

CARISCA REPORT

Centre for Applied Research and Innovation in Supply Chain – Africa

2025 • ISSUE 12



CARISCA-KÜHNE FOUNDATION PARTNERSHIP CONTINUES TO TRANSFORM SUPPLY CHAIN EDUCATION IN AFRICA

The Centre for Applied Research and Innovation in Supply Chain – Africa (CARISCA) has officially signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Kühne Foundation**, through its Learn Logistics programme.

The MoU, signed in May 2025, formalizes a strategic partnership aimed at transforming logistics and supply chain education across Africa. The agreement marks a new chapter for CARISCA as a Pan-African Centre of Excellence, now operating independently of United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funding. The Kühne Foundation's support ensures sustained funding for the Centre's core activities over the next three years.

Professor Nathaniel Boso, CARISCA Director, expressed gratitude to the Kühne Foundation for its swift and generous support, which began even before formal discussions were concluded.

"For the past three months, Learn Logistics has graciously supported CARISCA by covering staff salaries and ongoing activities, bridging the gap left by USAID's disengagement," said Professor Nathaniel Boso.

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CARISCA is working with the Kühne Foundation to elevate logistics and supply chain education across the African continent.

As Prof. Boso affirmed, "The journey to making that impact has just begun."

The Kühne Foundation has a long-standing focus on logistics, supporting education and research through its Learn Logistics initiative. Through its program, the foundation partners with universities across Africa to build local expertise in logistics education.

"We work with different universities to help develop capacities in logistics and supply chain management," said Dr. Andre Kreie, Director of Global Logistics Education at the Kühne Foundation. "This includes scholarships and support for research activities, initiatives very similar to what CARISCA did together with Arizona State University."

Dr. Kreie acknowledged CARISCA's notable progress over the years and expressed enthusiasm for the road ahead. "It was very interesting to see how well the project progressed... When we learned that the project was winding down, we became interested in how we could collaborate and possibly carry it forward."

Based at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), CARISCA continues to receive strong institutional backing. The university's vice-chancellor, Professor (Mrs.) Rita Akosua Dickson, reaffirmed KNUST's commitment to the project and its new partnership.

"At KNUST, we never tire of supporting our partners," she stated. "This is not a short-lived relationship; we are in this for the long haul. As you extend your impact across the sub-region and the continent, KNUST will serve as a backbone to connect you with other institutions."

Professor Dickson also underscored the central role of logistics and supply chain management in development across all sectors, including healthcare, food security, shelter, and climate action.

"If logistics and supply chain systems are not functioning well, no sector can perform at its peak. We are proud of CARISCA's work, and we believe this partnership will amplify its impact."

CARISCA's new support from the Kühne Foundation ensures the continuity of its flagship programs, including the Supply Chain Research Summit, Supply Chain Business Forum, and other capacity-building initiatives, while also opening up new possibilities for research, scholarships, and innovation.



Photo credit: Isaac Kwaku Duah, University Relations Office, KNUST

 [Watch the highlight video of the MoU signing](#)

bit.ly/MoUsigningKF



Videography: Emmanuel Dankwah, University Relations Office, KNUST



Join us for the **2025 Supply Chain Research Summit**

Reimagining Africa's Supply Chains for a Sustainable Future

July 16-18, 2025 | Lagos, Nigeria

CARISCA's fifth annual **Supply Chain Research Summit** kicks off July 16, marking the first time the event will be held outside Ghana. This year, the summit heads to Lagos, Nigeria, with scholars, students, and professionals from around the world registered to attend both in person and virtually.

The theme of this year's conference is "**Reimagining Africa's Supply Chains for a Sustainable Future**." Over 100 supply chain students, scholars, practitioners and policymakers will present papers in four tracks over three days.

Participants will hear from six keynote speakers and engage in **three panel sessions**; **Journal Editors**, **Health Supply Chains and Inclusion in Supply Chains** panels.

The summit will also feature the PhD Dissertation Awards competition and the newly introduced Best Paper Award.

CARISCA's annual Supply Chain Research Summit is central to our goal of strengthening African supply chain capacity and advancing Africa's supply chain research globally. We achieve this by bringing together academic and non-academic researchers and public, private and civil society organizations to create an ongoing dialogue addressing complex supply chain challenges in Africa.

If you have not yet registered, don't miss this opportunity to learn from and network with leading supply chain experts. Participants have the opportunity to attend in-person or virtually.

MEET THE KEYNOTES:

JULY 16



Dr. Oyebanji Filani

"Enhancing Quality and Expanding Access: How Pooled Purchasing by States can Strengthen Nigeria's Healthcare Delivery"

Dr. Oyebanji Filani is a global health leader and MD with over 17 years of experience in health systems reforms. He currently serves as the **Honourable Commissioner for Health and Human Services, Ekiti State, Nigeria** and the Chairperson of the Nigeria Health Commissioners Forum, guiding his colleagues on critical health systems reform issues at the sub-national level.

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Professor Charles Ojima Asenime

“Catechizing Nigeria’s Transport Resources and Sustainable Freight Logistics”

Professor Charles Ojima Asenime is a researcher and expert in urban mobility and logistics. He specialises in urban and regional transport planning, inclusive mobility, inland waterways transport, and logistics management. Prof. Asenime is currently the **dean of the School of Transport and Logistics at Lagos State University**, where he has developed academic programmes, mentored student research in sustainable transport, and advocated for policy reforms.



Dr. Obiora Madu

“Reimagining Africa’s Supply Chains for a Sustainable Future”

Dr. Obiora Madu is a leading authority in logistics and supply chain management in Africa, with over three decades of experience spanning international trade, customs, transport, and supply chain strategy. He is the founder/CEO of Multimix Academy and director general of the African Centre for Supply Chain (ACSC), where he drives research, education, and policy advocacy across the continent. He is an adjunct professor at Malaysia University of Science, and Technology and has played a key role in promoting logistics education and professional standards in Nigeria and Africa.

JULY 17



Professor Olayinka David-West

“Digital Transformation and Inclusive Supply Chains in Africa”

Professor Olayinka David-West is a distinguished academic and thought leader at the intersection of business, technology, and policy. She currently serves as the **dean of Lagos Business School (LBS)**, where she has played a pivotal role in elevating the institution’s global stature through strategic leadership and academic excellence. With a career spanning several decades in IT and financial services, her expertise lies in digital transformation, inclusive finance, and the strategic use of technology to enhance business models and organizational effectiveness.



Mr. Raphael Ajayi

“Managing Supply Chain Challenges in Nigeria’s Pharmaceutical Industry”

Mr. Raphael Ajayi is the **general manager (Supply Chain)** of Fidson Healthcare PLC, Lagos, Nigeria. He leads senior managers across the entire supply chain functions of the company. He has over 20 years’ experience in providing solutions to complex supply chain problems in various organizations after moving away from core engineering practices in 2002. Raphael is currently Chairman of Supply Chain Professionals of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers’ Group of Manufacturers’ Association of Nigeria (PMG-MAN), and a Fellow of Nigerian Institute of Management (Chartered).

Learn more and register: summit2025.carisca.org



PARTNERS AND SPONSORS:



Our Partners



JULY 18



Chief Mrs. Chinwe Ezenwa

Chief Mrs. Chinwe Ezenwa is the **managing director/chief executive officer** of Lelook Nigeria Limited, which she founded in 1985. Her audacious spirit and business expertise have seen the company grow to become a giant bag manufacturing company in Africa, with international acclaim and numerous awards. These include the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) Certification of Trade under GTI-0001. The company also made history by becoming the first SME to be awarded Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) status by the Nigerian Customs Service.

Platinum:



FROM RESEARCH TO IMPACT: THE ART OF ACADEMIC STORYTELLING

Conducting high-quality research is only the first step for any academic who wishes to advance knowledge and make an impact in his or her field.

The ability to effectively communicate your research findings is a critical skill. It can mean the difference between producing research that just sits on a shelf and research that drives real-world change.

On May 22, CARISCA hosted a virtual training session titled “From Research to Impact: The Art of Academic Storytelling,” led by Dominic Essuman, a lecturer in sustainable management at the University of Sheffield. The training focused on equipping participants with strategies for transforming complex academic work into compelling stories.

The event was part of the CARISCA Training Series, which aims to boost the research capacity of KNUST and other African scholars.

The training covered three primary topics:

- Developing a compelling research storyline
- Telling your research story with clarity and confidence
- Reflecting on and learning from presentation experiences

“Generally, no matter how complex your research is, you can still go for a simpler way of telling it.”

Communicating through Story

Dr. Essuman emphasized that storytelling “allows a greater level of flexibility in terms of how you start your story or how you want to package your message.”

While academia typically values precision and detail, he argued, effective storytelling depends on clarity and connection.

Participants learned how to shift from rigid, jargon-heavy presentations to narratives that are “simple, clear, understandable, and memorable.”

“Generally, no matter how complex your research is, you can still go for a simpler way of telling it,” Dr. Essuman said. He explained that while academic language “tends to be very technical,” storytelling should be “easy to tell” and accessible to non-specialist audiences.

A strong academic story starts with a compelling trigger: an event, paradox, or gap that sparked the research. As Dr. Essuman explained,

“Stories have characters... Beyond the researcher, they may include people, organizations, supply chains, relationships, or communities.”



▲ Dr. Dominic Essuman

He reminded participants that good storytelling requires coherence: “If people cannot see the clear connections between where you are starting the story from and where you are ending, it’s not a good story.”

Dr. Essuman encouraged participants to avoid academic jargon when explaining their methods or findings: “If you use a survey, you don’t have to say ‘we used a positivist paradigm.’ It’s not important there... Keep things simple.”

He advised them to focus only on findings that relate to their core research questions: “Just state findings that are related to your research question... Any other details can appear in an appendix.”

He also stressed the power of visuals: “One image can say a lot... Make sure you incorporate visuals or graphic information appropriately.”

Key Questions to Guide Your Story

Dr. Essuman shared a five-part framework:

1. What triggered your study?
2. What did you study?
3. How did you study it?
4. What did you find?
5. Why does it matter?

“As part of telling your story, you should begin by telling the audience in plain language what triggered your study,” he explained.

“With this simple framework, you should be able to tell any academic story... even in 30 seconds,” he added.



TOP 10 KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Present your research in a storytelling form, not just as data.
- Use plain and simple language when communicating academic research.
- Be concise yet comprehensive in your academic storytelling.
- Don’t be confident without competence.
- Practice as often as you can.
- Avoid overloading slides with text.
- Don’t read directly from slides. Focus on telling the story.
- Tailor your presentation to the target listener or consumer of your findings.
- Prepare thoroughly. Don’t assume the audience understands.
- A clear story paired with practice delivers the message effectively.

THEY CALLED ME ‘PROF’: HOW A CHILDHOOD NICKNAME BECAME A LIFELONG MISSION

Benjamin Agyei-Owusu’s journey into academia began quite literally at birth.

He formed his earliest memories within the walls of the University of Ghana, where his mother had returned to further her education. Right from the start, higher education wasn’t just a pursuit; it was his environment.

His mother’s classmates jokingly mentioned how he resembled the then vice chancellor of the university and nicknamed him “Prof.”

That joke stuck. His family still calls him “Prof” to this day.

“I’m not saying the nickname made me choose academia,” he says. “But none of my family were surprised that I did.”

The recommendation came through faculty mentors, Prof. Abdul Samed Muntaka and Dr. John Frimpong Manso, and his response was an instant yes to the opportunity.

His parents, both teachers, imbued a sense of discipline and studiousness into him and his brothers.

While his father taught at the junior high level and his mother at the senior high, Agyei-Owusu was their full-time student at home. They drilled fundamentals of academic success, including doing homework, revising notes and meeting deadlines into him right from the start.

“It does something good for you when your parents are also your teachers,” he reflects. “I wouldn’t have it any other way.”

Discovering Supply Chain

When Agyei-Owusu began his undergraduate studies at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), he was still unsure of his academic path.

His early years at the KNUST School of Business (KSB) exposed him to a variety of business disciplines, including marketing, human resources and accounting.

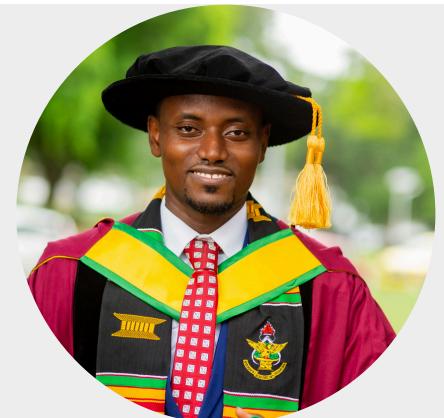
However, he found a deep connection with supply chain management after taking a few courses.

The subject was reputed to be tough, but that did not deter him.

“I was rather motivated to take on the challenge and excel at it,” he recalls.

The mentorship didn’t stop there. He participated in high-level training, attended countless seminars, conferences and workshops, and met with top scholars in the supply chain management field.

The program, he says, was intentional about preparing scholars for global impact, not just local relevance.



▲ Dr. Benjamin Agyei-Owusu

“I had already started applying to programs in the U.S. and the U.K. Then I heard about the CARISCA PhD scholarship, and it was exactly what I needed, right here in Ghana.”

From the start, CARISCA provided both academic rigor and a supportive environment. One early standout moment came during a Zoom call with Arizona State University professors Adegoke Oke and Thomas Choi. They reviewed his publication record and gave him feedback and advice on his research.

“Meeting with Prof. Oke and Prof. Choi inspired me to strive for even higher quality research, both in my Ph.D. and beyond,” he says.

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Landing the Postdoc at ASU

Shortly after completing his Ph.D., Agyei-Owusu was recommended by Prof. Goke for a position at Arizona State University's Global Center for Technology Transfer (GCTT). He interviewed for the position and was offered a role as a postdoctoral research scholar at the center.

"I had a big smile on my face for days. It felt like everything was aligning," he says.

Under the supervision of professors David Waldman and Donald Siegel, co-executive directors of GCTT, Agyei-Owusu's postdoc work focuses on supply chain issues within the context of technology transfer.

Technology transfer refers to the process by which new discoveries or inventions are transformed into useful products and services for consumers. While this process is widely recognized as critical to innovation, the role of supply chain issues in its success is often overlooked.

GCTT identified that many tech transfer initiatives struggle to succeed, and supply chain challenges may be a key contributing factor.

"People assume that innovative inventions easily translate into successful products," explains Agyei-Owusu. "However, supply chain issues such as procurement, production and distribution, when not effectively managed, can hamstring the successful development of innovative products and services."

"I can't fund Africa's research transformation. But I can share what I am learning now. And that's a start. "

In response, GCTT created a dedicated research portfolio to help address this issue.

"My role is to highlight these often-overlooked issues and explore how better supply chain practices can make the entire tech transfer process more efficient and successful," he says.

Agyei-Owusu's responsibilities are divided into two main areas: research and grantsmanship.

On the research side, he explores how supply chain issues influence the success of technology transfer, identifying ways to better move innovations from lab to market. On the grants side, he supports ongoing projects and helps develop proposals, especially those focused on improving healthcare through supply chain management and digital innovations.

"I'm learning from some of the top researchers in the field," he said. "What excites me most is the researcher I'm becoming. By the end of this postdoc program, I believe I'll have grown significantly, learned a great deal and be ready for what comes next."

Staying Grounded, Looking Ahead

Agyei-Owusu's academic mission now focuses on doing research with practical impact.

"I've found myself less interested in research that can't be understood or applied by a manager to improve a business or supply chain," he observes. "I'm becoming more passionate about research that has real-world impact and meaningful policy implications."



Photo Courtesy: Dr. Benjamin Agyei-Owusu

Final Reflections

Agyei-Owusu credits his resilience to his faith. A favorite quote from Philippians 4:13 carried him through his hardest moments: "I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me."

He also acknowledges the role of his long-term academic mentors, professors David Asamoah and Francis Andoh-Baidoo, in his academic and professional journey.

He is a husband and a father, raising his young daughter alongside his wife in Arizona. Together, they made the sacrifice of moving for the postdoc.

"Her support means everything," he says.

So how does he describe himself in three words?

"Excellence. Dedicated. Optimist."

And he still answers to the nickname "Prof."



Photo Courtesy: Dr. Benjamin Agyei-Owusu

SEVEN STUDENTS GRADUATE FROM CARISCA'S NEW SPECIALIZED SUPPLY CHAIN PROGRAMS AT KNUST



Seven CARISCA scholars celebrated their graduation from newly introduced specialized supply chain programs at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology's 58th Special Congregation in June.

CARISCA introduced master's programs in health, pharmaceutical, and agricultural supply chain management, run by the Department of Supply Chain and Information Systems at the KNUST School of Business. These scholars were enrolled in the 2024/2025 academic year for the one-year program.

These programs were developed in response to the growing need for professionals with expertise in sector-specific supply chain management across Africa. This is a major step in CARISCA's goal to strengthen local capacity and improve supply chains by increasing efficiency

and effectiveness, driving country self-reliance.

"As a pharmacist, I saw the need for a tailored approach that combines pharmaceutical knowledge with logistics expertise," said **Dr. Emmanuella Hagan**, a graduate of the MSc Health Supply Chain program. "This program gave me the tools and context-specific insights to understand how supply systems impact healthcare outcomes."

The seven graduates are part of a broader group of 108 out of 142 students who have received scholarships from CARISCA in the past five years. These include master's degrees in logistics and supply chain and procurement management, specialized programs, and doctoral programs. This reflects a continued impact similar to

More students are expected to graduate during the university's next congregation in November 2025.

A big congratulations to all seven graduates. CARISCA celebrates this important milestone with you and wishes you great success as you go on to lead change and create impact in your respective fields.

"This program gave me the tools and context-specific insights to understand how supply systems impact. "

Supply Chain Business Forum and Exhibition

Fueling Africa's Growth: Supply Chain Innovation and Financing

July 30–31, 2025 | Accra, Ghana

SUPPLY CHAIN BUSINESS FORUM AND EXHIBITION SET FOR JULY

The College of Physicians and Surgeons in Accra, Ghana, will be the place to be on **July 30–31** as we host the **Supply Chain Business Forum and Exhibition**. The event will bring together industry experts, business leaders, and academic researchers around the theme **“Fueling Africa's Growth: Supply Chain Innovation and Financing.”**

The goal of the forum is to enhance supply chain management practices across the continent.

The event will feature a dynamic blend of **keynote speeches, panel discussions, exhibitions, and networking engagements**. Companies operating across logistics, agriculture, energy, manufacturing, and digital platforms will also be showcasing their products and services in an interactive exhibition space.

Program

Serving as the special guest of honour for the event will be **Hon. Julius Debrah**, Chief of Staff of the Office of the President of the Republic of Ghana. The forum's exhibition hall will remain open throughout the two days, allowing attendees to connect with companies working in logistics, agri-processing, transportation, retail, and digital innovation.

A major highlight of **Day One** will be the panel discussion on **“Unlocking Innovation: How Africa's Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Can Transform Supply Chains.”** The panel will explore how startups and entrepreneurial ventures are transforming supply chain processes.

Day Two of the forum will dive into sector-specific financing strategies, featuring two insightful panel discussions:

- “Innovative Supply Chain Financing Models for Key Sectors of Ghana's Economy”
- “Navigating Ghana's Automotive Industry”

These sessions will provide actionable insights for entrepreneurs, investors, and policymakers seeking to unlock capital and foster sustainable supply chain development.



Hon. Julius Debrah
Special Guest of Honour

Learn more and register: cariscabusinessforum.com



The forum will feature keynote speakers across the two days, each addressing different aspects of the event's central theme.

- **Dr. Maxwell Ampong, Chief Executive of Maxwell Investments Group**, will speak on collaboration and resource sharing as a driver of economic growth.
- **Hon. Dr. Andrews Osei Okrah, CEO of the Ghana Tree Crops Development Authority**, will share insights from the agricultural supply chain sector.
- On Day Two, **Dr. Fredrick Appoh, CEO of the Railway Development Authority**, will deliver a keynote on supply chain financing, with a focus on opportunities and challenges in Ghana's railway sector.
- **Professor Xiande Zhao, JD.COM Chair Professor in Operations and Supply Chain Management and Programme Co-Director of AI and Digital Intelligence for Business**, will also deliver a keynote address.

Supporters

In order to make the Business Forum possible, CARISCA is supported by the **LEARN Logistics by Kühne Foundation**, which now funds the centre's flagship events and major activities.

Headline sponsors for the forum include the **Volta River Authority** and **Consolidated Shipping Agencies (Conship)**.

Gold sponsors are **Federated Commodities Limited (FEDCO)** and **Coral Reef Innovation Africa**.

Event partners also include the **Association of Ghana Industries (AGI)**, the **Business and Financial Times**, the **Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT)** and the **Maxwell Investments Group**.

Registration

Registration is now open at cariscabusinessforum.com

Rates: Individual: GH₵ 500 || Group of 5 or more: GH₵ 400 per person.

The event also features an exhibition space, where organizations across logistics, agri-processing, transportation, energy, manufacturing, and digital services will present innovations and build partnerships.

Interested in sponsoring or exhibiting?

Contact: **024-469-2953 / 024-413-1052**

MEET THE KEYNOTES:



Dr. Maxwell Ampong



Hon. Dr. Andrews Osei Okrah



Dr. Fredrick Appoh



Professor Xiande Zhao

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CARISCA'S UPCOMING EVENTS

July 16-18

Fifth Supply Chain Research Summit

Reimagining Africa's Supply Chains for a Sustainable Future

July 30-31

Second Supply Chain Business Forum and Exhibition

Fueling Africa's Growth: Supply Chain Innovation and Financing

Aug. 20-21

Research Capacity Workshop

Building and Defending African Context Specific Theory in Business and Management Research

To learn more about and register for CARISCA events,

go to carisca.knust.edu.gh/events



CARISCA

Centre for Applied Research
and Innovation in Supply Chain – Africa

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Managing Down

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Learn more and register:

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For More Information

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