

The Africa Institute

Newsletter

Health Equity in Context: Local Solutions for Global Problems

The Health Equity in Context: Local Solutions for Global Problems, or its shortform HEIDI, is an exciting Interdisciplinary Development Initiative happening here at Western, as well as in Rwanda. The project spans across six faculties, and 15 Africa Institute members are involved at some capacity with the project. Furthermore, the project is partnered with the University of Global Health Equity in Rwanda, which creates a broad team bringing many different perspectives and contexts. With its first year wrapping up, we wanted to illuminate the exciting work that is happening with HEIDI!

HEIDI is made up of three research initiative projects, as well as an education component, and a knowledge mobilization and community engagement component. The first research project is titled Pre & Post Migration, Trauma and Health, and is led by Lloy Wylie and Heather Lokko here at Western, and led by Clementine Kanazayire in Rwanda. This project's goal is to discover the best practices to support families experiencing forced migration. Within the Canadian context, the first year achieved a literature review of migration settlement issues and promising practice in the global context, an environmental scan of newcomer health settlement in Ontario in the cities with the highest refugee numbers, and developed a series of vignettes about the refugee experience as an educational tool.

The second project is titled Making Our Communities Trauma- and Violence-Informed. It is led by Nadine Wathen here at Western. Its primary activity has been the establishment of the Gender, Trauma & Violence (GTV) Knowledge Incubator here at Western University. Other major activities of the past year have included incorporating TVIC (trauma- and violence-informed care) into teacher training, into local organizations through workshops for professionals, into police practice with London and Woodstock police, and the development of online e-learning on TVIC, and working on developing how to assess the impact of TVIC interventions. More details on project two can be found on their [website](#).

The third project is titled Power, Practice, and Ethics in Global Health. Here at Western it is co-led by Elysee Nouvet and Robert Gough, and the Rwandan lead is Phaedra Henley. A large portion of this project's work has been the development of an Assessment Tool that is designed to assess the true equity in global health partnerships. There will be workshops to use the tool led in both Rwanda and here in Canada. There has also been work on the development of a definition of critical and ethical global engagement.

Director's Message

The summer and early fall have been incredibly busy times for many faculty and students doing internships and writing. The Africa Institute is particularly proud to see so many graduate students benefiting from Africa Institute funding in support of their research and knowledge translation efforts. Our newsletter this month features the story of Toby Le and his work in Kenya and Tanzania with a team of researchers under the supervision of Dr. Shari Hekamat. The sensory testing they did sheds insight into new ways of delivering the health benefits of probiotic-enhanced foods in fruit juices that consumers will want. You will also read about four of the nine students who were funded by the Africa Institute Graduate Student Fund in 2018 who have completed their work including "A Feminist Narrative Inquiry into Being a Child Bride in Nigeria" and "Predicting Contributions of Age and Motives for First Substance Use, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders to Later Addiction Severity in Clinical Sample from a Sub-Saharan Country, Rwanda" (see pgs. 8 & 9). This year we are pleased to have funded eight projects including "Gender and experiences of food insecurity in Atacora Benin" by Rosalind Ragetlie, "Using remote sensing and Public Participatory Geographic Information Systems to understand crop diversity and yield estimation for food security in Malawi" by Daniel Kpienbaareh, and "Assessment of Interprofessional Conflict Resolution in Healthcare Teams in Practice" by Sibylle Ugirase, among others (see pg. 5).

Meanwhile, my own scholarly activities continue and I am pleased to welcome four members of the Ubuntu Management Education Initiative for Africa Western Collaboration Day on Wednesday November 13th from 4-7 p.m. in the Great Hall at Western (see pg. 10). We will be discussing how we work towards achieving the spirit of Ubuntu in our work (which means I am, because we are) along with challenges we have faced. I hope you can join us, and members of the Africa Institute, the London community and members of the diplomatic missions of Sudan, Rwanda and Kenya.

I wish you all a productive fall and look forward to our continued collaborations.

Best,
Nicole

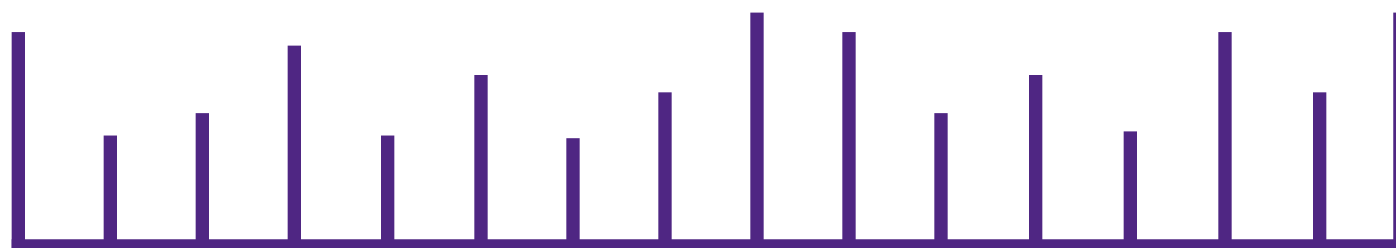


[Dr. Nicole Haggerty](#)

Associate Professor, Ivey Business School

Director [Africa Institute](#), Western University

Director [Ubuntu Management Education Initiative](#), Ivey



The education component of HEIDI is being led by Dr. Nicole Haggerty, Director of the Africa Institute. Case development is the key activity, aligning with the key mission of HEIDI to mobilize education as a key tool within the strategy of eliminating health inequities. Currently this component is working on developing and writing global health equity cases.

A HEIDI Case Writing Workshop was held at the start of October, which was open to all HEIDI and Africa Institute members, and grad students who weren't from a business background. Led by Dr. Haggerty, the four hour workshop helped participants learn the basics of case writing and teaching, and helped to jump start writing their own cases. A photo below was taken after the students completed what is usually a two day workshop in four hours!

The knowledge mobilization and community outreach component has been very successful in both Canada and Rwanda. Both countries have run several community gatherings with speakers speaking to equity issues and have had successful turnouts. Stay tuned for future events here in the London area, including an upcoming one on November 7th! More information can be found on the last page of the newsletter.



Western Heads East Student Summer Research Project: Alternatives to accessing probiotics in Kenya and Tanzania

This past summer, the Africa Institute assisted in funding a student research project in Kenya and Tanzania. Western Heads East is partly centered around the use of probiotics in Eastern Africa to produce sustainable and healthy yoghurt. However, a common problem is a lack of milk due to droughts or other factors. This summer, a team of seven students, all current or past Western Heads East interns, worked together to research alternatives to dairy, such as probiotic juices and cereals. We had the opportunity to ask the research coordinator, Toby Le, some of his views on the project.

1) What was your favourite part of the project?

Although, the entire project was an amazing experience, my favourite part was working in collaboration with all the talented students and remarkable East African leaders that allowed this project to be possible. I will admit there were stressful times, but it only made the experience more rewarding by providing us with opportunities to work together and problem-solve. As the Research Coordinator, I also could not have asked for a more supportive organization than the Africa Institute, which provided us with both financial support and creative freedom to mold the project into this multi-partnership research study that we see today.

2) Do you have any future plans to take this project further or continue in similar projects?

In the immediate future, we want to translate the research findings into practical and accessible applications in Kenya and Tanzania. Even though probiotic yogurt has been in East Africa since 2004, there are still issues associated with finding good quality and affordable milk. Our main goal for this project is to ensure that everyone and anyone can have access to probiotics, either supplemented through yogurt, fruit juices, or millet porridge. To accomplish this, we will translate the findings into educational posters and training modules that are simple and easy to understand for those without a formal education. These training materials will then be shared with non-profit organizations, like Mikono Yetu, that focus on sustainable development and economic empowerment of vulnerable populations. As a long-term goal, I want to work with high risk HIV populations to develop sustainable projects that promote access to HIV preventive and/or treatment therapies that are both affordable and culturally acceptable.

3) What are your thoughts on such partnerships? How do they benefit you, as well as your partners in Tanzania/Kenya?

I believe that it is through partnerships like this one that create sustainable and impactful solutions. Without the support of our East African partners, we would not have been able to design a project that was as practical and applicable to such regions. Despite our access to current literature, our East African partners were more effective in providing us with in-depth information about the issues on the ground and personal anecdotes which helped us better shape the project to address the issue. On the other hand, this partnership benefits our partners in Tanzania and Kenya because it provides them with novel research findings that could be applied into sustainable development and empowerment of vulnerable populations. Together partnerships like these are what drives change.

4) What inspired you to take on this project? Have you felt rewarded by your work?

I first took on this project because I knew it could make a difference in someone's life. During my internship in Tanzania in 2017, I had the opportunity to witness the impact of the Fiti probiotic program on many vulnerable populations. In Mwanza Tanzania, I witnessed firsthand how this program empowered single mothers to be business owners, health advocates, and community leaders. Most importantly, this program enabled single mothers to obtain the financial capacity to afford their children's education. Since this experience, I have remained inspired and determined to find practical solutions that would expand the accessibility of this program, which became the main objective of this project. Furthermore, there are no words that can describe how happy I am to have led a project that could empower someone's life.

5) What would you say to inspire others to get involved in this type of work/international partnerships with Africa?

In a world where there are over 7.5 billion people, we happen to be part of the 7% that are lucky enough to pursue college degrees. With this in mind, I believe that when you are fortunate to have more than others, you have the moral responsibility to utilize what you have to empower those that are less fortunate. And this message is not just restricted to science students – it's for any student from any faculty. If I could share only one advice from my entire experience in international partnerships, it's this: As long as you love what you do or learn, you have a lot more to offer to the world than you think. Being involved in international projects and partnerships with other countries like Africa, are the best opportunities to apply yourself and offer your best.

Funding Winners of Africa Institute Graduate Student Fund 2019

We are happy to announce the 8 winners of our funding call from May!

1. **Daniel Kpienbaareh**, Geography Department, *"Using remote sensing and Public Participatory Geographic Information Systems to understand crop diversity and yield estimation for food security in Malawi"*
2. **Rosalind Ragetlie**, Geography Department, *"Gender and experiences of food insecurity in Atacora, Benin"*
3. **Bianca Ziegler**, Geography Department, *"Fragile and Conflict Affected Care: Access, Timing, and Utilization of Antenatal Care in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi"*
4. **Romaisa Pervez**, Epidemiology and Biostatistics Department, *"Building a sustainable model and evaluation plan for psychosocial rehabilitation in Kenya: An implementation research study"*
5. **Sebastian Gyamfi**, Faculty of Nursing, *"Predictors of patient stigma perceptions: A dynamic stigma model of mental illness"*
6. **Trevor Potts**, Epidemiology Department, *"Impact of Non-communicable Disease Preventative Education Module on Community Health in Wakiso District"*
7. **Damilola Toki**, Health and Rehabilitation Science Department, *"Exploring training and capacity building from Community Health Workers and trainer's perspective: A case study in Northern and Southern Rwanda"*
8. **Sibylle Ugirase**, Faculty of Nursing, *"Assessment of Interprofessional Conflict Resolution in Healthcare Teams in Practice"*

The Africa Institute will be hosting the Canadian Association of African Studies at the Congress of Social Sciences and the Humanities, which is to be hosted here at Western for 2020! The annual CAAS Conference will take place on June 3 to 5, 2020.

Stay tuned for a call for papers and to hear more about our exciting programming that is already underway in planning!

Academics Without Borders: Call for Project Proposals

Western has long been a part of the Academics Without Borders network. Since partnering with the Mastercard Foundation, they are now calling for project proposals. The full details for the call can be found on [their site](#), and the deadline for submitting step one of the proposal is **November 8, 2019**. A benefit of Western being a member of the Academics Without Borders network is that it means all Western faculty, staff and administrators are eligible to apply under this call.

Africa Institute Graduate Committee

Come out on Monday, October 28th from 10:30 am to 12 pm to hear more about the Africa Institute Graduate Committee! The meeting will be held in the Chu Centre, in the International and Graduate Affairs Building. If you're a graduate student doing research in Africa, or are from the continent of Africa, please come on out and join our community!

Girls Are Eagles

Two Western Heads East interns used their internship this summer to develop a small video for the Eagle Movement, which is a girls' empowerment group in Tanzania, run by two of Western Heads East partners, Mikono Yetu and Maimuna. You can check out the video [here](#), and read more about the Eagle Movement below:

The Eagle Movement is a girl's empowerment club run by Mikono Yetu in Mwanza, Tanzania funded by the Novo Foundation. We meet weekly with girls from several schools to teach the lesser-known histories of African Queens who used to rule across the continent. These stories of strong women help to teach our girls the value of self-confidence and female empowerment. In Tanzania, girls are often told they are chickens. We teach them that they are eagles. This video was narrated by a member of the Eagle Movement and based on her life story. Directed, shot and edited by Western Heads East interns, Amber Silva and Sara Tracogna in partnership with The Eagle Movement and Mikono Yetu. Translated with the help of by Mathias Yusuph and Elizabeth C. Baluze.

Bibliometrics and Research Impact Summer School

From August 10 to 14 2020, The Faculty of Information Studies here at Western will welcome 15 academic librarians from across Africa to participate in a Bibliometrics and Research Impact Summer School. This idea was brought forward by one of our Advisory Board members, Dr. Isola Ajiferuke. Applications are currently open and will be until December 31, 2019. All information can be found [here](#).

Alumni Spotlight!

Stefania Wisofschi, MMASc '17

Western U alum selected for International Youth Fellowship Program

Stefania Wisofschi has been selected to participate in this year's cohort of Aga Khan Foundation Canada's (AKFC) International Youth Fellowship Program. She holds a Master of Management of Applied Science in Global Health Systems, and a Bachelor of Science from the University of Western Ontario.

Wisofschi will complete her placement at the Aga Khan University (AKU) Centre for Excellence in Women and Child Health, supporting their work in developing policies, practices, and programs associated with women's health and rights.

The Fellowship offers international development training and an eight-month overseas placement to recent university graduates and young professionals who are 30 years of age or younger.

Each Fellow spends eight months in Africa or Asia working with agencies and partners of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), one of the world's largest and most respected international development agencies.

About Stefania Wisofschi:

Stefania Wisofschi holds a Master of Management of Applied Science in Global Health Systems and a Bachelor of Science from the University of Western Ontario. The Global Health Systems in Africa program introduced Stefania to community-based intervention and brought her to Uganda where she interned at the Rakai Health Sciences Centre. She worked alongside the DREAMS program and assisted on community HIV/STD prevention and education services. Taking inspiration from the local community, she co-managed the creation of a micro-enterprise that provided probiotic yoghurt to the community and generated income opportunities for women. As part of a community project, Stefania collaborated with the London Intercommunity Health Centre and proposed a scalable solution to combating stigma and social isolation associated with mental illness and addiction by leveraging peer narratives. What she took away regarding the importance of working alongside communities to drive transformative change is exactly the message she seeks to amplify in her work.

Africa Institute Advisory Board

Over the summer months, the Africa Institute was busy rejuvenating our Advisory Board. We would like to extend a warm thank you to our Board members who stepped down, Prof. Ernest Yanful, Prof. Amanda Grzyb, and Prof. Immaculate Namukasa. We also had to say goodbye to Prof. Julie McMullin, VP International, as she accepted a new role at Mount St Vincent University in Halifax. All the best to you Julie! We have had a friendly face return to act as VP International, Dr. Jim Weese. Welcome back Jim!

We also have welcomed five new Advisory Board members: Bob Gough, Director of International Internships and Development; Akbar Saeed, Director of the Tschepo Institute for Contemporary African Studies; Lameck Osinde, Western Continuing Studies professor and member of ACFOLA; Katherine McKenna of History and Women's Studies Department; and Thomas Tiekou, of Political Science at King's. Welcome aboard to our new members! We are very excited for the year ahead.

Are you in Winnipeg? Consider checking out the exhibition [Ododo Wa: Stories of Girls in War](#) at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. This exhibit traces the journey of the Woman's Advocacy Network co-founders, Evelyn Amony and Grace Acan. The Woman's Advocacy Network is one of our regular community participants in our annual Africa-Western Collaboration Day!

Post-funding Reports from the Winners of the 2018 Africa Institute Graduate Student Research Fund

Last year we launched the Africa Institute Graduate Student Research Fund, and we were able to award nine graduate students. The funding assisted them with travel costs, supply costs, knowledge translation costs, and other costs associated with their thesis research. We are very excited to be able to provide our membership with a few brief post-funding reports. We hope you enjoy reading about these students hard work and dedication to scholarship in Africa!

A Survey of Language Use and Attitudes in Multilingual Societies

A Post-Funding Report for the Africa Institute Graduate Student Research Fund 2018

Grace Gomashie, Hispanic Studies

My doctoral project investigates the use of, and attitudes towards, the dominant, colonial and official languages and Indigenous languages in Equatorial Guinea, Mexico and Canada. A part of the study focused on the attitudes and use of the Spanish language in the multilingual Republic of Equatorial Guinea, the only African country with Spanish as an official language. The Spanish dialect of Equatorial Guinea is an understudied area, with very few research studies carried out on the sociolinguistic dynamic of this multilingual country. I worked with my Western PI Professor Joyce Bruhn de Garavito who provided her expertise on multilingualism. The results showed that Equatoguineans had positive attitudes to Spanish and considered the language important to their identity as the only Spanish-speaking country in Africa. Spanish was the functional language in almost all of the sociocultural contexts or domains. The Africa Institute Graduate Student Research Fund supported the dissemination of this project's results at the VI International Conference on Afro-Hispanic, Luso-Brazilian, and Latin American Studies, held at the University of Ghana in Accra. A revised and expanded version of the presentation was published in a special issue of *Humanities*, 'Africa and its Lusophone and Spanish-Speaking Diaspora: New Horizons of Conceptualization', guest-edited by Professor Joanna Boampong. This peer-reviewed article entitled 'Language Vitality of Spanish in Equatorial Guinea: Language Use and Attitudes' can be found in [Humanities 2019, 8\(1\), 33](#).

SUSUANA KWANING

MA LINGUISTICS

FRENCH STUDIES DEPARTMENT

As the recipient of the African Institute Graduate Research Fund, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the tremendous support that you have provided me through this Scholarship. My research on "The use of first language in the second/foreign language classroom: attitudes and perceptions" will inform the teaching methods of second/foreign language teachers specifically at the University of Ghana. The Scholarship allowed me to recruit participants for my study in Ghana (payment to a data collection agency & participant compensation) while maintaining focus on my course work here in Canada simultaneously. My goal is to become a lecturer and researcher in Linguistics with special focus of Language learning and teaching and be able to contribute to this field. Over the course of my academic and work career, I have had the opportunity to study different languages, language policies, and more broadly, the social and economic impact of language policies. As a Masters student in Linguistics, I have studied language variation and change as well as second language acquisition. This has further enlightened my view about the essence to learn a second/foreign language in this era of globalization. I look forward to furthering my PhD degree next academic year and continuing my work in Language Teaching. I thank you once again for your generous support in this endeavor.

Boniface Harerimana, Health Science
Testing a new addiction care model in Rwanda

Funded by 2018 Graduate Award from Irene Nordwhich Foundation and the Africa Institute

Background - Early age at initial psychoactive substance use is a significant contributing factor for progression to severe substance use disorders (SUDs). However, little is known regarding the extent to which age and motives for first substance use and contextual factors, such as post-traumatic stress disorders (PTSD) contribute to variations in later addiction severity.

Purpose - The present study predicted the effect of age and motives for first substance use as well as PTSD on later addiction severity among patients seeking care from two tertiary addiction care settings in, Rwanda.

Methods - This retrospective predictive study is a component of a larger investigation that developed and tested an addiction care model for patients' retention in the addiction recovery process. Data collection was conducted from September 2018 to April 2019; and used consecutive sampling techniques to recruit 315 inpatient participants. The Addiction Severity Index (ASI) measured seven domains of addiction problems. Demographic data, including age at first use and motives for first substance use were recorded in the additional information sections of the ASI. The Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSD) checklist civilian version was also used. Multiple linear regression analysis examined the contributions of age and motives for first substance use with later addictions problems.

Discussion - The present study contributes valuable novel insights into understanding unique contributors to addiction severity following initial substance use. This study demonstrates that early age of substance onset, traumatic experiences, and individual's demographics, such as level of education are significant predictors to later severe addiction problems.

Olubukola Sonibare
A Feminist Narrative Inquiry into Being a Child Bride in Nigeria.

Funding provided by the African Institute was used for part payment of airfare return ticket from Canada to Nigeria and translation from Hausa to English under the study.

Objectives:

- 1) To gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences of childhood marriage of Hausa women of northern origin that lives in southern Nigeria.
- 2) To reveal the conditions that influence the decisions of these women about the use of reproductive health services, including supports available to them.

Outcomes:

1. Met with the Hausa ethnic group community leader and other key members (women leader and men group) to introduce and justify the study (July 8 to 17, 2019).
2. Preparedness and approval process entailed sharing of the semi-structured questionnaire with the men's folk to give an idea of what will be asked in the face to face interviews with the women. This took 72 hours wait period to get a positive response from the community leader through the community secretary.
3. Purposeful sampling method was used to identify eligible participants with the help of the women leader and the community secretary.
4. Interviews were conducted only in southern Nigeria using two Hausa communities (Idi-araba and Agege). Approval was not gotten to conduct interviews in northern part of Nigeria because of ongoing instability in the region.
5. Contrary to the researcher's expectations, most of the interviews took place in the house of the participants (women who married before 18 years) with their husband's consent and approval, with a total of 18 interviews.
6. Interviews are at the stage of transcription, which will be followed with data analysis and results. However, the interviews revealed that despite modernization, urbanization, and nearness of health care services in these two communities, 98 % of Hausa women still give birth at home with Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs), and sometimes alone with no assistance for the multiparous and grand multipara women.

Africa-Western Collaboration Day

**Join us: Wednesday November 13th 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Great Hall, Western University**

Every year, Western University celebrates its international connections and the Africa Institute hosts Africa Western Collaboration Day. Over the past few years, we have hosted interactive sessions on gender equity and women's empowerment and human trafficking and forced migration.

This Africa-Western Collaboration Day – Wednesday November 13th, we offer you an opportunity to think about the meaning and impact of institutional collaborations aimed at achieving ethical and equitable engagement. Using the backdrop of the Ubuntu Management Education Initiative – an alliance of 8 African institutions and the Ivey Business School, this panel session will be a valuable occasion to learn about the opportunities and challenges facing the partnership from its inception in 2012, to its new strategic direction. The alliance is called Ubuntu, reflecting the rich African philosophy that means “I am because we are”. As these collaborators work towards the UN Global Goal of building capacity for Quality Education in the domain of management, panelists will discuss how collaborations with Western have facilitated their goals as well as share insights and lesson's learned on how to build and maintain equitable partnerships with African institutions.

Dr. Nicole Haggerty, Director of the Africa Institute and of the Ubuntu Education Management Initiative, will be joined in this panel discussion by:

- 1) Dr. Jean Bosco Rusagara, Programs Coordinator at the School of Business at University of Rwanda
- 2) Dr. Charles Lagat, Director for Directorate of International Programmes and an Associate Professor in the School of Business and Economics at Moi University, Kenya
- 3) Dr. Abeba Mengistu, Head of School, School of Commerce, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia

We look forward to another fruitful Africa-Western Collaboration Day, and invite you to join us in the spirit of Ubuntu on Wednesday November 13th between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. We will have items for sale, opportunities to talk to scholars about their research efforts in Africa, a chance to hear emerging research via Pecha Kecha presentations, and of course, the chance to reflect and learn more on the opportunities and challenges of institutional collaborations!

Other Upcoming Events...

Cerue Konah Garlo

The Carter Center ATI Liberia Program

*Women's Peace Building:
Lesson's from a Liberian
Activist and Leader*

Thursday, October 24, 2019
3:30 pm to 5:00 pm
Ivey Business School Room
2125

Hosted by the Africa Institute,
Ivey International Business
Club, and the Global Health
Systems Program

City Symposium on Reducing Inequalities

Thursday, November 7, 6:40
pm
Wolf Performance Hall,
Central Library

Featuring four speakers:

Michael Ciccone, CEO and
Chief Librarian of the London
Public Library

Carolina Cohoon, Education
and Rehabilitation Advocate
for Inclusion

Jenna Rose Sands, Cree
Ojibwe artist

Saverio Stranges, Professor
and Chair of the Dept. of
Epidemiology and Biostatistics