

AFRICA-UNINET

2nd Africa-UniNet General Assembly

Erasmus+ Cooperation Seminar

17–19 October 2022

Egerton University, Njoro Campus, Kenya

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Erasmus+

2nd Africa-UniNet General Assembly | Erasmus+ Cooperation Seminar Wednesday, 19 October 2022

- **09:30 – 11:00** | AUSTRIAN-AFRICAN COOPERATION: EXPERIENCES, IMPACT AND FUTURE

Moderator: Margarita Langthaler, ÖFSE

Panellists:

- *Tadesse Fetahi Hailu, Addis Ababa University*
- *Peter Mayr, Paris Lodron University of Salzburg*
- *Jane Misihairabgwi, University of Namibia*
- *Luke Olang, Technical University of Kenya*
- *Adama Oueda, University of Ouahigouya*





Report by Margarita Langthaler, ÖFSE

- **First question to the discussants:** Please share your experience on cooperation with Austrian Higher Education Institutions. In particular: what was the impact of these cooperations in terms of institutional and individual capacity building. What were the challenges?



Report by Margarita Langthaler, ÖFSE

- Most discussants focused on their personal experience as students in Austria emphasising their gratitude to Austrian donors for facilitating what was experienced as very constructive and helpful exposures, which laid the foundation for the future academic careers of the speakers. Discussants (Tadesse, Jane, Adama, Luke) stated that capacity building at the institutional level has been taking place mostly through phd scholarships at Austrian institutions, mentioning also difficult contextual circumstances in their home countries, such as high costs of studying (Tadesse).
- Among the challenges, the discussants mentioned intercultural communication (Adama: several languages in one research project, necessity of complex and multiple translational processes) and difficulties in obtaining visa for Austria (Jane: no Austrian embassy in Namibia). Peter Mayr highlighted difficulties in sending Austrian students to African countries.



Report by Margarita Langthaler, ÖFSE

- **Second question:** What recommendations do you have to improve African-Austrian cooperation?



Report by Margarita Langthaler, ÖFSE

- The discussion, upon request from the audience, focused on the issue of gender, with a number of African students and graduates highlighting their personal difficulties to match family duties and studies, esp. at PhD level. Prof. Kitaka explained the strong social pressure on African women to dedicate themselves to their families, which leaves many female students in difficult situations.
- The following policy recommendations were expressed:
 - Earmark funds for support measures to female students and staff
 - Build support structures at university level (e.g. child care)
 - Change regulations for scholarships
 - Elaborate gender policies at university level
 - Advocate for Erasmus funding to allow for exchange of Austrian students to African