



NAMIBIA UNIVERSITY
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International Relations News

Official Newsletter of the Department of International Relations



2021



Innovative and responsive internationalisation



Dr Marius Kudumo

The 2021 academic year at the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) is coming to an end. The year 2021, similar to 2020, has not been easy for academic, administrative staff, and students of the Institution, as it has been the case with nations across the world.

The Coronavirus has thrown both physical and psychological challenges our way requiring agility, innovation, and responsiveness to forge ahead with teaching, learning, research, and services, including internationalisation, despite the challenges. In June and July 2021 Namibia went through devastating coronavirus infections and has lost many precious lives.

The Department of International Relations at the University continued with its programmes and activities despite the Covid-19 challenges. The Pandemic, despite its impact on education, the economy, societies, jobs, and livelihoods, was an opportunity and reminder to rethink the resilience and adaptability of institutions, systems, and processes to respond to challenges in the future. It was also an opportunity to rekindle the virtues of humanness, solidarity, promoting the common good of society, and coexistence.

Despite anxieties and fears, the Department in 2021 continued with internationalisation activities as highlighted in this newsletter. These activities included staff and student exchanges, continued quality international partnerships facilitation and establishments, international internships, and hosting of the 2021 International Education Week(IEW) Public Dialogue. Virtual Internships is one of the innovative activities responding to the challenges imposed by Covid-19 and considering travel restrictions. This innovation afforded NUST students to connect with companies in Switzerland, continue with remote internships, and made the future of work using technology a real-life experience for the students.

The Department is satisfied that many students have shared their international experiences through this Departmental newsletter, and that they are appreciative

of internationalisation as a means of contributing to producing graduates with the requisite knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes, and who can function in culturally diverse, and competitive global contexts. The importance of education for global citizenship, and therefore, the critical role of institution-wide internationalisation cannot be overemphasized. With the new University Strategic Plan for the period 2021-2025, the Department looks forward to strengthening institution-wide internationalisation and quality international partnerships to contribute to producing well-rounded and holistic graduates ready to serve humanity and to address global challenges such as inequality, poverty, underdevelopment, and impact of climate change on livelihoods.

Wishing you pleasant reading.

IR Important Dates for 2021

APPLICATION DUE DATES

NUST Applications and Enquiries: **01 October 2021**
Application deadline: **15 November 2021**

OTHER IMPORTANT DATES

NUST Registration: **01 - 18 February 2022**
Exchange student registration is facilitated by the Department of International Relations
Lectures begin: **22 February 2022**
International Student Welcoming Function: **To be confirmed**

Partnerships in the COVID-19 Era

Professor Musiyarira Elected SOMP President

The Associate Dean for Research and Innovation in the Faculty of Engineering, Professor Harmony Musiyarira, was inaugurated as the President of the Society of Mining Professors (SOMP) in September 2021, at a ceremony in Medellín, Colombia. Prof. Musiyarira went through an intense review process to be elected to the top post. He became President-Elect Designate in 2018 and President-elect in 2019, and now in 2021, he is the President. His election signals the minerals education fraternity's growing confidence in Namibia and the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) as a key destination for minerals education in Africa. His inauguration means that NUST will host the SOMP International Conference in 2022. The conference will be a landmark event for minerals education in Africa, as it will draw participants from across the globe.

The Society of Mining Professors is a vibrant Society representing the global academic community and it is committed to making a significant contribution to the future of the minerals disciplines. The main goal of the Society is to guarantee the scientific, technical, academic, and professional knowledge required to ensure a sustainable supply of minerals for humankind. The Society facilitates information exchange, research and teaching partnerships, and other collaborative activities among its members.

In an interview after his inauguration, an elated Prof. Musiyarira said, "My career trajectory has been tremendously influenced and shaped by the seasoned members of this incredible and reputable community. I salute all the 288 active members from

the 49 countries spread across the globe for the gesture of support and show of confidence in my ability to preserve the legacy and rich history of this great organisation and navigate through this challenging yet promising phase. Indeed, it is an honour that I take with humility."

He highlighted that the momentous occasion also belonged to the collective of NUST and the Namibian community. The playing of the Namibian national anthem in Colombia, during his inauguration as the SOMP President, attested to this sentiment and defined the climax of the occasion.

"It is usually easier for people to see the result only, but the crucial elements namely, the NUST team, local industry and the government and the systems that made it possible should be highlighted," he said.

Prof Musiyarira plans to work with dedication, insight, and fortitude to ensure the creation and development of smart partnerships between SOMP members through the alliance of universities, especially the connection between developing and developed countries. A strategic goal of his term of office is to promote and grow SOMP membership in Africa and Asia, and Latin America, while maintaining the growth pattern in Europe, the USA, Australia, and North America.

He expressed his gratitude to the outgoing SOMP President, Prof. Oscar Jaime Restrepo Baena, who together with the SOMP Council, successfully navigated the organisation through an unprecedented year characterised by the Covid-19 pandemic.



Prof Musiyarira presentation regarding the next SOMP conference set to take place in September 2022.



Handover of the SOMP Presidency from Prof Oscar Respetro to Prof Musiyarira.



International members of the SOMP 31st Annual Meeting and Conference in Medellín, Colombia.

NUST and Romania Connect

The partnership between the Namibia University of Science and Technology and the University of Oradea in Romania continues to grow as exchange of staff intensifies even amidst the Covid-19 pandemic

In May 2021, Prof Vasile Grama and Prof Sorin Nistor from University of Oradea visited the Department of Hospitality and Tourism as part of a teaching mobility. In addition to guest lecturing and familiarising themselves with the Department's programmes, the Professors also had an opportunity to experience the best of Namibian wildlife, marine, and coastal tourism. The highlight was a visit to Etosha National Park, where they were fortunate to take plenty of wildlife photographs.

Two NUST lecturers from the Department of Hospitality and Tourism also travelled to Oradea for an Erasmus+ Mobility in July 2021. Dr Simon Chiutsi and Ms Hendrina Shiyandja completed

their teaching and staff training mobilities in the Faculty of Geography, Tourism and Sport. The visiting staff learned about the Bihor County's approach to tourism development, and had an opportunity to visit the best of Oradea's famous nature-based tourism resorts.

At the end of the mobilities, it was agreed to strengthen the partnership further by initiating joint research and publications in topics such as tourism recovery strategies, domestic tourism, culture and events tourism, the role of gastronomy in tourism, sports tourism, and the tourism-climate change nexus.



Namibia and Romania (Left to Right): Dr Simon Chiutsi (NUST), Prof Vasile Grama (Oradea) and Ms Hendrina Shiyandja (NUST) at the University of Oradea



Breaking Bread: The Department of Hospitality and Tourism hosting Professor Nistor (Left in blue and white plaid shirt) and Professor Grama (Right in grey jacket) from Oradea University.

University of Malaga Visits NUST

NUST hosted two professors from University of Malaga (UMA), Spain in September 2021. The visit was in the framework of the Erasmus+ Mobility Scholarship Programme between the two institutions. The Department of Technical and Vocational Education and Training in the Faculty of Human Sciences hosted Professor Manuel Ujaldón and Professor Ana María López Narbona.

The visit focused on discussing research ideas, insights into programme development and delivering public lectures. Prof Narbona, who is also a lawyer, presented lectures on "Socialisation and Deviated Conduct" and on "The Human and Natural Rights of Students." Prof Ujaldón, a Deep Learning Institute UMA Ambassador at NVidia Corporation, lectured on

"Big Data and Deep Learning" where he described the major innovations in artificial intelligence and its future from a deep learning perspective.

NUST colleagues, Dr Hennie Bruyns and Dr Stefan Schulz, shared findings from a baseline study on Pre-trial Detention in Namibia with their Spanish counterparts. The UMA professors were impressed by the project, and expressed interest in replicating it, which is aligned with their University's strategic goal to develop an African Studies course.

"We want to improve our students' African perspective and the visit to NUST has given us further insight into the envisaged course," Prof Narbona explained.



In the picture [L-R]: Professor Manuel Ujaldón, Professor Ana María López Narbona, Dr Marius Kudumo, Director International Relations at NUST, Mrs. Gabriella Cestino López from University of Malmö, Sweden and Mr Jesus Laso who hosted the visitors in the Faculty of Human Sciences.



Malaga, Spain.

2021 International Education Week Public Dialogue



Dr Lavern Samuels, Director of International Education and Partnerships at DUT

According to Dr Eroid Naomab, NUST Vice-Chancellor, while it is well documented that the Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted the operations of businesses and institutions, "Universities were especially affected, as they sought to transition to online mode of teaching and learning as governments introduced restrictive measures to arrest the spread of the Coronavirus."

Dr Naomab was speaking during the Virtual Public Dialogue organised by the Department of International Relations as part of the Annual NUST International Education Week (IEW). The theme of the 2021 IEW Public Dialogue was: "Teaching and Learning in a Pandemic: Lessons from South-North Partnerships." Participants were from the International University of Management (IUM) in Namibia, Durban University

of Technology (DUT) and Central University of Technology (CUT) in South Africa, and RheinMain University of Applied Sciences (HS-RM) and Flensburg University of Applied Sciences (HS-Flensburg), both in Germany.

Dr Lavern Samuels, Director of International Education and Partnerships at DUT during his intervention noted that the pandemic presented DUT with an opportunity to broaden access to higher education by consulting with the government and student funding bodies to create an environment that enabled digital learning. "The pandemic amplified the features of social injustice in our society, and we had to address them first, in order to proceed with online teaching and learning," he explained.

Sharing the HS-RM experience, the International Office Director Judith Hayer, observed that Covid-19 also caught their University unprepared to switch fully to online teaching and learning, necessitating the upgrading of their digital infrastructure.

Another issue discussed was the challenge of maintaining quality and academic integrity amidst online teaching and learning. Participants shared various methods and software tools they utilize to address issues related to assessment, examinations and invigilation. They acknowledged that teaching and learning in a pandemic is a learning experience for management, staff, and students, and called for further collaboration in the documentation of these experiences as well as research on the impact of Covid-19 on higher education.



NUST Partners with RWTH Aachen

The Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) signed a five-year partnership agreement with the Rheinisch-Westfälische Technische Hochschule (RWTH) Aachen University in Germany. RWTH Aachen is the largest technical university in Germany, boasting a student enrolment of 45,000. NUST has been identified as RWTH Aachen's African strategic partner through their new initiative in capacity building.

The agreement is an outcome of a virtual matchmaking workshop held in May 2021. During the virtual workshop, academics discussed and shared information about each institution's academic, research and strategic priorities, and thereafter agreed

on modes of cooperation. Fully executed in September 2021, the Agreement enables the two Universities to collaborate in areas of student and staff exchanges, joint research, and sharing of equipment and materials for research purposes.

Commenting on the way forward, Dr. Daniel Holder, Deputy Head of Division for International Strategy at RWTH Aachen University noted, "once the Covid-19 situation permits, we plan a DAAD funded fact-finding mission to Namibia to further engage our colleagues at NUST."

Dr Holder added that RWTH Aachen would also explore various DAAD funding opportunities in order to fund activities

between the two Universities.

Professor Haileleul Zeleke Woldemariam, Associate Professor in the Faculty of Human Science at NUST revealed that the Department of Communications has already engaged RWTH Aachen in various activities.

"Since the workshop, we have conducted a joint seminar for Master of English and Applied Linguistics candidates at NUST, shared three funding proposal ideas, and have identified areas of future collaborations. I foresee countless success stories emanating from collaborating with RWTH Aachen", Professor Woldemariam observed.

Learning in the COVID-19 Era: Engaging Youth

World Press Freedom Day

The Department of Communication at NUST hosted the 2021 Youth Newsroom from 29 April to 03 May as part of the UNESCO World Press Freedom Day celebrations.

The Newsroom concept aims to encourage journalism students and young reporters from all over the world to cover plenaries, parallel sessions, and side events in line with World Press Freedom Day. Sixteen participants from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries came to NUST, and 11 participants from all over the globe joined the discussions virtually.

Addressing the participants, NUST Vice-Chancellor, Dr Eroid Naomab said, "it is my sincere hope that the 2021 World Press Freedom Day has offered you lifelong learning opportunities that you will cherish for the rest of your lives.

The generation of Gwen Lister has put Namibia and Africa on the map with the Windhoek Declaration, and we look upon you, the 2021 Youth Newsroom participants, to carry on that legacy."

The 2021 World Press Freedom Day commemorated the 30th Anniversary of the Windhoek Declaration for the Development of a Free, Independent and Pluralistic Press, a statement of principles made by African newspaper journalists at a UNESCO seminar in Windhoek in 1991. As such, Windhoek was the host city for the 30th Anniversary global celebrations necessitating the visit of the UNESCO Director-General,

Audrey Azoulay, to Namibia.

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Nokwanda Sibandze, a participant from Eswatini presenting to the DG of UNESCO during the DG tour of the Youth Newsroom.



Youth Newsroom participants with Hon. Emma Theofelus; Deputy Minister – Ministry of Information and Communication Technology



In front, left to right: EU Ambassador, HE Sinikka Antila; UNESCO Country Representative to Namibia, Mr Djaffar Moussa-Elkadhum; Director-General of UNESCO, Audrey Azoulay; Namibian Ambassador to France, Albertus Aochamub; and NUST Vice-Chancellor, Dr Eroid Naomab pictured with other stakeholders and Youth Newsroom participants.

“We are working to create more transparency on online platforms in areas such as content moderation, while respecting human rights and international freedom of expression rules. We are equipping citizens with the media and information literacy skills they need to navigate this new information landscape, so that they can avoid being

duped or manipulated online,” said Azoulay.

The event was hosted in partnership with UNESCO with funding support from

the European Union. The 2021 Youth Newsroom was a resounding success, and all the articles produced by the Newsroom participants can be found on the Youth Newsroom website.

South African SRCs Visit NUST

The Presidents of the Student’s Representative Councils (SRCs) from Rhodes University, University of Pretoria, the University of the Witwatersrand, and the University of Namibia visited the Vice-Chancellor of the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST), Dr Eroid Naomab, earlier this year.

The NUST SRC President, Ms Pamela Gertze, and fellow members accompanied the delegation. The South African SRC leadership was in Namibia to visit NUST and the University

of Namibia as part of an effort to improve university student engagements in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Region.

Commenting on the visit, Ms Gertze noted, “the visit was insightful and helped us to understand the dynamics in student life and services at South African universities. As an added bonus, we shared personal experiences to inspire and learn from each other as women in leadership.”



The Future is Female (Left to Right): Ms Lebaghang Nkambule (Rhodes University), Ms Lerato Ndlovu (University of Pretoria), Ms Lucia Ndishishi (University of Namibia), Dr Eroid Naomab, Ms Pamela Gertze (NUST) and Ms Sthembiso Dabula (University of the Witwatersrand).



German Exchange Students Brave Covid

During the 2021 academic year, NUST hosted eight exchange students from Germany and Finland. The students came from partner universities namely, Aalto University and Aachen University of Applied Sciences (FH Aachen). The number is a drastic decline from the annual average of 55 students in the five years preceding 2020. The pandemic is the culprit for the decline, as the Covid-19 infections and deaths in Namibia increased significantly in 2021 as compared to 2020.

Notwithstanding, Eline Sieben and Sophie Peters from Germany braved the pandemic to continue with their Bachelor in Civil Engineering double degree studies in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering. NUST and FH Aachen have signed an agreement to offer a Bachelor of Civil Engineering double degree, which has graduated more than six students from FH Aachen since 2019.

During the First Semester, Sieben and Peters studied through a blended mode of online and face-to-face classes until an increase in Covid-19 cases during the winter forced a switch to online only mode. The students bemoaned the difficulties they faced, as they were unable to meet with or keep in touch with their classmates.

Fortunately, the cases abated just in time for the Mid-Year Break, allowing Sieben and Peters to engage in tourism activities. They travelled to the coast to witness the breath-

taking landscapes of Sandwich Harbour in the Namib-Naukluft National Park, Swakopmund, and the Namib Desert dunes. For wildlife viewing, the students visited Etosha National Park where they saw many animals at the watering holes due to the dry conditions.

"The different landscapes in Namibia are really beautiful and we are planning additional trips to different parts of Namibia before we return home," said Sieben.



Students Sophie and Eline

B360 Internships Go Virtual

The Covid-19 pandemic disrupted the annual selection and placement of students from NUST with Swiss-based organisations under the B360 Education Partnerships (B360) Internship Programme.

With the intake into the B360 Internship Programme unpredictable, B360 and the Department of International Relations at NUST set out to develop an initiative that enabled students to undertake internships with Swiss-based organisations while physically remaining in Namibia. The B360 Virtual Internship Programme, an initiative funded by the Staub Kaiser Foundation, was created and selected four students for the pilot project that lasted from April to July 2021.

Informatics student, Kashe Mayavero, Journalism and Media Technology student,

Rochelle Cornelius, and Communications students, Elizabeth Iita and Christine Scheepers, were virtually selected for the pilot project. Mayavero and Cornelius were placed with B360 for their internships, while Iita interned for the Swiss-Africa Business Circle, and Scheepers with Jobs for Africa. The students were provided with office space on the NUST campus and access to the Wi-Fi network to allow them to work remotely. B360 provided each intern with a laptop and a smartphone to enable seamless contribution to the work of the host Swiss-based companies.

"It was exciting to be part of a brand new initiative, and none of us really knew what to expect", said Iita, as she reflected on the early days of the Virtual Internship.

Scheepers added that the support provided by B360, the host companies, and the Department of International Relations ensured that they were well prepared for the demands of working life, and the challenges of remote work.

"I learned a lot about working life, and basic things I need to know for the

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Corporate world, and all I can say is that it was fun, educative and unforgettable experience," Cornelius recalled.

In order to provide the Virtual Interns with a holistic experience, including cultural exposure to Swiss life, B360 paired each of them with a virtual Swiss host family. The students engaged with their virtual host families on a weekly basis and gained insight into Swiss life. They also took a weekend-long road trip to Swakopmund funded by their Swiss host families, and were accompanied by Dr Rudolf Schmitt, a B360 Expert, who was guest lecturing at NUST.

The B360 President, Sabina Balmer, pointed to the uncertainty of the project at its early stages, saying: "It really took a lot of courage and hard work to get this initiative going, but we successfully concluded the pilot and we hope that the Virtual Internship Programme will become a lasting feature of the partnership between B360 and NUST."



CAPTION (from left to right): Elizabeth Iita, Rochelle Cornelius, Christine Scheepers and Kashe Mayavero on their road trip to Swakopmund during their B360 Virtual Internships

According to International Relations Officer and national B360 Coordinator, Nico Smit, the University "is excited to be involved in the development and piloting

of new initiatives, such as the B360 Virtual Internship Programme, that extend excellent opportunities for exposure to the world of work for NUST students."

Tourism Students Participate in Intercultural Project

Students from the Department of Hospitality and Tourism joined others from the Faculty of Computing and Informatics (FCI) in participating in the Global Intercultural Project Experience (GIPE), which is funded by the DAAD.

GIPE provides students with an opportunity to collaborate on an international project that brings together students, academics and cross-cultural working groups from Namibia, Peru, Indonesia and Germany. Although consisting of many components, the project for 2020/2021 aimed to assist Puspanita Eco-Spirit Centre in Bogor, Indonesia, to develop their business model, capitalise on modern technology tools for business, and transform their land and facilities into an environmentally friendly destination for eco-education and eco-tourism.

Bachelor of Tourism Innovation and Development students Angeline Khoeseb, Joshua Potts, and Rebecca Kapweya, were part of the business model and strategy component.

"It was amazing to have an intercultural exchange of ideas and perspectives, and it really allowed me to become more open-minded and learn about the world around me," said Angeline Khoeseb.

Five students and three lecturers from FCI also participated in the GIPE 2021 project. Stefanie Garises, Thomas Martin,

and PhD Candidate, Simon Muchinenyika, contributed to the design of the educational games, while Hage Angala, Jackson Nanghala, and Senior Lecturer, Dr Attlee Gamundani, joined the smart farming team. Isaac Lucio, and acting FCI Dean, Dr Colin Stanley, lent their skills to the website development team.

While 15 students and staff from NUST had previously participated in the 2019/2020 activity, this project was a first in which the Department of Hospitality and Tourism was involved.

"It helped me strengthen my teamwork skills as well as afforded many of us the opportunity to make new friends along the way. It was definitely a revelation for me having friends from completely different backgrounds that were able to work well together and develop an outstanding business model for our client, Puspanita Eco-Spirit Center," said Joshua Potts.

The NUST participants worked alongside students and academics from San Pablo Catholic University (Peru), Westphalian University of Applied Sciences (Germany), and Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia.

Youth Opportunity Forum for Europe Day

NUST and the European Union [EU] teamed up to commemorate Europe Day, celebrated annually on May 9, by hosting a Youth Opportunity Forum under the theme: “Youth Resilience, Innovation and Networking during Covid-19”

Youth from various institutions converged on the NUST campus to gain knowledge on topics such as the adaptation to new learning dimensions, digital solutions during Covid-19, and youth empowerment through technology. The forum also provided the youth with the opportunity to link with organisations that support start-ups, and that offer academic scholarships.

“This gathering will prove to be a stepping-stone for your personal and professional development. It is quite a privilege to be able to acquire knowledge and build extensive networks from a diverse pool of experts, at no cost,” said Dr Andrew Niikondo, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic at NUST.

Dr Phillip Santos, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Communication, spoke on how youth drew on digital solutions to negotiate the social atomisation brought about by Covid-19 restrictions. During his presentation, Dr Santos argued that before one can concern oneself with young people as innovators, it is imperative to see them as human beings who need to be socio-

psychologically healthy before they can assume any responsibilities as technological innovators.

Addressing the attendants, Her Excellency Sinikka Antila, European Union Ambassador to the Republic of Namibia, highlighted that the EU is committed to empowering the youth by giving them better opportunities to address current challenges.

“The European Union works with its multilateral and local partners to ensure that the youth around the world acquire new skills to contribute to a common brighter present and future,” she stated.

HE Antila proudly announced the successful launch of the 2021-2027 Erasmus+ Scholarship Programme, which offers mobility and cooperation opportunities in higher education, vocational education, school education and sport. “The Erasmus Plus Scholarship Programme budget for 2021-2027 has increased to €26.2 billion compared to €14.7 billion for 2014-2020,” she elaborated.



EU Ambassador, HE Sinikka Antila



The Goethe Centre engaging with youth.



The EU was also exhibiting.



The youth taking advantage of opportunities offered.



Selma Goes to Finland

Selma Shikulo, Faculty of Engineering student at NUST

Selma Shikulo is a student in the Faculty of Engineering at NUST. In August 2021, she travelled to Finland for a Semester Exchange at Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, Myyrmäki. Below she shares her experiences.

I was privileged enough to be chosen to be an Erasmus+ exchange student at the Metropolia University of Applied Sciences (Metropolia). I remember the day I received the email informing me that I was accepted for this opportunity as if it was yesterday. Excitement had blood rushing through my veins and my heart beating wildly. I could not believe it!

Fast forward to the departure when I stepped on an airplane for the first time in my life. That is when reality kicked in. I realised that this is happening. To be honest, I was terrified to be travelling all alone for the first time to a different continent, new country, culture and language. How was I going to manage? These were the concerns that filled my mind the whole journey, but it was a challenge I was keen to take on.



Orange you Glad?: My tutor and I in our overalls at a fresher's party. The orange overalls are for the Engineering and IT students.

the other students were to learn about Namibia. Of course, I took advantage to boast about The Land of the Brave and its beautiful landscapes, our high sand dunes and my favourite scenery, where the Namib Desert meets the Atlantic Ocean. I also told them about the variety of ethnic groups, languages and cultures, my favourite to talk about being the San people. I was shocked that there were some students that were surprised by how developed Africa, Namibia in particular was. I am glad I had the opportunity to educate them and clear up stereotypes about Africa.



Welcome: My tutor Essi Aarnio, me, and International Office Coordinators, Anna-Liisa Auroma and Laura Vahtera welcoming me to Metropolia.

I arrived in Helsinki, Finland, on a rainy day. Beautiful green scenery, tall buildings and a tutor organised by Metropolia welcomed me. My tutor was kind enough to pick me up from the airport, escort me to my apartment, and show me around the neighbourhood. I am fortunate to have a supportive team at Metropolia that assisted me until I was comfortable and settled in. Surprisingly, it did not take long before I was familiar with the city.

This exchange experience has expanded my mind and character tremendously. I have been exposed to many different cultures through my interactions with other exchange students and the residents of Finland. I experienced a completely different transportation system, which is mainly electrical trains, buses and trams. I was pleasantly surprised by how keen



Bonding: Spending time with fellow exchange students and discussing our cultural differences and other experiences.

Metropolia's student life and culture really caught my eye. They have overalls that most students buy when they are freshmen on which they sew patches that they collect from various student events hosted by the Student Unions. Students in Finland receive significant discounts on so many necessities from transport to food and even accommodation.

Overall, my experience in Finland thus far has been amazing and eye opening. We tend to be closed off from the true reality of the world. Often, all the information we know about the rest of world is solely based on what we see on social media and television. These exchange initiatives give students the opportunity to immerse in completely different cultures. I have grown fonder of my country and culture. The more I educate my fellow students about Namibia and see them in awe, the more I appreciate how truly beautiful and diverse it is.

DAAD Scholarship at NUST A Success

The Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) signed an Affiliate Agreement with the aim to foster strong, internationally oriented higher education systems with the capacity to contribute to sustainable development. Shortly thereafter, the DAAD In-Country/In-Region Scholarship Programme started at NUST in 2018 with an enrolment of five students in the Master of Computer Science and one in Master of Informatics in the Faculty of Computing and Informatics. The Scholarship Programme has funded three cohorts of six to eight students, with each cohort lasting two years. To date, 22 students have enrolled, and six graduated with Masters' degrees in Computer Science or Informatics. Apart from Namibia, beneficiaries hailed from Malawi, Nigeria, Lesotho, Sudan, and Zimbabwe. Mamoqenelo Morolong, a NUST and DAAD Alumnae from Lesotho, graduated with a Master of Computer Science in 2020.

"The Programme exposed me to different cultures and made me a diversified person," she said. She added that she is grateful to be among the first beneficiaries of the scholarship.

Blessing Sibanda, said "through the DAAD Scholarship, I learned and discovered a lot culturally and business wise". Sibanda, who is from Zimbabwe, was fortunate to be selected to conduct his research in Germany in 2020.

Namibian civil servant Penehafo Nghitamuka said if it were not for DAAD funding, she would have dropped out of university at

the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Impressed by the testimonies, the DAAD Representative in Namibia, Ms Julia Gambadatoun, expressed her willingness to support NUST for further applications.

Speaking at the virtual meeting to introduce him to the NUST DAAD-sponsored students and alumni, Dr Eroid Naomab, NUST Vice-Chancellor, applauded DAAD for supporting internationalisation at NUST and for its commitment to enhance collaboration with the Institution.



Blessing Sibanda, NUST and DAAD Alumnus

Students Intern in Switzerland

Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) students completed their internships in Switzerland as part of the B360 Education Partnerships (B360) Sending North Programme. The opportunity for NUST students to undertake internships in Switzerland is made possible through an agreement between NUST and B360 Education Partnerships.

The latter is a Swiss-based non-governmental organisation contributing to skills and knowledge transfer and capacity development in southern Africa. The partnership between NUST and B360 was established in 2009, and to date, nearly 90 NUST students have undertaken internships in Switzerland through the B360 Sending North Programme.

Anthens Liyali, Nancy Mukubesa, Ernestine Nkotongo, Paulus Awala, and Pena Nelumbu, were due to begin their internships in August 2020. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, their

internships were delayed by nine months. The five students only left Namibia in May 2021 and returned at the end of July 2021.

Awala, a Mechanical Engineering student, was placed at Buchi Labrotechnik AG, a firm involved in research and development, quality control, and production of laboratory equipment for various industries. Liyali, an Informatics student, was placed with Bob Finance, a financial services provider, while Nkotongo, a Logistics and Supply Chain Management student, was based at Ferrum AG, a manufacturer of canning machinery and centrifuges. Nelumbu, a Medical Laboratory Science student, was placed at the Zurich University of Applied Sciences, and Mukubesa, an Environmental Health Sciences student, was placed with Zweifel Pomy-Chips AG. Cathleen Sacheus, a Computing student left for Switzerland in July 2021

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All six students indicated that the internships had provided them with the ideal opportunity to put into practice the theoretical knowledge they had learned in class.

"I have learned to be a responsible individual as I never really had a supervisor tell me when to do my work, but they expected me to deliver. I am glad I could take responsibility and ownership of my work," said Nelumbu.

To ensure that the students were fully integrated into Swiss life and to ensure a holistic experience, the students were placed with host families during their stay in Switzerland.

"Overall, I had the best experience in Switzerland, all thanks to my host family," Mukubesa said. Liyali also expressed an appreciation for his host family for opening their home to a total stranger.



All Together: (Left to Right: Students Cathleen Sacheus, Anthens Liyali, Ernestine Nkotongo, Nancy Mukubesa, Pena Nelumbu and Paulus Awala out on excursion in Switzerland during their B360 Internships.

From South Sudan to Namibia to Germany

Akot Benjamin Awanda Makuach, Master of Computer Science student

Akot Benjamin Awanda Makuach is a final year Master of Computer Science student from the Republic of South Sudan studying at NUST under the In-Country/In-Region DAAD Scholarship in the Faculty of Computing and Informatics. He narrates his experience.

Studying in Namibia through the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) scholarship has been the best decision I have ever made in my entire life. This opportunity has changed my life for the better and has greatly shaped the way I look and think about certain aspects of research and life. Although the thought of spending nearly two years away from home seemed intimidating at first, it did not take long for Namibia – and Windhoek in particular – to become home for me. My time in Namibia has made me more willing to step out of

my comfort zone and try new things, especially independent research. The confidence this experience has given me is truly humbling.

My stay in Namibia has also offered me the chance to travel to countries I would never seen before like Germany, through a DAAD Short-Term Research Stay grant from October 2021 to February 2022.

I will be based at the Social CRM Research Centre e.V in Leipzig, Germany. During my research stay, I will design an m-Agri



All Aboard: Me on my way to Germany for a three-month research stay

(continues on page 14)



Market Price Information Platform m-app for my thesis project.

After a rigorous one year and eight months, research has become one of my passions and I cannot wait to see what else the academia has to offer. Aside from living in an insanely beautiful and culturally stimulating Windhoek, I met some of the most amazing people. I am especially thankful for my DAAD

colleagues from Malawi, Nigeria and Zimbabwe, scholarship coordinator and lecturer, Mr Gereon Kapuire, the best thesis supervisors Prof Hippolyte Muyingi and Mr Eliazer Mbaeva; NUST International Relations staff and all the friendships I established that I am sure will last a lifetime. Looking back on it, Master of Computer Science by Research at NUST has exceeded my expectations. Although traveling throughout Namibia

has not been possible, the experience has been worth it. While the reality of my time in Namibia being over is a bit distressing, the memories, experiences and friendships I have made are aspects of my life I will forever cherish. I will forever be grateful that I had the opportunity to study in Namibia and research abroad in Germany. I would recommend studying in Namibia – especially NUST – to everyone!

RheinMain Partnership Continues to Thrive

The partnership between NUST and the RheinMain University of Applied Sciences (HSRM) continues to thrive despite the challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic. The exchange of students continued unabated with the Department of Architecture and Spatial Planning at NUST selecting ten students for semester exchange.

Third year students Darren Franciscus, Ca-Rese Platt, Bica Martin, Ileni Lyaanyuka, Tariro Muparadzi, and Felicita Muhepa spent six months studying in the Faculty of Architecture and Civil Engineering at HSRM. Four students were funded by an Erasmus+ Inter-institutional Agreement for Credit Mobility, while two received the DAAD funded Internationale Studien- und Ausbildungspartnerschaften Programme (ISAP) grant. Although the students were physically on HSRM campus in Wiesbaden, their lectures were all online.

“Due to the pandemic and being unable to connect with our German classmates definitely limited our learning experience. However, watching the way they prepared and presented their work digitally certainly motivated me to push harder,” said Darren Franciscus.

The students expressed varied experiences of their stay in Germany touching on culture shock, isolation due to the online mode of instruction, cuisine adjustments, language barriers in the lectures and in town, the public transport system, and the ease of travel to other cities. While there were initial struggles in the first months, students managed to find ways to address or adapt to the situations and grow in the process.

“I gained a lot of life and learning experience. My presentation skills improved, as we were required to make more presentations than at NUST. I also discovered more about Building Information Modelling software I was unfamiliar with. Furthermore, it was a great chance to compare the educational system in a German university with that in Namibia as well as challenged myself to do well in this new and sometimes challenging educational system,” said Felicita Muhepa.

Many students appreciated the support from lecturers who availed themselves to clarify course content, and others praised their Student Buddies who helped them navigate life at HSRM and in Germany.

An additional four students, Samantha Schultze, Ingeborg Tjazuko, Takudzwa Pfende and Ignace Kazadi, were supposed to depart for their exchange during the Second Semester. However, Covid-19 induced travel and entry restrictions between Namibia and Germany necessitated the delay of the exchange.

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Out On the Town (L-R): German student Esther gives a tour of the town to NUST students, Ileni Lyaanyuka, Felicita Muhepa, Tariro Muparadzi, and Ca-Rese Platt



The postponement allowed the students to get fully vaccinated and have ample time to obtain their visas. With the Covid-19 infections significantly lower and the travel restrictions

revised, the four students are preparing to travel to Germany at the beginning of the First Semester in 2022.

Research Collaborations in the COVID-19 Era

20KW Solar Power Plant for !Kharoxas Community

In early August 2021, NUST staff commissioned a 20-kilowatt power plant as part of the Sustainable Energies, Entrepreneurship and Development (SEED) Project Solar Living Lab. The power plant is located in !Kharoxas, about 60KM outside of Windhoek and will benefit the members of the !Khomaniin San community. The NUST representatives included Prof James Katende, Professor of Renewable Energy Systems in the Faculty of Engineering, Ms Helvi Ileka, Acting Director of the Namibia Energy Institute, and postgraduate students. Representatives from the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Namibia Engineering Corporation (NEC), the !Khomaniin Traditional Authority, NamPol and several media outlets attended the commissioning.

Funded by the DAAD until 2024 and implemented in partnership with the Technical University of Munich (TUM) in Germany, the Living Lab will serve as a lighthouse project for the next two decades for teaching and research related to energy transition, rural electrification, and the entrepreneurial productive use of electricity. The Living Lab's 20-kilowatt solar panel was designed and specified by the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (DECE) team and installed by NEC.

"The Living Lab will be the foundation for teaching and research on concepts of sustainable energy and entrepreneurship. We foresee the development of new curricula and research theses incorporating the activities of the Living Lab are expected to happen soon," Prof Katende explained.

One of those research theses is likely to come from Nadege Versheri, a student in the Doctor of Philosophy in Electrical and Electronics Engineering programme in the DECE. Hailing from Douala, Cameroon, Nadege Versheri is one of the students



PhD student Nadege Versheri with Prof James Katende by the solar power plant

funded by the Intra-Africa Academic Mobility Scheme project FRAME, coordinated by NUST. The trip outside of Windhoek to commission the Living Lab enabled Versheri to gain new perspectives into Namibia and its rich cultures.

"This was the longest distance I had travelled outside of Windhoek since I arrived in Namibia in June 2021. I witnessed the music, dance, culture, and food of the people of !Kharoxas. I saw the San people for the first time and heard the famous 'click' in their language. It was indeed a beautiful experience and memorable day for me as an international student," said Versheri.

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Aside from the opportunities in practical teaching and applied research that the Living Lab presents, the power plant stands to benefit the !Kharoxas community greatly.

"We have to provide energy to remote communities which have no access to the grid so that they can start entrepreneurial activities which will generate funds and therefore raise the standard of living in these communities," stated Prof Katende.

Sudanese Geologists Trained in Uranium Exploration

Staff in the Department of Mining and Process Engineering (DMPE) in the Faculty of Engineering trained an eight-person delegation from Sudan in August 2021.

The delegation consisted of geologists from the Geological Research Authority of Sudan (GRAS), which falls under the Ministry of Minerals in the Republic of Sudan. Prof Harmony Musiyarira facilitated the training focusing on resource estimation in uranium exploration. In addition to the training, the delegation undertook industry visits to three uranium mines and geological field tours in the Erongo Region. The delegation also met with representatives from the Namibian Ministry of Mines and Energy as well as NUST leadership to discuss possible future collaborations. The GRAS delegation were impressed with the high professionalism of the DMPE and the new knowledge gained through the training and industry tours.

"The Department has the resources in terms of human and infrastructure to become a leading centre for training and development of mineral related professions such as geology, mining, metallurgy and environmental," Radwan Ahmed Mohamed Nador, the GRAS Consultant Geologist and delegation leader said.

They were also impressed with the synergetic relationship between DMPE and the Ministry of Mines and Energy and the local mining industry.



GRAS delegation meeting with Faculty of Engineering and Dr Andrew Niikondo, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic.

Researchers Present to Parliament

In 2018, NUST won the European Union funded Protecting, Preserving and Promoting Indigenous Knowledge Cultures and Languages (P3ICL) project to research the status of indigenous languages in Namibia. The project's technical advisory committee consisted of NUST researchers, representatives from the

Ministry Education, Arts and Culture, the Museums Association of Namibia, the Namibia Scientific Society, UNESCO, Namibia Media Holdings, and the Mother Languages Association.

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The project required researchers to travel and engage with remote communities in Ruacana, Tsumkwe, Aminius, Opuwo and Aranos for data collection. During the three years of research, the P3ICL team collected stories, folk tales, legends, and proverbs, and summarised this knowledge into six books that are now part of the NUST Library repository. In terms of indigenous language survival, the team found that Oshiwambo, Otjiherero and Namibian Khoe Khoe, faced a serious threat of endangerment.

“Due to modernisation, we tend to chase after European languages and neglect our own. Thus, the overall objective of the P3ICL project is to protect, promote and preserve the culture of Namibian indigenous groups such as the Ovadhimba, !Kung

and Sifwe,” said Prof Sarala Krishnamurthy from the Faculty of Human Sciences.

To close the project and to gain further public support for the P3ICL initiatives, researchers presented their findings in Parliament.

“The Parliamentarians were impressed with our work and promised to provide us their full support to further the research,” said Prof Sarala Krishnamurthy, the Principal Investigator.

Some of the research findings and presentations can be viewed on Facebook. The project team is still finalising additional project publications for inclusion in the NUST Library repository. More information about the project can be found on the P3ICL website.



Prof Krishnamurthy with some members of the P3ICL Technical Advisory Committee established in 2018.



!Kung children with Prof. Woldemarian during the data collection process in the Gobabis district.



Oluzemba play and other stories.



Prof Sarala Krishnamurthy presenting research findings to Parliament.

HP-GSB Contributes to GLOBE 2020 Project

The Harold Pukewitz Graduate School of Business (HP-GSB) participated in the Global Leadership and Organisational Effectiveness (GLOBE) 2020 Project, a unique large-scale research study looking into cultural practices, leadership ideals,

and trust in more than 170 countries with more than 500 collaborating researchers.

The 2020 iteration of the GLOBE Project was the first time that Namibia formed part of the GLOBE network through

the participation of Country Co-Investigators, Dr Hylton Villet, Director of the HP-GSB and Dr Sulaiman Atiku, Senior Lecturer in Strategic Human Resource Management at the HP-GSB.

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Dr Villet and Dr Atiku played a key role in collecting data from individuals occupying leadership positions in public and private sector organisations throughout Namibia. They worked with leading academics from across the world, contributing cultural information that will enable more nuanced cross-comparative research.

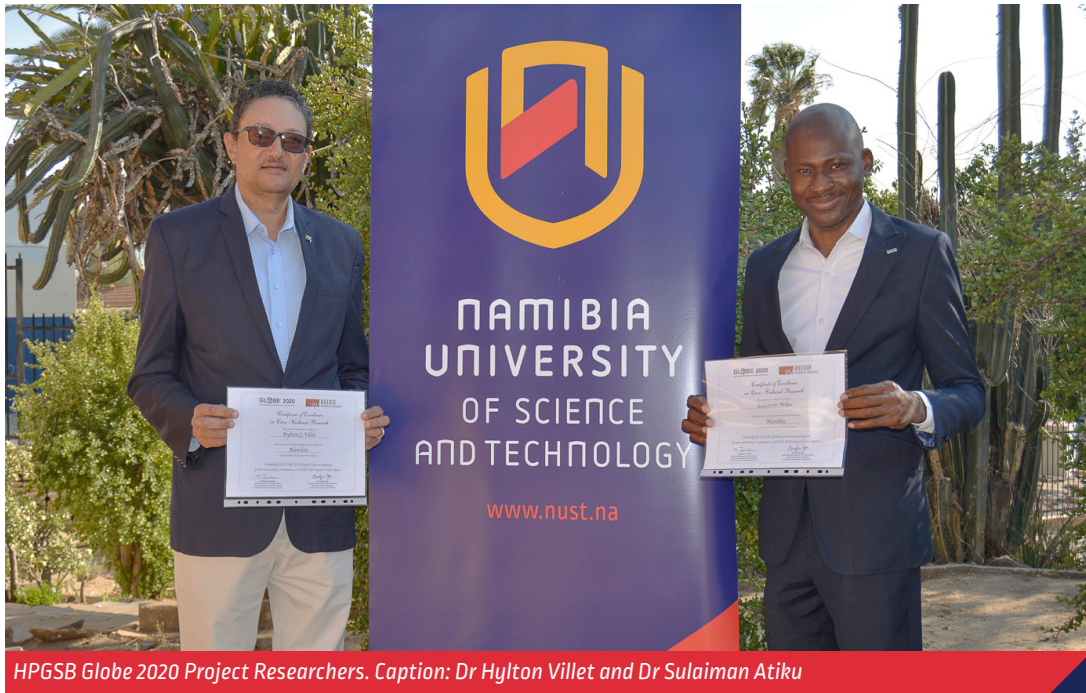
"It was a privilege for us to work alongside

renowned academics and distinguished professors, and we feel honoured to have had the opportunity to contribute to this global research study," Dr Villet said. He added that in many areas, especially the social sciences, there is a lack of data and research from or about Namibia.

Dr Atiku concurred by adding that, "It was therefore important for us to gather data locally and thereby contribute to the research project as it will allow for

a much deeper understanding of how culture, leadership and social practices affect one another, globally and in Namibia."

Dr Villet and Dr Atiku were awarded Certificates of Excellence in Cross-Cultural Research for their outstanding contributions to the GLOBE 2020 Project. According to Dr Villet, "participation in the GLOBE 2020 Project positions faculty members from the HP-GSB amongst leading academics globally."



HPGSB Globe 2020 Project Researchers. Caption: Dr Hylton Villet and Dr Sulaiman Atiku

ATPI Joins Network of Research Institutes

In June 2021, the Agricultural Trade Policy Institute (ATPI) at NUST joined the Regional Network of Agricultural Policy Research Institutes (ReNAPRI), based in Zambia.

ATPI's membership in ReNAPRI is a core part of its strategy to develop long-term research capacity and build sustainable partnerships with regional and global partners. ReNAPRI is composed of agricultural policy research centres that generate data driven evidence for African policymakers. Its member organisations are located in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe and now Namibia.

Supported by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the ATPI was launched in 2020 as part

of the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources in the Faculty of Natural Resources and Spatial Sciences. ATPI aims to be at the forefront of producing evidence-based research and to support policymakers, civil society, and the private sector in Namibia with data driven policy analysis. To that end, ATPI launched a two-year course titled Agricultural Trade and Policy Training and Exchange Programme for Professionals in June 2021. The 14-module training is aimed at government representatives from different ministries, farmers' unions, financial institutions, private sector, agricultural control

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boards, and local institutions and international organisations. The training course is offered in cooperation with partners such as GIZ's Agricultural Policy Development in Namibia (ECAP), the North-West University, and University of Stellenbosch in South Africa, and University of Hohenheim and the University of Bonn in Germany.

By joining ReNAPRI and offering this professional training course, ATPI hopes to achieve "knowledge enhancement of policy champions to advance the current agricultural sector's trade and policy mechanisms in Namibia," said Salomo Mbai, the Director of ATPI.



Launching the Training Module. From left to right: Maria Immanuel, Technical Advisor at Agricultural Trade Forum; Lara Beisiegel, Advisor at GIZ-ECAP; Prof Gerhard Erasmus, Founder of Trade Law Centre (TRALAC); Salomo Mbai, Director of ATPI; Dr Thinah Moyo, NUST Senior Lecturer in FNRSS; Trudi Hartzenberg, Executive Director of TRALAC; Vehaka Tjimune, Project Manager at GIZ-ECAP

Mountaintop Discoveries in Biodiversity Project

NUST Researchers led an eight-day helicopter expedition to mountaintops in Kaokoveld as part of the SCIONA Project. The SCIONA project aims to strengthen cross-border ecosystem management and wildlife protection in the Iona – Skeleton Coast Trans frontier Conservation Area (TFCA), one of the largest transboundary conservation areas in southern Africa. NUST is implementing the European Union funded project in partnership with the Higher Institute of Education Sciences of Huila in Angola.

The purpose of the expedition was to assess the biodiversity on three mountaintops, since the area is not reachable by other means. Prof Morgan

Hauptfleisch and Dr Vera De Cauwer from the Faculty of Natural Resources and Spatial Sciences represented NUST on a team that consisted of experts in botany, avifauna, herpetology, forestry, and mammals.

"The survey was an incredible success. We found an interesting and pristine dolomite cave on the Otjihipa mountains. The species and a variety of plants records exceeded all our expectations. The data we collected will keep us busy for many years," said Dr De Cauwer.

In addition, the team also found a previously unknown girdled lizard on both the Otjihipa and Serra Cafema mountains; fruit-bearing Marula trees

growing at a height of 1 600 metres in the Otjihipa mountains; and strategically placed camera traps recorded a caracal at the Tchamalinde mountains.

"Many species that were considered endemic to Namibia, were also found on the Angolan mountains," Dr De Cauwer elaborated.

While the discoveries on the mountaintop are exciting, it is normal for the SCIONA researchers who have made numerous species discoveries during the project. More about the project's discoveries and publications can be found on the project website.



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