

**IDS Youth Employment and Politics Webinar Series**

# **Youth politics: what to make of youth voices through the pandemic**

---

**Accompanying resources**

**April 2021**

*The Youth Employment and Politics webinar series is linked to IDS' strategic research initiative: 'Ensuring decent work and political inclusion for young people', which is part of the 2020-25 IDS Strategy.*

*IDS research undertaken within this strategic initiative contributes to new thinking on youth engagement and the links between youth employment and citizenship, including in fragile and conflict-affected settings. The webinar series will focus the themes of youth mobility, employment, rural livelihoods, politics, peace and security, and youth in humanitarian settings. The speakers will address both the 'histories' and 'futures' of youth by speaking to dynamics before and during the pandemic and making observations on its implication.*

*Presentations will primarily focus on sub-Sahara Africa and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. In line with our values on inclusiveness of voices and co-construction of knowledge, the webinar series will capture diverse perspectives. Speakers and discussants represent academia, civil society, governments and UN agencies. Researchers involved in the IDS Europe Engagement Initiative will also share insights. Together we aim to strengthen development thinking and practice for more effective interventions for 'the Covid generation' to tackle what is a universal development challenge.*

*This webinar focused on young people's civic and political action before and during the pandemic, connecting this to debates on civic space. In various countries, lockdowns were accompanied by state violence.*

*We invite researchers, policy actors and civil society representatives that study, fund and implement youth policies and programmes to sign up for our webinars and join the debate.*

## Chair

### Dr Dorte Thorsen - Institute of Development Studies



Dorte Thorsen has done research with adolescent and youth migrants since 2005, primarily in West Africa. Over four years she did multi-sited fieldwork following fifteen migrants between village, capital and neighboring Côte d'Ivoire, becoming familiar with the normality of West African mobilities and the social relations at work in the urban informal economy. Her main focus now is on how social change, gender and generational dynamics and mobility are entwined. Policy-wise her work speaks to discourses around young migrants and their work, criticising simplified notions of trafficking and

child labour – important in this year designated by the UN to focus on the elimination of child labour – and to discourses around youth and decent work, trying to highlight ongoing social change as an important element of understanding how gender norms and values affect young people's lives.

### Relevant publications

Thorsen, D. (2013). Weaving in and out of employment and self-employment: young rural migrants in the informal economy of Ouagadougou. *International Development Planning Review*, 35(2), 203-218. doi:10.3828/idpr.2013.13

Thorsen, D. (2014). Jeans, bicycles and mobile phones. Adolescent migrants' material consumption in Burkina Faso. In A. Veale & G. Donà (Eds.), *Child and youth migration. Mobility-in-migration in an era of globalization* (pp. 67-90). Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Thorsen, D. (2020). Independent child migration. In T. Bastia & R. Skeldon (Eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Migration and Development* (pp. 8). London and New York: Routledge.

## Speakers

### Dr Marjoke Oosterom – Institute of Development Studies



Marjoke Oosterom is a research fellow in the Power and Popular research cluster at IDS. She holds a PhD from IDS and has a background in comparative politics and development studies. Her research concentrates on how experiences of violence and conflict affect forms of agency, citizenship, and everyday politics and governance. Her specific expertise is on youth politics and youth agency in response to insecurity and violence, and politics in the informal economy. She has been involved in consultancy work for policy makers and international NGOs that fund and implement governance and youth-focused interventions in fragile and conflict affected settings. Marjoke leads IDS' strategic research initiative on youth employment and politics, and is convening this webinar series.

#### Relevant publications

Arinaitwe, E., Jesca, T., Jovia, N., Oosterom, M., Shinah, A., and Ssewanyana, A. (2021) *How socialisation reinforces workplace sexual harassment in informal markets* Brighton: Institute of Development Studies <https://www.ids.ac.uk/opinions/how-socialisation-reinforces-workplace-sexual-harassment-in-informal-markets/> (Accessed 30/03/2021)

Hossain, N.; Khurana, N.; Nazneen, S.; Oosterom, M.; Schröder, P. and Shankland, Alex (2019) *Development Needs Society - The Implications of Civic Space for the Sustainable Development Goals*, Geneva: ACT Alliance

Oosterom, M. (2019) 'The Implications of Closing Civic Space for Sustainable Development in Zimbabwe', mimeo, IDS and ACT Alliance

Oosterom, M. and Gukurume, S. (2019) *Managing the Born-free Generation: Zimbabwe's Strategies for Dealing with the Youth*

Oosterom, M.A. (2018) *Youth Employment & Citizenship: Problematising Theories of Change*, K4D Emerging Issues Report. Brighton, UK: Institute of Development Studies

### Dr Nadine Sika – American University in Cairo



**Nadine Sika** is associate professor of Comparative Politics at the American University in Cairo. She was Humboldt Foundation Visiting Fellow at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs in Berlin (2014-2015). She is the book reviews editor of *Mediterranean Politics*. She is author of *Youth Activism and Contentious Politics in Egypt: Dynamics of Continuity and Change* (Cambridge UP, 2017) and co-editor with Eberhard Kienle of

*the Arab Uprisings: Transforming and Challenging State Power* (I.B. Tauris 2015). Her recent articles appeared in journals such as *Democratization*, *Political Studies*, and the *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*.

### Relevant publications

2020: "Contentious Activism and Political Trust in non-democratic Regimes: Evidence from the MENA," <https://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/DMQTRWPNZWBENSENFNFWM/full?target=10.1080/13510347.2020.1813113>

2020: "Beyond the Impasse? Dynamics of Youth Agency in Times of Crisis" *Mediterranean Politics* <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13629395.2020.1749803>

2020: "Youth Socio-Economic and Political Grievances," *Mediterranean Politics* <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13629395.2020.1749813?journalCode=fmed20>

2020: "Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and Youth Policies in the MENA," (with Emma Murphy) *Mediterranean Politics* <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13629395.2020.1749816>

### Book

2017: *Youth Activism and Contentious Politics in Egypt: Dynamics of Continuity and Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) [www.cambridge.org/9781108418805](http://www.cambridge.org/9781108418805)

### Professor Emma Murphy – Durham University



Emma is a professor of political economy at Durham University. Past research evolved from a focus on structural aspects of economic and political liberalisation in the Middle East and North Africa, to broader processes which connected the region to the developing global political economy. Most recently she has been working on MENA youth in the contemporary global political economy, working on international and interdisciplinary collaborations which engage in cross-regional comparative research and deploy a range of quantitative and qualitative methods. She is currently a Co-I on a GCRF project studying young women's experiences of using and working in the transport sector in Africa through anthropological methods, and a Co-I on a survey project assessing the experiences of young people living under lockdown in the North East of England.

### Relevant publications

Murphy, Emma C. (2018). **Youth activism and protest around the Mediterranean**. In Routledge handbook of Mediterranean politics. Gillespie, Richard & Volpi, Frédéric Routledge. 342-355.

Murphy, Emma (2018). **The In-securitisation of Youth in the South and East Mediterranean**. *The International Spectator* 53(2): 21-37.

**Murphy, Emma (2017). A Political Economy of Youth Policy in Tunisia. *New Political Economy* 22(6): 676-691.**

## Discussants

### Dr Daniel Agbiboa – Harvard University



Daniel E. Agbiboa is Assistant Professor of **African and African American Studies at Harvard University**, where he also holds the position of Faculty Associate of the **Weatherhead Center for International Affairs** and Executive Committee Member of the **Harvard Mellon Urban Initiative**. He holds a PhD in International Development from the University of Oxford and an MPhil in International Development from the University of Cambridge. His research interests center on the relations between governments and publics in contemporary Africa. He is the author of ***Transport, Transgression and Politics in African Cities: The Rhythm of Chaos***, and of several articles in leading journals, including ***African Affairs, African Studies Review, International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, and Journal of Peacebuilding and Development***. In the 2021/2022 academic year, he will be a residential fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) in Princeton, under this year's IAS School of Social Science theme: "**Political Mobilizations and Social Movements.**"

### Rafiu Lawal - UNOY



Rafiu Adeniran LAWAL is the Regional Coordinator for the United Network of Young Peacebuilders in West and Central Africa. He is also the Founder and Executive Director of Building Blocks for Peace Foundation, an organization building the resilience of people against violent philosophies and promoting sustainable peace in Nigeria. Lawal holds a Master's degree in Peace and Conflict Studies from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. He is a passionate peace advocate with over four years' experience on youth, peace and security. He is a teacher, social commentator and also a researcher with a few publications to his credit amongst which are 'An Assessment of Hausa/ Yoruba Conflict and Peacebuilding Initiatives in Mile 12 Market 1999-2014', 'Raising the Bar of Scholarship from the Left: A Review of Boko Haram in Nigeria' amongst others.



Delivering world-class research, learning and teaching that transforms the knowledge, action and leadership needed for more equitable and sustainable development globally.

Institute of Development Studies  
Library Road  
Brighton, BN1 9RE  
United Kingdom  
+44 (0)1273 606261  
[ids.ac.uk](http://ids.ac.uk)

Charity Registration Number 306371  
Charitable Company Number 877338  
© Institute of Development Studies 2020