

Pandor urges African scientists to solve African health problems

Allafrica.com reports that science minister Naledi Pandor has called for increased efforts by African nations to build both a greater ability to carry out research relevant to their specific health challenges, and the capacity to put such research to use.

Speaking at the opening of Forum 2012, a three-day meeting on health research which opened in Cape Town, Pandor said it is essential that "African researchers become involved in finding solutions for the problems of Africa."

She made explicit reference to Africa's reliance on drugs and other tools discovered and developed outside the continent, and urged that "African-led innovation should be applied to address African health needs". Organised by the Geneva-based Coalition on Health Research for Development (COHRED), Forum 2012 is an international meeting being held under the title 'Beyond Aid', which identifies research and innovation as "key drivers for health, equity and development".

According to Allafrica.com, Pandor noted that South African scientists are actively engaged in new research in areas ranging from gene therapy to tissue engineering. "But such work will only prove useful if we can develop strategic mechanisms aimed at turning fundamental research findings into innovative treatments," she said.

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