

Evaluating a sustainable future for African education

'Education is the critical tool that can not only create a sustainable future for Africa. but play a vital role in the protection and enhancement of human rights and good governance across the continent', was a key takeaway from a recent webinar facilitated by Professor Kathija Yassim from the University of Johannesburg Faculty of Education.

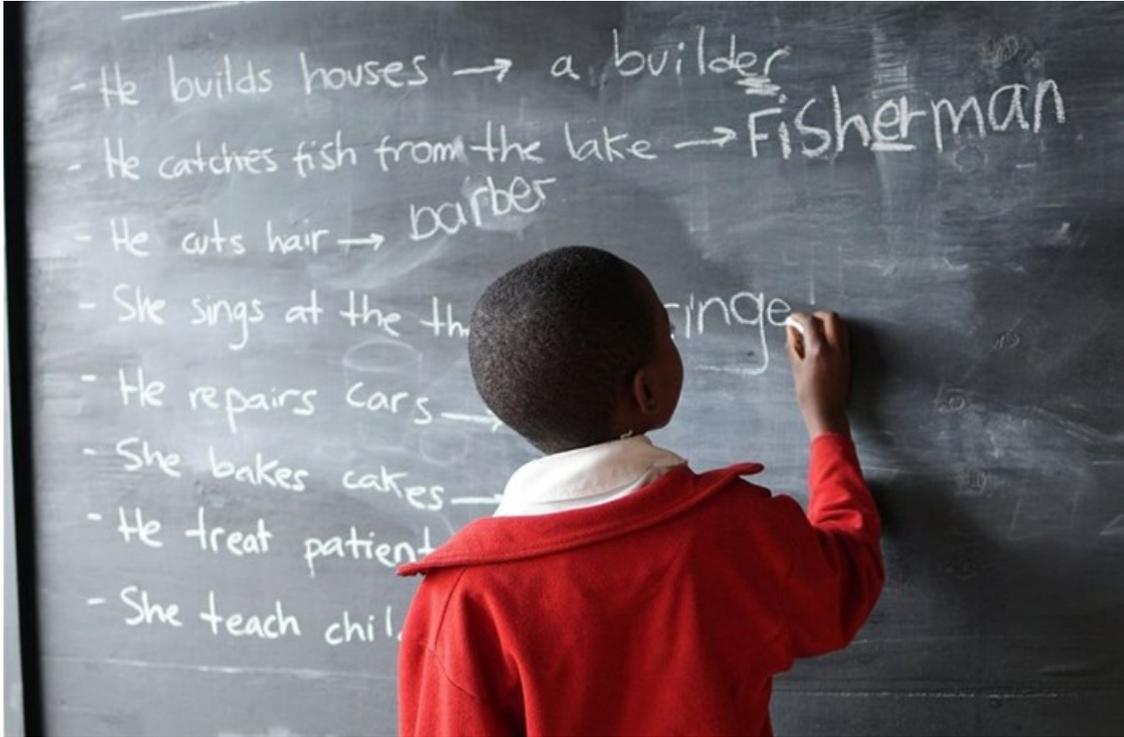


Photo by Dario Fernandez Ruz via www.pexels.com

The “A Sustainable Future for African Education” webinar, hosted by Kagiso Trust in partnership with the University of Johannesburg (UJ) at the end of May, sought to shed light on the current state of education in Africa, explore potential solutions, and foster collaboration towards achieving a prosperous continent based on inclusive growth and sustainable development.

Three themes were discussed: Education for Sustainable Futures – how to enhance education in Africa; Education, Entrepreneurship and the World of Work – acknowledging Africa’s current lack of preparedness for the world of work; and Leading Education for Sustainability and Inclusive Growth – the importance of inclusivity in African education, particularly for women, people living in rural areas, and those without access to technology for learning.

Professor Chinaza Uleanya of UJ’s Education Leadership and Management of Johannesburg spoke of the significance of Africa Day as an annual commemoration of the achievements and potential of the African continent but said there was a need to assess if the African Union (AU) had actually achieved its objectives.



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“Education is the only tool capable of sustaining the future,” said Phuti Ragophala, an associate at UJ. “Teamwork and collaboration among all stakeholders are needed to improve education. To sustain the future we need flexible education resources that accommodate people from diverse backgrounds and emphasise the significance of lifelong learning. We

need to focus on developing relevant skills to empower students to pursue their passions, start businesses, and achieve their goals.”

Brightness Mangolotho, a director at HERS-SA (Higher Education Resource Services South Africa), discussed the AU's aspirations and the role of higher education in producing skilled labour to ultimately transform the continent. “The United Nation's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) underscore the need for people-centred development to address issues of poverty and inequality in Africa. We need to be a united Africa, which we are currently not with the high number of gender-based violence cases we experience. Education is about good governance and human rights, and through it, we will be able to progress.”

Dr Beate Stiehler-Mulder, a senior lecturer at UJ who teaches digital and strategic marketing, urged participants to focus on developing new skills to thrive in a rapidly evolving job market. The job titles that are in demand in today's changing world need creative problem-solving, adaptability and openness to change.

“We have the power to make the change for the Africa we want,” said Mandisa Tselane, Head of Marketing and communications at Kagiso Trust in closing the webinar. “Continuous education is needed if we are to embrace a sustainable future in education. We need to prepare our educators for problem-solving and a changing world of work. The future world of work requires a new mindset.”

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