

# The Africa Institute Newsletter

**W**elcome to the inaugural issue of the Africa Institute Newsletter. As a way to keep our members connected and informed, we want to provide you with an update on what has been happening with the Africa Institute this past Fall and a look forward to the coming months.

As part of our efforts to build our community, we plan to distribute multiple newsletters this year. If you want to share your events and updates with fellow Africa Institute members via social media, website or newsletter, feel free to email us at [africain@uwo.ca](mailto:africain@uwo.ca).

## Strategic Renewal: We want to hear from you!

Over the past six years, the Africa Institute has done some great work – from hosting a summit day with African leaders in 2012, to setting up the Global Health Systems in Africa program in 2015. However, we don't want to rest on our laurels, and so a key task for this year is to renew our strategy.

We want to ensure we're providing as much value as possible to faculty, students, and other institute members. To this end, we solicited input from across the University, the core of which involved interviews with 18 faculty members from 10 faculties and departments: Schulich, FIMS, Geography, English, French, Anthropology, Earth Science, Women's Studies & History, Education, and Health Sciences.

Coming out of these conversations, members were clear that although the Institute has done some great things, there is much more we can do to add value and push forward research in and on Africa. So, to push forward the strategic renewal, the Africa Institute has a number of planned events, starting with a strategy retreat in December, working through the internal draft release of our strategy for the next five years, and building to an official launch of our strategy by the summer of 2018.

Throughout all of this, we want to hear from you! We're here to serve our members, and to truly do this, we need to know what you want! Do you need help in: knowledge translation, networking with potential research partners, community building focused on a specific country, help writing grants, or disseminating your research? Or, do you need something else? Let us know! We want the Institute to add value to your work!

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## Community Activities

### Africa-Western Collaboration Day



Africa-Western Collaboration Day, held on November 15, was a huge success, with over 150 people in attendance throughout the evening. Thank you to our keynote speaker Morten Jerven for his talk "Africa: Why Economists Get it Wrong". A huge thank you also goes out to all of the Western and community organizations involved including Western Heads East, Women's Advocacy Network, Global Health Systems Program, African Canadian Federation of London & Area, African Students Association, a local chapter of the Stephen Lewis Foundation – Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign and The Fritter Shop. We cannot wait for next year!



### Film Screening and Welcome Reception for Graduate Students



The Africa Institute welcomed new graduate students with a reception and a film screening of "The Promised Land", a one-hour feature film. The film was produced by Yoba for Life and Dr. Gregor Reid as part of a "Fermented Food for Life" project which has inspired men and women in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania to produce nutritious probiotic yogurt for their communities. In doing so these men and women are establishing small social enterprises around healthy food.

### Induction of 11 Africa Institute Fellows

After soliciting feedback from The Africa Institute and Western University community, we were delighted to confer eleven individuals with the award of Fellow of the Africa Institute in recognition of their substantial contributions to the success of the Institute since its inception.



Congratulations to our honorees: Dr. Eric Arts, Professeur Henri Boyi, Dr. David Cechetto, Dr. Irena Creed, Bob Gough, Dr. Nicole Haggerty, Dr. Isaac Luginaah, Dr. Joanna Quinn, Dr. Gregor Reid, Dr. Charles Trick and Dr. Ernest Yanful.



## Community Activities

### Africa Institute Graduate Student Committee



As part of a new community engagement initiative, we have recently formed the Africa Institute Graduate Student Committee. With students from a diverse number of faculties and programs, this committee will give graduate students an opportunity to plan events and projects that are specific to their needs. After a few meetings, this committee already has several ideas in the works. From starting a blog and podcast competition to hosting a seminar series and creating an alumni network, these students are full of fresh ideas. If you are interested in joining the Africa Institute Graduate Student Committee, please contact the co-leaders of the committee, Siera Vercillo ([svercill@uwo.ca](mailto:svercill@uwo.ca)) or Uche Ikenyei ([uikenyei@uwo.ca](mailto:uikenyei@uwo.ca)).

### Upcoming Events

December 13 - AI Advisory Board Strategic Planning Retreat

December 15 - Guest Speaker Dr. Alex Ezeh, Global Health Conversation Series, 11:15 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. (details to TBD)

### Meet our AI Graduate Student Committee Co-Leaders

#### Siera Vercillo

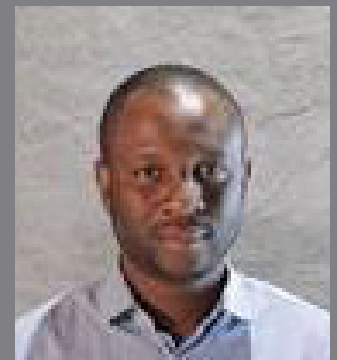


Siera Vercillo is a PhD Candidate and Lecturer in the Geography Department at Western University and a Queen Elizabeth II Scholar with the Africa Institute. Her research interests include gender, food security, agriculture,

development and political-ecology in sub-Saharan Africa and her dissertation research is focused in northern Ghana. She has worked in agriculture development practice for a number of years across West Africa focused on extension and farming group development. Follow her [blog here](#) and contact her at [svercill@uwo.ca](mailto:svercill@uwo.ca).

#### Uche Ikenyei

Uche Ikenyei is a first year PhD student in the Health Information Science (HIS) department of Western University. He has over 12 years experience working as a monitoring and evaluation



(M&E) expert in HIV and AIDs, maternal and child health, malaria, family planning and reproductive health development assistance programs in Nigeria. His last place of work was with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

## Visiting Researchers

The Africa Institute is pleased to host three incoming Visiting Researchers in 2018. Edwin Kipchirchir Kimitei and Ebelechukwu Gloria Igwe, have been awarded the Queen Elizabeth (II) Diamond Jubilee scholarship and Raymond Elikplim Kofinti, has been awarded The Africa Institute Visiting Research Scholar Fund. We look forward to welcoming and collaborating with these researchers during their six-month visits.



### **Raymond Elikplim Kofinti** **Africa Institute Visiting Research Fund Scholar**

**Home Institution:** Department of Economics, University of Cape Coast, Ghana  
**Program:** PhD in Economics  
**Western Supervisor:** Professor Isaac Luginaah  
**Western Host:** Department of Geography  
**Expected Arrival:** February 2018  
**Research Interests:** Development Economics with emphasis on applied micro-econometrics and mathematical techniques in analyzing household poverty, welfare inequalities and educational outcomes of women and children in developing countries.



### **Edwin Kipchirchir Kimitei** **Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Scholar**

**Home Institution:** School of Business and Economics (Marketing and Logistics Department), Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya  
**Program:** Doctor of Philosophy in Business Management  
**Western Supervisor:** Dr. Nicole Haggerty  
**Western Host:** Ivey Business School  
**Expected Arrival:** February 2018  
**Research Interests:** The effect of logistic capability, supply chain linkages and supply chain innovativeness on the performance of manufacturing firms in Kenya.



### **Ebelechukwu Gloria Igwe** **Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Scholar**

**Home Institution:** Africa Regional Centre for Information Science (ARCIS), University of Ibadan, Nigeria.  
**Program:** PhD in Information Science  
**Western Supervisor:** Professor Isola Ajiferuke  
**Western Host:** Faculty of Information & Media Studies  
**Expected Arrival:** May 2018  
**Research Interests:** Online Information Exchange Behaviours on Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) among Healthcare Practitioners in Online Social Networks