



U N I K A S S E L
V E R S I T Ä T

**Partnership of International Center for
Development and Decent Work,
University of Kassel, Germany with the
University of Witwatersrand
(2009-2016)**

Kassel, September 2016



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1. About WITS

1.1 Historical Background

The University of the Witwatersrand (WITS) is located at the vibrant and culturally diverse city of Johannesburg. The university has its roots in scholarship excellence and political and civil activism as well as the mining industry, as do Johannesburg and the Witwatersrand in general. Founded in 1896 as the South African School of Mines in Kimberley, it is the third oldest South African university in continuous operation, after the University of Cape Town (founded in 1829), and Stellenbosch University (founded in 1866).

In 1959, the Extension of University Education Act forced restricted registrations of black students for most of the apartheid era. Despite this, several notable black leaders graduated from the university. It became desegregated once again prior to the abolition of apartheid in 1990. Several of apartheid's most provocative critics, of either European or African descent, were one-time students and graduates of the university.

WITS has also been recognized as a center of excellence over its history. During the Second World War the university took an active role in the original radar development and construction. The university was also the first university in the country to have nuclear accelerator and being part of the development of other modern and high technologies.

The university has a total of 33,364 enrolled students, with approximately 2,674 international students¹. Moreover, Wits has more than 85% of their research published in accredited international journals. Mostly, it encourages cross-disciplinary research that goes from finding solutions of deep level mining problems to understanding the complexities of human interaction.

1.2 Faculties and Institutes

Wits University contributes to the global knowledge of the economy and local transformation through generating high level, scarce skills and innovative research. Wits University has five faculties: Commerce, Law & Management; Engineering & the Built Environment; Health Sciences; Humanities and Science. WITS also counts with 33 schools which offer around 3,000 courses to 32,500 students.

¹ According to Wits website, checked in August, 2016.

1.2.1 The School of Social Science (SoSS)

The School of Social Sciences is part of the Faculty of Humanities at the University of the Witwatersrand. It offers the disciplines of History; International Relations; Philosophy; Political Studies; Social Anthropology and Sociology.

It provides innovative areas of study at the University and is responsible for many of South Africa's leading internationally trained intellectuals, lecturers, researchers and writers in this field.

There are also five inter-disciplinary programs:

- Demography & Population Studies
- Development Studies
- Labour Policy & Globalisation
- African Centre for Migration & Society (ACMS)
- Wits Centre for Diversity Studies (WiCDS)

1.2.2 Department of Sociology

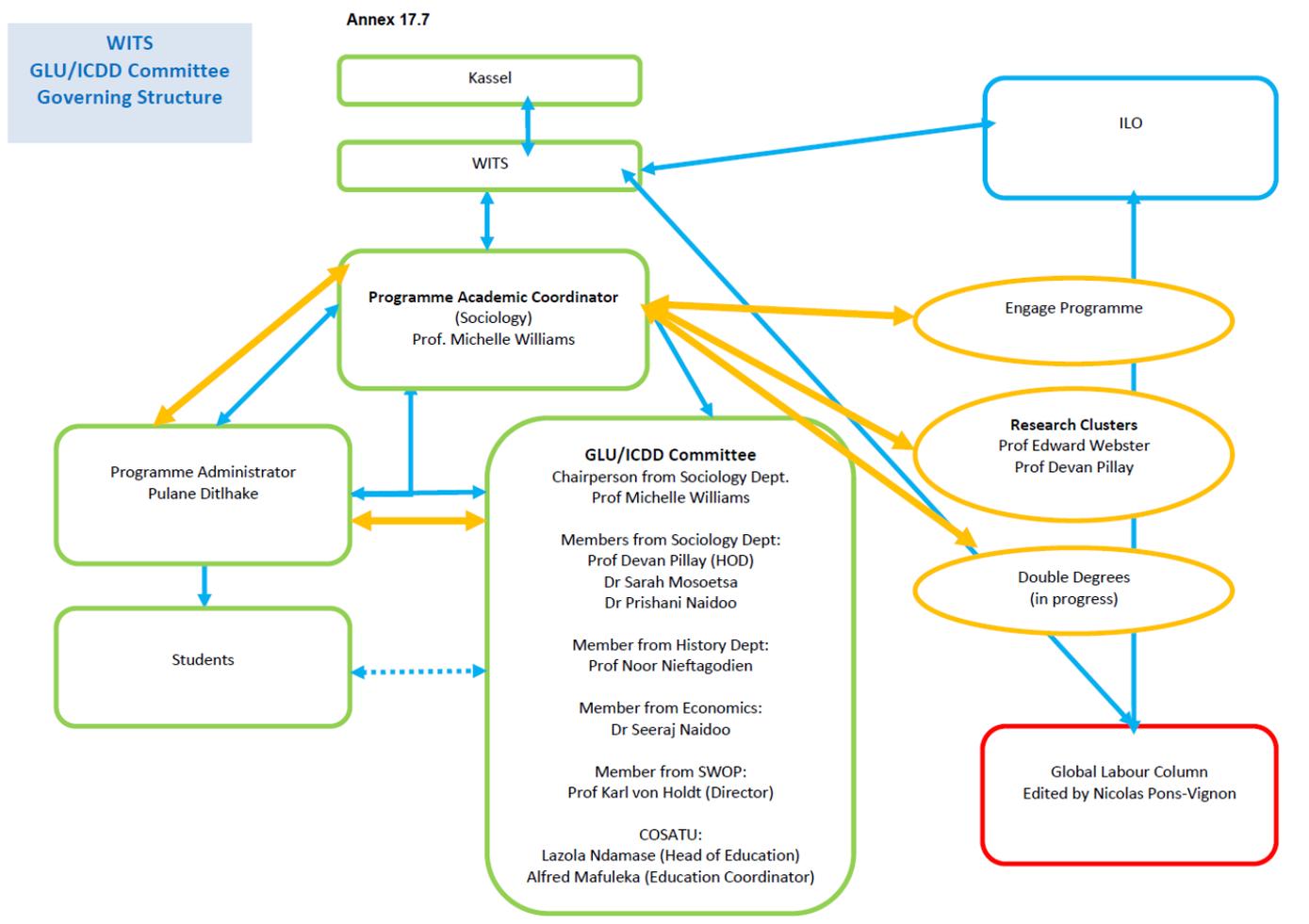
The Department of Sociology at Wits has an outstanding staff with an extremely wide range of teaching and research interests, and a deep commitment to teaching and to involving students in its work.

For students intending to major, WITS has a program, which contains both prescribed modules and options. Sociology and Industrial Sociology at WITS prepare students for careers in a variety of areas. These include:

- Policy and Planning in the public and private sectors
- Development and Aid work particularly in the NGO community
- Survey and other forms of social research
- Industrial Relations and Human Resources
- Academic Teaching and Research
- Journalism and many others
- Social Research in Health and HIV/AIDS

2. ICDD and WITS Partnership

ICDD and WITS have been successfully working together since 2009. ICDD and WITS partnership involves various types of activities including study programs, exchange of students and faculties, research, conferences, and workshops, among others.



Organogram: ICDD-WITS, 2014

2.1 The DAAD Exceed Program

ICDD has been conducting different research projects with WITS within the DAAD Exceed (Higher Education Excellence in Development Cooperation) program. The program aims at supporting German Higher Education Institutions (HEI) together with their partners in developing countries. Support is given to those institutions that contribute to the realization of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other targets of development cooperation policy in an innovative manner. The aim is to strengthen the HEIs in the domains of education, research and consultancy. The major concerns of the program are:

- bringing together working units in the HEIs with a direct linkage to the MDGs
- expanding education and research on issues of relevance to development cooperation policy in German and partner country HEIs
- increasing the visibility of activities related to the MDGs in the general public in Germany and DCs
- constructing Competence Centers for development cooperation by developing excellent research that can serve as a scientific "lighthouse", is internationally attractive and competitive
- strengthening north-south as well as south-south cooperation in higher education and research
- expanding policy analysis and consultancy on issues in development cooperation in developing countries and Germany

Through these activities, researchers and institutes are encouraged to continue and expand their commitment in development cooperation. The competence centers are meant to become think tanks for development cooperation that develop approaches for the solution of global challenges and transfer them to policy makers, donors and practitioners.

2.2 Study Programs

2.2.1 PhD program

The ICDD's objective is to generate and transfer knowledge on how to create and improve work and income opportunities in rural and urban regions in developing countries in light of globalization, climate change and urbanization processes. PhD projects are rooted in either the natural or social sciences and focus primarily on actor and problem oriented research on sustainable human-environmental relationships and decent livelihoods. Currently (2016), about 25 doctoral candidates within the graduate school are pursuing PhDs at the seven ICDD partner universities.

PhD Alumni/Fellows

- **Themba Masondo (2010-2013):** "The socio-economic impact of an employed guarantee: a comparison of CWP and NREGA". Supervisors: Prof. Dr. Edward Webster and Dr. Khayaat Fakier.
- **Crispen Chinguno (2010-2013):** "Strike Violence and Precarious Employment". Supervisors: Prof. Karl von Holdt, Prof. Jacklyn Cock and Dr. M. S. Kitchlu.
- **Katherine Joynt (2011-2014):** "What is the power of different actors at every node of the wheat to bread commodity chain and how could the power of workers in this

commodity chain be strengthened?” Supervisors: Dr. Jacklyn Cock and Prof. Dr. Christoph Scherrer.

- **Asanda Benya (2011-2014):** “Women in Mining: A comparative study of two South African Platinum Mines”. Supervisors: Dr. Bridget Kenny and Prof. Dr. Eugenia Leone.
- **Wellington Mvundura (2014-2017):** “Rethinking Social Dialogue for Decent Life: Zimbabwean Migrant farm Workers in South African Commercial Farms”. Supervisors: Prof. Dr. Devan Pillay and Dr. Zaheera.
- **Andrew Gowan Bennie (2014-2018):** “Agrarian transformation in South Africa: An investigation into grassroots alternatives in the South African agro-food system”. Supervisors: Prof. Dr. Michelle Williams and Prof. Dr. Christoph Scherrer.
- **Ruth Castel-Branco (2015-2018):** “The New Chibalo? Rural Livelihoods, Proletarianisation and Public Employment Programmes in Mozambique”. Supervisor: Dr. Ben Scully.

2.2.2 Master Programs

- **The Global Labor University (GLU)**

The Global Labor University (GLU) is a network of trade unions, universities and the ILO (International Labor Organization) to deliver high-level qualification programs. It offers Masters Courses in four different countries on trade unions, sustainable development, social justice, international labor standards, multinational companies, economic policies and global institutions and promotes research cooperation on global labor issues.

The Global Labor University is a new approach to increase the intellectual and strategic capacity of workers organizations and to establish stronger working relationships between trade unions, the ILO, and the scientific community. It strengthens trade union capacity and competence to advocate for Social Justice and Decent Work at the workplace nationally and internationally.

The Masters programs are a unique opportunity for trade unionists and other labor rights activists to work and study in an international environment and provide opportunities for trade unions to further qualify their staff or recruit new experts. The global network of the GLU provides an innovative framework for research and policy development in a truly multicultural, multiregional and multidisciplinary environment. After launching the first course in Germany in 2004, the M.A. program is now also offered in South Africa, Brazil, India, and the USA.

ICDD and University of Witwatersrand are two of the cooperating partners of GLU. Furthermore, students of the LPG (Labor Policies & Globalization) program in ICDD also have

the possibility to study one term of the program in Germany and one term at one of the partner universities, including WITS.

- **MA Partner University Scholarship**

ICDD also grants the Master students from the partner universities with MA scholarships to support them with their studies.

From the year of 2009 to the year of 2014, two students from WITS received the MA scholarship.

2.3 Ela Bhatt Professorship and Guest Lectureships

Ela-Bhatt Visiting Professors



Prof. Dr. Edward Webster:²A sociologist specializing in the sociology of work, labour relations and development, Prof. Webster from WITS held the first Ela-Bhatt-Guest-Professorship position. His professorship commenced in October 2009 and ended in September 2010. Prof. Webster participated in the following activities: Conducting lecture courses in two semesters. During the first semester, Prof. Webster conducted the Labor and Development course and the Advanced Research Methods course for master students from two master programs, Global Political Economy (GPE) and Labor Policies and Globalization (LPG). In the second semester, he taught a course on

Participation in Global Governance and led a master's colloquium in which he assisted students in writing their research reports. He also held lectures for the Summer Academy in June 2010. As well from that, Prof. Webster and Prof. Bhowmik from the Tata Institute of Social Science (TISS) in Mumbai launched a new collaborative research project titled Work, Livelihoods and Economic Security in the 21st Century: India and South Africa.

² Prof. Edward Webster. Available in: <http://www.wits.ac.za/swop/staff-and-postdoctoral-fellows/prof-edward-webster/> , used with permission.



Prof. Dr. Michelle Williams:³ Her research and teaching interests include political sociology, development, social movements, alternative economic and political systems such as the solidarity economy, social theory, democratic theory, qualitative research methods, and comparative historical analysis. She was Ela Bhatt professor at ICDD from April to June 2014 and during her period in Kassel she taught the seminar on solidarity economy and presented a public lecture entitled “The Solidarity Economy: Creating Alternatives to Neoliberal Capitalism”. She also attended several meetings and talks related to ICDD, such as the GLU alumni

conference in Berlin and gave one-day workshop with Prof. Edlira Xhafa on trade union campaigns for overcoming inequality.

Visiting Professors



Prof. Devan Pillay:⁴ Prof. Devan Pillay is associated professor at WITS at the Sociology organizational unit. He is the GLU Deputy Chair and was a visiting lecturer at the ICDD. He has published on issues relating to globalization, social movements, civil society, industrial relations, labour history, media and contemporary South African politics.

³ Prof. Dr. Michelle Williams. ICDD Files, used with permission.

⁴ Prof. Devan Pillay. Available in: <https://www.wits.ac.za/staff/academic-a-z-listing/p/devanpillaywitsacza/> , used with permission.

3. Research

3.1 Joint Research Projects

The ICDD network worked along 3 main research clusters in the first phase of cooperation (2009-2014), responding to (1) Sustainable Value Creation for Decent Work, (2) Instruments for Promoting Decent Work, and (3) Strategies for Empowerment for Decent Work.

In the second phase, there is a shift towards an enhanced cooperation between agricultural and social disciplines/sciences within the network, implementing 5 new research lines in the agenda: (1) Decent work along agricultural value chains, (2) Organizing the informal economy, (3) Extractivism and rural welfare, (4) Rural-urban linkages: transformation processes, livelihoods, and social protection, (5) Rethinking development cooperation.

3.1.1 Research Projects

- **Rural-Urban Linkages in Comparative Perspective: Labour and Land in Ghana and South Africa (2015-)**

Project Leaders: Prof. Dr. Ben Scully (WITS) and Prof. Der. Akua Britwum (UCC)

Rural-urban linkages are widely acknowledged as important, but difficult to measure empirically using available data, such as household surveys or case studies of particular locations. By tracing social and economic connections across the rural-urban divide, this project aims to provide a clearer picture of these linkages. This will allow insights into a range of theoretical, strategic, and policy issues.

The proposed study will examine how rural-urban linkages affect the lives and livelihoods of workers and families on each end of the city-countryside divide. Rural-urban connections have long been recognized as a key feature of social and economic life for both urban workers and rural dwellers in Africa. However, in contemporary debates about precarious work in urban areas, and precarious livelihoods in rural areas, these connections are rarely given sufficient attention. We will examine South Africa and Ghana, both individually and comparatively. These are two countries with long histories of rural-urban connections, and both countries have produced classic studies of the relationship between labor, land, migration, and livelihoods. We will use in-depth interviews with multiple members of households which attempt to build comprehensive “case studies” of household livelihood strategies.

Expected Contribution to the Decent Work Agenda:

Our research will produce a clearer understanding of how rural-urban connections shape the social and economic lives of people in South Africa and Ghana. The findings will have implications for debates about urban workers politics and organizing strategies as well as for rural dwellers well-being.

For more information on this research, please see:

<https://www.uni-kassel.de/einrichtungen/international-center-for-development-and-decent-work-icdd/research/research-2015-2019/7-rural-urban-linkages-in-comparative-perspective-labour-and-land-in-ghana-and-south-africa.html>

3.1.2 Research Clusters

Within the framework of the Research Clusters “Instruments for Promoting DW” and “Strategies of Empowerment for DW” (2009–2014), WITS developed together with other centers of the ICDD network a series of research projects:

- **Research Cluster 1: Strategies for Overcoming Economic Inequality (2013-2014)**

Project Leaders: Prof. Dr. Christoph Scherrer (University of Kassel), Prof. Dr. Anselmo dos Santos (Unicamp), Prof. Dr. Sharit Bhowmik (TISS), Prof. Dr. Michelle Williams (WITS)

The main question of this research cluster is what are effective policies for lessening economic inequality? Further questions are: (1) What measures to combat inequality are being currently proposed? To what extent are they appropriate with regard to the problem diagnosis? What additional actions or measures promise a reduction in economic inequality? (2) What social forces have campaigned for less economic inequality? What strategies have been successful thus far? How can these social forces be mobilized for collective action at various levels of government?

While much is known about the drivers of economic inequality, there has been relatively little research on the remedies for inequality to date and an integrated, interdisciplinary approach to develop alternatives is particularly long overdue. The main tasks of the project will be to conceptualize and develop countermeasures, outline implementation strategies, and identify relevant stakeholders for the achievement of more inclusive societies. The analysis take into consideration issues specific to Southern partners: Brazil, India, and South Africa.

Expected Contribution to the Decent Work Agenda:

The main aim of the project will be to conceptualize and develop countermeasures, outline implementation strategies, and identify relevant stakeholders for the achievement of more inclusive societies. Essentially it looks at measures to implement the Decent Work agenda. However, it goes a bit beyond the Decent Work agenda which focuses on a floor for wages, working conditions, and social protection. It also takes a look at how the top of the pyramid can be brought to make a contribution to more equality.

For more information on this research, please see:

<https://www.uni-kassel.de/einrichtungen/international-center-for-development-and-decent-work-icdd/research/research-2009-2014/instruments-for-promoting-dw/strategies-for-overcoming-economic-inequality.html>

- **Research Cluster 2: Organizing Vulnerable Workers – Comparisons between India, South Africa and Ghana (2013-2014)**

Project Leaders: Edward Webster (WITS), Prof. Dr. Sharit Bhowmik (TISS) and prof. Dr. Akua Britwum (UCC)

This research cluster began in the year of 2013 and tries to answer the question of how do the vulnerable workers in India, South Africa and Ghana organize, what form does it take, what strategies do they use, what sources of power do they draw on, what are their relationships with traditional unions and how are traditional unions responding. In order to capture these experiences effectively, we are partnering with progressive trade union movements in the three countries – in South Africa, it is the COSATU task team on Organizing Vulnerable workers, in Ghana, it's the informal desk of the Ghanaian Trade Union Congress and in India, the Self Employed Workers Association (SEWA) and NGOs such as LEARN.

Expected Contribution to the Decent Work Agenda:

1. Identify and analyse the organisational forms, strategies and sources of power that are emerging amongst vulnerable workers in India, Ghana and South Africa
2. Identify ways in which the voice of vulnerable workers and their working conditions can be improved.

Related Publications:

Webster, E. ;Joynt, K.; Metcalfe (2013). A. Repositioning Peak-level social dialogue in South Africa; Nedlac into the future, Johannesburg: National economic Development and Labour Council.

For more information on this research, please see:

<https://www.uni-kassel.de/einrichtungen/international-center-for-development-and-decent-work-icdd/research/research-2009-2014/strategies-of-empowerment-for-dw/organising-vulnerable-workers-comparisons-between-india-south-africa-and-ghana.html>

- **Research Cluster 3: Decent Work or Decent Life?: The Quest for an Economics of 'Happiness' (2012-2014)**

Project Leader: Prof. Dr. Devan Pillay (WITS)

The main research question is: Can the 'economics of happiness', based on localized food production and consumption, and the principles of 'sufficiency' and a Decent Life, be compatible with the traditional understanding of 'Decent Work', and the globalization of humanity, mutual understanding and global cosmopolitanism?

The globalization of capitalism has been accompanied by the globalization of democracy, human rights, cosmopolitanism, global scientific collaboration, innovation and the possibility of resolving the age old problem of the patriarchal oppression of the many by the few. Let us call this the globalization of humanitarianism.

Can a new logic of economics – the (relatively) localized economics of happiness – be compatible with the globalisation of humanitarianism, trade and development? Or does it encourage closed economies, and with it closed borders and closed cultural spaces? Do the "ecosocialist" experiments in Latin America, such as Bolivia, offer better prospects?

Thus, the aim of the research is to interrogate conventional understandings of "decent work" and its assumption that this is essential to the pursuit of a "decent life" for all.

For more information on this research, please see:

<https://www.uni-kassel.de/einrichtungen/international-center-for-development-and-decent-work-icdd/research/research-2009-2014/strategies-of-empowerment-for-dw/decent-work-or-decent-life-the-quest-for-an-economics-of-happiness.html>

- **Research Cluster 4: Work, Livelihoods and Economic Security in the 21st Century: India and South Africa (2010-2013)**

Project Leaders: Prof. Dr. Edward Webster (WITS), Prof. Dr. Sharit Bhowmik (TISS), Prof. Dr. Khayaat Fakier (WITS)

This research cluster was launched in April 2010 in Kassel as an inter-disciplinary study to examine why economic security is increasing in India and South Africa and how it can be reversed. The aim was also to extend the study to Brazil in 2011 and to collaborate with partners at the Unicamp.

Problem Statement

Growing unemployment and its impact on poverty is the central challenge in developing countries where formal employment can be less than 10% of the economically active population. The growing informalisation of work is eroding the membership base of organised labour worldwide. Informal workers are not able to draw on market-based power as they lack formal skills, nor are they in large enterprises where they can draw on workplace bargaining power. Labour is living in an age of insecurity (Webster, et al. 2008). In this context, it may seem utopian to think in terms of decent work.

Expected Contribution to the Decent Work Agenda:

Develop a strategy for progressively realizing the goal of decent work in developing countries that reconciles the goal of decent work with sustainable development.

Related Publications:

Webster, E; Bhowmik , S (2013).Work , Livelihoods and insecurity in the South: a conceptual introduction. Khayaat Fakier and Ellen Emke (editors) Socio-Economic Insecurity in Emerging Economies: Building New Spaces". London: Routledge /Earthscan.

For more information on this research, please see:

<https://www.uni-kassel.de/einrichtungen/international-center-for-development-and-decent-work-icdd/research/research-2009-2014/strategies-of-empowerment-for-dw/work-livelihood-strategies-and-economic-security-in-the-twenty-first-century.html>

3.2 Publications⁵

Bezuidenhout, A., and Webster, E. (2010) "Contesting the New Politics of Space: Labor and Capital in the White Goods Industry in Southern Africa". In: McGrath-Champ, S. and Herod, A.

⁵ Note that these are exemplary of the work developed. Not all publications are listed in this section.

- (Eds.) *Handbook of Employment and Society: Working Space*. London: Edward Elgar, 368-382.
- Joynt, K. and Webster, E. (2012) "Discordant Voices: The Hidden World of Johannesburg's Inner City Clothing Workers", *J. Workplace Rights* 162 (2), 149-169.
- Lambert, R. (2010) "Eddie Webster, the Durban Movement and New Labour Internationalism", *Transformation* 72 (3), 26-47.
- Lambert, R. and Webster, E. (2010) "Searching for Security: Case Studies of the Impact of Work Restructuring on Households in South Korea, South Africa and Australia", *Journal of Industrial Relations* 52 (5), 595-611.
- Vishwas S. and Williams, M. (2011) "Cooperatives and Worker Ownership in South Africa" In Daniel, J., Prishani, N., Pillay, D. and Southall, R. (Eds.) *New South African Review* 2, Johannesburg: Wits University Press,
- Webster, E. (2011) "The wages are low but they are better than nothing: The dilemma of decent work and job creation in South Africa". In: Daniel, J., Naidoo, P., Pillay, D. and Southall, R. (Eds.) *New Paths, Old Compromises (New South African Review 2)*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 160-181.
- Webster, E. (2011) "Organizing in the Informal Economy: Ela Bhatt and the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) of India", *Labour, Capital and Society* 44 (1), 98-125.
- Webster, E. (2010) "There shall be work and security: Utopian thinking or a necessary condition for development and social cohesion?", *Transformation* 72 (3), 225-246.
- Webster, E. and Bhowmik, S. et al. (Eds.) (2013) *Building New Spaces: Responses to Insecurity in the Global South*.
- Bhowmik, S. and Webster, E. "Reducing Social Insecurity through Social protection - Lessons from India and South Africa". *Overcoming Social Insecurity in the Global South, a presentation of South-South research*. Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik – German Development Institute (DIE), Bonn, 16 June 2011.
- Bezuidenhout, A., and Webster, E. (2010) "Contesting the New Politics of Space: Labor and Capital in the White Goods Industry in Southern Africa". In: McGrath-Champ, S. and Herod, A. (Eds.) *Handbook of Employment and Society: Working Space*. London: Edward Elgar, 368-382.

- Webster, E. and Sikwebu, D. (2010) "Tripartism and economic reform in South Africa and Zimbabwe". In: Fraile, L. (Ed.) *Blunting Neoliberalism: Tripartism and Economic Reforms in the Developing World*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan/ILO
- Webster, E. and Bischoff, C. (2011) *Relations Industrielles*. Johannesburg: Hiver Winter.
- Webster, E. (2011) "Development, globalization and decent work: An emerging Southern Labour paradigm". In: Serrano, M., Xhafa, E., and Fichter, M. (Eds.) *Trade Unions and the Global Crisis: labour's visions, strategies and responses*. Geneva: International Labour Office, 3-18.
- Williams, M. (2014) "The Solidarity Economy and Social Transformation" In Satgar, V. (Ed.) *The Solidarity Economy Alternative: emerging theory and practice*, Durban: UKZN Press.
- Williams, M. (2014) "Introduction" In Williams, M. (Ed.) *The End of the Developmental State?* London and New York: Routledge.
- Williams, M. (2014) "Rethinking the Developmental State in the Twenty-first Century" In Williams, M. (Ed.) *The End of the Developmental State?*, London and New York: Routledge.
- Williams, M. (2013) "Introduction" In Williams, M. and Satgar, V. (Eds.) *Marxisms in the Twenty-first Century: crisis, critique, and struggle*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- Williams, M. (2013) "Marxism and Democracy: Liberal, Vanguard, or Direct" In Williams, M. and Satgar, V. (Eds.) *Marxisms in the Twenty-first Century: crisis, critique, and struggle*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- Williams, M. (Ed.) (2014) *The End of the Developmental State?*. London and New York: Routledge; Pietermaritzburg: UKZN Press.
- Williams, M. and Vishwas, S. (Eds.). (2014) *Marxisms in the Twenty-first Century: crisis, critique, and struggle*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- Williams, M. (2013) "Alternative production and consumption relations?: Fair trade, the state, and cooperatives in the global South", *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 31(1)
- Chun, J. J. and Williams, M. (2013) "Labour as a Democratizing Force?: Lessons from South Africa and Beyond", *Rethinking Development and Inequality*.

Williams, M. (2013) "Marxism and Democracy: Liberal, Vanguard, or Direct" In Williams, M. and Satgar, V. (Eds.) *Marxisms in the Twenty-first Century: crisis, critique, and struggle*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

Mosoetsa, S. and Williams, M. (Eds.) (2012) *Labour in the Global South. Challenges and Alternatives for Workers*. International Labour Organization.

Britwum, A. O., Douglas, K. and Ledwith, S. (2012) "Women, Gender and Power in Trade Unions". In: Mosoetsa, S., and Williams, M. (Eds.) *Labour in the Global South: Challenges and Alternatives for Workers*. Geneva: ILO. International Labour Office Press, 41-64.

4. Conferences and Workshops

Within the framework of ICDD and WITS partnership different thematic conferences, workshops, seminars have been organised.

- **Alumni Applied Research School – AARS (2016)**

The eleventh AARS will take place in Johannesburg, from 28th to 30th September, 2016. The thematic discussed will focus on "Our Ecological and social Future: the role of labour".

- **Workshop of Organising Vulnerable Workers: Comparing India, South Africa and Ghana (2013)**

The greatest challenge facing the labour movement in the age of globalization is organizing the growing number of vulnerable workers, including those in the informal economy. A range of contemporary scholars have concluded that the labour movement has no future. What emerged from our three day workshop on 2nd to 4th December 2016 at WITS in Johannesburg is the growing skepticism towards traditional trade unionism as new forms of worker organization, strategies and sources of power emerge. In India, for example, union membership has increased by nearly 500% as informal workers take advantage of electoral competition amongst multiple parties to promote their demands. In South Africa, we see the re-emergence of worker advice offices such as the Casual Workers Advice Office in Germiston in the industrial heartland in response to the inability of traditional unions to respond to the needs of vulnerable workers.

This raises the question as to whether this shift to new forms of organization and sources of power will revitalize the existing movement, a process of transformation from within or if it will lead to the formation of a new worker movement. These questions were mainly discussed in the workshop.

- **Alumni Applied Research School - AARS (2011)⁶**



Participants-Alumni Applied Research School (AARS) 2011

The fifth AARS was organized jointly by the Universities of the Witwatersrand and Kassel, and the Berlin School of Economics and Law in the year of 2011 and took place from September 22 to 28 in Johannesburg, South Africa. The summer school brought together former and current GLU students, as well as professors and trade union experts from the GLU from around the world to continue research work on minimum wage, domestic workers, women and trade unions, and trade union alternatives, to name a few. They also launched new research groups on education and trade unions and the environment. Under the broad theme of Prospects for an Economic Recovery and Labor's Response to the Crisis, the following major topics and questions were discussed at the Summer School:

- Is there a recovery and for what should labor be prepared?
- Labor's role in the struggles, uprisings and revolutions in North Africa and Middle East
- Workers' struggles around the world: what are the lessons/alternatives?
- A labor perspective on the climate change and the environment
- Presenting the results of the current research projects

⁶ Participants-Alumni Applied Research School (AARS) 2011, ICDD files.

- Establishing new research projects

- **PhD Introductory Workshop (2011)**

The first major event of the ICDD Graduate School in 2011 was the “Introductory Workshop” for the new cohort of PhD students, taking place from May 8 to 10 in Johannesburg. Apart from introducing the ICDD and its Graduate School to the new candidates more generally, it aimed at making them familiar with the basic terms and themes underpinning ICDD research and teaching, such as the development of the decent work agenda of the ILO, decent work as a problem for labor politics as well as in agriculture or an issue in interdisciplinary research. Moreover, the workshop served the purpose of discussing not only the individual research projects with ICDD faculty members, but also the first steps in the PhD process itself, like developing a solid research proposal and conducting a literature review.

- **PhD Methods/Theory Workshop (2011)**

The second workshop followed in the same place immediately afterwards, all ICDD PhD students participated, thus including also the first cohort. Following up on the previous thematic workshop on research methods in 2010, this event primarily revolved around reflecting on theoretical concepts of relevance in the ICDD context. Pivoted among them was “development”, to which thus a full day has been devoted during which faculty members in cooperation with PhD students problematized this concept from the perspectives of political science, economics and agricultural science. Further workshop sessions dealt with class and social protection, ecology, informal labor and sustainable supply chain management. Almost developing into a “tradition”, issues related to the last aspect have then been analyzed also very practically during an excursion day at which participants travelled “along a supply chain” from a big South African Brewery towards a small family-run pub in a Township of Johannesburg. As this workshop at the same time constituted as the yearly meeting of the PhD group with ICDD faculty members, an important part of the workshop was not at least devoted to discussing current issues of each individual project in smaller working groups.

5. Professors and Scholars

- **Prof. Dr. Devan Pillay**

Faculty of Sociology-WITS/GLU Deputy Chair

Associate professor at WITS. Also GLU deputy chair. Has published extensively on issues relating to globalization, social movements, civil society, industrial relations, labour history, media and society, and contemporary South African politics.

- **Prof. Dr. Roger Southall**

Faculty of Sociology-WITS/SWOP

Staff associate and head of the department of sociology. He is an Honorary Professor in Work and Development Institute (SWOP). Founder of the HSRC's State of the Nation project and editor of the Journal of Contemporary African Studies. He has also published extensively on African politics, political economy and labour in leading academic journals, as well as contributing chapters to numerous books.

- **Prof. Dr. Edward Webster**

SWOP/COSATU

Professor Emeritus in the SWOP and director of the Chris Hani Institute in COSATU House. He is an internationally recognized sociologist and pioneered the study of labour in South Africa, and is the author of six books and over one hundred academic articles as well as numerous research reports. His research interests have expanded over time into studies of the democratic transition, including the economic dimensions of transition, with a growing focus on processes of informalisation of work and the economy.

- **Prof. Dr. Michelle Williams**

Faculty of Sociology-WITS/GLU chairperson

Former member of the Centre for Indian studies in Africa (2007-2011), the chair person for the Global Labour University Programme at WITS, and also a member of the Development Studies program's board. Her research and teaching interests include political sociology, development, social movements, alternative economic and political systems such as the solidarity economy, social theory, democratic theory, qualitative research methods, and comparative historical analysis.

- **Dr. Sarah Mosoetsa**

Faculty of Sociology WITS/NIHSS

Associate researcher in the society, work and development institute and senior lecturer in the sociology department at WITS. She has published in both local and international journals including Labour, Capital and Society, Transformation, and Journal of Southern African Studies. She has recently published a book entitled Eating from one Pot: Dynamics of Survival in poor South African households.

- **Dr. Themba Masondo**
- **Dr. Crispen Chinguno**
- **Dr. Katherine Joynt**
- **Dr. Asanda Benya**
- **PhD Fellow Wellington Mvundura**
- **PhD Fellow: Andrew Gowan Bennie**
- **PhD Fellow: Ruth Castel-Branco**

Acknowledgments / Disclaimer

Editorial Team:

Photos:

Page 5: Organogram, ICDD files.

Page 8: Prof. Dr. Edward Webster, available in: <http://www.wits.ac.za/swop/staff-and-postdoctoral-fellows/prof-edward-webster/> , used with permission.

Page 9: Prof. Devan Pillay, Available in: <https://www.wits.ac.za/staff/academic-a-z-listing/p/devanpillaywitsacza/> , used with permission.

Page 14: Alumni Applied Research school (AARS 2011), ICDD files.