

Dean Muraya



Dean Muraya is currently on his gap year, pursuing the Master in International Development at PSIA with concentrations in Migration and African studies. He is working as as a Research Assistant for Samuel Hall, a social enterprise specialising on migration and displacement.

What is your role and main responsibilities?

I work in the Nairobi office under Research Pillar One, conducting research on migration and displacement in the East and West Africa.

Last year I worked exclusively in Ethiopia, on a project to understand the social dynamics between refugees and host communities in four regions of the country. It is not my first time working in Africa, but it is my first time working in other African countries besides Kenya.

WHAT KIND OF CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE IN YOUR WORK AND HOW DO YOU TACKLE THEM ?

The nature of the research we conduct means that we travel often to complex settings, areas that are either in conflict or are difficult to reach. This means that planning logistics for a certain project can be an exacting task. For instance, colleagues of mine who travelled to Maiduguri had to organise for enumerators to travel by helicopter to the research locations because it was too dangerous to travel by road due to Boko Haram activity.

In planning logistics, the challenge of interconnectivity between African countries becomes apparent. We are privileged to be able to work with local enumerators or consultants as both the qualitative and quantitative tools are in the local languages of the areas of study. This means that we rely heavily on local knowledge and local experts in shaping the study and planning implementation.

WHAT WOULD BE YOUR ADVICE TO OTHER STUDENTS WANTING TO WORK IN AFRICA?

African countries are not exceptionally difficult places to work in. Relying on local knowledge to adapt expectations, tools and planning is the best piece of advice I could give for anyone thinking of doing research on the continent.

For students seeking to find a job in or outside of research my strongest recommendation would be to find a job that is challenging and allows you to work with people on the ground. These opportunities are often found outside of big INGOs.

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