



Academic Coordinator's Report for 2020

The year 2020 has been, in what we are told is the sense of the word as used in a Chinese curse, interesting. Like other research – and generally all human – organizations, the Moi University African Cluster Centre of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence (Moi-ACC) has been greatly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The effects have, expectedly, largely been negative. To clarify what is meant here by giving a few instances: some research projects that won funding could not start in the social environment created in the attempt to manage the spread of the virus; workshops were difficult to organize; and fellowship programmes were put on hold. Related to this last point, the interactions with colleagues in the other centres in the Cluster of Excellence – University of Bayreuth, Germany; Joseph Ki-Zerbo University, Burkina Faso; University of Lagos, Nigeria; Rhodes University, South Africa – that are central to the strategy to meet the Cluster of Excellence's main objective of reconfiguring African Studies were severely curtailed. Collaborative research that entailed empirical, field work was shelved. Fortunately, owing to the indomitable human spirit and the availability of digital technology, the full stoppage of work at the Moi-ACC was shorter than it could have been. The Africa Colloquium, the seminar series that is a flagship activity for the Centre, that had broken in late February resumed in late August – in a new, hybrid format whose reach enhances the kind of connections that the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence aspires to create and sustain.

Table 1: Africa Colloquium 2020

SR	Date	Paper Title	Presenter
1.	06.02.2020	The Kenyan Writer and the Discourse of Development	Dr. Martina Kopf University of Vienna, Austria
2.	27.02.2020	Towards the Democratisation of Knowledge Production: The “Shared Authority” Approach in Social Science Research	Dr. Daniela Waldburger University of Vienna, Austria
3.	27.08.2020	Prospects and Challenges of East African Common Market Protocol	Dr. Henry Kibet Mutai Kenya School of Law, Kenya
4.	03.09.2020	<i>Nganya</i> Rides: Travel Imaginaries in Matatu Transport in Ongata Rongai, Kenya	Dr. Miriam Maranga-Musonye University of Nairobi, Kenya

5.	10.09.2020	Strange Fruit: Election Violence as Ritual	Dr. Wandia Njoya Daystar University, Kenya
6.	24.09.2020	The Evolution of Learning in the Islamic Tradition and its Parallels in Other Ancient Traditions	Prof. Mohamed Bakari Raf International University, Kenya
7.	01.10.2020	On the Aesthetics of Language	Prof. Dr. Daniel Ochieng’ Orwenjo The Technical University of Kenya, Kenya
8.	15.10.2020	The Challenge of Covid–19 on Identity, Morality and Well–being in Kenya: An African Culture Based Analysis	Prof. Mary Getui Catholic University of East Africa, Kenya
9.	15.10.2020	Conceptualising African Studies in Shifting Theoretical Frameworks	Prof. Kembo Sure Rongo University, Kenya
10.	22.10.2020	Academic Mobility for Sustainable University/ Higher Education in Africa	Prof. Anne Nangulu Bomet University College, Kenya
11.	29.10.2020	Mainstreaming Kiswahili in the East African Community Agenda for Regional Integration and Sustainable Development	Dr. Caroline Asiimwe Makerere University, Uganda
12.	05.11.2020	Internationalization of Academic Mobility in Africa: Annotated Experiences of South–North and South–South Academic Mobility	Dr. Yekunoamlak Alemu Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia
13.	12.11.2020	Debating Local Moralities: The Case of Land Inheritance in Buganda	Dr. Claire Medard–Amutebi Institute of Research and Development – France
14.	26.11.2020	Imagining the Head of State as Poop: Stella Nyanzi’s Scatological Aesthetics in <i>No Roses from my Mouth</i>	Dr. Danson Kahyana Makerere University, Uganda
15.	03.12.2020	Knowledge, Learning and Teachings from the Friday Khutuba of Shaykh Al–Amin b. Ali Al–Mazrui, 1890–1947	Prof. Hassan Mwakimako Pwani University, Kenya

The 15 seminars in the Africa Colloquium were presented by researchers from 13 different universities and institutions of higher learning. 9 seminars were presented by researchers based in different Kenyan universities and institutions of higher learning. Of the remaining 6, 3 were presented by researchers based in different universities in the wider eastern Africa while the remaining 3 were presented by researchers based in different universities and institutions of higher learning in Europe. The importance of the Africa Colloquium cannot be gainsaid.

Through these seminars we bench mark with researchers in other institutions, we network, and we mutually inspire one another.

The resumption of the Africa Colloquium was preceded by the start, earlier that month (August), of the field research phase of one of the Africa Multiple–funded research projects being undertaken by researchers in the Centre.

5 such – Africa Multiple–funded – research projects are on–going in the Moi University African Cluster Centre.

Table 2: Africa Multiple Funded Projects

SR	Project	Research Section
1.	Economic Challenges Affecting Regional Integration of Member States in the East African Community	Affiliations
2.	East African Asian Writing and the Emergence of a Diasporic Subjectivity	Arts and Aesthetics
3.	Mediated and Mediatization of Islamic Knowledge in Kenya: Educational Institutions, Media Technologies and Performing Aesthetics	Learning
4.	Framing Identities from Human Agency Mobility on the Kenya–Uganda Highway	Mobility
5.	African Identities. Moralities and Wellbeing	Moralities

All these projects started in 2020.

In 2020, Moi–ACC hosted 2 workshops at which research papers were presented, and 3 others (the present one included) that were for strategic planning, project execution and review.

Table 3: Conferences and Workshops

SR	Date	Conference/ Workshop
1.	19.02.2020 – 21.02.2020	Reconfiguring African Studies (The Launch of the Moi University African Cluster Centre)
2.	27.08.2020	Moi University Management Board (MUMB) – Moi University African Cluster Centre (Moi–ACC)
3.	29.10.2020 – 30.10.2020	Music, Identity, and History: Reading Kalenjin Popular/ Traditional Music
4.	05.11.2020 – 06.11.2020	Reimagining Kenyan Film: Technologies, Aesthetics, Traditions, Publics and Meanings

5.	15.12.2020 – 17.12.2020	Moi University African Cluster Centre Retreat 2020
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Over the same year, researchers based in the Centre participated in several other programmes and activities of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence. 1 researcher took up a fellowship at the centre in the University of Bayreuth; 1 researcher was invited as a Keynote Speaker in a workshop in the centre in the University of Lagos; and 5 researchers are members of teams undertaking research projects based in the University of Bayreuth.

Table 4: Participation of Researchers Based in Moi-ACC in the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence Activities in Cluster Centres Other than the Moi-ACC in 2020

Fellowships	Keynote Speakers	Research Team Members
2	1	5

In all, and especially when one recognizes the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, it seems fair to judge that as far as first years in long term projects go, 2020 has been a good year for Moi-ACC. Obviously, more could have been done. A closer look at some of the achievements that have been picked out above suggests the point.

Table 5: A Selection of Activities Carried Out in Moi-ACC in 2020

	Seminars	Workshops	Funded Projects
Affiliations	1	-	1
Arts and Aesthetics	6	2	1
Knowledge	1	-	-
Learning	3	-	1
Mobilities	2	-	1
Moralities	2	-	1
	15	2	5

It would have been possible even in 2020 for all the 6 Research Sections to each host 3 seminars, 1 workshop and 1 funded project.

Building on lessons learnt from 2020, we look forward to a more productive 2021. We have developed an almanac for the year that should coax us to greater productivity.

Table 6: Moi-ACC Almanac 2021

Date	Event	Host Research Section
12.01.2021	Africa Colloquium Seminar	Affiliations
15.01.2021	Workshop	Critical Diversity
19.01.2021	Reading Group Meeting	All Research Sections

26.01.2021	Africa Colloquium Seminar	Arts and Aesthetics
28.01.2021	Public Lecture	Learning
29.01.2021	Workshop	Learning
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30.01.2021		
09.02.2021	Africa Colloquium Seminar	Knowledge
16.02.2021	Reading Group Meeting	All Research Sections
25.02.2021	Workshop	Affiliations
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26.02.2021		
16.03.2021	Reading Group Meeting	All Research Sections
18.03.2021	Africa Colloquium Seminar	Moralities
25.03.2021	Public Lecture	Mobilities
26.03.2021	Workshop	Mobilities
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27.03.2021		
06.04.2021	Africa Colloquium Seminar	Affiliations
13.04.2021	Reading Group Meeting	All Research Sections
20.04.2021	Africa Colloquium Seminar	Arts and Aesthetics
22.04.2021	Workshop	Knowledge
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23.04.2021		
04.05.2021	Africa Colloquium Seminar	Knowledge
11.05.2021	Reading Group Meeting	All Research Sections
18.05.2021	Africa Colloquium Seminar	Learning
27.05.2021	Public Lecture	Moralities
28.05.2021	Workshop	Moralities
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29.05.2021		
08.06.2021	Africa Colloquium Seminar	Mobilities
15.06.2021	Reading Group Meeting	
22.06.2021	Africa Colloquium Seminar	Moralities
24.06.2021	Workshop	Learning
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25.06.2021		
13.07.2021	Reading Group Meeting	All Research Sections
15.07.2021	Public Lecture	Affiliations

16.07.2021 – 17.07.2021	Workshop	Affiliations
27.07.2021	Africa Colloquium Seminar	Arts and Aesthetics
10.08.2021	Africa Colloquium Seminar	Knowledge
17.08.2021	Reading Group Meeting	All Research Sections
24.08.2021	Africa Colloquium Seminar	Learning
26.08.2021 – 27.08.2021	Workshop	Mobilities
06.09.2021 – 08.09.2021	Eastern African Literary and Cultural Studies Conference	Arts and Aesthetics
07.09.2021	Africa Colloquium Seminar	Mobilities
14.09.2021	Reading Group Meeting	All Research Sections
21.09.2021	Africa Colloquium Seminar	Moralities
23.09.2021	Public Lecture	Arts and Aesthetics
24.09.2021 – 25.09.2021	Workshop	Arts and Aesthetics
05.10.2021	Africa Colloquium Seminar	Affiliations
26.10.2021	Reading Group Meeting	All Research Sections
28.10.2021 – 29.10.2021	Workshop	Moralities
09.11.2021	Reading Group Meeting	All Research Sections
16.11.2021	Africa Colloquium Seminar	Learning
25.11.2021	Public Lecture	Knowledge
26.11.2021 – 27.11.2021	Workshop	Knowledge
30.11.2021	Africa Colloquium Seminar	Mobilities
07.12.2021	Reading Group Meeting	All Research Sections

It is our hope that when our researchers' participation in Africa Multiple research projects (in response to calls for proposals that will go out at different times of the year) are added to these regular Moi–ACC activities we will meet our targets for the year 2021. Very importantly, 2021

is the year when we must start publishing our research findings in reputable academic journals and books. With the resources at hand, we have no excuses to fail.

Table 7: Moi–ACC Scheduled Activities and Targets, 2021

	Seminars	Public Lectures	Workshops	Conferences	Funded Projects	Publications
Affiliations	3	1	2	-	1	2
Arts and Aesthetics	3	1	2	1	1	2
Knowledge	3	1	2	-	1	2
Learning	3	1	2	-	1	2
Mobilities	3	1	2	-	1	2
Moralities	3	1	2	-	1	2
	18	6	12	1	6	12