

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Acknowledging many people who have helped me achieve this doctorate degree has turned out to be the most difficult part of writing this dissertation. This is because, from my humble roots in a small Kiganza village in western Tanzania to this monumental academic and professional success, I have been blessed to receive countless support from dozens and dozens of people and organizations.

Thanking every individual without missing others is a daunting task. But, I would like to thank all individuals and organizations who have enriched my life profoundly along this journey and for and to whom I would like to express my profound, sincere gratitude for their partnerships and friendships.

There are no words to fully thank professors, students, and staff in my Department of Environment and Society here at Utah State University. My major Professor, Layne, is a very special friend and wonderful mentor. His experiences doing range ecology and management, international development, and systems analysis in Ethiopia and Kenya through his pastoral risk management project continue to inspire me. Layne is a quick thinker and is definitely one of the best major professors anybody could hope to have.

The first person I met during my first visit to Utah State University was Professor Terry, then head of the Department. I have heard Terry tell other people that he immediately recognized my unyielding commitment to my cause in Tanzania. Though Terry played and continues to play a key role in helping me form a network of partners to launch my efforts, he remains humble by not taking credit for the phenomenal fundraising and organizational abilities that we have developed together since 2005. “What Yared is doing is transformational,” Terry has told the media about me. “We helped him make connections, but he did all the footwork. I’ve never known a Ph.D. student who has been so successful in fundraising.” Terry is to-date doing an exceptional job as the Board Chair of our tax-exempt, non-profit organization of GOSESO-USA, Inc. I continue to learn a lot from his outstanding leadership abilities and diplomacy. Terry, you will always be my hero.

I have received outstanding academic support from my friend, Claudia. Her intellectual wit and the ability to simplify complex issues continue to amaze me. Additional unwavering

academic and emotional support has come from other professors on my graduate committee. I will never forget many informative lunch sessions I had with Rob and Chris. While Rob accepted a new research/teaching position at the University of Maine, I felt honored when he agreed to continue serving on my graduate committee. I have benefitted immensely from his outstanding extensive work related to African national parks.

Chris, I am enjoying reading your book, *Highland Sanctuary: Environmental History in Tanzania's Usambara Mountains*. I dream of becoming a good author like you. Grant, I wish to say I truly benefitted from an independent class that I took with you and from your deep knowledge of soil systems. You are a good buddy. For all of my professors on my graduate committee, our partnership has just started. I look forward to working together in years to come.

John has always been there as a good friend and supporter of my work here in the States and Tanzania. He has incredible technological skills. Steve was heavily involved in drafting vision, mission, and objectives of GOSESO during my early years at USU. The same can be said about Barbara. Other early professional and emotional assistance also came from Doug, Jodie, Dick, Tracy, Becky, Wes, Drew, Bill, Jascha, Jack, Chuck, Margo, Dan, Debbie, and the list could continue.

It is with great pleasure that I thank my friend and brother, Reuben and his wife Cindy. I have known Reuben for over a decade. When I first met Reuben in 1997, I had just arrived in the United States to pursue my college education at Longwood University. We were freshmen in college at the time, and right from the very outset, I was struck by his intellect and open-mindedness. Reuben stayed with my family at Kiganza village in 2002 and witnessed a clear disconnect between local people and the park management of Gombe. He was one of the first to recommend the creation of an institution that seeks to build the social capacity of local communities so that they have more of a stake in ensuring that environmental sustainability is achieved in a socially equitable manner.

Special thanks go to those men and women who helped me conduct this research throughout the six phases. I will never forget the many hours we spent walking on foot from village to village. Sometimes we had to ride our bikes. We traveled together by boat and car. Even during tough times, you were there with your smile and humor. We spent many daytime hours on the ground, meeting research participants and visiting their plots of land and then several hours at night trying to make sense of what we saw during each day of research. Your

names will never be forgotten: Makiri, Salum, Juma, Said, Ezekiel, Hamidu, and Salome. To my drivers, Lawi and Doto, I remain very grateful.

I thank the College of Natural Resources and Utah State University for providing structural and administrative support during the infant years of GOSESO's development. This kind of support gave us credibility as we were still trying to incorporate GOSESO to become a stand-alone non-profit and tax-exempt organization in the United States.

No words can truly explain how thankful I am to my beloved extended family in Tanzania. I was fortunate to grow up in a very happy and strong family. To my Mom, Scolastica Nyamweru Fubusa, and my Dad, Kenyatta Jonas Fubusa, you have been the engine of my life. It was my dad's death in the evening of February 25, 2004 that further ignited my determination to create a lasting vehicle of change.

I was teaching at the University of Virginia when my Dad passed away. My Dad's lockbox, which my surviving relatives assumed held money, contained only three photos of me. That day, I realized that my Dad's legacy was me. Everything he had, he invested in me so I could get an education. That made me take a second look at my life and I knew then that, through me, my Father's life could benefit thousands of people with similar humble backgrounds.

Dad, I know you can hear me even today. Please know that your son loves you and this doctorate degree is dedicated to you and Mom. I know that we will meet one day. I still remember the song of me that you used to sing during evening hours. Even now I still sing that song during tough days: *Mwanangu Yared...tunga! Mwanangu Yared...tunga!* Okay, Dad, let us translate this song into English: *My son Yared...prosper! My son Yared...prosper!* I have been reminded over and over how similarly I look like my Dad. My deep voice is his. My dark complexion is his. I also inherited his charisma.

It has been argued that alongside the success of every man, there is a woman. My mom has been that woman. For each morning that I wake-up during my extended fieldwork in Kiganza village and even here in the States, I consider it another Christmas gift just to know that my Mom is still with us and healthy. She continues to live in the same house where we all grew up, but this time surrounded by many happy grandchildren from my brother and sisters. Mom, you are the most gentle and yet powerful woman I have ever met in my years of traveling throughout the world. I still cannot believe how you managed to raise six Daughters and two

Sons in a single household. Even in the midst of economic hardship, it was your smile, endurance, and perseverance that kept all of us happy. You are my secret weapon, the unsung hero!

Apart from my parents, my seven siblings continue to amaze me with their love and support. I could have done what many other Africans do when they come to America; that is, work and send money back home as remittances to support their families. Even to-date, my family continues to live very normal lives in the village. They understand that my time and attention has been to finish this doctorate degree with extra time consumed with building a project that belongs to the people of Tanzania and the world. To all my family members, I promise you that now that I have finished this doctorate degree, I will do my part to give you a better livelihood. I am glad that we all share a common belief that a person's happiness cannot be achieved through accumulation of materials but through love and belonging to a happy community. We all realize that instead of building fences we need to build friendships. My Brother, Filipino, remains a vital element in my personal growth. He has a natural wisdom of life and unmatched tenacity to endure tough times. He continues to live in the village with his wife Salome and their growing family of five beautiful children.

As I have said, I come from humble beginnings. I grew up in the small rural village of Kiganza near Lake Tanganyika and Gombe Stream National Park—yet I have come so far due to my own efforts rather than relying on the privileges of family wealth or elite status.

It was my early life experiences growing up in a small village on the eastern shoreline of Lake Tanganyika just outside Gombe Stream National Park in western Tanzania that have shaped research interests in community-based conservation, sustainable livelihoods, household resilience, and poverty reduction. Here I would like to thank each member of my Kiganza village in western Tanzania as well as express thankfulness for the wildlife that used to be a part of our livelihoods.

I was no more than five years old when my village hired a group of hunters to kill the 'enemy' baboons. As a child I saw countless heads, legs, and hands of baboons on display in the government building in the center of the village. Almost everybody in the village came to see the 'enemy' wildlife that had crippled the subsistence economy and hindered crop productivity for centuries. Many of my friends were jubilant to see dead wildlife, but I never felt that way. What I saw were heads of baboons that bore remarkable similarities to humans. As far as I can

remember, watching their dead open eyes was like watching the eyes of my grandmother who had died the year before. Their faces clearly bore an uncanny resemblance to humans. Their dark eyes had the color of my own. Even at that age, I felt that wildlife near our village were in danger and that their end was near.

I now understand the connection between the plight of wildlife and the economic realities facing our people. As I grew up and took a leadership role within my community, I saw the need to create an institution that fosters the coexistence of humans and wildlife; one that bridges human prosperity with wildlife conservation. These childhood experiences in the villages have provided a solid foundation for this dissertation research and, together, they have informed the creation of the Gombe School of Environment and Society or GOSESO.

No words can truly express my profound gratitude to the staff and volunteers of GOSESO in Tanzania. I would need to take a few dozen more pages to list everybody. To these men and women, credibility of the messenger was more important than the message itself. Even during tough moments that, especially, came after the economic recession that hit our supporters here in the States and Tanzania, you never gave up on my call to action. You are the ones on the ground. You remain invisible to the outside world. Yet you are there, day and night. Together, we pledged to sacrifice all we have to build a successful indigenous-led institution that benefits future generations and wildlife of the region. We agreed that, together, we will grow as the project grows. A true friend demonstrates friendship in his actions. I will never forget you.

In December of 1995, while working at Gombe Stream National Park, I had the privilege of hosting a very special group of high school students of APES (African Primate Environmental Studies) and their chaperones. These APES were Prince Edward County high school students from Farmville, Virginia. Since fifth grade they had planned this trip, encouraged by their talented-and-gifted program teacher Cathy Cottrell. Several times they had traveled to conferences in the U.S. to see Jane Goodall. When National Geographic awarded Goodall the Hubbard Medal in Washington, D.C., they were the only students invited.

It had taken years of correspondence and encouragement from Jane Goodall, and a lot of support from family and school administrators back in Farmville, but here the APES were: Monte, Kate, Anna, Daniel, Toby, Laura, and Louise. Chaperoning the group was Cathy, Barbara, and Jim. As their gift to Tanzania, the APES group facilitated my admission to Longwood University in their beautiful hometown of Farmville, in the heart of Virginia, and the

group raised money for my airfare to the States. Even to date, the APES members remain my good friends. In fact, Cathy, the head of this trip, has become mother to all of us. I love you all.

My other special thanks go to the community of Longwood University in Virginia that started this journey of academic success here in the States. The love and support that I received from Longwood and the people of Farmville enriched my life beyond words. I was extremely humbled when I received an invitation last year from the President of Longwood University to deliver a keynote speech during Fall Convocation. Unfortunately, due to extenuating circumstances, I instead spoke at Longwood's Sustainability Conference on March 20, 2010. I appreciate Longwood University's continuing support and giving me the opportunity to share my vision of a more prosperous future for Africa.

My profound gratitude goes to Jane Goodall who, in the early 1990s, during my early teen years, accepted and loved me as her own son. I did not know then that she was, indeed, one of the most powerful and influential people this world has ever seen. She accepted me for who I was and believed that I was destined to achieve great things when I grew up. I am glad that I was part of a small circle of talented young people in Tanzania who became founding members of her international Roots and Shoots Program. Jane, I thank you for the opportunity you gave me during those early years of going around Tanzania and the world as your spokesperson, inspiring other young people to join your movement. While I may have grown up to embrace my own vision for the future, you will remain a pillar in my academic and emotional maturity. I have grown up to become a vital branch of your tree.

Dozens and dozens of committed individuals have supported the GOSESO vision through in-kind and financial contributions. More special thanks go to dozens and dozens of individuals who have donated to GOSESO, both small and large. Most notable individual support has come from Mac, Gay, Pam, and Will in Virginia. Mac and Gay have built one educational building in honor of my mom and dad. Pam and Will have built two buildings, including a library, in honor of their wonderful children Cabell and Mitchell. I feel honored that they all accepted me as one of their sons during my freshman years at Longwood University and they remain part of my life today. I love you all.

Nancy and Ralph have also been special. I remember my last visit in Virginia where I had the privilege of speaking at her Methodist Church, the church that adopted me during my first semester in college. The title of my lecture was "from the basket to the school in Tanzania."

While introducing me to the audience, Nancy showed everybody the only African basket that I brought from Tanzania during my first arrival in the states over ten years ago. I was reminded how my life in their town was nothing but “missionary work,” meaning that I smiled with people who would otherwise not smile with someone of my dark complexion, and I shook hands with those who would not dare to cross racial lines.

Very exceptional support has come from my friends Dick and his wonderful wife, Marion. For the last three years, Dick and Marion have become one of our largest individual donors. We had a great time hosting them in western Tanzania last year. Even as senior citizens, Dick and Marion are growing younger and stronger than ever. The couple has been instrumental in reviving the bylaws of GOSESO-USA to become more inclusive and transparent. Given their exceptional support, a new building of two classrooms in the heart of Kitobe Forest has been built. In fact, Marion and Dick have been pushing for me to complete this dissertation sooner than later.

Our other major donors have been Barbara and Stan of Jackson Hole, Wyoming. They, too, took their time to stay with us in western Tanzania. Barbara and Stan were one of our earliest supporters. They also took me in as their own son. In fact, their son, Joel, is one of our most important board members for GOSESO-USA.

I have also benefitted from Jack and his wonderful wife Christina in their capacity as donors, friends, and fundraisers.

My thanks go to various international volunteers at GOSESO-Tanzania. The most notable of them all is by far Drew. In 2007, Drew became the first student volunteer in Tanzania. “My first visit to GOSESO was a life-altering experience,” Drew has told Utah State University community. He graduated from USU in spring 2008 as the College of Natural Resources valedictorian and just finished spending almost two years working with us in Tanzania. I never heard Drew complain about our humble lifestyles in Tanzania, the fact that we are the only non-governmental organization in Kigoma Region who does not drive a Mercedes Benz, where everybody is a volunteer. Volunteers, such as Drew, actually seem to enjoy this very fact. In order to ensure that the voices of GOSESO-Tanzania are properly represented during board meetings of GOSESO-USA during my absence, Drew volunteered to be a board member here in the United States.

Since 2005, I have received unwavering and strong support from the government of Tanzania and local citizenry in the Lake Tanganyika Region, including several international organizations. I remain encouraged by this partnership. Tens and tens of individuals here in the States have donated to GOSESO over the last five years. There is no way we would have achieved the successes we enjoy today if it were not for the early and timely support from each person involved. As early investors, they took a risk on me at the time when nobody else dared. Many other supporters followed their lead and, above all, they never gave up on me. Even to date, they continue to love and support my vision of bridging human prosperity with wildlife conservation in Africa. They supported us at a time when others had deemed us “unbankable.”

These early and crucial gifts from WFF covered the following items: 1) funding for my Doctoral education here at Utah State University; 2) funding early phases of this dissertation research and GOSESO development, including a feasibility study and partnership building; 3) we also created our grass-roots, indigenous-based curriculum for the Gombe School; 4) procuring over 500 acres of Kitobe Forest that is now being restored for education, research, and as headquarters of GOSESO; 5) incorporating GOSESO to become a legally recognized institution in both Tanzania and the USA; and 6) helping us to increase capacity and quality of our academic and outreach programs. Special thanks also go to Richard and Amy of San Diego. They remained patient with us even when we did not meet deadlines.

I remain very grateful for the support I received from my friend and brother, Jack and the entire Teton Science Schools (TSS) community. My life was enriched during these informative days of meeting students and teachers. TSS also sponsored my meals and lodging during my extensive visits at their beautiful campuses in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. I was very amazed by Jack’s remarkable leadership abilities, his ways of talking to stakeholders, and forward-thinking abilities. He remains a role model to me. Like Jack, I now conduct meetings with stakeholders of GOSESO in very traditional styles, sometimes under mango trees. I still remember that dinner we had in a restaurant in Jackson Hole: me, Jack, Terry, and Wayne, in the spring of 2005. It turned out to be the most important dinner we ever had. It was where three phases in the implementation of GOSESO were drafted. Since we did not have any pen or paper, Jack came up with an idea. “Let’s ask the server to give us a pen and we can use this napkin!” I still have that napkin. The three phases and timeline were: 1) Feasibility Study and Partnership Building; 2) “School Without Walls”; and 3) “School Within Walls.”

Special thanks go to several families for embracing me as one of their own family members. Each year I visit Massachusetts and have the privilege of staying at the beautiful and lovely home of Dave and Coleen outside Boston. Their mother, Marilyn, is one of the most generous and loving people. Don also a very loving patriarch of the family enterprises. His wife Linda is equally impressive. I had the honor to sail in the Atlantic Ocean with Don and his son Dave during my last visit in 2009.

I also acknowledge the financial support for the last 18 months of my training at Utah State University from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) via the Pastoral Risk Management (PARIMA).

Special thanks also go to the Ashoka Foundation. I was extremely humbled in the fall of 2008 when the Ashoka Foundation recognized me to be among the leading international social entrepreneurs. This award is a great honor not only to me personally, but also to everyone who has and continues to support our exciting educational, research, conservation, and economic efforts in Tanzania.

Special thanks also go to six individuals who agreed to volunteer their time and resources as board members of GOSESO-USA. It happened to be a very special group of wise people with extensive experiences in management and operations of non-profit organizations. As I write, these six board members are as follows: Terry, Joel, Chuck, Kent, Wayne, and Nick.

Kent has been outstanding. As the Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations at Utah State University, he brought to me and GOSESO extensive experience in non-profit development and management, including 15 years on staff or on boards of organizations. In addition to supporting the fundraising of GOSESO, Kent has acted and continues to act as pro bono counsel on organizational and strategic matters.

For now, my responsibilities afford me little time to enjoy GOSESO's idyllic campus, which offers spectacular views of Lake Tanganyika, lush miombo woodlands, and the mountains of Gombe Stream National Park. Along with completing this doctoral research, I have maintained a busy speaking schedule throughout the United States and abroad trying to forge partnerships. But I am institutionalizing my vision and pursuing my dream—a lasting dream that builds on my father's legacy.

Yared J. Fubusa