

Miantso Ursula Soloharison

Community-Driven Development Expert

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EDUCATION

Master of Education in Community Development and Action, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN

Fulbright Scholar, U.S. Department of State

May 2025

Thesis: *"We're Not Just Fighting for Something That's Outside of Us; We're Fighting for Something That's Inside of Us:" A Decolonial Examination of Queer Youth's Sources of Resilience in Madagascar Confronting Cultural Stigma*

- Achieved 4.0 GPA and built network of 50+ professional connections through international exchange program
- Organized and led 5 workshop sessions that centered Malagasy knowledge at Vanderbilt and facilitated cross-cultural learning experiences for university community
- Created original pottery exhibition that combined storytelling with personal narrative and showcased cultural adaptation experience to 25 attendees at the Curb Center of Vanderbilt University, utilizing the event as a fundraising initiative that raised \$1,000 for Camp Fihavanana (community-based association in Madagascar) programming

Master of Education, Population and Development

August 2022

Catholic University of Madagascar, Antananarivo, Madagascar

Thesis: *Land Titling and Informal Micro-Entrepreneurship in Malagasy Slums*

Bachelor of Arts, Social Sciences Applied to Development

August 2019

Catholic University of Madagascar, Antananarivo, Madagascar

WORK EXPERIENCE

Development & Communications Consultant, Kids & Coaches, Non-profit

June 2024 – May 2025

- Conceptualized, filmed, and produced impactful documentary showcasing youth-coach partnerships through intensive field recording and advanced post-production techniques. Created compelling visual storytelling content that served as primary fundraising asset for nonprofit revenue generation.
- Established critical community-based operational partnerships and coordinated organizational match-making services in Nashville to leverage local network development. Created strategic partnerships that enhanced collective community impact across multiple youth-serving organizations.
- Developed detailed collaboration framework documentation serving as reference guide for Kids and Coaches Nashville. Facilitated targeted strategic consultation on collaboration methodologies that resulted in secured long-term partnership agreements through effective donor cultivation.

Community Development Research Assistant, The Curb Center, Vanderbilt University

July 2024 – May 2025

- Developed comprehensive research synthesis on Communities of Practice with expertise in organizational culture and collective learning models, and designed culturally responsive program evaluation framework for the Forklift neighborhood-based arts and community development initiative.
- Applied participatory research methodologies that recognized diverse cultural perspectives and supported careholder engagement through inclusive data collection methods across varied community contexts.
- Delivered program evaluation results through innovative visual presentations combining art and graphic design skills with evaluation methodologies, and analyzed organizational culture impacts to identify program strengths and development areas.

Country Program Officer, Omena Movement, Non-profit

January 2021 – December 2023

- Established Madagascar's first Community of Practice for Social-Emotional Learning and trained board members nationwide to implement evidence-based youth programming aligned with local cultural contexts and traditions.
- Designed participatory evaluation frameworks employing qualitative, quantitative, and storytelling methodologies, and facilitated 50+ structured cross-cultural engagement sessions achieving 90% positive participant satisfaction through culturally sensitive approaches.
- Led organizational change initiatives during program growth periods and coordinated all Madagascar-based operations to ensure alignment between global mission and local community needs across 11 large-scale community events.

LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

Camp Director, Camp Fihavanana

September 2019 – Present

- Focus on curriculum development, facilitator training, and program evaluation to enhance community-based youth programming
- Design curriculum that allows youth to take ownership of their identity, creativity, and critical thinking through peer-to-peer learning approaches

Communication Officer, International Mentorship at Peabody (iMAP), Vanderbilt University

October 2024 – May 2025

- Created and published promotional content across Instagram and Vanderbilt's internal communication systems to increase cross-cultural event engagement

Communication Officer, Peabody Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA), Vanderbilt University

August 2024 – May 2025

- Developed social media content strategy and managed digital communications to build community engagement among APIDA students

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Community Development and Action Thesis, Vanderbilt University

August 2024 – May 2025

- Pioneered community-based participatory research that amplified Malagasy queer youth voices across diverse cultural contexts and collaborated with local community members to co-develop culturally grounded assessment tools with multiple perspectives.
- Synthesized critical literature on cultural stigma, colonization, and resilience within Indigenous and colonial systems and designed inclusive research protocols that emphasized cultural safety and community protection across varied contexts.
- Bridged Indigenous methodologies with Western research approaches to create comprehensive knowledge frameworks and facilitated in-person panel discussions that ensured equitable participation among marginalized youth from diverse backgrounds

Graduate Research Assistant, Research Institute for Development

June 2020 – August 2021

- Led exploratory research in Antananarivo examining informal social protection mechanisms in urban settlements and designed place-based mixed-methods research protocol i.e. literature review, interview development, and data collection
- Executed in-depth interviews and surveys with 50+ families in informal settlements and analyzed spatial relationships between land tenure, entrepreneurship, and economic mobility to contribute to national social protection study

ACADEMIC PROJECTS

Program Evaluation Class, Vanderbilt University

August 2024 – December 2024

- Co-developed program evaluation proposal for Girls Write Nashville and applied participatory evaluation methods across 8 Nashville schools with culturally inclusive careholder engagement strategies
- Delivered comprehensive evaluation findings and recommendations to organizational leadership to inform program improvements and strategic decision-making

Community Inquiry Class, Vanderbilt University

August 2023 – December 2024

- Constructed theoretical framework integrating Contemporary trauma-informed approaches and community-based participatory research methods
- Synthesized literature on emotional violence and collective healing practices in post-colonial contexts

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- **Soloharison, M.U.** (2024). Session Convener with C. Etienne. at the Jumpstart Conference. Nashville, TN.
- **Soloharison, M.U.** (2022). Understanding Emotional Abuse: Perspectives and Prevention. Omena Madagascar & UNICEF Partnership Conference, Institut National des Sciences Comptables et de l'Administration d'Entreprises (INSCAE). Antananarivo, Madagascar.

RESEARCH & TECHNICAL SKILLS

- **Software:** SPSS; Stata; Dedoose; Canva; CapCut; Microsoft Office (Advanced Excel for data analysis, data tracking, and program management)
- **Research:** Mixed-method research design and implementation, survey development, and administration
- **Participatory Research Methods:** Expertise in designing and implementing inclusive research methodologies
- **Program Evaluation:** Expertise in culturally responsive assessment and evaluation methodologies
- **Facilitation & Training:** Advanced skills in cross-cultural facilitation and capacity building
- **Languages:** Malagasy (Native), English (AMCAT Certified Proficiency), French (DALF C2)