

CURRICULUM VITAE

WILLIS OKUMU

BA (Political Science and Sociology), MA (Culture and Environment in Africa)



A. Address

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B. Professional Experience

August 2013-to date, Junior Research Fellow and PhD Candidate, Right Livelihood College/Center for Development Research (ZEF), University of Bonn, Germany

October 2010 to July 2013, **Research Assistant** in Resilience, Collapse and Reorganisation in Social-Ecological Systems of African Savannas Programme of the University of Cologne in Baringo, Samburu, Laikipia and Turkana Counties in Kenya.

Responsibilities

- Maintain a long-term view on project work and strategic planning, and working with the Programme Coordinator and Researchers to realize these in accordance with the Programme objectives.
- Undertake research and awareness building on Community Based Conservation initiatives within Baringo, Samburu, Turkana and Laikipia Counties in Northwestern Kenya
- Provide research and editorial support to researchers on pastoralists' conflicts, access to land and user rights of community members to natural resources.
- Ensure that research projects meet objectives and outputs, timelines and assist with budgetary control of relevant research activities (research, events and publications)

- Organise and manage seminars, workshops, public events and conferences connected with the research project.
- Contribute to central Programme resources and systems e.g. contacts database.
- Contribute to initiatives that improve efficiency and effectiveness of the Programme as a whole.

January-September 2010, **Programmes Officer**, Young Women's Christian Association, Nairobi Branch

- Coordinate skills training for Garbage, Recycling, Water and Sanitation workers.
- Coordinate the implementation of Kiambu Youth Waste Management and Eastland's Voter Education Projects.
- Develop and maintain accurate, up-to-date work plans and schedules and reports.
- Identify feasible community projects, prepare and present project proposals to potential donors.
- Training for participating groups in Women's Development Programme
- Facilitate quarterly projects review sessions
- Co-ordination of advocacy & networking activities, including exchange learning visits with Communication for Change and goCY interns.
- Regular Data Collection and Analysis in Practice Reduction and Awareness Building on FGM project.
- Regular report writing & presentation, according to programme needs.
- Conduct regular monitoring and evaluation of projects.
- Facilitate the training of Y-teen members on Reproductive Health Education and Youth Skills Development projects

September 2007- December 2009: **Research Assistant**, Young Women's Christian Association of Kenya

Projects

1. June-November 2009: Developing Anti-Female Genital Mutilation Training Manual

Responsibilities

- To develop a Training Manual for educating girls, boys, parents, opinion leaders, circumcisers and health workers on the health consequences of Female Genital Mutilation.
 - To pre-test the Training manual through a 2 day workshop.
 - Revise the manual to incorporate changes from pre-test workshop.
- 2. February-May 2009:** Assist the organization in conducting a Baseline Survey on Female Genital Mutilation among the Abagusii, Ameru and Maasai communities
- 3. August-December 2008:** Part of the team that conducted a Mid Term Project Evaluation on the Implementation of the FGM Project by the YWCA of Kenya
- 4. April-July 2008:** Conducting a Sexual Gender Based Violence Baseline Survey in Garsen Constituency, Tana River District for the YWCA of Kenya

5. **February-March 2008:** Part of the team that conducted a Rapid Needs Assessment on Internally Displaced Women and Children in Kirathimo, Kisumu, Mombasa, Nakuru, Eldoret and Siaya for YWCA of Kenya Emergency Relief Programme following the Post Election Violence after 2007 General Elections.
6. **September-December 2007:** Conducted a Literature Review and a Desk Survey on Female Genital Mutilation among the Abagusii, Ameru and Maasai communities in Kenya under the Practice Reduction and Awareness Building on FGM for the YWCA of Kenya

Other Responsibilities

- Designing of questionnaires
- Supervising the administration of questionnaires
- Conducting Focused Group Discussions
- Interviewing Key Informants and Opinion Leaders
- Analyzing Data from the Field.
- Writing a Comprehensive Analysis of the Research Findings
- Presenting Research Findings to project partners and other stakeholders at validation workshops.

September – December 2006: **Research Assistant** - Butere-Mumias District, Legal Resources Foundation Trust

Major Duties & Responsibilities

- Conducting Focused Group Discussions involving members of the public over the Judicial System of Kenya
- Conducting Focused Group Discussions involving inmates at Kakamega GK Prison over the Judicial System of Kenya
- Interviewing the District Magistrate, the local Officer Commanding Police Division, the Administration Police Commander, the Chiefs and the Assistant Chiefs and members of the public regarding the Judicial System of Kenya
- Writing a Preliminary Report regarding the Research Findings

November 2005-September 2006: **Student Researcher**, Institute of Development Studies (IDS), University of Nairobi

Major Duties & Responsibilities

- Designing a Research Topic
- Writing a Research Proposal
- Formulating a Hypothesis
- Designing Research Questionnaires
- Administering questionnaires to a sample population of 116 students in 7 campuses of the University of Nairobi
- Analyzing Research Findings
- Writing Policy-based Recommendations based on the Research Findings
- Presenting the Research Findings to University officials as well as the Ford Foundation.

C. Papers Presented

Willis Okumu “**Biodiversity Conservation, Pastoralists Livelihoods and Conflict-the Case of Ltungai Conservancy in Samburu County**” to be presented at the “*Building Climate Resilience to Enhance Adaptive Capacity for the Achievement of National Development Goals of Vision 2030 for Biodiversity Conservation, Water and Food Security in Kenya*” organised by National Centre for Biodiversity at the National Museums of Kenya in Co-operation with German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Regional Office for Africa, Nairobi, Kenya DAAD Scholars Association (KDSA) and Institute for Climate Change and Adaptation-ICCA (University of Nairobi) at National Museums of Kenya, Nairobi, Kenya, 17-19th July, 2013.

Willis Okumu “**The Role of Religious Leaders in Peacebuilding among Pastoralists Communities in Northwestern Kenya**” to be presented at the “*ISTR Africa Civil Society Research Network Conference on Faith, Civil Society and Development in Africa*” from the 11th-13th July 2013 Nairobi, Kenya.

Willis Okumu “**Sedenterisation of Pastoralists and Deforestation in Northwestern Kenya-the Case of Samburu West district**” to be presented at the “5th GAFoR Symposium on “Sustainable Forestry in South/Southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa: Incentives for Close to Nature Forestry” to be held at University of Eldoret, Kenya from the 8th-12th July 2013, organised by German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Centre for Biodiversity and Sustainable Land Use (CBL) of the Georg-August University, Göttingen, Germany, and Section Tropical and Subtropical Agriculture and Forestry (SetSAF).

Willis Okumu ‘**Cross-Border Pastoralists Trade in the Karamoja Cluster - A Route to East African Integration?**’ presented at an International Conference on Institutional Frameworks on Region Building in Africa organised by Institute for Regional Integration and Development (IRID), Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA), 6th-7th June 2013. Nairobi, Kenya.

Willis Okumu “**Conflict over Ltungai Conservancy- a Case of Fatal Competition over Grazing Land and Water among the Samburu and Pokot in North-western Kenya**” presented at the International Conference on “*Large Scale Agricultural Investments in Pastoral Lowlands of the Horn of Africa: Implications for Minority Rights and Pastoral Conflicts*” at the Institute of Peace and Security Studies (IPSS), Addis Ababa University (AAU) on 26th -27th April, 2013 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Willis Okumu “**Conflict and Peacebuilding in Karamoja Cluster and the Challenge of Integration in the East African Community**” presented at the Conference on “*Harnessing*

Policy Research for Sustainable Regional Integration in the EAC” organised by Africa Research Resource Forum (ARRF) & Think-Tank Network in the East African Community (TTN-EAC), 26th-28th November 2012, Arusha Tanzania.

Willis Okumu “**Negotiating Natural Resource among Pastoralists in Kenya-the Case of Eltungai**” presented at the Heinrich Böll Foundation “Future Workshop on Resources in East Africa and the Horn of Africa”, 5th November 2012, Nairobi Kenya.

Willis Okumu “**Pastoralists Youth as Change Agents in Peacebuilding in North-western Kenya**” presented at the International Conference on “*Youth and Democratisation in Africa: Lessons Learned and Comparative Experiences*” organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 1st -3rd November, 2012, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Willis Okumu “**The Role of Youth in Trans-local Peacebuilding in Pastoralists Communities in North-western Kenya**” presented at the “*2nd Annual Research Conference*” at the Maastricht School of Management, The Netherlands, 4th September 2012.

Willis Okumu “**Trans-local Peacebuilding among Pastoralists Communities in Kenya-the Case of Laikipia Peace Caravan**” Master Thesis, Cologne African Studies Centre, University of Cologne, July 4th 2012, Germany.

Willis Okumu “**Pastoralists’ Arms race as a Challenge to Peacebuilding in the Karamoja Cluster**” presented at the “*9th International South Sudan and Sudan Studies Conference*” on 23rd-25th July 2012 organised by Bonn International Centre for Conversion (BICC) and Rheinische Freidrich-Wilhelms Universität Bonn.

Willis Okumu “**State Retreat and Underdevelopment in Kenya; a Case Study of East Pokot district**”, 20th January 2012, Institute of Development Research and Development Policy, Ruhr Universität Bochum, Germany.

Willis Okumu “**Legal Challenges of Trans-boundary Watercourses-Case of the Nile**” presented at the “*Sustainability of the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers Conference*” organised by Rechtswissenschaftliche Fakultät, 4th-5th December 2011, University of Cologne.

Willis Okumu “**The Empire of Nature; Hunting, Conservation and British Imperialism**” presented at the “Human-Environment Relations Seminar”, Cologne African Studies Centre, University of Cologne, Germany on 25th November 2011.

Willis Okumu “**Human Ecology of the World Systems in East Africa: The Impact of Ivory Trade**” presented at “Human-Environment Relations Seminar”, Cologne African Studies Centre, University of Cologne, Germany on 25th November 2011.

Willis Okumu & Jackton Otambo “**Fortress Conservation; The Preservation of Mkomazi Game Reserve, Tanzania**”, presented at the “Peoples and Parks Seminar”, Cologne African Studies Centre, University of Cologne, Germany on 23rd November 2011.

Willis Okumu “**Cultivating Pastoralists; Ecology and Economy among the Il Chamus of Baringo 1840-1980**” presented at the “Historical Ecology Seminar”, Cologne African Studies Centre, University of Cologne, Germany, 18th November 2011.

D. Publications

Willis Okumu (2013) “Trans-local Peace Building among Pastoralist Communities in Kenya- The Case of Laikipia Peace Caravan, Culture and Environment in Africa Series 3, Cologne African Studies Centre, University of Cologne pp 1-60.

Willis Okumu (2013) “**Drivers of Pastoralists Violence in Northwestern Kenya**” Transconflict, 1st March <http://www.transconflict.com/2013/03/drivers-of-pastoralist-violence-in-northwestern-kenya-013/>,

Willis Okumu (2013) “**From Ethnic Violence to Seeds of Peace: Pastoralists, Youth, and Inter-community Peacebuilding in Northwestern Kenya**” Kujenga Amani, Vistas, February, Africa Peacebuilding Network, Social Science Research Council, Brooklyn, New York <http://forums.ssrc.org/kujenga-amani/2013/02/11/from-ethnic-violence-to-seeds-of-peace-pastoralists-youth-and-inter-community-peacebuilding-in-northwestern-kenya/>

Willis Okumu (2012) “**Youth-led Peace Caravans and Inter-community Peacebuilding among Pastoralists in North-western Kenya**”, Conflict Trends, Issue IV, December, The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), South Africa pp 51-56 http://mercury.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/ISN/160353/ichaptersection_singledocument/15ebd8e5-715e-4a0d-b5be-6cc849f95833/en/7.pdf

E. Education

October 2010- July 2012, **Master of Arts in Culture and Environment in Africa** (CEA), University of Cologne Germany. Master Thesis on “**Trans-local Peacebuilding among Pastoralists Communities in Kenya-the Case of Laikipia Peace Caravan**”

October 2002-December 2006, **Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and Sociology**, University of Nairobi, Kenya

February 1997-November 2000, **Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (K.C.S.E), Grade B Plain** Nairobi School, Kenya.

F. Competencies

Language and Communication Skills

- Fluent Speaker of English, Swahili and Dholuo, average speaker of German
- Effective in public presentations
- Able to present technical data and write in depth research reports
- Knowledgeable on technical report writing and facilitate groups
- Understands proposal writing

Computer Skills

- Trained in Learning ArcGIS for Desktop
- Skilled in word processing
- Understands spreadsheet usage
- Able to use statistical packages

Research Skills

- Knowledgeable about statistical analysis
- Understands decision analysis
- Demonstrates knowledge of program evaluation
- Understands qualitative analysis
- Able to conduct applied research

G. Community Service

- Member, Peace and Collaborative Development Network Member since 2008
- Vice Chair, Board of Directors, Progressive Volunteers since July 2012
- Regional Facilitator for Africa, International Young Professionals Foundation since September 2012
- Member, Kenya Red Cross Society since 2004
- Member, Gender Training Working Group and Community of Practice- UN-INSTRAW since 2008

H. Referees

Prof. Dr. Michael Bollig

Vice Rector for International Relations & Director, Cologne African Studies Centre (CASC)

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