

SPEAKERS PROFILE

Kinyanjui Kombani

Kinyanjui Kombani “The banker who writes” is a creative writer, banker and learning solutions specialist. His novels ‘The Last Villains of Molo’ and ‘Den of Inequities’ have been study texts in Kenyan universities. His other work includes children’s stories, young adult fiction and a play that has been shot to film. Kinyanjui is the recipient of the Jomo Kenyatta Prize for Literature (2019), Wahome Mutahi Prize for Literature (2019) and CODE Burt Award for African Young Adult Fiction (2018). He has also been recognized as Outstanding Young Alumni Award (Kenyatta University), and was featured in the 2015 Top 40 Under 40 Men Survey by Business Daily Africa for his contribution to creative writing in Kenya.

John Mwazemba

John Mwazemba is an experienced editor, writer and publisher with over 17 years publishing experience having worked at various Kenya based publishers before joining Oxford University Press East Africa (OUPEA) as its Regional Director. A consummate scholar, John holds a Master’s Degree in Communication Studies (Communication, Journalism and related studies) from the University of Nairobi, and a BSc in Information Sciences (Publishing Major) from Moi University. He has done various editorial assignments for the World Bank, the United Nations (the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Ethiopia, and the United Nations Development Programme, Afghanistan) as well as other government and non-governmental organizations in Kenya. Mr Mwazemba is a regular contributor on various issues in the local media in both English and Kiswahili. He is passionate about education, and is active in the Kenya Publishers Association, where he has served as Treasurer since 2014. He will speak on Making the publishing industry more profitable

Gerald mbugua

I was born and raised in Kenya. I started my early education at Giathieko Primary one of the schools that we have built a library and donated books to. I then attended St. Mary's Boarding school in Mwea Tebere where I completed my Primary school education before proceeding to Moi Forces Academy for my High School Education. In 1992 I joined Strathmore College for a Diploma in IDPM (Computer Information Systems) and that prepared me for a job with BarclayTrust Investment Services a subsidiary of Barclay Bank of Kenya. After 3 years at Barclaytrust, I felt an urge to continue with my education and left for the U.S. in January 1996. I joined California State University and graduated with a Bachelors Degree in Business Administration with a Major in Computer Information Systems and a Minor in Telecommunication Systems in June 2004. I followed that up with a Masters in Public Administration with a Concentration in Public Policy and graduated in June 2007.

My Masters Degree and my Parents careers as lifetime educators motivates me to run Maktabas Gukaya Foundation. As an Alumni of one of these schools that we support, I feel indebted to give back to them and also a sadness that 54 years since independence, the schools still do not have a place where kids can go for leisure reading. I also felt that after my Masters degree, I could either have gone to work for a Foundation for the salary and not passion, or I could start my own and bring together a team that shared my passion and we would work together towards a common good and I chose the latter. We have entered into a partnership with several libraries, bookstores and schools to collect excess books both new and slightly used that I store in Storage units here until I have a full containers worth and I have collected enough money to ship to Kenya and clear them at the Mombasa Port.

Mercy Kibira

Mercy is the Co-Founder and CEO of Half Priced Books and a fast-growing Bookshop with 3 outlets in Nairobi including, CBD Biha Towers, Lavington Mall and Village Market. She is also the brains behind the MOTO Books and Arts Festival.

Mercy is a books enthusiast who is passionate about promoting the reading culture in Africa. She is keen on conversations revolving around African literature and eradicating illiteracy in marginalized communities from Africa. Mercy Has developed a Unique initiative Known as "Adopt A Library" an initiative that equips, refurbishes and stocks libraries from marginalized communities with new and repurposed books aims to improve children's literacy at ages of 3 years- 14 years

Lucas Wafula

Lucas Wafula is Editor-in-chief, and CEO, Booklyst Press Limited. Also, he is Director and Lead Facilitator, at Global Editorial Centre-KE. Lucas has been working as a publisher/editor for nearly 20 years now, during which he has worked with award-winning authors, authors of note, as well as young writers. He has worked in and on projects for, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Zambia, Uganda, Malawi, and South Sudan. Lucas is passionate about growing African literature and helping budding writers sharpen their writing craft. He lives in Nairobi, Kenya.