

# CERM-ESA

East and South African-German Centre of Excellence  
for Educational Research Methodologies and Management



## Newsletter 1/2020



## Table of Contents

Editorial	3	Consultative Forum of the Deans, Schools of Education in Kenya	14
Letter to CERM-ESA	4	Pre-Primary Teachers' Workshop	15
Graduation Ceremony at Moi University, December 2019	5	Second Postgraduate Workshop at the Centre	16
Congratulatory Message	5	Digitalising Teaching at the Centres of African Excellence: CERM-ESA as Partner in a New Project to Establish Online Teaching and Training Modules Across Africa	17
Master Research Topics	6	CERM-ESA Networking and Social Visibility	18
Meet the New Scholarship Holders	7	CERM-ESA in Brief	22
Capacity Building for Lecturers and Supervisors of the West African Centres of Excellence (CABLES@WA2019) in Ghana	10	Project Partners	22
Curricula at the Crossroads: The Role of Universities in Kenya	12	Contact	23

## Editorial

A very busy year 2019 ended joyously for CERM-ESA with the graduation of 10 Master's and one PhD scholarship holders at the Centre (Moi University) just before Christmas. We congratulate the graduates and welcome them in the CERM-ESA alumni programme!

The letter to CERM-ESA by one of our recent graduates, Roba, on the next page shows that one cannot expect all to be well and easy after having earned a Master's degree. Any support or ideas how to show solidarity with our alumnus as the new school principal and with the learners of Turbi Girls High School are highly appreciated ([cermesa@uol.de](mailto:cermesa@uol.de)).

Among the many activities CERM-ESA was involved in during the second half of 2019, the contributions to current developments concerning the new Competence Based Curriculum (CBC) and teacher professional development in Kenya need to be highlighted. CERM-ESA not only hosted a most relevant colloquium on the CBC to discuss the role of universities as teacher education institutions, it also brought together Deans of the Schools of Education at Kenyan universities to discuss the operationalisation of the 'National Deans of Education Forum'. Moreover, a three-day professional development workshop for Early Childhood Educators at the Centre was met with great enthusiasm. Through these activities, CERM-ESA was able to show its potential role in opening spaces for dialogue between academia, politics, school representatives and practitioners and in contributing to teacher education and professional development in Kenya.

Another highlight to be mentioned is the new DAAD funded 'Digital Initiative for African Centres of Excellence (DIGI-FACE)', in which CERM-ESA is a partner. In the coming years, CERM-ESA is tasked to develop six generic modules for online and blended learning, which are mainly based on our capacity building courses on supervision, research coherence and university pedagogy. In this way, CERM-ESA can lead its activities in the field of capacity building to the next level.



CERM-ESA wishes all its partners and supporters around the world a wonderful and prosperous New Year 2020!

Kenyit nelel nebo boiboiyet!

Mwaka mpya nyenye furaha!

Nibenonyaka omhle!

Frohes Neues Jahr!

As this newsletter is published, we are preparing to start our 6th Annual Research School with all scholarship holders, associated students and supervisors coming to Nelson Mandela University for a two-week intensive learning programme. Currently, CERM-ESA has 17 fully funded Master's and 10 PhD students enrolled in its programmes.

Enjoy reading our Newsletter!

On behalf of the CERM-ESA team,

Susan, Malve, Lily

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## Letter to CERM-ESA

"I must acknowledge the positive impact that DAAD has had in my career. As a way of giving back to the community, I have been appointed as a principal of a girls nomadic secondary school (Turbi Girls High School). The appointment was in recognition of my prestigious Master's degree in research and the community is really proud of my achievement.

However, the appointment comes with challenges and the expectations are high because they see me as a role model who is capable of bringing change. The girls in our community have been marginalized for long by retrogressive cultural practices like early marriages, circumcision and many other factors that have denied them opportunities to access education. Turbi Girls High School was built purposely to create a paradigm shift through community initiatives.

Currently we have admitted 50 students but we have numerous challenges; to mention but a few: we don't have a science laboratory, we lack a dining hall, we don't have staff houses except the principal's house, we only have two classrooms.

The majority of our students come from families that are less privileged and can't even pay their school fees. The school is located in the area with an infamous history of cross-border conflict. In the year 2005 the town was invaded by Ethiopian militias, where over sixty people were massacred - among them 38 pupils of Turbi Primary. Thousands of livestock including camels, cattle and shoats were driven away leading to abject poverty. The town has not yet fully recovered. There are still frequent attacks as recent as July 2019.

This is to kindly ask you through your global networks and the DAAD to support us, e.g. through the construction of facilities and, if possible, to sponsor the best girls in terms of performance to help realize their dreams of quality education.

Thank you and I wish you all the best."

**Roba Godana Galgalo**



## Graduation Ceremony at Moi University, December 2019

### Congratulatory Message

By Lily Yego

The graduation for our second cohort of students took place on the 18th of December 2019 at the Moi University, main campus graduation square. A day before the graduation, the Centre held a graduation party for the CERM-ESA scholarship holders that was attended by the University administration members, faculty members, CERM-ESA family as well as the graduates' family members.

The graduation marked a milestone for the project and the students. It is the height of an academic journey of persistent commitment and sacrifice of everyone involved. The day was celebrated with pride and joy for the achievement.

It is indeed a great joy that all the scholarship holders managed to graduate in the record time of two years. Their performance was remarkably good as from the academic results and the remarks from the speakers of the day. Dr. Lelan, the Head of Department of Educational Manage-

ment and Policy Studies (EMPS) that the students graduated from, in his speech said: "the students were thoroughly taken through research. We give thanks to the Centre for bringing a change in research in the University".

We are grateful to Moi University, School of Education, the hardworking supervisors under the leadership of Prof. John Chang'ach and the co-supervisors from the partnering universities, for the support towards achieving incredible success.

During the ceremony, the graduates were received into the CERM-ESA alumni programme in order for them to be involved in CERM-ESA activities in the future as well. We trust that they are prepared in all spheres to take up the challenges of academia and life to come. It is our wish that they better their communities and the world through the knowledge they acquired.

**Congratulations!**



Completed her PhD with CERM-ESA successfully: Dr Janeth Chemeli with her Moi University professors

## Master Research Topics

### 1. ROSE KANANA NJAGE

DETERMINANTS OF FIRST YEAR STUDENTS' PREPAREDNESS FOR TRANSITION TO UNIVERSITY IN KENYA

**Supervisor:** Dr. Charles Too

**Co-supervisor:** Prof. Logamurthie Athiemoolam

### 2. MARK SIRIMBIRI WAYA

TEACHERS' PERCEPTION ON THE ROLE OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL IN ENHANCING TEACHING AND LEARNING IN SELECTED PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KAKAMEGA COUNTY, KENYA

**Supervisor:** Prof. James Sang

**Co-supervisor:** Prof. Gerald Kagambirwe Karyeija

### 3. EKIRU SIMON ESEKON

EXPLORING THE USE OF GENDER-ATYPICAL KISWAHILI CHILDREN'S STORIES TO ADDRESS GENDER STEREOTYPING AMONG LEARNERS IN A SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOL IN TRANS-NZOIA COUNTY, KENYA

**Supervisor:** Dr. Sammy Chumba

**Co-supervisor:** Prof. Mathabo Khau

### 4. IDA JARIBU ANDREW

EVALUATION OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION PROMOTION AMONG THE UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM'S STUDENTS IN TANZANIA

**Supervisor:** Dr. Joyce Kanyiri

**Co-supervisor:** Dr. Joyce Sifa Ndabi

### 5. ELIZABETH KAMBA MURITHI

EXPLORING THE ASPIRATIONS FOR HEADSHIP AMONG FEMALE ADMINISTRATORS IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA

**Supervisor:** Prof. Catherine Kiprop

**Co-supervisor:** Dr. Philipo Lonati Sanga

### 6. ROBA GODANA GALGALLO

STAKEHOLDERS' PERCEPTIONS OF NGOS' CONFLICT INTERVENTIONS ON PARTICIPATION RATES OF STUDENTS IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MOYALE-SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

**Supervisor:** Dr. Emily Bomett

**Co-supervisor:** Dr. Proscovia Namubiru

### 7. MANDELA NELSON

COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR PARTICIPATION TOWARDS SUSTAINING COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KINKIIZI WEST, UGANDA

**Supervisor:** Dr. Wambua Kyalo Benjamin

**Co-supervisor:** Prof. Raymond Boniface

### 8. OLAO EVANS MOS

THE USE OF PARTICIPATORY VISUAL METHODS IN TEACHING CHARACTER EDUCATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD SETTINGS IN KENYA

**Supervisor:** Professor Bernard Misigo

**Co-supervisor:** Prof. Dr. Karsten Speck

### 9. DAVID KIPKEMBOI LAGAT

EXPLORING STAKEHOLDERS' COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS IN ENABLING INCLUSION OF LEARNERS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT IN SELECTED WEST POKOT COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOLS, KENYA

**Supervisor:** Prof. David K. Serem

**Co-supervisor:** Prof. Naydene De Lange

### 10. ANN WANJIKU MWANGI

PERCEPTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY ON TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN TRANS-NZOIA COUNTY, KENYA

**Supervisor:** Dr. Wilson Kiptala

**Co-supervisor:** Prof. Sylvan Blignaut



All 10 CERM-ESA graduates celebrating in the CERM-ESA auditorium

## Meet the New Scholarship Holders

In September 2019, a new cohort of nine Master's and two PhD scholarship holders started their study programmes at the Centre at Moi University. In the highly competitive selection process, seven female and four male students from Kenya and Uganda succeeded and won a DAAD sponsored scholarship for two years (Master) and three years (PhD). While CERM-ESA only sponsors three Master's students, the other eight scholarships are funded through DAAD's 'In-Region Scholarship Programme', which Moi University successfully applied for in 2018. It is a great pleasure to see also CERM-ESA alumni succeed: Janet Ronoh and Cornelius Rugut, CERM-ESA Master's graduates, won the PhD scholarships and are back on our CERM-ESA programme! The CERM-ESA family welcomes the 2019 cohort of scholarship holders and is looking forward to engaging with you!



**Josephine Odera** is a graduate teacher of English and Literature. She has always dreamt of becoming an education

expert, something that will be beneficial especially for policymaking and policy implementation in the education sector. The scholarship came in handy as she looks forward to adding her voice to the never-ending education debates in Kenya. She says, "I am grateful to DAAD through CERM-ESA for this golden opportunity to pursue a Master of Education Research at Moi University", her face beaming with excitement. Her preliminary topic "Stakeholders perception on CBC (Competency Based Curriculum) in Kenya" has come in at a time when the Kenyan education system is experiencing a new education system and school curriculum. With the change in the Kenyan education system and the raging debate, it is clear that a lot of research still needs to be done in the educational sector with regard to the CBC, hence, her choice of topic.



**Maingi Josephine** is a graduate teacher of History and Religious Education. Upon receiving the scholarship,

she was excited and grateful to see how her desire to be a contributor in the field of knowledge was coming true. Thanking the sponsor and the CERM-ESA community, she echoed the words of Isaac Newton that "If I have seen far it is only by standing on the shoulders of giants". DAAD is my giant". Her research area is on 'how learners with disabilities reconstruct their academic ability', looking at the extent to which inclusive education enhances social inclusion. Her special interest in children with special needs has been influenced by her close relationship with learners with special needs and having them in her inner circles. This particular interest has driven her to carry out a study in this field with a great desire to see education equity and proper presentation enhanced to all children despite their difficulties in carrying out activities of daily life.



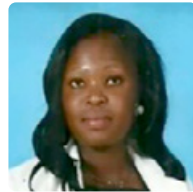
**Margret Angulu** from Kakamega County in Kenya, is a graduate teacher of Geography and Kiswahili. She has

been teaching before enrolling for the Master's degree. Her experience in the field raised her interest in educational research. She says, "I would like to do research so that I can contribute to the knowledge and most especially participate in policymaking and implementation for better education in my society, country and globally. This programme will help me acquire skills and knowledge on how to go about it." Upon receiving the scholarship, she said "I am so delighted that my dream of climbing the ladder in education to greater heights is now being a reality. My desire to participate in policy making in education will now be possible. I appreciate DAAD through CERM-ESA for the scholarship. You have changed my life". Her proposed topic is on "School Based Factors on the Rate of Pregnancy in Secondary Education in Khwisero sub-County". She hopes to understand how

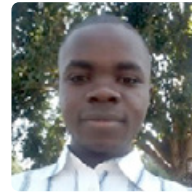
the school environment contributes to either reducing or increasing pregnancy cases among secondary school girls.



**Noel Japheth** spent a night of excitement after receiving the letter of award from DAAD on 24th of July, 2019 for the 'In-country/In region scholarship' under CERM-ESA. DAAD has always been my hope in relation to my academic motives since my first graduation. After receiving my rejection letter for the 'DAAD In country/In region scholarship-Uganda in 2018', my academic interests became broadened and internationalized, hence pinpointing CERM-ESA scholarship as the way to go for 2019 academic season. Being born from a very humble background, I take it as a privilege to communicate to my community that even children from very poor backgrounds can climb higher ladders in academia and leadership. Graduate unemployment being a threatening issue in Uganda provokes me to put my research focus on 'Curriculum and employability of university graduates in African contexts'. I appreciate DAAD for this excellent opportunity.



**Mercy Cheruto** is from Laikipia County in Kenya, she is a graduate teacher of English and Literature. She was elated to receive the award as she hopes that it marks the beginning of her scholarly journey. It has always been her dream to climb academic heights and inspire young girls that everything is possible through hard work and determination. Her earnest desire to pursue a Master's degree and specifically in research is to have prerequisite skills and knowledge to carry out research in the education field. Mercy's research topic is on 'The assessment of the re-entry policy for students who have dropped out of school due to teenage pregnancy'. Her interest originates from her scrutiny of her surroundings. Despite the introduction of the re-entry policy in 1994, many girls still drop out of school after getting pregnant and do not get the chance to go back and complete their education. This therefore has propelled her to probe why the number of girls dropping out of school is on the rise.



**Akampwera Aloyzius** comes from Ntungamo district in South-Western Uganda. He is a graduate teacher of Kiswahili language from Kabale University. His zeal for education is geared by his consciousness to become a responsible and impactful person to his community in future. He is interested in "Investigating the impact of school culture on academic performance of students in secondary education level", as he is inspired by the existing phenomena in schools around his home area when he looks at teachers, principals and other education practitioners. Aloyzius hopes that on uncovering the causes and effects of both teachers' and students' practices, the entire community will appreciate the results of their efforts in education. He is now influenced by Kurt Levin's critical theory that believes in democracy, equity, liberalism, and life enhancement to change individual's life status. Aloyzius is delighted to have received the CERM-ESA scholarship. He quotes philosopher Victor Hugo: "No man can be strong and powerful enough to defeat an idea whose time to happen has reached" he says, "CERM-ESA has finally lifted my hand towards the academic tower".



**Miriam Katusiime** is a Ugandan graduate teacher of ICT and Geography from Uganda Christian University. She is extremely happy and thankful to DAAD for the opportunity of giving her a chance to further her studies, which has always been her dream. Thus, she is excited about what lies ahead of her in terms of new experiences and the various types of academic work she will be engaging in. She is hopeful and optimistic that she will gain much from this scholarship. During the past years, Miriam has developed a strong interest to undertake research in her field of education in her country. She says 'Education research is a key in any education system' and therefore she looks at herself as well positioned to contribute to education research especially through her proposed Master's research topic "Perceptions and strategies of female administrators regarding the gender regimes in urban secondary schools in Uganda". This opportunity will enable her acquire the research knowledge and skills to achieve her dream.







**Cherotich Carolyne** from Kericho County in a Kenyan graduate teacher with a Bachelor of education in History and

Religion from Moi University. She received the CERM-ESA scholarship award with pride and says “the award provides an opportunity for me to realize my dreams of improving education uptake and dissemination by leveraging on latest technologies. Carolyne’s proposed topic is on “How modern technology affects education today and in the future.” She has unique skills of mobilization, teamwork and mentorship having been a class teacher in her former school. Her motivation behind the study is that education access levels using conventional modes are still low due to limited avenues of access and dissemination. With the advent of modern technologies, there will be a paradigm shift in terms of pedagogy that will provide an opportunity towards improved methods and practices of teaching. The intended outcome of the study is to enhance capacity among the teachers as well as students in the community schools.



**Innocent Muhwezi** is from Kabale District, Western Uganda, a graduate of Bachelor of Education of Kyambogo

University. He has worked as an Assistant Education officer at Duces High School in Kabale and a course coordinator for B.Ed. in Kyambogo University. He is a footballer, an athlete, and likes singing, writing, reading education texts and watching education and technology movies. Upon receiving the award, he was really grateful for the opportunity from DAAD to realize his education dream. He had this to say; “My academic dream of being a professor has a light for the Master’s degree will be the firm foundation for my Doctoral studies in the near future. I am grateful to DAAD via CERM-ESA for the Scholarship at a noble University - Moi University”. His research interests are in the area of Education accessibility. He wishes to establish the effect of family-related factors on learner school attendance in Secondary schools.



**Cornelius Rugut** is a graduate teacher of History and Christian Religious Education. He is a PhD candidate at Moi

University, School of education. He holds a Master of education in Research from Nelson Mandela University, South Africa and a Bachelor of education degree from Moi University. Rugut is a national examiner at the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) and a dedicated church leader and youth empowerment community director.



**Janet Chepchirchir Ronoh** is currently undertaking her PhD in curriculum studies at Moi University Kenya

under the East and South African-German Centre of Excellence for Educational Research Methodologies and Management (CERM-ESA) as a DAAD scholarship holder. She holds a Master’s degree-Cum Laude in Education Research from Nelson Mandela University, South Africa, and a Bachelor’s degree in Education (Arts) from Moi University. She has ten years’ experience working as a trained teacher of Mathematics and Geography in a Kenyan secondary school. She is the representative of CERM-ESA alumni in the African Excellence Network (AEN). She also works co-operatively with peers as an education counselor and as a youth motivational speaker. Her research interests are indigenous knowledge and education curriculum, research methodologies, education psychology and academic writing.

## Capacity Building for Lecturers and Supervisors of the West African Centres of Excellence (CABLES@WA2019) in Ghana

### October 2019

After two successful CABLES trainings for the Southern African Centres of Excellence in Port Elizabeth and for the Eastern Centres of African Excellence in Zanzibar in 2018, the regional Centres that had not been offered CERM-ESA's capacity building programme were the West and Central African ones. To close the cycle, the third offering of CERM-ESA's Capacity Building Programme for Lecturers and Supervisors (CABLES) was offered in Accra in October 2019. A group of 25 participants representing the

- **West African-German Centre of Excellence for Governance for Sustainable and Integrative Local Development**
- **West African-German Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Rural Transformation**
- **Congolese-German Centre of Excellence for Microfinance**
- **Ghanaian-German Centre of Excellence for Development Studies and the**
- **Namibian-German Centre of Excellence for Logistics**

engaged in questions of postgraduate supervision, research coherence, curriculum development and interpersonal competencies for excellent teaching. The week-long professional development programme was again sponsored by DAAD particularly for those lecturers, researchers and supervisors, who contribute to the success of the Centres of African Excellence. It was the first time for CERM-ESA to organise a bilingual capacity building programme in English and French and we were anxious how the simultaneous interpretation would work. All teaching materials and presentations had been translated from English into French and at all times during the workshop, simultaneous interpreta-



Participants and facilitators of CABLES@WA2019 in Accra



Listening attentively ...



... 'silent walk' looking at the research posters ...



... vividly discussing ...



... and re-energising through music and dance.

tion was available. The extra effort paid out during the workshop, where equal levels of engagement by the English and French speaking participants were shown. The feedback provided in the evaluation of the CABLES@WA2019 programme was overwhelmingly positive. The top level facilitators from South Africa and Kenya, Prof Michael Samuel, Prof Naydene de Lange, Prof Laban Ayiro and Ann-Mart Olsen, were praised over the moon for their excellent teaching and facilitation. The written feedback included statements that expressed the overall satisfaction with the CABLES@WA2019 programme:

***“The programme and the chosen topics were excellent.”***

***“All sessions were great and helpful – innovative, practical tips, capacity building, new vision of things.”***

***“I have taken a lot of methodological ideas for my own research projects and supervision.”***

***“The atmosphere of the event was very engaging and motivating (group work, dancing, clapping,...).”***

***“You have impacted me to take into account the human aspect of supervision - we are first human and then we are supervising the student.”***

The next step for CERM-ESA is to modularise its capacity building offerings and turn it into online and blended learning modules, which can be offered by and for all Centres of African Excellence

## Curricula at the Crossroads: The Role of Universities in Kenya

During the month of August 2019, CERM-ESA organised an international colloquium that brought together a group of South African, Kenyan and German academics, practitioners and officials to discuss the role of universities as teacher training institutions in the development, change and implementation of new school curricula. The colloquium was held at the Meridian Best Western Hotel in Nairobi. Besides representatives and actors from Kenyan universities and institutions, South African and German experts in the field shared their experiences of school curricula and their challenges of curriculum change. The aim of the colloquium, which was opened by Moi University's Vice Chancellor, Professor Isaac Kosgey, was to initiate an international dialogue between teacher educators, policy makers and practitioners about their experiences and challenges concerning school curriculum changes and implementation. The special



focus of the colloquium was on early childhood development, an area where the new Competence Based Curriculum in Kenya has been implemented. Professor Paul Webb from the Nelson Mandela University clarified: "Our task is not to judge whether the new competence based curriculum

[in Kenya] is good or not. We are here to discuss general issues around school curriculum changes and specifically want to look at the opportunities these changes offer in terms of improved pedagogy and instruction for various subject fields." The Dean of the School of Education at Moi

University and initiator of the colloquium, Professor John Chang'ach, adds that: "The universities feel they have been left out in the process of designing and implementing a new school curriculum while we are the ones who train new generations of teachers. It is high time that we as universities become part of the debate and share our insights, listen to the teachers and take our responsibility to help our children learn in better ways." Approximately 50 academics, educators and policy makers participated in the colloquium and shared their expertise in the interdisciplinary forum. Among the key actors were Prof Laban Ayiro, Vice Chancellor of Daystar University, Dr Julius Jwan, Director of the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development, Prof Michael Samuel of the University of Kwa Zulu Natal, Prof Karsten Speck of Oldenburg University. Shortly after the end of the colloquium, a position paper was published providing recommendations for key actors

in the universities and for teacher education and teacher professional development and submitted to the Kenyan curriculum reform taskforce. The position paper argued for a joined-up rather than adversarial policy dialogue around all matters related to educational reform initiatives. It acknowledges connected but separate focused roles of different stakeholders in ensuring

the interests of learners in school reforms. It suggests illustrative projects that could advance the agenda of the universities developing a more active and respected role in the wider education system. Collaboration, respect and dialogue are key goals to establish a shared system. Identified key structures to sustain and maintain the ongoing professional development of teach-

ers and the education system have been proposed. Matters of financing and governance should form the next procedural steps in activating this agenda of possibilities. Above all, a shared commitment to enhancing the capacity of learners and teachers within a situated specific schooling system in the Kenyan context must underpin all reform initiatives. Ideals can

become realities when responsibilities are democratically developed and negotiated rather than imposed. This position paper suggests how this dialogical relationship and respect can be fostered. The meeting climaxed with CERM-ESA accepting to sponsor the 2nd Deans consultative forum spearheaded by Dr Ciriaka Gitonga, Embu University.



If you want to read the position paper, you find it here:

[cermesa.uol.de](https://cermesa.uol.de)



## Consultative Forum of the Deans, Schools of Education in Kenya



The Deans of the Schools of Education with the VC of Moi University, Prof Isaac Kosgey (middle) and guest speaker Prof Michael Samuel

In support of Education reforms in Kenya, CERM-ESA hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> consultative forum of the Deans of the Schools of Education in Kenya on the 4<sup>th</sup> and the 5<sup>th</sup> of December 2019 under the theme **“Operationalizing the Deans of Education Forum”**. Attendees of the forum included over 30 Deans of Schools of Education from both public and private universities with a stake in teacher education. The host

Dean, Prof John Chang’ach, welcomed the members and set the agenda of the meeting. For a long period, the voice of the Deans of Education was rather silent or lacking. The Forum therefore will enable educators’ concerns to be channelled and thereby inform policy and practice in education in general and teacher education in particular. The Forum was officially opened by Prof Isaac Kosgey, the Vice

Chancellor of Moi University. In his speech, Prof Kosgey challenged the Deans Forum to go beyond the debate on the competency based curriculum and think about the future of education in Kenya. In particular, he challenged the Forum to explore how it will bring on board all other key stakeholders so as to learn from them. Prof Kosgey assured the Forum that Moi University was supportive of the Forum and would

provide any support required to champion its cause. The Forum invited Prof Michael Anthony Samuel from the School of Education of the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, to share his experiences as former chairperson of the National Deans of Education Forum in South Africa. At the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> consultative forum, it was clear that the meeting was a watershed moment for the members who were trying to find, determine and establish their place and role in the changing landscape of education in Kenya. The interim Chair of the Deans Forum, Dr. Ciriaka Gitonga, the Dean of the School of Education of Embu University, reminded members of the need to develop timelines for the operationalization of the Deans Forum. The closing remarks were delivered by Prof Carolyne Omulando, the Dean, School of Education, Alupe University College. She encouraged members to be bold in championing for quality education in Kenya. She challenged members to clearly understand who they are and to appreciate their potential in driving the education agenda in the country. CERM-ESA is proud to be part of this milestone of education initiatives in Kenya. ‘Long live CERM-ESA’ as echoed by the Deans.

## Pre-Primary Teachers' Workshop

By Lily Yego and Susan Kurgat

Following the discussions during the Colloquium on the Competence Based Curriculum (CBC) in Nairobi in August, the Centre organized its annual 'Teacher Professional Development Days' particularly for pre-primary teachers in late October 2019. In line with CERM-ESA's core goal of the second phase, to put more effort to teachers' professional development, this workshop aimed to offer pre-primary teachers a platform for exchange, networking and support on the newly introduced CBC. There was a hundred percent turn-up of the invited pre-primary teachers and the County Education officers in the region. The workshop's main aim was to empower teachers who were directly involved at the beginner stage of the Competency Based Curriculum. It was done with the hope that the teachers would be enabled to use the new curriculum in their classrooms for the



benefit of the Early Learners at pre-primary 1 and pre-primary 2 years of schooling. Chaired by Dr. Susan Kurgat, Dr. Mary Kerich and Dr. Lydia Kogo, the workshop included inputs and exercises on the CBC. Particularly, these topics were covered: (i) creative teaching methodologies in the early years, (ii) connecting and communicating with parents, (iii) learning through play, (iv) developing resources for pre-primary education and the (v) development of new curricula and creative learning environments for pre-primary education across the world. All the sessions were participatory and the teachers were enthusiastic throughout the workshop. From the reports, the teachers commented that the workshop

was an eye-opener to them since they got better equipped to handle their learners in their classrooms, as stated by one of them, 'the knowledge on variations of methodology in the classroom is very useful'. They were thankful to the organizers and funders of the workshop since the interaction with teachers from the different schools were avenues of sharing ideas guided by very competent facilitators. During the closing ceremony officiated by the Dean and CERM-ESA project leader, Prof. Chang'ach, the teachers were awarded certificates of participation in the three-day workshop. Prof. Chang'ach urged them to do service for humanity. In attendance was Dr. Lelan who represented the Coun-

ty Education Office and the teachers were happy to raise some of their questions that needed the attention of the County government. Thanks to the Sub-County office for allowing the teachers to attend the workshop, which was a rare occurrence for pre-primary teachers.

Sarah Jemutai, CERM-ESA PhD scholarship holder and one of the facilitators of the workshop sent a message after the event saying: "The big conference at Moi University came to an end today. It was sooooo awesome! How I wish it could be extended for just a day. CERM-ESA is doing marvelous things for the community around the university. The teachers were so inspired!"

## Second Postgraduate Workshop at the Centre

By Lily Yego

The second offering of the postgraduate workshop took place at the Centre on the 20th of August 2019. More than 120 academics and postgraduate students from the School of Education took part in the workshop, which was developed based on CERM-ESA's Research Schools and Capacity Building programmes, in order to stimulate innovative research activities in the wider School of Education. Selected experts of Moi University took the participants through abstract writing, quantitative and qualitative research methodologies and academic writing techniques.

The participants were very happy that CERM-ESA fulfilled the promise of hosting them again. From the reports, they emphasized that the workshop was very motivating since the topics were useful for their own studies and research projects. Just as expressed in the first workshop in April 2019, the students have strong levels of agreement to remain linked to CERM-ESA as they see the Centre as a hub that enhances research and encourages networking amongst the students in the different disciplines in the School of Education. However, a number of participants found

that the programme was too packed and that the topics had to be rushed through and hence, they requested that the overall length of time allocated for each facilitator be extended. Some of the suggestions for future CERM-ESA postgraduate workshops included that different, innovative research methodologies should be in the focus as well as digital literacy skills that would aid the students in data analysis and the writing of their theses. The Steering Committee is also thinking about ways to include international facilitators from the CERM-ESA network in future postgraduate

workshops at the Centre, in order to support this important initiative and expanding on the School of Education's international exchange.



## Digitalising Teaching at the Centres of African Excellence: CERM-ESA as Partner in a New Project to Establish Online Teaching and Training Modules Across Africa

By Bernd Siebenhüner

Lead by the University of Applied Sciences at Kehl, Germany, CERM-ESA participates in a new project initiative to develop and implement an interactive digital learning platform and online training courses in the Centres of African Excellence. Following a call for proposals by DAAD, Prof. Ewald Eisenberg put together a consortium to establish an online tool to support the Centres of Excellence in bringing their modules and teaching into the virtual space. Apart from the installation of small recording units at each Centre, this project called “Digital Initiative for African Centres of Excellence (DIGI-FACE)” involves

capacity building on blended and online teaching as well as the digitalisation of thematic offers and modules in each Centre.

As discussed in a first project workshop in November 2019, CERM-ESA’s tasks include the development of highly connective and ready-to-use software based on existing platforms at the Centres. This part is under the responsibility of the Nelson Mandela University (Prof. Paul Webb, Prof. Johan van Niekerk, Eldridge van der Westhuizen). Thematically, CERM-ESA is responsible to develop six generic modules out of existing capacity building modules to be offered by all Centres of Excellence

in future. These modules are (i) technology-enhanced teaching and learning I&II, (ii) research coherence, (iii) research methodology in African contexts, and (iv) research supervision.

It is the vision of this project to involve geographically separated participants to become part of a community of learners and practitioners of interactive digital learning progress and reflexive research supervision. Based on a thorough needs assessment, this endeavour will help students, doctoral candidates, alumni, lecturers and research supervisors to contextualise their learning and research issues within their

own disciplines and institutional policy frameworks. The project design is based on established learning theories such as the ‘brain-compatible learning design’. It should allow the Centres to reduce travel efforts and to reach remote university locations and learners in their home environments. The launching event will be held early March 2020 in Port Elizabeth involving all interested DAAD sponsored Centres of Excellence in Africa.

## CERM-ESA Networking and Social Visibility

### Presentation at the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the DAAD funded Centres of Excellence

A part from the Centres of Excellence in Africa, DAAD has been running another programme, which funds Centres of Excellence in various disciplines in other parts of the world. Among others, there is a German-Columbian Centre of Excellence in Marine Sciences and a German-Southeast Asian Centre of Excellence for Public Policy and Good Governance. As representatives of its 'sister programme' in Africa, CERM-ESA was asked to do a presentation on its activities at the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Centres of Excellence Programme in Berlin in November. In his talk, Prof Bernd Siebenhuener, one of the CERM-ESA project leaders of Oldenburg University, focused on CERM-ESA's comprehensive approach to building capacities on all levels including postgraduate students and lecturers, teacher educators and teachers, university administrators and top university management. The audience recognised the benefits of CERM-ESA's strong partnership between the five partner universities



and acknowledged the constructive collaboration and learning in all directions among the partners. They also admired the strong network of all 11 Centres of African Excellence, facilitated e.g. through the annual Networking Meetings and the CABLES programme as a useful tool to take the individual projects further and support their progress from the DAAD office.

If you are interested in DAAD's Centres of Excellence Programme, have a look here:

[www.daad.de](http://www.daad.de)



### CERM-ESA participates in the 'African Network for Internationalization of Education (ANIE)' Conference in Nairobi

The African Network for Internationalization of Education (ANIE) held its 9th Annual Conference at the Kenya Institute for Curriculum Development, Nairobi, from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> of October 2019. Its theme was on 'Africa, Internationalization and the global context: Making it work'. The conference brought together leading researchers, practitioners, policy makers, university leaders, students, and key stakeholders engaged in higher education in Africa and beyond. CERM-ESA, represented by the project leader, Prof. Chang'ach, the project coordinator, Dr. Kurgat and the project

assistant, Lily Yego, actively participated in the workshop. The conference consisted of four different formats, namely paper presentations, round table/dialogue sessions, panel sessions and workshop sessions. CERM-ESA participated in the panel session discussion and presented on 'African Centres of Excellence: Are they making a difference?' The panel session provided an opportunity for coordinated interaction and exchange amongst the presenters and the plenary. Questions and pertinent issues related to the theme were asked and responded to by the three presenters.



Participants of the ANIE conference

## CERM-ESA Alumni present at UMI conference and meet project team

Three of CERM-ESA's alumni were accepted as presenters at the 2nd International Conference on Governance and Service Delivery in Developing Economies, organised by CERM-ESA partners at the Uganda Management Institute (UMI) in Kampala. Dr David Ssekamatte and Prof Proscovia Namubiru welcomed Ann Karanja, Zainabu Ramadhan and Sarah Jemutai warmly and assisted them with accommodation and finding their way around so that it became a very special experience for the three. Ann, reporting on the conference, said: "It was a week that I myself can't get enough words to describe. It was a great learning experience. We learnt a lot from the other presenters and from the discussions on good governance, leadership, service delivery, education management and evaluation. We were also able to 'rub shoulders with prominent people'. For instance, a dinner on Tuesday with his Excellency Thabo Mbeki from South Africa and the Ugandan top politicians like the Minister of Foreign Affairs who spoke on human solidarity and social cohesion." Zainabu added that the interaction with the other conference participants was very construc-



Sarah, Ann and Zainabu participating in the conference in Kampala

ive: "On the day of my presentation, I was well prepared and presented on the issue of plagiarism in African universities. Surprisingly, even the scholars attending had a problem understanding the scope and social problematic of plagiarism." After a long week of presentations, Ann, Zainabu and Sarah enjoyed the cultural programme that was organised for the conference participants. "We also enjoyed the cultural diversity at the cultural centre and an excursion around Kampala city on Friday. It was all great. The whole experience was so fulfilling, I feel that I am a better person after the conference and feel more motivated going forward," Ann said. Thanks to David and Proscovia, who proved that CERM-ESA is a well-functioning family!

## DAAD meeting in Nairobi for the 'In-Country/In-Region scholarship programme'

The project coordinator, Dr. Susan Kurgat, together with project assistant Lily Yego, attended the regional networking meeting for the 'In country/ In region DAAD Scholarship programme' on 10th and 11th October 2019 at the Sarova Stanley Hotel in Nairobi. The participants of the meeting took this time to welcome the new DAAD Office for Africa Director-Nairobi, Ms. Beate Schindler-Kovats. The key discussions in the meeting included: presentations of

DAAD programmes in Africa; presentation of in-country/ in-region programmes and overview of DAAD processes and procedures; what works, what does not, lessons learnt and experience sharing and finally, brainstorming and an exchange of ideas on the DAAD selection procedure for the intake 2020. On the last day of the workshop, there was a handing over ceremony of the signed affiliate agreements between DAAD and the attached institutions.



'Participants of the 'In-Country/In-Region scholarship programme' meeting in Nairobi



Susan and Lily receiving the affiliate agreement certificate from Beate Schindler-Kovats in Nairobi

## PhD scholarship holder Ayanda Simayi presenting on cultural taboos

Ayanda Simayi, our Nelson Mandela University and CERMESA PhD scholarship recipient in the faculty of Education has presented a paper in India in early January 2020. The aim of the Eighth International Conference was to review research in science, technology and mathematics Education (EpiSTEME 8). It was held at the Homi Bhabha Centre of Science for Science Education, Mumbai.

Ayanda's paper titled "Asibizi: teaching human reproduction in rural Eastern Cape schools", is about taboos and ingrained cultural beliefs that prevent teachers talking about content viewed as culturally sensitive. The paper explores cultural taboos and their possible influence on how they restrict the teaching of Life Science concepts of a sexual nature in terms of language and lexicon use; namely, what teachers are allowed to say, the words that they are allowed to use, and language issues that they avoid. This paper presented taboo restrictions on language and lexicon, namely 'the things we do not talk about' (asibizi), and explored reflections shared by teachers of Xhosa culture on how they

teach sensitive, human reproduction content to learners of the same culture residing in traditional, rural communities. The paper, co-authored by Professor Paul Webb, has drawn considerable interest from the conference participants.



PhD candidate Ayanda Simayi  
at the conference in Mumbai

## 10<sup>th</sup> Networking meeting of the Centres of African Excellence in Dakar

The 10th Network meeting of the Centres of African Excellence took place between the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 21<sup>st</sup> of September 2019 at the Centre Africain d'Études Supérieures en Gestion (CESAG) Dakar, Senegal. The meeting was kindly hosted by the West-African German Centre of Excellence for Local Governance in Africa (CEGLA). All the DAAD funded Centres of Excellence in Africa were present. CERM-ESA was proudly represented by the project leaders Prof Karsten Speck, Prof Paul Webb, Prof John Chang'ach and Dr Susan Kurgat. The theme of the meeting was 'Networks for Sustainable Impacts on African Development – in which ways can network activities enhance scientific capacities and impact in sub-Saharan Africa?'. The climax of the meeting was the inauguration ceremony of the Centre of African Excellence for Local Governance (CEGLA). The ceremony was presided by H.E. Oumar Gueye, Minister of Local Governance, Development and Planning. A lot was shared in the meeting and links created in order to maximise synergies among stakeholders in science, politics and the



Participants of the 10<sup>th</sup> Networking Meeting in Dakar

public. Other topics included quality management and setting common standards, digital networks and e-learning formats for the Centres. We were accommodated in the beautiful tourist hotel Le Ndiambor and were treated to an emotional tour of the Goree Island, which has a history of the 15<sup>th</sup>- to 19<sup>th</sup>-century Atlantic slave trade. We truly enjoyed the hospitality extended by all the CEGLA project staff. Thanks a lot to Merlin Kull for his exceptional organization and communication!

## CERM-ESA calendar of events August 2019 – June 2020

Date	Activity	Location
30-31 August	Workshop with experts, stakeholders and practitioners: Curriculum at the Crossroads in Kenya - The role of universities?	Nairobi / Kenya
1 September	Nine new Master's and two new PhD scholarship holders (DAAD / CERM-ESA) take up their study programme at the Centre	Centre / Moi-U
18-21 September	Networking meeting of the Centres of African Excellence in Dakar and official opening of the 'West-African-German Centre of Excellence for Local Governance in Africa'	Dakar / Senegal
September / October	The 2018-2020 cohort of eight Master's scholarship holders defend their research proposals	Centre / Moi-U
10-11 October	DAAD In-Country/ In-Region Scholarship Programme Meeting	Nairobi / Kenya
14-19 October	Capacity Building for Lecturers and Supervisors (CABLES@WA2019) for the West African Centres of Excellence	Accra / Ghana
October	2017-2019 cohort of 10 CERM-ESA Master scholarship holders successfully defend their theses and complete their study programme	Centre / Moi-U
28-30 October	In-service teacher professional development days: Early Childhood Education	
18-19 November	DIGI-FACE Workshop with partners from Mandela University and Kehl University	Oldenburg University
4-5 December	National Education Deans' Forum Consultative Meeting	Centre / Moi-U
18 December	Graduation of CERM-ESA graduates	
27 Jan – 8 Feb	6 <sup>th</sup> CERM-ESA Research School with scholarship holders, associated students and supervisors	Mandela-U / Port Elizabeth
6-8 February	CERM-ESA Steering Committee and DIGI-FACE meetings	
2-6 March	Digital Initiative for African Centres of Excellence (DIGI-FACE) Kick-off meeting	
March	CERM-ESA scholarship announcements	Website
April	DAAD In-country/In-region scholarship selection for Master's and PhD students at the Centre	Nairobi
	Capacity Building for Lecturers and Supervisors (CABLES@UDSM2020)	UDSM / Dar es Salaam
May	Teacher Professional Development Programme	Centre / Moi-U
June	CERM-ESA scholarship selection 2020	Centre / Eldoret

## CERM-ESA in Brief

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Homepage:

[www.cermesa.uol.de](http://www.cermesa.uol.de)

## Project Partners



**Moi-University, Eldoret and Nairobi**

[www.mu.ac.ke](http://www.mu.ac.ke)

The Moi University School of Education is based in Eldoret and offers various undergraduate and postgraduate courses. It plays a vital role in educational development in the region.



**The Nelson Mandela University**

[www.nmmu.ac.za](http://www.nmmu.ac.za)

The NMMU is one of the leading universities in the field of teacher education and education research in South Africa. It cooperates with universities all over Africa and beyond.



**University of Oldenburg**

[www.uni-oldenburg.de](http://www.uni-oldenburg.de)

The University of Oldenburg builds on an almost 200-years long tradition in teacher education and is known for excellent, research-oriented study programmes in initial teacher education and the professional development of teachers.



**Networking Partners**

<http://www.umi.ac.ug/>

<https://udsm.ac.tz/>

The Uganda Management Institute and the University of Dar es Salaam complement CERM-ESA research, teaching and staff development with specific expertise in educational and management sciences.



## CERM-ESA Programmes

CERM-ESA has four major programmes that run concurrently.

1. The objective of the **Research Programme** is to build research capacity in the partner Schools of Education for sustainable institution building and excellent, innovative educational research in, about and for Africa.

2. The **Academic Programme** includes scholarships for postgraduate students in East and South Africa and focuses on teaching and training of future leaders in terms of research methodologies, innovative management solutions and instruction techniques on Master's and Doctoral levels.

3. The **Capacity Building Programme** offers opportunities for academic, teaching and administrative/management staff of all partner Schools of Education to further their education through professional development courses and workshops.

4. The goal of the **Teachers Professional Development Programme** is to support teachers and principals to advance their competencies in relevant areas of educational practice, curriculum implementation and management in their local contexts.

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# CERM-ESA

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