

THE MAWAZO INSTITUTE PHD SCHOLARS PROGRAMME FOR AFRICAN WOMEN

The Mawazo PhD Scholars Programme supports women's capacity to find solutions to some of the most pressing needs facing the African continent. Our Scholars are African women under the age of 40 who are pursuing PhD studies in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), and the social sciences at accredited universities in East Africa. Each year, we competitively select a cohort of PhD scholars whose research is relevant to African development priorities, contributes new knowledge to their field of study, and holds the potential for transformational change in their communities and beyond.

Over the course of a one-year, non-residential fellowship, PhD Scholars receive grants to support their research, conference travel, and ongoing training. Scholars also benefit from professional and leadership skills trainings provided by Mawazo and our partners, research and editorial support, as well as mentorship and networking opportunities. Our programme is designed to amplify our Scholars' research and position them as the next generation of leading experts, thinkers, and innovators who are finding homegrown solutions to local development challenges.

WE ENVISION A WORLD
IN WHICH THE VOICES
AND IDEAS OF AFRICAN
WOMEN ARE AMPLIFIED
TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF
THE CONTINENT.

MEET THE 2018 MAWAZO PHD SCHOLARS



MARILYN RONOH
University of Nairobi
Field: Applied Mathematics

Project Title: Mathematical Modelling of HIV Transmission Dynamics Coupled with Awareness among Adolescents and Young Adults in Kenya

Research Summary: My mathematical model will help the government and stakeholders make more accurate projections and allocate resources more effectively to address the spread of HIV/AIDS among adolescents and young adults in Kenya.

How the Mawazo Programme impacted my PhD journey
Thanks to Mawazo, I attended five conferences and workshops across five countries and learned skills for current methodologies in my research area. Feedback from presentations I gave at conferences also improved my work greatly.



PERIS AMBALA
Kenyatta University / Institute of Primate
Research (IPR)
Field: Virology

Project Title: Determination of Molecular Characteristics of Filoviruses Circulating in Humans, Wild Caught Non-Human Primates, Bats and Rodents in Laikipia County in Kenya

Research Summary: My research uses molecular tools to study zoonotic viruses, such as Ebola and Marburg virus, in Kenya. It will fill important knowledge gaps to support the prevention and control of filoviruses in potentially susceptible regions of the country.

How the Mawazo Programme impacted my PhD journey
Mawazo support enabled me to host a community sensitization workshop on filoviruses in partnership with USAID-Predict, where I engaged with stakeholders on the wider issues of zoonotic viruses and other pathogens in Laikipia County.

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MELISA ALLELA

Technical University of Kenya
Field: Design and Creative Media

Project Title: Storytelling Using Experimental Animation Techniques: Digital Mediation of African Orature Using New and Emerging Technologies

Research Summary: Through my research, I will make a conceptual and technical contribution in the use of emerging technologies, such as Virtual Reality for the preservation of intangible African cultural heritage, which includes oral storytelling.

How the Mawazo Programme impacted my PhD journey
Mawazo funding allowed me to purchase requisite Virtual Reality equipment and attend conferences that advanced my research. Thanks to their support, I was also able to secure funding from the 2019 HEVA Cultural Heritage Seed Fund.



JUDITH KOSKEY

Egerton University
Field: Environmental Science

Project Title: Assessment of The Effects of Land Use on Water Quality and Macroinvertebrate Abundance and Diversities in Njoro and Kamweti Rivers, Kenya

Research Summary: My research will analyze the state of environmental degradation in the Njoro River watershed, providing recommendations for effective approaches to conserve the area while securing livelihoods of local communities.

How the Mawazo Programme impacted my PhD journey
The interdisciplinary nature of the programme offered me a chance to interact with scholars from different areas and taught me not to be narrow minded to my field.



TERESIAH NJIHIA

Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology / International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (icipe)
Field: Plant Health Science and Management

Project Title: Field Evaluation of a Trapping System for the Control of Antestia Bugs, *Antestiopsis thunbergii*, in Coffee Plantations

Research Summary: My research supports the development of affordable and non-toxic pesticides for coffee farming by manipulating the chemical cues involved in interspecific (plant-insect) and intraspecific (insect-insect) communication of pests.

How the Mawazo Programme impacted my PhD journey
Mawazo's support allowed me to complete the last stage of my research for which funding was lacking. I was able to submit my thesis for approval and graduated in 2019 with my doctoral degree.



WINNIE NYAMBOKI

University of Nairobi
Field: Economics

Project Title: The Economic Consequences of Poor Health in Kenya

Research Summary: My research will provide sound economic analysis on the burden of the four major classes of illness and injury in Kenya, contributing important evidence for policy interventions at both the national and county levels.

How the Mawazo Programme impacted my PhD journey
Because of Mawazo, I gained valuable networks, improved my confidence and public speaking skills and became more aware of how to better navigate the research process.



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ELIZABETH MUTUA
Kenyatta University
Field: Computer Science

Project Title: Data Mining for Smart Cities: Predictive Analysis for Minimization of City Traffic Congestion: Case Study: Nairobi City (Kenya)

Research Summary: My research aims to create a dynamic traffic flow model that incorporates real-world data from Nairobi's network of smart traffic cameras, improving predictability and helping ease traffic congestion in Nairobi and similar smart cities.

How the Mawazo Programme impacted my PhD journey

Mawazo's academic writing and publishing trainings helped me write two papers required for my PhD programme which were critical for my research. I am now awaiting external approval of my thesis.



SUSAN GICHUNA
University of Nairobi
Field: Climate Change and Adaptation

Project Title: Impact of Weather and Climate Variability on Urban Commuter Travel Behavior: A Case Study of Nairobi Central Business District

Research Summary: My research will study how increasing climate variability, such as flooding and extreme heat, affect urban commuter travel behaviour in Nairobi. It will inform future planning and policy, supporting enhanced climate resilience in Kenya's urban transportation sector.

How the Mawazo Programme impacted my PhD journey

When I joined the Mawazo programme, I was stagnating with my research. Through the programme, I received invaluable personalized support and guidance that has allowed me to make good progress in completing my PhD.



JACQUELINE OWIGO
United States International University –
Africa (USIU - Africa)
Field: International Relations

Project Title: Return and Reintegration in Post Conflict Contexts: A Case Study of Returnees in Somalia

Research Summary: My research will highlight the experiences of Somali returnees – such as deportees, disengaged combatants, returning refugees and diasporans – with a view to identifying areas for policy intervention that may be effective in improving reintegration outcomes globally.

How the Mawazo Programme impacted my PhD journey

Mawazo grants funded my dissertation research which I would not have afforded on my own. Their Op-Ed Writing training also exposed me to communication platforms available to share my research.



EDINAH SONG'ORO
Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture
and Technology / Pan African University
Institute for Basic Sciences, Technology
and Innovation (PAUSTI)
Field: Molecular Biology and
Biotechnology

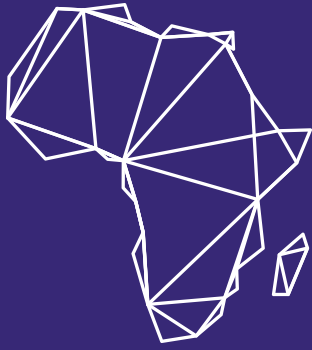
Project Title: Occurrence and Dynamics of Antimicrobial Resistance Genes in Selected Environments in Nairobi and Naivasha, Kenya

Research Summary: My research studies the prevalence of anti-microbial resistant genes in various environmental sites in Kenya. It will help increase our understanding of how this impacts spread of resistance into human and animal populations, and inform efforts to reduce the burden of infections caused by environmental microorganisms such as bacteria.

How the Mawazo Programme impacted my PhD journey

The research grants offered by Mawazo enabled me to carry out the first part of my PhD research. I also received many useful trainings and attended conferences that informed my research and expanded my network.





"... a
transformative
journey..."

– Melisa Allela, 2018 Mawazo PhD Scholar



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