



INSTITUTE OF ENVIRONMENT  
AND WATER MANAGEMENT



University of the  
West of England

# Researching Water-Related Issues in Nairobi, Kenya

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# Outline

- ▶ Institute of Environment and Water Management (IEWM)
- ▶ Research Project
  - ▶ Context
  - ▶ Aims
  - ▶ Methods
  - ▶ Findings
  - ▶ Conclusions
- ▶ Questions

# IEWM

- ▶ IEWM is small organisation based in Nairobi that was formed in 2005 and officially registered as an NGO in 2008.
- ▶ The institutions mission is to strengthen water and environmental governance and climate change resilience through unlocking the potential of communities and institutions to manage their natural resources equitably and sustainably.



# Projects

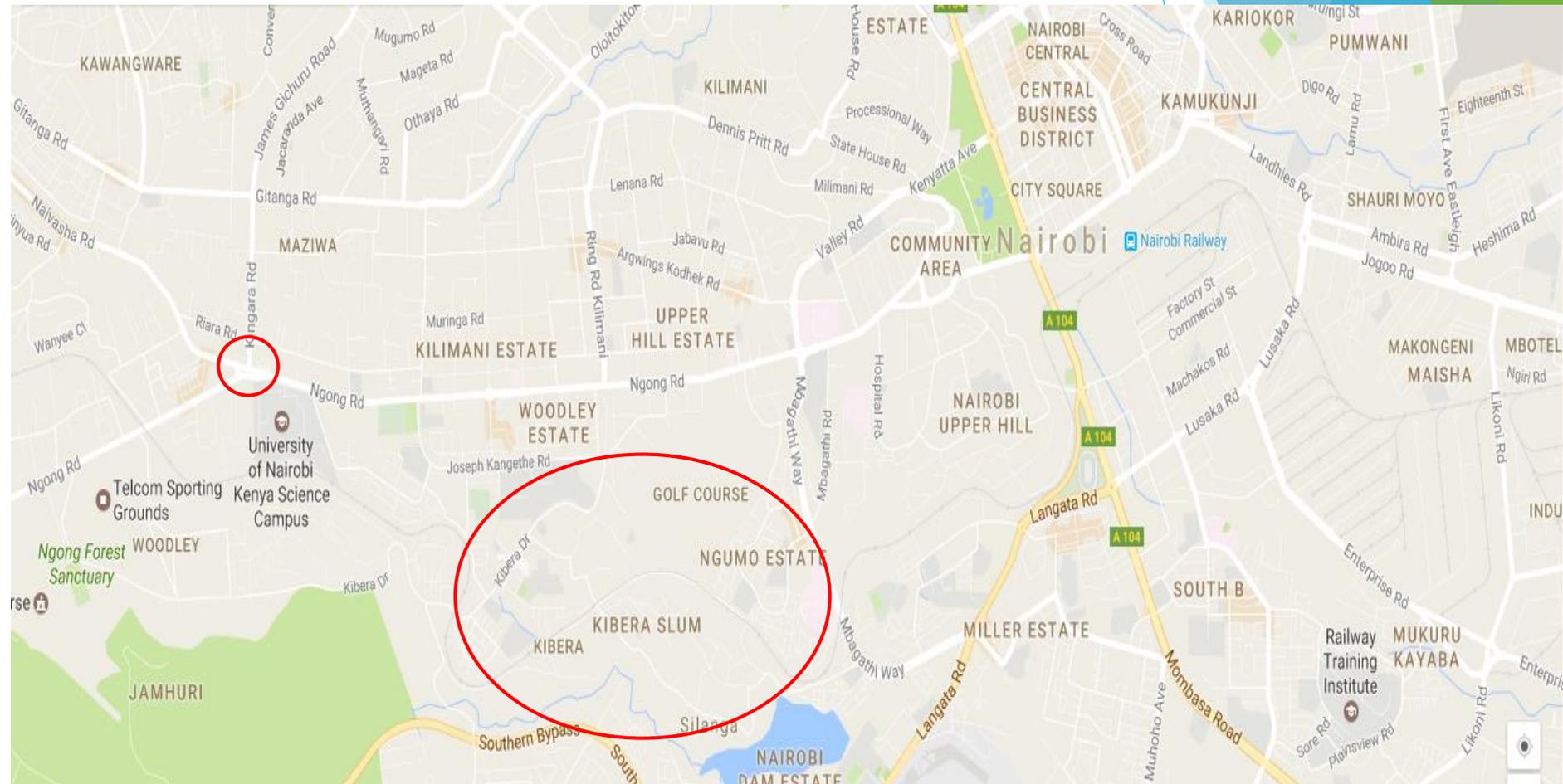
- ▶ Adaptation, learning and advocacy programme (ALAP)
- ▶ Civil society networks and individual organisations learn, share and document knowledge about community based adaptation goals and approaches.
- ▶ Civil society promote national and local action on community based adaptation.
- ▶ Implement activities as an individual organisation and through the Gender and Climate Change Working Group (GCCWG).



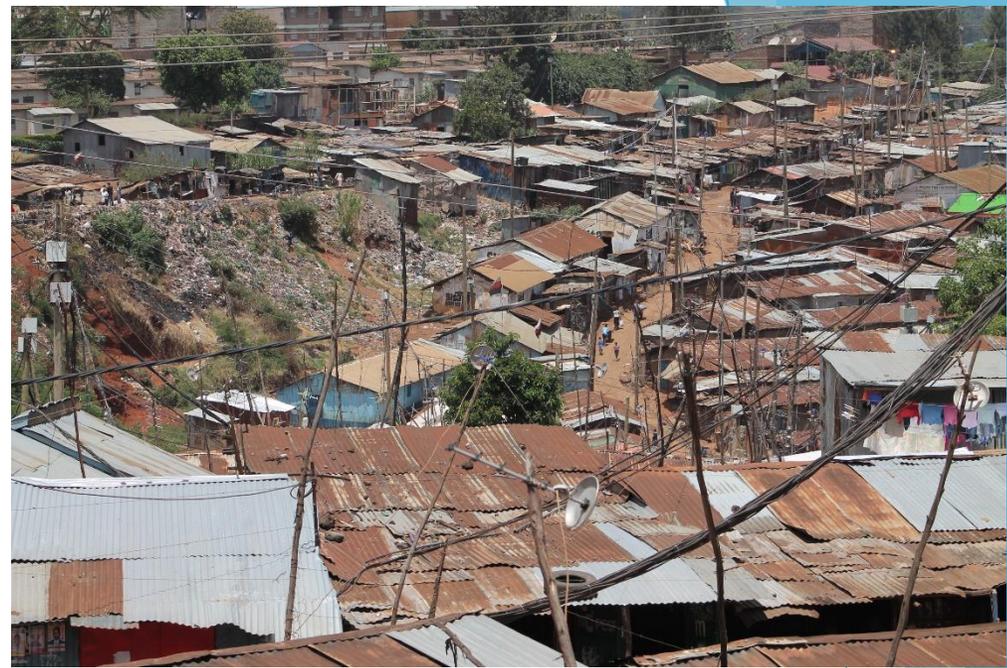
- ▶ *Nairobi Water Risks and Opportunities Assessment (NWRAO)*
  - ▶ Nairobi and its environments are subject to numerous water related risks like unreliable and decreasing water supply, flooding, pollution, weak enforcement, feeble urban and land use planning, and catchment degradation.
  - ▶ The assessment was utilized to further raise awareness and to engage more stakeholders to jointly develop actions to improve the water balance in the catchment and increase access to water.



# Research Project: Urban Agriculture (UA) in Nairobi



- ▶ Post-colonial period saw the rapid urbanisation of many African cities, including Nairobi.
- ▶ Many landless migrants lacked formal education and skills (women in particular).
- ▶ Urban crop cultivation used as a survival strategy.
- ▶ In recent years (with the help of government and NGO's), UA has become more entrepreneurial and significantly contributes to urban food security, social capital and women's empowerment.



# The Kichinjio Community Based Organisation

- ▶ The Kichinjio water and urban agriculture project is a community based organisation which was started 9 years ago with the help of the NGO Solidarities, who's mission was to raise awareness about the importance of unity between different ethnic groups and tribes in Kenya through urban agriculture.
- ▶ Aim:
  - ▶ To evaluate how successful the Kichinjio CBO has been in terms of promoting social cohesion and tackling food insecurities, and to highlight the institutional and socio-economic challenges facing urban farmers in Kibera.
- ▶ Method:
  - ▶ Semi-structured interviews with the farmers along with prolonged observation



# Findings

- ▶ All participants reported:
  - ▶ Overall better food security since being involved in the project (Do not use coping mechanisms or lack food).
  - ▶ Better dietary diversity - money earned/saved from farming activities is used for meat, dairy etc.
  - ▶ Good working relationships with other farmers and local community. (saving scheme, free vegetables for most vulnerable, training centre). Although there have been issues with encroachment in the past.
- ▶ Main challenges they face:
  - ▶ Access to water! Climate change intensifies drought and makes rainfall unpredictable
  - ▶ Financial resources
  - ▶ Land insecurity

# Conclusions

- ▶ The Kichinjio project is the only one of its kind (to my knowledge) serving the people of Kibera.
- ▶ The food grown and the water provided there help to support many potentially vulnerable people in the area.
- ▶ From the communities perspective, the site also has significant social value.
- ▶ Without ongoing support from the Ministry of Agriculture and protection from local authorities, the project would struggle to sustain itself, especially with changing climatic conditions.
- ▶ With a permanent source of water for irrigation and secure land rights, the project could continue to develop and benefit the community by providing fresh vegetables and educational opportunities.

## Final thoughts...

- ▶ Great experience! Both personally and professionally.
- ▶ Geography is a diverse subject and can open so many doors.

