



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

IDS@50 Conference: Call for Papers **Rethinking Development and Development Studies in the Post-2015 Era**

The Institute for Development Studies (IDS), University of Nairobi was established in 1965 as part of the then University of East Africa. Since its inception, IDS has carried out research on issues of development concern to Kenya and Africa, collaborating with partners globally to produce knowledge and to influence policy and practice. Several objectives have guided the conduct of research at the IDS: policy relevance, need to generate interdisciplinary knowledge, desire to establish collaborative networks, demand for academic publications and the need to produce teaching materials. IDS invites papers for a conference to mark its 50th Anniversary from November 18th to 21st 2015 at the University of Nairobi. The theme of the conference will be *Rethinking Development and Development Studies in the Post-2015 Era*.

The theme of the conference is in line with the core mandate of the Institute for the last fifty years which has focused on the study of development from a people-centred perspective. Since its inception, the Institute has addressed itself to a number of development issues.

Rethinking Development and Development Studies in the Post-2015 Era is an apt theme for the 50th anniversary celebration conference. This is because of a convergence of local, regional, and international developments that speak directly to the need to rethink development. Among some of the developments are transformations at the local Kenyan level involving a new constitutional framework that has restructured governance providing for a devolved mechanism for development. At the regional level, there is a greater push for regional mechanisms for sustained development while internationally, there are various efforts designed to take stock of the post-MDG era that aim to define a new development framework to replace MDGs. Over the last year, many international organizations reviewed the MGDs and provided a prospective analysis of the post-2015 development agenda. A notion of Sustainable Development Goals has been proposed and is being debated within the UN framework with a view to adopting it as the post-2015 development agenda. There is a consensus that though remarkable progress was achieved under the regime of MDGs, some targets remain elusive. The articulation of the SDG is, in large measure, designed to pursue further these elusive targets. The process of review and analysis has however largely been high-level and

top-down and it is unclear how much it has gained from reflections of institutions of higher learning in Africa, especially those that engage everyday with development studies from a long term perspective and whose thinking must be a necessary guide to the post-2015 development agenda.

IDS proposes to use the 50th Anniversary celebration as an entry point into discussions of the post-MDG development thinking. The aim is to initiate reflection on the nature of development thinking to inform the new era. The conference is deliberately set to take advantage of the convergence of intellectual and policy initiatives around the post-2015 development debates to review its trajectory and discuss new or different ways of thinking about development in Africa. Not only will the conference aspire to provide a prospective look into post-2015 development thinking, it will do this while also reflecting on the history of IDS, the idea of development it has articulated and to find a pathway for an intellectual agenda for IDS. The conference will be organized around five thematic areas.

- a) Development thinking and practice: a retrospective and prospective look;
 - i. The nature of development thinking past and present
 - ii. The prospect for a more inclusive development practice
 - iii. Higher Education and Development
- b) Democracy and development dilemmas;
 - i. Democratisation Process: Challenges and Prospects
 - ii. Devolved Governance and Development
- c) Mobility, Access and Urbanisation processes in Africa;
- d) Peacebuilding in Africa: towards a new architecture;
- e) Africa's changing economies and demography
 - i. Youth and Unemployment
 - ii. Gender and Development
 - iii. Innovation and Development
 - iv. Informal sector and Development
 - v. Climate Change and Environment
 - vi. Data revolution and Development

The Institute invites abstracts for papers on any one of the themes identified above. Abstract should not exceed 500 words. Applicants are required to identify very clearly the thematic area in which the abstract fits. The deadline for submission of abstracts is 15th August 2015. Those selected to develop full paper proposals will be notified by **31st August 2015**. Full papers should be received by 9th October 2015 on time for presentation at the conference. The papers will be peer reviewed and those selected will be published in a volume commemorating the 50th anniversary.

All communications and submission should be sent to ids50conference@uonbi.ac.ke and cc to ids50conference@gmail.com