



Message from the Dean

Our year is progressing rapidly in a busy but fruitful manner with many newsworthy activities to report in this March/April newsletter. March began with an exciting faculty development opportunity for our three Academic Heads, Dr Eunice Ndirangu, Associate Professor Columba Mbekenga and Mr Joseph Mwizerwa who attended a joint Harvard University and Aga Khan University executive leadership programme. This is the first partnership programme of its kind where Harvard University has joined with another university in the delivery of one of its globally renowned executive programmes. The programme was delivered at the Aga Khan University Graduate School of Media and Communications (GSMC) and provided an opportunity for our senior nursing academics to network with senior executives and further develop their leadership and management skills. Sincere thanks to our GSMC colleagues in brokering this invaluable faculty development opportunity.

More good news for SONAM came in the form of a major donation from Beta Healthcare. The aspirations of this organization resonated with our mission to strengthen the East African nursing and midwifery workforce, especially members in rurally remote and disadvantaged areas, by enhancing access to further education opportunities. Our heartfelt thanks to Beta Healthcare for their generous donation.

Recent months have also included significant activity within our Global Affairs Canada-funded projects in Mozambique, Egypt and Tanzania. In March, our Kenya-based SONAM team hosted Ms Maria Teresa Victorino and Ms Margarida Eduardo from the Pemba School of Nursing and associated Aga Khan Development Network project in Pemba, Mozambique.



Maria and Margarida visited Nairobi to benchmark teaching practices and gain first-hand experience to aid faculty development initiatives at their home base in Pemba. Joined by members of our faculty team, we undertook further work in Cairo and Aswan where we partner to support faculty development efforts at the Aswan University, Faculty of Nursing. We also provide technical assistance to national entities such as the Nursing Sector Group of the Supreme Council of Universities in their efforts to upgrade nursing curricula to competency-based formats. Lastly, in the Global Affairs Canada stable, we also get to check in with our IMPACT project in Mwanza where SONAM Tanzania is spearheading nursing education capacity building in eight underserved districts to enhance reproductive, maternal and newborn health.

Join me in wishing a warm welcome to two new members of the SONAM team: Mr Joseph Mutata, who serves as the Administrative Assistant to the Dean and

Academic Head in Nairobi and Mr Ramiz Allafi, who joins us as the new secondee from the Johnson and Johnson Corporate Citizenship Trust. You will find out more about them as you continue to read.

Finally, the results of faculty research activity have started to become increasingly evident with our growing list of publications. Congratulations to Mr Cliff Aliga and the team of Ugandan-based faculty colleagues and Associate Prof Columba Mbekenga on your publications which we have featured in this month's news. Meantime, I would like to encourage our entire PhD enrolled faculty who continue to study. All of your hard work will pay off and each month brings you closer to your end goal and those three small letters – PhD.

Professor Sharon Brownie

Dean

SONAM EA

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JOSEPH MUTATA



In what role are you joining us?

I have joined as the Administrative Assistant providing administrative support to the office of the Dean and Academic Head in SONAM Kenya.

Take us through a brief background of your career-path.

I studied accounting in India, and then worked as a tax accountant in Denver for eight years. I had an epiphany after a trip to Kotzebue, Alaska in 2008 to consult with nonprofits. I went back to graduate school to study health administration, and later public health. I conducted a review of the surviving SEPSIS campaign at three Denver hospitals. I also

improved turnaround times for troponin tests at these hospitals. When I returned to Kenya, I worked for a while in the Occupational Health and Safety office at AKU Hospital, and now I am happy to be with SONAM.

What words describe your first few days so far?

Fast paced! I enjoy challenges and so SONAM is the right fit for me.

What is your favorite quote OR personal mantra?

Keep improving, do not rest on your laurels

RAMIZ ALLAFI



In what role are you joining us?

I have joined SONAM as a Johnson and Johnson Corporate Citizenship Trust (JJCT) secondee to support the ‘Strengthening Nursing and Midwifery Associations in East Africa’ project, a partnership between SONAM and JJCT. I will be responsible for the development and implementation of an online resource platform for the nursing and midwifery associations.

Take us through a brief background of your career-path.

I have been working for Janssen (the Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies of Johnson & Johnson) for five years. I started as a junior product manager responsible for the psychiatry portfolio. Currently, I am CIS CVT Leader Immunology. I am in charge of developing marketing strategies and implementing marketing tools in CIS countries (excluding Russia) to support the sales team and achieve results. Since 2016 in Marketing, we have been implementing digital approaches aimed at improving the quality of communication with healthcare professionals and stakeholders.

What three words describe your first few days so far?

Big friendly team.

What is your favourite quote OR personal mantra?

“There is nothing impossible to him who will try” Alexander the Great

Things to note:

CIS stands for Commonwealth of

Independent States. It is a regional organisation that was founded in December 1991 by the former Soviet Republics. In the adopted Declaration, participants of the Commonwealth declared their interaction on the basis of sovereign equality. CIS member states include Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Ukraine. CVT stands for Country Value Team which is the equivalent of a department.

Dean’s Comment

The highly effective JJCT/SONAM partnership is further strengthened by the secondment programme which places high performing JJCT employees in on-site roles within SONAM East Africa. The programme is of extensive value to both partners adding real and measurable value to nursing workforce capacity developments in the region. We are delighted to welcome Ramiz as our current JJCT secondee.

Know the way, go the way, show the way

Transforming leadership for 21st century Africa

By *Martie Mtange*

“A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way and shows the way.” ~ John C. Maxwell

“Transforming leadership for 21st century Africa” was a course realised as a result of the collaboration of AKU’s Graduate School of Media and Communications (GSMC) and the John F. Kennedy (JFK) School of Government at Harvard University. Several leaders, some from as far away as Nigeria, travelled to attend this course at the GSMC premises in Westlands, Nairobi, Kenya.

The six-day onsite course introduction started on March 11, and was attended by the three Academic Heads from SONAM East Africa: Dr Eunice Ndirangu (Kenya), Mr Joseph Mwizerwa (Uganda) and Dr Columba Mbekenga (Tanzania).

The participants had been assigned permanent groups in which they are supposed to collectively accomplish tasks throughout the course, which ends in June. Dr Ndirangu shared that the purpose of the programme is to enable African leaders to be effective and adaptable, as well as committed to realising a positive future for Africans. She acknowledged that we are in an environment that is fraught with chaos and complexity, and this means that leaders need a new set of skills and

knowledge to navigate through these challenges.

During one of the sessions, participants settled into their groups and were provided with a coach (a member from the JFK School of Government). Then, they were asked to identify a leadership challenge they were facing in their various spheres of influence and come up with possible solutions for these challenges from an adaptive perspective. Other exciting activities throughout the course included specified readings, case studies, time set aside for reflection, as well as networking and sharing of leadership experiences and scenarios from participants.

As the sun set on the introductory course and March 16 approached, Dr Ndirangu was happy for several reasons. She was happy that she had an opportunity to network during the course, and that she got to learn not only from session-leaders but other participants as well. As we wrapped up the interview, she thoughtfully said, “Another thing that stood out for me was personal growth, because a lot of the ideas and concepts that I was introduced to will help me as a person. Also professional growth, especially as a leader, because their approach to what leadership is about is very unique...it helps you view challenges in a different way, particularly when the challenges involve introducing change into an organisation.”

Regarding what she thought was unique about the course, she shared that, “Most of the time, when you go to leadership courses you’re taught about leadership



Dr Ndirangu (left) enjoying a session



Mr Mwizerwa participating during one of the sessions

theories and processes. This particular course was not about processes per se, but about looking at a problem or an issue and applying certain concepts to it. For example, how you can deal with a problem in the context of the complexities within which it exists. If you engage in a course that's very text-book, when you come to our environment, you'll find that things run differently in Africa. Therefore, this course is teaching me how to be more adaptable."

Associate Professor Columba Mbekenga from SONAM Tanzania added that, "... being able to join this programme that is run by a prestigious university has been an exciting experience and I do appreciate the opportunity. The course is very practical, helping

participants adapt to and thrive under the day to day challenges of leadership. It also imparts different forms of leadership communication, highlighting the most and least effective communication strategies that [have] challenged my own style of communication and I am hoping to apply them in my daily work as an Academic Head."

This was the first of two face-to-face sessions that the course entails. The last session will take place at the end of the course in June. We can see that our Academic Heads have started their journey on 'knowing the way'. So, the next time you interact with your Academic Head, remind them that we are counting on them not only to know the way, but to go and show us too!



Group photo of all the participants

Faculty pops in for BOPPPS

Teaching and Learning Enhancement Workshop in Tanzania

By Martie Mtange

I write stories for the SONAM newsletter. As I flipped through the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Workshop (TLEW) announcement, I saw a statement that read “A compulsory course for faculty.” I found this particularly interesting, because the last time I heard of any involvement from the Teaching and Learning Network (TL_Net), Tayreez Mushani and the oncology nursing students came up with a masterclass of a play. The play was staged at the AKU Hospital lecture theatre, and the hall was packed with nurses and doctors who came to witness this unorthodox, yet effective, dance between healthcare and acting. The play was inspired after Oncology Faculty member Tayreez participated in a TL_Net training session. I began to understand why the workshop is compulsory—from the perspective of those who are looking in from the outside.

You can imagine my excitement for the students whenever I hear that another member of SONAM’s faculty attended a TL_Net workshop. This time it was Dr Eunice Ndirangu and Ms Isabel Kambo from SONAM Kenya who were in Tanzania together with Associate Professor Columba Mbekenga, Dr Eunice Siaity-Pallangyo and Dr Tumbwene Mwansisya to consolidate their understanding of teaching as facilitators of learning, and gain additional skills in being more reflective about their practice. During a short interview, Dr Ndirangu shared that the main objective of the TLEW was to equip participants with a philosophy termed ‘**BOPPPS**’.

This is an acronym where:

- **‘B’ stands for bridge:** bridging is a method of introducing a topic which generates interest in the topic among the students
- **‘O’ for objectives:** these introduce students to what you are going to teach them and the purpose of teaching the topic
- **‘P’ for pre-test:** this determines what the learners already know
- **‘P’ for participatory learning:** this introduces interactivity within the learning experience, either through peer-to-peer learning or between the instructor and learners
- **‘P’ for post-test:** this refers to finding out whether learning took place and defines a way to measure the effectiveness of the learning
- **‘S’ for summary:** winding up the course and creating a sense of closure and completion.

BOPPPS is a model used to structure lessons for instructors in a way that incorporates participatory learning. The workshop was held by the Institute for Educational Development at their campus in Dar es Salaam. The venue was Salama House, where SONAM Tanzania also has its premises. From April 10–12, members of faculty were able to consider variable needs of learners, write useful and practical lesson plans, conduct participatory lessons, use basic techniques to test for learning and, give and receive feedback. Most of this was achieved in small groups where each participant had to prepare a ten minute mini-lesson following the BOPPPS framework.

Dr Siaity-Pallangyo said that the workshop will enable her to ensure classes are participatory for both the teacher and the student, using various methods she learned that employ higher level thinking. She continued to add that the use of a variety of methods, addresses the differences amongst students and takes into account the different ways we learn. She says one of the practice sessions enabled her to consider time management while teaching as she had to deliver a lecture on a huge volume of content within a restricted timeframe of ten minutes.

Regarding what she learned from the workshop, Dr Ndirangu shared that “...it helped us get a sense of self-awareness on how to keep a class engaged, and how to maximise learning for the students.”

I suppose that as an institution of learning, this is the best one can hope for; that those who are teaching you not only keep looking for the best ways to ensure the learning is effective, but also keep learning themselves. You cannot give what you do not have.



From Left: Edward Misava (Digital Teaching and Learning Associate), Dr Tumbwene Mwansisya, Associate Professor Columba Mbekenga, Dr Eunice Ndirangu, Ms Isabel Kambo and a staff member from AKU Karachi.

Aga Khan University Library Feature

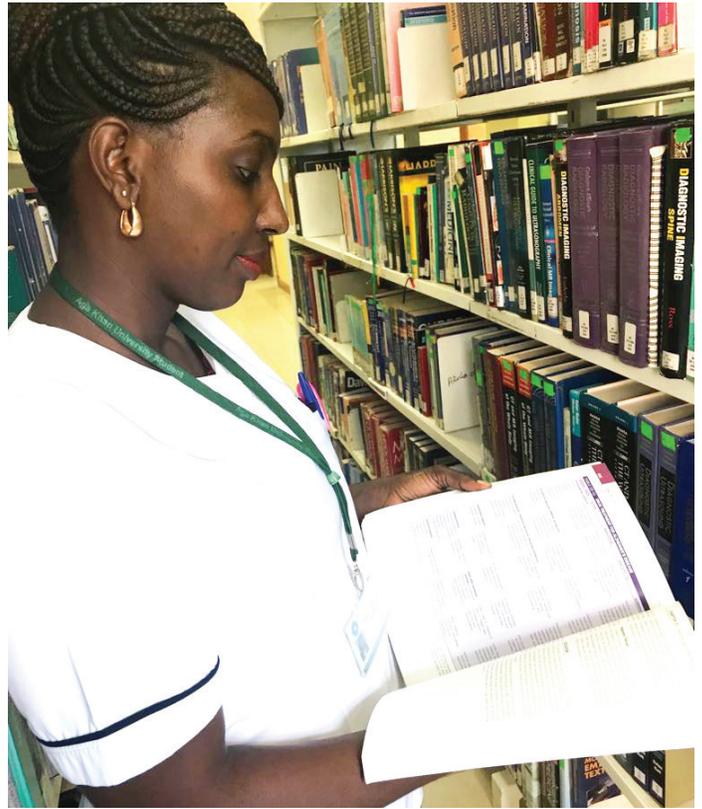
Hitting the books with Purity Kibathi

By Nepurko Keiwua

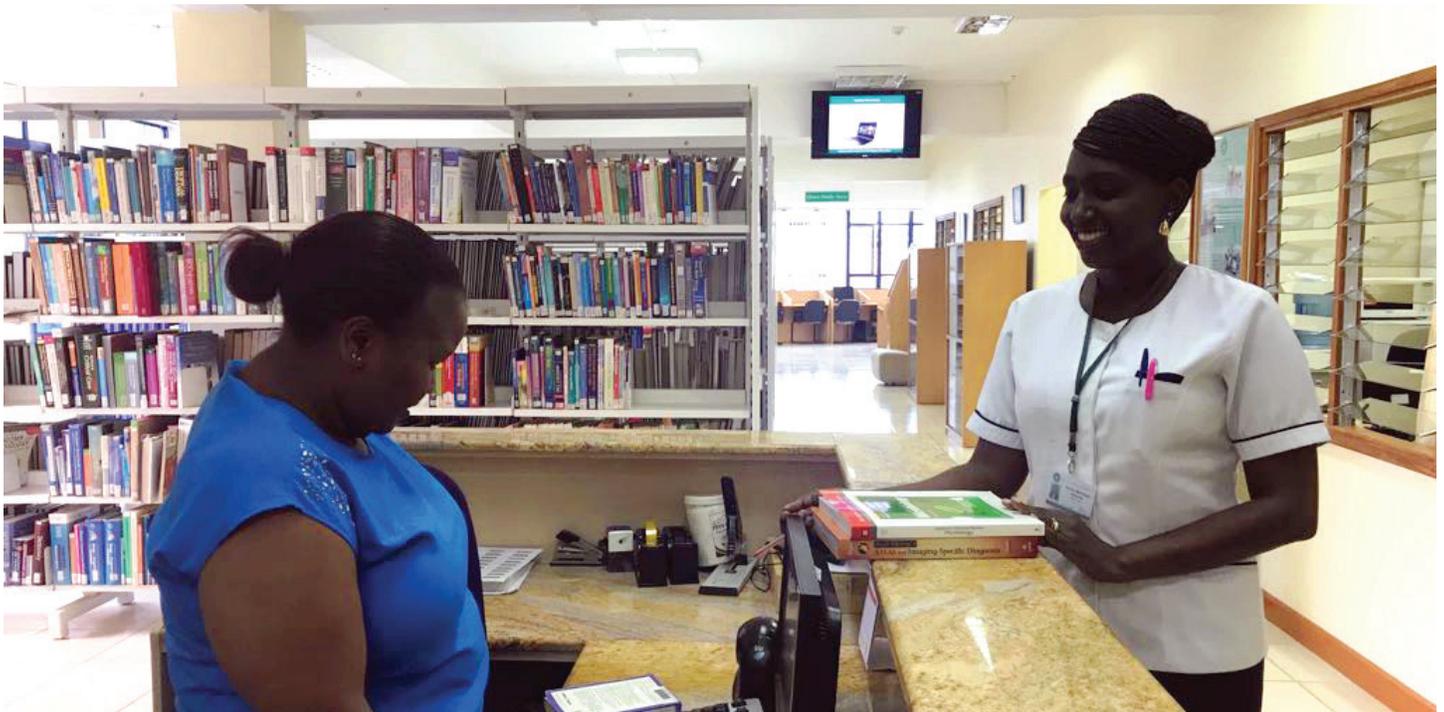
I reached out to a current Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BScN) student, Ms Purity Kibathi, to ask her what she thought of the Aga Khan Library, to which every SONAM Nairobi student has access.

Purity manages to access the library every day she is on campus. The BScN programme is a work-study programme, which means that she only attends class twice a week. The best part of the library experience for Purity is the flexible hours. The AKU library, located on the second floor at Sunny Plaza, is open Monday to Friday from 7:45 am to 8:00 pm, and 8:30 am to 5:00 pm on Saturdays. She was particularly grateful for the great support she has received from library staff, who are always passionate in seeking to assist students. She says the library resources are particularly helpful for BScN students as they provide "...an exciting experience for the students' academic walk."

She added that before joining SONAM Kenya, she rarely accessed external library services. Access to the library has changed how she learns, as she has realised how much she stands to benefit in her studies.



BScN student, Purity Kibathi skims through a book from the library shelf



Purity gets checkout assistance from the librarian on duty, Ms Catherine Wanyingi

SPECIAL FEATURE: GLOBAL AFFAIRS CANADA BOLSTERS NURSING EDUCATION IN AFRICA

Global Affairs Canada (GAC) manages Canada's diplomatic and consular relations, promotes the country's international trade and leads Canada's international development and humanitarian assistance. This month in SONAM News, we have a special feature on one of our most inspiring partnerships yet. GAC has provided financial support to the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) and SONAM EA in their joint effort to build nursing education capacity in Egypt, Mozambique and Tanzania.

Measuring Mwanza's IMPACT
Assessing how far we have come in improving reproductive, maternal and newborn health in Mwanza
By *Nepurko Keiwua*

Funding for the four-year 'Improving Access to Reproductive, Maternal and Newborn Health in Tanzania' (IMPACT) project by GAC and AKF Canada began in January 2017. This project focuses on reproductive, maternal and newborn health (RMNH) in eight underserved districts of Mwanza region, Tanzania, including Buchosa, Ilemela, Kwimba, Magu, Misungwi, Nyamagana, Sengerema, and Ukerewe districts.

IMPACT's geographical focus was decided upon, jointly with the Tanzanian government based on its priorities and guidance on specific regions with poor maternal, newborn and child health indicators compared to the national average.

The project is executed by AKF Canada and implemented in Tanzania by the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) agencies, namely



Comprehensive emergency obstetric and newborn care training from April 9th – 28th, 2018 at Sengereme district with facilitators, SONAM staff and trainees from eight districts of Mwanza

the Aga Khan Health Services Tanzania (AKHST), the Aga Khan Foundation Tanzania (AKFT), and the Aga Khan University East Africa (AKU EA), in partnership with the *Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children* at national, regional and district levels.

The aim of IMPACT in the short term, is to strengthen the local health system by improving the availability and utilization of quality maternal and newborn health services for women and their families. This project has a unique holistic approach based on the results of needs assessment that was done to identify gaps in RMNH services in Mwanza. As a result, there will be renovations and constructions of health care facilities, training of health care workers to equip them with the needed skills, and community engagement on gender equality and equity in relation to RMNH care and access.

SONAM EA is one of the AKDN implementing partners and its role is to deliver activities that strengthen RMNH human resource capacity in Mwanza. This involves upgrading 21 nurses from diploma to degree level with its courses through a work-study training model. Significant attention will also be put on strengthening midwifery competencies. The model was developed based on SONAM's immense experience in delivering nursing and midwifery training across EA.

Furthermore, about 266 nurse-midwives are targeted to improve their practice skills through short courses related to RMNH. So far 100 health workers have been trained with 80 improving their family planning skills and 20 undergoing training in Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (CEmONC). Recruitment for the BScN programme offered by SONAM Tanzania is underway and will commence in October 2018.

From Mozambique to SONAM with love

Taking AQCESS on the road

By Martie Mtange

When they landed in Nairobi, they were on a mission to discover the difference between what they are doing in Mozambique and what is happening in Kenya.

Maria Teresa Victorino and Margarida Eduardo are from the Aga Khan Development Network's AQCESS programme, which is based in Pemba, Mozambique. They came to SONAM Kenya to explore best nursing education practices and find out how to enrich their work back home by applying aspects that impressed them about the SONAM Kenya campus and facilities, and approaches to teaching.

While visiting SONAM Kenya, they toured the library, clinical skills labs, faculty office space and classrooms. They also spent time with Dr Eunice Ndirangu, the SONAM Kenya Academic Head, exchanging ideas about the leadership and management of a school of nursing and nursing programmes.

During their four-day trip, Maria and Margarida were also able to visit the AKU Hospital Paediatrics Unit, as

well as the Cancer, Maternity and Labour units.

At the end of their stay, Maria observed that “the nursing programme at SONAM is very different from what we have in Mozambique. Here, the instructor plays the role of a facilitator, whereas in Pemba, we still use the traditional model where a lecturer dictates notes to students. The online component [Moodle] is very good and through group work, the

instructor is able to see the students who have put in effort and the ones who are slacking.”

SONAM engagement with the Pemba School of Nursing is supported by Global Affairs Canada (GAC) funding. With GAC support, SONAM provides mentoring support in faculty and curriculum development. The exchanges are highly beneficial to all concerned.



Margarida Eduardo (left) and Maria Teresa Victorino posing for a picture in the Aga Khan University library

PUBLICATIONS



Spies, L., Gray, J., Opollo, J., Mbalinda, S., Nabirye, R., & **Aliga, C.** (2018). Transformational leadership as a framework for nurse education about hypertension in Uganda. *Nurse Education Today*, 64, 172-174 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2018.02.009>.



Mdoe, P., Ersdal, H., Mduma, E., Moshiro, R., Kidanto, H., & **Mbekenga C.** (2018). Midwives' perceptions on using a fetoscope and Doppler for fetal heart rate assessments during labor: a qualitative study in rural Tanzania. *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth*, 18(1), 1-10.

The pyramids were not built in a day

The shift to competency-based nursing education in Egypt

By *Nepurko Keiwua and Yvonne Mathu*

Supported by Global Affairs Canada (GAC), our SONAM team in East Africa (EA) is engaged in the five year Aswan Skills Development Programme (ASDP) based in Aswan, Upper Egypt. The project is a collaborative partnership between SONAM EA, the Aga Khan Foundation - Egypt, the Om Habibeh Foundation and GAC. SONAM's role in the project involves partnership activities with the Faculty of Nursing (FoN) at Aswan University (AU) to:

- Support and equip FoN to deliver high quality nursing programmes for more young women and men
- Conduct curriculum development and design workshops
- Work with FoN on design of clinical labs, equipment and training
- Conduct exposure visits for FoN faculty to improve hands-on clinical experiences for students

In March 2018, a team from SONAM EA visited Egypt to deliver a series of workshops and training events, and attend the second International Nursing Conference organised and hosted by AU.

This series of events was a follow-up to the initial competency-based curriculum (CBC) workshops conducted in July and October 2017. The earlier workshops focused on supporting Egypt's higher education reform through the National Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation (NAQAAE) in the development of CBC, global nursing standards, national competencies for nursing education and models against which universities could build entity-specific CBC.

Our Project Partners

The ASDP project in Aswan is a major capacity development endeavour and we would like to acknowledge our valued partners including:

- The team at 57357 Children's Cancer Hospital in Cairo who provide Egypt-based models of clinical excellence and clinical teaching experience
- Associate Professor Rachel Rossiter from Charles Sturt University who provides expert advice in curriculum development, classroom teaching and clinical education
- Professor Charles Docherty from the Medical Education Centre at Aga Khan University who has provided expert advice regarding the lay-out for

- clinical laboratories and teaching spaces
- Mr Peter Gatiti, our SONAM EA Regional librarian for his expertise in the provision of academic support services

We are delighted to provide an update regarding our most recent engagements in Egypt.

Pre-conference workshops - March 7th

I. 'Emerging Trends in Academic Libraries and Dewey Decimal Classification System'

Two pre-conference workshops were run concurrently at the Arab Academy of Science and Technology. Regional Librarian, Mr Peter Gatiti, delivered a workshop to 45 Aswan University librarians in which he introduced trends in academic libraries. These trends included principles of evidence-based practice that are directly linked to the competency-based nursing standards, which AU-FoN is implementing. Mr Gatiti also presented on the Dewey Decimal Classification system, which is used worldwide to organise and manage libraries.



Mr Peter Gatiti delivering his workshop presentation to AU librarians with the assistance of a skilled interpreter

II. 'Application of Competency-based National Academic Reference Standards (NARS) in Nursing Curriculum (II)'

37 participants, including 20 Deans from FoN and 17 from NAQAAE, attended the competency-based workshop. The programme focused on the development of competency-based nursing curricula that integrated NARS throughout to assure graduates meet the required competencies. Group activities and discussions engaged participants in identifying the programme and course contents, teaching strategies, learning activities and assessments that can be used to build a strong and effective curriculum.

In her opening remarks at the competency-based workshop, the NAQAAE Vice President, Professor Azza Agha, welcomed the SONAM EA delivery team and noted that "...it generates rich opportunities for innovation and creation, and provides stretching intellectual challenges by the ideas that will be discussed during the dynamics of the different activities."



Dr Agha during the competency-based workshop

While giving her presentation, the SONAM EA Dean, Professor Brownie, noted that the shift to competency-based nursing education is conceptually easy but technically complex and poses a significant change management challenge, because it is a time-intensive endeavour that requires a minimum of 12 months to design. The adoption of a CBC requires a lot of teamwork and collaborative learning, and Professor Brownie particularly stressed that it was important to maintain focus on the NARS if adoption of the CBC was to be deemed successful. This may seem an uphill task, but it is important to remember that the pyramids were not built in a day!



Professor Brownie assisting participants with a group activity



Participants from the competency-based workshop

Associate Professor Rachel Rossiter from the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Indigenous Health, Faculty of Science, Charles Sturt University added, "As co-facilitator for this second workshop for deans of nursing in Egypt, it was a delight to meet a good number of deans who attended the first workshop held at Halwan University, Cairo, in July last year. The depth of discussion and robust debate that characterised both these workshops attests to the energy and enthusiasm with which participants are engaging with the national requirement to upgrade baccalaureate nursing curricula to reflect the 2017 NARS."



Dr Eunice Ndirangu (left) and Ms Yvonne Mathu (middle) pay close attention during the competency-based workshop

The workshop represents a push by all stakeholders to adhere to the NARS for nursing set by NAQAAE. The expected outcomes of the project will result in enhanced quality and safety of patient care. This reflects a paradigm shift from a disease focus to competent care across the lifespan to promote and maintain health. This shift is necessary to bring about better quality in health service delivery.

Second International Nursing Conference - March 8th

The second International Nursing Conference targeted local and international researchers and experts. Approximately 250 participants attended including the General Manager of the Ministry of Health (MOH) Directorate in Aswan, Heads of Departments in the MOH, the FoN Dean AU, FoN Deans from other universities and undergraduate students from FoN, AU. The aim of conference was to provide a channel for the exchange of information on best practice in building CBC. Keynote speakers included Professor Sharon Brownie, Associate Professor Rachel Rossiter and Professor Mohammed Hag-Ali from the SONAM EA delivery team.

students in the clinical setting. A very well organized programme prepared by the 57357 Clinical Nursing Education unit engaged participants in oral presentations, group activities and discussions, and dedicated time to observe clinical practice. A formal debriefing session each evening encouraged reflection on the learning each day and the development of strategies for each person to implement upon their return to their workplace.



The visiting Aswan nurses. From left: Ms Seham Ebrahem (MOH), Ms Monira Solyman (MOH), Dr Thanaa Diab (FoN, Aswan University), Mr Ahmed Rabea (FoN, Aswan University), Ms Amal Hussein (Aswan University Hospital), Mr Mohammed Yousef (FoN, Aswan University), Ms Asmaa Abozied (FoN, Aswan University) and Ms Sabreen Yousef (FoN, Aswan University)



From left: Professor Sharon Brownie (SONAM EA, Dean), Dr Eunice Ndirangu (SONAM Kenya, Academic Head), Mr Peter Gatiti (AKU, Regional Librarian), Dr Samia Elshafie (Aswan based Project Support, Om Habibeh Foundation, Egypt), Ms Yvonne Mathu (SONAM EA Executive Officer) and Associate Professor Rachel Rossiter (the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Indigenous Health, Faculty of Science, Charles Sturt University)

Familiarization Training Visit - March 12th – 18th

Eight nurses from Aswan were selected to travel to Cairo and undertake a week-long familiarization and study visit at 57357 Children's Cancer Hospital. The objectives for this visit were to provide immersion in a hospital with well-structured nursing education programmes, to study and observe the role of a clinical instructor, and acquire practical knowledge to support and evaluate nursing



From left: Associate Professor Rachel Rossiter, Ms Yvonne Mathu, Professor Mohammed Hag-Ali and Professor Sharon Brownie with Ms Regaa Sayed and Ms Sahar Moussa, the Clinical Nursing Education Managers at 57357 Children's Cancer Hospital



Aswan participants learning about the role of a clinical instructor



Aswan participants learning about the nursing competencies required to care for patients in the intensive care unit



Some of the Aswan participants during one of their evening debrief sessions

At the end of the familiarization visit, participants shared their thoughts on the drive towards enhancing nursing education and quality of care in Egypt. Ms Seham Ebrahem, a member of staff at the Directorate of Health under the MOH said, “We have to start in our Directorate of Health office with ourselves before we try and get others to change.” Dr Thanaa Diab, a lecturer at the AU-FoN, commented, “I want to support change in the Faculty of Nursing and undertake research activities that focus on translating research into teaching and clinical practice.” These remarks show that going forward change must start with us!

Back to Practice

Learning the ropes of capacity building in nursing education

By Yvonne Mathu

I've always been passionate about caring for children. Therefore when I resigned from my position as a paediatric bedside nurse at the Children's Hospital in Washington, D.C., USA to move back to Kenya, I knew I would miss it dearly. I couldn't imagine any other experience being as fulfilling as the one I was leaving behind. However, in March 2018, I got an amazing opportunity to join Professor Sharon Brownie and Associate Professor Rachel Rossiter in Cairo, Egypt. We were there to deliver a weeklong familiarization training focused on enhancing nursing education and clinical practice. Eight Aswan nurses were chosen to participate in the training, which took place at 57357 Children's Cancer Hospital, an institution that holds the nursing profession in high regard.

This was my first time being involved in a capacity building initiative, which I found rewarding but with its own set of challenges. Personally, the most immediate challenge was the language barrier. It was hard for the delivery team to understand the Aswan nurses as English is not their primary language but all in all, we were able to successfully engage in presentations, activities and group discussions. Most importantly, we shared our experiences and learned from one another.

Previously, I never thought of capacity building in nursing education as a career path, but after this experience and the impact that I witnessed, I have a different perspective on how one



Yvonne Mathu excited to be wearing scrubs and training at 57357 with Associate Professor Rachel Rossiter

can influence others to improve quality of care and patient safety on a larger scale. The feeling I got reminded me of my work at the Children's Hospital in Washington D.C. The difference was that this time I was not helping a sick child

through direct contact, but through equipping those in direct contact with the skills and knowledge to provide care to their young patients diligently.

Beta Healthcare Cares

SONAM Nairobi receives a 2.5 million Kenya shilling donation for the scholarship fund

By Nepurko Keiwua

On March 27, 2018, SONAM was the beneficiary of a major donation from Beta Healthcare, a subsidiary of the Aspen Group. The donation provides scholarships which will enable more nurses and midwives to upgrade their qualifications. Representatives from the regional company were on-hand to seal the deal on a 2.5 million Kenya shilling (Ksh) donation that will benefit students enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BScN), Bachelor of Science in Midwifery (BScM), and Higher Diploma in Oncology programmes at the Nairobi campus.

The team, led by their Regional Head of Information and Communications Technology, Mr Manohar Sangaru, appreciated the need for more qualified nurses in the country, and especially recognised those serving in remote areas. This donation will make education possible for many nurses and midwives who would otherwise be unable to upgrade their nursing qualifications.

On receiving the donation, Professor Sharon Brownie expressed heartfelt thanks, and noted that financial

assistance of any kind enables the school to assist needy students who may otherwise not have a chance to uplift the communities in which they work. Professor Brownie further mentioned that a Kenyan nurse takes home 25,000 –40,000 Ksh as a monthly salary. In many cases, he/she is the sole breadwinner for their family, with responsibility for up to seven dependants. As such, the nurses have little or no disposable income left to cover their school fees. The various endowments and scholarships offered by SONAM enable more nurses to join the BScN upgrading programme, which is offered on a work-study basis. This helps to ensure that nurses can maintain their source of income as they pursue further qualifications.

Ms Nduta Kuria, Senior Manager, Resource Development, AKU East Africa, added that she was pleased that AKU's compelling impact resonated with the Aspen Group, and expressed appreciation for the donation that they were able to give. Dr Eunice Ndirangu, SONAM Kenya Academic Head, also expressed her deep gratitude, as the donation would "... open a window for the students to do even greater things in their communities."

After graduating from SONAM, most nurses opt to return to their communities to put their newly acquired skills to good use. This has a multiplicative effect, and greatly benefits the more than 4,000 patients that a nurse attends to each year.



From left: Ms Nduta Kuria, Senior Manager, Resource Development AKU East Africa; Ms Yvonne Mathu, Executive Officer SONAM East Africa; Dr Eunice Ndirangu, Academic Head SONAM Kenya; Ms Penina Oliech, Executive Assistant to the CEO, Aspen Group; Prof Sharon Brownie, Dean SONAM East Africa; Ms Margaret W John-Mathenge, Regional Head of HR and Administration, Aspen Group; Mr Manohar Sangaru, Regional Head of ICT, Aspen Group; Mr Rajendra Falor, Head of Finance, Aspen Group; and Mr Richard Kariuki, Head of Governance, Aspen Group.



The Beta Healthcare donated 1 million Ksh, the first instalment of the total amount to SONAM through the Aga Khan Foundation.

Opening doors to life-long learning



How Aga Khan University is reimagining education for nurses and midwives in East Africa

By Ramiz Allafi

I began working for Johnson & Johnson five years ago. During this time, I have always wondered about the extent of our company's corporate social responsibility footprint and how I could contribute to our impact around the world. I found that opportunity as a 2018 Johnson & Johnson Corporate Citizen Trust (JJCCT) secondee to Aga Khan University's School of Nursing and Midwifery (AKU-SONAM) in East Africa, supporting the Strengthening Nursing and Midwifery Associations in East Africa project. Within my first month, I am already seeing healthcare from a dynamically new perspective.

From left: Sospeter Ndaba (Project Manager, Strengthening Nursing and Midwifery Associations in East Africa) and Ramiz Allafi (Seconde, JJCCT) with Alfred Obengo (President) and Helen Wamuyu (Program Coordinator) of the National Nurses Association of Kenya

Through this unique long-term partnership, I am adapting to a refreshingly different way of conducting business.

The primary purpose of my secondment with AKU-SONAM is to help further strengthen the front lines of health in East Africa by building and expanding the access and usage of an AKU-SONAM facilitated virtual platform for nurses and midwives. The platform aims to connect nine nursing and midwifery associations throughout East Africa, potentially reaching up to 46,000 members, with lifelong learning opportunities! It will provide users with educational materials and video trainings that are accessible from anywhere and at any time, and serve as a

community forum for nurses and midwives to share best practices as well as additional professional development opportunities – creating a much needed support network. The virtual platform will also benefit from a partnership with the Global Health Network (GHN). GHN is an online “science park” already used worldwide by the global health community to disseminate research and training resources and this partnership will provide us with a blueprint for a strong learning platform for nurses and midwives across East Africa.

As the saying goes, “When you stop learning, you stop living.” Learning is a life-long process, and this is especially true for health professionals. As the healthcare landscape continues to evolve, health workers must develop new skills in order to keep up with the changes and overcome new challenges. The virtual platform will be a digital resource that helps nurses and midwives navigate the ever-changing healthcare field and continuously acquire new tools to advance their profession. This is especially important in East Africa, where nurses and midwives make up 85% of all health professionals and deliver most of the primary healthcare, education, and preventive health services available. Better trained nurses and midwives means more resilient and innovative health workers adept at responding to whatever health needs come their way.

Creating a virtual resource platform for all nurses and midwives across the East Africa region is a complicated initiative, but as nurses and midwives pointed out,

it would significantly improve their professional development and everyday work, removing some of their current barriers to learning opportunities. When I asked the nursing and midwifery associations how a virtual resource platform would help improve East African healthcare systems, they shared the following insights that have since guided our work:

1. **Access to materials from anywhere at any time** – no matter where you are and what time of day it is
2. **Equal delivery** – every member has access to the same information
3. **Financial savings** – no need to travel, print materials, rent educational spaces, etc.
4. **Digital skills** – improvement of digital capacity and crucial digital skills in the era of IT infrastructure evolution
5. **Expand** – expansion of professional horizons with the latest information

As the world celebrates International Day of the Midwife on May 5 and International Nurses Day on May 12, I feel immense pride to be able to support AKU-SONAM and my company in elevating these heroes on the front lines of care. In building the virtual platform, I have the opportunity to contribute to a culture of life-long learning, helping nurses and midwives reach their fullest potential, and open new doors for their professional growth — ultimately improving the quality of health care for the millions of their patients for years to come.



We have been chosen to be nurses

SONAM participates in 'Nursing Now' launch in Uganda

By Martie Mtange

“We have been chosen (chosen by God)—chosen to be nurses...” this is the Ugandan nursing anthem, which was joyously sung at the recent launch of the ‘Nursing Now’ campaign in Uganda. This is the commitment and passion that visiting global leaders of the campaign witnessed during its launch in Uganda. The launch took place on March 22 in Kampala, as part of the third UK-East African Healthcare Summit. More than 100 nurses participated—most of them in uniform—from different parts of the continent, largely Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, Zimbabwe and South Africa. There were also two or three visiting nurses from the UK and USA. SONAM East Africa Dean, Professor Sharon Brownie, attended the launch accompanied by some members of the Uganda faculty.

The purpose of the event was to officially inaugurate the Nursing Now campaign in the African context, incorporate nurses in the region in the campaign’s activities and establish an action plan for Nursing Now Uganda. Lord Crisp and Dr Hannaway from Nursing Now’s core team began the afternoon launch session with a general outline of the global campaign. This aimed to ensure that local nurses were fully briefed regarding the journey.

Professor Brownie shared that, “The vision and ethos of the Nursing Now campaign is a patient-centred approach focused on full utilisation of the nursing and midwifery



From left: Dr Catherine Hannaway, Nursing Now core team member; Mr Amb Amin Mawji, Diplomatic Resident Representative AKDN Uganda; Professor Sharon Brownie, Dean SONAM East Africa; and Lord Nigel Crisp, Co-chair Nursing Now.



Catherine Odeke, Commissioner of Nursing, Uganda with Professor Brownie at the Nursing Now campaign launch in London

workforce to enhance healthcare for the community. This resonates with AKU SONAM’s strategies to grow nursing and midwifery leaders that make a positive impact on health and community wellbeing. This is why we are happy to be a part of this campaign.”

Before the summit, Nursing Now visited the AKU campus in Kampala. There, they interacted with nursing and midwifery students and attending faculty, including Professor Brownie, Professor Edwards and Cliff Aliga, along with Catherine Odeke, Commissioner of Nursing, Uganda. This visit followed Professor Brownie’s attendance at



Proud Ugandan nurses at the Nursing Now launch



Professor Brownie alongside Sultana Afdhal, CEO World Innovation Summit for Health (WISH), and Didi Thompson, Director of Content WISH, at the Nursing Now launch in London

the official launch of the Nursing Now campaign in London on February 27, 2018. Additionally, the visit came after the gift of free subscriptions to the All4Maternity platform, which was granted to midwifery students from the Uganda campus in January this year.

SONAM East Africa continues to be at the forefront of several nursing and midwifery activities in the region, and is hosting teams and individuals connected to the nursing and midwifery professions globally. The Nursing Now campaign provides opportunity for our Uganda-based faculty and students to connect with a range of locally developed activities that will further enhance the contribution of nurses and midwives to community health and wellbeing.

International day of the Midwife

Celebrating midwives with Dr Grace Edwards

By Nepurko Keiwua

This year's International Day of the Midwife theme was 'Midwives leading the way with quality care'. In line with this theme, SONAM's first Professor of Midwifery, Dr Grace Edwards recently had an interview with popular Kenyan blogger, Potent Ash.

As we celebrate this auspicious global day for midwives, Dr Edwards shared some important facts about the practice of midwifery. She said, "One of the services I would like to see includes treating the women as partners in care rather than treating them like they are sick because pregnancy is not an illness. When the mother comes in she is going to be scared because she has not been prepared for the delivery, and midwives can make that better for her. They can make the experience a really positive one for her by supporting the mother and treating them as an equal."

On midwives leading the way with quality care, Dr Edwards explained the Three Delays model. "[It] is a documented model that talks about how women are not educated to access care (This is the first delay). The second delay in the model is that they access care but they do not go to the appropriate facility. The third delay is that they go to the appropriate facility but they do not get the appropriate care. Where midwives come in is that they can refer the women to where they can get appropriate care. They can diagnose and realize when things are not right and they need to be escalated to a higher facility. However, they can also act on their own initiative. They are trained to deal with emergencies effectively and appropriately."

To read the full interview, please check out Potent Ash's blog here: <https://www.potentash.com/2018/05/05/grace-edwards-midwives-maternal-healthcare/>

Dr Grace Edwards



International Nurses Day

What are our alumni up to?

By *Martie Mtange*

International Nurses Day happens on May 12 each year, the day Florence Nightingale was born. It's the day when we celebrate the importance of nurses in society, intentionally. This year's theme from the International Council of Nurses (ICN) is "A voice to lead – Health is a human right." The theme focuses on the fact that every human being deserves adequate health care regardless of his/her economic or socio-political situation. It also underscores that nurses need to understand their calling from a

philosophical perspective as well as their role in addressing inequalities.

This theme resonates with SONAM and their 17 year partnership with the Johnson and Johnson Corporate Citizenship Trust (JJCT) which ensures that nurses from underserved and underprivileged areas have access to quality nursing education. Therefore, for International Nurses Day, the two institutions have partnered again to recognize a few of SONAM's alumni who are serving in underserved areas, spreading their care wherever their influence allows and providing solutions that go beyond health care.



Pendo Bukoli, Tanzania

Pendo graduated from SONAM in 2006 and since then, has been able to establish 22 cervical cancer screening sites in the Pwani and Mtwara regions of Tanzania. She supervises these locations and provides training through an organization called Tanzania Health Promotion Support. Pendo said, "Cervical cancer prevention is a big priority for me as we have one of the greatest opportunities to impact women's health. With prevention, we can teach an entire community about the disease. We will work with women leaders within communities to talk to other women at *ngomas*, or traditional dances, about the importance of being screened, and also build trust."



Jobiso Ghafo, Kenya

Jobiso currently heads the Maternal Unit and the Comprehensive Counselling Unit at the Kipini Dispensary in Kenya, where he has worked for the past 26 years. His colleagues frequently refer to him as the "IQ Champion" particularly because of the information technology (IT) skills he learned while at SONAM Kenya before he graduated in 2015. Jobiso is delighted not only with his IT skills but with his leadership abilities as well. He says, "I use the leadership skills I learned to make my employees feel comfortable coming to me for counsel, and to find solutions even with our very limited resources."



Hannah Kirungu, Kenya

Hannah graduated from SONAM in 2015, but her training as a nurse began in 1998 in Murang'a, Kenya. Her commitment as a caregiver took her as far as the Mkwiro Dispensary on Wasini Island, a community off the coast of Southeast Kenya with a population of about 1,200 people. When asked about her experiences going through SONAM's programme, Hannah shares, "I learned to see health care as treating all the problems facing a community, rather than just the symptoms of the patient in front of you. Serving in a remote community like Wasini Island, I had to ask myself, how do I treat patients when the boats bringing medical supplies are unreliable? How do I serve the community when I barely have the staff and supplies to meet my own clinic's needs?"



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

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