

INCLUDE Annual conference

## Building forward more inclusively

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8–16 June 2021

### Background

The COVID-19 pandemic is the defining crisis of our time. While the spread of COVID-19 has been contained and the death toll relatively low in many African countries, the containment measures and halt to economic activities globally, as well as on the continent, have caused [significant harm to national economies, livelihoods, and people's wellbeing](#). Economies and livelihoods have been heavily affected, as [the demand for African commodities has fallen and tourism declined sharply](#). Unemployment rates in many countries are the highest in recorded history. Remittances and foreign direct investment have plunged. An estimated [29 million jobs were lost in Africa in 2020](#). As a result, up to [40 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa](#) are expected to be pushed (back) into extreme poverty, which means that extreme poverty is not only increasing, but also deepening in Africa, [especially in fragile states](#). [Evidence shows](#) that the pandemic has hit the poorest, women, and those with weak employment protection and without adequate social protection the hardest. Despite some positive [signs of resilience](#), it is evident that COVID-19 has and will [exacerbate existing inequalities](#). Therefore, the post COVID-19 socio-economic recovery response in Africa should aim to tackle these inequalities and promote inclusive development, while adapting the current approach to development aid.

Building forward more inclusively should be central to the process of recovery from the pandemic. It departs from the idea of [building back better](#) but is more forward-looking and is [focused on inclusive development](#) – development that [aims to reduce poverty and inequality](#). INCLUDE identified the following [key drivers of inclusive development](#): economic growth with structural transformation, decent work and income for women and youth, access to and use of social protection and basic services, and meaningful political participation and empowerment. Moreover, for development to be inclusive, all these drivers should be approached through the [four specific lenses](#) of social equity, spatial equity, inclusive governance, and political economy. To leave no one behind, building forward more inclusively will require addressing the root causes of inequality and promoting decent jobs, strengthening environmental sustainability, and reinforcing social protection mechanisms. The objective of this conference is to provide a space for African and Dutch policymakers and practitioners to engage with local African experts to learn about the impact of COVID-19 on inequalities, based on evidence embedded in local realities and robust political economy analysis on the continent. Such multistakeholder dialogue will contribute to fruitful exchanges, which could inform future joint policy design and implementation, and help us find the best way to build forward more inclusively in Africa post-COVID-19.

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*Please note that the conference will be held predominantly in English with simultaneous translation to French available.*

# AGENDA

**8 June, 14:00–16:30 CET**

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## **Conference opening and keynote speech: After the COVID-19 shakeup: realities and opportunities for Africa's development partners**

- 14:00–14:05 Welcome by Prof. Isa Baud, INCLUDE Chair
- 14:05–14:10 Opening remarks by Kitty Van Der Heijden, Director General for International Cooperation, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- 14:10–14:15 Opening remarks by Dr. Edward Brown, Senior Director, Research & Policy Engagements, African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET)
- 14:15–14:40 **Keynote speech: After the COVID-19 shakeup: realities and opportunities for Africa's development partners, by Jean-Paul Adam, Director, Technology, Climate Change and Natural Resource Management Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)**
- 14:40–14:45 Reflection and key takeaways by Steven Collet, Ambassador Business & Development, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- 14:45–14:50 Reflection and key takeaways by Dr. Edward Brown, Senior Director, Research & Policy Engagements, African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET)
- 14:50–14:55 Conclusion of opening session and overview of conference by Prof. Isa Baud, INCLUDE Chair

### **5-minute break**

## **Session 1: The (un)expected evidence: COVID-19 and inequalities**

The objective of this session is to present both the evident and surprising findings from INCLUDE's study on 'Equity in COVID-19'. We will discuss the implications of the pandemic on inequalities and identify strategies that could address them and by whom. Finally, these strategies will be translated into feasible action points for policymakers in order to build forward more inclusively after the pandemic.

- 15:00–15:05 Welcome by session chair Dr. Anika Altaf, INCLUDE
- 15:05–15:30 A synthesis of findings from the 'Equity and COVID-19' research project, Dr. Dzodzi Tsikata, University of Ghana
- 15:30–15:40 Q&A session

15:40–16:00 **Breakout sessions**

*Each breakout session will dive deeper into the key findings presented in the plenary session. In each virtual room, two research groups will visualize the given case in detail in a short and dynamic presentation. A short Q&A opportunity is planned. The breakout rooms will be moderated by representatives of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who will bring their reflections from each breakout room back to the plenary.*

**Facilitators and rooms**

• **Room A: Challenges for inclusivity**

Facilitator: Stijn Janssen, BUZA

- The case study of Nigeria (Thelma Obiakor)
- The case study of Tunisia (Mohamed-Ali Marouani)
- The case study of Mozambique (Adriano Nuvunga)

• **Room B: Innovations & solutions**

Facilitator: Paul Litjens, BUZA

- The case study of Rwanda (Martin Munu)
- The case study of Kenya and Uganda (Shiphrah Kuria)
- The case study of Ethiopia (Kassa Teshager and Tesfaye Chofana)
- The case of Ghana (Akosua Keseboa Darkwah)

16:00–16:25 **Policy roundtable on how the research findings can be translated into policy action**

Moderated by Prof. Dirk-jan Koch, BUZA

*The participants of the roundtable will share their main takeaways from the breakout sessions and link them to their own policy work. How can these findings be translated into action on the policy level? Who should take the lead and how can the Dutch government assist African colleagues in the process?*

**Participants:**

Stijn Janssen, BUZA

Paul Litjens, BUZA

Dr. Githinji Gitahi, CEO Amref Health Africa

Dr. Folake Olatunji-David, Director, Educational Planning, Research and Development Department of the Federal Ministry of Education in Nigeria

16:25–16:30 Closing remarks by Prof. Dirk-jan Koch, BUZA

## Session 2: Merging perspectives on decent employment for Africa's youth post pandemic

[The COVID-19 crisis is threatening Africa's robust growth pattern and has severe implications for the achievement of decent work.](#) Women and youth are particularly vulnerable. [Informal workers, 85.8% of the labour force, who generally lack social protection and buffers against economic shocks, have faced devastating consequences.](#) Decent jobs must be a top priority in building forward after the pandemic. This session will provide a floor for a high-level multistakeholder interactive discussion in which each actor will present the opportunities and challenges for decent job creation for youth in their own domain (policy, public, programme, private). In this roundtable, moderated by the youth representative, participants will also share what they need to overcome the challenges and capitalize on the opportunities, as well as how the different efforts can be better coordinated. A number of interactions with the audience are envisioned, including a quiz, polls and idea sharing.

14:00–14:05 Welcome by session chair Dr. Marjoke Oosterom, Institute of Development Studies (IDS), University of Sussex

### 14:05–15:20 **Multistakeholder interactive roundtable discussion**

Moderated by Dr. Chiamaka Nwachukwu, Co-coordinator of the AU African Youth Charter Hustlers Program

- Round 1: Challenges and opportunities (20 min)
- Round 2: What is needed to capitalize on the opportunities and how to achieve it? (20 min)
- Round 3: With set-backs and new challenges, how does the pandemic change the narrative and action points on youth employment? (20 min)
- Throughout: Interaction with audience (15 min)

#### **Speakers:**

- Multilateral policy and perspective: Susana Puerto, ILO, Global Initiative for Decent Jobs for Youth
- Policy strategy and action in Africa: Dr. Cheikh Tidiane Dieye, Executive Director at African Centre for Trade, Integration and Development (CACID)
- Policy strategy and action in the Netherlands: Tijmen Rooseboom, Dutch Ambassador for Youth, Education and Work, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Private sector representative: Emmanuel Lubanzadio, Head of Public Policy, Government & Philanthropy for Sub-Saharan Africa, Twitter (TBC)
- Funder perspective: Shona Bezanson, Head of Southern and Eastern Africa Scholar Programs, MasterCard Foundation

15:20–15:30 Key takeaways and closing by session chair Dr. Marjoke Oosterom, Institute of Development Studies (IDS), University of Sussex

### Session 3: Uganda's way: youth employment and participation post-COVID

The objective of this session is to hone in on Uganda in the discussion about why decent jobs must be a top priority in building forward after the pandemic. We will learn from the evidence brought by the speakers in the interactive panel about what works and what doesn't on the ground in regard to factors supporting decent employment creation in post-pandemic Uganda. The participants will also share the ideal outcomes of their work and reflect on what is needed to make these results a reality.

- 14:00–14:05 Welcome by session chair Maggie Kigozi, Director Crown Beverages (Pepsi) Ltd.
- 14:05–14:10 Opening remarks by Dr. Martin Wandera, Director for Labour, Employment and Occupational Safety and Health, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Republic of Uganda
- 14:10–14:15 Opening remarks by Jeroen Vlutters, Dutch Embassy in Uganda
- 14:15–14:25 Setting the scene: general introduction to youth employment in Uganda post-COVID-19 by Dr. Sarah Ssewanyana, EPRC
- 14:25–15:15 **Panel discussion on youth employment in Uganda**
- Moderated by Amanda Kabagambe, Bethel Advisors
- Round 1: What is the evidence available in your field on what works and doesn't on the ground in regard to decent employment creation in Uganda post-pandemic? (20 min)
  - Round 2: What are the growth sectors for youth employment? Agriculture is the backbone of the economy, but is this emphasis justified when it comes to youth employment creation? Where decent jobs are to be found? (20 min)
  - Throughout: Interaction with audience (10 min)
- Speakers:**
- Francis Arinaitwe, Board Member of Restless Development Uganda
  - Dr. Madina Guloba, EPRC: Lessons learnt from African Policy Dialogue (APD) on Productive and Decent Work for Youth and Women in Uganda in cotton and fish and/or agro-industrial sectors
  - Laura Chioda, University of California, Berkeley: Preliminary findings from the IDRC research group working on 'Soft vs. hard skills: two long-term evaluations of youth entrepreneurship training programs in Uganda'
  - Apollo Mbazzira, Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU)
  - Joost van Engen, Health Entrepreneurs, a case study from the Challenge Fund Youth Employment
- 15:15–15:20 Main takeaways from session by Dr. Martin Wandera, Director for Labour, Employment and Occupational Safety and Health, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Republic of Uganda

- 15:20–15:25 Main takeaways from session by Jeroen Vlutters, Dutch Embassy in Uganda
- 15:25–15:30 Wrap up of discussion and closing words by session chair Maggie Kigozi, Director Crown Beverages (Pepsi) Ltd.

**15 June, 15:00–16:30 CET**

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#### **Session 4: Donor meets policymaker: modelling social protection responses on the continent**

There has been a rise of social protection in Africa over the past decade. However, despite a significant increase in the number of countries with policy frameworks and cash transfer programs, coverage pre-COVID remained below 10% of the population in many countries. The global momentum for social protection measures in the response to COVID-19 included African countries, albeit that the fiscal capacity to respond was much lower than elsewhere. It is of utmost importance to [ensure that the population everywhere continues to have access to social services and social protection](#). Social protection responses must consider differentiated impacts of COVID-19 on vulnerable groups, women and men and those surviving on income in the informal sector, as well as those now shouldering additional unpaid care work. In this session, African policy makers, bilateral donors, and lead thinkers will discuss best practices in social protection responses on the continent with a view to embed social protection in a structural manner in policies of African government.

- 15:00–15:05 Welcome by session chair Prof. Isa Baud, INCLUDE Chair
- 15:05–15:20 Introduction by Jolijn van Haaren, BUZA, the Netherlands
- 15:20–16:20 **Roundtable discussion on social protection programmes in Africa**

Moderated by Dr. Rachel Sabates-Wheeler, Director of the Centre for Social Protection, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex

- Round 1: Assessment of the status quo of social protection:
  - What are the main reasons why social protection has become a major subject/instrument/modality in the policies of development donors?
  - What are success stories of inclusive social protection programmes that donors can share to inspire the Netherlands to implement social protection?
  - How do African policy makers and thinkers perceive developments in social protection, steps that governments have taken and should take, and how can development partners best support the expansion of social protection in Africa?
- Round 2: Role of social protection:
  - How policy makers and development partners perceive the role of social protection in Africa. What are priority programs?
  - What are priority groups in the population to reach with social protection?
- Round 3: Sustainability:
  - Is there political will of African governments to assume primary responsibility (policy and financially) of externally funded social protection programmes and ensure their sustainability?
  - How can donors support African governments?

## Speakers:

### Bilateral donors

- Ulrika Lang, SIDA
- Ralf Radermacher, Germany
- Jolijn van Haaren, the Netherlands
- Timo Voipio, Embassy of Finland in Tanzania

### African policymakers and thinkers

- Sabelo Mbokazi, Head Labour, Employment and Migration, Department of Social Affairs, African Union Commission (TBC)
- Dr. Rita Owusu-Amankwah, Director at Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Republic of Ghana
- Dr. Gift Dafuleya, University of Venda & University of Johannesburg
- Dr. Nicholas Awortwi, Director, Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS) Ghana

16:20–16:30 Main takeaways and action points by session chair Prof. Isa Baud, INCLUDE Chair

## 16 June, 14:00–16:00

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### Session 5: Resilience amidst COVID-19: approaches and strategies from the African Policy Dialogues

INCLUDE's African Policy Dialogues (APDs) are networks of policy actors that aim to encourage the use of existing and new knowledge in policy making in Africa. Led by Africa-based INCLUDE members, these dialogues are country specific and depend on a range of contextual factors, including existing socio-economic, political economy, and geographic realities. It is clear that in Africa COVID-19 has exacerbated inequalities and that local actors have played a key role in mitigating the adverse effects of the pandemic (compared to international actors). This session will highlight the localized approaches and strategies implemented by APDs that can be employed to enhance policy processes in Africa in the aftermath of COVID-19, considering the diverse contexts and the need to amplify local voices and actors to build forward more inclusively.

14:00–14:05 Welcome by session chair Désiré Assogbavi, Rights and Development consulting

14:05–14:08 Welcome by Prof. Njuguna Ndungu, Executive Director, AERC

14:08–14:10 Welcome by Frieda Nicolai, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (BUZA)

14:10–14:40 **Panel discussion on inclusion and localization in decision- and policy-making processes**

Moderated by Dr. Abebe Shimeles, Director of Research, AERC

- Round 1: How has the demand- and context-specific policy influencing approach of APDs been of benefit in different local settings during the pandemic?
- Round 2: How can we best establish and build strategic partnerships and alliances between actors in the country to build forward more inclusively?

**Speakers:**

- APD in Mozambique: Prof. Adriano Alfredo Nuvunga, Director Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD)
- APD in Ghana: Dr. Nicholas Awortwi, Director, Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS) Ghana
- APD in Kenya: Dr. Joyce Kinyanjui, PAL Network
- Dr. Pedro Madeira Guiliche, Minister Adviser for institutional development related issues, Mozambique

14:40–14:55 **Floor discussion, including Q&A and key takeaways from invited guests:**

- On how to promote inclusive decision- and policy-making that takes into consideration the local context and actors, political economy, voices of marginalized and excluded groups (including youth and women), by Frieda Nicolai, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (BUZA)
- On how to engage local experts on both national and subnational level on the example of INCLUDE's APDs, by Prof. Njuguna Ndungu, Executive Director, AERC
- Q&A

14:55–15:00 Closing remarks and action points by session chair Désiré Assogbavi, Rights and Development consulting

**5-minute break**

**Closing session: Conference highlights and innovation strategies for a post-pandemic Africa**

15:05–15:20 Wrap up of conference for INCLUDE by Prof. Isa Baud, INCLUDE Chair

**15:20–15:45 Inspirational keynote speaker: Looking ahead for Africa's recovery post-COVID-19 by Mavis Owusu-Gyamfi, Executive Vice President, ACET**

15:45–15:55 Reflections from the youth moderators about the future Africa:

- Dr. Chiamaka Nwachukwu, Co-coordinator of the AU African Youth Charter Hustlers Program
- Amanda Kabagambe, Bethel Advisors

15:55–16:00 Closing and the way ahead by Prof. Isa Baud, INCLUDE Chair



16:00–16:30 *[Optional] Informal networking opportunity*