

Innovations in Africa around Covid impacted contexts

USAf HELM Webinar: Covid -19 – the good, the bad, and the ingenious

August 31, 2021, 2-4pm/8-10am ET

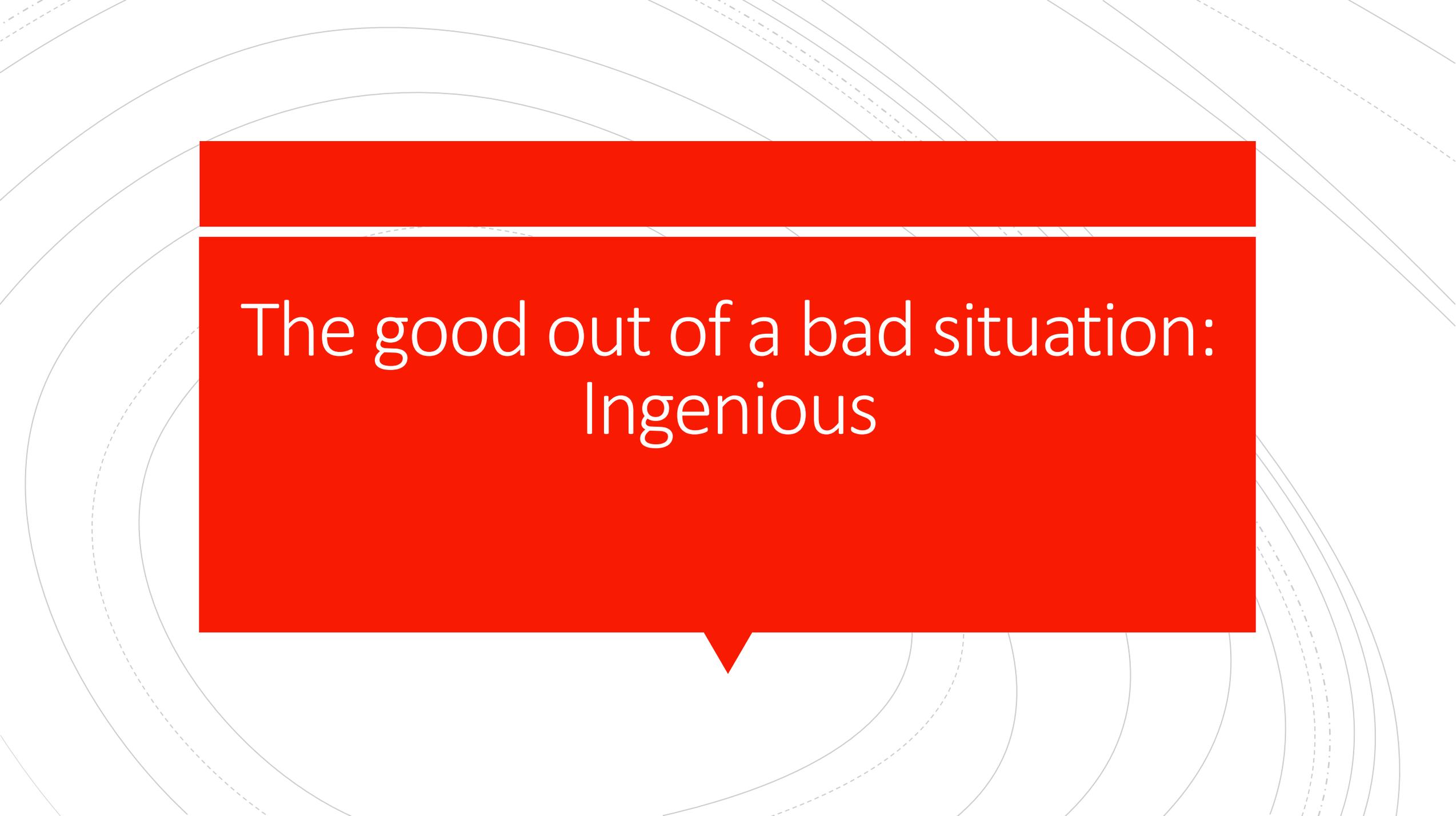
Teboho Moja

Predicted Changes and Disruptions

- **The Church and university remain recognizable from many centuries**
- **Adaptation along the way but not major changes – wars, political turmoil, staff and student strikes, (Fomunyam 2017)**
- **Peter Drukker the K- guru predicted changes at the turn of the century due to ICT**
- **Pandemic disruptions have been the main factor for changes not ICT, however ICT was a great asset to have.**
- **University buildings stood empty but the normal activities carried on – teaching, research and some public service.**

Reimagination - Survival

- All services had to be reimagined
- Senior Leadership and Student Affairs Services - forefront of the innovations
- SAS – became essential workers providing essential services.
- Remote student support – continue to enhance learning and development, build communities, and advance the social justice agenda.
- Provide students with basic needs in some instances – food, accommodation, etc.
- Attention for students living and learning with disabilities.



The good out of a bad situation:
Ingenious

Research Related to SAS

- JSAA – Call for papers – understand issues being addressed from African scholars' perspective
- 110 submissions from 18 African countries plus 5 other countries.
- Broad range of topics that scholars were already studying
- Impossible to cover all the research that came through but will focus on a few from this issue-
<https://upjournals.up.ac.za/index.php/jsaa/index>
- 3 areas to share – Disability, redesigning of student leadership orientation, and the fact that context we find ourselves in matters and SAS has to find a way to integrate the different context.

Disguised blessing for disability

- Disability issues highlighted worldwide.
- Study using the **Capabilities Approach's** concept of conversion factors revealed that circumstances *enable or constrain* learning of students
- Students mentioned they learned better in online and remote learning despite some challenges they had to face.
 - Some already had the equipment needed.
 - Disability accommodations already included.
 - Less anxiety of being in a crowded classroom
 - Access to recorded lessons.
 - Use of assignments vs examinations for assessment.
- Recommends use of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to cater for all forms of diversity.
- <https://upjournals.up.ac.za/index.php/jsaa/article/view/1431/132>
1

Orientation for student leadership

- Change from face to face to online training – loss of the social constructivist design element in the development process.
- Redesigning the orientation of student leaders for remote/online using online learning theories and guiding principles.
 - ADDIE framework (Analyse, Design, Develop, Implement, and Evaluate Model)
 - Affordance theory
 - The Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
 - The multimedia principle
 - The Community of Inquiry (CoI) theoretical Framework
- Redesigning the program enriched student practitioner experiences
- <https://doi.org/10.24085/jsaa.v9i1.1436>

Context Matters More than Ever Before

- A framework for providing service and taking into consideration students contextual environment
- Challenges – institutional resources and the external social context.
 - Students are social beings
 - Students learn in contextualized ways
- Covid has changed the context of learning
 - family context and dynamics
 - Gender roles in families
 - Renegotiated spaces
 - Family home external environment – safety, electricity, transport, etc – need to be functional for success.
- SAS plays a role in mediating impact of 4 domains identified in this article.

<https://upjournals.up.ac.za/index.php/jsaa/article/view/1425/1315>

SAS' Systemic Contextual Model for Student Success

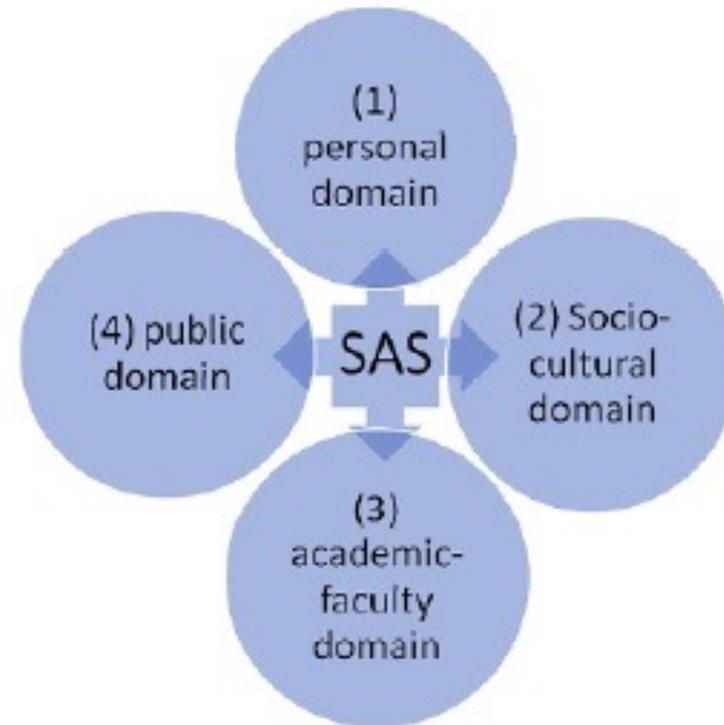


Figure 7: SAS' Systemic-contextual Model for Student Success: The four systems/domains which SAS mediates and engages, in order to support students' success

The proposed model – Areas of support

- Personal domain > internal intra-personal factors (*motivation, drive, abilities, etc*) –
- Socio-cultural domain > resources, family dynamics, gender roles etc
- Academic – Faculty domain > inst. culture, living and learning experiences, teaching frameworks -
- Public domain > macrosystems, basic infrastructure, safety, etc. -

Conclusion – Lessons

- **Great lessons to be learned – history – past crises have led to the dev of new policies (Chetty and Luescher) and long term solutions**
- **Investment in digital infrastructure and internet connectivity.**
- **Investment in laptops rather than desktops since they are more flexible to use in office and at home**
- **Social justice issues to remain on our agenda given the inequities in our societies – specific policies need to be in place.**
- **Mental health services to be boosted to serve the broader university community.**
- **Data analytics, monitoring, and evaluation are key finding solutions.**

Lessons continued

- Set aside funds for emergency situations – delays in financial aid.
- Productivity is possible without the need for physical space on campus and a saving on infrastructure such as new building – redirect money to digital infrastructure.

Conclusion

- **Adaptation**
- **Innovation**
- **Lessons**
- **Overall – a challenge but positive things came out of the experience.**