



University of Victoria



Knowledge. Voice. Democracy.

PRIA

UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education



unesco Chair

Community Scholars Fund

UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education

Yearly Report 2023-2024



Dear Friends,

We are thrilled to be able to share with you the names, photos and brief stories about the Community Scholars whose training as Knowledge for Change (K4C) mentors you have supported. Not one of these community scholars would have been able to take part in our UNESCO Chair Mentor Training Programme without the support of the Community Scholars Fund.

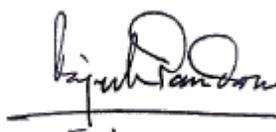
Each of these individuals has either already finished their training to become a mentor or is in the finishing stages. They are for the most part already working to provide learning opportunities for young people in their communities to be able to do community-led research on issues of climate change, gender justice, food security, water conservation or other local priorities.

The success of the Community Scholars Fund has been so strong, that we would like to invite you to consider making an additional donation this year, on the anniversary of the fund's creation.



Budd L Hall

Professor Emeritus,
University of Victoria (UVic)
Co-Chair UNESCO Chair in Community-
Based Research and Social Responsibility
in Higher Education



Rajesh Tandon

Founder President,
Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA)
Co-Chair UNESCO Chair in Community-
Based Research and Social Responsibility
in Higher Education

Dear Friends,

The Centre for Global Studies is delighted to be the home of the UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education and the Community Scholars Fund.

We have watched with interest how the availability of funding to support community knowledge workers has allowed a strong group of eight outstanding women and men to become trained mentors responsible for training the next generation of young researchers.

As we continue to grow and expand the reach of these initiatives, your ongoing support remains essential in ensuring that we can sustain and amplify this important work. We thank you for your generosity in the past and would be most grateful if you were able to make an additional donation this year. Your contribution helps to strengthen the foundation of a vibrant, inclusive global community-based research community.



Oliver Schmidtke

Director, Centre for Global Studies

The Community Scholars Fund

The **Community Scholars Fund** is a vital initiative that supports community-based practitioners to further their knowledge on community-based research, scholarship, and action. The fund has played a pivotal role in supporting learners from the Global South, enabling them to participate in the *Knowledge for Change (K4C) Mentor Training Programme (MTP)*, a curriculum and pedagogy of global standards in training in CBR to address locally pressing societal challenges, including UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The MTP trains individuals to become mentors who can then guide the next generation of young researchers in their communities. Community scholars are already making a significant impact by leading research on critical local and global issues such as climate change, gender justice, food security, and many more. This report highlights the inspiring stories of the community scholars whose training has been made possible due to donors' generous support.

By investing in the **Community Scholars Fund**, you are helping to build a strong network of community leaders dedicated to fostering inclusive, sustainable change through knowledge-sharing and action. As we celebrate the growth and success of the fund, we invite you to consider making an additional gift this year. Your generosity helps sustain and expand this essential work, strengthening community-led research efforts worldwide.

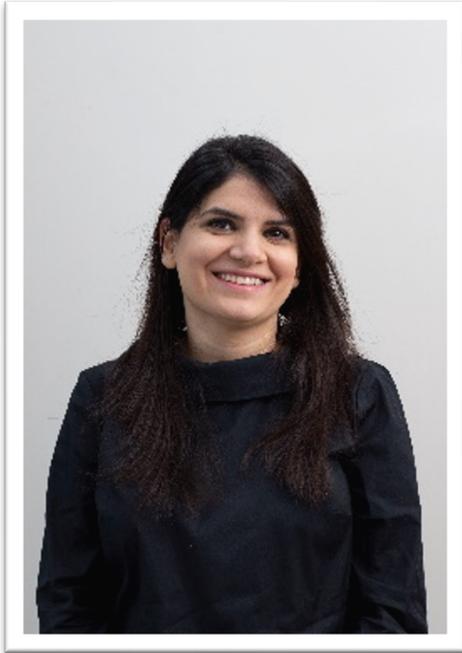
To donate, simply make your contribution using the link or QR code below, and be a part of this global movement to enhance capacities for the co-creation of knowledge.



tinyurl.com/49cdmxv6

Community Scholars Fund Recipients





Elham Rasoulian

**Program Lead,
Immigrant Women
Integration Program**

Elham Rasoulian's educational background is in Industrial Engineering. After moving to Canada in 2019, she began her Canadian career by joining the Immigrant Women Integration Program (IWIP) at the Centre of Learning and Development (CL&D). For her Community-Based Participatory Action Research (CBPAR) Project, she focused on the affordability and availability of childcare for newcomer families in Toronto. Using a Project Management perspective, Elham co-designed a workshop on planning for community-based research, which was tailored for the next IWIP cohorts.

Currently, Elham is leading the IWIP Program while collaborating with CL&D and the MAP Centre for Urban Health Solutions at St. Michael's Hospital on community-based research projects. She participated in the UNESCO Chair Mentor Training Program (MTP) to enhance her community research skills and expand her knowledge within her current role at CL&D. Elham believes that newcomer and immigrant women bring valuable lived experiences that drive them to engage in research and take action on issues that matter to them. Her objective is to make meaningful contributions to these communities by leveraging the insights gained from the MTP. Through this program, she also aims to build capacity at CL&D, empowering community organizations like hers to become leaders in research and innovation across Canada.



Brittany Taylor Murphy

Intern,
Hospital Clinic
of Barcelona

Brittany Taylor Murphy is a 24-year-old biomedical engineer working in the fields of Patient Experience and Innovation at the Hospital Clinic of Barcelona. Through the Patient Experience Observatory, she has been introduced to a variety of research methodologies, including citizen science and community-based participatory research. Her deep appreciation for community-based participatory research stems from its collaborative nature, which allows her to actively engage with diverse communities in the research process. This approach not only aligns with her commitment to fostering inclusive, patient-centered innovations, but it also empowers her to contribute meaningfully to research outcomes that directly impact the communities involved.

Brittany shares being delighted to have been a part of the UNESCO Chair Mentor Training Program as a recipient of the Community Scholars Award. She has enjoyed learning from the experiences of seasoned experts, and reports having enriched her knowledge in the field. She looks forward to applying these insights to execute impactful initiatives of her own and is excited to continue to contribute within the K4C Hub in Barcelona, building on her passion for community-driven research and innovation.



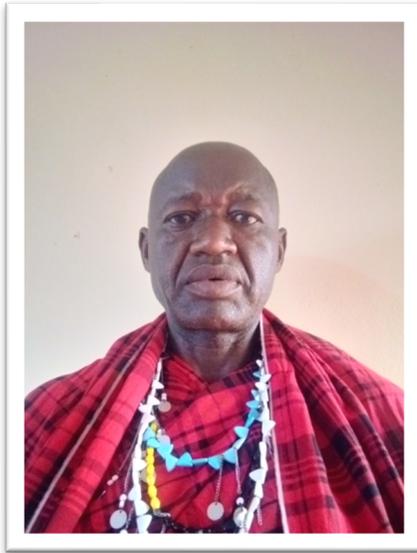
Latifa Bousselmi

**Professor & Vice Chair of
Research in Action
Association, REACT**

Latifa Bousselmi is an Engineer, Ph.D., HDR, and Professor at the Centre for Water Research and Technologies, CERTE in Tunisia. She is the head of the Laboratory of Wastewater and Environment and has built over thirty years of expertise in the water sector.

She is a founding member, former President and currently Vice Chair of Research in Action Association, REACT. Latifa is a member of the PRIMA Joint Programme “Partnership for research and innovation in the Mediterranean area” Scientific Advisory Committee.

In addition to technological and innovation aspects, she is also interested in the field of water governance and integrity. She has implemented, as coordinator and partner, several international projects targeting the Mediterranean region funded by the European Union and other institutions. She has published several impacted scientific papers and organised international conferences.



Alois Porokwa

**Director,
Natural resources,
Livestock, Education,
People, Production and
Other Livelihood Options**

Alois Porokwa is an active member of the Massaai community and the director of Natural resources, Livestock, Education, People, Production and Other Livelihood Options Organisation, NALEPPO.

He has been engaged in community work for more than 25 years, and has a background of different experiences ranging from government to community. Alois has a BA in tourism, a diploma in Veterinary science, and a diploma in forestry and wildlife conservation. He also has wide philosophical, theological, and Indigenous knowledge, and works representing and coordinating his community in various partnerships.

NALEPPO, his organization, takes a holistic approach to community development, focusing on both formal and informal education, natural resource protection, climate action, and environmental sustainability. The organization works towards economic and social growth, while promoting human rights to improve people's living standards. It also emphasizes the protection and restoration of ecosystems and biodiversity, with a strong focus on regenerative practices.



Muhindo Milly Dezire

**Epicenter Manager,
Sub-County Government, Uganda**

Muhindo Milly Dezire is a dedicated social worker with a passion for rural development. Born and raised in a rural area of Uganda in the village called Kyaterekera, Kagadi District, she earned her Bachelor of Rural Development from the African Rural University (ARU) in 2015. She is an Epicenter Manager at Sub-County Local Government level, where she focuses on community mobilization, Community Based Participatory Action Research, capacity building, and project implementation.

She began her journey with Community-Based Participatory Action Research (CBPAR) as a student at African Rural University (ARU) in 2011. During her practicum in Bukungwe B village, she was mentored by a host family and the epicentre manager of Kagadi Sub County, where she learned community engagement through home visits and meetings. This collaborative process led to identifying clean and safe water as a key focus, with the community acting as co-researchers. Together, they developed an action plan that improved water access and empowered the community. After graduation, she continued using CBPAR in her work with Uganda Rural Development and Training Programme (URDT) and as a mentor at ARU.



Mohd Fadly Bin Md Noor is passionate about environmental conservation and community development through sustainable tourism and education. His work focuses on preserving important geological sites and empowering local communities.

Mohd Fadly has over 8 years of experience exploring limestone and karst landscapes, and has collaborated with Geopark Lembah Kinta and Mineral Geosains Malaysia as a citizen geologist, advocating for community-led Geoparks. He is deeply committed to making a positive impact and driving change for his community.

Mohd Fadly Bin Md Noor

**Citizen speleologist &
nature caretaker,
VENTREX**

Mohd Fadly is currently engaged in protecting marine fossils in Changkat Tualang Village, which has been fighting against a quarry and plastic factory since 2010, and is now targeted to become an official Geosite on 2025. He is also working on supporting the Aboriginal Village of Ulu Geroh, which faces biodiversity decline, economic challenges, and the impacts of the logging industry. Together with the community, he is looking to establish a "Jungle School" or "Nature School" that is authentically led and guided by Indigenous communities, integrating traditional knowledge and cultural practices.



Ron Piksry

**School principal,
School Principal at Emaan
Internation School
PhD Candidate,
Royal University of Phnom
Penh (RUPP)**

Ron Piksry has been a staff member of Emaan Foundation Cambodia and school principal to Emaan International School for the past five years, during which he has been actively involved in various community projects aimed at improving the quality of education and the lives of underserved communities in Cambodia in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Ron Piksry has made significant contributions to both education and community development in Cambodia. As the Principal of Emaan International School, he has worked to improve literacy, numeracy, and essential life skills for children in underserved communities. Under his leadership, the school provides a curriculum that combines Khmer general education with international programs. In addition to his role as a school leader, Ron has organized quarterly teacher training sessions, equipping educators with effective teaching techniques, classroom management strategies, and curriculum development skills.

Beyond education, Ron has been deeply involved in community development projects. He has led initiatives that provide low-cost housing, clean water access, and improved sanitation facilities, directly benefiting hundreds of families. His efforts have also extended to facilitating food aid, supporting over 1,500 rural households with essential supplies. Additionally, Ron has played a key role in organizing Umrah Sponsorship and Qurban projects, helping community members fulfill spiritual and cultural needs while strengthening local bonds.



El Dahri Ismael

**Education Manager, Eeman
Foundation Cambodia (EFC)
PhD Candidate,
University of Malaysia**

El Dahri Ismael is an Education Manager at the Eeman Foundation Cambodia (EFC) and is currently conducting his PhD in Qur'an and Sunnah Studies at the University of Malaysia. He is an experienced project manager with expertise in managing humanitarian and educational projects, including food aid, water infrastructure, teacher trainings, affordable housing initiatives and community development. He is proficient in program design and implementation as well as impact assessment with a special focus on social impact and sustainable development.

El Dahri has played a key role in coordinating and managing a variety of community development projects aimed at improving the lives of underserved populations. He has led initiatives such as the Qurban Project, which provides essential food to families during religious holidays, and a food aid program that supports rural communities facing food scarcity. El Dahri has also facilitated the installation of clean water pumps, improving access to safe drinking water in multiple communities, and managed low-cost housing projects that help families living in insecure conditions. Additionally, he has organized teacher training programs to enhance educational quality and has supported spiritual and financial empowerment through Umrah sponsorships and zakat distribution.

We hope that the stories and experiences shared in this report have given you a deeper sense of the impact your support has had on the work of these dedicated mentors and the communities they serve.

The Community Scholars Fund has not only helped to train these inspiring individuals but has also contributed to the broader movement of community-led research that is addressing critical global challenges.

As we look to the future, we remain committed to expanding these opportunities and empowering more change-makers around the world. Your continued support is vital to sustaining this work and ensuring the success of future generations of community -based researchers!

Thank you for being a part of this transformative journey.



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