Rural Economies in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Global Politics of Local Change

Institute of Advanced Studies, University of Warwick, Tuesday 14 September 2010

Despite trends of urbanisation, the majority of people in sub-Saharan Africa still live in rural areas and still account for the bulk of the continent’s poor. Nevertheless, debates about economic policy remain centred round macro-economic stability, the promotion of mineral exports and further urban-rural migration. While the need for greater economic diversification, agrarian support and rural development is recognised, it has generally been marginalised in policy terms.

By bringing together research on policies and projects that have sought to stimulate poverty reduction in rural areas, this workshop seeks to re-affirm their importance whilst critically engaging with their form. It does so from a global and political perspective, highlighting the reciprocal cross-border relations between seemingly remote locations in sub-Saharan Africa and the final markets and foreign ministries of the Global North.

In particular, papers given at the workshop will address such issues as:

- What are the constellations of power (corporate, state, and social) promoting economic transformation in rural areas?
- What discourses guide international and domestic policy on rural economic change?
- How have local initiatives or resistance been received and have they been mainstreamed into international policy?
- How do problems of geographical and political distance from national or provincial capitals manifest themselves?
- What interventions can be made within the UK – especially by researchers – to promote rural development on the continent?

Please send a paper title and abstract to Ben Richardson at B.J.Richardson@Warwick.ac.uk by Friday 2 July 2010.

Presenters will be able to claim expenses for return travel within the UK. Lunch and refreshments will be provided.