

REMARKS BY PROF. AGNES MWANG'OMBE, PRINCIPAL, COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND VETERINARY SCIENCES DURING THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS) LAB AT THE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND VETERINARY SCIENCES (CAVS), UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI (UoN) ON 11TH FEBRUARY 2015.

The Vice Chancellor- University of Nairobi,

The Deputy Chief of Mission - USAID

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very delighted to be part of this important occasion on the official launch of the Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Laboratory at the College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences, University of Nairobi. I am aware that this facility was established two years ago at the [Center for Sustainable Dryland Ecosystems and Societies \(SDES\) in the](#) department of Land Resource Management and Agricultural Technology (LARMAT) with an initial start-up of nine computers that could only hold nine students in one sitting. However today, I am glad to note that the laboratory has been upgraded and is now fully established within [CSDES/LARMAT](#) department with 40 networked computers and with a capacity to hold 40 students at ago. The computers have also been installed with 30 permanent ArcGIS version 10.2 License software plus 3D analyst and spatial analyst extensions.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The setting up of this facility was made possible through the generous support of the USAID-Higher Education for Development Initiative that established the Centre for Sustainable Dryland Ecosystems and Societies (CSDES); a partnership between the University of Nairobi and Colorado State University. I therefore wish to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the US Government for supporting this and other programs at the College. As a University and in particular my College, we are very grateful for this assistance because it will go a long way in building the capacity of students, faculty members and other stakeholders to address the problems of dryland ecosystems and societies.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I also thank the University management especially the chairman department of LARMAT for supporting CSDES programs and for hosting the GIS Lab in the department. I have been reliably informed that so far CSDES and LARMAT have collaboratively held four GIS training in the department that have equipped more than 80 post graduate and undergraduate students and several faculty members with hands-on skills in GIS. I know the demand for GIS training continues to grow both from within and outside the University. As we respond to this demand, I

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wish to pledge my support in any way possible to ensure that more people can benefit from the GIS lab.

| As a College, we remain committed to contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable livelihoods in Kenya and the region through adoption of new technologies in our training and research programmes. The college, through the various departments will work closely with other stakeholders, development agencies and knowledge- based institutions taking into consideration emerging global and regional trends to improve livelihoods.

| **Ladies and gentlemen,**

| I wish to finally recognise the effort of CSDES in contributing to sustainable dryland ecosystems and improved livelihoods. For the past three years the Centre through the able leadership of Prof. Jeseo Njoka has made great strides in promoting action research and mentoring undergraduate and graduate students in sustainable utilization of dryland resources.

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