![pasgr.org — PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICAN SOCIAL & GOVERNANCE RESEARCH]

Call for Applications

Advanced Training for Multi-Method and Policy-Oriented Research

October 26 – November 11, 2016 in Nairobi, Kenya

The Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR) is offering a professional development training programme for multi-method and policy-oriented research in:

a) Advanced Research Design
b) Research methods in: Interpretive Methods & Ethnography, Social Network Analysis, Applied Quantitative Research, Comparative Case Studies Research, and Survey Design & Execution.

The training is unique in using participants' research and small group work to explore design innovations in multi-method research that engages public policy. The training emphasises the design of mixed methods strategies, and explores some of the different ways and moments throughout the research cycle that researchers could engage with different policy actors. It is applied and participant centred, and uses innovative alternative pedagogic approaches such as e-cases, simulations, animations and peer-learning.

PASGR is an independent, non-partisan pan-African not-for-profit organisation established in 2011 and located in Nairobi, Kenya. Currently engaged in more than 24 African countries, PASGR works to enhance research excellence in governance and public policy that contributes to the overall wellbeing of women and men. In partnership with individual academics and researchers, higher education institutions, research think tanks, civil society organisations, business and policy communities both in the region and internationally, PASGR supports the production and dissemination of policy relevant research; designs and delivers suites of short professional development courses for researchers and policy actors; and facilitates the development of collaborative higher education programmes.

Course Structure and Dates

This is a residential programme that will be offered in two consecutive blocks, including a *mandatory pre- and post-workshop online engagement:*

Block 1: Advanced Research Design (11 training days: October 26- November 5, 2016)
- Designing Social Inquiry
- Multi-Methods Research
- Critical Policy Engaged Research

Block 2: Elective Modules in Research Methods (5 training days: November 7-11, 2016)
- Interpretive Methods and Ethnography
- Social Network Analysis
- Applied Quantitative Research
- Comparative Case Studies Research
- Survey Design and Execution

For Block 2, participants: (i) are expected to choose only one elective, and (ii) must have previously taken PASGR's Advanced Research Design (ARD) course or Multi-Method Research Course (MMRC). Participants registering for the Block 1 course are encouraged to also register for an elective (Block 2) module. The electives will run concurrently.

Certificates of Completion will be issued on successful attendance of all modules participants are selected into; as well as completion of all required course/peer reading, reviews and assignments.

Target Applicant Profile

These are high level professional development courses for *active and committed African researchers* interested in broadening their knowledge and skills in design and execution of research that lends itself to a multi-method approach application in policy-oriented social science and governance questions. Applicants working in think tanks, universities, policy-research oriented NGOs, civil society, media or government departments are encouraged to apply.

In past years, faculty who teach research methods have incorporated PASGR's training in their courses. It may also benefit university teaching staff engaged in PhD or post-doctoral research.

PASGR is especially interested in receiving applications from female researchers and researchers working in conflict or post-conflict environments.

Participation fee

This programme is heavily subsidised. PASGR will cover training and course materials costs while participants are expected to provide all other costs, including travel and residential expenses. Residential expenses (bed, breakfast and dinner) are outlined below. Participants are encouraged to bring some money to cover incidental and out-of-pocket costs as PASGR does not give per diem.

Residential costs (bed, breakfast and dinner)	Block 1:	USD 650
	Block 2:	USD 350
	Block 1 & 2:	USD 1000

This training will be held in Nairobi, Kenya and the actual training location will be communicated to selected participants.

How to Apply

Interested applicants must submit a duly filled application form and CV. The application form can be downloaded from: http://www.pasgr.org/research-design-and-methods-courses-oct-nov-2016/

The completed application form and updated CV should be uploaded to the appropriate link, as follows:

Advanced Research Design: http://bit.ly/ARD2016Nov
Interpretive Methods and Ethnography: http://bit.ly/ETH2016Nov
Social Network Analysis: http://bit.ly/SNA2016Nov
Applied Quantitative Research: http://bit.ly/AQR2016Nov
Comparative Case Studies: http://bit.ly/CCS2016Nov
Survey Design and Execution: http://bit.ly/SDE2016Nov

The deadline for submission of both documents is **Sunday July 24, 2016**.

For questions and/or clarification, please email nirungu@pasgr.org

Detailed Course Content

BLOCK I: ADVANCED RESEARCH DESIGN MODULES

i.   Multi-Method Research

There is a growing interest in mixed method research among social scientists due to its relevance for policy-oriented research. The practice of mixing methods has emerged as a suitable complement to the dominant quantitative and qualitative paradigms. This module provides insights into the mixed method approach and its utility for policy engaged research. It examines the basic assumptions of the

mixed method tradition and its fundamental principles. The module further discusses how to mix and sequence methods within a mixed method research design. The final sessions of the module provide hands-on opportunity for participants to critique selected mixed method studies. Participants also build skills that they can apply to their own research.

ii.   Critical Policy Engagement

Researchers engaged in policy-related work stand to benefit if they interest policy actors in the work they are doing, involve them in the various stages of their research project, and get their feedback to enrich the research design. This module aims to enhance researchers' capacity to strengthen their relationship with policy actors in order to improve their research design and the chances that their findings will be used to engage policy. The module helps participants develop knowledge and skills related to building relationships with various policy actors and decision makers. It refines participants' ability to communicate research ideas and findings. It equips them with skills to distil the key message(s) they would like to communicate to relevant policy actors.

iii.   Designing Social Inquiry

The module's first goal is to develop participants' critical engagement with the existing state of knowledge in their respective fields. It equips participants with the competencies to question conventional definitions of the problem, the categories or techniques used for its analysis, and possible interpretations.

It also helps participants to turn ideas or assumptions into researchable questions. This involves making explicit not only one's own possible explanations or hypothesis, but also rival ones that exist in the literature, or circulated through other media. An important part of this process is to explicitly and carefully define the key concepts in a study. Finally, it introduces participants to advances in concept formation and illustrates how concepts can be modified, redefined, or created to accurately capture the empirical events, actors, or processes being investigated.

BLOCK II MODULES (ELECTIVES)

i.   Interpretive Methods and Ethnography

Interpretive social science rests on the idea that unlike the world of physical objects, the social world is made up of thinking and feeling beings engaging in meaningful action. To understand the social world, then, we must grasp the point of view of the actors who inhabit it and the context in which they do. Interpretive methods, used by various branches of the humanities and social sciences, frequently play a role in concept and theory generation, and can be used in conjunction with comparative case studies, action research, and network analysis. They can also be used, at various stages of a research project, to inform or complement quantitative methods.

Interpretive methods are particularly central to anthropology and ethnography, on which we focus here. In particular, this module provides training in two of ethnography's core techniques: participant observation and semi-structured interviewing. Participants will also practice coding and analysing the data generated by these techniques.

Through a combination of presentations, applied learning (practical experience), group work and feedback, the participants will develop an appreciation for the different ways in which interpretive social inquiry and the key methods mentioned above can contribute to policy-oriented research.

ii.   Social Network Analysis

Social network analysis is an analytical approach that allows researchers to analyse patterns of relationships among a set of actors. The actors are usually people, but they can also be organisations, cities, websites, nations, etc. Social network analysis can be applied to substantive problems that cut across many subjects and disciplines. Any research problem where relationships

are important may benefit from social network analysis. In this course you will be introduced to the theoretical foundations and research methods used in social network analysis. The course will also explore the usefulness of social network analysis for the study of governance and public policy.

iii.   Applied Quantitative Research

This module introduces basic statistics and econometric techniques, underlining the appropriate techniques that can be considered for analysis depending on the type of data available. It further explores the idea and intuition behind randomisation and why it is important in establishing causality. Practical examples are given for understanding the concept of randomisation and why it can lead to erroneous results if it is not taken into account. The difference between correlation and causality is illustrated using different designs that establish causality, such as randomised control trials (RCTs). It also distinguishes between inferences based on design vis-à-vis those based on econometric techniques.

iv.   Comparative Case Studies Research

When presented with research that has policy suggestions or implications, policy makers will often ask: "Does it work? Does it cause something to change or to happen?" They are asking about causality. Causal inference plays an important role in generating evidence-based research that can influence policy decisions. This module looks at different comparative case study designs and the types of causal claims and interpretive analysis they allow. It discusses how to define "a case" and locate it within broader phenomena. The module also explores how case study research contributes to theory development and concept formation.

Strategies for causal assessment in small-N (small sample) analysis are distinct from those in large-N (large sample) quantitative studies. Cases are rarely selected because they are representative of a larger universe of events, processes, or actors. In small-N research, much hinges on the criteria used for selecting the cases. The module introduces several approaches, including a quasi-experimental template for case selection.

Researchers in the quantitative tradition often question causal statements derived from small-N analysis, which they believe suffer from selection bias. We'll discuss how to address validity, selection bias and the representativeness of cases in small-N case study analysis.

v.   Survey Design & Execution

Surveys produce rather than collect data. Designing an effective survey, one that captures what you are after, is an art. Moving from general hypotheses and research questions to specific and measurable concepts, and then to simple questions which respondents can understand and answer, is far from straightforward. There are many decision points. There are also trade-offs in how we measure concepts, the response categories we choose, sampling strategies, and even how interviews are conducted.

All of these components influence the kind of data a survey produces. Survey research requires us to make decisions that apply to millions from a small representative group. If done well, surveys help us understand the dynamics of large groups of people and make generalisations. For policy actors who want to tackle major social issues, surveys can be a powerful tool. However, it is easy to get surveys 'wrong' and produce unreliable data. Unreliable data can lead to poor evidence for public policy.

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