



AnthroNews

About AAKe

The Anthropological Association of Kenya (AAKe) is a professional association of anthropologists engaging in anthropological work as reflected in the specialized domains of anthropology.



2022 - The Committee that formed AAKe takes interim leadership and hires first member of staff.

2022 - First annual general elections held in March where the Association Constitution is adopted and new officials elected.

History of AAKe

The idea of an association was conceived when the alumni and staff of the Institute of Anthropology, Gender and African Studies (IAGAS), University of Nairobi saw the need for a national body of anthropologists. Although there were associations in different universities, alumni groups, and social media groups, a nationally representative formal body was lacking. There was need for an association to advance anthropology as a science and a profession in Kenya. In early 2020, a group of anthropologists initiated the process of formal registration of the Association under the Societies Act with the IAGAS as its interim headquarters.

2012-2022

2012 - Idea to form AAKe discussed in PAA meeting.

2018 - A group of IAGAS alumni form a committee.

2020 - A new committee convened by Prof. Onyango-Ouma, a constitution drafted and the association officially registered starting with 11 paid up members.

KEY EVENTS

Over the period of 2021-2022 AAKe has successfully organized and planned events that have actively engaged its members. These events have included:

- Webinars involving both international and national speakers as well as its members.
- Annual lectures successfully held in December 2021 and 2022.
- Annual General Meeting successfully held in March 2022 in hybrid mode where elections were equally held.



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AAKe Membership

The association has grown through the support of its members and membership fees contribution. In 2021 the association had only 11 members who were both the founding members. Since its official launch, its membership has grown to 135 paying members, with 400 members having expressed interest to join the association. Special mention to these committee members who helped found and brought AAKE up from the ground and set up governance structures.



W. Onyango-Ouma



Edna Bosire



Fernandos Ongolly



Ruth Mwikali



Benson Mulemi



Alex Muriithi



Bernard Moseti



Jentrix Sakwa



Rosepetal Akoth

The Secretariat

With a small secretariat, the association would not have been functional administratively without one member of staff who worked with us on part-time basis. Special thanks go to Monica Wanjiru for her service to the association.

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This bulletin serves to inform our members about AAKE's activities, recent trends in anthropology, and to celebrate and showcase our members' progress.



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Current AAKe Officials 2022/23

Following the first AGM of AAKe the following officials were elected:



W. Onyango-Ouma
Chairperson

He is one of the founding members of the association and the first serving chairperson of AAKe. He has over 15 years of experience in research and teaching anthropology at the University of Nairobi.



Olivia Otuoma
Vice Chairperson

She is a Programme Specialist at Gertrude's Hospital Foundation, incharge of Coordinating and managing all subject programs.



Fernandos Ongolly
Secretary General

He is a founding member of AAKe and the first secretary general of the association. He currently works at the Irish Universities Association under Euraxess Ireland as he pursues his PhD at the Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School at University College Dublin.



Mariam Yusuf
Assistant Secretary

She is currently a Doctoral student at the University of Nairobi in collaboration with Oslo University, Norway and also a part time lecturer at IAGAS.



Lusigi Kariuki
Treasurer

Lusigi Kariuki has a BA in Anthropology and experience in Banking sector, private sector and the Civil Service.



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Anthropologists in Leadership & Governance

George Natembeya was elected the governor of Trans Nzoia County in the August 2022 general elections. He holds a Masters Degree in anthropology and Bachelors of Arts in Anthropology from University of Nairobi. As a governor of Trans Nzoia County, Mr. Natembeya has a 10 point-agenda that he intends to implement during his tenure. Some of the points include: proper land settlement and physical planning, Empower youths, bodabodas, elderly and other vulnerable groups and promotion of sports, culture, music and performance.



Prior to becoming governor, Natembeya served in the provincial administration for 25 years during which time, he was hailed as an astute leader. This followed his efforts to restore peace in conflict ridden regions of north and south rift. The former Rift Valley Regional Commissioner is on record admitting that his leadership was not without challenges – some which persist until today in some parts of Rift Valley. He championed women rights, urging them to take up leadership opportunities in order to contribute to public affairs. AAKE wishes him the best of luck in his tour of duty.

Hon. George Natembeya

Penina Malonza, who unsuccessfully contested for the Kitui Woman Representative 2022, was recently appointed as a Cabinet Secretary for Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage. Malonza, is a politician who has served in various dockets both in public and private sector. She holds a Masters Degree in Project Planning and Management and a Bachelors of Arts in Anthropology from the University of Nairobi.

Her exemplary performance across organizations led to her being awarded the Order of Grand Warrior (OGW) in 2015. Malonza is the first cabinet secretary to be appointed from Kitui South constituency since independence.

Her success will be defined by the way she revives the tourism industry which was greatly affected by the Covid 2020 pandemic.



Hon. Pamela Malonza

We congratulate her as a woman in leadership and wish her the very best in her tour of duty.



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News from Academia

Anthropology at University of Nairobi

The University of Nairobi houses the Institute of Anthropology, Gender & African Studies (formerly Institute of African Studies and now incorporating the Department of Anthropology, Gender & African Studies) which is the pioneer training Institute for anthropologists in Kenya. From the Institute located within the compound of the National Museums of Kenya, Anthropology spread to other Universities in Kenya. The Institute remains a vibrant training and research centre in Kenya and beyond. For instance, in 2022, a total of 107 new students joined the Institute's programmes including Bachelors (66), Masters (25) and PhD (15). The student population is not limited to Kenya and includes international countries like Uganda, Tanzania, DRC, Ethiopia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Denmark and Germany. Similarly in 2022, a total of 103 students graduated with various degrees including Bachelor's (92), Masters (10) and PhD (1).



Anthropology Fresher's and staff at UON in 2022

The Institute's research portfolio continues to grow and the Institute currently has 8 active research grants. Among these include the NORAD funded Medical and Environmental Anthropology for East Africa in the 21st-century (AnthEM) project which is a collaboration between departments of anthropology and related disciplines at four East African universities - the Universities of Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, Makerere and Maseno University - two leading East African medical research institutes - NIMR and KEMRI - and the University of Oslo's Department of Social Anthropology and Institute of Health and Society.

In terms of research output the Institute's staff published 20 articles in peer reviewed journals in 2022. Prof W. Onyango-Ouma is the current head of the Institute.



Students and Staff at the Institute's offices



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Anthropology at Moi University

The Anthropology programme in Moi University is domiciled in the Department of Sociology, Psychology and Anthropology. Pioneered in the early 1990's by the late renowned anthropologist, Professor Joshua Akong'a, the programme started alongside that of Sociology; and, with a then skeletal staff, it undertook to teach purely undergraduate courses. It has since broadened and now offers substantive Masters and Doctorate degrees. Undergraduate courses are anchored on three main pillars; the social, physical and medical trajectories of Anthropology.

At the postgraduate level, the programme has, for the last few years, attracted a number of students from within the African continent through initiatives that are centred on student and staff mobilities. The Intra-Africa Academic Mobility Scheme (AMAS) project is one such example. Not only has the Anthropology programme received international students through this scheme, but also graduates from the Moi University programme have been enabled by the project to get international exposure through studying outside the country. Mobility-based projects have also been instrumental in awarding fellowships to programme staff for experiences in universities outside Kenya.



In April 2022 the Programme, through Prof. Bernard Sorre, organized an international workshop under the Moi University African Cluster Centre of the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence on the theme "Decolonizing Anthropology for Contemporary African Studies". Members of staff are also involved in various research projects. An ongoing research project on Material Culture in the North Rift of Kenya has the potential of generating new knowledge on peoples' identities through (im)mobilities of objects. Dr. Donald Wandere is the current coordinator of the Anthropology Programme.



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Anthropology at Maseno University

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology has been in existence since 1999. Initially, the Department offered a degree course in Sociology alone but BA in Anthropology was introduced in 2006. In the first and second year, undergraduate students pursue sociology and anthropology courses combined. In the third and fourth year the students specialize in either sociology or anthropology. The department offers Masters of Arts (MA) and PhD in Anthropology by coursework and research. Although the numbers of undergraduate students have been fluctuating, currently, there are approximately 20 BA students in their year three and four. However, there has been a steady rise in postgraduate enrolment. Currently, there are 14 MA and 6 PhD students as well as 2 Staff members on Postdoctoral fellowships in collaboration with the Centre for Advancement of Scholarship, University of Pretoria.



Anthropology in Maseno attracts local and international collaborations for groundbreaking research. The Department is currently collaborating in a project known as Anthropology of Environment and Medicine in East Africa (AnthEM) funded by NORAD through Norwegian program for capacity development in High Education and Research for Development (NORHED II). The project aims to strengthen Research and Training in East African universities, particularly the PhD and Master's training. Through this collaboration, the Department is currently launching Master of Arts in Medical Anthropology, a new postgraduate opportunity in the wider area of social anthropology.

The department has also been collaborating with Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO) in a World Bank funded project, Kenya Climate Smart Agriculture (KCSAP), focusing on Gender mainstreaming and Social Inclusion in the adoption of technologies. The department also partnered with Ipas Africa Alliance on an intervention project on Sexual and Reproductive Health among adolescents and youth in Kenya. Dr Charles Olang'o is the current head of the department.



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Anthropology at South Eastern Kenya University

South Eastern Kenya University has six (6) Schools, one of them being the School of Humanities and Social Sciences where the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Community Development is domiciled. Students pursuing Bachelor of Arts specialize in their third year either in Sociology and Anthropology, or in a combination of any two of the following disciplines, English, Literature, Kiswahili, Geography, History and Religious studies. A significant number of students specialize in Sociology and Anthropology, and this provides them with a strong foundation to further in any one of the two at postgraduate level. Currently, the department is in the process of developing Master of Arts program in Anthropology in order to meet the demands of the students who have graduated in Bachelor of Arts with Sociology and Anthropology combination.



Anthropology at Pwani University

Pwani University started offering Bachelors of Arts in Anthropology degree during the 2020-2021 academic year. The first cohort of anthropology students are now in 3rd year and are expected to graduate with BA Anthropology in 2023. Dr. Dan Adino was recruited by Pwani University in 2022 as a lecturer and appointed the thematic head of Anthropology program which is domiciled in the Department of Social Sciences.



Anthropology at Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA)

Anthropology at CUEA is domiciled in the Department of Social Sciences and Development Studies (SSDS). Students in SSDS can pursue a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy and one of the following subject areas: Sociology, Political Science, Economics and Anthropology. Students in the department are taught both core and elective units in Anthropology as part of the Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy degree course. With some training in Anthropology, the students in the Department of SSDS can apply theory and methods across different work spaces for more meaningful contribution towards sustainable development.

Dr Mariah Ngutu was appointed as a lecturer in anthropology at CUEA in 2022





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News from the field

Anthropologists under water



Anthropologists are venturing into unique careers, and one such anthropologist is **Jentrix Chochi**. The post-graduate student at Nelson Mandela University in South Africa is currently undertaking studies in ocean cultures and heritages.

The exploration of ocean cultures and heritage involves studying coastal communities living along the coastlines; this is important in documenting those people's daily lives. In her study, Chochi documents Lamu people's cultural heritages – both tangible and intangible. She also explores underwater or maritime cultural heritage studies. The practice involves surveying, documenting, excavating and undertaking photogrammetry of underwater materials. To excel in the practice, Chochi says, one requires basic knowledge of terrestrial archaeology in order to navigate the complex underwater ecologies.

The training in terrestrial archaeology involves understanding how to apply the skills under water. Later on, one advances in other skills of diving and also communicating whilst under water. "The work of studying maritime resources calls for one spending their time in water," says Chochi. In her quest to improve her skills, she has had to undergo multiple trainings from different experts in the field.

Although the discipline is not offered in local universities, she observes, it has the potential to offer people knowledge on the maritime/underwater resources; information on the communities living along the coastlines and their conservation technologies; the area can also be critical in understanding conservation personnel involved in the preservation of coastal cultures and heritages.

"What makes maritime archaeology unique is its focus on the underwater resources. Whereas the other forms of archaeology deal with things found on land, maritime work delves into the aspects of life that is not easily accessible and require a great deal of work away from land to reach them," she notes.

Maritime archaeology was not her initial training. Rather, it is an area she developed interest after graduating with a degree in anthropology from the University of Nairobi. A trailblazer in a male-dominated field, Chochi challenges local anthropologists to take interest in the area in order to advance research among coastal communities, and especially maritime technologies and resources which might remain unattended for a long time.



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Featured Articles

Campus Students's side hustles in a 'Nation of Hustlers'



Tom Ondicho, an Associate Professor at IAGAS, made a presentation about African youth potential at the Institute of Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa's (ILCAA), Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Japan. The presentation was delivered on November 13, 2022, virtually in a seminar of the joint research project on Global Youth Dynamics and 'reality' negotiation in Eastern Africa. The participants comprised Afrocentric Japanese scholars and postgraduate students, and their collaborators in Kenya and Uganda.

The presentation was entitled 'Virtual learning as an opportunity for the youth to side hustle: The case of Students at the University of Nairobi, Kenya'.

Based on interactions and conversations with his students in Anthropology, Prof Ondicho made a number of observations:

- While the word hustler has negative connotations, in Kenya it appears to be used in a positive sense. It has gained traction since 2018 when the President of the Republic of Kenya, Dr William Ruto (then Deputy president), used the phrase 'hustler nation' in a speech and later in his presidential campaign to appeal to the ordinary citizens struggling daily to make ends meet to support his presidential bid.
- President Ruto has many times described his regime as "a government of the hustlers, by the hustlers and for the hustlers". The 'Hustler nation' has subsequently become a rallying point for a socio-political movement based on the conviction that through daily hustle, anyone can achieve their dream.
- Kenyans are increasingly being encouraged to engage in any income-generating activity because 'every hustle matters' and can enable even a vegetable vendor (mama mboga) to rise to own a supermarket. A KShs 50 billion 'Hustler Fund' has been set aside, with effect from December 1, 2022, to provide cheaper credit for 'hustlers' either to boost or start micro and small businesses.
- In the same spirit, some university students have moved to take advantage of the flexible hours of study offered by remote learning to start their side hustles as a survival strategy. As a result, university students in Kenya are engaged in a myriad of 'side hustles'- income-generating activities undertaken alongside one's main occupation as a pathway to financial independence and progress.



Graphics credit: UNASA

- Side hustling has enabled some students to earn some income, learn new entrepreneurial skills, enhance their capacity to manage time and set priorities, and gain financial autonomy, reducing dependence on 'sponsors' for upkeep.
- The session included a discussion of how side-hustles are empowering students economically, socially, and psychologically and thus enhancing their capacities and reducing their vulnerabilities.
- See <http://www.aa.tufs.ac.jp/en/projects/jrp/jrp272> for more information on the joint research project on Global Youth Dynamics and 'reality' negotiation in Eastern Africa.



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New Appointments



Prof Isaac Nyamongo: Appointed the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic, Co-operative Development, Research, and Innovation at The Co-operative University of Kenya. He was previously the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Co-operative Development, Research and Innovation at the same institution. Prof Nyamongo, a former Director of IAGAS, holds a PhD in Anthropology from the University of Florida, USA.



Ms Lucy Nyaga : Appointed the Country Director, Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM) Kenya. She provides overall leadership of the LSTM office and programmes in Kenya. Lucy has extensive experience in programmes development, implementation and management in the East and Southern African region. She holds a master's degree in Medical Anthropology from IAGAS.



Dr Dan Adino: Appointed by *ICIPE* as a Social Risk Management Capacity Strengthening Expert for Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund (RSIF). RSIF is an initiative of AU and offers full scholarship to Doctoral and Post-doctoral students drawn from 15 Universities in the Continent. The program is supported by financing from World Bank, Respective African governments and the Government of Korea. Dr Adino holds a PhD in Anthropology from IAGAS.



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New Appointments



Prof Benson Mulemi: Co-opted in the Editorial Board for the Research and publication Project on Healing and Politics in Modern African History, hosted at the Department of History, University of Oulu, Finland. He is also the East Africa representative for the Medical and Health Humanities Africa Network. Prof Mulemi holds an MA in Medical Anthropology from IAGAS and a PhD in Anthropology from the University of Amsterdam.



Prof Erick Otieno Nyambedha: Appointed the Acting Deputy Vice Chancellor for Partnership, Research and Innovations at Maseno University. Prof Nyambedha was previously the Chairman of Sociology and Anthropology Department. He holds BA and MA in Anthropology from IAGAS and a PhD in Anthropology from the University of Copenhagen, Denmark.



Mr Bernard Moseti: Appointed as Director of Strategy and Partnerships in Care Kenya International. He has also worked for OXFAM International as Program MEAL Manager as well as Field Program Associate for International Development Law Organization. Moseti holds a BA in Anthropology and MA in Development Studies from the University of Nairobi.



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International Webinars

The AAKE continues to hold a series of international webinars to keep its members abreast with current debates and practice within the discipline. Two webinars were held in 2022.



May 31, 2022: "Decolonizing anthropological knowledge production: Community-based participatory research, ethnography, and tacit knowledge in Kenya",
Speaker: Dr. Matthew Thomann, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, University of Maryland, College Park in USA.



June, 13, 2022: "Engaging in the practice of Other Anthropologies": The historiography of Anthropology in the US with reference to questions of decolonization and liberation Anthropology",
Speaker: Prof. Alex Otieno, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice and Associate Dean, College of Arts and Sciences at Arcadia University, USA.

AAKe Annual Lectures

The annual lectures are held every year on topical and current issues that have influenced the practice of anthropology in the calendar year. So far the Association has held two annual lectures:



December 20, 2021: The Inaugural Annual Lecture - "Anthropology and Covid-19: The Syndemic Lens"
Speaker: Dr. Edna Bosire, Postdoctoral Researcher for Blantyre Prevention Strategy, Centre for Innovation in Global Health, Georgetown University, USA and College of Medicine, University of Malawi.



December 19, 2022: The Second Annual Lecture - "Deconstructing Development in the Context of Culture, Society and the African Renaissance".
Speaker: Prof. Dr. Benard Mworri Sorre, Associate Professor of Cultural and Applied Anthropology, Department of Sociology, Psychology and Anthropology, Moi University, Kenya.



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Other news

Professor Isaac Nyamongo wins Global Co-operative Award

Professor Isaac Nyamongo won the prestigious International Cooperative Champion Award for 2022 in October. Professor Nyamongo is the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic, Cooperative Development, Research and Innovation) at the Cooperative University of Kenya. He is the first Kenyan to receive the award after being nominated by Global Communities, a member of the United States Overseas Cooperative Development Council (OCDC).

The award was established by the US OCDC to recognize individuals who have made notable contributions to promoting and defending effective, sustainable international cooperative development in low-income and emerging economies.

Prof Nyamongo was recognized for his regular contribution to cooperatives in the Daily Nation. The opinion pieces have generated interest of cooperatives and their members across the country.



Graphics credit: The Cooperative University of Kenya

Meetings Attended by AAKE members

1. Prof W. Onyango-Ouma & Prof Erick Nyambedha: Attended the Medical and Environmental Anthropology for East Africa in the 21st-century (AnthEM) project joint opening workshop for partners and PhD students, Zanzibar, 3rd -7th ,October, 2022.
2. Prof. Salome Bukachi: Attended World One Health Congress in Geneva on 2nd – 6th May 2022; the international annual feminist economic conference in Geneva from the 27th June 2022 to 3rd July 2022.
3. Prof Owuor Olungah: Attended the CARTA Training of Trainers (ToT) for Academic Professionals and Administrative Staff (APAS) Workshop 6th-10th June 2022 at Makerere University, Uganda.
4. Ms. Anne Achieng': Attended the 2022 Reproductive Health Network Kenya Scientific Conference in Mombasa and the 2022 ICFP conference in Pattaya City, Thailand.
5. Ms. Jane Shirima: Attended the 2022 Reproductive Health Network Kenya Scientific Conference in Mombasa.
6. Dr. Edna Bosire and Mr. Fernandos Ongolly presented a poster during the AIDS 2022 International conference, held in Montreal Canada (July 29-2nd Aug)



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Career Progression by AAKe Members

Since the inception of our association, its members have continued to advance in their careers - in and beyond Anthropology - thanks to the mentorship within AAKe. AAKe takes this chance to congratulate all its members who have advanced in one way or another.



1. Ms Mariam Yusuf completed a Master's in Cultural Anthropology and Development Studies at Katholieke Universiteit, Leuven, Belgium in 2021 and won a Norad funded scholarship to start a PhD in Anthropology at IAGAS in 2021.

2. Ms Sharon Otieno completed a Master's in Cultural Anthropology and Development Studies at Katholieke Universiteit, Leuven, Belgium in 2021 and won a Norad scholarship to start a PhD in Anthropology at IAGAS in 2022.

3. Mr Kennedy Opande is in the last year of his PhD studies at IAGAS and is expected to graduate in 2023.

4. Mr Fernandos Ongolly is in the third year of his PhD in Business at the Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School in University College Dublin and is expected to graduate in 2024.

5. Mr Alex Muriithi won a Norad scholarship to start a PhD in Anthropology at University of Oslo, Norway in 2021.

6. Mr Kevin Kamolloh won a Norad scholarship to start a PhD in Anthropology at IAGAS in 2022.

6. Mr Edwin Ameso completed his PhD in Anthropology at Aarhus University, Denmark and started a Postdoc at University of Leipzig in Germany.



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Becoming a Member

You can join the association in the following membership categories:

a. Ordinary Member, b. Student Member and c. Associate member.

Check this out at www.anthrokenya.org/membership

CLICK THIS LINK TO EXPRESS YOUR INTEREST TO BECOME A MEMBER

<https://forms.gle/VNyLMRSgYnSPMujS6>

Alternatively send an email to us through: **association@anthrokenya.org**





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