



MASENO UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
Department of Sociology & Anthropology

FULLY FUNDED PhD AND MASTERS SCHOLARSHIPS IN ANTHROPOLOGY

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Maseno University, Kenya in collaboration with the Department of Anthropology at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark, is offering: **Two positions for a PhD student and two positions for MA students in Anthropology** (starting 1 September 2025). The positions are offered within the framework of a transdisciplinary project namely; ***Inequities and conflicts in arid and semi-arid zones linked to groundwater management in Kenya project***, led by Klaus Mosegaard from Niels Bohr Institute at the University of Copenhagen. The positions are tenable within the larger transdisciplinary project involving institutions in Denmark and Kenya namely: Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Maseno University, Geothermal Energy Training and Research Institute (GeTRI), Dedan Kimathi University of Technology (DKUT) and Department of National Water Resources, Ministry of Water, Sanitation and Irrigation (KMoWSI), Kenya; Niels Bohr Institute, University of Copenhagen; Department of Anthropology, University of Copenhagen and Department of Geosciences, Aarhus University, Denmark.

Project Description

There is an urgent need for research to increase water supply in Kenya and into management frameworks that can effectively address water scarcity, unsustainable water use and the related inequities, injustices and conflicts. Rising global temperatures and increasingly erratic weather patterns intensify the pressures on shared water resources, calling for actions to mitigate the adverse impacts and adapt to the shifting climatic conditions. Possible actions are (i) increase water supply by discovery of new groundwater resources, (ii) more efficient water management frameworks based on enhanced awareness of inequities and conflicts due to unsustainable use, (iii) culturally appropriate policies and initiatives to protect vulnerable and marginalised populations. This project will be based on continuous interactions and interrelations to grasp and engage the relevant actors in the water resource use and management. The project is aimed at studying the different household dynamics and institutional management using anthropological methods, which, through their open-ended, participatory nature, can offer unique insights into unpredictable cases of conflicts. Moreover, the project will contribute to the planned groundwater mapping of Laikipia and to the development and guidelines for actions and policies aimed to combat unsustainable water use.

Call for Two (2) PhD Students in Social Anthropology

- We endeavour to recruit student (s) who would generate new patterns of thinking and interrogate the effectiveness of existing conflict resolution mechanisms put in place to address inequities and conflicts linked to management of groundwater in Laikipia County, Kenya
- The anthropology students will investigate different groups of water users and agencies involved in addressing concrete water problems by;
 1. isolating the specificities of groundwater related inequities and conflicts within and between households by comparing water use and related conflicts around groundwater and other kinds of water sources, and/or
 2. Comparing the different types of ownership and management of underground water resources found around existing boreholes and wells, to understand how they intersect with community structures (inequities in power and wealth), gender, and water use (farming, pastoralism, domestic use).
- The essential duty of the PhD students will be to develop, write and submit a PhD thesis on a subject of relevance to this project. This should include a substantial period of ethnographic field research.
- The PhD fellows are expected to be lead authors in at least 2 articles.

The candidates should meet the following prerequisites:

- Excellent master's degree or equivalent at a Kenya's university or international university of similar standing, either in anthropology or a closely related discipline.
- Experience with qualitative ethnographic methods.
- Excellent social and communication skills.
- Experience of working in interdisciplinary contexts.

Our Offer

The PhD positions are awarded for a maximum of four years, with no extension. These positions will be full-time, contractual, with sufficient additional funding for fieldwork. The workplace is Maseno University-Kenya. Regular meetings and exchange of information will occur and each of the Kenyan PhD student (s) will spend 6 months at Danish Universities. The scholarship includes all university fees, fieldwork costs, costs for books, and a monthly stipend of 900 USD/month.

Prospective applicants should send a CV, cover letter, a research outline (up to 800 words) publications if any and academic certificates by email to nyambedha@maseno.ac.ke, copied to quentin.gausset@anthro.ku.dk, sombere@maseno.ac.ke. **Deadline for applications is 31st July, 2025.** For any further inquiries, please contact Prof. Erick Otieno Nyambedha on 0713816189/0733878959 or DR. Stephen Okumu Ombere on 0724247260.

Master of Arts in ANTHROPOLOGY

Call for Two (2) MA Students

The project aims to study different household dynamics and institutional management using anthropological methods, which can offer unique insights into unpredictable conflicts.

We endeavour to recruit students who would interrogate the effectiveness of existing conflict resolution mechanisms put in place to address inequities and conflicts linked to management of groundwater in Laikipia County, Kenya. The students are also required to generate new ways of thinking by further

1. Isolating the specificities of groundwater related inequities and conflicts within and between households by comparing water use and related conflicts around groundwater and other kinds of water sources.
2. Comparing the different types of ownership and management of underground water resources found around existing boreholes and wells, to understand how they intersect with community structures (inequities in power and wealth), gender, and water use (farming, pastoralism, domestic use).
 - The students are required to apply for MA in anthropology at Maseno University
 - The essential duty of the MA students will be to develop, write and submit a MA thesis on a subject of relevance to this project. This should include a substantial period of ethnographic field research.
 - The MA fellows are expected to be lead authors in at least 1 article.

The candidates should meet the following prerequisites:

- Must meet fulfil admission requirements of the MA programme in anthropology at Maseno University-Kenya.
- Must have second class honours-upper division in Bachelors' degree from Kenya's universities either in anthropology or related discipline (mandatory).
- Experience with qualitative ethnographic methods (required)
- Excellent social and communication skills (required)
- Experience of working in interdisciplinary contexts (desired)

RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Interested candidates are invited to submit the following materials to the evaluation committee no later than 31st July, 2025.

- Bachelor's Degree certificates and any other relevant certificates
- 1-page motivation letter and CV
- 1-page of ideas for a MA research project related to the project objectives.

All applications should be sent by email to: nyambedha@maseno.ac.ke, copied to quentin.gausset@anthro.ku.dk, sombere@maseno.ac.ke. **Deadline for applications is 31st July, 2025.** For any further inquiries, please contact Prof. Erick Otieno Nyambedha on 0713816189/0733878959 or DR. Stephen Okumu Ombere on 0724247260.

Our Offer

The MA position is awarded for a maximum of two years, with no extension. This position will be on a full-time, contractual basis, with sufficient additional funding for fieldwork. The workplace is Maseno University-Kenya. Regular meetings and exchange of information will occur. The scholarship includes all university fees, fieldwork costs, costs for books, and a monthly stipend of 400 USD/month.