



The South Africa I know, the home I understand

Youth Edition – The struggle has a new face

16 June 2016

Conference Daily

Issue No. 4
16 June 2016

The Captain's Thoughts

“Young Statisticians have to be revolutionary in the field of statistics and the journey to be undertaken going forth”



Andrew Tshililo, Chairperson of The ISIbalo African Young Statisticians

“A vision is the key to understand leadership”



Dr H.E Maepa talking about the 7 Principles of an Eagle

I had the chance to interview Andrew Tshililo the Chairperson of IYAS during the 5th conference of African Young Statisticians held at St George Hotel:

Were your expectations met?

“Since day one the expectations were met because all the elders in the field of Statistics present in this conference (Dr O Ajayi, Dr L Lehohla, Prof B Kiregyera, Prof Findley, Prof L Thabane, Prof Kalton and many other academics) have emphasised the fact that this would not just be a conference but a training workshop of some sort.

The elders said that the Young Statisticians have to be revolutionary in the field of statistics and the journey to be undertaken going forth. From the side of the trainings, presentations, scientific papers presented and the Drs as well as Professors giving their time to assist young statisticians was a big highlight.

The commitment of the academia in assisting the young bloods has been outstanding. The visit of the Honourable Minister Jeff Radebe has been an inspiration to the young statisticians and to the EXCO of IYAS in the fact that programs of this nature are discussed on higher political platforms”.

What would you say are the successes of the conference?

“The commitment of the speakers, the quality of presentations, the types of trainings that have been offered and the presence of the Young Statisticians from Africa is a success on its own. The fact that EXCO is able to meet every night, where difference countries learn from one another

and the development of the term of reference for the current IYAS EXCO on the development of African programs is a success.”

What is next from here?

“For starters, on our IYAS EXCO meeting on the 17th of June 2016, we will be tabling the resolutions on taking Africa forward in the statistical development. All the resolutions taken and advices given will be put to practise and hopefully this will advance the development of young statisticians in Africa.”

In closing, he said that he hopes that the the Hon Minister, Jeff Radebe, and the SG Dr Pali Lehohla, will take it upon themselves to discuss the IYAS program together with their counterparts in the continental platforms to spearhead statistical development in Africa. - **Cavin Tolman (Young Statistician)**



Having a chat with Dr H.E Maepa, going down memory lane, we interrogated how he got where he is today. His accomplishment is proof that education is the key and where one comes from does not determine where they are going.

Dr Maepa shared how he started from having no matric, studying to have a technical matric, certificate, diploma, degree until he obtain his PhD. It was never easy because every stage has its own challenges.

He focused on the process one goes through in order to attain fulfilment of their vision, saying, “It is vision that makes the unseen visible, and the unknown possible”.

We ended our chat with him giving some words of advice “Young people can make it as long as they move away from laziness to diligence, without diligence Africa will remain poor, but with diligence you will never be poor”. - **Boipelo Metsing (Young Statistician)**



We asked Young Statisticians three questions about their experience of the 5th ISibalo Young Statisticians Conference, and this is what they had to say:

Thulani Sithole Zimbabwe



What I learned from the conference was the importance of Statistics and Big Data for Developing Africa. My expectations were exceeded. I plan to get involved in projects with PHIA, attend workshops, publish papers, and promote special youth programs.

Ella Lisuntha- Malawi



What I learned from the conference was data analysis , PHIA and other developmental issues. Expectations exceeded. Keeping in touch with other candidates and the Malawian team will develop some concepts and work with PHIA

Tsedeke Lambore Gemecho- Ethiopia



I learned from different presentations, data handling as it is important even for politicians. How we handle the data and how we use it appropriately. Yes, before coming to the conference I expected more, also I got more than my expectations. We get a lot of experiences by sharing ideas.

Dorcac Kareithi, Kenya



Spatial Statistics is what I learned from. My expectations surpassed. Being part of Young Statisticians EXCO, will take message back to other members, look for mentors for the young statisticians and encourage education

The struggle has a new face- What does this mean for you?

Soazic Wang Sonne (Cameroon)



There are not enough employment opportunities for the educated youth.

Swaziland Delegates



Access to education, employment, poor education system and only selected priority courses get sponsors.

Luxolo Langs(South Africa)



The face of the struggle remains the same and in fact the scars are being revealed highlighting socio economic disparities, but these are not unique to South Africa.

The struggle has a new face for Africa

Lerato Mtileni

Black tax is a persistent phenomenon troubling the youth.

I have learned that if we want to be successful in our program, we need to work together and help develop each other as Young Statistician. My expectation were met, I expected comments which i received from the session. I presented and believed this will turn my paper into a relevant one.

At some point i was lost in my own thoughts and started questioning the significant of my study, but team was really supportive, helped me to rehearse and reconstruct some of crucial points. It's a pity National Certificate of Official Statistics(NCOS) has been stopped because a lot of its content was so relevant and other countries had this knowledge, with us it was the few that attended NCOS, AD, and ITS.

What I am going to contribute to the sustainability of the program growing. I will start with ensuring that my proposal gets to be a finished product (full paper). Invite young people and read more, I think the time to change my reading material has come.



A life changing opportunity

Felix Sipho Mamba, Young Statistician, Swaziland



I am a teacher by Profession and currently studying towards my PhD with the University of Western Cape.

Today I attended a session in Data Presentation and I strongly believe that It will help me prepare my work in a more graphical and appealing way. Having attended this conference will also enhance and sharpen my teaching skills, I will now be able to teach my students on how to present research proposal as I am a part time lecturer at the University of Swaziland.

I am honoured to be part of this event, the past two days of attending the conference have been amazing. I have learnt in many ways, the importance of data that we use, accommodating and keeping data for different users and its importance to the country. I have also acquired different research skills, e.g. sampling, report writing and also and also different models of assessing the PHIA from the demographic surveys.

World meet the bright Sibongile Khoza.

Sibongile is a member of Statistics South Africa, but she is also representing team South Africa at the 5th ISibalo Conference of Young Statisticians.



At the conference she will be presenting a poster. The one thing she is grateful for is the opportunity she has had to interact and learn from the academics present at the conference. Sibongile shared that this conference has proved to be a fantastic learning experience, an experience she took full advantage of.

Members of the ISibalo committee need not worry that their efforts are going to waste, because she has assured us that everything that she has learned this past week will not end here. The way in which she plans to contribute to the sustainability of the program is by implementing and sharing the knowledge that she has acquired, further this program has equipped her with a fresh outlook on how to deal with challenges.

“I want to implement and share the knowledge that I have acquired”

Even the fastest runner in the world started by crawling

Gift Madiega



It is a great pleasure for me to express my gratitude to Stats SA for prioritising capacity building for the youth of South Africa and the continent. Attending the 5th ISibalo Conference of African Young Statisticians is motivating and an eye opener for me as a young person. I also thank my superiors from Corporate Communications for encouraging and allowing me to form part of this conference as it gave me an opportunity to engage with my peers from our continent Africa and learned what other young people are doing in their countries.

I am presenting a poster “Trend Analysis of Media Reporting on Population & Social Data: The Case of South Africa after 1994”. Apart from my poster presentation, I assisted with the conference’s daily newsletter as well as other activities regarding the conference. It was fun as most of us were doing the duties given to us for the first time. As Stats SA is the host for this conference, we then agreed that as volunteers we will take whatever task that is given to us with pride to make this conference a success. “To the top I will make it, as long as there is still breath in my body”



The conference in pictures . . .

The conference in pictures . . .



In the furnace...



The team behind Dr Miranda Mafafo

Vuyiswa Mgweba



I joined the team on the 29th of May and hit the ground running. This has been a great learning experience but I really enjoyed all the pressure.

Being part of this has given me the ability to think on my feet and a key skill of knowing how deal with different personalities. I now have a renewed team spirit and understanding of work.

William Tshabalala



Hectic! that is what I can say the planning of this conference was. Language can be a barrier but there is value to hard work.

Going forward Team South Africa needs to improve its standards and their participation in contributing research papers, the quality of the work submitted will also need to improve.

Motimedi Sekhobela

This experience has given me exposure in many things. It has opened my eyes on how administration can be simplified.

Time management is very important and has assisted in aligning all the work. Being a host requires a lot of commitment and I believe this opportunity has broadened my knowledge in administration.



Linda Mogale



I am impressed about everything that took place in preparation for this week and during this week all my expectations were exceeded.

I believe this is a grooming programme for young African leaders. I cannot stress teamwork enough; it is so important in getting the job done.

Behind the letters, between the pages...



From left to right; Motimedi Sekhobela, Nomaxabiso Tata, Letshabo Maoba, Gift Madiega, Buthanani Mda, Cavin Tolman, Boipelo Metsing, Nkateko Chabani Manala Tyobeka, Christina Jiyane

The thing about a new challenge is that it gives one a chance to discover new skills and abilities that they never knew they possessed. The faces that walked into the Operations room/Publications den seemed confused and uncertain to say the least. We all had the same question. "How are we going to do this? Where do we start?"

The team has nine people with the majority not having had any experience of running and publishing a newsletter. Yet after our first official meeting during the conference, we decided we would run with it. Crawl even. As long as we produce something.

Still unsure, everyone started with their work, attending presentations in the plenaries, looking for candidates to interview. Because the 1st day was mainly introductions and setting the tone for the conference.

There was so much uncertainty about what to include and leave out that, the team never slept.

Our biggest worry was not the completion of the articles, but rather how we were going to design the layout of the newsletter and get it to the printers.

As the week progressed, our confidence in working in the news den grew. More articles and interviews were complete; we were well above the waters. Every member brought something different to the table. It could have easily been a very difficult situation to work in considering the strong personalities we have, yet we found a way of putting all our strong characters aside and did the work. What was more inspiring was the dedication displayed throughout all the processes of putting together this newsletter.

It was not always smooth sailing, we had our moments where tempers flew yet we still managed to continue with the work. After all, that is why we are here. I do not believe that a group of people can work together without any sparks ever flying. Iron sharpens iron therefore, it is necessary to have such interactions for growth and great things to happen.

This new experience has been challenging yet fun. It was very clear from the beginning that in order to succeed we had to work as a team. We laughed, we argued but at the end of the day, we made sure that we had a newsletter. We might not have had the perfect working conditions and experience, but we pulled through and did our best.
- Nkateko Chabani (Young Statistician)

Contributors

- Dr Miranda Mafafo
- Boipelo Metsing
- Christina Jiyane
- Nkateko Chabani
- Manala Tyobeka
- Buthanani Mda
- Nomaxabiso Tata
- Gift Madiega
- Letshabo Maoba
- Cavin Tolman
- Kgaugelo Motloutse
- Mbongiseni Mndebele

