

# CARTANews

The newsletter of the Consortium for Advanced Research Training in Africa

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## News from the Secretariat

### CARTA Receives Staffing Boost



Dr. Pamela Juma

Dr. Pamela Juma is the new Training Coordinator of the Consortium of Advanced Research Training in Africa (CARTA). Dr. Juma has a master's degree in Community Health and Development, and a PhD in Nursing with a focus on health policy and health systems from the University of Ottawa, Canada. She

has extensive experience in teaching, management of research capacity strengthening programs, and research coordination. She has also taught at the Aga Khan University and the Great Lakes University (GLUK) in Kenya.

Dr. Wilson Wasike, previously the CARTA Program Manager, left the consortium in April, 2013. The CARTA Secretariat wishes Dr. Wasike the best in his next assignment.

### Capacity Building Training for CARTA Staff on Result-Based Management

A workshop for CARTA staff on results-based management (RBM) was conducted between January 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> 2013 at the APHRC Campus in Nairobi, Kenya. The Workshop was sponsored by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and conducted by Frederick Williams of Associates for International Management Services (AIMS). The workshop aimed at preparing a draft Umbrella Logical Framework to anticipate and prepare for the reporting requirements for Sida and pave way for an all-inclusive three-day training on RBM workshop for CARTA institutions slated for September 2013. At the end of the workshop, an RBM-compliant log frame based on agreement on the results to be obtained under Sida funding, with associated indicators and means of verification was developed.


 Results-based management workshop participants

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## CARTA Fellowship Call 2013/14

Recruitment for CARTA Cohort 4 fellows started on a positive note early in the year. The call for applications received a large number of applicants from CARTA institutions. Indeed, it was the largest number of applicants so far in the history of the program.

There were 120 applications out of which, 61 were nominated, among them 33 male and 28 female applicants. The positive response to the call is a contrast to last year's (2012/2013) submissions where a total of 43 applications were received. The improved response to the call in 2013 may be due to the timing of the call and the wide dissemination that was carried out by all CARTA institutions.

Table showing institution's applicants and nominations

	Total Applicants	Total Nominees	Male	Female
University of the Witwatersrand	11	5	4	1
Moi University	12	9	3	6
University of Nairobi	14	7	1	6
National University of Rwanda	6	5	2	3
APHRC	1	1	1	0
Makerere University	14	8	3	5
University Dar es Salaam	11	4	3	1
Ifakara Health Institute	6	4	3	1
KEMRI	2	0	0	0
University of Ibadan	21	8	6	2
Obafemi Awolowo University	10	4	3	1
University of Malawi	12	6	4	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>28</b>

In 2012/2013, the call was released in March 2012, whereas in 2013, it was circulated in January. Printed copies were produced in both instances as well as electronic format for online forums of scholarship information dissemination. With the deadline for submission of completed application package set for April 15<sup>th</sup> 2013, there was confidence that the almost four-month period was adequate to enable all potential applicants to be reached and accord them ample time to package their applications. This strategy has worked well, going by the number of applications yielded by the call. In the future, the call's timing will be done to give ample time and achieve a wider dissemination at the end of the call period. Credit goes to the CARTA focal persons at the CARTA institutions who strategically and conspicuously displayed the call in their institutions and ensured that it was featured in their institutions' websites. The Secretariat is also aware that the applicants received guidance in preparation of their fellowship request materials.

A good response to the call for fellowships is a great leap for the CARTA program. There is an indication that quality applications have been received.

## News on Training

### CARTA JAS 1 Cohort 3 holds Seminar in Dar es Salaam



Prof. Mukandala delivering the JAS 1 opening speech at the University of Dar. CARTA Program Manager Dr. Wasike (Left) and Dr. Dungumaro were in attendance

The CARTA Joint Advanced Seminar 1 (JAS 1) for Cohort 3 (2013) fellows

was held at the Giraffe Ocean View Hotel, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, from March 5<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> 2013. The event was officially opened by Professor Rwekaza Sympho Mukandala, the Vice-Chancellor, University of Dar es Salaam. Prof. Mukandala praised the efforts made by the African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC) and the University of the Witwatersrand for the CARTA Program which, he said, was very innovative. He noted that the program's objective of training and retaining African researchers in Africa was a noble one. Prof. Mukandala cited CARTA's potential for shaping policy in Africa through research.

Present during the event were JAS

1 facilitators, University of Dar es Salaam's CARTA committee members led by their focal person, Dr. Esther Dungumaro. The CARTA Secretariat staff, among them Dr. Wilson Wasike the Program Manager, Dr. Caroline Kabiru, the Head of Urbanization and Well-being Program of APHRC and CARTA Training manager, and Dr. Chimaraoke Izugbara, Director of APHRC's Research Capacity Strengthening (RCS) Division were also present. Cohort 3 has a total of 25 fellows, bringing the number of fellows in the CARTA program to 65.

Prof. Mukandala reminded the fellows that they were privileged to be on the CARTA program and chal-



CARTA Fellow join the Vice Chancellor, University of Dar es Salaam, Prof. Mukandala (seated third from right) for a photograph, March 2013

lenged them to work hard. "I challenge you not to rest on your laurels but to continue to strive towards even higher goals." Recalling the CARTA Vice-Chancellors' meeting held in Johannesburg in November 2012, Prof. Mukandala said that the University of Dar es Salaam was honored to host a CARTA event, coming as it did after that epic meeting of vice-chancellors. He advised the fellows to take their CARTA fellowship opportunity seriously and to make use of every learning opportunity under the program to bring about change in their respective countries. There are seven countries participating in the CARTA program.

For the four-week JAS 1 duration, the first two weeks were spent in Dar es Salaam, week three was spent in the field as fellows visited the Ifakara Health Institute Demographic Site to gain practical experience in research. They returned to Dar es Salaam to finalize the JAS training in week four. During JAS 1, fellows were introduced to learning activities aimed at shaping their critical thinking, technical skills, and other

core research competencies. They were further introduced to the essential concepts and seminal articles of the disciplines brought together under CARTA. Thereafter, within the course of their fellowship, fellows will take JAS 2, 3 and 4, each addressing a specific aspect of PhD scholarship.

On behalf of the CARTA Secretariat, Dr. Izugbara thanked Prof. Mukandala for taking time off to officially open the training and for the warm hospitality extended to the CARTA program.

### CARTA Supervisors' Workshop

Cohort 3 fellows had the opportunity to present their research protocols to their supervisors who were holding a supervisors' workshop in the same venue as JAS 1 in Dar es Salaam. They analyzed the fellow's research protocols and gave them guidance on how to improve them. The supervisors' workshop also addressed such issues as good supervision practices which, when put into practice, lead to good supervisor-supervisee relationship.

## CARTA Meetings

### University of Gothenburg hosts CARTA

CARTA held a meeting at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden, on May 6<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> 2013 to develop a document seeking to renew the Wellcome Trust funding. The meeting was convened by Prof. Göran Bondjers of the University of Gothenburg. It was attended by Akinyinka Omigbodun, Alex Ezeh, Sharon Fonn, Donald Cole, Adamson Muula, Samson Kinyanjui, Anne Katahoire, Chimaraoke Izugbara, Frances Griffiths, and Caroline Kabiru, among others. A renewal proposal was prepared for submission later in the year.

### CARTA at the 7<sup>th</sup> African Institutions Initiative Directors' Meeting

The 7<sup>th</sup> AII (African Institutions Initiative) Directors' Conference took place on April 29<sup>th</sup> 2013 in London, United Kingdom. CARTA Director Alex Ezeh together with the Deputy Director Sharon Fonn represented the consortium. They made a presentation highlighting various achievements by CARTA, and underscored the challenges facing the consortium. The presentation also reflected on the CARTA program, its quality and future.

### CARTA Board of Management Meeting

The CARTA Board of Management convened a face-to-face meeting on March 25<sup>th</sup> 2013 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, to review the implementation progress of the CARTA program. The CARTA Board normally holds a virtual meeting in March, but the face-to-face meeting in 2013 was necessitated by the need to elect a new Chair to the Board because the holder's term was about to expire. During the meeting, members were expected to elect a new Chair and to plan for the next phase of the program activities.

Those at the meeting were Akinyinka Omigbodun of the University of Ibadan and Board Chair; Alex Ezeh, the Executive Director of the African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC) and Director, CARTA; Sharon Fonn of the University of Wit-

watersrand, South Africa, and Deputy Director, CARTA; Wilson Mandala of the University of Malawi; Samson Kinyanjui of Kemri Wellcome Trust Programme in Kilifi, Kenya; Anne Nangulu of Moi University, Kenya; Göran Bondjers of the University of Gothenburg, Sweden; Wilson Wasike, the CARTA Program Manager and Secretary to the Board; Jane Kengeya-Kayonde, the Wellcome Trust Special Advisor for Africa; and Emmanuel Bellon.

A notable outcome of the meeting was the re-election for a second term of three years of the current CARTA Board of Management Chairperson, Akinyinka Omigbodun. In his acceptance speech, the Chair-elect promised to continue to lead and direct CARTA affairs to greater heights in order to achieve its objectives in full.

## Visitors to CARTA

### Carnegie Corporation of New York

Professor Tade Aina, Program Director, Higher Education in Africa, and Ms. Deana Arsenian, Vice-President, International Program and Program Director, Russia and Eurasia, of the Carnegie Corporation, NY, visited APHRC on May 17<sup>th</sup> 2013. They held a meeting with CARTA staff who briefed them on the CARTA's activities and programing. CARTA Director Alex Ezeh led the discussions.

### Alex Ezeh at BIARI

Dr. Alex Ezeh made a presentation on the CARTA Program at the Population and Development Brown International Advanced Research Institute (BIARI) on June 12<sup>th</sup> 2013. The forum was well attended and elicited interest from participants who wanted to know more about CARTA and the consortium's experience with funding applications. BIARI is an annual event. Dr. Ezeh is among renowned visiting faculty of BIARI.

Dr. Alex Ezeh at BIARI >>



# News from CARTA Partners

## New Focal Persons at the University of Dar es Salaam and the University of Nairobi



Dr. Esther Dungumaro, the new CARTA focal person at UDSM

Dr. Esther Dungumaro has been appointed the new CARTA focal person at the University of Dar es Salaam. Dr. Dungumaro, a demographer, is the Acting Director of International Relations at the University of Dar es Salaam. Dr. Dungumaro replaced Dr. Julius Kivelia and Dr. Francis Sichona who previously served as University of Dar es Salaam CARTA focal persons. Her research interests include population and environment. Her first assignment after taking over the office was to disseminate the call for CARTA PhD applications 2013/14 among University of Dar es Salaam staff. At the end of the application period, a total of 13 applications were received from the University of Dar es Salaam.

The University of Nairobi also got an extra focal person to assist in running CARTA affairs.

## Acting Rector, National University of Rwanda

Following the appointment of Prof. Silas Lwakabamba the Rector, National University of Rwanda, as the Minister of Infrastructure for that country, Prof. Manasseh Mbonye has been appointed as the Rector, National University of Rwanda on an acting capacity. Until his appointment, Prof. Mboye was the Vice-Rector and he is no stranger to CARTA. In November 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> 2012, he joined other CARTA vice-chancellors at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, while representing the Rector at the First CARTA Vice-Chancellors' meeting.

## National University of Rwanda and Moi University play host to CARTA monitoring team

Thomas Yebei, the CARTA Monitoring and Evaluation Officer and Makau Ngola, the CARTA program Communications Officer, visited the National University of Rwanda (NUR) Butare from February 17<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> 2013. The mission to NUR was to undertake a review of aspects of the CARTA program's implementation, among them procurement and financial management. Thomas and Makau met with CARTA fellows at NUR, the focal person Professor Rama Rao, the CARTA Committee and the Rector NUR, Professor Silas Lwakabamba, who has since been appointed the Minister of Infrastructure in the country. The visit to NUR was extremely fruitful. Structures have been revamped to effectively address CARTA issues at NUR and to enhance reporting of the activities taking place at the university.

The turn for a monitoring visit to Moi University in Kenya came on June 10<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> 2013 when Thomas Yebei and Evelyne Kemunto, the CARTA Program Accountant, paid the institution a visit. The two-day visit saw both CARTA officers meet CARTA members of Moi University, including the focal person, Prof. Anne Nangulu, and also engage CARTA fellows. They reviewed administrative practices and procedures on CARTA matters at the university.



Administration Block, National University of Rwanda



CARTA Monitoring and Evaluation visit to Moi University

## WLAN at the University of Dar es Salaam

In pursuit of its goal of enhancing research management and productivity in African universities CARTA undertook an installation of a wireless local area network (WLAN) at the University of Dar es Salaam's new conference room. The installation, carried out in February 2013 by the University Computing Centre, involved provision of three access points that employ the star topology. It is hoped that the installation will contribute to better access

of internet services to the university community and facilitate better access to quality and relevant research materials that will enhance research at the University of Dar es Salaam.

## CARTA Universities Rank among Africa's Best

All the nine CARTA universities have made it to Africa's top 100 universities, according

to the World University Web Ranking 2013. The ranking gives an indication of the web presence, visibility and web access of the featured universities and aims at promoting open access publication of scientific results. In 2013, all nine CARTA universities featured among Africa's best 100, led by the University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa, and the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The following table shows the position and the overall position in Africa.

Position	Africa Position	University	Country
1	5	University of the Witwatersrand	South Africa
2	6	University of Dar es Salaam	Tanzania
3	10	Makerere University	Uganda
4	17	University of Nairobi	Kenya
5	23	University of Ibadan	Nigeria
6	31	Obafemi Awolowo University	Nigeria
7	40	National University of Rwanda (Université Nationale du Rwanda)	Rwanda
8	65	University of Malawi	Malawi
9	85	Moi University	Kenya

## Fellows' News

### Cohort 3 in Dar es Salaam

The Tale of Fellows' Sojourn in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania,  
By Okaka F, Mwale M, Khisa A, Save K and Pentz S.

My grandchildren! Stir the embers to warm my bones and gather around that you may hear the great tale of CARTA Cohort 3 fellows' journey.

Touted as one of the most competitive fellowships in Africa, the budding aspiring fellows were subjected to intensive assignments that had to be completed within specific timelines. Strangers found themselves working together in groups to complete the assignments, albeit virtually! The rigorous process of selecting the 25 CARTA doctoral fellows finally climaxed with the hosting of JAS 1 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, from 4<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> March 2013 at the prestigious Ocean Giraffe Hotel. The March date coincided with the general election in Kenya, a development that presented Tanzania with the opportunity to play host to JAS 1. The last batch of fellows to arrive was Kenyans who presumably had to cast their votes in the election before travelling.

The first days were marked by attempts to get to know one another and to master names, which at times felt like a game of tongue twisters. With time, barriers thawed and guards lowered, and the initial herding in groups of countrymen began to disappear. The first week moved pretty fast as time was easily consumed by the back-to-back sessions and pre-session readings that saw some fellows virtually camp in the seminar room for 24 hours. The most outstanding session during the first week was that on knowledge philosophy, epistemology and ontology which sounded like Greek to some dear fellows. As they say in philosophy "knowledge is what remains after forgetting." Unfortunately, one cannot put one's money on this when it comes to the session on knowledge and philosophy. Sunday was a breather after a tiring week with a trip to town that ended at the landmark Kariakor market in Dar es Salaam. A visit to a market described by locals as the Dubai of Tanzania was a memorable experience. It is rumored that it is only rivaled in the region by Nairobi's Eastleigh.

The greatest discovery of the week, however, was the shrine next to the Ocean Giraffe by "great senior elders" led by Charles, Save, Tony (Malawi), Kato (Uganda) and later Okaka, Ann (Kenya) and Steve (South Africa). Here "elders" converged every evening to consult the oracles and quench their thirst. Wisdom flowed during such meetings. Important deliberations and intercessions were made on behalf of all the fellows to the gods. First-

class catering and laundry services were provided by a "mrembo" at pocket-friendly rates. Initially patronized by only 4-5 elders, the popularity of the shrine spread like bushfire and by the end of JAS 1 it had hosted almost all the Cohort 3 fellows.

The second week was spent mainly guiding fellows on research design and re-shaping fellows' research questions. The experience was that of a child learning how to walk as fellows wrote and re-wrote their research topics only to change their ideas the next day. However, it was an eye-opening experience, particularly the pasting of topics on the wall for all to critique. In the course of the week the group led by the "girls" decided to welcome the CARTA twins. The group gathered near the swimming pool where presents were given to the twins' mother Banjo (Nigeria). Angeline (Kenya) belted *Kalenjin* songs dedicated to welcoming the new born into the community, with the group following in chorus.

Week three saw the group travelling to Ifakara in the Morogoro Region of Tanzania. The ten-hour trip was tiring but enjoyable. The drive through Mikumi National Park presented the opportunity to interact with nature; fellows had the opportunity of seeing live elephants. Along the way fellows had the opportunity of sampling roasted goat meat sold by Maasai herders. The Maasai also hawked traditional herbs whose potency few brave "elders" wanted to establish. Herbs may be a good topic for a public health thesis. The group arrived at Ifakara just as the sun was disappearing, exhausted but happy with the change of environment. The nocturnal habits of some fellows followed them all the way to Ifakara where the drive to sample the nightlife of the rural town led them to go out despite the exhausting drive. And contrary to expectations, Ifakara town is a city in a village.

This story should not end without mentioning the trip back to Dar, and the ultimate realization that after all, work had just begun! So fellows had to present their protocols to the supervisors and to other CARTA faculty and fellows. The farewell dinner hosted by the CARTA was the apex of the one-month journey. Laden with wisdom and encouragement, Dr. Alex Ezeh, CARTA Director, urged fellows to go forward and shine the continent's torch in the academia. He reminded them of the unique opportunity the fellowship presents. Later, fellows bade farewell to each other, promising that Johannesburg shall come to be, ESEO challenges notwithstanding! It is no wonder that a team was dispatched to South Africa in the wee hours of the morning to set forth early preparations for JAS 2.

And this, my grandchildren, is how Cohort Three was inaugurated.

CARTA Fellows with the twins who attended with their mum >>



# Fellows share their experiences

## Sulaimon A. Afolabi

### *Introduce yourself, your institution and your research area.*

I am Sulaimon A. Afolabi, a doctoral candidate in the department of Demography and Population Studies, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. I am a staff member of the Medical Research Council/Wits Rural Public Health & Health Transitions Research Unit, also known as the Agincourt Health and Demographic Surveillance System Site. My research interest is mainly on the components of population change, namely migration, mortality and fertility and their impact on the health and well-being of the population.



Sulaimon Afolabi

### *There are other PhD fellowships. What made you apply for a CARTA PhD fellowship?*

It inculcates research capacity development especially in my field of interest i.e. population and health. Also, it promotes collaboration and networking among the fellows. It exposes the fellow to the crème de la crème in the field of population and health research.

### *What are your hopes and dreams in the CARTA PhD program?*

I hope to garner the necessary expertise to finish my doctoral program and afterwards apply the acquired skills to proffer solutions to the population and health challenges being faced in sub-Saharan Africa. In future, I envisage mentoring and nurturing upcoming researchers. This may entail the replication of the CARTA program. More importantly, I dream of becoming an outstanding researcher in my field of endeavor.

### *What progress have you made in your PhD studies and have you published from your work so far?*

My proposal has been approved by my institution. Hence, I can continue with my research. Currently, I am at the thesis writing stage. Meanwhile, I have presented my work at the 2012 edition of the Population Association America (PAA) conference in San Francisco, USA, and I will be doing the same in Busan, South Korea, at the 2013 edition of the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP) conference.

### *Not everything is without hitches or sacrifice. What obstacles have you come across while on the CARTA program?*

My arduous challenge is in attempting to carve out time out of no time for my research. Nevertheless, I have taken a clue from one of the sayings of the late Martin Luther King which goes something like, "If you cannot fly then run, if you cannot run then walk, if you cannot walk then crawl, but whatever you do keep moving forward."

## Sunday Adedini

My name is Sunday Adedini, a lecturer in the Department of Demography and Social Statistics, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. I have B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees in demography from Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria. I am currently undergoing doctoral training in Demography and Population Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. My broad research focus is on child health, reproductive health and mortality studies with particular interest in social and health inequalities as well as the effects of neighbourhood contexts on health matrix. My area of expertise includes data collection and analysis with the use of statistical softwares such as Stata, SPSS, Epi Info, MortPark and Excel.

Although, there are other PhD fellowship programs, I chose to apply for the CARTA PhD Fellowship for a number of reasons. First, when the call for CARTA PhD Fellowship for Cohort 1 was announced in 2010, the requirements for the Fellowship really made me feel that the fellowship is designed particularly for a person like me. These requirements include possession of masters degree in a relevant field, a willingness to undertake PhD research in the area of population and public health, being on the teaching or research staff of one of the nine participating universities or in one of the four participating research institutes,

and readiness to undertake doctoral training at one of the nine participating universities in Africa.

I saw myself as a candidate for whom the CARTA Fellowship was designed, particularly because I teach at the Obafemi Awolowo University and, by then my M.Sc. results had just been approved and I was seeking admission to the University of the Witwatersrand to pursue a PhD degree in Demography and Population Studies. This really gave me the impetus to undergo the rigorous pre-JAS competence tasks, which I benefited immensely from. Second, I preferred CARTA Fellowship to other PhD Fellowships because the components of



Sunday Adedini

the CARTA program include exposing students to important didactic seminars to build fellows' conceptual, methodological and analytical skills. Third, the CARTA program encourages and creates an atmosphere for collaboration among fellows. Additionally, the CARTA program provides financial support for fellows. For this reason I chose to be a full time

student and I managed the resources available to me.

CARTA's aims include training and retention of well-equipped scholars who could build capacity at African universities. My hope and aspirations include working towards realizing this objective by contributing my own quota towards building capacity at my home institution. Besides, it is my dream to contribute my own small quota towards solving many developmental problems facing sub-Saharan Africa in general and Nigeria in particular, through collaborative policy-relevant and innovative research in the area of population and public health.

With respect to progress made in my PhD studies, my proposal was approved by the Faculty's Graduate Studies Committee during the first year of my studies. The second year of my program was devoted to data management and analysis. Some preliminary findings from my studies have been presented in a number of conferences. These include the African Population Conference of the Union for Africa Population Studies (UAPS), the annual meeting of the Population Association of America (PAA) and the Asian Population Conference of the Asian Population Association (APA). In addition, three abstracts based on my PhD studies have been accepted for presentation (two for oral and the other one for postal) at the forthcoming International Population Conference of the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population. Also, three manuscripts based on my PhD thesis are currently under review in three different ISI-listed journals.

This PhD program has not been without its sacrifices and hitches. The first sacrifice involves being away from my family for far too long. This of course afforded me the opportunity to

fully concentrate on my studies. I have been a triangular student, commuting in-between three places – room, classroom and church. I did not create time for much social activity. This is deliberate because I know once I finish my PhD studies there will always be time for social activities. The second hitch I encountered concerns my health. This is because I overworked myself and my average sleeping time per day reduced drastically. This affected me a bit during the first year of my studies. I remember that sometime around August 2011 I could not close my eyes in sleep for a good four days. When I consulted with my doctor, I was told that I had been denying myself enough sleep, so the body was getting used to sleeplessness. The doctor was afraid that I might have developed high blood pressure considering that I did not sleep at all for four complete days. After medical examination, the doctor eventually found that my BP was normal. After this episode, I had to increase my average sleeping time to around five hours per day.

Additional useful information is that in the course of my studies, I discovered that developing excellent working relations with supervisors is crucial to successful completion of PhD studies. Understanding early enough that supervisors' criticisms are not meant to mar but to make one successful is key to success in a PhD program. From time to time I receive constructive criticisms, appropriate and prompt feedback from my supervisor. I also have the opportunity of promptly attending to supervisor's comments.

Finally, with the help of God, I know that as I continue to play my part with enthusiasm and all seriousness, my supervisor will play his part and sooner rather than later I will be done with my PhD studies.

## CARTA Fellows Going Places



Adesola Sangowawa

### Adesola Sangowawa attends the World Congress of the International Association for Adolescent Health

Adesola Sangowawa attended the 10<sup>th</sup> World Congress of the International Association for Adolescent Health whose theme was "Bridging clinical and public health perspectives to promote adolescent health". The Congress took place in Istanbul, Turkey, on June 11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>, 2013. Adesola presented a poster entitled "Our Sexuality, Our Health – Findings from

the Multi-country Study on Well-Being of Adolescents in Vulnerable Environments (WAVE): Phase 1, Ibadan Site." She has authored the poster with others.



Simbarashe Takuva

### CARTA Fellow Appointed to Pan African Medical Journal Board

Simbarashe Takuva, a Cohort 2 (2012) fellow has been appointed a member of the editorial board of the Pan African Medical Journal (PAMJ). <http://www.panafrican-med-journal.com/eboard.php> Simba, as he is popularly known, will join other distinguished and renowned researchers and scientists from all over the world to oversee PAMJ publication activities.

Simba is registered at the University of the Witwatersrand as a PhD student and does research at the Centre for HIV and STIs, National Institute for Communicable Diseases, South Africa. Simba's editorial skills and grasp of issues and ideas in his specialization have also seen him land an invitation to be a reviewer of submitted abstracts for the upcoming International Conference of AIDS and STIs in Africa (ICASA) to be held in Cape Town, South Africa, on 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> December 2013.

### Francis Adeniyi Fagbamigbe to attend the Canadian Society for Epidemiology and Biostatistics (CSEB) Biennial conference

Francis Adeniyi Fagbamigbe, a CARTA Cohort 2 fellow from the University of Ibadan got his two works accepted for poster presentation at the Canadian Society for Epidemiology and Biostatistics (CSEB) biennial conference on 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> June 2013. Francis submitted an abstract entitled "Modeling Fertility Outcomes in Nigerian Women: The Poisson Regression Approach" for oral presentation which the organizers converted to a poster presentation. Francis lauded the CARTA program and recognized its impact as evidenced by the acceptance of his presentation work. He wrote, "This is definitely evidence of the impacts of your laudable CARTA program. Thanks to you all!"

## Sulaimon Afolabi and Stephen Ojiambo Wandera on the way to at the XXVII IUSSP International Population Conference

Two CARTA fellows, Sulaimon Afolabi and Stephen Ojiambo Wandera received invitations to attend and make presentations at the XXVII IUSSP International Population Conference held on 26<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2013 in Busan, Korea. Each fellow presented a paper in the HIV/AIDS and STDS regular session. Sulaimon's presentation was entitled, "A Longitudinal Study of the Relationship between AIDS/TB Mortality and Migration in the Context of Other Causes of Death in Rural South Africa" while Stephen's presentation was titled "Intergenerational Solidarity in and after Marriage Crises: Older Women as Safety Nets for Younger Women in Uganda."

## Melvin Ojo Agunbiade to present at the Meeting of the Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP)

Melvin Ojo Agunbiade of the Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) and a Cohort 3 (2012) fellow will be presenting an oral paper entitled "Sexual exploitations, Concealment and Adolescent Mothers' Agency in a Semi-Urban Community in Southwest Nigeria" at the 63<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP). The conference is scheduled for 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> August 2013 in New York, United States. Melvin received partial funding from the Lee Scholar Support Fund to support his travel.



Herbert Longwe



Freseier Chidyaongo Maseko



Linda Nyondo-Mipando

## 3 UNIMA CARTA Fellows Clinch 4<sup>th</sup> Health Research Capacity Strengthening Initiative (HRCSI RFA) Awards

Three CARTA fellows of the University of Malawi -- Herbert Longwe, Linda Nyondo-Mipando and Freseier Chidyaongo Maseko -- were awarded the 4<sup>th</sup> Health Research Capacity Strengthening Initiative (HRCSI RFA) awards. The Malawi National Commission for Science and Technology runs the awards which are aimed at strengthening national capacity for generation of health research knowledge and improving its use in evidence-based decision making, policy formulation and implementation. The awardees will use the grants to finance their PhD research.

The interviews for the awards were conducted as two of the awardees were undertaking their pre-JAS 2 session in Johannesburg, South Africa. CARTA facilitated the fellows' participation by granting them time-off for their travel.

Herbert Longwe was among those who travelled to Malawi to attend the interview and after clinching the award, he wrote to CARTA to express his gratitude. "This is very exciting news and I would like to sincerely express my gratitude to CARTA for your unwavering support during this application and especially for permitting us to attend the interviews for these awards. Your continued belief in me has paid off."

News of the awards was received with excitement at the CARTA Secretariat. Wilson Wasike, the then CARTA Program Manager, had this to say: "This is a proud moment for the graduate school at UNIMA and for all CARTA partners. It's your hard work and dedication that made you stand out in the HRCSI competition. We are all pleased that you took the interview seriously. We are sure if you continue performing like this you will complete your doctoral research in good time and achieve the milestones expected of CARTA fellows. We wish you the best in your CARTA fellowship and hope that you bring more laurels to UNIMA and the CARTA network."

## CARTA fellows at the Symposium for Emerging Scholars in Health

CARTA has facilitated five of its fellows to attend and make presentations at the Scientific Symposium for Emerging Scholars in Health, from 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> July in Nairobi, Kenya. The symposium, organized by the African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC), brought together past and current African Doctoral Dissertation Research Fellowship (ADDRF) Program awardees and other researchers in the region. They came together to share research findings, to network, and to learn collaboratively. There were both oral and poster presentations in health systems as well as public and population health research.

Dieudonne Uwizye, a Cohort 1 fellow made two poster presentations entitled "Neighbourhood Conditions Determine Diarrheal Risks in HuyeUrban

Informal Settlements in Rwanda" and "Primary Healthcare at Home for Diarrhea Patients: Experience of HuyeUrban Informal Settlements in Rwanda".

Joel Olayiwola Faronbi who is in Cohort 3 made a poster presentation entitled "Perceived Health and Social Need and Access to Health Care among Elderly in a Rural Community in South West, Nigeria". He also made an oral presentation entitled "Perception, Occurrence and Prevention of Elderly Abuse among Residents of Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria".

Steve Mphatso Kamndaya, a Cohort 1 fellow made an oral presentation entitled "Material Deprivation and Youth Sexual Behavior in Urban Informal Settlements, Malawi: Preliminary Findings".

Peter Mpasho Mwamtobein Cohort 2 made an oral presentation entitled, "Im-

pact of Multi-intervention Campaigns on the Malaria Epidemics in Malawi".

Taofeek Oluwole Awotidebe, a Cohort 1 fellow, made an oral presentation entitled, "Effect of Cardiac Rehabilitation Exercise of Physical Function in Patients with Chronic Heart Failure" and presented a poster entitled, "Assessment of Health-related Quality of Life, Socio-economic Status and Physical Activity in Apparently Healthy Adults".

The symposium featured pre-conference workshops where participants learnt the art of effective presentation and public speaking, research leadership and management, academic supervision and mentorship, media engagement and research communication tools development, and grant proposal development. They were also introduced to health systems research.



## CARTA Fellows Head to the Brown University, USA

Through the support of CARTA, two fellows have been invited to the Graduate Program in Development (GDP) of the Brown University, United States of America. Evaline Mcharo, a CARTA Cohort 2 fellow was the first to receive the invitation, followed by Sulaimon Taiwo Adedokun, Cohort 1 fellow from the Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria. Evaline is from the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and is a registered PhD student of the University of Nairobi.

For the four months the two will be at the Brown University, both CARTA fellows will participate in all GDP activities, take classes offered by GDP along with other classes

that may be of interest to them. However, the two will be required to take a course entitled – Theory and Research in Development. In addition, they will have full access to Brown’s libraries and electronic resources.

Evaline and Sulaimon will attend Brown University at different semesters. Evaline will be at the university during the Fall Semester which begins on September 4<sup>th</sup> and ends December 12<sup>th</sup> 2013 while Sulaimon will take his call during the Spring Semester from January 22<sup>nd</sup> to May 16<sup>th</sup> 2014.

Evaline and Sulaimon were chosen from a large group of CARTA fellows who had submitted their



Evaline Mcharo



Sulaimon Taiwo Adedokun

applications for placement. Evaline wrote to CARTA to break the good news saying, “Thank you very much for your efforts to help CARTA fellows.” Sulaimon thanked CARTA for the opportunity, terming it rare and wonderful and promised to make maximum use of it. CARTA is pleased by Brown University’s offer to both Evaline and Sulaimon.

## More than an academic forum: Re-union of CARTA Cohort 2 fellows in Uganda

By Scovia Nalugo Mbalinda



Mr. & Mrs. Tumwine pose for a group photo with CARTA fellows

Evelyn Mcharo and Steven Wandera Ojiambo who took time off to celebrate with Gabriel. Many thanks also to the entire Cohort 2 Fellows who followed the whole function from the beginning to the end. Yes, and thanks to Gabriel for hosting us. We wish you luck in your marriage but remember you have to finish the PhD. We thank God for this friendship.

A group of fellows came together in support of their colleague who was taking his wedding vows. Dr. Tumwine Gabriel tied the knot with beautiful Winnie on February 2<sup>nd</sup> 2013. It had all begun on Friday when all the fellows arrived from various destinations and the group had a cozy evening at Ndere Troupe where Uganda showcased their traditional dances. It was a delightful evening. On Saturday morning the group joined Gabriel in church to witness his marriage.

The venue was colorfully decorated with bright colors of red signifying the passionate, the dramatic and personality; green gave a breath of fresh air signifying growth, new life and positive energy; and yellow that was a sign of optimism and volumes of happy thoughts.

At the reception, the fellows received VIP treatment and had a special table for them. A speech befitting the occasion was given by a student on behalf of the entire CARTA family. Many thanks to Dr. Sarah Nakubulwa, Linda Nyondo Mipando,

## Herbert Longwe CARTA Cohort 2 Fellow Visits Uganda

In March, 2013, Herbert Longwe of the University of Malawi and a CARTA Cohort 2 fellow, attended a course in malaria immunology at the Uganda Virus Institute. At the end of the week-long course, the entire group of Uganda CARTA Cohort 2 fellows hosted him to dinner. “It was a special time to have him here and indeed we are a family,” wrote Scovia Mbalinda of Makerere University and a CARTA Cohort 2 fellow.

Herbert Longwe (left) with Makerere University CARTA fellows Cohort 2



## Using technology to deliver CARTA activities

The process of a CARTA fellowship begins with the release of a call for application – this is for soliciting applications from potential PhD fellows. The call is widely disseminated through the internet by posting it into various websites, some of which act as content distributors where other scholarship-announcing websites pick feeds from. These, in turn, feature the call to accord it a world-wide coverage.

### CARTA Online assignment platform

This is a Google site which hosts the assignments and the evaluation form. Nominated fellows with access rights visit it, do the assignments from their institutions for a period of one and half months, and submit their responses via e-mail to the CARTA Secretariat for marking. They also evaluate the assignments by filling in an online form, also on the site, and submit their responses online. The form responses are received through the Google Drive technology.

### Grading the submissions

Submissions by potential CARTA fellows are marked at various CARTA institutions. They are either e-mailed to the markers or online file sharing platforms are used. The scripts are marked and submitted back to the Secretariat for collating. Depending on the performance, the fellows are selected and informed of the outcome immediately. Those who make it are entered into the next round, that is, to undertake round two of online seminars, pre-JAS 2, in preparation for their first Joint Advanced Seminar (JAS 1) which takes place in March each year. The online seminars are also submitted by e-mail and the responses shared with graders through e-mail. They also evaluate the process online using Google forms.

### Joint Advanced Seminar (JAS)

Throughout the CARTA fellowship, there are four planned Joint Advanced Seminars (JAS), each addressing a vital and specific aspect of the CARTA PhD scholarship. JAS-1 builds critical thinking, technical skills, and other core re-

search competencies besides introducing fellows to the essential concepts and seminal articles of the disciplines brought together under CARTA. JAS-2 focuses on data management and analysis. Fellows learn to use software packages for qualitative and quantitative data management and analyses. Practice sessions use real research data and current software packages for hands-on training. JAS-3 focuses on data presentation, the doctoral dissertation, and scientific writing and communication skills to facilitate results dissemination and policy engagement. JAS-4 addresses professional development, including skills necessary to manage and teach large classes, raise and manage research funds. At this level the skills also include grant writing and research management. JAS-4 is also designed to serve as an opportunity for senior fellows to practice mentoring of junior fellows through discussions and laboratory sessions, software training, and general information sharing.

### JAS portal

Delivery of the JAS, content, presentations and other relevant information, including profiles of both presenters and participants, is done through a JAS portal. It is a private access portal with access granted only to particular cohort of PhD fellows and other relevant persons such as supervisors and facilitators. Readings, presentations, and other activities are loaded here for use during the JAS and for reference after the JAS. An evaluation of the JAS session is carried out here as well.

### Workshop Portals

CARTA organizes training workshops geared towards strengthening institutional capacity of participating African universities to conduct high quality research and improving research administration. Workshops for supervisors, administration staff and junior faculty members are conducted throughout the year. The organization of the workshops relies heavily on ICTs, including content delivery.

### Constraints

While CARTA uses information and communication technology to deliver its program activities with a high degree of success, a few impediments have been identified. The strength of the internet service in a location where the content is being accessed determines the ease of use of the service. Few cases of poor internet service in terms of bandwidth have been reported in CARTA institutions in Nigeria but these have not adversely affected access to CARTA programs in those institutions. In some cases, we have faced the challenge of fellows learning to use the CARTA platform which is a general pointer of limitations in use of ICT. Whenever such challenges are encountered solutions are sought to enable a particular fellow to be fully conversant with the use of ICTs.

Another challenge faced is that of reliability of power in CARTA institutions. CARTA has been able to address this by procuring long-lasting batteries that will work until power is restored and thus enable fellows to continue working uninterrupted at times of power shortages.

### Mapping ICTs use in postgraduate training and research networks in Africa

In February 2013, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, a CARTA funder, commenced a study to map out ways in which postgraduate training and research networks in Africa use new information and communication technologies (ICTs) for teaching, research and supervision. The study is being carried out by Prof. Tankolshaya and will involve select CARTA institutions.

### Corrigendum

In our last issue of *CARTANews* Vol 2 (2), we carried a story on Sunday Adedini and quoted him as saying "I appreciate the financial support from CARTA which enabled me to attend the PAA conference". The information provided was incorrect. We have since established that the reference was to APA and not PAA. *CARTANews* regrets the error.

## Selected Publications by CARTA Fellows

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- Machisa, M., Wichmann, J., & **Nyasulu, P. S.**, (2013). Biomass fuel use for household cooking in Swaziland: is there an association with anaemia and stunting in children aged 6–36 months? *Trans R Soc Trop Med Hyg* doi:10.1093/trstmh/trt055
- Ndiaye, M., **Nyasulu, P. S.**, & Nachega, J. (2013). Risk Factors for Suboptimal Antiretroviral Therapy Adherence in HIV-Infected Adolescents in Gaborone, Botswana: A Pilot Cross-Sectional Study. *Journal of Patient Preference and Adherence*. Impact factor 1.143
- Swart M, Skelton M, Ren Y, Smith P, **Takuva S.**, & Dandara C. (2013). High predictive value of CYP2B6 SNPs for steady-state plasma efavirenz levels in South African HIV/AIDS patients. <<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23778320>>Parmacogenetics and Genomics. 23(8), 415-27. doi: 10.1097/FPC.0b013e328363176f.
- Takuva, S.**, Maskew, M., Brennan, A. T., Sanne, I., MacPhail, A. P., & Fox, M. P., (2013). Anemia among HIV-infected Patients Initiating Antiretroviral Therapy in South Africa: Improvement in hemoglobin regardless of degree of immunosuppression and the initiating ART regimen. Accepted - *Journal of Tropical Medicine*.
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- Lebina, L., Laher, F., Mukudu, H., Essien, T., **Otwombe, K.**, Gray, G. & Martinson, N. (2013). Does routine prophylactic oral flucloxacillin reduce the incidence of post-circumcision infections? *American Journal of Infection Control*. pii: S0196-6553(13)00101-6. doi: 10.1016/j.ajic.2012.12.015.
- Mhlongo S, Dietrich J, **Otwombe K**, Robertson G, Coates T.J & Gray G (2013). Factors associated with not testing for HIV and consistent condom use among men in Soweto, South Africa. *PLoS ONE* 8(5): e62637. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0062637.
- Simani, O.E., Adrian, P.V., Violari, A., Kuwanda, L., **Otwombe, K.**, Nunes, M.C., Cotton, M.F. & Madhi, S.(2013). Effect of in-utero HIV exposure and antiretroviral treatment strategies on measles susceptibility and immunogenicity of measles-vaccine. *AIDS*, (10), 1583-1591. doi: 10.1097/QAD.0b013e32835fae26
- Dietrich J, Sikkema K, **Otwombe K.**, Sanchez A., de Bruyn G., van der Watt M.& Gray G.E. (2013). Multiple levels of influence in predicting sexual activity and condom use amongst adolescents in Soweto, Johannesburg, South Africa. *Journal of HIV/AIDS & Social Services* (In Press)
- Otwombe, K.**, Variava E, Holmes C.B., Chaisson R.E. & Martinson, N. (2013). Predictors of delay in the diagnosis and treatment of suspected tuberculosis in HIV co-infected patients in South Africa. *International Journal of TB and Lung Disease* (In Press).
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- Sambai C.C.** (2013) Dramatising Gender Stereotypes and Violence within the Context of HIV/AIDS in Kenya. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3 (5), 61-67, <http://www.iiste.org/Journals/index.php/RHSS/article/view/5219/5475>.
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- Odimegwu, C., **Adedini, S.**, & Ononokpono, D.(2013). HIV/AIDS Stigma and Utilization of Voluntary Counseling and Testing in Nigeria. *BMC Public Health*, 13:465, doi:10.1186/1471-2458-13-465

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

-  **JAS 3 Cohort 1.** International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Ibadan, Nigeria. July 29<sup>th</sup> to August 22<sup>nd</sup> 2013.
-  The **JAS 4 curriculum meeting** September 9, 2013
-  **10 years of Demography** at the University of the Witwatersrand. October 21<sup>st</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> 2013.

-  **CARTA and SIDA Results-Based Management (RBM) workshop** for CARTA Secretariat and Partners' staff from September 10<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> 2013.
-  **CARTA Partners' Forum (PAF) meeting** from September 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> 2013.
-  **CARTA Board of Management (BOM) meeting** on September 14<sup>th</sup> 2013.
-  **CARTA Faculty and Administrators' Training Workshop** September 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> 2013.



### Contact us Consortium for Advanced Research Training in Africa

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CARTA is a South-South partnership with South-North collaboration jointly led by the African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC) in Kenya and the University of the Witwatersrand (WITS) in South Africa. The Consortium consists of nine African universities, four African Research institutes and seven northern academic institutions.

