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Born on 5th January 1959, Ms. Renuka Pillay a South African of Indian origin but whose love for Uganda was exercised in equal measure, died on 23rd February 2019 at a South African Hospital while undergoing a medical procedure.

As a South African, who had spent her life living and working in the East and South African Region, including three years at the Soloman Mahlangu Freedom Camp for South African Refugees in Mazimbu, Tanzania, she had a sound understanding of the cultural context and challenges of the African education system. She was a Doctor of Education (Ed. D) Candidate at the Massachusetts, Amherst, and also holder of a master in Education from the University of Manchester (UK), in addition to a higher education post-graduate Diploma in Peace and Conflict Education, Special Needs Education and Education Foundations from Connecticut University and a Bachelor in Education and a Higher Diploma in Education from the University of South Africa.

Renuka had such a rich professional profile as an educationist, development worker and freedom fighter; and fluently spoke English, Afrikaans, Zulu and Kiswahili and had a good working knowledge of Luganda.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Renuka has left such an indelible imprint on not only Uganda's education system and reforms but also within the East, Central and South African Region, with over 36 years of experience. As Uganda, and indeed the Ministry of Education and Sports, mourns the passing of this Pan-Africanist, we acknowledge the invaluable contribution she made towards systems development for education service delivery, improved teacher quality, professional conduct and service, inclusive education that addresses needs of all groups especially the disadvantaged like girls, children with special needs and in difficult and hard-to-reach and stay areas, and promotion of policies that support teaching and learning in schools.
Renuka worked with Creative Associates, Washington DC with distinction for over 20 years in many capacities, including as Chief of Party in Uganda, for the REPLICA (Revitalizing Education Participation and Learning in Conflict Affected Areas) and UNITY projects and Tanzania (TZ21), Project Director for Zambia (ZAMFAM), and as Creative Associates East African Representative. At the time of her sudden death, Renuka had been engaged by the British (DFID) funded 36m Pounds SESIL project (Strengthening Education Systems for Improved Learning) as a Performance Improvement Team Lead (2018-2019).

Renuka had an intimate understanding of the development challenges facing many African countries and had developed excellent working relationships with Government Ministries. In the case of Uganda, her service to the Education Sector dates way back to 1996 when, up to 1999, she served as an Institutional and Organization- al Development Advisor for reform activities in 36 major districts in the joint USAID, UMASS, AED, and Ministry of Education SUPER Project aimed at improving educational reforms in Uganda. The USAID funded project spanned three quarters of the country and encompassed 9 Core Primary Teachers’ Colleges (PTCs), with a staff of over 300 tutor-trainers nationally. Reform activities included national trainings for all PTC administrators, Head teacher management training, primary teacher educational in-service trainings, curriculum review, curriculum development, and curriculum assessment.

As National Programme Coordinator/Advisor, from 1999-2002 through the USAID funded SUPER Project, Ms. Renuka supported the Ministry of Education and Sports, in rolling out the Teacher Development and Management Systems (TDMS) – dubbed one of the most efficient and effective education services delivery system -, Continuous Professional Development (CPD), capacity building at the district level, and community mobilization.

She helped in unpacking H.E. the President’s Directive to implement the response to HIV and AIDS in primary and post-primary schools through a programme called the Presidential Initiative on Aids Strategy for Communication to Youth (PIASCY). There is no primary and secondary school in Uganda that does not demonstrate dissemination of key messages using Talking Compounds and Edutainment (Music, Dance and Drama).

Working in close collaboration with Ms. Cathy Watson, at Straight Talk Foundation, Ms. Renuka championed the launch of periodic inserts into The New Vision including Kid Talk, Young Talk, Teacher Talk and Parent Talk, all of which exerted considerable influence on the target audience in the fight against HIV and AIDS.

As Chief of Party of Creative Associates International in Uganda, 2002-2006, Renuka managed all aspects of contract, technical, and financial, performance for the $14 million USAID Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity in Uganda. Her core tasks included coordinating Working Group activities, monitoring work plans, managing and coordinating program areas of focus, acting as a liaison between the Education Ministry and field implementing institutions, serving on the Curriculum Taskforce and coordinating BEPS staff. She designed and implemented the REPLICA program which was an intervention that included peace education, leadership and governance, and psychosocial issues, as well as promotion of girls’ education for the people of Northern Region.

She collaborated with the Ministry to design and develop the first Guidance and Counseling program for Uganda; oversaw PEPFAR (the US President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief) activities for three years; and engaged with the Education Funding Agencies Group (EFAG) and the United States Government (USG) Partners on these activities. Renuka’s professional and passionate contributions during the Annual Education Sector Reviews on the quality of education in Uganda, particularly that of the teachers, attainment of the learning outcomes, early childhood development and education and special needs education, will forever be remembered.

In her continued role as Chief of Party of Creative Associates International, 2007-2011, Renuka oversaw performance for the $37 million USAID funded UNITY project. She supported the Ministry to design and implement the course in Teacher Education Competence, as well as providing technical support to measuring learning achievement of pupils and implementation of the Thematic Curriculum at the primary school level. Served on the UWEZO Research Board, which tracked lower primary performance and initiated a consultative mechanism with civil society organizations under the Forum for Education NGOs [FENU].
She also oversaw research work conducted by Uganda National Teachers’ Union (UNATU), on customized performance targets for head teacher performance; set up peer activities to support and track school-based management, governance and performance; and strengthened the role of School Management Committees through trainings and reviews. Through the UNITY project, the Ministry Policy of putting *Books in the Hands of Children*, instead of having them neatly stacked in head teachers’ offices, was developed and disseminated – all in a bid to improve literacy and numeracy at the foundational level, and the Learning Achievements and Outcomes.

The period 2011-2016 saw Renuka briefly serve as Chief of Party of Creative Associates in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania where she managed a $48 million TZ21 Basic Education Program, which was a replica of the reforms she had developed with the Ugandan Ministry responsible for Education.

For Renuka Uganda, where her family had fully settled, had indeed become home-away-from-home, and as the East African Regional Representative of Creative Associates, she returned to Uganda in 2016 to serve the Sector she knew best – Education.

In her eulogy, Mrs. Janet Museveni, the First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports, referred to Renuka’s stellar performance and contribution to the Education Sector as the legacy of a Pan-Africanist, whose contribution will be fondly remembered.

Those that worked closely with Renuka, will confirm that she was a social and caring person with a big heart for children and Uganda – a country she loved and worked for till her last breath. She left Uganda to visit her ailing sister in South Africa and for a Doctor’s appointment to check on her own failing health, only to be pronounced dead while undergoing a procedure to address her discomfort.

Our thoughts and prayers are with her husband Dr. Pat Naidoo, the Executive Director of ELMA Philanthropies East Africa based in Kampala. Renuka and her husband Pat were long-time activists against the Apartheid Regime in South Africa and continued with the struggle while in exile in the early 80’s as members of the African National Congress in Zambia, Angola, Tanzania and West Africa. They were only able to return to South Africa after 1990 – after the release of Nelson Mandela.

Renuka and Pat have two biological children, both boys, Kshethra (Keshy) Naidoo (29), who was born in Benin (West Africa), and Anveshana (Anvesh) Naidoo (18), who was born and is a student at ISU-Lubowa. Keshy is a lawyer in Cape Town South Africa. In addition, however, a number of children grew up in the Renuka-Naidoo household, including Anita Muruve, Pamela Acaye, Petra Ahabwamukama, Kiiza James, Deogratius Owuya and Denis Okoth.

Renuka’s mum, Ambigay Pillay is 86 years old and currently lives in South Africa with Renuka’s siblings: a brother (Koogan Pillay) and sister (Bowie Pillay). Renuka’s mum spent many wonderful years in Uganda as well as the family, while her dad was a renowned artist (the late Karen Pillay).

Fare thee well Renuka. You were such a Blessing to Uganda and humanity, in its entirety.
Early Childhood development (ECD) is the timely provision of a range of services that promote the survival, growth, development and protection of young children from the ages of 0-8 years. We strongly believe that learning starts at birth and whatever experiences a child goes through during these formative years will affect either positively or negatively on their learning in the later years.

It is for this reason, that the government developed both an ECD policy and guidelines to provide guidance for the holistic development of healthy and productive children in their early years.

The ECD teacher education programs at the Ministry of Education and Sports strive to improve the quality of early years’ teaching and care programs through continuity, ownership and community based partnerships with Faith Based Organizations as a mechanism for sustainability. This is a five-year program funded by Global Partnership in Education and implemented by the TIET Department.

The key role of the TIET department is to ensure quality in the service delivery of early years’ teacher training programs. The department has therefore done a benchmarking exercise on the quality and efficiency of ECDs in Uganda based on the different regions: central, eastern, south-west and northern regions.
STRONG GOOD PRACTICES FOR ECD – CCCP

CENTRAL REGION

This region consists of Colleges such as; Kabulasoke CPTC, Ndegeya CPTC, Nakaseke CPTC and Busubizi CPTC.

Successes and Good Practices

- Caregivers have fully been able to utilize the local environment to make efficient and effective play and instructional materials for the children.

- Every Universal Primary Education school according to Masaka Local government has been encouraged to create an ECD center with trained caregivers as a feeder to the main formal primary education. This has increased enrolment of children in Primary One who are ready to learn.

- Caregivers without any form of formal education have been absorbed by the programme. Those with small enterprises have now invested in their own ECD centres using the knowledge acquired from the ECD-CCCP model for example in Kalungu district.

- Community sensitization has helped to create ECD centers through which pupils from hard to reach areas have benefited. For example, Kaazi- Bugaba Island had no ECD center, now one is created and is successfully operating with a trained caregiver. Communities together with Local governments are now making sure that various ECD centres are created in the region to solve problems of long distances since trained caregivers are readily available to teach the young children.

- Some private schools in the region use the trained caregivers as resource persons mainly in materials development and learners’ management e.g. Bbeta madarasatu ECD centre.

SOUTH WESTERN REGION

This region consists of Colleges such as; Kabale CPTC, Bushenyi CPTC, Bulera CPTC and Canon Apolo CPTC.

Successes and Good Practices

- The community is involved in provision of structures e.g. Nyamutamba, Nyakishenyi, Ruhungye and Igambiro in the Western region. These structures are used by the caregivers to teach the young ones following the learning framework.

- ECDs have provided safety and security of children in many centres. Before the programme, parents were not sensitized to take their children to school and some and some decided to leave them at home because they could not find relevant teachers for them. Since this programme evolved, parents now safely live their children at ECD centres as they go to work.

- There is an increased enrolment of children in some ECD centres i.e. Rumuri, Kitagata and Bukungu in Kabale district. This has been due to the successfully trained caregivers who have shown the parents that they can effectively develop children.

- Formation of functional Centre Management Committees which have been fully empowered to carry out their roles and responsibilities to properly manage the ECD centres and the trained caregivers.

- ECD centres which begun in churches and mosques have now been shifted to new classrooms which have been built by the help of the community, local government and other Non-Governmental Organizations thus promoting sustainability of these centres.

- Licensing of ECD centres whose caregivers have been trained on the programme has increased for example in Bundibugyo district from 50 – 133 ECD centres. This enables the centres to also be included in government plans in terms of infrastructure development, and any other support.
NORTHERN REGION
This region consists of Colleges such as; Kitgum CPTC, Loro CPTC, Moroto CPTC and Gulu CPTC

Successes and Good Practices

• There is training of cohort 4 and 5 by FBOs which is supported by the community and Colleges that is to say Canon Lawrence PTC and Loro CPTC. Due to the high demand of trained caregivers on the ECD-CCCP model across the region also enhancing sustainability of the programme.

• Kitgum Core Primary Teachers’ College has benefited from a grant support from “African Revival.” They have established a model ECD centre and Nursery Teacher Training Institute as a result of the MTs having earlier on participated in the caregivers’ training - supported by UNICEF.

• There is community involvement in classroom construction e.g. Acanatin ECD centre in Dokolo district (UMSC) and Aloi ECD centre in Alebtong district (COU) which is aimed at obtaining long lasting structures and classroom buildings for the children.

• Children as a result of ECDs, love school and are active and creative as they learn through play.

• There is a change of attitude of parents towards the use of local language as a medium of instruction since the model embraces use of native language in children’s interaction with their caregivers and also during play time.

EASTERN REGION
This region consists of Colleges such as; Bishop Wil- lis CPTC, Nyondo CPTC, and Soroti CPTC

Successes and Good Practices

• There is improved involvement of different stakeholders (Community, FBOs, and Politicians) to appreciate the activities of ECD-CCCP across the different parts of the country.

• There is an improved learning environment for children. Some ECD centres for example, Kaliro Model in Kaliro District, St. James Namayemba COU, Alisiqama Islamic, Little Hope, Bupala and Buvule in Bugiri District, Ikulwe COU in Mayuge to mention but a few are doing excellently well in preparing and developing local play materials for children.

• Most of the ECD centres in the region are being used as model centres by different organizations such as World Vision especially in the developing of local play materials for children. Caregivers in these ECD centres are empowered and employed by these organizations so that they can train other teachers who have not been on the programme how to make local play materials.

• Parents and the community at large due to the goodness of the programme, have started to collectively donate land for the construction of various ECD centres for the good of their children e.g Loyoro Parish in Kaabong district.

By:
Sempala Sebastian
Senior Education Officer
Early Childhood Development centers are a new advancement in National Teachers’ Colleges in Uganda. Through the Teacher Training Education Project, Enabel is providing support worth 50,000 euro per college to build an ECD in all the five colleges.

The introduction of ECD centres in the colleges is something that was initiated following the experiences of teaching staff and students in the National Teachers Colleges. The number of mothers pursuing further studies as well as teaching staff was on the rise. A recent survey carried out in the NTCs showed that the combined total of mothers in the colleges from both students and teaching staff was 43.

The college infrastructure did not provide for private rooms for breast feeding, nursing for the mothers, their babies, and some mothers in general did not feel comfortable coming to school with their children and therefore were absent from class all together.

Under phase 2 of the TTE project, ECDs are currently under construction in all 5 NTCs to ensure that children with the ages of 0-3 years in the colleges are cared for in a safe environment. Most importantly, the ECDs show that Enabel mainstreams gender equity within the project by ensuring that young and new mothers continue their pursuit for further education in safe and enabling environment.

The ECDs will address both the children’s and parent’s needs. Currently the ECDs under construction will provide kitchen space for preparing meals, breast-feeding rooms, sleeping rooms, play areas, washing rooms, outdoor spaces, storage spaces, sanitary rooms and a proper waste disposal unit.

The infrastructural designs for construction leave room for expansion of the ECDs in the near future to cater for an increased number of children in the NTCs.
HOW SAFE ARE OUR INSTITUTIONS?

The need for safety in our institutions of learning has become more urgent than ever. With funding from Enabel NTC Unyama organised a training in safe environment for both staff and students.

Below are some of the best safety practices that could be embraced by institutions in ensuring the safety of all stakeholders:

- Have a vibrant health and safety committee.
- Fire extinguishers serviced after every six months.
- Both staff and students be trained on how to use fire extinguishers.
- Have buildings with clear escape routes.
- Have a safety policy for the institution.
- Have a fire assembly point.
- Have fire blankets especially in the laboratory where there are inflammables.
- Have fire champions trained on fire preparedness to alert the rest in case of fire outbreak.
- Arrange for fire drills to check whether people are prepared for any fire outbreak.
- Encourage staff and students to identify unsafe conditions and report for prompt action to be taken.

Safety starts with you so be careful, be aware and be safe!

By:

Lanyero Evelyn Grace (Deputy Principal - NTC Unyama)

NTC Unyama

NTC Unyama staff and students on drill exercise in firefighting skills
ICT A MUST FOR ALL TEACHER TRAINEES

By:
Lanyero Evelyn Grace (Deputy Principal- NTC Unyama)

NTC Unyama

There is a need to integrate Information and Communication technology (ICT) into teaching and learning and for the first time ever, NTC Unyama has included ICT in the general students’ time table. All classes in all departments have been given at least two hours per week for ICT skills sessions. Teacher trainees will acquire ICT skills as part of their learning while at the college so that they can incorporate ICT into practice in the job market.
Deputy Principal Hands over trophy to winners

Auma Hall of Residence immerge the overall winners in the ladies categories and received their trophy with jubilation – NTC Unyama Photo

By: Olara James NTC Unyama

PHYSICAL FITNESS IRRESPECTIVE OF AGE

NTC Unyama staff during take part in sports activities during the college sports day

Students during cross-country run in NTC Unyama Sports Day – Inter Halls Competition 2019
Visit NTC Muni and you will notice a sprawling banana plantation, sounds from the poultry and piggery farm etc. These projects are a result of a training in project planning and management from the Support to the Development of Human Resources (SDHR) project.

The college conceptualized these agricultural projects aiming at supplementing the college revenue and acting as a learning center for agriculture students.

After observing and realizing that there always was no extra money in the college accounts to run any internal projects and that the college only relied on grants to do any small development, the college administration asked themselves, “How may we diversify the college income levels?” mentions the college principal, Fr, Adrian Katarikawe mentions thoughtfully.

“The answer was to initiate projects. But we had no skills and knowledge to do that,” he adds.

And thus, the training in Project planning and Management was arranged by the SDHR project, followed by a benchmarking exercise as one of the actions plans.

“This training diversified my thinking,” states James Obot, the college farm manager. “I have thought of trying out things I would never have thought of,” he adds. Having a well laid out project plan is really already have the project accomplished,” James adds.

“We want to extend our banana plantation to 5 acres of the college land,” James mentions. In a year, we won’t have to buy matooke for students. “We shall have our own food grown here on our land and even surplus for sale,” the college principal chips in affirming James’ submission.

After the college land is exhausted, the college intends to then sale of the banana tubers. One piece goes for 1000 Uganda shillings and each banana plant can have up to 4 or more tubers at a time. Imagine how many will be produced on a 5 acre piece of land.
The piggery unit, poultry and cattle farms will be a constant source of manure for the plantation and other garden projects.

The college has also started a poultry unit with over 500 layers and 600 broilers at go.

**Future projections?**

The college is working towards involving the college students in the projects, improving to mechanized labor and addressing the water scarcity issue in the college.

“We also are looking at integrating our projects so that each component feeds into the other, kind of like a cycle,” adds Samson Candiga, the Agriculture lecturer at the college.

All this started off with simply a training in project planning and management and NTC Muni has not looked back since.

**By:**
Ayebale Rachael  
Support to the Development Human Resource Project
National Instructors’ College Abilonino staff and management led by the principal in conjunction with Hanze University staff and Hanze University foundation spearheaded the renovation of an old boys’ dormitory that had not been the most comfortable of places to live in. The construction works are still on going with the target of completion soon rather than later. The staff of Hanze University held several fund raising drives in order to put together the funds for this activity. During their 2 week stay at the college, they actively participated in the construction works and lent their hands on every activity they could.

**Didactic and pedagogical Skills Workshop:**

As part of the activities for their visit, they held didactic and pedagogic skills workshop to share ideas of how to consolidate and improve these skills to enable effective delivery of lessons in class. These workshops were held alongside other activities of renovation of the boys’ dormitory.

**E-learning platform:**

ICT personnel were part of the team that visited the college and in the 2 weeks was able to functionalize the E-learning platform that had been developed by an intern also from Hanze University. The ICT personnel was able to enroll staff and some students on the learning portal, shared some vital academic information. The idea is to create an enabling electronic learning environment to facilitate teaching and learning with the modern technologies available now. This can be accessed offline if one is connected to the college Intranet by following the link:

[elarning.nica.ac.ug or intra.nica.ac.ug](elarning.nica.ac.ug or intra.nica.ac.ug)
NICA Hanze University Computer Lab:
Hanze University also supported the college in ICT project to install work stations, projectors in class rooms and wireless access points in the college premises. There are 45 workstations in the new computer lab-called NICA-HANZE Lab. The 45 works stations are running on the latest version of N-Computing software, 5 Servers running a total of 9 workstations each totaling to 45 workstations.

MTN booster at the college premises:
For a very long time the college had been faced with the challenge of connectivity both for voice and data communication. But in recent developments, that has now come to be history. With the efforts of the woman member of parliament for Kole district and the open mindedness of the college management, an MTN booster (3G Supported) was temporarily installed at the college grounds for a period of 2 years as they work towards erecting a permanent one.
As Ntinda VTI concludes its 2019 enrollment, it is noted that there has been an increase in enrollment as compared to 2018. One of the reason is that more citizens are getting aware of the newly established VTI in Ntinda. I government together with its development partners for all the continuous support towards vocational training.

I also notice that some people haven’t discovered the fruits of vocational training, hence Ntinda VTI will continue blowing the trumpet. I have told my trainees that it doesn’t matter how and why you joined Ntinda VTI. “Let’s make the best out of it. You will tell the story after a few years, and it will be too late for others”. For they have made important choices that have a strong influence on their eventual career path and future. Our part is to ensure that the trainees obtain the best out of the best.

“Women miss out on opportunities in growing and highly paid occupations that require science, technical and engineering skills. This can be changed by you and I”
In terms of female enrollment in VTIs, it is clear that girls fear or are discouraged to join male dominated courses and mainly Automotive and Welding. Ntinda VTI has not yet attracted female trainees in these two courses. But good enough, we have realized an increase of female enrollment in Plumbing and Electrical. Fashion and Design ranks highest in female enrollment.

During my recent visit to Kenya, I was informed that Kenya Industrial Training Authority (the former DIT Kenya) sponsors 25 Kenyan female students annually to pursue engineering courses at craft, certificate and diploma levels in an effort to reduce gender disparity in technical/engineering disciplines as a part of its Corporate Social Investment. The objective of this program is to address the observed gender imbalance. Through this affirmative action, the programme, which started in 2006, has to date benefitted over three hundred Kenyan female students across the country.

When I was in India in 2012 during my training on management of vocational training institutes in a city called Chennai, I was amazed to see female polytechnics that offered mechanical and electrical courses. It remains a dream that I would like to realize in my life. I look forward to that day when such a project is replicated in Uganda.

The 2 female primary teacher’s colleges in Uganda in Gulu and Nkokonjeru boost enrollment for female teachers likewise Female Technical and Vocational training institutions could do the same. Some of the gender issues affecting those already enrolled in mixed vocational institutions can then be easily addressed when female have their independent institutions.

“Assuming every year Ntinda VTI enrolls 20 females trainees, it will have channeled a minimum of 250 female motor vehicle technicians and welders by its silver jubilee.”

*Kwagala Sarah performing final connections to supply her electrical circuit with power. Electrical workshop, Ntinda VTI*
We can do something as we wait for such projects. Ntinda VTI is the 76th among government institutes that offer post O-level Vocational and Technical training to be established. Each institute receives 50 slots of government sponsored trainees. Selected trainees must have filled in Vocational Training as one of their choices. One of the strategy we have to immediately think of is to offer places of government scholarships to female in Automotive and Welding. Assuming every year, Ntinda VTI enrolls 20 female trainees, then at its Silver jubilee, it will have channeled a minimum of 250 female motor vehicle mechanics and 250 female welders. Other VTIs can also borrow a leaf, and we will emulate Kenya in just two years.

I again applaud MoES for these slots which aren’t fixed or tied to any formula. As a Manager, I do support and guide colleagues to work within government policies provided, so that we narrow some foreseen issues like gender issues.

“Women miss out on opportunities in growing and highly paid occupations that require science, technical and engineering skills” Said by Trainer, Engineer and Certified Welder who I met at African Gas and Oil Ltd Mombasa, Kenya. “This can be changed by you and me”, she added.

Starting, 2021, Ntinda VTI is determined to graduate a number of female welders and automobile mechanics from which industry, as well as, instructor colleges shall be able to tap. Encourage your daughters, nieces, granddaughters, sisters and friends to select Ntinda VTI as they make choices for post O level under Ntinda VTI’s selection code 8081, so that they don’t miss out this opportunity.

By:
Harriet KAGEZI
Ag. Principal Ntinda VTI
On April 3rd 2019, Enabel marked 20 years in supporting world development across the globe.

We are proud to support the teacher education in Uganda and are thankful of the cooperation of our partners.

Join the Newsletter Team!
Send me your pictures or articles about what is happening in your college!
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