

# Jarida la KNATCOM

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United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Kenya National  
Commission for UNESCO  
(KNATCOM)

*Promoting peace, sustainable development  
and intellectual collaboration*

A publication of the Kenya National Commission for UNESCO (KNATCOM)



## KNATCOM engages with Stakeholders

Inside this Issue:

Embracing  
geotourism

Universities role  
in SDGs

The Youth  
agenda

Kenya's seat at  
global stage

# From the Secretary General's Desk



We at the Kenya National Commission for UNESCO (KNATCOM) take pride in releasing yet another informative and colourful edition of our journal sharing information and knowledge that we have gathered in our course of duty.

Kenya's decision to join UNESCO was motivated by the desire to promote its Educational, Scientific, Cultural, and Communication and Information, by tapping into experiences of the international communities.

As a Commission, our mission still remains that of mobilizing local institutions to promote peace and sustainable development as well as to activate international networks within UNESCO.

As always this magazine remains one of the most profound ways of reaching out to our stakeholders.

Talking of stakeholders, the Commission held the fourth Stakeholders Forum in late March and early April.

Firstly, we take cognizance of the immense contribution of stakeholders in past forums, which has helped the Commission to achieve its current milestones. It is because of the expertise and knowledge harnessed from past stakeholders forums that the Commission continues to grow by leaps and bounds.

During the Fourth Stakeholders Forum, there were many deliberations on UNESCO's specialized organs and networks and how they can be fully utilized in the country's effort to implement SDGs and our developmental blue print, Vision 2030.

The SDGs are a bold commitment of all people in all countries to transform the world. Kenya's adoption of SDGs, among other UN Countries, and in addition to its blue print, the Vision 2030, demands that more than ever before, the country should mobilize all citizenry and activate international networks to successfully realize her national and global agenda by the target dates.

In this edition we have a rich menu of activities and engagements that we have had with partners and stakeholders as we pursue peace and sustainable development as the overarching human pursuits of the Kenyan people.

*Enjoy the read*

**Dr Evangeline Njoka, MBS**  
*Secretary General / Chief Executive Officer*  
**Kenya National Commission for UNESCO**  
**(KNATCOM)**

## What's Inside

KNATCOM, MKU Partnership	3	Celebrating Kenya's World Heritage sites	21
Clean Ocean pivotal for People, Planet & Posterity	4	Youth urged to show up and step up	24
Role of varsities in SDGs realization	6	Cultural heritage & sustainable development	26
KNATCOM engages with stakeholders	8	Conserving the sacred Kaya forests	28
Promoting sustainable development through geotourism	11	Kenya to sit at global committee	33
Girls pathway to science & engineering	14	In support of UoN UNESCO/UNTWIN chair	35
Tackling pertinent issues in high schools	17	KNATCOM hosts Education ADG	36

*Jarida is a Swahili word for Newsletter*

# KNATCOM, Mt Kenya University Partnership

By Mary Kang'ethe

**K**enya National Commission for UNESCO and Mt Kenya University have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

The two institutions agreed to work collaboratively in the areas of; Youth empowerment, Information Communication Technology (ICT), science and technology promotion for sustainable development, Peace and security, environmental sustenance, research ,monitoring and evaluation.

At the signing ceremony Kenya National Commission for UNESCO was represented by Secretary General, Dr. Evangeline Njoka, who signed MOU with the MKU Vice Chancellor Prof. Stanley Waudo.

The MOU's initiative will mainly be achieved through exchange of staff and sharing of other resources and capacity development.

During the signing of the MOU the Secretary General, KNATCOM expressed her appreciation of the partnership with MKU. She took cognizance of the fact that the commission had worked with the University on other programmes including: the Setting up of a UNITWIN/UNESCO Chair of ICT in Education in Nakuru Campus and launch of Students' Training Entrepreneurial Programme (STEP).

The Commission embraces partnerships with both the public and private universities and has implemented various programmes towards improvement of higher education towards addressing societal challenges and needs.



*The KNATCOM Secretary General Dr Evangeline Njoka signs an MOU with Mount Kenya University Vice Chancellor Prof. Stanley Waudo.*

In May 2016 the Commission worked with the Mount Kenya University in the hosting of the international Conference on peace, Security and Social enterprise held in Nairobi.

Other initiatives that MKU has executed with the Commission are participation of students in UNESCO Youth activities and conferences, Digital Literacy for inmates in Naivasha maximum prison programme, conference co-hosting and MKU Faculty participation in KNATCOM Programmes and Expert Committees.

She stated that the signing of MOU signified a formal strategic collaboration and partnership between MKU and KNATCOM and KNATCOM was keen to see to it that the MOU was fully operationalized.

On the other hand the Vice Chancellor of MKU recognized the collaboration and partnership that has been ongoing between MKU and KNATCOM. He pledged commitment to the implementation of the MOU as this would help expand and enhance the programmes in the University.

*The writer is a deputy director at KNATCOM's Education Programme*



## Clean ocean pivotal for people, planet and prosperity

By Dr. Evangeline Njoka

The world marks the World Ocean Day, commemorated annually on June 8<sup>th</sup> under the auspices of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Oceans covers about 71 per cent of the earth's surface. Interestingly, 70 per cent of our human bodies is made up of water, so importance of water as a sustainer of life cannot be over emphasized.

The ocean waters are critical to humanity in a number of ways.

Oceans provide livelihood to a significant number of the global human population. Around one billion people (15 per cent) rely on marine ecosystem for their primary source of protein. It's down to this fundamental importance of ocean to humanity; that necessitated the international community to promote conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas and marine resource as one of the iconic Sustainable

Development Goals, under goal number 14 'Life below water'.

Blacktip sharks in the lagoon of Moorea, French Polynesia. [PHOTO: Gregory Lecoeur/ UN ]

Kenya has a 640 km long coast line in addition to a substantial marine exclusive economic zone. If properly conserved and utilized, this significant resource could be instrumental in poverty reduction, improved food security and increase job opportunities. Currently, Kenya's fishery sector contributes about 4.7 per cent of the country's GDP. The period 2021-2030 has been proposed to be named UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development; and current global emphasis on blue economy can position Kenya to benefit from the goodwill and international collaborations.

Oceans are also the largest biospheric reserve of carbon and it plays a central role in the global carbon cycle. Ocean absorbs half of the carbon dioxide generated through human activity. Carbon dioxide is the main

greenhouse gas responsible for climate change. The COP 21, popularly known as Paris Climate Agreement recognized the role of ocean as a climate regulator both as carbon pump and heat store.

Ocean acidification and warming poses a serious challenge to climate change mitigation measures and adaptability. Marine ecosystem is delicate and with parameters such as pH and salinity maintained at optimum by a natural buffer, any upset to that presents a great hazards to the biodiversity. This will undoubtedly have a far reaching effect on our climate and food systems. The currently experienced average global temperature rise is already producing a vicious cycle on the marine ecosystem. The increased ocean temperature not only reduces the ability of the ocean to absorb carbon dioxide, but also the combination of temperature rise and ocean acidity dissolves the thin layers of carbonate that forms the coral reefs releasing more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

Besides containing some of the most diverse ecosystem on the planet; coral reefs are the lifeline of the marine and the coastal ecosystems. Coral reef protects coastlines from the damaging effects of wave action and tropical storms; provide habitats and shelter for many marine lives. Corals are also the main source of nitrogen and other essential nutrients for marine food chains and also help in carbon and nitrogen fixing with nutrient recycling.

For long it has been assumed that ocean is resilient and tamper proof to the impacts of human activity. Globally less than two per cent of ocean is protected; this leaves

a vast proportion of the marine ecosystem to natural resource exploitation and in most cases overexploitation. Currently, oceans are under intensive pressure both from anthropogenic and non-anthropogenic factors.

Human activities have adversely affected and degraded over 40 per cent of oceans and making oceans incapable of performing its role as a climate regulator and food provider to the bulk of humanity. Over fishing and use of wrong fishing techniques has depleted fish stock and caused destruction to habitat and upset the marine life balance. We have treated oceans as dump sites with infinite capacity for chemical waste, industrial effluents and plastics disposal. These are all major threats to marine life and by extension human food security. It is in this light, that the recent government ban on plastic bags is a welcome relief.

Regional frameworks such as the Nairobi Convention, a partnership between governments, civil society and the private sector, working towards a prosperous Western Indian Ocean Region, with healthy rivers, coasts and oceans provide joint platforms for unified efforts towards sustainable use of marine resources.

A clean and healthy ocean will translate into a healthy and a prosperous people, these calls for concerted effort from all to ensure marine and coastal ecosystem conservation and sustainable use of ocean resources so as to fully harness the benefits of blue economy.

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*Dr Njoka, MBS, is the Secretary General / CEO of Kenya National Commission for UNESCO*

# Role of varsities in SDGs realization

By Nancy Wachira

In September 2015 Heads of State and Government across the world agreed to set the world on a path towards sustainable development through the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

This agenda includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which set out quantitative objectives across the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development all to be achieved by 2030. The goals provide a framework for shared action “for people, planet and prosperity,” to be implemented by “all countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership.”

bring an end to extreme poverty, promote prosperity and well-being for all, protect the environment and address climate change, and encourage good governance and peace and security.

Universities are expected to play very specific roles in promoting sustainable development through their traditional functions of teaching, research and knowledge dissemination, there is a growing consensus that our current paradigms are inadequate for addressing the long term needs of a sustainable future. As such, it is then necessary for universities to fill the gaps by updating strategies and procedures to accommodate the resilience

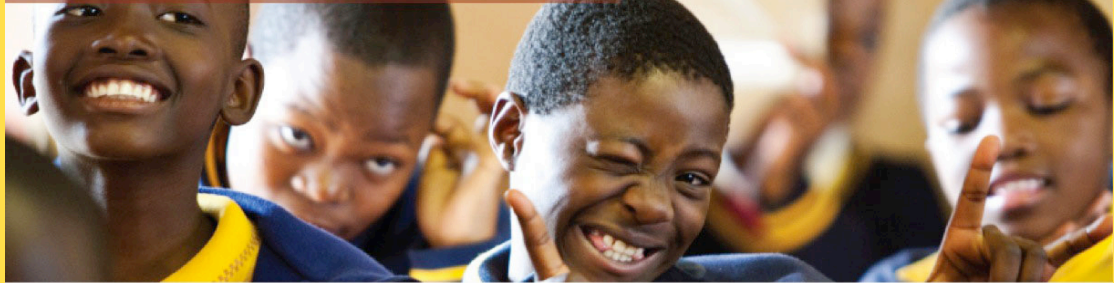


As articulated in the 2030 Agenda, “never before have world leaders pledged common action and endeavour across such a broad and universal policy agenda.” The 169 targets accompany the 17 goals and set out quantitative and qualitative objectives for the next 15 years. These targets are “global in nature and universally applicable, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities.” The Sustainable Development Goals aim to

required to progressively adapt to changing physical, historical and social conditions in order to play an active role in shaping a more sustainable future. They have a responsibility of taking care of the society and getting rid of the all the hurdles in the way of sustainable socioeconomic development. Higher education is key to the development of knowledge-based societies.

The Kenya National Commission for UNESCO (KNATCOM) through its Education programme carried out a capacity building

# GOAL 4



ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY  
EDUCATION AND PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

More at [sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgsproposal](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgsproposal)

workshop on the role of Universities in the realization of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The objectives of the workshop included; sensitize Universities role of in the realization of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); assess integration of Targets of Sustainable Development Goals into Universities curricula; create synergy and strengthen communication, coordination and collaboration among Universities who have been conducting their activities on SDGs; and mitigate gaps in accessibility to latest information and knowledge on SDGs.

The workshop targeted public and private Universities in Kenya and was officially opened by Prof. Collette Suda, PhD, FKNAS, CBS, Principal Secretary, University Education, Ministry of Education representing Dr. Fred Matiang'i, EGH,

Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education. The expected outcomes of the workshop were Universities to identify their leading roles in the realization of SDGs; Strategies to effectively achieve SDGs; Identify Challenges Universities may face in effecting SDGs and possible solutions; and Identify partnerships between Ministry of Education, UNESCO Regional Office for Eastern Africa, KNATCOM, Commission for University Education (CUE), and Universities for the attainment of SDGs. It is important for the future of the world that all universities play their part in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

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*The writer is a deputy director at  
KNATCOM's Education Programme.*

## KNATCOM engages with Stakeholders

By Anthony Ngare

Kenya National Commission for UNESCO (KNATCOM) Stakeholder Forums are instrumental since they have helped to define the progress of the Commission especially during its transition from a department to semi-autonomous government agency.

During the first and second (KNATCOM) Stakeholder Forums held in 2005 and 2008 respectively, one of the major recommendations from both meetings was for the Government to provide sufficient

2018). After a consultative process the Strategic Plan was completed in 2014. The Commission has been executing its mandate since under the guidance of the strategic plan.

Last year KNATCOM Board of Management commissioned a Mid-Term Review of the Commission's performance. A revised draft KNATCOM Strategic Plan (2014-2018), has hence been developed. The Draft captures some key strategies to promote the new global agenda of SDGs and the Africa's Agenda 2063, among other global and regional frameworks.



*The stakeholders that attended the KNATCOM's Fourth Forum pose for a group photo.  
[PHOTO: COURTESY /KNATCOM]*

autonomy. The Government heeded the call and in January 2013 enacted the Kenya National Commission for UNESCO Act of 2013.

The 3rd Stakeholders Forum was held in 2013 at the initial stage of the transition process, to discuss the development of the first KNATCOM Strategic Plan (2014-

Another major focus in this Forum is the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda 2030 adopted in 2015 as a successor to MDGs and EFA goals. Kenya's adoption of SDGs and Vision 2030, calls for intensive mobilisation of synergies both in public and private sectors for the goals to be realized.





*On completion of the Stakeholders forum, representatives of the forum signed a communique detailing the resolutions at the forum. Looking on is Board Chair Dr R. Aman, SG Dr E. Njoka and forum chair Prof. Jude Mathooko. [PHOTO: COURTESY / KNATCOM]*

UNESCO, being the intellectual arm of the United Nations has a major role to play in the implementation of the SDGs through its areas of competences. UNESCO, unlike any other UN Agency, has a wide architecture which includes specialized bodies such as Category I and II Institutes; a broad network of associations such as World Heritage Sites, UNESCO Biosphere Reserves, UNITWIN / UNESCO Chairs, Associated Schools Network (ASPnet), UNESCO Clubs, among others; and National Commissions which constitute the gateway to UNESCO's vast technical base, more so in the implementation of SDGs and Vision 2030.

It is against this context that the Commission hosted the 4th Stakeholders Forum to discuss its progress this far, and to raise awareness on SDGs and opportunities available in UNESCO with an aim of promoting Kenya's realization of SDGs and its Blue Print by 2030.

During the Stakeholders Forum opportunities for exploiting UNESCO's vast networks were explored. This would help to accelerate the SDG implementation at institutional levels thus leveraging on benefits accruing from Kenya's membership to UNESCO.

In his opening remarks read by the Principal Secretary for Basic Education Dr Belio Kipsang, the Cabinet Secretary for Education Dr Fred Matiang'i took cognizance of the immense contribution of stakeholders in past forums, which has helped the Commission to achieve its current milestones. "I am pleased to inform you that the Ministry of Education has been at the forefront in supporting KNATCOM before and even after transforming to a State corporation" he noted.

He further said that the ministry has over the last 52 years coordinated UNESCO activities in Kenya with much gratitude and establishing robust measures to realize global education goals including the current

Sustainable Development Goal 4 of Quality Education.

The Cabinet Secretary noted that the forum's theme of promoting Kenya's realization of SDGs and Vision 2030 through UNESCO Programmes among KNATCOM Stakeholders captures the wide consultation and inclusivity that will enable us to synergise and complement each other in pursuit of social transformation in Kenya.

The Cabinet Secretary noted the theme of this workshop: **Promoting Kenya's realization of SDGs and Vision 2030 through UNESCO Programmes among KNATCOM Stakeholders** captured the wide consultation and inclusivity that will enable Kenyans to synergise and complement each other in pursuit of social transformation in Kenya. "The SDGs, adopted by all the world's nations in 2015, cover nearly every aspect of our future. They concern all people, all countries, and all parts of society. We only have until 2030 to achieve them" Dr Matiang'i pointed out.

"In our country, this is going to require the engagement and participation of people from all walks of life. Let platforms such as this forum serve as our springboard for transformation" he reiterated.

The SDGs touch on the five major 'P's of humanity namely People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnerships, he noted. These are the key ingredients for social transformation and national development just as it is espoused in our national development blueprint; the Vision 2030, the CS added. "With these shared values as our guiding principles, Kenyans look up to us to drive and support the transformational agenda of our country" stated Dr Matiang'i.

The KNATCOM Board chairman Dr Rashid Aman in his remarks noted that Kenya needs to leverage on its membership to UNESCO in order to accrue the benefits it desires. "For this reason we are convinced

that this Stakeholders' forum will be an eye opener and will facilitate the exploitation of UNESCO's vast networks in order to accelerate the SDG implementation at respective institutional levels". The Chair added that "As a Commission, our mission still remains that of mobilizing local institutions to activate international networks within UNESCO".

Dr Aman added that UNESCO, unlike any other UN Agency, has a wide architecture of specialized bodies, institutes, centres and networks of National Commissions which Kenya can take advantage of in the implementation of its global and national agendas.

On her part, the KNATCOM Secretary General Dr Evangeline Njoka assured the stakeholders of the Commission's determination to work with them to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals through a revitalised partnership for Sustainable Development, based on a spirit of strengthened solidarity and focused on strategic areas. "We are determined to work with you to achieve these global goals through a revitalised partnership for Sustainable Development, based on a spirit of strengthened solidarity and focused on strategic areas. Therefore, as we embark on this collective journey, we hope that no one will be left behind" stated the Secretary General.

The SG also reminded the conference that 2017 is the year of sustainable tourism. "We are determined to promote sustainable tourism in our county. As we do so, we encourage Kenyans to visit the UNESCO Heritage sites in Kenya which include the Kayas in Kilifi County, Mt. Kenya in Nyeri County and Mt. Kulal in Marsabit County".

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*The writer is a deputy director at KNATCOM's Communication & Information Programme.*

# Promoting sustainable development through geotourism

By Dr. Jaro Arero

**K**NATCOM and UNESCO have been working very closely and plans are underway to have a Geopark in Kenya.

Geoparks are unified geographical landscapes of international geological significance managed through holistic

Currently there are 119 UNESCO Global Geoparks in 33 countries. In Africa, there is only one Geopark, located in Morocco and none in Sub-Saharan Africa.

UNESCO Global geoparks are unique and different from other UNESCO designated sites such as World Heritage Sites, Biosphere Reserves and Ramsar



*Cheploch Gorge, a geosite in Baringo County within the Great Rift Valley is an aspiring UNESCO Global geo park, it will be the first in sub-Saharan Africa. [PHOTO: WILLIAM KIMOSOP/COURTESY]*

concept of protection, education and sustainable development. It's a bottom-up approach that combines conservation with sustainable development with total involvement of local communities. This approach was started by UNESCO in 2001.

Sites although there can be overlap. Ideal geoparks should bring geological heritage of international value, visible presence to promote sustainable local economic development through geotourism both to domestic and foreign visitors.

Geoparks are fundamental to the realization of SDGs and Kenya's own Vision 2030. SDG 1 (No Poverty): community participations in UNESCO Global Geoparks reduce the vulnerability of local communities to geohazards and disasters through active risk awareness and resilience training. Reduced disaster risk is essential to ending poverty and fostering sustainable development. SDG 4 (Quality education): Global Geoparks are learning sites and incubators for sustainable development, sustainable economic activities, promotion of cultural diversity and peace.

Such cooperatives provide an opportunity for women to obtain an additional income in their own area and on their own terms. SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth): the promotion of sustainable local economic development through sustainable geotourism is one of the key pillars of Geoparks.

This creates job opportunities for the local communities through tourism, but also through the promotion of local culture and products. SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities): Geoparks promotes



*UK Geopark meeting participants when they visited North Pennines Geopark in United Kingdom. In the background is the High Forces Falls on River Tees. [PHOTO: WILLIAM KIMOSOP/COURTESY]*

SDG 5 (Gender equality): UNESCO Global Geoparks empowers women through educational programmes or the development of women's cooperatives.

protection; safeguarding and celebrating our cultural and natural heritage through holistic approach. Geoparks aim to give local people a sense of pride in their region and

strengthen the identification with the area. SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production): Geoparks educate and create awareness on sustainable development and lifestyles. Local communities and visitors are taught how to live in harmony with nature. SDG 13 (Climate action): Geoparks hold records of past climate change and information on current climate change. Through educational activities awareness is raised on the issue and people are provided with knowledge to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. SDG 17 (Partnership for the goals): Geoparks are all about partnership and cooperation between local stakeholders, regional and global networks where knowledge, ideas and best practices are shared. Experienced geoparks mentors aspiring geoparks to reach their full potential.

KNATCOM is working with partners to establish a UNESCO Global Geopark in the Great Rift Valley, as the first ever Geopark in the Sub-Saharan African, this will be a trailblazer. Kenya's Great Rift embodies the concept of Geopark as this is the cradle of mankind as evidenced by the many paleontological and archaeological discoveries. In Kenya the gorgeous Tugen hills and the scenic Kerio Valley makes part of the Great Rift Valley. This area contains largest number of Earth wonders in one geographical area.

A few mind blasting geosites includes: volcanic rock diversity and thick sedimentary layers, the home of the Millenium man *Orrorin tugenensis*, River gorges, Waterfalls, Mountains, Caves, lakes, geothermal springs, Stunning view points, all wrapped

in scenic landscapes, Local Astronomy and star gazing observation hilltops, Mountain passes and trails River gorges and water falls and an immense potential for bird watching sites and record-beating geotrails.

The proposed site of the Geopark includes areas with frequent interethnic conflicts. Ethnic cohesion can be achieved through promotion of geological and cultural heritage that comes with Global geoparks. The celebration of diversity and sustainable development will bring shared vision and values. Geotourism is an underappreciated income-generating opportunity both for the National and the County government. In the UK, a country with 7 geoparks, Global Geoparks generated an estimated Sh 1.14B (£8.7M) from April 2014 to March 2015.

One overarching ethos of global geoparks is networking. National Geoparks are expected to be collaborating with other UNESCO Global Geoparks through the Global Geoparks Network, and regional networks for UNESCO Global Geoparks, to promote exchange of best practices and, as a network, improve the quality of the label UNESCO Global Geopark.

In a bid to ensure Kenya realizes its grand dream of establishing a geopark, KNATCOM facilitated participation in the UK Global Geopark meeting (May 22-25, 2017) for the partners involved in the establishment of a Geopark in Kenya.

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*The writer is KNATCOM's Deputy Director at Natural Sciences Programme*

# Girls' pathway to science and engineering

By Dr Jaro Arero

Traditionally it has always been the view of the majority that science subjects are hard nut to crack for girls and therefore it has, inexplicably been a preserve of boys.

But the Sciences, Technology, Innovation and Mathematics (STEM) for girls initiative is aimed at driving up the number of girls in the so called traditional boys subjects.

Science careers are among the best paying world over, and more science professionals are needed for realization of Kenya's developmental blue print, Vision 2030 and the global development aspirations as encapsulated in the SDGs.

Moreover SDG 4 (Quality education) and SDG 5 (Gender equality) can only be achieved if more girls take up science courses. UNESCO and Kenyan government is concerned with the science leaky pipeline where the number of girls and women in

and Physical Science courses. The number of women gets more dismal at graduate studies level.

While it is known that many times admission into university in Kenya (for example) is based on marks scored in high school and the cut-off points, it is also possible that there are other factors influencing the choice of engineering and physical science courses among female high school students. The gender science pipe starts leaking at secondary school.

In KCPE results there is no significant difference between boys and girls in math and sciences and the rain starts beating us by Form 3 where most Physics classes are girls-free. No Physics for girls means no Engineering for girls. More women in science are good both for equality, prosperity and for science as well.

Mentoring through scientific camps of excellence has been successfully implemented in other parts of the world.

Category	Men	Women
Registered Consulting Engineers	355	8
Registered Engineers	1597	86
Registered Consulting Engineers	8639	757

*Gender distribution of Engineers in Kenya, Source: Engineering Board of Kenya (Sunday Nation, April 9th 2017).*

science decrease going up the education ladder.

Graduation statistics from Kenyan Universities across the country have consistently indicated that fewer female students are admitted into Engineering

The concept was first introduced in Kenya in 2014 by UNESCO through its partnership with KNATCOM, the Ministry of Education and the National Commission for Science and Technology now NACOSTI. Since then, a total of five Scientific Camps of Excellence

has been organized in Kenya targeting 80 secondary schools in 25 counties. The five STEM Mentorship Camps have mentored 731 secondary school students in total. The camps have so far targeted Nairobi and the neighbouring counties, the North Rift Valley region, the Lake and the Coast regions.

The STEM camp of excellence 2017 was held in Kaaga Girls' High school in Meru County between 9th and 15th April 2017. Just like the other camps, the Meru camp was based on the overall objective of the

university level;

- To provide support and nurture the girl scientist in her educational endeavours through mentorship on life skills and survival techniques;
- To demystify engineering and science-based courses with a view to making students link them to their daily life experiences;
- To bring to the attention of the students other existing fields of science that they may not know about but which are



*The participants of the STEM Girls Camp, Kaaga Girls.*

STEM mentorship Camps which is to inspire girls in secondary schools to embrace science subjects with a view to enhanced participation in STEM courses and careers.

Specifically, the camp had the following objectives:

- To encourage the girl child to take up science related subjects in high school in order to prepare for a career in STEM fields;
- To inspire girls to embrace sciences for increased enrolment into engineering and other science related courses at the

important for sustainable development. These include the ocean and aviation sciences.

- To encourage students to think of the problems that impact on their country's development and focus their attention on scientific and technological solutions for addressing them;
- To mentor the accompanying science teachers on gender responsive teaching, particularly for science subjects.

The students present were mentored on

opportunities in engineering and science careers, how to study effectively to ensure admission into STEM courses at the university and other tertiary level institutions and on life skills for survival and successful completion of their studies. The students were also exposed to both the learning and work environments for STEM fields.

Notable personalities who mentored the girls included Mrs Nancy Karigithu, the PS; Shipping and Maritime affairs, in her presentations she highlighted the acute shortages of marine science professionals in Kenya and encouraged the students to consider taking up these lucrative and prestigious careers and doing that will help Kenya harness the full benefits of the blue economy.



*A screen grab shows a plane that was flown from Nairobi, Kenya to Kinshasa, the Democratic Republic of Congo manned by women only crew.*

The participating schools for the Meru camp represented following counties: Meru, Embu, Tharaka Nithi, Isiolo, Marsabit, Wajir and Mandera. A total of 240 students from 30 schools participated in the program.



*A slide from the presentation by the PS, Maritime and Shipping Affairs*



*Camp participants listen to a lecturer demonstrating the various part of a car.*

The students visited Meru National Polytechnic to have a first-hand experience of the activities in automotive engineering workshop.

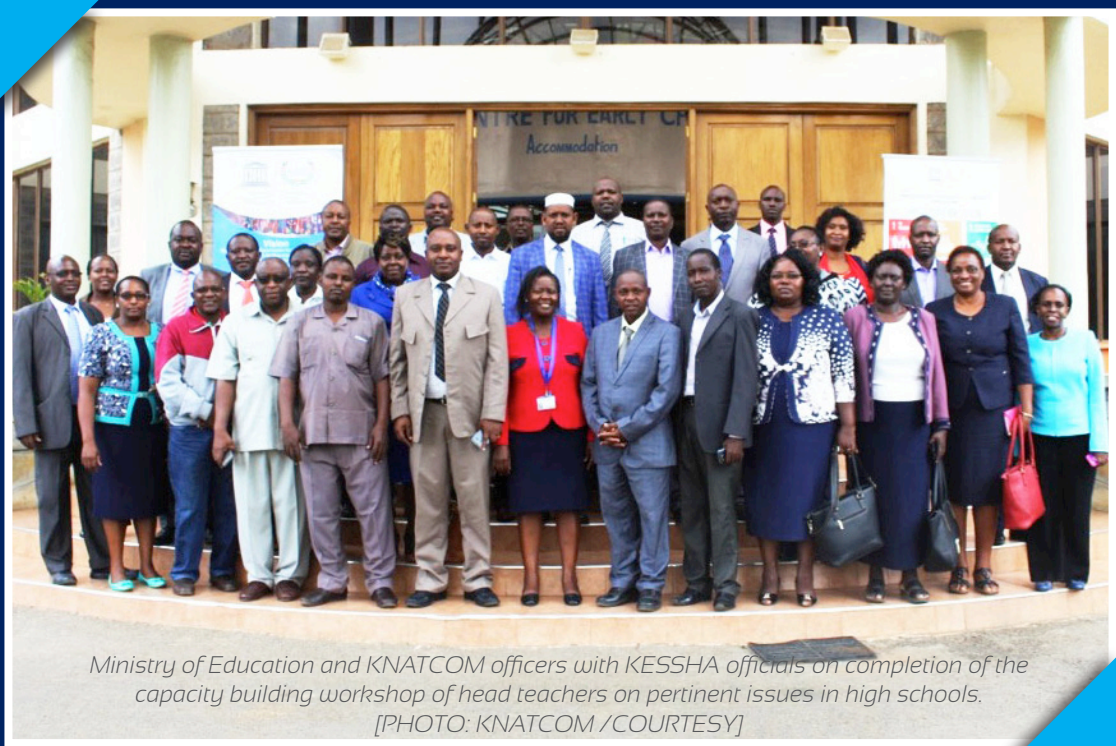
To orient the students into the world of innovation and original thinking, innovative proposal competition was held during the last day of the camp. Cutting edge proposals were presented which ranged from innovations addressing; renewable energy, food security, water quality and human-wildlife conflict. The schools with three top innovative and novel proposals were awarded trophies and certificates.



*Students and their teacher receive trophies after their proposals were ranked best during the camp*

*The writer is a deputy director at KNATCOM's Natural Sciences Programme*





*Ministry of Education and KNATCOM officers with KESSHA officials on completion of the capacity building workshop of head teachers on pertinent issues in high schools.  
[PHOTO: KNATCOM /COURTESY]*

## Tackling pertinent issues in high schools

By Mary Kang'ethe & Juster Kananu

Kenya faces numerous sustainable development challenges that range from climate change, loss of biodiversity, insecurity, high levels of poverty and HIV and AIDs among others. HIV and AIDs remains an impediment to the achievements made in the education sector over time. The pandemic continues to impact negatively on the learners, education sector personnel and community.

Education for Sustainable Development relates to a whole range of other educations that touch upon sustainable development. Such sustainable development oriented types of education include: climate change education, environmental education, global citizenship education (GCED), human rights

education, health education, multi-cultural education, peace education, HIV & AIDS education, biodiversity education, gender education, inclusive education, education for disaster risk reduction and values education. Education for Sustainable Development provides a broad framework for developing the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes learners need to secure more just, peaceful, tolerant, resilient and inclusive societies.

The 2030 agenda states that “there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development”. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aim to significantly reduce all forms of violence, and work with governments and communities to find lasting solutions to conflict and insecurity.

Strengthening the rule of law and promoting human rights is key to this process, as is reducing the flow of illicit arms and strengthening the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance. **SDG16 “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”**. Peaceful, just and inclusive societies are necessary to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

People everywhere need to be free of fear from all forms of violence and feel safe as they go about their lives whatever their ethnicity, faith or sexual orientation. In order to advance the Sustainable Development Goals we need effective and inclusive public institutions that can deliver quality education and healthcare, fair economic policies and inclusive environmental protection.

Kenya is a signatory to international treaties and conventions that advocate peaceful and harmonious co-existence among people of all nations. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) Article 26(2) states that education should promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations. The Government of Kenya acknowledges the role of peace in enhancing socioeconomic development.

The Constitution of Kenya, 2010 Chapter Four on the Bill of Rights provides for recognition and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms to preserve the dignity of individuals and communities and promotion of social justice and the realization of the potential of all human beings. Article 10 of the Constitution spells out the national values and principles of governance in Kenya.

The National Anthem on the other hand lays emphasis on peaceful coexistence as a prerequisite for nation building while the national goals of education strive to promote sustainable development, peace, social justice and responsibility, respect for diversity, international consciousness, national unity and moral and religious values. The Kenya Vision 2030 which is the blue print for social, economic and political development also underscores the need to diffuse a culture of peace and respect for the sanctity of human life through social institutions, in particular through education and training.

The Kenya National Commission for UNESCO (KNATCOM) through its Education programme carried out a capacity building workshop on pertinent and contemporary issues in education for Kenya Secondary School Heads Association (KESSHA). The workshop aimed to promote peace and harmonious existence through education, to enhance capacity of secondary school principals to mainstream HIV and AIDS in learning institutions.

Further, it set to sensitize members of KESSHA officials on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Education for Sustainable development (ESD) policy and to create awareness among secondary school principals on emerging trends in the education sector. The workshop targeted one KESSHA representative from each of the forty seven (47) Counties and was officially opened by Mr. Darius Mogaka, Director Policy, Partnerships and East African Community Affairs, Ministry of Education.

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*The writers are a deputy director and an intern respectively at KNATCOM's Education Programme.*



## KNATCOM, Commonwealth partnership for Students Governance

By George Njoroge

The Kenya National Commission for UNESCO, at the invitation of the Commonwealth Secretariat's Youth Division, partnered with the Commonwealth Students' Association (CSA) and Strathmore University in a three day capacity building workshop on student governance.

The workshop, held from the 29th to 31st May, 2017 at the Strathmore Business School brought together over 30 participants who are active student leaders from Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria and Tanzania.

The aim of the workshop was to provide a space for student leaders in Kenya and colleagues from other African countries to

discuss the future potential of the student movement, its role in the implementation of the sustainable development goals and how to streamline its governance, in line with Aspiration 3 of the African Union's Agenda 2063 and Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals which call for good governance. Apart from seeding the formation of a national union of students in Kenya, the workshop also served as a platform to pilot a Student Governance Toolkit developed by the National Union of Students (UK) in conjunction with the Commonwealth Students Association and the Commonwealth Secretariat.

On behalf of the Commission Ms. Mary Wanjiru Kangethe, the Deputy Director, Global Education Priorities made a key

presentation on Sustainable Development Goals and the Role of Young People in Their Realization. After outlining the main aspects and dynamics of the SDGs, the Agenda 2063, and taking cognisance of the inextricable link between student leadership and national leadership, she encouraged student leaders to be equipped with knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable them to better their delivery of service. She called on the student leaders to promote equity and inclusion and ensure that no one is left behind, share in prosperity, build

remain vigilant at both the personal and academic fronts.

The Commission has a cordial relationship with both the Commonwealth Secretariat having for some time been the focal point for Commonwealth Education activities. The Commission coordinated Kenya's participation in the 18th and 19th Conferences of Commonwealth Education Ministers (CEEM) that were held in Mauritius (2012) and the Bahamas (2015) respectively. The Commission has also supported the

UNESCO Youth Forum's leadership in their quest for office and while serving in various Commonwealth youth bodies, for instance, Mr. George Njoroge who was elected the Chair of the CSA



lasting networks, address issues such as poverty and foster peace and security in their institutions and communities at large.

She also called on participants to be alive to the fact that culture is not static and that there is a need to preserve and cultivate our heritage. She recommended that student leaders take up personal development more so in regards to the development of soft and interpersonal skills. She also recommended that mentorship be embedded into student leadership culture and that student leaders

in Mauritius (2012) and Ms. Faith Manthi who was elected as the Vice Chairperson of the Commonwealth Youth Council in Malta(2015). The two were instrumental in the development of the Student Governance Report, the Toolkit, having Kenya host the regional workshop and its execution. Kenya is scheduled to host the 21st CEEM in 2021.

*The writer is a research officer at KNATCOM*

# Celebrating Kenya's World Heritage Sites

Kenya's world heritage-listed properties are internationally recognized for their Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). What entails a world heritage site?

By Julius Mwachunga

## World Heritage listing

World heritage sites are places that are important to and belong to everyone, regardless of where they are located. They are an irreplaceable legacy that the global community has decided to protect for the future. There are 1052 properties from around the world on the World Heritage List. Kenya has 6 properties on the World Heritage List, which means that those properties are recognized by the global community as having special significance which needs to be protected for future generations to enjoy. The six properties are: Lamu Old Town, Fort Jesus in Mombasa, The Sacred Kaya Forests of the Mijikenda, Mount Kenya annexing Lewa Conservancy, Lake Turkana National Park, and the Lake system in the Great Rift Valley in Kenya. The



common feature of all properties inscribed on the World Heritage List is that they meet the requirements for Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).



## What is Outstanding Universal Value?

Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) is the central idea of the World Heritage Convention. Broadly, its meaning follows the common sense interpretation of the words:

**Outstanding:** For properties to be of outstanding universal value they should be exceptional, or superlative – they should be the most remarkable places on earth.

**Universal:** Properties need to be outstanding from a global perspective. World heritage does not aim to recognize properties that are remarkable from solely a national or regional perspective. Countries are encouraged to develop other approaches to recognize these places. Kenya does this through the national heritage listing process.



**Value:** What makes a property outstanding and universal is its “value”, or the natural and/ or cultural worth of a property. This value is determined based on standards and processes established under the World Heritage Convention’s Operational Guidelines (see [whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines](http://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines)). To be considered of outstanding universal value, a property needs to:

- meet one or more of ten criteria
- meet the conditions of integrity
- if a cultural property, meet the conditions of authenticity, and
- have an adequate system of protection and management to safeguard its future

### **Lamu Old Town – An authentic Swahili “Heaven”**

Lamu Old Town is the oldest and best-preserved Swahili settlement in East Africa, retaining its traditional functions. Built in coral stone and mangrove timber, the town is characterized by the simplicity of structural forms enriched by such features as inner courtyards, verandas, and elaborately carved wooden doors. Lamu has hosted major Muslim religious festivals since the 19th century, and has become a

significant centre for the study of Islamic and Swahili cultures.

### **Outstanding Universal Value**

#### **Brief synthesis**

Located on an island on the coast of East Africa some 350km north of Mombasa, is the oldest and best preserved example of Swahili settlement in East Africa. With a core comprising a collection of buildings Lamu has maintained its social and cultural integrity, as well as retaining its authentic building fabric. Once the most important trade centre in East Africa, Lamu has exercised an important influence in the entire region in religious, cultural as well as in technological expertise. A conservative and close-knit society, Lamu has retained its important status as a significant centre for education in Islamic and Swahili culture as illustrated by the annual Maulidi and cultural festivals.

Unlike other Swahili settlements which have been abandoned along the East African coast, Lamu has continuously been inhabited for over 700 years.



The growth and decline of the seaports on the East African coast and interaction between the Bantu, Arabs, Persians, Indians, and Europeans represents a significant cultural and economic phase in the history of the region which finds its most outstanding expression in Lamu Old Town, its architecture and town planning.

The town is characterized by narrow streets and magnificent stone buildings with impressive curved doors, influenced by unique fusion of Swahili, Arabic, Persian, Indian and European building styles. The buildings are well preserved and carry a long history that represents the development of Swahili building technology, based on coral, lime and mangrove poles.



The architecture and urban structure of Lamu graphically demonstrate the cultural influences that have come together over 700 hundred years from Europe, Arabia, and India, utilizing traditional Swahili techniques that produced a distinct culture. The property is characterized by its unique Swahili architecture that is defined by spatial organization and narrow winding streets. This labyrinth street pattern has its origins in Arab traditions of land distribution and urban development. It is also defined by clusters of dwellings divided into a number of small wards (mitaa) each being a group of buildings where a number of closely related lineages live.



Attributed by eminent Swahili researchers as the cradle of Swahili civilization, Lamu became an important religious centre in East and Central Africa since the 19th century, attracting scholars of Islamic religion and Swahili culture. Today it is a major reservoir of Swahili culture whose inhabitants have managed to sustain their traditional values as depicted by a sense of social unity and cohesion.

*The writer is a deputy director at KNATCOM's Culture Programme.*



By Cynthia Ichaminya

**A**frica is rising and in part this is because its youthful population. The greatest resource of any country is its youthful population and Kenya is no exception.

As the great management guru Peter F Drucker notes, this will be the age of the knowledge economy, and companies and countries will not be distinguished by so much as the physical goods they own, but rather by the ideas that they generate. Simply put, ideas will be the new gold and we know our youth have massive potential on innovations.

Therefore engagement of the youth in decision making is pivotal to sustainable development and prosperity of the country. UNESCO established the Youth Forum in 1999 to provide the youth with a platform to share their views, ideas and concerns with each other and Members States and contribute to the strategic direction of UNESCO. UNESCO and KNATCOM recognize the significance of prioritizing the youth agenda in all

## Youth urged to show up and step up

decision making processes. In line with the Constitution of Kenya, the National Youth Policy, UNESCO Operational Youth Policy, KNATCOM supported the establishment of the Kenya UNESCO Youth Forum. This support has and continues to grow and today, we are proud that the Youth Forum in Kenya has a Strategic Plan that was developed by its members, validated by its members and launched.

The launch of the Kenya UNESCO Youth Forum

Strategic Plan took place at the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development and it was a celebration of a 10 year journey. This occasion was officially opened by the KNATCOM Secretary General who commended the youth for their passion for sustainable development. Dr. Njoka reaffirmed her support in ensuring that the Youth Forum has a firm footing and fulfills its strategic objectives as enumerated in the Strategic Plan. The Key Note Speaker, Sen. Hassan Omar, challenged the Youth to take up their space and lead from the front. He shared his personal journey as a youth leader and reminded all the participants that the journey to leadership is not easy and





requires hard work, dedication, diplomacy and a good support system or a network that supports one's vision and mission.

Dr. Njoka and Hon. Hassan Omar both agreed that the Strategic Plan is an important framework to address the challenges that face the youth, namely, violent extremism, unemployment, drug and substance abuse, vulnerability amongst young people, exclusion and climate change.

Mr. Mwangi was the Guest of Honor and he officially launched the Youth Forum Strategic Plan. He applauded the Youth Forum members for supporting the

development of the strategic plan to its conclusion and welcomed collaboration between the Department of Youth Affairs and the Youth Forum in finding sustainable, home-grown solutions to the challenges that face the youth in Kenya today.

This occasion was graced by among others, Mr. Majani from the Ministry of Education who lauded the youth for being organized for positive change; Mr. Murimi from the Youth Enterprise Development Fund, who was deeply impressed by the spirit of volunteerism demonstrated by the Youth Forum Members and he encouraged the youth to take up agri-business opportunities in Kenya; the Former

Chairpersons of the Kenya UNESCO Youth Forum and representatives from USAID-Kenya.



The Guest of honour during the launch of the Kenya UNESCO Youth Forum Mr Simon Mwangi, director of youth affairs makes his remarks. In the background is KNATCOM SG Dr Evangeline Njoka and Mombasa county senator Hon Hassan Omar.

[PHOTO: KNATCOM /COURTESY]

The writer is  
Chairperson,  
Kenya UNESCO  
Youth Forum

# Cultural heritage & sustainable development

By John Omare

In recent years, the term “*sustainable development*” has been a buzzword in the international discourse. Originally, the term was limited to discussions on the three pillars of economic, environmental, and social dimensions of a society.

Over the past decade or so, however, the conversation has expanded to include the cultural domain to complement the other three to create what is sometimes referred to as the circle of sustainability. The intrinsic relationship between culture and development underscores not only the critical role of culture in development, but also its centrality in shaping the human understanding and world view of development.

The United Nations Education Science and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) acknowledge that no society can flourish without culture nor any development is sustainable without it. Culture is regarded as a mainspring of development. In particular ICH has a great potential of contributing to a people’s economic wellbeing and a significant drive engine for a country’s economic growth. A society with strong economic, environmental, and social dimensions is nothing without culture as culture is in itself what brings a sense of humanness and creative thought to the other domains of sustainable development.

Given the significance of culture in sustainable development, it isn’t surprising that the notion has been included in UNESCO’s 2003 Convention for the



Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, with the first draft of the Convention recognizing intangible cultural heritage as a “*guarantee for sustainable development.*” Kenya ratified the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) in 2007 and has since been undertaking a myriad of projects and activities as part of its implementation. Under the 2003 Convention, “*Safeguarding*” means measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage.

Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage for sustainable development is a global concern in the new millennium. Article 2 subsection 1 of the basic text of the 2003 UNESCO Convention, defines Intangible Cultural Heritage as “the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills, as well as the instruments, artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith - that communities, groups, and in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage”.

With a view to effectively implement the Convention, States Parties shall endeavour, by all appropriate means, to recognize the importance and strengthen the role of intangible cultural heritage as a driver and guarantee of sustainable development, as well as fully integrate the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage into their development plans, policies and programmes at all levels. While recognizing the interdependence between

the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development, States Parties shall strive to maintain a balance between the three dimensions of sustainable development (the economic, social and environmental), as well as their interdependence with peace and security, in their safeguarding efforts and shall to this end facilitate cooperation with concerned communities, groups, individual experts, NGOs, cultural brokers and mediators through a participatory approach.

To achieve the above objectives, the workshop aimed at sensitizing the local communities on the importance of the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, raise awareness of local communities on the various safeguarding methodologies under the convention and identify, inventory and document intangible cultural heritage elements as widely defined under the convention. At the end of the training session, the community representatives formed ICH working committees to regularly review progress made in the County Action plans and strengthen their capacities through organized regular workshops. It was also agreed that the County Directors of Culture will include the recommendations of the workshop in their County Development Plans.

As focal points of Culture at the County level the County Directors of Culture will ensure continuous public participation in ICH programmes and workshops. The final report of the workshop will be published and disseminated to stakeholders in the most appropriate ways.

*The writer is KNATOM's Director in charge of Culture Programme*

# Conserving the sacred Kaya forests

By John Omare

As human activities appear determined to annihilate our natural resources resulting into petulant weather patterns and drought stricken communities, Kaya elders of Miji Kenda have become the first line of defence for the natural and deeply forested kaya forest.

Kayas are forested areas of spiritual and cultural significance to the Mijikenda people. The Mijikenda include nine Bantu-speaking ethnic groups in the coastal Kenya region. They include the Chonyi, Duruma, Digo, Giriama, Jibana, Kambe, Kauma, Rabai and Ribe.

The identity of the Mijikenda is expressed through oral traditions and performing arts related to the sacred forests, which are also sources of valuable medicinal plants. These traditions and practices constitute their codes of ethics and governance systems,

and include prayers, oath-taking, burial rites and charms, naming of the newly born, initiations, reconciliations, marriages and coronations.

Kayas are fortified settlements whose cultural spaces are indispensable for the enactment of living traditions that underscore the identity, continuity and cohesion of the Mijikenda communities. The use of natural resources within the Kayas is regulated by traditional knowledge and practices that have contributed to the conservation of their biodiversity.

The Kaya forests are botanically diverse and have a high conservation value, as determined by a number of surveys; undertaken by the National Museums of Kenya (NMK), funded by World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). More than half of Kenya's rare plants are found in the coastal region, many in the Kayas. Each of the nine Mijikenda groups identifies with a specific Kaya or Kayas.



*The sacred Kaya forest in Kilifi County at the Kenyan coast*



*Miji Kenda elders perform traditional rites before venturing into the sacred Kaya Gandini/ Mtswakara Forest. [PHOTO: KNATCOM/ COURTESY]*

Due to pressure on land resources, urbanization and social transformations, the traditions and cultural practices associated to the Kaya settlements are fast diminishing, posing great danger to the social fabric and cohesiveness of the Mijikenda communities who venerate and celebrate them as their identity and symbol of continuity. The listing of the Sacred Kaya Forests of the Mijikenda as World Heritage Sites (WHS) under the 1972 World Heritage Convention and the inscription of the traditions and practices associated to the Kayas in the sacred forests of the Mijikenda on the UNESCO's List of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) in Need of Urgent Safeguarding under the 2003 Convention has led to increased awareness and more concerted efforts to restore the value of this heritage. It is for this reason that a holistic approach for the sustainably management and conservation of the Kaya forests is crucial.

In view of the foregoing, Kenya National Commission for UNESCO (KNATCOM) is organizing for the award of the best managed and well conserved sacred Kaya forests of the Mijikenda. Using the criteria developed, from 23rd – 28th April 2017, an evaluation and selection team comprising of KNATCOM staff, Coast Forest Conservation Unit (CFCU) staff in Kilifi and Kwale branch and Kaya Council of elders physically visited the nine (9) targeted Kaya forests based in Kilifi and Kwale Counties and manually administered the criteria, verified the status of conservation and picked the best managed and well conserved sacred Kaya forests of the Mijikenda.

Selection and awarding of the best managed and conserved Kaya is a critical approach for the sustainable conservation of the Kaya Forests and for the continued enactment of the Traditions and Practices

associated with the Sacred Kaya Forests. In particular, the replanting of trees will improve the conservation status of the forests. School visits, cultural festival and intercommunity visits will also strengthen safeguarding and raise public awareness about the element, particularly among the local communities.

Since many of the elders are ageing, most Kayas have started recruiting young and energetic elders for continued transmission of the element. The Councils of Elders transmit knowledge about the traditions and practices to the young generation through apprenticeship. The County administration

incentive and motivation for conservation of the Kaya cultural and natural heritage. It will boost the communities' capacity in terms of materials required for the continued conservation as well as provide for the motivation of volunteer site caretakers. The award will not only empower communities with the requisite resources for conservation but will as well energize the communities and promote a spirit of competition in conservation.

The Kenya National Commission for UNESCO intends to have the ceremony to award the best managed and conserved Kaya forest as an annual activity so as



*KNATCOM officers in a meeting with Kaya Fungo elders on the edge of the sacred forest.  
[PHOTO: COURTESY / KNATCOM]*

recognizes the role of the Council of Elders and involves them in consultations pertaining to security and socio-cultural issues affecting the Mijikenda, especially the prevention and resolution of conflicts.

The objective of the award is to contribute to the sustainable conservation of the Kaya forests and to promote holistic safeguarding and protection of the Kaya forests and its related cultures. The award will serve as an

to strengthen the communities' efforts and resolve for better conservation. It is envisioned that the activity will endear KNATCOM to communities, promote its visibility and enhance achievement of its mandate.

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*The writer is KNATCOM's Director in charge of Culture Programme.*

# Cultural diversity fosters cohesive, just societies

By Emily Njeru

Culture has a major role to play in a country's socio-economic and political development, as it sets the foundation for a country development in all spheres.

Indeed culture helps to nurture and concretize the societal fabrics that hold the country together providing a basis for peaceful co-existence, cohesion, integration and conflict resolution.

These diversities are embodied in the uniqueness and plurality of the identities of groups and societies that make up a nation. It is the diversities of culture and expressions that make people's lives challenging, meaningful and solution based. Many a times though, the richness of our cultural diversity has been negatively exploited as a weakness by self-seeking politicians that thrive on the premise of 'We against them'.

Just as natural diversity is vital to sustain ecosystems, cultural diversity is the lifeblood of vibrant societies, as it provides fresh ideas and perspectives that enrich our lives in countless ways, allowing us all to grow and thrive together. Cultural Diversity indeed makes the world richer by making it a more interesting place in which to live. Achieving the 2030 agenda goals will be impossible

without drawing upon the strength and creative potential of humanity's diversity of cultures.

Noting that Kenya's vision 2030 too aspires that the country becomes a globally competitive and prosperous country with a high quality of life by 2030, it is important that the country invests in promotion of cultural diversity to build peace, cohesion and shared common values. We must as a nation works to reaffirm our commitment to building more peaceful society founded on the values of mutual understanding and intercultural dialogue. Appreciation of cultural diversity is a requisite factor in dealing with divisions seen in today's society where communities and citizens in the past have been incited against each based on the differences of our diverse cultural backgrounds.

Indeed UNESCO's main mission is building peace in the minds of men and women. This is in recognition that since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed not only based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments also upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind.

While marking this year's World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development that is celebrated on 21st



May of each year, the Director General of UNECSO Irina Bokova during the occasion of the every year, has called for renewed humanism for the 21st century to renew the fundamental aspirations to justice mutual understanding and dignity to guide all men and women. The Director General observed that cultural diversity is increasingly under threat where across the world, where the culture of non-tolerance has destroyed a people's shared heritage and weakened the essential links between people and their history.

Acknowledging that Kenya is a Multicultural Society characterized by diverse ethnic / cultural communities, different social classes defined by their economic status and political parties whose foundations many at times is ethnic based, building bridges among communities becomes a major priority for the nation's stability. Those that wish to lead the nation must hence be gauged upon their ability to build inclusive and just societies. While the country in the past inherited economic and political structures that were structured alongside ethnic lines, the new constitution renewed hope of building a more inclusive nation that thrives on its diversity. An inclusive nation can only be sustained only when citizens live up to the spirit of the constitution by electing leaders that consistently promote peace, cohesion, dignity of all, national identity and pride. Individuals that propagate negative ethnicity that pin communities against each other based on stereotypes perpetuated through the 'we and them' premise should not be allowed to lead.

Those entrusted with the opportunity to lead the country at whatever level, whether political, economic or social positions must therefore consistently works towards inclusive policies that ensure respect for diversity and participation of all in the development of the nation. Putting people at the centre of decision making and

respect for the diversity enhances social justice and respect for the rule of law at individual, institutional and national level. Kenya's constitution affirms the importance of respect for diversity as part of day to day governance. Appreciation of diversity by our leaders will promote and nurture living values such as; love, peace, honesty, freedom, tolerance and kindness that distinguish man from animals.

The nation must work towards honest cultural dialogue among citizens to promote a cultural transformation that discourages division in the society through the we and them paradigm. To achieve this it is important that we nurture a strong national cultural foundation to inspire the younger generation to take pride in their nation and to become self-driven accountable citizens. This is will be revive African traditional values systems where culture indeed provided a bedrock of values on societal order and encouraged the younger generation to defend their communities.

As a matter of fact in most traditional African societies, leadership was never individualistic and was only confirmed to those individuals that met a people's philosophies and power could only be bestowed those that had the ability and the willingness to defend and hold a people together as well as only act for public good.

While cultural and ethnic diversity is real and relevant on the national scale, fostering an awareness and appreciation of cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity must start within our families, in our neighborhoods and in our counties. Whatever makes us is constantly contributing to the culturally diverse environment in which we live, grow, learn, and interact.

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*The writer is a deputy director at KNATCOM's Culture Programme.*



# Kenya to sit at global cultural committee

By Emily Njeru

There is a case for celebrations as Kenya, as a member state of UNESCO, was recently elected to the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

This was during the just concluded

Diversity of Cultural Expressions which is the main UNESCO organ for the promotion of the objectives of the 2005 UNESCO Convention on The Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural expressions was adopted by member states on 20 October 2005. It is a legally binding international instrument that ensures that artists, cultural professionals and



*A past session of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee for the protection and promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. [PHOTO: COURTESY /UNESCO]*

sixth ordinary session of the conference of parties to the UNESCO 2005 convention held on 12-15 June 2017 at UNESCO headquarters in Paris France.

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection and Promotion of the

practitioners worldwide can create, produce and disseminate and enjoy a broad range of cultural goods and services and activities including their own. At present, 145 parties have ratified the convention of which 41 are African Member states. Kenya ratified the

convention in 2007. Kenya was represented at the intergovernmental committee by the Department of Culture, Ministry Of Culture.

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions is composed of 24 elected representatives of the 144 Member States Parties. There were 12 vacant seats up for election two for each of the six electoral groups.

Kenya was elected to represent the East African Region while Mali was elected to represent West Africa Region. Other elected members were Finland and Canada (Western Europe), Croatia and Latvia (Eastern Europe), Argentina and Columbia (Latin America and Caribbean), China and Korea -Asia and Pacific, Egypt and Iraq - Arab states groups and North Africa.

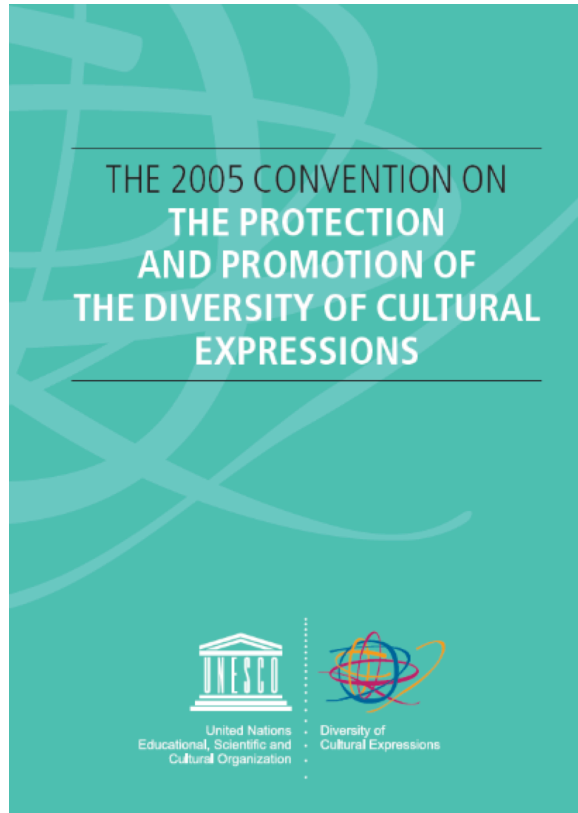
The Conference of Parties for a period of four years. The intergovernmental meets on an annual basis and may meet in extraordinary session at the request of at least two thirds of its Members to address specific issues. Other current members whose term expires in 2019 representing the electoral groups include; Germany and France, Czech Republic and Slovakia, Brazil and Paraguay, Indonesia , Cote d' Ivoire Nigeria and Morocco.

Election of Kenya to the Intergovernmental Committee provides

an opportunity for the country to defend her interests and those of Africa and to spearhead solutions to challenges facing the cultural and creative sector. Further the country stands an opportunity to share her expertise to promote and protect cultural and creative sector at a global platform. The Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity

of Cultural Expressions is a very important platform that discusses important matters affecting artist, creators and practitioners sector such as fair remuneration of artists, neutrality, and diversification of cultural content on the internet. The Intergovernmental Committee helps to encourage dialogue between member states and civil society organizations by providing opportunity at a

civil society forum during their sessions. UNESCO being an intellectual organization and a laboratory of ideas offers member states opportunities to learn and share good practices and standards in the design and implementation of cultural policies.



*The writer is a deputy director at KNATCOM's Culture Programme.*

# In support of University of Nairobi UNESCO / UNTWIN Chair

By Jacqueline Njeru

It is none other than the great physicist Albert Einstein that observed that 'Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding'

UNESCO/ UNTWIN Chairs established in Universities play a pivotal role in catalysing the inculcation of the culture of peace and non-violence through various thematic programmes. In addition they play a key role in advancing research, training and programme development in UNESCO's fields of competence.

The UNESCO Chairs and UNTIWN Networks are a global network of universities that encourage inter- university cooperation, collaboration and information sharing.

KNATCOM and the University of Nairobi worked closely to facilitate the application by UoN to establish a UNESCO UNITWIN Chair. Since its inception, KNATCOM has, and continues to co-implement with the UNESCO/ UNTWIN Chair at the University of Nairobi activities that focus on university students and the youth at large and their contribution to peace and security. The UNESCO/ UNTWIN Chair is dedicated to empowering the youth to be ambassadors of peace and security in their own institutions of higher learning.

On May 24th- 25th, 2017, the UNESCO/ UNTWIN Chair, the University of Nairobi and KNATCOM organized for a two day workshop at the UoN Council Chambers, themed, *"Universities for a sustainable culture of peace and security"*. This event brought together 94 student leaders from various public and private universities in Kenya to discuss their role in realization of peace and security through universities.

This consultative workshop took participants through discussion on the importance of intercultural dialogue and

forgiveness to cohesion among communities; the role of the individual in maintaining and enhancing peace with a focus on self-identification and self-understanding of one's values; radicalization, extremism and cyber-crime in Kenya (assessing dissatisfaction, radicalization and student violence and the gullibility of youth and religious fundamentalism that supports a "we" and "them" narrative); the role of higher education institutions in the promotion of national cohesion and the UN peace and security architecture. Ideas, comments and questions were explored through plenary sessions.

The event culminated in the signing of a communiqué by 76 student leaders which underscored the importance of collaboration with the youth in peace and security (in particular involvement in initiatives to address the eradication of radicalization and extremism) and the commitment of stakeholders to national cohesion, transformative leadership and sustainable peace and security; recognized the importance of partnerships in the promotion of peace, sustainable development and intellectual collaboration and acknowledged the crucial role played by the youth in creating awareness, consensus building and the promotion of a culture of peace.

The event was officially opened by the Vice-Chancellor, University of Nairobi, Prof. Peter M.F. Mbithi. Other distigyusihed guests included, Amb. Dr. Martin Kimani, Prof. Enos Njeru (UON), Dr. Abdul Lamin, UNESCO Regional Office for Eastern Africa, Prof. Godfrey Muriuki (Kisii Uni.) Prof, Shellemiah Keya (Chancellor, Dedan Kimathi Univeristy), Prof. Munyau Mulinge (USIU), Mr. Micheal Ndungu –Secretary, Directorate of National Cohesion and National Values, Dr. Florence Omosa among others.

*The writer is a deputy director at KNATCOM's Social & Human Sciences Programme.*



## KNATCOM hosts potential Director General for UNESCO

By Joel Ong'oto

The current Assistant Director General in the Education Programme at UNESCO and a candidate for the post of Director General of UNESCO Dr. Qian Tang, visited KNATCOM in May this year.

Dr Tang was accompanied by Dr. Du Yue, Secretary General of Chinese Natcom, Mr. Hou Jian, Director, Division of General Policy Panning from the Chinese Natcom, and Mr. Zhao Chen, from the Chinese Embassy.

They were welcomed and received at KNATCOM in the Secretary General's Office by Mr. Joel Ongoto, Programme Director Social and Human Sciences Programme (who was standing in for the SG and Ag. DSG), Mr. John Omare, Director Culture

Programme KNATCOM and Ms. Nancy Njeri, Ag. Director Education Programme.

At the meeting Dr Tang pointed out that Kenya was the first country he had visited after his visit to the AU Commission in Addis Ababa, where he requested AU Commission Chair to be made the AU candidate for the post of UNESCO Director General. He said that China is one of the founding members of UNESCO, and had committed itself to the fulfilment of the mandate of UNESCO. He said that China and UNESCO had jointly worked in many important areas, such as the UNESCO China Funds in Trust and UNESCO Prize for Girls and Women's Education.

He added that every year China works closely with UNESCO to organize a number

of major high level events which have helped enhance the visibility and influence of UNESCO. He added that China had officially presented him to the world be the next Director General of UNESCO and requested for Kenya's support. He added that he had visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and had sought Kenya's support to his candidacy.

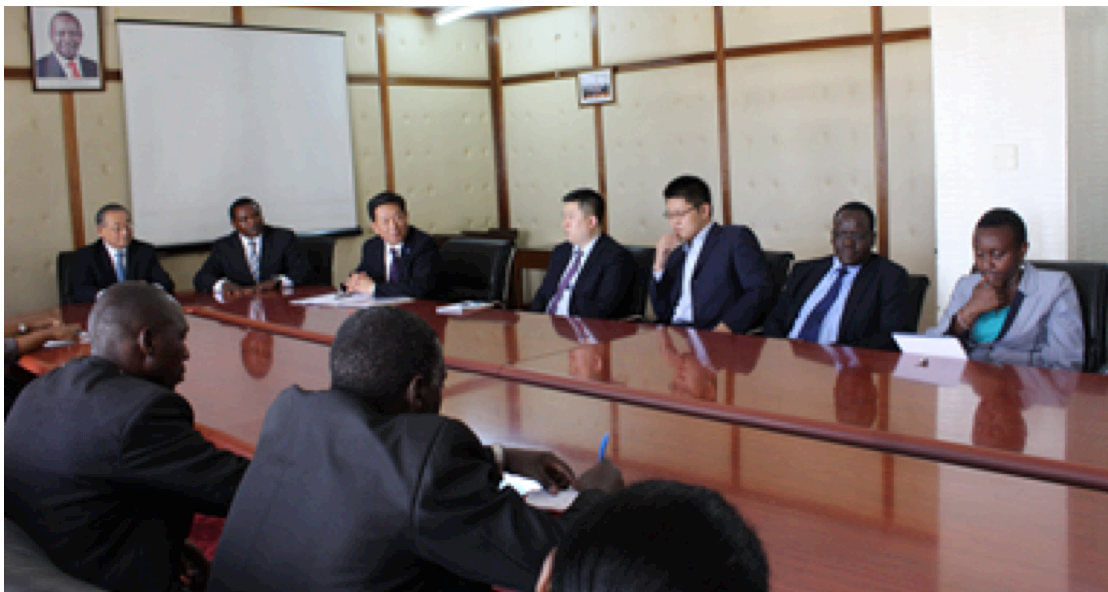
The Secretary General, Chinese Natcom, Dr. Yue, reiterated that Dr Tang was the candidate of the Chinese Government and requested that Kenya supports the candidacy of Dr. Tang. He assured that China will continue to support Kenya. He requested that KNATCOM formally signs an MOU with Chinese Natcom to further cement this partnership and planned support.

On his part Mr Ongoto thanked Dr. Tang and his team for visiting KNATCOM. He

appreciated the Chinese support to the improvement of Kenya's infrastructure and especially the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) that was launched recently by H. E. the President Hon. Uhuru Kenyatta. He thanked Dr. Tang for accepting that Kenya hosts the SDG 4 meeting in March 2018. He appreciated the long history and ties between China and Kenya dating back to the precolonial times.

He later addressed KNATCOM staff in the boardroom and where he further reiterated and assured KNATCOM of Chinese support to UNESCO. He restated his commitment to UNESCO if granted the opportunity to head the organization. He committed to have more Kenyans hired at UNESCO if given the opportunity by member states.

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*The writer is KNATCOM's Director in charge of Social & Human Sciences Programme.*



*Dr. Qian Tang, the current Assistant Director General in the Education Programme at UNESCO and a candidate for the post of Director General of UNESCO when he visited KNATCOM in May this year. He was accompanied by Dr. Du Yue, Secretary General of Chinese Natcom, Mr. Hou Jian, Director, Division of General Policy Panning from the Chinese Natcom, and Mr. Zhao Chen, from the Chinese Embassy.*

*[PHOTO: COURTESY / KNATCOM]*

# KNATCOM, University of Embu in a pact

By Jacqueline Njeru

The renowned American industrialist and founder of the Ford Motor Company Henry Ford once remarked that 'Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success'.

Kenya National Commission for UNESCO and the University of Embu signed a MoU in June 2017 to underscore their commitment to intellectual dialogue and collaboration as drivers of sustainable development.



*KNATCOM Secretary General Dr Evangeline Njoka (L) signs the MOU document with the University of Embu Ag. Vice Chancellor, Prof Daniel Mugendi. Looking on are Jacqueline Njeru of KNATCOM and Prof Kiplagat Kotut of University of Embu. [PHOTO: COURTESY / UNIVERSITY OF EMBU]*

The global framework for sustainable development known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) notes the pivotal importance of partnerships and cooperation to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. These partnership efforts will require coherent policies, an enabling environment for sustainable development at all levels and by all actors and a reinvigorated Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

It is in this spirit that the University of

Embu and the Kenya National Commission for UNESCO entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The MoU represents the two institutions commitment and cognition of the changing needs in our society and the importance of research, training, and staff –exchanges as strategies of achieving the SDGs.

During the occasion, KNATCOM Secretary General Dr. Evangeline Njoka, noted that UNESCO's and KNATCOM's core mandate is to promote a culture of peace through the five programmes of Education, Natural Science, Social and Human

Sciences, Culture and Communication and Information. She added that KNATCOM believes that the SDGs can and will be achieved through intellectual cooperation, intercultural dialogue and peace building.

On his part the Ag. Vice Chancellor, Prof Daniel Mugendi thanked KNATCOM for entering into a MoU with the University and he said that he is confident

that the partnership will be successful due to the shared objectives of the two organizations. Through the MoU, both organizations will contribute to solutions facing Kenyans at the local and national level. We all look forward to the realization of the commitments in the MoU for the prosperity of Kenya.

*The writer is a Deputy Director at KNATCOM's Social & Human Sciences Programme.*

# UNESCO INTERNATIONAL DAYS

<p><b>11 February</b> International Day of Women and Girls in Science</p>	<p><b>5 June</b> World Environment Day</p>	<p><b>5 October</b> World Teachers' Day</p>
<p><b>13 February</b> World Radio Day</p>	<p><b>8 June</b> World Oceans Day</p>	<p><b>13 October</b> International Day for Disaster Reduction</p>
<p><b>21 February</b> International Mother Language Day</p>	<p><b>17 June</b> World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought</p>	<p><b>17 October</b> International Day for the Eradication of Poverty</p>
<p><b>8 March</b> International Women's Day</p>	<p><b>18 July</b> Nelson Mandela International Day</p>	<p><b>20 October</b> World Statistics Day</p>
<p><b>21 March</b> World Poetry Day</p>	<p><b>26 July</b> International Day for the Conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystem</p>	<p><b>27 October</b> World Day for Audiovisual Heritage</p>
<p><b>22 March</b> World Day for Water</p>	<p><b>9 August</b> International Day of the World's Indigenous People</p>	<p><b>2 November</b> International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists</p>
<p><b>6 April</b> International Day of Sport for Development and Peace</p>	<p><b>12 August</b> International Youth Day</p>	<p><b>10 November</b> World Science Day for Peace and Development</p>
<p><b>23 April</b> World Book and Copyright Day</p>	<p><b>23 August</b> International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition</p>	<p><b>16 November</b> International Day for Tolerance</p>
<p><b>30 April</b> International Jazz Day</p>	<p><b>8 September</b> International Literacy Day</p>	<p><b>25 November</b> International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women</p>
<p><b>3 May</b> World Press Freedom Day</p>	<p><b>15 September</b> International Day of Democracy</p>	<p><b>1 December</b> World AIDS Day</p>
<p><b>5 May</b> African World Heritage Day</p>	<p><b>20 September</b> International Day of University Sport</p>	<p><b>3 December</b> International Day of Persons with Disabilities</p>
<p><b>21 May</b> World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development</p>	<p><b>21 September</b> International Day of Peace</p>	<p><b>10 December</b> Human Rights Day</p>
<p><b>22 May</b> International Day for Biological Diversity</p>	<p><b>28 September</b> International Day for the Universal Access to Information</p>	<p><b>18 December</b> International Migrants Day</p>
<p><b>25 May</b> Africa Day / Africa Week (from 22 to 24 May)</p>		

## Our Vision

To be a leading organization in the advancement of peace, sustainable development and intellectual collaboration

## Our Mission

To promote building of peace, eradication of poverty, sustainable development and intellectual dialogue through education, sciences, culture, communication and information



**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**  
17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD



Email :sg@unesco.go.ke | info@unesco.go.ke  
Website :www.unesco.go.ke  
Facebook :Kenya National Commission for UNESCO  
Twitter :@NatcomUnescope

National Bank Building, 16th Floor,  
Harambee Avenue,  
P. O. Box 72107-00200,  
Nairobi, Kenya.  
Tel: 020 2229053/4