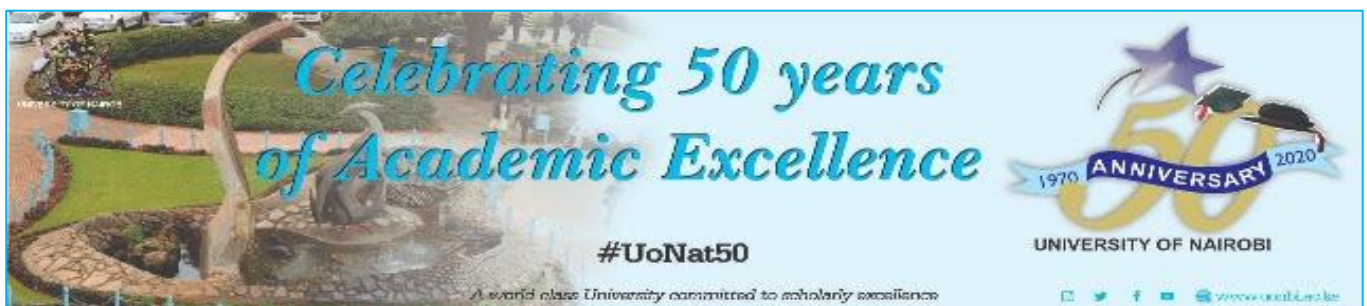




UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

# Department of Geography & Environmental Studies UoN@50 Magazine



# The Department of Geography and Environmental Studies



## Our Vision

A department of international repute committed to scholarly excellence in geography and environmental studies

## Our Mission

To provide dynamic leadership in the teaching, research, consultancy and outreach services in geography and environmental studies for the benefit of humanity and sustainable development

## Our Core Values

- Academic excellence
- Creativity and innovation
- Freedom of thought and expression
- Quality customer service
- Good corporate governance
- Responsible citizenship

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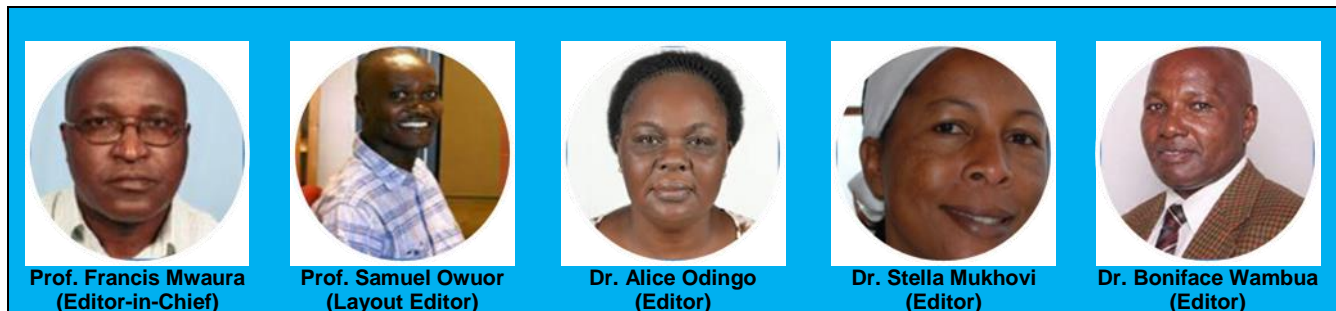
Reflections from alumni

Geography students' society (UNGSS)

Geography@50 Webinars



## Message from the Editorial Team



The University of Nairobi, in the academic year 2020/2021, marks 50 years since it became the first public university in Kenya on July 1, 1970. Consequently, the UoN@50 celebrations, running from July 2020 to June 2021, provided an opportunity for various events and activities at the University of Nairobi to mark 50 years of being a public university. The events and activities to commemorate UoN@50 were organized at various levels of the University administrative and academic hierarchy.

The events and activities of the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies were coordinated by a committee comprising Dr. Alice Odingo (Chair), Dr. Stella Mukhovi, Prof. Samuel Owuor and Prof. Francis Mwaura. The committee organized two webinars at the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies as part of the wider university celebrations.

The first webinar, held on March 9, 2021, had three key presentations on (1) **“Environment and development: Towards sustainable economy in Kenya”**; (2) **“Low carbon transport and sustainable development in Kenya”**; and (3) **“Neo-geographical research frontiers for the next century”**. The second webinar, held on April 13, 2021, brought together our strategic partners as panelists. The two panel discussions were on (1) **“The role of partnerships in training and research in geography and environmental studies”**; and (2) **“Positioning geography and environmental studies into future geographies and environments”**.

The last activity of the committee, which is the focus of this magazine, is to document the history and milestones of the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies since its inception in 1956. The magazine covers a wide range of issues that will be of interest to our past, present and future staff, students, alumni, strategic partners and stakeholders. We wish you an enjoyable and informative reading.



## Message from Chairman of Department

**Dr. Boniface Wambua**

The Department of Geography and Environmental Studies is the oldest Department of Geography in all public and private universities in Kenya. It was established in 1956 as a Department of Geography when the University of Nairobi was first established as the Royal Technical College. In 2005, the Department was renamed as the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies to serve as the hub for environmental studies at the University of Nairobi. The Department hopes to eventually transform into a School of Geography and Environmental Studies in future.

The Department, as part of the University of Nairobi, is celebrating 50 years of its existence. The Department is associated with major achievements in training, research and community outreach in geography and environmental studies. Since its inception in 1956, the Department has graduated thousands of undergraduate and postgraduate students. The academic staff continue to engage in a wide range of academic and professional activities, including research, consultancies, taskforces and conferences locally, regionally and globally. The staff have, cumulatively, produced a number of publications, including books, journal articles, book chapters, working papers and project reports, which provide important information for national and global development goals.

Our graduates apply their skills and competencies in a wide range of public and private sectors, both nationally and globally. They have been employed in government ministries, departments and agencies; local and international organizations; civil society organizations; and community and non-governmental organizations. The Department attracts a pool of international students, largely from other African countries. Furthermore, the Department maintains active links and collaboration with various institutions of research and higher learning across the globe.

The history and milestones of the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies is very long and detailed in time and scope. As such, only a few of them have been highlighted in this anniversary magazine. I hope that you will find the content of this magazine valuable and informative on the history and milestones of the Geography and Environmental Studies.

## Tracing the History of Department of Geography and Environmental Studies

The history of the Department can be traced back to the Royal Technical College of East Africa which opened its doors to the first intake of students in April 1956 during which the Faculty of Arts was established. Between April 1956 and June 1961, the Faculty of Arts consisted of five academic departments. These were Geography and Mathematics (in the Faculties of Arts and Science), Economics, History and English. The Department of Geography begun from a humble beginning with less than a score of students and two members of staff: Dai Morgan and Ron Bullock. It is therefore one of the oldest academic departments in the University of Nairobi. In this early period, the students in the Department of Geography, as was the case in both the Faculties of Arts and Science, were part of the University of London.



Geography students training for a research project



Undergraduate geography students during annual field class

During the 1961/1962 academic year, the first batch of BA and BSc students was registered for training under the University of London degree programmes. The undergraduate programmes in the Department were transferred from the University of London to the University College of East Africa, following its inauguration on June 28, 1963. From 1964, the Department began offering undergraduate BA and BSc Honours degree programmes. Postgraduate programmes were also initiated in the Department around that time. Since then, the Department experienced many phases of development.

In 2005, the Department of Geography was transformed into the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies through a university-wide restructuring programme. The restructuring came with an expanded mandate for the Department to serve as the hub for environmental studies at the University

of Nairobi. Consequently, a wide range of new courses, programmes and re-orientation of previous ones, was necessary.



**The postgraduate seminar room**

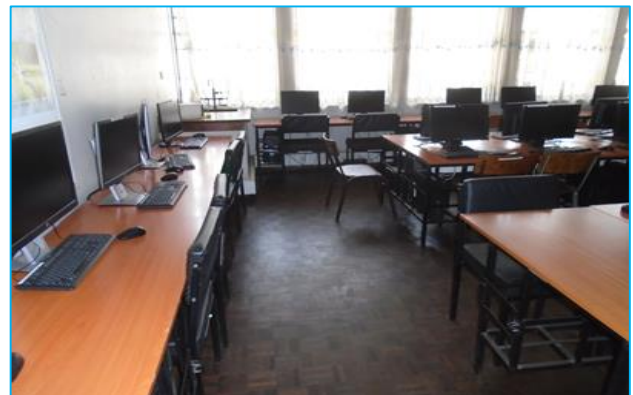


**Departmental library**

Currently, the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies offer a wide range of academic programmes leading to BA, BSc, BEd, MA, MSc and PhD degrees in diverse fields of geography and environmental studies. These degree programmes are offered within the Faculty of Arts (College of Humanities and Social Sciences), School of Physical Sciences (College of Biological and Physical Sciences), and School of Education (College of Education and External Studies). In addition, the Department offers service courses to the School of Biological Sciences, School of Economics and the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine.



**Lecture room**



**GIS Laboratory**

## Thematic Areas of Training and Research

DEGREE PROGRAMMES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● BA, BSc and BEd in Geography and Environmental Studies</li> <li>● MA and PhD in Agricultural Geography</li> <li>● MA and PhD in Biodiversity and Natural Resources Management</li> <li>● MA and PhD in Climatology</li> <li>● MA and PhD in Economic Geography</li> <li>● MA and PhD in Environmental Planning and Management</li> <li>● MA and PhD in Geomorphology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● MA and PhD in Industrial Geography</li> <li>● MA and PhD in Population Geography</li> <li>● MA and PhD in Transport Geography</li> <li>● MA and PhD in Urban Geography</li> <li>● MA and PhD in Water Resources Management</li> <li>● MSc and PhD in Hydrology and Ground Water Resource Management</li> <li>● MSc and PhD in Sustainable Urban Development</li> </ul>

**Agricultural Geography** deals with analysis and understanding of food systems, sustainable agriculture, agriculture and climate change, sustainable land management, agrobiodiversity, agriculture modernization and agricultural policy, among others. The main aim is to equip students with necessary skills and knowledge to solve current and potential challenges facing the agricultural sector.



Undergraduate annual field class



Undergraduate annual field class

**Biodiversity and Natural Resources Management** is grounded in the field of biogeography which is a multidisciplinary science at the interface between geographical and environmental sciences with a key focus on biodiversity and ecosystem studies. The thematic area deals with contemporary and headline

biodiversity issues including, spatial distribution mapping of species and biodiversity hotspots, biodiversity and ecosystem valuation, biodiversity informatics, ecosystem services and ecosystem-based management, including ecosystem restoration. It aims at human capacity building in the biodiversity sector for sustainable development in line with the global 2030 Agenda, Agenda 2063, EAC Vision 2050 and Kenya Vision 2030.



Field work



Lab work

**Climatology** deals with analysis and understanding of weather and climate patterns, climate change, weather forecasting, drought occurrence, crop growth seasons and urban climatic patterns, among others. The aim of the thematic area is to broaden learners' knowledge and understanding of the earth's atmosphere, weather, climate and related phenomena.

**Economic Geography** deals with spatial dimension of economic activities, relationship between society, environment and economic activities, as well as challenges facing developing countries in their pursuit of development strategies and goals. The goal of the thematic area is to enable students acquire a range of skills and techniques for identifying and solving development problems affecting the society at local, national, regional and international levels.

**Environmental Planning and Management** is a trans-disciplinary thematic area that deals with various aspects associated with the natural and human environment. The thematic area aims at equipping students with necessary skills and knowledge in promoting environmentally sound development and socio-economic sustainability through application of a wide range of strategies such as SEA, EIA,

environmental audits, project CBAs, EHS safeguards, cleaner production and corporate environmental management.



Postgraduate field class



Postgraduate field class

**Geomorphology** deals with the earth's surface features (landforms) and the processes that shape them, past and present. The thematic area combines theory, measurements and practice of geomorphology as well as application of geomorphological concepts in resolving resource and environmental management challenges facing human kind. The aim is to enhance the student's skills in theory, methodology and application of geomorphological knowledge to land resources management, including the impact of development.

**Industrial Geography** deals with the spatial dimension of industrial activities. The aim of the thematic area is to equip learners with knowledge of contemporary industrial geography with emphasis on the approaches to industrial geography, industrial location theories, industrial restructuring, green manufacturing and post-industrialisation.

**Population Geography** focuses on human-environment interrelationships and human resource management. The aim of the thematic area is to broaden learners' knowledge and understanding of population and demographic dynamics and their interactions with resources, environment and development.

**Transport Geography** deals with the spatial dimension of transport systems and their impacts on the economy, as well as the development of different modal systems such as road, aviation, rail and water transport. The goal of the thematic area is to enable students acquire a range of skills and techniques for identifying and solving transport problems affecting the society at local, national, regional and international levels.



Undergraduate annual field class



Undergraduate annual field class

**Urban Geography** deals with analysis and understanding of spatial processes and patterns in urban environments; nature, dynamics and challenges of urbanization; and urban growth, development and management. The aim of the thematic area is to train experts, researchers, managers and policy makers in urban geography, urban development and management.

**Water Resources Management** is designed to expose students and water resources professionals to a wide spectrum of knowledge on the hydrological (water) cycle, water distribution, water resources management, while taking into consideration the socio-economic demands and constraints of the effects of human activities on water environments.

**Hydrology and Ground Water Resources Management** is designed to expose students and water resources professionals to a wide range of knowledge and skills in hydrology and ground water resources management. The main focus is analysis and understanding of the hydrological cycle and its processes,

ground water resources management and appropriate techniques and methods for assessing water availability and quality.

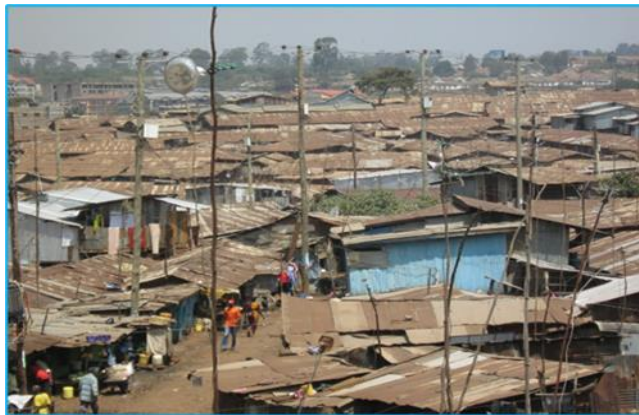


Postgraduate field class



Postgraduate joint international field class

**Sustainable Urban Development** is a trans-disciplinary thematic area aimed at training a pool of professionals from various fields who are capable of providing innovative, problem-solving and community-based solutions for sustainable urban development. The trans-disciplinary approach to sustainability challenges in urban areas leads to a better understanding of the complex and interconnected urbanization challenges in Africa.



Postgraduate field class



Postgraduate students during a research project

## Academic and Support Staff



**Prof. Elias O. AYIEMBA**  
BA, MA, PhD (Nairobi), Dip  
Demo. (Florida)  
Population Geography &  
Demography



**Prof. Evaristus M. IRANDU**  
BEd, MA, PhD (Nairobi)  
Economic, Transport, Industrial  
& Tourism Geography



**Prof. George O. KRHODA**  
BEd (Nairobi), MA (Wildrid  
Laurier), PhD (Simon Fraser)  
Geomorphology, Hydrology &  
Water Resources Management



**Prof. Francis MWAURA**  
BSc (Nairobi), MSc  
(Nairobi/McGill), PhD  
(Nairobi)  
Biogeography & NRM



**Prof. Samuel O. OWUOR**  
BA (Nairobi), MA  
(Nairobi/McGill), PhD  
(Amsterdam)  
Urban Geography



**Dr. Alice A.O. ODINGO**  
BA, MA, PhD (Nairobi)  
Agricultural & Medical  
Geography



**Dr. Boniface N. WAMBUA**  
BEd, MA (Kenyatta), PhD  
(Nairobi)  
Agricultural Geography



**Dr. Isaiah A. NYANDEGA**  
BA, MA, PhD (Nairobi)  
Climatology & GIS



**Dr. James M. MORONGE**  
BA, MA, PhD (Nairobi)  
Industrial & Economic  
Geography



**Dr. John K. MUSINGI**  
BSc, MSc, PhD (Nairobi)  
Climatology & Environmental  
Management



**Dr. Kennedy J. OMOKE**  
BA, MA, PhD (Nairobi)  
Population Geography,  
Demography & Tourism



**Dr. Shadrack M. KITHIA**  
BSc, MSc, PhD (Nairobi)  
Hydrology & Water Resources  
Management



**Dr. Stella M. MUKHOVI**  
BEd, MA, PhD (Nairobi)  
Agricultural Geography



**Dr. Isaac J. NDOLO**  
BEd (Nairobi), MSc  
(Nairobi/McGill), PhD (Nairobi)  
Climatology & Statistics



**Dr. John M. NYANGAGA**  
BSc, MSc, PhD (Nairobi)  
Hydrology & Water Resources  
Management



**Dr. Martin MARANI**  
BSc, MPhil (Moi), PhD  
(Salzburg)  
Environmental Management



**Dr. Parita S. SHAH**  
BA (London), MA, PhD (Nairobi)  
Biogeography & Natural Resources  
Management



**Dr. Teresa W. MBATIA**  
BA, MA, (Nairobi), PhD (Bordeaux)  
Urban Geography



**Mr. John O. WAKAJUMMAH**  
BA, MA (Nairobi)  
Population Geography & Demography



**Mr. Lincoln K. KARINGI**  
BSc, MA (Nairobi)  
Urban Geography



**Mr. Lincoln K. NDOGONI**  
BA, MA (Nairobi)  
Economic Geography



**Mr. Bernard MAJANI**  
BA (Nairobi), MA  
(ITC/Twente)  
GIS



**Ms. Veronica W. MWANGI**  
BA, MA (Nairobi)  
Economic Geography



**Mr. Nicholas M. MWAKAVI**  
Cert (GIS), Dip (Cartography), BA (TUK)  
Senior Technologist



**Mr. Oliver O. OGEMBO**  
HDip  
Technologist



**Mr. Jared O. LUMMAH**  
Dip (Comp Studies)  
Technical Assistant



**Dr. Teresa Mbatia being interviewed on urban farming**



**Prof. Irandu in a light moment after UN-Habitat public lecture**

## Links and Collaborations

The Department of Geography and Environmental Studies continue to maintain strong short- and long-term links and collaborations with a number of institutions across the globe. The links and collaborations revolve around collaborative research projects, staff and students' exchange programmes, scholarships, joint postgraduate supervision, staff training and capacity building, joint seminars, joint academic programmes, joint field classes for students and acquisition of research and teaching equipment.

### Strategic partners and stakeholders over time

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aarhus University, Denmark</li> <li>• African Studies Centre, Netherlands</li> <li>• Airbus Defense and Space Limited, England</li> <li>• Centre for Training and Integrated Research in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands Development (CETRAD), Kenya</li> <li>• Chinese Academy of Sciences, China</li> <li>• Columbia University, USA</li> <li>• French Institute for Research in Africa (IFRA), Kenya</li> <li>• Ford Foundation, Kenya</li> <li>• Green Care Foundation, China</li> <li>• Horn of Africa-Regional Environmental Network, Ethiopia</li> <li>• International Space University, France</li> <li>• Justus-Liebig-University Giessen, Germany</li> <li>• Kenya Land Alliance (KLA), Kenya</li> <li>• Kyoto University, Japan</li> <li>• Linköping University, Sweden</li> <li>• McGill University, Canada</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Miami University, USA</li> <li>• Mitsubishi Corporation, Japan</li> <li>• National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), Kenya</li> <li>• South Rift Association of Land Owners (SORALO), Kenya</li> <li>• Tongji University, China</li> <li>• UNEP, Kenya</li> <li>• UN-HABITAT, Kenya</li> <li>• United Nations University, Japan</li> <li>• University of Berne, Switzerland</li> <li>• University of Bonn, Germany</li> <li>• University of Bordeaux, France</li> <li>• University of Cape Town, South Africa</li> <li>• University of Jyväskylä, Finland</li> <li>• University of Salzburg, Austria</li> <li>• University of Southern Maine, USA</li> <li>• University of the Fraser Valley, Canada</li> <li>• Wilfrid Laurier University, Canada</li> <li>• Yokohama National University, Japan</li> </ul> |
|--|--|



Mitsubishi Corporation scholarship awards



Courtesy call: Dr. Gareth Haysom of University of Cape Town, South Africa



Undergraduate students on exchange programme at University of Jyväskylä, Finland



Meeting at Ford Foundation Offices: Provided funding to equip the GIS Laboratory



Postgraduate students on exchange programme at University of the Fraser Valley, Canada



Maasai Mara Development Initiative (MMSDI) joint seminar at Maasai Mara University



Dr. Kennedy Omoke giving a lecture in China



Visit by Canadian Field Studies in Africa students



**Prof. Francis Mwaura with experts for preparation of SEA guidelines for nuclear power stations, IAEA, Vienna**



**Prof. Samuel Owuor during a visit to Yokohama National University, Japan**



**Prof. Thom Meredith (McGill University):** “In January of 1986, I arrived in Nairobi to spend a term as a visiting professor in the Geography Department of UoN. I was met and welcomed by Prof. Ojany, and I counted the department as my home for the following months. It has remained my home-away-from-home for almost 35 years, as I have collaborated in research with colleagues there and, most notably, as we built a partnership around McGill’s Canadian Field Studies in Africa program. From the first visit – when we worked to set up what was the departments’ first computer lab (Pentium computers, which were state-of-the-art then!) – to the most recent, when I watched as UoN students guided McGill students out to explore the City of Nairobi, it has been a rich and rewarding partnership; a partnership that has seen many UoN faculty and students join us at McGill. We send congratulations, best wishes, and the hope that partnership continues to be strong for the next 35 years and beyond.”

## Former Academic and Support Staff



**Prof. Richard S. Odingo**  
Climatology &  
Agricultural Geography



**Prof. Reuben B. Ogendo**  
Biogeography &  
Industrial Geography



**Prof. Simon H. Ominde**  
Population Geography



**Prof. Francis F. Ojany**  
Geomorphology



**Prof. George S. Ongwenyi**  
Hydrology



**Prof. Dunstan A. Obara**  
Agricultural Geography



**Prof. David N. Mungai**  
Climatology



**Prof. Wellington N. Wamicha**  
Biogeography



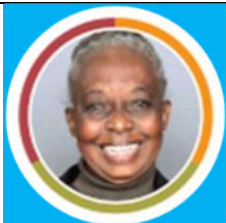
**Prof. Robert A. Obudho**  
Urban Geography



**Prof. Chris G. Macoloo**  
Urban Geography



**Prof. Justus I Mwanje**  
Statistics & GIS



**Dr. Wanjiku Mwagiru**  
Biogeography



**Dr. Margaret W. Kirimi**  
Population Geography &  
Demography



**Dr. Daniel E. Kapule**  
Geomorphology



**Dr. William O. Ogembo**  
**Onyango**  
Hydrology



**Dr. Maggie M. Opondo**  
Industrial Geography



**Dr. Samuel O. Aketch**  
Agricultural Geography



**Dr. Thuita Thenya**  
Biogeography



**Ms. Belinda A. Rego**  
Biogeography



**Mr. Nicholas M. Ochanda**  
Biogeography



**Robert K. Langat**  
Documentalist



**Mr. Haggai W. Namai**  
Surveying &  
Cartography





**Mr. Isaac Ayuyo**  
Chief Technologist



**Jacqueline A. Walubwa**  
Urban Geography



**Mr. Amos N. Kamweru**  
Chief Technologist

 <p><b>Fredrick M. Karema</b> Senior Technologist</p>	<p><b>Prof. Samuel K. Mutiso</b> (Agricultural Geography)</p> <p><b>Mr. Gregory Mpaka</b> (ASALs)</p>	 <p><b>Washington B.S. Weere</b> Principal Technologist</p>	<p><b>Dismus M. Nyakundi</b> (Cartographer)</p> <p><b>Mr. Gesumwa</b> (Cartographer)</p> <p><b>Gabriel Desouza</b> (Chief Technologist)</p>	 <p><b>Joseph K. M'Arungu</b> Cartographer</p>
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Group photo after a farewell luncheon for Prof. Richard Odingo and Dr. Margaret Kiriimi

## Recognition of Distinguished Service

**Prof. Richard S. Odingo** joined the Department in 1963 and served as Dean of Faculty of Arts (1982-1984). He played a major role in developing courses and degree programmes in climatology, agricultural geography and remote sensing. He served as Senior Programme Officer (Natural Resources) at United Nations University; Chair of National Climate Change Activities Coordination Committee; Member of International Advisory Board on Sustainable Development; and Vice President of Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. In 2007, Prof. Odingo was awarded Nobel Peace Prize jointly with former US Vice President Alexander Gore, for their contribution to the science of climate change.

**Prof. Reuben B. Ogendo** joined the Department in 1963 and served as Dean of Faculty of Arts (1976-1980); Head of Department (1988); and Fellow of Kenya National Academy of Sciences. He is the co-author (together with Prof. Ojany) of the famous geography text book titled "*Kenya: A Study in Physical and Human Geography*". He also authored a book titled "*Industrial Geography of Kenya*". In 1982, he delivered his UoN inaugural lecture on "*Geography: The Discipline and its Role in Public Policy*".

**Prof. Simeon H. Ominde** joined the Department in 1964 and later founded the Population Studies and Research Institute. He served as Dean of Faculty of Arts; Member of University of Nairobi Council; Director of Population Studies and Research Institute; and Fellow of Royal Geography Society of Britain. He chaired the 1964 Ominde Commission on Education which aligned Kenya's education system to address national development needs.

**Prof. Francis F. Ojany** joined the Department in 1964 and started courses and degree programme in geomorphology. He served as Chair of Kenya National Committee for UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme; Member of UNESCO Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves; President of African Mountains Association; and Editor-in-Chief of Kenyan Geographer Journal and Eastern and Southern Africa Geographical Journal. He is the co-author (together with Prof. Ogendo) of the famous geography text book titled "*Kenya: A Study in Physical and Human Geography*". He also authored the "*National Atlas of Kenya*".

**Prof. George S. Ongwenyi** joined the Department in 1973 and is credited for the vibrant MSc programme in hydrology. He served as Secretary to Geographical Society of Kenya; Executive Member of Geological Society of Kenya; Member of Kenya National Committee of the International Hydrological Programme; and Chair of Kenya

Committee for International Water Resources Association. Prof. Ongwenyi undertook numerous sedimentology and water quality studies in Kenya and was a key advisor to the Ministry of Water.

**Prof. Elias H.O. Ayiemba** joined the Department in 1974 and played a major role in enhancing courses and degree programmes in population geography, demography and medical geography. He served as Head of Department (1988-1991 and 2005-2011), Associate Dean of Faculty of Arts (1991-1997), Acting Dean (1997-1998) and Member of UoN Graduate School Board. Prof. Ayiemba has also served in various capacities as UoN Representative to Kenya National Examinations Council; Member of Post-Census Enumeration Planning Committee; Member of National Census Steering Committee; Chair of Kenya Task Force on the African Population Agenda; and East African Representative to Union for African Population Studies.

**Prof. Dunstan A. Obara** joined the Department in 1976 and served as Head of Department (1991-1993) and Dean of Faculty of Arts (1992-1996). He is the author of *"KCSE Gold Medal Geography"* and *"Macmillan Kenya Secondary School Atlas"*.

**Prof. Samuel K. Mutiso** joined the Department in 1981. He served as Head of Department of Geography (1990-1995), Faculty of Social Sciences at the College of Education and External Studies. Prof. Mutiso also served as Chair of National Task Force on Desertification and Drought, as well as Kenya National Environment Action Plan.

**Prof. David N. Mungai** joined the Department in 1984 to strengthen climatology thematic area. He served as Head of Department (1993-1999) and in 2019 was appointed Director of Wangari Maathai Institute for Peace and Environmental Studies. He has been Chair of NEMA Taskforces on Regulations, Guidelines and Environmental Standards; Chair of Technical Advisory Committee on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA); and External Examiner for Makerere University.

**Prof. George O. Krhoda** joined the Department in 1985 and played a key role in enhancing hydrology and water resources management degree programmes in the Department. He served as Head of Department of Geography and Dean of Faculty of Social Sciences at the College of Education and External Studies. He was founding member of African Mountain Association, Natural Resources Specialist for World Bank and Environmental Adviser for Royal Netherlands Embassy in Nairobi. He was appointed Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (2005-2006) and Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Water and Irrigation (2003-2005), where he chaired high level meetings on Nairobi River Basin, UN Convention on Climate Change, Nile River Basin, UN Convention to Combat Desertification and UN Convention on Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Waste. Prof. Krhoda

was awarded, by the President of Kenya, Chief of the Order of the Burning Spear (CBS) in recognition of his outstanding services rendered to the nation.

**Prof. Evaristus M. Irandu** joined the Department in 1988 and played an important role in developing transport geography degree programme in the Department, as well as a Faculty of Arts degree programme in tourism. He has served as Head of Department (1999-2005); Member of UoN Gender Policy Committee (2006); and External Examiner for Kenyatta University, Moi University, University of Eldoret, Karatina University and Masai Mara University. Prof. Irandu is the author of two important secondary school geography books: “*Longhorn Gateway Secondary Geography Revision*” and “*Longman Complete Junior Course in Human and Physical Geography*”.

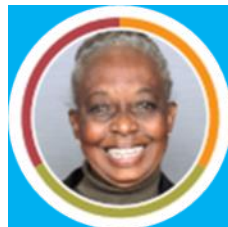
### Former Heads of Department



**Prof. Simon H. Ominde**  
(1964-1977)



**Prof. Francis F. Ojany**  
(1977-1986)



**Dr. Wanjiku Mwagiru**  
(1986-1988)



**Prof. Reuben B. Ogendo**  
(1988)



**Dr. Elias H.O. Ayiamba**  
(1988-1991)



**Prof. Dunstan A. Obara**  
(1991-1993)



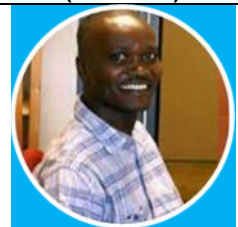
**Dr. David N. Mungai**  
(1993-1999)



**Dr. Evaristus M. Irandu**  
(1999-2005)



**Prof. Elias H.O. Ayiamba**  
(2005-2011)



**Dr. Samuel O. Owuor**  
(2011-2017)



**The Department of Geography and Environmental Studies**



**The Chairman's Office**

## Reflections from Retired Colleagues



**Dr. Margaret W. Kirimi**

"I joined the Department in 1970 as a freshman and later taught there until my retirement in 2017. While there I grew as an academician, taught many students and interacted with colleagues. I

witnessed the Department grow to become a formidable academic discipline of international repute as reflected in the numerous links it has with other universities and organizations both locally and internationally. Its graduate programs attract students from diverse backgrounds and nationalities. While I was there, I made lasting friendships. I have very fond memories of the Department"



**Prof. Richard S. Odingo**

It was a great honour to be part of the Department of Geography and Environmental studies. When the Department was formed, it quickly spread out like a bushfire! Its international performance was remarkable and this

enabled me to do my work with dedication at local, national and international levels. The student-staff relationships were great and my happiest moments were when I took students for fieldwork. We were flexible in embracing new technologies in the delivery of the curricula and this has been passed onto the younger generation that join the Department. May the Almighty continue to uplift the Department to greater heights.



**Ms. Belinda A. Rego**

"I am grateful to Almighty God for the memorable time I spent in the Department where I interacted with many wonderful students and a great team of colleagues. May God continue blessing the Department"



**Dr. Daniel Kapule**

"I am happy for the chance I had to work in the Department. I liked the teamwork spirit exemplified by colleagues. My best wishes"



**Mr. Nicholas M. Ochanda**

"I celebrate 27 years of imparting knowledge that appeals to geography and environmental studies especially biogeography. This was also a period for laying foundation for

space technology in Kenya including the deployment of UoN's 1KUNS-PF nano satellite"



**Mr. Haggai Namai**

I enjoyed working life at university of nairobi during which I interacted with numerous students and academic colleagues. My contribution to building and equipping the technical thematic area of the department in kikuyu campus gives me pleasure. I wish all the staff well as they continue taking the department to great heights



## Reflections from Alumni



**Prof. Saeed Mwangi**  
Associate Professor  
Environmental  
Science  
Technical University  
of Mombasa

"The Department offered a serene learning environment, effective guidance and challenging assignments in preparing students for independent research capabilities. Such comprehensive preparations made the work for my PhD degree smooth, enjoyable and very satisfying" (MA 2002 & PhD 2008)



**Sr. (Dr.) Maryann Njeri Kamau**  
Mental Health Supervisor  
Alberta Health Services  
Canada

"I wish to congratulate the Department as it marks 50 years of academic excellence. This milestone reflects the unique role UoN has played in empowering students with the right skills that excel them in their careers. This tradition of dedication and commitment will certainly continue to transform and inspire future generations here and beyond. Congratulations! (MA 1999)



**Dr. Matheaus K. Kauti**  
Senior Lecturer  
Department of  
Environmental Science &  
Land Resources  
Management  
South Eastern Kenya  
University

"A throwback of experiences at Hyslop Geography Building is both memorable and fulfilling. The strong research foundations I gained have inspired and shaped my academic career path and lifelong friendship with my mentors" (MA 2004)



**Dr. Thandiwe Chikomo**  
Program Director  
WWF Power of Voices  
The Netherlands

"Choosing the Department was one of the best decisions I made. The Department do not just train students, it prepares them for a professionally rewarding life. The relationship between professors and students has always been a special one" (PhD 2014, International Student)



**Julius Kamau**  
Chief Conservator of  
Forests  
Kenya Forest  
Service

"A wonderful Department with realistic academic programs for national development, including forest conservation" (MA 2011)



**Dorothy Masiga Syallow,**  
Tutorial Fellow  
University of Kabianga

"My training in the Department provided strong foundation for success and adaptability in a wide variety of situations. So great was the mentorship and tutelage by the faculty and it did not end when I graduated! I have always benefitted from constant counsel by my former university supervisors" (MA 2011)



**Ken M. Mwathe**  
Policy &  
Communications  
Coordinator  
BirdLife International  
Africa Office

"I thoroughly enjoyed my time as EPM student. I loved the class discussions and the lectures which I found practical and relatable to the real world. I feel more confident" (MA 2007)



**Martha Nziza Munyao**  
Biodiversity Resource  
Planner  
Kenya Wildlife Service

"Having a background in wildlife management, and then doing MA in the Department just opened new frontiers in my career. It is over ten years since completing my graduate degree but the faculty remains alive in my life. I am proud to be associated with the Department" (MA 2011)



**Antony Oduya Ndubi**  
Remote sensing & GIS  
Analyst  
FAO Somalia  
Programme

"This is one of the departments in the University of Nairobi offering courses that impart knowledge and skills relevant in developing solutions to different societal issues" (BA, MA 2016)



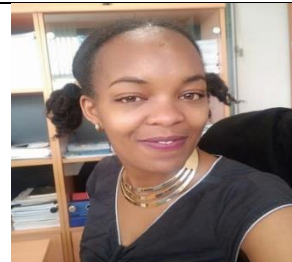
**Osuman Kiazolu**  
Manager  
Project Development and  
Monitoring Unit  
Forestry Development  
Authority  
Monrovia

"Well trained teaching staff, excellent learning environment and good support staff" (PhD 2019, International Student)



**Bubicha Mohammed**  
Environmental specialist  
Norken International

"The Department has produced a significant pool of highly trained and skilled professionals who have continued to play a significant role in the Kenya's development and beyond" (PhD 2019)



**Grace Githiri**  
Associate Programme Management Officer  
Policy, Legislation and Governance section  
UN-Habitat

Having had a background in urban and regional planning I joined the pioneer class on MSc. sustainable urban development (MSc. SUD) which was a total turn-around in my career that opened new opportunities. I remain grateful to the Department of Geography and Environmental studies for the insights and knowledge imparted by a very experienced, supportive and phenomenon teaching and non-teaching staff.  
**MSc. Sustainable Urban Development 2017**

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## University of Nairobi Geography Students Society (UNGSS)

The University of Nairobi Geography Students Society, popularly known as UNGSS, is an academic organization of students pursuing geography and environmental studies. However, because of a wider interest in geography and environmental studies, membership is open to students from other academic departments of the University of Nairobi. The vision of UNGSS is to be an active entity in enhancing sustainable use of the environment at different levels. UNGSS aims at promoting interests of members in the field of geography and environmental studies, cultivate a sense of awareness among the public on the need to conserve the environment and collaborating with the government, NGOs and other relevant agencies in promoting research in areas related to the environmental conservation, and consequently secure internships and attachments for its members.



UNGSS: Tree planting exercise during World Environment Day



UNGSS: Environmental clean-up in Nairobi National Park

UNGSS organizes symposia, field trips, public lectures, seminars and conferences to discuss sustainable solutions to environmental challenges. It organizes field excursions to areas of geographical and environmental interests. Through partnerships with various stakeholders, UNGSS members have access to specialized libraries and reference resources in NEMA, ICRAF, UNEP, ILRAD, KWS, AWF, NATURE KENYA and EAWLS, among others. UNGSS provides a platform for students to explore their talents and to add their voices on environmental issues that affects them and the society.



UNGSS: Hosting Canadian Field Studies in Africa students



UNGSS: Participating in World Water Day



UNGSS: Environmental awareness in Nairobi streets



UNGSS: Hosting Tsukuba University



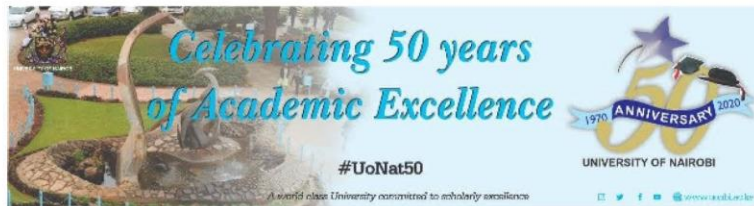
UNGSS: Community environmental clean-up in Nairobi



UNGSS patron giving a speech during WED



## Geography@50 Webinar



### Department of Geography and Environmental Studies

#### WEBINAR

"Reflecting on the past and positioning into  
future geographies and environments"

**Tuesday 9 March, 2021 (2.00pm-5.00pm EAT)**

(Link to be circulated)

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS	
"Environment and Development: Towards Sustainable Economy in Kenya"	
Prof. George O. Krhoda	
Department of Geography & Environmental Studies, University of Nairobi	
"Low Carbon Transport and Sustainable Development in Kenya"	
Prof. Evaristus M. Irandu	
Department of Geography & Environmental Studies, University of Nairobi	
PANEL: NEO-GEOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH FRONTIERS FOR THE NEXT CENTURY	
Ann Therese Ndong Jatta Director, UNESCO Regional Office for Eastern Africa	Dr. Evangeline Njoka Kenya National Commission for UNESCO
Dr. Jane Nyakang'o Kenya National Cleaner Production Centre	Dr. Theresa Tribaldos Centre for Development and Environment

ALL ARE WELCOME

*Chairman, Department of Geography and  
Environmental Studies*

## Geography@50 Webinar

**Department of  
Geography &  
Environmental  
Studies  
WEBINAR**

**TUESDAY 13 APRIL 2021 (2.30PM-5.00PM EAT)**

**Reflecting on Institutional Partnerships and Future of Geography and Environmental Studies**

**2.30 PM OPENING REMARKS (20 MINS): Prof. Samuel Owuor (Convener)**

**Dr. Boniface Wambua**  
Chairman, Department of Geography  
and Environmental Studies

**Prof. Stephen Kiama**  
Vice-Chancellor  
University of Nairobi

**Prof. Mohamud Jama**  
Principal, College of Humanities and  
Social Sciences

**2.50 PM PANEL 1 (40 MINS): The Role of Partnerships in Training and Research in Geography and Environmental Studies: "Reflections from our Experiences"**

**Prof. Urs Wiesmann**  
University of Bern

**Pernille Kallehave**  
Aarhus University

**Prof. Elias Aylemba**  
MODERATOR

**Dr. Boniface Kiteme**  
CETRAD

**Dr. Samantha Du Toit**  
SORALO

**3.30 PM Q & A (20 MINS): Dr. Alice Odingo**

**3.50 PM PANEL 2 (40 MINS): Positioning Geography and Environmental Studies into Future Geographies and Environments: "Directions in Training and Research"**

**Prof. Thom Meredith**  
McGill University

**Prof. Britta Klagge**  
University of Bonn

**Prof. George Krhoda**  
MODERATOR

**Prof. Joy Obando**  
Kenyatta University

**Prof. Evaristus Irandu**  
University of Nairobi

**4.30 PM Q & A (20 MINS): Dr. Stellah Mukhovi**

**4.50 PM CLOSING REMARKS (10 MINS): Prof. Francis Mwaura**

“Venturing into the future of academic excellence”



Chairman

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