


A tribute to Dr Sulley Gariba, his impact on global youth engagement in evaluation



In memorial:
Dr Sulley Gariba
1958–2021†



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In the realm of evaluation, Dr. Sulley Gariba's legacy reverberates far beyond a distinguished career. We pay homage to his pivotal role in transforming youth engagement in evaluation, particularly on the African continent, under the theme 'Addressing Knowledge Asymmetries'.

A global visionary

Dr. Gariba's influence transcended borders. His commitment to nurturing young evaluators extended beyond theoretical knowledge, exemplified by his insistence on bringing mentees to the International Program for Development Evaluation Training (IPDET). Through such initiatives, he not only bridged knowledge gaps but also empowered emerging talent to contribute meaningfully to the field.

Mentorship and advocacy

A mentor and advocate, Dr. Gariba created an inclusive environment. His championing of events like IPDET provided young evaluators with platforms to present their work, fostering a culture of learning and collaboration. His approachable nature and active engagement within the African Evaluation Association's Young and Emerging Evaluators (AfrEA YEE) network created a community where voices were valued.

Global outreach and impact

In 2019, Dr. Gariba played a central role in launching the Young and Emerging Evaluators (YEE) initiative in Abidjan, showcasing his commitment to global inclusivity. His involvement in evaluation initiatives in Canada further emphasised his dedication to embracing evaluators from different continents, promoting diversity and ensuring a global perspective in evaluation practices.

The transformative power of education

Dr. Gariba's unwavering support for IPDET showcased his belief in the transformative power of education. As an instructor and guest lecturer, even during his tenure as Ghana's High Commissioner to Canada, he actively contributed to shaping the next generation of evaluation leaders. His commitment to knowledge exchange and capacity building was unwavering.

Flourishing community

Under Dr. Gariba's leadership, the AfrEA YEE Network thrived. He cultivated an inclusive and collaborative environment, where YEEs felt heard and valued. His approachability fostered a sense of community, promoting the exchange of ideas and experiences.

Inspirational leadership

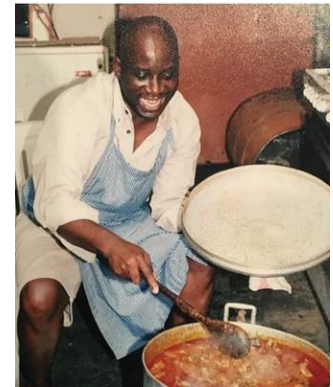
Dr. Gariba's passion for evaluation was contagious. His tireless dedication inspired countless young individuals to pursue careers in evaluation. By sharing his journey and experiences, he ignited a spark in the hearts of YEEs, motivating them to contribute meaningfully to positive change on the African continent.

Enduring legacy

In summary, Dr. Sulley Gariba's multifaceted role (Figure 1) in youth engagement on the African continent leaves an indelible mark on the field of evaluation. His mentorship, advocacy and inspirational leadership have not only strengthened the AfrEA YEE network but have also paved the way for a new generation of evaluators eager to address knowledge asymmetries.

Note: Special Collection: Addressing Knowledge Asymmetries.

A tribute to Gariba: family man, thinker and evidence advocate



Above from left to right: The evaluation community knew Sulley for far more than an academic, orator and diplomat. First and foremost, he was a family man and friend. The selected photos speak of his jovial, young-at-heart character, and dashing smile. And while not all may have known Sulley for his culinary skills, the global evaluation community was nourished by his generous sharing of knowledge and wisdom.



Left to right: Sulley receives an honorary doctorate from Carleton University in 2014. Sulley in his capacity as new High Commissioner to Canada (2015) officially ushered into office, with His Excellency Hon David Johnston



From left to right: Sulley Gariba has played a significant role in the evaluation community. On the first photo he is with colleagues at the 9th AfrEA Conference in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. On second photo, Sulley (second from right) with a group of delegates at the South African Monitoring Evaluation Association (SAMEA) conference in 2013. In the blue shirt (second from left) is African Evaluation Journal editor, Mark Abrahams.



From left to right: Sulley with Bagele Chilisa, Zenda Ofir and Adeline Sibanda at the IDEAS Conference that took place in Guanajuato, Mexico from 4-8 December 2017. Both Bagele and Adeline were part of the inaugural Sulley Gariba lecture held at the AfrEA Conference in March 2022. Sulley chairs a session on *The Role of Africa in Influencing the Global Evaluation Ecosystem: a dialogue between global evaluation leaders and African Post-Colonial Theorists* at the 9th AfrEA Conference in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. To his left is Mjiba Frehiwot, an editor of this edition.

Note: Credit for the photographs of Dr Sulley Gariba, along with friends and colleagues, is attributed to Mark N. Mulobi, who graciously supplied and granted permission for their republication.

FIGURE 1: A photo montage featuring Dr Sulley Gariba alongside loved ones, companions, and professional peers.

Dr. Sulley Gariba's impact resonates globally, reflecting his enduring legacy in the realm of evaluation. As we remember and celebrate his life, let us continue to build upon the foundation he laid, ensuring that knowledge is a shared asset, accessible to all and utilised for positive change.

Echoing his words, 'We need to engage more broadly in participatory evaluations with people in poverty, along with

people who make the policies that affect the lives of the poor'.¹ This clarion call underscores the importance of inclusive and participatory evaluations, which were at the core of Dr. Gariba's work. By embracing this approach, we can truly harness the transformative power of evaluation to uplift communities and drive positive social.

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1. https://ieg.worldbankgroup.org/sites/default/files/Data/reports/OED_IEG_First30Years.pdf.