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A Pedagogy of Hope: Higher Education and Sustainable Development in Africa (draft version)

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Abstract

This paper re-examines the traditional notions of education in developing countries. Whereas previous conceptions and developmental interventions focused almost exclusively on primary and sometimes secondary education, it is clear that if Africa is to engage the knowledge economy, a new emphasis on the importance of higher education is crucial. This is no easy task, especially when one reflects sub-Saharan Africa's tertiary enrolment challenges. However, if we can establish at a conceptual and policy level the clear link between higher education and socio-economic growth, we may find ourselves at the dawn of a new phase in the history of African higher education., namely of a robust, active and relevant sector that produces knowledge and experts who will lead the sustainable development solutions of our continent. Each region and country has its own obstacles to overcome on the route towards this new conception. I will therefore subsequently present a picture of the South African Higher Education landscape, reflecting commonalities and points of departure from other African and other developing countries, followed by Stellenbosch University's bold new vision for Higher Education embedded in African development and hope, pointing to a framework that would allow us, our universities, to chart a new course for future education partnerships.