



KIBU NEWS

A Bi-Weekly Digital Newsletter of Kibabii University

Week



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Prof. Ipara Gives Public Lecture and Launches Book in Colourful Fete



**Know Your Scholar |
Meet Dr. Risper Wepukhulu**

**2020/21 Theme:
Exercising Academic Freedom**



**Announce
Here**



Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

Welcome to Issue 10 of KIBU NEWSWEEK.

In this issue, we headline with the first Public Lecture given by KIBU Vice Chancellor Prof. Isaac Ipara Odeo. This week also marks the reopening of the University after a COVID 19 outbreak that led to closure in March 2020.

We welcome you to read through for in-depth coverage of other topical issues affecting the University.

Enjoy your reading!

**MR. Meshack Nyambane Makori,
Asst. Public Relations Officer
CHIEF EDITOR**



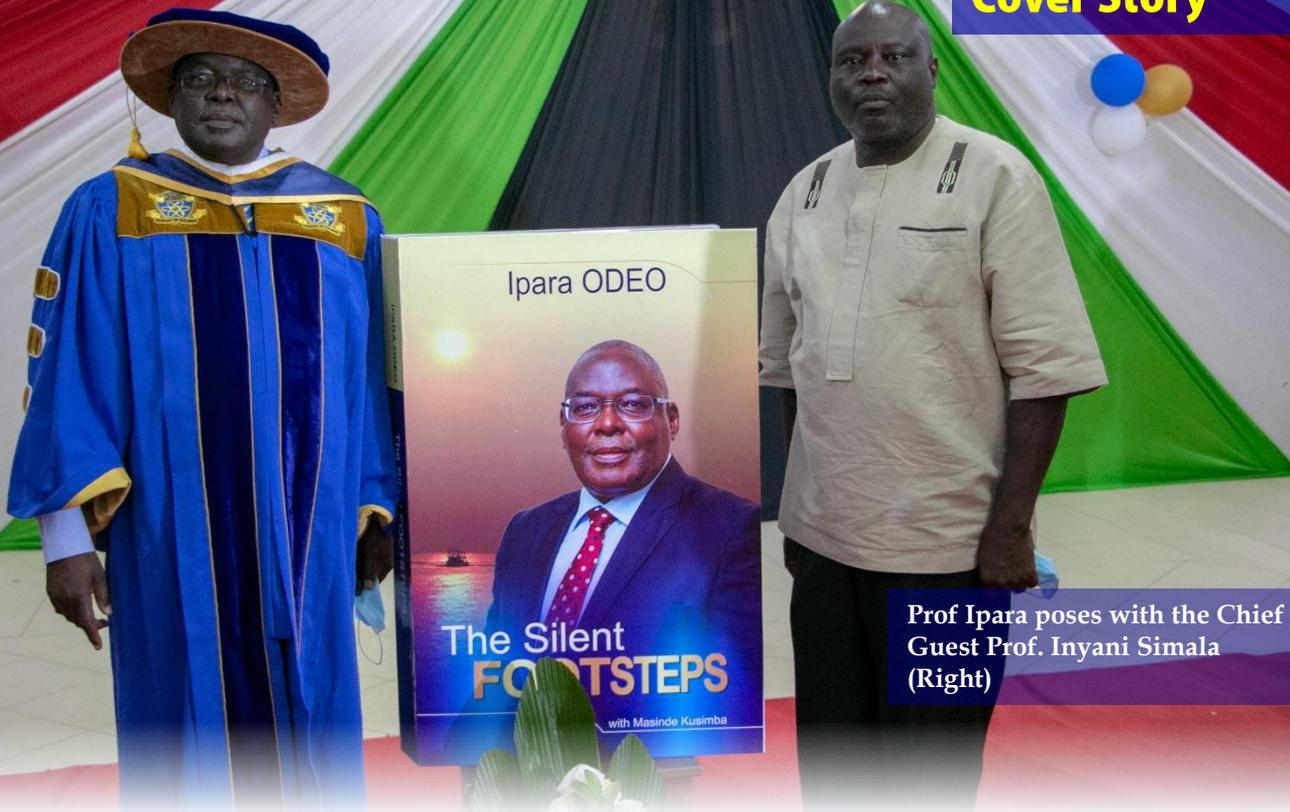
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Prof Ipara poses with the Chief Guest Prof. Inyani Simala (Right)

Prof. Ipara Gives Public Lecture and Launches Book in Colourful Fete

By Emmanuel Wamalwa |
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On Thursday, October 8, 2020, Kibabii University cemented her icon, Prof. Isaac Ipara Odeo, to his position in the limelight of academia during his first Public lecture titled "UKATI WA HAIBA YA MWALIMU KATIKA UJIFUNZAJI WA KISWAHILI: JE NADHARIA IPO?". The event lay a platform for the launch of Prof. Ipara's long-awaited autobiography "The Silent Footsteps" that saw educational figures from other Universities stream into the institution to have a taste of tales of the polished Professor of Swahili.

The launch of book and public lecture was attended by The Chief Administrative Secretary (CAS), Ministry of Education Mr. Zack Kinuthia, Bungoma County Government Deputy Governor Hon. Prof. Charles Ngome, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology's Ag. Vice Chancellor Prof. Solomon Shibairo, immediate former Executive Secretary, East Africa Kiswahili Commission Prof. Inyani Simala, Prof. Nathan Ogechi of Moi University, Prof. Egara Kabaji and host of other literary scholars across the East African Region.

Prof. Ipara is among the people behind many Swahili textbooks, and Kamusi used in Kenyan Secondary schools since the late President Daniel Arap Moi directed the implementation of the 8-4-4 system of Education and making of Swahili language as the compulsory discipline in Kenyan schools.

"...I started formal Education at Masaek School in Mount Elgon in 1962. It was made of grass-thatched muddy classrooms. Mostly, we wrote on the earthen floor. We also had some classes being conducted under a tree..."

"...While teaching at Kaimosi and Siriba TTCs, I interacted a lot with University lecturers and Professors. We engaged in endless academic discourses. This heightened my desire to teach in a University, besides climbing the academic ladder to acquire a Doctorate..." Prof. Ipara's autobiography reads in part.

While addressing the public and different media outlets, Prof. Ipara confirmed that the Swahili language had been an endangered species due to many factors that he summarized as lack of resources, teachers, and laziness.



ABOVE: The father of Prof. Isaac Ipara Odeo Mzee Eriya Odeo keenly following the proceedings of the event

"The teaching of the Swahili language started in 1964. There is a need to teach Swahili since it has a wider readership and is growing daily.



ABOVE: CAS for Ministry of Education Mr. Zack Kinuthia giving his remarks at the event

Languages have their rights just as human beings. Therefore, Swahili has the right to be taught in schools and to be used as a National language," Prof. Ipara said.

On his end, CAS Kinuthia said that he would champion more scholarly works to the Government, adding that Prof. Ipara should produce his autobiography in Swahili and submit copies to the notable national libraries and archives for wider readership.

"It is important that we encourage the production of scholarly work to the Government. I urge Prof. Ipara to rewrite his autobiography in the Swahili language and translate it to other African indigenous languages. Some of the translated copies should then be submitted to Kenyatta Memorial Library for the public usage," Education CAS said.

CAS Kinuthia further stated that the Swahili language is slowly finding its well into the Government, affirming that Kenya's 2010 Constitution had allowed the legislators to use Swahili in the Parliament, unlike the past years when all legislators were supposed to use the English language.

“Today, Swahili language is being used in the Parliament, which was not the case in recent years. We as the government, we shall work with Scholars and channel enough money in learning Institutions for research purposes,” CAS Kinuthia added.

Various scholars, mostly Prof. Ipara’s former students addressed with outpouring praises.

In his address, Prof. Ogechi confirmed to have been taught by Prof. Isaac Ipara Odeo at Moi University.

“Mwalimu Ipara was my undergraduate lecturer. He made me desire to be a lecturer. One thing that has not been said here is that we organized demonstrations at Moi University for a Swahili lecturer during our era,” Prof. Ogechi said.



ABOVE: Moi University's Prof. Nathan Ogechi gives his remarks as the Principal Guest

The subject revealed that the person brought to cool the hot temperatures of the strike was Prof. Ipara as the first lecturer of Swahili.

“During those days, the Swahili language was being taught in English. We were told to call off the strike since they had found a lecturer to take us through Swahili lectures, and that was Prof. Ipara,” he added.

About Prof. Ipara’s autobiography, he confirms his first interview at Moi University and how he emerged the best.

“In 1988, Moi University, which was barely three years old, advertised for tutorial fellows. I applied and was called for an interview by the then Vice-Chancellor Prof. Shellamiah Okoth Keya, a Professor of Soil Science...”

“...After the interview, the Dean of Education, Prof. Everett Standa, who had earlier taught me at KU, whispered to me in the corridors that I had performed well and I would be taken...” Prof. Ogechi’s sentiments read in part.

Prof. Ogechi confirmed that Prof. Ipara helped him undertake his (Prof. Ogechi) undergraduate studies at Moi University.

“He is a humble man, just the way the title of auto-biography reads. He was a resourceful person to me when I was undertaking my undergraduate studies. We have been friends for a long time,” Prof. Ogechi stated.



ABOVE: Prof . Egara Kabaji of Masinde Muliro University during the event.

Public Lecture and Book Launch Pictorial



ABOVE: Bungoma County Deputy Governor Prof. Charles Ngome graced the occasion.



ABOVE: Chairman of the Organizing Committee of the Public Lecture and Book Launch Prof. Ing. Benedict Mutua



ABOVE: Bungoma County CEC, Education and Vocational Training Ms. Betty Mayeku



ABOVE: Prof. Ipara's grandson displays the book at the launch. Looking on is Prof. Ipara's wife Prof. Hellen Ipara.



ABOVE: Members of Prof. Ipara's family present gifts to him after the launch of book.



“Social Intelligence is as Important as Intelligence Quotient!” Says Dr. Risper Wepukhulu Namasaka.

Interview by Meshack Nyambane | mnyambane@kibu.ac.ke

In this edition, we interview the Dean, Faculty of Education and Social Sciences; the largest faculty in staff and student enrolment. As one of the founding members of staff for Kibabii University, she takes us through her journey of academia and her passion for mentorship to young people and the various milestones the University has achieved since its inception in March 2012.

Q: Tell us about yourself, your academic and professional journey.

I am a Bukusu girl, born in Mwangale village, Kamukuywa Ward, Bungoma County. I am the 9th born in the family of eleven, seven boys, four girls. We were brought up by parents who mainly depended on subsistence farming; mainly planting maize and keeping animals. My father spent most of his time in building construction. He built houses for the European settlers in the white settlement schemes as my mother concentrated on the farm.

I started schooling in 1975 in Kamusinde FYM Primary School and later moved to Kibabii Girls Boarding Primary where I did my CPE examinations in 1982. I was selected to Bunyore Girls School in 1983 and sat for my O' Level exams in 1986. At that time, Bunyore Girls was being branded the Alliance of Western Province because of marvellous academic performance record.

Know your Scholar



After my O'Level, I did well and proceeded to Misikhu Girls where I did my A' Level exams in 1988. That year, I was the best in that class. This gave me an opportunity to teach as an "Untrained Teacher" (UT) at Kamusinde Mixed Secondary School. I was there up to March 1989 when we were taken to NYS for a further 3 months. I then joined Moi University and finished my undergraduate degree in 1992. I happened to be posted by TSC to St. Mary's Sosio Girls in 1993 to teach History/Government and Religious Education even before my graduation.

Q: That was a record time! What was your experience like? Fresh from campus, a job and bigger responsibilities at a young age.

The experience was great. I served at the school of 13 years in various capacities and especially as a Head of Department for Humanities. While there, I got a scholarship to Moi University to study Masters in Educational Communication and Technology which I completed in 2001.

In 2006, I registered for Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Communication Technology. After coursework, I requested for a transfer to Wamalwa Kijana Secondary School which is about 10kms from Sosio Girls Sec. School where I was given the responsibility of heading the Guidance and Counselling Department. Part of my achievements were being in charge of the neatest dormitory. I also received awards as the best performing teacher in the school and also the teacher of the year in 1999 when my CRE subject became top in Kimilili Division.

Q: When did you develop the interest to leave the classroom for the lecture hall?

Immediately I left Wamalwa Kijana, I worked at Bili Bili Secondary where I rose to the position of Deputy Principal in 2008. It is while at that School that I graduated with my PHD and set a record

as the first PHD holder in secondary school! I remained in the school for a further 3 years, and it is at this time that I developed the urge to move to higher education. In March 2020, I secured an interview with Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology and was appointed lecturer in the Department of Social Science Education. I worked at there for 2 years and on 2nd March 2012, I was seconded to Kibabii University by University Management and Council as one of the pioneer staff.

Q: We have read a lot of literature about the history of Kibabii University. As one of the founders, tell us how exactly the journey has been?

The journey has been exciting. In 2012, we never had the basics that are required for an institution. We did not have offices, furniture, neither did we have staff. We did not even have students! We used to operate from a construction site office. It was a trying period for us with our then coordinator Prof. Isaac Ipara Odeo who is today the Vice Chancellor. On 12th March, 2012 when our first students arrived, it was the day that we were purchasing mattresses for them to sleep. We want to thank them for their perseverance. Today we have the best hostel facilities in the country and ultra-modern lecture rooms. It is indeed a journey.

My challenge to the other staff who joined us later, let us add value to this institution. Let us be disciplined and perform our tasks as assigned.

Q: You head the largest faculty in the University in terms of staff and students, how is the experience like?

I have a lot to say, but challenges turned to opportunities would write even a bigger story.

Know your Scholar



Being the largest faculty in the compound, we have our good share of challenges. The first challenge is that most of our students don't want to attend classes, yet we are mentoring them to be the best teachers. We thank management because we have put down mechanisms to tackle this problem. With the upscaling of online classes, you can easily follow a digital register to ensure minimum class hours are attained by each student before examinations.

Secondly, in the past we have had very few staff on permanent basis. With reliance on part time staff, we lacked the aspect of close mentorship and guidance to our students. We have currently employed more permanent staff and we look forward for more.

Q: In 2009 at Moi University you successfully defended a PHD thesis titled "Attitudes of secondary school students towards pre-marital sex: effects on schooling and management of HIV/AIDS scourge in the larger Bungoma District". 10 years later, we are receiving shocking statistics of cases of teenage pregnancy, more so during the COVID 19 closure of schools. What is your comment on this?

Just as it were in 2009, our youth do not read the information about premarital sex, and when they read, they choose not to adhere to the information. In past years, the youth were ignorant and were blaming everything on their parents. We also realized that at the time, the statistics showed that the HIV/AIDS scourge was slightly higher among the youth as compared to now. With this COVID 19, we seem to have reversed on the gains made by various quotas.

My advice on what is happening now is, let us be closer to the youth. Starting from parents down to schools, and to Government agencies to understand what has changed and how to solve this problem.

We need to do a lot of mentorship and discussions. The youth should also be receptive to the information they are given because this is their personal responsibility. Let them have a meeting with themselves.

Q: Further statistics indicate that few girls are taking up admission spaces in university as compared to boys. What contributions have you made to empower the girl child and encouraging them to take up competitive space in society?

As an individual, I spend a lot of time with the youth. I walk in churches and public gatherings urging young girls to add value to themselves. I give them information and advise them. I give them tips on how to survive in environments that may not be conducive for girls.

My husband and myself have a project named "Donana Enterprises". This enterprise brings together a group of young girls and a few boys who create income generating ideas like making door mats and other artefacts for sell. The proceeds are deposited into their own accounts and profits are ploughed back to expand the production of more artefacts. The project is educating the girls to stop overdependence on other people for basic items like sanitary pads. This makes them less vulnerable from exploitation. So far, the girls are traversing Kimilili Constituency encouraging other girls to be self-dependent.

Q: Previously, we have seen you perform a role a Chair for Students elections. Have student leadership elections transformed from the earlier years?



In 2014 and before, University politics were very polarized. There were political camps. You could see them. Students had a lot of space to express themselves but most of the time, that freedom was taken overboard. There were occasional riots in Kenyan Universities and some could lead to deaths and permanent disability for victims. Fortunately, no riots were witnessed at Kibabii University. With the current system of election in place, there is reduced tension. My advice to the students participating in elections, elect leaders who are focused, objective and those with interest of the university and your welfare. Do not elect leaders based on ethnic backgrounds. And for the young people seeking elective positions in university, do not forget that your actions today will affect you for the rest of your life.

Q: We have read somewhere that you actually watch football? Do you have a soccer team that you religiously support?

My first love is netball. But during ball game competitions in my hay days, I developed a lot of interest in football. I loved to see how the young men and women pulled crowds during soccer matches in inter-school competitions. So, I became a darling of football. Additionally, most of my family members actually love football. But you know as you get married and grow older, the energy to follow passion diminishes.

I am a strong supporter for Harambee Stars and Liverpool but I cannot even remember the names of those players (giggles).

Q: There has been talk about some university courses being “useless”. There are even proposals to cut funding to these kinds of courses. What is your scholarly authoritative opinion on this?

All courses are important and necessary. It is only that the society has not attached value to some courses. In the sense that, when you look at the objectives of education, they cut across all courses offered in universities. In humanities, there are critical components that we teach on values, critical thinking, life skills that make learners grow up focused and knowing the next steps in life when they finally leave the university. The world today has high demand for social intelligence as opposed to the popular belief and focus on intelligence quotient (IQ). That's my opinion.

Q: As a seasoned scholar, what's your opinion on the criteria for employment and promotion of academic staff in Kenyan universities?

I have no problem with the criteria because we need to have a formula through which staff can be promoted. The only problem I have is with the publications. That when you publish alone, you get maximum publication points, but when you co-author you are ranked low. I wish they could relook at that so that authors of a particular paper are treated equally. Take for example, when I supervise my student at PHD, I will be placed as number (2) or number (3) and my student will be placed at number (1). Does that mean that I did not contribute and so I deserve a lower publication point?

So, to me that's the only problem. Otherwise, I support the criteria because it shows whoever is working and those not working. Previously, people used to get promotions on a whom you know basis. Perhaps going forward, each university should be allowed to customize the CUE promotion criteria to fit into their specific status and needs,

Know your Scholar

as long as the criteria remains based on merit

Q: What advice would you give to young scholars with respect to what kind of papers and to which journals to submit these papers for publication?

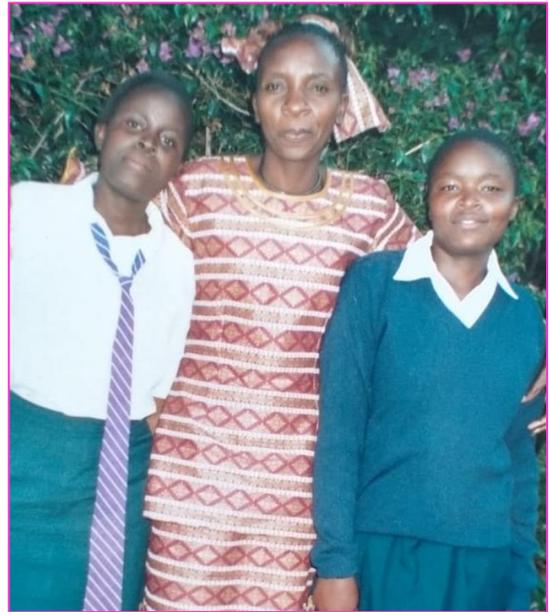
My advice is, let them develop interest in reading, doing research and publishing. Secondly, let them check around for journals with high impact. Journals that expose their papers to a wider community to read your findings. This way you will be beneficial in academia.

Q: As we come to the end of this interview, what is your philosophy of life? What advice would you give to the general Kibabii University community?

With my experience, I would like to say that the work environment can make someone to acquire a character which they did not intend to have. Therefore, as we move up the ladder in various professions, its good not judge the book by its cover. You should not judge someone because of what you have heard others talk about them. Take time to understand the people you're working with and appreciate their contributions to the institution. Rumor mongering is a sign of bad manners.



ABOVE: Dr. Risper With family in 2001 masters graduation at Moi University.



ABOVE: Dr. Risper with her students at Sosio Girls High School



ABOVE: Dr. Risper with classmates at Moi University



KIBU Resumes Face To Face Learning With Strict Adherence To Health Protocols

By Emmanuel Wamalwa |
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On Tuesday, September 29, 2020, Education Cabinet Secretary Prof. George Magoha directed all Public Universities and Tertiary Institutions to consider face-to-face resumption of learning with final year students being given the priority.

“Following broad-based consultations, the ministry of education notifies the public that the progressive reopening of education institutions will start with the reopening of universities and tertiary institutions with effect from Monday 5, October 2020,” Prof. Magoha outlined in an advisory posted to newsrooms.

Kibabii University started her face-to-face learning on Tuesday, October 13, 2020, after following the Ministry of Education's directives to have all the final year students resume learning.

The University subjected all her students to filling of forms that will guide them in adhering to the Health protocols to cut the virus's transmission chains amongst students.

While speaking to this author on Tuesday, October 13, 2020, Kibabii University Final year Students confirmed their joy and anxiety in the face of opened doors of learning. The following are some of Kibabii University Final year students' comments after spending seven months away from the Institution.

“We are happy that finally the Ministry of Education considered phased reopening of Higher learning Institutions amidst the battle with Covid-19 in the Country. Final year students have a lot to do this being their last year in the Institution.”

“There are those who have both main and special exams as well as supplementary

exams. As an individual, I am ready to commence with my studies,” said Joyce Wafula, a final year student taking a degree in English and Literature.

“We are just waiting to see how things will be done. It is not easy to adjust to the new culture of wearing masks and washing hands every time.” Daniel Kiprop said.

“Kibabii University has made it easy for us to follow the Health protocols by providing handwashing facilities at different points. We are ready to start learning,” Allan Mwangi said.

Conferences

KIBU’s Dr. Wafula Gives a Keynote Address at an International Conference

Kibabii University’s Director of Career Services Dr. Robert Wafula gave a keynote address on Wednesday 14th October 2020 at the Virtual “Multi-disciplinary International Conference on Transformation and Survival Post Pandemic” organized by Ajeenkya DY Patil University, Pune, India. The conference was a collaboration/association with Daffodil International University, Bangladesh, Chitkara University, Punjab, India, National Institute of Personnel Management, India and School of Management, Savitri Bai Phule Pune University, Pune, India.

The poster is for an online conference presented by Ajeenkya DY Patil University and The Innovation University. It lists several international partners and speakers. The speakers are:

- HRRIDAYSH DESHPANDE**: Director & Governing Body Member, ADYPU
- VIJAY KULKARNI**: Professor & Conference Chair
- DR. MAKARAND JOSHI**: CQ Chair & Head, School of Management
- MR. SUBRAMANIAN ANANTHARAMAN**: Vice President, Siemens Limited
- R. N. NALBALWAR**: Sr. VP-Aditya Birla Group, India
- PROF. DR. ROBERT WAFULA**: Kibabii University, Kenya
- DR. JITENDRA JOSHI**: Global President, Global India Business Forum
- DR. SABUR MD KHAN**: President, Daffodil International University Trust, Bangladesh



KIBU Joins the World in Celebrating Customer Service Week

By Agnetta Shilasi

What comes in your mind when you hear people talking about Customer Service Week?

It was all over the media, you could feel and experience it in any customer service providing institutions and organizations such as banks, supermarkets, learning institutions, media houses and many more.

International Customer Service Association started Customer Service Week in 1984 in an effort to recognize employees who deliver great service. In 1992, President George Bush officially designated the first full week of October as National Customer Service Week and proclaimed, "A business will do a better job of providing high-quality goods and services by listening to its employees and by empowering them with opportunities to make a difference." Customer Service Week's long history came in 1992 when the U.S. Congress proclaimed Customer Service Week a nationally recognized event, celebrated annually during the first full week in October. It is during this first week in October, when many organizations and companies around the world try to recognize the importance of excellent customer service and those that deliver the service.

The honor of this celebration is well deserved. Service providers will concur with me that offering services to clients is not an easy job. Often, they deal with repetitive work, challenging tools and technology, and the occasional upset clients. This year's Customer Service week was marked from 5th-11th October and Kibabii University was not left behind. The celebration came a few days after online registration of first year students. All the responsible departments worked as a team to ensure that there was customer satisfaction and positive results. Surprise gifts and snacks were shared to staff and customers visited the Customer Care desk.

The theme of the week was 'dream team' This was meant to remind all service providers how important team work is. When you work as a team, you achieve more and provide efficient services. We are all service providers.

The Public Relations Office appreciates every member who participated in the customer service week to see it a success as we look forward to an eventful remaining period of 2020.



Venereal Diseases not Preventable by use of Condoms

By Amos Nyongesa | anyongesa@kibu.ac.ke

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) or diseases (STD) are disease conditions which the causative organisms (pathogens) spread through sexual contacts and intercourse. Most known pathogens of Sexually Transmitted Infections include various kinds of virus, different types of bacteria, fungi and other parasites. Most of these infective organisms use the genitals (not in exclusivity) as port of entry into the host body where they cause local diseases or move into general body circulation to cause disease that touch many organs and body systems (systemic Infections).

Consistent and good use of certified Condoms can offer 98% preventions to many STIs in addition to protection against unwanted pregnancy. Condoms have become as necessary as water because of the critical relevance in this promiscuous time especially in helping to curtail the spread of incurable HIV infection.

However, there are some STDs that are resistant to the barrier of condoms and very deadly. The pleasing news is that they curable although some can be very stubborn to treatment.

Example of the Condom- Resistant STDs include:

1. Donovanosis (Granuloma inguinale);

This is a bacterial infection caused by *Klebsiella Granuloma* before called *Calymmatobacterium granulomatis*. This infection is not totally preventable with condoms because of skin contacts. This is not noticeable in the early stage and these lesions can erupt into open bloody sore. This sore unlike some infections like herpes and warts are not painful. Donovanosis is curable with antibiotics and can be prevented through abstinence or committed monogamous sexual relationship.

2. Condylomata Acuminata (Anogenital Warts):

Warts are viral infections caused by human papilloma virus with different serotypes. Usually warts present with painful growths and are not totally preventable by condoms because of skin contacts. Warts are treated with antiviral drugs and topical (surface) caustic preparations. Genital warts increase the risk for Cervical and Anorectal Cancers.

3. Herpes Genitalis:

This is a viral infection caused mainly by Herpes simplex virus 2(HSV-2). It presents as red hot and disenabling painful lesions/ blisters. It is often recurrent. Condoms cannot prevent herpes genitalis because of skin contacts.

4. Molluscum Contagiosum:

This manifest as scattered and painless bumps and growths. It is caused by pox virus (*Molluscum contagiosum virus*). This viral infection spread through unprotected heterosexual, oral, anal sex, including hug, handshake and body contacts. It's not preventable with condoms.

5. Syphilis:

This is a bacterial Infection caused by a spirochete, *Treponema pallidum*. Syphilis present with painless sore just like donovanosis but it's a more complicated disease that the later. From simple painless sore (primary) to rashes and lymph node involvement (secondary syphilis) to latent stage which later bloom into a lethal systemic disease involving the heart and brain (tertiary). Syphilis is not totally preventable with condoms because of skin contacts. Transmission include sexual intercourse, body contact and mother to unborn child. Syphilis is treated with good course of antibiotics.

6. Pthyrasis pubis:

This is pediculosis of the pubis region, infestation of the pubic skin with crab lice. Pubic lice infestation causes serious disfigurement and itching and serious discomfort including insomnia and depression.

Another STI is hepatitis B which is very infectious, transmitted through shared body fluids, sexual contacts and blood contacts.

THINGS YOU MUST DO FOR YOUR SAFETY

The surest way to safety from Condom-Resistant Infections is Abstinence and Committed and Faithful Monogamous Sexual Relationship.



Anyona's Ride of Resilience in *Boda Boda* paid his School Fees and Built him a House.

Life is all about strategy, focus, determination, innovation and creativity. Out of these pillars one can be a beneficiary of success as life career is concerned. Referring to the call for young entrepreneurs by the Kibabii University, KIBU community via the Careers and Mentorship office being chaired by Dr. Robert Wafula, a few of these young entrepreneurs have been asked to write a brief summary about their background information, career foundations, their current states and their future ambitions/strategies.

I am Anyona Judge from Kisii County. I joined Kibabii University back in the year 2013 and enrolled for a Bachelor's degree in Education Arts (Kiswahili/ History), after which I graduated in 2017 with a 2nd Class Upper.

Since I came from a very humble background being a partial orphan I had to think as fast as possible for a way which I can survive the campus life which I had not been used to before. We had to sell a portion of land at home for my starting fee and other expenses. We sold it at Ksh 100,000 which I used part of to build a simple three roomed house for

my parents since the one we had was worn out completely. I remained with Ksh. 30,000. At Kibabii University, I applied for a work-study programme while I was a first year and qualified. The little that I was paid was essential for my upkeep while taking my studies.

Here is a journey and phases of investments towards my success;

SUGARCANE BURNT ME

Using the remaining Ksh 30,000 that had remained from the sale of land, I decided to start a business of buying and selling sugarcanes after being advised by my maternal uncle.

I saw it as good idea and we got into a business immediately expecting that the money will cater for my second year studies. While in school I got a report that the sugarcane I bought got burnt by unknown individuals. But after a clear follow-up, I got that it was false information since my other uncle had sold the canes in my absentia. When I confronted him he promised to compensate me with new canes which remained a mystery promise up to date.

I TRIED BRICKS

After the failure of the first investment, I was forced to give up and look for another plan B strategy. I travelled to Kitale where my paternal uncle lived. I asked him to allow me to make bricks within his compound so that I can try to raise my second year fee. Kindly enough, he accepted. I made the bricks which generated for me Ksh 20,000. Since the money was not enough, I decided to look for a way that I can invest it at least to pay for my second year studies. I decided to buy a motorbike with the money that I made and planned to do boda-boda during my off-class periods. I came to realize that the motorcycle was just too old and even the money I was using to maintain it was much more than what I got from it. After realizing this loss, I decided to dump it but I later sold it at Ksh 5000, to a certain vegetable supplier who even didn't pay me all the money. But by God's grace I managed to finish my second year of studies well while working at the Students' Centre in the University as a waiter.

I JOINED "MJENGO"

Now it was the long holiday after my second year. I decided not to go home and joined a construction site inside the University (Milicons) where I worked as a casual labourer. I managed to mint Ksh 20,000 from the site and again I decided to take a good risk of buying another motorbike worth 35,000. I deposited the Ksh 20,000 I made

and the remaining Ksh 15,000 I had to pay it in instalments. At least this one tried to spare me since I did cycling which enabled me to finish my third year of study through payment of fee and other general upkeep.

POULTRY FAILED ME

Now I was in fourth year first semester. Still with my motorbike, I saw it was not really enough for me to relax. I started poultry with almost 1000 chicks but unfortunately I lost more than 800 chicks due to space limitation. Initially, the supplier gave false information that they were improved Kienyeji but in the real sense they were pure grade, this contributed to the extreme mortality rate. So I had to stop this kind of investment with an immediate action.

I kept on my track with the motorbike, which I also decided to sell it for another well-conditioned motorbike. By this time, I had finished my studies waiting for graduation. I got a better conditioned motorbike which took me almost a year to complete its payments since I was paying in instalments. Since then I have it up to date. And cycling became my daily routine to earn a living and win bread for my family.

Now I was done with my degree and I was stranded in a dilemma whether to proceed to masters level or not. But eventually I decided to settle down to educate my younger sisters in grade six and five. While with my younger sisters I tried my best to educate them and make them comfortable. I tried to save some money from my daily cycling duty until I purchased a piece of land which was quarter an acre where I stay currently practicing general farming which am being assisted by my sisters who are still in home due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Today, they are in form one and grade eight respectively.

Kelvin Oyugi, The love for Agriculture Beyond a Career Dream

I am Oyugi Kelvin Kennedy. I hail from Nyamira county Borabu sub-county, a village by the name Isoge-kineni. I come from a middle class family of four siblings being the elder.



MY 1st footstep into a school was back in the year 2000 when I joined baby class. I did my KCPE in the year 2008 and passed well which gave me a promotion to join one of the best schools in our region, MENYENYA SDA HIGH SCHOOL. KSCE knocked my door in 2015, where I passed quite well and secured a golden space at Kibabii University where am currently pursuing Bachelor's degree in Agriculture and Biotechnology. From my tender age I dreamt to be a lawyer up to form three where I had to withdraw it for agriculture after a visit to Egerton University Njoro where all my academia and innovations took a square one pick. Since then up to date I have been an Agri-oriented hobbyist practicing a wide range of Agri-related projects such as;

I. Farm planning and designing i.e. landscaping.

II. Construction of farm structures such as bee hives, fish ponds, poultry houses, hutches, dairy units, piggery units and biogas construction which are designed and modelled out of thorough research, innovation and accuracy. This has given me a cool chance even to work for quite a number of the university staff members, university itself, surrounding communities and even individuals from neighbouring counties like Trans-nzoia, Busia and Kakamega counties.

III. Farm advisories, provision of consultancy services concerning Agriculture and Biotechnology fields to all interested individuals. This covers a wide range of programmes including disease and pest control, farm inputs, farm structures, planting seasons, soil testing and remedy, organic farming, horticulture, GMOs, animal science and so many other inclusive Agri-related enterprises.



Supervising maize farm in TRANS-NZOIA COUNTY.



- IV. Practising intensive arable farming covering, olericulture, pomology, maize farming (trans-nzoia county), growing of legumes and other recognised crops.
- V. Agri-business, this includes construction and selling of farm structures such as bee hives, poultry structures etc.

My academic career in agriculture has been very vital and a great ladder towards my innovation and creativity field of work which comes in as my second life pattern.

INNOVATION AND INVENTION FIELD

Innovation and creativity site have been my main areas of interest and mostly in Agri-biotech field aiming to ensure advanced strategies thus improving quality and quantity of Agri-products. This came after discovering that most farmers receive a lot of losses after toiling and mowing in their farms due to lack of knowledge on which are the best crops in their farms, real time for planting, routine managements and harvesting, poor market timings and lack of information on certified farm inputs.

Out of this I challenged myself on how to look for a durable remedy for the above barriers between the farmers and the consumers. I came up with four main projects which are still under consideration by experts and they will be patented and released to our farmers immediately after their approval. They include;

- i. **The Mechanized Feed Trough Refiller.** A device which can feed animals on its own without the presence of the farmer, and it is very unique since it does not use any power (solar, fuel or electricity) hence economical and cheap to afford and maintain by our farmers.
- ii. **An E-tech programme** which can nourish farmers with first-hand information about best crop varieties

and animal breeds in their farms, their soil PH, pests and disease control and farm improvement strategies.

- iii. **Advanced Apiculture and Aquaculture.** This is all about their construction, maintenance and management.
- iv. **Value addition in some of the perishable crops** i.e. making sweet potato flour, pumpkin flour and peanuts.

Am looking forward to make the above innovations come through despite challenges such as lack of enough materials, change of climate patterns, and ignorance from some of the farmers and THE COVID-19 pandemic which has seriously ruined the world's economic curve. But out of support, research and help from well-wishing agencies and organisations this can be made possible since I do believe that we have to combine our efforts to encounter all these obstacles.

I owe a debt of gratitude to the DVC (PPR&I) Prof Benedict Mutua, Ms. Margaret Wanambisi, and Miss Jane Toroitich of Kibabii University Innovations hub for their material, information and moral support towards making these projects of mine come through. And this will dictate my future targets, dreams and accomplishments for the success of this university and country in general.



Also vote of thanks to the Career and Mentorship office under Dr Robert Wafula, for his undoubted concern over the welfare of Kibabii University students. May the Almighty God bless him and the work of his hands.

MY FUTURE TARGETS AND STRATEGIES.

As food security is one of the big four agendas of the President of the Republic of Kenya, H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta, it gives a room for research and advancements in agriculture which will be a good encouragement for the young generation to explore. This also gives me a room to have a future targets, plans and strategies including;

- Establishing a good Agri-based research centre with wide range of enterprises such as agrovets, AI services, veterinary services and a learning institution.
- Opening a general consultancy office with experts which will assist all the Agri- interested stakeholders and other young learners with the necessary information, materials and advisory.
- Ensuring food security by establishment of food value addition centres.
- Opening a supply centre for all farm inputs which are genuine, affordable and effective to all stakeholders in agriculture.
- Improving living standards of people especially those in rural areas, by providing them with necessary materials in support of the government. This can expose people on advanced technology of farming, providing them with employment opportunities and looking for a good market for their produce.

From the above strategies, I believe to be one of the patriotic citizens who will work tirelessly to ensure that the Big Four Agendas of the fourth President of the Republic of Kenya come into work and the VISION 2030 when our nation will be industrialized.



ABOVE: Langstroth bee hive, immediately after installation in a client's apiary in BUNGOMA COUNTY, Kimilili.



“Let this be the Year of Exercising Academic Freedom”

**-Prof. Isaac Ipara Odeo
Vice Chancellor**

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