‘Innovation policy in turbulent times’

Michael Kahn

‘Innovation policy in turbulent times’ examines the role of innovation in the context of the global financial crisis the multipolar world as manifested in the rise of the BRICS countries, the commodities boom, and the problematique of sustainability. The New Scramble for Africa presents a unique opportunity to Africalics to assist countries in shaping their innovation policies to address these challenges. This requires careful study of the historical and structure of the nascent innovation systems that function across the African continent. Enhancing the capacity for policy formulation, planning and management is central to this, and an associated evidence base is thus vital. This in turn demands both skills in measurement of what is relevant, the assembly of secondary data, and its interpretation, The presentation offers such insights through STI indicators, including patent and plant cultivar statistics, as well as exploring the need to interpret some innovation survey data differently. Resource nationalism is part of the new reality that countries are grappling with; specifying demand and deciding what investments must be made in science and technology are common problems. What is certain however is that investment in the human resource base, especially SET, is essential.