AGMCP MEMORABILIA

By

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(Nigeria)

Damilola Omotolani Itadare is a citizen of Nigeria. He is a Master Fellow of the Africa Graduate Mentorship and Coaching Programme. He is currently affiliated with the Department of Agricultural Sciences, Faculty of Agriculture, Afe Babalola University, Ado Ekiti, Nigeria. His research in Production Economics focuses on Effects of False Bottom Technology on Economic Performance of Rice Processors in Ekiti State, Nigeria. He looks forward to being further guided on the quantitative and qualitative approach to research, engage in group reviews, and seminars, also to network and gain from shared experiences from scholars in the mentorship programme. Damilola is being mentored by Dr Aminou Arouna**.**

January Report 23rd 2024

The January Schedule as commenced on the 23rd of January 2024 to address the following outlined schedule for the month which are Inception & goal-setting, Research theme & sub-themes, List of team of mentors, Expectations/deliverables, Reading materials, and Question & answer. The meeting started well via the zoom platform at 2m Lagos time, anchored by Dr Olawale Emmanuel Olayide the Chief Coach and Mentor of the Africa Graduate Mentorship and Coaching Programme (AGMCP), and the acknowledged presence of other mentors including Dr Omobolaji Olubukunmi Obisesan. The schedule was attended to one after the other as the origination of the Interconnections for Making African Great Empowered and Sustainable Initiative coined from the Interconnections conference Bonn Germany 2017, and the reason for such programme relating to his personal experience as an upcoming researcher, the expectations and deliverables were well spelled out for the cohort, Participation at monthly meetings/webinars/short courses (minimum of 75% attendance), Completion and submission of quarterly evaluation surveys, Submission abstract for conferences, Participation at Circularity Africa Conference (in-person or online), Submission of manuscript (journal article or book chapter or Policy Brief) for publication, Submission of fellowship report/memorabilia. We encountered a time too many system glitch which affected the transmission of the meeting through sounds or screen, and we were urged to take a group photograph screenshot and save for our memorabilia, which I did, and the meeting was brought to a close.

February Report 27th 2024

The session commenced at 2 pm by Dr. Olayide and Dr. Omobolaji, with a speech given by Dr. Augustin Yamdjeu of Akademiya for 15 minutes on the Malabo Agenda, post-Malabo processes, and food systems in Africa. We were enlightened on understanding the food systems and their drivers in classifications of socioeconomic and ecological/geological, on food systems outcomes and vice versa. It was emphasized that Africa is not likely to be sustainable, and advancement towards the SDGs is slow. In areas of resources, research and development, finance, productivity, and food utilization, Africa is said to be below benchmark. It is therefore necessary to identify entry points, set out objectives, and address actors for behavioral change.

March

I developed an abstract with my mentor Dr. Arouna Aminou for the 5th circularity conference, titled Impact of Rice technologies on the environmental and waste management in Africa: A systematic review.

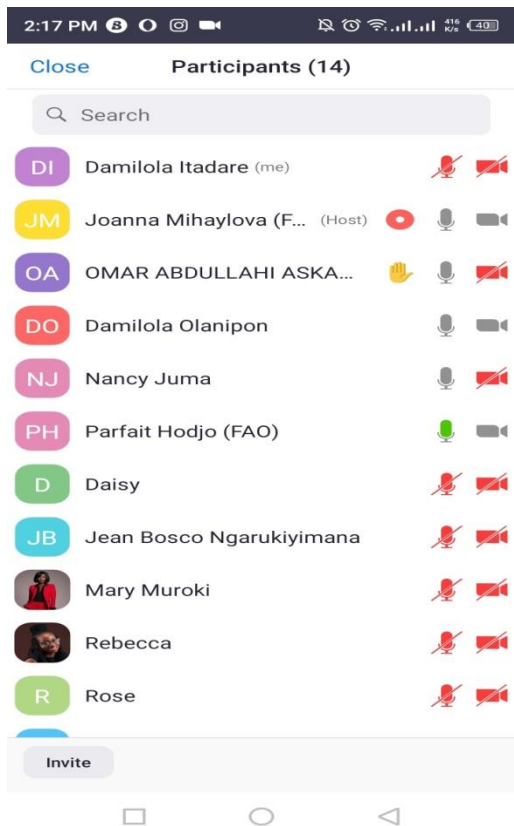**26th Webinar Effective mentor-mentee communication**

We were asked to read chapter 3 of Building the Next Generation of Mentors in Africa before the webinar. I missed the webinar due to physical engagements/limitations. A survey was carried out, which I filled out to evaluate our involvement with our mentors so far. However, I was able to access the session from the shared link on the group, which was very insightful, as researchers must be willing to be assertive, speak up to catch the interest of the mentor, make efforts to be known and stand out, and be considerate of the emotional intelligence. It should be a two-way communication for effectiveness and should involve learning as the knowledge is being passed down the tree.

April 25th and 14th May, 2024.

This session was training on RIMA, which highlights the tool, the short RIMA questionnaire, the shiny RIMA dataset cleaning and reparation manual, guidelines, and report. We were introduced to the Shiny RIMA, a simplified form of the original Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis, in addressing the resilience of households. Resilience Capacity Index, which has four pillars Access to basic services, assets, social safety nets, and adaptive capacity. The questionnaire has been given a format to enable efficient capturing of the household data to measure resilience and draw inferences for policy that addresses areas where households are non-resilient. The shiny RIMA tool automatically generates a report that is easy to interpret for recommendations. It does the backend modeling and only works by that principle to generate results. For example, it operates by regression, which is not known outwardly but helps to measure causal effect relationships at a simple level, then at a multiple level, and the intensity of such. We received study materials and got links to study the tool more efficiently, which I did, and I answered the quiz, and I got the
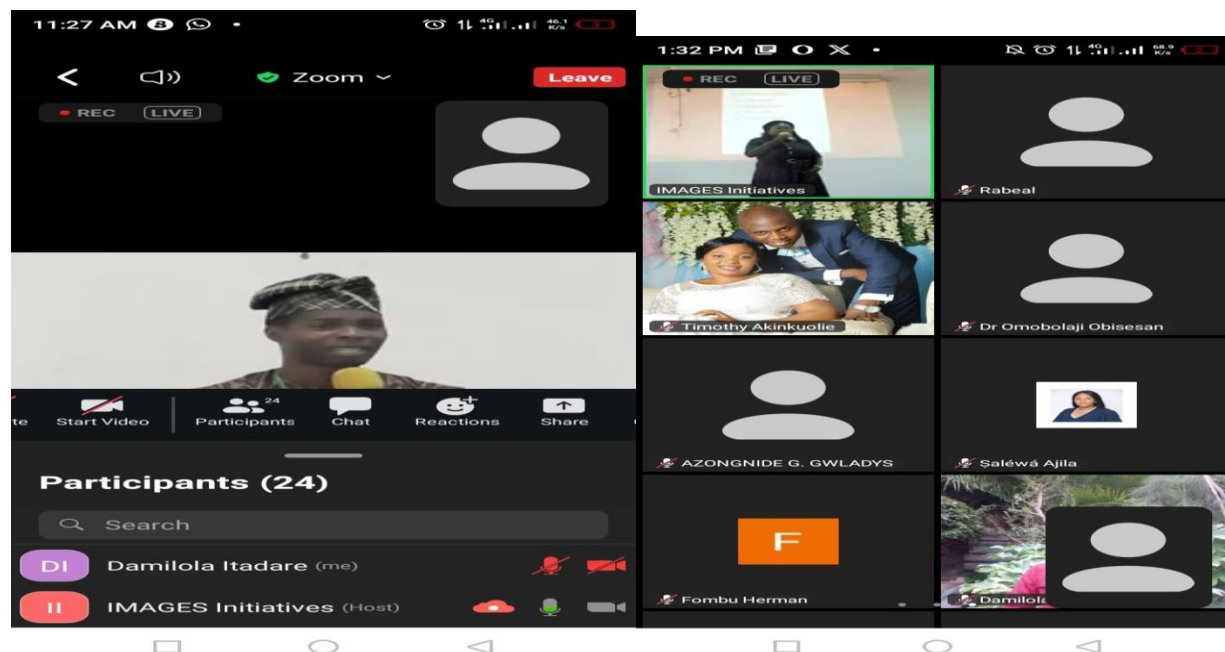
badge for the introductory class.

May 9th 2024

I attended a session of the 5th Circularity Africa Conference; it was based on the waste management project by a scholar who off-takes wastes, and it was insightful seeing such an initiative. A lot of questions were raised on the bottlenecks, e.g., how the project is going to reach some major areas where waste is badly exposed in the communities, if the initiative is to use tricycles rather than trucks, how can it have a significant impact on the output of the project?

Another aspect of the session was the introduction of young minds into robotic programs, initiating some programming through the use of robotic toys, and engaging them with coding basics for such; this helps them to be groomed into the tech world. This initiative has started and practiced at some schools, publicized at fairs and events as the conference, and there was already a structured timetable for school periods and holiday schedules for the young ones.

Another aspect of the session was on modeling simulation and visualization in agriculture, health, and meteorology by Somporn Chuai-Aree and how solar is being introduced to the communities for farm and domestic usage, in houses, on cars, and other energies.

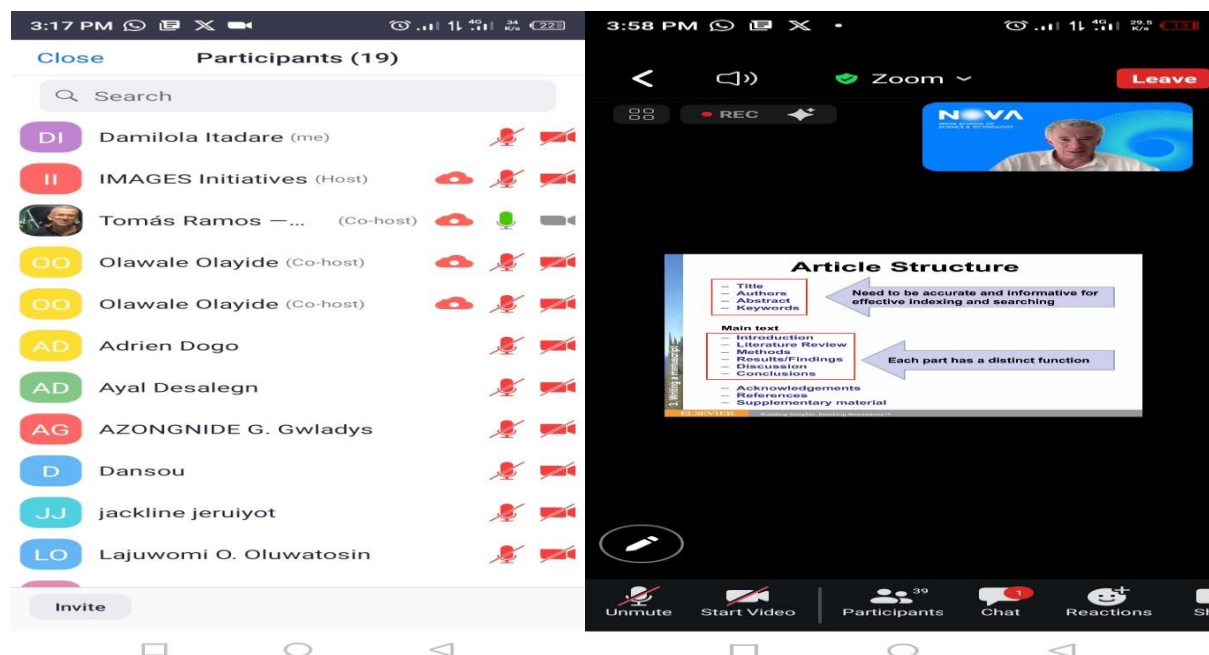**June 19th 2024 Grant writing and professional networks**

We were shared a link to view the recording.

July 16ᵗʰ Research Paper Publications and Impacts

This session was taken by Prof. Tamos Ramos, who has editorial experience.

He discussed types of research and journals that focus on disciplines. He said editors look out for certain qualities in papers submitted, which are clear focus, societal impact, and specialty. Why should one go for a journal? Or publish, contrary to the need for a degree, funding, and promotion. Journals want ethical standards, novelty, readability, significance, and methods.

Journal type, readership, and scope are crucial; indicators of such are impact factor, Eigen factor, etc. Our manuscript should have a format as conference, full, short, or review papers. Evaluate for the richness; seek advice on it from faculty. He further discussed a lot on the requirements of journals and the need to check their rules for each manuscript. The use of AI in generating the manuscript is not encouraged or should be clearly stated to avoid rejection; there is an ethical application of AI for scientific writing or peer review. The process could be a lengthy one but not an impossible one. I further asked about the PRISMA model and how to explore it, and he gave insight on using it for a review.

August 27th 2024

We had a webinar on data analytics across some software (SPSS, STATA). This session was led by Mr. Isaac Oritogun. We were briefed on data in different forms and means through which it could be obtained by interviews, questionnaires, online surveys, and more. The peculiarity of these methods and why it should be a choice for our research, and to make it practical we wanted to experience the modern ways by using online surveys. Data collection and analytics were introduced, focusing on ODK, and interactively we discussed the use of Google Forms, the Kobo tool, and more online, user-friendly software. We went through the registration of the Kobo collect for data; we were taught the features on the interface and the creation of our questionnaires in the best way possible to represent our models and objectives. We had practices on questionnaires, formulated ours, and shared our trials in the groups.

September 21st, and 28th 2024.

We continued in our sessions on data collection, this time to utilize the data collected using the ODK or any other tool, and progressing into the quantitative data analysis using Excel, SPSS, and Stata. We went briefly into what our data will look like from the collecting software, the need for cleaning and formatting, and transferring to the analytical software. We learned onboarding to the software and the necessary variable settings for proper use of data.
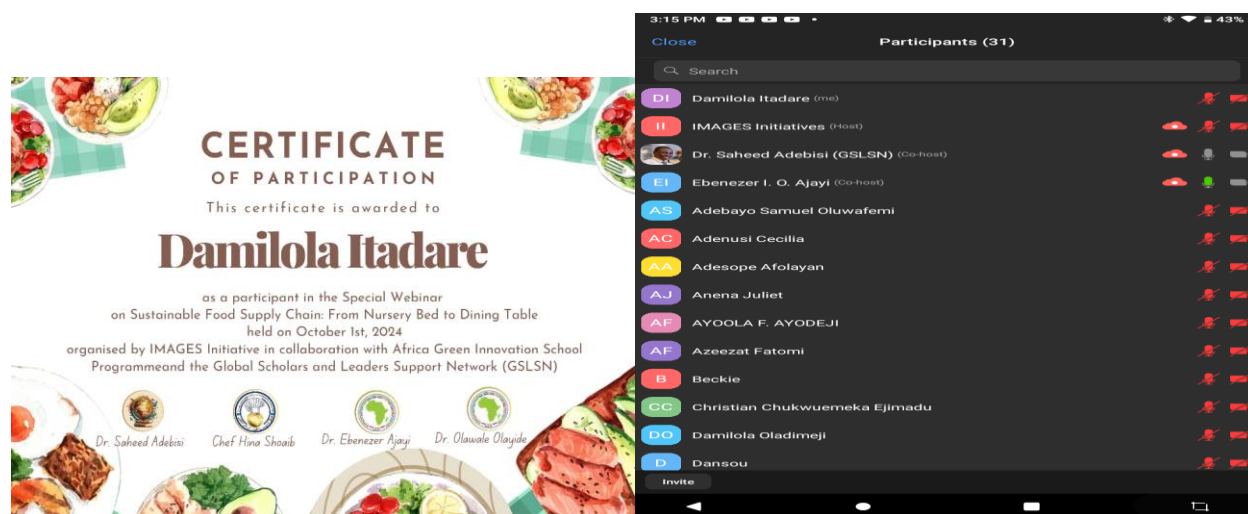
In the second schedule, which was hands-on training on data analytics. I shared my Kobo link towards this session on the group for data. October 5th reschedule.

October 1ˢᵗ 2024

A webinar on sustainable food supply chains from nursery bed to dining table was held. This discussion was on the chain reaction that is more or less focused on the cultivation and consumption of food. This went beyond consumption into the waste management of food products and its contribution to GHG emissions. Bringing into context Asia's consistent effort in managing home waste and environmental waste, the Asian continent was used as one of the case studies with incentives for sustainable food practices. The meeting also discussed the outcome of food consumption as waste and the need for proper post-consumptive practices. Home wastes are classified as biodegradable or non-biodegradable, and the basic knowledge of separation would manage waste more efficiently in Africa. Bottles and cans can be recycled for further usage, and food waste can be managed to produce biogas that contributes to GHG in the atmosphere. Furthermore, kitchen waste, which is inorganic, can have residue effects; the waste channels in Africa are not a well-monitored pathway. Soap waters can cause difficulties for microorganisms

that prosper the flora ecosystem or render the soil low on fertility. All these loops must be focused on to be sustainable in our farm-to-fork culture.
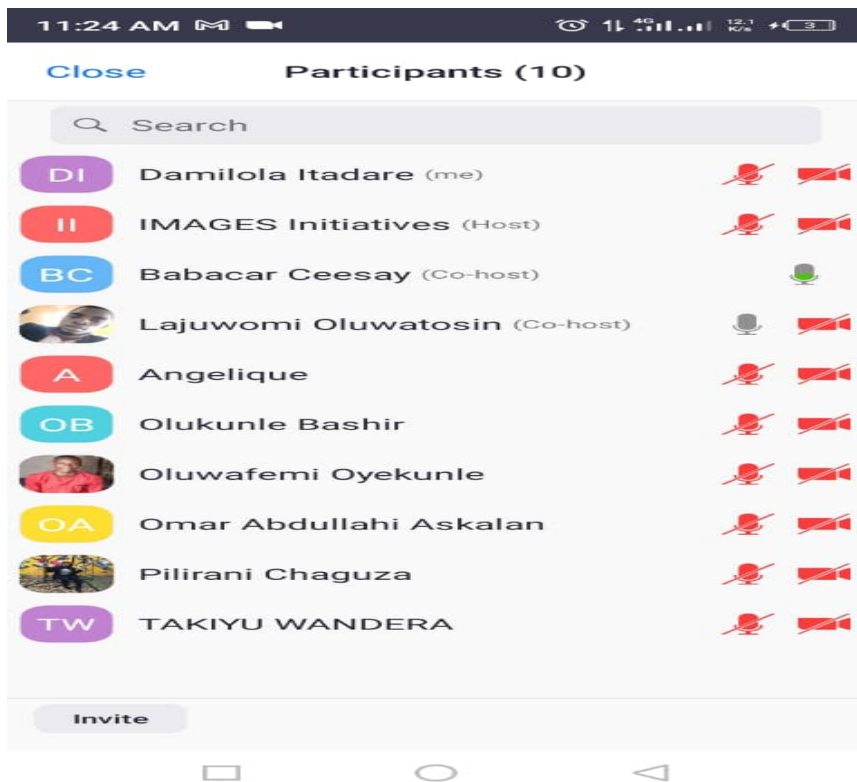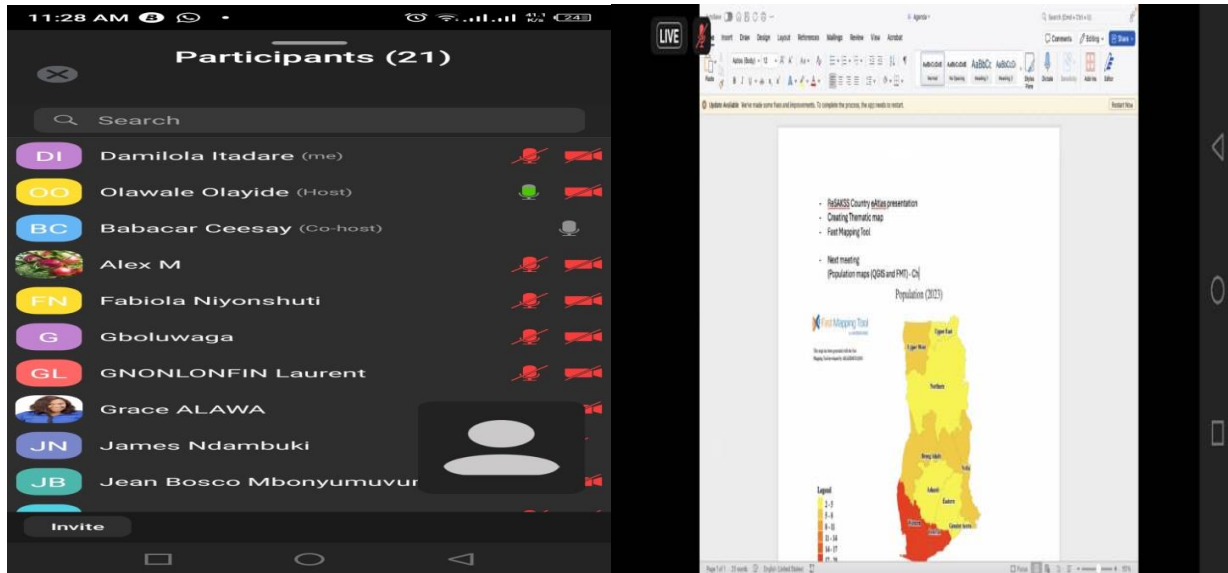

October 19ᵗʰ and 26ᵗʰ

Data Visualization Webinar taken by Mr. Babacar Ceesay.

We had 3 outlines in this session, which are data visualization using the eAtlas, creating thematic maps using QGIS, ARCGIS, and GADM (shape file and data). On the eAtlas we were shown how different African countries have data on different sectors and how different software are used to give a simplified visual of the interface, the data analytics, overlays, legends, indicators, and maps. We were told to import our shape files or download the new shape file of the country of choice from GADM; these shape files are identified by either region, national, state, etc.

Join and assemble was a major function under the properties that helps merge the file and data, after which the appropriate column of data is merged with the shapefile classification. Then the data appears on the SF, and we go to symbology to graduate the color and add value to it. Then we can visualize our map.

The fast mapping entails having the data, which is readily used by the tool to generate a map according to specifications. The data is not received or stored by the tool; rather, it can only be

worked upon by the user, much easier to use than the rigor of shape files and data joins, assembling, and symbology. We had an assignment to get the population data of our country and map using QGIS and the Fast mapping tool.

26th November, 2024

Research leadership and work life balance by Prof Olubukola Oluranti Babalola

Leaders have vision, and the vision is carried by people. There will be a need for delegation and priority in the face of a limited team, strength, and time. As leaders, you support your team and build their strength by addressing them uniquely. Expertise complements and should not contrast, learning to give space and observe. Be firm and optimistic without results, assertive, communicate with the team, subordinate or superior, and acknowledge the team when credit comes. Work-life balance is about teamwork, understanding you cannot do it alone. An indicator of work-life balance is happiness. Depression can indicate an unhealthy life balance. I was asked if there could be a healthy work-life balance, and I answered that there couldn't be a perfect metric for it, but yes, everyone can achieve efficiency and be optimal in their work-life balance, as long as there is priority; it must come at due time, not opposing the other, but with shared attention. Cores to achieving balance are being friendly, having supportive friends, having soft skills for managing time, having emotional intelligence, behavioral intelligence, etc. When you doubt balance, pause and take a break. Care for yourself because nobody will do so; buy time to rest, buy tasks off, or delegate them to others. Questions were asked on our speakers experience, how to handle perfectionists, and difficult people, which she answered.

The mentorship year has been a wonderful year, filled with learning. I am glad that despite the setbacks in the course of the mentorship, I am able to participate to the end. I have been able to gain knowledge outside my coursework, research knowledge that is not taught in classes and is

instrumental to further progress in research. I am very fascinated about the practical session on data collection (ODK, KoboTool), analysis (Excel, SPSS), and visualization (eAtlas, QGIS, ArcGis). The certificated webinars were really good incentives. This opportunity opens me up for more fellowship platforms in which I can participate, and I want to say thanks to the host, mentors, my mentor, Dr. Arouna Aminou, facilitators, and fellow cohorts I've communicated with, or will hopefully get connected to, in the progress of global research.

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Dr. Aminou Arouna (Mentor)   Itadare, Damilola Omotolani (Mentee)