

Harvard Law School, UCT collaborate in faculty development initiative

Harvard Law School will collaborate with local business, academic institutions and a law firm to address policy issues in Africa. Its Institute for Global Law and Policy (IGLP) has initiated a faculty development initiative with the University of Cape Town in South Africa.



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The initiative, which is co-sponsored by Bowman Gilfillan Africa Group and Old Mutual, aims to strengthen law teaching and scholarship and to nurture innovative approaches to global policy throughout Africa.

Professor David Kennedy, who heads the IGLP, explains, "The IGLP conducts annual workshops at universities with a view to empowering junior, doctoral and post-doctoral students in the fields of law and economic policy and facilitating creative dialogue among young experts from around the world. We are excited to bring this initiative to Africa for the first time."

Because of the initiative, 56 young scholars from 30 African countries gathered in Cape Town for an intensive week of peer-to-peer discussion and mentoring alongside 47 senior faculty members from 18 countries and 32 universities.

Chosen from a globally competitive pool of over 250 applicants, each scholar brought an ongoing project for discussion, placing the next generation of African scholars in collaborative policy and regulatory conversations with their global peers

as they addressed pressing issues in their own countries.

Participants in the workshop were encouraged to recognise the link between academic endeavour and policy. They were able to discuss regulatory and policy solutions and ideas in small teams and research groups, setting in motion the processes needed for positive change.

Faculty and participants alike stressed the intensity and value of the policy discussions. The young African participants were equally enthusiastic about their experience.

Local support

Deon de Klerk, partner and head of Bowman Gilfillan Africa Group's Corporate Practice said, "We are proud to be part of Harvard's IGLP initiative. Its aims to create a hub for African scholarship at UCT and to support the emergence of innovative ideas about the role of law in African economic and political life tie in well with our core competence in law and our own long-standing engagement in Africa."

Joel Baepi, chief legal adviser at Old Mutual said, "We must ensure we work with communities and other partners to build a better world by contributing to education, skills development and local economic development. The group supports this initiative for two reasons. First, we recognise that the problems that the world and specifically our continent face will require an exceptional brain trust to analyse and solve. We support the development of comprehensive and enabling governance frameworks that will create growth possibilities for the continent and ensure fairness and justice for its citizens. Second, as we grow into different markets on the continent we wish to promote cooperation and to establish relationships."

De Klerk concluded, "We believe that this initiative is the start of great things. We encourage participants to continue their collaboration and strengthen their network relationships with one another and the wider IGLP global network."

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