



EGERTON UNIVERSITY

NEWSLINK

www.egerton.ac.ke

Issue No. 109

31 July 2020

The 42nd Graduation

Egerton's First Ever Virtual Graduation

Golden Life Mall to Open

- Defending Theses at Egerton from Rwanda and Ghana
- FEDCOS Develops Pandemic Preparedness Programme
- Egerton, Tribus-TSG, Centum Investment, Launch Ajiry Centre



CESAAM

Centre Of Excellence In Sustainable Agriculture And Agribusiness Management

Phone No: +254 700 822 859 Email: cesaam@egerton.ac.ke:

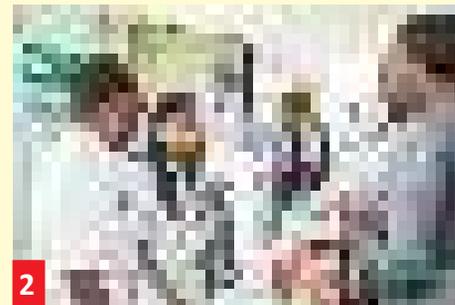
Website: cesaamegerton.org



CESAAM Vision: An excellence centre in agri-innovations, agri-entrepreneurship, climate smart agriculture, research, training and technology transfer for sustainable development

CESAAM Mission: To provide highly trained human capacity to agri-innovative products, services and sustainable solutions that address the challenge of food insecurity and persistent hunger in Africa

	CESAAM Main Upcoming Events/Activities	Proposed Month of Implementation
1.	Funding of competitively selected research projects by faculty	Aug-20
2.	Virtual retooling of faculty on Fundable Proposal Writing and Challenge Mapping	Sep-20
3.	Graduate students' thesis dissemination workshops	Oct-20
4.	International accreditation of programmes	Oct-20
5.	Virtual Agricultural Extension Forum	Nov-20
6.	Virtual graduate students & supervisors conference	Dec-20
7.	Private sector engagement forum	Jan-21
8.	Graduate students' innovation and entrepreneurship boot camp & exhibitions	Mar-21
9.	Regional summer school for graduate students	May-21



KEY

- 1** CESAAM students exhibit innovated products to PS, Education, Vice-Chancellor, and Centre Leader
- 2** CESAAM students and Project Manager explain their programme and innovations to World Bank Country Rep., Ms. Ruth Charo
- 3** CESAAM student on exchange at a biotech laboratory in Nanjing University, China a partner to CESAAM

IMPACT

Support of Female Scientists	CESAAM now has a total of 240 students enrolled. Of this number 52% are female, and 23% are regional students. CESAAM provides affirmative funding for female scientists (students) with toddlers.
1 st Regional Summer School for Graduate Students	CESAAM organized and hosted its 1 st Regional Summer School for Graduate Students. This, in our understanding, is the largest event that has brought together ACE II students in the agriculture field. Over 200 students participated from INSEFOODS, MaRCCI, CSABC, CREATES and CESAAM.
Open/Field Days	To train farmers on emerging agricultural technologies, CESAAM organized a joint Seeds of Gold Field Day with the Nation Media Group for farmers and industry at Egerton University. Over 400 participants and exhibitors attended. This was in January 2020.
Skill-based Short Courses	These are organized for the community, farmers and students. (Feed formulation, research analytics for students, proposal writing for students, policy brief preparation course).
Youth-led Extension	CESAAM students underwent direct outreach to farmers using the Seeds of Gold model of extension.
Community Dissemination Workshops	All students and faculty supported by CESAAM to hold research are expected to hold dissemination workshops of research findings in their areas of study. A dissemination workshop is planned post-COVID for 4 students who have graduated and collected data in Kenya.
1 st CESAAM Competitive Research Grant	CESAAM competitively awarded proposal research grants, which will be community oriented and that which must have policy implications, to faculty members. A key criterion for selection was whether the proposal had a strong component on collaboration with industry players.



REPUBLIC OF KENYA



ACE II

Eastern and Southern Africa
Higher Education Centres of Excellence Project



11 22 33 44 55 66 77 88 99

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Front cover photo: Egerton University Retirement Benefits Scheme's Golden Life Mall located on the Nakuru-Eldoret Highway approximately one kilometer from the Nakuru CBD (Photo: Solomon Kariuki)

GRADUATION STATISTICS	
Doctorates	10
Masters	43
Bachelors	874
Diplomas	90
Total	1,017

Vision

A world-class university for the advancement of humanity

Mission

To generate knowledge and offer exemplary education and training to society for national and global development

Core Values

The University's activities and decisions are guided by the following core values: National unity and social fairness; Integrity, transparency and accountability; Professionalism; Internationalism; Passion for excellence and devotion to duty; Team work; Passion for environmental conservation; Innovativeness and creativity

Editorial

The Fight Against COVID-19 Will be Won through Innovation

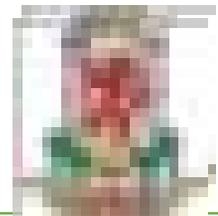
In spite of the considerable damage that the coronavirus pandemic has caused to society throughout the globe, there are indications to the effect that the world is rising up to the challenge of containing it. This is by no means happening only through the defensive methods of treatment, social distancing, contact tracing, quarantines, shut-downs, or fumigation. Equally importantly, individuals and communities throughout the world, operating largely from within their respective local settings, are responding to the crisis with altogether new and innovative strategies that have the potential to change the world for the better should they be carried through to their ultimate ends.

Among the counteracting measures that the world is using to fight the virus, perhaps the most far-reaching ones are the efforts that scientists and researchers throughout the world are putting into developing pertinent medical products. Most such efforts are, as usual, unfolding in the developed world, which is privileged with long-established foundations for industrial production. But there is no doubt that the developing world, despite its limited resources, has not been left too far behind in that regard. Indeed, the unprecedented manner in which our part of the world, including Africa, has been responding to the virus would make it appear as though there could be a silver lining to the virus in so far as innovation and inventiveness are concerned.

Up until recently, it was not commonplace to associate Africa with high-level technical production of medical equipment, most of which was imported from the developed world. But in the face of the outbreak of the virus we have increasingly become used to reports about innovative interventions in the medical world undertaken by African researchers and scientists working within very limiting circumstances but producing very remarkable products.

To use a number of readily available examples from Kenya, in recent times we have been receiving reports in the media to the effect that local scientists and researchers from our universities and research institutions have been making critical contributions to the fight against the virus through production of critical medical equipment of various kinds. For example, in April this year, a local university announced that its researchers had developed a prototype of a ventilator that could be used to support patients who have difficulty breathing and consequently support them in the fight against the virus. At around the same time, the Ministry of Health announced that Kenya would begin mass-production of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to

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Introduction

Egerton University, the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM), and Gulu University in Uganda are implementing a programme titled “Transforming African Agricultural Universities to Meaningfully Contribute to Africa’s Growth and Development (TAGDev)”. This eight-year (2016-2024) programme is supported by the MasterCard Foundation to train the next generation of Agleaders for rural community transformation. The programme focuses on experiential learning, community engagement, and entrepreneurship as well as support students who are bright but from economically disadvantaged or conflict regions of Africa. The Programme aims at providing scholarships to undergraduate and Master’s students by the year 2024. Currently in Egerton University, 80 students have benefited from full scholarship and over 100 students have benefited from research and tuition fee support. Recruitment of 15 Master’s students for 2020/2021 academic year is in progress. The Programme offers comprehensive scholarships, mentorship, psycho-social support, and training to ensure all-rounded graduates. Two community action research projects (CARP+) dealing with seed potato and cassava value chains, and one RUFORUM entrepreneurship challenge programme (RECAP) are key components of TAGDev.

TAGDev Programme Objectives

1. Pilot a new model of agricultural education that connects tertiary agricultural education to rural communities.
2. Strengthen agribusiness/entrepreneurship at two universities and selected TVET institutions.
3. Scale the new model for agricultural education to other agricultural universities and TVET institutions.
4. Increase collaboration and mutual learning among tertiary agricultural education providers for rural transformation in Africa.

Key Highlights in 2020

- The programme is in the process of recruiting 15 M.Sc. students at Egerton University on full scholarship. The focus courses include M.Sc. in Natural Resources Management, Horticulture, and Agrienterprise Development.
- The Programme held a virtual National Forum for Universities, TVETs, and other industry players. This was the 3rd National Forum but the first one to be held virtually. Prof. Hamadi Boga PS, State Department for Crop Development and Agricultural Research, MOALF, graced the event. The event brought together more than 200 participants.
- The Programme has supported students and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic for online interaction and learning. The programme also provided support to undergraduate students to enrol in online courses that add value to their degree programmes.
- The 55 undergraduate and 25 Master’s students on full scholarship are drawn from 14 African countries, including Liberia and Lesotho.

The Seed Potato CARP+ project supports training through experiential learning approaches where students and farmers undertake practical activities that help them learn and gain essential skills. Some of the students attached to the CARP have also benefited through attachment to partner organizations such as NPCK and ADC Molo. To-date, 2 Ph.D., and 6 M.Sc. students have been supported to do their research. In addition, 5 B.Sc. students’ projects, 1 Ph.D. student’s project have been supported as part of their course work. Two students’ enterprises are potato-based.

The CARP team participated in the formulation and the launch of the Potato Regulations 2019 (Kenya Gazette Supplement No. 39 of 5 April 2019). Farmers and stakeholders have been sensitized on these regulations.

More than 1,787 farmers have been directly engaged and trained and more than 3,000 indirectly reached. The project supported production of more than 70 tons of certified seed potato at Egerton University and Baraka Agricultural College.



TAGDev Programme Partners during the Second National Forum for Universities, TVETs and other Industry players at Lake Panorama Park Hotel in Naivasha, February 2019. Stakeholders had an opportunity to exhibit their products during the Forum.



Seed Potato team prepare the planting medium in a greenhouse at Field 7, Egerton University



TAGDev Coordinating Committee Members with the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Rose A. Mwonya, after the virtual 3rd National Forum for Universities, TVETs and other Industry Players

For more information



<http://www.tagdev.org>

@egertonmastercard
@MCFatEgerton

Golden Life Mall Practically Complete

By Wilkister N. Moturi

The Egerton University Retirement Benefits Scheme (EURBS) has completed a commercial/retail mixed development referred to as the Golden Life Mall (GLM). GLM stands on a three-acre parcel of land located along the Nakuru-Eldoret highway, approximately 1.0 kilometre from the Nakuru Central Business District. The Scheme aims to utilise the property with a view to optimising return on investment. Bearing in mind the geological status of Nakuru, an intensive geotechnical survey informed the structural design of the building right from the foundation.

GLM was certified as Practically Complete on 28 February 2020. It consists of 30,688 square metres of commercial, service, and circulation space. The lettable area is 167,108.00 square feet with 430 parking spaces. The handing-over of the building, including specialist installations, commenced immediately after practical completion. However, before the process was finalised, the COVID-19 pandemic struck. The subsequent legislation of the cessation of movement in and out of

the Nairobi Metropolitan Area stalled the hand-over process as the necessary personnel and equipment could not reach the site. Now that the cessation of movement has been lifted, the hand-over will resume and be completed. A certificate of occupation was awarded by the relevant government authorities and some tenants have commenced on fit-outs.

In addition to the commercial development, the scheme has also upgraded the access road to enable easy access from all directions. The works are complete except the road markings and furniture, which were delayed due to the lockdown. It is expected that they will be completed in due course.

Once the mall begins operations, it will offer a unique experience for those who come to shop or visit the offices there. This is provided by the ambience and facilities present. It is designed to cater for all age groups, and it is hoped that it will have the following categories of services in the tenant mix, by the time it is fully occupied: a retail supermarket; clothes, shoes and phone

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The Fight Against COVID-19

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be used to fight the virus not only in the country but also in the region. And here at Egerton, a researcher from the Department of Industrial and Energy Engineering, Dr. George Owino, fabricated and donated to the Nakuru Level Five Hospital a booth for testing samples of the virus that overcomes most of the challenges associated with interactions between medical personnel and patients. Perhaps most importantly, all this was happening as ordinary Kenyans with the requisite technical knowhow, from all parts of the country, were mass-producing and distributing face masks for use against the virus by members of the public.

Furthermore, in July 2019, long before the crisis, Egerton's Faculty of Education and Community Studies, through its Department of Applied Community and Development Studies, had organised a highly successful pilot training workshop on the topic "Pandemic Preparedness With a One Health Approach" and subsequently developed a postgraduate diploma course designed to unearth new knowledge on epidemics and pandemics such as those associated with Ebola, Marburg, SARS, and yellow fever.

In comparison to the discoveries that scientists in the developed world are making with respect to the fight against the virus – such as the ongoing development of

vaccines by Pfizer in the United States of America, Oxford University in Britain, and CanCino Biologics in China – these efforts may appear to some to be rather miniscule. In fact, however, they constitute a major milestone in development in our part of the world because they mark a moment in our history whereby we are undergoing a momentous paradigm shift towards awareness of the important role that scientific innovation and inventiveness play in human development.

We at *Newslink* would like to encourage our local scientists and researchers to keep moving in that direction. The struggle against the coronavirus and other such challenges will be won, for the most part, primarily through science and innovation.

Equally importantly, we would like to urge African governments to do more to support the efforts of our local scientists and researchers in that regard. The innovation and inventiveness that goes into such products constitute only the beginning of the efforts that are required to turn society around as required. The most important part consists of the mass-production of such products in quantities that are required to meet societal demands. This will not happen adequately without the wholehearted support of African governments throughout the continent. ■

MESSAGE FROM THE CHANCELLOR

Kenya Cannot Become a Prosperous Country without You



Dr. Narendra Raval

Congratulations to our July 2020 graduands! You are now set to join well-trained professionals, whose knowledge, ideas, and practical skills are in high demand as we strive to become a prosperous country. Particularly at this time, when we are facing the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, your skills,

competencies, and capabilities are needed more than ever before by your community. The pandemic of poverty, illiteracy, inequality, and gender-based violence also need viable and sustainable solutions from you, our graduands.

Today's graduation is a milestone that you have reached, and we are proud to count you among the growing number of Egerton University alumni. I also thank you for having chosen Egerton University. I hope that you have benefited from your time in this institution and have witnessed with confidence the University's effort to advance as a premier destination for the brightest students and scholars.

I note with appreciation the contribution of parents and guardians as well as the University staff for making your accomplishment possible.

As you continue your academic and professional journey, know that you are always welcome back. We will need your support to thrive and continually enhance the value of the degrees and diplomas you will be awarded today.

Our best wishes are with you today and into the future. Congratulations!

Golden Life Mall Practically Complete

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shops; bookshops; a tyre centre; food court kitchens and coffee shops; banking and financial services; entertainment services for adults and children; health related services, like chemists; and offices for various services.

The services will be facilitated by the following facilities: borehole with reverse osmosis treatment plant; rain water harvesting and storage system; municipal water connection; water fountain at the entrance; own transformer installed by the Kenya Power Company within the premises of the building; two generators to be used in case of blackouts – one large to operate during daytime and one small to operate during the night; four lifts – three for persons and one for goods; CCTV surveillance cameras in and around the building; electric fence around the building; a BMS system connected to all installations; metal scanners at entry and exit points; five levels of parking, including basement and rooftop; payment stations for parking services; roof-top playing area for children; landscaped sitting area opposite the gate of the mall; landscaped sitting area within the mall near the exit; hydrants and pressurised fire-fighting systems; fire escape routes that meet the specifications of fire safety; mechanical ventilation systems; piped music

in the common areas; provision for free Wi-Fi within the common areas; landscaped gardens and green spaces; external solar lighting; electronic advertising board; and baby changing rooms.

The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic has slowed down letting activity with some tenants who had signed up, delaying occupation. Negotiations are underway with several other tenants, including the prospective anchor and sub-anchor tenants. We believe that once restrictions imposed by the pandemic ease off, more of the signed-up tenants will commence their installation and those awaiting signing will do so. Operations within the building will start as soon as the tenants have completed installations. The grand opening will be dictated by the COVID-19 situation, but it is our hope that it will be done by December 2020.

The significance at the GLM is that the retirement funds of the Members are effectively secured and that the Members are assured of a comfortable life in retirement.

Prof. Wilkister N. Moturi is Associate Professor of Environmental Health and Trust Secretary, EURBS.

This Graduation Ceremony Symbolises Your Resilience



Amb. Dr. Luka Hukka Wario

To the one thousand and seventeen graduands at this ceremony today: Each one of you made it to this special moment through your sustained hard work. On behalf of the Egerton University Council, therefore, I would like to congratulate all the graduating students on their determined will and dedicated study here at Egerton University. All of you can be truly proud of your achievement. I also congratulate the parents, guardians and well-wishers of our graduands for their remarkable support.

This Graduation Ceremony, which is a virtual one owing to prevailing challenging circumstances, is in itself symbolic of some of the difficulties you had to go through during your time at the University. You approached such difficulties in university learning with resilience and innovativeness, and that is why you made it to the end.

You have developed certain qualities of character and mind to achieve success. These qualities include empathy, rigour, the capacity to think independently, to listen attentively, and, where necessary, to disagree, without being disagreeable. With these qualities, you have been empowered to seek out new opportunities with the confidence that you can contribute, with the knowledge that you are prepared, and with the certainty that you can overcome challenges and unexpected setbacks. That's the power of university education.

Graduands, we have endeavoured to guide you in a journey of experiences which has helped you to grow and evolve. The whole University celebrates you and with you. We are proud of your achievements. But there is much more to do, and today marks a new beginning. Set your sights on what is ahead!

Thank you and may God bless you.

Chief Officers of the University



*Prof. Rose A. Mwonya
Vice-Chancellor*



*Prof. Alexander K. Kahi
Deputy Vice-Chancellor
(Academic Affairs)*



*Prof. Isaac O. Kibwage
Deputy Vice-Chancellor
(Administration, Planning
& Development)*



*Prof. Bockline O. Bebe
Ag. Deputy Vice-Chancellor
(Research & Extension)*



*Prof. Lenah Nakhone-Wati
Principal, Nakuru Town
Campus College*



*Prof. Mwanarusi Saidi
Ag. Registrar (AA)*



*Dr. Thomas K. Serrem
Registrar (HCA)*



*Prof. Nancy Mungai
Ag. Director (R&E)*



*Ms. Janegrace Kinyanjui
University Librarian*



*Mr. Moses Ouma
Finance Officer*

Do Not Let the Current Moment of Global Uncertainty Consume You



Prof. Rose A. Mwonya

I want to thank the graduands, guardians, and parents for your patience and understanding while we prepared for the 42nd Graduation Ceremony. We typically have one of our two annual

graduations in June, but due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, we had to adjust our calendar and have it in July, that is today. We made the decision not to skip a graduation and have a virtual one because of our concern for you. The University understands that you need your academic certificate to proceed with your plans.

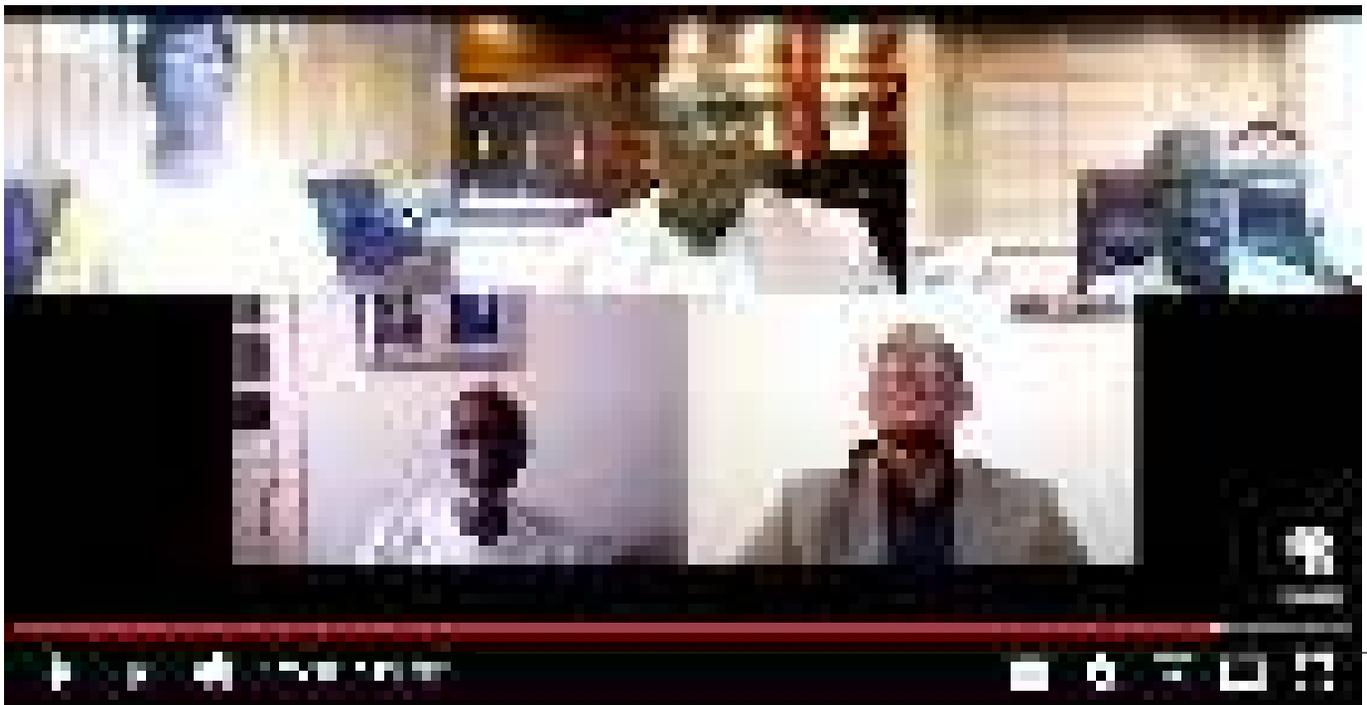
Even as we acknowledge the unusual difficulties we are facing today, do not let the current moment of global uncertainty consume you. Today is your time to celebrate what you have accomplished in the last few years, and to dream about what you will achieve in the years to come. Your degree/diploma is a testament to your resilience, character, and determination.

The University is committed to transforming lives through quality education. We continue improving our curriculum to meet the ever-

changing demands of today's world. Our graduands have been contributing to national and global development, and from today, you will be joining them.

Not only do we offer quality education, but the University is also at the forefront in environmental conservation as enshrined in our core values. We organise various tree-planting activities and other environment-centred outreach activities together with the community. On 29 February this year, we held the 7th Mau-Egerton University Cross Country. The main objectives of this event are to create environmental awareness and to raise funds to rehabilitate the Njoro River and Mau ecosystem.

To the graduands, please accept my warmest congratulations to you and to your family and friends who have supported you. I wish you every success in your future endeavours.



The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Rose A. Mwonya, speaks online at the Alliance of African Partnership Public Dialogue Series on COVID-19 Pandemic Responses and Lessons Learned on 30 April 2020 (see message from the Director of Marketing and Resource Mobilisation, pages 5-6)

Resources Mobilised to Deal with COVID-19 Pandemic



Prof. Josiah Ouma Omolo

Let me take this opportunity to congratulate the cohorts of the 42nd Graduation Ceremony. Congratulations on a job well done. I extend my appreciation to the people who made it possible for you to complete your studies.

The Directorate of Marketing and Resource Mobilisation (DMRM) continues to deliver on its objectives through its six core sections, i.e.: the Director's Office, Resource Mobilisation Department, Alumni Relations, Gift Shop, Bookshop, and

Communication and Marketing Department. I wish to outline some of our engagements since the University's last graduation.

Mau-Egerton University Cross Country

The University held the 7th Edition of the Mau-Egerton University Cross Country on Saturday, 29 February 2020. The event was conducted through partnerships with various organisations, such as Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB), Athletics Kenya, KASS FM, Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organisation (KALRO), Kenya Water Towers, Kenya Forest Service, Kenya Wildlife Service, Nakuru County Government, Narok County Government, Alexandria Cancer Centre, Kenya Red Cross, and Mediheal Group of Hospitals. As a University, we continue with our efforts to create environmental awareness and to rehabilitate Njoro River and the Mau Ecosystem.

Egerton on the Move amid COVID-19

Egerton University is on course to fully integrate online delivery of its

courses. This was the message of the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Rose A. Mwonya, who spoke at the Alliance for African Partnership (AAP) Public Dialogue Series on COVID-19 Pandemic Responses and Lessons Learnt, on 30 April 2020.

The AAP Dialogue Series brings together university leaders from across Africa to discuss their institutions' response to the COVID-19 crisis and share best practices on how to move forward. The first dialogue, out of a six-part series, included, besides Prof. Mwonya, three more participants: the Vice-Chancellor of Makerere University, Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Botswana, Prof. Davis Norris, and the Rector of the Cheikh Anta Diop University, Prof. Ibrahima Thioub. The Moderator was Prof. Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, the Vice-Chancellor of the United States International University–Africa.

The Egerton Vice-Chancellor pointed out that the pandemic had made the University realise that it was not making full use of its resources at the School of Distance Learning (SoDL). The University, therefore, approached the Kenya Education Network Trust (KENET) to train lecturers on the use of their online teaching and learning system. KENET is an organisation that provides affordable, cost-effective and low congestion internet bandwidth services to its member learning institutions in Kenya.

The Vice-Chancellor further explained that Egerton University had mobilised resources to help deal with the current COVID-19 pandemic, by cushioning its employees from immediate effects and by offering support to the general public as a corporate social responsibility. Thus, the Department of Chemistry was producing hand-rub sanitisers for the benefit of the community. The



Participants in the 7th Edition of the Mau-Egerton University Cross Country compete in the Junior Men category on 29 February 2020

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DQA Implements CUE Recommendations



Dr. Patricia Wambugu

I take this opportunity to congratulate the graduands of the 42nd graduation of Egerton University for completing their studies successfully. I believe that you will be our ambassadors in the world of work as you demonstrate the quality of knowledge and skills you gained in your specific areas of specialisation.

The Directorate of Quality Assurance (DQA) has fully automated the Teaching Effectiveness Evaluation (TEE)

process from administration of questionnaires to provision of feedback to individual lecturers and technologists/technicians through their respective Chairs of Department/Directors. Currently, plans are in the final stages to embed the TEE process in the Academic Records Management System (ARMS). These activities are aimed at continued improvement of our internal quality assurance mechanisms.

DQA also maintains quality in benchmarking through analysis of External Examiners (EE) reports by preparing a synthesised summary report. The recommendations of the report, once approved by the Senate, are implemented by faculties and departments.

Academic programmes that have undergone a full cycle of implementation undergo mandatory self-assessment. Deans of faculties, in consultation with the Chairs of departments, identify programmes that are due for evaluation and forward them to DQA. Selected teams from the respective departments are trained on how to carry out the self-assessment. A compiled self-assessment report is

submitted to the Directorate for internal review and follow-up on the recommendations made for quality improvement. In the 2019/2020 academic year, the Directorate is carrying out self-assessment of five programmes (two undergraduate and three postgraduate). The Directorate is exploring ways of carrying out the self-assessment of programmes under the prevailing conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Directorate continues to monitor the quality of education offered in the University through academic audits. The Directorate together with the departments is focusing on the implementation of the recommendations on areas of improvement made by the Commission for University Education (CUE) during the regular audit carried out in October 2019. The Directorate is also compiling data for CUE in the creation of the Commission's Interactive Management Information System (MIS).

During this time of COVID-19, DQA holds its monthly meetings via Zoom to review its activities and ensure internal quality measures are in place. ■

Resources Mobilised to Deal with COVID-19 Pandemic

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Department of Applied Community Development Studies was also designing and making face masks for students, staff, and the neighbouring community.

In her presentation, the Vice-Chancellor also touched on some challenges that Egerton University, together with other Kenyan universities, was facing while delivering on their objectives amid the global pandemic. Among the obstacles was the low internet penetration rate and unstable internet connections in

some parts of Kenya, and the economic difficulties some students faced in acquiring the appropriate gadgets to facilitate online learning.

Furthermore, as an agricultural institution, Egerton undertook field research in rural areas, which was now affected by regional lockdowns in some counties. Laboratory work and experimental work were also hampered. But the University was dealing with these challenges in a gradual and systematic manner.

The general conclusion arrived at

by the participants was that the COVID-19 crisis had exposed inequalities within institutions and among institutions on the African continent. The pandemic had also revealed deficiencies in infrastructural capacities that facilitated seamless movement from face-to-face teaching to online platforms, eased international collaborations, and supported the welfare of international students. However, all participants expressed confidence that the difficulties were not insurmountable. ■

You Have the Ability to Create Your Own Future



Prof. Alexander K. Kahi

Upon admission to Egerton University, our students arrive brimming with hopes, desires, and prospects of the future. They walk under soothing shadows cast upon sidewalks by ageing trees to and from classes, burning with a desire to learn and acquire knowledge before the sun sets in the distant horizon.

From the onset, one gets a foretaste of a generation watchfully living up to the dreams they enviously desire to achieve. Understanding these aspirations, Egerton University innovatively influences the development of our students through holistic education and generation, acquisition, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge and skills. As a result of years of hard work, our great institution produces competitive and hands-on graduates who have consistently contributed to national and global development.

As we confer degrees and award diplomas each year, we are proud to say that we have done our very best to send equipped individuals to the professional world. The University's 42nd Graduation does not fall short of these expectations.

As their schooling days wane, our students scale up the levels of study, always keeping the faith and staying true to the struggle. They emerge on the other side transformed individuals ready to face the world and

make it a better place.

Well, numbers don't lie. We commend the graduands on the long list of today's Graduation Ceremony for the tolerance they have exercised through their course of study. It has not been a mean feat, and that they have made it this far calls for a celebration.

Guided by the core values on which our great University is founded, we always nurture in our students the ability to harness their fear and transform it into creativity: an intrinsic knowledge that when they take risks, they learn that there will be times when they succeed and there will be times when they fail, and both are equally important – a constant reminder of the reason they came to Egerton University in the first place. This explains why we send very competitive graduates into the plethora of fields that the professional world has to offer.

Abraham Lincoln once said, “The best way to predict the future is to create it.” In the same strength, education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today. As we make the most of the thirst for a brighter tomorrow, our students have always put in the relentless effort to improve themselves academically and hence improve the future transitively.

We from the Division of Academic Affairs, having an innate understanding of the very important role education plays in the development of the future of our students, make it our sole purpose to ensure that students at Egerton University acquire the best education there is. Seeing the graduands of July 2020 transiting to the next phase in life gives us happiness and fulfilment. It is a vindication that our efforts are materialising.

As Egerton University marks its 42nd Graduation we are proud to share that the journey has been for the most part graceful to us. The graduands of July 2020, supported by their lecturers and their families, have journeyed through challenges and light moments that have been beneficial in directing them towards their achievements. Our lecturers have been consistent in imparting in our students quality education and setting up a foundation for tomorrow's leaders.

Families back at home have also substantially supported the growth of each of our students be it financially or emotionally. We as Egerton University have in our capacity availed fertile ground for the nurturing of the world's next great minds by providing support structures and systems directed towards delivering quality education through market-driven academic programmes.

As we look in retrospect at the journey that each student, family member, lecturer, and member of the Egerton University community has taken in helping achieve this grand feat, we as the Division of Academic Affairs chant a resounding “Congratulations!” to the graduands of July 2020!

Even as we cheer on our graduands to the next phase ahead, it is important to note the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on education in Kenya and the world in general. The pandemic has resulted in school closures that have hampered the quest of knowledge the world over. The Division of Academic Affairs takes this opportunity to assure our students of continuity in the acquisition of knowledge despite the difficulties that exist.

We are far ahead in this pursuit by streamlining the delivery of education through harnessing technology and other tools vital in enabling progress in learning despite the pandemic. We have hit the ground running by conducting online thesis defences besides working with our lecturers in developing online modules of lecture content. With the unwavering commitment of our staff and support from our students, we are proud to say that we are on the right course.

With such frameworks in place, we can say that Egerton University is a most suitable institution for our graduates and prospective students to further their education.

This being the first virtual graduation by Egerton University, we are gratified to say that we are making true of our promise of the transformation of lives through quality education. We are delighted to see that our determination to generate knowledge and offer exemplary education and training to society for national and global development has yielded fruit.

Though it may not be feasible for all of us to congregate and honour the successes of our graduands, all of us at a personal level acknowledge your achievements and admire the zeal with which you have guarded your desire to achieve academic success. You

“As we make the most of the thirst for a brighter tomorrow, our students have always put in the relentless effort to improve themselves academically and hence improve the future transitively.”

are a living affirmation that what lies behind us and what lies before us are small matters compared to what lies within us. We wish you nothing but the best in all your future undertakings.

It is our prayer that after everything is said and done, the distinction between your life and your work stays clear to you. That you always grow in the wisdom that the second is only part of the first and, therefore, you will make the best out of your work while creating value in life. That you keep in mind the difference between your schooling and your education, and, therefore, you will make good of the schooling seeded in you while committing yourself to building a life around your education.

In the words of Stephen Colbert, “Life is an improvisation. You have no idea what's going to happen next, and you are mostly just making things up as you go along.” We encourage the graduands to be bold and to improvise, never faltering in the pursuit of the lives you have worked so hard towards.

The Division of Academic Affairs wishes you well in your endeavours and welcomes you to further your academic studies at Egerton University. As you journey through life, making the best of the education imparted in you, we encourage you to be good emissaries of Egerton University and remember to keep it “CORONA MINUS”.

Congratulations to the graduands of July 2020! ■

With Great Power Comes Great Responsibility

By Andanje Sarowiwa

Graduation ceremonies often carry along a potent feeling of reminiscence, especially among the graduating class and the team that had a role in their development. Every little moment that filled in an individual's stay at university comes to full life, colour, and luminance. It may be a friend who lent them a shoulder during a difficult time, or a roommate, whom they got along with when all the rest were quite distant, or the successes that defined them, not forgetting the failures that moulded them. All of these memories come together to give the graduate an unyielding sense of peace and joy.

Back in my days as a B.Sc. Statistics student at Egerton University, my first impression of him didn't quite fit the description of an individual who would warm one's heart every other day for the rest of one's period of study. He seemed to be the typical mathematics lecturer with the usual clockwork demeanour of a man driven by results and targets.

In his introductory class, my statistical computing lecturer said he wouldn't mind if we called him Mapengo (toothless) owing to the gaping hole that sat where his front teeth should have been. He didn't care so much for dress shirts and pressed suits. Jeans, polo shirts, and a rustic bomber jacket sealed the ensemble of a man of simplicity. With him, he always carried a sling bag that was bursting at the seams. It housed his electronics, power cables, and an assortment of documents that were at

the mercies of the zipper.

He was good with time. He was in fact so good that we countless times found him in class early on before us. He was adept at the simulation of probability distribution functions. We speculated that he was born doing them because he was a virtuoso in them. Time and again, when my mind went on a whirl following extreme concentration and no grasp, I couldn't help but wonder whether he too had had a hard time during his undergraduate days studying that stuff.

When everything he said sounded like pig Latin, I was often left to admire his decent handwriting, one that would merit being a font in MS Word and what have you. He used a stylus and a tab whose contents he projected to a wall somewhere in NPLs. To say the man was tech-savvy would be an understatement. In the eyes of many, or mine at least, he might as well have been Tony Stark from *Iron Man*. Between you and me, he was the most passionate lecturer to ever pace the front of the classroom. Even when we looked at him with blank stares and numbed minds, he always inspired some wild sense of optimism in us that all would work out eventually.

Then he would call it a day and engage us in some mature talk about life beyond campus. How his life in adulthood was panning out; bills, responsibilities, and parenting were usual topics. Unbeknown to us, his spontaneous intermissions to share

about life in a way prepared us for whatever awaited on the other side.

He once showed us a copy of his pay-slip just to paint a picture of how responsibility looks like. It was then that I realised that transiting into the next phase of life needed some grace, a lot of it. He would then tell us how much he desired that we made good of our time in school, keeping in mind the sole purpose that brought us where we were. That we all ought to stand for something and that he would hate it if he was to fail any of us for poor results in his course. It's no miracle he didn't have to suffer the agony. Not because we knew so much, but because we knew that there was a serious probability of failing if we didn't work hard enough. And so we did.

Dear graduands, you may be wondering where I am going with all this and what a random story about a lecturer has to do with any part of what's happening today.

I would like you to challenge yourself, as my lecturer did, and understand the power that resides in responsibility. Responsibility, like power, carries its own gravity. The two are almost indistinguishable when they work in tandem. "With great power comes great responsibility", they say. They come and work together as a package.

Today you have received diplomas and degrees, i.e. power. The power to read, write and change the world in your own unique way. There's no better time to become the best of yourself rather than strive to

be a first-rate version of somebody else. My lecturer had a responsibility not only to his students but also to their future beings – a responsibility that transcended keeping alive the fire we came with and rekindling our thirst for fulfilment and knowledge. A responsibility he never fell short of delivering. Who knew he would inspire such great power in us in the process?

As you move on to the next phase in life, remember that through the deliberation of the responsibilities, you will channel a lot of power to the people you will interact with. In ways beyond your comprehension, you will encounter hurdles when working towards this end. I encourage you to have faith in the process and walk among people who have achieved the results you want. Only in this way can you succeed.

Theodore Roosevelt once said, “A man who has never gone to school

may steal from a freight car, but if he has a university education, he may steal the whole railroad.” Only when you sit back and reminisce about the power bestowed upon you today will you understand the luminous future that awaits you.

How about the coronavirus? Our capacity as mankind to withstand tribulations has been and will be put to test, time and again. But look, the rallying call is to the people upon whom great power and responsibility have been bestowed. The same goes for any other situation that may come your way. With the powers vested in you, you have the abundance to guide, serve, and effect change.

We may not be able to make merry as usual. I urge you not to have a heavy heart. You have run your race to completion and no situation should make you forget where you have come from. As you celebrate this 42nd Graduation Ceremony in your own

special way and reminisce about the events of the past years, your families can't help but share in your feeling of accomplishment. You can barely imagine the sense of relief they are experiencing even though they might not show it that much. Between you and me, this would be the most opportune moment to ask for money. Ha-ha! Trust me. It is probably the last time you will ever get to do it.

In sum, remember that bosses don't usually accept notes from your mother. It's time to put on the big boy pants and move. You are bound to the promises you made yourself during your early days and the power entrusted upon you.

Congratulations on your graduation! May good tidings and cheer follow you everywhere you go!

Mr. Andanje Sarowiwa graduated with a B.Sc. Statistics from Egerton University in 2019. ■

MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR EGERTON UNIVERSITY PROGRAMMES

CERTIFICATE PROGRAMMES

Minimum Mean Grade D+ (plus) in KCSE or its equivalent

DIPLOMA PROGRAMMES

Minimum Mean Grade C- (minus) in KCSE or its equivalent

DEGREE PROGRAMMES

Minimum Mean Grade C+ (plus) in KCSE or its equivalent

MASTER'S PROGRAMMES

Bachelor's Degree in a related field with at least Second Class (Upper Division) or Second Class (Lower Division) with two years relevant working experience

DOCTORATE DEGREE PROGRAMMES

Master's Degree in related field

NJORO (MAIN CAMPUS)

NAKURU TOWN CAMPUS COLLEGE

E-CAMPUS

For further information on specific programmes and their requirements, kindly visit the University website www.egerton.ac.ke or application.egerton.ac.ke

Defending Theses at Egerton from Home in Rwanda and Ghana



Prof. Abdul Faraj

On behalf of the staff and students in the Faculty of Agriculture (FOA), may I take this opportunity to congratulate all the graduands on their accomplishments and a job well done, one that has enabled you to graduate from your various programmes. It is due to your determination, diligence and confidence that you have been able to reach this far. CONGRATULATIONS! I would also like to thank and congratulate the parents, guardians, and sponsors, as well as the various organisations that have supported these graduands throughout their stay at Egerton University.

The current COVID-19 pandemic has posed challenges to FOA just as it has to other education sectors in the country. However, we have managed to continue fulfilling our mandate as a centre of excellence in agriculture. For example, we have managed to complete teaching online two M.Sc. courses, and the students are eagerly waiting to sit for their

examinations. Currently we are continuing with thesis defences online and have successfully completed four Ph.D. and seven M.Sc. defences. Two of the Ph.D.s were of our students who have already returned to Rwanda and one M.Sc. of a student in Ghana. The online teaching and thesis defences face a number of challenges, especially poor internet connectivity and power interruptions. But we have managed to surmount these challenges.

FOA graduates continue to excel in their various fields. Cyprian Syeunda, who graduated with an M.Sc. in Food Science in November 2019 and was one of the recipients of the Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Award, received a scholarship to pursue his Ph.D. in Food Science from January 2020 at Texas A & M University in USA. The major faculty-wide projects and programmes continue to perform well, attracting and sponsoring many undergraduate and postgraduate students.

The Centre for Excellence in Sustainable Agriculture and Agribusiness Management

(CESAAM), which is sponsored by the World Bank, recently held a groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of its offices and laboratories. While the Transforming African Agricultural Universities to Meaningfully Contribute to Africa's Growth and Development (TAGDev), a MasterCard Foundation support project through the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM), held a very successful virtual 3rd National Forum for Universities, TVETs and other Agricultural Industry Players. The theme of the forum was "Agricultural Innovations, Research and Transformation for Sustainable Development in the Era of COVID-19".

I wish the graduands all the best and success in their endeavours as they begin their professional career. Use the knowledge and skills you have acquired to solve the many global problems affecting humanity, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic and after, and try to bring positive changes to those around you. Thank you and God bless you. ■

Egerton Don wins One Planet Fellowship

By the Newslink Team

Dr Miriam Karwitha Charimbu of the Department of Crops, Horticulture and Soils is among the first cohort of successful applicants of the One Planet Fellowship. The Cohort consists of 45 outstanding scientists in Africa working on a wide

range of agricultural research topics.

The scientists, referred to as Laureate Candidates, were selected from a pool of 1,523 applicants from 12 African countries, including Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo,

and Zambia.

The One Planet Fellowship seeks to build a vibrant, highly connected, and intergenerational network of African and European scientist leaders equipped to lead next-generation research focused on helping Africa's smallholder farmers adapt to a changing climate. The Fellowship is a new \$20 million initiative dedicated to supporting research on climate change adaptation. Announced at the One Planet Summit in 2017, it is a career-accelerator designed to enhance the capacity of high-potential agricultural researchers focused on climate change adaptation, by building their leadership, scientific research, networking, and mentoring skills.

The United Nations has warned that “climate change is costing communities and countries dearly

today and even more tomorrow.” Experts agree that the African continent is particularly vulnerable to climate change and that hundreds of millions of lives will be at risk of hunger and starvation if Africa is unable to feed its growing population.

Research and innovation in the agricultural sector can help Africa feed a growing population in the context of a changing climate but only if investments are made now to build a pipeline of the next generation of research scientists. That is why African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD) together with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), France's BNP Paribas Foundation, the European Union, Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and France's Agropolis Fondation have partnered

to implement the One Planet Fellowship.

Dr. Charimbu's focus is to create a cadre of competent, knowledgeable, and skilled small-scale youth exporters to improve their incomes by training them on climate-smart technologies and value addition and to link them to export markets in Africa. To achieve that objective she will be guided and mentored by Prof. Job Lagat of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness. She and her mentor, with support from Prof. Abdul Faraj, the Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, attended the official launch of the One Planet Fellowship on 16 September 2019 as well as the fellowship and mentoring orientation workshop held at Safari Park Hotel, Nairobi, on 17-21 September 2019.



Dr. Miriam K. Charimbu (second row, fifth from left) with other One Planet Fellowship successful applicants during the launch of the Fellowship at Safari Park Hotel, Nairobi, on 16 September 2019

Faculty to Host a Major African Scholar



Dr. Phylis Bartoo

Hats off, graduands! You have completed your undergraduate, Master's, and doctoral programmes and are now about to begin on a new journey. I take this opportunity to congratulate you in that regard on behalf of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. I have no doubt in my mind that you will build upon our reputation of excellence to continue to serve as worthy ambassadors of the Faculty.

My deepest gratitude goes to our professors and lecturers for enabling these great minds to blossom. The same goes to our administrative staff for their support. Thank you.

I would like to extend special thanks to the parents, spouses, children, and friends of our graduands for their patience, understanding, support, and sacrifice – both moral and financial – during the challenging and rewarding years of their college life. You have helped our graduands to successfully complete their studies.

As you contemplate the journey ahead, you must bear in mind that it is a tightrope and that you must learn to balance among the competing interests. The journey will be full of constraints and many unknowns within a limited space of time on earth. However, if you define your purpose in life realistically, you will achieve much. In making the decision to come to study at Egerton, you opened a door to a whole new world of opportunity. Today we are celebrating a new commencement.

You should endeavour to give back to the Faculty and University as much as you can as well as to continuously update us on the many achievements you will experience in your career paths and personal lives. We will appreciate and take pride in your achievements.

In the course of the year, there were a number of noteworthy developments that we would like to report.

To begin with, the Youth for Social Development Initiative, a project by FASS students who volunteer their services for the advancement of humanity, has continuously participated in community development beyond the University. Early this year, for example, the team visited Mombasa County and carried out cleaning activities along the Indian ocean and in the old town.

Secondly, Dr. David Nderitu of the Department of Philosophy, History and Religious Studies (PHR) was awarded a travel grant by

Wellcome Trust through the Global Forum on Bioethics in Research (GFBR) for a writing fellowship in McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. The purpose of the fellowship, which in Dr. Nderitu's case began on 17 November 2019 and ended on 17 December 2019, is to support visits to countries other than the country where the applicant is based for purposes of research. The idea is to afford the applicant the opportunity to develop a scholarly article for publication within a conducive environment. The applicant gets the chance to learn a great deal from being in a different research environment while working with an expert mentor.

Dr. Nderitu worked together with his mentor, Dr. Claudia Emerson, the Director of the Institute on Ethics and Policy for Innovation at McMaster University, on a research project entitled “The Cultural Value of Human Tissues for African Indigenous Populations and Its Implications for Bio-Banking”. He made two presentations on the topic to the Egerton University Community, first, on 21 February 2020 in the Education Theatre 2, and, second, on 3 March 2020 in the FASS Boardroom.

Together with Dr. Emerson, Dr. Nderitu is in the process of developing a manuscript for publication.

Early this year the Faculty was honoured to host an International scholar. Dr. Shadrack Nasong'o, Professor of International Studies at

Rhodes University, is the recipient of a 2020 Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship. Through the fellowship programme, African-born scholars participate in educational projects at higher education institutions in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda.

“The fellowship provides funding for me to spend two months at Egerton University in Kenya to help develop curriculum for a Master's degree programme in International Relations and Diplomacy and to help mentor graduate students and junior faculty in social science research methods and pedagogical strategies for

effective teaching and learning,” says Prof. Nasong'o.

The Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship Programme is funded by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York and is managed by the Institute of International Education in Washington, DC.

Born and raised in Western Kenya, Prof. Nasong'o is a prominent critical voice on African politics and has been widely recognized for his prolific research and scholarship on Africa. In 2012, he received the Rhodes' Clarence Day Award for Excellence in Research and Creative Activities. In 2016, he received the

University of Texas at Austin's Ali Mazrui Award for Research and Scholarly Excellence.

Prof. Nasong'o served as chair of the Department of International Studies at Rhodes University for five years. The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences is looking forward to welcoming him to Egerton.

Despite the challenges of COVID-19, the Faculty has been carrying on with various academic activities. For example, we have had ten postgraduate defenses during the pandemic via ZOOM, an online programme that the staff and students alike have been embracing as our “new normal”. ■



Besides their regular engagement in face-to-face teaching, Egerton University staff are also well-prepared for online teaching. In the picture above, lecturers are trained to develop e-learning material. The training, which has been going on for quite sometime, is undertaken by the E-Campus, coordinated by Prof. Fred Keraro, under the School of Distance Learning, headed by Prof. Ezra Maritim

Faculty Develops Pandemic Preparedness Programme in Time for COVID-19



Prof. Joseph Mworira Wamutitu

The Faculty of Education and Community Studies (FEDCOS) takes great pride in presenting the highest number of graduands for the 42nd Graduation Ceremony. The Faculty has four departments: Curriculum, Instruction and Educational Management (CIEM); Agriculture Education and Extension (AGED); Psychology, Counselling and Educational Foundations (PSYCOEDFO); and Applied Community and Development Studies (ACDS). Each department has highly qualified academic and technical staff who have played key roles in imparting knowledge and sharpening learners during training towards the achievement of Kenya's Vision 2030, the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Big Four Agenda of the Government of Kenya.

On behalf of the staff of FEDCOS and on my own behalf, I congratulate all the graduands and wish them success in their future careers. The intensive training you have gone through has equipped you with knowledge, skills, and attitudes

that make you the best leaders in tackling Kenya's challenges. I strongly believe that you have the potential to transform humanity and improve lives. The Faculty is committed to continuous improvement by regular revision of the teaching curriculum and upgrading of pedagogical and research skills through staff training and development. FEDCOS academic programmes are engineered to generate, develop, and share knowledge for efficient and effective management of the educational sector, training, research, and outreach through the nurturing of an intellectual culture that integrates theory with practice and innovation. This is demonstrated by our students' outstanding performance during Field Attachment and Teaching Practice. As a Faculty, we believe we are giving the best to Kenya and the entire world. As you join the world of work, remember our slogan, "Students First". Make yours, "Kenya First".

The Faculty members have attended a number of national conferences on curriculum reform trainings and have a steering committee in place to oversee the preparations and implementation of the Competency Based Curriculum (CBC).

In July 2019, FEDCOS, through the Department of ACDS, organised a pilot training workshop on "Pandemic Preparedness with a One Health Approach" at the CMRT in Egerton University. Following this success, the Department of ACDS has developed a Postgraduate Diploma on Pandemic Preparedness with a One Health Approach curriculum. The purpose of this

programme is to provide critical knowledge and skills to potential diverse responders to infectious diseases whenever and wherever they occur. Among the pandemics are Ebola, Marburg, SARS, yellow fever, and, currently, COVID-19.

In addition, the Department of CIEM has developed a Postgraduate Diploma in Pedagogical Leadership in Africa (PEDAL). This is a training programme that embraces teaching and learning as an art to be orchestrated in classrooms through thoughtful preparation of university teaching staff. The programme uses a combination of tools such as digitally enabled case studies, flipped classroom, role plays, simulations, and tricky topics to support a range of interesting problem-based learning activities aimed to engender deep learning that maximises learning outcomes. The programme targets university academic staff who have not been trained in pedagogy. Those who will be enrolled in the programme will be trained to create the appropriate environment for practical application of tools and technologies for a holistic teaching and learning experience.

The Department of CIEM has developed a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) curriculum, targeting those with Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) and Bachelor of Arts (BA) degrees who would like to develop a career in Education.

Lastly, the Faculty will appreciate every feedback that could enable the continuous development and improvement of its programmes and services. To the graduands, we wish you the very best as you endeavour to unlock your full potentials. ■

Faculty Fights Coronavirus with Innovative Technology



Prof. Japheth O. Onyando

The Faculty of Engineering and Technology currently has four Bachelor of Science programmes and one Technology programme as follows: B.Sc. in Agricultural Engineering; B.Sc. in Water and Environmental Engineering; B.Sc. in Manufacturing Engineering and Technology; B.Sc. in Instrumentation and Control Engineering; and Bachelor of Industrial Technology. The programmes are accredited by the Commission for University Education (CUE).

In the 2020 Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Services (KUCCPS) admissions, the Faculty received a total of 151 students for the four Bachelor of Science programmes against a declared capacity of 142, which indicates that our programmes are highly preferred by prospective engineers.

In our training programmes, we place a lot of emphasis on development of skills through practical sessions and industrial

practice. This has made our students be preferred by the industry.

In addition, the Faculty has nine postgraduate programmes in various fields of Agricultural Engineering and Industrial and Energy Engineering that have continued to attract students both locally and internationally.

In terms of collaboration, the Faculty, in June 2020, renewed its Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the University of Twente, The Netherlands, for another period of five years. Through the MoU, the Faculty has continued to train postgraduate students as well as to leverage research and development projects. These include the EOIA-Lake Naivasha and MaMaSe project, which has resulted in the establishment of the Centre for Integrated Water and Basin Management (CIWAB) Centre.

At the Centre, we receive and archive satellite data from Meteosat's second-generation satellite at a temporal resolution of 15 minutes, in addition to other satellite-based and third-party products. The facility is used to monitor vegetation changes, floods, and droughts, as well as to develop early-warning systems in the same and related fields.

In February this year, a group of fourth- and fifth-year students from the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering presented their innovations at the International Engineering Students Conference 2020 (IESC 2020) held at the University of Nairobi. Their innovations were highly rated, and they qualified to compete at the L'Oreal Brandstorm International 2020 Conference in Paris, France.

The purpose of the competition is to assess the level of skills development among engineering students, which is essential in building competence in the profession.

Similarly, the Department of Electrical Engineering has initiated a process of partnering with the Geothermal Development Company in developing an automated Mini Hydro Electric Power station along River Ndarugu in Njoro. The project has started and will offer practical lessons to students on power-generation as well as on the transmission, distribution, instrumentation, control, and utilization of power. This will enhance the practical skills of graduates from the Department.

Further, the Department of Industrial and Energy Engineering has made a milestone in contributing towards the control of the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, and through the initiative of Dr. George Owino, the Chairman of the Department, the Department has innovatively fabricated and donated a booth to the Nakuru PGH Level Five hospital whose purpose is to protect health care workers as they conduct nasal and throat swab sample collections from the general population.

This initiative has been driven by the recently observed high risk of infection among the medical personnel who are handling patients. This is of particular concern in Kenya due to the low number of medical experts, the limiting costs of the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and the growing need to expand the country's testing capacity to all counties.

One of the major concerns for

contamination and infection of the medical staff (15-33% of staff) has been identified to be at the points of triage. This has led to the recommendation by the Ministry of Health to emphasize on the use of physical barriers to limit contact with patients at triage. There have also been noted risks of infections during the doffing process (i.e. the removal

of the PPE).

The use of PPEs is an effective practice but the costs of their use in the intervention are too high for sustainable financing in Kenya. It is estimated that the cost of a full PPE suit is in the range of Ksh15,000-45,000, depending on source and quality.

It was, therefore, necessary to

devise a way to prevent infection by use of a booth that houses the medical professional with a provision to reach a potential patient using a set of non-porous and chemical-resistant gloves. The gloves are disinfected after every use and eliminate the use of PPEs.



The sample collection booth fabricated by Egerton's Dr. George Owino. The booth, which is made from acrylic (a type of transparent plastic) and embedded sealed rubber gauntlet gloves, will allow medical professionals to collect nasal and throat samples contact-free thereby minimizing interactions with potential COVID-19 patients. It is easily cleaned and sanitized between each medical use and will eliminate use of the costly single-use personal protective equipment.

Department Strengthens Management of Water Resources

By Raphael M. Wambua

The Department of Agricultural Engineering has recently made significant strides in training of undergraduate and postgraduate students as well as in research activities.

To begin with, during the ongoing period of the COVID-19 pandemic, the academic staff have developed e-learning materials for online teaching of both undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Secondly, in the course of the year, the Africa Centre of Excellence in Sustainable Agriculture and Agribusiness Management (CESAAM) at Egerton University offered scholarships for postgraduate

students in the Department. In total, approximately 20 students have been pursuing postgraduate degrees, including the Master of Science degree and the Doctor of Philosophy degree, at different levels.

The staff in the Department have also been involved in consultancy and research activities. For example, some of our staff have been collaborating with the Kenya Climate Smart Agriculture Project (KCSAP) for bioenergy research along agricultural value chains. A number of consultancy proposals have also been developed from within the Department.

Finally, the Department has established a Centre for Integrated Water and Basin Management

(CIWAB). The Centre focuses on four key pillars of the water sector, namely water governance, catchment protection and rehabilitation; value-added water resources data; economic water use and investments; and water use efficiency and livelihood diversification.

In the course of the year, the project has embarked on the construction of a complex comprising offices and laboratories to cater for its operations.

Dr. Raphael Wambua is the Chair, Department of Agricultural Engineering at Egerton University.

FACULTY OF ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Message from the Dean

Staff and Students Win Scholarships to Further Their Studies



Prof. Elias Maranga

On behalf of myself and the community of students and staff in the Faculty of Environment and Natural Resources Development (FERD), I take this opportunity to congratulate our esteemed graduands, who have worked diligently amidst all odds (including the dreadful COVID-19 pandemic) and who merit the awards, certificates, diplomas and degrees they are receiving on the occasion of

the 42nd Graduation Ceremony. We all join you, your parents, and your families in celebrating your well-deserved achievements. We are hopeful that subsequent to your graduation you will proceed to carve out your own niche in the service of humanity and that you will fully realise your professional and entrepreneurship skills as you do so.

I urge you to continue learning and elevating your professional

acumen and integrity as you serve humanity. FERD is privileged to have contributed to your tutelage and mentorship. We believe that many of you will choose to come back for your various training needs, research engagements, and partnership with us in the development of humanity in this part of the world.

In the course of the year, a number of noteworthy developments took place in the Faculty as outlined below.

Collaborative Research and International Student Exchange

FERD has been aggressively pursuing collaborative staff research engagements and student exchange with the Department of Urban Regional Planning, Nanjing Agricultural University. Interactions with Prof. Wei Wu of Nanjing Agricultural University with FERD staff in the formalization of engagements, which started in June 2019, are progressing well, albeit somewhat behind schedule because of the global COVID-19 pandemic. We are hopeful that the logistic frameworks and working modalities we are developing will soon culminate in formalized working arrangements in a memorandum of understanding with Nanjing. Potential areas of engagement include training and research in Wildlife and Forestry, environmental pollution, and Transport and Urban Geography. We are happy to note that, in this regard, two of our graduates from the Department of Geography have joined Nanjing to pursue further degrees in Urban and Regional Planning.

M.Sc. Students Win Full TAGDev/MasterCard Scholarships

The TAGDev/MasterCard programme has found new partners beyond Agriculture in FERD. In the 2020/2021 academic year, five M.Sc. local and international students pursuing programmes in Environmental Science and Natural Resources Management will be the beneficiaries of full TAGDev/MasterCard Scholarships. In the meantime, two Ph.D. and two M.Sc. students have received partial research funds from TAGDev for the completion of their programmes. We are grateful for this partnership in human capacity development beyond agriculture.

Indelible Marks in Research, Consultancy, and Policy

In May-June 2020, Prof. E.K. Maranga, Dr. M.O. Esilaba, and Dr. K.K. Bernard participated in the Third National Forum for Universities, TVETs, and Agricultural Industry Stakeholders organized virtually by Egerton University and coordinated by TAGDev. The main theme of the conference was “Agricultural Innovations, Research, and Transformation for Sustainable Development in the Era of the COVID-19 Pandemic”. Important policy ramifications in training in agriculture, research gaps in intensive knowledge needs of the agricultural production value chain, innovativeness in application of technology, and commercialization of innovations were sifted for further refining.

Policy Briefs

In November 2019, two members of

staff in the Department of Geography, Dr. H.W. Obulinji and Dr. M.A. Karanja did consultancy work with AgriFoSe2030/ILRI and managed to publish three policy briefs. The policy briefs focus on agriculture and the informal sector with an aim of contributing to improvement of food security at the household level in Kenya.

Geography Hosts Fulbright Fellow

The Department of Geography is currently hosting a Fulbright Fellow, Ms. Faye Ricker, a Ph.D. student at South Florida University, USA. Originally, she was scheduled to be at Egerton University for the period August 2019 to May 2020. However, her stay will be extended indefinitely due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has disrupted her research work and teaching of undergraduate students at the Department.

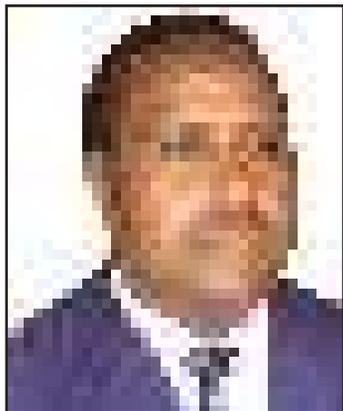
Ms. Ricker is undertaking research on the nexus between women, energy, and environment in the Naivasha region. Prof. Francis Wegulo is her local supervisor.

Besides pursuing her research in that respect, Ms. Ricker, a geologist by specialisation, is assisting in the development of a Bachelor of Science curriculum in Geology.

Technician Wins Scholarship

Mr. Stephen Mwangi, a technician in the Department of Geography, is currently on a full scholarship with “Partnership for Knowledge” financed by the Italian Agency for International Cooperation. He is pursuing the Master of Science degree in Geoinformatics Engineering at the Politecnico di Milano.

Staff Land Opportunities to Sharpen Their Knowledge



Dr. Moses N. Gichuki

On behalf of the Faculty of Science staff, I take this opportunity to congratulate all the graduands of our 42nd Graduation Ceremony. No doubt, the achievements we are celebrating today are a culmination of the hard work, patience, and determination on the part of our graduands and their instructors. Your parents, guardians,

and sponsors, who made incredible sacrifice to enable you complete your studies, deserve great recognition! We challenge you to use the knowledge and skills acquired to transform your lives and the society as you remain focused on our University's core values, which are now well entrenched in you.

Since the inception of our Faculty 33 years ago, we have endeavoured to provide a solid foundation for all our students. Many have built on this foundation to pursue further studies, while others have joined the job market. Currently, the Faculty boasts of eight Bachelors Programmes, eleven Masters Programmes and eight Doctor of Philosophy programmes spread across our six academic departments, namely: Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Biological Sciences, Biochemistry, and Computer Science. In addition, the

Faculty is home to two Diploma programmes (Diploma in Computer Science and Diploma in Modern Chemistry Laboratory Technology). The Applied Biology diploma programme will be rolled out soon. As of July 2020, our total student population stands at 2,002.

Meanwhile academic staff in the Faculty have continued to access opportunities to sharpen their knowledge and skills. In early 2020, courtesy of the Alexander Von Humboldt foundation, Dr. David Omondi of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology proceeded on a two-year postdoctoral fellowship at the Institute of Parasitology and Tropical Veterinary Medicine in Berlin, Germany. Dr. Cox Lwaka from the Department of Mathematics is currently attending a six-month Bioethics Fellows training programme in the USA. The training is organised by the Western Institutional Review Board (WIRB) at Puyallup, Washington.

As part of the University's contribution to the fight against COVID-19, the Department of Chemistry commenced the production of hand sanitisers on 19 March 2020. Since then, the Department has continued to supply this necessary item to all University premises.

Once again, to our graduands, congratulations to you all and best wishes as you embark on the next phase of your professional development and further studies.

You made it! Happy Graduation Day! Congratulations!



Technical staff at the Department of Chemistry, Egerton University, Njoro Campus, prepare sanitisers during the COVID-19 pandemic, an activity that began on 19 March 2020

Limnology Programme Continues to Attract International Students

By Steve O. Oduor

This academic year, the Department of Biological Sciences received 17 students of various nationalities into its Joint MSc. in Limnology and Wetlands Management (LWM) course. The students, drawn from Kenya, Uganda, Austria, Bhutan, and Ethiopia, started their Kenyan trimester in February 2020.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the students had successfully completed two modules. However, face-to-face classes were suspended as COVID-19 containment measures were announced in March 2020. Consequently, the LWM programme swiftly switched to the online mode of content delivery, enabling these students to complete their semester work as scheduled. The students are currently enrolled for the third trimester at the Institute of Water Education (IHE), Delft in The Netherlands.

After completion of their coursework, research and thesis writing, the students will be conferred with a Joint Master of Science degree by Egerton University, BOKU University (Austria), IHE.

Dr. Steve O. Oduor is the Chair, Department of Biological Sciences at Egerton University



Limnology and Wetland Management students undertake a practical at the Njoro Campus

Staff Train Judges for Science Fair

By the Newslink Team

Organisers of the Rift Valley region Kenya Science and Engineering Fair (KSEF) held a two-day training workshop for their project judges from 12-14 March 2020 at Moi Secondary School, Nakuru. Dr. M.N. Gichuki, (Dean, Faculty of Science) and Dr. R.K. Rop (Chair, Department of Physics) facilitated the training, which was attended by more than 1,000 teachers drawn from high schools across all the thirteen counties that constitute the Rift Valley region.

Dr. Gichuki is the Rift Valley KSEF patron, while Dr. Rop is the region's KSEF Chief Judge. The subject judges were trained on various project stages, including Project Identification, Development, Documentation, and Presentation. The Chief Judge presented a report on the 2019 KSEF projects with a detailed Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis in order to inform areas of improvement for the year 2020 KSEF event which was scheduled to take place in Bomet County later in the year.

Our Programmes Stand out for Being Hands-on



Dr. Jane N. Mburu

On behalf of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Surgery I wish to congratulate all graduands of the 42nd Graduation Ceremony of Egerton University for completing their studies successfully and being the first to graduate virtually. We expect that the graduands will use the

valuable knowledge and skills gained to better themselves and others and to contribute to nation-building. I wish them well.

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Surgery is the second veterinary school in Kenya that offers the Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine degree. The Faculty also has other programmes that train animal health personnel at various levels, including B.Sc., diploma, and certificate. All our programmes are hands-on, that is, they equip students with the appropriate skills they will require while dealing with different aspects of the health of animals. Our graduates are very marketable and are to be found in most livestock farms, leading drug production and food processing firms, as well as in institutions of higher learning, research and wildlife care.

The closure of the universities in Kenya in March this year, due to the

COVID-19 pandemic, halted learning in our Faculty, as it did in the rest of the University. It is our prayer that resumption will take place soon. Animal health training contains a great deal of practical work, both in the laboratory and in the field. Therefore, the face-to-face encounters we cannot have now will be done at an appropriate later time.

During the COVID-19 lockdown, one of our staff members, Lubembe D. Mukolwe, completed his postgraduate studies and graduated virtually with a Ph.D. in Parasitology from the University of Pretoria in South Africa. We congratulate Dr. Mukolwe.

I am sure our graduands graduating today virtually will be happy as they can start benefiting from their achievements without waiting for the pandemic to end. I wish all of them great success.

BOARD OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES & FIELD ATTACHMENT PROGRAMMES

Message from the Director

BUGS/FAP Has a New Director



Dr. G. O. Ong'ondo

Today we are happy to join the important occasion of the 42nd Graduation Ceremony. Graduation is a crucial activity in the academic life of both the graduands and the University. It marks the culmination of the effort made by each graduand in their study and that of the academic staff and departments that have resulted in the successful completion of the academic cycle. The Board of Undergraduate Studies and Field

Attachment Programmes (BUGS/FAP) is proud to be associated with the graduands, and we congratulate all of them for achieving this milestone in their academic journey.

BUGS/FAP is mandated with the review and recommendation to the Senate of undergraduate programmes. To this end, BUGS/FAP has ensured that the programmes offered at the University are competitive and aligned to market

needs. The Board also coordinates and facilitates field/industrial attachment (FA) and teaching practice (TP), which equip the students with workplace experience.

In the Farm Attachment Programme (FAP), students are attached on farms for eight weeks. The students work with the farmers and are expected to gain hands-on skills and implement relevant projects and activities on the farm. Feedback from the students has emphasised the need for reliable, unbiased sources of agricultural information to farmers. This was key in encouraging BUGS/FAP to come up with the Farm-Up Connect (farmup.egerton.ac.ke), an online platform that is beneficial not only to the farmers but also to other stakeholders in the agriculture sector. The platform is hosted at the University website under the Division of Research and Extension and currently has content on production and marketing issues for maize, potato, dairy, poultry, and a few other selected cross-cutting issues.

Egerton University has continued to partner with Arava International Agricultural Training Centre (AICAT) in Israel to provide hands-on skills for students undertaking agriculture-related sciences. This 11-month programme provides selected students with an opportunity to be attached to farms and farmer organizations in the Arava region of Israel for five days in a week. Currently, the 7th cohort of the programme is in Israel for the training. The 2020/2021 cohort (the 8th cohort) was to start their training in August 2020, but the process of selecting students stalled due to the coronavirus pandemic.

On 6 February 2020, the Israeli Deputy Ambassador to Kenya, Mr. David Eyaal, visited Egerton University. He was excited to be in the University as this rekindled his connection with the academia having postponed his Ph.D. studies to take up the diplomatic posting. He noted that the Israeli embassy was started in Kenya in 1963 and that both governments were satisfied with their diplomatic relations. The Prime

Minister of Israel, Mr. Benjamin Netanyahu, has visited Kenya several times, including during President Uhuru Kenyatta's swearing-in in 2017, cementing the relationship between the two countries.

The Ambassador reiterated that even though Israel was largely a desert, farming was one of the country's main economic activities. Therefore, the 100 or so Kenyan students sent to Israel every year can act as agents of change in the agriculture sector in Kenya. Israel has established three trade offices in Africa (Kenya, South Africa, and Ghana), and the AICAT alumni should leverage on this to form partnerships with Israeli firms.

The Ambassador also encouraged students and staff to apply for short courses in Israel through the Israeli embassy website.

Finally, BUGS/FAP has a new Director, Dr. G. O. Ong'ondo, who took over from Prof. N. W. Mungai (who was appointed Ag. Director, Research and Extension) effective from March 2020.



The Deputy Ambassador of Israel to Kenya, Mr. David Eyaal, signs the visitors' book in the Egerton University Vice-Chancellor's office, on 6 February 2020. The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Rose A. Mwonya, is looking on.

Postgraduate Presentations and Defences Go Virtual



Prof. Nzula Kitaka

Graduation is a milestone for any institution to celebrate the achievement and success of their students and staff. Normally graduations are festive occasions, but the global COVID-19 pandemic has become a game changer leading to new ways of doing things. As the Director, Board of Postgraduates Studies (BPGS), I take this opportunity to sincerely congratulate all the 42nd Graduation Ceremony graduands. You have made history by being the first ever virtual graduands of Egerton University.

I wish to send a special appreciation and congratulations to postgraduate students graduating today. Some of you beat the odds and adopted the new way of doing things through online defences and you came out victorious to earn your place in today's Ceremony. It has been an honour for us at BPGS to have set the pace for our University in online examinations and to have walked with you to the finish line. As a postgraduate student, problem-oriented solutions, innovative ways and adaptability to change have been key to your success. You have proved that you are ready to conquer the world since COVID-19 did not become an impediment to your

success. Your success is our pride as the Graduate School.

The COVID-19 pandemic was a wakeup call for us at BPGS. With the closure of universities in the country and the requirement to adhere to preventive and containment measures given by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Ministry of Health, postgraduate students could not proceed with their normal learning activities. BPGS quickly came up with Regulations and Procedures of Online Processing of Proposals, Projects, and Theses in line with the Presidential Executive Order on COVID-19 of 16 March 2020, which required people to work from home. The new regulations and procedures approved by Senate in May 2020 ensure that Egerton University postgraduate students will proceed with their academic activities from whichever part of the world, and at the same time be guided to undertake quality, innovative research work and abide by national requirements and ethical regulations.

On behalf of BPGS, I wish to thank the University Management for structural support and Egerton

University members of staff for embracing this new way of proposal/project/thesis defences and processing of documents online. Consequently, since 15 May 2020, several postgraduate students have virtually proceeded with oral presentations of proposals both in the departments and faculties as well as projects/theses defences from across the country and other parts of the world.

Change is inevitable, and at BPGS we will be part of this new normal by continuously reviewing our processes and engagements to make them more hospitable to all our postgraduate students and those who would wish to join Egerton University to further their education. Every day of our interactions with postgraduate students gives us a learning opportunity and the base for our continuous transformation of our processes. Meanwhile, BPGS is in the process of preparing more regulations for online processes such as development, review, and realigning of postgraduate curricula to be more market-oriented, creative, innovative, and solution-based. ■



The Dean, FOA, Prof. Abdul Faraj, and the secretariate from the Board of Postgraduate Studies conduct an online Ph.D. defense during the COVID-19 pandemic at the Njoro Campus.

Ph.D. GRADUANDS

FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE



Adrien Turamyenyirijuru

Programme:
Ph.D. Agronomy
Thesis Title:
Potato (*Solanum tuberosum* L.) Yield and Quality Response to Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Potassium Fertilizer Rates in Rwanda
Supervisors:
Prof. Rhoda Jerop Birech
Dr. Robert Morwani Gesimba
Dr. Guillaume Nyagatare



Aloys Fashaho

Programme:
Ph.D. Soil Science
Thesis Title:
Evaluation of Soil Properties and Response of Maize (*Zea mays* L.) to Bioslurry and Mineral Fertilizers in Terraced Acrisols Andlxisols of Rwanda
Supervisors:
Prof. Samuel M. Mwonga
Dr. Joyce J. Lelei Ndemo
Prof. George M. Ndegwa



Assinapol Ndereyimana

Programme:
Ph.D. Horticulture
Thesis Title:
Evaluation of Entomopathogens and Plant Extracts as Options for Integrated Pest Management of Tuta Absoluta Meyrick (Lepidoptera: Gelechiidae) for Enhanced Tomato Productivity in Rwanda
Supervisors:
Dr. Samuel Nyalala
Dr. Patrick Murerwa
Dr. Svetlana V. Gaidashova



Emily Atieno Masinde

Programme:
Ph.D. Agronomy
Thesis Title:
Evaluation of cassava (*Manihot Esculenta Crantz*) Germplasm for Resistance to Cassava Brown Streak Disease and Virus Elimination Using in Vitro Technique
Supervisors:
Prof. Joshua Ogendo
Prof. Richard Mulwa
Prof. Maruthi Gowda

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES



Naftaly Gisore Mose

Programme:
Ph.D. Economics
Thesis Title:
Analysis of County Government Expenditure and County Economic Growth in Kenya
Supervisors:
Prof. Lawrence Kibet
Dr. Symon Kiprop

FACULTY OF COMMERCE



Josephine Jepkorir Inyangala

Programme:
Ph.D. Business and Management
Thesis Title:
Influence of Selected Career Management Practices on Job Satisfaction: The Mediating Effect of Job Security among Administrative Staff in Chartered Public Universities, Kenya
Supervisors:
Prof. F. Keraro
Dr. S. Kipchumba

FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY STUDIES



Simon Warui Mwangi

Programme:
Ph.D. Science Education
Thesis Title:
Effects of the Use of Computer Animated Loci Teaching Technique on Secondary School Students' Achievement and Misconceptions in Mathematics within Kitui County, Kenya
Supervisors:
Prof. B. N. Githua
Prof. J. M. Changeiywo

FACULTY OF SCIENCE



Mayaka Regina Kemunto

Programme:
Ph.D. Chemistry
Thesis Title:
Chemical Characterisation and Antimicrobial Activity of Compounds from Some Selected Medicinal Kenyan *Ganoderma* and *Trametes* Species
Supervisors:
Prof. Josiah Ouma Omolo
Prof. Peter Kiplagat Cheplogoi (Posthumously)



Bornes Chelangat Mosonik

Programme:
Ph.D. Chemistry
Thesis Title:
Molecular Products, Thermal Emissions and Radical Kinetics from the Thermal Degradation of *Croton megalocarpus* Biodiesel and Binary Transport Fuels
Supervisors:
Dr. Joshua K. Kibet
Prof. Mwaniki S. Ngari

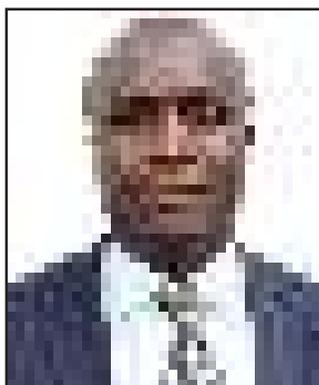
INSTITUTE OF WOMEN, GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES



Samwel Kiuguini Nduati

Programme:
Ph.D. Gender, Women and Development Studies
Thesis Title:
Transforming Masculinities in the Context of Emerging Family Crisis: The Case of Selected Faith-Based Organisations in Nakuru County
Supervisors:
Prof. Fr. Stephen N. Mbugua
Dr. Damaris Parsitau
Dr. Ruth Aura

University Partners with Tribus-TSG and Centrum Investment to Launch Ajiry Centre



Dr. Wambongo C.S. Recha

The 42nd Graduation is virtual and a first for Egerton University. It signals a new normal in the era of COVID-19. From the Directorate's point of view, we welcome this new normal. We

believe the new normal will work well for our international students, who come from the entire stretch of sub-Saharan Africa. The virtual graduation gives you – the graduands – a chance to celebrate this momentous occasion with your family and friends from a location of your choice. The Directorate takes this opportunity to congratulate you for the milestone and wishes you the very best in your next step in life.

Dear graduands, the events of COVID-19 are a reminder that the 21st century is unique and calls for a shift in our *modus operandi*. We cannot continue with the same way of doing things. As the University ushers you into the job market, your job-searching skills will be crucial.

Aware of this, Egerton University has partnered with Tribus–TSG, Centum Investment, to establish an Ajiry Centre, located in the New Dining Hall. The Centre at Egerton University is one of the ten that have been established country-wide. The Centre's mission is to create empowerment and employment for our students. We seek to enhance our student's capabilities in entrepreneurship and job search skills. At the Ajiry Centre, we have a training room, a gaming area, a recording studio, an art gallery, a cyber, and other offices. We are hopeful that the Centre will, in part, be a job and employment solution and contribute to the overall welfare of our students.



Right to left: The DVC-AA, Prof. Alexander K. Kahi, the Managing Director, Tribus-TSG, Mr. James Nicholl, the Director of International Linkages and Career Services, Dr. W.C.S. Recha, the Dean of Students, Prof. D. Odera-Wanga, and the National Coordinator of the Ajiry Programme, Mr. Brian M. Mutuku, during the launch of the Ajiry Centre at Egerton University, on 9 January 2020

International Students Tour the Kenya Coast

By *Pauline Aarakit and Yasir Sa'adu*

When the Kenya Coast is mentioned, we have memories of Vasco da Gama, the slave trade, the Gedi ruins, the Swahili language, and all about the Portuguese, the Arabs, and the local communities. All these memories accrued from our primary and high school days. The retreat to the Kenyan Coast in January 2020

brought to life the stories we had learnt in school. As international students, we found the retreat educational, thanks to Egerton University for the retreat facilitation. But the visit also gave us a chance to bond. The cheerful and adventurous team of international students from eight nationalities was refreshing – away from lecture rooms and the

back-and-forth processes of proposal and thesis writing.

We found the Kenya Coast fascinating, notably the economic vibrancy and multi-ethnicity of Mombasa, and the connectivity of the island of Mombasa with the mainland (bridges and ferries). The busy Mombasa port where commercial shipping mingles with traditional sailing was evidence of why Mombasa is the main entry point to Eastern and Central Africa. The soul of Mombasa is found in the exotic old town, among the narrow winding streets and Arab architecture. The air there is always heavy with the scent of spices. Fort Jesus brings back the memory of the fight between the Portuguese army and the Shirazi Arabs for the capture of the Kenya Coast in the 16th century. Contrary to our expectations, we realised that the Kenya Coast is a place of great diversity; a melting pot of Muslims, Christians, Hindu, and others.

We are thankful to Egerton University for the opportunity to visit the Kenya Coast and experience the warmth of the Kenyan people.

Pauline Aarakit, an M.Sc. student, Agronomy, is from Uganda and is the Chairperson of the Egerton University International Students Association. Yasir Sa'adu, a B.Sc. Agribusiness Management student, is from Nigeria and is the Vice-Chairperson, the Egerton University International Students Association.



Egerton University International Students pose for a picture at the Vasco da Gama Pillar during a retreat at the Coast in January 2020

Configuring a Revolving Door in Higher Education: The Convergence Model



Prof. Ezra Maritim

Prior to the onset of the 20th century, educational systems across the world were distinguished as offering education through either the conventional or the distance mode. In this dichotomy, the conventional mode was given prominence over the distance mode. Today, the revolutionary impact of information communication technologies, the changing learner demographics, and globalisation has blurred the boundaries between conventional on-campus and distance off-campus modes of teaching and learning. The resultant convergence of the two educational and systems has catalysed the proliferation of dual mode universities in Kenya.

While there are benefits of being either a single mode Open and Distance Learning (ODL) institution or a dual mode institution, dual mode status has unique challenges that have been unmasked by the COVID-19 pandemic. Being established initially as conventional institutions,

dual institutions have fundamental difficulties with the concept of “open and distance learning”, which encapsulates ODL and its sub-set online learning as a philosophy of learning, as an emerging discipline, and as a mode of delivery. All these form the ODL “umbilical cord” and are not separable.’

When the universities, schools and colleges were physically closed due to the pandemic, the only component of ODL that the public received and consumed under duress in the name of remote learning was the delivery part. That is, when these institutions closed physically, learning was sustained through ODL delivery. This is the true nature of online learning that has come to be called “a” learning – anywhere, anyplace, anytime learning. Being a learning safety net across difficult circumstances, ODL has proved itself to be the only resilient educational sector in the face of disaster.

Today's Graduation Ceremony is unique in the sense that its mode of conduct is in an ODL style – an unprecedented event in the history of, Kenya. It symbolises four issues: our ability as an institution to cope and continue with our teaching and learning activities in the midst of disaster; the convergence of face-to-face learning and remote learning is a reality; the usual statutory requirements for spaces for conducting teaching and learning or designated as examination centres are obsolete; the urgent need for national ODL policy to mainstream

“

Since 1998, the School of Distance Learning has provided and continues to provide a second chance for those in difficult circumstances to pursue their educational advancement and achieve their self-actualisation ambitions”

ODL and to address *inter alia.*, open-door admission, the Sustainable Development Goal of “leaving nobody behind”, movement of students from conventional to ODL mode and vice versa, and recognition of prior learning.

Since 1998, the School of Distance Learning (SoDL) has provided and continues to provide a second chance for those in difficult circumstances to pursue their educational advancement and achieve their self-actualisation ambitions. Bravo to SoDL graduands for believing in yourselves and achieving your ultimate goals. The doors for further educational advancement are now open.’

Help Reduce Gender Inequalities



*Dr. Josephine Obonyo
Ag. Director*

As we celebrate the 42nd Graduation Ceremony of Egerton University in these unprecedented times of the COVID-19 pandemic, we at the Institute of Women, Gender and Development Studies (IWGDS) heartily congratulate all graduands for successfully completing their studies.

Having worked hard, the knowledge and skills you have gained should catapult you into the next phase of your life. We, therefore, send you into the world as our ambassadors. The obligation is now on you, the graduands, to put to work the competencies and skills you have gained over the years at the University and to make valuable contributions to the society of which you are a part by solving society's problems based on your training.

You are also called upon to positively influence both the current and future generations, not only in attaining Kenya's Vision 2030, but also the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and

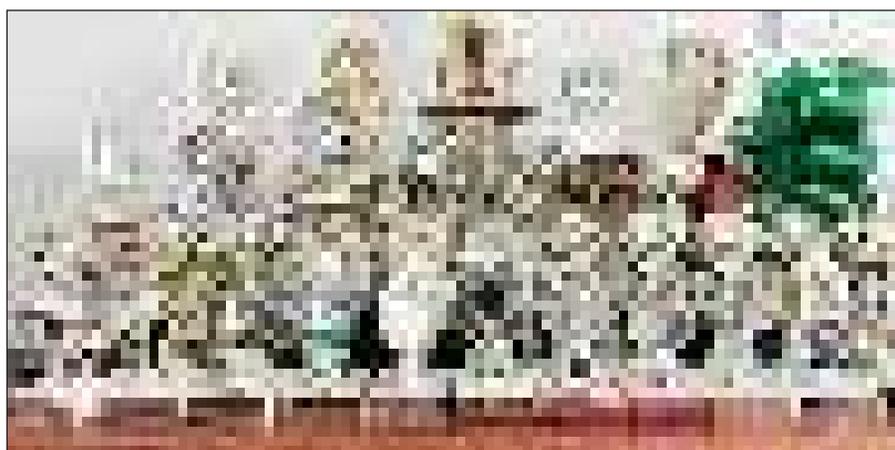
more specifically Goals 5 and 10. These two goals focus on gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, and reduced inequality respectively. As the University releases you into the world of new norms occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic, my hope is that you can find fulfilment in your new phase of life.

The IWGDS continues to actively disseminate as well as create new knowledge through research. We also continue to engage in collaborations and partnerships with like-minded institutions to learn and also strengthen the Institute's capacity. We had planned several activities for the current academic year, among them outreach and field trips by our students meant to create gender awareness, mentoring of high school students, and learning from what other institutions do. Unfortunately, this was not to be following the COVID-19 pandemic which led to the indefinite closure of all learning institutions in the country. Most of these institutions

have had to adopt new ways of ensuring continuity. We at the Institute have equally had to adapt to a new normal and are prepared and ready to go the E-learning way.

The IWGDS has in the past hosted a number of institutions on our Campus, both to learn from their experience and to offer them a chance to learn from us. The same has been the case this year. On 13 February 2020, we were honored to receive a team of faculty from Kibabii University. The team was headed by Dr. Tom Ekisa who is the director of their newly established Institute of Gender and Development Studies. The team left inspired to grow and strengthen their institute given the knowledge shared.

Finally, to our graduands, as we release you today to the world, I urge you to remain positive and to keep the Egerton University fire burning by transforming lives through your work and by upholding the values we have instilled in you. I wish you the very best, and may God bless you all.



Some of the trophies awarded to students who have excelled in their respective academic disciplines and extracurricular activities. They are presented during graduation ceremonies and other important occasions in the calendar of the University.

Egerton Students Shine at Regional Drama Festival



Prof. D. Odero-Wanga

On behalf of the Dean of Students Office, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my congratulations to all graduands for their commitment and hard work during their academic journey at Egerton University. I commit every graduand into the hands of our Almighty Father to lead them as they go out to serve in building our nation. May you always find joy in your future endeavours.

The mandate of the Office of Dean of Students is to develop, nurture, and promote an enabling environment, one that supports and enhances both the academic pursuits and other development processes of students. The Office offers services that cater for the general welfare of students and acts as an advocate of students by assuring that the interests of students are taken into account in strategic aspects of University operations. The Dean of Students coordinates counselling, registration of clubs, public lectures, financial

aid, orientation of first year students and students' recreational activities.

Since our last graduation in December 2019, the Dean of Students Office has been involved in a series of activities as per its mandate. The Rift Valley Regional Drama Festivals were held from 28-29 February 2020 at the University of Eldoret, where Egerton University students competed and performed excellently. The theme of the festival was “Connecting Cultures through Performing Arts and Film”. All the eight items presented by our students qualified for entry at the national level. In addition, Egerton University presentations scooped a number of awards in various categories.

The English play titled *Lives and Likes of Julita* was third position overall. The Swahili play *Kifo Kisa Kisima* won second position in that

category. The Swahili choral verse titled *Garagaza* won third position while the Mashup titled *Binti Baru* won first position in the category. Others were the English solo verse titled *The Graduation* (3rd position), mime titled *The Dance* (2nd position), narrative titled *The Gender Director* (3rd position), and a stand-up comedy titled *Kachiri Saga* (3rd position).

The Dean of Students Office also held a training workshop for peer counsellors at Njoro Campus from 10-18 February 2020. A total of 132 peer counsellors from both Main Campus and Nakuru Town Campus were trained. The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs), Prof Alexander K. Kahi, graced the graduation ceremony of the trained peer counsellors as the chief guest on 10 March 2020.



Egerton University students participate in the Rift Valley Regional Drama Festival held on 28-29 February 2020 at the University of Eldoret

COVID-19 Disrupts Academic Calendar, but Learning Continues



Prof. Julius Kipkemboi

Under normal circumstances, campus life is always a buzzing intellectual and cultural hub with students from different corners of the country and other nations around the world living and studying together. Egerton University, like other Kenyan institutions of learning and their counterparts throughout the world, has been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions that have paralysed most campus activities. While it is true that the academic calendar that defines the normal activities of the University has been, and may continue being, adversely affected by the pandemic, the resilience and the ability to ensure continuity of learning in the aftermath will be a major challenge for most institutions; and the space of the university will be an interesting one to watch.

When the Presidential Order was released on Sunday 15 March 2020 effectively closing learning

institutions, none of us expected that more than four months later the situation would still be the same. The second semester of the 2019/2020 academic year was just a few weeks away from the onset of the end of semester examinations. As more information on the COVID-19 pandemic became available thereafter, it became clear that the closure was for the long haul, and that there was need to come up with ways to provide teaching and learning support to students from their various locations and vantage points. In view of this, the unfolding situation demands that the University has to plan progressively because the aftermath will affect subsequent academic calendar years.

In light of the foregoing, the University is embarking on online learning, which offers opportunities for students to continue with their academic programmes and activities while the restrictions related to the management of the pandemic are in place. The use of virtual platforms is perhaps the best way to ensure student retention and to maintain access to learning. It is in this view that the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) marshalled the staff in the Division to prepare for online learning to mitigate the effects of the pandemic on the academic calendar.

Exclusive online teaching and learning being a relatively new phenomenon, it is prudent for the University to ensure that members of staff are empowered with the

“The Directorate of Examination and Timetabling is working with the other units in the University to put in place dynamic interventions as the COVID-19 situation unfolds”

knowledge, skills, and other necessary resources to develop a robust structure to support this mode of delivery among all students. In the digital age, the University is better placed today than ever before to provide students with an opportunity to continue their studies online.

The Directorate of Examination and Timetabling is working with the other units in the University to put in place dynamic interventions as the COVID-19 situation unfolds. This pandemic presents not only new and unanticipated challenges but also opportunities for all of us to learn and prepare for the unusual circumstances. Extra-ordinary circumstances call for adaptive actions. That's why today we have a virtual graduation – a realisation of one of the academic calendar events.

On behalf of all staff at the Directorate, I wish to convey our congratulations to all graduands on your well-deserved success!

Egerton Radio to Expand Coverage in Nakuru



Prof. Lena Nakhone-Wati

I congratulate graduands, parents, and sponsors as we mark the 42nd Graduation Ceremony of Egerton University. This is a unique event bearing in mind what our country and

the world at large are going through due to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Your names will go down in history as the first graduands of Egerton University to ever graduate through a virtual congregation. The pandemic has caused a disruption in our lives, but it has also come with ways of handling adversity as humanity. May this be a lesson to all of us that in every new challenge in life there is an opportunity lying next to it. It is upon you to look for it keenly.

Since our last graduation, Nakuru Town Campus College (NTCC) has recorded a number of successes which I wish to share with you. To begin with, we have started the refurbishment of the Electronic

Media Studio that is used to offer practical lessons to students taking Communication and Media studies. This is the first phase of the refurbishment that will see the studio transformed into a modern media training centre. In this phase the University has acquired modern broadcasting equipment for the expansion of Egerton Radio. This will enable the radio to be heard beyond its current reach as it hits Nakuru Town and its environs. With this expansion, we expect to launch more courses in communication and media studies and attract more students. We will also use the radio as an extension tool for the University as well as an income generating unit (IGU). The second phase will see the University acquire more media equipment for the training



The Chair of the Department of Public Law, Faculty of Law, Mr. C. M. Gitanda, facilitates at a chiefs' forum on "Mediation and Alternative Dispute Resolution" (ADR) at a Nakuru Hotel. Also present is the Dean of the Faculty, Dr. Ruth A. Aura (centre, seated) and a representative of the County Commissioner, Ms. Mary Mwangi (right, seated)

of students in video and television production as well as photography and eventually lead us to the launch of our own television station.

In December 2019, I reported that the Faculty of Law had partnered with UNDP-Amkeni Wakenya in a project to support indigenous and marginalised communities in Nakuru County to access legal aid. I wish to update you that this project finally kicked off and has seen the University extend legal services to the communities that surround us. The Faculty has been running a legal aid clinic that is open to the public twice every week. It has also been delivering legal aid services to communities by organising legal aid camps at grassroot levels. This has given us visibility as a legal training institution.

In February 2020, our Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery programme in the Faculty of Health Sciences was inspected by the East Africa Community Partner States, National

Medical and Dental Practitioners Regulatory Council. I wish to report that the Council gave the medical programme a clean bill of health for meeting minimum requirements to train doctors in East Africa. The objective of the inspection was to ascertain whether medical and dental schools are operating in compliance with the set standards and guidelines as approved by the East African Community states.

I am delighted to inform you that, despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, some of our graduate programmes have been going on through virtual classes. At the Faculty of Commerce, for instance, students have been doing virtual presentations of their projects and theses. Plans are underway to ensure that our undergraduate programmes are also offered virtually.

Although the current situation has made it difficult for us to offer on-campus services, we have continued to serve our students facing

challenging times through the office of Assistant Dean of Students (ADOS) in terms of support and counselling services. I wish to inform the community in Nakuru that these counselling services are also available to the community members in Nakuru County and its environs. This is because we understand the difficulties and challenges that have been posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. We thus encourage the community to reach us at our offices and benefit from these services.

In conclusion, we live at a time when humanity is in dire need of novel ideas to deal with modern life challenges. It is my hope that the skills you acquired at Egerton University will give you a firm foundation in doing exactly that.

Once again, I wish to congratulate you and your parents/guardians on this very important occasion. May God bless you in your endeavours.



The Vice-Chancellor, Egerton University, Prof. Rose A. Mwonya (right), and the DVC(AA), Prof. Alexander K. Kahi, receive a cheque of Ksh2 million from the Senior Corporate Relationship Manager of KCB Bank, Mr. David Kemei, and his team towards the 7th Edition of the Mau-Egerton University Cross Country held on 29 February 2020

Remote Engagement Skills Key to Success



*Prof. Bockline Omedo Bebe
Ag. Deputy Vice-Chancellor*

Today we are celebrating with you an important event in your life, your graduation, in the midst of a global health shock – the COVID-19 pandemic. When you began this journey sometimes back, our promise was to transform lives through quality education as you uphold discipline, sacrifice and hard work. Making it to the list of graduands in this virtual congregation demonstrates the virtues that you upheld, which should also continuously define you in whatever career path you may choose. Equipped with the quality education you have acquired, you should now endeavour to transform lives and advance humanity to make this world a better place than you found it.

The COVID-19 crisis is an unprecedented disruption of your good plans but should not make your future become uncertain. With the

quality education you have acquired at Egerton University, you have a rich reservoir of knowledge and skills to empower yourself to overcome the unexpected obstacles in the COVID-19 era. I encourage you to deploy, from this reservoir, the basics of taking good care of yourself, especially your health, your loved ones, and those you will be serving. In addition, update yourself regularly with advice from your seniors as well as keep abreast of innovations and new trends to effectively adapt to COVID-19.

Adapting to COVID-19 goes beyond applying the health measures outlined by the Ministry of Health. You will have to advance your digital skills and value-add to your worth in

the labour-market. Professionals in the post COVID-19 era will be more and more digitally enlightened. Remote engagement skills should become the next set of skills you have to build soonest. You will need them in communicating, searching for jobs, creating business, working and keeping in touch with your networks. In your free time, put extra effort into sharpening your online skills.

Being a graduate of Egerton University, you are a competitive professional, both locally and globally. You have all it takes to succeed in life, so may you dare to dream big!

Congratulations and God bless your growth.



A section of the Egerton University Botanic Garden located on the Njoro Campus near the Western Gate in July 2020

Egerton Appointed on the Board of ASNET



Prof. Symon M. Mahungu

To the graduands who have been brought virtually together in this 42nd Graduation Ceremony, their parents, guardians, and friends: congratulations! To the administrative, support and teaching staff who trained them, we thank you! We at UILO, are particularly pleased with your achievements because most of you are well-equipped to join the industry.

In the first half of 2020, the University Industry Liaison Office (UILO) engaged with various public and private institutions as one of the strategies to achieve the University's Mission and Vision through collaborations. These institutions included the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), the Kenya Industrial Property Institute (KIPI), SoyAfric, the Country Meat Products of Njoro, and the Kenya Forest Research Institute (KEFRI). These engagements led to various outcomes that will benefit Egerton University.

KIPI will soon train Egerton University staff and students on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) through workshops that will be jointly organised with the University. However, the of training was rescheduled to a later date due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The training, when launched, will target about 500 staff and graduate students. UILO has prepared a *Framework on Implementation of Research Innovations and Inventions* for ease of management of IPR and patents. Through this training, KIPI is expected to add value to this framework.

Through our engagement with KEPSA, Egerton University was appointed to serve on the Board of Directors for the recently launched Agriculture Sector Network of Kenya (ASNET) from 1 July 2020 for a period of three years. This appointment was given to Egerton University due to the recognition by KEPSA that the University is a premier institution in agriculture. It is worth noting that Egerton's Tegemeo Institute of Agriculture Policy and Development will be a key actor in the activities of ASNET, especially concerning policy.

A composite flour composed of rice-sorghum and bamboo shoots was developed in collaboration with SoyAfric. This high protein flour will be used in the preparation of ready to eat snacks. This innovation will increase local consumption of bamboo shoots. This will, in turn, create local jobs along the bamboo

“Through our engagement with KEPSA, Egerton University was appointed to serve on the Board of Directors for the recently launched Agriculture Sector Network of Kenya (ASNET) from 1 July 2020 for a period of three years.”

value chain.

The fabrication and preparation of beef-mushroom sausages for upscaling to the market has been completed by the Department of Dairy and Food Science & Technology. The escalation of these products (including cured beef rounds) will enhance food and nutrition security in the country. We are currently engaging Country Meat Products (CMP), based in Njoro, for collaborative activities to upscale the innovations.

The University continues to engage the Industry for their mutual benefit. UILO has initiated consultations with the Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM) on the possibility of collaborating with the Association's members, who are mainly processors. These discussions are aimed at presenting the innovations and inventions from staff and students for upscaling. ■

University Community Plants 6,000 Tree Seedlings

By Charles M'Erimba

Egerton University initiated rehabilitation of the 55 kilometres Njoro River from the source in Eastern Mau to Lake Nakuru in the year 2012. The river originates from about 3000 metres above sea level in Entiyani (translated from Maasai to mean a place with bamboo) and ends its journey in Lake Nakuru, after descending by more than one kilometre on a vertical scale. Like many other rivers, it changes its name several times, from Shura at the source, through Sigotik and Ndarugu at the middle section, and, finally, Njoro River downstream.

River Njoro is the major river draining to Lake Nakuru, one of the first Kenyan Rift Valley lakes to be included in the list of wetlands of international importance by the Ramsar Convention, based in Switzerland. In the recent years, the prime value of the lake has increased after the Kenya Lake System of the Rift Valley was declared a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2011. The river is the source of water for over 600,000 people, livestock, wildlife, industry, and agricultural production. As such, it is the lifeline of the communities within its catchment.

In the last two decades, a massive loss of forest areas on the upper section of the river has been witnessed due to forest excision and illegal settlements. This has subsequently led to changes in land use from forest to predominantly agriculture. The situation has been worsened by wanton destruction of tree cover, including encroachment

on riparian forest for charcoal and firewood.

Trees are known to play a significant role in creating an environment suitable for the development of the herb and grass layer underneath which is crucial for sediments, pollutants and nutrient reduction in the diffuse runoff from farmlands. Besides creating a cool micro-climate along the rivers and reducing evapotranspiration, trees also play a significant role in reducing the energy of raindrops during rainfall, thus minimizing the erodibility effect. In the absence of tree cover, the raindrops quickly compact the ground and reduce the rate of infiltration, while increasing runoff.

The presence of increased number of livestock also creates pressure on the grass areas along the river. According to aquatic science experts, the presence of trees and the type of trees is also critical for the health of the aquatic environment. Aquatic organisms derive their food from the leaves that fall into the water and create surfaces for attachment by microbial organisms, which add nutritive value to the leaves. Aquatic organisms are useful not only as indicators of the quality of water but also play an important role in the natural purification system of the river. Deforestation, therefore, has a catastrophic effect on the value of any river.

Population increase and development of built environment in the catchment has also increased over the last decade. The area surrounding

Egerton University is changing rapidly from smallholder farms to peri-urban settings, thereby resulting in an increase in built environment. In the absence of rainwater harvesting, a rainfall event generates a lot of runoff, which ends up in the river.

Realising the importance of this river, the University Management Board (UMB) constituted a team of five members to oversee its rehabilitation. About 12 out of the 55 kilometres of the river traverse the Egerton University boundary with the Njokerio and Ng'ondu communities. The project is a Vision 2030 flagship project anchored under the Division of Research and Extension. The team was mandated to: Steer the rehabilitation of the Njoro River”, educate the community on environmental conservation; support M.Sc. projects on Njoro River rehabilitation; and partner with other stakeholders in the rehabilitation of the Njoro River. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Extension) oversees the implementation of the set targets by the University Council.

The original design of the rehabilitation process was to be done in six phases covering approximately ten kilometres each at an estimated cost of Kshs136 million. Egerton University put in approximately Kshs20 million as seed money. The deficit of Kshs116 million was to be raised through proposal writing and well-wishers. So far, several key partners are on board supporting the rehabilitation process. These include the Kenya Commercial Bank, the

Kenya Forest Service, APA Insurance, and the Cooperative Bank of Kenya.

Currently, the University has rehabilitated 12 kilometres of the river and 25 acres of forest at the source in partnership with Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organisation (KALRO) and other stakeholders. Other achievements include 19 community sensitisation seminars and workshops that have been held, construction of three community livestock watering troughs, clearance of dumpsites along the river, planting of indigenous tree seedlings, community tree nursery support, and water quality monitoring. In the 2019/2020 financial year, the University mobilised staff and students in planting 6000 tree seedlings both at the source, along the river course, and within the University.

There has, however, been a challenge of limited funding to rehabilitate the whole river and sustain rehabilitated sites, leading to a tree survival rate of about 60%. Other challenges include uncontrolled dumping of waste, negligence in enforcement of environmental laws, conflicting laws on riparian boundaries, low adoption of solid waste management methods, low uptake of the concept by the community, and uncoordinated rehabilitation by other interested parties.

For the Njoro River to recover fully from degradation, there is urgent need for the concerted effort by all stakeholders from Nakuru County, the Environmental Management Authority (NEMA), the Water Resources Management Authority (WARMA), industries, institutions, the local administration,



Top: A section along the River Njoro undergoing rehabilitation in 2015

Below: The section after rehabilitation in 2020

local authorities, the Kenya Wildlife Services (KWS), and community members. These are the key institutions whose presence is yet to be felt in the rehabilitation process.

Charles M'Erimba is Associate Professor of Natural Sciences at Egerton University and Coordinator of the Njoro River Rehabilitation Project.

DRTEC Trains Agropastoralists in the Lake Bogoria Region



Prof. George M. Ogendi

I wish to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Dryland Research Training and Ecotourism Centre (DRTEC) staff and myself, to congratulate the graduands of our first ever virtual Graduation Ceremony upon your achievement! It is a milestone worth celebrating, noting the length of time spent and the rough terrain you have walked through to get to your destination. I commend you for the success and wish you God's blessings and strength as you turn another page in your life.

In spite of the prevailing difficult times brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, I believe that, like an eagle, you will soar high above the turbulence as you navigate through the stormy wind towards your next destination. I believe that you possess the necessary skills and knowledge that our society needs to provide solutions to existing and emerging issues of concern. Just like your parents and guardians, I am proud of

your accomplishments. Hold your head high and face the future with optimism and confidence in the knowledge that you have what it takes to succeed in whatever you have put your body, mind, and soul to.

At DRTEC, we have continued to champion the research and extension mandates of Egerton University by supporting the local communities in addressing food and environmental insecurity challenges. In the last six months, four interns at the Centre, together with their Director, wrote seven funding proposals to the Global Environment Facility/Small Grants Programme focusing on pasture, livestock production, and smart agriculture. The proposals, developed in partnership with seven Community

Based Organisations (CBOs) within the Lake Bogoria landscape in South Baringo, have since been reviewed favourably. The seven CBOs have been awarded between Kshs2.5 million and Kshs3 million each. Their projects will focus on bio-diversity conservation as well as livelihoods improvement through smart agriculture, pasture establishment, production, harvesting, baling and value addition for increased livestock production.

It is expected that with enhanced pasture establishment land degradation arising from overgrazing and soil erosion will be significantly reduced. It is estimated that through these projects over 40,000 acres of degraded land within the Lake Bogoria landscape will be restored. The communities will use an already



Members of the Sinyati Women Group (Ms. Winny Megiri and Ms. Hellen Lewatachum) harvest Cenchrus ciliaris grass seed at their project site at Kailer, South Baringo

proven and tested grass species; buffel grass (*Cenchrus ciliaris*), that is high yielding, adapted to the local geologic and environmental conditions, drought tolerant, and attains maturity in less than two months. This grass species has shown tremendous success in other ongoing projects in the region involving Nooseiya Self Help Group and Sinyati Women Group. The two CBOs have demonstrated that pastures are forage not only for cattle but also for bees – an enterprise that has benefited heavily owing to improved pastures and vegetation in the area. This grass technology has gained acceptance amongst the local communities, and it is readily being adopted by both group members and

non-members.

Working in collaboration with the Baringo County Government's Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Kenya Organic Agriculture Network (KOAN) and Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organisation (KALRO), the DRTEC staff and interns have taken the lead role in training agropastoralists from the Lake Bogoria catchment area on various aspects of pasture establishment, production, and value addition. A series of training workshops at DRTEC and on-farm training sessions have been conducted since January 2020. The topics for the training workshops have ranged from beekeeping value chain, pasture

production and its value chain, water resources management, and smart agriculture. These themes are in line with the Baringo County Integrated Development Plan, the Big Four Agenda, and the Sustainable Development Goals. As a result of the training, there has been an improvement on watershed protection, reduction in land degradation, diversification of livelihoods, and improved vegetation cover on the landscape.

Going forward, we intend to continue working with all stakeholders and strategic partners in addressing issues of socio-economic and environmental concern to the people of Baringo County and the greater North Rift region. ■

The

NEWSLINK

*For everything you
need to know about*

Egerton University

Congratulations

to all the Graduands of
the 42nd Graduation, the first ever virtual
Graduation Ceremony
at Egerton University!

New Policies Developed to Improve University Governance



Prof. Isaac O. Kibwage

Join the University fraternity in congratulating this year's cohort on the 42nd Graduation Ceremony. This year's graduation event is unique. It is the first time in the University's history that a graduation ceremony is being conducted virtually. This has been occasioned by the ravaging COVID-19 pandemic, hence the need to adhere to the guidelines and protocols issued by the Ministry of Health to prevent the spread of the virus. While you may not have the chance to physically interact and make merry with your colleagues on the occasion of your biggest achievement so far, earned over a gruelling academic pursuit, your participation in this unprecedented gathering is in itself special.

Disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic cannot be overemphasised. Egerton University, like other universities in Kenya and worldwide, has found itself in uncharted territory. In light of this, the University is crafting strategies of ensuring smooth resumption of live academic activities and other business once the government announces the requisite specific guidelines for the education sector.

In order to further bolster the security of staff and students on campus, the government recently deployed armed security personnel, who are hosted internally to complement the contracted security company. The

University is installing more security features at the Security Control Complex, which has now been constructed to 100% completion. There is also increased CCTV coverage in strategic locations to provide assurance of safety.

The Centre of Excellence in Sustainable Agriculture & Agribusiness Management (CESAAM) has commenced the construction of the Project's building at the University. CESAAM is a World Bank funded project that is modelled to address challenges of food security, persistent hunger, frequent droughts, youth unemployment, rampant disease, poor plant and animal genotypes, inadequate technical capacity, and innovations.

Egerton University aims to improve its environmental capacity and that of its community in the 2018–2023 plan period. Among the specific activities envisaged to make this a success is the development of a policy on waste management and pollution control. In order to continue improving the learning environment for students and staff, the University promptly carries out renovation and maintenance of infrastructural facilities and the physical environment. Plans are underway to replace and safely dispose of asbestos on roofs. This will help in rain water harvesting to complement the dams and boreholes in place.

Various policies have been developed to improve the University governance. Among them are those on human capital, workload, post-retirement contract, HIV/AIDS, workplace, Endowment Fund, Income Generating Units, and alcohol and drug abuse. The revision of the University Staff Scheme of Service is on course. Once complete, the document will provide guidelines on staff recruitment, review, and promotion in line with established labour laws.

The University is on course to improve efficiency of service provision. Among the areas in focus to make this a success are implementation of the Service Delivery Charter; improving customer satisfaction; and improving performance management by implementing

annual performance contracts, conducting staff appraisals, and implementing appraisal outcomes.

As you prepare to venture into the world where your skills will be needed, figure out who you really are, trust yourselves, and do not let others define for you who you are. Join professionals in your various areas of study in adding value to the community and the country as a whole. Keep in mind that industry players require a

variety of skills, among them being analytical, listening, communicating, problem solving, creative thinking, and organisational effectiveness. Most of these skills, you have acquired during your years of study at Egerton University. The call for you is to make them count.

Congratulations on your graduation. Make your communities and the country proud. Stay safe!

May God bless you! ■

Plans Underway to Support Students With Visual Impairment

By Josephine Khaemba

The Disability Mainstreaming Unit (DMU) is a unit within the Directorate of University Welfare Services (DUWS). Since the last graduation, DMU has recorded several accomplishments.

To begin with, the accessibility Audit of the Njoro, Nakuru, and Nairobi campuses was completed successfully. This will enhance inclusivity and create a friendly environment for all persons, including persons with disabilities (PWDs).

Secondly, in the same period, DMU assisted four students with disabilities to get bursaries from the National Council for Persons with Disability (NCPWD), and one student to get a bursary from the Nyandarua County Government.

DMU also managed to procure assistive devices, which included tough rider wheel chairs and crutches from the Association of the Physically Disabled of Kenya (APDK) for use at the Disability Mainstreaming Resource Centre.

As we endeavour to adapt to the new normal of online learning occasioned by the COVID-19

pandemic, we are making plans to cater for students with visual impairment by installing the JAWS software in their smart phones to enable them access material on the e-platform.

Finally, DMU took 24 members of the University Community to Bahati General Hospital to be assessed for various disabilities. Nine of them were found to have disabilities and were recommended

to apply for NCPWD identification cards. These cards will give them the opportunity to access government services and benefits available to persons with disabilities.

Dr. Josephine Khaemba teaches Linguistics in the Department Literature, Languages and Linguistics and is the Coordinator of DMU at Egerton University.



With the shut-down of flights from local and international airports in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Egerton international students had to remain in their halls of residence at the Njoro Campus. The Catering and Halls Department has been overseeing their welfare.



EGERTON UNIVERSITY

Welcomes all Graduands

OF THE 42ND GRADUATION CEREMONY

to join the

EGERTON UNIVERSITY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

The Egerton University Alumni Association (EUAA) was founded in 1984 by former students of Egerton College. The Association serves as a forum for the exchange of ideas amongst members, staff, and students of Egerton University. It promotes the image and integrity of the University and engages the Alumni and other stakeholders in the physical development of the University.

VISION

To create and sustain a network of connected alumni who call others to action in support of Egerton University.

MISSION

The contribution of alumni to society represents the true value of any institution of higher learning. EUAA Alumni are present in all sectors of the economy and spread all over the world. They constitute a vast wealth of knowledge, experience, influence, and resources. They have a common bond – Egerton University. They can be of great value to one another. The Association endeavours to unleash this potential to the benefit of its members, the University, and the greater community, by cultivating life-long relationships, motivating participation, and creating opportunities for a continuous connection with the University, its Alumni, and the community.

MEMBERSHIP AND ALUMNI INVOLVEMENT

Membership in EUAA is the gateway for Egerton Alumni involvement in the affairs of the University. It is a commitment that Members make to support the University and each other. The Association aggressively works towards increasing the number of Alumni Life Members and strives to offer valuable benefits and services to attract and retain alumni as Members. The Association recognises students as alumni in residence and therefore supports current students and works to improve the quality of the students' experience at the University.

The Association is open to the following as stipulated in its Constitution:

- Egerton University graduates;
- Egerton academic and administrative staff;
- Individuals and organizations interested in the development of Egerton University as a premier institution of higher learning ("friends of Egerton").

The Association focuses its efforts in ways that reach the largest concentrations of Alumni by actively engaging in programmes such as continuing education, career networking, student recruitment, and fund raising.

COMMUNICATIONS

As the voice for more than 50,000 Egerton Alumni worldwide, the Association strives to keep Alumni informed about the University and the Association affairs.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Membership fees are as follows:

- Ordinary Membership : Ksh500.00
- Associate Membership : Ksh1,000.00
- Life Membership : Ksh5,000.00
- Corporate Membership : Ksh10,000.00

While Ordinary Membership and Associate Membership is paid annually, Life Membership and Corporate Membership fee is paid once.

Membership fees may be directly deposited in the Association's account at the Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB) account: EUAA No. 1139956076.

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

- Alumni benefits include:
- Networking opportunities for professional development;
- Certificate of Membership and University Alumni badge (LAPEL);
- Access to discounted Alumni-branded items;
- Participation in the governance of the University and of the Alumni Association;
- Regular updates through Alumni newsletters, SMSs, emails, telephone, and social media;
- Recognition through Distinguished Leadership Awards.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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EGERTON BATTLES THE COVID-19



Top: Before visitors and members of the University community enter the Njoro Campus, they wash their hands at designated points and have their temperature checked

Middle: As visitors approach the Administration Block, they wash their hands

Bottom: The Medical Department at the Njoro Campus has set up an isolation ward at Sanatorium and Maternity Unit with four beds in readiness to admit possible COVID-19 patients. In addition, the Department has trained a COVID-19 Response Team, stocked PPE kits in the facility, and bought six thermoguns.

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