

THE 7th AFRINEAD **CONFERENCE REPORT**

**“Positioning Afrinead: Rolling out
Disability Research in Africa.”**

**Wednesday 29th – Thursday 30th
November, Friday 1st & Sunday 3rd
December 2023**

**(Hybrid) Online and at Artscape Theatre
complex, Cape Town South Africa.**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY BY THE AFRINEAD CHAIRPERSON

Dear Friends and Colleagues



As we recover from the challenges presented to the global community by COVID-19, the AfriNEAD Conference Organising Committee was excited to host a hybrid conference at the Arts Cape from the 29th of November to the 1st of December 2023. This was the 7th AfriNEAD conference, and it was the last conference to be held by Stellenbosch University in Cape Town. The 8th AfriNEAD conference will be held in one of the African countries, and Ethiopia, Tanzania and Kenya had entered the bidding process to host the conference. The AfriNEAD family will know by June

2023 which country amongst the three will host the 8th AfriNEAD conference.

AfriNEAD conference planning committee want to extend a huge thank you to Dr Marlene Le Roux for her generous offer to host the conference at the Arts Cape. I would like to extend gratitude to the Rectorate of Stellenbosch University for again endorsing and supporting this conference and AfriNEAD. Our greatest gratitude goes to the following organizations for their support: Wes Gro, Irish Embassy, World Bank, Premier of the Western Cape, and Edit Micro System. We further thank the Stellenbosch University Disability Unit, Cape Town Network for Persons with Disability and African Disability Forum for their support in preparing and hosting the conference.

The return home of AfriNEAD conferences in 2020 gave AfriNEAD space to strengthen some of the critical areas such the business plan and the development of the Governing document for AfriNEAD. We also went through a time for internal reflection by Stellenbosch University (SU) on the ground covered in creating an inclusive University. Other related activities to the hosting of the conference by Stellenbosch University was

the awarding of Honorary Doctorate degree to Dr Charlotte McClean – Nhlapho.

In the conference, 65 education papers and 10 posters were presented in the nine AfriNEAD research areas which were supported by approximately 22 keynote addresses. This was a well-attended conference; with 140 people who attended physically and 42 people who attended virtual. They were local, national, regional, and international AfriNEAD stakeholders. As well as this, there were many dignitaries that attended the conference, and we are grateful for the support and the dignity they brought to the conference. The AfriNEAD partners both at local, national, regional, and international levels came out to further endorse the relevance of this network. We appreciate your support.

The conference closed with critical recommendations that came from both the outcome of the nine research areas (the UNCRPD commissions) and the AGM. Below are some of the critical issues that the AfriNEAD Secretariat and the Governing Body will have to follow:

1. Governance document as guiding document for AfriNEAD

AfriNEAD does not have a constitution but Governance Document. This document should be regarded as a guiding document for AfriNEAD activities.

2. AfriNEAD business plan

Originated already from the development of business plan for 2007 and updated in 2021. The business plan will be utilised until the eighth conference.

The governing board did come to the realisation that there is not a clear sustainability plan and that the newly elected Governing Board will develop a sustainability plan.

3. Hosting of 8th AfriNEAD conference and guiding document

Each interested country will get the opportunity to present their bidding document to be reviewed by the governing board. Countries that have shown interest were so far Tanzania, Kenya, and Ethiopia. Bidding countries will send their bidding document for review at the end April with feedback in June.

4. Membership and membership fees

Conference registrations will form part of registration to be members of AfriNEAD for 2023 – March 2024 and will be reminded in March every year.

5. New Governing Board and Disability Research Country working groups.

Will have three Tier of Governance which is as follows:

Members of the 7th conference organising committee will be the 1st tier.

The coordinators of DRCWGs will be the second tier of Governance of AfriNEAD.

The third Tier – the Advisory Body will be the GB that their tenure elapsed end 2023.

6. Disability Research Country Working Groups (DRCWGs)

DRCWGs to grow within their country and more people to subscribe to the group.

Need to use AfriNEAD model for membership registration.

A certain percentage of membership fees must go to AfriNEAD governing board (e.g. 25%; exact amount to be finalised by the new governing board of AfriNEAD) for running costs and sustainability practices.

DRCWGs to use the nine AfriNEAD UNCRPD thematic areas for collating research evidence for their countries.

The DRCWG coordinators to give feedback to their members on Governance matters of AfriNEAD.

7. Partnerships

The new Governing structure need to revive participation of old partners while also strengthening the network with selection on new partners.

8. Status of the African Journal of Disability and way forward.

Doing well in getting submission, but still issues of academic writing and not all submissions of academic standard. A call was made for senior researchers who are willing to support with writing mentoring of novice researchers.

Delegates at the conference were also encouraged to start organising their presentations into papers for publication in the 7th AfriNEAD Conference special issue.

9. Presentation of AfriNEAD in the African Union (AU)

It is noted that this has been a process but still incomplete and the new GB need to drive this process to completion.

The network wants to extend gratitude to the Governing Board of the network that has stood by the Network since its conception in 2007. The network has completed 17 yrs., and it is delightful to see younger people taking leading roles in the network to secure its future.

As I move to retirement, I send warm wishes to the network as it continues with its quest of being a regional disability research network that is underpinned by Ubuntu and inclusivity.

Emeritus Prof Gubela Mji

Chairperson: The African Network on Evidence-to-Action in Disability (AfriNEAD)

AfriNEAD 7th Conference Organising Committee Chairperson



1. Introduction and background

The African Network for Evidence-to-Action in Disability (AfriNEAD) conference held its 7th conference in Cape Town, South Africa. The 6th conference was also held in Cape Town too, but due to the 2020 Coronavirus pandemic that broke out globally, it was held virtually. The decision to hold the 7th conference in person in Cape Town was made to accommodate for the unexpected virtual conference. This was indeed the case, and the conference took place from 29 to 30 November and 1 and 3 December 2023 (3 December became a sight-seeing day

for delegates).

2. The delegates

Approximately 220 delegates registered for the conference or joined online. The countries that were represented are: Belgium, Botswana, Cameroon, Canada, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Rwanda, Somalia, South Africa, Tanzania, The Gambia, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States, Zambia and Zimbabwe

3. Conference organising Committee (CoC)

3.1 The CoC was established soon after the 6th AfriNEAD conference end 2020. It consisted of the following members:

- AfriNEAD chairperson: Prof Gubela Mj
- CoC chairperson: Dr Marcia Lyner-Cleophas
- Secretariat: Hillary Lane, assisted by Luigia Nicholas
- Sub-committees:
 1. Finance and Fundraising led by Rustim Ariefdien
 2. Marketing and Media led by Luigia Nicholas
 3. Programme (programme content) led by Gubela Mji

4. Education (abstracts & final presentation selections) led by Lieketseng Ned
5. Public Relations (Internal with SU) led by Marcia Lyner-Cleophas
6. Technical team led by Hillary Lane and Rustim Ariefdien
7. Accommodation and Tourism led by Hillary Lane

3.2 Regular meetings

Were held, once a month. The meetings covered the aspects noted above and each area was led by a lead person. AfriNEAD only has a secretary and the chairperson, Prof Gubela Mji (at the time). Other leads came from the Division Disability Research Studies, - DDRS -the Disability Unit and an Non-Governmental Organisation. Each area of expertise therefore had a team that met outside of the monthly AfriNEAD meeting to discuss pertinent matters and reported back into the bigger monthly AfriNEAD meeting.

4. Conference programme – see below

4.1 A total of 102 abstracts were received and 85 were accepted for oral presentations while some were accepted for poster presentations.

4.2 The conference started off on 29 November with a pre-conference workshop focussed on students doing their PhD and postdocs sharing good practices and challenges. This session was led by Michelle Botha and Chioma Ohajunwa.

On the afternoon of 29 November, the official opening took place with keynotes, presentations. This ended in a welcome function.

On 30 November, after the plenary session, Commissions A – H took place, chaired by two people who had to ensure the smooth-running of that commission. Pertinent issues from each commission had to be recorded.

On 1 December 2023, after the plenary session, Commissions A – H did their feedback session in the form of a panel discussion. The end to the conference took place too.

On 2 December, Ms Charlotte McClain-Nhlapo addressed delegates (instead of the scheduled address which was to take place on Sunday 3 December). This was done to shorten a long conference. Thereafter, Prof

Mji addressed the delegates about the “Disability Research Country Working Groups” which created a vibrant discussion.

On 3 December – The International Day of Persons with Disabilities was marked by a tour of conference delegates around the Cape Peninsula. The day was held in a celebratory mode.

5. The commissions

Each commission had a chairperson who introduced the presenters for that commission. The chairperson was introduced by a moderator for the session. Presentations were mainly live with very minimal recorded speeches or live Zoom link presentations.

Nine (9) commissions were established for the conference, in which presentations were themed and feedback given. The commissions were:

5.1 Commission A: Children and youth with disability

5.2 Commission B: Education: Early childhood to tertiary

5.3 Commission C: Economic empowerment

5.4 Commission D: Development process in Africa: Poverty, politics and indigenous knowledge

5.5 Commission E: Disability research and utilisation

5.6 Commission F: Health and HIV & AIDS

5.7 Commission G: Systems of community-based rehabilitation

5.8 Commission H: Holistic wellness: sport, recreation, sexuality and spirituality

5.9 Commission I: Assistive technology/devices

Presentations were done by various key researchers and notable people from civil society and NGOs and various universities across the globe. Details are evident in the conference programme. No research writing workshop took place during this virtual conference given the challenges this would present. Many thanks to all those who served as session chairs for the various commissions.

6. Finance

Find an outline of the conference budget and the conference fees structure attached as an annexure.

The remainder of the conference budget will remain in the AfriNEAD cost centre which is part of the DDRS at the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences

7. Conference administration and reception desk at conference

This portfolio experienced glitches, including during the conference. A better spread of skills and tasks must be done in the future with better time management and organisation. Many thanks for those who stood in at the last minute, often fumbling about due to the lack of information.

8. Conference IT

This was done by Edit Micro in Cape Town and generally went very well. A highly competent team ran this conference for a second time (previously in 2020 which was their first).

9. AfriNEAD in the future

The next AfriNEAD conference will be contested through an application process which was shared with the core AfriNEAD group. We look forward to that conference at a location other than South Africa, but still on the African continent.

Young and emerging researchers are entering the fold and promises to bring along fresh inspiration to AfriNEAD. The change in the chairperson of AfriNEAD goes hand in hand with the change in leadership of the Division for Disability and Rehabilitation Studies. The newly elected incumbent, Prof Lieketseng Ned, replaced the outgoing Prof Gubela Mji of both the DDRS and AfriNEAD and we look forward to supporting and strengthening AfriNEAD in its future endeavours as it grows from strength to strength.

A recommendation is that conference planning be outsourced to a reputable conference organising committee that will work in close collaboration with the CoC and that is au fait with disability-related conference with its many nuances. Matters such as billing, invoicing, bookings, conference reception area, email and other communications with delegates to name a few should be done by professional people that are au fait with planning disability-related conference. Meticulous administration is vital for a smooth-running conference to the end. Attention must be paid to the catering as well as this is an important element of any conference.

10. In closing

The leadership of AfriNEAD and all committee leads are hugely thanked for their commitment and expertise since the 2007 conference. They are wished only the best as they charter the waters ahead.

Prepared by Dr Marcia Lyner-Cleophas in collaboration with committee leads.

Chairperson: 7th AfriNEAD CoC

Head: Disability Unit, Stellenbosch University.

Stellenbosch University's honorary doctorate recipient

Mrs Charlotte Vuyiswa McClain-Nhlapho

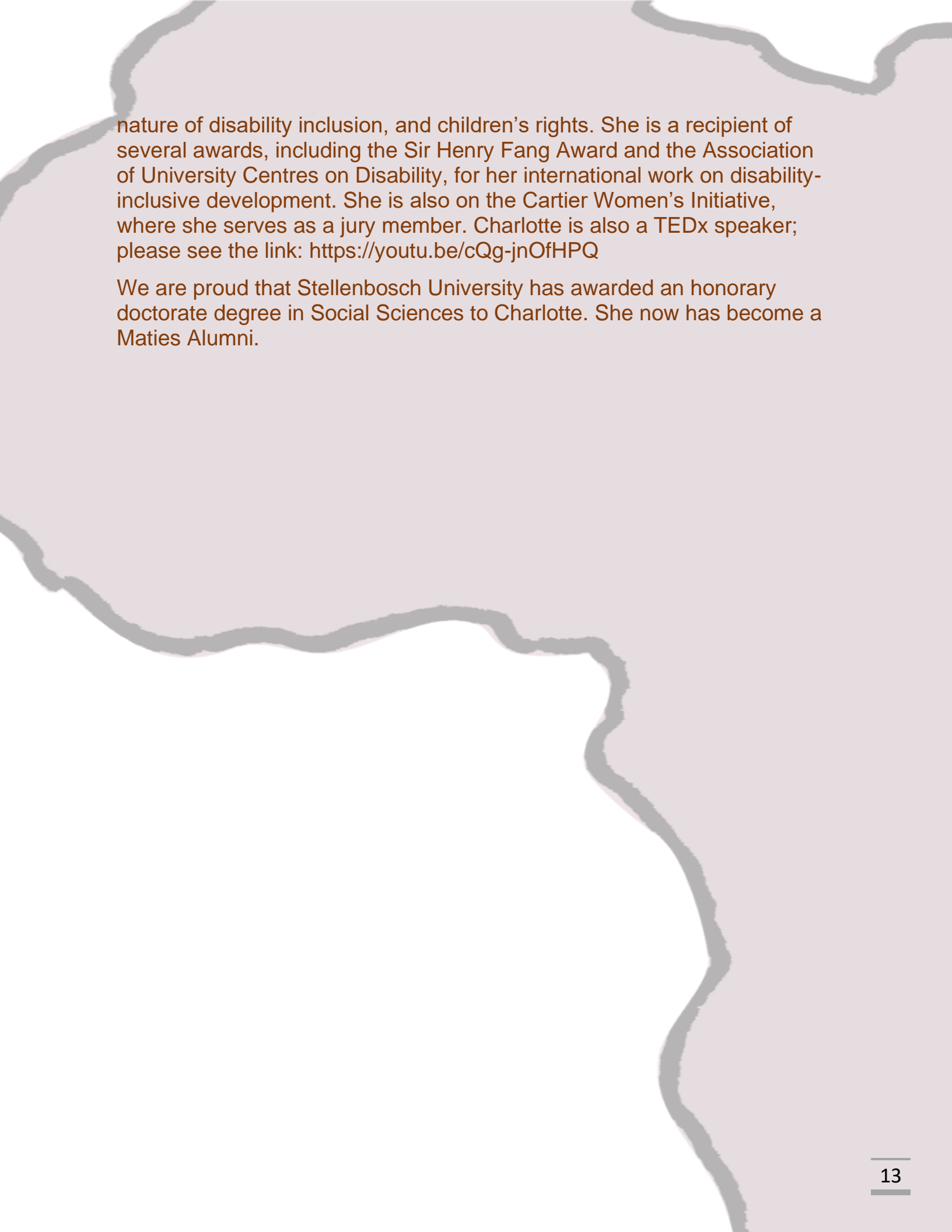


Ms Charlotte Vuyiswa McClain-Nhlapho is the Global Disability Advisor for the World Bank Group. Her work at the Bank focuses on disability-inclusive development under its twin goals to end poverty and promote shared prosperity on a liveable planet. As Disability Advisor, she supports operational teams across the institution to ensure that Bank policies, programs, and projects are disability inclusive. Her responsibilities include leading

the production of analytical products and analysing and articulating Bank policy on disability and development. Charlotte also sits on the World Bank's Presidential Council on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. More recently, she has managed several trust funds supporting inclusive education. She is passionate about ensuring that excluded groups are included in development and that they have voice and agency.

In 2011, as a well-respected human rights lawyer in disability and child rights, she was appointed by President Obama to lead USAID's work on disability-inclusive development, including developing policies and country strategies for technical assistance for program implementation. Prior to this, she worked as a Senior Operations Officer at the World Bank in the East Asia Pacific and Africa regions. Earlier in her career, she was appointed by President Nelson Mandela as a Commissioner to the South African Human Rights Commission. She focused on social and economic rights, disability rights, and child rights. Charlotte also represented the National Human Rights Institutions during the negotiations of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and was a member of the working group that drafted the Treaty. Before joining the Commission, she worked as a Child Protection Officer for UNICEF.

Charlotte holds multiple Law Degrees in International Law and Administration from the University of Warsaw, Poland, and Cornell Law School, Ithaca, New York. She has published numerous articles and works on various topics related to disability-inclusive development and human rights, including the right to food, disability rights, the intersectional



nature of disability inclusion, and children's rights. She is a recipient of several awards, including the Sir Henry Fang Award and the Association of University Centres on Disability, for her international work on disability-inclusive development. She is also on the Cartier Women's Initiative, where she serves as a jury member. Charlotte is also a TEDx speaker; please see the link: <https://youtu.be/cQg-jnOfHPQ>

We are proud that Stellenbosch University has awarded an honorary doctorate degree in Social Sciences to Charlotte. She now has become a Maties Alumni.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Program Moderator Ms Luigia Nicholas

SIDE EVENT 1: PRE CONFERENCE EVENT

9:00 – 12:30 Developing a community of practice for African disability/rehab/IKS Doctorates. Run by Michelle Botha and Chioma Ohajunwa.

START OF THE CONFERENCE

Day 1: Wednesday 29th November 2023- Conference Opening

08:00 - 12:00 Registration

Session 1A: Welcoming (13:00 – 17:15)

13:00 - 13:05 Moderator introduces Chairperson and starts the conference

13:05 - 13:10 Chairperson: Anthony Ghillino

13:10 - 13:20 Welcome event: Singing of the SA anthem: Victor Sakube

13:20 -13:30 Welcome remarks from Artscape CEO: Marlene le Roux

13:30 - 13:40 Unmute performance

13:40 - 13:50 Welcome & introduce planning committee: Marcia Lyner-Cleophas

13:50 - 14:00 Background of AfriNEAD: Gubela Mji (AfriNEAD Chairperson)

14:00 - 14:15 Keynote Address recorded speech: Honorable Minister Anne Rabbitte

14:15 - 14:50 The use of ICTs in disability-inclusive education: Charlotte Vuyiswa McClain-Nhlapho and Deepti Samant Raja: World Bank

14:50 - 15:05 What we can learn from others for further development of African AT sector: Chapal Khasnabis

15:05 - 15:20 Official welcome by Prof Elmi Muller – Dean: Faculty Medicine and Health Sciences, Stellenbosch University

15:20 - 16:20 Performance among the disabled children in Ghana and Niger – a study amongst children in primary school in Niger and Ghana (Stine H. Braathen, Anne Kielland, Huafeng Zhang, Evelyn Adjei, Yacouba Daouda, Oumarou Siddo Nouhou, Sirina Mahamadu, Anthony Edusei)

16:20 – 16:40 What Works to increase access to assistive technology in LMIC's, which can be scaled across the continent” Diane Bell (GDI Hub), Anne MacKinnon (FCDO, UK), Naomi Thompson

16:40 – 16:50 Discussion

16:50 – 17:00 Moderator closes session

Session 1B: Welcome Function: Marimba Band, Cocktail & Drinks (17:00 – 18:00)

17:00 – 17:05 Chairperson: Theresa Lorenzo

17:05 – 17:15 A welcome message from Stellenbosch University: Prof Sibusiso Moyo

17:15 – 17:25 A welcome message from the Disability Movement: Shuaib Chalklen

17:25 – 18:00 Cocktail and Networking

Governing Board Meeting (18:00 – 20:00) Venue: Boardroom

Day 2: Thursday 30th November - Conference Continues

08:00 – 08:30 Registration

Session 2: Research Evidence (08:30 – 10:30)

08:30 - 08:35 Moderator recap from day before, explain programme and introduce chairperson

08:35 - 08:40 Chairperson: Prof Leslie Swartz

08:40 - 09:00 The role of academic institutions in decolonizing disability research: Prof Sibusiso Moyo Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Research, Innovation and Postgraduate Studies at Stellenbosch University

09:00 - 09:15 Contribution of disability statistics in the realization of rights of persons with disability in Africa: Ass Prof Margie Schneider

09:15 - 09:55 The role of disability units/centers in advancing regional disability research: KNUST in Ghana (Anthony Edusei), Disability Unit in Malawi (Alister Munthali), Disability Study at UCT (Theresa Lorenzo), Disability Unit (Marcia Lyner-Cleophas) and DDRS (Lekietseng Ned) at Stellenbosch University

09:55 - 10:10 Discussion

10:10 - 10:30 Tea & networking

Session 3: Country Working Groups (10:30– 12:10)

10:30 - 10:35 Moderator introduces chairperson

10:35 – 10:40 Chairperson: Patrick Devlieger & Nondwe Mlenzana

10:40 - 12:00 Round table discussion: (Ghana: Kofi Nseibo; Malawi: Alister Munthali; Zimbabwe: Tsitsi Chataika; Uganda: Victor Locoro; South Africa: Hetsie Veitch; Tanzania: Rosemary Chioma; Zambia: Martha Banda; Kenya: Ezekiel Isanda Oweya; DRC: Eric Nkayilu

12:00 - 12:10 Discussion

12:10 – 13:00 Lunch & networking

Session 4: Commissions A, B, C, D AND E (13:00-15:20)

13:00 - 13:05 Moderator introduces Chairperson of session

13:05 – 13:15 Overall coordinator explain briefly how commissions (breakaway sessions): Lieketseng Ned

Commission A: Children and Youth with Disability

Commission B: Education: Early to Tertiary

Commission C: Economic Empowerment

Commission D: Development Process in Africa: Poverty, Politics and Indigenous Knowledge

Commission E: Research Evidence

15:20 – 15:30 Tea & networking

Session 5: Commissions F, G, H and I (15:30 -17:45)

COMMISSION F: Health and HIV/AIDS

COMMISSION G: Systems of Community Based Rehabilitation

COMMISSION H: Holistic Wellness: Sport, Recreation, Sexuality, Spirituality

COMMISSION I: Assistive Technology/Devices

17:45 – 18:00 Tea & networking

END OF CONFERENCE DAY

19:00 Unmute production

Day 3: Friday 1 December 2023 - Conference Continues

08:00 – 08:30 Registration

Session 6: Plenary (08:30 – 10:05)

08:30 - 08:40 Moderator recap from day before, explain programme and introduce chairperson

08:40 - 08:45 Chairperson: Rustim Ariefdien

08:45 – 09:05 Role and contribution of Disability Movement in advancing the rights of persons with disability in disability research: Mr Shuiab Chalken - UN Special Rapporteur

09:05 – 09:25 Ethics and emancipatory research: The vehicles that give guidance in disability research: Martha Geiger

09:25 - 09:45 AfriNEAD - A role player in the realization of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRDP) in Africa: Callista Kahonde

09:45 – 10:05 Disability PhD community of Practice: Michelle Botha and Chioma Ohajunwa

10:05 - 10:10 Discussion

10:10 – 10:30 Tea & networking

Session 7: Commissions A, B, C, D and E Feedback (10:30–11:35)

10:30 – 10:35 Moderator introduces Chairperson

10:35 – 10:40 Chairperson: Noreth Muller-Kluits

10:40 - 11:25 Commissions: A, B, C, D and E Feedback

11:25 - 11:30 Discussion

11:30 - 11:45 Tea & networking

Session 8: Commissions F, G, H and I Feedback (11:45 –12:45)

11:45 – 11:50 Moderator introduce Chairperson

11:50 – 11:55 Chairperson: Michelle Botha

11:55 – 12:35 Commissions: F, G, H and I Feedback

12:35 – 12:40 Discussion

12:40 – 13:30 Lunch and Unmute concert

Session 9: Conference Wrap-Up (13:30 – 16:00)

Chairperson: Lieketseng Ned and Anthony Edusei

13:30 – 15:00 Annual General Meeting

15:00 – 15:30 Presentation and discussion of way forward

15:30 – 16:00 Closing remarks

END OF CONFERENCE

POST CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

Saturday 2 December 2023 – Workshops and site seeing

Pre-conference event

Pre-conference event on: 'Strengthening emerging researchers in disability studies in Africa'

Facilitators: Dr Michele Botha & Dr Chioma Ohajunwa

Background:

This workshop was held on Wednesday, 29 November 2023, forming part of the pre-conference event programme. This event aimed to create a space for emerging disability researchers in Africa (including PhD candidates, PhD graduates and post-doctoral fellows) to share knowledge and experiences on the challenges and opportunities that they face as disability researchers in this context. Some key areas of interest for this event were:

- Strengthening disability theorising in Africa
- Disability research ethics in the African context
- Translating research into evidence-based action and practice in Africa
- Making the PhD/post-PhD experience more meaningful

Structure:

The event was structured as a dialogue. We welcomed Prof. Elelwani Ramugondo, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Transformation, Student Affairs and Social Responsiveness at the University of Cape Town to present a keynote address. She delivered a strong call to action for health professionals and those involved in research to critically question the dynamics of power-knowledge in their disciplines so as to contribute to dismantling oppression of many kinds in the African context. We then engaged in two panel discussions on the experiences of both PhD candidates and those navigating the post-PhD phase. These discussions focused on experiences of challenges and opportunities. The Stellenbosch Disability Research Hub gave a brief presentation on their work to strengthen early career researchers in disability studies. The event included a time for small group discussions on the topic of what is needed to build capacity for disability researchers in Africa.

Outcomes:

Some key themes emerged from these discussions which are briefly summarised here. A more thorough report will be developed for the upcoming special issue of the African Journal of Disability.

Disability studies is experienced as a “personal” as well as a “academic” endeavour. People expressed being drawn to disability studies because of deeply felt experiences around disability, including confronting their own unconscious biases towards people with disabilities. This means that:

- Disability studies researchers are often undergoing a process of conscientisation on disability and other social justice concerns with which they need support.
- There are specific ethical issues at stake which researchers require knowledge and training on.
- Disability studies researchers feel that they are not merely an “academic product” but human beings embarking on a personal journey of growth with which they also need support from supervisors and peers.

Researchers identified the following needs:

1. Opportunities to network across country contexts and disciplines
2. Mentorship from both peers and academic staff
3. Pre-doc support
4. Secure funding that takes research needs in Africa into account
5. Opportunities to combat isolation

There was also a call to capacitate people with disabilities as researchers as a means to combat academic ableism.

Conclusion:

AFRINEAD can play a key role in addressing these needs, particularly providing spaces for networking, mentorship, support and the opportunity for researchers to develop a critical consciousness around disability in their specific disciplinary contexts. There is a need to develop strong collaborations across African contexts to avoid duplicating research and address research gaps. AFRINEAD is well-positioned to contribute here.

Feedback on Commissions

The last day of the conference included feedback on the nine thematic areas that were used to organize presentation of abstracts for the conference. Each thematic area, at the end of the presentations, makes a summary of critical emerging points from the keynote address, paper and poster presentations. Below is a summary of the outcome from the nine thematic areas.

COMMISSION A: CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITY

Facilitators: Chioma Ohajunwa and Christinah Sadiki

The keynote address was given by Erna van der Westhuizen, titled “An exosystemic approach to mobility and positioning assistive technology services for children with disabilities”. The study was conducted in the Northern Cape Province of South Africa, with 1330 stakeholders directly involved. The study outcomes showed that to facilitate sustainable social transformation, assistive technology provision cannot happen in a vacuum or be removed from other systems that impact inclusion. Therefore for services and social support and assistance for persons with disabilities to have long term effect on their lived experiences, other systems around persons with disabilities that also impact on their lives must be considered at the same time. Continuous interaction, and swift responses to changes in the ecosystem can enhance the impact and sustainability of human service programmes.

Commission A had seven oral presentations, and two poster presentations.

- Breaking Barriers: Enhancing soft skills for young persons with congenital disabilities in Uganda.
- Adaptation and validation of a tool to measure participation of children with disabilities in Uganda.
- The Ubuntu Bulamu training manuals: Peer-to-Peer Support for Inclusive Education in Uganda.
- Perspectives on the institutionalisation of inclusive education for children and young people with disabilities in South Africa: Rhythms, Silences and Omissions over time.

- Using social cohesion to improve service access and quality of care for children with disabilities: preliminary findings from a pilot in Luapula and Copperbelt provinces in Zambia.
- Transforming the lives of children with developmental disabilities through a community-based caregiver skills training intervention: Feasibility findings from a rural South African setting.

And two poster presentations

- Participatory Film: Experiences of African Youth in Education and Employment.
- Independence training for the blind by the South African Mobility for the Blind Trust (Sambat): Impact of the training on 12 people trained.

The different session outcomes produced discussions related to the different key challenges in each area. However, there were key thoughts that emerged across the presentations and the plenary discussions after the presentations. The major themes are highlighted below:

Key challenges identified.	Recommendations
Procurement and provision of assistive devices is a challenge. (Long waiting period for assistive devices)	Governments should play a role in enabling universal access to essential and affordable assistive devices for young people with disabilities to be able to access and participate optimally in society.
Inadequate support from the family and community towards healthcare and education initiatives	Conducting disability community dialogue to create awareness and participate in activities to change disability perspective was cited as important initiative to take up with communities. Utilising the Ubuntu intervention strategies, working collaboratively with teachers, and peer to peer support. Participants also highlighted the training of parents and

	caregivers as non-specialists and part of systems of care.
Economic hardship, funding challenges and poverty are still highlighted as current challenges still faced by CWD and their families. Most of CWD and their families live in resource constrained contexts and do not have access services, employment and faced by poverty.	Strategies are needed to advocate for opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in leadership roles. Being in leadership roles would provide opportunities to directly influence decision making and contribute to empowerment.

COMMISSION B: EDUCATION: EARLY CHILDHOOD TO TERTIARY

Facilitator Noreth Muller-Kluits

This commission was chaired by Noreth Muller-Kluits. Unfortunately, Tsitsi Chataika was also scheduled for her presentation in another commission was not able to attend. This commission consisted of six presentations, including the keynote address.

The keynote address was given by Femke Bannink Mbazzi and Youth Researchers with disabilities of the MRC/UVRI & LSHTM Uganda Research Unit. The presentation was on a case study on Disability Inclusive Youth (DIY) research in Uganda. In their presentation, they included a short video clip on the experiences of youth researchers from this programme. The research training included qualitative research methods and mentoring, and an effort was made to ensure accessibility and reasonable accommodations for researchers were adhered to. They further highlighted that there should be a greater focus on going beyond learnerships to address employment for youth with disabilities. An upcoming participatory film will also form part of the project.

Adam Awin presented next on access to e-learning resources from the perspective of students with visual impairment in Ghana. His presentation included findings from a study exploring the e-learning adaptations made by the University of Education, Winneba during COVID-19 restrictions.

The study recommends enhancing access to technology, especially Wi-fi, to ensure access to e-learning tools and resources.

Alida Sabastian shared the educators' perspectives on vision concerns of learners with hearing loss in schools in Tanzania. She highlighted that the educator's awareness on various health issues, social functioning and vision disturbances play an important role in the child's development and learning process.

Kofi Nseibo shared an evaluation of Disability Studies in Education in a short course incorporating universal design for learning (UDL) at the University of Cape Town. He shared the UDL principles and how it was applied to the short course, using technology as a tool for UDL.

Rabbi Abu-Sadat presented on the experience of two wheelchair users on the accessibility to the Faculty of Educational Studies building at the University of Education, Winneba. This presentation opened up further discussions on how to address accessibility in buildings within the delegates attending the session.

Lastly, Benedict Leteana shared educators' perceptions of schools for visually impaired learners within an inclusive education system in South Africa. This study specifically explored the disconnect between policy and implementation. It was found that educators find inclusive education as impractical and ineffective and that they were not always clear about their specific role for implementation. Recommendations included continuous professional development towards inclusive education, clarification and directives regarding educators' and other stakeholders' roles as well as a support mechanism for educators.

The commission discussions emphasised the challenges that are still present in the full inclusion and participation of people with disabilities in education. There are also many systematic challenges and policy implementation challenges. Finally, there is a high need for research to pay attention to the perspectives and experiences of educators.

COMMISSION C: ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Facilitators: Marcia Lyner-Cleophas & Arne H Eide

What transpired:

Annelise Murangi (Namibia): It is so hard to get a job: the challenge for graduates with visual impairment in Windhoek, Namibia.

- Qualitative study of graduates with visual impairment
- Three stressful phases of transition into employment: i) completing education and graduating, ii) seeking employment, iii) maintaining employment.
- Range of psychosocial stressors linked to each of the three phases.
 - Discrimination and unfairness were emphasised as being prevalent.
 - Inclusion and support are crucial at all levels, in any setting.
 - Community support is a crucial factor for creating conducive environments.
 - Challenges associated with securing employment are more and have a negative toll on self-acceptance, self-doubt, anxiety, and stressful experiences of graduates with visual disabilities.

(From discussion: Awareness raising and training among varsity staff, students and employers)

Jean Mitchell (South Africa): A training eco-system to train students with disability for meaningful employment.

- Mixed methods mainly qualitative among students with hearing impairment who had been trained by the Training Department of the National Institute for the Deaf
- Students with hearing impairment were not adequately prepared for employment in spite of the training.
- Employers were not adequately prepared for employing persons with hearing impairment.
- A new ecosystem was introduced: A model called the "Industry model" represent an integrated approach to partner students and workplaces incorporating different elements to support both students/trainees and employers.
- The needs of the student are considered first, followed by needs of facilitators and employers.
- The "industry model" gives much better results (in employing students with hearing impairment) than the more traditional "college model".

Lana van Niekerk et al.: Supported Employment in South Africa: Cost calculation of service utilisation.

- Supported employment defined as: “competitive employment in an integrated setting with ongoing support services for individuals with the most severe disabilities.”
- Purpose: 1. Explore the suitability of SE for use in the South African context, 2: Capture the components of SE utilised by persons with mental disability (psychiatric, intellectual) - time utilisation pattern over 12 months, 3: Calculate the cost using government and private practice rates.
- Using focus group discussions, data capture sheet for SE utilization, cost calculations to study benefits of SE (among participants in SE)
- Results: incremental decrease of service utilization, modest consumption of SE services, the cost of SE services substantially lower than the government investment in disability grants and protective workshops subsidies at the time of the study
- SE services: promising with regards to decrease service utilization, reduction of SE services, reduced costs compared to government investment in disability grants and sheltered workshop subsidies.

Zara Trafford: Using the care dependency grant as a lens for exposing the multi-layered invisibility of disabled children and their families in South Africa

- Methods: In-depth individual interviews and focus group discussions, total 15 participants + policy desk study
- Findings:
 - Disabled children invisible in policy and grant literature – this was confirmed by the key informant interviews.
 - Part of the problem seems to be that there is also no ‘home’ for disability accountability/oversight within government, even more so for children.
 - And, even for those families who managed to gain access to the CDG, life was extremely difficult because of few complementary interventions, and made worse by the

isolation and stigma caused by society's attitudes toward disability.

- In sum, the study pointed to the profound 'invisibility' of these children and their families, at multiple levels.
- Conclusion:
 - We need to think urgently about how to improve the *quality* of their lives, not just survival – but narratives from this study and others demonstrate low access and inclusion, and poorer outcomes in key metrics for well-being.

Louis Mbibeh et al.: The PIRL Project: A community of practice focused on disability inclusive development research.

- The PIRL project: Primarily based in Cameroon and Canada
- The overall research question was: When, how, and why are information and communication technologies (ICT) used in communities of practice (CoP) focused on disability-inclusive development (DID)?
- Brought PIRL members and others together to learn about inclusive research, used a blended learning approach: workshops, seminars, online sessions, and resources.
- The research component of this partnership used a sequential, explanatory mixed methods design.
- A community of practice model can be effective for collaborative disability inclusive development research and capacity building.

Locoro Victor: Deafblind children and the Covid-19 pandemic in Uganda

- Purpose of study: To establish the impact of Covid-19 lockdowns on the learning and participation of children with deafblindness and their families.
- Method: qualitative, interviews with 10 children with deafblindness (and their mothers) + teachers + project officers + focus group discussion + observation
- Conclusions:
 - Deafblind children have unique needs that ought to be known to parents and service providers for effective intervention.
 - Families with deafblind children feel shuttered with the end of the Community-Based Education project implemented

by Sense International. The Covid-19 lockdowns worsened their plight.

- Parents and service providers need capacity development for holistic needs identification and assessment of deafblind children to inform appropriate interventions.
- Recommendations:
 - Resume home learning and preferably empower parents for continuity.
 - Capacity for livelihood development.
 - Empower teachers to manage holistic learning of deafblind children.

Summing up:


Three first studies are thematically about employment and employability of students with disabilities. Three different approached to study this problematic transition from university to employment for students with visual impairment, a novel training eco-system involving students and employers, and an evaluation of Supported Employment.

Next three studies about i) the invisibility of disabled children at policy and service development level, ii) A community of practice focused on disability inclusive development research, iii) Impact of Covid-19 shut-down on deafblind children

COMMISSION D: DEVELOPMENT PROCESS IN AFRICA: POVERTY, POLITICS AND INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

Facilitators: Callista Kahonde and Brian Watermeyer

The keynote presentation was about an action plan to assess the effectiveness of the intersectoral global action plan on epilepsy and other neurological disorders (IGAP) adopted at the World Health Assembly in May 2022. It was presented by Jacqui Ala and Sharlene Cassel. The presenters explored the norm localization process in a South African context i.e. how can the norms be implemented in a contextually relevant way. They proposed Acharya's postcolonial framework concerning normal localization which has five elements. They emphasized the need for cooperation between government and civil society and that persons with disabilities must be given a strong voice in norm localization.



The keynote was followed by three presentations that focused on access issues. Dr Karin Smith presented a framework of inclusion that she argued must be adopted by mobile network operators for the inclusion of persons with disabilities. The presenter shared strong insight in this area based on both her research and her work with a mobile network operator. She argued that mobile technology or ICTs have the potential to promote or impede the participation of persons with disabilities in society and currently persons with disabilities in the Global South continue to experience barriers to accessing and using technology, products, and services of ICT companies. Disability advocates need to mobilize for change as digital inclusion opens many opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Thereafter, a presentation by Arne Eide reviewed evidence from a study concerned with the extent to which persons with disabilities in Africa are either aware of, or members of, organizations of persons with disabilities. A key finding was the limited reach of such organizations, reflecting the need for upscaling advocacy and awareness of disability inclusion as a social justice issue. The next presenter, Prince Changole, spoke about an initiative called the Disability Evidence Portal that facilitates understanding and strengthening of disability-inclusive policymaking in low- and middle-income countries. The portal is a repository of synthesised evidence to enable and empower decision-makers about how best to improve access, health, education, livelihood and social outcomes for people with disabilities worldwide, but especially in and in low- and middle-income countries. The hub, previously housed in the UK and now in South Africa, is working on a scoping review of the published grey and peer-reviewed literature around disability-relevant decision-making among policymakers and governmental and nongovernmental programme managers. Investigation will focus on understanding who makes decisions about disability-inclusion in mainstream policy, what sources of information are used, and what other factors drive such decisions in LMICs. They also presented a protocol for a forthcoming primary research project with relevant stakeholders in health, education, livelihoods, empowerment, and social inclusion programmes in South Africa and Bangladesh. These findings will complement the scoping review to contribute to building theory and evidence in this important area.

Another presentation by Anthony Edusei focused on road transport accessibility for basic school pupils with mobility impairment in Ghana.

Road transport was identified as something so basic for the children to get to school but was not prioritized.

Then the issue of political participation by persons with disabilities was explored by Vladimir Pente from within the context of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The presentation was on a proposed study that questions if the developments that have happened in the DRC have had any impact on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the making of laws and policies and their implementation.

Lastly, there was one poster presentation by a representative of Shonaquip Enterprises Let's Talk Parents tool which commissions caregivers of children with disabilities in South Africa to monitor the implementation of the White Paper pillars in their community. The tool which is an application available on basic smartphones gives caregivers a voice by prompting them to report whether they feel that their children's human rights are being upheld or not. The tool has multiple functions of providing data to monitor implementation of the White Paper; enabling caregivers to advocate for their children's rights and holding the government accountable.

As a whole, the commission reflected a set of meaningful, goal directed projects, each dealing with an important area of disability development in a pragmatic and helpful way. There was a strong sense of hope in the session, generated by evidence of how key issues in disability inclusion were being tackled. As a means of gleaning the most benefit from gathered evidence, the disability evidence portal initiative seemed pivotal. What this resource will provide is a readily available store of carefully curated, accessible research evidence to drive advocacy, providing activists and others with essential information to support their positions. This speaks to the key issue of actual change driven by research, ensuring that data are not lost, but carefully preserved and made available to individuals and organisations that need them.

COMMISSION E: RESEARCH EVIDENCE

Facilitators: Lieketseng Ned & Madri Engelbrecht

This commission comprised presentations by researchers from six African countries that focussed on how research is conducted, and methodology is utilised to capacitate and emancipate co-researchers and/or participants with disabilities.

Elita Chamdimba delivered the keynote address titled "Decolonizing disability research by (re)centring other(ed) voices and narratives of belonging: participatory approaches with Malawian children with albinism", about her PhD research. The research emphasised the decolonisation of research from the Global South through facilitating the participation and expression of voices from the children in novel and creative ways as co-researchers. Research methods included poetic inquiry, arts-based inquiry, and digital storytelling.

Michelle Botha's presentation titled "Why discourse matters in disability research in the Global South" continued with the theme that focuses on emancipatory and participatory disability research. In her presentation, she showed the role of critical discursive inquiry in considerations about disability and citizenship, and made a case for understanding the construction of disability discourse and rhetoric in efforts to dismantle disablist constructs.

Tsitsi Chataika's presentation, "Redefining disability research evidence generation in Africa", echoed sentiments about decolonisation of disability research in the Global South. She shared her personal experience as a disability scholar in Africa and the Global South focussing on her publication of three handbooks and the inclusion (or exclusion) co-authors with disabilities. The books were, respectively, about disability in Southern Africa, disability activism, and postcolonial disability studies. She concluded that capacity development and support to people with disabilities on the Continent should be expanded to enable their knowledge generation through writing.

Three presentations by researchers from the Coordinating Unit of Associations of Persons with Disabilities (CUAPWD) in Cameroon centred around the research work of this Unit and lessons learnt and being learnt. Chick Sama's presentation, "The joys and satisfactions of

establishing a research department with an association of disabled person's organizations", explained the impetus for and the processes followed to establish a research department within the CUAPWD that emphasised contributions of people with disabilities in disability and rehabilitation knowledge. Louis Mbibeh followed this with his presentation on "Proposing guidelines for compensation and reimbursement of research participants with disabilities". He reported how such guidelines were developed alongside persons with disabilities, to promote the research participation of people with disabilities and to counter the exclusion and silencing of disability voices in research. They concluded that consideration of the outlined processes in the guidelines will contribute to effectiveness and fairness of compensation and reimbursement. The final presentation in the series from Cameroon was through a poster by Nain Yuh titled "Conducting reviews of disability research to understand the evidence in a local area". The researchers documented the process of conducting reviews with the aim to encourage locally based groups to review and engage with literature about disability, disability-related topics, rehabilitation services, and other topics of concern. Their conclusion was that useful materials can be created through joint efforts by researchers in local areas.

Another presentation from Cameroon by Lesley Sikapa was titled "Digital Storytelling to share the importance of disability inclusive research". The presentation described The PIRL Project (Partnerships for Inclusive Research and Learning) run by a network of community-based and academic researchers, professionals, and students who were primarily from Cameroon and Canada. Digital storytelling was used for exploration of themes like disability inclusive research and social justice. The researchers highlighted the importance of exploring different means of knowledge translation (such as digital storytelling) that encourages critical and creative thinking and reflection, but also pointed out that the process of this method is time consuming.

Mary Wickenden's presentation, titled "Using participatory and inclusive methodologies to explore Inclusive Education in West and East Africa", reported two examples of participatory research employed by the Disability Inclusive Development Programme (DID). The example from Kenya involved working alongside peer researchers in inclusive Early Childhood Development and Education, and in Nigeria the focus was on developing a model of inclusive primary education with children and parents as research collaborators. A range of innovative, inclusive

methods were used to gather data with children and adults, and the researchers concluded that the peer researchers with disabilities were advocates and role models in the research.

A further presentation by Siv Sæbjørnsen and Sarah Hean reported "Equitable collaborations in Global North-Global South partnerships: the NOREC project in Tanzania as case study". The presentation detailed how reciprocal student and staff exchanges between inclusive education schools in Tanzania and Molde University College in Norway formed the basis of research interventions in the study. The example of influencing the use of corporal punishment in these inclusive education settings, while considering philosophical underpinnings such as the Ethics framework of Ubuntu, was given.

COMMISSION F: HEALTH AND HIV & AIDS

Facilitators: Alister Munthali and Kofi Nseibo

No report was provided (refer to ther conference program about key note address and papers presented under this commission)

COMMISSION G: SYSTEMS OF COMMUNITY BASED REHABILITATION

Facilitators: Nondwe Mlenzana

No report provided (refer to ther conference program about key note address and papers presented under this commission)

COMMISSION H: HOLISTIC WELLNESS – SPORT, RECREATION, SEXUALITY, SPIRITUALITY

Facilitators: Michelle Botha & Sr. Frances Emily Owusu- Ansah

As suggested by the title of this commission, the presentations given covered an array of topics and represented diverse areas of interest. This,

in itself, speaks to the interdisciplinary nature of disability research and the importance of recognising disability as a cross-cutting issue. Taken together, the presentations in this commission highlight the multifaceted and intersectional nature of “wellness” in the lived experience of persons with disabilities, including physical, psycho-emotional, social, cultural, spiritual, sexual, and identity-related factors. They encourage us to look beyond the material/physical when considering measures to develop wellbeing for people with disabilities and their families.

Tarusarira Wilson gave the keynote of the commission, sharing findings from his qualitative work with mothers of children with disabilities in Zimbabwe. This work considers how hostile traditional beliefs about disability, and which surround mothers who birth and care for disabled children, might be push factors contributing to women deciding to migrate to South Africa. Exposure to these negative beliefs contributes to a sense of insecurity for these women about their social and cultural status, with implications for their wellbeing. Their connection to disability as a negatively evaluated state means that they are, in a socio-cultural sense, already displaced persons, experiencing separation from familial and cultural belonging, before they embark on the process of geographical migration. This presentation served to remind us that concerns around wellbeing and disability extend to and include families and caregivers.

Resonating with this focus on the material, emotional and identity-related implications of socio-cultural beliefs about disability, Dane Isaacs presented his work with men who stutter. This presentation traced several ways in which socio-cultural ideas about disability, and stuttering in particular, interact with dominant constructions of masculinity, productivity and valued roles in familial and religious settings. Isaacs showed through his qualitative study that men who stutter are socially and culturally compelled to comply with a masculine norm in ways which may affect their full and authentic participation, and sense of belonging in the spheres of work, family and faith. Similarly, but focusing in the area of rehabilitation, Brian Watermeyer discussed the socio-cultural beliefs on disability which underpin rehabilitative work. Drawing on scholarly work and his experience in clinical psychology, this presentation critically considered a subtle yet persistent normalizing drive in rehabilitation. Watermeyer considered whether what is accepted as a “good” outcome in rehabilitation might require people with disabilities to silence emotional

struggles and physical difficulties, with significant implications for their wellbeing.

Speaking to the multifaceted nature of wellness in the lives of persons with disabilities, Annemarie Hill presented work from Special Olympics on the covid-19 experiences of special Olympics athletes. This highlighted a complex set of challenges to the physical and psycho-emotional wellbeing of people with intellectual disabilities during the pandemic and associated lockdowns. A key concern in this regard was lack of accessible health and wellness information, leading to further isolation and health risks. Also highlighting the importance of accessible and appropriate information, Ronel Davids presented on her work on gender-based violence with women who are Deaf. This presentation highlighted the central importance of participatory approaches in the development of health and wellness information for people with disabilities and the danger of misinformation when researchers and practitioners assume themselves to be all knowing. Davids' work establishes Deaf women as knowledge bearers.

Aviva Cohen presented her work on developing the Empathic App, a communication tool for non-verbal or minimally verbal persons. As above, this presentation highlighted the importance of positioning people with disabilities as key stakeholders and knowledge bearers. This work also recognizes that physical care and wellness must necessarily include emotional care, communication and social wellbeing. Finally, and speaking into the importance of social wellbeing and authentic connection, Faith Chilistsidya presented her work on examining the social networks and participation of university students with disabilities in Malawi. This work recognizes the need to develop and support persons with disabilities in accessing opportunities to build authentic social networks.

Although diverse, three overarching points of connection have been identified among these presentations: These are:

- The importance of an intersectional approach which takes into account how disability interacts with such things as gender, race, culture, migrant status, faith/religious beliefs and more.

- The need for participation of persons with disabilities as key stakeholders and knowledge bearers, recognizing that as researchers “we don’t know what we don’t know”.
- The importance of understanding the world of cultural and social meanings that people are exposed to if holistic wellness is to be championed and fully understood.

With regard to the latter, there is a need, as was suggested in the presentation by Dane Isaacs and alluded to by others, to develop a critical disability approach in Africa. This approach requires that we carefully question accepted knowledge on disability (cultural, social and professional), and enables us, with disabled people at the helm, to rethink and reformulate our understanding of wellness with disability.

COMMISSION I: ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY/DEVICES

Facilitator: Surona Visagie

A huge thank you to a every presenter and an engaging audience.

What stood out during the session was the links that could be drawn between different research projects on different AP in different African settings. And further the enthusiasm both presenters and audience members had for the topics and the practical application of the research to different settings and environments.

To borrow a term from the PhD workshop on Wednesday. Pracademics, were clear. Research developed from clear user centered needs and had social application. Examples being the question what assistive products are available and can be useful to persons with psychosocial impairments and, the need for innovative rehabilitation practices in the face of resource constraints.

Research was done in an inclusive manner an example being sitting down with a group of preschool children and letting them show and tell what pictures should be part of an augmentative communication tool in their mother tongue. An audience discussion led to the assertion that if the will is there participation can be achieved in research with any group of people.

Finally, the studies showed important applications in prevention. For example earwax and middle ear infections can be managed relatively

cheaply and prevent the need for much more expensive interventions down the road. – as indicated by one study 60% of hearing loss in children can be prevented.

Also showing the conundrum of knowing that what is available is not optimal for a setting such as augmentative communication products in a second or even third or fourth language versus no product. Clearly showcasing the need for local innovation, development and roll out.

The overarching issues raised by the keynote that everybody in this room is aware of such as AT must be provided seamlessly over time and place throughout the lifespan. That AT on its own is not enough. AT provision must be supported by promotion, prevention, curative care, rehabilitation, and palliative care as needed and wanted were again underscored. That the demographics of AT users and need for AT is shifting and ever increasing globally and in Africa as health systems improvement leads to increased life expectancies and an increase in older citizens who have increased AT needs.

AT being a health product like medication something that most if not all people will need through the course of their lifespan. AT need is larger than disability prevalence since many impairments can be managed with AT to the extent that they do not result in a disability for instance my spectacles. Thus, AT should become a political priority and seen as investment and not expenditure.

AT service delivery should follow a tiered approach, with the basic essential devices available at primary level and specialist devices at tertiary level.

Examples of successfully implemented AT systems in some countries such as Norway, China and India were shared. African countries can look at these, take what might be applicable and built a suitable system for their specific context. EG in Norway – nearly 30% of AT distributed are second hand. In Africa:

- o Kenya is in the process of developing an AT Center of Excellence and
- o In Egypt – Joint AT manufacturing centers are under development

AFRINEAD AGM MEETING: 1 DECEMBER 2023

1. Welcome

Everyone was welcomed by Anthony Edusei who co-facilitated the meeting with Callista Kahonde.

2. Minutes of 2nd December 2020

Minutes of the previous AGM held on 2nd December 2020 were accepted following a motion for acceptance from Theresa Lorenzo and seconded by Ezekiel Isanda. With no corrections made, motion for adoption was tabled by Ezekiel Isanda, seconded by Tsitsi Chataika.

3. New Business for the Day:

With no matters arising from the previous meeting to be discussed, Gubela Mji opened the discussions for the day and challenged delegates to address the concerns for disability inclusion raised during the conference before the next conference. She gave feedback from the Governing Board on matters discussed at its meeting of the 29th of November 2023.

- 3.1 Governance document as guiding document for AfriNEAD
 - AfriNEAD does not have a constitution but need a governance document to help guide the processes and structures for AfriNEAD.
 - A motion that the said document becomes a guiding document for AfriNEAD was tabled by D. Wakene, seconded by V. Duma. Majority of members present were in favour of the motion.
- 3.2 AfriNEAD business plan
 - Originated already from the development of business plan for 2007 and updated in 2021.
 - Came to the realisation that the business plan was never fully implemented.
 - The governing board did come to the realisation that there is not a clear sustainability plan and that the new governing board will work on addressing this.

- A motion for the business plan to be utilised until the eighth conference was tabled by Callista and seconded by Charmaine. Majority of the members present were in favour of the motion.

3.3 Hosting of AfriNEAD conferences and guiding document

- countries and two Stellenbosch conferences – followed by two conferences in Cape Town (2020 & 2023) now in the process of looking at the bidding document for the hosting of the next conference in 2026. Each of the interested AfriNEAD has finished a conference cycle of 15 years – three African countries will get the opportunity to present their bidding document to be reviewed by the governing board.

- Gubela highlighted that countries can now show expression of interest to host the next conference. Once expression of interest has been shown, a four-month period will be given to finalise the document and send to Governing Board for Review and the bidding countries must expect to get the outcome of the review within a month of submitting their document.

- Gubela asked if this is an acceptable approach for AfriNEAD and the general membership were in favour of this approach.

- Countries that have shown interest were so far Tanzania, Kenya, and Ethiopia. A suggestion was made that each country gives a one-minute brief motivation on why they want to host. Their motivation was as follows:

✓ Tanzania: “First Female” term is very significant in Tanzania in terms of leadership positions such as first female AfriNEAD coordinator (person presenting on behalf of her country)

✓ Kenya: Success stories to share.

✓ Ethiopia: The country has a strong link to AfriNEAD including the African Union

3.4 Membership and membership fees

- Will have to be enhanced in management and will be reminded in March every year.

- Conference registrations will form part of registration to be members of AfriNEAD for 2023 – March 2024.

- In March 2024 new registrations must be paid for membership (see information in GBD)

- Further discussion about membership fee was held under 3.5.

3.5 New Governing Board and Disability Research Country working groups.

- Gubela gave feedback from the governing board for the suggestion for the DRCWG to grow within their country and more people to subscribe to the group.
- The coordinators of DRCWGs will be the second tier of Governance of AfriNEAD.
- A certain percentage of membership fees must go to AfriNEAD governing board (e.g. 25%; exact amount to be finalised by the new governing board of AfriNEAD) for running costs and sustainability practices. The new governing board coordinators to give feedback to their members on Governance matters of AfriNEAD.
- A suggestion was made to upload the relevant documents regarding this motion to the AfriNEAD website.
- There are ten countries already members of AfriNEAD. Once you have expressed interest in becoming a member as a country, you do not need a specific number of people, you will then become a member. AfriNEAD is committed to the countries working on ground level and for them to participate and working together. Motion was accepted by the majority.
- AfriNEAD thematic areas are guided by the UNCRPD and with conferences this is also aligned - a call for DRCWG to align their research according to these thematic areas so that for the next conference to be a summary of DRCWG research findings and the status of research from their country based on symposiums they held in their specific country.
- Suggestions were made by Theresa Lorenzo to adjust certain themes and include spirituality and culture, and to perhaps minimise the commissions to have less than nine. Or also to align the themes according to the SDGs. Another suggestion for consideration is the African Disability Protocol for thematic areas and the inclusion of Ubuntu and self-representation. Further suggestions include restructuring the thematic areas including other policy guidelines and to see what the impact is of research and to compare what is happening in the different countries. A motivation to discuss solutions to be worked on in the DCRWG workshop on 2 December 2023 was accepted by

members present. This includes consideration in publishing the outcomes in a journal such as AJOD.

- A question for AfriNEAD as a mother organisation relates to the taking of the findings from the conference and works to create change internally within AfriNEAD affiliated countries.
- The new governing board must take the documents already existing and then strengthen and implement these documents.
- Gubela explained the new governmental structure of AfriNEAD as it consists of the current planning committee that has a variety of skills, the DRCWGs (the coordinator of that structure) and the current governing board (some already starting in 2007). The coordinators for the DRCWGs become the second structure of Governance for AfriNEAD. The current planning committee becomes new governing board, current governing board becomes advisory board and when new planning committee comes from a country selected to host the conference, they will later become the new governing board. Gubela emphasised that the HOD of Division of Disability & Rehabilitation Studies (Stell.) should always be the driver of AfriNEAD.
- One of the delegates affirmed the new structure to ensure that people can hand over and not hold on to knowledge.

3.6 Partnerships

- AfriNEAD was started with disability researchers, governmental structures, DPOs which shows the importance of partnerships.
- AfriNEAD was funded by the Irish Embassy for this conference which comes from the partnerships created with AfriNEAD.
- The new Governing structure need to revive participation of old partners while also strengthening the network with selection on new partners.

3.7 Status of the African Journal of Disability and way forward.

- Doing well in getting submission, but still issues of academic writing and not all submissions of academic standard.
- There is a need for increased African focussed research on disability.

- A call was made for senior researchers who are willing to support with writing mentoring of novice researchers.
- Delegates at the conference were also encouraged to start organising their presentations into papers for publication in the 7th AfriNEAD Conference special issue.

4. Feedback from the 2023 Conference:

4.1 Report from the chairperson of the conference organizing committee for 2023.

- Could not be facilitated. The report had already been given at the beginning of the conference.

4.2. Selection of country to host the 2026 AfriNEAD conference.

- Will be finalised at a later stage following the bidding process.

5. AOB

- A question was asked if AfriNEAD has representation on African Union. It was noted that it has been a process but still incomplete. There have been some attempts from partnerships but unfortunately some of them have left the AU.
- A comment to thank Gubela for where she brought AfriNEAD and that there is excitement about the future of AfriNEAD since seeing the DCRWGs who presented in the conference as well as young, enthusiastic researchers also starting to take the lead – shows a strong hand over. A suggestion to have an active AfriNEAD media platform to provide updates on what it is happening was made.

Meeting closed on 15h20.

PICTURES



The full planning committee – missing Kofi!



Happy delegates !



conference

Gubela addresses the



Delegates deep in conversation!



The reception committee



Representatives from Disability Research Country Working Group



A Q&A Session



'Altogether, now'



The majesty of the chandelier foyer at Artscape theatre complex!



Marlene Le Roux, CEO of Artscape taking a moment with one of the delegate



A photo opportunity with the Chairperson!



A pre conference workshop



**An International Day of People with disabilities
outing with international delegates in beautiful
Cape Town**

SPONSORS

We are extremely grateful to all our sponsors, without whom we would not have been able to hold the conference.

Name of the person/organization	Name of the Organization
Coenie Labuschagne	Edit Micro Systems
Marlene le Roux and team	Artscape Theatre/ Department of Arts and Culture
Tshepo Maseko and team	SA National Convention Bureau
Honourable Minister Anne Rabbitte	Irish Embassy
Office of the Rectorate.	Stellenbosch University
The Premier's office	Western Cape Government
Dr Vuyiswa Charlotte McClain-Nhlapho & Deepti Samant Raja	World Bank



ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE 1: CONFERENCE ATTENDEES


	FIRST NAME	SURNAME	EMAIL ADDRESS	COUNTRY
Prof.	Patrick	Devlieger	patrick.devlieger@kuleuven.be	Belgium
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Mr.	Vladimir	PENTE	vpente@sightsavers.org	Cameroon
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ANNEXURE 2: PAYMENT/FEEES FOR THE CONFERENCE

- **Virtual (SA Rand) – see table below:**

VIRTUAL	Full conference	One (1) Day	
Overseas	R3700	R1850	
Local and Regional (African countries)	R2225	R1250	
NPO's	R1250	R550	
Students and Persons with Disabilities	R550	R300	

- **Physical/ In-Person (SA Rand) – see table below:**

PHYSICAL/ IN-PERSON	Full conference		One (1) Day	Per Session	Caregivers/Assistants	Caregivers / assistants one day
Overseas	R5000		R3000	R400	R1200	R925
Local and Regional (African countries)	R3500		R2300	R275	R1200	R925
NPO's	R2300		R1400	R200	R1200	R925
Students and Persons with Disabilities	R1500		R1300	R100	R1200	R925

- **Virtual (US American Dollars) – see table below:**

VIRTUAL	Full conference	One (1) Day	Per Session
Overseas	\$200	\$100	\$15
Local and Regional (African countries)	\$120	\$60	\$10
NPO's	\$60	\$30	\$5
Students and Persons with Disabilities	\$30	\$15	\$5

- **Physical/ In-Person (US American Dollars) – see table below:**

PHYSICAL/ IN-PERSON	Full conference	One (1) Day	Per Session	Caregivers/Assistants
Overseas	\$265	\$165	\$20	\$65
Local and Regional (African countries)	\$185	\$125	\$15	\$65
NPO's	\$125	\$75	\$10	\$65
Students and Persons with Disabilities	\$95	\$70	\$5	\$65

ANNEXURE 3: CONFERENCE BUDGET INCOME AND EXPENSES

AfriNEAD Conference 2023 Income and Expenditure Statement as at 31st March 2024

		Budget	Cashflow
Bank Balance (as at 21/3/2024)	Verified		<u>R 802 814</u>
<u>INCOME</u>		R 2 195 211	R 1 761 291
University of Stellenbosch	Yes	R 532 866	R 532 866
SA National Convention Bureau	No	R 433 920	
Irish Aid	Yes	R 627 000	R 627 000
World Bank	Yes	R 190 000	R 190 000
Dept of Premier	Yes	R 60 000	R 60 000
Conference Registration	??	R 351 425	R 351 425
<u>EXPENSES</u>		R 958 477	R 958 477
HR		R 260 509	R 260 509
Food		R 146 004	R 146 004
Travel Accommodation		R 293 912	R 293 912
Marketing		R 62 562	R 62 562
IT		R 111 487	R 111 487
Sundry Expenses		R 84 002	R 84 002



Thank You