

# CERM-ESA

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



## Newsletter 1/2023



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## Editorial

After almost 10 years of existence, our Centre of Excellence is busy and thriving with our scholarship holders graduating, new scholarship holders coming on board, capacity building programmes running online and on-site, alumni progressing in their career and a number of publication projects being in the pipeline. 10 years of funding is a long time and we are grateful to DAAD for the opportunity to work and engage meaningfully with one another as reliable and responsible partners.

Our partnership, however, was shaken when DAAD decided to cut 10% of project budgets in 2022 due to the global crises and cuts in government funding. We are convinced that especially in times of global crises, wars, and fatal inequalities, international cooperation, dialogue and reliable partnerships are pivotal to tackle the challenges.

Due to the budget cuts, we could not carry out our teachers' professional development programme at the Centre, the field research support for our students was drastically reduced and the on-site capacity building programme for lecturers and supervisors at the Uganda Management Institute was cancelled. But in the academic programme, we were able to facilitate a magnificent 8th International Research School for all our scholarship holders at the Nelson Mandela University. It was wonderful to meet and engage with one another in person again - you are welcome to read some reflections on the two weeks in Gqeberha in this newsletter.



Our next cohort of scholarship holders, who began their postgraduate studies in September 2022, introduce themselves in this newsletter. And if you want to learn more about the relevance of education and education research, you are invited to read two wonderful stories of engagement and agency from two of our alumni in South Africa and Kenya.

We are going to celebrate the fruits of the 10 years of CERM-ESA and reflect on the achievements, obstacles, and developments later this year. Our final conference 'The Future of Educational Research in African Contexts' will take place at the Centre at Moi University in early October. We hope to see many of you – CERM-ESA's friends, family, supporters and funders – there: Karibu Eldoret 2-4 October 2023!!!

Enjoy reading our newsletter!

Susan & Malve (project coordinators)

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## Meet our new scholarship holders 2022



My name is **John Karanja Ranji**. I hail from Gilgil Subcounty, Nakuru County, Kenya. I am an alumni of Moi University and CERM-ESA, having done my Bachelor's degree in Education (Early Childhood and Primary Education) and a Master's degree in Education Research both from Moi University. It is the best feeling to be back here for my PHD. Having benefited through CERM-ESA for my Masters, I am eternally grateful to DAAD. Currently I am a center manager and tutor at Morning star teacher training college, Nakuru, where I teach mathematics, physical education, foundations of education and Kiswahili as I manage the running of the institution. My passion and lifelong goal is to become a self-actualized individual and an advocate of change through being the voice for the voiceless through educational empowerment mostly for learners with different disabilities. My research interest is on inclusive education specifically on parental empowerment and engagement in the inclusion of differently enabled learners in selected primary schools in Kenya: "strategies and challenges involved".



**John Samson Magara Mgejwa** was born on 27th August 1988 at Ragata village found in Bunda District in Mara-Tanzania. He started his journey of education in 1997 at Ragata Primary School, in 2004 joined ordinary secondary level of education at Bulamba Secondary School (Ward School) where he completed his studies in 2007. In 2008, John Samson Magara Mgejwa worked as a volunteer at Nassa Primary School found at Busega district in Simiyu Region as Math and Science Teacher. He then joined advanced secondary level of education in 2009-2011 at Twitange Secondary School found at Sengerema district in Mwanza region, taking Economics, Geography and Mathematics. While he was at Twitange Secondary School, John Samson Magara Mgejwa became the 5th Winner of 2010 Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) Essay Competition in Tanzania. He was selected to study a Bachelor of Arts with Education (Economics and Mathematics) from 2011 to 2014 at Jordan University College, a constituent college of St. Augustine University of Tanzania (SAUT).

He was among six students awarded a DAAD In-Country/In-Region Scholarship to study a Master of Education Planning and Administration at Jordan University College in Tanzania (2018-2020), while studying his master's degree, he was selected by his fellow students to be the President of Jordan University College Students' Organization (2019-2020).

Furthermore, John has worked at the Institute of Rural Development Planning Lake Zone Centre-Mwanza (This Institute is under the Ministry of Finance and Planning) as a tutorial assistant (Mathematics and Statistical Methods) (2016-2018, 2020-2021), Kiloleli Secondary School in Ilemela Mwanza (2015-2021), St. Peter's Junior Seminary in Morogoro-Tanzania (2014).

In 2020, John Samson Magara Mgejwa was among 39 candidates of Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM) who contested for being elected to represent Mwibara Constituency, Mara-Tanzania in the 2020 Tanzania General Election through Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM) on Member of Parliament Position. This is because he has a dream of becoming a prominent leader in Tanzania. He has also a dream of establishing a Research

Training Centre for the benefit of society.

Currently, John is working as an Assistant Lecturer at the Institute of Accountancy Arusha, this Institute is also under the Ministry of Finance and Planning in the United Republic of Tanzania. John S.M Mgejwa is currently pursuing his PhD in Educational Research and Evaluation at Moi University in Kenya under CERM-ESA) funded by the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD). His area of research is on the economics of education.



My name is **Erick Otieno**, from Alego Usonga, Siaya County Kenya. I did my First Degree in Education Arts (Geography, History, Archaeology and Political studies) at Kenyatta University Nairobi, where I graduated with a First-Class Honours in 2021.

I am a teacher by profession with diverse pedagogical/ teaching skills and currently pursuing a Master of Education in Research at Moi University (Kenya). My area of research interest is the utilization of teaching and learning resources by ge-

ography teachers in Secondary Schools in Ugunja Sub-County, Siaya County Kenya.

I have proven to be an excellent student of education with outstanding academic performance as evidenced in my previous undergraduate degree studies. I am deeply passionate and enthusiastic about teaching, as it not only allows me to interact and mentor learners, but also to nurture them. My desire is to be the best teacher by impacting positively in the field of education. This made me to serve in the education sector as a secondary school teacher at Agoro Sare Mixed Secondary School in Homabay County Kenya.

My ultimate goal is to become a university professor, where I can conduct research, instruct and develop students in the field of Geography Education and other related areas. My sincere appreciation goes to CERM-ESA-DAAD for the scholarship award, not forgetting Dr. Susan Kurgat, Mr. Noel Japheth and Ms. Stella Sang for their unwavering support. The master's degree will provide a firm foundation of my scholarly journey in becoming a researcher and an educationist.



My name is **Jean Paul NYABYENDA**, and I was born in the year 1994 in the Nyaruguru district / of Rwanda. I was born at a time of great difficulty in Rwanda: during the Genocide against the Tutsi of 1994 - and grew up hoping to create a better country for all Rwandans through my education and volunteer activities. With hard work and determination, I graduated from the University of Rwanda College of Education with a Bachelor of Education (Honor) History in the year 2018. I am proud that I have managed to do this - even more so because I come from an economically weak family, and it was never easy for me as a pupil and also later as a student to compensate for the disadvantages it brings with it. Since 2020 I have been working as a history teacher at Karembure Secondary school located in Kigali city. Here I have contributed in many ways, shown commitment, and made a decisive contribution to improving cooperation between teachers, pupils, and parents and to increasing the quality of education and teaching. Alongside my regular work as a teacher, I was able to take part in the "Young Citizen Training Program" (YCTP) organised by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung

(FES) Rwanda in 2021. In nine monthly modules, which took place mostly online due to Covid and improved my digital competence, we came together as a group of 24 participants with various national and international experts. In addition to the thematic parts, there was an extensive "soft skill" program, and I was also able to complete this civil society training in October 2021. The most interesting part of my life, in 2022 I have been awarded a DAAD scholarship to study Master of education in Research at Moi University under the CERM-ESA project. I would like to give something back to my country Rwanda as a professor of educational research at the University of Rwanda. I strongly believe that the DAAD scholarship opened doors for me to achieve my own professional goals and make an important contribution to education in Rwanda. Having been born in a single mother-headed household, I grew up in one of the most economically disadvantaged families and the situation has exposed me to different vulnerable situations. I am the only one in my family to have attained a university-level degree, the rest haven't had chances to go to school at all and they are illiterate. As an individual who experienced such a difficult situation, the DAAD scholarship has profound mean-

ing in my life as a lift that I am going to stand on to achieve my career goal and write a new family record. My topic of interest is the role of the secondary school environment in enhancing adolescent mental health promotion as a way of preventing mental health illness in adulthood. Being part of DAAD scholars is a golden opportunity to meet with champions and like-minded people to share experiences and perspectives with the world leaders of tomorrow on how to eradicate the challenges affecting the education sector in my country and across the globe. It also provides an ideal platform to discuss possible solutions to the world's biggest challenges such as ending poverty by 2030 on earth, coping with the aftermaths of Climate change, world conflicts, wars, and gender equity, among other things.



Hello! I am **Mabior Man-yok Gong**, from South Sudan. Call me a researcher. I am passionate about the problem of

quality in teaching and learning in Sub-Saharan Africa, with a typical example being in my country. And that is where my area of current Masters research is based on.

To begin with, I am dedicating the first few sentences in this letter to appreciate the German Academic exchange service (DAAD) and the CERM-ESA team at Moi university for making my dream come true. Actually, before the DAAD came to my rescue, I had exhausted all my prayers, wishes and a few helpless-teacher's resources at my disposal in pursue of Master's studies; but failed.

### **How is it possible that I am in class today doing my Master's programme?**

Allow me to answer this question with a brief success story of mind. When I was called to attend the interview for the DAAD scholarship on 3rd March 2022, I was in the Sudanese capital, Khartoum. I received the news enthusiastically. However, due to regular protests that were going on as a result political instability by then, my interview would be impossible as there was no free movement and access to internet. So,

I had to travel by bus to the Sudan-South Sudan border where I would attend my interview in my friend's small office having a generator-powered WIFI.

### **Did you know that my hope for the scholarship dropped to zero percent by that time?**

In fact, as the online interview started, the generator went off unexpectedly because of a technical problem according to that organization's mechanic. I was disconnected from the DAAD-CERMESA's interview panel. But, thank God! And thanks to their effort! Having tried by all means possible, the panel caught up with me through WhatsApp.

And, finally, today, I am here studying educational research at Moi University. I really like the course. I am now learning research techniques. Most notably, I enjoy quantitative research methods. I believe, these studies will help me learn data collection and data analysis strategies amongst others, which will make me an expert in the field of educational research.

I am very glad that I have met very experienced lecturers in the field of research at Moi university. In addition to that, it is a privilege for me to connect with students from other part of Africa. For example, I have known professionals from Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and others.

Important to mention is what motivates me to opt for research in "quality assurance of teaching and learning". I do assume that there is always impact of students' performances (considering the process of a student acquiring a good grade) in secondary school on their future university career.

As per now, I cannot give clear evidence that it is true my country is far and far behind the world in terms of quality education. But preliminary indicators have shown that, most students pass their form 4 examinations with controversial excellent grades, however such students have been reported to have failed in their careers at the university. Not only that, also for them to acquire admission or scholarship at other world-class universities is a problem. Why? This research study will answer the question.

"This problem is not happening in South Sudan alone, it is also in Kenya, the problem is existing in the whole African education systems", said one of my professors at Moi university.

**I have got a role to play, in this case:** upon completion of my research project, I will have documented reliable and valid findings that will help future researchers, education practitioners and Ministries of education in Africa in tackling issues of quality assurance in education.



**Usman Ahmed Guni** is a Nigerian-born international student currently pursuing his master's Degree in research at

moi University. He was born and raised up from a nomadic family in a rural community of Maisamari village in Taraba State, Mambilla plateau of Nigeria. Usman started his early Nomadic primary education in 1994 at Tamnviya village and later proceeds to high school at GDSS Mbamnga by the year 2000. In 2010, he obtained a Nigeria Certificate in Education at the federal college of education, Yola, Adamawa State from where he proceeds to Bayero University Kano, and graduated with B.Sc. (ED) Agriculture from the department of Science and technology education by the year 2019. In the same year, August 2019, he was posted to serve for a one-year mandatory national youth service in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, in the department of forestry and wildlife management. Usman considers himself a student without borders.

Immediately after the national youth service, he was employed by Adamawa State government through the ministry of education to teach in high schools and hitherto he is a classroom teacher and a registered member of Teachers registration

council of Nigeria (TRCN) which is a professional body for all qualified teachers.

Usman was awarded the DAAD Scholarship in partner with CERM-ESA to pursue a Master's degree in research on 22nd July, 2022, though he had enjoyed a number of scholarships during his undergraduate program in his alma mater on the basis of merits.

The DAAD scholarship is not just only a succor, but also a life changing opportunity for all beneficiaries because of its partnership with world-class universities. The journey involves both curricular and extra-curricular activities that are far beyond theoretical explanation. One will hardly understand unless if he/she is part of the team or is blessed to grasp the opportunity to be under the umbrella of this benefactor.

I view the DAAD scholarship as an excellent opportunity for me to actualize my age-long ambition for teaching, learning and conducting groundbreaking research in academia that can place me to the apex lane of academic environment and to contribute my quota to the educational sector and the national development at large. My area of interest is the gender parity index in education.



**Mbui Sylvia Mishi** is a Kenyan who hails from Kilifi County, Kilifi North Sub-County and Tezo ward. She started her education journey at Bahati Preparatory school and then she joined Ribe Girls Secondary School. Later she joined Moi university for her undergraduate studies. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Education Special Needs Primary option and she specialized in hearing impairment. She is a highly enthusiastic responsible, hardworking, self-motivated and all-round individual. She is highly adaptable and productive in the field of educational special needs. In her teaching journey Mishi has taught at several schools including Sahajanad Special School in Mtwapa, Marafa Special School in Marafa, and Juba Primary school in Dagahaley Refugee Camp and Bidii Primary School in Hagadera Refugee camp in Dadaab Refugee Camps. Current she's doing her Master's Degree in Education Research at Moi University her topic of concern is on EVALUATION OF FACTORS AFFECTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION POLICY IN SAHAJANAD SPECIAL SCHOOL.



**Abigael Jepchumba** graduated from Moi University with a Bachelor's degree in education (special needs) education for visually impaired learners.

She is passionate about teaching and interacting with special needs learners. She is deeply passionate about researching students in special needs education focusing on visually impairments. Her proposed Master's research topic is on the effects of integrating assistive technology for teaching and learning among visually impaired learners.

As the world is moving to a digital era, this study will help the visually impaired learners to meet their tremendous need for education and cope with dynamic nature of technology in teaching and learning.

## CERM-ESA 8<sup>th</sup> research school photos



## CERM-ESA 8<sup>th</sup> research school reflections

### MERCY CHEMUTAI BARASA at Nelson Mandela University during the 8<sup>th</sup> CERMESA Research School

The warm reception by Prof. Paul Webb at the airport in Gqeberha on the night we arrived was a sure harbinger of a lovely time in South Africa. I was not disappointed. The great accommodations at the Kelay Hotel, the excellent research school program, and all the people I got to meet and interact with made every day uniquely fulfilling. First on the order of events in the research school was getting to know a little more about one another- this was more fun than I expected! It was great to finally put faces to names!

The research school had a careful balance of work and play. I loved every bit of the work portion. I was challenged by Prof. Naydene to reevaluate, reframe, and sharpen my research problem; a process I benefitted from immensely. Prof.

Mathabo's exhortations to decolonize our research methodologies was an epiphany. I realized that I, and I suspect many fellow African researchers hardly ever gave a second thought to the origins of the theories we framed our studies around. Do they represent who we truly are? Where we come from? Do our indigenous knowledge systems count in our research? I think more of us African researchers need to hear this even as we seek to conduct research that affects national policy and shapes our societies for the better. A particular highlight was Prof. Logan's session on performing arts in education research. This was a new angle for me and it was interesting to realize that indeed, deeply held belief systems and thoughts are more easily revealed through the performing arts. It emerged that this is



actually a simple, fun, but powerful avenue of conducting qualitative research- one that I will definitely be trying out at some point in my career.

The 8th research school allowed me an opportunity to present my research ideas before fellow scholars for the very first

time. It was nerve wracking to put my mind out there and offer myself up for feedback. I am really glad for it, though, because it was instrumental in shaping my research proposal that I have since successfully defended. I benefitted greatly too from engaging with the studies of my colleagues at their various stages and hearing the feedback they got from the erudite professors and doctors present.

The Englishman quipped that all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy! Well, play we did! The research school organizing team prepared an awesome menu of activities for us, including beach walks, a game drive, shopping expeditions, and to cap it all off, a lovely dinner. I am so grateful for this because we got to see the vibrant colors of South Africa- well Gqeberha anyway! The sites were mind-blowingly beautiful and the people were warm. Nelson Mandela University was awe-inspiring! I appreciate the entire leadership of CERM-ESA for all the funds and organization that went into the 8th research school. It is an experience that will forever be etched in my memory.

## Sarah Jemutai at Nelson Mandela University during the 8<sup>th</sup> CERMESA Research School

It has always been so interesting being a student and more specifically a scholarship holder at CERM-ESA. The experiences are so overwhelming. Ranging from understanding research, doing research and finally being a scholar. The trip to South Africa on 19<sup>th</sup> June to 2<sup>nd</sup> of July was one of its kind. It was a fresh reunion with all the scholarship holders, with our project leaders, coordinators, facilitators and supervisors. A lot was achieved through our facilitators on all the guidelines for successful education research and developing skills on the golden thread of research. The learning sessions had breaks of tours in between and our first tour was a visit to Nelson Mandela South Campus where we toured different places at the university. First to the historic monument of Nelson Mandela a place, that interests everyone.

Then to 'Mandela's Shirt' within the same area. A section we spent more time learning about the history of Nelson Mandela University. We had free game activities that left us refreshed.

Proceeded to Nelson Mandela University Missionvale Campus specifically at the



centre for community schools. It was a very thrilling and fulfilling stay at the Missionvale with the Executive Dean Dr Muki Moeng, setting the stage on the role of community schools. Then too by Dr. Bruce Damons and Mr. Nkosinathi Mzuzu. They were applauded by our coordinators and project

leaders the African way. This left us very energized for the facilitative sessions that were a head of us.

The academic trip never misses an excursion. This time round, it was a trip to Kragga Kamma game park. It was like I had been dropped at Maasai Mara in Kenya. The Kragga Kamma Game Park is a small reserve within the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality in the Eastern Cape. One of the cheetahs featured in the movie Duma used to reside at Kragga Kamma. The park's lush coastal forest and grassland plays home to vast herds of African game including White Rhino, Buffalo, Cheetah, Giraffe, Zebra, Nyala, Bontebok, Lechwe and many more species. The animals roam freely, unrestricted in their natural surroundings giving guests the opportunity to view the animals in the most peaceful, natural state. Other activities at the park include bird watching from the Treetop Boardwalk, the Monkey Walk with the opportunity to see vervet monkeys, cheetahs even the shy and elusive blue duiker. It was amazing taking a stroll at the monkey walk.

One very interesting thing that I learnt at the park is that some of the lionesses there were rescued by Lionel director of the Lawrence Anthony Earth Organization.

These lionesses were in a 35m square concrete and steel cage who were left to suffer. These Lionesses were left behind on the farm, where the circus was set up, no longer wanted and simply dumped. Lionel requested Kragga Kamma to provide a sanctuary. Although they were habituated to humans, they accepted the lionesses. They were provided with an environment as natural as possible. This never ended the day. The beach was waiting for us. Everyone had fun in his or her own way; swimming, sand bathing walking to the top of the hill and finally having Cornelius Rugut's birthday at the beach. With all the fun, we still had a serious week with our facilitators but with a break of a conference dinner at The Beach hotel in Summerstrand full of fun, music and dancing. Different dances were performed and one very interesting one from the pearl of Africa (waist twisting) headed by Prof Pros. Thanks to the team that sang the three national anthems Kenyan, South African and East African. Wrapping it up with 'Malaika Nakupenda' (I love Malaika).

The climax was now on abstract writing, poster presentation then reflection, evaluations and outlook. Home finally awaited us! Really looking forward to another one just like the other ones. Cheers!

The 8th Research School in South Africa was such a wonderful experience as a scholar and as an individual as it gave me a chance to travel outside my country for the first time. Other than the travelling experiences, the academic experience was a chance of a lifetime; it was eye and mind opening with regard to research. As a master's student, sometimes you go through your research process without clarity of thought in some aspects of your research. As a participant in this research school, I was accorded the opportunity to be in a scholarly space to learn and seek clarity where I needed. What a wonderful experience! For two weeks to be learning and putting together piece by piece my research project with all the constructive feedback and guidance I was receiving away from distractions.

The learning sessions were filled with lots of profound knowledge and information. It felt like in this research journey I

## Sheila Chepkirui at Nelson Mandela University during the 8<sup>th</sup> CERMESA Research School.



am not alone and someone understands and is more than willing to offer guidance. One of the sessions I loved so much was the 'Golden Thread of Research' by Prof. Naydene. I learnt that my research thesis needs to have a connection like a thread right from the title to the last chapter. This was really essential for me as I had just begun doing data analysis of my research. Indeed all the sessions were so profound and the facilitators too were so generous to share their feedback and knowledge. They would go the extra mile and have one on one sessions early morning or later in the evening. I particularly remember Prof. Mathabo pulling a chair next to mine and said 'now dear let's do this together'. This felt like an angel had been sent to me! From her guidance, I had clarity of thought and purpose with regard to my research. Thank you so much Prof. Mathabo!

I will forever cherish the wonderful fun moments I had with fellow scholars and our

organizers. I really loved the way we freely interacted with our facilitators at scholarly level and as a family. To Prof. Changach and Dr. Susan who travelled with us from Kenya, thank you so much for being there for us and with us. Together with Prof. Paul and other organizers and facilitators you offered me an opportunity of a lifetime to write a beautiful story in my life. Indeed, it was such a blessing, you impacted my life and that of my entire family, my children included. They have set the bar higher for me, that my PhD will be in South Africa at the Nelson Mandela University and yes, I believe them. So Prof. Paul, Prof. Mathabo, Prof. Naydene, Dr. Ayanda and Ms. Kholisa we will meet soon at PhD level. CERM-ESA family am filled with so much gratitude for in this family I was given a chance to light my candle and put it at the table as all of us have space at the table. ASANTE SANA.

## Going Back to Nelson Mandela University

by Nelson Mandela

Going back to Nelson Mandela University/South Africa was an immense pleasure and opportunity to improve my research knowledge and skills and at the same time improve my study. After settling in, the second day and on was always serious business and as usual our prolific mentors were ready to decolonise our research constructions. Every time I attend sessions of the CERM-ESA research school, I realise that I am hungrier than before for scholarly knowledge from the gurus. The two weeks went on smoothly as usual, thanks to the perfect coordination of Dr. Malve and Dr. Susan. We had tremendous sessions on different aspects of the research processes, university-community engagement orientation, which actually influenced my current study. I must confess that the period in South Africa was so much instrumental in reshaping my study (University-Community engagement opportunities to address climate change in African contexts) and getting a clear sense of direction for my proposal. I have since been able to reshape my study and with the guidance of my able supervisors, I have successfully



defended my proposal. I am currently in the field collecting data.

Of course, I cannot forget to commend the good care, accommodation (with the perfect ocean view), meals, excursion and lots of other things that CERM-ESA gave us. I was glad to be part of the birthday celebrations of my colleagues. To the CERM-ESA leaders and coordinators, thank you so much for everything. I will be looking forward for other opportunities to come. Like always, I will forever be grateful.

## Abdulkadir Shehu Adam at The Kelway Hotel during CERM-ESA 8<sup>th</sup> Research School

### My Trip to South Africa – What an Opportunity and a Privilege

My name is Abdulkadir Shehu Adam from Kano State, Nigeria, a 6th cohort scholar studying Master of Education in Research at Moi University Eldoret in the Republic of Kenya.

Given the opportunity, I will like to express my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to DAAD and CERM-ESA for finding me worthy of the nomination to attend the 8th CERM-ESA Research School at Nelson Mandela University Port Elizabeth, South Africa. My trip to South Africa was so interesting! I have never been to the southern part of Africa before and I was excited that my first visit to the region is on academic ground. The Research School was so enjoyable due the experiences and skills acquired academically, morally and socially. The vast knowledge gain in the area of research methodology and education cannot be over-emphasised.

Firstly, on academics, I acquired substantial knowledge in educational research and methodology, the first week was on introduction to research by Prof. Mathabo



Khau which comprised of research definition, understanding, framing and sharpening the research problem, guidelines for successful educational research, the relationship between research problem, research objectives and the research questions. This part was so interesting because the facilitator clearly explain the mysterious and arcane areas in the module. In the second week, Prof. Naydene de Lange introduced research paradigms, theoretical and conceptual frameworks and how to choose

a theory. All the contradictions and questions in mind have been answered and explained thoroughly by Prof. Naydene, of course it was a great privilege for me to be her student. Prof. Mathabo gone further to comprehensively talk on data generation techniques i.e developing a research instrument specifically in qualitative, and data generation in mixed methods/mixing methods and their boundaries. Also data generation techniques in quantitative research was facilitated by Prof. Paul Paul Webb. The last part of the second week was on individual support and mentoring for proposal writing by two every-time together Prof. Naydene de Lange and Prof. Mathabo Khau. I was highly impressed by their relationship and ups and downs.

Secondly, in social aspects, I really enjoyed the trip for some activities that were very refreshing like beach walk, tour of Nelson Mandela University South and Missionvale Campuses, excursion to the Beach and Kragga Kamma Game Park where I saw many wild animals like Giraffes, Buffalos, Lions, Zebras, Cheetahs, Ostriches, among others. Other activities are drama in educational research, and tours to the city, malls and shopping centres.

As part of the moral aspects that I learnt there I can mention the sticking to the

schedule, time management, science of prioritisation, quick decision making, and lots more. I can't end without acknowledging the proposal presentation I did before the panel, that was so commendable as I received a lot of praises and well wishes. I was honored. Some difficulties I faced during the trip are: on our passing by Kilimanjaro mountain in Tanzania the sky turned blue black until we left the mountain area; the long transit at O.R. Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg before flying to Port Elizabeth; too much programme schedules/activities; the cold weather of the city; missing Friday congregational prayer; spending twelve days praying without facing the correct Qibla; and the day we were flying back when our plane was shaking above the Indian ocean in Port Elizabeth.

Lastly, I thank everyone whom in one way or the other made the trip successful with special mention to Dr. Malve v. Moellendorff, Prof. Paul Webb, Prof. John Chang'ach, Prof. Mathabo Khau, Prof. Naydene de Lange, Dr. Susan Kurgat, Mrs Sonja Ebbing and Mrs Karlien Potgieter.

Long live Scholars,  
Long live Facilitators,  
Long live CERM-ESA, and  
Long live DAAD in general.

## Brenda with Dr. Susan at the Centre for the Community School, South Africa, During CERM-ESA 8<sup>th</sup> Research school.

### My South Africa Trip



For someone that had spent the most part of my life in Southwestern Uganda, I cannot hide my joy, excitement and gratitude to CERM-ESA for not only presenting me with a rare opportunity to tap on the knowledge at the Centre of excellence, but also offering me the first ever chance to fly out of Uganda and the East African region. It was all excitement as we departed the JKIA airport for the 8th Research School at the Nelson Mandela University, Port Elizabeth-South Africa.

The two weeks of engagement and mentorship presented were a rare oppor-

tunity to further conceptualise research methodologies and academic writing. The mentorship and guidance sessions by renowned CERM-ESA research giants were an opener for reflection on and refinement of my research topic. Prof Naydene's 1st day reflection kept me focused on what I needed to achieve throughout the two weeks whereas Prof Mathabo's thought-provoking discussions on research topics made me realize that good research is indeed not a walk in the park, but a back-and-forth journey of discovery. And then, there was Prof Naydene's Research Problem ses-

sions that were very insightful for reflection on what it is I really wanted to research and the value of doing research aimed at creating social change. The research school could not have come at a better time.

The Nelson Mandela team led by Prof Paul facilitated a warm and wonderful reception. You made us feel at home. At the Nelson Mandela library, we were taken through online databases and I am glad I can navigate through them with ease. I cannot wait to use tableaus in my drama class next year, all thanks to Prof Logan. Courtesy of Prof Mathabo, I take issues of sexuality seriously for I am well aware of the danger posed by silence. I cannot forget the role of the community engagement in institutions. The humility of all our project leaders and facilitators is something that humbled and continues to humble me. It is true that not all lessons are directly imparted.

Ever heard of the “All work and no play”? How can I forget the stunning beaches and the superb wildlife experience at Kragga Kamma Park? The foodie that I cannot get over the luscious dishes that graced our meals all throughout our stay. Are we not just very lucky? Thank you, CERM-ESA, thank you DAAD for the life-changing opportunity to become a scholar that is ready to undertake research for social change.

## Mike Kipyego at Nelson Mandela During CERM-ESA 8<sup>th</sup> International Research School

### South Africa – an unforgettable experience

I went to South Africa courtesy of the CERM-ESA research school at Nelson Mandela University, Port Elizabeth/Gqeberha. The aim of the trip was purely academics. We had participants from Uganda, Tanzania, Nigeria, Zambia, Malawi, and Kenya.

The landing at O. R Tambo international airport (JNB) was just a sit-back and relaxed affair with several services such as, meet and greet services, airport lounges, baggage handling services, and priority check-in to name a few. The airport isn't too big, and it's not too small and, while it's easy to navigate, it still has lots of things to do, see, eat and buy. I loved seeing all those oversized statues of the Madiba everywhere, smiling at us with a gentle welcome to South Africa.

We stayed at the timber structured- Kelayway hotel for the entire period. Which without a doubt made our stay memorable right from the staff (GREAT!!) from the glance views of the Atlantic Ocean, Nelson Mandela Bay, and its cliffs, the hotel was well featured with spacious rooms and a plunge pool, and above all the conference facilities which played a major role in ensuring that our main intent to Gqeberha was fulfilled.

Nelson Mandela Bay in South Africa's eastern cape province is another African wanderlust that has activities like route 67 which symbolizes Nelson Mandela's 67 years of work dedicated to the freedom of South Africa.

The rich cultural heritage guarantees history lovers a unique insight into the bay. So much of the struggle for freedom in South Africa took place there and it left me in awe.

The drive to Kragga Kamma game park-situated along the garden route is an ideal gateway for nature lovers and was fantastic. We had adventure activities whereby I partook in a canopy tour in the indigenous forest as I enjoyed the angle view of the wild animals. This was like nothing I have experienced before and I will live to remember it.

A tour of Nelson Mandela University campuses possessing an iconic name of a man who became the world's moral compass and one of the greatest leaders we have ever known was the most memorable thing to me, the sceneries surrounding the NMU and the ownership of spectacular - flagship buildings make it amazing. The Missionvale campus one of the satellite campuses wins it all due to its physical location



in the more underserved and poorest areas of the Nelson Mandela Bay metropolitan, it's strategically positioned to engage with the communities in its surroundings.

The development initiatives established on the campus aim to build strong and meaningful partnerships between the university and the communities within its vicinity.

On our final night, we were treated to a beautiful outdoor dinner in one of the hotels. It was truly an unforgettable experience that prepared us for a back-home journey. The day we departed, we felt a good send-off, which is just the kind of heart-warming gesture I learned to expect from South Africans.

This journey was so much more than anything I ever could have imagined – it was the trip of a lifetime, one that I will cherish to the end of my days.

## CERM-ESA fourth graduation

Noel Japheth



End of year Party and Graduation 2022 in CERM-ESA Auditorium

The fourth graduation celebration was held at Moi University CERM-ESA auditorium on 22nd December 2022. The event was graced by Prof. Ambrose K. Kiprop, Moi University Deputy Vice Chancellor (AP&S), the dean School of Education, Prof. Anne Kisilu, and Dean Emeritus, Prof. John K. Changa'ch, all Heads of Departments of the School of Education, postgraduate coordinators as well as supervisors.

It was with great honour to have international supervisors gracing the occasion. These were Prof. Naydene De Lange of Nelson Mandela University, who attended virtually, and Dr. David Ssekamate of Uganda Management Institute, who attended physically. CERM-ESA family members were both physically and virtually in attendance.

All graduates attended with their dear ones, who were amazed for the milestone of completing their Masters' studies in time. In their words, they expressed appreciation to DAAD, CERM-ESA and the Centre leadership for the tremendous support in their academic journeys. The following were the graduates of the day.

S/N	NAME	DEGREE AWARDED	THESIS TITLE
1	KATUSIIME MIRIAM	MASTER OF EDUCATION IN RESEARCH	Integration of Information Communication Technology in Teaching and Learning Processes: A case of Selected Secondary Schools in Sheema Municipality in Uganda
2	ANGULU AYAKO MARGRET	MASTER OF EDUCATION IN RESEARCH	Experiences of Female Students on Strategies Addressing Teenage Pregnancies in Secondary Schools in Khwisero Sub- County, Kakamega County, Kenya
3	MUHWEZI INNOCENT	MASTER OF EDUCATION IN RESEARCH	Teachers' Preparedness for the Implementation of the New Business Subjects' Curriculum in Selected Secondary Schools of Kabale District, Uganda
4	SING'OEI CHERUTO MERCY	MASTER OF EDUCATION IN RESEARCH	Exploring the Implementation of the Re-admission Policy for Adolescent Mothers in an Urban slum Context in Eldoret, Kenya
5	CHEROTICH CAROLYNE	MASTER OF EDUCATION IN RESEARCH	Integration of Information Communication Technologies (ICT) in Personalised Adaptive Pedagogy in Teaching of Christian Religious Education in Public Secondary Schools in Bureti Sub- County, Kenya
6	AKAMPWERA ALOYZIUS	MASTER OF EDUCATION IN RESEARCH	Administrative Strategies Adopted to Enhance Learners Performance of Kiswahili Language in Secondary Schools: A Case of Ruhaama County, Uganda.
7	MAINGI WANJIRU JOSEPHINE.	MASTER OF EDUCATION IN RESEARCH	The Lived Experiences of Learners Living with Physical Disabilities in Inclusive Primary Schools in Elgeyo Marakwet County, Kenya.
8	CHEPKEMEI SHEILLA	MASTER OF EDUCATION IN RESEARCH	Head Teachers' and Teachers' Level of Preparedness for the Implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum in Primary Schools in Wareng Sub-County, Uasin-Gishu County, Kenya
9	NOEL JAPHETH	MASTER OF EDUCATION IN RESEARCH	Determinants of Students' Completion of Postgraduate Studies: A Case of Selected Universities in Uganda.

## Remarks from DVC Prof. Kiprop

As entire CERM-ESA fraternity, we were amazed by the Deputy vice chancellor's honour to our invitation to grace the graduation celebration. Led by Prof. John K Chang'ach to the podium, Sir DVC Prof. Ambrose Kiprop expressed the joy of witnessing graduates with their dear ones including bouncing babies making it timely in completing their degrees. He noted "thank you for taking care of your families and balancing them with class work". He appreciated supervisors for doing their part and students on the other hand.

Giving CERM-ESA as an example, the Deputy Vice Chancellor challenged faculty members present and those online to write proposals for projects' funding citing that such projects increase the visibility of the entire university. He thanked DAAD for supporting students, CERM-ESA project and Moi University. He noted that CERM-ESA is widely increasing the visibility of Moi university nationally, regionally and internationally which is highly appreciated.

The vice chancellor encouraged students to return back and pursue doctoral

degrees, publish their research and put to use skills attained during their tenure as masters' students.

In his final remarks, he recognised CERM-ESA for putting up such a classic auditorium at Moi University. He noted "... this a is a very nice auditorium, whenever we have meetings usually we want to be at CERM-ESA, you will hear... lets have this meeting at CERM-ESA. Of course there is a procedure to secure this auditorium for a meeting ...ahaa! but we sometimes find ourselves running to Prof. Chang'ach..., Chang'ach please don't get tired of us..."

He finally thanked everyone for being a good audience and wished everyone a joyful celebration since he was leaving for further official engagements.

Being the first CERM-ESA event to officiate as the Dean, we were all expectant to hear from the hopeful incoming Moi University CERM-ESA project Leader, Prof. Anne Kisilu, who is the new Dean Moi University School of Education. Indeed, her remarks were worth our expectation.

The Dean started by appreciating



Prof. John K Chang'ach, Moi University Dean Emeritus, School of Education and CERM-ESA Project leader giving remarks at CERM-ESA fourth graduation celebration, Moi University, Eldoret.

DAAD for funding the CERM-ESA project since 2014 and supervisors for good leadership and mentoring students very well.

She encouraged graduates to work hard wherever they will go, emphasising that hard work pays. In her words, "Hard work and merit pays, you will definitely get where you want to be; go and serve the nation both nationally and internationally". She implored the graduates to keep the core values of Moi university including professionalism, integrity, teamwork, innovation, networking tolerance, excellency, transparency, accountability, equality, social justice among others.

She finally encouraged everyone to

make a difference in wherever they go mentor the next generations and keep reading so that they do not become educated illiterates.

Our project leader and father Prof. John K Chang'ach was present with informative remarks as always. He started his talk by giving the vote of thanks to DAAD, CERM-ESA project leader Prof. Dr Bernd Siebenhüner, Prof. Dr. Karsten Speck, Professor Paul Webb, Dr. Eugenia Kafanabo and Prof. Proscovia Namubiru; coordinators - Dr. Malve von Moellendorff and Dr. Susan Kurgat; supervisors and graduates for the work well done. Prof John informed celebrants that CERM-ESA funding started in

2014 and is due to end in 2023. He attributed project achievements to good working relationship with DAAD Nairobi office and the hand in hand working mode between CERM-ESA project and Moi university School of Education. He encouraged the new dean to keep the trend highlighting that the school and the project must cooperate for full realisation of opportunities from all ends.

The outgoing project leader further thanked DAAD for sponsoring several programmes under CERM-ESA including DIGI-FACE and capacity building, "DIGI-FACE has been key in digitising the centre and many supervisors from Moi university have advanced their research supervision skills from both DIGIFACE and CABLES programme" he emphasised.

He concluded by recognising the support CERM-ESA receives from school coordinators of postgraduate studies (Dr. Esther Kiaritha and Prof. Sammy Chumba,) noting that the two work hard to make sure that theses examination for students goes on well. Also, he thanked the Heads of Departments for coordinating the entire teaching and learning process in their respective departments and the professors/ lecturers for mentoring the students.

## Graduating students give thanks



Angulu Margret, class leader of CERM-ESA 2019 cohort giving thanks on behalf the class

**A**s cohort 4 under CERM-ESA, we are delighted about this great achievement. I take this opportunity to thank God for giving us good health and keeping us all this time.

I would like to thank our sponsors DAAD and CERM-ESA for funding our postgraduate studies, we were picked from far and wide and we are very grateful because what we thought was impossible was made possible. Also, we say thank you to Moi University and CERM-ESA for hosting us, we enjoyed the stay.

I would also like to appreciate our pro-

ject leader Prof. Chang'ach for his good leadership, he mastered all our names when we thought he didn't know us. His presentation motivated us and encouraged us especially when we were losing hope during proposal and thesis writing.

Special thanks to the project coordinator our mum Dr. Kurgat. She was strict and funny at the same time. She would scold you and hug you at the same time. Her wise counselling sailed us through, she ensured we attended all sessions and on time. She also took care of our welfare.

As cohort 4 we appreciate our lecturers

and supervisors. They gave their best; we also enjoyed their teamwork and coordination. Some lecturers shared meals with us from their pockets and we cannot forget. Thank you, supervisors, for being patient with us and guiding us in the best way ever, now other students from other departments are being referred to us for guidance including Ph.D. students.

We appreciate all the speakers of today, you have all encouraged us to carry on to the next level and practice what we have learned in our societies, we acknowledge that and I confirm that you have steered what was already in me that one day I will be a professor.

We say thank you so much to the other staff members in CERM-ESA most especially Madam Stella for the devotion you showed towards our success.

We also say thank you Noel for coming in at the right time. We acknowledge your efforts.

Last but not least we appreciate our family members and friends for their support and encouragement.

Thank you all for coming.

Class Rep: Angulu Margret

## DIGIFACE IT Capacity Building Workshop at Kehl University

RAYMOND SAWE  
CERM-ESA IT MANAGER

In the fall of 2022, I had the privilege of being invited to an IT Capacity Building workshop, fully sponsored by the DIGIFACE programme, the Digital Initiative of the DAAD funded Centres of Excellence in Africa. This was a great opportunity to link up and network with like minds from across the African continent and Europe.

The training took place at the University of Applied Science, Kehl in Germany where we interacted with the DIGIFACE project management group along with two representatives from the German Academic Exchange Service. This meeting was truly long awaited since the first kick off meeting was held in March 2020 at the beginning of global pandemic.

The training ran from the 26th to the 30th of September. IT managers received new updates and information on the inner

workings of the DIGI-FACE platform so that they can efficiently use the platform when working on their Centre's projects. Several topics that were of interest were such as managing rights and roles of members on the platform, managing the technical aspects of the Centre, publications, updating and modifying info on the official Centre page as well as course creation using Moodle.

A significant topic we discussed with our sponsors was on the financial sustainability of our Centres in the long term. The ongoing discussion brought about local solutions driven by the demand of our target market and especially solutions both the Centre and its participants were familiar with.

Beyond the training, we were delighted to be graced by Prof. Dr. Joachim Beck, President of the Hochschule für öffentliche



Verwaltung, Kehl. Moreover, Mr. Wolfram Britz, the mayor of the City of Kehl made a courtesy call to the university so as to give a warm welcome to all who attended and facilitated the training. Still further, we secured a visit to the notable tourist spots, such as the Cathedral of Strasbourg along with a boat ride through Strasbourg's historic canal that has stood the ages.

Taking everything into consideration, we enjoyed ourselves to the full extent of the trip as we grew wiser professionally and as the CERM-ESA and DIGIFACE team.

## CERM-ESA DAAD Exzellenz in Bewegung at Nelson Mandela University

Dr Ayanda Simayi (PhD)

Email: [Ayanda.Simayi@mandela.ac.za](mailto:Ayanda.Simayi@mandela.ac.za)

### Preamble

Saying enkosi (thank you) is an African cultural practice taught to children at an early age by elders in our rural villages. In our Xhosa cultural villages, elders taught

us to bring two hands together and curtsy when given something of value. To be given PhD research funds freely, a monthly allowance and overseas trips for conference

presentations was beyond imagination for a rural girl like me. Attending a research school at Moi University, Kenya in 2020 was one of the highlights of my study as it

was my first time to fly to an African country. Sincere gratitude is extended to CERMESA-DAAD donors and management team, my supervisor Prof Paul Webb, Prof Karsten Speck, Dr Malve Moellendorff, Prof John Chang'ach, Dr Susan Kurgat for their unwavering support and motivation. The climax of my PhD study was the solo journey to India to present a conference paper titled Asibizi: Teaching human reproduction in rural Eastern Cape schools, (Simayi & Webb, 2020), see Fig.1. CERMESA brought a spark in my life which 'became yet brighter...' (Mutwa, 2019, p. 6) and, through periods of financial and covid-19 pandemic uncertainties, the spark continued to grow as my financial and emotional well-being were always catered for. Unknowingly, CERMESA set Exzellenz in Bewegung as this rural girl flew the CERMESA flagship higher by graduating within the prescribed scholarship period (2019-2021), see Fig. 2 and was employed full-time as a science lecturer in the Faculty of Education at Nelson Mandela University in July 2021. In 2022, excellence was in motion as she received five excellence awards. Two awards as an



Figure 1: Ayanda Simayi participating in the Eighth International Conference to Review Research in Science, Technology and Mathematics Education, Mumbai, India.



Figure 2: From left, Prof Paul Webb (supervisor) and Dr Ayanda Simayi on stage during mask-to-mask PhD graduation for a study titled a culturally responsive strategy for teaching sexual concepts in rural Xhosa secondary schools on 14 December 2021, (Simayi, 2021).

## CERM-ESA set Excellenz in Bewegung for the novice researcher and academic

Excellent Emerging Teacher from the university, see Fig. 3.

Ayanda received the overall institutional Vice Chancellor's Leading Excellent Emerging Teacher Award and the Faculty of Education Excellent Emerging Teacher Award. The awards are a recognition of her Indigenised Teaching Strategies used in teaching science content to rural students consequently, decolonizing the science curriculum. For selection purposes,

a portfolio of evidence was sent to a selection panel comprised of all Faculty Deans. What stood out was an anonymous testimony sent by a first-year science module (PINT102) student saying the lecturer Dr Simayi was such an amazing lecturer, if ever I had to rate her on a scale of 1-10, I would rate her 100 000 000 000%. Ayanda was awarded the Teaching Development award for initiating an ICT-IK integrated science teaching of sexual concepts and

experiments project in a primary school, see Fig. 4.

Figure 4: Dr Ayanda Simayi teaching the menstrual cycle to a Grade 7 class using an Indigenised Teaching Strategy from her PhD studies and a model of a human uterus. In March 2022, she initiated an Information Communications Technology (ICT)-Indigenous Knowledge (IK) integrated science project where university science classes were linked real-time on

Microsoft Teams' while teaching sexual concepts and experiments using Indigenised Teaching Strategies at a local primary school, (Simayi, 2021). The extension of PhD findings to real classroom situations provided a platform where dialogic argumentation provided a platform for primary school learners and university students of diverse cultures to make comparisons between their IK and Western Science menstrual cycle concepts and identify parallels



Figure 3: Dr Ayanda Simayi receiving two Nelson Mandela prestigious excellence awards from the Vice Chancellor, on the left, Prof Sibongile Mutwa on 28 November 2022.



Figure 4



Figure 5: Picture on university social media platforms, from left, Dr Ayanda Simayi voted as the winner for the best dressed staff member in university colours during the Vice Chancellor's end of the year function @MandelaUni.

between the two. Using her personal funds, she drove four times a quarter to do face-to-face science lessons to Grade 6 and 7 learners at Swartkops Primary School. The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) awarded her the Teaching Discretionary Fund through the University Capacity Development Grant (UCDG) to assist with the project.

Finally, the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS) in

collaboration with the South African Education Research Association (SAERA) Early Career Researcher Award in Cape Town. Adding a light moment to academic life after a 2-year covid-19 period, she won a celebratory award as the VC's Best Dressed staff member in university colors, see Fig. 5 and acted in an end of the year Faculty of Education drama, see <https://youtu.be/9N-yP9bxYVh4>

## Conclusion

I hope that the ripple, roller-coaster funding effect provided by CERM-ESA through DAAD may continue to change lives in Africa and pave the way for Exzellenz in Bewegung for generations to come. Thank you very much CERM-ESA-DAAD, enkosi.

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## How to support the inclusion of differently enabled learners in Kenyan public schools

BY RANJI JOHN KARANJA

Having gotten a scholarship opportunity under CERM-ESA in 2018 to undertake a Master's Degree in Education Research at Moi University, Kenya, I took up the opportunity and started a scholarly journey that led to a lot of learning, socialization and exposure to a lot of life changing opportunities.

With a background in early childhood education and teacher training, I initially had an idea of doing a study in teacher education. But through the guidance and training by the lecturers at CERM-ESA/ Moi University Centre, I found myself shift my interest to the aspect of early year education that deals with the inclusion of learners with different disabilities in normal classroom set-ups. The interest came up as a result of my experiences as I went to different schools



in the Nakuru North sub-county in Kenya to assess my students in their teaching practice. My students (teacher trainees) encountered so many challenges handling learners with disabilities stemming from the lack of necessary support in terms of resources for identifying and appropriately placing learners with disability, specialized assistive devices, teacher competencies and parental support.

Through these experiences and also going deep into the literature on inclusive education and its effective implementation, I was able to come up with an assessment study of the support mechanisms available in the schools and how they influence the inclusion of differently enabled learners. I was hence able to move to the area of

study where I met with very enthusiastic participants who were very ready to assist with information with the aim of ensuring that findings of the study would help them address the challenges concerning inclusive education, which was keeping learners with disabilities often out of school. The participants were majorly the teachers and school administrators who are directly involved in the implementation of the policy and they really helped me with relevant in-depth information on the issues of investigation which helped to really shape up the content of my findings, discussion and recommendations of my thesis.

It was through the data generation process that the idea of conducting a data dissemination workshop came into being

since almost all the participants requested that I should share the findings of the study with them when I write up the report. They complained of helping many researchers overtime with data but have never seen anyone come back to share the findings and appreciate their input. I took this as a challenge and immediately after graduating with my Masters, I approached the CERM-ESA community through the Alumni programme with the idea of getting facilitation to conduct the workshop and with the help of Dr. Susan and Dr. Malve I was able to get adequate funding to facilitate the workshop.

The one-day workshop was conducted on 22nd September at the Safari Bite hotel in Nakuru town where 30 teachers from the

schools that had contributed in the study were involved. We discussed the findings of the study with the very happy teachers whom we provided with a copy of the findings and recommendations, a note book and a pen. Refreshments were also provided in terms of morning tea and snack, lunch and evening drink and snack. The transportation expenses were also reimbursed. It was a very insightful event and the teachers could not hide their happiness and appreciation for honoring them and appreciating their immense contribution to the study.

Personally, it was a great experience and I am forever grateful for the support given to me by the CERM-ESA family to successfully plan and conduct the workshop.

## Workshop on innovative approaches to education research in african contexts

Capacity Building Programme for Lectures, Supervisors and Postgraduate Students  
June 2023, School of Education, University of Dar es Salaam

By Janeth Mlay & Juliana Bachilula

As part of CERM-ESA's capacity building programme, UDSM School of Education invited Prof. Mathabo Khau from Nelson Mandela University to facilitate workshops for postgraduate students and academic staff members. Some of us, who had been to CERM-ESA Research Schools and methodology workshops, had already been introduced to the question, why it needs contextualised education research methodologies. We learnt about the different approaches that are being developed in order to make sense and get adequate data in and for a specific context. It all relates to the question, WHY we do research at all.

So, during our workshop with Prof Mathabo, we started off by discussing the WHY first and participants emphasised

that their research into educational questions should be useful and beneficial for the research participants, their schools or higher education institutions, and help change things to the better. It was agreed that a lot of empirical research sits on the shelves of libraries and has no relevance for the contexts in which the data was generated. Particularly for educational research, there are a number of arguments why we do not do research only because it is exciting to do research or because we want to earn a degree. One is, that in education science, theory and practice are always intertwined. Another one is, that developments in society change the conditions for education constantly in many ways and pose new challenges that education needs to be responsive to. Some of these conditions are

global, but many are local.

But how can we make sure that our research is useful and not only serves the purpose of us getting a degree?

Students and staff members found it very useful to learn about and engage with participatory arts-based methods, e.g. using Haiku poems, drawings, cellphlms, photovoice, as a means to generate meaningful data. Over 50 academic staff members and 80 Master's and PhD students thoroughly enjoyed the sessions with the expert facilitator from South Africa, which had a good mix of theoretical and practical sessions.

We thank all the organizers from the School of Education Management led by Dr. E. Kafanabo (The Dean); facilitator (Prof. M. Khau); the Secretariat and all who worked together to fulfil the Workshop program.



# CERM-ESA calendar of events 2023

Date	Activity	Location
<b>13-28 Feb</b>	Shortlisting of scholarship applicants	Centre / Moi University
<b>3-6 March</b>	Research Workshop to prepare CERM-ESA publications	South Africa
<b>April</b>	Final scholarship selection	DAAD Nairobi
<b>June-July</b>	Preparing a funding proposal for CERM-ESA's future activities	Centre
<b>1 September</b>	New cohort of scholarship holders take up their postgraduate studies	Centre / Moi University
<b>21 Sept – 5 October</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> CERM-ESA Research School for all scholarship holders	Centre / Moi University
<b>27-28 Sept</b>	Capacity Building for Lecturers and Supervisors	Centre / Moi University
<b>29-30 Sept</b>	Teachers' and Principals' Professional Development Programme	Centre / Moi University
<b>29 September</b>	CERM-ESA Advisory Board Meeting	Centre / Moi University
<b>2-4 October</b>	CERM-ESA International Conference: The Future of Educational Research in African Contexts	Centre / Moi University
<b>October – December</b>	CERM-ESA Academic Programme	Online / DIGI-Face
<b>31 December</b>	CERM-ESA ends its second and last fully funded project phase (2019-2023)	

## CERM-ESA in Brief

Funding period: 2014 – 2023

Funding volume: 3.4 Mio EURO

Funding Agency:

### DAAD

Deutscher Akademischer  
Austauschdienst (DAAD)  
with support of the  
Federal Foreign Office (AA)



Federal Foreign Office

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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