



DECEMBER 2015

# Varsity Focus

*A magazine of the University of Nairobi*



## The Holy Father

**Pope Francis Celebrates  
Historic Mass at University**



### **Our Vision**

A world-Class University committed to scholarly excellence

### **Our Mission**

To provide quality university education and training and to embody the aspirations of the Kenyan people and the global community through the creation, preservation, integration, transmission and utilization of knowledge

### **Our Core Values**

- Freedom of thought and expression;
- innovativeness and creativity;
- good governance and integrity;
- team spirit and teamwork;
- professionalism;
- quality customer service;
- responsible citizenship;
- national cohesion and inclusiveness.





## VarsityFocus

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**Varsity  
launches  
online tool for  
measuring  
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benefit from  
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**Thousands  
graduate  
at 53rd  
graduation  
ceremony**



**Rugby and  
basketball  
teams  
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# Pope Francis: Symbol of peace, humility and hope

The visit by Pope Francis to Kenya on November, 25-27 2015 will undoubtedly be the trending item for days to come. Prior to the visit, the last time a Pope stepped on Kenyan soil was in 1995. Children who were born in 1995, now clocking 20 years, have already completed high school.

It is therefore a great honour for the Pope to have accepted to conduct the main mass at the University of Nairobi grounds on November 26, 2015.

Apart from getting spiritual blessings alongside other Kenyans, the University has also inherited the grand podium from where the Pope gave his sermon.

Pope Francis was born Jorge Mario Bergoglio on December 17, 1936 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He was a son of Italian immigrants who had settled in Argentina. He chose the name Pope Francis upon ascending to the papacy in 2013.

Kenya is the first African country to host His Holiness the Pope since he was elected to the position in March 2013.

His was both a pastoral and state visit since he is also the sovereign of the state of Vatican City in Rome, Italy.

The Vatican City, as the headquarters of the papacy, enjoys the status of a nation. So the Pope is, in that capacity, at par with world presidents. Pope Francis is the 266th pope of the Roman Catholic Church, a title he holds *ex-officio* as Bishop of Rome and sovereign of the Vatican City.

Famous for his humility, Pope Francis has throughout his public life put emphasis on God's mercy, displayed open concern for the poor and expressed his commitment to interfaith dialogue. His respect for environment is also legendary. But as the leader of the Catholic Church, the Holy Father has maintained the traditional views of the Church regarding abortion, euthanasia, contraception, homosexuality, ordination of women and priestly celibacy, but calls for forgiveness to those who repent.

In his teachings, Father Francis has always advised his priests to show mercy and apostolic courage, and to

keep their doors open to everyone. He has said that the worst thing that could happen to the church is to suffer from "spiritual worldliness," which means being self-centered.

He is also an ardent believer in that if you follow Christ, you understand that trampling upon a person's dignity is a serious sin. Showing empathy to those affected by terrorism, he said his only fear in Africa was a mosquito.

The title "Pope" is in our age used solely to denote the Bishop of Rome, who by virtue of his position as the successor of St. Peter, is the Chief Pastor of the whole church; the vicar of Christ upon earth.

May the Humility and Grace of Pope Francis rub on the members of the University of Nairobi Fraternity and Kenyans in general.

Enjoy.

**Peter Muturi**  
pr@uonbi.ac.ke

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*May the Humility and Grace of Pope Francis rub on the members of the University of Nairobi Fraternity and Kenyans in general*

# Varsity makes strides in Transformation Agenda



**A**s we draw near the end of the year 2015, I can't help but view the beginning and the end as two climaxes for the university. I say so because year 2015 has proven to take semblance of a 100 metre race - take off and finish speed almost at constant!

On January 6, 2015, I clad into the captains' attire and fully engaged into motion with a one day old group of freshmen and women for the College of Humanities and Social Sciences of the 2013 KCSE cohort, who had just reported to the university the previous day.

As is the tradition, the freshers were taken through a week-long orientation and therefore come Thursday January 8, 2015, I delivered my first welcome speech to the students at Taifa Hall. This was followed by the colourful ceremony of my Installation as the 7th Vice Chancellor of the University of Nairobi on January 14, 2015.

March 1, 2015 saw the operationalization of the Centre for Self Sponsored Programmes, which manages fees and debt collection from self-sponsored students. This function was previously handled by the University of Nairobi Enterprises and Services (UNES).

Another key achievement in the month of March was the creation and implementation of the Directorate of University Advancement. This arm of the

office of the Vice Chancellor has made significant strides towards actualization of the University's transformation agenda through the triple 'P' approach. There are already potential financiers, both locally and abroad who have begun working with the Advancement Office for construction of students hostels.

In an effort to bring the wide-spread network of Alumni and strategic stakeholders on board towards realization of my transformative agenda, my management initiated a series of breakfast meetings with the first one being held at Norfolk on March 25, 2015. To continue discharging our mandate of mentorship of institutions of higher learning, the University of Nairobi undertook to mentor Koitaleel Samoei University College. This commitment was sanctioned on April 7, 2015 during a joint meeting between the University of Nairobi and the County Government of Nandi led by Governor Dr. Cleophas Lagat.

The Month of April also witnessed an historic event of the most Peaceful SONU elections in the recent past. Indeed, the 2015/2016 elections that were held on April 10, 2015 was a true testimony that our students have begun to play a national role by demonstrating leadership skills.

Year 2015 has seen a number of landmark events in the university. The first UNESCO/UNITWIN Chairs Consultative meeting with the theme "UNESCO Chairs for knowledge creation, Innovation and Sustainable Development in Kenya" took place on university premises on April 20, 2015.

The University of Nairobi was also proud to host the 4th Edition of the National Commission of Science and Technology "Science and Technology week". The National Science Week that was held in May 11-15, 2015 acted as a precursor to the first ever Nairobi Innovation week held in the first week of August. I have no doubt in my mind to state that the University of Nairobi has proven to be the preferred venue for hosting national

and well as international functions. It will be remembered that of the Prime Minister of Italy H.E. Matteo Renzi delivered a Public lecture in the month July, 2015 in Taifa Hall.

Research remains the hallmark of a world class University. Currently the University's research fund stands at Ksh. 4 billion. Collaborations and links with renowned organizations have also contributed to our research portfolio while enhancing the University's performance in international rankings. The University has recently been ranked position 4 in Africa based on research publications, citations and visibility on the internet. Through research activities, the University managed to produce over 3,400 publications in 2015.

For students, the University Senate is implementing a student's mentorship program and has also operationalized the Centre for Pedagogy and Andragogy. To ensure lasting security and safety, the University is also implementing a comprehensive and integrated work plan that addresses safety of students while on campus. On their part, our students have continued to excel and win international awards. This year, they have twice won, on different occasions, the International Law Moot Court competitions.

I also wish to recognize the work done by the Institute of Development Studies, who remain the hub of research in development studies, and who have just concluded celebrations for IDS @ 50.

To crown it all, the university was identified by the state as the venue for hosting the Pope and as the place for celebrating the holy mass during his maiden visit to Africa. Pope Francis' presence on the University of Nairobi's graduation grounds on November 26, 2015 climaxed the events of year. It is a blessing to the university and I strongly believe that as we celebrate academic excellence during the 54th graduation ceremony on December 4, 2015, the graduands will truly realize their dreams.

Finally, I thank you all and sundry for making year 2015 a success story. I take this opportunity to wish all staff and students and their families a Merry Christmas and prosperity in the coming year.

**Peter M. F. Mbithi**  
Vice-Chancellor



## Pope Francis celebrates Holy Mass at UoN

Thursday, November 26, 2015, saw all roads lead to the University of Nairobi as His Holiness Pope Francis celebrated Holy Mass at the University grounds. The President of the Republic of Kenya, H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta, led Kenyans during the historic mass that brought together over 1 million Catholic faithful.

### A message for Kenyans

In his message to the people of Kenya, Pope Francis said that the Kenyan society has long been blessed with

strong family life, a deep respect for the wisdom of the elderly and love for children. He said that the health of any society depends on the health of its families. "For their sake, and for the good of society, our faith in God's word calls us to support families in their mission in society, to accept children as a blessing for our world, and to defend the dignity of each man and woman, for all of us are brothers and sisters in the one human family."

His Holiness Pope Francis also had a message for the Kenyan youth. "Here, in the heart of this University, where the minds and hearts of new generations are being shaped, I appeal in a special way to the young people of the nation. Let the great values of Africa's traditions,

the wisdom and truth of God's word, and the generous idealism of your youth guide you in working to shape a society which is ever more just, inclusive and respectful of human dignity," he said. "May you always be concerned for the needs of the poor, and reject everything that leads to prejudice and discrimination, for these things, we know, are not of God."

The Pontiff quoting the parables of Jesus, urged Kenyans to build their 'house' on a solid rock, the rock Jesus Christ. God is the rock upon which we are called. Jesus wishes to draw men to Himself, so that He can bring them to the Father.



after ascending to the papacy. The Pontiff arrived in the country on November 25, 2015 and was received as a state and spiritual leader.

During his 3-day visit, Pope Francis met with the President Kenyatta at State House, Nairobi and held a series of meetings with various religious leaders, youth and catholic clergy.

The Pope also celebrated mass at St. Joseph's the Worker Church in Kangemi, Nairobi. He also met youth from across the country before jettisoning out to Uganda on Friday, November 27, 2015.

The Pope is recognized as the Leader of the Vatican- the smallest sovereign State in the world- and as the spiritual Leader of the Roman Catholic Church.

This year's visit by the Pope was the 4th time the country played host to a Pope. Pope John Paul II visited the country on 3 separate occasions in 1980, 1985 and 1995.

Indeed, it was an honour for Kenya and for the University of Nairobi to host His Holiness Pope Francis.

In his reconciliatory message to Kenyans, the Pope noted that we are all part of the great Christian Family. He urged Kenyans to embrace family values as family makes an important aspect of the society.

The Head of the Vatican urged Christians, to be people who radiate the truth; People who channel God's mercy and truth. He urged Kenyans to create great families, to create homes where brothers and sisters live together in harmony.

The Pontiff who is famous for speaking for the rights of the downtrodden, noted that leaders must rise up and defend the dignity of all humans. In doing so, they should be bold and very courageous. "Do not be afraid, for you belong to the Lord."

**God bless Kenya**

In his blessings to the Kenyan people, the Pope blessed Kenyans and the leaders and their families, saying, "May Jesus, the Good Shepherd, guide you and your families. May God bless your lives and your families with peace."

As he concluded the homily, the Pope blessed Kenyan and Kenya. Speaking in Kiswahili, the Pontiff said, "Mungu awabariki. Mungu abariki Kenya! (God bless you. God bless Kenya).

**The Papal visit**

The visit to Kenya is Pope Francis' maiden visit to the African continent



# Varsity Establishes Endowment Fund

Education is the most powerful weapon that can be used to change the world. However, many students from needy backgrounds miss out on the opportunity to attain higher education.

Consequently, both the country and the continent are denied valuable human capital that should drive the growth of the country and the continent. To address this problem, the University of Nairobi has established the 'Stars for Africa' programme aimed at raising funds towards a scholarship

endowment for the University. University of Nairobi Endowment Fund Targets KSh10 billion. Through the Stars of Africa' programme, the University will raise a generation of stars that will secure and light Africa's growth, lead a manpower revolution, drive growth in our counties and showcase the University.

The Stars for Africa initiative was launched on September 3, 2015 by the Chancellor of the University of Nairobi, Dr. (Mrs) Vijoo Rattansi to support bright and needy students in Kenya and across Africa.

Dr. Rattansi and Vice-Chancellor, Prof Peter Mbithi, are spearheading the operationalization of the Endowment. The fund will support talent development, scholarships and research. The goal of the University is to raise at least Ksh. 1 billion by 2016 from development partners, corporate sector and foundations to support the first 3,000 stars in Africa. The University has a long-term vision of growing the fund to 10 billion through a funds drive from supporters of higher education.

The fund has had great support from top University management. During its launch, the Chancellor contributed Ksh. 1 million seed money to the fund. Prof. Mbithi gave Ksh.500, 000 while the Director and Deputy Director of University Advancement, Johnson Kinyua and his deputy, Brian Ouma contributed Ksh.250, 000 each to the fund.

Dr. Manu Chandaria, through the Chandaria Foundation, has contributed Ksh. 2 million towards the Fund. Dr. Chandaria, who has been a long-serving member of the UoN Council said endowments should be a tradition in all universities.

"It is very encouraging to see that the university top leadership is in great support of the endowment fund efforts," he said.

Dr. Chandaria retaliated that to develop and maintain a world class university, the corporate sector, foundations and other development partners must accord the required support.



The Chandaria Foundation makes a donation of Ksh. 2 million towards the University of Nairobi Endowment Fund.





University of Nairobi's Chancellor Dr. Vijoo Rattansi contributes Ksh. 1 million seed money to the Fund. Receiving the cheque is Vice-Chancellor Prof. Peter Mbithi, Chairman of the Council, Dr. Idle Farah and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Administration and Finance, Prof. Bernard Njoroge.

### Investment in Endowment Fund

One of the major challenges that public universities face is inadequate funding. The large number of students in need of financial support for both undergraduate and postgraduate levels makes this problem worse.

Higher education is growing at an incredible speed because of demand and the developments in the education sector. The University of Nairobi has however sought to strike a balance between quantity and quality.

While the number of students in Kenyan universities keeps increasing every year, funding from the Government has dwindled in the past few years. Public universities are now faced with decreased Government subsidies.

This has made it difficult for the University to cater for the growing student numbers, calling for strategies for alternative funding sources, such as establishment of an endowment fund. "To sustain this initiative, there is great need for support from well-wishers", noted Dr. (Mrs) Vijoo Rattansi.

### University's Resource Mobilization Strategy

Innovative resource mobilization for higher education has been recognized as critical to both University education and human resource development in the country for the successful achievement of Kenya's Vision 2030.

The Stars for Africa Programme is a major resource mobilization and revenue generation strategy effort by the University. According to Prof. Mbithi, the University has the capability to generate and source for additional funds to support its activities.

As part of the University's Resource Mobilization strategy, Prof. Mbithi has re-organized and re-focused the University of Nairobi Enterprises and Services (UNES) to focus income-generating activities and consulting services on behalf of the University.

The University has also established the Directorate of University Advancement, responsible for partnerships with donors, partners

and like-minded agencies in order to grow the University's resource base, research capabilities and strategic assets to guarantee the sustainability of the University.

### What is an endowment fund?

An endowment is a permanent gift, an investment that gives back to the University forever. The endowment is critical for ensuring the university's long-term sustainability and an endowment fund is a permanent, sustainable source of funding. An endowment fund can grow and be a stable source of support indefinitely, particularly in unstable or uncertain times. This is critical for UoN. Funds can be named after the donor or in honour of someone the donor wishes to recognize.

### Endowment Building Strategies

Presently, the University has an Alumni Association comprising graduates from the University. The Universities Act 2012 section 42 provides a provision for establishing an Alumni Association to act as an interactive forum for the members and perform such other functions as may be specified in the Charter, such as fundraising, friend raising and industry-academic partnerships.

The University is developing a new, aggressive and pro-active process of fundraising and resources mobilization and/or marketing of the University. The University will establish the University of Nairobi Foundation to co-ordinate fund raising and receive donations and endowments. The Foundation will be administered by an independent and broad based Board of Trustees comprising persons in the private and public sectors for networking to raise funds for the University.

*Higher education is growing at an incredible speed. This is because of demand and because of the developments in the education sector. The University of Nairobi is seeking to strike a balance between quantity and quality.*

### Impact of the Endowment Funds

UON's endowment fund will generate money for scholarships, faculty chairs, programmes, and technology as well as other critical resources. Funds from the endowment are also vital because they reduce dependence on tuition and thus create a more financially sound institution. The maintenance of University of Nairobi excellence rests on a level of financial support that can only be gained through a robust endowment.

The Endowment Fund will help UON leverage its resources, attract exceptional students, and churn out graduates with a solid knowledge base and an expanded consciousness. Increased scholarship funding will enable the University to expand access university education by providing both need-based and merit-based assistance. An enriched endowment also helps to bring in additional graduate students, enabling UON to attract outstanding candidates for higher degrees. A healthy, growing endowment fund adds diversity to university's revenue streams and safeguards against future economic downturns.

### Administration of the Fund

The students eligible for scholarships should be financially needy and from diverse background. In addition, they should display the following attributes: Academic merit, creative accomplishment, unusual force of character, community Service and leadership. The University Advancement Office and University of Nairobi Foundation will raise support for the endowment fund.

The Foundation will be the entity through which private, charitable investments to the UoN will be made in pursuit of scholarship, research and common educational and societal goals. The mission of the UoN Foundation will be to promote higher education in general, and specifically encourage the advancement of teaching, research and community service through private support for the University of Nairobi's academic and student development endeavours.

The University of Nairobi Alumni Association will help foster a mutually beneficial, lifelong relationship between the UON and its alumni; inspire loyalty and pride among

current and future alumni; and advocate for excellence in teaching research and public service.

### Endowment Fundraising Targets

The goal is to raise Kshs. 1 Billion by 2016 for student support. Increasing the University's number of endowed scholarships and fellowships is critical to the achievement of this goal and ensuring UoN's ability to continue to attract high-performing students, offer a diverse learning community, and reduce the amount of debt students carry after graduation.

To achieve the goal of raising the Kshs. 1 billion endowment fund, the University will engage with various stakeholders; alumni, media, donors, partners, corporates, government and philanthropists.

The objective of the Endowment Fund Campaign is to ensure that no qualified student is ever turned away because of financial need, that UON continues to attract the best and brightest students and to enhance the image and reputation of the University.



Stakeholders at the launch of the UoN Endowment Fund.

# Performance Contracting Demystified

**M**ention performance contracting in the University and some staff start thinking of a complicated system that is driven by the top management, to keep them on their toes! Not entirely wrong, but the process is far from complicated. Those who have taken a keen interest in the performance contracting process have over time come to appreciate its usefulness as a management tool to monitor performance. Essentially, it is about delivery of results and is a "child" of Results-Based Management.

Introduced in Kenya in 2004, performance contracting was part of the broader public sector reforms, when the Government of Kenya launched the Economic Recovery Strategy (ERS) which was designed to turn around the economy of the

country. It was specifically designed to improve public sector performance, enhance service delivery and refocus governance. At that time, there was a perception (largely validated) that the performance of the public sector had consistently fallen below the expectations of the public.

The Government therefore introduced Results-Based Management as a deliberate policy in order to improve performance, service delivery and governance. It was to help focus attention and resources on the achievement of definite objectives and the targets prescribed by the Economic Recovery Strategy.

Results-Based Management (RBM) is a participatory and team-based management approach designed

to achieve defined results by improving, planning and programming management efficiency, effectiveness, accountability and transparency. The introduction and institutionalization of the RBM concept in the public service was aimed at focusing the public servants' mindset on results in service delivery to citizens. Therefore, the mantra, "*Huduma Bora ni Haki Yako*".

With the introduction of Results-Based Management, all public institutions were required to develop their own strategic plans, which would specify the institution's Vision, Mission and Core Values. The strategic plan also indicates the strategic objectives to be put in place to achieve the Vision and Mission, and the strategies to be laid out to implement the said objectives. At the core of the strategic plan is the



The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi signs his 2015/2016 Performance Contract as part of the process of cascading the Corporate Performance Contract. Looking on is the Chairman of Council, Dr. Idle Farah.



The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, Production and Extension, Prof. Lucy Irungu exchanges signed copy of her Division's performance contract with the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi. Looking on is the chairman of council Dr. Idle Farah.

implementation plan matrix, which specifies the various activities to be undertaken in the Plan period, which Office is responsible for what activity and the attendant costs. A typical strategic plan runs for 3 or 5 years, after which the organization may review its strategy depending on the prevailing circumstances

It is important to note that there is a direct connection between strategic planning and performance contracting. A performance contract, whose life span is one year, is the implementation tool for the strategic plan. It picks the performance targets for the specific year from the strategic plan and details the avenues for implementation. Typically, targets are picked from the strategic plan and cascaded to the relevant unit or section, with a requirement for quarterly monitoring.

A Performance Contract (PC) in the general understanding, is a freely negotiated agreement (freedom always comes with some limitations) between the Government, acting as the owner of an institution and the management of the institution. The main Performance Contract, therefore, is signed at the

corporate level and, to a large extent, the outcome reflects on the performance of individual managers. At the University of Nairobi, all Colleges and key Central Administration units are on Performance Contract with Management. Some Colleges have cascaded the process to their downstream units i.e. to the Faculties, Schools, Institutes and Departments.

**So what is the essence of performance contracting?**

At one time or another, those who have undertaken physical projects e.g. in the farm or building a structure have noted that if you leave your workers to work in an ad hoc manner, very little is achieved. There is a lot of time wasting and little regard for expenses.

However, if you cut the assignment into portions and allocate your workers specific parts with given time lines, you normally achieve your target faster and in most cases, relatively cheaper. Indeed, you are able to time your project to take a certain duration, depending on your available resources and the number of workers you are able to hire at any given time.

Similarly, with performance contracting, agencies that are on PC have noted as follows: that they are able to post improved performance; there is increased transparency in operations and utilization of resources; there is increased accountability for results; there is reduced confusion; there is a clear apportionment of responsibility for action; and most importantly, there is a decline in reliance on exchequer funding.

It is therefore important for all to remember the adage that "What gets measured gets done," for it is the one that drives performance contracting. It works in government, in the private sector and also for individuals.

Performance contracting is therefore not an essentially new concept per se, but an organized, documented approach to have institutions and individuals get defined targets for their core functions in a manner that is measurable.

Ultimately, it is about improved service delivery for our customers and stakeholders.

# Footprints in our transformation agenda

It seems only like yesterday, when Prof. Peter Mbithi was appointed the 7th Vice-Chancellor of the University of Nairobi. But already, close to one year has passed since he became the Vice-Chancellor on January 6, 2015. Within that period, a number of initiatives and activities have taken place, sustaining the position of UoN as the premier University in Kenya and the region.

In March, 2015, the University developed a Short Term Strategic Implementation Plan to help fast track the implementation of the 2013-2018 Strategic Plan. Key in the Vice-Chancellor's Transformation agenda, whose initiatives are captured in the short term plan, include: having a working and teaching environment that conforms to world class standards, working towards a new performance curve, adoption of experiential learning, enhancement of the University's visibility and brand image, enhancement of staff and students discipline and embracing efficiency, professionalism, innovation and creativity.

Earlier in the year, the University created the Advancement Office to help in fast tracking its transformation agenda, key issues in the agenda being the development of infrastructure to help the University achieve its mandate of teaching, learning and conducting quality research, construction of students' hostels through Private Public Partnership, improving the university image and global competitiveness and improving the working conditions of staff.

Management also approved the operationalization of the Centre for Self-sponsored Programmes (CESSP) to manage module II programmes and shifted this function from the University of Nairobi Enterprises and Services (UNES) Ltd, leaving UNES to pursue its core mandate of income generation.

The University also established a Comprehensive Security Programme that guarantees staff and students

a safe, secure environment that is conducive for learning, teaching and research in response to the changing faces of terrorism world-over. To help bright students from poor backgrounds attain higher education, the University has established an Endowment Fund. The overall plan is to give bright and needy students a chance to get University education and to develop future African Leaders through the "African Rising Stars Initiative".

Over the past one year, the University has performed exceptionally well and has been ranked 'Excellent' in the recent Performance Contract evaluation by the Department of Performance Contracting in the Ministry of Devolution and Planning.

The University of Nairobi attracts the best students in the country and in the region. In order to develop the students to exemplary human capital and astute leaders of this country, the University has embarked on a students' mentorship programme. Students will not only tap from the fountain of knowledge and the wisdom of its professors, but are also being mentored into global citizens. The mentorship programme has enabled students to conduct peaceful elections unlike in the past when student elections were riddled with chaos.

To boost staff morale, many have been promoted and their terms of service reviewed. This has enabled University staff to retain its best work with passion and give their best in terms of service delivery.

As the University strives to maintain world class status, deliberate efforts have been made towards increasing international linkages. The University has also attracted global leaders such as Prime Minister of Italy, H. E. Matteo Renzi who delivered a public lecture in Taifa Hall. World literary scholar Prof. Ngugi wa Thiong'o also inspired the University staff and students when he delivered a public lecture in Taifa Hall. Our own president, H. E. Uhuru Kenyatta has also had occasion to visit

the University. This goes to confirm that the University is indeed the preferred academic destination for global elite who have engaged staff and students.

In August 2015, the University organized the inaugural Innovation Week which attracted technology icons like Saul Singer, the author of: Start up Nation, the story of Israel technology development. The other key speaker alongside Saul Singer was Morris Langdon, who is famous for his riveting technology debates.

The Institute for Development Studies (IDS), whose Alumni have gone ahead and won several awards including two Nobel Laureates, organised 50 years celebrations on November 17 – 20, 2015 and several industry players, including Dr. Manu Chandaria, American Ambassador to Kenya, Bob Godec, Government officials and several leaders were in attendance. They challenged the young people to rise and take up their role in the development of the nation.

To scale the academic ladder and to increase access to University education to all Kenyans, the University has embarked on incorporating ICT in all its programmes. Several courses are being incorporated in ODeL programmes and the online campus is in the process of being launched. University operations have been automated as well. Recently, the Vice-Chancellor launched two IT systems to help in financial transactions of the University.

The Centre of Pedagogy and Andragogy (CEPA) was also launched to assist in helping the University teaching staff to enhance their delivery of lectures to include experiential learning and mentorship of students. Alongside CEPA, was the launch of Centre of Dry Lands Sustainability to help those living in the dry areas tackle the challenge of climate changes.

## University and RTI International to partner in health research

The University of Nairobi and RTI International will partner in health research. This was discussed in a meeting between the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Affairs, Prof Henry Mutoro and the President, RTI International, Dr E. Wayne Holden. Dr Holden noted that RTI has seen the potential of partnering with UoN in improving the education sector and is now looking to set up an initiative in health research. RTI is an independent, non-profit institute that provides research, development, and technical services to government and commercial clients worldwide.

While welcoming the initiative, Prof Mutoro said UoN is looking for strategic partnerships of mutual benefits. He noted that the University is seeking collaborations on research and student mentorship. The Director, University of Nairobi Institute of Tropical and Infectious Diseases (UNITID), Prof Walter Mwanda, noted that a partnership with RTI will address key areas in advancing training programmes geared towards management and control of tropical diseases. During the meeting, it was agreed that a memorandum of understanding will be drafted and signed for implementation.



Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC), Academic Affairs, Prof Henry Mutoro and the President, RTI International, Dr E. Wayne Holden.

The two organizations are already in a joint programme in early grade reading which has recorded significant impact in the country. In addition, a number of UoN academic staff have worked with RTI as consultants.

## UoN and University of Sistan hold talks



The Vice-Chancellor, University of Sistan and Baluchestan, Prof Dor Mohammed Kordi, and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Affairs, Prof Henry Mutoro during the meeting.

The University of Nairobi (UoN) and the University of Sistan and Baluchestan (USB), Iran, have entered into talks on possible collaboration. The Vice-Chancellor, USB Prof Dor Mohammed Kordi, visited UoN and was received by the Deputy

Vice-Chancellor (DVC), Academic Affairs, Prof Henry Mutoro and DVC, Research, Production and Extension, Prof Lucy Irungu.

Among the areas of collaboration explored include joint training of post-graduate students, exchange programmes for both staff and students and joint projects.

Prof Kordi noted that USB is keen on collaborating with UoN for mutual benefits. USB has engaged in collaborations in scientific research and co-educational programmes. He proposed that the two institutions can partner in programmes in technology, sciences and engineering.

Prof Irungu observed that UoN can benefit from USB's strengths in the sciences specifically biotechnology, nanotechnology and petroleum engineering. Prof Mutoro said the two universities will develop and sign a memorandum of understanding with specific areas of collaboration.

# Prime-K improves quality of medical education

The Partnership for Innovative Medical Education in Kenya (PRIME-K) has recorded improvement in the quality of medical education in Kenya. PRIME-K is a programme inaugurated by the University of Nairobi in 2010 in collaboration with the University of Washington and the University of Maryland Baltimore.

The programme allows students pursuing medicine to acquire hands-on clinical experiences using expert patients and simulation models. In addition, the faculty has been trained in clinical teaching, and new educational approaches have been rigorously evaluated to promote the most effective methods university-wide. In a meeting between UoN and a team from the

University of Washington, the Prime-K team highlighted the impact the programme has had in the medical field. The Prime-Kenya team consisted of Prof. James Machoki, Deputy Director, UNITID, Dr. Onesmus Gachuno, Director, PRIME-Kenya, Prof. Ruth Nduati, Department of Pediatrics and Child Health and Collins Owek, the Programme Manager.

The team said the programme has developed and implemented a decentralized, community-based programme that optimizes training of local medical doctors and specialists in primary care and preventive medicine around HIV/AIDS. As a result, 18 county hospitals, which are rotation sites for medical students, interns, and postgraduates, have benefitted from the medical training and mentorship.

This has recorded an improvement in service delivery, hands-on exposure and communication. Prime-Kenya will come to end in April 2016.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Student Affairs, Prof Isaac Mbeche, noted that the programme activities have improved the quality of the University's medical training and increased retention of UON faculty by providing opportunities for postgraduates and faculty to pursue clinical or applied research. Prof Mbeche was speaking on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research, Production and Extension, Prof Lucy Irungu, said the College of Health Sciences (CHS) is the highest contributor to the University's research portfolio.

She said the research division is working with CHS to train staff from other colleges on writing winning proposals for funding as well developing a Grants Management Information System.



Representatives from the University of Nairobi, University of Washington and University of Maryland Baltimore.

# UoN and University of Manitoba renew three-decade partnership

The University of Nairobi and the University of Manitoba (UM), Canada, have renewed their over 30-year partnership. The relationship was renewed during the signing of agreement ceremony between UoN Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi and UM President/Vice-Chancellor, Dr. David Barnard in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, on September 23, 2015.

The University of Manitoba has supported the University of Nairobi's Institute of Tropical and Infectious Diseases (UNITID) through collaborative research, training of PhDs and Masters Students in Canada and construction of state-of-art research centre at the College of Health Sciences (CHS). Manitoba has

supported the University of Nairobi with over CAD \$50 million (Kshs 4 Billion) for research and training and is currently running joint projects worth CAD \$12 million (Kshs 1 Billion).

The renewed agreement will see UNITID transformed into a regional Pan African Centre of Excellence in research, training and practice in infectious diseases with students drawn from across Africa and enhance trained programmes such as Programme/Implementation Science, Indigenous Health, Global Health, Biosafety and Bio-Security, among others.

There will also be more students (PhDs and Masters) going to Canada for training. The new MoU will also see

other departments from UoN such as School of Business, Agriculture, Physical and Biological Sciences, Education, Sports and Education, Pharmacy, Environment, Law and Engineering collaborating with the University of Manitoba in students and faculty exchange and research collaboration.

The ceremony was witnessed by Prof. Walter Mwanda, Director, UNITID, Prof. Fred Were, Dean, School of Medicine, Mr Johnson Kinyua, Director, Advancement, Mr Leonard Musyoka, Assistant Registrar, Performance Contract and Mr Peter Mwaura, Chief Executive Officer, Partners for Health and Development in Africa.







The Vice-Chancellor, Prof Peter Mbithi and Nairobi County Governor, Dr Evans Kidero, sign the memorandum of understanding.

## Medical students to benefit from UoN and Nairobi County collaboration

Students from the College of Health Sciences (CHS) will benefit from the partnership between the University of Nairobi and Nairobi County Government. According to the terms of the memorandum of understanding signed by the Vice-Chancellor, Prof Peter Mbithi and Nairobi County Governor, Dr Evans Kidero, the medical students will be attached to research projects in the county. Through the opportunities, the students will gain experience through practical training and research. Students will be attached

to the county's health facilities. Prof. Mbithi said the University will benefit from the county's resources, noting that already UoN and Nairobi County have been working together in different sectors.

Prof Mbithi said that through the partnership, medical research and clinical care related to infectious diseases will be conducted. Dr Kidero said the county government will ensure the objectives of the MoU are realized. He said the county will provide teaching and supervision

services to the students by qualified staff. It was discussed and agreed that a management committee comprising members from both parties to implement the agreed issues of the MoU will be constituted.

Present during the meeting was Prof Henry Mutoro, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Affairs, a team from the College of Health Sciences led by the Principal, Prof Isaac Kibwage and officials from the Nairobi County Government.

# VC urges new students to shun vices

The Vice-Chancellor Prof Peter Mbithi has challenged new students to build a future that they will all be proud of. He was speaking at the orientation ceremony for over 5,000 new students admitted at the University for the academic year 2016/2017.

Prof. Mbithi reminded the students that the University is a perfect opportunity to rise above the humble beginnings. He urged students to make the best out of their new found freedom and to shun activities that lead to loss of focus and dreams. "Choose to work hard and smart and a world of endless opportunities will unfold before thine eyes. Ultimately the choices you elect will make or break you. Choose today which masters you shall serve," he said.

Prof. Mbithi further reminded the students that it will not be an easy ride, but affirmed the University's commitment to ensure that the students are comfortable and attain their dreams at the end of it all. He also stressed the University's

firm commitment to the protection of the environment and urged the students to contribute in transforming the University to green and sustainable campuses. The VC asked the students to participate actively in club activities and professional associations in order to acquire leadership and personal skills, which are not attained through formal class or lessons but are drawn from interaction and acculturation of best practices.

"The time you will spend in the University will be important for each one of you in specific and personal ways, but overall, each one of you should experience growth in intellectual knowledge, personality, cultural enrichment, building personal friendships and career planning." He encouraged them to enjoy their time and experience in campus, by interacting with people from different parts of the world, instead of being cocooned in their respective disciplines because university education is a holistic experience. During the orientation,

the freshers were sensitized on the HIV/AIDS pandemic, drug abuse, and other aspects that are part of students' lifestyle. The students were urged by the administrators to concentrate on their studies and engage in positive extra-curricular activities.

The orientation week assists the students to settle down and adjust to the new life with ease. Some of the officials who addressed the students included the Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Registrars from Central Administration Divisions, Chief Security Officer, Director, Centre for International Programmes and Links, Director, Board of Common Undergraduate Courses, Director, Information Communication & Technology Centre, Director, Library and Information Sciences, Dean of Students, Special Students Advisor, Chief Medical Officer, Chief Legal Officer, Director, Students Welfare Authority, Managing Director, University of Nairobi Enterprises Services and SONU leaders.



First year students follow proceedings during the orientation ceremony.



The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi receives a cheque from Mr. Imran Rattansi of the Rattansi Educational Trust. Looking on is the Trust's Chairperson and Chancellor, UoN, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi.

# Needy students to benefit from Rattansi bursaries

The Rattansi Educational Trust has donated bursaries to support needy students in higher learning institutions. The donations were made by Mr. Imran Rattansi and the Trust's Chairperson, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi, in a function at the University of Nairobi, attended by representatives of public and private institutions of higher learning.

While issuing cheques to the institutions, Mr. Rattansi pledged that the Trust will continue supporting higher education in the country by financing the needy students as his father always said "Education is the path to enlightenment." He noted the importance of universities working with industry leaders to ensure that graduands receive holistic education.

He said that through this, students get opportunities to not only think for themselves but also make ethical choices in their lives. Mr. Rattansi

revealed that the Trust is in the process of setting up a monitoring and evaluation system that will enable them understand the needs of their students as well as interact with those who benefit from the Trust.

Many institutions of higher learning in Kenya receive bursaries for needy students from the Rattansi Educational Trust. The Trust aims at contributing to the development of the country through investing in young people and eradicating poverty by funding the education of needy students.

While receiving cheques on behalf of the University of Nairobi, the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi, thanked the Rattansi Educational Trust for the support it has been extending to higher learning institutions over the years. Prof. Mbithi noted that universities in Kenya are committed to offer education to as many people as possible.

# PSRI releases research findings on studies in Homa Bay County

The Population Studies and Research Institute (PSRI) disseminated findings of three studies on Homa Bay County. The research was on the Rusinga Demographic Surveillance System (DSS) Round 22, A Needs Assessment and Maternal Mortality reports undertaken as part of the 8th Government of Kenya and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) country programme.

The findings were released at a workshop organized by PSRI in partnership with the Homa Bay County Government, National Council for Population and Development (NCPD) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) at a data dissemination workshop in Homa Bay County.

PSRI Director, Prof Kimani Murungaru, said the research data had many potential applications on the county development, including planning for basic services such as education, health facilities, identifying the needs of the community as well as monitoring and evaluating the impact of development activities.

Prof Murungaru said the findings from Rusinga suggest a rapidly growing population which is yet to attain the desired standards of living although there have been positive changes. He also noted that the high population growth is because of the high fertility (on average women have 5 births) since use of contraceptives is not prevalent.

The Director observed that despite the challenges, there was notable improvement in the infrastructure, particularly roads and connection to the national grid as well as increased use of pit latrines and solar. The Homa Bay County Minister for Health, Dr Lawrence Oteng, enumerated the actions which the County



Participants follow proceedings during the PSRI Data dissemination workshop in Homa Bay County.

government was taking to reduce the maternal mortality, as identified in the Needs Assessment report. The actions include staffing, construction of the theatres in the sub-counties hospitals, improved referral system by providing ambulances to each sub-county, among others.

Dr Oteng observed that maternal and neonatal mortality were part of the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP). He said the County Family Planning Strategic Plan had been developed and the county was seeking resources. He also emphasized the importance of monitoring and evaluating the policies and projects as well as forging strategic partnerships with various stakeholders.

The minister lauded PSRI for supporting the county government through scientific studies and findings. Deputy Commissioner, Homa Bay County, Mr Daniel Lusava said various issues outlined during the workshop - including gender violence, lack

of adequate skilled staff and health facilities, negative cultural beliefs and poor infrastructure - need utmost attention to overcome. The UNFPA representative, Mr Ezekiel Ngure, observed that the recommendations from the Needs Assessment Report were incorporated in the current Annual Work-Plan (AWP) for 2015 while those from the other two reports, maternal mortality and Rusinga DSS, will be integrated in the AWP for 2016.

He noted that future planning will focus on the Sustainable Millennium Development Goals (SMDGs) following their recent endorsement by the UN General Assembly. Mr Nzomo Mulatya, the NCPD Director of Programmes, observed that the data dissemination was timely and would be useful in the planning of the 2016 8th GoK/UNFPA country programme. The workshop drew participants from National and County governments, UNFPA and NGOs working in Homa Bay County.



## Varsity launches online tool for measuring broadband quality

The University of Nairobi Computing for Development Lab (C4DLab) has launched M-Lab (Measurement Lab), an open and distributed online tool used to measure and monitor the utilization of internet bandwidth. M-Lab will enable internet users to get objective data on the speed and quality of broadband connections by conducting measurement tests on their computers or phones.

This will enhance internet transparency as well as enable internet users to compare performance of broadband. In addition, it will provide information that can be used to diagnose the performance of the connection. C4DLab's objective for M-Lab launch is to increase its use in Kenya as a resource for broadband data. Also, it will provide consumers and network operators with reliable data and demonstrate

to the communications regulator and policy makers the value of M-lab tools for Kenya's broadband ecosystem. Google is the sponsoring partner for M-Lab. Presiding over the launch on behalf of the Principal Secretary, Ministry of Information, Communications and Technology, Mr Joseph Tiampati, Dr. Kate Getao, said M-Lab will enhance transparency as well as expand infrastructure for delivery of bandwidth to the user.

Speaking on behalf of the Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Affairs, Prof Henry Mutoro noted that UoN management will support the successful running of MLAB. He reiterated the importance of strengthening partners noting that it is the linkages with partners that have contributed to building the University. M-Lab covers over 130

servers in the US, Europe, Australia and Parts of Africa. Presently M-Lab is the largest open measurement platform and data repository in the world, supporting research, policy and user empowerment.

Prof Okelo-Odongo, Director School of Computing and Informatics, Dr Tonny Omwansa, Prof Timothy Waema, School of Computing and Informatics and Chairman Management Board Kenya Education Network (KENET), Eng. Fancis Wangusi, Prof Meoli Kashorda CEO (KENET), Google NetLab Project Manager, Collins Ndukwe were among the guests at the M-Lab launch. Representatives from Communication Authority of Kenya (CAK), Strathmore University and Chuka University were also present.



Justice Prof. J.B. Ojwang', Judge of the Supreme Court of Kenya, makes a public presentation on his Doctor of Laws Thesis.

## Justice Ojwang' presents Doctor of Laws Thesis

Justice Prof. J.B. Ojwang', Judge of the Supreme Court of Kenya, made a public presentation on his Doctor of Laws Thesis. Titled "The Unity of the Constitution and the Common Law,"

Justice Ojwang' presented his research journey on his scholarly and judicial works for three decades.

This was the first public presentation for a Doctor of Laws at the University of Nairobi.

An evaluation panel led by the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi, took Justice Ojwang' through a rigorous

exercise that culminated in an oral public defense of his works. In his public presentation, Justice Ojwang' took the audience through the various thematic areas he has researched on.

He spoke on the constitution: the essence and depictions, the constitutional judicial process and common law, interpreting the judicial phase and the common law, the notion and reality in scholarship and court scene and the Judiciary as the last recourse in governance.

Justice Ojwang' gave examples of his contribution to the judicial process

saying that his work has underlined the enhanced intimacy of the Judiciary role and of the recognized practice of judges. He said it is a symbiosis of his common research work and work at the bench. He noted that the judiciary is the storehouse of humane values which the public yearns for.

Justice Ojwang' stated that the unity of the common law and constitution should be acknowledged and upheld.

# UoN Marks International Open Access Week 2015

The University of Nairobi joined the world in marking the International Open Access Week 2015 themed "Open for Collaboration." The 3-day event took place simultaneously in Main Campus, College of Biological and Physical Sciences (Chiromo) and Kenya Science Campus. Exhibitions showcasing Library services and to sensitize University stakeholders on Open Access were on display.

The occasion was graced by Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research Production and Extension, Prof. Lucy Irungu, who emphasized the importance of embracing Open Access Initiatives and strengthening collaboration globally

to maximize research and enhance advancement of scholarship. She noted that the Library is the "Heart of the University" and should strive to bring academic staff on board to enable them harness the vast knowledge present globally. Prof. Irungu urged the library to make good use of Social media to reach the students as it is the current mode of communication used by the young generation.

Open Access is a global initiative advocating for free, immediate, online access to the results of scholarly research. The University of Nairobi has been at the forefront in advocating for open access initiatives.



Prof. Lucy Irungu, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research, production and Extension visits the library stand at the Open Access Week. Looking on is Dr. Sophia Kaane, Director, Library and Information Services.

# Pictorial



1. Dr. Willy Mutunga, the Chief Justice of Kenya, Prof. Winnie Mitullah, the Director, Institute of Development Studies and Prof. Karuti Kanyinga, from the Institute, catch up during the IDS@50 Anniversary Conference.
2. A team from the University of Nairobi led by the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi, held discussions with the Ambassador of Norway to Kenya, Victor Conrad Ronneberg, on collaboration in the area of oil and gas exploration.
3. Participants drawn from the academia and media take a group photo during the workshop on 'Freedom of Media and Expression in the Digital Era' hosted by the School of Journalism. The workshop explored how people use digital media and spaces and their effects of society.





4. *International Reggae family the Morgan Heritage at the 'I've got 10 minutes....do you?' a Youth Enterprise Development Fund mentorship programme held at the University of Nairobi. The artists called on Kenyan youth to embrace entrepreneurship by staying focused on achieving their goals and career objectives.*
5. *Celebrating excellence: The University of Nairobi students and staff join the Chancellor, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi in celebrating the University's winnings at the Nairobi International Trade Fair 2015.*
6. *Micky Mwamuye, a master's student from the School of Biological Sciences receives the Young Researchers Award - 'Emerging Research Talent' in recognition for his Exceptional Research Abstract related to Emerging Infectious Disease.*

# Youth urged to uphold regional peace and development

The youth have been challenged to join discussion on building a sustainable culture of peace and security in the region. Prof Tade Aina, Chief Executive, Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGAR), said young people can play a significant role in creating a culture of sustainable peace, security and development. He made the remarks at the consultative meeting dubbed 'Youth for a Sustainable Culture of Peace and Security in the East African Region.'

Prof Aina highlighted the need to understand the environment in which youth exercise their energy to make certain choices, and come up with ways of meaningfully empowering and including them in the process of creating and sustaining a culture of peace. Prof Judith Bahemuka, UNESCO/ UNITWIN Chair, said universities are central to establishing a



Participants follow proceedings at the consultative meeting on "Youth for sustainable Culture of Peace and Security in the East African Region"

sustainable culture of peace in the region through research, innovative engagement and guided curiosity that instil knowledge and practice among their students to become effective and efficient change agents in their institutions, communities, and families.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic Affairs, Prof Henry Mutoro, said universities can bridge the gap between research, policy and practice and play an important role in ensuring the youth become an important resource for development, and critical factor for social change, political, and economic development. The issues

discussed include the UNESCO culture of peace, unpacking of Kenyan values, and the new narratives, peace and security in Kenyan universities, new approaches to peace and security, sharing of regional experiences and extremism and culture of peace. The two-day consultative meeting was organized by the University of Nairobi, UNESCO/ UNITWIN Chair, African Leadership Centre and UNESCO.

At the end of the consultative meeting a communique binding the partners to continue working towards a culture of peace and security in the region was developed.

## French envoy outlines collaborations with Kenya

The University of Nairobi hosted the Ambassador of France to Kenya, His Excellency Remi Marechaux, for a public lecture on September 25, 2015. The Ambassador made a presentation entitled "Kenya and France: Two Strategic Partners for the Future". Ambassador Marechaux gave a detailed presentation on the relationship between Kenya and France noting that the two countries share common interests. He divided that French government's interests in Kenya into three categories- security, economic growth and management of global challenges.

On matters security, the Ambassador said a state insecurity upsets many sectors on a growing economy. He noted that France is at the forefront in restoring peace and security in countries such as Somalia and South Sudan. On economic growth, the Ambassador said France has given Kenya

loans, through the France Development Agency, to the microfinance institutions that are then supposed to lend the funds and multiply resources. The two governments have also entered into agreements that have seen France fund infrastructural development in Kenya.

The Ambassador revealed that France is working with parastatals and the private sector, especially on resource management. On management of global challenges, Ambassador Marechaux highlighted the effects of climate change.

He encouraged students to apply for scholarships and take advantage of the exchange programmes available. As he concluded the lecture, the Ambassador tickled the audience when he gave a brief summary of his presentation in Kiswahili.



Ambassador of France to Kenya, His Excellency Remi Marechaux giving a public lecture at the University of Nairobi, on September 25, 2015.

# I gained lifetime experience at AIESEC

**O**n March 8, 2015, I took a 25-hour bus journey to Kigali, Rwanda, on an AIESEC Exchange programme. I did not anticipate how low the temperatures would get. I had to embrace the cold because trying to convince my friend to share his shuka with me rather than his girlfriend required a miracle.

On 9th March, I arrived in Kigali around lunch time and together with the four other exchange participants, we headed straight to meet our Rwandese hosts. I was surprised but comforted at the same time to see Nakumatt. The prices were double Nairobi prices.

A soda was retailing at 700 Francs (approximately Ksh.100) compared to Ksh.55 back at home. All the budgeting tips I had been given before my exchange were surely going to be

put to test. We were welcomed in the National AIESEC office residence for the six-week exchange programme.

The first week, I spent on a project known as 'Global Money Week', which was aimed at imparting financial literacy to students. The project involved taking students to various banks to be taught how to save. They also visited the Rwanda Stock Exchange to learn how the economy worked in the country.

I accompanied the President of AIESEC in Rwanda to the Ministry of Education and got to see how I gained lifetime experience at AIESEC keen the Rwandan government is on the youth. I was amazed to see student leaders offices within the ministry. I believe that this would be a good strategy for the Kenyan government to reduce students' riotous behaviour.

The next week we went to Musanze, where Busogo University was running an English-teaching project in the neighbouring high schools and health centres (Rwanda is Franco-phone). I really loved this place since it was upcountry and the cost of living is very low.

The people were very friendly and we interacted with the students even outside the classroom. I learnt a lot and my Kinyarwanda became surprisingly good. After one week of teaching English, I had to go back to Kigali.

Back in Kigali, I spent the remaining weeks on a micro-enterprise project. It involved boosting the entrepreneurial skills of Rwandese students and changing their mind-sets about self-employment. My first task was to draft proposals to get partners.

I had to make major decisions by myself, which improved my decision making skills. I got lost plenty of times since I had to go to new places all by myself. I had meetings trying to create new partnerships for the project and this greatly boosted my self-drive and professionalism. My efforts paid off when I got support from Kigali Independent University, Kigali Institute of Management and Techno-Serve as our learning partners.

How can I forget how much fun I had? I met some pretty cool Kenyans too had settled in Rwanda and made life-long connections. Learning about the Rwandan Genocide really moved me. I visited the Genocide memorials and saw first-hand the events that unfolded. It reminded me that life is more precious than your tribe.

The greatest virtues I learned were patience and resilience. Going for exchange is the best decision I have made yet and it gets you on a road to self-discovery like no other. So get out of your comfort zone, visit our AIESEC office and get the experience of your lifetime!!



Student members of AIESEC hold consultations on campus next to Taifa Hall.

## Red Cross UoN Chapter holds blood drive

The Kenya Red Cross UoN Chapter in collaboration with Pledge 25 and the Kenya National Blood Transfusion Service (KNBTS) held a three-day blood drive at the Main Campus and Chiromo Campus.

Volunteers from Chiromo Campus Christian Union mobilized friends and classmates as part of their Compassion Week, which reaches out to the less fortunate in the society.

UoN Chapter volunteers held the blood drive at the Great Court. The mobilization included donating blood



and encouraging friends, students and staff to donate while briefing them on the importance of the initiative and safety of the process. The exercise received a nod from University of Nairobi administration; including the

Vice Chancellor and Dean of Students, as it's a form of Corporate Social Responsibility that students get to engage in. Every 10 minutes in Kenya, someone needs a lifesaving blood transfusion.

## Lions Club of Kenya joins Chancellor in tree planting

The Lions Club of Kenya joined their President, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi, in planting over 2,000 trees at the College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences, Kanyariri grounds. Dr. Vijoo Rattansi, who is also the University of Nairobi Chancellor, was accompanied by the Vice-Chancellor Prof. Peter Mbithi in planting trees.

They also launched eight Campus Clubs which will serve the society in various sectors, such as health and environment. The clubs, which will be headed by the College Principals, will admit 20 students each and their membership fees will

be paid. Also present during the tree planting exercise were the Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Members of the Senate, Deans and Directors, Heads of Departments, Staff and Students. Tree planting, which is part of environment sustainability and taking care of the environment, is one of the key mandates of the University.

Together with the National Environmental Management Authority, the University is keen on environmental conservation and environment sustainability is one of the indicators in the University's Performance Contract. The University has planted over 30,000 trees.



University of Nairobi Chancellor, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi and the Vice-Chancellor Prof. Peter Mbithi during the tree planting initiative.

# Students to benefit from Barclays Bank's ReadyToWork Programme

The Barclays Bank of Kenya (BBK) launched the ReadyToWork programme at the University of Nairobi (UoN) to enhance the students' competitiveness. The programme is a free online platform that offers a curriculum for certificate courses in a range of people, work, entrepreneurial and money skills. Students are encouraged to log onto the portal <https://readytowork.barclays/> and register as members in order to benefit from the resources.

Presiding over the launch, Jeremy Awori, BBK Managing Director, said the ReadyToWork programme is in line with the bank's global citizenship strategy which aims to provide young people access to the skills and opportunities they need to find employment or venture into

business. Mr. Awori revealed that the bank has invested in programmes that have equipped the youth with financial literacy, employability and life skills.

Speaking on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Student Affairs, Prof. Isaac Mbeche welcomed the initiative noting that the programme is timely as it will equip students and graduates with crucial people and work skills.

Prof. Mbeche challenged the students to develop an intellectual and cultural curiosity both within their academic and professional disciplines and also across discipline boundaries. He urged them to develop problem solving work-ready skills as required in the dynamic

and changing world. In readiness for the work environment, Prof. Mbeche asked students to demonstrate cultural awareness, develop a global perspective and cultivate respect and tolerance.

The ReadyToWork curriculum was developed after research carried out across Africa to identify the gaps in employment and youth-owned businesses.

Prof. Bernard Njoroge, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Administration and Finance, Prof. Isaac Jumba, Principal, College of Education and External Studies, Prof. Peter Ngau, Ag. Principal, College of Architecture and Engineering, graced the event.



Jeremy Awori, Managing Director, Barclays Bank of Kenya, demonstrates how the ReadyToWork online portal works. Looking on is Prof. Isaac Mbeche, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Student Affairs and students from the University of Nairobi.



# UoN donates 14,400 books to primary schools in the City

The University of Nairobi has donated over 14,400 books to primary schools in Nairobi under the cross-age peer tutoring in the teaching of reading in Kenya project. This initiative is a joint programme with the University of York, United Kingdom, the University of Concordia, Canada, and the College of Education and External Studies (CEES) funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC).

The programme aims at helping pupils in lower primary schools enhance their reading skills. Ten schools in Nairobi and two in Machakos will benefit from the book donations. At the ceremony held in Kenya Science Campus, Jamhuri and Kilimani primary schools received books.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Affairs, Prof Henry Mutoro, encouraged the pupils to work hard in their studies and secure a place at the University. He said that a country with no youth has no future. Prof. Mutoro was speaking on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor.

According to the co-Investigator and Deputy Director, CEPA, Dr Justus Inyega, there are 24 book titles and each school will receive 50 copies of each title, making a total of 1,200 story books per school. With 12 schools in the pilot phase of the programme, over 14,400 books will be donated. Dr Inyega noted that books challenge the mind and stimulate imagination. Pilot schools provided with reading materials will use the books for

classes 3, 4, 5 and 6 pupils during the research project duration. The project is being implemented as collaboration between the three universities with Prof Frank Hardman, from University of York, as the Principal investigator.

In attendance were Dr Isaac Kipchirchir, Associate Dean, Dr Ursullah Okoth, Acting Associate Dean, School of Education, Timothy Maonga, Teaching Practice Coordinator, Dr Mari Nelson, Dr Hellen Inyega, and Dr Andrew R. Riechi, all from UoN. Also present were the head teacher of the Jamhuri Primary School and the deputy head teacher, Kilimani Primary School.



*Clients being served at the newly set up CHSS Huduma Centre.*

## College of Humanities and Social Sciences sets up Huduma Centre

The College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS) has rolled out the first ever Huduma Centre in the University of Nairobi. The CHSS Huduma Centre is a replica of the government's Huduma Centre and will serve as "one-stop-shop" for all college related services.

Located at the entrance of Education Building, CHSS Huduma Centre will enable staff, students and

other stakeholders to conveniently access college, faculty, schools and departmental services. The automated system is directly connected to various schools, departmental and faculty databases, making it easy to access records.

Some of the services offered include: Academic issues, procurement, finance, human resource/administration and general customer

service enquiries. Quality customer service is one of the core values in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences' 2013-2018 strategic plan. The college is targeting a customer satisfaction index of over 60%. Currently the customer satisfaction index stands at 55%. The CHSS Huduma Centre is expected to enhance the delivery of high quality customer service to all customers.

The concept of Integrated Service Delivery (ISD), a one-stop-shop, had not been utilized in the university before.

The College of Humanities and Social Sciences, the biggest college with a population of 60% of the entire student body in the university, leads other colleges in helping the University of Nairobi achieve its vision and mission.

# Thousands graduate at the 53rd ceremony

**5**,301 graduands were conferred and awarded with degrees and diplomas at the University of Nairobi's 53rd graduation ceremony by the Chancellor, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi. During the ceremony, Justice (Prof.) Jackton B. Ojwang, a judge of the Supreme Court of Kenya, was awarded a Doctor of Laws degree (LLD). The graduation featured graduands from the Colleges of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences, Architecture and Engineering, Biological and Physical Sciences and Education and External Studies.

While congratulating the graduates, Dr. Rattansi challenged them to make a difference in society. "You are equal to the task and any curve balls that the world may throw at you. All you need to do is try. You are today's stars, tomorrow's legends. You are our ambassadors for the future. Let it never be said that you did not play your part," she said. "I wish thee well, in all you aspire to do! In a world full of selfish interests, treachery and opportunities for corruption and ill gains, I advise you as the good book does: whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, meditate on these things."

Referring to the graduands as the 'the pioneer crop of graduands under the new administration,' Vice-Chancellor Prof. Peter Mbithi challenged them



University of Nairobi Chancellor, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi awards Justice (Prof.) Jackton B. Ojwang, a Doctor of Laws degree (LLD).

to gain industrial experience and come back in future as masters and PhD students to enhance their knowledge.

Prof. Mbithi said the University is expanding infrastructure and will soon break ground for several development projects. These include the construction of the Wangari Maathai Campus funded by the African Development Bank and the Government of Kenya to the tune of Kshs 700 million, the Confucius Institute building estimated to cost Kshs 1.2 billion and construction of hostel blocks to accommodate 5,000 students thereby addressing the shortage of fit-for-purpose student accommodation.

Prof. Mbithi was speaking at the first graduation ceremony after taking over as Vice-Chancellor. Wishing the graduands well as they embark on their career journey, the Chairman of Council, Dr. Idle Farah, congratulated the class of 2015, noting that graduation is the

culmination of a long and tortuous process. On administrative issues, Dr. Farah revealed that the Council has domesticated Mwongozo, which is the new code of governance for state corporations and that it is committed to managing and growing the University's resources. "We are satisfied that so far, the University management has been prudent in the use of these resources as well as in generating resources internally".

Ms. Fenny Mwakisha, Senior Deputy Director, Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology challenged universities to continuously review their academic programmes to fill the skills gap in the market.

She congratulated the University for offering quality programmes that are relevant to the everyday societal challenges. Ms. Mwakisha was speaking on behalf of the Cabinet Secretary for Education, Prof. Jacob Kaimenyi. The University congratulates the class of 2015.



# Valedictorian speaks out on campus life

## Tell us briefly about yourself

My name is Christine Nzilani Mbai. I'm 24 years old. I enrolled at the University of Nairobi to pursue the Bachelor of Architecture in October 2009.

## Why did you choose this course?

During my high school days at Alliance Girls' High School, I wanted to pursue Medicine. However, when the time to select the course to pursue at the University came, I had changed my mind and wanted to pursue either Architecture or Engineering, despite not having prior interactions with an Architect. It would be safe to say that I just liked the challenge at that point in time. As a primary school child (I am an ACK Wote Township Alumni), I had loved Art and Mathematics, which I think subconsciously played a role in me choosing Architecture over engineering. I'm glad I made that choice, because now, I cannot imagine being in any other field!

## What are the highlights of studying in the University of Nairobi?

Being able to interact with fellow students from other parts of the country and region was one of the perks of studying at UoN. However, architecture students spent most of the time at the ADD Building so most of my Campus experience is within those premises.

Particularly, field excursions organized by the Department of Architecture and Building Science proved to be eye-openers, for instance, trips to OI Donyo Sabuk, Voi, Taita Hills, Lamu Old Town via Mombasa and Malindi which exposed us to other facets of the built environment which we had not appreciated before. In addition, having the opportunity to engage in your area of interest for the Final year (6th year) was exciting, to say the least.

## What are some of the challenges you faced?

Finding housing on campus was and still is an obstacle. If one is lucky to find accommodation, the conditions in some halls of residence are discouraging. Getting funding for research and fieldwork activities was difficult, especially in the final year, with the provision being inadequate. Peer pressure and drug abuse are some of the greatest challenges to student life at the university today.

## How can some of these challenges be addressed?

With an increasing student population, the University of Nairobi will have to expand its facilities, from classrooms to theatres to studios to hostels, as the strain on the existing facilities is already being felt. Today, most institutions of higher learning in Kenya are expanding their facilities rapidly and in the process quality has been sacrificed.

As for the University of Nairobi, there is need to lead the way in the field of architecture in this era of global warming and climate change by developing cutting-edge, climate responsive buildings. The world over, some of the best buildings are to be found on university campuses and we at University of Nairobi should be no exception. I urge the university administration to ensure we are the foremost green architecture university on the African continent.

## What are some of the lessons that you learned?

The first take off is quality education which was my main agenda here. I learnt to develop budgets and live within my means. I strove to stand strong in the face of peer pressure, and most importantly to always aim highest.

## What challenge would you like to give to other students?

I can only advise them from what I found useful during my time at the University. Constantly challenge the mind and endeavour to explore new areas of

knowledge. Each of you has endless opportunities to develop yourselves. Manage your time well and keep off drugs. Be strong in the face of peer pressure. Learn to live within a humble budget. Appreciate and learn from the past, but, importantly, make good use of the opportunities you have today.

## What are your plans after graduation?

First and foremost is to join the market that we (fresh graduates) have been preparing for and put in practice what I have learnt over the past 6 years. I believe we (and fellow graduates) stand well equipped having been through the best university in Kenya to offer our services as well as learn from the practitioners, working towards registration by the professional bodies. Equally important is to further my education, make time for family and see the rest of the world. I hope to mentor young scholars, preferably through teaching if and when the opportunity arises.

## Your last word?

We must never give up at the first sight of defeat. Let us always seek to rise above the ordinary. We are good enough, smart enough, well prepared and toughened by comrade-life for the world out there. Let us not lose sight of what we aspire to be. Let us choose to be motivated, not manipulated. Let us choose to be useful, not used. Let us choose to be productive, not languish in despair. Our youth and our knowledge is our power. Let us embrace it and move our nation forward!



# UoN students develop a networking website

Two University of Nairobi (UoN) students have developed a new platform that connects like-minded people across the world depending on their interests. Sidney Rema, a 3rd year Medical student and Phelix Juma, also a 3rd year Engineering student at UoN, are the brains behind the site called VoSpine. They say more than 1500 users across various professional, social and educational levels have already joined the platform, barely a month after it was launched.

Users join particular channels and share their knowledge and experiences with other people across the world. VoSpine already has a team of 17 Developers and Channel Managers who are all students at UoN. Their aim is to ensure users get information that is most relevant to them as opposed to other networking sites where users sometimes are exposed to contents that they consider inappropriate. This highlights VoSpine's mission to avail users a great environment to learn by engaging in productive interactions that can grow them in their various fields of experience.

"VoSpine is a networking site that is aimed at ensuring only relevant content reaches the relevant people. At times we, are irked by the posts we see from other users on social sites. For instance, a friend may post content on fashion and if you have no particular interest in fashion, you'll find this inappropriate. This is because it has been directed to the wrong audience.

However, if we create a community where you only associate with people with whom you share common interest, then you can be sure that your posts are targeted to the right audience," says Sidney Rema, VoSpine's team leader. VoSpine seeks to make the interaction of users on networking sites more productive. "Prominent people have already joined the platform, including Equity Bank CEO Dr. James Mwangi, and Pepe Minambo, a renowned international motivational speaker. We are targeting to connect more than 50,000 likeminded people



Sidney Rema, a 3rd year Medical student and Phelix Juma, also a 3rd year Engineering student at UoN, are the brains behind the site called VoSpine.

across the world by the end of this year," says Danstan Wanyonyi, VoSpine's Brand & Marketing Director, also 3rd Yr Engineering student at UoN.

### How VoSpine works

On signing up on VoSpine, a user is required to join channels of his/her interest to start experiencing VoSpine. Be it an interest in business, fashion, health, technology or even religions, VoSpine has a home for everyone.

There are two main categories of channels namely: General Channels and Scholar Channels. Scholar channels mainly encompass students and other scholars in particular fields. Within these channels, the scholars have a good environment where they can share their experiences with fellow scholars across the world. According to Juma, who is also a team leader at VoSpine, scholar channels have been created to group various scholars according to the courses they pursue.

However, General Channels are open to everyone, irrespective of their professional or educational fields. All information sharing is done within channels and so without joining channels, there really won't be an interaction for any user," says Anaklet Koros, Product manager, 3rd year Actuarial student at UoN. Information within channels is public and visible to all VoSpine users, however, non-members can only read while members can read as well as add posts and comments. Since users can have many different interests, they are

allowed to join as many channels as they like. A part from just sharing information on the site, a user also has access to unlimited relevant content in form of news items, opportunities, and upcoming events i.e. summits and symposiums within the respective channels.

### Association between users

VoSpine users relate as Associates if they are on same professional or education level and Mentors/Mentees if they are on different levels. Unlike on other networking sites, where users are not grouped and can post anything anywhere, it is mandatory for VoSpine users to join channels that suit them best. This aims to ensure a user only accesses information that is relevant to them. Besides sharing information only into the relevant channels, private information and discussions between users can be done in private chat rooms.

### Accessing the platform

The VoSpine website can be accessed through [www.vospine.com](http://www.vospine.com) on all browsers except opera mini which is almost done. The team is also working on VoSpine's mobile app set to launched soon. "As at now, our priority is getting more and more users onboard. We already have a few prominent people as mentors for some of the channels like business, health and fashion. However, we are experiencing a few challenges in form of funding and as VoSpine grows, we need more expertise to handle the management and development of both the site and mobile" says Rema.



Baringo Governor Benjamin Cheboi and Ag. Principal, CAVS, Prof. Charles Mulei, during the launch of the El Nino Animal Preparedness Campaign in Baringo.

## University backs Animal Disaster Preparedness Campaign in Baringo

The University of Nairobi, through the College of Veterinary Sciences, collaborated with the Directorate of Veterinary Services, County Government of Baringo and World Animal Protection, in running a 14-day El Nino Animal Preparedness

Campaign in Baringo. The campaign was officially launched by the Baringo County Governor Benjamin Chesire Cheboi to help animal owners prepare for floods and diseases caused by the El Nino phenomenon.

The Governor applauded the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and World Animal Protection for their participation in the initiative. He urged the University to expand its collaboration with the County to include research and training in the animal resource sector.

The college's acting Principal, Prof. Charles Mulei, noted that the campaign is part Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). He said the University is committed to offering community based research to underpin its commitment to excellence within its CSR pillars.

The campaign entails public service messaging and advice, veterinary treatment and deworming, mass vaccination campaigns against Rift Valley Fever (RVF) for cattle, sheep and goats, and rabies for dogs. These activities will build the immunity of the animals and prepare them to better survive the El Nino disaster.

Being the only institution offering Animal Disaster Management courses in Africa, the University of Nairobi's Faculty of Veterinary Sciences' support will be key in managing and mitigating animal disasters during El Nino in Kenya.

The University's collaborations with World Animal Protection offer vast exposure in the field of disaster management to the students and faculty.

# Prof Joseph Malo gives a public lecture on creation versus evolution



Prof. Joseph Malo from Department of Physics gives a public lecture on Creation vs evolution.

Eminent Professor of Physics, Prof. Joseph Malo, gave a public lecture on one of the most intriguing questions in physics today, the origin of mass. Prof. Malo's lecture was titled Creation versus Evolution. He highlighted that science and religion do indeed appreciate and recognize not only the beauty and magnificence of the universe but also desire to discover what is behind this grandeur.

In his lecture held on October 15, 2015, Prof. Malo noted that it is naive for a scientist to conclude that the existence of God is impossible because God cannot be observed or experimented.

He highlighted that current research in Physics focuses on the understanding of how galaxies form in the Big Bang theory, Physics at the earliest instant of time and reconciling observation and basic theory as well as extrapolation of the Universe backward in time using general relativity. "The basic theory predicts that at an instant time in the past we came face to face with infinity in terms of extreme densities, temperatures and pressures," explained Prof. Malo. "Thus without any credible evidence

associated with the earliest instant of the expansion with very extreme physical conditions, the Big Bang theory cannot and does not provide any explanation for such initial conditions. It rather describes and explains the general evolution of the universe after that instant," Prof. Malo said. He noted that there is profound mystery in science in explaining the creation of the universe. Prof. Malo

pointed out that there is a concept of creation that leads to the existence of the Supreme Being- God. Present during the public lecture was the President of the Atheists in Kenya, Mr. Harrison Mumia. The atheists' president welcomed the discussion and proposed incorporation of additional religions in the comparison study between creation and evolution.



Students listen to Prof. J. Malo during a public lecture on Creation vs Evolution.

# Glowing tributes as IDS Marks

50<sup>th</sup>  
Anniversary

The Institute for Development Studies (IDS), University of Nairobi, celebrated its 50th Anniversary with a series of activities beginning with a UNEP public lecture on 29th October and culminating in a three-day conference between 18th November to 20th November 2015. It was an historic moment for the Institute, which was established in 1965, as it basked in the unique history of being older than the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS), where it is housed, and even the University of Nairobi itself.

Top university management paid glowing tributes to IDS, which has carved a niche as the premier research institute. In his message, the University of Nairobi Vice Chancellor, Prof Peter Mbithi observed that IDS is not only a global pioneer of development studies but also a front runner of the premier higher learning institution in Africa, the University of Nairobi. "Over the years IDS has engaged with development issues and made a name for itself, to the extent that those not conversant with the organizational structure of the University of Nairobi assume that the Institute is an autonomous entity, and not part of the University. This assumption is a demonstration of the University of Nairobi's strength in building institutions of excellence and promoting knowledge generation and learning in almost every sector and area of development," said the VC.

He said IDS is one of UON's flagships in the area of development research, with national, regional and global outreach and networks. He singled out the 1972 ILO study on Employment and Incomes, which made the concept of Informal Sector a popular and a global concept.

In his tribute, the CHSS Principal Prof Enos Njeru said that besides being mother of the College, IDS is mother of the Institute



The Institute for Development Studies (IDS) celebrated its 50th anniversary in November 2015.

of Anthropology Gender and African Studies (IAGAS) and of the College's most recent but very important entity, the Centre for Advanced Studies in Environmental Law and Policy (CASELAP).

He pointed out that besides its regional and global outreach, the Institute is a household name to many industries and sectors in Kenya. Academics from the Institute have been members of many government and non-governmental committees, taskforces, commissions and expert teams assisting to shape policy and practice for effective development.

The IDS Director Prof Winnie Mitullah paid glowing tribute to her predecessors, many of them still at IDS. She said having researchers of excellence remain in an institute for decades has been a deliberate policy of the University of Nairobi and the Institute. "At the University level, the staff development policy produced more than half of IDS staff, including myself.

Over the years we have come to realize that those produced through this policy tend to have unlimited attachment to UoN and the Institute," Prof Mitullah said. She observed that as the world begins to embrace the post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals and the African Union's Agenda 2063, which prioritizes unity, prosperity and peace, the IDS@50 celebration allowed the Institute to look back and learn from past lessons.

"This is a tall order which no single institution can undertake on its own. It is what justified the Institute's decision to organize a celebration around the theme of Rethinking Development and Development Studies in the Post-2015 Era. This framework enables local, regional and international stakeholders to speak directly to the need to rethink development, a need which has convergence of almost all stakeholders," she observed.

The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research Production & Extension) Prof Lucy Irungu observed that over the years, IDS has fulfilled the UON goal of promoting research, production, and extension work. This has made the University research outputs be recognized in the region for their relevance and impact. The DVC said one of the functions of RPE Division is to nurture partnerships with industry and other institutions so as to maximize the benefits of research outcomes. She applauded the remarkable contribution of IDS in this area.

"I am also filled with pride to see the impact IDS continues to make within the University of Nairobi and our society in general. Of particular significance among the achievements of IDS is the development of social research skills in young scholars who are the backbone of research and practice and the future of our nation," said Prof Irungu.

# Varsity hosts Extensive Livestock Expo

The inaugural Extensive Livestock Expo officially kicked off at the University of Nairobi's College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences (CAVS). Themed, "Herding for the Markets", farmers were urged to put more effort in producing the best yields for the market. At the opening forum, stakeholders discussed ways of increasing livestock outputs and access to markets.

The Expo aimed at improving the potential of farmers, convert existing research into action and engage, policy makers to understand the needs of the farmers. Speaking at the expo, the Chief Guest, the Principal Secretary, State Department of Fisheries, Prof. Micheni

Ntiba, noted that livestock play an important economic and social cultural role among the pastoralist communities and that there is need to improve on this. Some of the challenges facing farmers in accessing the markets include poor breeds, nutrition, public health concerns, inputs and poor road infrastructure.

The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter M. F. Mbithi, noted that mandate of the University is to embody the aspiration of the Kenyan people and to dispel the ivory tower myth. He said the Expo offered researchers a chance to do just that. The expo also gave the University a chance to create linkages with industry. He said research helps in improving the quality

and quantity of livestock production. Paul Wanyaga, CEO, Kenya Markets Trust, said agriculture has the same potential to contribute 12 percent to the GDP. He challenged policy makers to develop the sector. More than 10 million Kenyans directly depend on livestock for their livelihood. The multiplier effect will affect those in the transport, inputs and processors.

The Expo partners include KCB Foundation, the Government of Kenya, Kenya Markets Trust and SNV Kenya. The expo that ran from November 4 to 6, 2015 brought together researchers, exhibitors and livestock farmers.



The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi and the Principal Secretary, State Department of Fisheries, Prof. Micheni Ntiba at the Expo.



A participant contributes to the discussion during the symposium.

## UoN, KNH hold symposium on alcoholism

The University of Nairobi's College of Health Sciences (CHS) and Kenyatta National Hospital (KNH) held a symposium to address alcoholism menace in the country. The symposium, Responding to the National Alcoholism Crisis, was held on September 11, 2015 at Lecture Theatre III.

The event brought together scholars, medical practitioners, senior government officials and a section of members of public to help come up with ways to curb the menace with support from National Transport and Safety Authority (NTSA).

NTSA Director General Francis Meja delivered a keynote address during the event. He urged scholars and medics to come up with behavior change methods to curb the habit of

drunken drivers in Kenya. He said most of the accidents recorded by NTSA are caused by young people who speed after taking alcohol. He called for the adoption of a behavior change approach to address the issue of drunk drivers. He called on passengers in public service vehicles to report drunk drivers.

CHS Principal Prof. Isaac Kibwage was represented at the event by Prof. Wangari Kuria, the Chair of the Department of Psychiatry at CHS.

Prof. Kuria called on medics to help the government fight alcoholism in the country, after President Uhuru Kenyatta ordered a crackdown on illicit brew. She challenged fathers to take up parental roles, to help address the menace, which she said has seen the boy child suffer.

She said there should be a community based treatment for alcohol addicts, if indeed the government wants to get rid of alcoholism in Kenya.

The KNH CEO Lily Koros said there is need to review the way drug addicts are dealt with. She said there is an urgent need to address alcohol and drug abuses which pose a great challenge to the Kenyan economy, adding that those affected should be helped to reform. She revealed that KNH management had come up with a policy to help address alcoholism and drug abuse among KNH staff.

Other presenters at the symposium were Prof. Amayo from the Department of Clinical Medicine, Prof. Bhatt, Dr. Oketch-Helu, a consultant psychiatrist, and Dr. Knut Hovda.



The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi and Giorgio Triaietti from SACE Group during the meeting.

# University and SACE discuss modern dairy farming

The University of Nairobi (UoN) has entered into discussions with the SACE Group on implementing an integrated dairy chain. SACE is an Italian export credit agency whose mission is to help organizations develop business and investments.

In Kenya, SACE is seeking partnerships with universities to set up modern dairy farms. Already, the company is putting up the pilot project of modern dairy farm in Moi University.

Besides producing dairy and meat products, the modern farms will also produce energy from biogas and solar. According to Giorgio Triaietti from SACE, the Government of Kenya is committed to the SACE initiative in the country and the Italian Government is keen on financing the projects.

While welcoming the initiative, the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi, said UoN is seeking to venture into partnerships that will enhance the quality of teaching and research. He noted that the University is in talks with other Italian organizations and the government on partnerships and collaborations.

It was discussed and agreed that a team from both sides will develop a project for implementation.

Present during the meeting were Prof. Charles Mulei, Acting Principal, College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences, Prof. John Kimenju, Dean Faculty of Agriculture, Dr. Fr Dominic Wamugunda, Dean of Students and Mr Johnson Kinyua, Director, University Advancement.



# Centre for Pedagogy and Dryland Institute established

The University of Nairobi (UoN) has established the Centre for Pedagogy and Andragogy (CEPA) and the African Dryland Institute for Sustainability (ADIS).

CEPA will train the academic staff on the development of academic programmes and establish sustained faculty training on pedagogy and andragogy. The training will address sensitive issues in teaching and research. CEPA will be based at the College of Education and External Studies.

On the other hand, ADIS will play a unique role in addressing dryland issues. The Institute will focus on supporting dryland communities so that they can adapt to the many changes affecting their sustainability.

ADIS is a partnership between UoN and Colorado State University that is supported by the United

States Agency for International Development (USAID) through Higher Education for Development initiative. The Institute will be at the College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences.

While presiding over the launch, Vice-Chancellor Prof. Peter Mbithi noted that the two institutes will address key issues in the society. Prof. Mbithi said pedagogy is critical to the quality of graduates the university produces. The Vice-Chancellor noted that ADIS activities will reinvigorate the University's Kibwezi Farm.

Prof. Henry Mutoro, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Affairs, Prof. Isaac Jumba, Principal, College of Education and External Studies, Prof. Charles Mulei, Acting Principal, College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences, Prof. Patrick Digolo, Director, CEPA and Prof. Jesse Njoka, Acting Director, ADIS, were present during the occasion.



University of Nairobi officials applaud during the launch of CEFA.



His Excellency, President Uhuru Kenyatta presents a trophy to the Chancellor, University of Nairobi, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi. The University scooped first position in the best institution of higher learning category at the Nairobi International Trade Fair.

## University maintains excellent performance at trade fair

The University of Nairobi took top positions in various categories at the 2015 Nairobi International Trade Fair. The University was ranked first in the best institution of higher

learning in developing and advancing technology and the best engineering based institution of higher learning. The University was ranked second in the best university stand, best stand embracing information technology and communication systems and the best stand demonstrating the application of environmental quality standards.

UoN was also ranked third best stand in research development. In addition, the University won prizes in the farm and animal produce categories.

The innovations on display included a robotic arm that sorts out ripe fruits, a multiple extractor for oils and food flavours, washable handmade reusable sanitary towels dubbed-UYEG Pad, a mkokoteni stall, a project

promoting urban farming dubbed Urban Roots, as well as displays on youth activities, empowerment and capacity building, corporate social responsibility and community initiatives.

The annual event accords the University a platform to share information with stakeholders, among them potential students, parents and the general public on its programme and services, and its role in promoting food security and national development.

The University displayed research innovations, food crops and farm animals in line with this year's trade fair theme- 'Enhancing Technology in Agriculture and Industry for Food Security and National Growth.'

# Plans underway to construct Confucius Institute

Plans are underway to build the Confucius Institute at the University of Nairobi following a discussion between the University of Nairobi Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi, and a delegation from the Chinese Government. The meeting

was held at the Vice-Chancellor's Committee Room on 24th October, 2015. Mrs. Ai Yuiyang, from the Chinese Ministry of Commerce, who is in charge of China Aid Projects – construction and monitoring - noted that the Confucius Institute will be the first of its kind in Africa and a demonstration of the true partnership with the Chinese government. A leading design company has been selected to work on the project, alongside a delegation of 10 experts from China.

A Memorandum of Understanding will be signed to help Kenya and China and the two institutions work together on the iconic project. Speaking during the meeting, the Vice-Chancellor noted that the University of Nairobi and the Chinese people have had good working relations, including the establishment

of the Confucius Institute, award of scholarships, and the staff and students exchange programmes. Other development projects done in collaboration with China include the construction of the iconic University of Nairobi Towers, which is being constructed by China Wu Yi. Prof. Mbithi assured the guests that the government will be very cooperative in handling finance and immigration issues should such cases arise.

It was also agreed that before construction work commencement, the main utilities like water and power supply will be available at the site. These will be facilitated by the Estates Manager and Construction Manager. Development of infrastructure is one of the transformation agenda of the Vice-Chancellor and it will help the University achieve its mandate of teaching, learning and research.



Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi presents a gift to Mrs. Ai Yuiyang, from Chinese Ministry of Commerce during the discussions on construction of Confucius Institute at the University of Nairobi.

# University sensitizes staff to combat corruption

As part of efforts to mainstream the fight against corruption, the University of Nairobi (UoN) and the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) organized a three-day annual refresher training for corruption prevention committees and integrity assurance officers.

The training focused on specific deliverables to combat corruption and unethical practices in the University. Participants were sensitized on the obligations of state and public officers under the Leadership and Integrity Act 2012, governance, corruption prevention tools and strategies in the public service, corruption detection, investigation and reporting and promotion of positive organizational culture free from corruption.

In the keynote presentation the Director, Preventive Services, EACC, Mr. Vincent Okong'o, noted that corruption is the main obstacle to the realization of good governance. He said that corruption stifles development, leads to higher taxation, increases poverty, compromises equality and affects a country's competitiveness in the global market.

Okong'o noted that adverse effects have made governments put more efforts in the fight against corruption. To this end, EACC is mandated to combat and prevent corruption and economic crime in Kenya through law



Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi addressing participants at the staff training on corruption at the Central Catering Unit

enforcement, preventive measures, public education and promotion of standards and practices of integrity, ethics and anti-corruption. Okong'o said that public education remains critical in eradicating corruption and that the Commission holds frequent sensitization forums in different organizations.

Okong'o noted that UoN is making significant steps towards the fight against corruption by organizing such forums. He challenged the University management to adhere to good governance, integrity and guidelines for corruption prevention.

He also called on the University to promote an ethical culture of high standards by ensuring accountability of gifts presented to the University through gift registers alongside a conflict of interest register.

Speaking on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Student Affairs, Prof. Isaac Mbeche, said the University is focused on zero tolerance to corruption by ensuring that all staff are vetted.

The process which began with the Central Prevention Committee members will cascade to teaching members of staff and administrative staff.

Prof. Mbeche revealed that the University has made major strides towards achieving this goal by putting in place the anti-corruption framework comprising of 10 committees, developing an anti-corruption policy, vetting members of the central corruption prevention committee, among others.

Prof. Bernard Njoroge, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Administration and Finance, said the University has been institutionalizing corruption prevention mainly through submission of quarterly progress monitoring reports to EACC, publishing of an annual evaluation report and preparing reports on training of staff on integrity, ethics and anti-corruption.



# UoN Management revamps sports teams and facilities

The University of Nairobi has relaunched its rugby team (Mean Machine) and basketball teams, Terrorists (men) and Dynamites (women). Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi, said the University relaunched the two teams for improved performance in leagues and tournaments. He said the University is renovating and revamping sports facilities, replenishing the kits and equipment and mobilizing resources to support the teams.

The Vice-Chancellor said plans are underway for the University to award scholarships to outstanding

players and increase partnership with corporates and give the teams global exposure. Aggressive recruitment of new players and coaches is currently underway.

During the ceremony, the team members interacted with the University management. Supplier of sports equipment in Kenya, Prime Wood, donated trophies and balls.

The relaunch will see the University enhance ownership and support for the two teams and make great strides in the sporting world.





*Miss F. Okwemba, the only woman lecturer at the Correspondence Course Unit at Kikuyu talks to students of the School of Journalism about the organization of the Unit's Library (University Bulletin, November 1970). Miss Okwemba, in later years Florida Karani, rose to become a professor of the University and served as the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Affairs (1994-2004). She is still serving as a professor in the Department of Educational Studies, College of Education and External Studies.*



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