

Prof McCormick and Dr Kamau Participate in the UNU-WIDER Conference in Helsinki

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Prof Dorothy McCormick and Dr Paul Kamau presented papers during the UNU-WIDER Conference, "Learning to Compete: Industrial Development and Policy in Africa", in Helsinki, Finland.

The Research Professor and Senior Research Fellow, respectively, at the Institute for Development Studies are also coordinators of the African Clothing and Footwear Research Network (ACFRN). The 24-25 June 2013 conference featured a mix of plenary speakers, and panels, sessions based on invited papers and those submitted through the call for papers.

Prof McCormick and Dr Kamau responded to the United Nations University-World Institute for Development and Economic Research (UNU-WIDER) call for papers by submitting two separate abstracts based on the just concluded ACFRN research project: "Chinese Ascendancy in the Global Clothing Industry". Prof McCormick's paper during the conference is entitled

Breaking-in: Can Africa Enter Global Marketsø It examines how sub-Sahara African countries have fared in the context of increased competition from China in the global clothing industry.

The paper traces the genesis of the challenge in apparel export trade to the rapid rise of China as a competitor in many of the same markets. It rose from a relatively small player accounting for 4 percent of world clothing imports in 1980 to a major force in world clothing trade.

Dr Kamauø's paper is on Industrialisation and Skills theme. It examines how availability of technical skills in the Kenya clothing industry has affected its competitiveness in the global market. The research project from which these two papers are drawn was funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).