

CARTANews

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The Journey Begins

April 2014 marked the start of a new chapter for Cohort 1 CARTA Fellows as their four-year journey in the CARTA program came to a close



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Anne Tuiskunen Bäck, of Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) presents Francois Niragire, CARTA Fellow a certificate of completion

Cohort 1 CARTA Fellows successfully completed their fourth and last Joint Advanced Seminar (JAS) marking the end of their four-year journey through the program. This is a significant milestone for the program since the Cohort 1 fellows are the first set of graduates from CARTA. In order to complete the program, each Fellow must go through a four-month long Joint Advanced Seminar over a four-year period. The first of these, JAS 1 is held in Nairobi in March of the first year. JAS 2 is held in November/December of the same year at the University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa. During the second year of fellowship, Fellows undertake activities in preparation

“JAS 4 gave me valuable tools that I need to be an effective leader in my teaching and research career”, Rose Opiyo, Cohort 1 CARTA Fellow

for JAS 3 which is held in the third year at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. Finally, JAS 4, the last in the seminars, is held in the fourth year in Nairobi, Kenya.

During JAS 4, Fellows were trained by experts on teaching, policy engagement, grant-writing and management skills. Cohort 1 Fellows also had an opportunity to serve as mentors to the new Fellows in CARTA Cohort 4 as their JAS 1 was taking place at the same time and venue. As mentors, Cohort 1 Fellows chaired session presentations by Cohort 4 Fellows and guided the lively discussions that ensued.

At the end of JAS 4, CARTA organized a graduation ceremony during which Cohort 1 Fellows were presented with certificates to mark their completion of the program. During the ceremony, the CARTA Director, Alex Ezeh, Deputy Director, Sharon Fonn and Chair of the CARTA Board of Management, Akinyinka Omigbodun congratulated them for successfully going through the program. They urged them to put into practice the CARTA ideals learned and knowledge gained throughout the four years of their CARTA Fellowship and continue to contribute to better health for the people of Africa.

Speaking on behalf of Cohort 1 Fellows at the graduation ceremony, Caroline Sambai of Moi University noted that the CARTA Program prepared Fellows to the highest standards available. She said “We, at our completion stages of the program, trust that we are well equipped to compete globally and regard ourselves as global players through the exposure from different researchers and scholars from all over the world facilitated by the CARTA program.” CARTA not only seeks to prepare Fellows to be top-notch researchers but also to provide them opportunities to grow into research leaders.

The CARTA Fellows’ comments on their take home from the JAS indicated that the objective of the JAS was realized. CARTA Cohort 1 fellow Rose Opiyo had this to say,

“JAS 4 gave me valuable tools that I need to be an effective leader in my teaching and research career. I must however concurrently nurture and apply these leadership tools through my day-to-day integration of knowledge and skills that I previously acquired as a CARTA PhD fellow.”

Other Fellows had similar views. Awotidebe Taofeek Oluwole said “I am overwhelmingly satisfied with the way JAS 4 sessions were organized and more importantly the contents of the courses. Philosophies of teaching, life, leadership and policy brief lectures were indeed motivating, instructive and educative. I am developing long lasting strategies to internalize the virtues of leadership especially in the academia and the society at large.”

In spite of completing the CARTA Fellowship, Fellows are expected to continue with their PhD research work. The Fellows are also expected to play an active role in passing on the technical skills they have acquired to faculty and students in their home universities in order to improve the research skills of a larger pool of African scholars.

CARTA Fellows shine at Uganda Conference

CARTA Fellows excel at the Wellcome Trust Research Capacity Conference in Uganda



⬆ Steven Wandera, Cohort 2 CARTA Fellow

Wellcome Trust hosted a research capacity scientific conference in Uganda from May 20 - 21, 2014. Three CARTA Fellows: Anne Khisa, Stephen Ojiambo Wandera and Simbarashe Takuva were selected to present their research and compete for prizes at the conference. The Fellows were selected based on a competitive call for abstracts issued by the Wellcome Trust in December 2013.

Present at the Conference were the CARTA Director, Alex Ezeh and the Deputy Director, Sharon Fonn as well as Donald Cole, a Northern Partner representative from the University of Toronto and key CARTA training facilitator.

Anne’s presentation, based on her PhD research “An exploratory study of reintegration of women following obstetric fistula surgery in West Pokot, Kenya” won a Certificate of Commendation. Simbarashe Takuva presented a poster entitled Variation in the Vitamin D Receptor Gene and its association with virologic failure and mortality in HIV-infected patients in South Africa, while Stephen presented a poster entitled “Prevalence and correlates of disability among older Ugandans: Evidence from the national household survey”.

The CARTA Executive Director, Alex Ezeh thanked the Fellows for their excellent showing, saying:

“Their presentations (and posters) were excellent by all standards and Anne’s presentation was judged one of the four best oral presentations, said Alex, “They all did CARTA proud.”

I Want to Tell the Story of the African Woman

Anne M. Khisa, is a Cohort 3 CARTA Fellow based at the University of Nairobi. CARTANews talked to her about her academic journey and the role that CARTA has played in it.

Tell us briefly about yourself?

My bachelors training is in Nursing, while my Masters degree is in Gender and Development Studies from the University of Nairobi (UON). It is also at the same institution that I am registered for my doctorate at the School of Nursing Sciences. My PhD study is by research and thesis. Currently, I assist to teach undergraduate and graduate students as a part-time lecturer in the Department of Midwifery at the University of Nairobi.

Tell us something about your PhD Journey

Undertaking PhD research has been both exciting and challenging for me. Being a full time student means I have to complete my PhD in a shorter period of time, and often, I have been hard pressed for time. However, there are some pluses to it. I have met and interacted with fellow PhD students from various countries thus expanding my professional network. It has also been quite fulfilling to sit side-by-side with, and learn from people who have been there before me. I have had support from my family, teachers and sponsors which has also made the burden a little lighter.

What is your PhD research about?

My PhD research is on obstetric fistula; a maternal health condition that affects women following obstructed labor. The condition causes damage and development of a hole in the vaginal canal to the bladder (vesicovaginal fistula) or to the rectum (rectovaginal fistula). The women suffer continuous urinary and fecal incontinence and often face social stigma and isolation owing to the bad smell and cultural myths about the illness. The condition is common in low and middle income countries where there is little access to obstetric care during labor, poor infrastructure and other socio-cultural factors that contribute to its occurrence. My study entitled '*Health seeking behavior and reintegration of obstetric fistula in Kenya*' investigates the treatment pathways followed by women during the illness that at times takes decades after childbirth. It also focuses on their social reintegration in the period after corrective surgery.

That is an interesting field of study, what made you go there?

My inspiration to conduct exploratory and later long term research on vaginal fistula came about in the most atypical way. Initially, as a graduate student at the Institute of Anthropology, Gender and African studies, University of Nairobi, I focused on reproductive health conditions that hamper women's participation in development and the gendered nature of such illnesses. This is how I chose to conduct research on obstetric fistula. At that point, the devastating nature of an illness previously so ignored captivated me. Telling the women's story in the most comprehensive way thus became my obligation, knowing too well how policies of the day demand scientific evidence. I thus shifted from gendered aspects of illness to understanding fully the nature of this illness and how women's reproductive health programs could holistically cater for their needs.



Anne M. Khisa, Cohort 3 CARTA Fellow

How has the CARTA program contributed to progress in your research?

The CARTA program aims at academic excellence and developing all-round researchers. CARTA's set-milestones have contributed to my progress, which, by attaining, means I have made great strides in my research work. The program also offers four intensive four-week research seminars (JAS) with renowned faculty in their fields of expertise. I have benefitted directly from these trainings and maintained consultations on different aspects of my study with the faculty. In addition, the six-month online writing course with ESE:O, the Chile-based organization refined my writing skills and will definitely be helpful during the writing of my thesis and research papers.

Further, the CARTA program offers research seed funding to Fellows, which ensured I commenced my research on time as I continued applying for other research funds to complete my work. The program also offers support to fellow's participation in international conferences. All these components of the program culminate to a deliberate effort on my part to progress in my PhD research.

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What is the greatest challenge that you face as a researcher in the chosen field and how do you overcome this?

Conducting research on obstetric fistula has presented challenges of working with women who have been socially isolated before and therefore do not find it very easy to open up to me. However, by making this research qualitative and about them, they eventually learn that they can trust me and narrate their stories. Little attention to the behavioral and social aspects of fistula research has been focused on in Kenya, probably because of the not so obvious benefit such research is deemed to reveal as compared to biomedical research. However, with time, the merits of this research have been asserted and I thank the consortium for having realized the value of this research and sponsored it. Other challenges have been mainly logistical but a flexible approach to my research and constantly collaborating with community gatekeepers has ensured my research team is able to collect quality data.

What was the greatest lesson learnt in participating at the Wellcome Trust research capacity scientific conference held in Kampala, Uganda?

Entry into this competition provided me with an opportunity to share my research on obstetric fistula on an international platform; to arguably the best minds in public health research on the African continent and internationally. Receiving honorary mention and a certificate of commendation in this contest meant that my ongoing research is definitely cutting edge and headed in the right direction. It certainly encourages me to continue with my PhD research! I have learnt that you are what you believe, and in my case, I believe I am among the very best. This thought propels me to do things better each time. In addition, the Wellcome Trust conference opened new avenues in networking with other scientists in research. The breakaway emerging scientists' meeting helped shape my skills in grant writing and improved my confidence in bidding for competitive research grants in future. Participating in this conference was a great experience.

Where do you see yourself in a few years to come?

I believe that I should be able to conduct cutting-edge research and contribute to the improvement of women's reproductive health. I envision that research and teaching shall be the core areas in which I impact on my country's and continent's public health and general development. In a few years to come, I should have exerted my place in research and academia and hope to be recognized by peers internationally.

Some final words?

I have been lucky to be mentored and supervised by great scholars who have done tremendous work experience in their fields. Grace Omoni is a professor of midwifery and director of the School of Nursing at the University of Nairobi. Prof. Omoni leads cutting-edge research in the field of midwifery and nursing globally and has greatly improved my research. Isaac Nyamongo is a Professor of Anthropology at the Institute of Anthropology, Gender and African studies and is a leading authority in medical anthropology whose research work in malaria, HIV AIDS among others spans close to three decades and is globally recognized. Professor Nyamongo has been a great teacher and mentor in my research journey. Outside academic work, I love being with people. To unwind, I sing in my church choir, read biographies of world leaders and enjoy watching soccer. When opportunity arises, I tour historic places in each new city I travel to.

From the Secretariat and the Partners

Monitoring Visit by CARTA staff

Thomas Yebei, CARTA's Monitoring and Evaluation Officer and the CARTA accountant, Evelyne Kemunto made a two-day Monitoring and Evaluation visit to the University of Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania from April 28 – 30, 2014. The purpose of the visit was to monitor the implementation of CARTA activities at the University of Dar-es-Salaam.

New Focal Persons in CARTA Institutions

Makerere University

Prof. Anne Katahoire, the CARTA Focal Person at the Makerere University will now be supported by Prof. Buyinza Mukadasi who is the Director, Directorate of Research and Graduate Training at the university.

University of Nairobi.

The University of Nairobi, Population Studies and Research Institute (PSRI) has a new Director, Prof. Murungaru Kimani replaced the long-serving Director of PSRI, Prof. Lawrence Ikamari who will now concentrate on research and teaching at the University. The new Director of PSRI, Prof. Murugaru holds a BSc. in mathematics and statistics; an MSc and a PhD. in population studies. He will be the new CARTA focal person at the University of Nairobi.

Obafemi Awolowo University

Dr. Esimai Olapeju Adefunke from the Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) became one of CARTA's focal persons at the university. Dr. Esimai Olapeju Adefunke who is an Associate Professor/Consultant in department of Community Health, joins Prof. Antony Aluko Mabayoje in the running of CARTA affairs at the OAU. Dr. Esimai has a master's degree in Environmental control and management from OAU and a master's degree in bioethics from University of Ibadan. Additionally, Dr. Esimai is a fellow of Public Health in the National Post Graduate College of Physicians and West African College of Physicians and was awarded a graduate diploma degree in Early Childhood Development by the Virtual University of Victoria, Canada.

University of Malawi

The University of Malawi (UNIMA) appointed Dr. Kamija Phiri, Associate Professor of Clinical Epidemiology, and currently the Dean of Public Health and Family Medicine and former Dean of Postgraduate Studies and Research as a CARTA focal person alongside Dr. Adamson Muula. Dr. Phiri replaces Dr. Wilson Mandala, who has assumed the Associate Directorship Position at the Malawi-Liverpool-Wellcome Trust Research Program at the UNIMA College of Medicine. Dr. Phiri is an accomplished researcher and a recipient of the Third Annual (2012) Merle A. Sande Health Leadership Award awarded by the Accordia Global Health Foundation.



Daniel Ochiel, CARTA
Training Manager

How Higher Education in Africa can be improved

Daniel Ochiel, CARTA training manager, explains how Africa can improve the quality of higher education on the continent, and the consequences if we don't

Advancements in science, technology and innovation (usually abbreviated STI) are needed to spur economic growth and development in Africa. Unfortunately, STI indicators from most African countries are considerably poor and compared to most developed countries. Research output from majority of African countries remains weak. For example, Africa's role in knowledge contribution globally is estimated to be only 1.1%. Similarly, the number of available researchers per million inhabitants is lower for most African countries. For example, in year 2004-2008, Ghana, Kenya, Uganda, Malawi, Mali and Zambia had fewer than 100 researchers per million inhabitants. In the same reporting period, United Kingdom had approximately 4,200 researchers per million inhabitants.

Why is Africa lagging behind in STI?

Higher education in Africa faces a myriad of challenges. These include; i) limited funding for training and research: According to a recent World Bank Report, public investment on higher education has remained steady over the last 15 years at less than 1% gross domestic product (GDP) for most African countries. This is in spite of increasing enrolment of students into higher education programs. Inadequate funding presents considerable strain on available resources for infrastructure development, program faculty recruitment and training and for conducting research. Additional funding for higher education programs in Africa are coming from international agencies and donors. However, these funds are limited to supporting basic education with less than 25% of aid to education sector being allocated to higher education. ii) Inadequate number of highly trained academic staff: Shortage of staff compounded by a large number of trained faculty seeking opportunities outside Africa ('brain-drain') has deprived

African institutions of the critical mass of human resource capacity to lead higher education training initiatives. Furthermore, faculty have to balance between teaching and administrative responsibilities on the one hand, and conducting research on the other hand. Often, the balance is tilted towards teaching and administrative commitments, thus compromising quality research output from institutions. iii) Lack of infrastructure for high quality technical research: Training and research in technical disciplines e.g. biomedical sciences suffer from poorly equipped laboratories and lack of adequately trained personnel.

What is the way forward for improving the quality of higher education in Africa?

Programs aimed at improving quality of post-graduate education in Africa are likely to entail a multifaceted approach targeting different components namely, individuals (students, faculty, and administrators), institutions (policies, guidelines and administrative oversight) and governments (higher education policies, funding and programs) structure and systems. In short, a holistic approach is required. The following are some approaches and recommendations for improving quality of post-graduate training in African institutions. a) Multi-institutional collaborative training networks (consortia): A number of regional training networks have been formed and

are operation in Africa (e.g. CARTA, SACORE, EARC, RUFORUM, PAU). Regional networks offer the advantage of maximizing on the strengths of individual institutions, hence allowing greater synergy in achieving training goals and overall program impact. b) Inter-disciplinary training programs: Being integrated in nature, such programs facilitate a broader and more in-depth training experience than afforded by traditional models which are based on individual disciplines or courses. c) Policy relevance of training: One of the challenges faced by post-graduate training programs in Africa is that they are often not aligned to the national research priorities. Thus, the policy relevance of the training and research is not immediately appreciated. Further, limited engagement with the private sector in the design and implementation of higher education programs results in the generation of graduates ill-equipped with the required skills for the job market. Increased public-private partnership is essential in ensuring the relevance of graduate training programs in terms of focusing the content of training to the prevailing market needs and the national priorities. c) Innovative funding initiatives for post-graduate training programs: The diminishing financial commitments from national governments to support post-graduate training in Africa calls on individual institutions to diversify funding sources and to implement sound financial regulatory structure aimed to ensure efficiency in the utilization of available funds to improve infrastructure, provide scholarship programs, and support research programs by faculty and students.

Increased public-private partnership is essential in ensuring the relevance of graduate training programs in terms of focusing the content of training to the prevailing market needs and the national priorities.

Fellows' Corner

Updates on what our Fellows have been up to

Save Kumwenda undergoes Helminth Enumeration Training at University of Kwazulu Natal

Save Kumwenda (University of Malawi, Cohort 3 Fellow) identified his lack of practical skills in laboratory techniques as a critical area where he needed strengthening. The University of Kwazulu Natal's (UKZN) was identified by CARTA as the institution that would offer Save the training he needed. CARTA funded Save to visit UKZN for a period of two weeks under the tutelage of Professors Chris Buckley and Colleen Archer.

According to Save, the training and mentorship he got there were invaluable and excellent.

"Now I am very clear on what I am going to do on my PhD research, said Save, "and the skills I have acquired will assist me in this and other related research projects that I undertake. I will also teach colleagues and laboratory staff at my home university engaged in similar research."

He also expressed his gratitude to CARTA for funding the course and UKZN staff, Prof. Colleen Archer, Val Kerry, Prof. Chris Buckley and Kerry Lee Philip for their efforts to make him a become a better researcher. Save also thanked Dr. Tracy Morse of University of Malawi for connecting him with Prof. Chris Buckley.



Simbarashe Takuva at the Conference for Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections

Simbarashe Takuva, (University of the Witwatersrand, Cohort 2 Fellow) presented a poster entitled "Variation in the Vitamin D Receptor Gene and its association with virologic failure and mortality in HIV-infected patients in South Africa" at the Conference for Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI). This took place on March 3 - 6, 2014, in Boston, USA.



Celine Niwemahoro attends the 6th Africa Conference on Sexual Health and Rights

In February 3-7, 2014, Celine Niwemahoro (University of Rwanda, Cohort 1 Fellow) from the University of Rwanda had presented her preliminary results titled "Understanding maternal health seeking behavior among young unmarried women in Rwanda: The journey from the first person to tell to maternal health care services" at the 6th Africa conference on sexual health and rights held in Yaoundé-Cameroon on February 3 - 7, 2014. Celine also made another presentation at the 6th Africa Conference on Sexual Health and Rights. Her presentation here was on "Eliminating Women and Girls Sexual and Reproductive Health Vulnerabilities in Africa."



Fredrick Okoth Okaka attends the 7th Annual International Conference on Mediterranean Studies

Fredrick Okoth Okaka (Moi University, Cohort 3 Fellow) attended the 7th Annual International Conference on Mediterranean Studies held April 14-17, 2014 in Athens, Greece. Fredrick made an oral presentation at the conference which was organized by the Athens Institute for Education and Research (ATINER), an independent global association of academics and researchers. Frederick also attended a short training course on Urbanization and Health at the United Nations University- Institute for Global Health (UNU-IIGH) in Kuala-Lumpur, Malaysia June 2- 6, 2014. The course focused on integrated systems approach to urban health problems.



Stephen Pentz attends the South African Annual Family Practitioners Congress

Stephen Pentz (University of the Witwatersrand, Cohort 3 Fellow) from the participated at the South African Annual Family Practitioners Congress, held in Pretoria South Africa, from June 21-22, 2014. Stephen made an oral presentation entitled Ethical

Challenges in Primary Health Care Re-engineering.



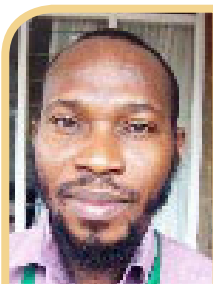
Judith Nekesa Mangeni attends the Science of Malaria Eradication Conference in Mexico

Judith Nekesa Mangeni (Moi University, Cohort 3 Fellow) attended the Science of Malaria Eradication Conference in Mexico from February 1 - 7, 2014. The conference was organized by the Keystone Symposia team. Judith had won a Global Health Travel Grant to facilitate her travel, registration and accommodation while in Mexico.



Adedokun Sulaimon Taiwo participates in the Brown University Graduate Program

Adedokun Sulaimon Taiwo (Obafemi Awolowo University, Cohort 1 Fellow) participated in a 5-month visiting Fellowship (January - May, 2014) of the Graduate Program in Development (GPD), Watson Institute for International Studies, Brown University, Providence, Rhodes Island, U. S. A. The fellowship was designed to assist graduate students and recent PhD holders in strengthening their research skills.



CARTA Fellows present papers at the Population Association of America 2014.



Sunday Adedini's poster presentation on contraceptive use in Uganda.

Three CARTA Fellows presented papers at the Population Association of America (PAA) showcasing the work they are doing through the CARTA Program. The three are from different Universities; Mary O. Obiyan (Obafemi Awolowo University, Cohort 2 Fellow), Stephen Wandera Ojiambo (Makerere University, Cohort 2) and Sunday Adedini (Obafemi Awolowo University, Cohort 1). Mary gave an oral presentation from her ongoing research work titled "Unmet Needs and Misconceptions around Contraceptives Use in Nigeria." Stephen gave both oral and poster presentations. His oral presentation was entitled "Prevalence and Correlates of Disability in Older Ugandans: Evidence from a National Household Survey" while the poster was entitled "Empowerment, partners' behaviors and intimate partner physical violence among married women in Uganda."

Sunday gave an oral and a poster presentation on "Gender-based violence as a new proximate determinant of fertility change in sub-Saharan Africa" and "Contraceptive use in Uganda: Do women contracept less in war-affected regions?"

PAA convenes an annual meeting of demographers and other scholars who are interested in the field of population research to share and exchange ideas and information which could contribute to the health and well-being of individuals globally.

Rose O. Opiyo attends Manuscript Writing Workshop



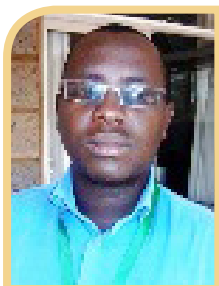
Rose O. Opiyo (University of Nairobi, Cohort 1 CARTA Fellow) attended a manuscript writing workshop held in Naivasha, Kenya from April 14 - 17, 2014. Organized by the College of Health Sciences, University of Nairobi, the workshop aimed to

promote scientific writing and publication among the college academic staff members and to establish a Manuscript Review Committee at the College of Health Sciences.

Marjorie Kyomuhendo attends Methodology Workshop



Marjorie Kyomuhendo, (Makerere University, Cohort 3 Fellow) attended a course entitled "the Philosophy of Methods" at the Makerere University from March 31- April 11, 2014. The course, sponsored by the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), covered the philosophical principles of quantitative and qualitative methods of research, the concepts of science, knowledge and research as well as ethical considerations in research. Marjorie also attended the Scholarly Writing and Communication Skills short course also held at Makerere University, Uganda from 28 April to May 10, 2014.



François Niragire attends Course on Statistical Methods

François Niragire (University of Rwanda, Cohort 1 Fellow) attended a short Course on Statistical Methods for Missing data & Causal inference in Health Research at the Noble Conference Center, Eldoret, Kenya, from June 23 - 26, 2014. Mr Niragire's participation in this four-day training course on statistical methods was facilitated by Fogarty International Center, AIDS International Training Research Program, and

Brown University U.S. Additional support was provided by Academic Model for Providing Access to Healthcare (AMPATH) and Moi University School of Medicine.

Angeline Chepchirchir attends Workshop on Healthcare Systems

Angeline Chepchirchir (University of Nairobi, Cohort 3 fellow) attended and gave a talk at the Workshop on Repositioning Medical Training and Healthcare in a Devolved System on May 14 -16, 2014, at the Kenya Medical Training College, Nairobi. The workshop brought together staff and students of all Kenya Medical Training Colleges staff together with affiliate institutions such as the Ministry of Health, Kenyatta National Hospital and University of Nairobi. Angeline also attended the Critical Appraisal of Research Proposals Training Workshop (CARP) in Nairobi, Kenya between June 16 - 20, 2014. This was a one-week workshop that reviewed steps of research proposal development, development and validation of data collection tools, data collection process, analysis and reporting.



Batamuliza Kaitesi Mukara attends the German Society of Oto-Rhino-Laryngology, Head and Neck Surgery Annual Meeting



Batamuliza Kaitesi Mukara (University of Rwanda, Cohort 4 Fellow) took part in the 85th German Society of Oto-Rhino-Laryngology, Head and Neck Surgery annual meeting in Dortmund, Germany, from May 28 - 31, 2014. Batamuliza was conferred with the honor of a Corresponding Member during the meeting. Being a Corresponding member is a lifetime honor for collaborative work done with German scientists, which gives Batamuliza free access to all scientific conferences as well as

presentation of papers and special participation in annual conferences in Germany.

She presented a paper on "Rhinoscleroma: case series and review of literature and Complications and outcomes management in patients with chronic suppurative otitis media in Rwanda. She also chaired a session during the meeting entitled "International Forum session on Endoscopy: Vocal Cord".

Adefolarin Adeyinka
Attends Course on Child and Adolescent Care



Adefolarin Adeyinka (University of Ibadan, Cohort 3 Fellow) attended a short course on psychological care of the physically ill child and adolescent participation. The two-day course was held from June 17 – 18, 2014 and was organized by Centre for Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CCAMH). The essence of the course is to empower health workers with the knowledge and skill to attend to physically and chronically ill child and adolescents.

Bridging Cultural and Academic Differences

CARTA Cohort 4 fellow Ayodele John Alonge from Nigeria explains how the Joint Advanced Seminar 1 earlier this year helped him find new perspectives to old challenges



The four-week joint Advanced Seminar (JAS) part one will remain in my memory for a long time. I find it difficult to pen a particular experience as outstanding because I count every experience at the just concluded JAS 1 as exciting and informative.

It is an outstanding experience from the first day where I bonded with members of Cohort 4 who come from diverse cultures and disciplines. It is astonishing how quickly we got used to one another sharing our work experiences and research interests. I learnt that showing interest in other people's research work helps in reforming and understanding one's own research better.

It was also a great experience for me to have an opportunity to present my research proposal to the multi-disciplinary audience who willingly provide comments and suggestions that makes research better. This took place on the last week of the JAS.

Finally, I certainly left JAS 1 better than I came having developed a better view of research methodology, learnt the importance of critically thinking and improved my skills in the use citation software. I learnt new techniques in searching electronic databases.

I appreciate APHRC, the University of Witwatersrand, our northern partners and funders for giving me this excellent opportunity.

CARTA Makes a difference in Malawi

Two University of Malawi professors highlight the impact of the CARTA program on their university



University of Malawi Central Administration Offices

CARTA has contributed to the Doctoral Program of the College of Medicine (CoM) University of Malawi (UNIMA). This was observed during the CARTA Board of Management meeting held in Nairobi, April 1, 2014 by Professors Adamson Muula and Kamija Phiri both focal persons of the University of Malawi.

Professor Phiri confirmed that the takeoff of the UNIMA PhD program was largely influenced by the CARTA model. He said this was a measurable impact of CARTA on UNIMA.

According to the two scholars, the program had faced various challenges, including weak systems

and a general reluctance on the part of the students to register for this program. Due to these deficiencies, a Joint PhD program with the University of Liverpool was initiated which quickly attracted and registered a number of students. With the entry of CARTA which champions home-grown programs, the College of Medicine enrolled a significant number of students on the program.

"So far we have only been enrolling PhD students on the CoM program which has now gained a good reputation and is an attractive option for students. CARTA which has supported the highest number of registered students on this program has greatly strengthened the program", said Phiri.

Apart from the recruitment and training of PhD students, the CARTA program has carried out staff development workshops benefitting administrators and faculty at UNIMA. Supervisors of PhD students have also attended these trainings and UNIMA has had access to the large pool of talented supervisors in CARTA institutions for supervising its students as well as examining their theses.

Board of Management Meeting



On the 1st of April 2014, the CARTA Board of Management held its meeting at the Safari Park Hotel in Nairobi, Kenya. The Board welcomed Dr. Kamija Phiri the new Malawi member of BoM who replaced Dr. Wilson Mandala. Dr. Mandala has been promoted to another position within the University of Malawi. The BOM deliberated on various issues, among them, CARTA program implementation activities and planning for the next period. The Board reviewed and approved several CARTA policies and set date and venue for the next meeting to be held in Malawi, September 19, 2014.

Putting Academic Integrity at Risk

Sebastian Brett and Soledad Falabella, both staff at ESE:O explain some of the grey zones around plagiarism and the ethical responsibilities of researchers.



 CARTA Fellows pay attention during session on plagiarism

A responsible academic or researcher must demonstrate a full understanding of the importance of the rules for correct referencing of sources, especially from the Internet. Indeed, an ethically responsible author is required to ascertain that all references she or he uses in their work are true, and reliable. Searching a topic in Google, copying extracts, pasting them into a text and then later changing words and fonts to make the text appear original without acknowledging sources, is unacceptable. Unfortunately, it is a common practice in student writing.

This practice is plagiarism and a serious violation of academic integrity. However, there are other uses of the Internet that may not technically amount to plagiarism (some say they do), but are close to it. This kind of practice is treacherous and puts the ethical reputation of authors at risk. For all its extraordinary benefits, the Internet can be a dangerous place for writers.

Mis-attributed quotations

One of these dangers is misattributed quotations. For example, a web page may quote an author without using quotation marks. It may also give a reference that is incorrect or vague. Copying the reference without finding and checking it independently, is equivalent to taking a short cut, and is a breach of academic integrity. So, when unable to find the original source, an ethically responsible author should drop that “perfect” quote. Alternatively, she or he should search until they find an internet article that gives a more credible attribution. Is that source available online? If it’s not, academic integrity requires academic writers to contact authors and check the referenced material directly with her/him. Most authors appreciate inquiries about their work, and you may establish a useful contact.

Even putting the quotation in quotation marks and attributing it to the Internet source doesn’t automatically avoid accusations of plagiarism. A mis-attribution occurring out of laziness results in endorsing someone else’s plagiarism practice. So, never cite a source you haven’t read in its original form (primary source).

Patch-writing

The other dangerous practice is paraphrasing that sticks too closely to the original, or what has come to be known as “patch-writing”. According to Rebecca Howard (Professor of Writing at the University of Syracuse, N.Y), who coined the word (Howard, 1993, p.233), writers’ ability to paraphrase others’ ideas in their own words declines as they move away from their area of expertise. It is especially difficult for writers for whom English is a second language (Howard, 2009). The result is often texts that “borrow” closely from the language of the original. This does not meet academic standards of excellence and can be deemed by some as a form of plagiarism.

Patch-writing, unlike straightforward plagiarism, is not a sinful practice, says Howard. If done properly and responsibly it may be a valuable learning process for those seeking to “appropriate the discourse of the new community” to which they aspire (Howard, 1993, p.243). But even Howard points out that this practice is “never acceptable for final draft academic writing” (Howard, 1995, p.799).

Obviously, the ideal—as practiced by many writers experienced in their field—is to provide perceptive paraphrases or summaries of other’s work in your own words and style. But acquisition of the language and cognitive skills needed to do this takes time and effort. A City University of Hong Kong “academic honesty” page gives some useful tips on paraphrasing, using Howard’s 1995 text as a basis (referenced below).

Copying expressions and phrases should expand the linguistic repertoire of beginning authors and help them to reach excellence. But academic authors must meet standards of integrity. They must acknowledge all sources, starting with the primary source, and put all the copied expressions and phrases in quotation marks, giving the page reference where possible. That way, writers truthfully signal their debt to the authors of those phrases and avoid charges of plagiarism.

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CARTA Certificate Awards

Andrea Johnson
of Carnegie
Corporation of
New York presents
Caroline Sambai
a certificate of
completion



Anne Tuiskunen Bäck of Swedish International
Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) presents
Dieudonne Uwizeye, a certificate of completion



Sharon Fonn of University of the Witwatersrand and Alex Ezeh of African Population
and Health Research Center present Joshua Akinyemi a certificate of completion

Mphatso Kamndaya receiving his certificate of completion from Sharon Fonn of the
University of Witwatersrand and Alex Ezeh of African Population and Health Research
Center (APHRC)



Upcoming Events

- 5th Faculty and Administrators' Workshop, July 21 – 23, 2014, Makerere University, Uganda
- JAS 3 Cohort 2 August 4 – 28, 2014, University of Ibadan, Nigeria
- Writing Retreat September 12– 16, 2014, University of Malawi, Malawi
- Partners' Forum 5, September 17 – 18, 2014 University of Malawi, Malawi
- Board of Management Meeting, 10 September 19, 2014 University of Malawi, Malawi
- Funders' Annual Review Meeting, September 20, 2014 University of Malawi, Malawi
- JAS 2 Cohort 4, November 4 – 27, 2014, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa
- Writing Retreat, December 2-6, 2014, Bellagio, Italy



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