



# KIBU NEWS

A Bi-Weekly Digital Newsletter of Kibabii University

## Week



Vol. 1 Issue 11: 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2020

ISO 9001:2015 Certified

## Renewable Energy Student Wins the Inaugural Innovations Contest.

Full Story on Page 05



**KNOW YOUR SCHOLAR:  
A Chat with Dr. Alice Nambiro**

CERTIFICATE OF EXCELLENCE  
AWARDED TO  
Alice Nambiro

2020/21 Theme:  
Exercising Academic Freedom



Graduation Ceremony  
26<sup>th</sup> March, 2021



# *Editorial Team*



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# Kibabii University Unveils Multi-Million Data Centre and Video Conferencing Facility

By Meshack Nyambane | [mnyambane@kibu.ac.ke](mailto:mnyambane@kibu.ac.ke)

# I

In a mission of becoming a leading technology higher education institution in the region, Kibabii University commissioned a Data Centre and Video Conference facility that was funded by National Research Fund (NRF). The grant was awarded after a competitive grant proposal on ICT infrastructure led by the Principal Investigator Prof. Franklin Wabwoba. Other members of the team were Prof. Mbuguah, Dr. Mayeku, Dr. Samwel Barasa, Dr. Yonah Etene, Dr. Patrick Owoche, Ms. Dorcus Arshely Shisoka, Mr. Juma Kilwake and Mr. Daniel Khaoya Mukobo.

The state of the art Data Centre commissioned by the Vice Chancellor Prof. Isaac Ipara Odeo will host the University servers for all systems. It will also qualify the University to hold data for other organizations in the region as well as enhance capacity for Kibabii University's Open Distance and E-Learning programme.

[More Details  
Next page >>](#)



## Facilities at the New Video Conferencing Hub

S/No.	Items	Quantity
1	High end server	1
2	Tripp Lite Smart online-Double conversion UPS	1
3	HDX 8000 1080p60 Complete Video Conferencing system (Polycom) with dual 55" or 70" LED monitors	1
4	Qt Conference room Edition	1
5	SMART Board SBM685 77" Interactive Whiteboard	1
6	SMART Learning Suite software-	1
7	LCD Projector	5
8	Wall mounted LCD Projectors plus bracket	3
9	Desktop computers	5
10	LMS configuration	1

## Equipment at the New Data Centre

S/NO	Items	Quantity
1	Utility Improvements Kit improvement clutch Epi sport utility polaris Epi 129012 (WE437035	2
2	MAIN SWITCH GEAR	1
3	TRANSFER SWITCHES	1
4	TVSS SYSTEM	1
5	POWER BACK UP 100KVA	1
6	ROOM PDU	1
7	CONDUIT AND CABLING FOR GENERATORS	1
8	Harmonic-Mitigating Transformer (HMT)	1
9	Condensate Drains	1
10	Leakage detector	1
11	Intergen Fire Suppression	1
12	Facility Management System	1
13	CCTV System 1080P	1
14	Biometric Access system to the labs Fingerprint Recognition	1
15	Terminal Server Equipment	3
16	Racks and Cabinets 42U Universal Rack Dimensions	3
17	Data migration of systems RDS	1
18	Core Network Equipment Cisco Nexus 5548UP 32-Port Gigabit Ethernet Switch	4
19	24-Port 1U Rackmount Fiber/CAT7 Patch Panel Black, Rack (Cisco SG102-24)	4
20	Netgear FS108 8-Port 10/100/1000Mbps/s Gigabit Ethernet Switch Hub, Networking Equipment	4
21	24 Port 10/100/1000Mbps/s Giganet Switch Module NLHUB-924M, Networking Equipment	4
22	Patch cables for Fiber length 3 meter	24
23	Patch cables for CAT 7 length 3 meters	56
24	Cisco Fiber SFP modules 1GBPS Cisco GLC-LH-SM 1000BASE-LX/LH SFP Transceiver Module	48
25	Cisco router 4000 series 50Mbps - 100Mbps system Throughput, 2WAN/LAN ports, 1 SFP Port, multicore CPU, 2 NIM, Security, voice, WAAS, Intelligent Wan, OnePk, AVC	1



Photo: Joshua Owiti receives a winner certificate from the Vice Chancellor Prof. Isaac Ipara Odeo



## Joshua Owiti Emerges Tops at The KIBU AHEAD Project Students' Innovation Competition 2020

By Meshack Nyambane | [mnyambane@kibu.ac.ke](mailto:mnyambane@kibu.ac.ke)

A third-year student has won the Inaugural Kibabii University Students' Innovation Challenge 2020. Joshua Odhiambo of the Faculty of Science pursuing Bachelor of Science in Renewable Energy emerged winner after thorough vetting by the Research and Innovation Technical Committee with his project entitled: *Production of Charcoal Briquettes using Waste Papers*. The competition was conducted at the Faculties and Schools level between 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020 while the grand finale at the University wide level was held on 28th October 2020. Initially, the contest slated for 29th April 2020 was disrupted by University closure due to COVID-19 pandemic.

This Competition is part of the European Union Funded African Higher Education Leadership in Advancing Inclusive Innovation for Development (AHEAD) Project activities geared towards helping nurture innovative ideas into powerful business models and activation of a series of innovative solutions for various community challenges.

The areas of focus for this year's Innovation Challenge themed "*Sustainable Innovation and Kenya's Big Four National Agenda*" were Food Security and Nutrition; Universal Health Coverage; and Affordable Housing in line with the Big Four Agenda of the Government of Kenya.



The awards ceremony that was held on 27th November 2020 was graced by the Vice Chancellor Prof. Isaac Ipara Odeo. The winners and finalists took home various awards in form of certificates, cash rewards and trophies. According to the Director of Research, Consultancy and Extension Dr. Paul Obino, this inaugural contest sets the stage for even bigger and better events of this nature going forward.

## So who is this Joshua Owiti? The interview.

To understand the life and challenges of this year's winner, the KIBU NEWSWEEK brings you an in-depth interview with Joshua, a fourth born son brought up by a single mother in extremely difficult circumstances, joining secondary for a week, and dropping back to primary school because of inability to raise school fees.

### Q: Tell us about yourself, your family?

I am Odhiambo Joshua Owiti, 22 years old, a third year student at Kibabii University, pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Renewable Energy and Biofuels Technology. I come from Siaya County, Rarieda Sub-County. I am a self-motivated and committed person with an energetic spirit. I always believe in making a difference by using the little I have or that which I may get. I don't always allow any opportunity to slip between my fingers to get away from me.

Talking about family, I come from a very humble family, headed by my mom after losing my dad while I was in class three back in 2005. I am the fourth born in our family with the highest education level. I have a brother and three sisters. My mom is a peasant farmer with a hand-to-mouth lifestyle.

### Q: How about your academic background?

I attended my pre-primary and primary education in Sangla Primary School from 2004-2011. In 2011, I sat for my KCPE and attained 307 marks. I received a calling letter from Barding Boys High School but due to my family background, my mother could not afford the fees at Barding Boys and therefore took me to a nearby day school; Wang'arot Secondary School which was up to form 3 by then.

Being well aware of my potential, my primary school teachers were not contented with the school I joined and they therefore persuaded me to go back and "rewind". I respect my teachers a lot and I believed in them and so in 2012 March, after going to a secondary school for one week, I went back to primary school.

In December 2012, I sat for my second KCPE exam and attained 340 marks. This time, I received a calling letter from Usenge Boys but my mom could not afford still. It is at this point that my primary school teachers decided to come in fully. They organized a fundraiser where they mobilized around 40,000 shillings. Well-wishers came in and from them arose the Principal of Mukuyu Secondary School, Madam Anne A. Oloo who was more than willing to support me. The fund raised catered for my shopping, part of the fees and my transport plus some pocket money. I then travelled to Mukuyu Secondary School, Migori County on March 11th 2013.

In December 2016, I sat for my KCSE, attained a C+ of 50 points and was invited to Kibabii University for a Bachelor's degree in Renewable Energy and Biofuels Technology. I joined the course in 2017 up to date.



### **Q: Did you love sciences back in high school?**

Yes! So much.

### **Q: Tell us briefly about your experience with sciences back in high school.**

Wow! Sciences were my favourite subjects in High School with exception of chemistry which was kind of challenging. I had to struggle with it though, now that it was compulsory. I loved sciences a lot and so I took them all, that is physics, biology and chemistry.

My love for sciences made me to enthusiastically and successfully participate in the science congress where I won a trophy or two.

### **Q: What is your hobby?**

I like travelling. Moreover, I love watching more so the DIY YouTube videos.

### **Q: How did you come to learn about Kibabii University and what motivated you to choose KIBU?**

I was so interested in Renewable Energy when I realized that my cluster points could lead me there. I then saw in the list, Kibabii University as one of those universities offering Renewable Energy. Offering a course of my interest, I placed it among the schools of my choice and the KUCCPS placed me here.

### **Q: Congratulations for your win in the competition. Could you please tell us what your project is all about?**

Thanks a lot.

My project was about production of charcoal briquettes from combustible waste. Charcoal briquettes are products of combustible particles commonly biomass, mixed with a binder, pressed to a higher density with a higher energy concentration, used as fuel.

Normally, charcoal briquettes are made from charcoal dust obtained from charcoal stores after selling of charcoal. Charcoal burning means cutting down trees to obtain energy.

As an environmental scientist, this is not right since the rate at which the indigenous trees are cut to make charcoal is higher than that at which they are planted thus leading to environmental degradation in a way. This means that in few years to come, there will be two major problems; First, there will be no quality charcoal since all indigenous trees shall be done away with. As experts have it, good charcoal come from mature indigenous trees which will be no more by then. Secondly, there will be extinction of the indigenous tree species which will lead to the loss of the beauty of our environment. I was therefore advocating for the environmental conservation by discouraging the cutting of trees to obtain energy but provide an alternative; using combustible waste to obtain charcoal briquettes.

### **Q: What would you like KIBU to do to support innovative students?**

I think more funds should be allocated to finance students' ideas and bring them to life. I know there are many students out there who have very beautiful ideas but due to lack of resources, they are unable to make their dreams come true.

### **Q: Any message to other students who wish to achieve awards in academic?**

I just want to say that self confidence is key. Just believe that you can make it and surely you will for the Bible says that as he thinks, yes he is. Don't degrade yourself. Most importantly, put hard work and greater love to that which you are doing.



# KIBU Receives a Donation of Books from Rattansi Education Foundation

By Meshack Nyambane | [mnyambane@kibu.ac.ke](mailto:mnyambane@kibu.ac.ke)

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On Wednesday, 18th November 2020, Kibabii University received a donation of volumes of books from Michael Blundell/Rattansi Education Foundation.

According to the Deputy University Librarian, Ms. Ndukuh Charles Kilei, the books were selected according to the needs of KIBU Library users, who are mainly the students. The books, locally published range from various subject areas in linguistics, Kiswahili, nursing, business, engineering and children's short stories.

The donation worth KES. 780,000 was received by the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Isaac Ipara Odeo, who thanked the Dean of Students, Dr. Alice Chemutai and Deputy University Librarian and other members of the University Management for their concerted efforts in sourcing and realizing the donation.

"It's a great honor you wake up in the morning running usual office chores only to be surprised with very good news. I want to thank Rattansi Education Trust for the many hearts they have touched through this kind of support. My God bless them abundantly. I also wish to applaud the two Senior University Officers for their hard work and persistence in delivering this dream. This is a true demonstration of how much they have placed at heart the needs of our students," Prof. Ipara said. Prof. Ipara further appreciated the role of the students in education assuring them of the university's commitment to their success.

The unveiling ceremony was attended by the acting Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic and Students Affairs) Prof. Franklin Wabwobwa, Registrar (Academic Affairs) Prof. Ernest Mohochi, Registrar (Administration & HR) Dr. Ruth Mitalo among others. In his remarks, Prof. Wabwoba congratulated the Vice Chancellor and the Library Department for the milestone.

The event was also attended by Student Representatives led by the President Mr. Caleb Musawa, Secretary General Mr. Kirong and Academic Secretary Mr. Dilton Alwanda.

The Rattansi Education Trust was established in 1956 as a philanthropic organization, whose founders believed in social justice and the centrality of education in the advancement of individuals. Their vision is “Education Lights the Path to Development” and the main aim of the Trust is getting Kenyans out of poverty. Rattansi Education Fund Trust helps needy students in institutions of higher learning at public and private universities, polytechnics, and other institutions of tertiary education in Kenya.

### **Brief Profile of Dr. Vijoo Rattansi**

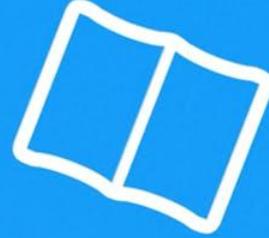
Dr. Rattansi is the Chairperson of Rattansi Educational Trust, Daisy Eye Cancer Fund, Trustee to Michael Blundell Trust among other organizations. She is also the Chancellor of the University of Nairobi. Dr. Vijoo has wide experience in institutional development and conflict mediation; and experience in fundraising and networking. She also has skills and competencies in corporate governance, strategic planning, gender and development. She is fluent in English, Kiswahili and Italian languages.

She was awarded a honorary doctorate (D.Litt.) by Moi University in recognition of her efforts in promoting higher education in the country. The state recognized her efforts in supporting higher education in the country by awarding her the Order of the Grand Warrior (OGW) in 2006.



**Top:**  
**Dr. Vijoo Rattansi.**  
**Photo: UoN Media**

# Distance Learning



## Kibabii University Joins the World in Embracing Open, Distance & Electronic Learning (ODEL) Amidst the COVID-19 Scourge

By Emmanuel Wamalwa | [emmanuelwamalwa942@gmail.com](mailto:emmanuelwamalwa942@gmail.com)

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On Sunday, March 13, 2020, His Excellency Hon. Uhuru Kenyatta C.G.H. President of the Republic of Kenya and Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces and Chancellor of Kibabii University, directed the systematic closure of all learning institutions across the country following the entry of the deadly Corona virus into Kenya. Most public universities were caught unawares and were unprepared to embrace open and distance learning, unlike majority of their private counterparts. Their inability to adapt and implement e-learning in the wake of Covid-19 scourge spurred mixed reactions from education stakeholders, students and the general public.

Education Cabinet Secretary, Professor George Magoha, early this year came under immense public pressure for alleging that online learning in the country was going on well during the pandemic despite the closure of schools. Prof. Magoha asserted that e-learning was the way to go to save the 2020 academic calendar.

While inspecting the preparedness for reopening of Maseno University in Kisumu County, the CS for Education noted that virtual learning was the best response to the unprecedented situation that Covid-19 had presented to the education sector.

“Up to 70 percent of our universities are going on with online learning while others have planned to conduct online graduations.” Prof. Magoha said.

Private Universities like KCA University were reported to have quickly shifted their face-to-face learning to e-learning in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. KCA University, for instance, gave out its end of semester examinations to students online so that they could complete their semester.

According to Dr. Kevin Wachira, a lecturer of entrepreneurship and innovations at South Eastern Kenya University (SEKU), KCA University entered into the ‘Soma na Telkom’ bundles partnership with Telkom Kenya. Dr. Wachira noted that KCA University had trained its staff and students on e-learning and ensured they accessed cheaper data bundles to participate in online learning activities.

A one-on-one Interview with Dr. Dinah Samikwo, a lecturer and Head of the Department of Science Education at the University of Eldoret, revealed that their staffs and first-year students were still grappling with accessing online learning avenues and content.

“ODEL is a new project both to the staff and students. We were used to the traditional ways of teaching and assessing our students but in a twinkle of an eye, we were subjected to open distance and e-learning. Our staff were trained to handle online classes and we hope that our first-year students will not be left out since they were provided with tutorials.” Dr. Samikwo said.

In a virtual interview with Mrs. Salome Sabila, a third-year student taking medicine at Kabarak University, it was established that learning and examinations at the institution continued without hitches since e-learning had been taking place at the institution even before the Covid-19 pandemic. According to Mrs. Sabila, they

had not fallen victim to Covid-19 as far as their education was concerned, since Kabarak University had already embraced some form of e-learning way before Covid-19 was reported in the country.

“The management of Kabarak University led by Baringo Senator Gideon Moi who is our Chancellor directed the immediate appreciation of e-learning and since we were well prepared for the same, it was an easy transition for us. We have been learning all the way since President Uhuru directed the closure of schools. We also did our end of semester online examination mid-last month, and it was a success despite some few technical challenges that were fixed prior to our exams dates.” Mrs. Sabila said.

ODEL at Kibabii University (KIBU), headed by Dr. Alice Nambiro, has established itself as an emerging center in offering ‘blended’ learning at the institution. A document seen by this author about the Status of Kibabii University confirmed that the University had set up an ICT HUB that would aid in the implementation of ODEL services at the institution.

“KIBU has set up an ICT HUB comprising of a data center, mobile computing, video conferencing lab, CISCO certification lab and forensic lab. Of importance is the data center which will house data. This is so because with the growing number of LMS users, a lot of storage space is required. The video conferencing lab will enable lecturers to have sessions to interact with students,” a section of the letter read in part.

KIBU confirmed that the 2020/2021 first-year undergraduate students were already in the system, revealing that out of the 1,399 enrolled students, 971 students had accessed the e-learning platform since it was first introduced.

## The Journey of Open Distance and Electronic Learning At Kibabii University

Open Distance and Electronic Learning (ODEL) directorate was established in 2017 under the leadership of Dr. Betty Mayeku who is currently the County Executive Committee Member, Department of Education & Vocational Training at the County Government of Bungoma. The vision of the Directorate is to be an innovative learning centre in enhancing flexible acquisition to quality education and the mission is to provide flexible and innovative approaches to learning through utilization of technology and provision of effective learner support. The Directorate has established itself as an emerging centre in offering blended learning. It is currently headed by Dr. Alice Nambiro since July 2018.

### Strengths of ODEL at Kibabii University

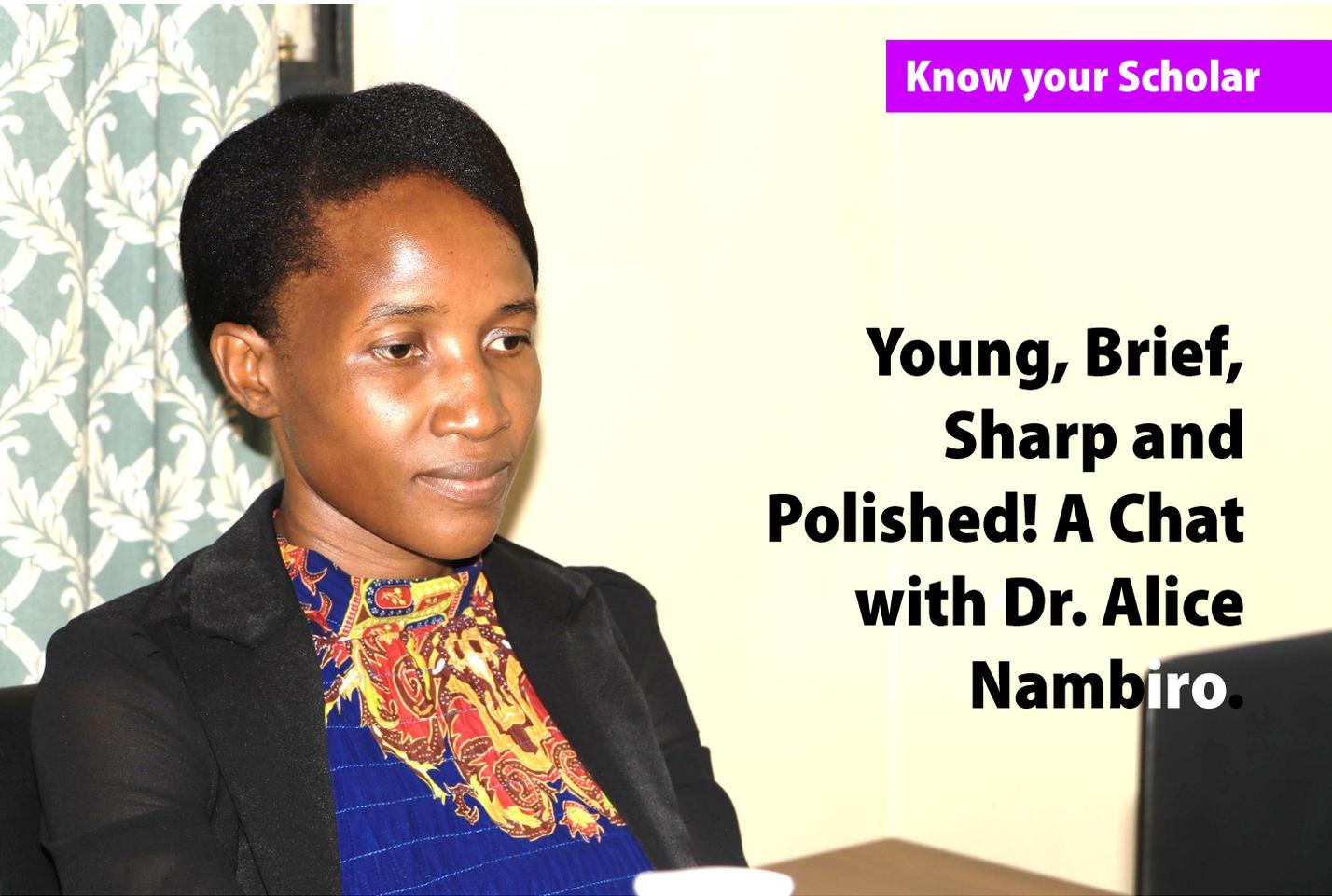
The ODEL Directorates prides itself of several achievements and milestones. Some of them include;

- Installation and customization of Learning Management System (Moodle). The Learning Management System was installed on the Kibabii University server, its customized to suite our need and it is accessible to the users.
- Competent support staff and faculty
- Continuous trainings to all students and faculty
- Successfully piloted Master of Science in Information Technology programme
- KIBU entered into a collaboration with Commonwealth of Learning (COL) where the university enjoys support on Technology Enabled Learning (TEL).
- The setting up of ICT HUB comprising the data centre, mobile computing, video conferencing lab, CISCO certification lab and forensic lab will immensely contribute to the growth of the ODEL operations.

According to Dr. Nambiro, the directorate has continued to provide support to the students and teaching staff to make sure online teaching and learning is taking place successfully.

“E-Learning is the new normal that the learners should embrace. LMS has created a platform that students can learn and access the content and activities created by their lecturers,” Dr. Nambiro said.

**On the next page, we bring you a comprehensive interview with the Incharge of ODEL programme, Dr. Alice Nambiro**



## Young, Brief, Sharp and Polished! A Chat with Dr. Alice Nambiro.

Interview by Meshack Nyambane | [mnyambane@kibu.ac.ke](mailto:mnyambane@kibu.ac.ke)

**I** In this 11<sup>th</sup> edition, we shall feature Dr. Alice Nambiro. A young scholar, the woman behind the rise of Open, Distance and E-Learning at Kibabii University. Because of her trifling body size and calm demeanor, most people may not understand the contributions she has made in placing Kibabii University in a notable position at Higher Education map. Welcome to the interview.

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

I was born and raised in Budonga, Navakholo sub-county, Kakamega County. I am a third born in a family of 10. I am married and a mother of two children. I am currently a lecturer in the department of Information Technology and In-charge, ODeL Directorate.

I started my formal education at Budonga Primary School and later transferred to Kakamega Hill School where I sat for my KCPE in the year 2001. I joined Lugulu Girls High School where I sat for KCSE in the year 2005. I then proceeded to Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology for a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science and later enrolled for a Master of Science in Information Technology in the same University. Afterwards, I enrolled for a Doctor of Philosophy in Information Technology at Kibabii University and graduated in the year 2017.



**Q: You are one of the youngest PHD holders in Kibabii University and right now, you are holding the future of the University as in-charge, ODEL Directorate, what is your feeling about the place and future of young scholars in University Management positions?**

Thanks to the University management for believing in young scholars and giving me an opportunity to be part of management and serve in the position of In-charge, ODeL Directorate. The young scholars should remain optimistic and work towards achieving the mission of the University. The future is always bright.

**Q: Take us through the journey of KIBU ODEL.**

Open Distance and Electronic Learning (ODEL) Directorate was established in 2017. The vision of the Directorate is to be an innovative learning centre in enhancing flexible acquisition to quality education and the mission is to provide flexible and innovative approaches to learning through utilization of technology and provision of effective learner support. The Directorate has established itself as an emerging centre in offering blended learning. It is currently headed by Dr. Alice Nambiro since July 2018.

The achievements realized so far include; Installation and customization of Learning Management System (Moodle). The Learning Management System was installed on the Kibabii University server, its customized to suit our needs and it is accessible to the users. We also enjoy full support of Management in the implementation of blended learning. Furthermore, we have competent staff who provide real-time online technical support. We have trained lecturers from all academic departments on interactive

content creation and delivery on Learning Management System. The directorate has successfully conducted five (5) trainings on the use of LMS to design and deliver digital content. We also trained students on interacting with LMS. KIBU entered into a collaboration with Commonwealth of Learning (COL) where we enjoy support on Technology Enabled Learning (TEL). We were supported on carrying out a survey on TEL readiness in KIBU, development of TEL policy and Designing Blended Courses in Moodle. The ODEL policy was successfully developed and approved for use.

**Q: Did it ever occur to you that a pandemic could come to the world and change the academic sector into digital now that most students and even parents traditionally believed in the face to face learning.**

I knew and believed that Kibabii University would one day be able to offer online courses but I never expected is a pandemic to force us to do it early. Change that is not anticipated always faces some resistance but with the COVID-19 situation, parents and students have no option but to accept what is on offer.

**Q: What measures have you put in place to ensure that the students get to attend classes and tutors are familiar with the digital learning system?**

The Directorate organizes orientation to E-Learning students who are to undertake blended mode of learning. We then do a follow up using a survey to ensure every student can comfortably use the system. In addition, we have organized several trainings for lecturers to be able to create digital content and relay the same to the students.

## Know your Scholar



We highly encourage lecturers to engage students on the platform using tools like discussion forums which encourages students to attend the class since they have to make their contributions. With the ODeL team in place, we also provide real time support to students and lecturers whenever need arises.

### Q: Are there any challenges?

The most common challenge experienced by most students is lack of enough bundles to be able to attend the online classes, but thanks to the Internet Service providers through the Directorate of ICT, lecturers and students can get the bundles at subsidized prices.

### Q: What advice would you give to young scholars who might have an interest in the ICT world?

Currently, we are moving to a digital world. Most of the business processes are done in a digital space. I advise the young scholars to carry on with what interests them and carry out their work in an ethical manner. This opens up opportunities to compete globally.

### Q: Have you ever won any grant either alone or with peers? Please tell us about it.

With my peers, we won funds from Commonwealth of Learning to Implement Technology Enabled Learning in March 2020. I have known about Commonwealth of Learning and how they support institutions for sometime. Our engagement with Dr Sanjaya Mishra who works with Commonwealth of Learning in Canada enabled us write a proposal for support. We were lucky to be the third University in Kenya to be supported. With the support provided, we managed to carry out a survey on Technology Enabled Learning readiness in Kibabii University, came up with a draft Technology

Enabled Learning Policy and we recently concluded a three weeks training on Designing Blended Courses in Moodle.

I also won a grant from National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation to carry out my PhD research in 2016.

### Q: Do you have any current research interests? Any proposals on the way?

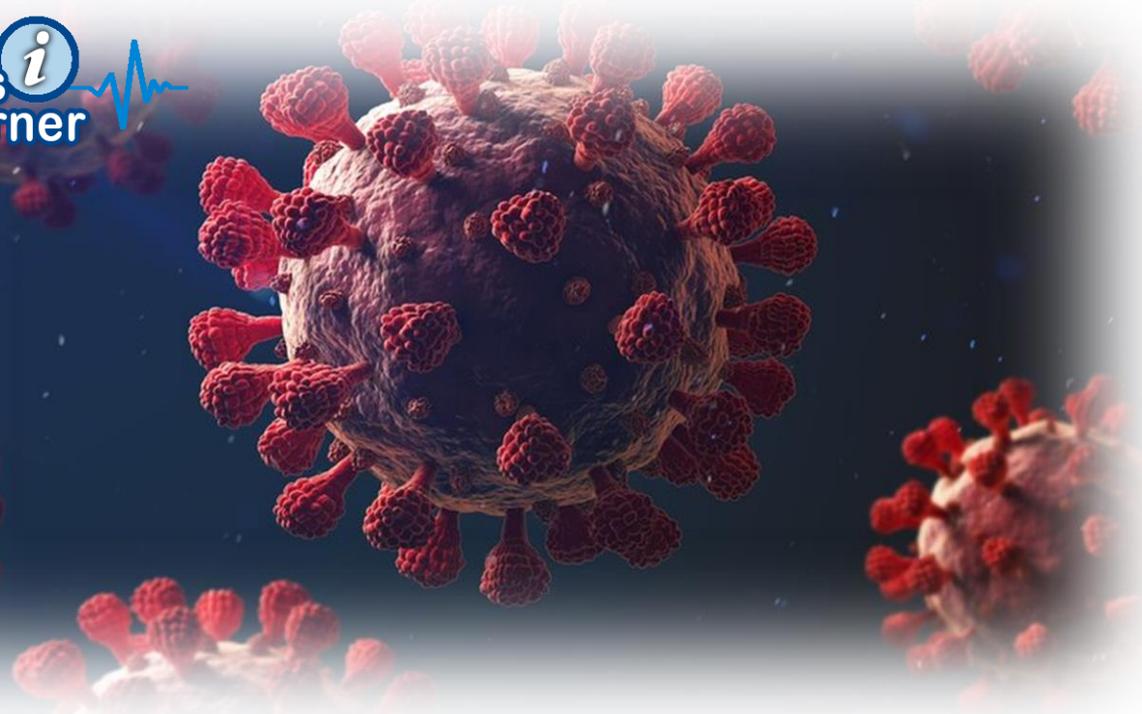
My research interest is Security in Computing. As you understand, technology is ever changing and many organizations are on the run to adopt more sophisticated technological infrastructure. This poses a challenge to the security in the use of the systems since most of the time, organizations put more emphasis in systems without the knowledge that human beings are the weakest link in the information society.

### Q: As we conclude our interview Doc, what is your philosophy of life?

If someone managed to do something admirable, however difficult it may seem, with consistency and hard work, I can also do it.

### Q: What advice would you give young scholars and especially women in science?

Women have made significant contribution in the society. My advice to young scholars is to believe in themselves and also believe in what they do in the society. Always have a mentor and create networks. Also, peer support is key. Always know that all the efforts you put into your work can never go to waste as you are clearing bushes which will benefit others and in turn bring self-satisfaction.



# Managing Mild COVID-19 Disease at Home

By Amos Nyongesa | [anyongesa@kibu.ac.ke](mailto:anyongesa@kibu.ac.ke)

Kenya is hitting over 7 months since the first case was reported in the country. With over 1,500 deaths and over 70,000 recoveries, the country is breathing a sigh of relieve after the discovery by various world agencies of a vaccines that are over 95% effective. As these developments are ongoing, a majority of people with COVID-19 are expected to have relatively “mild” symptoms that can be resolved at home. While the majority of COVID-19 cases are mild, even asymptomatic and mild infections can be a problem. Before you even know you have an infection, odds are you’ve spread the virus to three other people – though, sometimes that number can be less or much higher. This article will educate you on how to deal with the mild type Corona Virus infection at home.

## COMMON COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

- Fever
- Continuous cough
- Shortness of breath
- Tiredness
- Muscle aches
- Congestion or runny nose
- Headaches
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste/smell
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhoea

## **IF YOU ARE DIAGNOSED WITH COVID-19, OR IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS BUT YOU CANNOT ACCESS THE TEST WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?**

1. Do not go to work
2. Do not use public transport
3. Do not go to public places
4. Do not go for shopping
5. Do not visit anyone
6. Do not attend religious gatherings
7. Do not encourage visitors at your home
8. Do not leave your place of residence unless you need medical care
9. Do stay at your place of residence for 14 days
10. Do stay calm
11. Do ensure you have family members who can help you to get shopping and things you may need.
12. Do keep connected to people you care about by phone and video chat

## **IF YOU HAVE COVID-19, HOW SHOULD YOU ISOLATE YOURSELF?**

1. Separate yourself from other people in your home, in a well-ventilated bedroom. If possible, your family should not stay or sleep in the same room as you.
2. Use a separate bathroom. If you have to share a bathroom, clean after every use.
3. Avoid sharing items and the same spaces with other people and clean surfaces often.
4. Stay at least 1.5 metres (3 steps) away from other people in the home.
5. Wear facemasks to help prevent the spread of the disease to others.
6. Cough or sneeze into the fold of your elbow. Alternatively, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and dispose of tissue in a dedicated bin.

7. Clean your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or with alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 60-95% alcohol.

## **WHAT IS A CLOSE CONTACT?**

Face-to-face encounter with a probable or confirmed case within less than one meter for more than 15 minutes and both were not wearing masks.

## **WHO IS AT GREATEST RISK FOR SEVERE DISEASE?**

1. Older than 60 years
2. Overweight
3. Multiple pre-existing medical conditions
4. Medical conditions not well controlled
5. Hypertension
6. Diabetes
7. Chronic kidney, heart and lung disease
8. Cancer
9. HIV
10. TB

## **IF YOU ARE A HIGH RISK, MONITOR YOURSELF CLOSELY.**

1. Make sure your underlying medical conditions are well controlled. Take your hypertension, diabetes and other medicines correctly and on time.
2. Monitor your blood pressure and sugar. If you are diabetic it is a very good idea to get a home device to measure your blood sugar levels.
3. Consider getting a pulse-oximeter. This is an easy-to-use device which measures the oxygen saturation (level) in your blood and helps to identify early on when you are in need of medical attention. Oxygen saturation should always be greater than 92%

### HOW TO STRENGTHEN YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM

- ❖ Eat healthy meals, drink water, sleep well, and get plenty of rest but also remember to stay active.
- ❖ Stop smoking!
- ❖ Take the following:
  1. vitamin D 50 000 iu once off
  2. zinc 200mg daily for 5 days
  3. vitamin C 500mg three times per day for 5 days
  4. vitamin B complex 1 tablet daily
  5. Use the usual Cold and Flu remedies to relieve symptoms
  6. Take Panadol/paracetamol for fever and pain
  7. Drink warm honey and lemon water or use lozenges to relieve sore throats
  10. Do warm water and salt gargles twice daily
  11. Traditional remedies like black seed, turmeric, ginger and other natural substances known for their anti-inflammatory properties are not harmful and may help
  12. Do not take steroids or hydroxychloroquine, or any medicines you may have heard about in the media. Many of these treatments have not been proven to work or are used for seriously ill patients who are being managed in hospital.

### FEELING A LITTLE SHORT OF BREATH?

- ❖ Sleep on your stomach for as much as possible with your head turned to the side (prone position)
- ❖ You can also cycle between laying on your belly, on your side and sitting up:
  1. 30 minutes - 2 hours: laying on your belly
  2. 30 minutes - 2 hours: laying on your right side
  3. 30 minutes - 2 hours: sitting up
  4. 30 minutes - 2 hours: laying on your left side
  5. Then back to Position 1

### BREATHING EXERCISES CLEAR YOUR LUNGS AND IMPROVE OXYGEN FLOW

1. Take a deep breath in through the nose.
2. At the end of it, hold your breath for five seconds and then breathe out through the mouth.
3. Do this five times - five breaths in total.
4. Next, take a sixth deep breath in, then at the end of it cough strongly, covering your mouth when you do so.
5. The six breaths plus cough at the end represent one cycle. Repeat this cycle twice.

**NB: Only do these breathing exercises when you are alone in the room.**

### BELLY BREATHING

1. Lie on your back. Bend your knees.
2. Breathe deeply through your nose, allowing your chest and belly to expand.
3. Breathe out through your mouth at least twice as long as you inhale.
4. Perform for 1 minute then, rest for 30 seconds.

The idea is to get the lower part of your lungs to expand so that any mucus that's collecting there can be dislodged and coughed out.

### WHEN SHOULD YOU SEEK MEDICAL HELP?

1. If your symptoms are worsening or have not improved after 7 days
2. If you become confused or have difficulty concentrating
3. If you develop a new fever or your fever returns
4. If you develop chest pain
5. If you are diabetic and your sugar level is very high (>18) or very low (<3.5)
6. If your breathing becomes difficult, and the number of breaths you take in one minute (respiratory rate) is more than 25 breaths.
7. If your oxygen level on the pulse oximeter is lower than 92%

Image: Kibabii University's Finalists at the Digital Workshop



# KIBU Students Join Peers in Digital Conflict Resolution Workshop Amidst Pandemic

By Isabel Zattu | [izattu@kibu.ac.ke](mailto:izattu@kibu.ac.ke)

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Kibabii University joined a collaborative online social media depolarization process in the month of May 2020; a collaboration between Maseno University, Rongo University's CMDPS, Kisii University, Kibabii University, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology and Build Up.

During this time of Covid-19, when online activity has sky-rocketed and polarization is on the rise, this collaboration proved to be an important peacebuilding intervention. Social media sites are often used for exacerbating political polarization by creating “echo chambers” that prevent people from being exposed to information that contradicts their pre-existing beliefs. Social media also attracts considerable attention for its potential to increase polarization of political views, among other views, as it fosters creation of networks among people with similar beliefs.

The pilot program was facilitated in the six Universities with guidance and support of university faculty focal points along with 10 students selected to engage as online facilitators. Kibabii University team was led by Prof. Ernest Mohochi and Ms. Isabel Ziz.

The students who participated include Norah Kipruto, Patience Khaoya, Janeffer Katila, Judith Obuya, Linda Atiamuga, Chrisptopher Mutuku, Wycliff Okeng'o, Samuel Muchemi, Alex Obure and Ammar Kassim.

The program started with an introductory online workshop, followed by an online facilitation training for the student facilitators, followed by a 3-month period of applying online depolarization strategies developed by Build Up. Content delivery was done through interactive assignments, live chats that took place via WhatsApp (separate university groups), animated recorded video lectures on different sub-topics (10 - 15 minutes each), and interactive assignments that helped participants apply the course materials broadcast via WhatsApp for individual, asynchronous response. Responses were compiled and shared back with each group with feedback. There were scheduled weekly WhatsApp live chats for Q&A and experience sharing, building on lectures and assignments.

Build Up is a global non-profit working beside local organizations through

participatory interventions, research and training to combine peacebuilding best practices through participatory methodologies and digital technologies that identify and address emergent challenges to peace. Build Up's main aim is to transform conflict in the digital age.

Since 2017, Build Up has been researching the dynamics of conversations on social media that polarize positions, and designing interventions that model civic online dialogue to tackle this dangerous polarization. Through research and practice, Build Up has been developing a digital peacebuilding curriculum that combines non-violent communications and multi-partial dialogue practice with insights from social media analysis to provide tools for social media influencers to engage in fostering constructive online conversations that contribute to building peace.

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Here are some of the experience from three of our finalists who represented the other students in the closing workshop.

## “Be Part of the Solution”



**Jennifer Katila,**  
(Fourth year journalism student-KIBU)

Differences in opinions and perceptions does not necessarily mean that there should be a divide. This is the phrase that has been my greatest take away during the Online Peace Building training and practicum. Joining a team that will be trained to become digital peace builders was an exciting moment for me and I was eager to see how it will unfold.

The training was successful but the challenging part was putting the skills we had acquired into practice. We had to go online and depolarize dialogues, there were many dialogues that needed to be intervened, especially in political topics.

## “My Life Changing Experience with the Maskani Digital Peace Builders”



**Orege Okeng'o Wycliffe,**  
(Fourth year journalism student)

Following the prolonged Covid-19 break, we were all living in uncertain times. Every routine came to a standstill and it was the beginning of a one day at a time schedule. When I got the opportunity to be trained as an online peace builder, it couldn't have come at a better time. I have learnt a lot from this exercise and I am looking forward to train others on the same. The most interesting part for me was the practicum sprints that took place from July all through to October. We had to put into practice all the digital peace building skills that we had learnt. This was done by intervening on online dialogues to reduce conflict and promote positive messages. We were intervening in social media spaces, mostly Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp.

WISH YOU A  
**MERRY**  
*Christmas*



# **“Let this be the Year of Exercising Academic Freedom”**

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

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