

Exchange
to change

52

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Alumni
magazine



University of Antwerp

| IOB | Institute of
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Crises as opportunities

Dear alumni and students,

In my introduction to one of the previous E2C sessions, I attempted to define what IOB could represent *for you*, and *through you*: a university-based global community platform, with the hope of cultivating a space for active academic encounters encompassing various forms of knowledge and interests. Within this space, we aim to *co-generate* relevant knowledge and forge global coalitions, in order to find innovative and socially just solutions to address the life-threatening challenges that affect our shared planetary commons. In the meantime, I have had the privilege of witnessing many, perhaps small yet very tangible expressions of this aspiration being realised. This issue of E2C once again presents some clear examples.

We are indeed living in very challenging times; in some ways, the 'turmoil of our time' appears to be becoming even more challenging, multifaceted, and evident. This is evident when we consider recent calamities such as the global pandemic, the increasingly visible effects of negative climate change, and events such as the war in Ukraine and other international geopolitical shifts. Clearly, even the 'Global North' is not immune to such calamities.

Furthermore, despite evident indications of increasing societal and personal awareness regarding exclusion, discrimination, and injustices, as well as the success of certain specific actions to remedy these issues, one concurrently observes not only widespread disinterest and even denial of the urgency of the situation but, even more disconcertingly, clear indications of diminishing policy spaces for the very emancipation, social transformation, and justice that are becoming evident in a growing number of countries. Among other factors, this phenomenon can be attributed to the rise of conservative and authoritarian regimes in these nations. These latter developments pose a threat to, and in some cases, reverse the modest successes achieved in recent years, effectively nullifying our collective efforts of the past years. We are beginning to experience the impact of these developments not only on a global scale but also within the IOB, particularly in relation to some of our institutional partner collaborations. Consequently, these developments also pose a potential threat to affect our colleagues and alumni on a personal level.

Amidst all this turmoil, it's understandable that we may feel overwhelmed by the immense challenges, disheartened by the lack of sustained progress, and disheartened by the

apparent success of opposing forces and catastrophic events. We might even be tempted to lose hope and courage. If you, dear reader, find yourself resonating with these sentiments, please allow me to offer a counteractive perspective and provide some reassurance. Frequently, crises are accompanied by opportunities. When certain doors unexpectedly close, others may open. This compels us to actively and intelligently seek out new opportunities and explore fresh avenues that may arise as a result of the closure of previous ones. Often, this exploration leads to more promising paths, taking us into uncharted territories that we might never have ventured into otherwise, away from the familiar paths in which we may have felt somewhat stuck. The end results can be even better than we could have ever imagined. This is a reality that we also observe at IOB.

In this regard, we find ourselves not only in challenging times but also in genuinely exciting ones. They are exciting due to the pivotal role we play in collaboratively generating innovative responses to our shared planetary challenges and confronting unforeseen counterforces. These challenges compel us to venture beyond the familiar and well-trodden paths, thus adding an extra layer of significance to the concept of a university-based global community platform, as previously defined. Let us come together with renewed vigour and passion, embracing this aspect as well.

At this time of year, we bid farewell to the graduating master students who are now officially welcomed into the IOB alumni family. Simultaneously, we extend a wholehearted welcome to the incoming group of students joining the IOB community and family. Reflecting on the past and addressing our departing students, I hope that your IOB experience has significantly broadened your knowledge, enabling you to look beyond well-trodden paths and discover new opportunities for addressing societal challenges. I also hope you are inclined to actively engage with our collaborative platform in pursuit of these goals. To the incoming students, I encourage you to fully embrace all the opportunities for innovative thinking and learning that our master programs offer, beginning with an exploration of the contents of this E2C. I wish all of you happy reading!

Danny Cassimon
IOB Chair

Africa in the midst of East and West: what policies for current global social-political and economic challenges?

by Divin-Luc Bikubanya and Mark Kadigo



If Africa is geographically an integral part of what is conceived as the Global South, its current geopolitical position places it in the middle of a much-decried Western trend and an increasingly highly-regarded Eastern one. Post-independence Africa has been going through unprecedented political, economic and social transformations for decades now, marked in particular by forms of cooperation designed to help it find its way in a globalised world. Meanwhile, African leadership is shaped by a conflict between internal pressure/support (the population) and external influence (the international community), which are often intertwined. The continent is thus at the heart of major commercial interactions, intense cultural exchanges and significant

diplomatic links that place it between dominant and emerging economic powers. This article takes a look at these multifaceted relationships between Africa, the West and the East, highlighting their important historical aspects, current challenges, and potential avenues for a stronger Africa. At the same time, particular emphasis is placed on the regional dynamics of development within the continent.

The political and economic stakes: a dramatic triangle

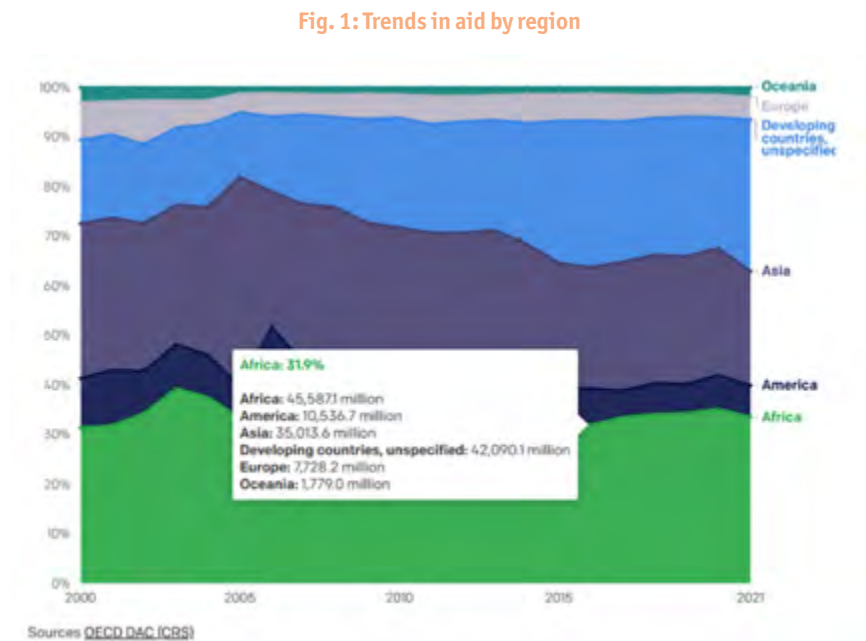
Most (if not all) African countries share a complex and multifaceted relationship with countries of the West, such as the USA, Germany, France and Belgium, among many others and those of the East - for instance, Russia, China, India, etcetera. These relationships normally date back to dark periods in

the continent's history, when foreign powers took advantage of the chaos they sometimes sowed in order to consolidate their political or economic influence. On the one hand, with regard to the West, many commentators agree that the backdrop to its relations with the African continent is strongly linked to its colonial heritage, which still lingers in many African countries to this day. This is the case of, for example, eight states in West Africa and six in Central Africa, which still use the Francs CFA, pegged to the euro and then guaranteed by the French Treasury, as their common currency of reference. On the other hand, although it is not clear how long countries in the East have been present in Africa, specific historical facts seem to justify their presence, which is even greater today. This is the case, for example, with Russia, which, during the Cold War, made its mark

by supporting certain African countries in their liberation movements against the (former) colonial powers. While this commitment was only momentarily successful, particularly following the decline of the Soviet Union, it is now increasingly being used to rebalance or disable the Western powers present in many countries. The upheavals and anti-French sentiment in Mali (since 18 August 2020), Burkina Faso (since end-January and early October 2022), the Central African Republic (CAR, since November 2022)¹ and Niger (since 26 July 2023) are convincing examples of this frustration, which sees Russian power as the alternative to Western imperialism.

This historical and current configuration of actors between Africa, the West and the East seems to follow the schematisation of the dramatic triangle or Karpam triangle, which illustrates the different possible roles and their interactions in an unbalanced relationship. Within these interactions, Africa seems to play the role of the victim, always the recipient of aid. This is the service provided by the transfer of funds and resources from the richest to the poorest countries, known as Official Development Assistance (ODA). Figure 1 below from the OECD shows the evolution of ODA in the 21st century. With the United States, the European Union's institutions and major economies and Japan as its main donors, Africa is the biggest beneficiary of ODA, with the main sectors targeted being humanitarian aid, economic infrastructure (transport, energy, banking system, construction, etc.), health, education and, a long way behind, environmental protection².

ODA thus appears to be attractive to actors who are often perceived as persecutors, acting on the victim by providing resources. Apart from the cycle of aid and debt, other challenges such as economic dependence (particularly with the export of raw materials), political influence (particularly with Western interference in countries' internal affairs) and the migratory crisis (to name but a few) eat away at cooperation between providers of resources to the West and recipients in Africa. It is also, in part, on the basis of these links of



exploitation and dependence on aid, whose social and economic effects on communities are barely palpable, that a third player in the triangle comes into play: the saviour. The pro-Russian leanings and adulation of a 'new imperialist' in many French-speaking African countries is a valid echo of this configuration. While Russia benefits from propaganda aimed at redefining the international order, the fact remains that this campaign, as during the Cold War period, tends to infantilise African countries by presenting itself as the only possible way out of their current problems. The campaign to question the viability of democracy as a model of governance and the recent promise of free grain deliveries to six African countries (Zimbabwe, Somalia, Eritrea, Mali, CAR and Burkina Faso) are clear examples of this. In essence, in seeking to counterbalance the dominance of the Western powers in the global sphere, Russia is looking on the one hand for an emerging market with economic opportunities, particularly in terms of investment and trade, and on the other for political alliances, including military cooperation aimed at strengthening its defence industry and increasing its bargaining power on international issues. The ethical challenges of this engagement, particularly in terms of human rights, remain open to question. As a preamble to this questioning, it is

not inconvenient to point out the opaque and unofficial nature of the methods used (notably through the infamous Wagner Group), which are often low-cost but whose influence is far-reaching.

Impact of dependence on Africa's sovereignty

While the end of the 19th century saw the African 'cake' carved up and distributed among the powers of the time and then exploited to the hilt for at least the whole of the 20th century, in the 21st century (and probably beyond) the continent continues to attract external actors and powers seeking either to establish their domination or to maintain it. Whether it is the former or the latter, this modus operandi, which is clearly based on patron-client relations, raises questions about a principle such as respect for the sovereignty of states, which was nevertheless dearly (and perhaps only theoretically?) won with the independence efforts of the 1950s and 1960s. In what follows, I describe the harmful consequences of this infringement on sovereignty, firstly at the political level, and secondly in terms of economic dependence.

At present, it seems apparent that the African political landscape is caught up in a tension between 'democratic' aspirations as perceived by the West, and the latter's geopolitical agendas. The renewal of forums such as the US-

Fig. 2: Demand for cement by region

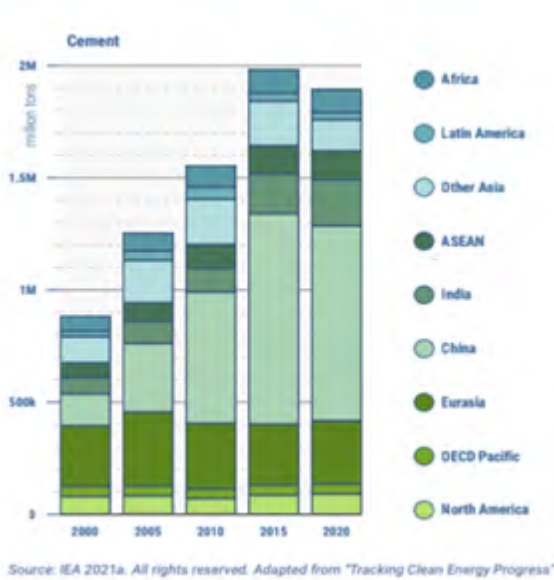
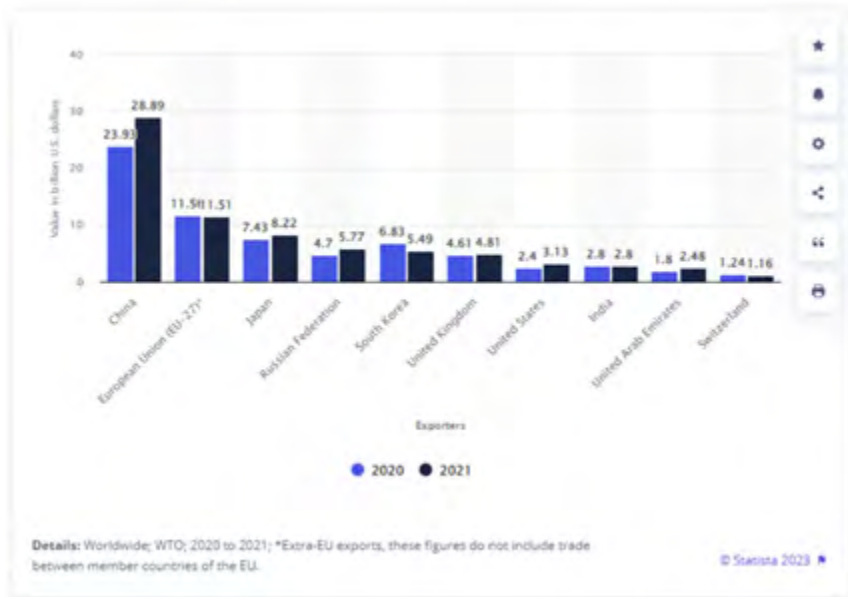


Fig. 3: Value of exports of building materials around the world from 2020 to 2021



Africa Leaders’ Summit (most recent in December 2022), Afrique-France (most recent in October 2021), Russia-Africa (most recent in July 2023), China-Africa (most recent in November 2021), India-Africa (most recent in October 2015), Japan-Africa (most recent in August 2022) and Turkey-Africa (most recent in December 2021) demonstrate the renewed interest in a struggle ‘for’ Africa. These platforms are becoming veritable

arenas for expressing or challenging the African policy line established by these powers (developed or emerging). In terms of expression, the need to peg financial aid to democratisation and good governance as announced by France in the 90s, is a striking example. In terms of challenges, it can be seen that China’s soft power policy is constantly faced with the need to act in favour of the development of good governance in

Africa (to please the expectations of the international community) or to pursue at all costs its historical principles, which are mainly focused on investment and trade. It is a choice between non-interference and the famous “business is business”.

In terms of economic dependence, the extroverted nature of many African economies makes them vulnerable, on the one hand, to fluctuations in world commodity prices and, on the other, to unforeseen shocks of all kinds. The first shock since the start of the second millennium was the financial crisis of 2007-08, which was (consequently) followed by the creation in 2009 of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and prompted a number of developing countries to reconsider their economic dependence on the USA following the collapse of Western financial networks and the slowdown in supply and demand in the USA. Twelve years after this turmoil, the global health crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic has not spared key sectors of the African economy, particularly in the extractive industries. This is the case, for example, with the demand for construction materials, which is extremely important in Africa (Figure 2), and which has undergone enormous upheaval, particularly with the impact of the pandemic (WTO, 2021). The consequences of commercial dependence on China - by far the world’s leading producer and exporter of materials (Figure 3) - in this area are such that any shock in the value chain, particularly in terms of extraction, processing and transport, would drastically affect the availability and cost of these materials (UNEP, 2021). Yet, given their impact on the domestic market, these materials (such as sand and gravel) are seen as “development minerals” and very important for urbanisation purposes (Franks et al., 2016).

Just as the value of cooperation with economic and/or military powers in terms of infrastructure projects (roads, railways, ports, airports, etc.) is often

acknowledged, the voracious appetite of Africa's 'benefactors' for its natural resources is fuelling debate about the nature of these relationships. Concerns about the unequal distribution of benefits (relating to local development, for example), labour practices and human rights, the lack of transparency and accountability, and environmental sustainability are continually growing in Chinese-operated mines and construction sites in DR Congo as they are in many countries of Sub-Saharan Africa (Zimbabwe for platinum, Guinea for bauxite, Zambia for copper, Mauritania for iron, South Africa for cobalt, etc.). Added to this, the issues of debt sustainability and accumulation mentioned above are putting Africa in a position where it is ill-equipped to ensure its political and economic sovereignty.

How can Africa play its cards right?

Faced with the challenges posed by globalisation, the current geopolitical tug-of-war and the emerging climate crisis, there are a number of considerations that need to be integrated into Africa's development programmes. The social, economic and even political needs expressed by many African countries to their external partners, past or present, jeopardise the quality of the relationships that are established and, ultimately, the autonomy of action and reaction of Africans within the dramatic triangle in which they are trapped. Imagination and the practical implementation of exit strategies are, therefore, all the more urgent.

An attempt to move in this direction would involve strengthening regional integration and cooperation between African countries (Akidenle, 1985). As part of a regional and sub-regional dynamic, the African Union should, ideally, genuinely constitute a body for intra-African cooperation, by making it possible to create mechanisms and platforms for exchanging practices and knowledge between regions in order to deal with the institutional, security and economic problems raging in Africa. Drawing on natural assets (in terms of mining, forestry and lake

resources), and the contributions of digital transformation, there is reason to believe that a synergistic approach by (1) governments, (2) industries and (3) local communities in the extractive sector could generate employment opportunities on a larger scale and promote skills development for the benefit of local populations. Ultimately, it is about creating wealth through rational and sustainable investment to ensure the economic sovereignty of African countries while creating a prosperous and resilient future.

Provided that this cooperation is aimed at African decision-making for African problems (and beyond), such a dynamic would augur well for African leadership to find its place in the geopolitical upheaval we are experiencing. For example, while the quality of the diplomatic (and perhaps military) involvement of ECOWAS countries in the political (and economic) crisis in Niger since 26 July 2023 remains open to debate, this gesture, by its very existence, is proof that Africa is waking up to the problems that concern it. The brutal (in terms of occurrence) and delicate (in terms of management) nature of regime overthrows in the African political arena prompts us to (self-) question the responsibility of African leaders and their understanding of the future of their populations.

While it has been reported that, over the past three decades, nearly 80% of the 27 coups d'Etat in sub-Saharan Africa have taken place in French-speaking countries³, the recurrence of such events in this specific area (and elsewhere) calls for a thorough re-examination of the internal politics of these countries in order to see more clearly the role played by (powerful) external actors. This would involve, for example, leaders guaranteeing their citizens fundamental freedoms and putting in place safeguards against the thirst for power that characterises many African elites. When these challenges (and many others) are not dealt with rigorously, there is a risk that African political leaders will excel in the search for a persecutor far from their own comfort zone. Clearly, this seems to

be the attitude of the authoritarian and putschist regimes that are taking hold here and there, comfortable in using the West to justify their inability to govern their own countries effectively. Faced with such a dynamic, the adulation of an external partner with equally imperialist overtones can only reproduce the same effects of exploitation and dependence.

ENDNOTES

1. This date marks the end of the *Décanat*, or diplomatic privileges historically granted to France.
2. <https://data.one.org/topics/official-development-assistance/>
3. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-66406137>

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Student stories

Examining the Sustainable Effects of Cash Transfers on Gender Dynamics, Empowerment, and Resilience: Evidence From Rural Uganda.

Martha Mukui Mutua - DEM

The fieldwork I conducted for my dissertation examined the sustainable effects of cash transfers on gender dynamics, empowerment, and resilience in rural Uganda. Most research on the cash transfer spectrum mainly looks at short-term impacts. With my dissertation, I am trying to add to the literature by looking at the sustainability of the effects after program closure. I conducted primary qualitative research through life-story interviews to understand if the effects experienced when the program was in operation were still visible almost four years after the cash transfers stopped. Moreover, if they were not, I aimed to understand the circumstances and reasons behind it.

This study builds upon an unconditional cash transfer program in Uganda where for two years (2017 to 2019), all the adults in a rural western Ugandan village received monthly transfers. Concurrently, an impact evaluation was conducted by a research team composed of three IOB and three Ugandan researchers to investigate social network and collective effects. My current research builds upon this study by conducting life-story interviews with about 44 respondents split between 25 beneficiaries, 15 non-beneficiaries, and four key informants. Because I do not speak the local language, I worked together with two research assistants from Uganda Christian University to collect the primary data. Even though I could not speak the language, I could interact with some respondents who spoke Swahili or English. Overall, it was a demanding yet exceptionally valuable educational journey.

The data collection took about two weeks, but the planning process was the most time-consuming part. This step involved designing survey instruments, consents, and life story diagrams to allow interviewees to detail their lives and experiences. Preparing those materials took quite a lot of time, but I had the



help of my supervisor, Nathalie Holvoet, throughout the whole process and the coordinator, Sara De Wachter.

The sustainability of cash transfer effects is a relatively understudied area, so with the availability of a program completed four years ago, I saw it as an excellent opportunity to contribute to the literature through mixed research methods research. Combining quantitative data and life-story research allowed me to measure sustainability in a more in-depth way and understand the underlying causal mechanisms that enable or prevent sustainability.

Overall, a key takeaway from this experience is the significance of adaptability and flexibility in research. Despite adverse weather conditions, challenging accessibility to the villages, and language barriers, I successfully established constructive connections with communities and families. While some local practices clashed with my scholarly and feminist beliefs, I embraced a respectful and open attitude towards diverse individuals and groups, nurturing my personal growth and the progress of my research.

Seeing through the Partnership Governance of Family Welfare Empowerment Organization through the Lens of Women's Empowerment Agenda

Fitri Ayunisa - GOV

In writing my dissertation, I focused on the partnership governance of the Family Welfare Empowerment Organisation, known as Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga (PKK), established in the 1960s in Indonesia. PKK is a women's community organisation with four million PKK members (or cadres), aiming to empower women and participate in welfare development programs from the local to national levels.

Regardless of my mother's role as a former PKK cadre and her inspiration in my research on PKK, its history is closely intertwined with the changes in Indonesia's government. Decentralisation has brought about a significant transformation within PKK. It has evolved from being a fully funded organisation to becoming a semi-governmental entity that now actively engages in partnership governance with various stakeholders. Through this approach, PKK aims to enhance the women's empowerment program among its cadres and contribute more to the community's needs. This is another reason driving my curiosity to address questions about how the women's empowerment program is implemented and expressed among PKK cadres within the community, as well as the challenges associated with these partnership relations.

During my fieldwork, I visited PKK in a subdistrict in Kota Bogor. Despite its proximity to the capital city of Jakarta, this location was the very area where PKK was initially established, thus pioneering the women's empowerment agenda through a community-based approach. Up to this point, I conducted in-depth interviews with 20 informants, which included PKK

cadres and relevant authorities, and engaged in several participant observations. Consequently, the utilisation of these methodologies has proven beneficial in addressing my study objectives and offering recommendations for enhancing PKK's partnerships in the near future. Undoubtedly, I encountered numerous challenges during my data collection. Frequently, I felt like an outsider due to the significant age gap between me and the PKK cadres. This age difference made it challenging for me to fully grasp their narratives, which were rooted in different generations. Additionally, the language barrier posed a considerable hurdle. Despite the relatively short distance between Kota Bogor and Jakarta, PKK cadres commonly used the Sundanese language, which features dialects and accents distinct from those of Jakarta. Consequently, I had to engage in our conversations gradually and employ triangulation techniques. Thirdly, due to the limited duration of the fieldwork, I couldn't gain a comprehensive understanding of the area's demographics or delve deeply into its social issues. Nevertheless, I hope that my brief fieldwork, supported by literature reviews, will still result in a high-quality dissertation that everyone can appreciate.

Overall, all the moments I have learned and experienced during my fieldwork have deepened my interest in community care workers in Indonesia and their challenges. In the near future, I intend to conduct further research on how governmental and non-governmental agencies utilise them within the context of tokenisation and domestication, which still persist among PKK cadres and Indonesian women. Additionally, I aim to continue advocating for the recognition of PKK cadres and their role in community management, as they remain largely unnoticed in specific sectors of Indonesia.

cadres and relevant authorities, and engaged in several participant observations. Consequently, the utilisation of these methodologies has proven beneficial in addressing my study objectives and offering recommendations for enhancing PKK's partnerships in the near future. Undoubtedly, I encountered



Energise Cameroon: a new avenue for green remittances?

Hannah Dowes - GLOB

I did my dissertation fieldwork in Cameroon on the topic of remittances, which is the money that migrants send back to their origin countries. I had the opportunity to work on a project that uses remittances to invest in solar energy in Cameroon. So I spent four weeks at Solarly and gained insight into how a solar energy company works, how they try to convince people to buy the solar installations, how they install them and how they get around the country trying to find clients. In previous years, I was very involved in the topic of migration. Now that I am delving into development studies, I am interested in finding the nexus between them both: migration and development. Remittances, in this case, are a great materialisation of this nexus. Many migrants who live abroad have this obligation, this desire, this need to send money back home.

I was in the capital, Yaoundé, most of the time but I also managed to visit an installation outside the city, hospitals, schools and communities in rural villages. During those visits, we talked to chiefs and villagers about the program and how they can use solar energy in their favor. I had never visited

Cameroon before, and was positively surprised by the warmth of the people and diversity of the country. I found everything on the streets to be highly impressive. There was always something to see, to do, to eat, and to listen to.

Despite having difficulties moving around, I managed to learn a lot from the materialisation of all I had been studying during the last year at IOB. Everything I saw and experienced changed the way I think and feel about development studies. I think it is so important, if you want to get into policy-making and make a change, to know what is there on the ground. I am glad that I managed to do that with this trip. I really did go to rural villages; places I think I would never have gone to as a tourist. I talked to people and they trusted me because I was with the company, which gave me an insight into how people live. Everyone wants to make a change and live a good life and they all have the same right to do so. This motivated me to keep doing what I am doing and maybe to go back, or go to other countries, and keep researching and learning.



COOKING WITH IOB

The previous year in the lives of IOB students primarily revolved around tight deadlines, rigorous exams, intensive classes, and demanding assignments. However, this wasn't the sole focus. Amid the whirlwind of our academic pursuits, we managed to carve out moments for collective gatherings, which turned out to be our refuge during times of stress and challenges. A particularly cherished means of coming together was through 'potluck' events. Inviting all IOB students, these gatherings entailed each person contributing a dish and beverages to share. These occasions frequently featured dishes that harkened back to the traditional flavors of students' home countries. Once everyone had gathered, the grand feast would commence. The diverse and tantalizing flavors took us on a culinary journey

around the globe, strengthening our sense of community as we bonded over the shared experience of tasting foods from diverse continents. These gatherings weren't just about discovering new tastes; they were evenings filled with laughter, camaraderie, and the enjoyment of meticulously crafted dishes, prepared with care and affection by our peers.

For many students, these potluck gatherings stand out as some of the most cherished memories, having woven tighter threads in the fabric of our relationships. It brings us great joy to feature a selection of these treasured recipes in the pages of the Exchange to Change magazine!

basic chili sin carne recipe

(Belgian style, not spicy)

- 2 onions
- 4 cloves of garlic
- 2 red bell peppers
- Vegetarian meat (ground meat)
- Burritos seasoning package
- 1 can of black beans
- The juice of the black beans
- 1 can of peeled tomatoes

In the order written above, put everything in a big pan and stir. Then let it simmer for about 20min.

You can make some rice on the side as well.

Serve with cheddar, avocado, sour cream, hot sauce and lime.

- ☑ in a tortilla wrap for a burrito
- ☑ in a bowl with Doritos



chapati: a popular kenyan flatbread

Here's a recipe for making Ingredients:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup warm water
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil or ghee (clarified butter)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- Extra flour for dusting

Instructions:

- In a large mixing bowl, combine the all-purpose flour and salt. Mix well.
- Make a well in the center of the flour mixture and gradually add warm water while kneading the dough with your hand. Continue kneading until you have a smooth and elastic dough. If the dough feels too sticky, add a little more flour. If it's too dry, add a little more water.
- Once the dough is well-kneaded, drizzle about a tablespoon of vegetable oil or ghee over the dough and coat it evenly.
- Cover the dough with a damp cloth or plastic wrap and let it rest for about 30 minutes. This resting period allows the gluten to relax and makes the dough easier to roll out.
- After the resting time, divide the dough into small equal-sized balls (about the size of a golf ball).
- On a floured surface, take one dough ball and roll it out with a rolling pin into a thin, round circle. Dust with flour as needed to prevent sticking.
- Heat a flat, non-stick frying pan or griddle over medium-high heat.
- Place the rolled-out dough circle on the hot pan and cook until small bubbles start to appear on the surface (about 1-2 minutes).
- Flip the chapati and cook the other side for another 1-2 minutes or until golden brown spots appear.
- Remove the chapati from the pan and place it on a plate.

- Optionally, you can brush the chapati with a little ghee or butter while it's still warm to add extra flavor.
- Repeat the rolling and cooking process with the remaining dough balls.
- Serve the hot and freshly made chapatis with your favorite Kenyan dishes, such as sukuma wiki (collard greens), nyama choma (grilled meat), or any other stew or curry.
- Enjoy your delicious homemade Kenyan chapatis!



traditional pico de gallo

Ingredients for 4 people

- ½ onion
- 2 medium tomatoes
- 2 tablespoons of fresh coriander
- 1 fresh jalapeño pepper (optional)
- 1 lemon
- Salt

Preparation

1. Finely chop the onion and put it in a bowl.
2. Chop the tomatoes, discarding the seeds (which can be used to spread bread, for example), and add them to the onion.
3. Chop the cilantro and add it to the previous mixture.
4. Remove the seeds and white veins from the jalapeño. Chop it and add it to the previous mixture (optional)
5. Season with lemon juice, a bit of vinegar and salt to taste.
6. Serve at room temperature with fried tortillas and/or refried beans and/or cream/ white cheese.



chicken adobo

Ingredients (serves 4 to 6):

- 500 g of Chicken (cut preferably thigh and wing part)
- 1 cup soy sauce (Filipino soy sauce 🍷)
- ½ cup vinegar
- 1 cup of water
- 1 tbsp peppercorns
- 3-5 pcs of bay leaf
- 5 cloves of garlic (crushed)
- 1 small red onion (chopped)
- 1 tbsp of sugar
- 1 tbsp of oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

Optional:

- 1 tbsp oyster sauce
- Fried potato (sliced like chips)
- Hardboiled eggs
- Spring onion
- Chilli or 1 tsp of chili garlic oil

Method:

1. Heat the oil in the pan, and fry the chicken pieces for around 3 minutes per side, then set aside.
2. In the same pan, sauté garlic and onion.
3. Put back the chicken
4. Add the soy sauce, peppercorns, bay leaf, then water, then let it cook for 20-30 mins. Simmer occasionally
5. Put the vinegar, and let it cook for 10 minutes or depending to the dryness you want.
6. Put the optionals (potato, egg, spring onion) on top of it
7. Enjoy

Artificial Intelligence for the Global South: solution or danger?

by Diana Tiholaz



Artificial intelligence (AI) refers to the simulation of human intelligence in machines that can learn, reason, and perform tasks autonomously. While it presents exciting opportunities for humanity, such as enhancing productivity in all economic spheres, healthcare advancements, and improved decision-making, AI also carries potential dangers. Concerns include job displacement, ethical dilemmas surrounding AI-driven decisions, and the potential for biases in algorithms that could perpetuate inequality. Striking a balance between harnessing AI's potential for the betterment of society while mitigating its risks remains a crucial challenge for humanity.

The above text and image were generated in just a few seconds by the AI platforms ChatGPT and Kandinsky 2.1¹, responding to my request to explain artificial intelligence and the dangers and opportunities it represents for humanity. AI can now mimic what has until now been considered an exclusively human ability: creativity. Something that just a few years ago existed only in the realms of science fiction movies and books is currently threatening to replace the writers of these movies and books. Even Hollywood writers now fear losing work to AI (Hornik, 2023, July 27). As my “artificially intelligent”

contributor clarified above, there are infinite possibilities for AI use. Healthcare, one of the most labor-intensive and intellectually demanding fields that exists, is witnessing a revolution following the integration of AI (Davenport & Kalakota, 2019) in clinical practice, research, public health, and administrative tasks (European Parliament, 2022). For instance, AI models may substantially improve or, in some cases, are already improving decision-making during surgery by integrating diverse sources of information (patient risk factors, anatomic information, etc.) (European

Parliament, 2022). Since 2017, we have had the first robot, Sophia, who received citizenship² and currently holds the position of Innovation Ambassador for the United Nations Development Programme (Leigh-Hewitson, 2022). Now, Sophia and other robots are active participants in international conferences and summits (Cost, 2023, July 7). Judicial systems are also using AI. Several jurisdictions in the USA have adopted AI technology to calculate recidivism risks and make pre-trial detention decisions (Contini, n.d.) while judges in India and Colombia ask ChatGPT for advice (Cost, 2023, March 29; Taylor,

2023, February 3). AI is also a powerful tool to deal with massive data collected in agriculture, such as data on plant growth, animal behavior, market access, and consumer preferences, and paves the way to more efficient production and agrifood value-chains, improved well-being of workers and higher standards of animal welfare (De Baerdemaeker et al., 2023). AI is also taking the education system by storm. The successful launch of ChatGPT, a powerful language model from OpenAI, reached one million users in only five days³ (Haque et al., 2022). Early adopters of ChatGPT expressed largely positive sentiments on their experience with the platform (Haque et al., 2022), while academics have been stunned by ChatGPT's essay-writing skills, and its ability to generate responses to exam questions and solve coding challenges in a matter of seconds (Hern, 2022). This, however, forced universities around the globe to "do something about" it quickly and choose between resisting AI (banning it) and adopting it as a complement to traditional teaching methods (Mucharazy Cano et al., 2023). The list of fields implementing AI is long and exciting - but what does AI bring to the Global South? Will it offer solutions to complex problems like climate change, poverty, and inequality or, on the contrary, will it aggravate the ills of the Global South by deepening the economic and digital gap between North and South? There is no answer to this complex question. We will, most likely, witness a mix of the two scenarios on the ground. Instead, we discuss here why reflecting on AI and the Global South is important, the opportunities and risks AI represents for the Global South and we consider several strategies for a responsible development and deployment of AI in the Global South.

The what and why of AI and its risks for the Global South

'Global South' and 'Artificial Intelligence' are difficult terms, so before we discuss what AI means for the Global South, we will follow the foremost tradition of academic research and clarify these two concepts. 'Global South' has a broader meaning than 'third world' or

'developing countries' - the terms it replaced. Being more than a geo-political term, it transcends borders and exists in both the so-called Western or developed countries and Southern or developing countries. This definition covers both the migrant workers living in New York in dreadful conditions and the inhabitants of Brazil's favelas. This conceptualisation of the Global South differentiates between billionaires and impoverished citizens around the world. De Sousa Santos (2016), who contributed to the conceptualisation and promotion of this term, explains that the 'Global South' is a metaphor for human suffering at the global level. In other words, the Global South accounts for excluded, silenced, and marginalised populations worldwide. The term 'Artificial Intelligence' was coined at the 1965 Dartmouth Conference and was defined as the creation of machines capable of mimicking intelligent behavior and performing task-specific activities (Heng et al., 2022). AI typically uses pattern recognition, reasoning and decision-making, often dealing with complex conditions such as noisy data, uncertainty and the need for in-situ solutions (Wall et al., 2021). Nowadays, AI is an umbrella term covering machine learning (e.g. when computer programs learn from and adapt to new data without being specifically programmed to do so), natural language processing (e.g. use of computer algorithms to analyze or synthesise human speech and text), robotics, and the internet of things (IoT) among others (Financial Times, n.d.; Heng et al., 2022). AI-related opportunities for the Global South are indefinite and unforeseen. AI promises to address problems in sectors such as healthcare, agriculture, social services, and natural resource management. AI's negative impact on the Global South is also obvious but often ignored and dismissed as minor or with short term effects (Muggah & Szabó, 2023, May 29). To generalise, the main concern is that it is the representatives of privileged groups who are primarily involved in the development of AI technology and business models (Chinmayi, 2019). Whether these privileged representatives are white

men from the Global North or qualified specialists from Global South with a high level of education acquired in the Global North, the concern remains the same. The AI systems and models developed will have little consideration for frequent power cuts and internet shutdowns. The developers will also be less concerned with the risk of illicit diversion of public funds or massive surveillance to oppress vulnerable populations. Furthermore, these AI models do not come with solutions for remediating the massive loss of jobs for low skilled workers, who are being replaced with AI. Despite the massive potential opportunities, these AI-developed systems and models at best will not fit the Global South contexts, and at worst will exacerbate the existing systemic inequality and oppression (Chinmayi, 2019). Before we consider the way forward for AI in the Global South, we will take a closer look at AI's opportunities and risks.

AI: Opportunities and Risks for the Global South

We asked ChatGPT about the AI-driven opportunities and risks for the Global South - see the text box below for its response. Apart from overgeneralised answers and a focus on countries located in the geographical South, this list corresponds, unsurprisingly, with the one in the literature. We will discuss just a few examples.

Remote diagnostics and medicine, as well as crowdsourcing for health, are supported by sensors built into mobile phones, promising to transform healthcare by making the transfer and analysis of large amounts of data faster and more reliable and enabling patients to interact with health workers more closely (Wall et al., 2021). An important component of these AI technologies is analytical predictions based on large amounts of data.

Text Box: ChatGPT response to the question about AI-related opportunities and risks for the Global South

AI opportunities for Global South:

- 1. Improved Healthcare:** AI can enhance healthcare services in the Global South by facilitating early diagnosis, personalized treatment plans, and telemedicine initiatives, especially in remote and underserved areas. AI-powered medical devices and diagnostic tools can help bridge healthcare gaps and improve patient outcomes.
- 2. Agricultural Advancements:** AI-driven precision agriculture can optimize crop yield, predict weather patterns, and manage resources more efficiently. This can lead to increased food production, reduced waste, and better livelihoods for farmers in the Global South.
- 3. Education Enhancement:** AI-based educational platforms can provide personalized learning experiences, adapt to individual student needs, and support access to quality education, even in areas with limited educational resources.
- 4. Financial Inclusion:** AI-powered fintech solutions can enable greater financial inclusion by offering innovative banking services, micro-loans, and digital payment systems, benefiting the unbanked and underbanked populations in the Global South.
- 5. Disaster Management:** AI can aid in early warning systems for natural disasters, such as earthquakes and floods, helping authorities and communities to prepare and respond more effectively, potentially saving lives and minimizing damage.
- 6. Language Translation:** AI-driven language translation tools can break down language barriers, promoting cross-border communication, trade, and cultural exchange in the Global South.
- 7. Economic Growth and Job Creation:** Embracing AI technologies can stimulate economic growth and lead to the creation of new job opportunities, particularly in tech-related sectors, supporting economic development in the region.
- 8. Environmental Sustainability:** AI can contribute to environmental conservation efforts by monitoring wildlife, detecting illegal activities like poaching, and optimizing energy consumption in industries to reduce carbon footprints.
- 9. Public Services Optimization:** AI can help governments optimize public services, such as transportation, waste management, and urban planning, leading to improved efficiency and better quality of life for citizens.
- 10. Climate Change Mitigation:** AI can be employed to analyze climate data, model scenarios, and recommend policies to combat climate change, supporting the Global South in meeting sustainability goals.

AI risks for the Global South:

- 1. Digital Divide Widening:** The Global South often lacks access to reliable internet connectivity and advanced technological infrastructure. Rapid AI advancement could exacerbate the digital divide, leaving certain communities and regions further marginalized and excluded from the benefits of AI.
- 2. Bias and Fairness:** AI systems can inherit biases present in the data they are trained on. If these data are biased or unrepresentative of diverse populations in the Global South, AI applications might perpetuate or amplify existing inequalities and biases, leading to unfair treatment.
- 3. Data Privacy and Security:** Inadequate data protection regulations and weak cybersecurity measures in some Global South countries could lead to unauthorized access to sensitive data collected by AI systems, resulting in privacy breaches and potential misuse.
- 4. Job Displacement:** AI automation could disproportionately impact sectors that are major sources of employment in the Global South, such as agriculture and manufacturing. Without proper mechanisms for re-skilling and job transition, large-scale job displacement could lead to socio-economic challenges.
- 5. Ethical Considerations:** The adoption of AI raises ethical concerns related to transparency, accountability, and responsibility. The Global South may face challenges in developing and enforcing AI ethics frameworks and regulations.
- 6. Lack of Localized Solutions:** Many AI models and solutions are developed for languages and contexts of the Global North. This lack of localized AI tools might limit the applicability and relevance of AI to pressing issues in the Global South.
- 7. Resource Constraints:** Developing and deploying AI technologies require significant resources, including funding, infrastructure, and skilled labor. Limited resources in the Global South could hinder the effective implementation of AI solutions.
- 8. Dependency on Foreign Technologies:** Reliance on AI technologies developed in the Global North might lead to economic and technological dependence, limiting the ability of Global South countries to shape AI for their specific needs.
- 9. Cultural and Societal Impacts:** AI applications might not align with cultural norms and societal values in the Global South, potentially leading to resistance and challenges in their adoption.
- 10. Lack of Regulation and Governance:** Some Global South countries might lack comprehensive AI regulations and governance frameworks. This could result in the unregulated use of AI technologies, leading to unintended consequences.

migrant settlements across Colombia (information shared with humanitarian agencies such as the UNHCR and ICRC) (Tingzon et al., 2023).

All of the above-mentioned opportunities are dependent upon improving infrastructure and connectivity and adopting advanced technologies in the Global South countries, such as the rollout of fiber and 4G networks. The cost of these technologies, usually developed in the Global North, is enormous compared to traditional methods. Therefore, it is not certain that AI technologies will be deployed in the Global South, and so there is a high risk that the North-South digital gap will widen (Wall et al., 2021).

Apart from the cost of building the infrastructure, implementing AI technologies is not without problems. For instance, different forms of technological coloniality come into play (Bon et al., 2022). The technologies deployed for free by transnational tech firms in Global South countries are often offered in exchange for market penetration, tax savings, branding and policy influence (Bon et al., 2022). In addition, AI-based technologies facilitate data extraction from the Global South - data that later on is used to create services sold back to the Global South (Chinmayi, 2019).

AI-based devices used in agriculture and nature conservation may inadvertently harm farm animals, local wildlife, humans, and their property (e.g. emitting toxic material, fumes, and waste) (Wall et al., 2021). Moreover, AI could easily replace a quarter of jobs in the OECD countries, with the Eastern European countries being the most vulnerable (Reuters, 2023, July 11). Similarly, Goldman Sachs recently estimated that as many as 300 million jobs are at risk of being replaced by AI (Muggah & Szabó, 2023, May 29). The citizens of the Global South worldwide will be hit the hardest since the jobs AI will replace are mostly

Similarly, agriculture in the Global South could benefit massively from the combination of AI with technologies such as big data, cloud computing, remote sensing, agri-robotics, and IoT sensors (De Baerdemaeker et al., 2023). Drones, for instance, can be used in farming for aerial observation, sensing, and spraying pesticides. The data provided by drones and IoT sensors enable farmers to make informed decisions (Wall et al., 2021). The same technologies can be used for surveying and mapping forests and biodiversity to contribute to nature conservation and provide accurate predictions of potential fires and floods.

AI can also be used in intelligent energy management. IoT facilitates the collection and analysis of data from different sources and devices that can then be used to inform energy companies about power requirements, potential faults, electric device health, and power quality (Wall et al., 2021). There are already attempts to employ such technologies in Kenya (Fobi et al., 2022). Policy planning and implementation can be greatly facilitated by AI-provided data. Leverage computer vision and satellite images are already generating nationwide wealth estimates across the Philippines and identifying informal

unskilled.

AI-based technologies can endanger lives, breach human rights, and may lead to dystopian scenarios regarding further human development when implemented inadequately or with malicious intentions. Predictive analytics tools will, in an unprecedented way, strengthen the surveillance capacity and, respectively, the power of authoritarian regimes. China's infamous social credit system is a good example (Lee, 2020, August 9). Moreover, the sophisticated Chinese surveillance system has now been exported to other Global South countries to control their citizens (Chinmayi, 2019).

Most AI-facilitated platforms were created for societies with a healthy

media and civil society ecosystem. Nevertheless, even in democratic societies with due consideration for human rights, algorithmic design flaws and biases can lead to privacy breaches and identity-based discrimination. For example, the AI system built to help US judges assess the likelihood of recidivism erroneously determined that black defendants are at far greater risk of re-offending than white ones (Muggah et al., 2023, March 2). There are numerous examples of other forms of AI discrimination, such as an algorithm that whitens black and Asian faces (Bon et al., 2022). The possibility of intentional algorithmic collusion should not be ruled out either, as in the Forex scandal, where several financial institutions

manipulated trading algorithms for their own benefit (European CEO, 2014, December 11). Indeed, when free media and civil society are absent, as is the case in many Global South communities, the consequences can be extreme and tragic. For instance, Facebook and its AI algorithms contributed to the Rohingya genocide in Myanmar, after being used by state-controlled institutions to spread hate (Chinmayi, 2019).

AI for the good of the Global South: The way forward

"Unless we learn how to prepare for and avoid the potential risks, AI could be the worst event in the history of our civilisation," declared Steven Hawking



(Kharpal, 2017, November 7). We should not, however, focus only on the contexts in which these technologies are developed. AI may have the effect of magnifying the Global South's ills. Thus, careful consideration of these risks and the voices of representatives from the Global South should accompany the use of AI in these communities.

The way forward for AI in the Global South should be based on complex strategies. We consider just a few of these in order to feed the reflection and discussion around this topic. One of these strategies should focus on capacity building and education. We should invest in AI education and skills in the Global South to foster local expertise and knowledge. This way, citizens can be involved in the collaborative development and deployment of AI technologies in their communities. In this vein, researchers have proposed the creation of community-oriented and inclusive platforms where local communities gain access to information and skills and use them to develop localised AI solutions (Bon et al., 2022). These skills creation strategies should also be coordinated with strategies for sustainable job transition to create pathways for displaced workers to transition into new roles in AI-supported industries. Also, local communities, local and national authorities, academia, non-state organisations, and other stakeholders should participate in the development of AI and data ethics guidelines that take into account local cultural values and societal norms and mitigate bias in AI algorithms (Muggah & Szabó,

2023, May 29). AI should be regulated; developing AI regulations and standards that address data privacy, algorithm transparency, and accountability is essential in both the Global South and Global North. However, these regulations and standards should consider the local conditions, characteristics, and cultural idiosyncrasies involved (Kerry et al., 2021). Ensuring responsible AI development for all and fostering trust requires international cooperation across all aspects of AI, including development, deployment, and regulation, grounded in democratic principles (Kerry et al., 2021).

It has not yet been determined whether the disruption brought about by AI is similar to or even greater than what Google did a few decades ago or what the Gutenberg printing press did centuries ago. We know that AI is already transforming every aspect of our life, permeating economies and societies, promising to solve global challenges, and bringing real challenges for governments and citizens alike. The challenges faced by citizens of the Global North and Global South obviously differ. Addressing these challenges with care and listening to all voices will be key in creating an AI for the good of humanity.

ENDNOTES

1. All the images used in this article are AI-generated, while the text is solely human-written content, apart from the highlighted segments.
2. Sophia received Saudi Arabian citizenship, the news of which generated significant controversy and shock. Sophia's creator declared that a female robot represents an opportunity to speak out on women's rights, however, in Saudi Arabia these same rights are still far from being protected. Also, many opposed the idea of robots being given citizenship (Reynolds, 2018, June 1).
3. Other platforms, like Facebook, Netflix, and Instagram, needed much more time to reach this number of users (Haque et al., 2022).



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This was the year 2022-2023

Eye-opening,
exhilarating,
enriching.



Enriching in every aspect:
the classmates, the food,
the classes, the experiences,
the professors, IOB, the
assessments, the cultures, etc.
It was a year that brought me so
much more than I thought was
even possible.



My IOB experience was truly ama
Firstly, I pursued my passion f
governance and development. Sec
learning from expert professors en
my education. Thirdly, I formed o
friendships with classmates fro
diverse regions. Lastly, the world
academic environment in Europe p
invaluable knowledge and skills
time at IOB was a remarkable jour
personal and academic growth

Life in Antwerp and as a student at
IOB was not always easy. But the
people I met at IOB, my dearest IOB
friends especially, made life so much
better! They are truly my greatest
treasure. :)

Understanding multiple
realities is one of the
things IOB taught me

Transformative,
Challenging, and
Empowering

Just accepting people
are different and all
equally gifted.

Deep and sincere talks build
bond. During the Kick-off
weekend, I enjoyed the team
building activities because they
helped me to bonding, trust,
and collaboration with different
persons.

Broadened friends and
professional network,
increased knowledge and
critical thinking, better self-
confidence

Mindblowing,
enriching,
exceptional



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Mishelle Gellibert V. GLOB 2017 | Ecuador



Where are you currently living? I am living in Ecuador.

Where do you work? I work for the Business School of ESPOL (Escuela Superior Politecnica del Litoral). This University is one of the best public institutions in Ecuador and its Business School is number 1 also. I started working there since 2020. I started in the Projects and Alumni Department, where we were in charged of all the events that connect us as a school with our alumni and the community. Then, I got promoted to assistant of the subdean where I assisted in everything that involved all the academic aspects of each of the master's degrees offered at the school. As part of the engagement with the community, during 2022 I was the leader of the Young Crew Chapter Ecuador, where young people between 18 and 35 years old participate in national and international activities related to project management. As a way to strengthen the school's core programs, I was promoted as academic assistant in the coordination of the Masters in Project Management (MPM), Business Administration (MBA) and Entrepreneurial Management (MiM), There I'm in charged of students management, annual calendar, faculty, programs

improvement plan and revision of curricular frameworks. I'm also part as a member of interinstitutional projects such as, student exchange programs, research projects and international certifications

How did the IOB experience affect your life/ career?

IOB was and will always remain one of the best experiences of my life. When I arrived there, it was my first time in Europe, living independently, and pursuing a Master's degree in a language different from my own. However, everyone at IOB, including fellow students, professors, assistants, and administrative staff, transformed this initially unfamiliar experience into one that will stay with me for the rest of my life. I had the opportunity to meet people from all corners of the world and learn about their cultures, challenges, aspirations, and life stories. This exposure provided me with a fresh perspective on the world.



Joshua Byenkya DEM 2020 | Uganda

Where are you currently living? I am living in Kampala, Uganda.

Where do you work? I am a Senior Research Manager at L-IFT. I am managing the Solar Adoption Randomised Control Trial (SAR) aimed at testing the effectiveness of behavioural approaches in influencing saving for solar devices among 300 Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) in the two refugee settlement camps of Nakivale and Kiryandongo in Uganda. This is a World Bank-commissioned project. My primary responsibility involves implementing the study, training field researchers, overseeing field activities, ensuring data accuracy, collaborating with stakeholders in settlement camps, and providing feedback to the central coordination teams at L-IFT and the World Bank. I am also a part time Lecturer at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at Uganda Technology and Management University (UTAMU).

Alumni panel



Emebet Dlasso Menna **DEM 2010 | Ethiopia**

Where are you currently living?

Currently I live in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia with travel to Yemen for work where my current organisation is located.

Where do you work? I work with Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE) International in

Yemen as the Assistant Country Director for Programmes (Acting role). CARE is a global humanitarian organisation that works to save lives, defeat poverty, and achieve social justice. CARE has been working in Yemen since 1992, providing emergency relief and development assistance to millions of people affected by protracted conflict, famine, and disease outbreaks.

I am responsible for leading and supporting the CARE Yemen humanitarian and development programs in the overall design, development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

I enjoy working with CARE in Yemen because I believe in its mission and vision of creating a more just and equitable world.

I am inspired by the resilience and courage of the people we work with, who despite facing unimaginable hardships,

still have hope for a better future. I am also proud of the achievements and impact of our programs, which have reached over 2.5 million people in 2022 alone with lifesaving and life-changing interventions.

How did the IOB experience affect your life/ career?

Studying at IOB was one of the best opportunities that life brought to my way. It had many positive impacts on my personal and professional development.

Exploring new and exciting opportunities, such as traveling to different countries, learning new languages, discovering new cultures, and making new friends. Participating in various events and activities that enriched my knowledge and broadened my horizons.

Challenging myself to step out of my comfort zone and try new things, such as taking on new roles, responsibilities, and risks.

Pursuing my passions and goals, such as continuing my engagement in the development industry, advancing my career, and stepping out of my comfort zone to engage internationally.

Becoming a more confident, resilient, and adaptable person, who is ready to face any challenges and opportunities that life may bring. I am very grateful for the IOB experience and how it shaped me as a person and a professional.

Tell us more about one of the exciting projects you are currently working on?

I am currently conducting research about the effectiveness of evaluation capacity building (ECB) initiatives by Uganda Evaluation Association (UEA), which I intend to publish in the African Evaluation Journal (AEJ).

How did IOB experience affect your life or career? IOB reinforced my academic writing, research, and critical thinking skills. Modules such as “Working with Data” and “Regression Analysis and Inference” refined my evaluation abilities. Within five months of completing the course at IOB, I secured the role of Senior Research Manager at L-IFT, demonstrating the tangible impact of my enhanced skills on my career trajectory.

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