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Editorial Note

This is a brief introduction to a timely and intellectually relevant conversation in this AYIKA publication. It centres on ten articles that cover unique aspects of development challenges in Africa, with particular attention to South Africa and Nigeria. These contributions, taken together, not only identify persistent challenges in environmental protection and economic growth but also advance policy recommendations in response to Africa's changing circumstances across various fronts. To be clear, the needs of Africa are multifaceted and interconnected in several ways; the challenges are similar across the board, although the manifestations may differ geographically. These articles address the connections in the needs and choices of Africa while projecting a better future. Motswaledi's article illuminates this in this volume, concluding that equitable and inclusive energy provision should be prioritised as a fundamental social justice intervention to redress historical inequalities, promote human dignity, and advance socio-economic transformation in post-apartheid South Africa. Such insight applies to all of Africa.

Collectively, these contributions demonstrate that Africa's development challenges cannot be understood in isolated compartments. Governance affects environmental management; energy affects social justice; infrastructure affects economic growth, etc. The major strength of this collection is therefore its interdisciplinary character. It brings together governance, economics, environmental studies, development studies, public policy, agriculture and social justice. More importantly, the articles consistently return to a central question: how can African societies build institutions and development pathways that improve human welfare without undermining the environmental and social foundations of the future? This collection does not claim to offer simple answers. Instead, it provides evidence, cases and critical perspectives that can help scholars, policymakers and practitioners ask better questions. New and better research questions are a right way in the right direction.

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