

Speech from Simon Carter, Regional Director, Canada's International Development Research Centre, Nairobi.

PEP Policy Forum 2017

Your Excellency Sicily Kariuki, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs, Kenya

Ms Njambi Kinyungu, Chef de Cabinet, Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kenya-representing Cabinet Secretary Amina Mohammed

Dr. Mustapha Nabli, Chair of the PEP Board of Directors,

Colleagues,

It is my great pleasure to say a few words at the opening of this PEP Policy Forum.

On behalf of IDRC, I would like to thank you all for joining us today. I would also want to thank the UK's Department for International Development, represented today by Yolanda Chakava of the DFID Kenya office for the excellent partnership we have in support of PEP

I would like to thank the ever-energetic PEP team for the organisation of the PEP conference and the policy forum today. I would like to acknowledge and thank Professor Mustapha Nabli, and Marie-Claude Martin for their leadership in the Board of PEP.

Many more people need to be thanked, but on this occasion allow me to highlight the role Professor Jane Mariara has played, having taken on the role of PEP Executive Director during the last year – her leadership is

extremely important and on behalf of my IDRC colleagues I thank her for the energy and collaborative spirit which she brought to the partnership.

For many years now, PEP has been a critical partner for IDRC. Since 2002, it has trained over 800 researchers in developing countries, including in countries with very low income. PEP and IDRC believe that top-quality research and evidence is critical to promote inclusive economic growth, and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. And that research should be carried out by local researchers. In many cases, PEP supported research has directly informed pro-poor policies, such as Nigeria's first national protection Scheme.



The photo you see behind me is of Mrs. Felicia Jegede, a 71 year old widow, who received a cash grant of US 32. Research led by Dr Olajide showed the positive impacts cash grants can have, thus directly influencing policy.

Over the years, PEP has continued to evolve. In each program cycle it focuses on topics that are pertinent for the major development challenges. Today's Policy Forum demonstrates this clearly. Globally, including here in Africa, unemployment is one of the key development challenges. PEP is supporting research that helps promote economic opportunities, including

the development of entrepreneurship. And it focuses on the critically important issue for Africa opportunities for youth and women

Finally, we are very proud to be working with PEP on gender equality. As some of you know, Canada's Minister for International Development and La Francophone, on. Marie-Claude Bibeau, announced Canada's new International Development policy last Friday



As was widely expected, given the lead from our Prime Minister, this is a Feminist Policy. Canada is putting gender equality and women's rights at the heart of its policy, nationally and internationally.

Our partnership with PEP is a fantastic asset in this respect. The research PEP supports speaks loudly for the partnership's commitment to gender equality: today's policy event will focus on the barriers women face in exploring economic opportunities, and this afternoon there will be a special session on experiences with gender analysis in policy research, and priorities for future work to meet our commitment on gender. And PEP's commitment to gender equality of opportunity is highlighted by its own

practices: PEP trains as many female as male young researchers-which in the field of economics I am told is a fantastic achievement

Once again, let me thank our distinguished guests for joining us, the Chair, the panellists, speakers, participants and organisers for contributing to this important policy forum and what I am sure will be an enormous success.