



# NUST BRIEF

# NUST hosts Youth Newsroom

The Department of Communication under the Faculty of Human Sciences, presented a Youth Newsroom (YNR) from 29 – 03 May 2021 under the auspices of the European Union (EU) in line with the World Press Freedom Day (WPF) commemoration of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

The YNR provides opportunities for the youth to engage in the latest discussions on press freedom and freedom of speech with leading practitioners, experts and advocates at an international forum. "The newsroom brought together 16 participants from Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries physically, and 11 more from elsewhere in the world, virtually," the co-ordinator, Dr Hugh Ellis, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Communication said. The YNR concept was birthed in 2012 and encourages journalism students and young reporters from all over the world to cover plenaries, parallel sessions and side events in line with WPF. "As part of these efforts, 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 they can avoid being duped or manipulated online," Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO elaborated.

Addressing the participants of the YNR, NUST Vice-Chancellor, Dr Eroid Naomab, expressed his concerns surrounding the standards and ethics of journalism. Additionally, Dr Naomab showed his gratitude that NUST could form part of the YNR.

"It is my sincere hope that the 2021 WPF has offered you lifelong learning opportunities that you would cherish for the rest of your life. The generation of Gwen Lister has put Namibia and Africa on the map with the Windhoek Declaration, and we look upon you, the 2021 YNR participants, to put Africa on the global map," he said.



In front, left to right: EU Ambassador, HE Sinikka Antila; UNESCO Country Representative to Namibia, Dr 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.



Student, Elise Nghalip, using the LI-COR 6400 during a study that looked at soil respiration in savannas.

## LI-COR 6400 workshop fruitful

NUST's Faculty of Natural Resources and Spatial Sciences (FNRSS) hosted its first session of a series of workshops on 07 April 2021, where trainees from both NUST and the University of Namibia (UNAM) were familiarised with the working of NUST's LI-COR 6400 XT Portable Photosynthesis System.

The LI-COR 6400 is capable of measuring an array of ecophysiological variables such as soil respiration rate, carbon dioxide uptake by plants and photosynthetic potential; all of which are closely linked to the effects of climate change on ecosystems. "By using the LI-COR, we can study our natural and agricultural ecosystems to understand how plants and crops function in our climate, thus getting a better understanding of how the plants might fare when the climate becomes warmer and drier," Prof Theo Wassenaar from FNRSS, who also attended the workshop, said.

The training session addressed the main principles behind the functioning of the LI-COR 6400 XT, as well as its basic operation. "Namibia is an arid country that can expect significant climate changes, thus it is an ideal place to use the photosynthetic response of plants as a proxy to provide us with insight

on how plants might respond to a range of stressful climatic conditions," Dr Clara Nesongano from UNAM explained.

Being able to grasp the physiological profiles of plants and soil dynamics are crucial in understanding risk factors that climate change could hold for Namibian biodiversity and its agricultural sector. Fransiska Kangombe, also from UNAM and one of the key drivers behind the training initiative, stated that the improvement of predictive models will allow informed decision-making and enhanced adaptive capacity for threats to Namibia's biodiversity and horticultural base.

FNRSS anticipates to host a second and possibly a third workshop in June and July. These follow-up training sessions will allow participants to learn how to measure photosynthesis in plants in a variety of environmental conditions.

## NUST graduate one of Top 100 Young African Conservation Leaders

Former NUST student, Toini Amutenya, who graduated from the Faculty of Natural Resources and Spatial Sciences in 2019 was astounded when she received a message from the Top 100 Young African Conservation Leaders. The message conveyed that she was successfully chosen to serve as one of the members after being nominated anonymously. The charismatic Amutenya sat down with NUST Brief to share her exciting story.

### Q. What was the selection criteria for the Top 100 Young African Conservation Leaders?

One has to be a youth activist who is well engaged at a local, national, or regional level. You should also be under the age of 35 years. Entries were in different categories such as Wildlife, Forestry and Land Degradation; Agriculture and Food Security; Waste Management; Energy; Oceans and; Research, Education, and Awareness which I fall under. The Top 100 committee received a total of 565 nominations from youth organisations and networks, which underwent a rigorous judging and verification process.

### Q. How does it make you feel to be recognised for your work?

I am overwhelmed in knowing that the little contribution I make towards the conservation of biodiversity, research, and my community awareness initiatives, are well recognised at a national level. The recognition comes with a one-year leadership development programme, which I look forward to.

### Q. What is your passion in life?

I have a passion for conservation, as well as to ensure that citizens are educated on the

impact of climate change on their livelihoods, social economy, and ecosystems, including the effects on biodiversity.

This I do by engaging the community as a facilitator, educator, and youth representative on global affairs through global youth summits and affiliating with global networks to make a difference and contribute to sustainable development.

For more information about the Top 100 Young African Conservation Leaders and how to participate, visit:

<https://top100youth.africa/>



Toini Amutenya