

**Re-imagining the SDGs**  
**Online Creative Writing Workshop for young writers participating in the**  
**Championing the Decade of Action Initiative**

**Parallel Session ARFSD 4-5 March 2021**

**Day 1:**

**2-5 PM Addis Ababa Time**

**Session 1: Opening Session**

- *Why we are here* with **Prof. Kimani Njogu** Linguist and Cultural Scholar, CEO Twaweza Communications
- **Poetry Recital** by a Young Poet (5 mins)
- **Welcoming Remarks by Jean-Paul Adam**, Director Technology Climate Change and Natural Services Division (TCND) - **(5 mins)**: The Context – African Regional Sustainable Development Forum and the importance of exploring how issues of poverty eradication, climate change, migration, technology, human rights and gender equality can be woven into compelling short (fiction) stories.

**Session II: SDGs Overview:**

- **Sustainable Development Goals**; Why the goals, what do they mean in a time of COVID-19.

*3-minute health break (short video)*

**Session III: *Crafting SDG Themes into Compelling Short Stories*** with Peter Kimani, Author, 'Dance of the Jakaranda,' a New York Times Notable Book of the Year & 'Nairobi Noir' Editor;

A clichéd, if necessary, question in creative writing, is: what comes first, the narrative or the story theme? This analogy, evocative of the chicken-or-egg dilemma, conveys the interconnectedness of the two processes. You cannot have one without the other. While an emphasis on either one could easily overwhelm the other, only compelling, well-crafted stories can bear the weight of thematic storytelling. In this Workshop, we shall learn how to balance the two competing, yet complementary demands, and how to master the art of storytelling.

- What is a short story?
- The structure of a short story
- Deconstructing a short story: (Participants will read and respond to a story assigned ahead of class)

**Bio: Dr. Peter Kimani** is a leading African writer of his generation. He has published three novels – including *Dance of the Jakaranda*, a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year and Editors’ Choice Selection for 2017. Dr Kimani has taught at Amherst College and the University of Houston. He chaired the 2019 Caine Prize for African Writing—the continent’s preeminent literary prize and mentorship programme. His latest effort, *Nairobi Noir*, released in 2020, is a short story anthology featuring generations of Kenyan writers.

- **Day 2: 5<sup>th</sup> March**
  - **Quick overview of some priority SDGs:** climate change (ACPC); Poverty eradication and inequality, gender equality (GPSD) and how the 3 broad issues relate to migration, technology, human rights, health/covid-19

**Training Session continues: 2-5 PM Addis Ababa Time**

**Session 11: Craft of Writing Continues**

- Recapping Day 1

**Craft of Writing Continues**

- Constructing powerful narratives
- Powerful beginnings
- Plot and narrative arc
- Setting
- Characters come to life: Point of view
- Enticing dialogue: Voice and tone
- Powerful endings
- Revising and editing

**Conclusion:** Mercy Wambui, Focal Point, Championing the Decade of Action, Economic Commission for Africa