

ADA International Fellowship Program: 2017 Fellows

Fall 2017 ADA alum **Japhary Shehaghilo** is an assistant lecturer at [Sebastian Kolowa Memorial University \(SEKOMU\)](#) in Lushoto, Tanzania. He plays a central role in coordinating academic evaluations of students with disabilities, in addition to paring, administering, and grading exams for the university's Department of Special Needs.

Although Japhary works in postsecondary education, he has extensive professional training in early intervention. He provides consultations on special education options for families of children with special needs outside of his work at SEKOMU. Through the ADA International Fellowship, Japhary hoped to learn about effective strategies to build the capacity of preschool teachers that he could apply back home.

Japhary spent his fellowship with the [University of Colorado/JFK Partners](#) under the supervision and mentorship of Dr. Cordelia Robinson Rosenberg, a professor of pediatrics and psychiatry.

For his follow-on project, Japhary intended to create an

Figure 1: Japhary giving a training on capacity-building to village women, focusing on early childcare and speech and language development.



inclusive training initiative specifically for preschool teachers in rural Tanzania. He planned to connect with community stakeholders when designing the initiative, and to implement it in target schools so as to maximize local involvement and enthusiasm for improving teachers' knowledge of inclusive principles and practices.

Japhary also intended to develop training manuals that could be used to train these preschool teachers.

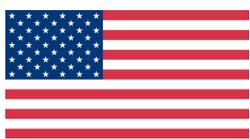


Japhary Shehaghilo

“The ADA International Fellowship has opened more doors for me, both in and outside Tanzania. More opportunities are coming my way because of the fellowship, without which I could not imagine happening.”

—Fall 2017 ADA alum Japhary Shehaghilo

Since completing his fellowship and returning to Tanzania, Japhary has made some progress toward achieving these goals. In addition to sharing his fellowship experience with his colleagues at SEKOMU, he has applied some of the inclusive education practices that he studied at the University of Colorado to his field-based project work. He has been training village women on early childcare and speech and language development (see Figure 1), and developed information materials for the *Preventive Community-Based Work in Early Childhood Communication Development Project*.



The ADA International Fellowship Program was funded by the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, and implemented by the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) in partnership with the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) at the University of Massachusetts Boston.

The project aims to build the capacity of local village women in childcare and development by equipping them with knowledge and skills to help other people in their communities to support children between the ages of zero and 3. It is a joint project between SEKOMU and Leibniz University, Hanover (Germany), and is implemented at Irente Children's Home in Tanzania.

When asked how this effort is related to his initial follow-on project, Japhary explained, "Both projects are focusing on early childhood and intend to maximize child potential in education. The current project is more preventive in nature where as the first (follow-on) project was reactive. So in this case we are working on minimizing the risk of disabilities in learning. At the same time, we are recognizing the knowledge that already exists in the community."

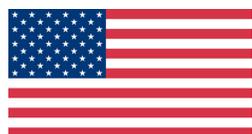
Starting in September 2018, Japhary will be working with ADD International Tanzania in the Kisarawe district, training preschool teachers on inclusive education.

As part of the ADA International Fellowship, Japhary helped forge a relationship between SEKOMU and the University of Colorado Department of Pediatrics at the School of Medicine and the Positive Early Learning Experience Center at the School of Education and Human Development. These entities are in the final stages of signing a memorandum of understanding formalizing their relationship and paving the way for ongoing future partnerships and collaboration.

Japhary has presented on inclusive education to various audiences. Most recently, his paper "Play as an Instructional Strategy for Teaching Social Skills to Learners in Preschool" was accepted for presentation at the Competence Building Networks for Early Childhood Education for South and East Africa (CBN) meeting to be held November 12–16, 2018 in Manzini, Kingdom of Eswatini (Swaziland).

Additionally, Japhary will present a paper on "Designing and Applying the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Approach" at the 6th Annual Disability Rights Conference to be held November 6–7, 2018 in Pretoria, South Africa.

Reflecting on the fellowship, Japhary said, "The ADA International Fellowship has opened more doors for me, both in and outside Tanzania. More opportunities are coming my way because of the fellowship, without which I could not imagine happening."



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