

# NEWSLETTER

THE CENTRE FOR EDUCATION RIGHTS AND TRANSFORMATION &  
THE SOUTH AFRICAN CHAIR IN COMMUNITY, ADULT AND WORKER EDUCATION



CERT  
CENTRE FOR  
EDUCATION RIGHTS AND  
TRANSFORMATION



Prof June Bam-Hutchison  
Director: CERT



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SARCHI Chair CAWE



South African Research Chair  
Community, Adult and Workers' Education

## Introduction to the first edition of the 2025 CERT-CAWE Newsletter

This newsletter edition highlights the milestones, innovations, and collaborative efforts that have shaped our journey in CERT-CAWE in the first Semester of 2025. From project updates and strategic developments to community engagements and capacity-building initiatives, this issue reflects our collective dedication to excellence, resilience, and societal impact locally, in the country and on the continent. Whether you are a scholar, researcher, activist partner, worker, stakeholder, or supporter, we thank you for being part of the incredible CERT-CAWE story. We hope you find this edition informative, inspiring, and a reflection of the values that drive our mission forward.

*With best wishes for the winter recess. From everyone at CERT and CAWE!*

## WHAT HAPPENED IN JANUARY-JUNE 2025?

### South Africa's Human Rights Day Commemoration public talk delivered on 20 March by the CERT director Prof June Bam-Hutchison

On 20th March this year, in commemoration of Human Rights Day, Professor Bam-Hutchison presented an invited public talk online for the Post-graduate School Research Capacity Development Department titled '**From Policy to Implementation: Human Rights in Action Research**'. Scholars and social justice activists (including from other universities) were in attendance and participated. An adapted summary of her talk follows.

Recent research shows that 91 not 69 people were killed in the anti-pass laws protest in Sharpeville of 21 March 1960; many were shot in the back as they fled from the apartheid police. Today this day is commemorated in South Africa as an integral part of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Furthermore, South Africa's Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) was mandated by the Human Rights Act, and our new Constitution, adopted later in 1996, to protect our hard-won Bill of Rights (human dignity, equality, freedom and social justice at its core).



L to R: Sharpeville Massacre, 21 March 1960, Credit: Nelson Mandela Foundation; Marikana massacre, 16 August 2012. Credit: Times Live

Despite these constitutional achievements 30 years ago, and the dedicated work of the SAHRC, South Africa has painfully witnessed and endured major human rights atrocities against the majority (i.e. poor black people). Just two examples are the Marikana massacre of mine workers in 2012 and the very recent atrocity committed towards the Stilfontein trapped miners in 2024/2025.



*L to R: Protests to save lives of trapped miners at Stilfontein, January 2025. Credit: The Guardian; UCT protests in support of the workers' struggle. Credit: Eyewitness News and #Rhodes Must Fall*

Many lives have been tragically lost in these atrocities. How did we happen to arrive here today at this painfully troubling and unsettling point in our history on Human Rights Day in the supposed 'new' South Africa? Many will agree that our young democracy is haunted by a stark incongruity since 1994: a well known case of very advanced and widely admired human rights policies (arguably of the best on the continent and in the world) but with poor implementation success.

This anomaly is also evident in higher education. For instance, despite an increase in doctoral research outputs (as a universal metric measure of societal advancement in knowledge production for poverty eradication and 'development', one could argue), our society tends to frequently fail the majority at fundamental levels of protection of their human rights. We continue to be ravaged by youth unemployment including of graduates (the latter has more than doubled according to QLFS data – especially for African women). Communities in the townships battle the significant lack of food security, lack of efficient energy and water provision at schools, lack of sanitation for the majority and the additional widespread violence against women and children.



*Credit: Black Star Images / Spotlight*





*Credit: Mail & Guardian*

The latter, of the worst in the world. It is not an exaggeration to state that the majority of South Africans (black people and their children) face ongoing rampant criminality and daily threats to their safety and survival in poor townships. Township schools in crime-ridden areas are held hostage, and teachers are reported to being forced to pay protection fees to criminal syndicates.

Official police statistics show that close to 1000 women and almost 400 children are murdered annually. Rape has doubled, including of children and very young learners at creche and pre-school (shockingly, including by teachers themselves as perpetrators of such horrendous crimes).

Official police statistics report close to 4000 kidnappings annually, and this figure is disturbingly on the increase. It is even more disturbing that criminal cases also (at times) involve corrupt government officials. In addition, the country battles poor infrastructure and collapse (for instance, roads remain unfixed for years in poor provinces and we are often battling darkness, and lack of water). Township schools in the Gauteng province are frequently forced to close early due to lack of water, which significantly undermines the right of young children and youth to education – and also their and their teachers' rights to health and safety.

The March 2023 Fact Sheet: National Development Plans for 2030 indicates a target of producing more than 100 doctorates per million South Africans. The review of the period 2012-2021 shows that doctoral graduate figures have more than doubled mostly in Science, Technology and Engineering fields. Yet despite the welcoming increase in doctorates in these fields (the highest academic and research level normally considered an imperative for 'development'), we struggle to realise improvements in addressing issues related to social justice, environmental protection, safety and security, the water crisis, energy provision, and quality education.



*L to R: Poor state of schools for the poor. Credit: Mail & Guardian/ Gender-based violence protest poster, 18 July 2022.*

Within these precarious social and economic contexts, official police statistics of reported crimes committed are hardly alarming; these have in fact doubled over the last 5 years (2020-2024). This human rights crisis in South Africa is further exacerbated by the post-truth and 'post-humanity' global era in which we live today. Within these active global attempted erasures of universal truths and a shared equal humanity, human rights atrocities and genocides thrive (such as we are witnessing currently in Gaza).

Within this bleak global context in which universal human rights are no longer upheld, and in which international law no longer counts, how do we begin to restore hope for future generations through education? What therefore would it require from us as activist scholars, and socially conscious researchers at this time to restore our equal humanity, and the right to life and dignity?

We are called upon as scholars and intellectuals to continue to address this foundational question as critical thinkers in all disciplines, starting with: *What is a university? What does it mean to be an intellectual and scholar in this country, on the continent and the world today?* These pressing questions highlight the importance of research for human rights in action as we grapple with the key questions: *knowledge for what, for which purpose and to whose benefit?* And this is where action research in universities engaged with impoverished communities facing real-life challenges matters. We have the moral responsibility to find sustainable solutions and thereby developing a daily critical consciousness as researchers and scholars. In reflecting on the challenges facing the world some decades ago, Palestinian scholar and intellectual Edward Said argued that 'there must be a critical consciousness if there are issues, problems, values, and even lives to be fought for'.

*Salutations from us all at CERT as we strive to build a world free of hunger and oppression for all!*



CERT Director: Professor June Bam-Hutchison

## PUBLIC LECTURE ON JUST AND SUSTAINABLE FUTURES delivered by Professor Leon Tikly

Prof Leon Tikly delivered a public lecture on the 25th of March, titled 'Transforming Knowledge and Research for Just and Sustainable Futures: Towards a New Social Imaginary for Higher Education'. The public lecture focused on the transformation of knowledge and research in higher education, particularly in relation to justice and sustainability. Prof. Tikly discussed the historical evolution of knowledge systems, critiquing the dominance of modern scientific knowledge and its colonial roots. He highlighted the importance of recognizing the non-neutrality of knowledge and the interactions between different knowledge systems over time. Language was identified as a critical factor in accessing knowledge, with Prof. Tikly arguing that the marginalization of local and indigenous languages leads to cognitive injustice.



CERT Visiting Professor Tikly is the new Director of the Perivoli Africa Research Centre, Bristol University, UK, and has led on developing the path breaking 'Africa Charter' to rebalance the global research ecosystem. Credit: Perivoli Africa Research Centre



He referenced Achille Mbembe's work to illustrate the necessity of drawing on diverse knowledge systems to address complex global issues. Prof Tikly shared a case study from Rwanda, where indigenous knowledge faced challenges from capitalist interests, and he linked the current crisis of global capitalism to the need for a more inclusive approach to knowledge production. Prof. Tikly also addressed the growing inequality exacerbated by neoliberal policies and the rise of protectionist ideologies. In criticizing the role of technology companies in perpetuating racial biases and the political climate that mirrors colonial practices, he proposed the concept of 'new ecologies of knowledge' to empower communities in shaping their futures themselves, advocating for transdisciplinary research approaches that respect local practices and cultural contexts. The need for equitable access to knowledge and the establishment of a knowledge commons were emphasized in the lecture as essential for fostering public education and community engagement. The discussion included insights from scholars, who explored the complexities of decolonization and the influence of funding on research agendas. They highlighted the importance of recognizing the historical roots of decolonisation in African liberation movements and the challenges posed by new elites favouring western knowledge.



*African knowledges engagement. Credit: Perivoli Africa Research Centre*

Prof Tikly called for a re-evaluation of conventional western-based scholarly citation practices and the integration of indigenous knowledge into research, stressing the need for ethical engagement with communities. Key questions raised during the public lecture were: what are the implications of different terminologies like 'decolonization', 'transformation', and 'Africanization' in the context of knowledge systems and how can the Global South navigate the challenges posed by knowledge systems and scholarship conventions on what constitutes 'excellence' dominated by the Global North? The public lecture and discussion concluded with a call for transformative changes in higher education to ensure that it serves the needs of all communities and promotes justice and sustainability.



## WEBINAR ON 'CRITICAL THINKING' with Professor Mondli Hlatshwayo

On the 30 March, Prof Mondli S. Hlatshwayo led the discussion 'Critical Thinking for Postgraduate Research in Education' in the faculty. Organised by CERT, in collaboration with CAWE, the discussion addressed the meaning and importance of critical thinking and how critical thinking could enhance the quality of education research. The webinar was widely attended by researchers and scholar activists from fifteen different organisations within and outside the university.

*CERT's Professor Mondli Hlatshwayo is a well known socially engaged scholar on the continent and in the global south.*

## INDIGENOUS ARTISTIC PRACTICES: DIALOGUES BETWEEN BRASZL AND SÁPMI By Dr Laura Burocco

CERT visiting scholar from the University of Lisbon, Dr Laura Burocco, delivered an online public lecture titled 'Indigenous Artistic Practices: Dialogues between BraszL and Sápmi' on 29th of April. She highlighted the significance of art within Indigenous cultures and in challenging western definitions of 'culture'. Dr. Burocco emphasized the role of art in daily life for Indigenous peoples and the importance of curatorial work that includes Indigenous voices in academia. Indigenous artists are 'communicators' of culture rather than the stereotypical use of western references such as 'traditional artists', using Sámi culture's concept of duodji (arts and crafts) as illustration. She emphasised the Lula Biennale's role in promoting the cultural richness and breaking down art-craft hierarchies, and also the introduction of innovative archival practices, such as the Haida Archive. Dr Burocco discussed projects like Danilson Baniwa's Escola Panapaná, which aims to enhance the visibility of Indigenous artists in Brazilian institutions. She underscored the historical context of Indigenous education and the need for methodologies that transcend colonial frameworks. The conversation further explored the evolving understanding of knowledge in educational settings, particularly regarding Sámi culture and the impact of assimilation policies.



*Dr Laura Burocco participating with CERT in a Youth Day dialogue with 1976 Soweto uprisings historical icon Murphy Morobe on 16 June. The cultural dialogue on indigenous knowledge and youth was hosted by UJ Professor of Practice, Sylvia Vollenhoven, curator of the Cosmic Echoes exhibition, at the Origins Centre, Wits. <https://www.wits.ac.za/events-archive/2025/cosmic-echoes-shared-sky-indigenous-art.php>. Credit : Sylvia Vollenhoven*



Laura emphasized the importance of recognizing the knowledge that students bring to the classroom, particularly in the context of Sámi culture affected by historical assimilation policies. She shared Thomas Colgenstone's experiences with language loss and the establishment of artist residencies focused on indigenous knowledge recovery. The discussion included the Swedish government's Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the public apology from the Swedish Church for the mistreatment of the Sámi people, as well as the issue of cultural appropriation highlighted by Andre Sombi. She shared insights on cultural appropriation and the importance of reshaping narratives through artistic expression. The dialogue included discussions on the challenges of representation and ethical considerations in partnerships with Indigenous communities. Laura's experiences working with Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous artists highlighted the complexities of authorship and the need for trust in collaborative projects. Questions on how Laura navigates the process of decolonizing work in partnership with Indigenous communities and navigating her own positionality (as from Europe) were raised, as well as the lessons that the Indigenous artists and scholars from Brazil and Sapmi learn from each other through the dialogical process. The discussion concluded with reflections on linguistic challenges and the broader implications of nation-state politics on 'Indigenous' representation.



## Indigenous Artistic Practices: Dialogues Between Brasil and Sápmi

Centre for Education Rights and Transformation (CERT) | Cottage 3, Research Village, UJ's Bunting Road Campus

Tuesday 29 of April 11h00-12h30

Laura Burocco, Centre for Research in Anthropology (CIA) ISCTE University Institute of Lisbon,  
[lburocco@gmail.com](mailto:lburocco@gmail.com)

 CIA Centro de Investigação em Antropologia e Etnologia  
 fct Faculdade de Ciências da Universidade de Lisboa  
 IN2PAST Instituto de Investigação em Património Cultural

## YOUTH MONTH: CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF UJ

This well-attended hybrid event, organized by the Education Faculty, was hosted in partnership with the UJ Library, the Centre for Education Rights and Transformation (CERT), the SARCHI: Community, Adult and Workers' Education (CAWE), the Ali Mazrui Centre for Higher Education Studies (AMCHES) and the Transformation Committee of the Faculty of Education. The panel discussion focused on UJ's curriculum transformation, inclusivity, and youth empowerment for equitable human flourishing and critical agency. The discussion was facilitated by Prof Sadi Seyama (Chair: Transformation Committee, UJ) and the panelists were Prof June Bam-Hutchison (Director: CERT); Prof Salim Vally (SARCHI: CAWE); Prof Siseko H. Kumalo (Associate Professor: AMCHES), and Ms. Babalwa Silangwe (Senior student: Faculty of Education).



## YOUTH DAY

16 JUNE 2025

### YOUTH MONTH: CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF UJ

The **Faculty of Education** at the **University of Johannesburg** invites you to a **panel discussion** exploring UJ's contribution to youth development and curriculum transformation over the past two decades.

### *Reflecting on UJ's Impact on the Youth of South Africa*

DATE • 12 June 2025 / TIME • 11:00 – 13:00

VENUE • Nadine Gordimer Auditorium, Level 5, UJ Library (APK)

HYBRID ZOOM LINK • <https://zoom.us/j/95645001238>

Don't miss this thought-provoking conversation as we honour UJ's legacy and look ahead to the next chapter in youth-focused education.

This event is hosted in partnership with the **UJ Library**, the **Centre for Education Rights and Transformation (CERT)**, the **SARCHI: Community, Adult and Workers' Education (CAWE)**, the **Ali Mazrui Centre for Higher Education Studies (AMCHES)** and the **Transformation Committee** of the Faculty of Education.

DISCLAIMER: All events taking place in this venue may be photographed and video recorded for marketing, social media and media purposes. Attending this event grants the University of Johannesburg permission to use and publish any recorded material. The University of Johannesburg encourages academic debate and discussion that are conducted in a manner that upholds respectful interaction, safety of all involved, and freedom of association as enshrined in the law, the Constitution, and within the boundaries of the University policies. The views expressed during events are expressed in a personal capacity and do not necessarily reflect the views of the University of Johannesburg.



From Right to Left: Prof Sadi Seyama (Chair: Transformation Committee, UJ); Prof Salim Vally (SARCHI: CAWE); Prof June Bam-Hutchison (Director: CERT); Prof Siseko H. Kumalo (Associate Professor: AMCHES), and Babalwa Silangwe (senior student: Faculty of Education) during the hybrid panel discussion of the Youth Month Celebrating 20 Years of UJ



Onsite participants during the hybrid panel discussion of the Youth Month Celebrating 20 Years of UJ



**Curriculum Transformation at UJ:** The discussion highlighted the university's efforts in transforming its curriculum over the past 20 years, emphasizing interdisciplinary, socially conscious approaches to foster inclusive education and to empower youth. Babalwa Silangwe, a fourth-year student, shared her perspective on UJ's transformative curriculum, citing modules like LGBTQI+ rights, financial literacy, and social justice as examples of how the university prepares students for life and work. The professors reflected on the visible historical transformation of the university from an apartheid-era institution to one that embraces inclusivity and critical pedagogy, noting incredible demographic changes as an African university. Inclusivity and Disability in Education: A visually impaired attendee raised concerns about the lack of inclusivity for students with disabilities in UJ's curriculum and broader South African education systems, citing personal experiences of discrimination and exclusion. Prof Batchelor mentioned a research project by the Center for Academic Technologies aimed at capacitating staff to develop inclusive curricula, signaling early progress in addressing these issues.

**Student Voice and Social Justice Activism:** Ms Babalwa Silangwe expressed concerns about the limited inclusion of student voices in policy-making at UJ, emphasizing the need for students to lead policy development rather than being passive recipients. Panelists called for open dialogue and democratic decision-making within the university to ensure students are heard and that their perspectives should be considered when developing institutional policies.



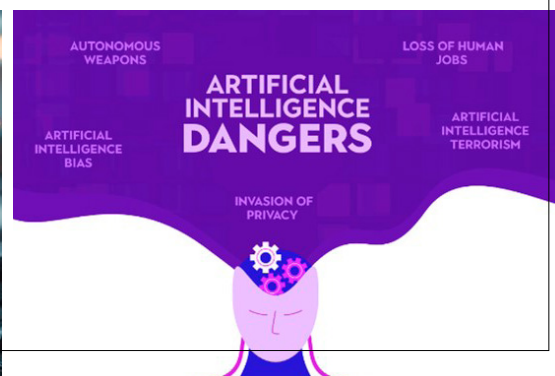
*Babalwa in conversation with Prof Kumalo*



*Global protest movements against the market-driven neo-liberal university  
Credit: Angus O'Brien*

**Neoliberalism and Resistance in Universities:** Prof Salim Vally critiqued the neoliberal model of universities, which prioritizes rankings, branding, and commodification over social justice and inclusivity. The panel discussed the challenges of balancing financial constraints, performance management, and the need for developing student critical consciousness in a neoliberal global academic environment. Resistance was framed as fostering democratic dialogue, addressing structural inequalities, and ensuring that universities serve as spaces for critical thinking, and social and economic justice through active and open public intellectual engagement.

**Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Education:** Ms Babalwa Silangwe and other student attendees raised their growing concerns about the uncritical use of AI in education, highlighting its potential to perpetuate Eurocentric perspectives and the continued marginalization of indigenous knowledge systems in Africa. The discussion emphasized the need for responsible AI policies that include student voices and address ethical considerations, rather than simply banning AI tools. Prof Batchelor and others called for critical engagement with AI to ensure it benefits humanity and which does not exacerbate inequalities or undermine critical thinking. Prof Vally pointed out the current danger in the world where we see the emergence of the horrific use of AI as a militaristic weapon to commit genocide.

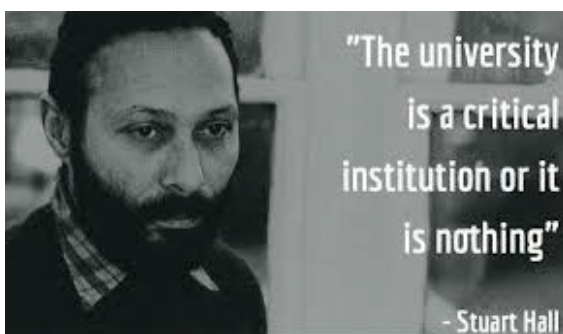


*ai-war-and-in-humanity-the-role-of-human-emotions-in-military-decision-making/*

**Youth Unemployment and Integrated Work Learning:** An attendee raised the issue of youth unemployment and questioned UJ's role in addressing this through integrated work learning programs. The panel discussed initiatives like internships and industry partnerships that aim to equip students with practical skills and values, ensuring they are prepared for meaningful employment but also with the necessary critical consciousness of the impact of their work for social and economic justice in society. The discussion emphasized the need for UJ to align its curriculum with the lived realities (such as meeting employment needs, addressing the climate catastrophe in South Africa, and extreme poverty), through fostering relevant critical agency.



*Credit: Joburg ETC*



*Critical theorist Stuart Hall famously cited on the role of the university. Credit: Pluto Press*

**Values and Social Justice in Education:** Profs Salim Vally and Bam-Hutchison reflected on the erosion of values that motivated the 1976 youth uprising, linking this to the rise of consumerism, despotism (silencing of critical voices and questioning even in university spaces), corruption, and transactional relationships in society. The panel called for a return to principles of social justice, epistemic justice, and economic justice, advocating for a holistic approach to education that prioritizes human dignity and equitable flourishing, as was evident with the 'Values Saamtrek' under the national ministry of education in 2000 (in which Palestinian intellectual Edward Said and foremost critically conscious South African scholars and social activists in education participated). The discussion emphasized the importance of constant critical questioning of everyday practices in higher education institutions, such as uncritically imposed 'top down' colonial symbols (critically reflecting on the cultural critical theories of Stuart Hall). One of the hallmarks of the 1976 student uprisings was resistance to despotic and oppressive Afrikaner Nationalist and Calvinist institutional cultures.



This was as a hard-won freedom against apartheid oppression in its many forms. Post-apartheid universities have the responsibility to foster a critical decolonial consciousness amongst students to resist current societal challenges of increased despotism, militarisation, fascism, inequality, poverty, xenophobia, and climate injustice in the world.

**Role of African Epistemologies in Education:** Prof June Bam-Hutchison emphasized the importance of integrating African epistemologies into UJ's curriculum to address socio-cultural, socio-economic, and socio-political challenges in classrooms. The discussion highlighted the need to move away from western traditions that simplify life and marginalize indigenous knowledge systems, advocating for a curriculum that humanizes the student experience. The panel discussed how African epistemologies can foster critical thinking and equip students to navigate complex societal dynamics, including diversity and difference.



*Devastating storm and flood damage in the Eastern Cape in June 2025. Credit: Sowetan Live*

The panel also reflected on the climate crisis in South Africa and the role of youth education in mitigating these climate disaster management risks to ensure livelihoods in the future. It was sadly noted that extreme winter weather conditions in the Eastern Cape in June 2025 affected an estimate of 5000 people and have left over 100 people dead, including 38 children.

## PAN-AFRICAN COLLABORATIONS AND DECOLONIAL SCHOLARSHIP: Professor Morgan Ndlovu's journey through Makerere, Kampala, Bradford, and Toronto



CERT prides itself in being an actively engaged global research collaboration and networking hub with a decolonial footprint. Between May and June 2025, Prof. Morgan Nkululeko Ndlovu engaged in a series of significant scholarly and research collaboration activities across Africa, in the United Kingdom (UK), and in Canada - all underpinned by a decolonial and Pan-African intellectual agenda. On 9 May he delivered a public seminar at Makerere University (Kampala, Uganda) titled 'Theorizing African Identities: The Front, the In-Between and the Back-stage', contributing to the growing academic dialogue between Makerere University and the University of Johannesburg (UJ). He also facilitated a PhD training workshop on applying theory to practice at the Makerere's Institute of Gender and Development Studies. Prof. Ndlovu then travelled to conduct fieldwork at the Ewaffee Cultural Villages as part of his URC-funded research project on '*Decolonial Indigeneity: Colonial and Decolonial Horizons of Africanity*'. This fieldwork supports a comparative study between South Africa and Uganda, and seeks to establish lasting research ties between UJ and Makerere University. In addition, his abstract titled 'Cultural Commodification and the Decolonial Horizons of African Identities' was accepted for oral presentation at the African International Conference in Bradford, UK (May 22–24, 2025). He also presented another paper, 'On Decolonial Indigeneity and Reconstitution of the Political in Africa', at the Canadian Association of African Studies Conference in Toronto (June 3–6, 2025). Furthermore, Prof Ndlovu is conducting discussions to formalize a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Institute of Cultural Studies at Obafemi Awolowo University (Nigeria) and CERT, marking a strategic step toward institutionalizing transnational academic collaboration in African and decolonial studies. CERT is excited about these extremely important and promising Pan-African decolonial research initiatives led by Professor Ndlovu.





## CAWE'S POPULAR EDUCATION AND CRITICAL PEDAGOGY WORKSHOP

The CAWE Chair, Prof Salim Vally, ran a one-day widely attended popular education and critical pedagogy workshop at the Training of Trainers education course at the Nkrumah School (hosted at the Thuto Centre in Bela-Bela) on the March 25th. The course was attended by 84 participants from 35 organisations in 22 countries, including 10 African countries.

The aims of the workshop were to:

- Encourage an appreciation for Paolo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed and Amilcar Cabral's praxis, particularly around culture including popular education.
- Understanding that critical pedagogy and critical consciousness are among the few mechanisms for ensuring the autonomy and survival of any popular organisation.

These aims contributed to advancing the objectives of the course which were to:

- ~ Strengthen relationships between delegates from the most influential peoples' organisations and movements advancing the Pan-Africanist struggle today;
- ~ Collectively sharpen analytical tools to effectively assess the current context of Africa and the world for viable and necessary alternatives; and
- ~ Contribute to the strengthening and development of progressive education and political campaigns in our continent and to encourage solidarity actions.

## CAWE WORKSHOPS FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE EDUCATORS



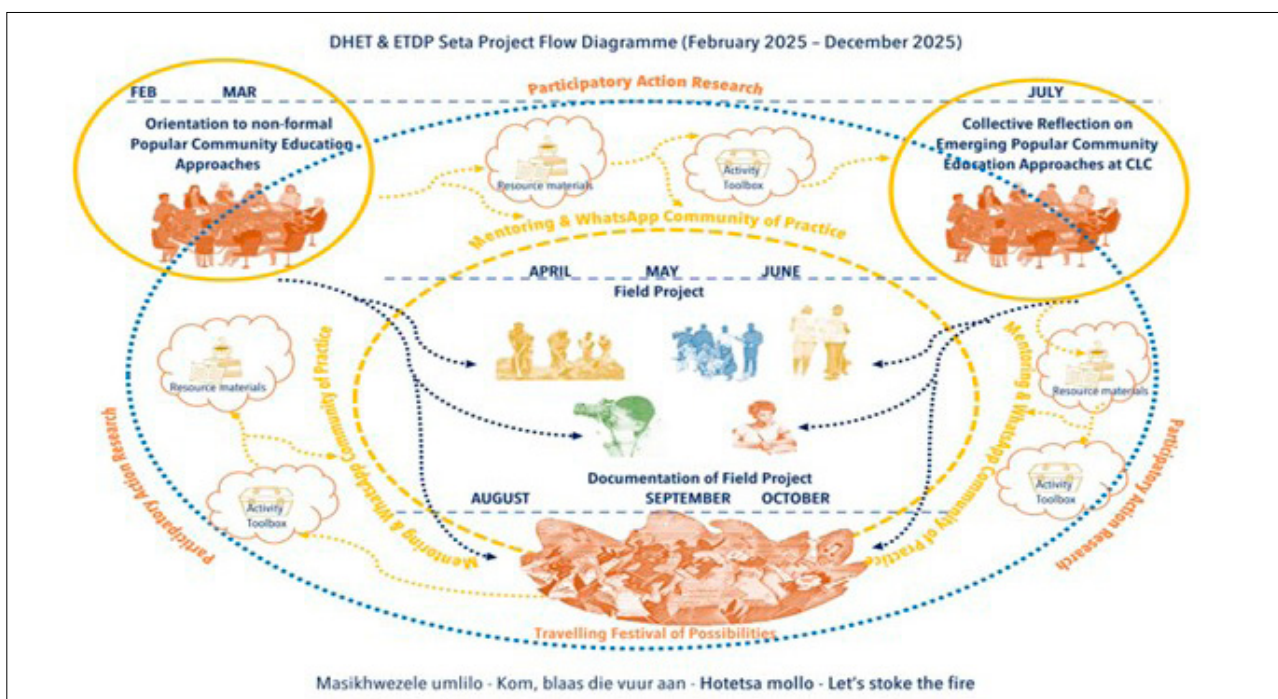
*A well attended CAWE event on Popular Education and Critical Pedagogy*

Supported by The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET); The Education, Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority (ETDP SETA); Institute for International Cooperation of the Deutscher Volkshochschul-Verband (DVV-International), the CAWE Chair, together with the Centre for Integrated Post-School Education and Training (CIPSET) at Nelson Mandela University (NMU) and popular educators from the Western Cape have embarked on an ambitious programme of training sessions for Community College educators on implementing non-formal education.



Credit L to R: DVV / CIPSET

The desired outcome of our work in community education must result in learning through, with and in communities and support Community Colleges in this work to achieve their transformation goals. Thus far, workshops have been held for educators in Gauteng, the Western Cape, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and the Northern Cape. The initiative includes the formation of 'Communities of Practice' including through the WhatsApp platform. The latter innovation allows education practitioners to collectively develop a curriculum and pedagogy that centers concrete experience, and the material interests of rural and urban communities pushed out of mainstream education processes. The educators work together to strengthen the ties that bind education, democratic organisation and social action by building concrete alternatives to current social problems. The collective of practitioners support one another by sharing their experiences and stories of hope and struggles and build a wealth of knowledge about approaches, tools and practices that they can use to navigate through the problems they face in their local context.



A graphic illustrating the Community of Practice including through the Whatsapp platform to facilitate communication between Community College educators throughout the country.





The Communities of Practice are supported by a group of facilitators, a growing e-library of resources and tools, and importantly, the new resources created by other communities of practice across South Africa. The national facilitators are Eunice Christians, Vumile Danyile, Farrell Hunter, Ntombi Mjekula, Sarah Motha, Enver Motala, Derrick Naidoo, Selby Nomnganga, Vanessa Reynolds, Irna Senekal and Salim Vally. We hope that the various Communities of Practice will build a strong movement for popular community education which will live on beyond this initiative.

*Sarah Motha is a highly respected socially engaged researcher and public figure on feminist indigenous knowledges at CERT and one of the national facilitators of the CAWE Community of Practice.*

## Other CERT/CAWE Research Activities in the first semester:

The SARCHI Chair CAWE (Prof Salim Vally) did various talks and presentations in the first semester:

- 21st January on 'The University, Social Justice and the Role of the Academic'. 26 Degrees South, Muldersdrift;
- 12th February, Al Najjar University Conference online: Education and United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA).



**CIES**  **COMPARATIVE & INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION SOCIETY**

10th – 11th March. CAWE/DHET/DVV International. Two-day seminar for Community College Educators from Gauteng and the Free State. UJ Astro Turf Hockey Club; 23rd March. Comparative International Education Societies Conference 2025. Conference online: 'Scholasticide: Between Repression and Resistance. Learning from the Palestinian Experience'; 25th March. Nkrumah International School on Panafricanism, Bela Bela: Popular Education and Critical Pedagogy in Africa; 15th April. William and Mary University, US. Arab-African Exchange, Keynote (online): Decolonising the Humanities; 26th April. Workers' College of SA. Keynote Address at Graduation for Worker Leaders, Coastlands Hotel, KZN; 21st - 22nd May. Workshop: Hybrid 2-day Seminar: Reclaiming the Radical Traditions of Workers' Education, UJ, Astro Turf Hockey Club.

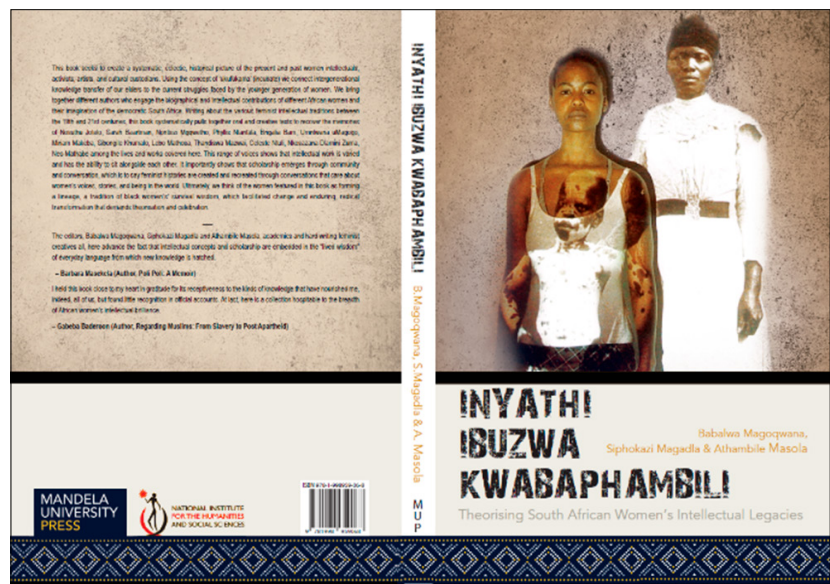
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[https://pari.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/20250512\\_Symposium\\_PARIBrown\\_StateDemocracySA1.pdf](https://pari.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/20250512_Symposium_PARIBrown_StateDemocracySA1.pdf)

CERT's Professor Hlatshwayo was invited speaker on 24th March at the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA)'s Bargaining Conference of 2025; and panellist on 16 May 2025 at the *State, democracy and the promise of development: South Africa in comparative perspective Symposium*, Public Affairs Research Institute (PARI)'s Symposium.

CERT director (June Bam-Hutchison) was invited by the Centre for Women and Gender Studies and Mandela University Press to be key respondent on the 28 February 2025 to launch its recently published book *Inyathi Ibuzwa KwaBaphambili: Theorising South African Women's Intellectual Legacies*, edited by lead African feminist scholars Babalwa Magoqwana, Siphokazi Magadla and Athambile Masola in Gqeberha. The groundbreaking book focuses on the 'incubation' (inyathi) of intergenerational feminist knowledges in southern Africa, which has long been ignored in western-centric scholarship.



NELSON MANDELA  
UNIVERSITY

Prof June Bam-Hutchison in conversation with Professor Babalwa Magoqwana at the book launch where she served as invited keynote respondent to *Inyathi Ibuzwa KwaBaphambili* at Nelson Mandela University.



June Bam-Hutchison with African feminist and LGBTQI+ activists and scholars at the launch of *Inyathi Ibuzwa KwaBaphambili* at Nelson Mandela University.



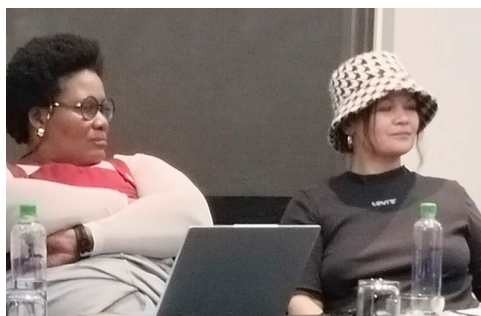
## ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

### Doctoral Training Programme

CERT organised a 3-day training programme for doctoral students, held from 26th to 28th March 2025 at the Riverstone Lodge, Muldersdrift, South Africa. This research training programme was sponsored by Professor Tikly with the aim of enhancing the academic and research capacity of our doctoral students. The training programme, also attended and facilitated by postdoctoral research fellows and CERT professors, entailed three days of intensive learning, critical engagement, debate and global scholarly exchange amongst the transdisciplinary scholars representing doctoral scholarship journeys in 5 countries (Nigeria, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Britain and South Africa). Prof Tikly delivered an engaging introductory lecture exploring the philosophical underpinnings and methodological approaches pertinent to decolonial education research. His engaged lectures centred on integrating multiple knowledge systems, specifically, scientific and indigenous epistemologies, when tackling complex global issues such as sustainable development and climate change. Prof Tikly argued that while western scientific methods are crucial for understanding environmental challenges, they are insufficient on their own. Instead, they should be complemented by the longstanding environmental insights of indigenous communities, who have cultivated deep ecological awareness over centuries through lived experiences and oral traditions.



*The hybrid doctoral training programme in session at Riverstone Lodge.*



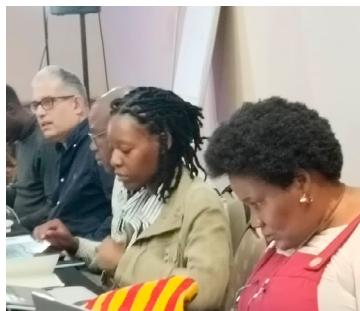
*L to R : Doctoral students Lerato Msiwa and Eshcha Adams ; Esther Rafout Khensani presenting her research proposal on transformation challenges in schools.*



*Prince Muzuva (from Zimbabwe) presenting his research on "Indigenous knowledge, local communities and controversial 'development' sites in Zimbabwe and South Africa"*



*Nomatokozi Ongezwa Mbele engaging CERT scholars in a debate on her complex and perplexing preliminary doctoral findings on decolonising community theatre and youth representation of violence in South African townships.*



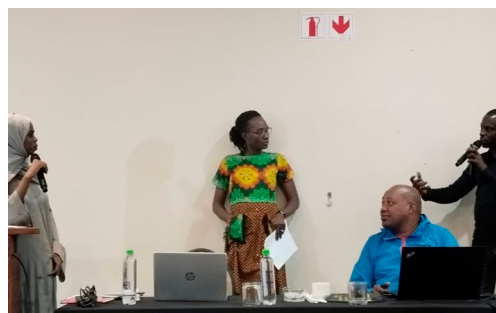
*L-R: Dr. Matthew Ayegboyin; Prof Leon Tikly; Prof Morgan Ndlovu; and doctoral candidates Esther Rafout Khensani and Lerato Msiwa (both conduct research in schools)*



*Doctoral candidate Charlene Houston (whose research focus is on museums as sites of public pedagogy) with senior CERT post doc Dr Hope Nwakanma (from Nigeria)*



*L to R : Eshcha Adams enjoying the discussion session during a light moment. Dr Titilope Opesemowo presents her research proposal on feminist mathematical indigenous literacy in Nigeria.*

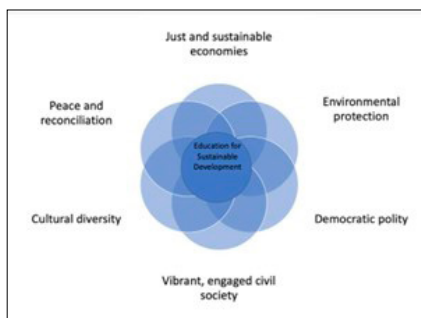


*Dr Matthew Ayegboyin (far right) debating with Dr Aisha Lawal Bagiwa (far left) and Dr Titilope Opesemowo (middle). Prof. Mondli S. Hlatshway (seated).*



In his lecture, Professor Tikly cited the work of bodies, like the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which have attempted to bridge the gap between scientific and indigenous knowledge systems.

He emphasized the value of recognizing subjective, situated knowledge alongside dominant scientific discourses. Moreover, he called for critical engagement with all forms of knowledge, urging scholars to evaluate both the strengths and limitations of each framework. He pointed out that our research positions are often a blend of different methodologies and perspectives, and that transparency in our epistemological stance is essential for scholarly integrity.



Source: Tikly (2019)

In his second lecture, Prof Tikly addressed the significance of conducting doctoral research that promotes sustainability.

He emphasized strategies for enhancing the impact and relevance of research findings with broader academic and social contexts. The second day of the workshop was focused on doctoral candidates' presentations of their research proposals or draft chapters. The programme provided a structured platform for peer and expert feedback, collaborative learning and reflective engagement with ongoing research work. The postdoctoral research fellows (PDRFs) presented short reflections on their doctoral journeys in African contexts, sharing key lessons learned with the existing cohort of CERT doctoral students.

#### Feedback from the participants:

*Such training sessions are a vital lifeline for any PhD student—they provide the critical feedback, encouragement, and scholarly camaraderie needed to persevere and succeed.* **Lerato Msiwa**

*It was good to hear my peers present their research, think and debate about ideas within the community.* **Ongezwa Mbele**

*These training programs are invaluable in moulding and transforming my academic experience and research methodology, which will impact local communities.* **Prince Muzuva**

*I particularly appreciated the interactive format, which encouraged meaningful dialogue and knowledge exchange among emerging and senior scholars. The workshop deepened my critical engagement with fellow researchers and expanded my academic support network.* **Dr Titilope Opesemowo**

We thank Nkomo Busisiwe for organising the logistics and also our post-docs Dr Matthew Ayegboyin and Dr Titilope Opesemowo for facilitating the doctoral research training programme with Prof Leon Tikly.

## INTERNAL SEMINARS WITH POSTDOCS, DOCTORAL AND MASTERS STUDENTS

CERT hosted a number of internal seminar sessions. These internal seminars are focused on strengthening the scholarship of our students and researchers and are organised and chaired by our post docs. We highlight a few here.

### Mathematics Literacy and Feminist Indigenous Knowledge

On the 11th of March 2025 Dr Titilope Opesemowo presented a seminar which illustrated how mathematical concepts are embedded in the daily lives of African women in South Africa, using the story of Mama Nanzo as a case study. She highlighted the significant roles these women play in agriculture, traditional healing, and market systems, demonstrating their practical application of mathematical literacy through measurements, ratios, and forecasting techniques. The discussion also addressed the challenges faced by these women, particularly the invisibility of their mathematical practices due to the impacts of colonial education and urbanization, underscoring the need for documentation and integration of this knowledge into educational curricula. The seminar emphasized the importance of decolonizing knowledge and adopting a transdisciplinary approach that expands traditional disciplinary boundaries.





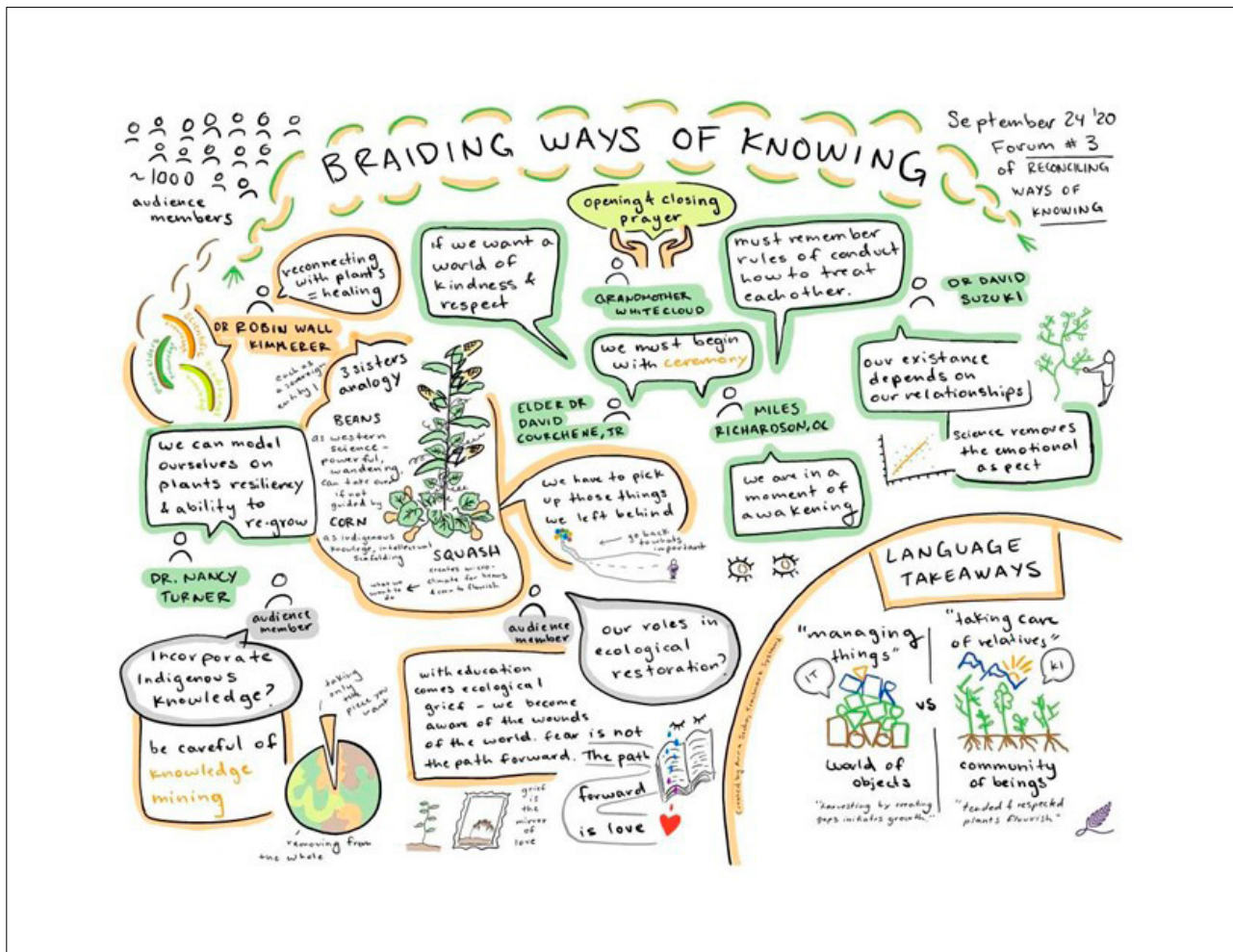
*Ancient Astronomy and Mathematical scripts in Timbuktu, Mali*  
Source: Wikipedia

Titilope highlighted the limitations of colonial disciplines in mathematics and knowledge representation, advocating for a deeper exploration of ancient knowledge methodologies. Key questions raised during the seminar include: what challenges do indigenous women face in preserving their mathematical practices; how can the study promote the recognition of indigenous mathematical knowledge in educational policy; and what are the implications of younger generations losing access to indigenous mathematical knowledge? She suggested involving younger girls in research related to feminist indigenous knowledge and the sustainability of traditional practices, reinforcing the need to understand positionality in knowledge production and the interconnectedness of various fields of knowledge and ways of knowing, including in the arts and sciences.

### Indigenous Cultural Heritage and Education of Women in Africa

On the 18th of March, Dr Matthew Ayegboyin presented on 'Indigenous Cultural Heritage and Education of Women in Africa: A Comparative Study In Holistic Well-Being and Its Education Implications for School Curricula in Nigeria and South Africa'. Ayegboyin outlined key objectives for his study, including the exploration of women's interactions with cultural heritage and its significance for their overall well-being. He discussed the theoretical frameworks guiding his research, such as feminist and comparative education theories, to analyze the variations in Indigenous education across the two regions. The presentation highlighted women's dual roles as conservators of culture and agents of change, emphasizing the importance of indigenous knowledge in fostering resilience and community ties. He also identified challenges faced by women, including globalization, educational disparities, and patriarchal interpretations that impede empowerment. Dr Ayegboyin argued for the integration of indigenous cultural heritage into educational curricula to enhance women's leadership roles. The discussion also included a critique of conventional research methodologies rooted in colonial paradigms, urging a decolonization of research practices – the need to illustrate those methods in *practice*.

## CERT Digital Archival Researcher and Curator Shamila Abrahams presented a seminar on 'Restoring the Epistemic Integrity of the Indigenous Knowledge System by Braiding Knowledge' (Robin Wall Kimmerer).



Decolonising through 'braided knowledge'. Source: <https://rwok.ca/dialogue3>

On the 15th of April, CERT digital archivist and researcher Shamila Abrahams presented her research on the ideological clash between indigenous and western knowledge systems, noting that the latter's fragmented approach fails to capture the complexity of indigenous knowledge. She addressed the limitations of western knowledge systems in curating Indigenous knowledge, advocating for a more inclusive approach that recognizes the relational ontology of Indigenous perspectives. She introduced the Islamic concept of *Sunnatullah* to explore the integration of diverse knowledge systems and outlined her research questions focused on maintaining the epistemic integrity of Indigenous knowledge while examining digital archiving potential. Her research findings revealed challenges in categorizing knowledge domains and highlighted the concept of 'reclaimed knowledge' which refers to information needing to be 'freed' from colonial entrapment and misrepresentation. Additionally, she discussed hermeneutic realism and the interconnectedness of humanity with the cosmos, culminating in the creation of a 'braided' knowledge conceptual 'ecosystem'. The discussion included critical questions such as on the complexities of curating indigenous knowledge in digital archives.



## Dr Jacob Katumusiime speaks on 'Separationist Self-Determination in Postcolonial Africa'

On the 27th of May, Dr Jacob Katumusiime, a postdoctoral research fellow at CERT, presented his research on 'The Colonial History of Separationist Self-Determination in Postcolonial Africa'.



He described the prevalence of separationist movements in Postcolonial Africa including state separation, federal government desires, and kingdom demands. He notes that these movements often occur along racial, tribal, and religious lines and can be engineered from both the state and society levels. He discussed how the concept of *abeed* (servant or slave of God) is used to dehumanize blacks in North America and the derogatory terms in Rwanda to label the Tutsi such as *inyenzi* (cockroach) and *izoka* (snake). Katumusiime discussed the impact of colonialism and the legacy of racial, tribal, and religious separationist movements, often state-engineered, such as Uganda's expulsion of Kenyans and Nigeria's expulsion of Ghanaians. In highlighting the enduring threat of expulsions and xenophobic violence, Dr Katumusiime noted that postcolonial African states have expulsion tendencies, leading to the rise of fascist regimes and dictatorships and the challenges of self-determination in a nation-state framework. He concluded his seminar by questioning the future of self-determination and the role of borders in shaping political futures.

## INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH PROJECT IN SCHOOLS

### Food Garden Project: Community Collaborating for Ecology Thriving



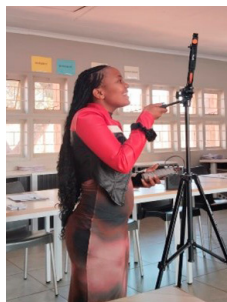
*Intergenerational indigenous feminist knowledge sharing at the co-design workshop in Tembisa with CERT and the university consortium in June 2025. Photo: June Bam-Hutchison*



*Prof June Bam-Hutchison engages with educators on their indigenous knowledges of food sovereignty at one of the co-designed food garden circles in schools. Credit: Amanda Ntaka*

CERT is a lead research collaborator on this international food gardens research project in partnership with a consortium of universities and schools in Gauteng, Limpopo and KZN. The project aims to promote ecological thriving initiatives in local communities, by fostering environmental awareness, agency in food security, and community empowerment in townships (such as the local Tembisa). By bringing together educators, parents, academics, and local residents, the project encourages inclusive participation and knowledge sharing of local sustainable agricultural practices and indigenous knowledges.

The non-profit co-design collaboration also provides a platform for educational opportunities, and community-driven development. An action research collaboration with international scholars, it further enriches initiatives that nurture ecological literacy and resilience in communities in the face of the global climate crisis and its economic consequences. The community engagement activities are managed by the young research assistants Amanda and Nokwanda as part of their internship training at CERT.



*CERT Intern Amanda Ntaka testing one of the research technologies for the food garden project.*

## PROFESSOR MONDLI HLATSHWAYO ON 4IR RESEARCH VISIT TO GERMANY



*Credit: Kuka robotics*

Funded by the Department of Higher Education and Training's Future Professors Programme, Professor Mondli Hlatshwayo undertook a research visit to Germany from December 2024 to February 2025. The purpose of the visit, which included Ruhr University in Bochum, was to examine the ongoing changes in the automotive sector and to explore how these changes were affecting work and skills development. Professor Mondli reportedly arrived at a critical time, in the midst of an automotive crisis characterized by warning strikes and protests led by members of Industriegewerkschaft Metall (IG Metall), one of Germany's leading metalworkers' unions. The crisis stemmed from increased competition from the Chinese automotive industry, which had placed significant pressure on German manufacturers. Volkswagen (VW), for instance, had threatened to reduce wages and shut down some of its plants. However, just before Christmas, an agreement was reached between the company and the union. During the visit, Professor Mondli was hosted by Professor Manfred Wannöffel, the Managing Director of the Centre for Cooperation at Ruhr University in Bochum. Professor Wannöffel had previously served as a key informant in Mondli's 2021 research on learning factories in university-based centres designed to simulate real factory conditions.



A warm welcome was extended to Prof Mondli Hlatshwayo at Ruhr University in Bochum. Source and credit: <https://www.rubigm.ruhr-uni-bochum.de/rubigm/aktuelles/akt00136.html>

At the university's Industrial Engineering Department, named in honour of Nelson Mandela, Professor Mondli observed a learning factory focused on three-dimensional printing and drone technology. Particularly noteworthy was a facility where researchers were developing robotic systems designed to empower workers by enabling them to control the robots, rather than the reverse. The highlight of Professor Mondli's trip was a visit to Kuka Robotics in Augsburg, a company now owned by the Chinese Midea Group. There, he observed the entire production process of car-manufacturing robots. He noted that the ownership of Kuka by a Chinese firm reflected China's growing dominance in global manufacturing, attributed largely to sustained investment in research and development. Professor Mondli expressed the hope that the South African government would see the value in investing in education as a foundation for human development and for the *ethical use of technology in addressing the nation's social challenges*.



## 'It's Europe that's sick' – an online article by CERT visiting scholar Dr Laura Burocco (University of Lisbon)

*The European Union website states: "Every year on 9 May we celebrate Europe Day, which celebrates peace and unity in **Europe**." In Italy, the call to demonstrate support and indignation against the massacre in Gaza, both online and on the streets, is almost sterile. Despite this, I have all my respect for those who still have the strength to take to the streets, despite the stagnant air of failure that can be felt in Europe. As one of the participants of the demonstration in Milan on April 25 recalls in a video: "It is important to be together every now and then and to see that there are still many of us."*



Source: [https://comune-info.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/IMG\\_8018-1024x1024.jpeg](https://comune-info.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/IMG_8018-1024x1024.jpeg)

A poster can be seen circulating online, carried in procession at various pro-Palestinian demonstrations in different European cities, which says: "You know what also died in Gaza? The Myth of Western Humanity and Democracy? "For more details, click on the link below:

<https://zaf01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fcomune-info.net%2Fleuropa-che-e-mala-ta%2F&data=05%7C02%7Ctopesemowo%40uj.ac.za%7Cfbf6db12328444e2dd6f08dd9924c92a%7Cfa785acd36ef41bc8a9489841327e045%7C0%7C0%7C638835105479769551%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGki-OnRydWUsIlYiOilwLjAuMDAwMCIslAIiOiJXaW4zMilskFOljoitWFpbClldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=M62NJX46WLENXn4CJbjQzrAs31Ftm2U3JJgawqhPteY%3D&reserved=0>

## AN INTERVIEW ON 'SUSTAINABLE FUTURES' WITH PROF. LEON TIKLY



*Professor Leon Tikly holds key Global South research leadership positions.  
Credit: Bristol University*

On the 2nd of April 2025, PDRFS Dr Matthew Ayegboyin and Dr Titilope Opesemowo conducted an interview session with CERT Visiting Professor Leon Tikly on his academic journey and intellectual vision for Africa. Prof. Leon Tikly is a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences and the UNESCO Chair on Transforming Knowledge and Research for Just and Sustainable Futures at the University of Bristol. A Professor at the School of Education, he is the co-Director of the Centre for Comparative and International Research in Education (CIRE); the Academic Director at the Perivoli Africa Research Centre (PARC); and the Principal Investigator (PI) of Transformation Education for Sustainable Futures (TESF). At TESF, he directs a large network of 67 projects across Africa and India, all concerned with knowledge co-creation. He has been working on epistemic justice for some time, looking at different knowledge systems and their implications for research and teaching. He has recently directed a United Kingdom Research and Innovation (UKRI)-funded Network Plus on Transforming Education for Sustainable Futures with partners in India, Rwanda, Somalia/ Somaliland, and South Africa (UKRI; £4.75 million; 2019-23). His scholarship over many years has focused on globalization and education policy in the postcolonial world and on initiatives to improve the quality of education for disadvantaged learners, particularly in Africa. Between 2005 and 2011, he directed a research programme consortium on Improving Education Quality in Low-Income Countries (EdQual) (DfID; £2.5 million). His work is informed theoretically by critical realism, postcolonial, and decolonial perspectives and is underpinned by a commitment to social, environmental, and epistemic justice. His project is about how universities can work in co-creative ways to make knowledge relevant for tackling the social and environmental challenges faced by the African continent. Prof. Leon Tikly discussed his transition from teaching in London to working at the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College in Tanzania, where he became aware of the challenges faced by South African learners.



*Source: SAHO*

His academic pursuits, including a Masters' degree and PhD at the University of Glasgow, centred on South African education and the impact of globalization on educational policies. He emphasized the importance of integrating local knowledge into curricula and the need for equitable partnerships in research in three key areas:

- The impact of globalization on education in Africa;
- The importance of African-led research and knowledge co-creation; and
- The development of the Africa Charter for equitable partnerships in research.



As inspirational note to the PDRFs, Prof. Leon Tikly discussed the critical relationship between coloniality and sustainable development, highlighting how colonialism has historically undermined African knowledge systems and governance. He urged emerging scholars to focus on developing their own theories and methods relevant to the continent, rather than conforming to external dictates. He stressed that sustainable futures must be led by Africans themselves to ensure that the continent's rich cultural and intellectual heritage is recognized and utilized.

## CERT-CAWE welcome Visiting Scholar, Dr Laura Burocco

On the 22nd of April, the Centre for Education Rights and Transformation welcomed visiting scholar, Dr. Laura Burocco, a researcher at the Centre for Research in Anthropology (CRIA) at the University of Lisbon, where she is part of the Practices and Politics for Culture Research Group. She holds a PhD in Communication and Culture from the School of Communication at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), as well as postdoctoral degrees in Visual History and Theory from the Centre for Humanities Research at UWC and in Visual Arts from the School of Arts at UFRJ. Her work explores the intersection of culture and power, with a central focus on the decolonization of knowledge, critically engaging with both academia and the arts.

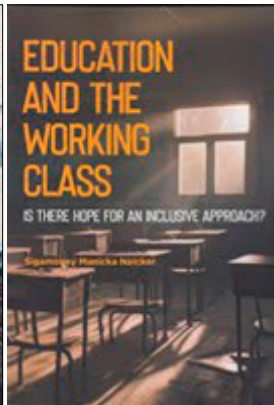
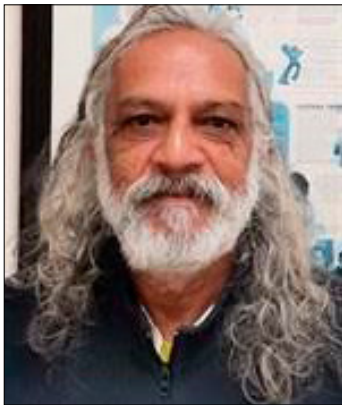


### Laura reflects on her stay at CERT:

*'I first met Professor June Bam during her tenure at the University of Cape Town (UCT) in 2022. At that time, I was undertaking a visiting research period at Creative Knowledge Resources (CKR) at Michaelis School of Art, UCT. I was engaged in the 'Southern North Dialogue on Afro-Indigenous Art' project, based on a dialogue between Indigenous Brazilian and Sámi artists, curators, and academics. It was during this period that we initiated discussions on potential collaborations within our respective research fields. It is a pleasure, after two years, to be able to present the results of this project during my current visiting period at CERT, and to engage in a more extended dialogue and sharing with Prof June. CERT represents a valuable opportunity to focus on the work carried out with Indigenous artists, particularly with regard to their pedagogical practices of knowledge transmission and political activism, rather than the artistic dimension of their work. As a space committed to the production and transmission of inclusive and heterogeneous forms of knowledge—and one that does not hesitate to explicitly embrace its own political positionality—I have found CERT to be a fertile environment for the generation of new ideas and approaches. Notably, I have encountered in the work of the individuals involved a level of care and attentiveness that I believe is increasingly absent in academic settings. This ethos resonates strongly with the Indigenous practices I have been engaged with. In the difficult times we are currently experiencing, it is invigorating to be part of such a movement. During my visit, I participated in a series of workshops involving students at various stages of their academic development, including Masters' and postdoctoral levels. The dedication and generosity demonstrated by the teaching staff and researchers in engaging with the work of their colleagues is noteworthy, contributing to a stimulating atmosphere conducive to research and intellectual realisation. I will bring this experience back to my institutional affiliation at the University of Lisbon, and it prompts reflection on the types of exchanges that could be envisioned to ensure that these more attentive, inquisitive, and generous academic models might also be cultivated there. In this respect, the visit entirely fulfilled my research objectives, which aim to analyze how knowledge is produced in the Global South—specifically in Brazil and South Africa—and how it circulates within European decolonial discourse. The workshops I attended have provided significant insight into how decolonial theory, as developed in South America, is being applied and interpreted within the South African context. These experiences have also highlighted a series of tensions that underscore the necessity of deepening mutual understanding between the two continents and expanding South-South dialogues. It is my hope to contribute to fostering such dialogues through the various networks with which I am involved and to explore potential routes for collaboration with CERT in the future.'*

It has indeed been a pleasure to be hosting Laura as global scholar!

## POST-DOCTORAL BOOK DISCUSSION WITH PROFESSOR SIGAMONEY NAICKER



Credit (picture far right): The Citizen

On the 24th of April, Matthew and Titilope participated in a book discussion on *Education and the Working Class: Is There Hope for an Inclusive Approach?* with Prof Sigamoney Naicker at the Centre Court Venue, FNB Campus, Randburg. This book, launched by CERT in October 2024, has since invited pressing conversations nation-wide on the significant challenges faced by many children, particularly those from vulnerable and working-class backgrounds in accessing and succeeding within the education system. It was observed in the discussions in Randburg that the ongoing commodification and politicisation of education have severely undermined public education systems in many parts of the world. Attention was drawn to the persistent struggles of children from farming communities and townships to attain quality education. The book raises critical questions about South Africa's bureaucratic systems and whether they possess the intellectual capacity and will to drive meaningful educational transformation. Naicker's book makes a plea for sociological imagination and the shift towards a social justice model in school education; that education, at its core, should be rooted in love and humanity.

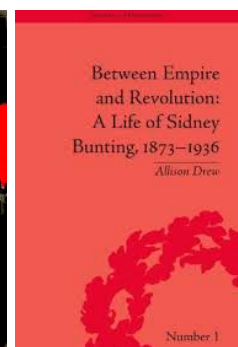
## GOOD NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### We warmly welcome Professor Linda Chisholm back as Emeritus Professor at CERT

It is with excitement that the CERT family welcomes our internationally prestigious Professor Chisholm back. A top-rated education science scholar in Africa, Linda will continue to pursue her research in her niche scholarship area of the history of education in South Africa and curriculum studies.



### Allison Drew Appointed As Distinguished Visiting Professor At CERT



We are pleased to announce that Professor Allison Drew has been appointed Distinguished Visiting Professor at CERT. Her work forms part of a rare archive on South African history, its primary sources within the African Studies Library and Collections largely destroyed by the University of Cape Town's (UCT's) fire of 18 April 2021. Drew's contribution to this decolonial education archive is phenomenal, unique and irreplaceable. Drew worked closely with the late Neville Alexander as a researcher and scholar since the 1960s. Her work on the intellectual history of the South African left is recognised by public intellectuals, and South African and



international historians. The well-known and respected 'Allison Drew Collection' volumes on South African History Online (SAHO) have contributed significantly to civil society's understanding of the public education struggle, and in particular regarding understanding the complexities and international context of the intellectual and education work of Neville Alexander. This is highly specialised research within a niche area of decolonial work spanning over decades, with high impact on worker and community education. Her public profile as a noted historian on South Africa can be found at the following link which is a substantial and unique archive on the connection between national liberation struggles and political organisations and education in South Africa. <https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/allison-drew-collection>. South African History Online is recognised as the largest online collection on the country's history as part of digital humanities. <https://www.sahistory.org.za/about-us>. The platform enjoys 6 million visitors per year as a 'go to' place and accessible community education research hub for researchers both locally and globally, including materials developed for school education. Drew's scholarship contribution is evidently in her placing of a small cohort of South Africa's radical intellectual left within a global context of radical education, working with a vast and diverse archive of little-known primary sources such as in Moscow. Drew's appointment would therefore be strategic and intentional without which CERT fails to succeed to deliver on its research mandate to 'transform' education and how we understand 'education rights' in new novice research methodologies in Africa and the global south.

## **CERT's Education as Change (EaC) Journal makes impactful global strides – here follows a brief summary from the annual report by Commissioning Editor Dr Na-iem Dollie**



EaC is a journal of our faculty and is hosted by CAWE and CERT. The journal's most recent impact factor is 1.6. While this is an excellent and positive indicator, it does not reflect the journal's readership and submissions, which, especially over the past two years, have increased exponentially. Ordinarily, journals with impact factors of between 0.2 and 1.5 are considered specialist journals. EaC's in-house statistical record reflects 791 submissions received, an increase from the 457 submissions last year. After desk reviews (the initial filter for selecting articles for peer reviews), 766 submissions were declined, and 24 were declined after formal double-blind peer reviews. Twenty-four submissions were published. The journal has one confirmed Themed Section for 2025, "Scholars in the Margins: The Complex Lives of Postdocs in Higher Education", with guest editors Mlamuli Hlatshwayo from UJ and Heidi Prozesky from Stellenbosch University. The journal has attracted a wide range of global and local education scholars. EaC's listings on the Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO), Web of Science, Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), Scopus, and its accreditation by DHET have contributed to its wide exposure and appeal as a journal of choice for scholars.

*The journal is chaired by Prof Mondli Hlatshwayo and its management is democratically governed by a board of senior academics appointed from various institutions across South Africa.*

## Congratulations to PhD scholar Ongezwa Mbele

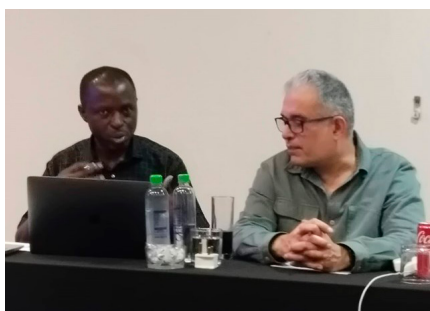


*Next Generation Social Sciences in Africa Doctoral Awardee*

CERT warmly congratulates Ongezwa Mbele as the recipient of a 2025 Next Generation Social Sciences in Africa (SSRC) doctoral Fellowship. Ongezwa studies under the research supervision of Professor June Bam-Hutchison and is an applied theatre practitioner, storyteller, and published poet. A lecturer at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and a 2021 Atlantic fellow for Racial Equity, Ongezwa has been a guest editor for the *Agenda Journal* and *Imbiza Journal* for African Writing. Mbele has co-authored various research journal articles and her poems have been featured in various anthologies. Her professional interest is in using theatre techniques and storytelling to engage with diverse communities about their relevant societal issues. She has facilitated various theatre programmes/projects with young people and incarcerated people in South Africa and Norway. Yearly, Ongezwa facilitates intercultural training workshops for Norec (a Norwegian and African professional exchange programme). Collaboration is at the heart of her interest, and she desires to archive and practice theatrical interventions with various communities.

## CERT warmly welcomes 3 New Postdoctoral Research Fellows from the continent

During the first semester of 2025, the CERT-CAWE community had the privilege of welcoming three new postdoctoral research fellows from Nigeria and Zimbabwe: Dr Matthew Ayegboyin, Dr Tracey Muradzikwa and Dr Aisha Lawal Baggiwa.

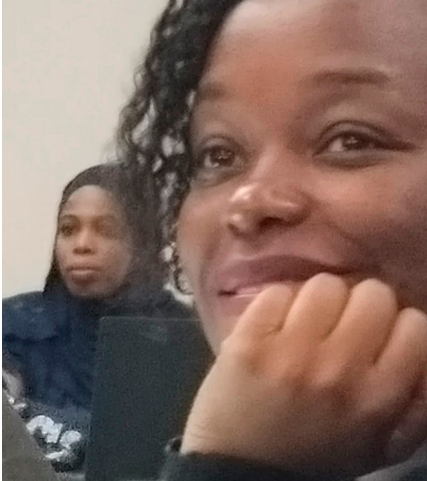


*Dr. Matthew Ayegboyin engaging Prof. Tikly on key emerging questions from the presentations during the Doctoral Training Programme at Riverstone Lodge.*

**Matthew Ayegboyin** earned his PhD in Sociology from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, with a dissertation titled *Social Dimension of Musculoskeletal Pain Among Elderly People in Southwestern Nigeria*. He is a recipient of the CMED 2016 Grant Award in recognition of his outstanding doctoral research work in Nigeria by the LAPO Institute. He has been an awardee of *The Editors of Scientific African* under the Elsevier Reviewer Editors for Reviewing manuscripts for the Journal since April 2021. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/scientific-african>

Ayegboyin specialises in medical sociology, ethnography, gerontology, and social research methods. He is an alumnus of a professional Program on Negotiation (PON) at Harvard Law School, Harvard University. Ayegboyin's current research explores indigenous medicinal and food heritage among the elderly in Nigeria and South Africa, aiming to bridge traditional cultural knowledge and formal education systems. Dr Ayegboyin studies under the research supervision of Professor June Bam-Hutchison.





**Tracey Muradzikwa** completed her doctoral studies at the University of Witwatersrand working on the legitimacy of female traditional leaders in Nswazi, Zimbabwe. Her research interests are traditional leaders in Southern Africa, indigeneity, gender, governance and development, and gender and political institutions. She previously taught Feminist Theory and Politics at the University of Witwatersrand's Department of Political Studies.

Her research interests are traditional leaders and politics in Zimbabwe since 1980 and gender politics in the Global South parliaments. She is a recipient of the Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Fellowship (2020), the Doctoral Dissertation Research Fellowship (2021), and the Doctoral Dissertation Completion (2023). She has also received international fellowships such as the Global Minds Fellowship, Ghent University, Belgium and Erasmus+ KA107 International Credit Mobility Programme Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Spain. Dr Muradzikwa studies under the research supervision of Prof Morgan Ndlovu.



*Dr Aisha Lawal Bagiwa defending her research presentation at Riverstone Lodge*

**Aisha Lawal Bagiwa** holds a PhD in Science Education from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria, where she explored the effectiveness of virtual laboratories and field trips in teaching science. Through her research and publications, Aisha contributes to the advancement of science education and the promotion of innovative teaching methods. Her dedication to academic excellence and research has earned publications in both local and international journals and she has presented her work at several conferences. Her current research focuses on the integration of indigenous knowledge systems in science education, aiming to promote a more inclusive and culturally responsive approach to science teaching and learning. Aisha's work has the potential to impact educational policies and practices, fostering a more nuanced understanding of science and its relationship with local cultures. Dr Bagiwa studies under the research supervision of Professor Morgan Ndlovu.

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## MEET THE CERT PROFESSORS:

(LtoR) June Bam-Hutchison; Linda Chisholm; Mondli Hlatswayo; Morgan Ndlovu; Salim Vally



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