



Season 2- Episode 3: Networking Through Embedded Researchers

In Episode 3 of the second series of the STARTcast, Mzime Murisa, a Program Specialist at START, discusses the role of embedded researchers in the FRACTAL project with Rudo Mamombe, who was the Embedded Researcher in Harare, Zimbabwe. In her discussion she also includes comments from Dr Anna Taylor, Dr Lulu van Rooyen and Brenda Mwalukanga.



[Rudo Mamombe](#) was embedded in the Harare City Council's water department while completing her MPhil studies at the Chinhoyi University of Technology. Her studies focused on issues to do with water and decision-making in Harare.



[Dr. Anna Taylor](#) is a researcher at the University of Cape Town. Her research addresses questions of climate adaptation in cities, particularly developing a process-based understanding of how urban climate adaptation happens, is organized and governed. She coordinated the embedded researchers for FRACTAL.



[Dr. Lulu van Rooyen-Pretorius](#) was embedded with the eThekweni municipality in Durban, South Africa, whilst she was a postdoctoral student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.



[Brenda Mwalukanga](#) was the Embedded Researcher in Lusaka, Zambia. She worked closely with the Lusaka City Council and also the Lusaka Water Security Initiative.

In the FRACTAL Project, Embedded researchers:

- Acted as champions, bridges and intermediaries between the universities and the municipalities.
- Had slightly different roles in each city but all enhanced the trans-disciplinary process by identifying collaborative, mutually beneficial research agendas in their dual positions,
- Brought and learnt people, organizational and communication skills by leaving their (knowledge) comfort zones, practicing a willingness to learn, patience, flexibility, humility, proactiveness, and empathy,
- Learnt constraints and opportunities by being involved in and understanding both organizations.
- Were central to bringing researchers and societal stakeholders together to collaboratively co-design solutions to climate risks,
- Worked to ensure that FRACTAL's research agenda was shaped by the users of climate information,
- Helped to build good and lasting working relationships between stakeholders, decision makers and researchers.
- Added value as knowledge brokers who established, built, facilitated and sustained a variety of co-exploration and co-development platforms



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Helpful Links

To learn more about the embedded research (ER) approach, here are some further resources:

- [ER introductory video](#)
A short, two minute introduction to the role of an ER and some of their successes and challenges.
- [ER webinar](#)
A 2019, FCFA hosted webinar that gives details of the ER approach, including its origins and constraints. Four FRACTAL ERs give their feedback on the lessons learned. Anna, Lulu and Brenda's comments in the podcast were taken from this webinar and it includes a wealth of information about the concept and the role of ERs in FRACTAL.
- [Impact Story 5](#)
A two page summary of the role of the ER in FRACTAL.
- [Working paper](#)
This FRACTAL working paper unpacks the role of the ER. It also unpacks some of the case studies.
- [Adaptation Futures Conference paper](#)
A useful overview of the ER approach and activities throughout FRACTAL.
- Two FCFA articles discuss the ER's role in [Windhoek](#) and [Durban](#).
- [START ProSus magazine](#) interview on the [ER approach](#)
An in-depth interview with the FRACTAL ER Coordinator, Anna Taylor on the embedded approach, ERs and how it all worked in the project
- [START](#)
- [FRACTAL](#)
- [FCFA](#)
- [WeAdapt](#)
- [ACDI](#)

