

Fogarty-leDEA Mentorship Program 2022-2024

Trainee profiles

- *Asia-Pacific*: Smita Nimkar, India; Maylin Palatino, Philippines
- *CCASAnet*: Fernanda Fonseca, Brazil; Genesis Huerta Vera, Peru
- *Central Africa*: Martin Herbas Ekat, Republic of the Congo; Faustin Kanyabwisha, Rwanda
- *East Africa*: Nelson Kalema, Uganda; Marion Achieng Kariuki, Uganda
- *Southern Africa*: Benson M. Hamooya, Zambia; Billy Tsimba, Botswana
- *West Africa*: Ebiere Clara Herbertson, Nigeria; Temitope Wunmi Ladi-Akinyemi, Nigeria

Asia-Pacific

Smita Nimkar, BJ Medical College and Sassoon General Hospitals – India



Smita Nimkar graduated with a degree in Microbiology and is currently pursuing a PhD in Health and Biomedical Sciences at the Symbiosis International University in Pune, India. She is based in Pune and works at BJ Medical College, an leDEA Asia-Pacific site that is affiliated with Johns Hopkins University. In her current position, she manages leDEA-related research studies. A research focus is on the assessment of tobacco use and cessation strategies among PLHIV. In addition, her doctoral work is on the validation of instruments for assessment of cognition among children with tuberculous meningitis. Her other research interests include mental health among PLHIV adolescents and adults, HIV-related comorbidities, and ethical issues in HIV research. In the future, she wants to expand her research activities in these arenas,

including studying disease burden and implementing prevention and treatment strategies in public health settings.

Maylin Palatino, University of the Philippines Manila – The Philippines



Maylin Palatino received her ScM Biostatistics degree from Brown University in the US, and her MS in Public Health degree from the University of the Philippines Manila (UPM). She was a D43 trainee in the *Brown University and University of the Philippines Training Program for the Prevention of HIV in Vulnerable Populations* (Operario). Until May 2021, she was on the teaching faculty at the College of Public Health, UPM. Her research interests include HIV and non-communicable diseases. For her FIMP project, she plans to study the correlates of having detectable VL among HIV patients on ART in the TREAT Asia HIV Observational Database (TAHOD) and TAHOD Low-Intensity Transfer

cohorts of leDEA Asia-Pacific.

CCASAnet

Fernanda Fonseca, AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) – Brazil



Fernanda Fonseca has a medical degree from the Federal University of Bahia, and completed her residency in Infectious Diseases from the Institute of Infectology Emilio Ribas/ São Paulo. She is currently in a Master's program on clinical research in infectious diseases at INI/Fiocruz. At the Ministry of Health of Brazil, she has contributed to the national response to HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, including the country's PMTCT program. She currently works for the AIDS Healthcare Foundation, as the Associate Global Medical Director and Country Medical Coordinator for Brazil, and as an independent consultant for the Pan American Health Organization. Her research focus is on women living with HIV, syphilis, hepatitis B, and perinatal HIV transmission.

Genesis Huerta Vera, Instituto de Medicina Tropical "Alexander von Humboldt" – Peru



Genesis Huerta Vera is a medical doctor from Lima, Peru, with an MSc in Epidemiology from the Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia. She is currently working as a research trainee in the D43 *Program for Advanced Research Capacities for AIDS in Peru* (PARACAS; Gotuzzo, Zunt) at the Instituto de Medicina Tropical "Alexander von Humboldt". As an HIV researcher, she is interested in studying migration and HIV and aging with HIV. She has previously published work on clinical characteristics of migrants with HIV in Lima, Peru.

Central Africa

Martin Herbas Ekat, Brazzaville Teaching Hospital – Republic of the Congo



Martin Herbas Ekat is an investigator with Central Africa leDEA in the Republic of the Congo. His research interests include mental health and quality of life issues for people living with HIV in resource-limited settings, as well as quality improvement in HIV care. He holds a medical degree from Marien Ngouabi University, and an MPH in International Health from Bordeaux University. He completed a fellowship in infectious and tropical diseases at Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar, Senegal. He is currently an infectious disease specialist at the Brazzaville Teaching Hospital. Through the FIMP program, he will be examining long-term virological, clinical and immunological outcomes among children.

Faustin Kanyabwisha, Rwanda Military Hospital – Rwanda



Faustin Kanyabwisha is an investigator with Central Africa leDEA who serves as the Research Laboratory Coordinator for the Einstein-Rwanda Research and Capacity Building Program (ERRCBP) at the Rwanda Military Hospital. He is a Medical Laboratory Technologist with training in advanced molecular biology, as well as a Master's degree in Public Health. His research has examined AmpFire and MY09/11 assays for HPV genotyping in anogenital specimens. Through the FIMP program, he will be examining the reproducibility of HPV testing results after long-term storage of cervical specimens collected from women living with HIV.

East Africa

Nelson Kalema, Makerere University, Kampala – Uganda



Nelson Kalema is a physician, research scientist and Program Impact Specialist at the Health Systems Strengthening Department, Infectious Diseases Institute, College of Health Sciences Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda. He was a D43 trainee in the *Building Implementation Science Capacity at Makerere University to Strengthen the Response to the HIV/AIDS Epidemic in Uganda* program (Kamya, Semitala). He supports routine data utilization and dissemination, and efforts to improve HIV-TB prevention and care outcomes for persons living with or at risk for HIV. His current research focus is on real-world HIV-TB program data to assess TB risk, identify evidence-practice gaps in the provision of TB prevention therapy, diagnosis, and treatment initiation among PLHIV, and use stakeholder-engagement to design evidence-based interventions.

Marion Achieng Kariuki, Makerere University, Kampala – Uganda



Marion Achieng Kariuki is a statistician in the process of transitioning into a health data scientist, with over 15 years of experience working with HIV care programs in Uganda. Currently, she is the Uganda Country Coordinator and the Regional Coordinator for East Africa leDEA, and is based at the Infectious Diseases Institute – College of Health Sciences, Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda. She completed a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Statistics and Mathematics and a Postgraduate Diploma in Biostatistics at Makerere University. She holds an MSc in Public Health from the

University of South Wales, United Kingdom. Her primary interest is in the application of modern statistical and data science techniques to assess health outcomes such as retention, survival, regimen switches, and viral load suppression, and related co-morbidities among PLHIV.

Southern Africa

Benson M. Hamooya, Mulungushi University – Zambia



Benson M. Hamooya is a lecturer and researcher at Mulungushi University. He has an MSc in Epidemiology from the University of Zambia. He is an alumnus of the *University of Zambia-Vanderbilt Partnership for HIV-Nutrition Research Training* (UVP; Heimburger, Nzala), during which he earned his PhD in Epidemiology. He has over 10 years of work experience in Sub-Saharan Africa working as a biomedical scientist in the Ministry of Health and as a lecturer and researcher at the University of Zambia and Mulungushi University. His primary research focus is on understanding the magnitude of and factors leading to non-communicable diseases among PLHIV.

Billy Tsimba, University of Botswana – Botswana



Billy Tsimba is an Associate Professor at the University of Botswana's Faculty of Medicine, and is trained in Family Medicine. He participated in the *D43 HIV Research Training Program for Botswana (Gross)*, during which he completed an MSc in Clinical Epidemiology at the University of Pennsylvania Center for Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics. His faculty position includes teaching responsibilities, administration, research and clinical service. He is a member of the Penn Center for AIDS Research International Core that oversees key HIV research operations under the Botswana-University of Pennsylvania Partnership and its stakeholders, particularly Botswana's

Ministry of Health & Wellness and the University of Botswana.

West Africa

Ebiere Clara Herbertson, Nigerian Institute of Medical Research – Nigeria



Ebiere Clara Herbertson graduated from the school of pharmacy, University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria, and later obtained a Master's degree in clinical pharmacy at the University of Lagos, Nigeria. She has over 20 years of experience in the clinical care of PLHIV and is now the Deputy Director of Pharmacy at the Nigerian Institute of Medical Research in Lagos. She currently is studying for her PhD in Clinical Pharmacy at the University of Lagos. She also is a D43 research trainee in the *Emory-Nigeria HIV Research Training Program (EN-RTP; Ofotokun)*. Her primary research interests are on studying the HIV care continuum among young women in Sub-Saharan Africa and pharmaceutical care outcomes for PLHIV in resource-limited settings.

Temitope Wunmi Ladi-Akinyemi, College of Medicine, University of Lagos – Nigeria



Temitope Wunmi Ladi-Akinyemi is a Consultant Public Health Physician, Epidemiologist and Medical Statistician. She received her medical degree and Masters of Public Health from Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Nigeria, an MSc in Epidemiology and Medical Statistics from the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria, and an MBA from Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife, Nigeria. She is a Senior Lecturer of Public Health and Community Medicine at the Department of Community Health & Primary Care, College of Medicine, University of Lagos, Nigeria. She also is a D43 research trainee in the *Emory-Nigeria HIV Research Training Program (EN-RTP; Ofotokun)*. Her primary areas of research interest are in the prevention and control of sexually transmitted infections and HIV, adolescent health, maternal and child health, and mental health.