



# Labour market insertion of African graduates: The experience of Erasmus Mundus - SEMINAR REPORT

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## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>CCD-STeDe</b>	Erasmus Mundus Joint Master on Climate Change and Diversity: Sustainable Territorial Development
<b>DG EAC</b>	Directorate-General Education, Youth, Sport and Culture of the European Commission
<b>DEVISE4KE</b>	Empowering Sustainable Development of VET in Kenya Using Solar Energy and Low Energy Devices
<b>DIH</b>	Digital Innovation Hub
<b>EACEA</b>	European Education and Culture Executive Agency
<b>EIMAS</b>	European Interdisciplinary Master African Studies
<b>EM</b>	Erasmus Mundus
<b>EMA</b>	Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni Association
<b>EMDM</b>	Erasmus Mundus Design Measures
<b>EMGS</b>	Erasmus Mundus Joint Master in Global Studies
<b>EMJM</b>	Erasmus Mundus Joint Master
<b>EMMIR</b>	European Master in Migration and Intercultural Relations
<b>EMSI</b>	Erasmus Mundus Support Initiative
<b>EPOG+</b>	Erasmus Mundus Joint Master in Economic policies for the global transition
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>EU4M</b>	Erasmus Mundus Joint Master in Mechatronic Engineering
<b>F.A.I.T.H.</b>	UAS are F(it), A(djusted), I(nnovative), T(rendy) & H(olistic)
<b>GREEN STEM</b>	Green Science Teaching Materials for Digital Learning
<b>HEI</b>	Higher Education Institution
<b>HumanResponse</b>	Erasmus Mundus Joint Master on Coordinated Humanitarian Response, Health and Displacement
<b>JD</b>	Joint Degree
<b>JP</b>	Joint Programme

<b>MoE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>TPTI</b>	Master Erasmus Mundus Techniques, Heritage, Territories of Industry
<b>TROPIMUNDO</b>	Erasmus Mundus Joint Master (Degree) in Tropical Biodiversity and Ecosystems
<b>Q&amp;A</b>	Question and Answer

## GLOSSARY

**African Region:** In accordance with the regional groupings of third countries not associated to the Programme defined in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide, the Africa region includes the following countries and territories:

- Region 9 Sub-Saharan Africa: Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Congo - Democratic Republic of the, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.
  - Additionally, this report also includes some countries from Region 3 South-Mediterranean Countries, specifically Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia.
- Alumna/us:** A former student who has completed their studies in a specific programme or at a particular university.

**Associated Partner:** Entities from the public or private sector that contribute to the implementation of specific project tasks or activities and support the promotion and sustainability of the project. They are, however, not considered beneficiaries for contractual management purposes and do not receive any funding from the Programme as part of the project. As such, they are not entitled to charge costs or claim contributions.

**Beneficiary:** When a project is awarded an Erasmus+ grant, the applicant organisation becomes a beneficiary by signing a contract with the National or Executive Agency that has selected the project. If the application was made on behalf of other participating organisations, the partners may become co-beneficiaries of the grant.

**Competence:** As defined by the European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO), competence refers to an individual's capacity to independently and autonomously apply their knowledge and skills in response to new situations and unforeseen challenges. It involves not only the ability to utilise existing expertise but also the adaptability to handle complex, dynamic contexts.

**Employability:** The combination of job-specific skills, soft skills, knowledge, and personal attributes that enable individuals to secure employment, succeed in their roles, and advance their careers.

**Graduate:** An individual who has completed their studies and obtained a degree or diploma from a university. The term applies to those who have transitioned from student life to the professional world or further academic pursuits.

**Labour Market Insertion:** The process through which individuals enter and become integrated into the workforce, whether through traditional employment, self-employment, or entrepreneurship.

**Scholarship:** A contribution towards the costs incurred by beneficiary students for full-time enrolment in an Erasmus Mundus Master's programme. This may be awarded to the highest-ranked students globally, fully covering their participation costs and providing support for travel, visa, and living allowance expenses throughout the duration of the Master's programme.

**Skill:** As defined by ESCO, skill typically refers to the ability to effectively use specific methods, techniques, or instruments within a particular context to accomplish a defined task

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## 1. Seminar background, objectives and contextualisation

On 2 and 3 April 2025, the Erasmus Mundus regional seminar “Labour market insertion of African graduates: the experience of Erasmus Mundus” took place at Strathmore University in Nairobi. It gathered around 60 participants representing Erasmus Mundus partners and coordinators, alumni, industry leaders, higher education stakeholders, civil society representatives as well as policy makers, from Africa and from Europe. The aim was to explore how Erasmus Mundus Master’s programmes can be better aligned with the labour market needs in Africa and address labour shortages across the continent’s different regions.

With the aim of supporting Erasmus Mundus consortia in sharing knowledge, expertise and good practices on the topic of “Labour market insertion of African graduates. The experience of Erasmus Mundus”, the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) organised this regional seminar in the framework of the Erasmus Mundus Support Initiative (EMSI) in Nairobi. The regional seminar in Nairobi was informed by a dedicated state of play report prepared by EMSI<sup>1</sup>. EMSI is a four-year initiative of the European Commission (2023-2027) implemented under the Erasmus+ programme in the funding period 2021-2027. The initiative focuses on promoting the exchange of good practices, facilitating networking among stakeholders, and developing a collaborative structure to support the wider Erasmus Mundus community<sup>2</sup>

The regional seminar kicked off with welcome addresses delivered by Dr Vincent Ogotu, Vice-Chancellor of Strathmore University, as well as by the EU officials Ondrej Simek, Deputy Head of Mission at the Delegation of the European Union to Kenya, Adrian Veale, representative of the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (DG EAC) (online), and Theo Duivenvoorde, Head of Unit A3 Erasmus Mundus, Sport at the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) (online). Dr Ogotu focused on the importance of – apart from securing employment – nurturing entrepreneurship and self-employment in Kenya. He emphasised the role of international partnerships and shared the significant value Strathmore University places on service to society in its HE programmes.

Mr Simek emphasised the importance of the EU-Kenya Economic Partnership Agreement and the EU’s commitment to strengthening ties with Kenya, including in the field of higher education and with the envisaged impact of overcoming the mismatch between academic training and real-world job opportunities.

Mr Veale raised the need for navigating a rapidly evolving labour market with the right set of competences. He underlined the pivotal role Erasmus Mundus programmes and other Erasmus+ and EU initiatives play in preparing students for a rapidly changing labour market. Moreover, he addressed the need to better understand how they are embedded in the EU’s overarching strategic frameworks like the recently introduced Union of Skills. He then introduced questions that are particularly relevant when addressing the main topic of the seminar, employability of higher education graduates, for which the voices of academics and graduates will be heard: (i) How Master’s studies are preparing students for the world of work, (ii) to what extent future employers are involved in the delivery, (iii) how the programmes create career opportunities for students from outside Europe, and (iv) how the programmes prepare African students for the job market in Europe or in Africa.

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<sup>1</sup> The report “Labour market insertion of African graduates: The experience of Erasmus Mundus: State of Play” published in March 2025 as well as further publications of EMSI can be downloaded at the Erasmus Mundus Community platform: <https://erasmus-networks.ec.europa.eu/search/resources>.

<sup>2</sup> The Erasmus Mundus Community platform can be accessed via the following link: <https://erasmus-networks.ec.europa.eu/organization/erasmus-mundus-community>.

Mr Duivenvoorde highlighted that the global and interdisciplinary learning experience in Erasmus Mundus Joint Master programmes, with study periods in at least two different countries, fosters both economic growth and personal development, preparing students to become leaders in an increasingly volatile world. He reminded seminar participants that Erasmus Mundus celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2024 and that, to commemorate this milestone, the European Commission and EACEA have published an impact study titled “20 years of Erasmus Mundus – Beyond borders and boundaries” ([link](#)). This report highlights that career and skills development are among the top three reasons why students chose an Erasmus Mundus Master’s programme. Therefore, the seminar on labour market insertion of African graduates was considered both timely and relevant. Moreover, Duivenvoorde introduced EMSI and its recently published State-of-Play report “Labour market insertion of African graduates: The experience of Erasmus Mundus” in preparation of the seminar. This report explores the challenges and opportunities African graduates encounter when entering the work force. Findings indicate that while EM Master programmes facilitate African graduates’ labour market entry, there is a need to ensure greater consistency across programmes, enhance networking opportunities, and encourage involvement of African employers in order to better equip graduates with the theoretical knowledge and practical competencies required in today’s global labour market.

## 2. Understanding career trajectories of Erasmus Mundus graduates (Session 1)

The presentation of the State of Play report ([link](#)) by Beatriz Garre Hernanz, Business Consultant at NTT DATA, introduced the four objectives of the report: (i) understanding the current participation of Africa in the EM Action, (ii) examining the performance of African EM students in the programme, (iii) delving into the transition of African EM graduates to the labour market as well as (iv) exploring the career development of African EM graduates. Garre Hernanz shared key insights into the African participation in Erasmus Mundus, which involves 18 African higher education institutions (HEIs) from 12 African countries participating as beneficiaries, with South Africa, Egypt, and Uganda being the most represented. 178 African organisations from 32 countries are involved as associated partners in EM, with South Africa, Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria leading in representation. In the reference years 2015-2024, there were 2,830 African scholarship holders from 45 African nations, alongside an additional 400 African students not receiving scholarships. Among these, students from Nigeria, Egypt, and Ethiopia are the most represented.

The State-of-Play report is based on desk research, interviews with two African alumni and two students, a focus group with EM programme coordinators from seven consortia, and an online survey of 48 African EM students and alumni. Certain aspects of these programmes are particularly valuable in fostering the job prospects of African EM graduates. The diverse, interdisciplinary, and intercultural nature of the cohorts foster global exposure and flexibility. Students acquire key professional competences during their studies. The multidisciplinary nature of EM Joint Master’s programmes equips students with key interdisciplinary knowledge. Moreover, they gain access to valuable professional and industry connections with leading employers and companies. The findings suggest that, while several career-oriented measures are in place, there is still scope for ensuring they are consistently implemented across EM consortia and aligning the curriculum with global market needs. Programmes can better support graduates by assessing the labour market demands, embedding industry perspectives in the curriculum, engaging in industry collaborations, as well as enabling access to employment events, career development workshops and engaging in student and alumni associations. While Erasmus Mundus programmes are recognised for positively shaping career outcomes, the results of the report point to the need for a more tailored approach to address skill gaps and better align academic disciplines with evolving market demands. The survey results indicate that many African EM



graduates prioritise enrolling in PhD studies and selecting their post-graduation destination based on academic opportunities.

The presentation and audience interaction were followed by a testimonial from Reagan Chidhakwa, Country Representative of the Erasmus Mundus Association in Zimbabwe, offering a personal reflection on the career relevance of his LIFE+ Erasmus Mundus joint Master's programme. He highlighted several features that supported his own transition from education to employment across two continents. These included degrees from universities in three different countries (Spain, France, Belgium), the development of academic and soft skills, internship, Master thesis opportunities as well as site visits offered by associated partners, which provided academic depth and broadened his global career opportunities. An annual LIFE+ seminar series bringing together students, alumni and other professionals for career talks were also deemed as beneficial for career talks and networking. Chidhakwa moreover emphasised the need for early and sustained engagement with local employers, both for networking and for understanding regional labour market dynamics and needs. Recommendable are also structured recruitment processes.

Chidhakwa recommended that curricula could be enhanced by addressing regional needs and including modules focusing on Africa-specific challenges, in the case of his study field of vaccinology for instance, by addressing disease management and public health issues. Moreover, promoting interdisciplinary training that includes entrepreneurship and technology as well as systematising and scaling up career support services, including job matching, mentoring and job readiness workshops, were identified as support mechanisms. He also recommended to incorporate student feedback and alumni testimonials into programme development to better align with labour market realities.

## 3. Labour market insertion of African graduates in Erasmus Mundus (Session 2)

The seminar highlighted how nine Erasmus Mundus (EM) programmes have developed and implemented strategies to enhance student employability and to monitor African graduates' labour market integration in Africa as well as in Europe. It also looked at the challenges their graduates from Africa are facing when aiming to enter the labour market in Africa and in Europe, and what suggestions they can share based on their experience.

The nine programmes are:

- CCD-STeDe (Erasmus Mundus Joint Master on Climate Change and Diversity: Sustainable Territorial Development): Dr Lee-Ann Modley, Local Coordinator South Africa
- EMGS (Erasmus Mundus Joint Master in Global Studies): Stephan Kaschner, Coordination 'Global Studies' and 'European Studies'
- EMMIR (European Master in Migration and Intercultural Relations): Professor Roberts Muuriisa, EMMIR Course Director of Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST)
- EPOG+ (Erasmus Mundus Joint Master in Economic policies for the global transition): Dr Sibulele Nkunzi, Local Coordinator of EPOG
- EIMAS (European Interdisciplinary Master African Studies): Mirjam Strasser, European Coordinator of EIMAS
- EU4M (Erasmus Mundus Joint Master in Mechatronic Engineering): Professor Wael Akl, President of Nile University
- HumanResponse (Erasmus Mundus Joint Master on Coordinated Humanitarian Response, Health and Displacement): Dr Julio Ambrosio Masquete, Local Representative of HumanResponse

- TPTI (Master Erasmus Mundus Techniques, Heritage, Territories of Industry): Professor Moustapha Sall
- TROPIMUNDO (Erasmus Mundus Joint Master (Degree) in Tropical Biodiversity and Ecosystems): Dr Cosmas Nzaka Munga, Local Coordinator of TROPIMUNDO

The following sections provide an overview of the involvement of African institutions and organisations in Erasmus Mundus programmes, of graduate monitoring and tracking systems, of challenges identified, as well as on their recommendations for improving alignment with labour market needs. Further details on each programme can be found in Annex II.

## 3.1. Involvement of African institutions and organisations in Erasmus Mundus programmes

African organisations involved in Erasmus Mundus programmes serve both as full and as associated partners, with essential roles in teaching, research supervision, fieldwork coordination, internships, as well as institutional networking. These contributions enhance the local relevance and contextual grounding of the programmes, particularly in case of curriculum components offered by African institutions.

African full partners facilitate thematic learning experiences that are rooted in regional contexts. For instance, the CCD-STeDe programme includes a Winter School in Africa, mainly based on fieldwork on the key topics on biodiversity, just transition, and sustainable community tourism. In the TPTI programme, students can attend five-week modules on tangible/intangible heritage and sustainable development at Cheikh Anta Diop University (Senegal) and University of Sfax (Tunisia). TROPIMUNDO on the other hand, offers a 15 ECTS field course on a tropical ecosystem in a university in the tropics, combining hands-on research with training in geomatics.

Moreover, in several programmes, African partners are facilitating internships, summer schools, and thesis work. In HumanResponse for example, students engage in internships and a credit-bearing summer school, with supervision and final dissertation work completed in collaboration with African academic staff. Similarly, CCD-STeDe, and EIMAS offer internships and thesis research across Africa, through established local networks and associated partners.

In addition, EM programmes are benefiting from African associated partners' engagement in supporting student placements, research access, and community engagement. EIMAS for instance, works with universities such as the Université Abdou Moumouni (Niger), the Université Ibn Zohr (Morocco), Kenyatta University and Moi University (Kenya), the University of KwaZulu-Natal (South Africa), the University of Sousse (Tunisia). EPOG collaborates with the Institute for Economic Justice (IEJ) and the Southern Centre for Inequality Studies (SCIS) in South Africa. TROPIMUNDO engages with associated partners, including Jimma University (Ethiopia), UNIKIN (D.R. Congo), ZU University (Tanzania), and research institutions like KMFRI (Kenya), SAIAB (South Africa), international institution Wetlands International (Senegal), and the governmental institution Kenyan Wildlife Research and Training Institute (KWS/WRTI), which offer field-based components for students enrolled in the TROPIMUNDO programme.

## 3.2. Graduate monitoring and tracking systems

All programmes have implemented mechanisms to monitor graduate outcomes. Several programmes regularly conduct alumni or employability surveys, with some planning or already undertaking long-term impact studies to assess the personal and professional development of their former students.

Furthermore, several programmes are maintaining active alumni networks to foster engagement, including EMGS, HumanResponse and EU4M, using platforms such as LinkedIn, newsletters, roundtables, and/or institutional events. Some programmes support alumni with tailored databases and job-matching tools. Moreover, to enhance labour market readiness, programmes such as TROPIMUNDO and EPOG offer structured career support, including job coaching, seminars, and mentoring. These initiatives serve as comprehensive personal development tools and are complemented by employer engagement and alumni management systems. Employability support is further integrated through teaching and collaborative academic activities, such as joint conferences and seminars.

Understanding of how EMJMs contribute to labour market integration particularly in Africa is limited. There is a need to systematically monitor impact and to enhance awareness and to strengthen strategies to foster local impact. Participants showed interest in enhancing transparency and in sharing the results of their impact surveys publicly through channels such as the Erasmus Mundus Community Platform.

### 3.3. Labour market insertion challenges encountered by graduates

Erasmus Mundus graduates are encountering different challenges as they transition from academia to professional careers, both graduates returning to Africa as well as those aiming to work in Europe.

In Africa, the barriers identified by the programme representatives are deeply connected with challenging systemic and economic conditions. Key issues are high unemployment rates and skills mismatches, as higher education curricula are often only poorly aligned with the qualifications EMJM graduates require – particularly in rural areas, where their specialised expertise often does not correspond with local labour market demands. Economic and political instability further exacerbates this issue. Graduates often lack the social capital and industry connections necessary for accessing employment or launching projects or an enterprise. Cultural and societal norms influence career choices and access, for instance, traditional gender roles and expectations can limit opportunities for women and other underrepresented groups. Furthermore, some curricula lack concrete alignment with African academic or policy developments. For example, graduates may find that the economic theories taught in Europe differ significantly from those applied in their home countries, creating academic and practical gaps.

In Europe, one of the most prevalent issues is related to the restrictive visa and immigration regimes, which complicate efforts to remain in the EU for work or further studies. Graduates of several programmes struggle with obtaining residence permits or navigating complex bureaucratic systems. Moreover, language barriers significantly impact employability. While programmes are taught in English, host countries typically require local language proficiency, which EM graduates have mentioned as challenging due to limited time and resources during their studies. Some programme representatives also mentioned that there is a bias during hiring processes, impeding equal access to opportunities to jobs. Just like for the case of Africa, several programmes are facing a shortage of professional partnerships with employers, especially internationally oriented companies. Graduates often find it difficult to translate their academic training into viable job roles due to this disconnect. In addition, financial constraints remain a challenge even after graduation. Pursuing further academic or professional opportunities can become difficult. Even when PhD paths are available, they are often unpaid and self-funded. Some programme representatives also pointed to underdeveloped alumni financial support structures, which limits institutional career guidance and job matching offers after graduation.

### **3.4. Opportunities and recommendations for improved labour market alignment of EM programmes**

The programme representatives highlighted a range of opportunities and recommendations aimed at enhancing employability, academic relevance, and institutional collaboration, with targeted strategies for both African and European contexts.

For Africa, there is a strong emphasis on deepening institutional partnerships, increasing African student participation, and aligning academic offerings with regional development needs. Key recommendations include establishing increased university-industry collaborations, improving collaboration with and support by the government, dedicated career services, regional job fairs, and formal internship agreements with African organisations. Programmes encourage the integration of specialised courses addressing local, African challenges for improved contextualisation of curricula. Increasing interdisciplinarity and promoting innovation and entrepreneurship are also prioritised to enhance real-world impact and job readiness across the continent. Furthermore, alumni networks and mentorship are seen as vital tools for supporting African participants post-graduation.

For Europe, recommendations include enhancing the expansion of university-industry collaborations, interdisciplinary learning, and increasing the presence of social sciences and humanities in academic and corporate environments. Increased connections between academia and research, stronger support for African graduates in pursuing PhD opportunities, along with stronger academic pathways that prepare students for emerging roles in migration, sustainability, and humanitarian sectors, were also mentioned as key supportive measures. Programmes also recommend closer alignment with European research and innovation agendas to ensure global relevance and responsiveness to evolving labour market demands.

## **4. Current developments in African and European Higher Education (Session 3)**

The panel brought together leading figures in higher education and research – the Secretary General of CAMES, Professor Souleymane Konaté, Prof Olusola Bandele Oyewole, Secretary General of the Association of African Universities (AAU), Thérèse Zhang, Deputy Director of Higher Education Policy of the European University Association (EUA) as well as Professor Dickson Andala, Director General of the National Research Fund of Kenya. The discussion focused on recent developments and practices to improve the employability of graduates in rapidly changing landscape of higher education in Africa and Europe.

Oyewole emphasised the mismatch between higher education (HE), training and industry requirements, calling for curriculum re-alignment, stronger collaboration between universities and industry – particularly through internship placements – and continued dialogue on technological innovation. He shared that many universities in Africa are undertaking comprehensive curriculum reforms to strengthen connections with industry and enhance relevance to labour market needs across disciplines. There is a strong belief that investing in vocational studies will enhance skill development and drive broader economic growth across Africa. Universities are being encouraged to self-assess and define whether they align with the model of an entrepreneurial university. Regional and international partnerships are playing a key role in improving graduate quality and employability. One notable initiative is the establishment of Centers of Excellence in Africa, supported by the World Bank. Oyewole called for encouraging universities to conduct research that fosters innovation and to create mechanisms that allow academic staff to spend time within industry settings, thereby strengthening the link between academia and the labour market. Africa has a large and growing youth population, which

represents a tremendous opportunity. Young people should be empowered and encouraged to embrace new skills without fear, especially in rapidly evolving fields. Universities need to adapt their curricula to include emerging and future-oriented areas such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Data Science, Blockchain, and Cybersecurity, which are becoming essential pillars of development and innovation across the African continent.

Konaté highlighted systemic challenges such as inadequate infrastructure and a decline in the quality of HE. He stressed the importance of mandatory market assessments prior to programme accreditation, the promotion of academic mobility, and international partnerships built on mutual trust. He also advocated for Africa-centred Erasmus+ approaches that reflect local contexts, rather than replicating European models.

Zhang underscored that, based on the outcomes of a study by EUA on employability and skills demands, universities emphasised that employability is not only about meeting immediate labour market needs but about preparing graduates for meaningful societal engagement and adaptability, which is beneficial throughout their lifelong learning (LLL) journey. Institutions support student employability through both curricular and extracurricular activities. A key challenge is the difficulty of embedding employability consistently into learning outcomes across different study programmes. The EUA Trends 2024 report ([link](#)) based on a survey with around 500 respondents from universities across Europe, reveals that in many universities in Europe, job and career fairs, work placements, and internships are common features, just like the integration of transferable skills into the curriculum, which are offered in the universities of most respondents. About half of the respondents mention that their institution includes entrepreneurial skills in their curricula. For Zhang, improving graduate employability is a complex challenge that requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach across various areas within higher education institutions. Institutions are encouraged to give value to and recognise employability across all different kinds of activities.

Andala illustrated Kenya's transition towards practical, skills-based education, with initiatives including structured internships, industry involvement in curriculum design, and institutional support for graduate entrepreneurship. These measures aim to address the needs of a rapidly expanding youth population.

## 5. Keynote address: Cooperation with the labour market from an institutional perspective

At the start of the second day of the seminar, Dr James Boyd McFie, Academic and Research Director at the School of Management and Commerce (SMC) at Strathmore University, provided a keynote address, sharing insights about the market-alignment strategies needed for the Kenyan labour market as well as the soft competences required to meet industry demands.

His presentation offered insights about how higher education can play a pivotal role in the labour market insertion of higher education graduates in Africa, with a regional focus on Kenya as one of the leading economies in East Africa, serving as a regional hub with a wide range of employment opportunities.

Drawing on different surveys conducted by organisations such as the Federation of Kenya Employers, Microsoft, Target Jobs, the BBC, Prospects, NACE and AGR, ten key skills and competences have consistently emerged as essential for graduates. These are: (1) verbal communication, (2) teamwork, (3) commercial awareness, (4) analysing and investigating, (5) initiative/self-motivation, (6) drive, (7) written communication, (8) planning and organising, (9) flexibility as well as (10) time management. In



addition to these core skills, other important ones for graduates in Kenya include developing professionalism, action planning, decision-making, interpersonal sensitivity, and creativity.

Strathmore University's Career Office plays an active role in helping students develop these competences. It encourages students to seek out opportunities proactively before graduation by introducing them to digital platforms such as Brighter Monday and LinkedIn. The university also fosters strong connections with alumni, lecturers, and relevant industry contacts to support students' career development. Moreover, employers frequently reach out to the Career Office with opportunities for internships, graduate training programmes, and casual roles. Strathmore University further strengthens student-employer engagement by forming strategic partnerships with companies and organising visits to potential employers.

Regarding the provision of internships, McFie noted that many companies often perceive internships more as a time investment than an immediate benefit. To address this, raising awareness about the long-term value of hosting interns could help motivate companies and increase their willingness to collaborate with universities. Additionally, the personal networks of professors – particularly their connections with local companies – can play a crucial role in helping students gain initial access to the labour market. McFie further highlighted that technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions could serve as a model for universities in enhancing labour market relevance. In Kenya, approximately 73% of technical schools are successful in delivering training aligned with market demands, compared to only about 50% of universities.

## 6. Labour market insertion of African graduates in other EU programmes (Session 4)

The seminar also featured projects funded by other EU initiatives, including the Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE), Capacity Building in Vocational Education and Training (CB-VET), and the Intra-Africa Academic Mobility Scheme, who shared how they promote market-relevant skills and competence acquisition to address labour shortages in Africa. The four projects presented were DEVISE4KE (CB-VET), F.A.I.T.H. (CBHE), UNIHUBS (CBHE), and GREEN-STEM (Intra-Africa Academic Mobility Scheme).

These initiatives emphasised capacity building, green technology, and digital innovation to address persistent skills gaps and improve employability outcomes.

Jonathan Mulwa presented the DEVISE4KE project, which aims to enhance the employability and entrepreneurial competencies of vocational education and training (VET) graduates in Kenya. The programme integrates work-based learning into curricula, strengthens ICT and transversal skills, and promotes the use of solar energy and low-energy devices in VET institutions. By partnering with Rongo University, local industries, and VET schools, the project seeks to close ICT skill gaps and improve infrastructure. Alumni employability is tracked through tracer studies and alumni networks. However, implementation faces challenges including inadequate infrastructure, lack of teacher training, and unreliable energy supply. Opportunities exist in digital education, resource sharing, and deepening industry partnerships.

Ephrem Tekle introduced F.A.I.T.H., a capacity building project supporting the structural transformation of higher education in Ethiopia. The project focuses on developing a national University of Applied Sciences (UAS) model, supported by a €1 million grant over 36 months. In collaboration with European and Ethiopian partners, the project has developed and tested a toolbox tailored to the Ethiopian context, covering areas such as internships, applied research, industry partnerships, and the professional development of academic staff. These efforts are aligned with the national plan to convert 15

comprehensive universities into UAS. Labour market relevance is central to FAITH, which addresses mismatches between academic training and industry demand. Institutional resistance and weak industry linkages remain key obstacles, but the project recommends sustained cooperation with the Ministry of Education and adaptive policy frameworks.

Gideon Brefo discussed the UNIHUBS project, which connects African universities in Ghana, Kenya and Tanzania with European partners to better align curricula with digital innovation and labour market needs. Grounded in research and stakeholder engagement, the project identifies key skill gaps in areas like AI, data analytics, and programming. Activities include co-creation of learning materials, experiential learning, and international online courses. The initiative improves graduate employability by facilitating collaboration between universities and Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs). Monitoring mechanisms include alumni surveys and follow-up support by DIHs. Challenges such as weak university–industry ties, especially in Ghana and Tanzania, and outdated curricula are addressed by using Kenya’s collaborative model as a reference. The project also advocates for stronger EU–Africa innovation networks and policy-level engagement.

Finally, Anne Nkoidila presented GREEN STEM, a mobility and education project under the Intra-Africa Academic Mobility Scheme. This initiative aims to strengthen research, innovation, and education ecosystems in STEM fields with a focus on sustainability. It promotes intra-African mobility for students and staff, and supports green skills development in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and environmental engineering. The programme enhances employability by equipping graduates with industry-relevant competencies and tracks alumni outcomes through post-graduation surveys and mentorship networks. Key challenges include coordination issues due to mismatched academic calendars, financial transfer problems, and unintended limitations in gender-focused mobility programmes. Recommendations include earlier fund disbursement, flexible mobility design, and consideration of geopolitical dynamics.

## 7. Aligning Erasmus Mundus Masters with labour market needs (Session 5)

The panel brought together a group of Erasmus Mundus alumni who are now successful employers, entrepreneurs, and agents of economic and social change across African regions. The panel discussions highlighted that university–industry partnerships, problem-solving abilities, a forward-looking mindset, a blend of hard and soft skills, entrepreneurship, and the ability to rethink work habits are key for graduates’ successful entry into the job market. The panellists also stressed the need to raise awareness of Erasmus Mundus across Africa and build its brand recognition. The following insights from individual panellists offer a closer look from alumni and labour market perspectives.

Karen Basiye, Sustainability, Shared Value, and Corporate Environment Specialist at Safaricom PLC (Kenya), began her Erasmus Mundus (EM) journey in 2005 while working at the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA). The scholarship allowed her to reflect on her professional goals, gain new perspectives, and explore emerging fields in environmental leadership. The programme connected her with experts, particularly in climate change, which sparked her interest in corporate environmental management. The EM experience provided her with the skills, knowledge, and network that have been instrumental in her career. She emphasised the lasting value of the EM community, from her cohort to alumni across various intakes. Additionally, the programme broadened her global outlook and exposed her to multilateral environmental negotiations, fuelling her desire to influence policy both locally and internationally. As graduation approached, the EM career office helped her refine her CV and tailor applications for the African job market. Despite not meeting all listed qualifications, Karen successfully applied for Safaricom’s first Environment Manager position. The practical experience gained through

EM allowed her to translate academic knowledge into market-relevant skills, particularly in sustainability and environmental management. She also honed critical soft skills like public speaking, effective communication, and adaptability. Today, she develops policy, drives sustainability initiatives, and contributes to a greener future for her country. Looking ahead, Karen advocates for greater recognition of Erasmus Mundus qualifications in African job markets. She sees an opportunity to strengthen collaboration between African and European universities, unlocking potential in research, policy, and employment sectors. As African universities continue to grow as innovation hubs, stronger ties between Europe and Africa could drive mutual benefit, particularly as Africa's youth population continues to rise. Investing in Africa's development is, in essence, investing in the global future.

Susan Chomba, Director of Vital Landscapes for Africa at WRI, realised early on that a Bachelor's degree alone would not qualify her as a research scientist. Facing financial constraints and as a young mother from rural Kenya, she sought fully funded scholarships and found the Erasmus Mundus SUTROFOR programme ideal due to its comprehensive support and its ability to accommodate her parental responsibilities. She studied Agricultural Development in Denmark and Agroforestry in the UK, initially doubtful about European expertise in tropical forestry but soon inspired by faculty actively involved in projects across tropical regions. A summer grant gave her practical experience in forestry across Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Europe, broadening her global perspective. Excelling academically, Susan received an award as the top student and a fully funded PhD opportunity in Denmark. Erasmus Mundus expanded her career focus, particularly at the intersection of forestry and climate change, and enhanced both her technical and soft skills, including communication and confidence. She challenges the negative narratives often shared about Africa, seeing it instead as full of opportunities. Looking ahead, she suggests Erasmus Mundus strengthen partnerships with African Centres of Excellence, highlight successful African alumni, and provide better support for women – especially mothers – in mobility programmes, such as flexible study options and childcare. She also advocates for the inclusion of emotional intelligence, adaptability, and leadership in curricula to nurture effective, inclusive leaders.

Adams Brent, representing a retail business in Cape Town (South Africa), completed the Erasmus Mundus Master's in Strategic Project Management (MSPME) between 2015 and 2017. Before joining the programme, he had already taken a project management course at work, realising how transferable this skill could be. Through Erasmus Mundus, he had the opportunity to deepen his knowledge by learning from top experts in the field, which enhanced his career potential. The programme took him to three different universities: Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh in Scotland, Politecnico di Milano in Italy, and Umeå University in Sweden. Beyond gaining technical expertise, the programme fostered significant personal development, helping him thrive in diverse, multicultural environments – an asset in his current leadership role, where he manages teams from various backgrounds. With classmates from 21 different countries, the experience was life-changing, leading to lifelong friendships. The programme also broadened Adams' perspective on lifelong learning, inspiring him to continue developing his skills. The international qualification has since unlocked numerous career doors, enhancing his professional recognition and market entry. Through collaborating with classmates from diverse backgrounds, he acquired soft skills, particularly emotional resilience and empathy, which have become more valued in the workplace. Companies, including his own, now prioritise self-awareness in both employees and leaders, as it enables more effective team management and leadership. Looking ahead, Adams suggests that Erasmus Mundus should place greater emphasis on career planning. Many students finish the programme without a clear understanding of their next steps or the opportunities available. Providing career coaching and guidance would help them transition more confidently into the job market.

Tamene Sinshaw Gelaye, an alumnus of the Erasmus Mundus Master's Programme in Geospatial Technologies (2017–2019), is currently a Data Analyst at the Ethiopian Red Cross Society. He began the programme at Jaume I University in Spain and completed his thesis at the University of Münster in Germany. The EM programme provided valuable international experience and aligned closely with his



career goals. It emphasised problem-solving, teamwork, and soft skills, helping him develop the adaptability and collaborative mindset essential for addressing real-world challenges. These qualities distinguished him in the job market and facilitated his transition across roles, including an earlier position as a lecturer at a higher education institution in Ethiopia. Sinishaw Gelaye highlights the mindset gained through EM as its most lasting impact, more significant than the degree itself. Looking ahead, he suggests an enhancement of the EM programmes by: Updating content regularly based on feedback from students, researchers, and industry, expanding internship opportunities, especially in shorter programmes, as well as creating a dedicated alumni platform to support networking and collaboration. These improvements would help EM remain relevant and continue fostering impactful careers.

Birhane Guesh Weldeargay, a 2017 graduate of the Erasmus Mundus Master's Programme in Geospatial Technologies, is an IT professional, educator, and Founder and CEO of Feleg-AI@Digital Literacy (Ethiopia, online). He studied at Jaume I University in Spain and completed his thesis at the University of Münster, Germany, extending his stay for six months to further develop his professional networks. The experience gave him the opportunity for rich academic, cultural, and personal growth, appreciating Germany's strong work ethic. After graduation, he became a university lecturer and launched Feleg, a startup providing consultancy in AI, digital literacy, and geospatial technologies: tools he believes are vital for development in areas like urban planning and climate modelling. Through the CIM-GIZ initiative as a returning expert, he saw firsthand the value of stronger industry-academia collaboration, which he recommends. He also advocates for a focus on entrepreneurship and digital transformation within Erasmus Mundus, particularly for African students who often lack access to practical training in these fields. Birhane emphasises the value of in-person international study, noting the impact of cultural exchange on professional and personal development. He and other EM alumni continue to act as bridges between higher education and the labour market, especially through involvement with the Erasmus Mundus Association (EMA).

## 8. Info session about EU programme involvement

Following the formal sessions of the seminar, EACEA Policy Officers hosted a focused information session, offering attendees the chance to engage directly in discussions and ask questions about opportunities and modalities for higher education institutions to participate in EU international collaboration projects. These initiatives, which adopt a collaborative approach, are centred on promoting skills acquisition and enhancing the quality of higher education across Africa. The session provided a platform for participants to gain deeper insights into programmes such as Erasmus Mundus, Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE, [link](#)), Capacity Building in Vocational Education and Training (CB-VET, [link](#)), and the Intra-Africa Academic Mobility Scheme ([link](#)), and explore how they contribute to addressing skills gaps in the African education sector.

Adrian Veale informed participants about Erasmus+ projects being built on the principle of partnerships between European but also with non-European institutions, including many in Africa, with Sub-Saharan Africa having the largest individual regional budget, which funds many of the international collaboration opportunities. Opportunities for HEIs from Sub-Saharan Africa include international credit mobility, EMJM ([link](#)) and Erasmus Mundus Design Measures (EMDM) ([link](#)) measures, CBHE as well as Jean Monnet activities ([link](#)). Opportunities for other organisations from sub-Saharan Africa comprise Capacity Building in the field of Youth, Capacity Building for VET and Erasmus+ virtual changes. He also drew attention to the Erasmus+ projects results platform ([link](#)) which provides access to outcomes and best practices from mature projects, allowing anyone, whether involved or not, to benefit from shared knowledge and experiences, and project outcomes.

## Question and answer (Q&A) session:

1. *Question: What are the funding opportunities for a network of African universities on education for sustainable development aiming to reach out to more African students through online collaboration?*  
 Response: For HE-focused initiatives, CBHE is most suitable. Virtual Exchange can also be used as a channel, provided there's broader outreach involving youth organisations, since the primary target group for virtual exchange is young people. CBHE projects require balanced partnerships between European and African institutions. There is a limit to the number of formal African partners, but others can still be engaged through a broader outreach network.
2. *Question: Please clarify the general eligibility requirements for Erasmus+ project opportunities.*  
 Response: Erasmus+ projects are selected through annual calls for proposals, each outlining eligibility requirements. These are primarily institutional opportunities aimed at recognised universities or related stakeholders. Projects should address a clearly identified need, like curriculum updates, staff training, or strategic responses to technological advancements, not just exist for the sake of applying. The next Erasmus+ call for proposals will be issued at the end of this year, with deadlines in spring 2026. Selected projects will start either at the end of 2026 or in January 2027.
3. *Question: Are there mentors available to help individuals shape projects to ensure they meet the required expectations and guidelines?*  
 Response: Most African countries have an Erasmus+ National Focal Point, typically individuals from the Ministry of Education, who are trained to explain how Erasmus+ works, assist in getting involved, and help find European partners for collaborations. Those from academia, should check with their rector's or international relations office to see if their university has existing Erasmus+ contacts or projects. Faculty members involved in mobility programmes may offer valuable links for new collaborations or projects. Another option is to connect with alumni, as many EM graduates are now working in academia. Organisations like EMA – or its country representatives – can also offer valuable advice, especially on student-related aspects of projects.
4. *Question: Is there an opportunity to fund infrastructure or capital development through Erasmus+ projects, as infrastructure has been one of the biggest challenges in the projects we are running?*  
 Response: It can be part of an Erasmus+ capacity-building project if they support the project's overarching objective and helps implementing the activities planned, but they should not be the primary focus. There is also a certain maximum amount for the equipment to be purchased as part of the total grant.
5. *Question: If I want to apply for especially a capacity building programme and I don't have a European partner, how do I get one?*  
 Response: It is recommended to start with the own institution to identify international links and expertise in the envisaged focus area (e.g. solar power). International project funded by Erasmus+ require previous experience with international partners to pool resources and expertise across borders. National Agencies and ENFPs can assist in connecting with relevant European partners. Moreover, currently funded Erasmus+ projects can be identified related to key players involved in the specific field, including leading European universities.
6. *Question: Some European institutions are hesitant to participate in Erasmus+ projects unless alumni are involved, as they prefer working with familiar contacts.*  
 Response: Leveraging alumni networks through the institutions' International Office can in fact help to establish connections with European universities.

7. *Question: Is the Capacity Building programme eligible for partners from all African countries?*

Response: All sub-Saharan African countries (Region 9) are eligible for the programme. Applicants can apply for a national, multi-country regional, or multi-country cross-regional project. For a national project, at least two institutions from the country are needed, along with the required number of European institutions. Potential applicants can also advertise their plans and the partners they are seeking via a post on the EU Funding and Tenders Portal Partner Search, when a call is open ([link](#)).

Elif Memis Marsman, representative of the Intra-Africa Academic Mobility Scheme, presented the objectives and modalities of the scheme (2022-2027). The scheme aims to encourage international learning mobility across the African continent by supporting consortia of African Higher Education Institutions and scholarship opportunities for African trainees, students, and staff. Its main objective is to contribute to Africa's economic, social, and human development by improving individuals' skills and competences in areas relevant to the Global Gateway Strategy in Sub-Saharan Africa. Notably, the scheme prioritizes strengthening the employability and entrepreneurship of higher education graduates through its traineeship programme, which provides practical experience and skills development opportunities.

Together with the 28 projects funded in the previous phase (2016-2020), a total of 110 universities from 33 African countries were involved in the selected projects. In the current funding period, evaluation of proposals is ongoing under its second call, with the aim of selecting 20 new projects to complement the 15 projects selected in 2023. Moreover, further funding is expected through 2027, allowing for the selection of additional projects. The Intra-Africa Academic Mobility Scheme is poised to drive meaningful change in Africa's development by enhancing the skills and knowledge of its higher education community.

## 9. Key takeaways from the seminar

The Erasmus Mundus (EM) programme is widely recognised as a powerful tool for fostering strong international collaborations between Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), industry and civil society, as well as high quality interdisciplinary Joint Master's programmes addressing global challenges and local needs. The various sessions and discussions of the seminar generated a range of ideas to improve the conditions for the successful labour market integration of graduates from Erasmus Mundus Master's programmes, including:

- **Tailoring programmes to local contexts boosts employability:** Erasmus Mundus programmes that focus on African regional contexts, involve African partners, and address global challenges are more likely to help graduates find relevant employment locally.
- **Aligning curriculum with labour market needs:** Conducting regular labour market analyses and involving African industry and employers in programme design helps ensure that graduates gain the skills and competencies required in today's fast-changing job market.
- **Building graduate capacity for adaptability and resilience:** Graduates must be equipped not only with technical skills but also with transferable and transversal competencies – such as adaptability and resilience – to succeed in a volatile and rapidly changing global labour market.
- **Embedding career preparation in the curriculum:** Incorporating internships, work placements, and career counselling into Erasmus Mundus programmes supports the transition from education to employment and helps students build professional networks early.

- **Strengthening alumni networks for mentorship:** Alumni associations like the Erasmus Mundus Student and Alumni Association (EMA) and the EU supported African Students and Alumni Forum (ASAF) are crucial for offering mentorship and professional development opportunities, helping students navigate their career paths more effectively.
- **From graduation to employment:** As not all candidates plan to remain in academia and pursue a PhD upon graduation, it is essential to focus on enhancing employability prospects and removing persistent barriers that hinder effective labour market integration of graduates.

## ANNEXES

### Annex I – Seminar programme

Wednesday, 2 April 2025 - 09:30-18:00h, Nairobi time (CEST+1)

Time	Session
09:30 > 10:00	Onsite registration with welcome coffee & online check-in
10:00 > 10:30	<p><b>Welcome &amp; introductory remarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ondrej Simek</b>, Deputy Head of Mission, Delegation of the European Union to Kenya</li> <li>• <b>Dr Vincent Ogutu</b>, Vice Chancellor, Strathmore University (Kenya)</li> <li>• <b>Adrian Veale</b>, Representative of Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (<b>DG EAC</b>) (Belgium, online)</li> <li>• <b>Theo Duivenvoorde</b>, Head of Unit A3 Erasmus Mundus, Sport of the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (<b>EACEA</b>) (Belgium, online)</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Michael Hörig, Director of DAAD Brussels</p>
10:30 > 10:40	Group photo
10:40 > 11:00	<p><b>Icebreaker / Getting to know the participants</b></p> <p>DAAD Brussels (Belgium)</p>
11:00 > 12:30	<p><b>Session 1: Understanding career trajectories of Erasmus Mundus graduates</b></p> <p><i>Presentation-based session followed by discussions</i></p> <p><b>Session outline:</b> After a brief overview of the career trajectories of EM graduates in general, the session will feature a presentation of the results of the State of Play report that was prepared for the seminar. The report addresses the career trajectories of African EM graduates as well as how EM projects collect data, track and measure graduate employability and discuss ways to move forward. The results will then be discussed by the seminar participants. Presentation of the State of Play report outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Beatriz Garre Hernanz</b>, Business Consultant at NTT DATA (Belgium)</li> <li>• <b>Reagan Chidhakwa</b>, Country Representative of Erasmus Mundus Association Zimbabwe and employee in vaccinology industry (Zimbabwe)</li> </ul> <p><b>Interactive session</b> with EM project representatives in plenary</p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Tanja Kreetz, Deputy Director of DAAD Brussels</p>
12:30 > 13:30	Lunch
13:30 > 15:30	<p><b>Session 2: Labour market insertion of African graduates in Erasmus Mundus</b></p> <p><i>Input-based session, followed by Q&amp;A</i></p> <p><b>Session outline:</b> The session will showcase different EM projects by introducing their programme and demonstrating how they enhance student employability. It will also explore how these projects track and measure the labour market insertion of their alumni in Africa.</p> <p><b>Representatives from EM projects:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CCD-STeDe</b> (Erasmus Mundus Joint Master on Climate Change and Diversity: Sustainable Territorial Development): Dr Lee-Ann Modley, Local Coordinator South Africa</li> <li>• <b>EMGS</b> (Erasmus Mundus Joint Master in Global Studies): Stephan Kaschner</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>EMMIR</b> (European Master in Migration and Intercultural Relations): Prof Roberts Muuriisa of Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST)</li> <li>• <b>EPOG+</b> (Erasmus Mundus Joint Master in Economic policies for the global transition): Dr Sibulele Nkunzi, Local Coordinator of EPOG</li> <li>• <b>EIMAS</b> (European Interdisciplinary Master African Studies): Mirjam Strasser, European Coordinator of EIMAS</li> <li>• <b>EU4M</b> (Erasmus Mundus Joint Master in Mechatronic Engineering): Prof Wael Akl, President of Nile University</li> <li>• <b>HumanResponse</b> (Erasmus Mundus Joint Master on Coordinated Humanitarian Response, Health and Displacement): Julio Ambrosio Masquete, Local Representative of HumanResponse</li> <li>• <b>TPTI</b> (Master Erasmus Mundus Techniques, Heritage, Territories of Industry), Professeur Moustapha Sall</li> <li>• <b>TROPIMUNDO</b> (Erasmus Mundus Joint Master (Degree) in Tropical Biodiversity and Ecosystems): Cosmas Nzaka Munga, Local Coordinator of TROPIMUNDO</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Tanja Kreetz</p>
15:30 > 16:00	<b>Coffee break</b>
16:00 > 17:30	<p><b>Session 3: Current developments in African and European Higher Education</b></p> <p><i>Panel discussion</i></p> <p><b>Session outline:</b> The panel discussion will address current developments and practices related to enhancing employability of graduates in the evolving landscape of African higher education. Furthermore, the discussion will showcase current developments and practices related to enhancing employability of graduates in Europe and illustrate how joint programmes and collaborative initiatives can contribute to strengthening Africa's higher education system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Prof Dickson Andala</b>, Chief Executive Officer of the National Research Fund, Kenya</li> <li>• <b>Prof Olusola Bandele Oyewole</b>, Secretary General of Association of African Universities (Ghana, online)</li> <li>• <b>Prof Souleymane Konaté</b>, Secretary General of CAMES (Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'enseignement supérieur) (Burkina Faso)</li> <li>• <b>Thérèse Zhang</b>, Deputy Director of Higher Education Policy, European University Association (EUA, Belgium, online)</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Michael Hörig</p>
17:30 > 18:00	<b>Wrap-up of Day 1</b>
19:00	<b>Dinner</b>

#### Thursday, 3 April 2025 – 09:00-16:00 (Nairobi time (CEST+1))

Time	Session
09:00 > 09:30	<p><b>Keynote address: Cooperation with the labour market from an institutional perspective</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dr. James Boyd McFie</b>, Academic and Research Director, School of Management and Commerce (SMC), Strathmore University</li> </ul> <p><b>Session outline:</b> The session will present input from higher education and stimulate discussion, including with a forward-looking lens, on how higher education can play a pivotal role in the labour market insertion of graduates in Africa, with a regional focus on Kenya, which is one of the leading economies in East Africa and serves as a regional hub with a wide range of employment opportunities.</p>

	<p><b>Moderator:</b> Inés Fernandez-Figares Durcudoy, Senior Business Consultant, NTT DATA</p>
9:30 > 11:00	<p><b>Session 4: Labour market insertion of African graduates in other EU programmes (Capacity Building programme, Intra-Africa Academic Mobility Scheme)</b></p> <p><i>Input-based session, followed by Q&amp;A</i></p> <p><b>Session outline:</b> The session will showcase how different Erasmus+ and IntraAfrica projects address graduates' employability. The session will also discuss how stronger synergies can be developed between different EU programmes.</p> <p><b>Representatives from CBHE, CBVET and IntraAfrica projects:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>DEVISE4KE</b> (Capacity Building in the Field of Vocational Education and Training): Jonathan Mulwa, Head of the Department of Business Studies</li> <li>• <b>FAITH</b> (Capacity Building in Higher Education): Ephrem Tekle, Project Coordinator</li> <li>• <b>UNIHUDS</b> (Capacity Building in Higher Education): Gideon Brefo, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of hapaSpace Innovation Hub</li> <li>• <b>GREEN-STEM</b> (IntraAfrica Academic Mobility Scheme): Anne Nkoidila, Coordinator</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Michael Horig</p>
11:00 > 11:30	<p><b>Coffee break</b></p>
11:30 > 13:00	<p><b>Session 5: Aligning Erasmus Mundus Masters with labour market needs</b></p> <p><i>Discussion among participants</i></p> <p><b>Session outline:</b> Building on the insights shared in previous sessions, participants will explore opportunities and potential implications for aligning Erasmus Mundus Masters more closely with different labour market needs. Key themes will include the integration of practical components into higher education curricula and foster industry collaboration. The session will feature input pitches from industry and labour market representatives to enrich and complement the discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Karen Basiye</b>, Sustainability, Shared Value and a Corporate Environment Specialist at Safaricom PLC (Kenya)</li> <li>• <b>Susan Chomba</b>, EM alumna (SUTROFOR programme; forerunner of GloFor), Director of Vital Landscapes for Africa at WRI (Kenya)</li> <li>• <b>Adams Brent</b>, EM alumnus (Master's in Strategic Project Management (European) programme (MSPME), representative of retail business in Cape Town (South Africa)</li> <li>• <b>Tamene Sinishaw Gelaye</b>, EM alumnus, Data Analyst for Ethiopian Red Cross society (Ethiopia, online)</li> <li>• <b>Birhane Guesh Weldeargay</b>, EM alumnus (Geospatial Technologies programme), IT professional and educator, Founder and CEO of Feleg-AI@Digital Literacy (Ethiopia, online)</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Tanja Kreetz</p>
13:00 > 13:30	<p><b>Wrap-up and conclusions of the seminar</b></p>
13:30 > 14:30	<p><b>Lunch</b></p>
14:30 > 15:30	<p><b>Info session</b></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Michael Horig</p>
15:30 > 17:00	<p><b>Campus Tour (optional)</b></p>



## Annex II – Programme examples: Labour market insertion of African graduates in Erasmus Mundus

The following programme overviews were compiled by Eszter Hargitai based on the PowerPoint presentations provided by the speakers.

### Climate Change and Diversity: Sustainable Territorial Development (CCD-STeDe)

**Speaker:** Dr Lee-Ann Modley, Local Coordinator, University of Johannesburg, South Africa

**Programme description:** CCD-STeDe is an inclusive, innovative, multilingual Master's programme jointly managed by a consortium of two EU universities (coordinator: Università degli Studi di Padova, Italy) and three non-EU universities, two of which from Africa (University of Johannesburg/South Africa, Université Ouaga i Professeur Joseph Ki-Zerbo/Burkina Faso). Three EU and one non-EU companies are involved as professional partners.

**Components of the curriculum undertaken in Africa and involvement of African partners and organisations:** During the third semester, CCD-STeDe students participate in a Winter School, mainly based on fieldwork on the key topics of biodiversity, just transition and sustainable community tourism. The fourth semester is dedicated to internships and thesis work, which can be implemented worldwide and is facilitated by the partners. Associated partners like the "European Association for Local Democracy" have contacts in Africa and are locally embedded like ViaVia Tourism Academy, with partnerships to local entrepreneurs, governments, school, neighbourhood organisations, artists, social organisations, and tourism organisations, and ViaVia World cafés located in Benin, Mali, Morocco, Rwanda (opening end 2024), Senegal and Uganda.

**Monitoring and graduate tracking systems:** A graduate impact study is planned from 2026, carried out by the coordinator with contributions from all partners. The objective is to analyse how participants rate the benefits both in terms of their personal and professional development in cross-sectional and longitudinal terms, and how the programme prepared graduates for the labour market. CCD-STeDe also plans specific sessions to analyse the job opportunities of its graduates in Europe, Africa and Latin America.

**Challenges:** One of the most pressing issues is the high unemployment rate, exacerbated by a skills mismatch in Africa, where the qualifications and expertise of job seekers do not align with the demands of the job market. This is compounded by limited job opportunities, especially in rural areas, making it difficult to secure stable employment. Geographical disparities also play a role, with certain regions lacking the infrastructure and resources needed to attract investment and create jobs. Access to professional networks is another significant barrier as without strong connections, graduates can struggle to find jobs or career advancement opportunities. Moreover, cultural expectations often influence career choices and limit opportunities for certain groups.

**Opportunities/Recommendations:** These challenges require comprehensive strategies to address the underlying factors in the study programme and promote inclusive economic growth in the region.

**Link to project website:** <https://ccd-stede.eu/>

### European Master in Global Studies (EMGS)

**Speaker:** Stephan Kaschner, Local coordinator, Leipzig University, Germany

**Programme description:** EMGS is a well-established, interdisciplinary programme that has been offered since 2005. It is a collaboration between multiple European universities, including Leipzig University (Germany), Ghent University (Belgium), Roskilde University (Denmark), University of Vienna (Austria), and University of Wrocław (Poland). Until 2024, the London School of Economics was also part of the consortium.

**Components of the curriculum undertaken in Africa and involvement of African partners and organisations:** EMGS involves several African academic institutions as partners, including Stellenbosch University (South Africa), Addis Ababa University (Ethiopia), and the University of Yaoundé I (Cameroon).



Stellenbosch and Addis Ababa are particularly attractive destinations for non-African students. To date, 45 African students have successfully completed the programme, primarily from South Africa, Ghana, and Morocco. The programme maintains close ties with the “Master in Global Studies and Peace and Security in Africa.”

**Monitoring and graduate tracking systems:** The EMGS consortium conducts an alumni survey every five years with the next survey scheduled for fall 2025. Additionally, the programme maintains strong alumni networks through LinkedIn groups and dedicated alumni communities with over four hundred members. Several alumni meetings have been held in Leipzig, and one in Dakar in 2018, which was co-funded by DAAD. Furthermore, regular (digital) alumni roundtables and career colloquia are organised.

**Challenges:** One of the main challenges faced by the programme stems from restrictive European visa regimes. Funding also remains a significant obstacle, as very few students can afford the programme without an Erasmus Mundus scholarship.

**Opportunities/Recommendations:** A recommendation to further enhance gender equality would be to promote a good balance of male and female students. To further support students, EMGS is currently preparing a library of testimonials, internship experiences, and career reports.

**Link to project website:** <https://globalstudies-masters.eu/>.

## European Master in Migration and Intercultural Relations (EMMIR)

**Speaker:** Prof Roberts Muuriisa, Local coordinator, Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST)

**Programme description:** EMMIR is a multidisciplinary Erasmus Mundus Joint Master’s programme focused on migration studies. It is the first African-European-Asian collaboration in migration studies. EMMIR brings together a diverse consortium of nine partner institutions: the University of Oldenburg (Germany), the University of Stavanger (Norway), the University of South Bohemia (Czech Republic), the University of Nova Gorica (Slovenia), Ahfad University of Women (Sudan), Mbarara University of Science and Technology (Uganda), the University of the Witwatersrand (South Africa), Rabindra Bharati University and Mahanirban Calcutta Research group (India). Since its inception in 2011, the programme has successfully trained students from around the world, with twelve editions completed to date. The 13<sup>th</sup> edition of the programme is set to begin in September 2025.

**Components of the curriculum undertaken in Africa and involvement of African partners and organisations:** There are three African universities involved as full partners in the programme, namely Ahfad University for Women (AUW) in Sudan, Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) in Uganda, and the University of Witwatersrand (Wits) in South Africa.

**Monitoring and graduate tracking systems:** The EMMIR programme utilises the EMMIR Alumni Surveys to collect feedback from graduates, allowing for ongoing assessment of their career progression and the impact of the programme. In addition, the EMMIR Tracer Study is a regularly updated database that tracks the employment and career outcomes of alumni. Since its inception in 2011, 50 African students have participated in the EMMIR programme across 12 editions. A total of 33 African graduates have completed the programme by Edition 10. African graduates work in various employment sectors, including NGOs, international organisations, academia, and the private sector.

**Challenges:** African graduates of the EMMIR programme face several challenges when transitioning from education to the labour market. One significant issue is the difficulty in obtaining visa and residence permits, particularly in Germany and the EU, due to restrictive immigration policies and complex bureaucratic processes. This, combined with language barriers, limits their access to job opportunities, despite the programme being conducted in English. Additionally, structural barriers such as racism and discrimination further hinder employment prospects, both in Europe and Africa, where unconscious biases in hiring processes often play a role. Many job opportunities rely on personal connections, which African graduates may lack, leading to prolonged unemployment. In Africa, graduates face challenges related to economic and political instability, weak job markets, and underfunded migration research initiatives, making it difficult to secure employment in their home countries. Mental health support for graduates is also minimal, with existing services often not tailored to migrants' specific needs. Given these challenges, many graduates turn to postgraduate studies, with PhD positions in Germany typically being unpaid and therefore self-funded.

**Opportunities and recommendations:** There is a growing demand for migration experts as global migration challenges intensify. Many companies now value expertise in migration and diversity, particularly in roles related to corporate social responsibility, sustainability, and ESG. African nations are also increasingly prioritising migration governance, offering employment opportunities in policymaking, research, and international development. African graduates bring unique perspectives, rooted in African philosophies and decolonial knowledge systems, which complement Western academic and professional frameworks. Additionally, the rise of remote and hybrid work opportunities allows African graduates to work for global institutions while staying in Africa. Strengthening the EMMIR alumni network can also support job referrals, mentorship, and career development for new graduates, thereby helping to enhance their employability in both local and international contexts.

**Link to project website:** <https://www.emmir.org/>.

## Economic Policies for the Global transition (EPOG)

**Speaker:** Dr Sibulele Nkunzi, Local programme manager of EPOG, University of the Witwatersrand

**Programme description:** EPOG is a two-year EM Master's programme designed to tackle some of the most pressing challenges facing the global economy today. This programme offers a comprehensive approach by addressing ecological concerns alongside significant socio-economic issues such as the rise of the digital economy, growing income, and wealth inequalities, financialisation, and the development of the Global South. EPOG takes a critical and pluralist stance on economics in terms of methods, theories, and disciplines. With a strong research-oriented focus, the programme fosters connections between academia and non-academic institutions.

**Components of the curriculum undertaken in Africa and involvement of African partners and organisations:** The programme has cooperated with African partners, including the University of Witwatersrand (degree-awarding institution, South Africa), the Institute for Economic Justice (IEJ), and the Southern Centre for Inequality Studies (SCIS) (both associated partners, South Africa).

**Monitoring and graduate tracking systems:** The EPOG programme monitors graduates through an annual alumni survey, exchanges during its activities such as the Master's conference, joint seminars, and courses on ecological challenges. Graduate tracking is further supported by teaching opportunities and a mentoring system among alumni. Between 2015 and 2024, 18 African graduates from ten nationalities and 19 non-African graduates from 12 nationalities studied at WITS. For the current academic year (2025-2026), two African students (one nationality) and four non-African students (four nationalities) are studying at WITS.

**Challenges:** The programme faces several challenges in supporting African students and graduates. One key issue is the limited availability of job opportunities within the field of economics in Africa, as job opportunities at partner universities may not be specifically tailored to African students. Additionally, differences between the programme's economic approach and the topics covered in students' home countries can create academic gaps. Visa difficulties also pose a barrier for those relocating to South Africa. Furthermore, there is a need for additional support, including technical skills development, tailored labour market preparation, and enhanced assistance for international mobility.

**Recommendations:** To increase the support for African students and graduates, several recommendations have been proposed. Establishing dedicated career services for African students would offer crucial guidance and resources to support their professional growth. These services would include organizing regional job fairs that connect students with African employers and global organisations operating in Africa, as well as providing career workshops that help students navigate language barriers, visa processes, and labour market trends. Formal internship agreements with African organisations would offer valuable hands-on experience, while a structured mentorship programme would pair students with experienced professionals to enhance their career development. Lastly, offering specialised courses would equip graduates with the knowledge and skills needed to address contemporary African challenges effectively.

**Link to project website:** <https://www.epog.eu/>.

## European Interdisciplinary Master African Studies (EIMAS)

**Speaker:** Mirjam Strasser, Coordinator of EIMAS, University of Bayreuth

**Programme description:** EIMAS is a joint EM Master's programme designed to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of African Studies. Between 2020 and 2023, the programme had four intakes, offering a unique four-step mobility scheme. Students begin their studies at the University of Porto, followed by semesters at Universität Bayreuth and Université Bordeaux Montaigne. In the final phase, students engage in Africa-based or Africa-related fieldwork or internships, culminating in the completion of their thesis at a university of their choice.

**Components of the curriculum undertaken in Africa and involvement of African partners and organisations:** EIMAS does not have a full partner in Africa, but several associated partners from across the African continent are involved in the programme and help with establishing connections to local institutions for a possible field research project or internship in the country. Associated partners from Africa include the Université Abdou Moumouni (Niger), Université Ibn Zohr (Morocco), Kenyatta University (Kenya), the University of Kwazulu-Natal (South Africa), Moi University (Kenya), the University of Sousse (Tunisia), and Tiniguena "Esta Terra É Nossa" (Guinea Bissau).

**Monitoring and graduate tracking systems:** To track and measure the labour market insertion of EIMAS alumni in Africa, an alumni survey focused on employability was conducted, achieving a 92% response rate (34 out of 37). Additionally, the EIMAS Closing Event and the first alumni meeting will be organised at the African Union Commission Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in October 2025. African participation in the EIMAS project has been substantial, with 62 EIMAS-ers representing 34 countries, including 17 African nations. The programme has also welcomed over 20 African guest scholars and facilitated more than 50 field research projects or internships across Africa.

**Challenges:** EIMAS graduates face several challenges in their career development. The lack of PhD scholarships for many EMJMD graduates limits academic opportunities. Many students struggle with insufficient time to learn the national language of their host country, which is often essential for securing jobs and scholarships. Additionally, there is a lack of cooperation with internationally operating companies. Alumni engagement is also difficult due to limited external or EU funding, raising concerns about the long-term sustainability of the alumni network and the ability to track graduates in the future.

**Opportunities/Recommendations:** To enhance opportunities for graduates, EMJMs should promote greater interdisciplinarity while allowing students to define their own academic focus. Strengthening partnerships with African institutions as full collaborators would further enrich the programme. There is also a need to increase the presence of social sciences, cultural sciences, and humanities within companies and to raise awareness among African employers about the value of EMJM(D) graduates. Improved cooperation with research and educational institutions across Africa could expand career prospects, and additional support should be provided for graduates seeking to pursue PhD studies in Europe.

**Link to project website:** <https://www.eimas.eu/en/>.

## Joint Master's in Mechatronic Engineering (EU4M)

**Speaker:** Prof Wael Akl, President of Nile University

**Programme description:** EU4M offers mobility and exchange focusing on the multi-cultural dimension. It is offered by four universities in Spain, Germany, France, and Egypt, with courses available in four languages. Students are required to spend their programme in at least two countries and take the courses in at least two languages. By breaking down language and cultural barriers, EU4M equips graduates with the confidence and skills needed to thrive in the international job market.

**Components of the curriculum undertaken in Africa and involvement of African partners and organisations:** The EU4M programme cooperates with Nile University in Egypt as a full partner.

**Monitoring and graduate tracking systems:** Mail exchanges, invitations to events at Nile University, and alumni newsletters are used to monitor and sustain continuous engagement and communication with graduates.

**Challenges:** Challenges faced by students include language acquisition, navigating visa application processes, as well as adapting to new cultural environments.

**Opportunities/Recommendations:** It is recommended to expand the programme by increasing the number of African participants and diversifying technical domains to better address African needs. Additionally, integrating the programme with research, innovation, and entrepreneurship, as well as strengthening industry partnerships are recommended.

**Link to project website:** <https://www.eu4m.eu/inicio>.

## **Human Response Erasmus Mundus Joint Master on Coordinated Humanitarian Response, Health and Displacement (HumanResponse)**

**Speaker:** Julio Ambrosio Masquete, Local Representative of Human Response Project, Universidade Rovuma

**Programme description:** Human Response focuses on creating and delivering four editions of a Master's programme on Coordinated Humanitarian Response, Health, and Displacement, awarding joint diploma (EQF Level 7 degree), comprised of 120 ECTS. In response to the growing number of displaced people affected by conflict and climate crises, the programme addresses the pressing need for professionalisation of humanitarian workers through (i) a specialised offer, (ii) fostering South-North collaboration and multi-stake holder cooperation, (iii) strengthening localised leadership, and (iv) articulating theory and practice to navigate organisational complexity in humanitarian action. The programme is coordinated by Iscte – University Institute of Lisbon, in Portugal, in cooperation with the full partners Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), in Norway, the Makerere University (Makerere), in Uganda, the University of Cape Verde (UniCV) and the University of Santiago (USant), in Cape Verde, the University of Athens (NKUA), in Greece, and the University of Rovuma (UniRovuma), in Mozambique.

**Components of the curriculum undertaken in Africa and involvement of African partners and organisations:** The programme includes the above listed full partners from African countries, where students attend a teaching semester in the third semester (Makerere University, Uganda), and a credit-bearing Summer School (in Cape Verde in the first edition of the Masters, in Greece in the second edition, in Uganda in the third edition, and in Mozambique in the last edition). Students complete their final dissertation in the fourth semester (University of Cape Verde (UniCV), University of Santiago (US), also in Cape Verde, University of Rovuma (URovuma). Academic supervision and evaluation are also undertaken in Uganda, Cape Verde, and Mozambique with fieldwork/internships conducted in different countries considering the locations of the twenty plus associated partners.

**Monitoring and graduate tracking systems:** The Human Response team will establish alumni networks to facilitate ongoing communication, collaboration, and knowledge exchange, thereby fostering a sense of community and continuity among graduates. Additionally, the team will initiate and continuously update a database with a list of public and private organisations that may employ graduates from across the world, thus allowing for tracking students' employability.

**Challenges:** There is a need for greater specialisation among graduates from African higher education institutions to effectively lead humanitarian action at local and national levels. Moreover, many of the African higher education institutions face difficulties in being adequately equipped to deliver advanced training programmes to address the complexities of humanitarian disasters. The collaboration with European universities that have an excellent track record and experience in the field of humanitarian action within this consortium is an opportunity to enhance these capabilities.

**Opportunities/Recommendations:** The Human Response programme offers learning opportunities that are specifically designed with and for countries affected by humanitarian crises and displacement in the areas/locations most affected by these crises. It also aims to increase employability and create advanced opportunities for young professionals from diverse academic backgrounds within the humanitarian action field.

**Link to project website:** <https://humanresponse.eu/>.

## Techniques, Heritage and Industrial territories (TPTI)

**Speaker:** Professor Moustapha Sall, Local coordinator, Université Cheikh Anta Diop

**Programme description:** TPTI is an interdisciplinary and international two-year programme that focuses on the history and heritage of technology. It is coordinated by the University of Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne (France) in partnership with the University of Padua (Italy) and the University of Évora (Portugal). Additionally, six partner universities provide short mobility modules of five weeks, each worth 5 ECTS: Kagoshima University (Japan), Cheikh Anta Diop University (Senegal), University of Córdoba (Argentina), University of Sfax (Tunisia), University of Oviedo (Spain), and Czech Technical University in Prague (Czech Republic). The programme is designed for students aiming to pursue careers in research, teaching, or various cultural and heritage professions.

**Components of the curriculum undertaken in Africa and involvement of African partners and organisations:** The TPTI programme involves several African institutions as partners and offers short mobility modules of five weeks at two African institutions: Cheikh Anta Diop University in Senegal and the University of Sfax in Tunisia. At Cheikh Anta Diop University, the focus is on "Tangible and Intangible Heritage in West Africa," and the University of Sfax offers a module on "History, Archaeology, and Sustainable Development."

**Monitoring and graduate tracking systems:** To effectively monitor and measure student progress, an employability survey is conducted at key intervals: n+1, n+5, and n+10. In addition, an Individual Monitoring Table is used to track and document each student's progress.

**Challenges:** not included in PPT

**Recommendations:** not included in PPT

**Link to project website:** <https://www.tpti.eu/en/>.

## Erasmus Mundus Joint Master in Tropical Biodiversity and Ecosystems (TROPIMUNDO)

**Speaker:** Cosmas Nzaka Munga, Local Coordinator of TROPIMUNDO, Technical University of Mombasa

**Programme description:** TROPIMUNDO is the world's only European MSc. Programme on tropical biodiversity and ecosystems with a full semester of class and field schools in the tropics. The programme involves 14 partners from across the globe with respective expertise in tropical biodiversity and ecosystems.

**Components of the curriculum undertaken in Africa and involvement of African partners and organisations:** During the second semester, students spend a full semester in a university in the tropics (taught in English, French or Spanish) for basic and specialised courses focussing on a particular tropical ecosystem, incl. a 15 ECTS field course, geomatics and other skills and qualifications. Out of the 14 partners, three partner universities that students can choose from are based in African countries. These partners are: Technical University of Mombasa (Kenya), Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar (Senegal), and Université de Dschang (Cameroon). The last semester (S4) is dedicated to the Master's thesis in collaboration with full and associated partners. The associated partners based in Africa include universities (Jimma university in Ethiopia, UNIKIN university in D.R. Congo, ZU University in Tanzania), research institutions (KMFRI in Kenya, SAIAB in South Africa), international institutions (Wetlands International in Senegal) and governmental institutions (KWS/WRTI in Kenya).

**Monitoring and graduate tracking systems:** The programme enhances employability through testing and matching components, including presentation skills, career planning, and engagement with potential employers via thesis and internship fairs. The Master's thesis defence serves as a comprehensive assessment testing knowledge, skills, and communication abilities. Participants can also opt for a personal development analysis and occupational personality profiling, followed by a one-on-one session with an experienced job coach, facilitated by a specialised firm with over 30 years of global expertise in human capital. Furthermore, the programme includes a system of student and alumni management. The scope of this covers everything ranging from admission to alumni career prospects.

**Challenges:** No challenges were highlighted.



**Recommendations:** No recommendations were highlighted.

**Link to project website:** <https://www.tropimundo.eu/>.

## Annex III – Session 4: Labour market insertion of African graduates in other EU programmes

The following programme overviews were compiled by Eszter Hargitai based on the PowerPoint presentations provided by the speakers.

**Empowering Sustainable Development of VET in Kenya Using Solar Energy and Low Energy Devices (DEVISE4KE)** (EU programme “Capacity Building in the Field of Vocational Education and Training”)

**Speaker:** Jonathan Mulwa, Head of the Department of Business Studies

**Project description:** The DeVISE 4KE programme aims to enhance the employability and entrepreneurial skills of VET graduates by integrating work-based learning into curricula. It focuses on improving ICT and key transversal competencies such as collaboration, initiative, adaptability, and digital competence. This is achieved through the installation of green technologies in VET schools, the adoption of digital teaching methods, and a collaborative skills development model involving Rongo University, VET institutions, and regional industry partners. The programme addresses critical challenges including the ICT skills gap relative to job market demands and inadequate ICT infrastructure in VET and secondary schools.

**Labour market relevance:** The labour market relevance of the programme lies in its focus on equipping graduates with transversal skills that enhance employability, aligning training with real-world industry needs, and addressing skills gaps through collaborative training. Additionally, the inclusion of mentorship and networking opportunities further supports graduates in successfully integrating into the workforce.

**Mechanisms to track and measure the labour market insertion of your alumni in Africa:** To track and measure the labour market insertion of alumni in Africa, the programme utilises tracer studies and engages alumni networks to monitor employment outcomes and career progression.

**Challenges and opportunities/recommendations:** The programme faces several challenges, including deficits in ICT infrastructure and unreliable energy supply, which hinder effective delivery. The implementation of new curricula is also resource-intensive and presents logistical hurdles. Additionally, there is a lack of integration of work-based training due to missing partnerships, and significant gaps exist in teacher training, driven by limited resources and inadequate professional development opportunities. Despite these challenges, there are strong opportunities for collaboration in areas such as teacher and content development, resource sharing, and industry immersion.

**Link to project website:** <https://devise4ke.com/>.

**UAS are F(it), A(djusted), I(nnovative), T(rendy) & H(olistic) – F.A.I.T.H.** (EU programme “Capacity Building in Higher Education”)

**Speaker:** Ephrem Tekle, Project Coordinator

**Project description:** F.A.I.T.H. is an Erasmus+ Capacity Building project in Higher Education (CBHE) focused on structural reform projects. The main objective of the project is to build a framework for the UAS sector and to work on an Ethiopian UAS model. The project has a duration of 36 months and received 1,000,000 EUR in funding. European partners collaborate in the project to co-design a framework for the UAS sector and to work on an

Ethiopian UAS model. The project develops toolboxes adjusted to the Ethiopian context. These toolboxes have been tested and piloted in three designated UAS, and then updated. Before the end of the project, the toolboxes will have been rolled out to all 15 EUS in Ethiopia. The partnership comprises seven full partners: Kotebe University of Education (KUE) as the Project Coordinator, the Ethiopian Ministry of Education (MoE) as well as four UAS (Osnabrück University of Applied Sciences, Saxion University of Applied Sciences, Wolaita-Sodo University of Applied Sciences as well as Jigjiga University of Applied Sciences). The German International Cooperation Institution (GIZ) is involved as associated partner.

**Labour market relevance:** FAITH aims to bridge the gap between industry demand and training at universities. During the project, the government is transforming 15 out of 44 comprehensive Ethiopian universities into universities of applied sciences (UAS) to better address labour market needs in higher education. Among the six focus areas of the toolboxes are (1) internships as part of the degree programmes, (2) partnerships and networks with industry/SMEs, (3) demand driven applied research and technology/knowledge transfer, (4) career paths for professors (teachers and researchers) from applied research and professional fields, (5) integrating part-time lecturers with a practical background into the course delivery and upskilling of academic staff as well as (6) engaging for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

**Challenges and opportunities/recommendations:** Higher education institutions face challenges regarding change resistance and loose linkages with industry. To address these issues, it is recommended to work closely with the MoE and create responsive frameworks.

**Link to project website:** <https://faith.ethernet.edu.et/>.

## UNIHUBS (Capacity Building in Higher Education)

**Speaker:** Gideon Brefo, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of hapaSpace Innovation Hub

**Project description:** The UNIHUBS project is a collaboration between African Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Ghana, Kenya, and Tanzania, and EU partners in the Netherlands and Greece. The goal is to align university curricula with the evolving needs of digital innovation to enhance graduate employability. The implementation of the UNIHUBS project relies on a combination of quantitative and qualitative research activities, aiming to identify labour market needs and innovation requirements in HEIs, with a series of targeted interventions, including training workshops; co-creation of educational material; experiential learning practices; and an international online course.

**Labour market relevance:** The growing mismatch between graduate skills and labour market needs highlights the critical importance of UNIHUBS. Activities so far include a needs analysis comprising desk research, interviews, and eight focus group discussions across three countries, involving sixty-nine participants. Additionally, a collection of best practices has been gathered, such as Kenya's coding bootcamps co-developed by HEIs and Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs), which have led to measurable increases in graduate employability. The project has also mapped skill gaps in key areas such as AI, data analytics, programming, teamwork, and problem-solving.

**Mechanisms to track and measure the labour market insertion of your alumni in Africa:** To track and measure the labour market impact, partner HEIs will monitor graduate placement, while DIHs will support follow-up efforts to assess the practical application of the skills acquired during the programme. Additionally, alumni surveys will be conducted post-pilot to track employment outcomes.

**Challenges and opportunities/recommendations:** The project faces several challenges, including fragmented relationships between Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and DIHs, particularly in Ghana and Tanzania. Additional obstacles include outdated curricula and under-resourced rural institutions. However, there are significant opportunities to address these issues, such as using Kenya's collaborative model as a blueprint for fostering stronger partnerships. Also engaging national stakeholders to influence policies, along with the development of EU-Africa joint innovation networks, present valuable opportunities for long-term impact and sustainable collaboration.

**Link to project website:** <https://unihubs.eu/>.

## **Green Science Teaching Materials for Digital Learning (GREEN STEM)** (IntraAfrica Academic Mobility Scheme)

**Speaker:** Anne Nkoidila, Programs Manager, University of Nairobi

**Project description:** GREEN-STEM is a high-quality education, research, and innovation ecosystem that empowers African professionals to develop solutions to societal challenges through entrepreneurship and innovation. The project aims to foster intra-African mobility for students and staff in STEM fields, with a focus on sustainability and green technologies.

**Labour market relevance:** The programme addresses skills gaps in renewable energy, environmental engineering, and sustainable agriculture. Furthermore, it enhances employability by equipping graduates with industry-relevant green skills.

**Mechanisms to track and measure the labour market insertion of your alumni in Africa:** The programme tracks and measures the labour market integration of its alumni in Africa through a post-graduation employment survey, as well as alumni networking and mentorship programs.

**Challenges and opportunities/recommendations:** The project faces several challenges, including misaligned academic calendars, delays in physical mobility, financial transfer issues (particularly with Euro accounts), and difficulty attracting female applicants after initially restricting some opportunities to women only. To address these, key recommendations include initiating fund transfers earlier, avoiding long-term mobility programmes exclusively for women, and considering geopolitical factors, such as tensions in South Africa and Rwanda, that impacted operations.

**Link to project website:** <https://www.green-stem.eu/>.