

THE DIASPOREAN I: THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN PERSPECTIVES

EDITOR:
Stephen Mutula



Alternation African Scholarship Book Series, Volume #15



The *Diasporean I* and *Diasporean II* research project, and two published book volumes, are dedicated to the memory of Katie Mutula (1991 - 2021).

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*The Diasporean I:
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Email: cssall123@gmail.com
Editor-in-Chief: Prof J.A. Smit
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Email: smitj@ukzn.ac.za

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Preface

World-historical events such as the fall of the Berlin wall, and the fall of ideologies such as apartheid, opened borders for world travel and the global movements of people, like seldom before. Often driven to move away from drought and disaster-prone geographical areas, some people also move to new countries in search for better education, working, or health opportunities. For whichever decisions people move, and especially when they move with their immediate family, such movements themselves are often perilous, in addition to which one then has to set up a home, and become a member of the population of the new country of adoption.

Conceptualised by the late Katie Mutula, these two volumes of *The Diasporean*, are together, simultaneously, a prime sample of research excellence, and the power of interdisciplinary research, focused on such a fluid social and historical phenomenon as human movement, migration, as well as challenges that accompany our diaspora communities of the world. *The Diasporean I: The Southern African Perspectives*, covers five main sections, all together presenting 11 exceptional chapters. The main topics covered are,

- financial integration, that covers issues related to financial development dynamics in both home and host countries, and access to credit;
- xenophobia and Afriphobia in the contexts of increasing forms of local nativisms and populist xenophobia on social media; and family language policies of home country languages;
- feminisation and gendered roles in migration, within transnational relations; how it impacts family life, and how diasporean experiences are also in themselves gendered, in the transnational space; and
- the significance of technology and skills transfer for developing sustainable livelihoods, and also the significance of education, in this context, especially postgraduate education.
- The final chapter in *The Diasporean I*, covers food security challenges that migrants experience in South Africa.

The Diasporean II: Perspectives from Beyond Southern Africa, likewise cover five main thematic focuses. These are the study of,

- existing diaspora policy in Africa, including how these determine challenges concerning ‘capital structure’ and the growth of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in Africa, as well as philanthropy in rural areas; and how
- foreign remittances bring data and related arguments to the fore, on the impact of COVID-19 on remittances, the nature, size and scale of foreign remittances from elite migrants, and how remittances also impact rural development in home countries.
- Section three develops topics on immigration policy, analyzing how diasporians’ human dignity is harmed in how they are portrayed and framed in the press, how it impacts family structures and careers, and how repatriation or deportation are portrayed by the online press in South Africa and in Britain.
- This is followed by a section on the notion of the ‘brain drain’ and skills transfer related to possibilities for multi-sectoral collaboration in the medical field, and challenges of skills transfer in diaspora contexts.
- The final section on the digital economy, addresses the acceleration of the digital economies world-wide during the COVID-19 pandemic, and investment opportunities that accompany the diaspora movements of peoples.

Each in its own way, but also as a two-volume collaborative research project, *The Diasporian I* and *The Diasporian II*, are comprehensive and are the result of incisive scholarship in a critical field of study both in South Africa and Africa more further afield.

We are thankful, that Prof. Stephen M. Mutula and the team who was working with the late Katie Mutula, saw the project through to its conclusion. The project itself as well as the quality of the research for the two volumes, stand as a testimony to Katie’s character and a monument in her name on behalf of all those mentioned or not mentioned, who formed part of the project, and too, those who have passed on due to migratory experiences, and the nameless ones, who got lost at sea or in sandy deserts or forests or strange countries.

Prof Johannes A. Smit
 Chair: Humanities Institute
 University of Kwazulu-Natal

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❧ Contributors ❧

Dr. Jerald Hondonga is a TVET practitioner with experience spanning more than 25 years as a high school teacher and lecturer. His research interests are TVET education, curriculum studies, skills development and employment, migration and labour. He has presented at numerous conferences and published several book chapters and articles in peer-reviewed journals in the areas of interest. He specialised in Civil Technology and Curriculum Studies. Jerald is a PhD graduate from the Tshwane University of Technology (2022) in the Technology and Vocational Education Department. He is the Head of the School of Construction at New Era College in Gaborone, Botswana, and Acting Coordinator for Research Management and Innovation. Dr Hondonga has been a research fellow with INTI University of Malaysia since September 2022. He completed the UNESCO-UNEVOC TVET Leadership Programme 2022 (October 2022 – March 2023) in Greening TVET.

jhondonga@gmail.com; <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7608-0818>

Ms. Gorrety Maria Juma is a librarian at Ndejje University, Kampala, Uganda. She holds a Master of Library and Information Studies from Uganda Christian University and a Bachelor of Library and Information Science from Makerere University. She has over 11 years of work experience in libraries and has worked in different capacities. Gorrety attended the Carnegie CPD program and presented at the standing conference of Eastern Central Southern African Libraries. She is interested in Continuous Professional Development and Indigenous Knowledge. gorrety18@gmail.com;

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3237-5707>

Prof. Forget Mingiri Kapingura is an associate professor of Economics at the University of Fort Hare, South Africa. His research interests are in Development Economics, with a special focus on the role of finance in reducing poverty and inequality. He has published extensively on Economics issues in various journals, books, and conference presentations.

Fkapingura@ufh.ac.za; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5808-5612>

Dr. Clement Nabutto Lutaaya is a lecturer at Makerere University Kampala Uganda, College of Computing and Information Science, Department of Library and Information Science. She holds a PhD in Information Studies

Contributors

from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, with master's and bachelor's degrees in library and information Science from Makerere University. Clement has vast experience in academic libraries and has worked for over 20 years as Head Librarian. She is interested in the training and development of library staff, academic libraries, knowledge management, ICTs and bibliometric studies, where she has made publications.

clement_lutaaya@yahoo.com; <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4305-4298>

Dr. Mfazo Clifford Madondo holds a PhD in Entrepreneurship. He is an Honorary Lecturer at the School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics, University of KwaZulu-Natal, and the Head of the Department for Development Studies at the St Joseph's Theological Institute NPC. Areas of expertise are Entrepreneurship, Management and Theology of Development. His research interests are Migrant Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Business Management and Marketing Management, Church Management and Development, Feminisation of Migration in Africa, and Quality Assurance in Higher Education.

madondom@ukzn.ac.za; <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1857-3926>

Professor Moses Makgato is a research professor at the Tshwane University of Technology and conducts research in Technology and Vocational Education, Technology Education, as well as the use of digital technology in teaching and learning. He has published over 26 articles in journals and conference proceedings and presented more than 40 papers at national and international conferences. He has peer-reviewed articles in the following journals: African Journal of Research in Maths, Science and Technology, Africa Education Review, South African Journal of Education, International Journal of Educational Science, and the Journal of Educational Studies. He continuously reviews NRF application proposals for projects and ratings. Prof Makgato supervises masters and doctoral students in Technical and Vocational Education, Educational Technology and Technology Education. So far, he has promoted six doctoral and seven master students. He is part of a consortium research project by DHET in Technical and Vocational education with the University of the Witwatersrand and the University of the Free State.

MakgatoM@tut.ac.za; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9416-2777>

Dr. Busani Maseko is a post-doctoral research fellow in the School of Language at the North-West University in South Africa. His research interests are Multilingualism, Language Planning and Policy, Language and Social

Justice, and Sociolinguistics. komaseko@yahoo.co.uk; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9550-7968>

Mr. Perminus Moinogu is an experienced qualitative researcher and panellist with transdisciplinary research interests in International Relations, Migration, Social Cohesion and Entrepreneurship. He holds a master's degree from the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Howard College. His dissertation focused on the economic and diplomatic relations between China and South Africa: Exploring gains and hidden challenges. Mr Moinogu has worked with various research organisations across South Africa, such as Frontline Group SA, The Democracy Development Programme and Upendo Research Promotions, using qualitative and quantitative research methods to conduct fieldwork and collect and process data. perminus2013@gmail.com; <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-1215-8634>

Dr. Tigere Muringa is a media, communication and journalism lecturer and researcher focusing on research, teaching, knowledge management, supervision, and consultancy. Thematically, his research interest revolves around media and cultural studies, corporate communication, government communication, public relations, and new and digital mass communication. Dr Tigere Muringa is a post-doctoral fellow at the University of Free State, South Africa. He is also a Director of Research at M&G Research Consultants. Previously, he worked at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (2019-2021) and Durban University of Technology (2021-2023), where he taught media and journalism modules. He taught Public Relations at Boston Media House, Durban Campus. tigerem@589@gmail.com; <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3773-4959>

Prof. Sybert Mutereko is an Associate Professor of Public Governance and the Academic Leader of Public Governance at the School of Management, IT and Governance. He was the Acting Dean and Head of the School of Management, IT and Governance. Professor Mutereko holds a PhD in Policy and Development Studies and a Master of Policy and Development Studies, both earned from the University of KwaZulu-Natal. He previously served as a post-doctoral scholar in a South African Department of Higher Education and Training and Human Sciences Research Council-funded Labour Market Intelligence Partnership project, where he investigated employability and curriculum responsiveness in post-school education in South Africa. This

Contributors

work led to the development of a manual for the Department of Higher Education and Training to manage curriculum responsiveness in TVET Colleges. Professor Mutereko's research focuses on the supply and demand dynamics of the public sector labour market. He is leading two research projects commissioned by the South African Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority on shared services and waste recycling and reuse. Sybert@ukzn.ac.za; <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7490-5943>

Dr. Janet Muthoni Muthuki is a senior lecturer in Gender Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, in the Department of Gender Studies. She has expertise in Gender Studies, Gender and Development, Peace and Conflict Studies, Feminist Theories, Qualitative Analysis, Transnationalism, Migration, and Social and Cultural Anthropology, and her research interests are Transnationalism, Gender and Development, Peacebuilding, Migration, And Feminism. She is the Academic Leader for Teaching and Learning in the School of Social Sciences at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. muthuki@ukzn.ac.za; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5130-3373>

Prof. Stephen M. Mutula is the Dean and Head of the School of Management, IT and Governance at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. He also served as the Dean and Head of the School of Social Sciences and interim Deputy Vice-Chancellor for the College of Humanities at the same University. He has published widely. Mutulas@ukzn.ac.za; <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3776-8104>

Ms. Nomusa Ndlovu is a lecturer in the Department of Business Management, University of Fort Hare, South Africa. She is pursuing her PhD in Economics, focusing on the role of finance in promoting regional integration with a special focus on the Southern African Development Community. nonoemthombeni@gmail.com; <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7777-2939>

Prof. Dion Nkomo is professor at Rhodes University's School of Languages and Literatures, as Well as SARChI Chair of Intellectualisation of African Languages, Multilingualism and Education. He previously worked under the African Languages Lexical Project at the University of Zimbabwe and the Multilingualism Education Project at the University of Cape Town. His major academic interests include Lexicography, Translation, Terminology, Lang-

uage Planning and Policy, Multilingualism, Sociolinguistics and Higher Education Studies. d.nkomo@ru.ac.za; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0277-6828>

Dr. Aloysius Odii is a lecturer at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, where he obtained a PhD in Demography and Population Studies. He is part of the Anti-Corruption Evidence Research Consortium – led by SOAS, University of London, and in partnership with Health Policy Research Group. alloysius.odii@unn.edu.ng; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2222-0835>

Dr. Adetayo Olorunlana holds PhD in Medical Sociology from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. He is an alumnus of the Association of African Universities, Ghana, where he went through a workshop on Quality Assurance, Higher Education Learner-Centred Teaching Skills, and Leadership Development. He is a fellow of the Centre for African American Research Studies. <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1985-3455>; adetayo.olorunlana@calebuniversity.edu.ng

Prof. Sylvia Manto Ramaligela is an associate professor at the University of Limpopo and holds a PhD in Technology Education from the Tshwane University of Technology and an MEd in Education specialising in Technology Education from the University of Pretoria. She has over 30 years of experience teaching at high schools and tertiary institutions in South Africa and has several publications in peer-reviewed journals on TVET and technology-related topics. Her research interests are vocational pedagogy trends, technology integration in teaching and learning, TVET teacher education and blended learning. Sylvia.ramaligela@ul.ac.za; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3200-2700>

Prof. Asrat Tsegaye is an associate professor and lecturer at the University of Fort Hare, South Africa. His research interests are International Trade, Finance and Development, Growth, Inequality, and Poverty. Atsegaye@ufh.ac.za; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2824-9516>

Dr. Anthony Gathambiri Waiganjo is a lecturer at Kenya's Bomet University College. He is a scholar in Gender Studies. His key research interests are Gender Studies, Gender and Development, Transnationalism,

Contributors

Intersectionality, Refugee Studies, Globalisation, and Feminism. He is the author of *The President*, a book weaved along gender trajectories. His main teaching interests are Gender, Feminism, Globalisation and Development, and Research Methods. Previously, he taught at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, Karatina University and Egerton University in Kenya. awaiGANjo@buc.ac.ke; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5130-3373>



