

Project Challenges

- To schedule the presence of researchers and programs evenly to utilize local resources effectively.
- To match research objectives with local needs and expectations.
- To establish a working network within Mwanza to support and facilitate research and to respond to emergency situations.



Project Recommendations

- To continue to support and work with local partners to create greater capacity to support future ISL programs.
- To consider ways in which ISL programs match local agendas for research and development.
- To seek opportunities to create reciprocal learning experiences for local participants in Canadian institutions and communities.
- To provide local partners with training and resources to foster local institutional capacity and sustainability.

Mwanza, Tanzania

Project Goals

- To engage in research that explores the experiences of local community partners in International Service Learning (ISL) programming.
- To consider partners' experiences from a critical perspective, and to identify opportunities to increase partners' capacities to deliver services and promote sustainable partnerships.
- To do a comparative analysis of the project goals/outcomes for ISL between Northern Universities and local host communities.

Project Activities



- Observed a five-week International Service Learning program in Mwanza.
- Interviewed local partners who worked with various international service learning groups in and around the Mwanza region.
- Participated in events and activities related to the service learning project.
- Co-facilitated critical reflection sessions with service learners.
- Conducted interview research for Dr. Marianne Larsen in several yoghurt kitchens that probed the impact of students interns on local communities.
- Worked in different kitchens to observe and learn more about the yoghurt-making process, and to gain perspective and understanding on the role of kitchens in women's lives.
- Sought out partners at local universities to begin to build potential research partnerships, and to learn more about their findings in related research projects.
- Met with local representatives of NGOs/CSOs to learn more about their activities, challenges and opportunities working in the Mwanza community.
- Assisted with the planning and implementation of different ISL activities.
- Worked with local partners to understand the goals and objectives of ISL programming.
- Carried out research in local post-secondary institutions on the experiences of organizations that partner with higher education institutions from the Global North.
- Networked with other universities from North America who were engaged in International Service Learning programs in Mwanza and the greater region of South Africa.

Project Outcomes

- Gathered interview data for dissertation research project.
- Produced a research article on the impact of internationalization policy at Northern universities in local communities.
- Continuing to work on research articles focused on the use of qualitative methodologies for research in ISL host communities.
- Completed interview research for Dr. Marianne Larsen on the impact of student interns on the yoghurt mamas in local kitchens.
- Analyzed interview transcripts and other data to begin to formulate frameworks that will contribute to the planning and implementation of future ISL programs.

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Project Impact

ISL continues to be a growing trend within the field of international education, and with targets in Canada set to dramatically increase the number of students traveling abroad for global education experiences, it is essential that more is learned about the impact of programming in local communities. It is my hope that this research will contribute to increasing awareness of local interpretations and experiences of global service learning, and suggest ways to respond to partners' needs and expectations.

Impact on Me

My research in Mwanza is an extension of more than twenty years of working in the field of international service learning. My purpose has always been to try to work for social justice and to bring awareness to critical issues in the communities where I have worked. The people and students I met while in Mwanza were generous participants in my research; their stories and experiences reaffirmed for me the opportunities of ISL programming but also the need to become highly attuned to the needs and challenges of local host partners. I look forward to returning to Mwanza to further my research and to continue to work with the partners that I met in future research projects. I am very grateful to everyone at WHE, APYN and SFD for their generous support of my travel and time in Mwanza, Tanzania.

