

NAME OF STUDENT: Wanican Lilian Angala

REG NO: 2005/HD03/1563U: **STUDENT NO:** 205024068

Course: Master Land use and Regional Development

School of Forestry, Environmental and Geographical Sciences (SFECS)

College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES)

My case story submitted to RUFORUM

FEBRUARY 2023

The Untold Story of My Master Degree

My name is Wanican Lilian Angala, female Ugandan aged 47 years old. I am a single mother to 4 children i.e. a girl aged 19 in April 2023 and she is S.6, a boy aged 17 this 26th March 2023 and he is in S.4, another girl aged 15 years old and in S.2 and a little daughter aged 8 who is currently in Primary 3.

I joined Master's Program in the Department of Geography, School of Forestry, Environmental and Geographical Sciences in 2005 with Reg No 2005/HD03/1563U and student No 205024068. My plan was to complete the program and get a sponsorship to enroll for another Master's Degree in Rural Development probably in the Netherlands and then a PhD. thereafter.

I was then working for Uganda Coffee Development Authority as District Coffee Coordinator for the greater Masindi at the time. Although the pay was not adequate to cater for my tuition and other family needs, I struggled to pay tuition, passed all course work and had my proposal successfully vetted.

The proposal was entitled, **“Land evaluation for coffee production in Masindi District” and supervised by** Prof. Majaliwa Mwanjalolo and The Late Dr. Festus Bagoora. Unfortunately Dr. Festus Bagoora later passed on, leaving me with Prof. Majaliwa Mwanjalolo as the main supervisor. At the time, I had not collected data for my research work.

With the coming of a second child and increased family responsibilities, I was overwhelmed, stressed and decided to apply for withdrawal and extension of program and I was granted in the year 2006/2007. I embarked on vigorous search for sponsorship and fortunately **KULIKA CHARITABLE TRUST** granted me the opportunity and paid part of my tuition.

The major setback came in the year 2008-2009 when I had my 3rd child. There was major downsizing of staff at UCDA where some of us were affected. I was jobless, had enormous marital challenges and yet faced with responsibilities of fending for the family. **THIS IS THE TIME I PUT STUDIES ON HOLD TO FOCUS ON MAKING MONEY AND TO RAISE THE CHILDREN. LITTLE DID I KNOW THE DECISION WAS ALMOST THE “DEAD END” TO MY MASTERS PROGRAM.**

I disappeared from Makerere and got lost as a mother and wife who would leave her young babies in the care of a househelp to travel long distances in search of opportunities including consultancies with NGOs alike.

In 2018 (7 years later), **Dr. Sarah Akello Esimu** a Lecturer at Makerere University reached out to 7 of us who were struggling (4 Masters and 3 PhDs) with the news of sponsorship program at RUFORUM. The sponsorship was a Post Doctorate from **Carnegie Corporation of New York**. Although, I took up the opportunity, those family challenges I thought would subside kept

escalating and I became heavily stressed. I received a letter of discontinuation from Makerere because I had been too long on the program.

The worst time came in 2021 when I received a discontinuation notice from MUK, i had just walked out of the marriage to embrace life as a single mother, fend for the children including tuition, had issues at my workplace where I was denied a promotion and many others. **“THIS WAS A BREAK DOWN POINT OF MY LIFE”**. Fortunately, I was given opportunity to appeal to Graduate Committee through my Supervisors Prof. Majaliwa and Dr. Sarah Akello to defend myself.

On 30th September 2021 during the 2nd lockdown, I appeared before Graduate Committee Meeting which was both in person and on zoom. I narrated my story but also requested for an opportunity to complete the program because I had submitted the draft thesis for review with my Supervisors. At this point, I broke down because the Masters was all I had to push life forward. Prof. Nabanoga Goretti the Deputy principal then was on zoom told me she had no question for me. I want to thank Graduate Committee and the Dean Prof. Babwetera who gave me 3 months chance to submit my work.

In the meantime, the School Registrar failed to locate my biodata and the results for all course work were not seen. We managed to retrieve my file from Records Graduate School and later got results for the course work. In yet another dilemma in December 2020, Registrar called and said my book was stuck because one of my results on Land evaluation and Land use was missing. This paper was lectured by my Supervisor, **The Late Dr. Festus Bagoora who passed away almost 10 years ago**. God being God and with the cooperation and help of my Head of Department Dr. Frank Muggaga, the results were retrieved on 6th January 2023 from the original submission made by The Late Dr. Festus Bagoora.

I honestly want to extend sincere gratitude to my Supervisors **Prof. Majaliwa** who walked this journey with me for the past 17 and half years and **Dr. Sarah Akello Esimu** who never gave up on me. They both kept pushing and mentoring me till the finishing line on 14th February 2023 when I graduated during the 73rd Graduation Ceremony of Makerere University. **“YOU DESERVE MEDALS”**.

I sincerely thank RUFORUM for sponsoring my research. I wouldn't have attained this degree without your support. I now appeal for further sponsorship to be able to enroll for PhD and further my academic and professional dream.

I AM SURE THAT MY GOD IS ABOUT TO DO A NEW THING (Isaiah 43:18-19) and that HE WILL PAY FOR THE YEARS THE LOCUSTS HAVE EATEN (Joel 2:25).