

## **IDS Students attend June mentoring session at the African Leadership Centre**

IDS first year students joined the current ALC Fellows for the annual June mentoring sessions held at the African leadership Centre (ALC) office from the 6<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> June, 2015. The sessions are designed to enable ALC Fellows return to the Centre in Nairobi after 9 months of uninterrupted study at King's College London. This year, the Centre welcomed 10 Fellows drawn from five different African countries including Ethiopia, Cameroon, Nigeria, Uganda and Kenya. The mentoring sessions covered a range of topics touching on leadership and development. They included sessions on reading, writing and plagiarism, higher education in Africa, the quest for peace and security in Africa, politics of knowledge production, and the nexus between academic work and policy uptake. The sessions were framed from the perspective of building a new epistemic community and examined the challenges of this in relation peacebuilding as a terrain of study where leadership and development are critical. Other sessions also touched on the dilemma of publishing in African scholarship. The IDS students and ALC Fellows were also mentored on the idea of mentoring and on nurturing the next generation of African academics and policy practitioners. Finally, in addition to the mentoring sessions, the Fellows and IDS students presented initial concept papers for their MSc and MA proposals. The process enabled them to critic each other's work and get feedback from ALC Faculty at the Centre.

IDS students found the experience informative and beneficial. They particularly appreciated the input they got on their various research proposals as they are at their early stages of conceptualizing their proposals. Generally, the students gained insights on academic writing especially by learning from experiences of senior academics like Prof. Funmi Olonisakin, Prof. Charles Abiodun Alao, Dr. Awino Akech, Dr. Mutuma Ruteere and Dr. Wandia Njoya and Dr. Mshai Mwangola, to name but the few.

Meanwhile, King's College London has offered opportunities for two students from the University of Nairobi to join King's summer program in London from 27<sup>th</sup> July to 14<sup>th</sup> August 2015. Flaciah Munyua of IDS and Jasper Odhiambo Lubeto of the Law School were nominated to this summer course.