

**KENYA FOREST SERVICE,
EQUITY HOLDINGS GROUP AND
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
PLANT TREES TO CELEBRATE UON@50**

On 18th May, 2021, The Kenya Forest Service partnered with Equity Holdings Group and the University of Nairobi (UON) for a tree planting activity at UON's College of Agriculture and Veterinary Services (CAVS) and the Wangari Maathai Institute for Peace and Environmental Studies in Kabete to celebrate UON@50 years since formation.

Mr. Julius Kamau, the Chief Conservator of Forests joined the Chief Guest, Equity Group's Chief Commercial Officer Mr. Polycarp Igathe and UON's Vice-Chancellor Prof. Stephen Kiama in planting 7,000 trees.

The exercise was part of the bank's plan to plant 35 million trees through its networks & branches countrywide towards supporting the country's 10% tree cover goal.

While launching the exercise, Mr. Igathe noted the importance of trees to the wellbeing of humanity in the provision of fresh clean air for the sustenance of life. He stated that so far the bank has planted a total of four million trees countrywide over the past year with 1.5 million more planted in the current ongoing rain season.

"Forests are the lungs of Kenya, and we've gathered here to activate the lungs of our country through this tree planting exercise," noted Mr. Igathe.

He further lauded the University's choice to mark 50 years at the Institute named after Kenya's Iconic Noble Peace Prize Laureate the Late Prof Wangari Maathai whom he referred to as having planted a tree in the minds of Kenyans and the global citizenry.

Also speaking during the exercise, Mr. Kamau lauded Equity and UON for collaborating with the Service to grow trees whereby the academic institution dedicated part of their land for afforestation, with the bank providing seedlings towards the same and KFS providing technical support.

He noted the Presidential directive to all ministries, state departments and agencies to participate in tree growing by allocating 10% of their CSR budgets to tree growing. The CCF appreciated the involvement of the private sector in the initiative with Equity Bank CS commitment to plant 35 million trees through its bank networks.

The CCF also underscored the constitutional requirement of raising Kenya's tree cover to 10% being brought forward by His Excellency the President from 2030 to 2022, as an enormous task mandated to the Service adding that to achieve it, partnerships and goodwill from both public and private sector would play a big role hence the open-door policy approach to tree growing partnerships being exercised by KFS.

Mr Kamau commended UON and Equity for previous tree growing initiatives in collaboration with KFS where 7,000 trees that had been previously planted at CAVS and Ngong Forest (Miotoni block) having registered a high survival rate.

Through this, the CCF further interested the university's leadership to encourage students to take up tree growing exercises such as adopting a culture where both incoming, graduating and alumni classes can actively undertake tree growing.

The CCF noted that the Service is currently undertaking extensive tree planting activities across the country and encouraged Kenyans to join the movement of growing trees to achieve a 10% tree cover by next year.

The tree planting activity drew participants from UON comprising dons and students, and staff from Equity Bank branches in Kibera, Westlands, Kasarani, Ngara, Kangemi, Karen, Four Ways and Community among others present.

Equity Bank Kenya
University of Nairobi