Trinity International Development Initiative

Concept Note: Africa Day 2017

Title: “Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investments in Youth” African Union Theme for 2017.

Location, Date, Time

- Davis Lecture Theatre, Arts Building, Trinity College Dublin
- Thursday 25 May 2017, 14:30 – 16:45

Hosts

The Trinity International Development Initiative (TIDI) [www.tcd.ie/tidi], with the support of the African Embassies accredited to the Republic of Ireland.

Aims & Objectives

Africa Day, which falls on 25 May annually, is the official day of the African Union and marks African unity. In Ireland, events to mark Africa Day, celebrate African diversity and the cultural and economic potential of the continent are held around the country. Africa Day also represents an important opportunity to raise awareness of the progress which is being achieved in development, focusing the lens very much on the development challenges which remain. For further information on Africa Day, visit: [http://www.africaday.ie](http://www.africaday.ie).

Context of TIDI's celebrations for Africa Day 2017

The year 2017 marks the African Union's theme 'Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investments in Youth.’ Young people in Africa are an enormous resource for the continent's developments and thus the African Union Heads of State and Government declared the theme for 2017 to be 'Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investments in Youth'.

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Schedule

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<td>14:30 – 14:35</td>
<td>Prof. Carol Newman</td>
<td>Welcome by the Chair of TIDI</td>
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<td>14:35 – 14:45</td>
<td>H.E. Mr. Ahlangene Cyprian Sigcau</td>
<td>Opening Address by Ambassador of South Africa to Ireland</td>
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<td>15:15 – 15:45</td>
<td>Prof. Keith Lewin</td>
<td>Demography and Education for Sustainable Development: Debates and Dilemmas</td>
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<td>15:45 – 16:15</td>
<td>John Fitzsimons</td>
<td>Technology’s Role in Transforming Education</td>
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<td>16:15 – 16:40</td>
<td>Panel Discussion</td>
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<td>16:40 – 16:45</td>
<td>Prof. Carol Newman</td>
<td>Closing Remarks</td>
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<td>16:45 – 17:00</td>
<td>Photo Opportunity</td>
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<td>17:00 – 18:00</td>
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Presentation Abstracts

Socially Just Education and Youth Development: Redeeming African Youth through the Continent’s Renewal. Prof. Vuyisile Msila

Currently among Africanists, there are several debates about the need to continuously promulgate Africa’s renewal. As society we frequently disregard the youth’s role in building strong African communities whose main role will be to empower thousands of young Africans. In numerous African states the youth have become the largest group to face the voting booths during elections. Yet the youth are frequently bypassed by meaningful development projects. They still face various challenges that include diseases, homelessness, hunger, unemployment and marginalisation from meaningful political participation. Despite relative peace in several African states today, the youth still need to realise an adequate voice and empowerment to combat social ills that they encounter every day. Africa will be failing future generations if youth development does not take the necessary centre stage.

The recent upheavals by young people at South African higher education institutions for example, cannot be viewed as mere spontaneous acts. They have put the society on a different pedestal to rethink the ideals of communities. Similarly, in several countries the young people have forced their communities to reflect critically on numerous societal challenges. Auspiciously, several African governments are responding with urgency and understanding why many of the youth demands are long overdue. Historically, in the case of South Africa, many of these demands were part of the rhetoric of the liberation struggle in the fight against the draconian apartheid system. Many are timely demands perceived by youth as legitimate; these include demands for a free and fair as well as a decolonised education. In addition to these, this presentation explores at how a socially just education can empower young people as it enhances their development. This can be perceived as a redress of past imbalances that threaten the attainment of a demographic dividend.
Demography and Education for Sustainable Development: Debates and Dilemmas. Keith M Lewin

Demographic transition occurs when higher rates of population growth are displaced by lower rates. Many low and middle income countries have seen child population growth rates fall from over 3% per annum to less than 1.5%. This dramatically changes dependency ratios of adults to children, reduces demand for new teachers and schools, and allows more to be invested per child in education. Most middle and high income countries have low child population growth rates which makes it easier for them to universalize access and provide high quality schools and Universities. Many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have yet to make the transition to low population growth. About half of the Africa Union States have child population growth above 1.7% and about 25% are above 2.5%. If they do experience demographic transition it will transform their prospects of reaching the educational goals associated with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. About 25% of countries in the African Union have achieved demographic transition with child population growth rates below 1% growth. Their experience may offer insights into policy and practice in managing transitions. Key issues are whether development leads to demographic transition or demographic transition leads to development, what role investment in education may play in the process, and how the effects of demographic transition on education should be managed.

Speaker Biographies

Vuyisile Msila is the Head of University of South Africa’s Institute for African Renaissance Studies. He has also been just appointed as Director: Leadership in Higher Education in March 2017. Before joining University he was a secondary school teacher then an official in Eastern Cape’s Department of youth Affairs between 1996 and 1999. He was a Fulbright Fellow at Michigan State University where he completed a Masters Degree in Curriculum Theory and Teaching. He also has a Masters degrees in Education Management as well as in Conflict Management and Transformation. He has taught at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University as well as University of Johannesburg before joining the University of South Africa. He was part of the research team that did a national longitudinal study, evaluating the effectiveness of the School management and Leadership qualification in South Africa. A C3 national Research Foundation (NRF) rated researcher Msila received Chancellor’s Award for research in 2013. He supervises post graduate students and has published more than 72 peer reviewed articles. His recent books include Africanising the curriculum: Indigenous perspectives and critical theories(2016); Ubuntu: Shaping the current workplaces with (African) Wisdom (2015). Two other books will be published in May and June 2017 - Africanisation and the Curriculum: Lessons from practice (Ed) and Decolonising knowledge for Africa’s renewal: Examining African Perspectives and Philosophies (Ed). Msila is also a regular newspaper columnist in Mail and Guardian, Sunday Independent and other Independent newspapers in South Africa.
Keith Lewin, is the Emeritus Professor of International Development at the University of Sussex. He founded the International Masters programme at Sussex and directed the Centre for International Education for 17 years. He has worked extensively on education and development in Asia and Africa for over 40 years for DFID, the World Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO and many national governments. Recently Keith directed the DFID funded Research Centre on Educational Access and Equity (www.CREATE-rpc) and has been Research Advisor to Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, the Government of India programme to universalise access to secondary school. He is currently advising the Global Partnership for Education. He has supervised 50 PhD students and published more than 150 scholarly articles and 17 books on education and development. Keith is a Fellow of the UK Academy of Social Sciences and a Chartered Physicist and is a Trustee and Treasurer of the UK Forum for International Education and Training.

John Fitzsimons is the CEO of Camara Education, a social enterprise that uses technology to deliver 21st century skills and, as such, improve education in disadvantaged communities around the world. John has an engineering and IT background, having worked with Analog Devices before spending two years in Tanzania setting up the IT function in Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre. Prior to Camara, John ran a consulting business that was part of Dell. John has a Degree in Electronic Engineering from University College Dublin and an MBA from Smurfit School of Business and is a board member at Dochas, the umbrella organisation for International NGOs in Ireland.

Location details:

Davis Lecture Theatre, Arts Building, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin