

CAPOLSA NEWSLETTER

MISSION: To promote behavioural and educational research and practice in Sub-Saharan Africa

VISION: To become an international centre of excellence in behavioural and educational research and practice

● **Honesty** ● **Excellence** ● **Teamwork** ● **Integrity** ● **Accountability**

Editorial Letter



It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to Volume 2, Issue 1 of the CAPOLSA Newsletter. Through this edition, we are delighted to share some of the activities, developments and milestones that continue to shape our work as a Centre committed to advancing behavioural and educational research and practice.

This issue reflects the diversity of CAPOLSA's work and the importance of collaboration, research and capacity building in achieving our goals. Under our regular features, we share updates on some of the engagements and activities undertaken by members of the CAPOLSA team. These include our participation in the dissemination of findings from Zambia's Catch Up Programme study, a high-level roundtable discussion hosted by Lubuto Library and the Embassy of Finland, as well as the eTALE project meeting held in Finland.

We are also pleased to highlight the continued efforts of our team to strengthen research capacity. In this issue, we share experiences from specialised training in data interpretation and communication, as well as Item Response Theory for policy and research. Such opportunities are important in strengthening our ability to generate, interpret and communicate evidence that can contribute meaningfully to education, research and development.

Another exciting development is the expansion of the CAPOLSA Fellowship and Internship Programme. We are pleased to introduce the programme and recognise the contributions of our current Research Fellows. Through mentorship and practical involvement in the full research process, we hope to continue creating opportunities for emerging researchers to develop their skills and contribute to knowledge generation.

This edition also introduces two new members of the CAPOLSA family, Dr. Bestern Kaani and Dr. Kalunga Cindy Nakazwe. We are delighted to have them join our growing team and look forward to the knowledge, expertise and perspectives they bring to the Education and Behavioural clusters respectively.

As we look ahead, there is much to anticipate. We share updates on the upcoming eTALE dissemination meeting, a proposed certified short course aimed at strengthening the skills of Research Assistants, the development of a series of CAPOLSA policy briefs on Zambia's new education policy, and our planned participation in the 4th Biannual Psychology and Behavioural Research Conference.

We also continue to celebrate and promote reading through our recommended reading and children's literature sections. In this issue, we feature *Eat That Frog!* by Brian Tracy, a practical book on productivity and overcoming procrastination, alongside a children's story presented in both a Zambian local language and English. We hope these features will continue to encourage a culture of reading, reflection and learning among our readers.

As always, we are grateful to everyone who continues to support, collaborate and engage with CAPOLSA. We invite you to journey with us through this edition, share your ideas and explore opportunities for collaboration. Together, we can continue to strengthen research, promote evidence-based practice and contribute to meaningful educational and social development in Zambia, the region and beyond.

We hope you enjoy reading this edition of the CAPOLSA Newsletter.

Haatembo Mooya PhD
Centre Leader, CAPOLSA
University of Zambia



REGULARS

RECOMMENDED READINGS

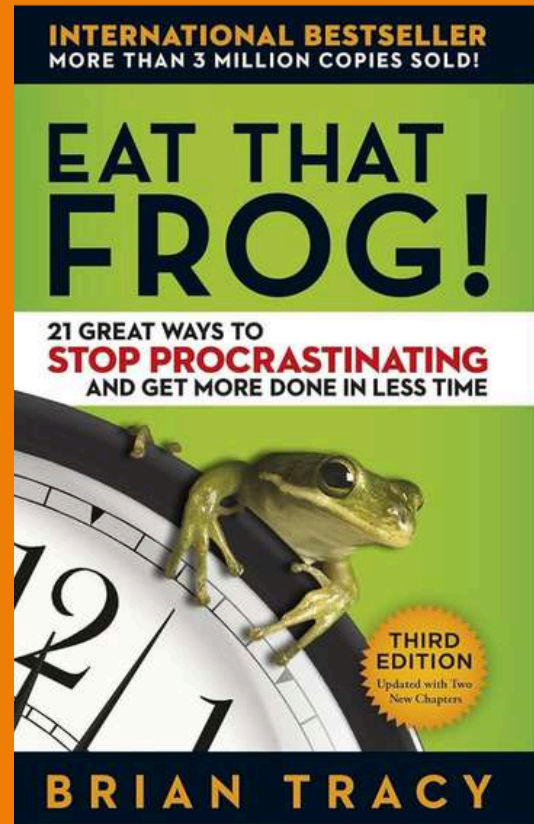
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Eat That Frog! by Brian Tracy

If procrastination is getting in the way of your productivity, *Eat That Frog!* offers practical strategies to help you take control of your time and accomplish more. The book's central message is simple: start each day by tackling your most important and challenging task, the "frog," before moving on to less critical activities.

Through 21 practical techniques, Tracy explains how to set clear priorities, plan effectively, eliminate distractions, and develop the discipline needed to focus on high-impact work. Rather than working harder, the book encourages readers to work smarter by concentrating on the tasks that create the greatest results.

Whether you're a professional, entrepreneur, student, or team leader, *Eat That Frog!* provides actionable advice that can help improve productivity, reduce procrastination, and build habits that lead to long-term success. It is an easy-to-read, practical guide for anyone looking to make better use of their time and achieve their goals more efficiently.





Muntu, Mvula, Ntaka na Mbeu



Muntu:

Koma ine! koma ine!
Ine pano ndine wapindu,
Wapindu kuposa inu nonse,
Nibyala mbeu nakuisamalila kufikila itakula,
Nimaichinjiliza ku adani kufikila itapeleka zipaso,

Ine ndine wapindu, ine ndine wamkulu.

Mvula:

Koma ine! koma ine!
Ine pano ndine wapindu,
Kopanda ine mbeu siikoza kukula,
Muntu amadalila ine paulimi wake onse,
Nyama zimamwa mazi anga kopanda malipilo,

Nyumba zimangidwa cifukwa camazi anga,
Ine ndine wapindu, ine ndine wapindu.

Ntaka:

Koma ine! koma ine!
Ine pano ndine wapindu,
Nimasunga mbeu itakula nakupeleka zipaso,
Nimasunga antu munyumba yanga,
Mazi amakala mwa ine,
Zonse zaziko lapansi zimakwanilisika cifukwa caine,
Ine pano ndine wapindu,
Ine ndine wamkulu.

Mbeu:

Ine pano! Ine pano
Ine pano ndine wapindu,
Kopanda ine ziko likala lopanda cakudya,
Muntu amakala namoyo cifukwa caine,
Zaka na zaka.
Miyezi na miyezi,
Mulungu na mulungu
Siku na siku,
Muntu amatenga zipaso zanga.

Akadya ine amakala namphamvu,
Akadya ine, azapeza moyo.

Ine pano, ine pano, ine pano, ine pano,
Ndine wapindu, ndine wamkulu.



Mafunso

1. Kupitila mukuwerenga kwanu, kodi niciani cikulu pakati pa mbeu, mvula, ntaka na muntu?
2. Mukuganiza kwanu, kodi mwapunzilamo cani munkhani iyi?
3. Mwamene mwawerengela, kodi muntu angapulumuke kulibe mbeu, mvula na ntaka?



Person, Rain, Soil and Seed

Person:

It is me! It is me!
I am the most valuable,
More valuable than you all,
I plant the seed and care for it until it grows,
I protect it from any danger until it bears fruit.

I am the most valuable, I am prominent.

Rain:

It is me! It is me!
I am the most valuable,
Without me, seed can not grow,
People take pride in me in their farming,
Animals drink my water without paying,

Houses are built because of my water,

I am the most valuable, I am the most valuable.

Soil:

It is me! It is me!
I am the most valuable,
I keep the seed until it grows and produces fruits,
I keep people in my home,
Water resides in me,
Everything on earth is made possible because of me,
It is I who is the most valuable,
I am prominent.

Seed:

It is me! It is me!
I am the most valuable,
Without me the world would be without food.
People have life because of me,
Year after year,
Month after month,
Day after day,
People collect my fruits.

When people eat me, they have energy,
When they eat me they have life.

It is me, It is me, It is me, It is me,
I am the most valuable, I am prominent.



Questions

1. Based on your reading, what is most important between the seed, rain, soil and person?
2. Based on your thinking, what have you learnt from this poem?
3. Based on your reading, can a person survive without seed, rain and soil?

FEATURES

NEW MEMBERS AT CAPOLSA



DR BESTERN KAANI



Dr. Bestern Kaani is a distinguished Zambian academic and literacy researcher. He holds a PhD in Curriculum and Instruction with a specialization in Reading from Texas A&M University, USA. He currently serves as a Senior Lecturer in the Department of EPSSE at the University of Zambia (UNZA), where he also served as Head of Department between 2023 and 2025.

He was the founding Chief Editor of the Zambia Interdisciplinary Journal of Education. Dr. Kaani is the Education Cluster lead at the Centre for the Promotion of Literacy in Sub-Saharan Africa (CAPOLSA), where he coordinates research activities and projects. Dr. Kaani's research examines literacy acquisition among multilingual children in early grades in Zambia, with emphasis on how orthographic depth influences reading development in Zambian languages and English.

He has conducted numerous studies on foundational literacy learning for organisations such as World Vision Zambia, Big Win Philanthropy, and African Early Childhood Network. His work spans across teacher pedagogical content knowledge, cross-linguistic transfer of reading skills, and cultural conceptualizations of cognition. He has presented at prestigious conferences including the International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development and the International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology.

Dr. Kaani co-authored the Handbook of Literacy in Africa (2023) for Springer and has published extensively on reading instruction and orthographic transparency in multilingual contexts. Beyond his research and teaching, Dr. Kaani is committed to educational equity and has advised the Ministry of Education on the World Bank funded Zambia Enhancing Early Learning Project literacy curriculum reforms. He mentors a number of postgraduate students at Masters and Doctorate level and is a passionate advocate for evidence-based literacy practices that empower all learners to reach their full potential.



FEATURES

NEW MEMBERS AT CAPOLSA



DR KALUNGA CINDY NAKAZWE



Dr. Nakazwe is a Mental Health Specialist with 13+ years of experience, holding a BA in Psychology from the University of Zambia (UNZA), an MSc in Psychological Research Methods from the University of Sheffield, and a PhD in Psychology from Lingnan University, Hong Kong. She lectures and conducts research in the Department of Psychology at the University of Zambia, teaching both undergraduate and postgraduate courses spanning research methods, forensic psychology, and military psychology, while supervising student research and serving on the university's Community Research Uptake Committee and as an external examiner across the region.

Dr. Nakazwe is the Behavioural Cluster Lead at the Centre for the Promotion of Literacy in Sub-Saharan Africa (CAPOLSA), where she oversees behaviour-related projects and mentors upcoming researchers. Her research focuses on child and youth mental health, survivors of gender-based violence, intimate partner violence, labour trafficking, climate change related mental health impacts, marginalised populations, and maternal healthcare. She also conducts forensic assessments and reports for police, courts, and prisons, and works as a Stress Management and Lifestyle Coach. Currently she is a co-investigator on a Zambia-Sweden-UAE collaborative maternal healthcare project.

She is a licensed member of the Psychology Association of Zambia and the Zambia Counselling Council, providing psychotherapy, counselling, and organisational workshops. She is also a full member of the International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development (ISSBD).



ACTIVITIES / COMMEMORATIONS

Attended the VVOB - TaRL Africa public dissemination of the Catch Up Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT) findings.

On 19 March 2026, CAPOLSA attended the dissemination of findings from a national study evaluating Zambia's Catch Up Programme, an initiative that supports foundational literacy and numeracy by helping learners acquire essential reading and mathematics skills before progressing to more advanced content.

The study, conducted in partnership with the Ministry of Education, VVOB, J-PAL, and other partners, found that learners who participated in the programme achieved significant improvements in foundational reading and numeracy, with these gains translating into better overall academic performance over time. The evidence highlights that strengthening foundational skills not only improves immediate learning outcomes but also supports success across a wider range of subjects. The study further noted that while additional intensive teacher professional development increased programme costs, it did not lead to significantly greater learning gains, underscoring the importance of investing in interventions that deliver the greatest impact.

Why this matters to CAPOLSA

As an organisation committed to promoting quality education and improved learning outcomes, CAPOLSA values evidence-based approaches that strengthen foundational learning. The findings reinforce the importance of ensuring that every child develops strong literacy and numeracy skills as the basis for lifelong learning. They also provide valuable insights for education stakeholders for designing effective, scalable, and cost-efficient interventions that can improve learner achievement across Zambia.

CAPOLSA remains committed to engaging with research and policy dialogues that inform education practice and contribute to strengthening the country's education system.



ABCD

ACTIVITIES / COMMEMORATIONS

Lubuto Library Meeting



At the invitation of the Embassy of Finland in Lusaka and Lubuto Library, CAPOLSA attended a high-level roundtable discussion at Lubuto Library on 14th April, 2026. The event started with a tour of Lubuto Library in Garden, Lusaka. It was followed by the high-level roundtable discussion on the importance of reading from both personal and societal perspectives. In addition, the discussion included conversations on the role of public libraries in creating spaces and services where anyone can access books and find the joy of reading. The meeting was attended by various stakeholders, including the Ministry of Education.

eTALE Workshop

We are excited to share an update on the eTALE project meeting which was held from 20th to 24th April 2026 in Jyväskylä Finland. The eTALE project is funded by the Finnish Government through the Niilo Maki Institute. The initiative aims to create a user-friendly eLearning website that guides best users on best practices in teaching literacy and mathematics, while supporting child development in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC). Learn more at <https://dev.taleafrica.com/>. There are five participating countries and these are Finland, Kenya, Tanzania, Namibia and Zambia (CAPOLSA). The team from CAPOLSA included Dr H. Mooya, Dr B. Kaani, Dr B. Z. Ndhlovu and Ms B. M. Moyo.



A productive eTALE project meeting brought together experts from across the partner countries to review progress, align the content, and plan the next steps. The team focused on ensuring that the eLearning platform will deliver high-quality guidance for educators, with a clear path toward teacher certification and ongoing professional development.

The team at CAPOLSA will continue refining the learning content, finalizing assessment tools, and formalizing the project's administrative framework. A clear dissemination plan will be developed to help ensure educators, policymakers, and stakeholders can access and benefit from the eTALE resources.

Stay tuned for more updates as the eTALE project progresses, and visit <https://dev.taleafrica.com/> for ongoing information and resources. If you would like to get involved or learn how to implement the eTALE approach in your setting, reach out to the project team at CAPOLSA.



ACTIVITIES / COMMEMORATIONS

Training - Mastering Data Interpretation and Communication at DataFirst at the University of Cape Town - South Africa: Dr Haatembo Mooya (Centre Leader).



The Centre Leader Dr. Mooya attended a training by AFLEARN from the 6th to 10th April, 2026 on Mastering Data Interpretation and Communication. The course focused on maximising the impact of fundamental learning and brought together policy and data analysts from non-governmental organisations, officials from African Statistics entities and education ministries, including postgraduate students and researchers from across the continents. Participants were equipped with skills and sights to interpret and communicate foundational learning effectively.



Training - Item Response Theory for Policy and Research at DataFirst at the University of Cape Town - South Africa: Ms. Bridget Phiri (Research Fellow).



From 13th to 17th April 2026, Bridget Phiri, a Research Fellow at CAPOLSA participated in the AFLEARN Item Response Theory (IRT) Course hosted by the AFLEARN Data Hub and DataFirst at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. The training strengthened participants' knowledge of psychometric methods, including Classical Test Theory and Item Response Theory, to support the development and evaluation of high-quality assessment tools. The skills acquired will enhance CAPOLSA's research, instrument validation, and evidence-based programme evaluation initiatives.

Community & Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Initiatives

Fellowship Program

The Centre for the Promotion of Literacy in Sub-Saharan Africa (CAPOLSA) is a University of Zambia research Centre of Excellence, established in 2011. Our work spans three clusters namely; Education, Behavioural and Mental Health; and the Testing and Measurement. We are excited to announce the expansion of our research fellowship programme at CAPOLSA. This hands-on program will cover opportunities for mentorship in research spanning the full research cycle—from design to data collection, analysis, and reporting. Fellows and Interns will collaborate with cluster leads on active projects, contributing to knowledge generation, dissemination, and community engagement, while building valuable research skills and strengthening project efficiency.

We invite applications for Research fellows; Interns and Student Attachments to join CAPOLSA. Interested candidates should submit the following to coordinator.capolsa@unza.ac.zm

- Latest updated Curriculum Vitae (CV).
- Copy of academic transcripts and certificates.
- Any other relevant documents and certificates.

Currently, CAPOLSA hosts two research fellows, Ms. Bridget Phiri and Ms. Gladys Mbiri.

← Ms Bridget Phiri

Ms Bridget Phiri is a Research Fellow at CAPOLSA pursuing a Master's in Applied Behavioral Research Methods at the University of Zambia. Her research interests include psychometrics, health systems research, autism spectrum disorder, HIV/AIDS, and literacy. At CAPOLSA, She gained valuable experience in literacy research, educational assessment, Item Response Theory, research methodology, data analysis, and evidence-based approaches to improving learning outcomes.



Ms Gladys Mbiri →



Ms Gladys Mbiri is a Research Fellow at CAPOLSA and is currently pursuing a Master's in Applied Behavioural Research Methods (Psychology) at the University of Zambia. Her research interests include autism, early intervention, inclusive education, and child development. At CAPOLSA, she has strengthened her skills in research design, data collection, analysis, and scientific writing while contributing to projects that promote evidence-based solutions for education and social development.

Upcoming Events

eTALE Dissemination Meeting.



The eTALE Africa eLearning environment provides guidance and the best practices on how to teach literacy and maths skills and support child development in ECEC. Learning materials provide research-based knowledge and concrete examples to support teaching practices and professional development of teachers and other professionals in education. The learning materials are available free of charge. The website also provides teacher certification offered by the Niilo Mäki Institute in collaboration with The University of Jyväskylä, Finland.

CAPOLSA is proud to be part of the 5 countries that have worked over the past few years to set up the eTALE website. CAPOLSA is excited to announce that it will host an eTALE dissemination Meeting on 26 August 2026 aimed at sensitising and familiarising educators, learners, care givers and policy makers of the massive benefits that the eTALE environment provides. Interact with the eTALE environment by following the link <https://dev.taleafrica.com/>.



Certified Short course – Research Associate Training: Design, Data Collection, and Analysis

CAPOLSA is delighted to announce a 3-week Short Course in Enhancing Research Assistant Work in the Social Sciences coming soon. This will be a 3-week practicum: 3 weekly sessions (2–3 hrs each) + take-home practice between sessions, targeting Research assistants supporting social science research (sociology, political science, economics, anthropology, or interdisciplinary programs). At the end of the course, participants will gain skills that will enable them to support a study across its full lifecycle; grounding it in the literature, collecting data ethically (survey, interview, or secondary/administrative), managing and analyzing it with discipline, and communicating findings honestly to academic or applied audiences. Social science RA work is often mixed-methods by necessity, usually involving a survey, some interviews, and secondary census/administrative data. This course is built to flex across that, rather than assuming one method dominates. All participants will receive a certificate at the end of the course”



Upcoming Events

CAPOLSA Policy brief

CAPOLSA is developing a series of policy briefs to examine Zambia's new education policy, introduced in 2025, which replaces the 2013 policy. This series will focus on literacy instruction and expected learning outcomes, evaluating the new policy's effectiveness in ensuring children acquire appropriate reading skills applicable across content areas. We will explore the benefits of the new policy's provisions, such as the language of instruction, teacher preparedness, availability of teaching and learning materials, and proposed teaching strategies, all in relation to the science of reading. Zambia has undertaken significant policy reforms aimed at improving and aligning its education system with the country's current social and economic development agenda. The new National Education Policy 2025, released to operationalise the 2023 Zambia Education Curriculum Framework, reflects these efforts. The proposed CAPOLSA policy briefs are designed to evaluate this new educational policy in light of CAPOLSA's research on orthographic harmonisation, GraphoGame literacy intervention, and reading materials in seven Zambian languages. A key focus will be on the language of instruction during the foundational learning stages, specifically from preschool through Grades 1–4. Additionally, we will examine challenges facing Zambia's education system and propose solutions to address gaps in teacher qualifications and confidence, limited instructional materials, and uneven reading outcomes across language communities.

We encourage teachers, policymakers, researchers, and other stakeholders involved in foundational learning to look out for this policy brief series. Our aim is not only to provide research-based arguments for and against the new policy but also to stimulate debate among like-minded stakeholders to help refine the literacy programmes Zambia should be adopting.

CAPOLSA is participating at the Psychology Association of Zambia (PAZ) conference.

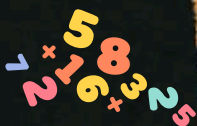
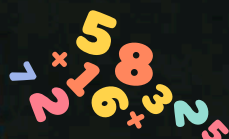


CAPOLSA will participate in the 4th Biannual Psychology and Behavioural Research Conference, organised by the Psychology Association of Zambia (PAZ), on 11–12 November 2026 in Lusaka. The conference provides an opportunity for the Centre to showcase its literacy and behavioural research, share knowledge, strengthen partnerships, and contribute to discussions on psychology, education and child development.

"Literacy is a bridge from misery to hope." — Kofi Annan



*Engage
with
us!*



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Sub Saharan Africa – CAPOLSA

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