

African nations must prioritize science, technology, and innovation (STI) to unlock their vast potential and achieve sustainable development, declared Claver Gatete, Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).

Gatete emphasized this crucial point at the 2024 Africa Business Forum in Addis Ababa, urging African countries to boost their investments in STI to tap into their resources, enhance productivity, and become more competitive globally.

“Achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2063 hinges on embracing STI,” Gatete stressed.

He highlighted the need to address the digital skills gap, data generation, and utilizing the digital economy effectively.

Currently, only 25% of African youth possess the digital skills needed for the digital economy, and only half of African countries integrate these skills into their curriculum.

The forum, themed “Boosting Africa’s Transformation through Education, Science, Technology and Innovation,” brought together experts who emphasized the need for collaboration to bridge the scientific and technological gap between Africa and developed nations.

Experts warn that unequal access to scientific knowledge and resources threatens the SDGs’ promise of inclusivity.

This news highlights the critical role of STI in Africa’s future development. By investing in research, education, and digital skills, African countries can unlock their potential for economic growth, poverty reduction, and sustainable development.

The call to action from the UNECA and experts underscores the urgency of bridging the digital divide and ensuring all Africans have the opportunity to participate in the knowledge-based economy.