

## Engineering Education Workshop - Zimbabwe (16-17 November 2011)

On 16-17 November, the Academy, as part of the Africa-UK Engineering for Development Partnership, helped facilitated a two day engineering education workshop at the Zimbabwean Institution of Engineers in Harare. The workshop brought together 40 leading academics and policy makers from 11 different sub-Saharan African countries to explore how engineering education in SSA could be improved and better aligned with international development goals. The workshop also allowed the Africa-UK Partnership to gather informed opinions and recommendations on the future work of the Partnership in the field of tertiary education.



Delegates were welcomed by Dr Sanzan Diarra, CEO of the Zimbabwean Institution of Engineers, and the keynote speech was delivered by Eng. Samuel Kundishora, Permanent Secretary at the Zimbabwean Ministry of ICT. Other speakers included Professor Luc Rukingma, Director of the UNESCO office in Harare, Eng. Wilson Nyemba, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Zimbabwe, and Professor Duncan Fraser, from the University of Cape Town, as well as senior academics from Swaziland, Malawi and Uganda.

Speakers discussed the need for improved engineering education across Sub-Saharan Africa to boost the economy, build infrastructure and deliver the millennium development goals. Key needs included the updating and localisation of teaching approaches and curricula, the inclusion of advanced technologies such as ICTs, the development of soft skills, and a better roll out of quality assurance and accreditation of degrees. There were particular challenges facing the higher educational sector in the continent, including lack of



suitably qualified staff and up-to-date equipment, and difficulties in finding industrial placements for students and identifying opportunities for knowledge transfer, which could be tackled in co-operation with international partners. Across all countries, there was a pressing need to show public and politicians the attraction of engineering as a career and the vital role engineers could play in driving economic and human development.

The Academy was represented at the workshop by Holly Wright, International Policy Advisor, who gave a presentation on the forward programme of The Africa-UK Engineering for Development Partnership.