

UNICAF[®]

RESEARCH

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2024 - JANUARY 2025

CONTENTS

CEO & Founder

Dr Nicos Nicolaou

Principal Editor

Dr Elena Papadopoulou

Editor-in-chief

Dr Athanasia Kavadia

Production Assistant

Mrs Eleni Stylianou

Design

Mr Kyriakos Kouzapa

Student Registrationinfo@unicaf.org**Student Support**support@unicaf.org**Alumni Support**alumni@unicaf.org

Cyprus Administrative Office
 Old International Airport
 7130, Larnaca, Cyprus
 PO BOX 42572, 6500
 Larnaca, Cyprus
 Tel: +35724747500

Emailresearch.office@unicaf.org**Website**www.unicaf.org

Editor's Note 2

Unicaf Master's Conference 2024: A Milestone of Academic Excellence! 3

Research activities at Unicaf University in Zambia 8

Research activities at Unicaf University in Malawi 11

Students' Hub 12

Eyes to the Future 15

RECENT UNICAF PUBLICATIONS 18
 New peer-reviewed publications by our students and faculty

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES 19
 If you have the idea; We can help you with funding opportunities

FELLOWSHIPS / AWARDS / COURSES 20
 List of fellowships, awards and courses

CALLS FOR CONFERENCES AND EVENTS 21
 (WORKSHOP / WEBINARS)
 Upcoming conferences and events

OTHER NEWS - What we think might interest you 22



Editor's Note

Dear Students and Colleagues,

Welcome to the latest edition of the Unicaf Research Newsletter, where we celebrate the remarkable achievements, milestones, and innovative endeavours across our vibrant research community. This issue brings you exciting updates and highlights the collective efforts that are shaping our academic and research landscape.

We begin with comprehensive coverage of the Unicaf Master's Conference 2024, a standout research dissemination event that brought together over 3,730 delegates from 137 countries. This extraordinary participation underscores the global reach and impact of our academic community.

On 21st September 2024, Unicaf University proudly participated in the World Alzheimer's Day Walk to End Dementia, reaffirming our commitment to raising awareness and supporting impactful health initiatives worldwide.

This edition also introduces Dr Sethi Dube, our new Postdoctoral Researcher at Unicaf University in Zambia. Dr Dube's expertise and innovative perspectives are a welcome addition to our academic and research endeavours.

We also highlight Unicaf University Malawi's engagement with the Erasmus+ Programme for Capacity Building in Higher Education, showcasing our efforts to enhance academic capacity and foster international collaboration.

In Students' Hub we feature an inspiring interview with Mrs Tinah Mukunda, who shares her journey as a doctoral student. Tinah's reflections offer invaluable insights for fellow students and those considering a PhD.

In our Eyes to the Future section, we continue to spotlight the groundbreaking thesis projects of our graduate students. We are delighted to welcome Dr Keyeh Emmanuel Lufang, who recently earned his Doctorate of Education from Unicaf University in Zambia, marking a significant milestone in his academic journey.

As always, this edition includes a roundup of recent publications, key funding opportunities, and upcoming conferences to keep you informed and inspired.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to excellence and innovation. We hope this edition serves as a source of inspiration and a celebration of our collective achievements.

Kind regards,

Dr Elena Papadopoulou Pro Vice-Chancellor, Teaching and Learning
Principal Editor, Unicaf Online Journal
Principal Editor, Unicaf Research Newsletter

Unicaf Master's Conference 2024: A Milestone of Academic Excellence!



The Unicaf Master's Conference 2024 successfully demonstrated its remarkable impact as the largest academic conference organised by Unicaf to date. Over the course of five days, a total of 3730 delegates, united from 137 countries, creating an enriching and diverse academic environment.

Key Highlights:

Impressive Attendance: 3730 delegates, comprising 3669 attendees and 61 esteemed panelists, attended the conference. This remarkable participation highlights the enthusiasm and engagement of our global academic community.

School-Specific Participation: Across the three schools, the conference featured a total of 30 oral presentations, 10 from the School of Business, 9 from the School of Sciences, Health Sciences, Technology, and Engineering, and 11 from the School of Education, Humanities, and Social Sciences.

Global Collaborations: The conference showcased the international collaboration that defines Unicaf, with 15 presenters from Unicaf in partnership with Liverpool John Moores University, 5 from Unicaf in partnership with

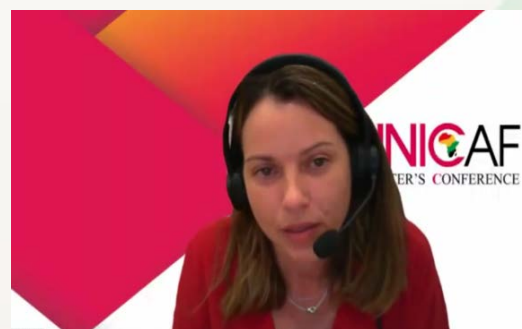
University of East London, 5 from Unicaf in partnership with University of Suffolk, 3 from Unicaf University in Zambia, and 2 from Unicaf University in Malawi.



Diverse Program: Attendees were treated to a rich program, including 8 plenary presentations, 1 interactive session, and 1 workshop.

Mrs Isabella Frangouli, the Director of Partnerships at Unicaf, reflected on the Unicaf Master's Conference (UMC), emphasizing that it "showcases the transformative power of partnerships in advancing inclusive and accessible education. By bringing together participants from diverse cultures and institutions worldwide, this forum highlights how collaboration drives innovation, amplifies voices, and fosters global progress in higher education."

She further celebrated the spirit of UMC 2024 as "a testament to the partnerships that enable Unicaf to bridge educational gaps, create opportunities, and empower learners to thrive globally." Mrs. Frangouli acknowledged the invaluable contributions of Unicaf's partner universities, stating, "None of this would be possible without the support of our partner institutions - Unicaf University in Zambia, Unicaf University in Malawi, Liverpool John Moores University, the University of East London, and the University of Suffolk - whose collaboration enriches our mission and vision."





The Pro Vice-Chancellor, Teaching and Learning, of Unicaf Dr Elena Papadopoulou, expressed profound gratitude to all students, faculty, and senior management for their enthusiastic participation in the conference. In addition, she emphasised the importance of current research by stating that “While watching all presentations it was apparent that the topics presented were in line with Unicaf’s environmental, social and corporate governance in being community driven research aiming at enhancing inclusiveness and equity in education, supporting

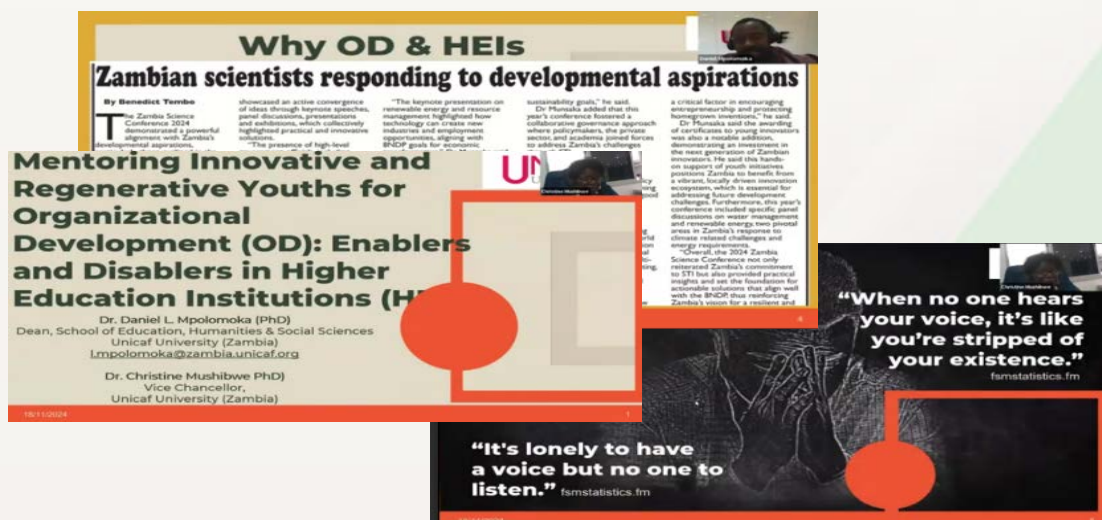
public health and providing instrumental support to the economic growth of the presenters’ community”.

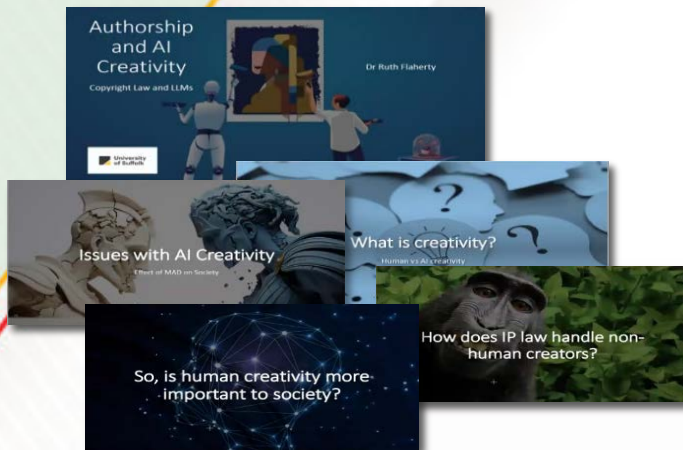
In acknowledging the significance of this newsletter's dedication to the conference, we extend a special mention to express our heartfelt gratitude to each distinguished speaker who contributed to the resounding success of this event. Your insights and expertise have truly enriched the academic tapestry of the Unicaf Master's Conference 2024.

This year's conference featured many impactful presentations by our esteemed colleagues from Liverpool John Moores University, the University of East London, the University of Suffolk and the Unicaf University in Zambia.

Mrs. Torsney, a seasoned Literacy and English educator and advocate for inclusive education and currently a ProfDoc researcher at Liverpool John Moores University, recently presented on Supporting Autistic Learners in Educational Settings, discussing the UK's progress towards inclusive education for autistic students. She highlighted how stereotypes and limited resources have hindered the development of a neuroaffirmative culture in schools. Her presentation underscored the importance of individualized, student-centered approaches to support mental well-being and examined the power dynamics within the Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) process, which can significantly impact support outcomes for autistic children.

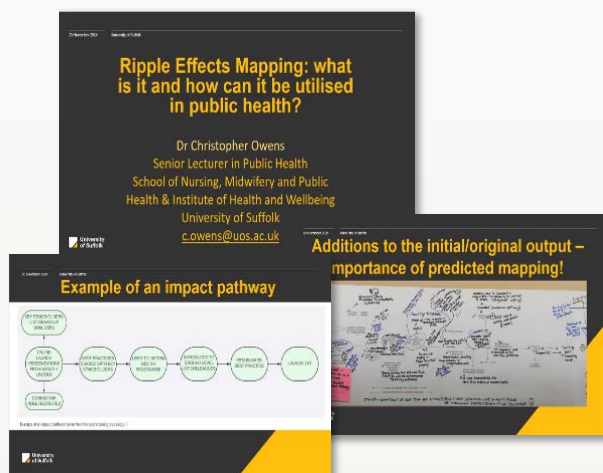
Dr Daniel Mpolomoka, Dean of the School of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences at Unicaf University in Zambia and Dr Christine Mushibwe, Vice-Chancellor of Unicaf University in Zambia explore the impact of mentoring in fostering youth innovation and regenerative practices within HEIs. Using a systematic review, they analyze global, African, and Zambian perspectives on how mentoring programs can drive organizational development through youth empowerment.





Dr Flaherty, an experienced law academic, examines the evolving role of AI in copyright law, questioning whether AI-generated works should qualify for copyright protection. Through analysis of key case law and theories of creativity, Dr Flaherty explores how copyright law might adapt to recognize AI as a potential 'creator'.

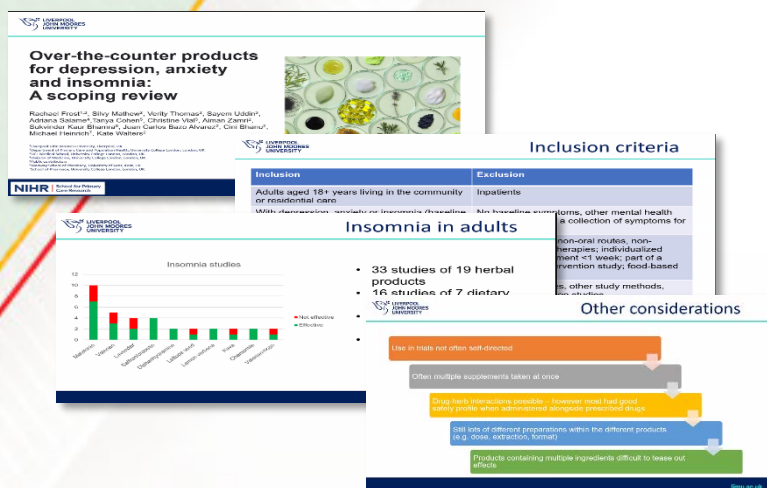
Mr Wez Nolan, a seasoned creative industries professional and current Media Production Programme Lead at Liverpool John Moores University, this researcher examines the transformative impact of Creative Industries education on first-generation students. Using a longitudinal study and transformative learning theory, they propose new models for curriculum design to enhance student growth and career outcomes.



Dr Christopher Owens, Senior Lecturer in Public Health at the University of Suffolk and Link Tutor for the MSc Public Health program delivered in partnership with Unicafe, explores the use of Ripple Effects Mapping in public health evaluation. His presentation covers the method's background, practical applications, and reflections on its benefits and challenges in assessing public health interventions

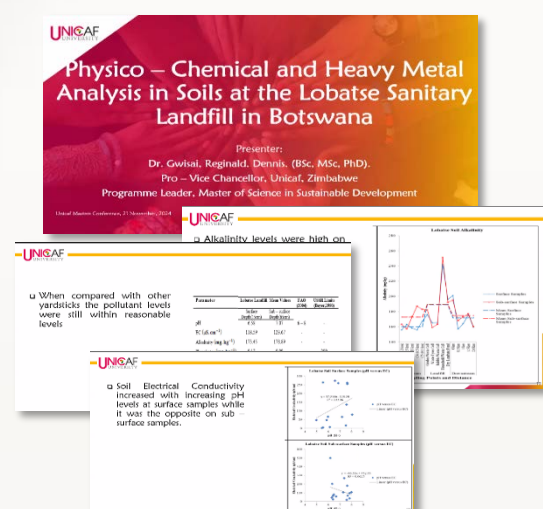
Dr Kezia Njoroge, Senior Lecturer in the School of Health Sciences and Allied Health at Liverpool John Moores University, investigates the practice of clay ingestion among African migrant women during pregnancy. Her study highlights the need for culturally sensitive public health interventions to address the health risks associated with this practice, recommending tailored education and regulatory frameworks for maternal health nutrition.





Dr Rachael Frost, Senior Lecturer in Health and Social Care at Liverpool John Moores University, led a scoping review on over-the-counter medicines, herbal medicines, and dietary supplements for managing depression, anxiety, and insomnia. The study maps evidence from randomized controlled trials and highlights gaps in research, particularly for products widely used but under-evaluated, and emphasizes the need for future studies targeting older populations and adjunct therapies.

Dr Stratis Efthymiou, an academic programme leader at Unicaf federal in School of Business with over 13 years of experience in business, leadership, and HR, explores the evolving role of Human Resources in building future-ready organizations. His presentation emphasizes the importance of flexible, interdisciplinary teams, talent development, sustainability, and the use of AI and data-driven insights to drive organizational growth and adaptability in a rapidly changing business environment.

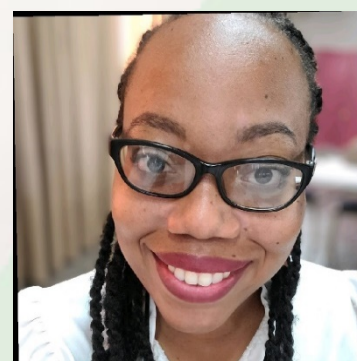


Dr Reginald Dennis Gwisai, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academics) and Programme Leader at Unicaf University, specializes in environmental health, pollution control, and sustainable development leads the workshop for this year's UMC2024. His research focuses on the impacts of point pollution sources like mines, smelters, and landfills on human health and the environment. In his workshop, Dr Gwisai presents a study on the physico-chemical and heavy metal pollution levels in soils surrounding the Lobatse sanitary landfill in Botswana. The findings highlight significant contamination from elements like Chromium, Manganese, and Magnesium, surpassing established environmental standards, emphasizing the adverse effects of landfills on soil health and agricultural viability.

Following the conference, the committee organised a ceremony awarding the best presentation from each school. Winners received a \$150 voucher, and the ceremony, held online on December 3rd, witnessed high participation. The winners were:

School of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences: Ms Ayanna A.E. Lee from Unicaf in collaboration with Liverpool John Moores University.

Ayanna Lee is a lifelong learner, and an experienced educator with a background in both teaching and academic administration. She is currently a faculty member at the St. George's University in her home country of Grenada where she provides supplementary English Language and Communication support to a global roster of students. Her recently completed master's degree in Education at Liverpool John Moore's University was undertaken to enhance her pedagogy so that she can better serve her students. Ayanna enjoys baking, reading, and





playing the steelpan and looks forward to making more contributions towards educational research in her native Caribbean region.

School of Sciences, Health Sciences, Technology and Engineering: Mrs Ama Ohenewaa from Liverpool John Moores University.

Ama Ohenewaa is a Ghanaian public health advocate committed to tackling the burden of infectious diseases in Africa. With a Master's degree in International Public Health from Liverpool John Moores University, and a research paper on "A Scoping Review of HIV Testing Approaches in Ghana: Trends, Effectiveness, and Challenges", Ama combines academic knowledge with hands-on experience to drive meaningful change. Currently working in the Microbiology Department at the 37 Military Hospital in Accra, Ghana, Ama is focused on advancing diagnostic and prevention efforts to improve public health outcomes in the region.

School of Business: Mrs Paula Forrest from Unicaf in partnership with University of Suffolk.

Paula Forrest is a financial expert with 28 years of experience in banking, including roles at JMMB, Development Bank of Jamaica, and Sagicor Bank. As SME Resource Centre Officer at JMMB Group, she drives business growth through sales strategies and client success. Her skills include financial analysis, business development, and coaching. Paula holds an MBA from the University of Suffolk and is pursuing CBCA certification. She is passionate about mentoring SMEs and fostering success.



We extend our sincere appreciation to each speaker for their valuable contributions, making the Unicaf Master's Conference 2024 an intellectually stimulating and enriching experience.

Stay tuned for more insights and updates on upcoming academic endeavors!



ATTEND THE
**2ND ANNUAL UNICAF
MASTER'S CONFERENCE
2024**

REGISTER NOW!



Research Activities at Unicaf University in Zambia



World Alzheimer's Day Walk to End Dementia - 21st September 2024

On September 21, 2024, Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias in Zambia (ADDIZ), in collaboration with partners including Unicaf University, joined the global community in commemorating World Alzheimer's Day. The event featured a symbolic 4.5-kilometer walk under the theme "How exactly do you change the world? One step at a time," aimed at

raising awareness of dementia and advocating for coordinated support for individuals affected by Alzheimer's and related conditions.

Event Overview

The walk, which began at Manda Hill and concluded at Unicaf University, attracted over 100 participants from diverse backgrounds, including healthcare professionals, community organizations, students, and concerned citizens. It served as both a tribute to those living with dementia and a show of solidarity with their caregivers. The event embodied hope and a collective commitment to fostering a dementia-inclusive society in Zambia.



Through the participation of various stakeholders, the walk highlighted the continued need for dementia advocacy, public education, and dedicated support for those affected. It reinforced the importance of a collective approach in addressing the challenges of dementia in Zambia.



Valedictory Remarks and Vote of Thanks

At the conclusion of the walk, Dr Moses Mataa, a neurologist and dementia awareness advocate, delivered valedictory remarks, emphasizing the importance of creating widespread awareness about dementia in Zambian society. He acknowledged the contributions of key partners, including Unicaf University, the Resident Doctors Association of Zambia (RDAZ), DaisyCare Zambia, Avocado Media, and the Zambian Cohort of Healthy Ageing and Dementia in Zambia (ZCHAD), all of whom played vital roles in making the event a success.

Dr Marirajan Thiruppathi, Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation at Unicaf University, delivered a heartfelt vote of thanks, acknowledging the participants for their dedication and tireless efforts in raising awareness about dementia. As an engaged university deeply connected with the local community, Unicaf University has already trained 23 Dementia Care Coaches (DCCs) and is planning to extend this training to an additional cohort of 30 healthcare professionals and community members later this year. This initiative, carried out in collaboration with ADDIZ and the University of Huddersfield, UK, reflects Unicaf University's ongoing commitment to advancing dementia research and education. Through partnerships with key stakeholders, Unicaf University remains dedicated to driving impactful change in dementia care and awareness



Meet Dr Sethi Dube, our new Post Doc at Unicaf University in Zambia



We are pleased to introduce Dr Sethi Dube, the new postdoctoral researcher at Unicaf University in Zambia. A Zimbabwean geographer and environmental scientist, she brings extensive expertise in climate change modeling, geospatial analysis, and natural resource management. Dr Dube holds a PhD in Geography from the University of Witwatersrand and is a Senior Lecturer at Lupane State University. Her research focuses on assessing climate change impacts on socio-economic and environmental systems, using GIS and remote sensing technologies. Widely published in peer-reviewed international journals, she has also presented her work at conferences worldwide. Committed to sustainable environmental management and climate resilience, Dr Dube applies geospatial technology to address pressing environmental challenges. Below, we share an

engaging conversation with her about her research background and how her work aligns with the University's mission, creating a broader impact within academic and social communities.



Q: Can you tell us about your research background and what brought you to Unicaf University?

SD: My primary research interest is in the area of climate and land use change impacts on land and water ecosystems. Human and natural systems are increasingly threatened by anthropogenic and climatic changes and such research is critical for the sustainability of terrestrial and aquatic systems under the current global change spasm. Such

increasing global concern requires robust climatic and statistical modelling methodologies to provide adaptive and mitigative strategies for sustaining human life (e.g. water resources) and other natural ecosystems. Analysing spatio-temporal impacts of climatic and land use induced changes on water and land systems is the general goal of my research. The use of GIS and earth observation technologies to analyse changes and ascertain the impacts of anthropogenic and natural activities on water and land systems are the central questions that drive most of my research activities. Because natural systems are complex, answering these questions require careful design and implementation that will provide detailed solutions for sustainable development. I also employ statistical analysis and climatic simulations to help understand the impact of human activities and climate stressors on land and water systems. I came to Unicaf University, Zambia to be part of the research that promotes sustainability and environmental stewardship through fostering interdisciplinary approaches to environmental challenges as well as to spearhead climate change research and modelling.

Q: What specific projects or research areas are you focusing on during your postdoc here?

SD: My post doc research will focus on investigating climate change impacts on water resources in Zambia and or Southern Africa. It will also assess ecosystem service provision in wetland ecosystem under changing climatic conditions. As well as using climate modelling to project future weather and related extreme events and their likely impacts on water resources and agricultural production in Zambia.

Q: How do you see your research contributing to the University's mission and impact within the broader academic or social community?

SD: My research is aligned to the Unicaf mission of promoting sustainable communities and environment through fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing among scholars, students and policy makers. In the academic community, it will advance the understanding of climate change impacts on ecosystems and human society at large. It will also provide evidence-based policy and decision making in environmental and sustainable development. To the society, my research supports sustainable climate change adaptation and resilience building in vulnerable communities, as well as raising awareness on contemporary global environmental issues and promoting public participation in environmental management.

Q: What advice would you give to aspiring researchers or students interested in pursuing a similar field?

SD: As a researcher in climate change and environmental conservation, I would advise researchers to embark on research that will protect and preserve our natural heritage for the present and future generations. I believe that such investigations are imperative for building community resilience to climate shocks.

To students, pursuing a career in climate change and environmental conservation offers a sense of purpose and stewardship essential for sustainable development and the achievement of sustainable development goals particularly SDG 13.

Research activities at Unicaf University in Malawi



Highlighting Unicaf University Malawi's Engagement with the Erasmus+ Programme for Capacity Building in Higher Education

Unicaf University Malawi's Dr Fritz Kadyoma, Deputy Vice Chancellor, and Dr Wilfred Masebo, Associate Professor and Dean of the School of Business and Management, recently participated in the Erasmus+ Programme Information Session for Malawi held in Lilongwe. The session, organised by the Malawi Ministry of Education in collaboration with the European Union (EU) Malawi Office, attracted around 40 participants, including representatives from both public and private universities as well as technical colleges across Malawi.

This event offered critical insights into the Erasmus+ Programme, which has allocated €570 million for sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) from 2021 to 2027 to support capacity building in higher education and technical institutions. Prospective projects are evaluated on criteria such as relevance, quality, institutional capacity, and sustainability. The programme prioritizes areas such as environmental sustainability, digitalization, governance, job creation, and social integration, with potential funding ranging from €200,000 to €400,000 per project.

The Erasmus+ Programme offers robust funding opportunities for various academic activities, including student scholarships, curriculum design, faculty and student mobility, virtual exchanges, and institutional reform. Additionally, it has a sister programme focused specifically on research and innovation for faculty, postdoctoral researchers, and PhD candidates.

To qualify, projects require collaboration between at least two EU institutions and a minimum of two SSA institutions, with participation from at least three SSA countries. Calls for 2025 project proposals will open in November, with submissions due by February 2025. The announcement of results is expected in August, and contracts will be signed in late 2025 for project implementation to begin in early 2026.

The session provided invaluable orientation for potential applicants, equipping them with the necessary information to prepare for upcoming calls for proposals. For more details, you can visit the session's official webpage: [Erasmus+ Information Session for Malawi](#).

This engagement highlights Unicaf University Malawi's proactive approach to expanding educational opportunities and capacity building through international collaboration.



Students' Hub



Spotlight on Excellence: Tinah Mukunda

Mrs. Tinah Tusiime Mukunda, a Doctorate of Business Administration (DBA) student at Unicaf University's Zambia Campus, was recognized with one of the Best Presentation Awards at the 4th Unicaf University Graduate Conference (UGraC). Her research, titled "Assessing the Effects of International Donor Aid Shifts on Non-Profit Sustainability Strategies in Uganda," highlights critical challenges and strategies for sustaining nonprofit organizations amidst evolving donor priorities.

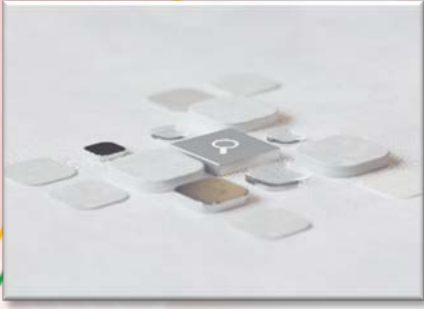
In her interview, Tinah shares valuable insights and reflections that can inspire and guide fellow doctoral students and those considering embarking on a PhD journey. She discusses common struggles and breakthroughs in the doctoral process, offering relatable perspectives for students who may face similar challenges but have yet to voice them.

About Tinah Mukunda

Tinah Mukunda is an accomplished and passionate leader with over 15 years of experience in the development sector, including 10 years of leading multi-sectoral programs and multidisciplinary teams across Africa in both fragile and stable contexts. Currently serving as the Country Director for World Vision International in Eswatini, Tinah is known for her strategic leadership, adaptability, and focus on achieving evidence-based impact.

Her doctoral research reflects her deep commitment to the nonprofit sector, addressing vital questions about the sustainability of organizations in Uganda as they navigate shifts in international donor funding. Alongside her DBA studies, Tinah holds a Master's degree in Management Studies, a Postgraduate Diploma in Human Resource Management, and a Bachelor's degree in Social Science.

Tinah's achievements and dedication serve as an inspiration, demonstrating how persistence, curiosity, and leadership can shape impactful research and professional excellence. Her story and advice offer a roadmap for students to overcome challenges and thrive in their doctoral studies.



Q: Reflecting on your doctoral journey so far, what key insights or lessons have you gained, and how have these experiences begun to shape your perspective as a researcher?

TM: As I move towards finalising my doctoral Journey, I can't help but think about, the importance of harnessing the staying power, focus, resilience and adaptability throughout the research process. A lot of times research seldom goes as was planned, and often, the research trajectory evolves and navigating the unexpected outcomes and ensuring fidelity of the research phenomenon and methodology calls for a well-grounded thought process and this has been my defining formula. Ability to exercise flexibility, going back and forth between chapters, ensuring the grounding of the research objectives and the conceptualisation of the same, has been my greatest lesson. I have learnt to view stumbling blocks as opportunities to do better and exercise creativity and innovation. I have come to appreciate the iterative and interplay between the research methodology and objectives as critical and unrivalled tool for birthing new ideas and occasioning a stronger nuanced understanding of any research field. The aforementioned, has gone a long way to helping me appreciate the needed rigor and the endurance that is must have, for anyone undertaking academia work. I have learnt to practice thoughtfulness and adaptable character while undertaking research.

Q: As you progress through your doctoral studies, can you share specific challenges you've encountered in your research and the strategies you are employing to navigate them?

TM: What I found to be a major challenge is in regard to working with complex datasets and using advanced statistical software packages. Data analytics is inevitable in research and requires one to be adept in the same. Moreover, producing data informed analyses and arguments including recommendations is integral to a research undertaking. As I navigated this rugged terrain, I invested in reading and understanding the applicable data management software and reached out to experts in the field, who gladly mentored me and provided guidance on data mining, analysis and presentation best practices. Discussions with my Supervisor especially bouncing ideas on what approach I intended to take helped me to build my confidence and overcome the challenges in the data structure and effective data analyses. I have found it absolutely necessary in research to establish a structured system that allows progress reviews, proactiveness and learning collaboration to counter any challenges in research process.

Q: How has your experience participating in the UGrac conference contributed to your development as a graduate student? Are there any specific skills, insights, or connections you have gained that have influenced your research or academic journey?

TM: Participating in the UGrac conference was an invaluable experience that I would recommend to any student looking to build presentation skills, defend and interrogate research ideas. This experience broadened my academic network and exposed me to innovative research methodologies in my field. What I found really rewarding was ability to present my work to the captains of industry, a diverse audience and that helped me refine my communication skills; including adapting my presentation approach to suit the audiences that constituted both the highly specialised researchers as well as those that were outside my area of study. I found



the feedback quite enriching and the joy of being one of the best presenter was worth the time, energy and effort that I poured into the work and preparations.

Q: Looking ahead, how do you envision applying the knowledge and skills you're acquiring during your doctoral studies in your future career or academic pursuits? Are there particular areas or projects you're excited to explore further?

TM: As I look towards the future, I am looking forward to translating the skills garnered throughout my doctorate journey especially analytical and problem solving skills to benefit a community of practice in business administration especially at work places. I look forward to influencing agendas in organisations through my honed skills of in-depth analysis and ability to building data informed compelling business cases. I am particularly passionate about exploring donor aid shifts and helping Non for Profit Organisations with forward-thinking agendas to prepare better for their resilience and adaptability amidst volatile donor aid architecture. In addition to advancing my own research, I also hope to mentor future students and contribute to fostering an environment that values curiosity, perseverance, and innovation. This path aligns with my long-term goal of making meaningful contributions to both academia and broader societal challenges.



Eyes to the Future



In this edition of Eyes to the Future, we continue to spotlight the innovative thesis projects of our graduate students. Each month, we feature responses from selected graduates to three key questions:

What was your research about?

What inspired you to choose this topic?

How might your findings benefit Africa?

If you are a recent graduate and would like to share your thesis project, please respond to these questions at the link [here](#). Join us in celebrating the remarkable work of our research community!

We are also pleased to welcome Dr Keyeh Emmanuel Lufang who obtained his Doctorate of Education from the Unicaf University in Zambia.



Keyeh Emmanuel was born in rural Cameroon in 1978 and has dedicated his career to advancing mother tongue literacy. After joining the Cameroon Association for Bible Translation and Literacy (CABTAL) in 2004, he helped hundreds gain literacy in their native languages. With an MA in Literacy Programme Development from the UK, he returned to Cameroon and became CABTAL's Executive Director, overseeing over 80 language projects. Recently, Emmanuel completed his PhD in Education at Unicaf University Zambia, with research that supports literacy initiatives amidst Cameroon's socio-political shifts. He resides in Yaounde with his wife and three children, continuing his work in community development.

Abstract: Approaching the literacy programme from humanistic and constructivist perspectives, which pay particular attention to the human and social needs created in the learning environment of individuals, and using a case study and ongoing action research, (McNiff, 2016; Stringer, 2014) this dissertation investigated and analysed an existing literacy programme in the Babanki, Mankon, Nkwen, and Weh communities of the Northwest Region of Cameroon and explored the impact of the Socio-political changes on the outcomes of the mother tongue literacy programme that is operating in these communities. The research used a sample of 100



participants; literacy learners, literacy teachers and literacy programme facilitators who were interviewed individually and through focused groups. The research sought to answer three questions.

1. What are some results that have come about in the mother tongue literacy programme because of the socio-political changes?
2. What modifications should be made in the mother tongue literacy programme to accommodate the current results?

3. What are the implications of these modifications on the future of the mother tongue literacy programme?

Although many people desire to learn how to read and write, they also have daily realities that confront them, inhibiting their progress and limiting their opportunities for study. The greatest motivation for overcoming these challenges comes from an understanding of how literacy will help them achieve their desired purposes (Alsawaier, 2018; Ross, Perkins, & Bodey, 2016). In the Babanki, Mankon, Nkwen, and Weh contexts, the socio-political changes of the Northwest and Southwest Regions have greatly impacted the mother tongue literacy programme and based on the results obtained, this dissertation foregrounds and emphasises the need for a better understanding of such impact which will help to inform the design of a more appropriate literacy model for the Babanki, Mankon, Nkwen, Weh and other people in similar contexts.

What was your research about?

KEL: The research was aimed at understanding the profound impact of the socio-political shifts in Cameroon's North West and South West regions on the outcomes of the mother tongue-based literacy programme of the Cameroon Association for Bible Translation and Literacy (CABTAL). Carried out in a context that already has prevailing negative language attitudes, this research intended to examine how the socio-political changes have impeded the effectiveness of the mother tongue literacy programme and the resulting setbacks in meeting planned activities.

With the emergence of socio-political challenges and the disruption it brought on various aspects of the mother tongue literacy programme, including enrollment, teaching practices, learning outcomes, and stakeholder commitment, the research aimed to highlight the impact of these socio-political changes on the projected outcomes of the mother tongue literacy program. Additionally, this research sought to examine how these shifts in the socio-political landscape of the Northwest and Southwest regions have affected the programme's continuity and the survival of the involved mother tongues.

CABTAL oversees a mother tongue-based literacy initiative with more than 85 language communities in Cameroon, many of which are situated in the affected regions. This research was aimed at providing a comprehensive understanding of the socio-political impact on CABTAL's mother tongue literacy programme.

By shedding light on these dynamics, the research intended to inform strategic adjustments necessary to ensure the continued relevance and success of CABTAL's mother tongue literacy programme amidst evolving socio-political landscapes. The holistic approach of the research was intended to contribute to safeguarding the objectives of the mother tongue literacy programme and the linguistic heritage of the communities that CABTAL serves.



What led you to choose this topic for your PhD research?

KEL: The recent socio-political upheavals in Cameroon's North West and South West regions have significantly impacted the mother tongue-based literacy programme of the Cameroon Association for Bible Translation and Literacy (CABTAL). In an effective literacy programme, collaboration among learners, literacy teachers, facilitators, and stakeholders is crucial to achieving phonemic awareness, basic reading and writing skills, vocabulary enhancement, reading fluency, comprehension, and practical application of literacy skills.

However, the socio-political environment has posed numerous challenges and unmet expectations for stakeholders. CABTAL administers a mother tongue literacy program across 85 language communities in Cameroon, many of which are located in the affected regions. The persistent socio-political changes in these areas have hindered enrollment, teaching, learning outcomes, and stakeholder commitment.

The ongoing socio-political shifts, compounded by existing negative language attitudes, have hampered the program's effectiveness. Failure to comprehend the impact of these changes may lead to discrepancies between projected and achieved outcomes, potentially endangering the program's continuity and the linguistic heritage of the communities it serves.

Without intervention, the mother tongue literacy program faces the risk of failure, threatening the vitality of the languages involved. Thus, addressing these challenges requires extensive efforts to adapt to the evolving socio-political landscape and ensure the program's resilience and relevance.

How do you think the findings of your research could be useful in Africa's context?

KEL: The findings of this research offer valuable insights for literacy programme designers and implementers across Africa. They can adapt strategies to similar socio-political contexts, enhancing the effectiveness of literacy programmes continent-wide. Empowering literacy teachers with technological skills, as emphasized in the research, enables better facilitation and monitoring of literacy programmes, addressing practical needs across Africa.

Language shifts and cultural assimilation pose challenges across many African nations, influencing socio-political landscapes. Amidst growing instability, this research emphasizes the importance of preserving indigenous languages and cultures, contributing to ongoing discussions on this topic continent-wide.

Moreover, the research findings empower language communities to advocate for culturally relevant literacy programmes, fostering community engagement and ownership. This understanding enhances the inclusivity and sustainability of literacy initiatives throughout Africa.

By shedding light on the impact of socio-political changes on the mother-based literacy programme of CABTAL, this research contributes to broader discussions on literacy and education in similar contexts across the continent. Collaboration among researchers can address common challenges and improve literacy programmes continent-wide, drawing from the experiences in Cameroon.

In summary, this research provides insights applicable to the broader African context, empowering stakeholders to design and implement sustainable literacy programmes amidst socio-political challenges.

RECENT UNICAF PUBLICATIONS

New peer-reviewed publications by our students and faculty



Students:

Nyako Jnr, A. and Mahapatra, R. (2024), "Key drivers of organisational effectiveness in churches: a qualitative study of pastors' and leaders' perspectives in Accra, Ghana", International Journal of Organizational Analysis, Vol. ahead-of-print No. ahead-of-print. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOA-07-2024-4642>

Faculty:

Albin MQ, Igihozo G, Musemangezhi S, Namukanga EN, Uwizeyimana T, Alemayehu G, et al. (2024) "When we have served meat, my husband comes first": A qualitative analysis of child nutrition among urban and rural communities of Rwanda. PLoS ONE 19(7): e0306444. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0306444>

Drousioti, K. (2024). Discourse Theory, Nodal Points, and Stereoscopic Optics on Justice. The European Legacy, 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10848770.2024.2368309>

Elhami, A., Roshan, A., & Giles, H. (2024). Interaction between Teacher and Students in Spanish Language Classes through the Lens of Communication Accommodation Theory. International Journal of Society, Culture & Language, 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.22034/ijsci.2024.2026757.3459>

Mpolomoka, Daniel & Mwaka, Petronella & Mandyata, Joseph. (2024). Secondary School Learners' Experiences During COVID-19 in Africa and Beyond: A Systematic Review. 10.4018/979-8-3693-1507-1.ch006.

Nyako Jnr, A. and Mahapatra, R. (2024), "Key drivers of organisational effectiveness in churches: a qualitative study of pastors' and leaders' perspectives in Accra, Ghana", International Journal of Organizational Analysis, Vol. ahead-of-print No. ahead-of-print. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOA-07-2024-4642>

Simwinga, E. , Mpolomoka, D. , Muvombo, M. and Chikopela, R. (2024) Establishing a Measure of Educational Attainment: Using the Zambia Neurobehavioural Test Battery. Open Access Library Journal, 11, 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.4236/oalib.1111870>

Yaseen, M., Sultan, F., Ishaq, M. S., Shahzad, M., Chambashi, G. (2024). Analyzing multi- step reaction mechanisms: Unveiling non-linear dynamics with advanced reduction techniques. AIP Advances 14, 045338 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.1063/5.0197019>

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

If you have the idea; We can help you with funding opportunities



[The Conservation, Food & Health Foundation](#)

Area/Disciplines/Themes: conservation, food, and health

Deadline: 1 January 2025 – Concept Application Deadlines

[Annual Seeding The Future Global Food System Challenge](#)

Area/Disciplines/Themes: Food

Deadline: 6 January 2025

[Commonwealth Climate Resilience Network Grants](#)

Area/Disciplines/Themes: climate change adaptation

Deadline: 9 January 2025

[Independent Social Research Foundation](#)

Area/Disciplines/Themes: Social scientific disciplines and interdisciplinary research fields

Deadline: 10th January 2025

[Sustainable, secure and competitive energy supply \(HORIZON-CL5-2024-D3-02\)](#)

Area/Disciplines/Themes: Resource Efficiency of PV in Production, Use and Disposal

Deadline: 4 February 2025

[IATEFL Projects](#)

Area/Disciplines/Themes: to support Teaching Associations

Deadline: 14 March 2025

[Institute for Humane Studies](#)

Area/Disciplines/Themes: [Conversations Shaping the Course of the 21st Century and the Future of a Free Society](#)

Deadline: on a rolling basis

FELLOWSHIPS / AWARDS / COURSES

List of fellowships, awards and courses



[Climate and Mental Health Award: Uncovering mechanisms between heat and mental health](#)

Area/Disciplines/Themes: mental health science and climate science

Deadline: 18 December 2025

[2025/2026 Center for Effective Global Action \(CEGA\) Fellowship](#)

Area/Disciplines/Themes: skills in quantitative social science research

Deadline: 17 January 2025

[2025 APN Individual Research Fellowships Program](#)

Area/Disciplines/Themes: African peacebuilding research

Deadline: 31 January 2025

[2025 Iso Lomso Fellowships](#)

Area/Disciplines/Themes: All disciplines

Deadline: 15 February 2025

[Climate and Health Award: Advancing climate mitigation solutions with health co-benefits in low- and middle-income countries](#)

Area/Disciplines/Themes: climate change mitigation and health

Deadline: 18 February 2025

[Wellcome Early-Career Awards](#)

Area/Disciplines/Themes: any discipline

Deadline: 25 February 2025

CALLS FOR CONFERENCES AND EVENTS (WORKSHOP / WEBINARS)

Upcoming conferences and events



Unicaf University Doctoral Research Groups (for Doctoral Students)

The Doctoral Research Groups (DRGs)' s aim is to foster collaboration, knowledge exchange and feedback provision between doctoral researchers and faculty, with a view of advancing original and rigorous research. The initiative is aimed at Unicaf University doctoral researchers and faculty, during which doctoral researchers present ideas and share expertise that can enhance their research. The open dialogue between doctoral researchers working on similar subjects will facilitate information exchange and will be a vibrant forum in which students can receive feedback on their work.

The next Doctoral Research Groups are held on:

Date and Time: 12 December 2024, 14:00 - 16:00 (Cyprus time, UTC+02:00)

Area/Disciplines/Themes: Education

Zoom Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83888269954>

Date and Time: 23 January 2025, 14:00 - 16:00 (Cyprus time, UTC+02:00)

Area/Disciplines/Themes: Information and Technology

Zoom Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86889484695>

Date and Time: 6 February 2025, 14:00 - 16:00 (Cyprus time, UTC+02:00)

Area/Disciplines/Themes: Business

Zoom Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89556414230>

More information regarding the Doctoral Research Groups can be found at our [webpage](#).

OTHER NEWS - What we think might interest you



Don't Miss Out: Open Call for Papers: Unicaf Online Journal!

Special Issue in Education: "Teaching and Learning in Modern Multilingual and Multicultural Classrooms"

This issue explores the vital role of multilingualism and multiculturalism in education, highlighting how these themes support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We invite research that demonstrates the transformative power of cultural and linguistic diversity in educational settings.

Special Issue in Technology and Sciences: "AI and ML Applications in RIST to Attain SDGs in a Changing Industrial Landscape"

This issue focuses on the impact of AI and Machine Learning in enhancing industrial practices, problem-solving, and operational efficiencies, showcasing their alignment with the SDGs.

The Unicaf Online Journal accepts diverse research topics, promoting interdisciplinary approaches within the educational field. We encourage researchers worldwide to contribute and join this collaborative scholarly endeavor. This open-access journal is published bi-annually, with issues released in July and December.

For more information and submission guidelines, please visit our [webpage](#).

Join Our Team: Become a Peer Reviewer for UOJ!

The Unicaf Online Journal (UOJ) is inviting scholars and professionals to join our team of volunteer peer reviewers across any of our five disciplines. By serving as a reviewer, you'll help ensure the quality and rigor of our publications while providing constructive feedback to support authors. UOJ is dedicated to a double-blind peer review process and timely, thorough assessments.

We welcome applications from those with a doctoral degree, relevant professional experience, or active research in a related field.

If you are interested, please complete our [Google form](#) with details of your research specializations. For more information, including guidelines for submitting a paper or becoming a reviewer, visit the [UOJ website](#) and refer to the Call in a [previous edition of the Unicaf Research Newsletter](#). We look forward to your contributions!

Reminder: Share Your Publications and Get Featured!

We would like to take this opportunity to kindly remind everyone that we welcome doctoral and Master's students (or graduates) who have already published, or are in the process of publishing their work to share their peer-reviewed publications with us by utilising the following link: <https://forms.gle/u6jyfopDaCyUfvbY8>. Additionally, please mention whether the publication is affiliated with Unicaf / Unicaf University.

Moreover, we extend the same invitation to faculty members who have publications to share. If you are a faculty member, please send us your publications (with correct reference or DOI) to research.office@unicaf.org. Kindly indicate whether the publication is affiliated with Unicaf / Unicaf University, as this information will assist us in accurately registering your publications in our database.

Please note that only Unicaf-affiliated publications will be featured in the "Recent Unicaf Publications" section of our Unicaf Research Newsletter. By sharing your publication, whether as a student or faculty member, you will also have your work registered in our database, which is accessible to all via the following links

For student publications: <https://www.unicaf.org/research/publications/students-alumni/>

For faculty publications: <https://www.unicaf.org/research/publications/faculty/>

The guidelines for institutional affiliations for academic submissions can be found [here](#).

We look forward to receiving your valuable contributions!



Connect with us on social media