Thank you so much for your support of Warwick in Africa. As you’re part of our wonderful community of supporters and volunteers, I wanted to take this opportunity to update you about our activities this year, which has been a year like no other. The impact of the pandemic on Warwick in Africa’s activities in 2020 has been very significant. In March we had to take the difficult decision to cancel all inter-country travel for the year, moving many of our activities online.

However, I’m pleased that virtual mentoring for our Lead Teachers has continued throughout this period, and some teacher-led professional development events have also continued to take place locally. At the end of September, the annual Lead Teacher Conference was held virtually for the first time in its 15-year history in Ghana, Tanzania, South Africa and the UK, with contributions from a greater number of speakers than ever before, meant we were still able to deliver a rich and exciting programme of events.

Many student volunteers recruited for placements in 2020 have instead contributed to Warwick in Africa by taking part in two UK-based research projects, providing us with new knowledge and data which will inform the programme’s development. Some of the students have been trained by our delivery partners so please look out for an email from us in the New Year.
Warwick in Africa begins as a pilot project involving six schools in Johannesburg and 12 student volunteers.

Founder Patrick Dunne: “Maths is a great liberator from poverty. Helping local teachers by supporting them with volunteers who could inspire with humility, energy, empathy and respect might just make a difference. Turns out it was a great equation!”

The programme extends its reach to Tanzania in two schools in Dar Es Salaam.

The first Warwick Study Programme takes place on the Warwick campus, attended by two teachers from South Africa. The objective is to inspire and motivate teachers as well as to provide them with an opportunity to visit the UK, immerse themselves in UK culture and spend time in UK schools.

In 2009, Phumi Mthiyane visited Warwick for our annual study programme. She had been involved in the programme from the outset and had worked closely with several teams of volunteers. “When I returned [from Warwick] everything changed because of how inspired I was and accredited that change in my journey in ICT and becoming a Tekkie. At the end of 2016 I received a promotion to Senior Education Specialist at the district office. After only three years I received another promotion to the Head Office where I am now a Deputy Chief Education Specialist in eLearning. WiA made me realise how capable I am and I love my job. Thank you, WiA.”

Walker first encounters the WiA programme in 2014 when a volunteer called Luke gives him the confidence and self-belief that he can do Maths. Five years later we meet Walker again, now as a trainee teacher in one of our other partner schools. Walker wants to inspire the next generation of students living in poverty. Teaching in underachieving schools means he can have a big impact, exposing the children to new ideas and giving meaning to education just like Luke was able to do for him.

Our Study Programme is going from strength to strength: eight teachers attend the programme at Warwick.

We start working in Ghana in three schools in Accra and piloted our first Teacher Workshops in Ghana with 180 participants.

Warwick in Africa celebrates its 10th year anniversary!

Soumya’s experience volunteering with Warwick in Africa in Ghana in 2015 leads her to found Project Baala, an organisation dedicated to improving knowledge and understanding of menstruation and providing girls with environmentally sustainable menstrual products. “These ten weeks set the course for at least the next ten years of my life,” she says.

WiA brings together its activities supporting teachers into the Teacher Support Programme. Our first Lead Teacher Conference takes place in Tanzania, attended by 13 teachers.

WiA connects Phamela, a talented learner from Kayamandi to Young Scientists for Africa and she successfully gains a scholarship to attend the London International Youth Science Forum. “It was my first time travelling outside the country; the forum created more opportunities for growth and development in the STEM field and I was able to decide what I would love to do in the future. It was not only about Science but the experience brings you closer to other cultures, ideas, values, beliefs and religions. It was the best experience ever.”

Over the past 15 years, 735 Warwick students have completed Warwick in Africa volunteering placements working directly with a total of more than 130,000 learners and we’ve delivered training for nearly 5,000 teachers.

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