

UDSM ALUMNA OF THE MONTH [JAN 2024]: NANCY LAZARO MWAISAKA (Tanzanian)



Year of matriculation: 2006;
Year of graduation: 2009;
Award: B.Com (Marketing), University of Dar es Salaam (2009).

More info:

MBA (International Business), University of Dar es Salaam (2011);

MBA (Arts and Culture Management), University of Rome Business School, Italy (2017)

Happily working with the Tanzania regional office of the United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) as a National Professional Officer (Culture), Nancy Lazaro Mwaisaka (néé Lazaro) is an alumna of the University of Dar es Salaam – of the graduating class of 2009 at the undergraduate level and, later, at the postgraduate level, in 2011. This month, UDSM is featuring her as an alumna of the month.

Nancy was born in 1986, of parents hailing from Mbeya—a region then including a large expanse to the border with Zambia, today sub-divided into two separate regions, Mbeya and Songwe. On reaching school-going age in 1994/95, she was sent to school for seven years of primary education after which she moved on to St. Francis Girls Secondary School Mbeya and Kilakala Girls' Secondary in Morogoro, respectively for Forms 1-4 of ordinary secondary education. In 2004, upon passing her 'O-level' national examinations, she was admitted for advanced-level secondary education (Forms V-VI) at St. Mary's Mazinde Juu Girls' Secondary School, well up to 2006. It was in that year 2006—upon passing her 'A-level' exams and earning the 'Advanced Certificate for Secondary Education Examination' (ACSEE)—that she got admission into the University of Dar es Salaam for a bachelor's degree study programme in the University of Dar es Salaam Business School (UDBS), majoring in marketing.

Upon earning her B. Com degree in 2009, Nancy was interested in continuing with a two-year postgraduate programme for a master in business administration degree at the University. She pursued the international business specialisation, from 2010–2011, successfully completing the programme and obtaining the MBA degree qualification which, in turn, enabled her to secure a job with the International Labour Organization (ILO).

At the ILO in Dar es Salaam, she began at the level of Programme Assistant, for a period of two years and one month (April 2013–April 2015). From there, she rose to the position of National Programme Coordinator (Youth Employment). Her responsibilities were appreciably many, with most of them focusing on youth employment policy and practice. These lead her to reviews and analyses of specific national development plans and priorities, socioeconomic data, sectoral reports and other relevant information sources related to the 'youth employment and decent work' agenda in Tanzania. At the same time, she would plan, organize and monitor activities of the United Nations Joint Programme on youth employment, making necessary preparations targeted at timely and efficient implementation of activities as well as delivery of quality outputs in accordance with the framework drawn up under the Swedish–Tanzania 'One-Fund Agreement'. She would also ensure a mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues, including gender and human rights in the planning, implementation and monitoring of youth employment initiatives. In short, Nancy provided the necessary technical support, advice and capacity-building to the tripartite partners, namely the UN-ILO, Sweden and Tanzania, in order to enable the partners to effectively influence the needed policies on youth employment. Nancy's engagement with the ILO office is linked intimately with conducting of training seminars, consultation workshops, planning of executive meetings as well as development of manuals and guides for youth employment initiatives. It was also connected with preparing, managing and updating of a finance-cum-administrative system that would facilitate an effective interface with the finance and administrative system of both the ILO and the UNDP.

In September 2016, Nancy left the ILO to join the International Youth Foundation (IYF) in Dar es Salaam, first as a programme assistant (September 2016–July 2017) and, subsequently, rising to a full-time programme officer as from August 2017 to April 2020. At the IYF, among other things, Nancy served as a Project Manager for three particular programmes, namely ‘*Via: Pathways to Work*’, ‘*Youth Lead*’ and ‘*Youth Speak*’. These programmes aimed at enabling youths towards productive work engagement, empowering them for effective and functional leadership and, as well, training them in the art of self-assertion and self-articulation.

In 2017, Nancy earned another MBA from the graduate Business School of the University of Rome in Italy, a degree pursuit that focused on the arts and management of cultural heritage.

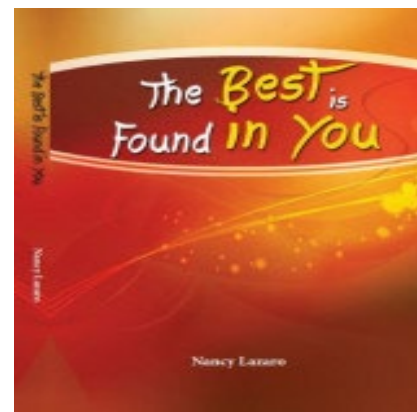
Since May 2020, Nancy Lazaro Mwaisaka has been with the UNESCO regional office in Dar es Salaam, where she has, for about 3½ years, been working with clients—both national and international—within a variety of contexts of official and professional interactions and interchange with reference to the organisation’s mission.

In a particular way, Nancy’s combination of professional and creative energies beyond office routine provides the public with additional interest in knowing the range of surprises that are associated with her. She is a co-founder of *La Poetista* - a group of young artists who are committed to nurturing of the art of poetry in the Tanzanian community, as well as to providing a platform for developing any other forms of culture that complement poetry. *La Poetista* stands for ‘freedom and humanity’ principally focussed on denouncing violence against women. Nancy is a talented and creative writer. In 2014, she authored a readable and lesson-evoking book titled *The Best Is Found in You* (published by E&D Vision Publishers and available at Elite Bookstore and other popular outlets). In that year, 2014, she was recognized by a Tanzanian Women Achievement Award (TWAA) Committee for *promoting the arts and culture*. In the same year, she earned a Mandela Fellowship from Washington University in USA, that had been created to be offered to Young African Leaders with Initiative. In 2016, she was named for a Global Citizen Youth Advocate award. Apart from these, she has served as Chairperson on the School Board at Gift Skilful High School in Dar es Salaam.

The University of Dar es Salaam congratulates her on these achievements and her contributions to society.



2014. Nancy Lazaro a finalist and winner in the Tanzanian Women Achievement Award (TWAA) competition termed ‘Game Changer Competition’ in the category of *Promoters of the Arts and Culture*. She expresses her belief and confidence in the Game Changers Project that was initiated to look for and identify social entrepreneurs working to improve the lives of children. This was on 16th June 2014, marking the International Day of the African Child.



↑
A book, *The Best is Found in You*, by Nancy Lazaro Mwiasaka. (E&D Vision Publishing, 2014; 156 pp.)