

EXPERIENCES OF AN ENGAGED EDUCATOR IN THE PRACTICE OF EDUCATION AND GLOBAL DEMOCRACY

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents the practice of Education and Democracy as experienced by one engaged educator in South Sudan, Rwanda and Kenya. The paper seeks to demonstrate the extent to which educators can practice or experience the benefits of global democracy as practiced in various countries. The author is a renowned scholar with over 30 years of teaching experience of which 17 years have been at the university level. The author has also engaged in a variety of academic research and participated in several national and international conferences where has shared his vast experience as an educator and researcher. However, this paper will seek to explore the understanding of the practice of education and global democracy by focusing mainly on the experience of the author on retraining of teachers in the Republic of South Sudan (2011) and academic staff exchange programme organized by the Inter-University Council of East Africa (IUCEA) in Rwanda (2019). In order to demonstrate the experience of global democracy in education, the paper will demonstrate the comparative dimensions in the practice of global democracy. The experiences shared here are hoped to enrich the global debate on education and globalization which has been underpinned in the global democracy.

Key words: Education, Educator, Exchange, Democracy, Globalization

RESUMEN

Este artículo presenta la práctica de la educación y la democracia experimentada por un educador comprometido en Sudán del Sur, Ruanda y Kenia. El documento busca demostrar hasta qué punto los educadores pueden practicar o experimentar los beneficios de la democracia global tal como se practica en varios países. El autor es un investigador de renombre con más de 30 años de experiencia docente, incluidos 17 años a nivel universitario. El autor también se dedicó a una variedad de investigaciones académicas y participó en varias conferencias nacionales e internacionales donde compartió su vasta experiencia como educador e investigador. Sin embargo, este artículo buscará explorar la comprensión de la práctica de la educación y la democracia global centrándose principalmente en la experiencia del autor en la reconversión docente en la República de Sudán del Sur (2011) y el intercambio de currículos del personal académico organizado por el Consejo Interuniversitario de África Oriental (IUCEA) en Ruanda (2019). Para demostrar la experiencia de la democracia global en la educación, el artículo demostrará las dimensiones comparativas en la práctica de la democracia global. Se espera que las experiencias compartidas aquí enriquezcan el debate global sobre educación y globalización que ha sido apuntalado por la democracia global.

Palabras clave: Educación, educador, intercambio, democracia, globalización

Fecha de recepción: 30 de septiembre de 2022.

Fecha de aceptación: 30 de noviembre de 2022.

INTRODUCTION

The idea of education for democratic citizenship and human rights education is not new. Civic or citizenship education has been present in various European countries and many other countries globally for many years and has been implemented in many different ways. Mainly this has consisted of informing learners about the political system – that is to say, the constitution – in place in their country, using formal methods of instruction (Rolf, G., et al, 2010). Additionally, Students need a sound understanding of what democracy means, and what human rights they enjoy, in which documents they have been laid down, and how they may be protected and enforced. As young citizens, they need to know how their country's constitution functions as a political system. This is what Rolf (2010) calls Teaching “about” democracy on one hand and on the other hand teaching “for” democracy by ensuring that young citizens need to learn how to participate in their communities and how to exercise their human rights: “Democratic values and practices have to be learned and relearned to address the pressing challenges of every generation. To become full and active members of society, citizens need to be given the opportunity to work together in the interests of the common good; respect all voices, even dissenting ones; participate in the formal political process; and cultivate the habits and values of democracy and human rights in their everyday lives and activities. As a result, citizens come to feel useful and recognized members of their communities, able to participate in and make a difference to society.” The understanding of the concept of democracy is critical for every citizen to be able to practice it.

Although democracy is presumed to be admirable and desirable by everyone internationally, according to (Rolf, 2010) global democracy has been faced by a number of challenges including but not limited to ethnic conflicts and nationalism; global threats and insecurity; development of new information and communication technologies; environmental problems; population movements; emergence of new forms of formerly suppressed collective identities; demand for increased personal autonomy and new forms of equality; weakening of social cohesion and solidarity among people; mistrust of traditional political institutions, forms of governance and political leaders; increasing interconnectedness and interdependence; political, economic and cultural i.e., regionally and internationally.

ASI, (2003), posited that one of essential element of a good education for democracy is a systematic and continual emphasis on teaching and learning knowledge of democracy, democratic government, and democratic society. He further emphasized that if students would be prepared for effective and responsible participation in a democracy, then they must know what it is and what is it not. They must know the standards or criteria by which we distinguish democratic governments and societies from those that are not democratic. This proposition if applied globally would ensure that global citizens acquire the right education and hence be able to practice the real tannates of democracy without any form of discrimination or any disadvantage. Accordingly, Swedish social movement tradition.

Popular education contributes to the realisation of lifelong learning for all, and finally, it strengthens personal development as reflected in the Riksdag states (2005) that the aim of the State's grants to popular education should be to support activities that contribute to: strengthening and developing democracy, making it possible for people to influence their life situation and creating participative involvement in societal development, reducing educational gaps and raising the level of education and cultural awareness in society, and creating interest and broadening participation in cultural life.

Ron Israel & Jane Schubert, (2000), posited that true democracy means more than a constitution, elections, and the rule of law. It is also about widespread acceptance of a social contract that entails

responsible actions, good citizenship and a belief that no one is above the law (even if it's only a law about littering). Democracy entails empathy and respect for others well as a deep-rooted conviction that individual as actions often carry communal consequences. Cooperation and a willingness to consider issues from perspectives other than one's own are democracy's life forces. Democracy's sustenance comes from citizens who, recognizing their interdependence, seek to achieve an appropriate balance between their personal interests and those of the greater good. And, democracy's longevity depends on citizens who strive to create a common future that transcends differences of ethnicity, religion, race, class, gender and lifestyle. These views should be born in mind by every citizen in the global village, for in doing so then the practice of education for democracy would be attained if not fully achieved in every democratic state.

According to Bawa (nd), it is an admitted fact that there is an intimate relationship between democracy and education. In a democracy, education is given primacy, for it is pre-requisite for the survival and success of the former. Similarly, education fosters a democratic temper in the minds of people. Bawa further alludes that democratic values like liberty, equality, fraternity justice, dignity of individual, co-operation, sharing of responsibility etc. are applied to education to make it more effective, meaningful, relevant and useful. Democracy in order to be a reality and a way of life has to be introduced from the very beginning of education and its values need to be practiced in educational institutions. Before a thorough discussion on the inalienable relationship between the two-democracy and education, it is essential to unfold the meaning of democracy.

Democracy is a form of government in which there prevails the rule of majority. It is government of the people, by the people and for the people. This is a political connotation of the term democracy. Economically, it is a system where no one is exploited, where everybody is assured a fair standard of living, where there is equal opportunity for work according to abilities and capacities, where economic organization is based on collective or co-operative basis and where economic projects are geared for the benefit of the community at large but not for any private bodies.

Socially, it connotes absence of all distractions based on class, caste, creed, birth, religion, language or possession of money. Everyone is guaranteed fundamental rights, and equality of opportunities is given for the fullest development of personality. In Bawa's views, overall thus, it is social justice which is central to the understanding of democracy. Dignity of individual is accorded a primacy in it. In other words, there exists a paramount faith in the worth of the common man. There is no domination of any individual or group over another.

1. SOUTH SUDAN EXPERIENCE

South Sudan as a country has been characterized by decades of underdevelopment, war, famine, drought and flood, has caused economic, political and social destruction to institutions and infrastructure in the newly independent South Sudan. Access to and provision of education services have been severely affected and South Sudan faces serious constraints and challenges in its efforts to rebuild. Nearly eighty-five percent of the population still cannot read or write, and polls consistently place education as the number one priority for the people of South Sudan. However, the current infrastructure and human capacity to provide quality teacher professional development to promote quality teaching and learning is insufficient (Ador, 2021).

Ador (2021), further alludes that the quality of teaching and learning in South Sudan is severely compromised by a number of factors, including limited opportunities for professional development for teachers, few qualified teachers, challenging teaching conditions, and an incomplete

professional development curriculum and framework. Although the Republic of South Sudan (RoSS) employs over 26,000 primary teachers, only 13% of them are qualified (South Sudan Development Program, 2011, p. 2). As most Teacher Training Institutes (TTIs) are either closed or barely functioning, teacher training access and quality is poor and inconsistent. (SSTEP, 2014). Additionally, SSTEP began providing high quality training to 2000 South Sudanese in-service teachers (largely with P8 qualification) using the revised Unified Curriculum training system, with a specific focus on improving teachers' skills in teaching literacy and numeracy. SSTEP intended to focus on two groups of teachers: 1) those who are enrolled in or who have completed some of the MDTF program and 2) teachers from a sample of schools (100 total over two years) where the project planned to pilot its approach to the teaching of literacy through a holistic approach. The project developed teaching and learning materials to support teacher training and classroom instruction, with particular focus on literacy. Teachers were also supposed to receive training to improve their English language proficiency

1.1. PRE-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS AND CAPACITY BUILDING OF THREE NATIONAL TEACHERS' TRAINING INSTITUTES (NTTIS) WORLD BANK PROJECT 2010-2011(BACKGROUND INFORMATION ADOPTED WITH PERMISSION OF THE DEPUTY PROJECT DIRECTOR)

After the launching of the Go-to-School initiative after the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, there has been significant increase in number of children accessing basic education. The quality of education being provided to children in southern Sudan can generally be referred to as poor. One of the key factors contributing to the poor quality educations is the quality of the teacher that provides that education. Many of the schools are staffed by teachers who have not undergone any training at all. Studies estimate that about 65% of the primary school teachers in southern Sudan are untrained and under-qualified.

The Ministry of Education (MoE) through the grant for Education Rehabilitation Program (ERP) approved by the Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) availed funds for addressing the quality of basic education by training teachers through the Pre-service Teacher Education Programs. The project targets the training of 1000 primary school teachers (500 practicing untrained teachers & 500 secondary school leavers) in Maridi, Aramweer & Malakal National Teacher Training Institutes (NTTIs). The training was expected to commence in August 2010 but because of several impediments the programme commenced in October 2010.

To make this programme possible the Ministry of Education secured funds and contracted University of Juba and University of Nairobi to identify fifty four (54) people of international repute as trainers with a minimum of a BA degree in Education or related field. The overall objective of contract is for the two universities to carry out a pre-service training programme in Aramwer, Malakal and Maridi of 1,000 student teachers and improving the management and pedagogical capacity of those NTTIs.

The key tasks of the training program include:

- Improving the quality of basic education through the development and design of the curriculum for the Intermediate Certificate course.
- The training of 1000 pre-service primary school teachers.
- The strengthening and building of the management, administrative and pedagogical capacity of the three NTTIs.
- The development and review of the teacher education materials to be used for the training.

Situation analysis at the NTTIs

1.2. MARIDI

At the time of reporting Maridi had received 231 pre-service students, 15 female and 216 males, and more were still expected to come.

11 tutors have been deployed, 6 from the University of Juba and 7 from the University of Nairobi. 2 are female and 11 are male.

The process to integrate with the local tutors in the teaching and training process had started. The significance of the transfer knowledge and skills to the local tutors was fully appreciated as was the significance of learning from each other all round. The Year Two class had been informally added to the teaching schedule and members were expected to help in teaching as part of capacity building.

What seemed to be of concern was the inability of the NTII local tutors to apply their best effort given the disadvantaged conditions in which they had been operating and the low morale which characterized their initial participation at the work place.

The trainers went ahead and included the 40 Second Year students who were in the Institute but who did not have a satisfactory learning teaching process. The concerns of this cohort soon came to the surface as they wanted to understand the entire programme for their training course. They wanted to know how long their course will last, who will examine them and who will offer them the training qualification certificates. These concerns were addressed and they were informed by the Ministry of Education that they will be examined and awarded certificates by University of Juba.

1.3. RUMBEEK

At the time of reporting Rumbek (Aramweer) had received 210 pre-service students, 20 female and 190 male and more than 100 more were still expected to come. There were three Aramweer NTII trainers who had joined the trainers from the University of Juba and the University of Nairobi. In total 13 tutors have been deployed, 3 from the University of Juba and 10 from the University of Nairobi. 3 are female and 10 are male.

At the start there seemed to be reluctance on the managers of Education in the NTII and the local education institution to take up the programme as part of their remit. The uncertainty delayed the actual start of the training by one day, made worse by the heavy rains which came on the day the student tents were pitched. There was some difficulty getting the electric power and tap water, but these too have been sorted out.

The lack of internet connectivity at the training venue created some difficulty as the University of Nairobi could not send and receive pedagogic materials from each other as they had planned to do, after they shared the tasks in the preparatory stage. They were compelled to duplicate the preparation work which became a strain on their time. The erratic power supply also slowed down the work.

The trainers took time to paint over some walls to make suitable black surfaces for writing on and grey and white surfaces for projecting audio-visual media.

1.4. MALAKAL

Malakal NTTI had received 218 pre-service students, and more were still expected to come. Of these 215 are men while 3 are women. There were three Quality Assurance Officers of the State Ministry of Education who operated from the NTTI. Some of them joined the trainers from the University of Juba and the University of Nairobi to make preparations for the training of the pre-service trainees.

In total 10 tutors have been deployed, 6 from the University of Juba and 4 from the University of Nairobi. 2 are female and 8 are male.

Science room:

The science trainers at Malakal have set up a small science room. On visiting the state ministry of Education, the trainers learned that there may be science equipment and material in storage which had not found appropriate use, so they negotiated with the ministry officials who were happy to give the materials out for the Pre-Service Teacher training programme.

Language:

A proportion of the trainers are limited in the use of English as the education medium. They have used Arabic before and have a challenging level of English. There is yet another group of seven students whose level of English is distinctly above the rest. It has been proposed to hire a language support teacher to concurrently support the students who need that support. A suitable teacher has been interviewed and she is on stand-by.

Library:

The trainers set up a small seed library of just over 100 books as a basis for developing a larger library. The books were gathered from various places in the NTTI and at the State Ministry of Education.

Games and joint activities.

The trainers arranged to buy a few balls to enable the trainees to engage in some recreation. The trainers joined the trainees in playing soccer and volleyball.

Generator: A generator was installed which enabled the fans in the teaching rooms to begin functioning again, thereby making the learning areas a great deal more tolerable.

Table 1: Trainee Statistics

| NTTI | EXPECTED NUMBERS | TRAINEES IN THE INSTITUTES | | TOTALS |
|------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|------|--------|
| | EQUAL MALE AND FEMALE | FEMALE | MALE | |
| MARIDI | 300 | 15 | 216 | 231 |
| RUMBEK [ARAMWER] | 400 | 20 | 190 | 210 |
| MALAKAL | 300 | 3 | 207 | 210 |
| TOTAL | 1000 | 38 | 613 | 651 |

Table 2: Trainer Statistics

| | UNIVERSITY OF JUBA | | | UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI | | | GRAND TOTALS |
|----------------------|--------------------|------|-------|-----------------------|------|-------|--------------|
| | FEMALE | MALE | TOTAL | FEMALE | MALE | TOTAL | |
| MARIDI | 0 | 6 | 6 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 13 |
| RUMBEEK (ARAMWER) | 0 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 7 | 10 | 13 |
| MALAKAL | 0 | 6 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 11 |
| Total | 0 | 16 | 16 | 7 | 14 | 21 | 37 |
| Grand Totals | 16 | | | 21 | | | 37 |

2. AUTHOR'S EXPERIENCE IN SOUTH SUDAN

I learnt of the Pre-Service Teacher Training of Primary School Teachers and capacity Building of Three National Teachers' Training Institutes (NTTIs) World Bank Project 2010-2011 from the Deputy Director, Mr. Kukubo Barasa, of the University of Nairobi. He explained to me the need to have an international teaching experience since I had done much of my teaching in Kenya from the time, I graduated with my Bachelor's Degree from Kenyatta University in 1991.

As the case may be with new opportunities, I was filled with excitement and a lot of hope to see this new born country in the world, that is, The Republic of South Sudan (RoSS). I had to do all the travel logistic to enable me travel to Juba which was the reporting center for deployment.

I arrived in Juba on the first week of February 2011. The first shocker was the extreme high temperature right after alighting from the aircraft. The Deputy director received me very well and took me to the coordination premises where we had to stay before traveling to the teaching stations. I had to stay for one week at Juba so as to acclimatize and also prepare for my teaching. I had to quickly adopt to the new diet and way of life in Juba more specifically with the locals and in particular our university counterparts from the University of Juba. I was then informed that I had been designated to go and teach at Malakal NTTI which was a 2 hour flight from Juba.

In the second week of February, 2011, I took a flight to Malakal to join my other colleagues who had already been there teaching at Malakal NTTI. I quickly settled down and the following day I was in class. I taught Business Studies and Economics. My first class went on very well as I introduced myself and the subject. Most of the students were well advanced in age since most of them had been involved in the prolonged civil war. Since the language of instruction was English a good number of the teacher trainees had some challenges of even understanding simple concepts. I had to quickly devise a way of using very simple language and illustrations to explain these business concepts. Overall, most students were very cooperative and not only willing to learn, but were very ready to learn. This was manifested by the way they interacted in the class discussion and seeking clarification on every aspect of the subject matter.

As I continued teaching, it became evident that the teacher trainees were in dire need of this training that they were being offered. In one of the lessons, as I explained some concepts, I noted that most of the students were "clicking", this sounded very rude to me and I had to ask what this was all about. To my amusement and surprise, the whole class burst into laughter. This left me a bit confused then one of the elder trainees informed me that the "clicking" was their way of appreciating my good teaching and explanation of the concepts. They would further support this by nodding their heads. This was another shocker, since in my country when someone "clicks" it is considered a very rude behaviour. In this country, I learnt that "clicking" was form of appreciation. Hence, the culture continued by the day. I should also hasten to say that most of the

learning spaces i.e., class room were in very deplorable conditions. During the training not funds had been allocated to refurbish the learning facilities. The Malakal TTI had been used as an army barrack during the civil war and hence most buildings served as evidence of the severity of the war as one would not help to see the bullet marks on the walls of most classrooms. One of the classrooms that I used to have one of my lessons had a roof that looked it was to fall the next minute. However, God's grace was sufficient and we learnt without any major issue. The wash room facilities were not in good shape and we had often to seek help from a nearby hotel that had been recently constructed after the war. The training project made effort to provide the necessary teaching materials, hence these were not a major challenge save for a lot of photocopying.

Due to my home university engagement, I had offered to be involved in the programme for two months (February-March 2011). So, the teaching went on very well most of the time. The training routine was followed just like in any other learning institution. One of the nights, there was a sudden disruption of the learning, as some rebel forces tried to force their way into the Malakal area. For the first time in my life, I found myself in a bullet fire exchange that lasted for about 4 hours in the wee hours of the morning. This happened around where the lecturers were accommodated at the University of Upper Nile. At day break, the entire region was under very high tension between the rebels and the government forces. This also put all residents of the Malakal town under risk. For the security of the lecturers, we were moved to another secure space which was considered not to be near the risk of the rebels' operations. One of the major effects was the suspension of learning since security had been threatened. From our South Sudan university colleagues, it became apparent that no one was sure when peace would be restored to enable normal life to continue including teaching. It is in the midst of this confusion that I had to end my contract and go back to my home country for other engagements.

One lesson I took home, was the importance of a united and cohesive society that would allow then ordinary citizen to carry on with their lives without any interruptions. Hence, peace is a very important key for human survival. Overall, I enjoyed my stay at Malakal TTI and had a memorable experience and I am glad to share a bit of that in this paper.

3. THE RWANDA EXPERIENCE

The IUCEA staff exchange programme for teaching has been modelled in a structure involving staff moving to another institution for a fixed period of time across institutions and Partner States. The Staff Exchange Programme is a strategic intervention for enhancing sharing of human resource among universities in the EAC, geared to promoting regional integration. The Programme aims at strengthening inter-university cooperation through academic mobility and enhancing quality of teaching and research as well as effective community services activities in universities in the East African Community. It provides university institutions with experts and facilities in various fields of study that may be lacking or needing more collaboration with other universities, as well as availing opportunities to visiting lecturers to gain experience from the hosting institutions, and hence enhancing their career prospects and capacity of their mother institutions. A modest amount of money within IUCEA annual budget has normally been allocated for the staff exchange programme which has largely involved teaching functions, to serve as an out of station allowance. For some time now, universities' participation to the staff exchange programme has been low, despite the increase in the number of higher education institutions in the region. On the other hand, shortage of teaching staff especially for newly established universities has been observed. In this regard, IUCEA developed "Regulations governing engagement of staff in member universities

of other Partner States” in 2011, to guide implementation of this programme as an interim measure. In order to address these gaps in a more comprehensive manner, in 2015, IUCEA developed a policy framework on Academic Mobility which will include staff mobility to guide effective implementation of the programme within member university institutions in the EAC. (Staff Mobility Policy, 2015).

Section 6(i) of the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) Act, 2009, stipulates that the Council shall “encourage the exchange of students and staff between member universities”. Facilitation of such staff exchange has continued to be one of the main activities of IUCEA since the institution was established in 1980, as well as at the time of its predecessors, Inter-University Committee (IUC). The Staff Exchange Programme is a strategic intervention for enhancing sharing of human resource among universities in the EAC, geared to promoting regional integration. The Programme aims at strengthening inter-university cooperation through academic mobility and enhancing quality of teaching and research as well as effective community services activities in universities in the East African Community. It provides universities with experts and facilities in various fields of study where there is deficiency as well as those needing more collaboration with other universities. The mobility programme will avail opportunities to visiting lecturers to gain experience from the hosting institutions, and hence enhancing their career prospects and capacity of their mother institutions. A modest amount of money within IUCEA annual budget has normally been allocated for the staff exchange programme which has largely involved teaching functions, to serve as an out of station allowance (Staff Mobility Policy, 2015).

Scope of IUCEA Staff mobility policy

The scope of the policy covers staff mobility for higher education functions of teaching, research and community services and involves only staff (Staff Mobility Policy, 2015).

Objectives of IUCEA Staff mobility policy

The overall objective of the Staff mobility policy is to enhance inter-university academic activities in teaching, research and community service for enhanced regional integration through academic mobility. Specifically, the policy will,

- (i) Enhance capacity of Higher Education institutions
- (ii) Increase participation of Higher Education institutions to the programme
- (iii) Enhance exposure of staff to inter-university interactions among faculty in teaching, research and community service activities in the EAC.
- (iv) Enhance quality in teaching, research and community services
- (v) Strengthen collaboration among universities through increased joint programmes and projects co-ordinated by IUCEA in the EAC and abroad (Staff Mobility Policy, 2015).

4. AUTHOR'S EXPERIENCE IN RWANDA

I learnt of the IUCEA staff exchange program for our DVC-RIE last year) sometimes in December 2018. I then visited the IUCEA website and downloaded the application forms and filled them as required and then I submitted them to the relevant authorities. My home University endorsed my application (Form G) with maximum efficiency. I then forwarded the application to the host University (University of Rwanda), (Form H) this was also endorsed with maximum efficiency. After both forms were filled by both Universities (home and host), then, I submitted the forms to IUCEA Coordinating office in Kampala for processing. The process of filling application forms

by the two universities generally took about one month (i.e., January 2019). After the forms were submitted to IUCEA office in Kampala, I got the appointment letter within a period of about three weeks i.e., by mid-February 2019. This was very impressive.

After I got the appointment letter from IUCEA, I forwarded it to the host University in February 2019. However, it took about three months for the host University to send the work plan. This was after a lot of email communication with the host University. Whatever, made this take so long, can only be explained by the host university-University of Rwanda, College of Education (UR-CE). Finally, by May 17, 2019, the work plan was sent to me. I then advised that the host university i.e., UR that I was to start my exchange program on June 16, 2019. The host University then issued the revised work plan indicating the start date as June 16, 2019 and end date as September 18, 2019. I then forwarded the said work plan to IUCEA office so that the air ticket would be processed. Interestingly, the air ticket was sent to me one week before my travel date. This was also very good. My experience upon arrival in Host University was rather not as smooth as I had expected. Here is a sneak preview of my experience but without any prejudice to the University of Rwanda. The aim is to share my real experience as it was. On Sunday 16-6-2019, I arrived at Kigali International airport and was received by Dr. Innocent Twagilimana, who was the designated focal person. He informed me that there was no official University vehicle to pick me from the airport, hence, I used Dr. Innocent Twagilimana personal car to the guest house. I spent the night at Bethany Guest House Isano Branch, Kigali, since there was no arrangement from the University of Rwanda on where I was to be accommodated on the first day/night of my arrival. On Monday/Tuesday 17 & 18-6-2019, I waited for communication from the College of Education University of Rwanda on where to be officially accommodated. After two days of waiting the communication came in the evening of June 18, 2019 that I was to be moved the following day June 19, 2019 to Dereva Hotel, in Rwamagana. On Wednesday 19-6-2019, I was moved by the UR-College of Education to Rwamagana, Dereva Hotel as the official accommodation for my stay, I thought so by then. Something that I did not expect is the since the morning of that day, I waited for the driver who ended up turning up at 8 pm, I had waited the whole day, and this was very stressful. However, we arrived Dereva hotel at 9.30 pm. On Thursday 20-6-2019, I met Mr. Peter Nkuranga the campus administrator of Rukara campus

College of Education, University of Rwanda. He assured me everything was now under control and final arrangements for my accommodation and transport were to be finalized. He however, apologized for the inconveniences caused upon my arrival. On Friday 21-6-2019, I received communication from Dr. Innocent Twagilimana on curriculum review workshop scheduled for 26-28 June 2019 at Dereva Hotel, Rwamagana. This was my first engagement and it was very enriching. After the workshop, we then planned for my subsequent engagements.

My main teaching activities revolved around reviewing both undergraduate and postgraduate online teaching and learning modules. I therefore reviewed year 1, 2 and 3 undergraduate modules and several postgraduate modules all on education. This occupied much of my time at the college of education at university of Rwanda for the three months that I stayed. I also had opportunities to participate in several workshops including curriculum review of undergraduate online modules and specifically the one of History and Comparative education. I also had an opportunity to attend an academic seminar for one of the PhD student's oral examination. On several occasions, I had an opportunity to engage with the students during their Christian Union meetings including their Sunday services. This was very inspiring to just learn how students conducted their spiritual matters. With regard to community engagement, I had opportunity to attend and even speak in the Kayonza Pentecostal Assembly of God church. This was with the precincts of my residence at Kayonza. These experiences provided me with an opportunity to engage with the Rwandan community at a close level and the experience was very enriching. One of my major admirations

of the Rwandese people is their preference of natural foods which were very delicious most of the time and well balanced in terms of diet. On major lesson that was a take away for me was the role of education in building resilience after a civil war. The Rwandese are a people who could be said to be more cohesive now than they were prior to the 1994 genocide. On various occasions I had an opportunity to also visit some of their genocide museums that are spread in various parts of the country. In these museums, one is taken aback by the devastating effects of a war torn country. But with the resilience of the Rwandese people, their economy has grown, industries have emerged, tourism has also been revamped and I had an opportunity to visit one of their national parks known as the Akajera National Park, and the experience was breathtaking.

To my shock and surprise, the three months ended so fast, just when I thought I was getting to learn more and acclimatize with the people and the land, I had to go back to my home country. Overall, I learnt a lot from the IUCEA staff exchange programme and as a scholar my knowledge and experience were enriched even much more. I am glad to share a bit of this experience on this paper.

5. CONCLUSION

These experiences of an engaged educator are a clear demonstration of the power of global democracy. It is evident that, when democracy plays its rightful role, peoples' lives are changed and improved, people can travel to various parts of the modern global village and engage with the locals, and programmes such as the IUCEA can continue to thrive. Also, countries can support each other in all aspects of development including education as the case of pre-service teacher training programme in South Sudan, that the author had an opportunity to participate in. All these engagements and opportunities for collaborations are possible as envisaged in global democracy. Hence, the spirit of global democracy should be promoted and embraced by all communities in this day and age so that each and every individual regardless of their place of domicile, can benefit.

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