

ADDRESSING AFRICA'S CHALLENGES IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The 21st Century has witnessed an unprecedented change in social, economic, political and ecological systems. The technological innovations witnessed in this century has been associated with improved health, food security, energy, housing, transport, and almost every aspect of life. These remarkable achievements have not been spatially equitable. Africa has entered the 21st century with huge unresolved issues. Although the continent of Africa has made substantial progress during this century, it is still bedeviled with myriads of challenges. Africa is characterized by a 'paradox of poverty in plenty' whereby the continent is blessed with abundant human and natural resources and yet a quarter of the population live in poverty. Compared to other regions, Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is ranked worst for almost every health indicator with health status ranked lower than the global average. The continent's social and economic infrastructures are inadequate as manifested in erratic power supply, poor transportation systems, inadequate housing and poor educational and health systems. The continent's health burden is exacerbated by the more recent and devastating Covid-19 pandemic, which has significantly reduced the region's economic growth potential. Social scientists have been grappling with problems including climate change and agricultural productivity, livelihoods and wellbeing, youth unemployment, increasing crime and violence, weak institutions and poor governance. We as social scientists have a very important role in devising workable solutions in addressing these persistent challenges. This conference provides a platform for academia, technocrats, graduate students and policy makers to generate and harness evidence-based research, recommendations and solutions of pressing challenges of Sub-Saharan Africa.

Sub-themes:

- Implications of COVID-19 on life in Africa (psychosocial, economic, political et cetera).
- African responses to COVID-19
- Methodological Challenges and Innovations in the era of COVID-19
- Childhoods, Families and Relationships
- Gender, Rights and Violence
- Science, Technology and Digitalization
- Sexuality, Culture and Religion
- Attitudes, Behaviours and Institutional Changes
- Psychological Health and Wellbeing
- Politics and Electoral Violence
- Life's transition- Childhood and Ageism
- Sexuality, Culture and Religion
- Microfinance and SMEs Development
- Health and Economic Development
- Security and social Vulnerabilities
- Mental Health and Human Development
- Migration, Return and Reintegration

- Climate Change - Developing Resilience and Adaptive Capacity
- Leadership, Governance and Politics
- Urbanisation, Housing and Slums