

PiAf Final Report I for Upload

Report Name (Org_Country_Year_Report Type)

Alliance_Kenya_2021-22_Final_Report_(1)

Fellowship Year

2021-2022

Fellowship Organization

Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT

Fellowship City

Nairobi

Fellowship Country

Kenya

Please summarize all of the fellowship work you did this year as you would on your resume.

- Performed monitoring and evaluation duties as the head of the Africa hub to assess impact among scientists
- Analyzed agronomy data pertaining to nutrition accessibility, soil microbes, and cash crop exports utilizing software such as python, R, and QGIS
- Led monthly workshops across the African continent to inform farmers of climate friendly agricultural techniques in order to build resilience against climate change

List the three things that you are most proud of contributing to your fellowship organization over the past year.

- I helped establish a monitoring and evaluation hub in Africa, aiding scientists in evaluating impact efficiency to inform future research projects.
- I expanded my technical knowledge in analyzing data relating to sustainable agriculture and was able to provide my organization useful insights and teach other team members how to continue the analyses
- I led monthly workshops for scientists and farmers and helped train a new hire who will take over my position when leaving

Do you feel like you are a more competitive candidate for the types of jobs or academic programs you would like to pursue after your fellowship as a result of your PiAf fellowship experience?

Yes

Please briefly explain why you do or do not feel like a more competitive candidate for the types of jobs or academic programs you would like to pursue after your fellowship.

I absolutely feel like a more competitive candidate for future jobs as I plan to continue working on the African continent after graduate school. Having a year of experience living within the communities I hope to rejoin, I believe will increase my flexibility and adaptability in future positions.

What have you learned about your own values and worldview through this year?

I found myself constantly pondering my place working on the African continent. Looking back, I believe that the work I accomplished may have been more meaningful if coming from someone that grew up on the continent. That being said, I have found much value in this experience as it has allowed me to educate myself about the community as well as educate others. Being American, Africa is not necessarily advertised as an attractive place to live. Often when Americans think of living abroad, their minds go to Europe or other western countries. Even while living in Nairobi for six months, I only ran into a handful of Americans. I believe I added value to my community in Nairobi, as well as my community in the states, by sharing my experiences and attempting to diminish common misconceptions.

Looking back, what does PiAf mean to you? How did this experience affect you? What did you learn or gain from your fellowship?

Princeton in Africa is a wonderful opportunity to either begin or continue ones connection to the continent. Going into my fellowship, I had a loose idea of what I wanted to work in. Now after completing my year, it is quite clear to me that international work is incredibly important in my self satisfaction. This experience clarified my professional goals of working in the nonprofit world to help combat global climate change.

What will you miss most once your fellowship has ended?

The community I built in Nairobi was truly something that I could have never predicted. I will very intentionally carry the friends I made there for the rest of my life. Somehow I was blessed with connecting to amazing people, almost immediately. I am so incredibly grateful for my community there, and they are a large factor in my intention to return to live there long term.

If you could go back to the start of your fellowship year and do anything differently, would you? If so, what? What do you know now that you wish you had known at the beginning of your PiAf fellowship?

I am quite proud in the way I navigated my fellowship, mostly in advocating for myself to join projects that I had great interest in. Though, if I could give myself one piece of advice, I would emphasize that it's ok not to know everything right away. When I started my fellowship, I had just graduated college and was incredibly nervous about entering the workforce for the first time. In preparation, I spent much time familiarizing myself with M&E (monitoring and evaluation) techniques in an attempt to hit the ground running. However, there were instances when I would be afraid to ask questions in fear of not seeming qualified enough. Naturally, there are learning curves when entering any new situation or position. So I wished that I was a bit more forgiving of myself for not knowing everything. My advice for any future fellows is: you were chosen for a reason. Your supervisors and mentors believe in you and are confident in your abilities. So allow yourself some room to ask questions and admit when you are needing additional support.

Please provide a brief overview of your post-fellowship plans.

I will be attending the Yale School of Forestry for a 2 year program in Environmental Management starting in August 2022.

Please briefly describe your professional goals for the next five years.

I hope to obtain my degree from Yale in 2024 and at that point will be applying for jobs within CGIAR (my host org) or other organizations that focus on research driven environmental solutions.

Is there anything else you would like to share?

I had a fantastic experience with PIAF and am constantly impressed by my co-fellows. The dedication of each individual is incredibly inspiring and I feel so grateful to be a part of this community.