

The Business of Emerging Technologies in Ethiopia

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Hello!

My Name is Hruy Tsegaye and I am from Ethiopia. I work in a company called iCog Labs.

- AI research and Development
- Mobile Robotics
- Technology Transfer and Capacity Building
- Incubation and acceleration



Let's begin with the perception of Emerging Technologies

It is too good for Africa

Emerging Technologies (ET) are luxuries and there is no immediate use for such business in the country

It is not the time now as the economy is small

Implementing ET is impossible because of the infrastructure gap

It is Impossible

Our people are not smart enough neither to develop such technologies nor to use it

We cannot afford to pay

What is it, we don't know it

Almost all the officials and policymakers I have worked with confuse technology as a by-product of development. Yet, technology is a tool for development!

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The Challenges

It looks like the room for sustainable tech market in Ethiopia,
right now, is tiny!





What are the Main Concerns

- Fear of change
- Lack of competitive labour
- Inflexible market policies
- Absence of regulatory rules and policies

Disruptive Technology displaces an established technology and shakes up the industry; it is a pioneering and radical product that creates a completely new industry and new markets separate to the mainstream. The market for disruptive technology, at the time of its inception, is not only non-existing but it is also unknowable.



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The roots of the fear





Lack of competitive labour

Outdated

The curricula is that of the 1980s and 90s and as a result the students have no clue about what the current development and progress.

Not connected

The universities are not linked with the industry and are lost within their ivory tower assuming that they are the only source of technology transfer.

Theoretical only

Most of the higher institutes have no laboratory. The methodology of education has little room for practice-based education.



Inflexible market policies

Antediluvian

Most part of the financial rules are that of the 1960s and it is a complete chaos to manage businesses engaged in emerging technologies.

Corrupted and vague

A monopolistic and corrupted government interruption and absence of clear rule that defines business relationship between the government and private companies.



Absence of regulatory rules and policies

Clueless

The officials in charge are not well educated or have no advisor who can assist them to understand the nature and politics of emerging technologies

Lack of communication

Policy often fails to address the issue because it is not supported and shaped by the people from the industry.

Isolated and Oblivious

So far there is no continental communication platforms where policy makers address the issue of AI and emerging technologies.

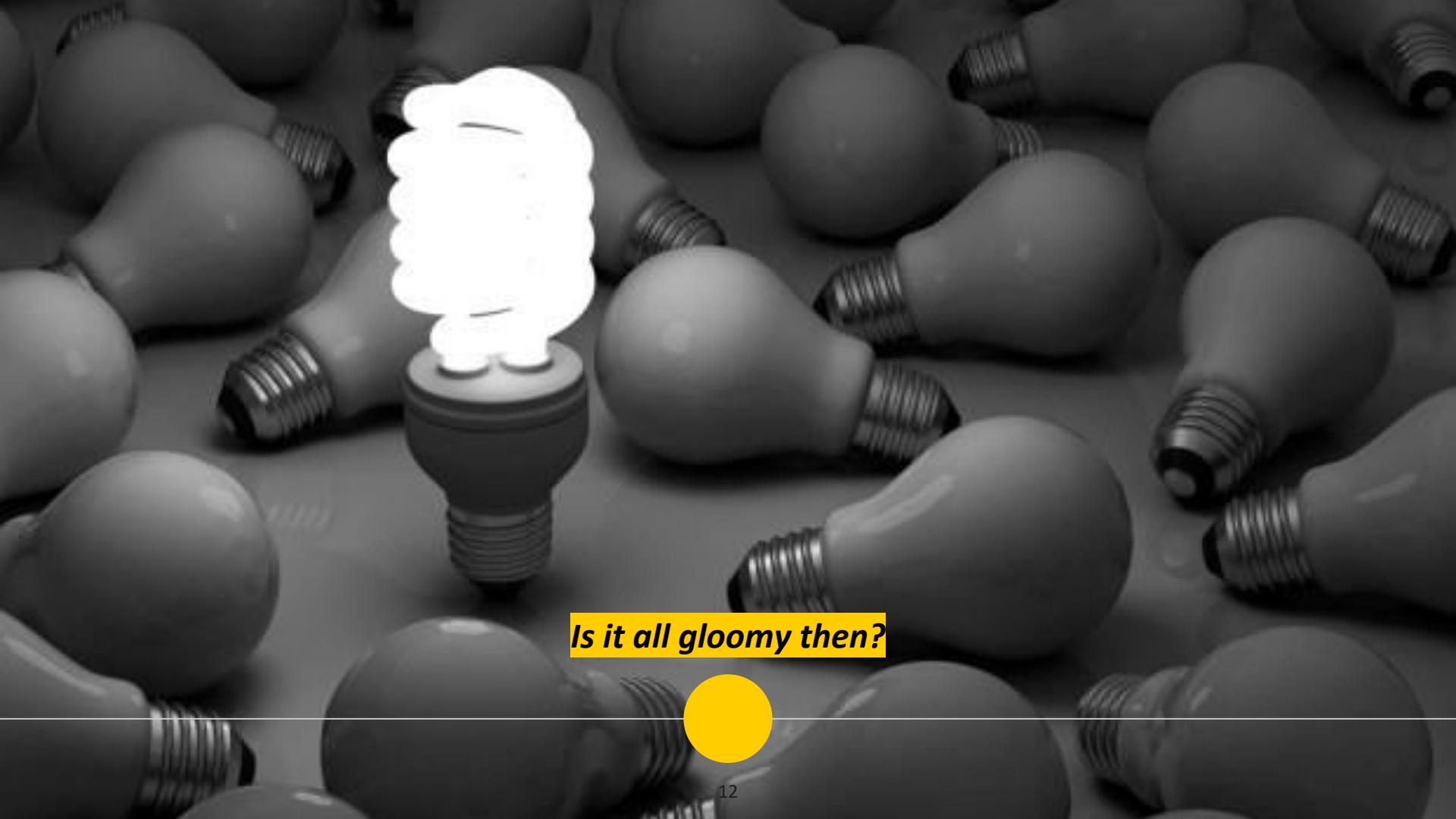
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I fear that these challenges will not be quickly solved because of:

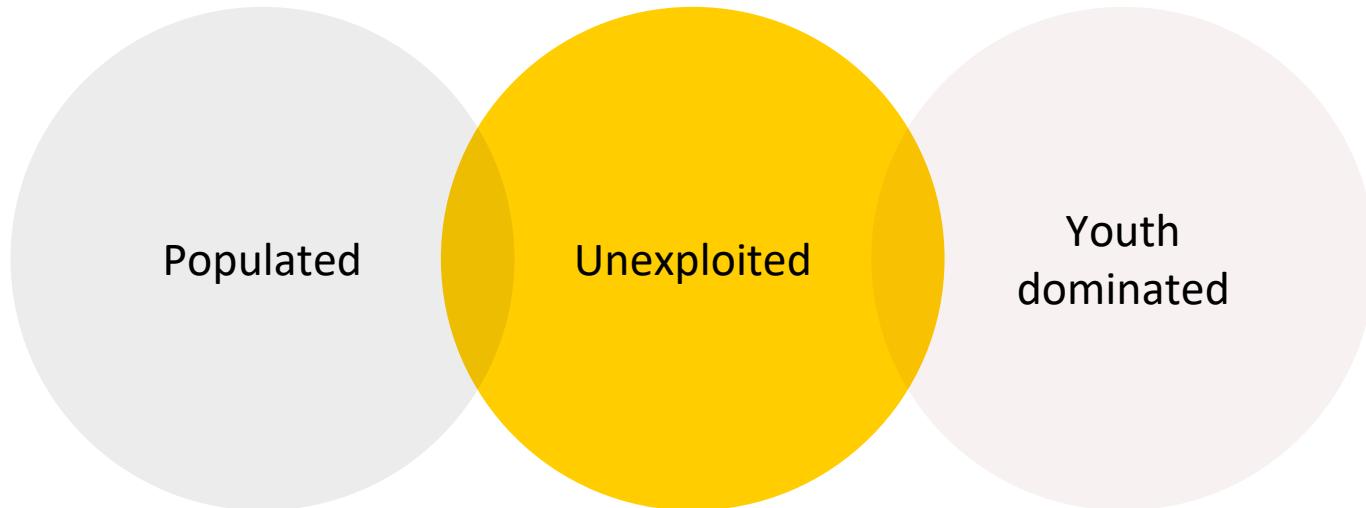
- The dead horse theory
- The Issue of Priority



Is it all gloomy then?



The prospects of emerging technologies



100,000,000

45,500,000

>20,000,000

Total Population, number of mobile subscribers and people who have access to
internate





Some of the Positive aspects

More than 60 Universities

Ethiopia is investing on tertiary education and right now there are more than 40 public and 15 private universities

Curricula Change

Even though it is not fast, the government is changing the education system with special attention to STEM.

Foreign Investment

A considerable rise in foreign tech investment witnessing a positive move. Investors are coming with money.

Incubation and Acceleration

The private sector is mobilizing innovation and it's cultivating innovators through incubation and acceleration centres.

Attitude Change

The public is now open to utilize new technologies. The market is willing to pay as long as the product is good enough.

Outsourcing Business

Ethiopia can become the favourite destination of outsourcing software business in Africa and there are signs of a good beginning.



Articles I Recommend

How Decentralized AI Can Change the Lives of Millions (iCog Labs Website)

Technology: The Last Frontier in Economic Challenges (iCog Labs Website)



Thanks!

Any questions ?

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