

# CERM-ESA

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



## Newsletter 1/2025



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## Editorial

**2025** has been CERM-ESA's second year of its current 'transition funding phase', where the Centre is only partly supported by the DAAD Centre of Excellence Programme and we are asked to generate funds from other sources in order to sustain CERM-ESA. In August this year, we used our own funds to meet as a Steering Committee at Nelson Mandela University and jointly facilitate a transdisciplinary professional development programme. This programme aimed to include gender and climate change in school curricula in South and East Africa in ways that were both locally relevant and culturally sensitive, building on local knowledge, skills and practices. It was also at this meeting that we launched our CERM-ESA book: *Education Research in African Contexts: Tradition and New Beginnings for Knowledge and Impact*, which features our students' research projects. It was wonderful to come together, share ideas, make plans and celebrate our achievements.

As we are writing this editorial, we just received the good news that our application for another round of DAAD In-Country/ In-Region Master's scholarships has been successful and CERM-ESA will have the opportunity to welcome more DAAD scholarship holders in the coming four years, which is wonderful! We are grateful to the DAAD for believing in CERM-ESA and having supported all our efforts to establish and sustain a Centre of Excellence in Education since 2014! The trust in our work – not only shown by generous financial support, but also through high profile German visitors to the Centre at Moi University and a warm reception by Dr. Dorothee Weyler as the director of DAAD Nairobi in September this year – is an honour and privilege and we do our best to keep up the good work. Our scholarship holders and alumni certainly make us proud with their excellent work and ambassadorship, holding the CERM-ESA flag high everywhere they go. We are certainly looking forward to our next graduation in December, where we will have more CERM-ESA Master's and PhD graduates joining the group of CERM-ESA alumni!



CERM-ESA and DIGI-FACE reunited with Dr. Doro Welyer, the 'mother' of the DAAD Centres of African Excellence Programme © DIGI-FACE

The combination of individual DAAD scholarships and our international CERM-ESA co-operation opens up the opportunity for our scholarship holders to apply for a research visit at the University of Oldenburg. Six CERM-ESA Master's and doctoral students spent time in Oldenburg between February and April 2025, enjoying the snow, the university canteen (Mensa), weekly seminars, the library and the opportunity to interact with their Oldenburg peers and academics. We look forward to welcoming the next group of CERM-ESA students to Oldenburg University in 2026 and supporting them in their research work.

Please read about some of CERM-ESA's recent activities and meet our scholarship holders in this issue. Even though this format seems outdated with all the social media around, we still treasure a look back, share with you some of our highlights, learnings and developments and to stay in touch with our members, friends, supporters, and the larger network. Enjoy our 2025 edition of the newsletter!

Susan Kurgat & Malve v. Moellendorff  
CERM-ESA coordinators

## Meet our Scholarship Holders

### CERM-ESA Master's scholars



**Ronah Ampeire** is a dedicated teacher of English Language and literature at St. Maria Goretti Secondary school Rushoroza in Kabale District. Hailing from Kabale Municipality in South Western Uganda, she has devoted several years to the noble profession of teaching, imparting knowledge, skills and values that empower learners to express themselves with confidence and integrity.

Her academic and professional journey reflects an unwavering commitment to excellence in education. Ronah attained a Diploma in Education from Kyambogo University followed by a Bachelor's Degree in Education at Kabale University, which she completed in 2019. She is currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Educational Research at Moi University, with a focus on promoting innovative and evidence-based teaching practices. A passionate advocate for holistic learning, Ronah believes that

education should not only equip learners with academic knowledge but also shape their character and worldview. Her enthusiasm for language and literature continues to inspire her students and colleagues alike, reaffirming her belief that teaching is both an art and lifelong calling.



**Alfred Kipkirui Tanui** hails from Kutete Village, Narok West, Narok County, Kenya. He is a Kenyan scholar and emerging educational researcher affiliated with the School of Education, Moi University, where he is currently pursuing a Master of Education in Research under the DAAD-CERM-ESA scholarship program. His ongoing research on AI in Kenyan universities reflects his deep interest at the intersection of education, emerging technologies, and data science.

Alfred possesses a distinguished academic background in science education,

holding a Bachelor of Science in Education (Mathematics and Chemistry) from Karatina University. To complement his research training, he is currently undertaking a Data Science and Artificial Intelligence Career Essentials (AICE) certification from ALX Africa. His academic and professional work is driven by a vision to integrate Artificial Intelligence (AI) and data-driven innovation into educational systems to enhance teaching, learning, and research outcomes across Africa.

He has a professional background in teaching and educational leadership and has held positions as a teacher, Assistant Director of Studies, and Head of Curriculum in various educational institutions. These experiences enhanced his instructional design and educational management skills, laying a solid foundation for his transition into research and academic pursuits.

In his current role as a Junior Researcher at the African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC), Alfred

contributes to multidisciplinary projects in foundational learning, educational policy, and digital transformation. Through these engagements, he has demonstrated exceptional analytical ability, methodological precision, and commitment to data-informed decision-making in education.

Alfred's research interests include AI literacy, digital pedagogy, educational innovation, and sustainable research ecosystems. Beyond his academic pursuits, Alfred is deeply passionate about mentorship, inclusive education, and global cooperation. His professional aspiration is to contribute to the transformation of African education by responsibly integrating AI, and promoting interdisciplinary collaboration to advance sustainable education.



I am **Chepngetich Caroline**, a Kenyan national hailing from Kericho County. I am a passionate educator, counsellor,

and mentor deeply committed to empowering young people. I was raised in the serene community of Keongo Village, where my curiosity and love for learning first blossomed. My academic journey began at Keongo Primary School and continued at Kericho Day

Secondary School, where I earned my Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE).

Guided by a strong desire to nurture and support others, I pursued a Bachelor of Education in Guidance and Counselling at Moi University, graduating with First-Class Honours. My undergraduate experience inspired a lifelong passion for promoting student well-being and mental health, shaping my path as both a teacher and a counselor.

Currently, I am pursuing a Master of Education in Research under the CERM-ESA programme at Moi University, with my research focusing on adolescent well-being and mental health in school settings.

Beyond academics, I am a compassionate mentor who finds fulfillment in guiding and inspiring adolescent girls to develop self-confidence, resilience, and positive life values. I believe that through education, counselling, and mentorship, young people can overcome challenges and become agents of positive change in their communities. I stand out as a dedicated educator, reflective researcher, and empathetic counsellor devoted to nurturing minds and transforming lives.



**Mr. Ebenezer Atta-Wirekoh** is an experienced educator, communicator, and advocate for youth development, with over a

decade of professional involvement in teaching, educational outreach, and grassroots advocacy. He resides in Kumasi, the capital of the Asante Kingdom in the Ashanti region of Ghana.

Ebenezer holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English Education (with German) from the University of Education, Winneba, where he graduated with First Class Honours and ranked in the top ten of his graduating class. He is currently a scholar fully-funded under the DAAD In-Region Scholarship and is pursuing a Master of Education Research at Moi University, Kenya. His academic training has equipped him with a solid understanding of educational research, pedagogy, and the social implications of language and character education in multicultural contexts.

Professionally, Ebenezer has served as an English and German language facilitator at the Institute of Languages in the University of Media, Arts and Communication (UNIMAC) in Kumasi- Ghana, where he taught over 60 students daily and clarified German grammar concepts to learners

with difficulties. Out of his passion for languages, communication and teaching, he also volunteers as a German tutor at Moi University, guiding university students to acquire vital German language proficiency. In this role, he actively inculcated values such as punctuality, respect, and discipline through his lessons. Ebenezer has gained the ability to combine academic content with moral development.

Prior to this, Ebenezer worked as an English teaching intern at Akrofuom Senior High Technical School, and as a primary school teacher at Holy Child International School, Obuasi in Ghana. Across all these roles, he emphasized inclusive pedagogies such as project-based learning, drama, role play, and collaborative assignments to boost learner confidence, especially in English communication. He has volunteered extensively in community engagements which include facilitating adult education and promoting tolerance and intercultural dialogue. His research interests center on collaborative learning strategies in curbing the behaviour of children in deprived cocoa growing communities as well as the role of German lessons in addressing climate sustainability and social integration.

His professional identity is rooted in his belief in Lincoln's quote: "Reputation is the shadow, character is the tree."



Meet **Ms Elizabeth Marwa**, a Tanzanian Master of Education student at Moi University. Born and raised in

Serengeti, Mara Region, Tanzania, she is passionate about advancing the ethical and innovative use of educational technology including AI to enhance teaching and learning in higher education.

She holds a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy with Education from Saint Augustine University of Tanzania, and is currently pursuing a Master of Education in Educational Research at Moi University, supported by the DAAD In-Country/In-Region Scholarship Program through CERM-ESA.

As an educator in Korogwe, Tanga, she intends to integrate digital tools and emerging technologies into her teaching practice to promote interactive, inclusive, and research-informed learning experiences. Her research, titled "Exploring the Ethical Implications of Artificial Intelligence in Education: A Case of Selected Universities in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania," investigates how Artificial Intelligence (AI) is being integrated into higher education in Tanzania. It focuses on examining what institutional policies and ethical guidelines exist (if any) to govern the responsible use of AI in uni-

versities, and how adequate these policies are in addressing issues such as privacy, bias, academic integrity, and equitable access.

Her academic and professional interests include AI in education and policy development for sustainable learning systems in Africa. Through her participation in the CERM-ESA program, she aspires to contribute to evidence-based research, policy formulation, and the promotion of ethical and equitable integration of technology in education across Tanzania and beyond.



My name is **Marani Benjamin Nyongesa**. Born in Buloosi Village of Bumula Sub-County in the larger Bungoma County, I went to Buloosi Primary School and later Namachanja High School in Bungoma town where I did my KCSE. Later, I joined Moi University in 2014 to pursue a Bachelor of Education (arts) degree, majoring in English and literature. To test my teaching skills, I started off at Teremi School in Bungoma County on teaching practice in 2017 and Isongo Secondary School in Mumias East Sub-County, Kakamega County upon graduation. Then I proceeded to Mary

Seat of Wisdom Bulimbo Girls in Matungu Sub-County where I stayed for three years before joining St. Teresa's Itete School. While there, I was appointed the Class Teacher to a form one class, and the Secretary Academics Committee, the roles I played for two years. It was then that a chance to apply for the DAAD Scholarship presented itself and, with valuable help with regard to application from my campus buddy and a beneficiary of the same scholarship, Obadiah Orangi, I was lucky to get the coveted and competitive scholarship. Presently, I am pursuing a Master of Education in Research degree under the auspices of DAAD. With close to five years of teaching, I have gathered enough experience to put me at a vantage point to identify a gap in research that needs filling. In light of this, my research interests lie in the English language, with my title "Teachers' English Language Proficiency and Students' Performance in Selected Secondary Schools in Kanduyi Sub-County, Kenya" seeking to propose policy recommendations to enhance teacher training for teachers of English in Kenya with the intention of improving performance in the subject. Given

en a chance, I would gladly proceed to doctoral studies (PhD) to enhance and hone my research skills around the area of English language.



**Mary Wanjiru** is a Kenyan educator and researcher with an interest in improving the teaching and learning of science in Kenya's secondary schools. She is currently pursuing her Master's degree in educational research, where her research explores teachers' use of instructional strategies to foster creativity in Integrated Science classes.

Mary has participated in several education and research development programs, where she gained recognition for her dedication to effective classroom practices. Her academic work reflects a strong belief that empowering teachers with effective pedagogical tools is key to transforming classroom experiences and developing 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills in learners.

Beyond her research, she has taught Chemistry and Mathematics, and mentored students, taking part in community initiatives that promote educational growth. She looks forward to contributing to collaborative projects that strengthen creativity in education.



**Maureen Carolyn Kaiburu** from California, Lodwar, in Turkana County, is a passionate advocate for inclusive education. She believes every child deserves the opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed regardless of their background or ability.

Her journey began in the classroom, where she worked as a special needs education teacher supporting learners with diverse needs. Those early experiences deepened her commitment to inclusion and inspired her to reach beyond the classroom to influence systems and communities.

Over the years, Maureen has contributed to several initiatives promoting equality and access to education. While working with the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) in Turkana County, she helped raise awareness, train teachers, and build partnerships that promote the inclusion of both children and adults with disabilities. Later, at the Dadaab Refugee Camp with Humanity & Inclusion (HI), she supported education programs that gave hope and opportunity to children living with disabilities.

Today, Maureen serves as a Project

Mentor with Fondazione L'Albero Della Vita (FADV) in Eldoret and Kericho Counties. Her work centers on helping vulnerable and at-risk youth access education, vocational skills, and family reintegration support under the project "Strengthening Inclusion, Health, and Education for Children and Youth, Both Vulnerable and in Conflict with the Law."

She brings to her work a wealth of practical skills, including Kenya Sign Language (KSL), basic Braille, understanding of intellectual and learning disabilities, behavioral and attention-related challenges such as ADHD, neurodevelopmental conditions including autism, multiple disabilities, and basic psychosocial support.

Maureen holds a Bachelor's degree in Special Needs Education and is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Education (Research) at Moi University, Eldoret, through the DAAD-sponsored CERM-ESA program. Her research, titled "Assessing Teacher Preparedness in Implementing Inclusive Education in Primary Schools in Turkana County," explores how teachers can be better supported to make inclusion meaningful in every classroom.

Looking ahead, Maureen hopes to establish a Teacher Support and Inclusion Resource Center in Turkana County; a

space for training, mentorship, and community learning that promotes inclusion following her motto: Inclusion is not just about access, it's about belonging, empowerment, and hope. Grounded in empathy and purpose, Maureen continues to use her skills and voice to create learning environments where every child feels valued and supported



**Mr. Niyibizi Vincent** is a Rwandan educator, researcher, and language professional with a strong background in

English and Kiswahili education. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Education (English and Kiswahili) from Mount Kenya University (2019) and a Diploma in Education from the University of Rwanda – College of Education (2015). He is presently a Master of Education in Research candidate at Moi University, Kenya, under the DAAD Scholarship Programme.

Mr. Niyibizi has accumulated over seven years of teaching experience at both secondary and university levels. He has served as a teacher of English and Literature in English, a Head of Languages Department, and a mentor of English debate clubs in various schools, including GS

Karembure in Kicukiro District and E.S. Munzanga in Karongi District. His strong commitment to improving students' communicative competence has been demonstrated through his leadership in debate clubs and mentorship programs that enhance learners' speaking, writing, reading, and critical thinking skills.

Since April 2022, he has been serving as the Head Teacher of GS Rukore in Rulindo District, where he provides both academic and administrative leadership. Alongside his leadership duties, he contributes to higher education as a part-time Tutorial Assistant at the University of Tourism, Technology, and Business Studies (UTB) Kigali Campus, where he tutors undergraduate students in English-related modules.

Mr. Niyibizi is also known for his translation and volunteer work, particularly with The Sober Club, where he has translated key policies, rules, and regulations between English, Kinyarwanda, and Kiswahili to promote accessibility and inclusivity.

Through his current studies at Moi University, Mr. Niyibizi aims to deepen his research expertise, particularly in exploring innovative approaches to language education and professional development in Rwandan schools. His academic and professional journey reflects a lifelong commit-

ment to educational excellence, community service, and the advancement of language learning in Rwanda and beyond.



**Muhammed Naziru Bala** is a Nigerian Master's student at CERM-ESA / Moi University, School of Education,

Department of Educational Management and Policy Studies, supported by the DAAD In-Country/In-Region Scholarship Programme.

He holds a bachelor's degree in education from Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto (2018), and a Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) from the Federal College of Education, Zaria (2013). Muhammed has professional experience with the Kaduna State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) in Ikara Local Government Area, where he worked in the field of educational administration and grassroots school management.

Muhammed's research interests include education and development, education and security, and education for peace-building. His academic work is guided by a commitment to advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 (Quality Ed-

ucation), SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), and SDG 13 (Climate Action).

He has actively led and participated in several community development initiatives, focusing on improving access to education, promoting peace and social cohesion, and advocating for climate awareness and resilience. His efforts contribute directly to the broader development agenda of Kaduna State and Nigeria, which prioritize inclusive education, security, and sustainable community development.

Muhammed aims to contribute to the development of evidence-based educational policies that enhance equity, inclusivity, and quality in education, thereby fostering human capital development and sustainable growth across Nigeria.

His master's research focuses on "Security Challenges and Their Implications on Primary School Education: Implications for Sustainable Development - Case Study of Giwa Local Government, Kaduna State." Through this study, he seeks to generate actionable insights that will inform policy and practice towards achieving inclusive, safe, and quality education for all in line with national and global development priorities.



**Mwita Chacha** is a Kenyan citizen from Kuria East subcounty, Migori County. He holds a First-Class Honors

Bachelor's degree in Education from Kenyatta University where his passion for climate change and sustainable development first took root. Building on this foundation, he began pursuing a Master's degree in Climatology at Kenyatta University which he is now finalizing. His strong academic performance and commitment to research excellence later earned him the prestigious DAAD Scholarship to pursue a Master of Education in Research at Moi University.

Mwita is a licensed teacher with the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) and a former fellow of AGNES Africa Cohort XVII. He is both a digital learning enthusiast and a serial volunteer. He has engaged in national and global platforms including the pre-COP29 campaigns as a UN Volunteer, STEAMLABS facilitation and the DAAD 2025 global summer school at Heidelberg University in Germany. He is also an alumnus of the competitive Trevor Noah Foundation Education Change Maker's Cohort 2, an initiative by the Yali Regional Leadership Center East Africa.

His professional experience spans

teaching, climate action, research coordination and community engagement. Previously, he served as a Research Assistant with World Vision Kenya where he led data collection and quality assurance for the Kenya Big Dream Project.

At ICARE Sustainability International, Mwita volunteers in climate-smart farming initiatives, education for sustainable development (SDG 4) and grassroots mobilization. His long-term goal is to bridge education, research and policy for transformative social and environmental impact.



**Racheal Munyakiire** is a dedicated educational professional in Uganda. She completed her Bachelor's degree from

Makerere University. Driven by a deep passion for improving the quality of education, Racheal is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Educational Research at Moi University. Due to her interest in enhancing teacher motivation and performance, she is conducting a research study on the effects of government teacher recruitment towards the motivation of private teachers in Uganda.

Beyond academics, Racheal is committed to lifelong learning, mentorship and

empowering young educators to embrace innovation and professionalism in their teaching careers.



**Sharon Chepkemai** is an Education Officer, Researcher, and Boy-child Advocate.

Born in Kericho County, Sharon Chepkemai's journey reflects her dedication to education, equity, and social transformation. She began her education at Chepkutung Primary School, continued to Kipsigis Girls High School, and later earned a Bachelor's degree in Education (Arts), majoring in English and Literature, from the University of Nairobi.

Currently pursuing a Master's degree in Education (Research, Policy, and Practice) at Moi University's CERM-ESA Centre, Sharon serves as an Education Officer at EIDU, where she supports teacher capacity development and digital learning integration. She is also an active member of the Education Leadership and Research Association (ELRA), an academic affiliation of Moi University.

Sharon is a passionate boychild advocate, championing initiatives that promote male inclusion, mental health awareness, and gender equity in education. At the Re-

gional Leadership Center (East Africa), she was selected among Cohort Two of the Education Changemakers and was honored to be nominated as the Cohort representative, leading peer-learning sessions and collaborative initiatives that empower young African educators.

Sharon continues to advance evidence-based, community-centered approaches to education and social development.



**Brenda Taboi Chebet** is a Kenyan citizen that hails from Trans-Nzoia county. She is a special needs educator, an as-

stant language & speech therapist and an educational researcher. My career in special needs education began with a desire to ensure every child, regardless of their learning needs, has access to a quality education. This path has taken me from the dynamic environment of the classroom to the focused setting of a hospital, working with children, particularly with learners with hearing impairments and the neurodiverse learners. These experiences have crystallized my core belief: that within inclusive education, there is love, beauty, and greatness for everyone.

Currently, I am pursuing a Master's degree in Education Research in the DAAD-sponsored CERM-ESA program, and I am focusing on the engine of this inclusion. I am interested in the alchemy that happens when educators feel truly capable and confident so that their high self-efficacy translates to positive cognitive, behavioral, and social outcomes for their students. My work is dedicated to creating the resources, research, and supportive spaces that empower these educators, because I know that quality education for children begins with quality support for their teachers.

## CERM-ESA PhD scholars



**Josephine Maingi** is a PhD candidate in the School of Education department of education management and policy studies at Moi University, specializing in Education Research and Evaluation with a focus on inclusive learning and disability studies. She embodies the spirit of resilience and dedication that defines Moi University's academic community. Born, raised, and schooled in the central part of Kenya through high school, Josephine's educational journey has brought her to Eldoret, where she has found not just a university, but a home for her academic aspirations.

From Undergraduate to Doctoral Scholar: Josephine's relationship with Moi University spans over a decade. After completing both her Undergraduate and Master's degrees here, she is now pursuing a PhD in Education Research and Evaluation. Her academic progression reflects a deepening commitment to understanding and transforming education in Kenya and beyond.

"I am grateful to the DAAD for funding both my Master's and PhD studies with CERM-ESA. This support has made it possible for me to pursue my passion and contribute meaningfully to the field of education research."

**A Passion for Inclusive Learning:** As a passionate qualitative researcher, Josephine has carved out a specialized focus in inclusive learning and disability studies. Her work addresses one of the most pressing challenges in contemporary education: ensuring that every learner, regardless of ability, has access to quality education and the opportunity to thrive.

Through her research, Josephine seeks to amplify voices that are often marginalized in educational discourse and to develop evidence-based solutions that promote equity and inclusion in learning environments.

**An Inspiring Message for Fellow Educators:** Josephine's philosophy on education is both pragmatic and poetic. "As educators, we cannot run away from the education challenges in our continent and the world," she reflects. "Rather, we look

for solutions to better our tomorrow. We will not wait for the rain to cease – we learn to dance in the rain.”

This powerful metaphor captures her approach to the obstacles facing African education: instead of waiting for perfect conditions, she advocates for active engagement, creative problem-solving, and unwavering commitment to educational excellence.

As Josephine continues her doctoral research at Moi University, she represents the next generation of educational leaders – scholars who are not only studying education but actively working to transform it for the benefit of all learners.



Born and raised in the dusty plains of Amboseli in Kajiado County, Kenya **Munke Senteu** is a Bachelor's graduate of Moi University class of 2016 specializing in Kiswahili, African language, history and government. He is a teacher with a teaching experience of seven years.

Munke has taught in several schools both as a volunteer teacher and under remuneration as a way of giving back to the community including teaching the vulnerable members of the society refugees in the

DADAAB refugee camp in Garissa County, Kenya. He graduated with a CERM-ESA Master's degree from Moi University in 2021. His thesis title was “Exploring Maa-sai Women Teachers' Constructions of Womanhood: a Case of Kajiado County, Kenya”.

Munke has served in different leadership positions and roles that advocates for equity and promotion of education and gender mainstreaming in the society. He is the patron of the bursary committee of Olgulului Land Trust that champions education opportunities to all within Amboseli ecosystem. He is a member of the education committee within the National Government Constituency Development Fund (NGCDF) Kajiado South Constituency, as well as being the current chairperson of the Board of Management (BOM) of Entonet Secondary School. Munke Currently works as a Deputy Director of Education in charge of Quality Assurance and Standards in Kajiado County Government. He is a Moi University and CERM-ESA PhD student pursuing a course leading to a doctorate degree in Education Research and Evaluation with a keen interest in gender and sexuality education.



Born in Nakuru County in Kenya on a warm January day, **Mercy Wanjiru** is a passionate educator and researcher committed to transforming educational access and equity in Africa. Her academic journey began at Flamingo Primary School and later Loreto High School, Limuru, where she developed a deep appreciation for learning and leadership.

Mercy earned her Bachelor's degree in Education Science from Egerton University, followed by a Master's degree in Education from Kenyatta University. She is currently pursuing her PhD in Education at Moi University, where her research explores innovative pathways for inclusive education through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and the integration of informal and non-formal learning systems.

Professionally, Mercy serves as a dedicated teacher at St. Francis Mang'u High School in Kiambu county in Kenya, where she continues to inspire young minds through her commitment to academic excellence and personal growth. Her work reflects a strong belief in the transformative power of education, particularly in empowering marginalized communities and expanding educational participation across Africa.

Driven by curiosity and compassion, Mercy envisions an education system where all learners – regardless of their background – are recognized for their skills, experiences, and potential.



**Kenneth Muthomi** hails from Giaki Village in Meru County, on the eastern slopes of Mount Kenya. He is a Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Educator specializing in Electrical and Electronics Technology. Kenneth is a dedicated educator, researcher, and DAAD alumnus with a Master of Education in Research (CERM-ESA) and a First-Class Honours Bachelor's degree in Technology Education from Moi University, Kenya.

He is a licensed TVET trainer by the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority of Kenya (TVETA-Kenya) and a graduate member of the Institution of Engineering Technologists and Technicians of Kenya (IET-Kenya). He has extensive experience in teaching and mentoring students in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) subjects. His teaching emphasizes practical skills, creativity, and active learner engagement to prepare trainees for real-world

opportunities in technical and engineering fields.

In addition to his teaching and academic roles, Kenneth works as a freelance researcher specializing in questionnaire design and development, as well as advanced quantitative data analysis. His expertise includes designing robust data collection instruments, managing complex datasets, and applying statistical techniques to support decision-making and policy development. Kenneth has worked on various research and consultancy projects in education, training, and workforce development, applying data-driven insights to enhance program effectiveness and policy outcomes.

Kenneth is currently pursuing a PhD in Educational Research and Evaluation through the CERM-ESA DAAD scholarship. His research focuses on improving the quality and relevance of Competency-Based Education and Training (CBET) in public TVET institutions in Kenya. Through evidence-based and collaborative research, he aims to strengthen TVET systems and promote inclusive educational transformation that equips young people with the skills needed for sustainable development across Sub-Saharan Africa.

# CERM-ESA Family Celebrates its new Graduates

The CERM-ESA graduation celebrations were held at the Centre's Auditorium and Guest House at Moi University, main campus, following the official university graduation ceremonies on the 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2024 and 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2025 respectively.

Earlier that morning, the graduates joined hundreds of others at the university pavilion, where the event was graced by the Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, members of the university leadership, and invited guests. It was a moment of pride and reflection, marking the peak of years of rig-

orous academic pursuit and personal resilience.

Later in the day, the CERM-ESA community gathered to celebrate its graduates with the family members who gave moving speeches that highlighted vivid pictures of perseverance and hope. Both the gradu-

ates and the family members spoke of the late nights, moments of doubt, and the constant belief that success would eventually come. Their words carried gratitude to the CERM-ESA leadership, supervisors, mentors, and colleagues who offered unwavering academic, emotional and financial support throughout the journey.

Representing the Centre, the project leader, coordinator and members of staff extended their congratulations to the graduates, commending them for their hard work, academic excellence and contribution to the Centre's mission of advancing education research and management in Africa. They encouraged the new graduates to continue serving as ambassadors of CERM-ESA by transforming education through research-informed practice, collaboration and innovation.

The afternoon was filled with moments of joy and reflection from the symbolic cake cutting to shared laughter and photo sessions that captured the spirit of community and achievement. What stood out most was the deep connection between academic success and the collective support



of family, mentors, and peers.

The event closed on a note of gratitude by the graduates; a fitting close to a remarkable academic journey and a joyful beginning of new possibilities ahead.

The graduates were awarded their degrees as follows:



**LONG LIVE CERM-ESA!!!**

| S/N | NAME                  | DEGREE | TITLE                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-----|-----------------------|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | LABANI MIKA KANYONGA  | PhD    | Medicating Effect of Learning Approaches on the Relationship between Student Engagement in Experiments and Scientific Inquiry Competencies in Technical Institutions in Tanzania |
| 2   | MERCY CHEMUTAI BARASA | PhD    | Leveraging Teacher Concerns in Educational Change: A Case of the Uganda Lower Secondary Curriculum Reform                                                                        |
| 3   | SARAH JEMUTAI         | PhD    | Play Way Method of Learning in Developing Digital Literacy Among Pupils in Primary Schools in Nandi County, Kenya                                                                |
| 4   | LILY YEGO             | PhD    | Exploring Learners' Experiences of Socio-Ecological Risks During the COVID-19 Pandemic Lockdown: A Case of Selected Secondary Schools in Kenya                                   |
| 5   | NELSON MANDELA        | PhD    | University-Community Engagement Opportunities to Address Climate Change in African Context: A Comparative Case Study of Ndejje and Makerere Universities                         |
| 6   | ADAM ABDULKADIR SHEHU | Master | Integration of Information and Communication Technology in Teaching and Learning and its Influence on Students' Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Gezawa Kano, Nigeria  |
| 7   | FRANK MWALUKO         | Master | Integration of Information and Communication Technology in Teaching and Learning of Geography: A Study of Public Secondary Schools in Manyoni District, Tanzania                 |
| 8   | JECINTA GITHIOMI      | Master | Teachers' Sensitization of Learners with Visual Impairment on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in an Integrated Secondary School in Nakuru, Kenya                       |
| 9   | JUMA MUGAYA           | Master | Exploring English Language Teachers' Experiences in Developing Critical Thinking and Communication Skills in Selected Ugandan Secondary Schools of Kayunga Town Council          |
| 10  | VERONICA MKUSA        | Master | Biology Teachers' Experiences of Teaching in an Inclusive Classroom in Selected Secondary Schools in Malawi                                                                      |
| 11  | ERICK OTIENO OUMA     | Master | Evaluation of the Utilization of Instructional Resources by Secondary School Teachers Teaching Geography in Ugunja Sub-County, Siaya County, Kenya                               |

# PhD Graduation – a Personal Reflection

By Lily Yego, CERM-ESA PhD graduate

On March 28 2025, I was deeply honoured to be conferred the Doctor of Philosophy degree, a moment that crowned years of rigorous academic pursuit, personal growth, and unwavering determination. The PhD journey has been both challenging and transformative; it has been a test of hard work, resilience and perseverance.

This achievement would not have been possible without the academic and financial support of CERM-ESA. I remain profoundly grateful to CERM-ESA for providing not only the funding that sustained my studies, but also the mentorship, intellectual community, and research opportunities that shaped my academic and professional development. The Centre's commitment to nurturing educational leadership and research excellence across Africa has been both inspiring and empowering.

I also extend heartfelt appreciation to my



supervisors, mentors, and peers, whose guidance, constructive feedback, and encouragement enriched my academic experience. Their support helped transform challenges into opportunities for learning and growth. Each phase of this journey reminded me that success in research is not merely an individual accomplishment, but a collective outcome of shared effort, collaboration and faith.

Completing this doctorate reaffirms my belief in the transformative power of education and research to shape healthier, more equitable communities. As I look ahead, I remain committed to advancing scholarship that addresses the socio-ecological risks affecting young people's well-being, mental health and resilience.

To the entire CERM-ESA family and all who walked with me on this journey: Thank you for believing in my potential and for being part of this milestone.

# CERM-ESA Teacher Professional Development Initiatives

## Building Tomorrow's Classroom: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, Early Childhood Approaches, and Wellness Support

By Susan Kurgat

CERM-ESA's annual professional development workshops for teachers and principals in schools in and around Eldoret always spark a lot of interest and enthusiasm. The 2025 workshop successfully brought together educators to explore three interconnected pillars of modern teaching practice: equipping students with 21<sup>st</sup> century competencies, implementing research-backed early childhood pedagogies, and prioritizing mental health support for both students and staff.

The first session, facilitated by Mr Patrick Bett, focused on embedding the "Four Cs" – Critical Thinking, Creativity, Collaboration, and Communication – into daily instruction. Participants engaged in hands-on activities demonstrating how to move beyond rote memorization toward problem-solving and inquiry-based learning. Teachers particularly appreciated

practical strategies for integrating digital literacy and computational thinking across subject areas, even in schools with limited technology access. The session emphasized that 21<sup>st</sup> century skills aren't separate from core academics but rather represent how we teach content. Educators left with concrete lesson plan templates that weave these competencies naturally into literacy, mathematics, and science instruction while maintaining curriculum standards.

The 'Movements in Early Childhood Education' session was facilitated by Mr David Weru. It explored contemporary approaches reshaping early learning environments from his vast experience in Waldorf Education. The session covered the following topics: outdoor movement, indoor movement, movement in teaching numeracy, movement in teaching literacy, how to create own movement, use of stories in



Participants of the CERM-ESA Professional Development Workshop for Teachers 2025 © CERM-ESA

teaching, drawing and coloring in teaching numeracy. Teachers explored how these frameworks share common ground: respect for children as capable learners, environments as "third teachers," and the critical importance of unstructured play for cognitive and social-emotional development. Breakout groups designed classroom modifications incorporating these principles, from creating provocations

and learning centers to restructuring daily schedules to protect extended play periods. Many educators expressed relief that research now validates what they've long observed: that young children learn best through active, joyful engagement rather than worksheets and direct instruction.

The final session addressed the growing mental health needs in our school communities. A school counselor and psycholo-

gist, Mr David Owame, led discussions on recognizing early signs of anxiety, depression, and trauma in students, emphasizing that teachers are often the first to notice changes in behavior or engagement. Participants learned trauma-informed classroom practices, including establishing predictable routines, offering choices, and using restorative rather than punitive discipline approaches. Equally important was the conversation about educator wellness. Teachers shared strategies for preventing burnout, setting healthy boundaries, and accessing support systems. The group collaboratively developed a school-level action plan for implementing mindfulness practices, peer support networks, and clearer pathways for referring students to mental health services.

## Teacher Workshops and CERM-ESA Book Launch

By Mercy Barasa

How do educators meaningfully integrate SDGs 5 (gender equality) and 13 (climate change) into curriculum reform and teacher development? More importantly, how do they do so in ways that empower learners, especially girls, to critically engage with gender norms and climate resilience in their own communities? These questions drove the Teacher Workshop and Professional Development Programme held at Nelson Mandela University on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> August 2025, aptly themed: Translating policy into teaching practice – including climate change and gender issues in secondary school teaching.

The workshop attracted an impressive array of educators from every level of the educational spectrum: foundation phase, primary, junior secondary, senior secondary, and higher education. What better way to tackle these challenges than to facilitate vertical and horizontal discussions across the entire spectrum? Educators got a first-hand sense of how their colleagues at different levels experienced and handled the same thorny issues.



Participants of the Professional Development and Engagement Workshop at the Nelson Mandela University

© Nelson Mandela University

Professor Mathabo Khau, professor in gender and sexuality studies at the Faculty of Education's Department of Postgraduate Studies, Nelson Mandela University, ably facilitated the workshop. With her specialization in gender and sexuality, HIV/AIDS, inclusive education, and participatory research, she was a natural choice to lead this policy-to-practice exploration. She was supported by Professor Pius Zhebe Yanda, professor at the Institute of Resource

Assessment, University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, who served on the Inter-Governmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC). The educators also benefitted from insights from experts across Tanzania and Germany, including Dr. Nkuba Musa (lecturer, trainer, researcher and consultant in sustainability and management, University of Dar es Salaam), Prof. Eugenia Kafanabo (senior educationist at University of Dar es Salaam), Dr. Malve von Möllendorff

(project coordinator, CERM-ESA), and Dr. Wiebke Scharathow (senior lecturer at the Department of Social Pedagogy, Institute of Educational Science, Freiburg University of Education, Germany). Together, these experts offered a rich tapestry of intercultural practice and reflection.

Behind the scenes, Dr. Ayanda Simayi did the crucial work of putting the workshop together and coordinating all its moving parts, while Ms. Lisa Eisler and Ms. Birgit Schelenz provided essential logistics and rapporteur support. The event was made possible through the invaluable funding and support of Prof. Dr. Karsten Speck, who championed every aspect of the workshop.

Discussions opened with a baseline assessment of how teachers currently include gender and climate change issues across different subject fields. South African teachers shared their individual practices with fellow educators from Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. The challenges and struggles, it turned out, were remarkably similar across the continent. The classic time versus content battle loomed large everywhere. It also became apparent that teachers were often left to interpret and implement curricular material largely on their own, which frequently led to con-

fusion, frustration, and sometimes outright neglect of these important topics. The good news? Everyone was unanimous in acknowledging how critical these issues are for the 21st century learner. Better still, curricular content in all participating countries already includes these topics, providing a solid starting point for deeper integration.

A particular highlight was the presentation by the Green Avatars of Walmer High School, winners of the 2024 South Africa Climate Change Champs competition with a technical model in the renewable energy category. The group developed a project promoting biogas as a household application for cooking and heating. It was clear that this generation of learners cares deeply about climate change and gender issues, making it all the more important for educators to bring these policies alive in their classrooms.

Running alongside the main workshop was an equally important session on childhood trauma: Creating safe and supportive classrooms: Addressing learners' mental health through a trauma-informed lens: A child psychiatry perspective. Professor Dr. Yulia Golub, director of the University Clinic for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Psychosomatics and Psychotherapy, Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg, fa-

cilitated this sobering but necessary conversation. Teachers explored their potential role in supporting learners' mental health within the school environment. Drawing on global evidence and clinical experience from child psychiatry, the session offered a culturally aware and trauma-informed approach tailored to the realities of South African classrooms. Participants learned how to recognize common mental health challenges, respond sensitively to emotional and behavioral difficulties, and foster psychological safety and inclusion, especially in resource-constrained settings. The mood was heavy with recognition of the enormous and often unspoken challenge of child mental trauma, but lightened by resolve that it could be tackled and that teachers were up to the task.

The workshop concluded with the much-anticipated book launch for Education research in African contexts: Traditions and new beginnings for knowledge and impact. Edited by Prof. Paul Webb, Prof. Mathabo Khau, and Prof. Proscovia Namubiru Ssentamu, the book is a collection of research work by CERM-ESA scholars. It showcases the transformative role of education research in Africa, illuminating the intersection between education, society, and culture while fostering sustain-

able education reform and empowering communities. It was a proud moment for CERM-ESA: scholars, project coordinators, facilitators, supervisors, funders, and friends alike. The book launch celebrated the concretization of CERM-ESA's place as a center of excellence in educational research methodologies and management. It was a toast to the remarkable work already accomplished and the great work yet to come.



Scan the QR code and download the full book or specific chapters!

# CERM-ESA Hosts International Guests and Expands its Networks

## German Embassy Deputy Head of Mission visit to the Centre

In the beginning of the year, CERM-ESA at Moi University hosted a distinguished visitor: His Excellency Alexander Fierley, the Deputy Head of Mission and Economic Attaché from the German Embassy, Kenya, paid a courtesy call to engage with DAAD scholarship recipients. The visit, which underscored the strong academic partnership between Germany and Kenya, provided an opportunity for current scholars to interact directly with diplomatic representatives and learn about expanding educational opportunities in Germany. During his address to the assembled scholarship holders, the Economic Attaché emphasized the transformative impact of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) in fostering international collaboration and building expertise across critical sectors. He commended the students for their academic achievements and selection for the pres-



tigious program, noting that they represent the future of the regions' economic and intellectual leadership. "Your success reflects not only your individual talents but also the potential for deeper cooperation between our nations," the Attaché remarked. "The skills and knowledge you gain through

DAAD programs position you to drive innovation and development in your respective fields." A key focus of the visit was encouraging scholars to view their current awards as stepping stones rather than endpoints. The Economic Attaché outlined various DAAD funding opportunities available for

postgraduate studies, research fellowships, and professional development programs. He urged students to remain proactive in seeking additional scholarships and exchange programs that could enhance their academic trajectories. CERM-ESA leadership expressed gratitude for Germany's continued investment in African higher education and research capacity. The Centre, known for its focus on education research and management training, has benefited significantly from DAAD partnerships that enable students and faculty to access world-class training and collaborative research opportunities. The visit concluded with an interactive session where scholars posed questions about studying in Germany, career pathways, and how to maximize their scholarship experience. The warm exchange reinforced the mutual commitment to academic excellence and international cooperation that defines the DAAD program. As the scholars return to their studies with renewed motivation, the message was clear: hard work, persistence, and a commitment to excellence can unlock doors to extraordinary educational opportunities that extend far beyond borders.

## DIGI-FACE Leadership's Courtesy Call to CERM-ESA, Moi University

By Susan Kurgat

In a bold stride towards transforming higher education through digital innovation and strategic collaboration, as well as extension, celebrating eleven (11) solid years of excellence, Moi University's Centre of Excellence recently welcomed a high-end delegation from the DIGI-FACE (Digital Initiative for African Centres of Excellence) leadership on Tuesday 23rd August, 2025. The visit, coordinated by Prof. Susan Kurgat, marked a significant milestone in ongoing efforts to expand digital capacity and enhance access to quality postgraduate education across Africa.

The visiting team comprised prominent figures from the DIGI-FACE leadership, including the Project Leader Prof Ewald Eisenberg and the Project Coordinator Elisa Adams from the University of Applied Sciences Kehl (Germany), as well as Andrew Thuo (Learning Technologist) and Karlien Potgieter (Coordinator) from Nelson Mandela University in South Africa and

Michael Kongo from the Congolese Centre for Microfinance. Their visit was a strong affirmation of the enduring partnership and mutual commitment to sustainable educational development, as well as support for the digital needs of the DAAD African-German Centers of Excellence.

The crux of the visit was a series of high-level consultations with Moi University's leadership aimed at deepening collaboration and upscaling educational delivery through digital platforms. Key discussions focused on expanding access to learning for postgraduate students and co-developing innovative short learning programs through the university's resourceful Institute of Open, Distance, and e-Learning (IODL). These initiatives underscore a shared vision of inclusivity, flexibility, and academic excellence in postgraduate education, particularly in all the other disciplines of postgraduate studies. The meetings reaffirmed a joint commitment to not



only optimize existing platforms but also to pioneer new modalities of learning that respond to the rapidly evolving demands of the 21st-century knowledge economy.

A defining feature of the visit was the direct engagement with DIGI-FACE platform beneficiaries and users, with Moi University Master's students Tanui Alfred and Benjamin Marani Nyongesa, both from Cohort 9 of the DAAD Scholarship holders, together with Dr. Philomena Chepsiror, sharing candid reflections on their learning experiences through DIGI-FACE. Their feedback emphasized the platform's accessibility, user-centered design, and academic value. These interactions provided the delegation with vital first-hand user insights and a clearer understanding of the platform's

on-the-ground impact.

In a forward-thinking move, the DIGI-FACE team proposed involving students and alumni as volunteer ambassadors to support peer learning, co-create user-driven content, and enhance platform engagement. This strategy aims not only to strengthen community ownership but also to attract a broader user base and stimulate innovation from within the community.

Acknowledging the increasing need for mobile accessibility, the team also discussed strategies to extend DIGI-FACE resources through the Moodle Mobile App, thereby reaching students in low-bandwidth regions and expanding the platform's inclusivity and usability. The move aligns with broader efforts to make digital learning

more equitable and responsive to students' varying technological realities.

The visit concluded with a set of actionable recommendations focused on leveraging existing infrastructure and optimizing available resources. These include improving digital infrastructure, strengthening academic staff training in e-learning methodologies, and promoting cross-institutional knowledge sharing. The overarching goal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of the DIGI-FACE initiative while continuing to respond to the dynamic needs of African postgraduate learners.

The DIGI-FACE leadership's visit to Moi University serves as a testimony to what can be achieved through purposeful international collaboration, rooted in the

shared values of innovation, inclusion, and academic excellence. It reinforced the strategic partnership between Moi University, Nelson Mandela University, and the University of Applied Sciences Kehl, all of whom are united by a commitment to using digital transformation as a catalyst for educational equity and development across the continent.

As the DIGI-FACE initiative continues to grow, this engagement marks a pivotal step in its journey, one that promises not only to deepen impact but also to empower the next generation of African scholars and leaders through accessible, high-quality digital learning.

## The 10<sup>th</sup> CERM-ESA Research School

Seventeen scholarship holders gathered at Moi University, Eldoret, between 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> September 2025 for what has become a treasured CERM-ESA tradition: the annual Research School. For five intensive days, Masters and PhD scholars at the proposal development phase of their journey filled the beautiful CERM-ESA auditorium with excited discussion, critical feedback, and the kind of deep academic exchange that sharpens ideas.

Taking the steering wheel as chief facilitator was Prof Naydene de Lange, professor emeritus in the Faculty of Education at Nelson Mandela University, Port Elizabeth, South Africa. With over 200 publications and more than 3,000 citations to her name, Prof Naydene brought formidable expertise in qualitative methodologies, particularly participatory visual approaches, alongside an infectious passion for research as a tool for social change. Given the school's hybrid format, she was ably supported on the ground by Dr. Mercy Chemutai Barasa, who had herself sat under Prof. Naydene's tutelage in the 7th and 8th research schools and was delighted to help newer scholars find their own research



voices. Several staff members from Moi University School of Education joined online, with Professor Alice Mulee deserving special mention. Working tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure smooth logistics was Professor Susan Kurgat, project coordinator for CERM-ESA, supported by the indefatigable CERM-ESA staff. The sumptuous meals from the CERM-ESA Guest House throughout the week certainly kept minds and bodies well-fuelled.

The daily program ran from 9 am to 5 pm, tackling topics both deep and varied. The first day addressed fundamentals: finding a research-worthy topic, crafting the DNA of a problem statement, achieving coherence between problem statement, aim,

research question, and objectives, and situating the problem within the appropriate paradigm. Day two explored research design and methodology, enlivened by an exciting photovoice exercise in which participants visualized and explained the research experience using AI.

On day three, participants took centre stage, each presenting their research concepts and receiving critical feedback from colleagues and seniors. This illuminating exercise set the stage for day four's exploration of literature review approaches, theoretical frameworks, and conceptual frameworks. A particular highlight was the literature review mind map that Prof. Naydene introduced. Participants were

unanimous: the mind map made so much sense and promised to be infinitely useful for students, supervisors, and readers alike. The school concluded with a discussion of data analysis methods, where many participants had their first taste of thematic analysis under Prof. Naydene's expert guidance, drawing out codes, categories, and themes from their own impromptu writing.

But scholarship is not all seminar rooms and problem statements. After five days of intense learning and exchange, participants set off for a well-deserved excursion to Iten, Baringo District, the famed "Home of Champions." At the Iten viewpoint, they drank in breath-taking vistas. The divers at the gorges left them equally enthralled and scandalized. They refuelled on mouth-watering nyama choma before embarking on a boat ride across the beautiful Lake Baringo with its seven islands. There they boiled eggs at the hot springs, slathered on volcanic clay for its purported skin benefits, lured an eagle with fish, and rode home to sights of the setting sun glistening over the lake water.

Thus ended a most impactful research school week. Many thanks to the DAAD for the funds that made this school, like all others, a resounding success.

# Sharing my experience at the 5<sup>th</sup> CEMEREM Biennial International Conference

By Susan Kurgat

I am pleased to share on my successful participation in the 5th CEMEREM biennial international conference held at Taita Hills Safari Resort, Voi Kenya on 28th September– 1st October 2025. The Centre of Excellence for Mining, Environmental Engineering and Resource Management (CEMEREM) is a sister DAAD Centre of African Excellence located at Taita Taveta University. The conference provided an excellent platform for presenting reflections of the CERM-ESA project and engaging with fellow coordinators, academics, alumni and policymakers in meaningful discussions about international educational collaborations. The event exceeded expectations in terms of intellectual exchange, networking opportunities, and potential future collaborations. My presentation, titled “International Collaborations in Education: Models, Benefits, and Challenges Through the Lens of CERM-ESA Project,” was delivered during the parallel session under



technical presentations in Kiddy Hall. The presentation attracted a diverse audience of approximately 30 participants, including university administrators, education researchers, government officials, and representatives from international development organizations. The presentation focused on sharing insights from coordinating the CERM-ESA project, highlighting various collaboration models employed, tangible benefits realized, and practical challenges encountered. I emphasized the importance of equitable partnerships, contextualized approaches, and sustainable practices in

international educational collaborations, particularly within the East and Southern African context. The autoethnographic methodology resonated strongly with attendees who appreciated the honest reflection on both successes and difficulties experienced in managing transnational partnerships.

The conference provided exceptional networking opportunities that extended well beyond the formal presentation. I engaged with numerous colleagues during coffee breaks, meals, evening social events, a visit of the ‘Big Five’ in the Tsavo West na-

tional park and establishing connections that hold promise for future collaboration. Notable interactions included university management members of Taita Taveta University and the CEMEREM staff who discussed opportunities for knowledge exchange between CERM-ESA and their ongoing digital learning initiatives. Attending the conference provided valuable insights into emerging trends in international educational collaborations, including increased emphasis on decolonization of partnership practices, and innovative approaches to leveraging technology for collaboration. An interesting observation was the participation of ‘Local Miners’ in the conference who addressed their need to be included in all stakeholder planning for successful implementation of international projects. In our context, this would mean inviting teachers to our conferences in the future. Presentations generally expanded my understanding of alternative models and approaches that could inform future development of CERM-ESA and similar initiatives.

I am grateful for the support given by DAAD through CERM-ESA that made this participation possible and look forward to leveraging the connections established to advance our collaborative work in education.

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[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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# Centre for Educational Research Methodologies and Management (CERM-ESA)



African Excellence

Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst  
German Academic Exchange Service

Five universities from Germany and Africa are jointly shaping the CERM-ESA Centre of African Excellence. Together, they are driving a future-oriented educational culture while learning from one another along the way.

## GOALS

**Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education** is a **core goal of the 2030 Agenda**. To achieve this, **effective and evidence-based teaching practices** are essential. CERM-ESA strengthens educational research in Sub-Saharan Africa with innovative approaches that address the challenges in **(teacher) education and educational management** – in line with the specific contexts of the participating countries. The Centre supports future teachers and leaders in schools and universities through **targeted capacity development and knowledge sharing**. Additionally, it positions itself as a competent partner in educational policy debates.

## KEY ACTIONS

CERM-ESA combines international **research on education and education systems** with **practice-oriented support** at multiple levels: The Centre offers a **master's programme in Education Research**, annual **summer schools**, facilitated **online teaching modules**, and **international exchange** opportunities for faculty, doctoral candidates, and students. Further initiatives focus on **staff development**: In collaboration with schools in the region, CERM-ESA organises **training programmes for education practitioners**. Researchers, lecturers, and university managers from partner institutions also benefit from capacity-development courses, which are accessible to all Centres of African Excellence via the DIGI-FACE platform. This fosters **regional networking and impact**.



Focus

Educational research  
and educational  
management



Current funding phase

2024–2028



Partner countries

Kenya  
Tanzania  
South Africa  
Uganda

### Partner institutions

in Germany:

→ University of Oldenburg

in Sub Saharan Africa:

→ Moi University, Kenya  
→ University of Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania  
→ Nelson Mandela University, South Africa  
→ Uganda Management Institute, Uganda



Since the start of the project, **80 master's degrees** and **21 doctorates** have been successfully completed



Around **100 African education experts** take part in professional development programmes of the Centre each year



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