

# Western



# The Africa Institute

## Upcoming Events

### Madam Leymah Gbowee, 2011 Nobel Peace Laureate

Monday, June 7, 2021

12:15 to 1:15 pm

Register [here](#) for free

Livestream from our [FB Page](#)

### Dr. Tade Aina, Head of Research, Mastercard Foundation

Thursday, June 10, 2021

12:00 to 1:00 pm

Register [here](#) for free

Livestream from our [FB Page](#)

### June African Conversation Series

Thursday, June 24, 2021

1:00 to 2:00 pm

Topic of talk and speakers can be found on page 5

Dear colleagues,

While we are approaching the end of this academic year, it is time to celebrate the multiple milestones and achievements by the team of outstanding scholars affiliated with the Africa Institute at Western University.

As we are all aware, the last academic year has been extremely challenging given the new scenario imposed by the ongoing global public health crisis.

We have been forced to reorganize and deliver our scholarly activities in an online format, which has provided challenges but also opportunities for innovative methods in both research and teaching.

Despite the new virtual reality, I am proud to praise the numerous successes of the Africa Institute over the last 10 months.

We have substantially expanded the network of scholars across Western and beyond, who are now contributing to our advisory board and institute.

The latest success is the recently awarded Interdisciplinary Development Initiative (IDI) grant, led by Dr. Isaac Luginaah, on "Climate Change, Sustainable Food Systems and Health Nexus".

This 2-year project will provide a unique opportunity to develop a new interdisciplinary research stream within our Western community, which will tackle issues of utmost importance related to climate change and its wide impact on food systems and health outcomes.

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Finally, I would like to acknowledge the crucial role, professionalism and dedication of my colleagues and friends, Dr. Melanie Katsivo and Aislinn Adams, who have supported and facilitated my work over the last 10 months.

Aislinn Adams will leave us at the end of June to start a new chapter of her academic career (Dalhousie University, Schulich School of Law). We will miss her for her outstanding skills, efficiency, and human touch.

Thank you, Aislinn, for everything you have done for the Africa Institute over the last few years. You have been a shining star keeping the Institute on the right path...

Wishing you all a relaxing and enjoyable summer with your loved ones !

Thanks,  
Saverio Stranges

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Dear colleagues,

It is bittersweet that I announce my time with the Africa Institute will be coming to an end on June 30, 2021. I began with the Africa Institute back in January of 2019, which now certainly feels like a lifetime ago, with the pandemic and all! It has been an absolute pleasure to work within this Institute over the past two and a half years, and certainly quite rewarding to see how much we have grown. This job has been instrumental in teaching me a number of valuable work skills, and furthermore, valuable life skills. I've also had the pleasure of meeting and working with an amazing group of faculty, staff and students within the Africa Institute. It goes without saying that I owe a great amount of my positive experience here to Dr. Nicole Haggerty, past Director, and Dr. Saverio Stranges and Dr. Mel Katsivo, current Director and Associate Director. Furthermore, the entire unit of Western International has always been a warm, welcoming and supportive place to call home during my time here at Western.

I will miss Western immensely, but I am excited to begin my next chapter as a JD Candidate at the Schulich School of Law at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. I look forward to bringing the lessons learned and connections made forward with me onto this next chapter, and look forward to continue contributing to CAYSC and their alumni network on the East coast. I cannot wait to see where the Africa Institute goes next.

Cheers,  
Aislinn

Aislinn Adams  
Administrative Assistant, Africa Institute

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CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF AFRICAN STUDIES

**2021 ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
JUNE 07-10**

ACHIEVING *UBUNTU*: REFRAMING EQUITY,  
PARTNERSHIP AND SOCIAL CHANGE



A VIRTUAL EVENT

Hosted by:



**On behalf of CAAS and the Africa Institute at Western, you are invited to attend our two special keynote sessions during the 2021 Annual CAAS Conference.**

**These keynotes will be open and free to all, no conference registration required!**

**Madam Leymah Gbowee**



**2011 Nobel Peace Laureate and President/  
Founder of Gbowee Peace Foundation Africa  
(GPFA)**

Monday, June 7, 2021

12:15 - 1:15 pm EDT

Register for free & Livestream from our [FB Page](#)

**Dr. Tade Aina**



Head of Research, Mastercard Foundation  
**Centering Young people in Reframing Equity,  
Partnership, and Social Change**

Thursday, June 10, 2021

12 - 1 pm EDT

Register for free & Livestream from our [FB Page](#)

# Successful Interdisciplinary Development Initiative - Climate Change, Sustainable Food Systems and Health Nexus



Congratulations to the IDI team who have been awarded \$199,000 over the next two years to work to develop Western as a global leader in climate change and sustainable food systems. This IDI was built upon the recently successful QES-West Africa grant that the Africa Institute was awarded this winter. The project leader is **Isaac Luginaah** (Social Science), with the following team: **Isola Ajiferuke** (FIMS); **Godwin Arku** (Social Science); **Bipasha Baruah** (Arts&Humanities); **Tim Conley** (Social Science); **Mel Katsivo** (SSMD/Africa Institute); **Erica Lawson** (Arts&Humanities); **Gordon McBean** (Social Science); **Katrina Moser** (Social Science); **Mohammad Reza Najafi** (Engineering); **Francisco Olea-Popelka** (SSMD); **Madhumita Ray** (Engineering); **Chantelle Richmond** (Social Science); **Clare Robinson** (Engineering); **Jiali Shang** (Agriculture&Agri-Food Canada); **Saverio Stranges** (SSMD); **Jamie Voogt** (Social Science); **Jinfei Wang** (Social Science); **Tony Weis** (Social Science). The team is also collaborating with **Frederick Armah** (University of Cape Coast, Ghana);

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# African Conversation Series

***“Identifying and explaining shift in FGM/C through Bayesian multivariate analyses of household survey data for Kenya, Nigeria, and Senegal”***

## **Featuring Panelists:**



### **Kandala Ngianga-Bakwin, PhD**

Professor of Biostatistics at the School of Public Health, University of Witwatersrand, South Africa  
Visiting Professor of Health Technology Assessment, Warwick Medical School, University of Warwick, UK



### **Ava John-Baptiste, PhD**

Associate Professor of Epidemiology & Biostatistics and of Anesthesia & Perioperative Medicine, Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry, Western University

## **Moderated by:**



### **Janet Martin, PharmD**

Associate Professor of Anesthesia & Perioperative Medicine and Epidemiology & Biostatistics, Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry, Western University

***All are welcome and there is no cost to attend***

**Thursday, June 24, 1:00 to 2:00 pm**

**Zoom link can be accessed [here](#)**

**Amadou Gaye** (Cheikh Anta Diop University, Senegal); **Waliou Amoussa** (University of Benin, Benin); and **Ben Guri** (Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Organizational Development, Ghana). This interdisciplinary team includes researchers from five faculties and six departments across Western campus, and is building upon ongoing Western work in Africa. The funding from the IDI will go towards four main goals; consolidating a Centre of Excellence at Western in the area of climate change, health and sustainable food systems; generating climate change knowledge to improve resource governance in Africa; working with local partners to train men and women farmers on climate change impacts and responses; and generating research ideas for large scale projects relating to climate change, health and sustainable food systems.

**Congratulations team!**

**Congratulations to Dr. Lindsay Scorgie-Porter for a successful application to an Association of Commonwealth Universities Virtual Mobility Grant (BP7,500) for “Virtual Experiential Learning in Post-Genocide Peacebuilding: Rwanda in Comparative Context”!**

**Best of luck with your virtual summer school!**

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## ***Reflections from our April African Conversation Series on Education***

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Our winter term work study students, Emily Sullo (GHS) and Nirekah Suthakar (Health Sciences), had the chance to write a great reflection on our April African Conversation Series, titled “Education as a Social and Economic Game Changer”. This panel featured Dr. Teresiah Wambui Gathenya, PhD, Senior Education Advisor at USAID Monrovia, Liberia, and two youths, Hannah Nungari Ndungu and Daniel Mwangi. Here is what our work study students wrote:

On April 22nd, the African Institute presented the African Conversation Series: Education as a Social and Economic Development Game Changer, moderated by Immaculate Namukasa. Dr. Teresiah Wambui Gathenya, the Senior Education Advisor with USAID in Liberia, presented a narrative explaining the importance of investing in education for all through the stories of two youth, Daniel Mwangi and Hannah Nungari Ndungu. Dr. Gathenya believes giving a child an opportunity to access quality education can transform their lives and the lives of those around them. She has been the mentor to both Daniel Mwangi and Hannah Nungari Ndungu in assisting them to obtain their schooling and other opportunities.

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Hannah Nungari Ndungu was brought up by her grandparents in Kenya after the loss of her mother and was one of the top students at her local primary school. However, she was close to dropping out of her primary school due to a lack of resources. This was changed when she met Dr. Gathenya, who connected Hannah Nungari to schooling services and scholarships that she could access to further her studies. With the support of Dr. Gathenya, Hannah Nungari completed her Bachelor's of Sociology and Psychology at the University of Nairobi. She is currently working with the Kiambu County government as a secretary and a board member of her past primary school. She sponsors students in their academics and well-being and supports the less privileged members of society. She firmly believes that education is the primary cause for her growth in academics and well-being. She ended her motivating narrative by sharing some of the lessons she learned through her life experiences in helping to inspire others.

Daniel Mwangi was left to grow up living on the streets after his mother left, as he had no connection to his father. Throughout his time living on the streets, Daniel experienced a number of hardships, including Malaria, and struggled to produce enough money for himself. However, he was introduced to Dr. Gathenya in his teens and was provided with the opportunity to attend school. Daniel worked his way through secondary school and attended the Kenya Power Training Institute for a diploma in electrical engineering. He has since earned his diploma and continues to give to others through his church, schools, and the local rehabilitation centre. He shares his story with youth in hopes of being a mentor for them and aims to empower them to achieve their own goals.

Dr. Gathenya, Hannah, and Daniel emphasized that education played a pivotal role in redirecting their lives and leading them from harmful circumstances. Hannah specified that without the opportunity to continue her education, she would have continued to live in poverty and may have ended up living in the streets. On the other hand, Daniel recognized that he would most likely have died if he continued to live on the streets, as many of his friends did after he left. However, these impacts have extended beyond Daniel and Hannah to their families and communities, as they now work to create change within the lives of those around them through the positions they hold and their actions. By inciting change by offering what little they have to others, Hannah and Daniel produce a ripple effect through others. By supporting one person, who then goes to support another, their successes can be replicated throughout communities, the country, and the world.

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## **Advisory Board Updates**

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The Advisory Board would like to provide a brief update on our May 2021 meeting where we hosted a team from Aga Khan University, East Africa for an information session. We had the pleasure of hosting Dr. Carl Amrhein (Provost and Vice-President, Academic), Fayaz Noormohamed (Senior Advisor, Academic Strategy), and Farzana Karim-Haji (Director, University Partnerships Office). The Aga Khan team provided an informative session on the research and academic activities at Aga Khan, East Africa, and we are looking forward to now identifying potential areas for collaboration between Western and Aga Khan.

# SUMMER BREAK

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***A friendly reminder that the Africa Institute will be taking a summer break from Advisory Board meetings as well as our African Conversation Series. We will be continuing with our weekly emails of opportunities, events and news.***

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***We look forward to picking back up in the fall!***

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***We wish everyone a restful and relaxing summer.***

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### **FRIENDLY REMINDER**

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*We would love to hear success stories from all of you to share with the community! If you have a recent publication, recent successful grant application, new project, an exciting event you would like to share, a student who is graduating, to anything else in between, please feel free to let us know at [africain@uwo.ca](mailto:africain@uwo.ca) and we will include it in our regular updates to the community!*

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