

# African Network for Internationalization of Education (ANIE)



# ANNUAL REPORT

2025



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# From the Chairperson



The year 2025 has just quickly come to an end. For us in ANIE, it has been a year of significant achievements and progress.

We have kept on with our annual conference and this year we held the 15<sup>th</sup> Edition of the ANIE Conference in Kampala, Uganda, with resounding success. We continued with the successful implementation of the EU funded DigiGrad and IMPACT projects. We also joined in the new EU funded SHINE and PROSPER projects which will be implemented over the next three years. The launch of the Network of Early Career Researchers on Digitalisation and Internationalisation (NECREDI) was another important milestone in addition to the operationalisation of the Network of International Office Practitioners (NIOPA). ANIE led African partners in putting up the inaugural African Booth at the 2025 EAIE Conference that was held in Gothenburg, Sweden. We participated in a number of other partner events in 2025 which enabled us develop new projects and further strengthen our partnerships.

Our membership further grew in 2025 in addition to the new partnerships that we developed. Looking forward, I see much better prospects for ANIE in the coming years amidst the emerging challenges. We will strive to reposition ourselves strategically and take advantage of some of the opportunities for internationalization, partnership building and strengthening research opportunities for African scholars and institutions.

I wish to sincerely thank the Board, the dedicated ANIE staff and all our partners for the achievements recorded this year. I sincerely thank OBREAL Global for the several initiatives that we had together in this year. We continually thank Moi University for the excellent support in hosting the ANIE Secretariat. I wish all of you a Merry Christmas and a healthy and successful 2026.

Prof. Goski Alabi  
Chairperson, ANIE Board.

# From the Executive Director



The year 2025 was a pivotal moment for the African Network for Internationalisation of Education (ANIE).

It was a time of consolidation, expansion, and deepened continental engagement in the rapidly changing global higher education landscape. Despite significant shifts in geopolitics, technology, and funding, ANIE remained steadfast in its commitment to advancing Africa-centered, inclusive, and context-responsive internationalization.

A major highlight of the year was the successful convening of the 15th ANIE Annual Conference in Kampala, Uganda. This conference brought together diverse stakeholders to discuss internationalization in challenging times and explore pathways toward resilient and future-oriented African higher education systems. It also provided a platform to showcase ANIE's growing portfolio of initiatives, including the EU-funded DigiGrad and IMPACT-HE projects, as well as the recently concluded British Council-supported Gender Analysis research.

Beyond convenings, 2025 witnessed significant progress in network building and capacity development. The launch of the Network of Early Career Researchers on Digitalization and Internationalisation (NECREDI) and the operationalization of the Network of International Office Practitioners (NIOPA) strengthened ANIE's role in fostering communities of practice that transcend project lifecycles. Simultaneously, ANIE expanded its regional influence through engagements in Europe and across Africa. These engagements included participation in policy-shaping forums like APPEAR, S-DHG, ADEA, and IEASA, as well as strategic representation at the EAIE Conference, where ANIE co-led the inaugural Africa Booth.

The year also marked ANIE's continued involvement in new multi-year collaborations under the EU-funded SHINE and PROSPER projects. These collaborations reinforced ANIE's commitment to supporting institutions in East Africa in developing holistic, equitable, and sustainable internationalization strategies. Notably, the launch of the International Education Association of Somalia (IEASO) further highlighted ANIE's role in strengthening national and regional platforms for higher education cooperation, particularly in emerging and under-represented contexts. Looking ahead, ANIE remains dedicated to consolidating its strategic position as a continental think tank and convening platform. This position is grounded in research, capacity development, information-sharing, and advocacy. I extend my sincere gratitude to the ANIE Board, Secretariat staff, members, partners, and host institution, Moi University, for their unwavering support and collaboration. Together, we will build on the momentum of 2025 to advance an internationalization agenda that is African in its foundation, global in its reach, and just in its implementation.

Prof. Kefa Lidundu Simwa  
Executive Director.

# ANIE Holds Resounding 15<sup>th</sup> Conference in Kampala, Uganda



The 15<sup>th</sup> ANIE Conference was successfully held from 8<sup>th</sup>- 10<sup>th</sup> October 2025 in Kampala, Uganda. The conference, whose theme was Internationalization in challenging times: Sustaining Impact and Driving Change towards new futures for Africa brought together more than 130 participants including researchers, thought leaders in education, practitioners, early career researchers, students and development partners. The conference discussed the profound geopolitical transformations posing unprecedented and far-reaching impacts on the future of higher education and research cooperation between Africa and other regions of the world.

In his keynote presentation, Prof. Chika Sehoole of University of Pretoria, South Africa, recounted the developments of internationalisation in Africa and made a strong call for reframing internationalisation and partnerships between higher education institutions and researchers from Africa and those from other world regions. He noted that the new world order required African universities to reevaluate their engagements with internationalisation and take proactive and mutually beneficial approaches.



*Prof. Chika Sehoole, University of Pretoria & ANIE Board Member delivering the Keynote address for the conference.*

In her remarks, the Chairperson of ANIE Board Prof. Goski Alabi called on African universities to develop policies, strategies and interventions to enable them effectively respond to the new global dynamics and new opportunities such as digitalisation and the emerging use of Artificial Intelligence. She noted that Africa is poised.

*Prof. Goski Alabi, Chairperson ANIE Board at the opening of the conference.*



## ANIE Holds Resounding 15<sup>th</sup> Conference in Kampala, Uganda



The conference had various sessions focused on the various thematic areas including: building resilient partnerships; inclusive and equitable policy frameworks; leveraging technology and virtual collaborations; curriculum innovations; leadership for internationalisation and financing of internationalisation in Africa, among others. Alongside the conference was the workshop for Early Career Researchers within the framework of the EU Funded DigiGrad project in which over 70 early career researchers were trained in a hybrid format on transversal research skills.

Dr. Anita Veltmaat of Groningen University presented a workshop on the Active Bystander which was very engaging and provided new insights on taking various types of actions and interventions for various situations. In the 2nd Keynote address, Prof. Nawangwe, Vice Chancellor, Makerere University provided a resounding rendition of the changing research and funding landscape for African universities. He highlighted some of the successful initiatives and networks that are promoting research in Africa and some of the areas of challenges. He pointed out the steps that Makerere University has taken to enhance research productivity and capacity building through international partnerships.



*Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe, Vice Chancellor Makerere University Uganda, making his keynote remarks at the conference.*

ANIE took the opportunity to show case its ongoing initiatives including the EU funded DigiGrad Project which is focused on how internationalisation and digitalisation can strengthen postgraduate training and research in African higher education institutions. ANIE further showcased the EU funded IMPACT Project and the British Council funded Gender Analysis Research that had just been concluded.

# ANIE Holds Resounding 15<sup>th</sup> Conference in Kampala, Uganda



Dr. Marvin Bakker Executive Director, European Association for International Education (EAIE) took note of the growing and changing global dynamics and their impacts on internationalization and on Europe-Africa partnerships. He emphasized that Europe still remains a key partner to Africa and urged African institutions to take advantage of the emerging opportunities to further strengthen the higher education sector and internationalisation. He urged ANIE and African universities to enhance their participation in the EAIE Conference and collaborations with European universities and take advantage of emerging opportunities such as the Global Gateway initiative. As Prof. Goski noted, the conference was an opportunity for us to come together and reflect on Africa's position in a very dynamic and turbulent new world of international education



Participants at the 15<sup>th</sup> ANIE Conference, Kampala, Uganda



## Network of Early Career Researchers Launched



A key highlight of the conference was the launch of the Network of Early Career Researchers on Digitalisation and Internationalisation (NECREDI). The network was established as a Community of Practice of the ANIE and is one of the outputs of the EU funded DigiGrad (Internationalisation and Digitalisation of Postgraduate Training and Research for the attainment of Africa's Regional and Global Development Goals) Project that ANIE has been coordinating (2023-2026). The aim of the network is to enhance the quality and relevance of postgraduate training and research in African universities by harnessing the opportunities provided by digitalization and internationalization. The goal is to establish and consolidate a network of African early career researchers for internationalization and research collaborations, which will last beyond the DigiGrad project lifetime. Additionally, NECREDI presents a significant step towards strengthening Africa's role in global research.

Speaking at the launch Dr. James Jowi, DigiGrad Coordinator noted that by empowering young researchers and providing them with the tools, resources, and international partnerships necessary for success, the network will contribute to Africa's growing research capacity and foster innovation that addresses the continent's unique challenges. Mr. Abraham Ochieng the newly elected Chairperson of NECREDI appreciated the opportunity and noted that it will give early career researchers an unprecedented opportunity to gain skills, develop expertise and enhance research productivity in Africa and collaborations with other world regions. The founding members are from Ghana, Kenya, Burundi, South Sudan and will be expanded to include members from other African countries.



*Prof. Goski Alabi, Chairperson of ANIE Board Launching NECREDI. Mr. Abraham Ochieng, Chair of NECREDI making his inaugural remarks.*

## Benchmarking visit to Extremadura



ANIE's Executive Director participated in a DigiGrad study visit to the University of Extremadura (UEX), Spain, engaging with key institutional units on models of internationalization, lifelong learning, doctoral training, and research support. The visit highlighted UEX's Innovation Lab approach to cooperation and research partnerships, structured lifelong learning and micro-credential systems, Erasmus+ Key Action 171 mobility frameworks, and doctoral governance practices including international co-tutelle and the RAPI digital monitoring platform. Sessions with Library Services further showcased integrated support for research visibility, information literacy, open science, and emerging AI applications in research support. The visit enriched ANIE's understanding of European institutional practices relevant to capacity building and international partnership development in African higher education.



*Members of the DIGIGRAD Project at a project meeting, Extremadura University, Badajoz, Spain*

## ANIE at IMPACT Meeting, JIMA University



ANIE's Executive Director participated in the IMPACT HE Consortium Meeting hosted by Jimma University, Ethiopia (23–25 September 2025), which brought together African and European partners to consolidate findings from Work Package 2 institutional mapping activities and prepare for the project's capacity-building implementation phase. The meeting focused on reviewing mapping reports on international funding landscapes and institutional knowledge gaps, and on identifying priority training needs for African university international offices and project management units.



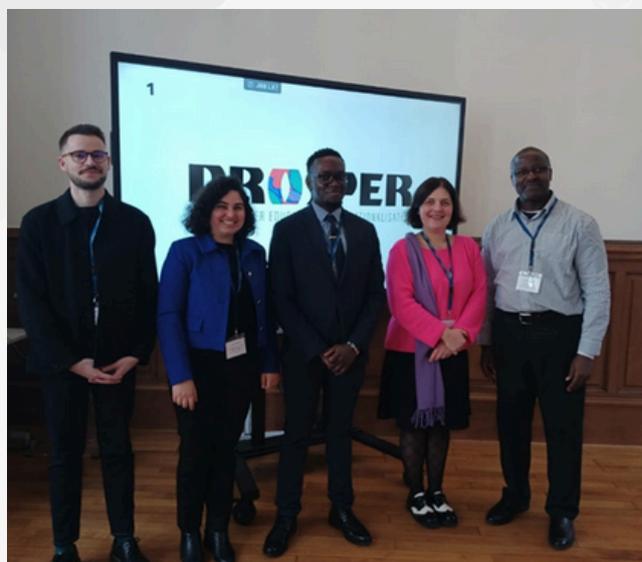
*Prof. Kefa Simwa, ANIE Director at the IMPACT Project meeting at Jimma University, Ethiopia.*

ANIE contributed to discussions supporting the launch of the Training Programme Development Team (TPDT), in which the network plays a role in co-developing training modules and supporting continental capacity-building under Work Package 3. The meeting also included engagement with policy representatives from Kenya and Ethiopia on coordination of international development cooperation in higher education, as well as strategic dialogue on decolonizing development cooperation partnerships, development of an institutional self-assessment tool, and forward planning for subsequent project phases. Participation in the meeting further strengthened ANIE's positioning as a key knowledge, training, and advocacy partner within the IMPACT HE consortium.

## ANIE at PROSPER Project Meeting



ANIE's Executive Director participated in the PROSPER Project Kick-off Meeting held in Paris, marking the formal launch of the Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education initiative aimed at strengthening internationalisation in Kenyan universities. The meeting brought together European and Kenyan partners to align on project objectives, governance, and implementation plans across six work packages focusing on international outreach, international relations services, digital collaboration, quality monitoring, and impact dissemination. As an associated partner, ANIE contributed perspectives on continental networking, capacity building, and policy advocacy, positioning the network to support knowledge exchange and the adaptation of European internationalisation practices to African contexts. The engagement strengthened ANIE's strategic partnerships with institutions in France, Germany, and Kenya, and informed its future role in supporting institutional internationalisation strategies and staff capacity development within the PROSPER framework.



*ANIE Director Prof. Kefa Simwa at the PROSPER meeting in Paris, France*

### Study and Research Africa Workshop

ANIE was represented by Dr. James Otieno Jowi, Founding Executive Director, at the Study and Research Africa Workshop held at the DAAD Offices in Brussels, Belgium from 26<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> June 2025. The Workshop was to support the preparations to launch the first component "Opportunities" of the European Commission's Study and Research in Africa programme. The new programme aims at promoting Africa as a study and research destination of choice and is part of the Youth Mobility for Africa Initiative. ANIE made inputs into the key components of the workshop that included:

- Develop a shared understanding of realistic targets for Component 1 of the Study and Research in Africa programme
- Promote African-European co-creation in shaping the programme's implementation
- Design potential user journeys for effective engagement with the online platform
- Support the strategic internationalisation efforts of African higher education institutions through Component 1
- Ensure equal partnership, sustainability, and synergy into the programme's implementation approach.

The program aligns well with the mandate of ANIE and would be useful if ANIE is included in the implementation of the program.

# International Education Association of Somalia (IEASO)



*ANIE Director Prof. Simwa at the launch of IEASO in Mogadishu, Somalia*

The African Network for Internationalisation of Education (ANIE) is proud to celebrate a significant milestone in African higher education: the official launch of the International Education Association of Somalia (IEASO) on July 3, 2025, in Mogadishu. This historic event signals not only progress for Somalia's higher education sector but also a renewed spirit of regional solidarity and institutional resilience across East Africa. Representing ANIE at the launch, Executive Director Prof. Kefa Lidundu Simwa delivered a keynote address in which he described the moment as “a historic moment of institutional resilience and regional hope.”

“This is not just a Somali milestone,” Prof. Simwa stated. “It is an East African moment—one that invites us to reimagine internationalisation from within our contexts.” The launch brought together key stakeholders from government, academia, and the development community. It highlighted IEASO's commitment to leading Somalia's engagement in global higher education networks and shaping homegrown responses to global education challenges. Prof. Simwa outlined some strategic imperatives for the future of higher education in Somalia and the East African region and highlighted some of the challenges. Despite these hurdles, Prof. Simwa shared a roadmap for transformation centered on locally driven solutions, South-South partnerships, and youth-focused innovation. He reaffirmed ANIE's dedication to supporting IEASO's growth: “ANIE is ready to walk alongside IEASO—building national strategies, enhancing institutional capacity, and amplifying Somalia's voice in global higher education spaces.” With IEASO's formation, Somalia joins a dynamic network of African actors committed to shaping a more equitable, inclusive, and collaborative global education landscape.

Dr. James Jowi participated in the 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the APPEAR Advisory Board that was held on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2025 in Vienna, Austria. In his remarks Reinhold Gruber, Austrian Ministry for European and International Affairs and Chair of the Advisory Board recounted the progress that APPEAR had made over the year that had contributed significantly to strengthening capacities of higher education in the South. Charlotte d'Elloy, Senior Consultant, Technopolis presented the Evaluation Report that showcased the success of the APPEAR projects and made recommendations on some of the areas that needed improvements.

During the session for updates, Dr. Jowi updates the meeting on the recent developments in internationalisation in Africa, the impacts of some of the developments in Europe and the cuts of funding from USA towards various projects, the outcomes of the 15<sup>th</sup> ANIE conference, the participation of APPEAR, EAIE and other European partners at the conference. There were also updates on the growing intra Africa partnerships and the emerging opportunities such as the Research and Study Africa initiatives.

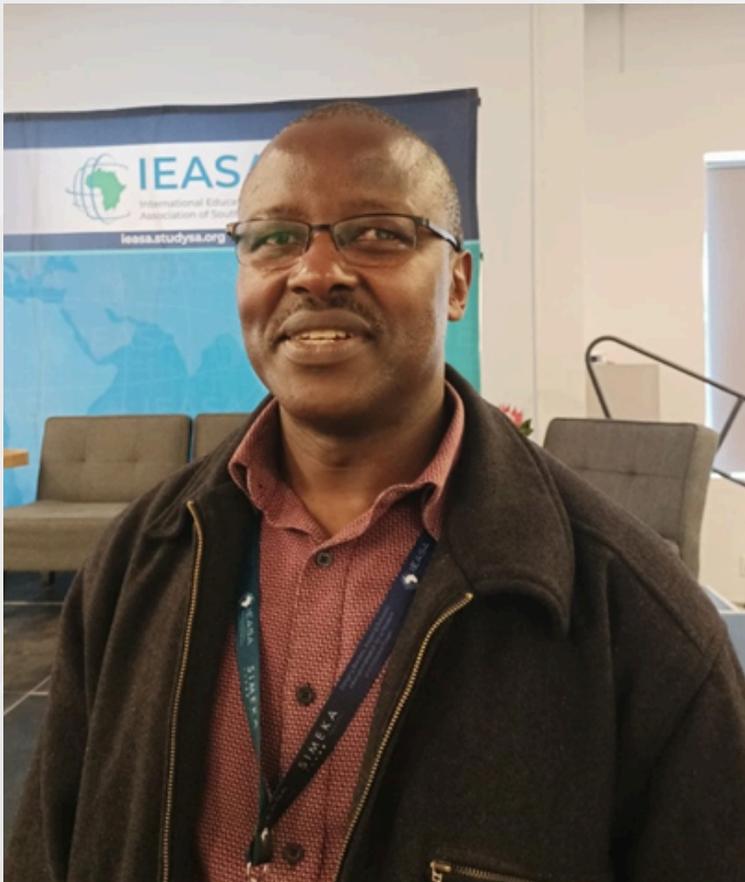


*Dr. James Otieno Jowi, Founding Executive Secretary ANIE, participated in the 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Forum of the Cooperation for Sustainable Development in Higher Education Group (S-DHG Forum 2025)*

## **S-DHG Meeting, Vienna Austria**

Dr. James Otieno Jowi, Founding Executive Secretary ANIE, participated in the 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Forum of the Cooperation for Sustainable Development in Higher Education Group (S-DHG Forum 2025) held from 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> November 2025 in Vienna Austria. The theme of the meeting was Challenging times: Communicating the Value of Higher Education Cooperation with the Global South to Decision Makers and Stakeholders. The Forum is an annual gathering of prominent agencies, international organisations and associations dedicated to supporting and funding higher education in international cooperation. The objectives of the S-DHG Forum are to share expertise and experience, to enhance cooperation among funding and implementing agencies of capacity development and cooperation programmes, and to provide a networking platform for relevant resource organisations in the higher education and research sector. The agenda includes funding and collaboration opportunities, including within broader frameworks such as Global Gateway or Agenda 2063, aimed at reinforcing collective efforts.

ANIE was invited to share on the contemporary developments in internationalisation in Africa and how to improve, strengthen and make better the EU-Africa partnerships. Dr. Jowi presented on Reframing Global North–South Collaborations Through the Lenses of Aware, Connect, Empower (ACE) Principles. ANIE has been developing the ACE model as a model for reframing the North-South collaborations. The meeting brought together the key EU agencies engaged in higher education including German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD); Finish National Agency for Education (EDUFI); NUFFIC, Expertise France, Austrian Agency for Education and Internationalisation (OeAD), Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), GIZ, DANIDA, British Council, NORAD, OBREAL Global, VLIRUOUS and the World Bank, among others.



*Prof. Simwa making a contribution at the IEASA Conference*

### **ANIE at IEASA Conference 2025**

ANIE participated in the 2025 International Education Association of South Africa (IEASA) Conference through the Executive Director's role as a closing panelist, contributing Africa-centred thought leadership on the future of internationalization.

The intervention synthesized key conference deliberations and advanced a values-driven framing of internationalization that prioritizes equitable and reciprocal partnerships, Ubuntu-informed ethics, and digitally enabled inclusion beyond mobility-dependent models. ANIE Annual Conference in Kampala, Uganda (8–10 October 2025) as a continuation of shared continental dialogue on inclusive and resilient internationalization.

## ANIE Joins Consortium for Africa Booth at EAIE



ANIE joined hands with OBREAL Global and Accra Metropolitan University to jointly have an Africa Booth at the 2025 European Association for International Education (EAIE) Conference held in Gothenburg, Sweden from 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> September 2025. This was an opportunity to show case the developments in internationalisation, collaborations and partnerships in Africa. It was a bold step taken by the three partners and expected to be expanded in the future EAIE conferences for enhanced visibility and presence of African institutions and projects. ANIE used the opportunities to among others, show case its DigiGrad and IMPACT projects that are funded by the EU and are contributing to building capacities for enhanced internationalisation of higher education in Africa. ANIE was represented by Prof. Goski Alabi, Chairperson ANIE and Ag. Vice Chancellor, Accra Metropolitan University. OBREAL Global was represented by Apiyo Okwiri. It was also a useful opportunity to show case the developments in internationalization in Africa.



*Prof. Olusola Oyewole, Secretary General AAU and other delegates with Prof. Goski Alabi, Chairperson ANIE Board at the Africa Booth*



*Apiyo Okwiri of OBREAL Global and Prof. Goski Alabi, Chairperson ANIE at the Africa booth*



## ANIE at ADEA Triennale 2025



*Dr. James Jowi of ANIE at the 25<sup>th</sup> ADEA Triennale, Accra, Ghana*

The Association for Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) held its 25<sup>th</sup> Triennale from 29<sup>th</sup> October 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025 in Accra Ghana. The meeting whose theme was Strengthening the resilience of African education systems: Advancing towards ending learning poverty by 2035 with a well-educated and skilled workforce for the continent and beyond. The Triennale brought together African policymakers, educators, development partners, and researchers to reflect on critical themes shaping the transformation of education systems for sustainable social and economic development across the continent. The Triennale aimed at, among others: (1) Celebrating progress and successes: Showcase efforts and achievements in building resilient, equitable, inclusive, and relevant education systems across Africa. (2) Take stock of challenges: Reflect on persistent bottlenecks, emerging issues, and opportunities related to foundational learning, skills development, financing, and innovation. (3) Facilitate dialogue: Enable learning and exchanges between countries and partners, with an emphasis on innovative approaches, leadership, and accountability mechanisms. (4) Chart a collective path forward: Agree on priority actions to accelerate the transformation of Africa's education and training systems.

ANIE was represented in the meeting by Dr. James Otieno Jowi- the Founding ANIE Executive Director who participated in several sessions and mainly in the PEERS session in which the EU is supporting enhanced coordination of education in Africa beginning with the East African region and the West African region. It was also an opportunity to network and develop collaborations with other international organisations working on education.

## Gender Analysis Project Concluded



ANIE has concluded a British Council funded study on Gender Analysis in Sub-Saharan Africa. The study carried out a contextualised analysis of the difficulties and challenges faced by students in sub-Saharan African universities regarding how gender affects the pursuit of employability and entrepreneurship opportunities. It includes specific examples from universities in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa. The study explores some of the main challenges and barriers facing students – especially female students – in African universities regarding access to employability and entrepreneurship opportunities.

The study highlights the myriad and persistent challenges facing female students in sub-Saharan African universities, and how these affect their pursuit of employability and entrepreneurship opportunities. It notes the remarkable transformations and growth that have taken place in the higher education sectors of the four countries and the efforts being made towards gender mainstreaming and the promotion of inclusion and equality in the institutions of the study countries. The study notes, however, that these efforts have not been adequate and have thus not dealt with the persistent challenges facing female students in these institutions at a time when new and more complex problems and challenges are emerging. Good progress appears to have been made regarding access to higher education by female students, despite several continuing barriers and challenges within the institutions and in wider society. Similar progress has been made in developing policies both at national and institutional levels. However, weak operationalisation and implementation render most of the policies ineffective or not particularly useful for those whom they should serve.

The Ghana component of the study was led by Prof. Goski Alabi- ANIE Chairperson; South Africa by Prof. Beatrice Akala- University of Witwatersrand; Nigeria by Prof. Rita Akudolu-Nnamdi Azikiwe University while the Kenyan component is headed by Prof. Kefa Simwa - Executive Director ANIE. Dr. James Jowi- Head of ANIE Research Committee coordinated the project. The outcomes of the project has been disseminated in various forums.



### **SHINE Project**

ANIE is part of the new EU funded project Strategic Approach to Higher Education Internationalisation for Nations in East Africa (SHINE) whose aim is to support higher education institutions in East Africa to develop holistic, context sensitive, equitable and inclusive internationalisation strategies, build structural units and build staff capacities and capacities and strengthen networks of internationalisation coordinators to enhance internationalisation in African universities. It is to enhance the governance, management and administrative capacities of the participating institutions to integrate internationalisation into their activities. The project is led by University of National and World Economy (Bulgaria). In addition to ANIE other project partners include University of Sannio (Italy) KCA University (Kenya); Tharaka University (Kenya); Kabale University (Uganda); Soroti University (Uganda); Upper Nile University (South Sudan); and University of Bahr El-Ghazal (South Sudan). The project has a budget of Euros 399 996. ANIE will play a lead role in development of context assessment tools; developing context assessment reports; communication and dissemination; national dissemination conferences and organising online workshops

### **Youth Futures Project**

ANIE is part of the consortium implementing the Youth Futures in Dignified and Fulfilling Work in Africa. The project, also known as Youth Futures, Mastercard Foundation funded ...The project has a number of research studies. ANIE is participating in the Future Fit Young Africa component coordinated by Human Science Research Council (HSRC) of South Africa. This component explores the hard and soft skills young people in five African countries (Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Senegal and South Africa ) need for meaningful work in future. ANIE is coordinating the Kenya component of the study that included two case studies and digital stories of the youth. It will explore youth skills needs, innovative and transformative approaches to skills development and reimagine the skills requirements for the future. Through this project, ANIE will recruit a postdoctoral research fellow, which will be important in strengthening ANIEs research capacity. This is a three-year project.