

## CEID Annual Conference 2018 - Higher Education and International Development Programme

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**8:30 – 9:00      Coffee and Registration**  
Foyer

**Welcome and Keynote (Jeffrey Hall; 9:00 – 10:30 am)**

**9:00 – 9:30      Welcome**

Becky Francis, Director, UCL Institute of Education

Elaine Unterhalter, Co-Director, CEID

Tristan McCowan, Co-Chair, CEID Conference 2018

**9:30 – 10:30      Keynote Address: *Strengthening Research for Development in the African Context***

Teboho Moja, New York University

Introduced by Moses Oketch, Co-Director, CEID

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**10:30 – 11:00      Coffee break**  
Crush Hall and Foyer

**First Parallel session (11:00 am – 12:30 pm)**

**Diverse understandings of higher education's role in 'development'** (Jeffrey Hall; Tejendra Pherali, Chair)

- *The role of higher education in development: Are the market and non-market benefits attainable simultaneously in sub-Saharan Africa?* - Moses Oketch (CEID, UCL Institute of Education)
- *What if higher education contributes to mediocrity? Questioning the relationship between higher education and progress in Mozambique* - Patricio Langa (University of the Western Cape [South Africa] and Eduardo Mondlane University [Mozambique])
- *Conceptualising and researching Higher Education and the Public Good in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa* - Elaine Unterhalter (CEID, UCL Institute of Education) and Stephanie Allais (University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa)
- *Higher education as a common good* (quickfire)– Rita Locatelli (University of Bergamo, Italy, and UNESCO Chair on Human Rights and Ethics of International Cooperation)
- *How can the notion of the 'public good' contribute to conceptions of the 'developmental university'*? (quickfire) - Palesa Molebatsi (University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa)

**Models of aid to higher education** (Drama Studio; Joanne Coysh, Chair)

- *Transforming Chemistry and Pharmacy Education in Kenya* – Claire Anderson, Simon McGrath & Robert Mokaya (all University of Nottingham)

- *Evaluation of the Development Research Uptake in sub-Saharan Africa (DRUSSA) programme* – Ben Prasadam-Halls (Association of Commonwealth Universities)
- *National policy environments supportive to international higher education engagement in lower-income countries* – Kevin Van-Cauter (British Council)
- *A practitioner's perspective: Addressing the challenges to higher education access, completion and employment in South Africa (quickfire)* – Kate Kuper (Moshal Scholarship Program)
- *Chinese scholarships to Cambodia: Who gets them and what do they learn? (quickfire)* - Kongkea Chhoeun (Australian National University, Australia)

**'Horizontality' of access to higher education** (Committee Room 1; Roy Carr-Hill, Chair)

- *International perspectives on the attainability of higher education opportunities: models and strategies for accessibility and availability* – Vincent Carpentier (UCL Institute of Education); Yann LeBeau (University of East Anglia); Jussi Välimäki (University of Jyväskylä, Finland)
- *Private higher education in Brazil: funding and structural changes* – Renato Pedrosa (Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Brazil)
- *Higher education and social equity in Bolivarian Venezuela* - Margarita Langthaler (Austrian Foundation for Development Research, Austria)
- *The impact of university regionalization strategy: A case in Colombia (quickfire)* - Gus Gregorutti and Monica Wringer (both Andrews University, USA)
- *Pedagogical self-accountability and social justice accountability in Indonesian higher education (quickfire)* – Elisa Brewis (UCL Institute of Education)

**South African higher education undergraduate pathways: understanding access, student experiences and graduate outcomes** (Committee Room 2; Melanie Walker, Chair)

- *South African higher education, society and economy* - Stephanie Allais (University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa)
- *Perspectives on Equitable Access* - Melanie Walker (University of the Free State, South Africa)
- *Researching student experiences: Theories, approaches and assumptions* - Sioux McKenna, Mandy Hlengwa & Thando Njovane (all Rhodes University, South Africa)
- *Examining the post-graduation trajectories of young South Africans: A critical review of the literature on graduate employment and destinations* – Siphelelo Ngcwangu (University of Johannesburg, South Africa) and Ibrahim Oanda (CODESRIA)

**Questions of curriculum & pedagogy** (Room 604; Amy North, Chair)

- *Pedagogical innovation and critical thinking in higher education: Evidence from Ghana* – Caine Rolleston (CEID, UCL Institute of Education); Christine Adu-Yeboah (University of Cape Coast, Ghana)
- *Beyond the neoliberal value of higher education: teaching and learning subjectively-framed criticality in a Kazakhstani university* – Sara Felix (London School of Economics & Political Science)
- *Design Thinking: A proposed framework for transforming higher education in the Arab World* - Hanadi Traifeh and Christoph Meinel (both University of Potsdam, Germany)
- *Mind the gap? Investigating the curriculum labour market nexus in Tanzania (quickfire)* - Jones T. Kaleshu, Esther Towo and Mangasini Katundu (Moshi Cooperative University,

Tanzania); Stefan Ouma (University of Frankfurt, Germany); Besrat Tesfaye (Södertörn University, Sweden)

- *Graduate exit surveys: the potential of mobile phone technology to address issues of affordability and sustainability for universities in sub-Saharan Africa (quickfire)* – Nan Yeld (British Council)
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**12:30 – 1:30    Lunch and Poster Display**

Crush Hall, Foyer and Jeffrey Hall

**Second Parallel session (1:30 – 3:00 pm)**

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***Higher Education and the Sustainable Development Goals*** (Jeffrey Hall; Colleen Howell, Chair)

- *Research in African universities to inform the Sustainable Development Goal for Education: Invisibility, gaps and future priorities* – Rafael Mitchell and Pauline Rose (both University of Cambridge)
- *Impacts and evaluation of the Climate Impacts Research Capacity and Leadership Enhancement (CIRCLE) Programme* – Verity Buckley (Association of Commonwealth Universities)
- *Supporting Higher Education Interventions to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals* – Andy Cherry and Ben Prasadam-Halls (Association of Commonwealth Universities)
- *Lifelong Learning, Women and Community Leadership (quickfire)* – Joanne Coys (CEID, UCL Institute of Education, and Nelson Mandela University, South Africa)
- *Global Education and the Global South: a critical engagement with the concept of Ubuntu (quickfire)* - Małgorzata Anielka Pieniążek (UCL Institute of Education)

***Higher education and conflict*** (Drama Studio; Elaine Chase, Chair)

- *Tertiary Education for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon: Overcoming the challenges through collaboration* – Tejendra Pherali (CEID, UCL Institute of Education) and Mai Abu Moghli (RELIEF Centre, UCL Institute of Education)
- *The role of higher education in peacebuilding in Nepal* – Ganesh Khadka (UCL Institute of Education)
- *Higher education, conflict and the public sphere: A history of the National University in Lebanon* – Helen Murray (University of Sussex)
- *Participatory approaches to MOOC co-design in Lebanon (quickfire)* – Eileen Kennedy and Diana Laurillard (UCL Institute of Education)
- *Experiences of Access to Higher Education for Gazan Refugee Youth in Jordan: Exploring Perceptions, Pathways, and Issues (quickfire)* – Dina Batshoun (UCL Institute of Education)

***Equality of experience and outcomes in South Africa*** (Committee Room 1; Thierry Luescher, Chair)

- *Going to university: The influence of higher education on the lives of young South Africans* - Jenni Case (Virginia Tech, USA & University of Cape Town, South Africa); Delia Marshall, (University of the Western Cape, South Africa); Sioux McKenna (Rhodes University, South Africa); Disa Mogashana (University of Cape Town, South Africa)

- *Low income rural and township youth: which capabilities matter for their inclusive higher education learning outcomes?* – Melanie Walker and Merridy Wilson-Strydom (both University of the Free State, South Africa)
- *'You have to change, the curriculum stays the same': South African rural students' experiences of higher education* – Sheila Trahar, Sue Timmis & Lisa Lucas (all University of Bristol)
- *Engaging Social Realism with the Call for Decolonising the Curriculum in South Africa* (quickfire) – Lerato Posholi (University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa)
- *Continuing capabilities dilemmas for sociology undergraduate students in South Africa* (quickfire) – Bothwell Manyonga (University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa)

***Issues of accessibility*** (Room 822; Jenny Parkes, Chair)

- *Gendering access to higher education in Haryana, India: a comparative case study of two government colleges* – Emily Henderson and Anjali Thomas (University of Warwick)
- *Higher Education for Whom?: A Spectre in Policy and Human Rights Discourse?* - Sahar D. Sattarzadeh (University of the Free State, South Africa)
- *Are African Students Entering Higher Education in Africa in any way 'Poor'; and how does their 'class' distribution reflect that of the UK fifty-five, fifteen years ago and now* (Roy Carr-Hill, CEID, UCL Institute of Education)
- *Competencies and Skills for Access to Higher Education. Gaps between schools and students' perspectives* – Francisco Durán del Fierro and Jenny Lavados (University of Chile)

***Research partnerships*** (Room 604; Elaine Unterhalter, Chair)

- *Supporting PhD capacity building in 6 Sub Saharan African countries* – Michael Peak (British Council)
- *Negotiating transnational science: East African doctoral journeys beyond 'capacity building'* (quickfire) – David Mills (University of Oxford)
- *Co-producing knowledge and building capacity in Knowledge in Action for Urban Equalities* - Adriana Allen and Julia Wesely (The Bartlett Development Planning Unit, UCL)
- *Partnering with higher education institutions for social and environmental justice in the global South: lessons from the Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre* - Alexandre Apsan Frediani and Andrea Rigon (The Bartlett Development Planning Unit, UCL)
- *Nesting capacities for knowledge generation on economic and climate justice on HE institutions in the South* (quickfire) – Ibrahim Oanda (CODESRIA)

**3:00 – 3:30      Tea Break**

Refreshments served in the Crush Hall and Foyer

**Final Plenary (Jeffrey Hall)**

**3:30 – 5:00      Final Plenary and Close**

Chair: Rebecca Schendel, Co-Chair, CEID Conference 2018

Panellists

Mandy Hlengwa, Rhodes University, South Africa

Miguel Lim, University of Manchester

Renato Pedrosa, Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Brazil

Nan Yeld, British Council

## **Keynote Speaker**

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### **Professor Teboho Moja, New York University, USA**

Teboho Moja obtained her Ph.D at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1985. She joined New York University in 1999 and is now a Director and Professor of the Higher Education Program at New York University, an Extraordinary Professor at the University of the Western Cape (South Africa), and a Visiting Research Fellow, Centre for the Advancement of Scholarship at the University of Pretoria (South Africa).

Dr. Moja's career has focused on higher education policy research. She has published extensively on higher education and presented numerous keynote addresses at international conferences on higher education issues.



In 1991/92 she became involved in the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI), a project initiated by the Mass Democratic Movement in South Africa. The project goal was to investigate policy options for the new government in all areas of education. In 1993 Dr. Moja was appointed to the Centre for Educational Policy Development (CEPD) in South Africa as a policy analyst for higher education. The Centre produced policy documents and also proposed implementation strategies for hand-over to the new Minister of Education after South Africa's first democratic elections. Following the elections Dr. Moja served as a Special Advisor to two Ministers of Education and was appointed Executive Director and Commissioner of the National Commission on Higher Education.

Dr. Moja has served on numerous committees and boards of international bodies such as UNESCO and Councils of Universities in South Africa and is the current Chair of the Board of Trustees for the Center for Higher Education Trust (CHET).

## **Poster Display Participants**

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*Teaching English via ICT Tools, a source of Engagement: The Algerian Experience between Mythos and Palpability* - Radia Guerza (Batna II University, Algeria)

*Emerging technologies and pedagogies in Higher Education: A case of Mobile instant messaging in Mobile in Teacher Preparation* - Rovincer Najjuma and Palitha Edirsingha (both University of Leicester)

*Understanding how university aspirations are shaped and developed amongst Mexican high-school students* - Claudia Yvonne Linan Segura (University of East Anglia)

*International student mobility experience and life trajectories. Life depictions of form Mexican doctoral students* - Karla Lopez (UCL Institute of Education)

*Gender balance in Georgian Education* - Maia Kipiani, Emilia Alaverdov and Tsiala Gloveli (all Georgian Technical University)

*Household spending on engineering education in India* - Pradeep Choudhury (Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi)

*Trends in funding models in Higher Education in development countries* - Cristina Pulido Montes and Alexandra Carrasco (both University of Valencia)

*The growing demand for HE, what has the emerging countries answer been?* - Bruno Morche (UCL Institute of Education)

*Maintaining quality in graduate education: experiences from a quality conscious university in Pakistan* - Sajid Ali (Aga Khan University)

*Challenges and opportunities for internationally mobile Zimbabwean postgraduates returning home* - Victoria Reed (Lancaster University)

## Paper abstracts (grouped by panel)

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### **Diverse understandings of higher education's role in 'development' (Jeffery Hall, 11-12.30)**

1. *The role of higher education in development: Are the market and non-market benefits attainable simultaneously in sub-Saharan Africa?* Moses Oketch (CEID, UCL Institute of Education)

It is hard to imagine a topic of more importance to education and economic policy than the role of higher education in development. Much literature confirms theoretically through human capital theory (HCT) and empirically higher education's importance to development. HCT argues that investment in higher education makes individuals more productive and that a higher proportion of productive people in the workforce leads to economic growth - one measure of development, albeit a narrow one. It is also now largely accepted that human capital skills largely created through higher education is associated with life's chances over the life cycle and progress in national and international development. Qualifications as a measure of these skills affect earnings, and that higher education affects private and social non-market benefits beyond earnings. Private non-market benefits include better own-health, child health, spousal health, infant mortality, longevity, fertility, household efficiency, asset management, and happiness. Social benefits include democratization, civil rights, political stability, reduced crime, lower prison, health and welfare costs, and new ideas. Individual benefits enhance community-wide development. Focusing on higher education development in sub-Saharan Africa, this paper argues that these benefits are not achievable simultaneously. It argues that in the initial stages of development, the market benefits associated with wage earnings and productivity are a necessary condition for achieving the non-market benefits.

2. *What if higher education contributes to mediocrity? Questioning the relationship between higher education and progress in Mozambique* - Patricio Langa (University of the Western Cape [South Africa] and Eduardo Mondlane University [Mozambique])

Globally, the public values of higher education for its contributions to social and economic development, scientific discoveries and cultural enhancement have become a truism. While many believe that higher education is worth the cost in terms of individual and public benefit, due to a positive correlation between investment in higher education and economic growth. In contexts marked by resource constraints and low quality of higher education, there are reasons to reexamine the, often taken for granted, value of the public investment in higher education. This paper reviews the case of Mozambique, where the expansion of higher education has hypothetically led to (i) rapid individual/social mobility, especially of those, who through their academic credentials, secured jobs in the public sector; (ii) competition for academic credentials

as means to fast track social mobility; (iii) rise in public expenditure due to the indexation of public servants salaries to formal qualifications in government institutions, which does not necessarily translate into efficiency of the public sector due to more cultured manpower (iv) the decline of creativity and the quality of the public sphere competency for a rational debate due to a growing tendency to use credentials as criteria of plausibility for arguments in public sphere. The combination of the factors

listed above leads to unintended consequences of the current trends of expansion in African higher education. Drawing on multiple data sources and mixed methods, this paper critically examines the contribution of higher education to progress in Mozambique, questioning whether it might contribute to the rise of mediocrity.

3. *Conceptualising and researching Higher Education and the Public Good in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa* - Elaine Unterhalter (CEID, UCL Institute of Education) and Stephanie Allais (University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa)

Higher education has been the object of policy attention in sub-Saharan Africa in recent years, with significant expansions in enrolment and its positioning as key to addressing important development imperatives. However, major barriers to access still exist, reflecting persistent inequalities across the region. There are also quality challenges around teaching and learning, research and governance, and protests that have questioned its relevance and power relations, highlighting the need to decolonise the curriculum, organisation and cultures of universities. These raise questions about higher education and its relationship to the public good. While these are global concerns, this paper explores this relationship in the sub-Saharan African context and considers how it is understood and conceptualised within these contexts with their particular histories and associated inequalities.

The paper draws from a project presently underway that is examining views of higher education and the public good in four sub-Saharan Africa countries, bringing together the views of a range of stakeholders on this theme. It takes as its starting point two distinct but intersecting ways in which higher education and the public good are linked - captured as an instrumental and an intrinsic relationship. Drawing from emerging findings from the project it then considers the connections and disconnections that emerge when these are explored within the sub-Saharan African context. Finally, it offers some thoughts on what is important in understanding the relationship of higher education and the public good in these contexts and the value these understandings have for broader debates on these issues.

4. *Higher education as a common good* – Rita Locatelli (University of Bergamo, Italy, and UNESCO Chair on Human Rights and Ethics of International Cooperation)

The principle of public good as applied to higher education appears to be challenged by the greater diversification of actors and sources of funding and by the influence of neo-liberal ideologies which emphasize the private and economic benefits of higher education. As well as undermining principles of equity, these changes may also affect the ultimate purposes and main functions of universities in order to meet the needs of the knowledge economy. This theoretical paper provides a revisited interpretation of the application of the principle of public good to higher education in light of current trends of privatisation and marketisation. While acknowledging the importance of the role of the State in educational governance, however, it also argues that a mere reaffirmation of this principle may not be sufficient to counter the effects of the market in both the public and private domains. Referring to the concept of common goods, this paper explores complementary frameworks for the development of new approaches likely to strengthen participatory and deliberative processes and to implement sustainable and ethical forms of cooperation according to different realities. In contrast to dominant development discourse, this normative concept favours a humanistic

approach and highlights the quest for knowledge as a shared endeavour and responsibility. Considering higher education as a common good entails fostering the diversity of worldviews and knowledge systems in order to envisage new social structures and development models while ensuring more equitable educational policies.

5. *How can the notion of the ‘public good’ contribute to conceptions of the ‘developmental university’?* - Palesa Molebatsi (University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa)

Developing societies and economies remain underdeveloped despite widening participation, highlighting the need to better understand how (if at all) higher education contributes to development, and if the failure of educational outcomes is partly to blame. The concept of the ‘Developmental University’ has been devised as a tool to theorise the impact of universities and to help us understand the relationship between higher education and society. Generally, universities are conceived as ‘developmental’ in relation to: a) their knowledge production for economic imperatives, or b) forms of community engagement in small pockets of the university. I argue that this conception is too narrow, especially in the case of South Africa where students, the government and the general public have contesting notions of the university’s developmental character. This presentation considers the contextual embeddedness of notions of the public good, and describes the developmental university as a public sphere with many ‘publics’ interacting in, and with, it to define these notions. I conclude that without a clear delineation of the contesting notions of the public good, no clear theory of the developmental university is possible.

#### ***Models of aid to higher education (Drama Studio, 11-12.30)***

1. *Transforming Chemistry and Pharmacy Education in Kenya* – Claire Anderson, Simon McGrath & Robert Mokaya (all University of Nottingham)

Kenya intends to create a globally competitive and adaptive workforce to meet the requirements of a rapidly industrialising economy. Public and private universities have been encouraged to expand enrolment, with an emphasis on science and technology courses. This paper will report on the inception phase of a new DFID-funded 4-year partnership between the University of Nottingham, 5 Kenyan universities, and other stakeholders. The project aims to transform curriculum, pedagogy, industry partnership and staff development in both chemistry and pharmacy with a strong focus on equity and sustainability. The presentation will outline the project’s vision and offer a critical reflection on its initial theory of change, seeking dialogue with a higher education and development audience regarding the challenges inherent in an attempt to support sustainable change in HE through a donor-funded intervention.

2. *Evaluation of the Development Research Uptake in sub-Saharan Africa (DRUSSA) programme* – Ben Prasadam-Halls (Association of Commonwealth Universities)

In 2010, a DFID scoping study found that while African universities can play a vital role in contributing research evidence to support development policy and practice, the capacity of universities in Sub-Saharan Africa to advance the application and use of scientifically validated evidence is constrained. Poor linkages, limited public access to university research and weak interactions between policymaking and research communities were

identified as the main constraints to research uptake in the region. These factors were further impeded by institutional and organisational barriers within potential research users, especially within government bodies. To address this, the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), funded by DFID, implemented the Development Research Uptake in Sub-Saharan Africa (DRUSSA) programme, aimed at improving capacity in African universities to contribute research evidence in the development of pro poor policy and practice, and to increase the use, understanding and demand for university produced development research evidence.

Interventions aimed at strengthening capacity were delivered at three levels: individual, organisations and the wider systems level. By developing new skill sets to meet the changing needs of researchers and research users, the DRUSSA programme saw an increase in the use of research evidence from African institutions by policymakers and their local communities. More broadly, the programme made important strides in shifting attitudes towards research uptake within higher education institutions across Sub-Saharan Africa. This presentation will draw out lessons from the DRUSSA programme of relevance to research projects with potential for achieving development impact.

3. *National policy environments supportive to international higher education engagement in lower-income countries* – Kevin Van-Cauter (British Council)

International collaboration in teaching and research can support capacity building, can help to raise and assure quality provision, and contribute to widening access to international higher education. But what steps are being taken at a national level to support international engagement in higher education in lower income countries?

To address this question, a British Council study commenced with an extensive literature review and desk research. Given the high variability in publicly accessible data on countries' policies, interviews with local experts complemented the desk research to fill information gaps. The issues were also explored in the academic literature, to establish a correct understanding of the regulatory environment in the studied countries.

This study uses an index-based methodology to evaluate countries' policies and regulatory environments with regard to international higher education. The index is constructed from 37 indicators, grouped into three broad categories: (i) openness and international mobility policies; (ii) quality assurance and degree recognition; and (iii) access and sustainability. These three categories contribute equally to the overall index. The information against each indicator is factual and refers to the country's government guidelines and legal framework. Each criterion is assessed on whether it is fully met, partly met or not met.

The study includes 43 countries and territories in total, 13 of these are lower income countries. By comparing the relative strengths and weaknesses of national policy and regulatory frameworks across these countries recommendations can be made for policy development to support international engagement.

4. *A practitioner's perspective: Addressing the challenges to higher education access, completion and employment in South Africa* – Kate Kuper (Moshal Scholarship Program)

This presentation will provide a practitioner's overview of the challenges facing disadvantaged students in accessing higher education, graduating in time, and obtaining employment thereafter. It will describe how the Moshal Scholarship Program (MSP) has sought to mitigate these challenges since 2010, working in South Africa, Israel and the Ukraine to support approximately 1000 students per annum. This will include the vision behind the programme, its "Theory of Change", and how the model has evolved as a result of organisational learning across the three countries. The paper will also locate the MSP along the spectrum of corporate, non-profit and government financial and/or wraparound support programs that seek to increase equity in access and outcomes in South Africa, and critically reflect on MSP's vision, approach and KPIs relative to other providers and the country as a whole.

5. *Chinese scholarships to Cambodia: Who gets them and what do they learn?* - Kongkea Chhoeun (Australian National University)

China has been providing scholarships to foreign countries' citizens to study in China for several decades. Despite its long history, little is known about who gets them and what influences these scholarships have on the recipient countries' citizens. This paper attempts to answer the following two questions: Who are selected? and What impact do Chinese scholarship programs have on Cambodian students' political attitudes? Methodologically, I employed online and face-to-face surveys to understand who is selected and a before and after, quasi-experiment without pre-measurement and an in-depth, semi-structured interview research design to identify causal one-year effects of the program. Overall, contrary to common assumptions about Chinese aid, I found no evidence that Chinese scholarship programs excessively benefited the elites and that the programs had been exploited for political ends by Cambodia's ruling elites. However, the programs have influenced Cambodian scholars' political attitudes in ways that are consequential for the future of democracy and governance in Cambodia. As a consequence of the scholarships, Cambodian scholars had become less supportive of democracy and more so of communism; more in favour of the role of the state in the economy; less tolerant of corruption and more positive about China and its development model. This paper helps fill gaps in our understanding of the impact of non-OECD aid on democracy and governance in the recipient countries.

***South African higher education undergraduate pathways: understanding access, student experiences and graduate outcomes (Symposium) (Committee Room 1, 11-12.30)***

This symposium presents papers from the three strands of the ESRC-NRF funded International 'Pathways' Research Partnership project\*, together with an overview paper on South African higher education to situate the three themes. The three strands are: 1) access to higher education; 2) students' experiences of higher education; and 3) the impact of graduates on society. In addition to building research focus our network objectives are to increase understanding of how undergraduate higher education in South Africa can most effectively contribute to the development of individuals and society and to produce resources to enable policy makers, managers and practitioners to develop higher education in ways that enhances the benefits of widening access in South Africa. Whilst we

consider the three themes individually, what is original and significant about our project is the examination of how these work together, recognising that they are different dimensions of the same issue: how an undergraduate education contributes to both personal and social transformation. Widening access and transformative undergraduate experiences are important because of the potential they have for contributing to personal and public good, and the distribution of these goods cannot be understood without knowledge of access to and experiences of HE.

1. *South African higher education, society and economy* - Stephanie Allais (University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa)

Funding shapes every aspect of the three pathways themes. A crisis of student funding has led to repeated closures of many South African universities in 2015 and 2016, with a few also being closed for long periods in 2017, and emerging sporadic struggles in 2018. In an historically racially segregated and still stratified higher education system, and a grossly unequal society in terms of both income and wealth assets, higher education funding has become a major political issue in South Africa. Emerging political and policy pronouncements in response show an acute awareness from government on just how important this issue is to the electorate and public opinion. Missing, however, is analysis of the relationships between higher education, society, and the economy. This paper therefore interrogates the assumptions which underpin current approaches to measuring higher education in South Africa. It argues that analyses of labour market relationships, associated with forms of measurement linked to rates of return, graduate tracer studies, and employer requirements and satisfaction studies, give us a snapshot of relatively contemporary data, but do not tell much about the dynamics of causation. They contain interesting information but should not be used to over-claim about the relationship between higher education and the economy or equity in social mobility pathways made possible by higher education. Taken together with other approaches to higher education evaluation, they tell us more about how labour markets are looking for distinctions between candidates than about the value that higher education adds to societies and economies. A clear public policy response needs better forms of measurement and better tools of analysis.

2. *Perspectives on Equitable Access* Melanie Walker (University of the Free State, South Africa)

We understand access as getting in to university across four key 'moments': 1) matric achievement; 2) getting information and choosing a university; 3) being accepted into a programme; and 4) getting funding in order to able to register. These moments may be more or less agentic, more or less secure or unstable, and more or less equitable. The paper draws on McCowan's three dimensions of equity in access: availability (of places), accessibility (can the student actually take up a place), and horizontality (to which university and degree does a student get access). The third of McCowan's dimensions is reframed as achievability – if there is a place, and it is accessible can the place actually be achieved? In practice there is considerable overlap between accessibility and achievability and both are shaped by institutional selection and admission policies, whereas availability is shaped bilaterally by government and universities with regard to enrolment numbers at each university. In turn, access is shaped by the biographies of students, their personal efforts and family circumstances, and structures race, gender, social class, region, and so forth. Thus choosing higher education, choosing a university and choosing a programme of study are not simply personal decisions but sit at the intersection of the person, her schooling, her family, university policy and actions and

society, and in turn intersect with McCowan's three equity dimensions. How these intersect will either give the green light for access and genuine choice or the red light for exclusion or limited choices. These complicated factors are explored in the paper, drawing on international and national research and data to show that access is not yet fair in South Africa.

3. *Researching student experiences: Theories, approaches and assumptions* - Sioux McKenna, Mandy Hlengwa & Thando Njovane (all Rhodes University, South Africa)

Student experiences are by nature varied, especially when the sector is highly uneven. This presentation draws from a meta-analysis of 127 South African PhD and Master's studies that focused on the student experience in higher education. By analyzing the research occurring at the 'boundaries of the field', we were able to interrogate how student experiences are being conceptualized. The three main findings to be discussed here were, firstly, that many of the studies drew on what Boughey and McKenna have termed the 'decontextualized learner' discourse through which students are understood separately from the socio-cultural world, stripped of heritage, norms, values and social practices. In the studies drawing on this discourse, student failure was ascribed to issues such as age, under-preparedness, their lacking specific language or academic skills (which were understood to be neutral), or their having poor problem-solving abilities. The second key finding to be discussed here emerged from this decontextualized learner discourse. There were a number of studies that offered solutions to the problem of poor student success by testing and recommending add-on interventions. Such initiatives are based on the premise that existing university structures and cultures, the curriculum content or the teaching and assessment approaches are all unproblematic. The third main finding is more optimistic and relates to those studies that focused on the potential for higher education to enable the flourishing of capabilities. Such studies offer a rigorous theorization of student experience in ways that suggest a different future.

4. *Examining the post-graduation trajectories of young South Africans: A critical review of the literature on graduate employment and destinations* - Siphelo Ngcwangu (University of Johannesburg, South Africa) and Ibrahim Oanda (CODESRIA)

Research into graduate employment and destinations has been growing internationally, notably in the context of a policy environment that has prioritized the economic purposes of higher education. In South Africa concerns are magnified by the legacy of the racially stratification of education and work; with the expectation that higher education will deliver strong employment possibilities for the individual graduate. This paper surveys recent research in this area, based both on analyses of the labour force surveys and on those graduate destinations studies that have been conducted to date. Overall, graduate employment prospects are strong and unemployment is not the problem it was initially assumed to be, although there is evidence of some difficulty for fresh graduates entering the labour market. Across the board, studies show that race continues to play a significant role in graduate employment; some of this seems related to the differential patterns of access to institutions of differing perceived quality, but other work also suggests that social capital plays a role. The paper identifies gaps in the current graduate employment and destinations literature and points to areas for further investigation.

***'Horizontality' of access to higher education (Committee Room 2, 11-12.30)***

1. *International perspectives on the attainability of higher education opportunities: models and strategies for accessibility and availability* – Vincent Carpentier (UCL Institute of Education); Yann LeBeau (University of East Anglia); Jussi Välimäa (University of Jyväskylä, Finland)

The paper explores how access to Higher Education (HE) is being varyingly regulated by policies managing the availability and accessibility of study opportunities under pressure from social demands. Policies of access to HE have long been analysed in the context of a worldwide move towards a massification of HE systems, and primarily from the perspective of the trade-off between quality and quantity. More recently, in the light of data showing persisting inequalities of access to and success within HE - even in high participation systems - the question of equity in the availability and accessibility of HE opportunities has been raised. The paper will examine five approaches to counter the deepening of those inequalities in a range of high to low income countries. Initiatives related to institutional diversification, funding paradigms, the diversification of pathways into HE will be looked at in their capacity to challenge key barriers in the attainability of higher education.

Our sample of countries presents distinctive HE patterns historically shaped by the evolving connections and tensions between social, economic, political and cultural rationales. They include an archetypical high participation system, a centralised republican “model”, a market orientated approach and two postcolonial configurations in low income countries.

The paper uses these contrasting cases to engage with discourses on the worldwide march towards universal HE. In doing so, we would like to question developmental conceptualisations of “participation” and suggest ways in which this approach can be complemented to better reflect higher education developments around the world.

2. *Private higher education in Brazil: funding and structural changes* – Renato Pedrosa (Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Brazil)

For the two decades before the onset of the recent economic crisis (2015-2016), the private sector had been the main driving force behind the explosive expansion of higher education in Brazil. Undergraduate enrolment in private HEIs expanded continuously, from 1 to 6 million students, from 1995 to 2015. In 2016, for the first time since 1992, the number of students enrolled in private HEIs showed a reduction from that of the previous year, from 6.08 to 6.06 million students. Is that the start of a new period or just a small break in the seemingly never-ending growth trend? The purpose of the paper is to analyse the available information and data in detail, including structural and institutional changes in the private sector. There is evidence that points out to a longer period of stagnation in enrolment, not unlikely the one that prevailed in the 1980s, with two main causes: the continuing failure of basic education to entitle larger groups of the young population for HE and the financial restrictions for expanding public and private funding of HE. Some structural changes are also relevant to the analysis, as the system has drifted in favour of the for-profit model and of further academic diversity, including the expansion of the distance learning model and of vocational programmes offer.

3. *Higher education and social equity in Bolivarian Venezuela* - Margarita Langthaler (Austrian Foundation for Development Research, Austria)

The paper aims at analysing higher education policies in Venezuela in the first decade of the Bolivarian government (1999 – 2010). In particular, it aims at assessing whether these policies complied with the declared government objective of enhanced equity in higher education including access and social outcomes. Existing academic literature delivers conflicting findings reflecting the high political polarisation in the country. On the one hand, existing knowledge highlights the massive increase in access to higher education to the benefit of poor sectors. On the other hand, a more critical strand of literature claims that government policies have resulted in substantially deteriorated quality of higher education. Research was undertaken for a doctoral thesis based on a qualitative methodological approach comprising expert interviews and participant observations. Repeated field trips were undertaken between 2005 and 2009. Key findings include that government efforts to democratise higher education led to increased access, in particular for the poor, a socio-spatial reordering of higher education institutions, and increased engagement of communities and grassroots actors. As a result, higher education policies supported increased democratic participation, popular self-organisation and the emergence of new state-society relations. However, in drawing up a parallel Bolivarian system of higher education while leaving traditional elite universities untouched government policies resulted in a hierarchical parallelism of differently valued tracks of higher education. Consequently, these policies ended up fortifying rather than overcoming social inequalities. Implications point to the inevitability of structural reforms rather than simply drawing up additional educational tracks for the poor.

4. *The impact of university regionalization strategy: A case in Colombia* - Gus Gregorutti and Monica Wringer (both Andrews University, USA)

Education access inequalities have been a common denominator in Latin America. Particularly in Colombia, public and private higher education institutions have shown a monopolised investment in big cities, leaving semirural areas with little options to get professional training and economic, political and social consequences. Rama and Ceballos (2016) underscored that over the last 30 years, public and private universities have been putting efforts to minimise difference in education access between the urban and rural areas. This has been done through diverse university models of regionalization across Latin America. In the case of Colombia, in 1995 the government of the State of Antioquia officially established the regionalization of education as a strategy to promote higher education in disadvantaged regions. According to Londoño, Canavire, Bohorquez and Cuartas (2015), between 2000 and 2015 this approach helped to increase the demand for higher education in a 106%. This has produced important human resources and economic developments in the whole state.

The goal of this study is to measure the impact of Regionalization of Higher Education in the State of Antioquia, Colombia. This is a descriptive quantitative analysis that compares levels of regional coverage, from the beginning of the implementation of the model, and the socioeconomic status of the students at admission versus different socioeconomic indicators used to measure development.

Preliminary results show that Uraba, one of the most violent guerrilla regions, evidenced significant higher education access gains with remarkable social mobility. Policy implications to further the regionalization strategy are also discussed.

5. *Pedagogical self-accountability and social justice accountability in Indonesian higher education* – Elisa Brewis (UCL Institute of Education)

Massification of higher education (HE) has improved tertiary enrolment rates globally, but it has not led to more equitable participation. Patterns of stratification or vertical differentiation prevail. Accordingly, scholars have emphasised the need to examine patterns in access to HE in relation to quality. Indonesia's 2012 Higher Education Law introduced major accountability reforms to address these twin concerns of quality and equity. It did so through curricular standardisation across the public and private sector, and by boosting financial aid for poor and disadvantaged students. Drawing on multi-method case studies of three institutions (comprehensive university, institute of technology, health science college), this paper explores how institutions define and practice their own conceptualisations of quality and equity, or what I term their 'pedagogical self-accountability' and 'social justice accountability'. Analytically, the paper illustrates the way in which structural forces (public-private sector competition in student recruitment, labour market pressures, governmental regulations), institutional factors (mission, staffing autonomy, organisational culture) and discipline-specific norms have shaped institutional responses. Positive outcomes for students were observed in terms of (a) a values-driven teaching and learning praxis that goes beyond the neoliberal discourse of standardisation and employability; and (b) increased enrolments for poor/disadvantaged students. The private providers demonstrated a more unanimously-accepted culture of accountability toward peers, students and the public, whereas accountability culture varied by department at the state institution. The paper concludes that we can avoid a policy fatigue with accountability if we open it up to its pedagogical and social justice dimensions.

**Questions of curriculum & pedagogy (Room 604, 11-12.30)**

1. *Pedagogical innovation and critical thinking in higher education: Evidence from Ghana* – Caine Rolleston (CEID, UCL Institute of Education); Christine Adu-Yeboah (University of Cape Coast, Ghana)

Concern about the capacity of graduates from African universities to demonstrate '21st Century skills', such as critical thinking, has prompted growing recognition of the need for pedagogical change within many African higher education institutions; while there has been little analysis of the effectiveness of pedagogical practice in that context.

*Pedagogies for Critical Thinking* is a three-year research project jointly funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), investigating the impact of locally-generated pedagogical interventions on student critical thinking ability in Kenya, Ghana and Botswana. The study follows a mixed methods design, comprising a longitudinal study of student outcomes and a qualitative investigation of the ways in which institutions are successful or otherwise in encouraging processes of pedagogical change.

This paper presents findings from Ghana. Firstly, it compares critical thinking skills across faculties and institutions, according to undergraduate students' demographic and educational backgrounds, and their orientations to learning as measured by an attitudinal assessment of learning motivations and strategies. Secondly, it reports results of regression models employed to examine the relative importance of these factors in the determination of baseline critical thinking skills. Finally, analysis of qualitative data from interviews and focus groups conducted at participating faculties in Ghana is presented in order to shed light on the question of whether students who are more advantaged either economically or educationally (or both) are more likely gain access to faculties and programmes which are employing pedagogical strategies which may be considered more conducive to the development of critical thinking.

2. *Beyond the neoliberal value of higher education: teaching and learning subjectively-framed criticality in a Kazakhstani university* – Sara Felix (London School of Economics & Political Science)

The aim of this paper is twofold: 1) to trouble neoliberal values of international higher education that use it to argue for economic development through the notion of the knowledge economy, and global market competitiveness (Naidoo, 2008; 2010; 2011); and 2) to propose framing higher education for the development of critical beings (Barnett & Coate, 2005), where critical beings belong to contexts with diverse and powerful histories. Therefore, higher education becomes interested in subjectively-framed criticality (Freire, 1998; hooks, 2010; Felix & Smart 2017) rather than 'objective' ahistorical critical thinking. Criticality allows for critical beings to move beyond focusing on global markets as a means of development into a desire to address inequalities, sustainability, and social development. This paper draws on empirical research conducted in a university in Kazakhstan to make this theoretical argument. The paper uses thematic analysis of interviews and reflective narratives from first year undergraduate students at the university, and thematic analysis of President Nazarbayev's speeches relating to higher education. The key findings, which are that a curriculum for subjectively framed criticality does promote critical beings dedicated towards engaging social inequalities, has implications for how teaching and learning is practiced in higher education globally. However it also has policy implications – specifically that policy should consider the multiple values of higher education for development beyond a free global market perspective.

3. *Design Thinking: A proposed framework for transforming higher education in the Arab World* - Hanadi Traifeh and Christoph Meinel (both University of Potsdam, Germany)

Higher education (HE) is undergoing a fundamental transition. Internationalism, globalization, students' demands and expectations, and a changing economic and political sphere led to major changes in the models of higher education. Unlike institutions in developed countries, low and middle income countries such as those of the Arab world are still struggling in accepting new models of HE due to their own social, political and economic challenges. However, the Arab spring uprising disrupted the way many things are usually run in these countries, and opened the door for change at all levels. Education is no exception.

This paper examines the current state of HE in the Arab world, and explores the challenges and obstacles that both students and HE institutions face. The paper then focuses on the potential of digital learning in overcoming some of these obstacles, and proposes a ‘design thinking’ framework to be considered when redesigning the current learning experiences in Arab universities. Design Thinking (DT), an approach to problem solving, creativity and innovation, is being successfully adopted by many western universities, as well as some universities in China, South Korea, Singapore and India. It proved its value in rethinking the educational process for both students and teachers. Design Thinking focuses on the students’ needs, cultivates their creative confidence and equips them with many 21st century skills critical for their future careers. The paper concludes by providing recommendations for using a Design Thinking framework to support and facilitate the transformation of higher education in the Arab world.

4. *Mind the gap? Investigating the curriculum labour market nexus in Tanzania* - Jones T. Kaleshu, Esther Towo and Mangasini Katundu (Moshi Cooperative University, Tanzania); Stefan Ouma (University of Frankfurt, Germany); Besrat Tesfaye (Södertörn University, Sweden)

This paper is the product of a joint project between scholars based at Moshi Cooperative University (Tanzania), Södertörn University (Sweden) and the University of Frankfurt (Germany) funded by the CODESRIA Diaspora Programme. The project evolved from relationships that Moshi Cooperative University had developed to the other universities prior to the project. The project has been developed against the backdrop that in Tanzania, the number of universities increased from two in 1985 to 37 Universities and 15 university colleges by mid-2015. At the same time, the national input of entrants in the labour markets is estimated to be between 800,000 and 1,000,000 per annum. This leads us to the general question of whether the rising number of students graduating from this system meets the requirements of the labour market. Preliminary evidence suggests otherwise and there is a recurrent discussion in Tanzania that graduates often require additional training in order to be able to perform tasks even in areas assumed to have been studied at the university. In short: there seems to be a skills gap between what the higher education system provides and what the labour market demands. Around the world, a proposed solution to close such gaps has been the development of competence-based curricula, which are said to have the potential to link the theoretical with the practical, thus matching the skills employers demand. The promotion of such curricula has by no means been uncontested around the world, with critics considering this a problematic neoliberalization or vocationalization of higher education.

5. *Graduate exit surveys: the potential of mobile phone technology to address issues of affordability and sustainability for universities in sub-Saharan Africa* – Nan Yeld (British Council)

Several of the major problems facing universities in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) arise from the lack of reliable and useful data on the basis of which to plan, monitor and review. Attempts to address this issue are widely believed to need ongoing and significant financial inputs, and this acts as a powerful deterrent to attempts to tackle the issue. It is therefore particularly interesting to note the progress of a small pilot project that

promises to challenge one at least of the constraining factors militating against SSA universities' ability to join the 'big data' game.

The project aims to achieve two aims: (i) to conduct an exemplar graduate exit survey, focusing in the first instance on graduating BPharm students from three major universities in the region (the Universities of Ghana, Lagos and the Western Cape); and at the same time (ii) to test the potential of mobile phones for data collection. The first aim has intrinsic interest, given significant curriculum developments in the field which impact on the role of pharmacists in national health systems, as well as the general lack of information on student choices and opportunities at the point of graduation. The second aim, however, has broader implications for universities across the region – indeed, in Lower Income Countries more generally. If it can be shown that data of this kind can be gathered cheaply and reliably, and that the quality of the data is not compromised, a major hurdle to establishing and maintaining student databases could be overcome.

Initial evidence in this regard is encouraging, with very high response rates of fully completed surveys being achieved. Analysis of the data is in progress and so it is not appropriate to make more indepth claims at this stage. Plans are underway to roll out the graduate exit survey project from the small, highly specialised field of Pharmacy, to a very large qualification such as the Bachelor of Commerce/Administration, and to a higher number of universities. This will allow the approach to be fully tested.

#### ***Higher Education and the Sustainable Development Goals (Jeffery Hall, 1.30-3pm)***

1. *Research in African universities to inform the Sustainable Development Goal for Education: Invisibility, gaps and future priorities* – Rafael Mitchell and Pauline Rose (both University of Cambridge)

African research suffers from a crisis of visibility, often overlooked in global and regional policy debates. To redress this historical neglect this paper offers insights from a cross-national study of education research in 48 countries in sub-Saharan Africa. African universities' research outputs are analysed to identify patterns in publication type, thematic foci and research methods. The extent to which universities are generating knowledge relevant to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) for Education is considered.

Located within a broader project to catalogue education research in sub-Saharan Africa and develop an online database, this paper focuses on the publications of university-based researchers. The dataset comprises social science research outputs relevant to education policy and practice published over the period 2011-2017, which was identified through a structured search of the Scopus academic database and process of expert consultation.

Building on previous national (da Silva & Oliveira 2017) and regional (MacLure 2006; Poirier et al. 2015) inventories of education research in Africa, this study is more comprehensive in scope, and the first to consider the extent to which research outputs are able to inform the SDG for Education. In exploring the degree of alignment, this study addresses the status and role of universities in relation to national, regional and

global priorities and identifies strengths and potential gaps within the African research evidence base. It is hoped that this study will contribute to future research planning and policy prioritisation which capitalises on African knowledge and expertise.

2. *Impacts and evaluation of the Climate Impacts Research Capacity and Leadership Enhancement (CIRCLE) Programme* – Verity Buckley (Association of Commonwealth Universities)

According to the IPCC, Africa is likely to emerge as the most vulnerable region to climate change by 2100. A better understanding of the consequent impact is critical to developing sustainable and cost-effective responses (IPCC, 2014). However, sufficient support and resources to build a solid research base in Africa are severely lacking. Between 1981 and 2009, African scientists contributed less than 2% of global climate change publications. In 2014, the ACU, funded by DFID, established the Climate Impacts Research Capacity and Leadership Enhancement (CIRCLE) programme to tackle this issue.

The programme has funded 100 early career African researchers, across multiple disciplines, to undertake research into the impact of climate change within Africa. It has also worked with their academic institutions to strengthen their support systems for researchers. The very early indicators emerging from the evaluation of this programme offer valuable insights into building research capacity at both the individual and institutional levels and the interdependence of these approaches. Data collected on academic publications, grant applications and conference attendance, when compared with a matched counterfactual group, point to higher levels of academic attainment as a result of the programme interventions. CIRCLE has also yielded interesting qualitative data on the sustainability and impact of research through initiatives to support stakeholder engagement and research uptake. The results highlight the importance of nurturing early career academics for the long-term development of university research, and how improved support can offset some of the disadvantages facing academics in the region.

3. *Supporting Higher Education Interventions to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals* – Andy Cherry and Ben Prasadam-Halls (both Association of Commonwealth Universities)

Higher education is central to achieving every one of the SDGs – through the research undertaken at higher education institutions and the skilled and globally aware graduates of tertiary education. The Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) is driven by its vision to support sustainable development by strengthening the value and role of higher education. In low and middle income countries, the ACU's focus is on building and strengthening the capacity of individuals and institutions, allowing higher education to play a greater societal role. As the higher education body for the Commonwealth, the ACU has the convening power as a practitioner in the field of higher education and the unique opportunity to test and scale higher education interventions in international development. The ACU's approach to capacity building and strengthening is four fold: 1) to initiate high-level conversations on contemporary higher education topics of relevance to the sector and to our membership; 2) to gather and communicate evidence of the needs and possible interventions or solutions (both practical and policy oriented);

3) to seek resources to build better evidence or to pilot interventions or solutions; 4) to assess and communicate impact, including informing policy makers and lobbying for change. This presentation will explore the ACU's approach to addressing the SDGs through capacity building and strengthening both individuals and higher education institutions in developing Commonwealth countries. It will draw on the ACU's experience managing projects on respect and tolerance, supporting early career researchers, research management, research uptake/impact as well as running major scholarship and mobility schemes.

4. *Lifelong Learning, Women and Community Leadership* (quickfire) – Joanne Coys (CEID, UCL Institute of Education, and Nelson Mandela University, South Africa)

This paper critically explores the relationship between lifelong learning for women in low income contexts and women's community leadership. It suggests that universities could play a more active role in facilitating women's community leadership by embedding learning around leadership, empowerment and social change into vocational training, for example with community health workers, teachers and social workers, usually based in local neighbourhoods. Empowering women in community based settings is usually focused on by NGOs, which work in informal settings with groups of women and often use creative and innovative methods, such as participatory video and participatory action research. However, there is a growing trend and opportunity for universities to offer training for individuals and groups they would not have been able to reach in the past. And yet, what are the broader impact of this type of training in terms of women's leadership in local settings and is there scope to take this engagement further than increasing vocational skills by learning from other approaches? This research builds upon the author's previous work on human rights education in community based settings and working with NGOs in South East Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa exploring and designing learning processes. Drawing on these learnings, this paper considers the possible implications of including leadership, empowerment and social change as specific elements of the women's learning experience and how formal lifelong training courses might contribute to women's community leadership.

5. *Global Education and the Global South: a critical engagement with the concept of Ubuntu* (quickfire) - Małgorzata Anielka Pieniazek (UCL Institute of Education)

This presentation will consider some of the power imbalances in the field of educational research and policy implementation around the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that have led to exclusion of voices and perspectives from the Global South (Soudien, 2015) and propose an alternative approach to addressing global challenges.

The paper will discuss a literature review around the sub-Saharan African concept of *Ubuntu* – the review forming part of a doctoral study on the contribution of discourses and educational perspectives from Kenyan and South African scholars to the post-2015 international debates.

*Ubuntu* can be understood as a knowledge system grounded in sub-Saharan African perspectives, traditions, and realities, that one the one hand emphasizes the aspect of shared humanity between people and the importance of obligations that human beings

have towards each other that lead to solidarity (Eze, 2017). Yet on the other, has been regarded with suspicion for insufficient consideration of aspects of the human subjectivity and autonomy.

Through some of values associated with *Ubuntu* – including its contradictions – there are resonances with human rights discourses, concepts of cosmopolitanism and global citizenship (Swanson, 2015). By engaging in a dialogue with various understandings and contestations of the term, I will argue that its potential value lies firstly in providing linkages between the concepts of global citizenship and cosmopolitanism (through addressing some of the tensions between universalism and non-dominant perspectives), secondly, in contributing to the debates about cognitive justice within academia and finally, by providing a ground for discussions about (re)designing global policies which can draw from locally relevant values and knowledge systems.

#### ***Higher education and conflict (Drama Studio, 1.30-3pm)***

1. *Tertiary Education for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon: Overcoming the challenges through collaboration* – Tejendra Pherali (CEID, UCL Institute of Education) and Mai Abu Moghli (RELIEF Centre, UCL Institute of Education)

In Lebanon, 95% of refugees from Syria aged 15-24 are not enrolled in secondary or tertiary education (El-Ghali et al 2017). Whilst there are a number of initiatives to improve access to primary education, 48% of 6-14 year-old refugee children are still out of school, indicating a bleak picture of tertiary education for them. Some of the key barriers to higher education include the lack of valid evidence of previous qualifications, the need for renewed residency permit or registration with UNHCR, high unemployment and inability to afford high university fees and restricted mobility for young refugees from Syria. Moreover, some private institutions expressed reluctance to accept refugees from Syria for fear that they would adversely affect their educational outcomes and institutional reputation (Shuyab et al 2014) reflecting a general ‘sense of hostility towards Syrians’ (King 2014).

In this paper, we argue that barriers to higher education for young people from Syria contribute not only to their systemic marginalization in Lebanon but also jeopardise their potential to rebuild post-war Syria when the conflict ends and when/ if they choose to return home. While there are some innovative models of higher education learning for those displaced from Syria (e.g. online degrees, MOOCs, scholarships, international degrees etc.), their accessibility and availability is limited and their overall contribution to the scale of need is negligible. Hence, we argue that there is a need for a multi-stakeholder collaboration between universities, Lebanese government, refugees, civil society organisations and international community to find solutions within the mainstream university system in Lebanon in which the costs could be shared through partnerships, admission criteria could be flexible and access is better regulated to benefit the refugee youth.

2. *The role of higher education in peacebuilding in Nepal* – Ganesh Khadka (UCL Institute of Education)

While there is a plethora of research into the role of education in conflict-affected context, the higher education sector has generally received much less attention in educational debate within post-war governments. This research aims to explore and highlight the role of higher education in peacebuilding in post-conflict Nepal. In doing so, it attempts to analyse socio-economic and political dimensions of higher education in Nepal, relationships between higher education and violent conflict, and how Nepalese higher education could contribute to post conflict transition and sustainable peacebuilding in Nepal.

Higher education is perceived to be a stabilizing or securitizing factor by providing a positive alternative to youth through opportunities to gain knowledge, skills and qualifications to lead a stable life. It is argued that equitable access to higher levels of learning addresses the problems of marginalization and economic exclusion of ethnic minorities and indigenous populations who challenge stability (Milton and Barakat, 2016). In Nepal, the onset of armed rebellion by Maoists is attributed to unequal access of diverse social groups to political and economic domains through the exclusionary nature of higher education system (Bhatta et al, 2008). In the context where access to higher education is minimal; growing privatization of higher education that excludes socio-economically underprivileged groups; and horizontal inequalities across castes, gender and geographies often create, sustain and undermine equitable access to higher education. In this paper, I will argue that post-conflict reconstruction should adopt a 'conflict-sensitive' approach to address the structural issues of educational inequity, social exclusion, and political hegemony of the privileged social groups (Pherali, 2012).

3. *Higher education, conflict and the public sphere: A history of the National University in Lebanon* – Helen Murray (University of Sussex)

This paper is about the role of higher education in societies affected by conflict, a topic that has, until recently, been under-researched and largely ignored by global education policies. My case study is the Lebanese University, which is the only public university in Lebanon and hosts almost half the total student population. As a result of the physical and political fragmentation of the university during the civil war (1975-1990) and the subsequent marketisation of the higher education sector in Lebanon, the future of the university as a national institution has been called into question. The university remains divided, but is also the most socially diverse university in the country, and one of the last major public institutions in Lebanon. The emerging international humanitarian agenda for higher education, partly precipitated by the scale of the Syrian refugee crisis in the Middle East, has largely focused on refugee access to higher education. From this perspective, the role of universities as societal institutions still tends to be overlooked. Drawing on both the case study and a wider theoretical discussion of universities and the public sphere, the paper argues that universities can play a vital role in building and rebuilding public spheres that are fractured by conflict, but that this potential may be blocked by a range of local-global factors. The paper concludes that questions of autonomy and public space are central to the flourishing of universities in any society, and are particularly acute in contexts affected by conflict.

4. *Participatory approaches to MOOC co-design in Lebanon* (quickfire) – Eileen Kennedy and Diana Laurillard (both UCL Institute of Education)

One of the major global challenges facing equitable access to higher education is the crisis of mass displacement. UNHCR estimates that 90-110,000 young Syrian refugees in the Middle East and North Africa are currently qualified for University, but lack opportunities or hope of getting their qualifications, and that <1% of refugees globally have access to higher education. Increasing access to higher education can help increase access to education at all levels, particularly through the education of teachers and other professionals, since in times of crisis trained teachers are in high demand. MOOCs or Massive Open Online Courses offer a way of coping with problems of access by scaling up virtual engagement with higher education whilst removing the barrier of fees. However, for MOOCs to be successful in this context of mass displacement, both the learning experience they provide and the process of producing them need to be re-envisioned. The typical MOOC participant is employed, highly educated with access to reliable broadband internet (Dillahunt, Wang, & Teasley, 2014), far removed from the experience of most refugees. In addition, the origin of MOOCs in the Global North creates barriers to engagement including language and culture (Liyanagunawardena, Williams, & Adams, 2013; Sharma, 2015). This paper will report on the theoretical framing and early progress of a programme of MOOC development within the RELIEF Centre which aims to use a participatory co-design methodology to produce teacher professional development MOOCs with teachers and teacher educators in Lebanon.

5. *Experiences of Access to Higher Education for Gazan Refugee Youth in Jordan: Exploring Perceptions, Pathways, and Issues* (quickfire) – Dina Batshon (UCL Institute of Education)

This research explores the experiences of access to higher education for Gazan refugee youth in Jordan. In spite of higher education moving closer to being universal in Jordan, thousands of Gazan youth are today still unable to access opportunities as easily as their peers. Gazan refugees do not have a Jordanian citizenship, and are viewed as foreign residents, meaning that when applying for public universities they are treated as ‘international’ students, having to pay much higher fees in comparison to Jordanian peers and to other Palestinian refugees in Jordan.

This research is a qualitative research, and is interpretivist and critical in its epistemology. The theoretical framework this research is built around is complexity. One-to-one semi-structured interviews were undertaken with six male and female Gazan refugee youth in their twenties, all of which managed to access higher education, here defined to be a first degree at university.

The research presents the different pathways of access available to Gazan refugees and suggests that these pathways are limited, not accessible or known to all, and do not fit the needs of all Gazan youth. Furthermore, the findings highlight 2 major issues, that a. access to higher education both affects and is affected by Gazans legal status, socio-economic status, opportunities for work, and more, and b. access to higher education is highly affected by communication and the dissemination of information. Findings argue that Gazan youth face inequity, social injustice, and systematic violence with regards to their experiences of access to higher education in Jordan.

### ***Equality of experience and outcomes in South Africa (Committee Room 1, 1.30-3pm)***

1. *Going to university: The influence of higher education on the lives of young South Africans* - Jenni Case (Virginia Tech, USA & University of Cape Town, South Africa); Delia Marshall, (University of the Western Cape, South Africa); Sioux McKenna (Rhodes University, South Africa); Disa Mogashana (University of Cape Town, South Africa)

Currently there is renewed scholarly work especially around the concept of higher education and the ‘public good’, in times where the policy discourse in many parts of the world is informed by a position emphasising the individual economic value of higher education. These debates are informed by macro data on higher education participation and employment patterns. However, little is known at a detailed level of how young people are currently making use of their higher education experiences in crafting their life courses, especially in developing countries of the South. This study draws on close-up interviews with 73 young people who had started studies in either a BA or BSc programme some six years before at one of three South African universities. Key findings of the study centre on how individuals grapple with their options in order to determine courses of action. The resources of the family and community are shown to be important in supporting young people in their early life trajectories, not only in material support and access to information and networks, but also in supporting the individual in testing out options, and in reframing plans when initial ideas do not work out as intended.

The university also has a particular role in the distinctive experience it provides to young people, with a space that needs to be safe enough to explore, but also sufficiently engaging to provide the necessary challenges that are centrally formative for these young graduates who go out into the world with an emerging sense of purpose and responsibility.

2. *Low income rural and township youth: which capabilities matter for their inclusive higher education learning outcomes?* – Melanie Walker and Merridy Wilson-Strydom (both University of the Free State, South Africa)

We draw on work undertaken in the first two years of the four-year mixed methods longitudinal *Miratho* research project funded by the ESRC-DFID. The focus is on inclusive higher education learning outcomes for low income youth in South Africa. The case is made for understanding learning outcomes as being capabilities-based and hence related to a good life that students have reason to value and which is meaningful for them. The project’s aim is to investigate the multi-dimensional factors shaping students’ effective opportunities to access higher education, participate, and move into work and to do this in ways which enhances well-being and agency. For this paper, we draw on a set of rich life-history interviews with 65 second-year university students from five diverse universities in Limpopo, Gauteng and the Free State. We consider three domains that intersect with personal and social conversion factors: material (income), subjective (personal motivation and agency), and opportunity structures all working together in enabling or constraining well-being. In the interviews the students discuss choosing higher education, and the part played by their school and teachers, friends, parents, community, a youth-led NGO the Thusanani Foundation, and the university they now attend. They also discuss how they were able to access university having made their

choice, and aspirations for their university studies and their lives and careers beyond university. We outline what – at this stage – is a key finding from the interview data: two core capabilities which matter in making choices to access university and to succeed in programmes of study.

3. *'You have to change, the curriculum stays the same': South African rural students' experiences of higher education* – Sheila Trahar, Sue Timmis & Lisa Lucas (all University of Bristol)

Our paper shares preliminary findings from our collaborative project, *Southern African Rurality in Higher Education* (SARiHE) (ESRC/Newton/NRF funded), involving South African and UK partners. Framed within a sociocultural perspective, the research investigates how rural students negotiate the transition to university and how prior cultural and educational experiences influence their higher education trajectories. We examine practices shaping their approaches to learning including in relation to language and digital technologies. Crucially, we foreground the challenges for rural students facing curricula imbued with colonialism, using Connell's (2017) notion of 'curricular justice'.

Rurality is a complex category and the study employs a participatory methodology, a 'decolonising' mode (Bozalek and Biersteker, 2011), avoiding a deficit positioning of under-represented students. Fieldwork is being conducted at the Universities of Johannesburg, Rhodes and Fort Hare with undergraduates from rural backgrounds as co-researchers (Phase 1). Senior university leaders and academics are participating in interviews and focus groups (Phase 2). In this paper, we share Phase 1 findings indicating the importance of rural life and of school and church in orienting students towards higher education. We show how institutional cultures embodied in language, technologies, pedagogies and staff/student relationships influence students' sense of belonging and academic progress. Data illustrate the importance attributed by students to rethinking curricula to reflect their experiences and indigenous knowledge systems, curricula that they do not currently experience. We focus therefore on the importance of curricular justice to address the challenge within the words of one co-researcher: 'You have to change, the curriculum stays the same'.

4. *Engaging Social Realism with the Call for Decolonising the Curriculum in South Africa* (quickfire) – Lerato Posholi (University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa)

The student protests of 2015/16, under the movements of #FeesMustFall and #RhodesMustFall, brought about a renewed interest in the debate about the question 'what should we teach?' through their call for decolonising the university curriculum. In this project, I am interested in looking at how social realism, as an approach to curriculum, could engage with this call for decolonising the curriculum. Social realism is a prevalent approach to curriculum globally, and it has shaped and influenced curriculum scholarship and policy in South Africa.

According to social realists, the biggest social justice issue in curriculum is access to what they term 'powerful knowledge'. I argue that what the call for decolonising the curriculum highlights is that issues of curriculum justice in South African higher

education are broader and deeper than this. The decolonising movement raises questions about whose knowledge, and why, is selected for the curriculum. In this way it reiterates the problem of the influence of power on knowledge selection for the curriculum, and forces us to think about the curriculum and knowledge question in a way that considers the socio-political, epistemic and ethical issues connected with the question. I show that engaging the two positions - social realism and the call for decolonising the curriculum - allows for an interesting further exploration of the distinction drawn by social realists between 'powerful knowledge' and 'knowledge of the powerful', and that this could be an enriching exercise for social realist thought, and the scholarship on knowledge and curriculum more broadly.

5. *Continuing capabilities dilemmas for sociology undergraduate students in South Africa* (quickfire) – Bothwell Manyonga (University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa)

This paper examines how the sociology curriculum and pedagogy interact to enhance or constrain students' capabilities and more broadly, human development. This paper explores the dilemmas that sociology undergraduate students face as a result of the teaching and learning that they experience. Specifically, the focus centres on how curriculum knowledge acquired by undergraduate sociology students contributes to enhancing their capabilities to live and to act in society. The context is where some university graduates experience a persistent advantage in the labour market, yet sociology undergraduate students struggle with occupation identity and to situate themselves in the job market. Drawing from the principles of capabilities approach of Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum, the paper argues that curriculum ought to offer students real opportunities, expanding choices for individuals to do and be what they have reason to value.

The paper presents findings from qualitative data collected from undergraduate sociology students at two South African universities. It suggests grounds for (re)thinking policy orientations to sociology curriculum developers, particularly on how the capabilities approach and the human capital theory can complement each other in curriculum development and fostering skills for life, work, and society. The results, which suggests a different way of thinking and conceptualising curricula in human development terms with more emphasis on outcomes that contribute to both economic advancement and human well-being, casts light on how university curricula and indeed education might be transformed. It also casts light on how university curricula and indeed education might be transformed in the twenty-first century.

***Issues of accessibility (Room 822, 1.30-3pm)***

1. *Gendering access to higher education in Haryana, India: a comparative case study of two government colleges* – Emily Henderson and Anjali Thomas (University of Warwick)

The Indian higher education system incorporates a plethora of institution types, differentiated primarily by funding and governance (Tierney and Sabharwal, 2016). This paper focuses on government colleges, which are state-funded institutions offering undergraduate education, often within a relatively contained catchment area. These colleges provide access to higher education for a relatively underprivileged population, particularly outside of metropolitan areas. This paper presents a comparative case study

of two government colleges in Haryana, a North Indian state which is known for its low sex-ratio and prevalence of female foeticide, and caste-based violence (WASVSR, 2014). The paper is based on preliminary research conducted within a five-year study of gender and educational success in Haryana. The colleges were selected because of their contrasting location, one within the National Capital Region (the area surrounding Delhi), one within a rural district. The case studies are comprised of documents and interviews about the colleges, a questionnaire survey with students on their educational profiles and trajectories, and focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews with students. Within a context of relatively limited access to higher education, the analysis presented in the paper addresses how gender and other intersecting inequalities mediate students' experiences of enrolling in higher education. Gender is understood as a construct whose meaning can be collaboratively established with participants in higher education research (Henderson, forthcoming). The paper presents initial findings on the students' understandings of how access to higher education is gendered, and considers how this gender construct will inform the subsequent stages of the research project.

2. *Higher Education for Whom?: A Spectre in Policy and Human Rights Discourse?* - Sahar D. Sattarzadeh (University of the Free State, South Africa)

In UNESCO's World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century: Vision & Action it is emphasized that access to higher education for disadvantaged groups "must be actively facilitated, since these groups as collectivities and as individuals may have both experience and talent that can be of great value for the development of societies and nations." Underrepresented groups across the globe, including minorities and indigenous peoples, traditionally endure the most unequal, inequitable, low quality educational opportunities. Discourses regarding this reality at the tertiary level is often overlooked and nearly non-existent, however. This dissertation, therefore, guided by an interdisciplinary theoretical framework relevant to higher education, international human rights law, and decolonial theory, highlights the cases of three specific minority and/or indigenous populations— Afro-Brazilians in Brazil, Bahá'ís in Iran, Blacks in South Africa, and Māori in New Zealand.

This study is guided by two questions: 1) How are indigenous peoples and minorities' rights to higher education accounted for in international instruments and national laws and policies?; and 2) How do international and national-level discourses compare regarding equal and equitable access to quality higher education for these underrepresented groups? To answer these questions, a mutually-reinforcing critical discourse analysis and interpretive policy analysis approach was applied to study texts specific to minority groups and indigenous peoples' access to "equal" and "equitable" higher education that meets "quality" standards. The language and culture of legislative and policy measures at the national level (Brazil, Iran, New Zealand, and South Africa) are compared to international human rights instruments ("binding" and "non-binding") adopted by entities within the United Nations System. State and international texts selected are specifically relevant to minority groups, indigenous peoples, and the right to education and higher education.

Interestingly, there are some parallels between national and international regulations and policies, and in other instances, there are clear-cut contradictions, and much has to do with evident weaknesses and/or strengths across comparisons. The sociocultural, historical, economic, and political contexts of the three countries are also reflected in the language and content of their legislative measures and policies as well as in the states' attitudes towards standards of education and underrepresented groups in international law.

3. *Are African Students Entering Higher Education in Africa in any way 'Poor'; and how does their 'class' distribution reflect that of the UK fifty-five, fifteen years ago and now* (Roy Carr-Hill, CEID Institute of Education)

In sub-Saharan Africa, in spite of policy initiatives for widening participation in higher education, men from the top socio-economic backgrounds are the most likely to have completed higher education. But the main quantitative evidence used has been based on DHS surveys recording the self-reported cumulative experience of educational attainment among different age groups. In order to see what has really happened we need observational data on entrants to higher education.

Evaluation of a pan-African post-graduate higher education drew on evidence from their monitoring systems. The income data is difficult to interpret because of poor groupings. Taking a very loose interpretation of a poor household - where the graduate's parents had only completed primary education (20-25 years ago a significant fraction of the appropriately aged population would not have been at school at all), are renting (but have somewhere to live) and don't own any land then 1% are poor in any cohort. In contrast, their parents were much more likely to have completed tertiary education in 1990.

We compare these 'class' breakdowns with the situation in the UK fifty-five, fifteen years ago and now. Robbins (1963) reported that children from the professional classes were 33 times more likely than those from a semi-skilled or unskilled background to be attending University; in 2002, the ratio had decreased to 10 times (Gayle, 2002); and by 2015 to about 3 times (BIS, 2015). The current situation in this programme is at the Robbins level!

4. *Competencies and Skills for Access to Higher Education. Gaps between schools and students' perspectives* – Francisco Durán del Fierro and Jenny Lavados (both University of Chile)

Nowadays, the Chilean Admission system for higher education appears to be segmented. On the one hand, there are subgroups of universities that use the Admission System (UAS), which applies standardized tests. On the other hand, there are other universities and VET centres that do not apply any selection process. It is important to add that the latter institutions mainly attend students from low-income families.

The Admission System plays a vital role in the access to the higher education system because it regulates the students' opportunities to enter the most prestigious universities in the system. However, the test used is not adequate because it enlarges the social inequities already observed in primary and secondary school education outcomes. Even when the use of standardized tests seems to offer the same opportunity to all the students' that are taking them, they rather perpetuate the inequities started at

elementary school level. In addition, the students of the vocational track take tests including items about curricular content that is not part of their learning programs. This phenomenon implies challenges for the new access system intended to be more democratic and inclusive than the actual one.

In this context, DEMRE has been developing assessment instruments focused on assessing basic competencies in language, mathematics, sciences and cross-curricular skills identified as relevant for success in tertiary education. Therefore, the purpose of the research is to improve equity in terms of access and outcomes. Particularly, one of its objectives is to reduce the outcomes gap between students from scientific and humanistic schools and those from technical schools, in order to ensure equal opportunities.

After the application of these new tests in a sample of 2.500 students, the findings of this study suggest that even though the outcomes gap remains to exist, it has been reduced, specifically between the two types of school previously mentioned. However, what the evidence does not show is the specific reasons for this reduction. Furthermore, from the student's perspective, these tests could in fact create new forms of social segmentation.

#### ***Research partnerships (Room 604, 1.30-3pm)***

1. *Supporting PhD capacity building in 6 Sub Saharan African countries* – Michael Peak (British Council)

The higher education sector across Africa is expanding rapidly, but despite this, Africa has the lowest research productivity compared to other world regions. Combined with the growing social needs within the region, the low research productivity and expansion of the HE sector have several implications – there is greater responsibility of the HE sector, but serious capacity deficits for teaching and research, and a risk of low quality programmes, low levels of innovation and weak links with industry. A greater focus is needed on developing PhD capacity.

The British Council and DAAD worked together to initiate an investigation into the state of PhD capacity in universities across six countries in Sub Saharan Africa. Through partnering with a pan-African network of academic researchers, the study involved desk research; semi structured interviews with stakeholders at national and institutional level; and surveys of PhD candidates, PhD graduates and PhD supervisors.

Although in many cases national strategies are in place, and targets have been set to encourage and incentivise institutions to produce more PhD graduates and to ensure more staff have PhDs, further steps can be taken to support institutions with these aims, and some of this support can be provided through bilateral and multilateral collaborative research programmes.

2. *Negotiating transnational science: East African doctoral journeys beyond 'capacity building'* (quickfire) – David Mills (University of Oxford)

What does it take to forge a research career in Africa today? This quickfire presentation sets out my current work, developing ethnographic portraits of young Kenyan and Ugandan scientists on their doctoral and postdoctoral journeys. Negotiating multiple international supervisory relationships, funder expectations and institutional guidelines, these scholars embody research capacities that defy global research imaginaries of deficit. Through an exploration of their educational biographies I argue for alternative understandings of research 'capacity building' that start from individual scholarly capabilities and vitalities.

3. *Co-producing knowledge and building capacity in Knowledge in Action for Urban Equalities* - Adriana Allen and Julia Wesely (The Bartlett Development Planning Unit, UCL)

Planning education and professional praxis are fundamental drivers to either reproduce or disrupt urban inequality. The maldistribution and quantitative and qualitative deficits of planners across the Global South, pedagogies and tools that are inadequate to address contemporary challenges, and colonial curricula are considered key obstacles for pathways towards urban equality. The re-invention of planning education and trans-local learning are therefore instrumental to counter-act outdated practices and contest the political co-option of planning as a governance mechanism. Based on a preliminary scoping study of planning in higher education institutions across Africa, Asia and Latin America, the presentation aims to stimulate a debate: How can planning education become instrumental in building the capacity of urban planners and planning institutions to work within a networked field of governance to challenge urban inequality and foster trans-local learning at scale?

4. *Partnering with higher education institutions for social and environmental justice in the global South: lessons from the Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre* - Alexandre Apsan Frediani and Andrea Rigon (The Bartlett Development Planning Unit, UCL)

In the context of the £1.5 billion aid money that the UK government is now channelling through UK research institutions, this paper explores the importance of building local research institutions and capacity in order to establish equitable research partnerships that respond to local concerns. It will also explore the role of these institutions in brokering local partnerships for urban justice with other actors. Building on the case of the Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre set up by UCL and Njala University in Sierra Leone, the paper will discuss the potential of strategic global research partnerships and the challenges of unequal power dynamics in knowledge co-production.

5. *Nesting capacities for knowledge generation on economic and climate justice on HE institutions in the South* (quickfire) – Ibrahim Oanda (CODESRIA)

How would partnerships better support HE institutions in the South build knowledge generation capacities that promote economic and climate justice in ways that contribute to stemming environmental conflicts and the social and human dynamics of climate change?