

## Curriculum Vitae

**Dr. Virginia Gathoni Gichuru Ph.D.**

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### EDUCATION

**PhD(Plant Pathology) 2004-2008**

Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda

**Thesis title:** 'Influence of farming systems and crop host varieties on *Pythium* root rot epidemics in a highland agroecology of southwestern Uganda.

**MSc (Molecular Biology) 2002-2004**

Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda

**Thesis title:** 'Analysis of diversity among East African sweet potato cultivars (*Ipomoea batatas*) using morphological and simple sequence repeats (SSR) DNA markers'.

**BSc (Biochemistry & Botany) 1996-2000**

University of Nairobi, Nairobi, Kenya

Grade attained: Upper Second Class Honours

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### TEACHING EXPERIENCE

*Lecturer, Pwani University* **2018 to present**

- Lecturing undergraduate students in the Department of Biological Sciences for the following units: Plant pathology, Microbial Ecology, Plant Ecology, Plant morphology and Anatomy.
- Lecturing Masters students in the Department of Biological Sciences in the following units: Environmental Microbiology and Advanced Bacteriology
- Supervising 1 Masters and 1 PhD student
- Supervising undergraduate 4<sup>th</sup> year research projects

*Lecturer, Strathmore University* **2011 -2018**

- Lecturing undergraduates in Ethics, Bioethics and Philosophy

- Supervised 1 Masters students.

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## ADMINISTRATION EXPERIENCE (

<b>Chair of the Curriculum Committee</b> <i>Pwani University, Kilifi</i>	2019 - date
<b>Secretary, Ethics Review Committee</b> <i>Strathmore University, Nairobi</i>	2019 to date
<b>Head of Mentoring</b> <i>Department of Biological Services</i> <i>Pwani University</i>	2019 to date
<b>Member of the Library Advisory Committee</b> <i>Pwani University, Kilifi</i>	2018 - date
<b>Dean, School of Hospitality and Tourism</b> <i>Strathmore University, Nairobi</i>	2016 - 2018
<b>Dean of Research</b> <i>Strathmore University, Nairobi</i>	2013 - August 2016
<b>Member of the Academic Council</b> <i>Strathmore University, Nairobi</i>	2013 – 2018
<b>Member</b> <b>Academic Administration and Enhancement Committee</b> <i>Strathmore University, Nairobi</i>	2013 -2016
<b>Member of the Research Committee</b> <i>Strathmore University, Nairobi</i>	2013-2018
<b>Head of Research Committee</b> School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS)	2011-2013

*Strathmore University, Nairobi*

**Member of School of Graduate Research Committee**  
*Strathmore University, Nairobi*

2011-2014

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**RESEARCH EXPERIENCE**

**Supervisor of Undergraduate research projects**

2019 to date

*Pwani University*

- Muleli, Annet Mashayo. Isolation and Identification of bacteria from food vendors at Kibaoni market, Kilifi
- Omolo, Elly Brian. Isolation and identification of microorganisms associated with spoilage of tomatoes at Kibaoni market, Kilifi
- Kilonzo, Muimi, John. Determining if *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Propionibacterium acne* can be isolated from used makeup brushes
- Neema, Kassim Nderi. Antimicrobial activity of microbes isolated from soil mixed with human saliva against pathogenic microorganisms causing dermatological diseases.
- Mwabonje, Lorna. Isolation and identification of pathogenic bacteria on mobile phones in lab setting in RVIL

**Supervisor of Graduate research projects**

2019 to date

*Pwani University*

***Masters research***

- Dogo, Masha. Salt tolerance induction by bacterial endophytes from *Solanum spp.*

***Doctoral research***

- Odundo Alice. Hygienic practices of food handlers and the microbiological quality of fresh vegetable salad in private hospitals in Mombasa County, Kenya

**Conference Organiser**

November 2015

*Strathmore University*

- Organised the Research Week at Strathmore University from 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> November 2015 whose theme was :’Innovation for Sustainable Development’

**Conference Organiser**

May 2014

*Kenya Association of Private Universities (KAPU)*

- Organised the Kenya Association of Private Universities (KAPU)Research Conference held on 21<sup>st</sup> -22<sup>nd</sup> May 2014 whose theme was:’Re-aligning Academia, Government and Industry (AGI):Roadmap for the attainment of Vision 2030.

**Project Manager**

**2013-2014**

*Strathmore University*

- This was a partnership between the University of Applied Sciences Burgenland (Austria) and Strathmore University. The partnership was designed to achieve educational, research and development goals involving faculty and students at both institutions. The collaboration set up a trans-disciplinary project that brought together students from different disciplines from both institutions to address a complex challenge together. They made use of the Biomimicry process to co-design potential solutions for a sustainability-related problem.

**WORKSHOPD/TRAININGS ATTENDED**

- Training course on Plant Health organized by the John Innes Centre,UK and Pwani University,held in Pwani University,Kilifi on 3<sup>rd</sup> April to 16<sup>th</sup> April 2019.
- Training course on Phage Biology organised by Phages for Global health held in Pwani University, Kilifi on 24<sup>th</sup> June to 7<sup>th</sup> July 2018.
- Training course on Plant Metabolism for Improved Nutrition and Health Course organised by the John Innes Centre (UK) and BECA-ILRI, held in Arusha Tanzania on 20<sup>th</sup> February to 4<sup>th</sup> March 2017.
- Workshop to develop a training module for University leadership held at Commission for University Education (CUE) headquarters on 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> August 2016.
- Attended the EuroScience Open Forum (ESOF) held in Manchester from July 23<sup>rd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> 2016. Funded by Robert Stifung Organisation
- Attended a confocal microscopy workshop held at the Donald Danforth Plant Centre, St. Louis Missouri on 27<sup>th</sup> June to July 1<sup>st</sup> 2016.

- Attended a seminar on Environmental Projects and Territorial Transformations held at French Institute for Research in Africa (IFRA), Nairobi, Kenya on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2016
- Participated in the International Deans Course part III held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 8<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> February 2016.
- Participated in the International Deans Course part II held in Accra Ghana on 1<sup>st</sup> -5<sup>th</sup> November 2015.
- Participated in the International Deans Course part I held in Osnabruck and Berlin, Germany on 20<sup>th</sup> June - 4<sup>th</sup> July 2015.
- Attended a Participatory Research Methods workshop held at the Strathmore Governance Centre on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2014.
- Attended the Public Policy Executive Program held at Strathmore Business School, 17<sup>th</sup> -21<sup>st</sup> March 2014.
- Attended the Faculty Development Program held at Strathmore Business School, 4<sup>th</sup> -7<sup>th</sup> March 2014.
- Attended the Strathmore University IRB (Institutional Regulatory Board) training held at Strathmore Business School, 30<sup>th</sup> January 2014.
- Training workshop in Responsible conduct of Research 16<sup>th</sup> -23<sup>rd</sup> December 2013 at Kenya School of Monetary studies.
- 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the African Network of Internationalization of Education held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 2<sup>nd</sup> -4<sup>th</sup> October 2013
- Scientific communication and publishing training held at the University of Nairobi, 26<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> August 2013.
- Bioethics Training held in the Medical School University of Nairobi on 5<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> August 2013.
- Attended a stakeholder validation workshop to review the Draft National Guidelines for Care and Use of Animals for Research and Training held at the Panafric Hotel, Nairobi on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2013.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Hands-on workshop in point-of care diagnostic organised by the Institute of Primate Research, Nairobi, Kenya on June 25<sup>th</sup> -29<sup>th</sup> 2012.
- Innovation for Africa Symposium, 20-23<sup>rd</sup> November 2006 held at Speke Resort Munyonyo, Kampala Uganda.

- Mentoring workshop organised by the Gender and Diversity Program of the CGIAR, 2<sup>nd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> July 2006 held at Severin Sea Lodge, Mombasa, Kenya.
  - Workshop on the setting and moderation of Exams in the University, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2006 in the Department of Biology, Kyambogo University, Uganda.
  - Enhancing Negotiations Skills for Women, 28<sup>th</sup> -30<sup>th</sup> March 2006 held in Los Baños, Laguna, Philippines.
  - Participated in a round table discussion on the role of Young People in Agricultural Research for development, 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2005. This was the first-ever Youth Forum associated with a CGIAR (Consultative Group of International Agricultural Research) Annual General Meeting. Held at the Moroccan Institut National de Recherche Agronomique (INRA) in Marrakech, Morocco. (CGIAR and the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) cosponsored the side-event).
  - Annual General Meeting of the CGIAR, 2<sup>nd</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> December 2005 held in Marrakech, Morocco; I made a presentation on ‘The impact of the Gender & Diversity Program to my career development.’”
  - Attended a special Women’s Leadership and Management Course for G & D-Rockefeller Fellows, 16<sup>th</sup> -23<sup>rd</sup> October 2005 held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
  - Participated in a mentoring workshop, July 2005 organised by the Gender and Diversity Program of the CGIAR at ICRAF Nairobi, Kenya
  - Attended a data analysis workshop on Minitab/SPSS and Excel, 2nd April 2005 held in the Faculty of Forestry, Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda.
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## AWARDS RECEIVED

- Visiting Scholar at the Campus Biomedico, Italy 2020.(postponed due to COVID-19 pandemic outbreak).
- Award for the **Best Presenter at a Symposium** held for the **13<sup>th</sup> Symposium of the International Society of Tropical Root Crops (ISTRC)** in Arusha, Tanzania, 10<sup>th</sup>–14<sup>th</sup> Nov 2003.
- Gender and Diversity-Rockefeller Fellowships for enhancing the careers of East African women scientists. **I was one of the eleven fellows selected out of a pool of 104 applications from the region.**([www.genderdiversity.cigar.org](http://www.genderdiversity.cigar.org)), 2005-2007.

- Visiting Scholar position at the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study(STIAS) in South Africa from July to August 2018.
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## **PUBLICATIONS**

Gichuru, V., Rubaihayo, P.R, Lubega, G.W., Aritua, V., Mukasa, S., Edema, R., Wasike, S. and Adipala, E. 2003. A preliminary analysis of diversity among East African sweet potato cultivars using morphological and Simple Sequence Repeats (SSR) Markers. ActaHort. (ISHS) 703:159-164. <http://www.actahort.org/books>

Gichuru, Virginia.2014. “What should we consume: An Examination into the Ethical Acceptability of Genetically Modified Foods in Kenya Principled on Aristotelian Ethics In: The Bounds of Responsibility Ed. Tadeusz Lewandowski and Elisabeta Gabriela Illie

Gichuru,V,Buruchara,R and Okori,P. 2016 Pathogenic and molecular characterisation of *Pythium spp.* inducing root rot symptoms in other crops intercropped with beans in Southwestern Uganda.Journal of Applied Biosciences 104:9955 – 9964.

Gichuru, V. 2019.Kenya’s green revolution to enhance food security (In press).

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## **CONFERENCE PAPER PRESENTATIONS**

### ***Oral presentations***

Virginia Gichuru.Pathogenicity of *Pythium ultimum* on other crops intercropped with beans. A paper presented at the 2016 Plant Cell Dynamics Conference, Washington University, St. Louis Missouri, 21<sup>st</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> June 2016.

Virginia Gichuru.'An examination into the ethical acceptability of genetically modified foods in Kenya principled on Aristotelian Ethics'. A paper presented at the 4<sup>th</sup> Global Conference on Responsible Living: reflecting on the ethical issues of everyday life, held in Lisbon, Portugal, 6<sup>th</sup> May to 8<sup>th</sup> May, 2014.

Virginia Gichuru.The moral acceptability of genetically modified foods. A paper presented at the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Ethics Conference, Strathmore University, 25<sup>th</sup> -26<sup>th</sup> October 2012.

Virginia Gathoni Gichuru. Influence of farming systems and crop varieties on *Pythium* root rot epidemics in Southwestern Uganda. A paper presented at the Campus de Excelencia in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain, 22<sup>nd</sup> -27<sup>th</sup> June 2008.

Gichuru, V., Rubaihayo, P.R., Lubega, G.W., Mukasa, S., Edema, R., Aritua, V., Wasike, S. and Adipala, E. 2003. Assessing the genetic relatedness of sweet potato cultivars (*Ipomoea batatas*) from selected areas of East Africa using simple sequence repeats (SSR). A paper presented at the 6<sup>th</sup> African Crop Science Society Conference, 12-17<sup>th</sup> Oct. 2003, Nairobi, Kenya.

Gichuru, V., Rubaihayo, P.R., Lubega, G.W., Aritua, V., Mukasa, S., Edema, R., Wasike, S. and Adipala, E. 2003. A preliminary analysis of diversity among East African sweetpotato (*Ipomoea batatas*) cultivars using morphological and Simple Sequence Repeats (SSR) Markers. A paper presented at 9<sup>th</sup> Triennial Symposium of the International Society for Tropical Root Crops-Africa Branch, 31<sup>st</sup>Oct –5<sup>th</sup> Nov. 2004, Mombasa Kenya. Funded by CIP (The International Potato Centre).

Gichuru, V., Rubaihayo, P.R., Lubega, G.W., Aritua, V., Mukasa, S., Edema, R., Wasike, S. and Adipala, E. 2003. Preliminary analysis of diversity among East African sweet potato (*Ipomoea batatas*) cultivars using morphological and Simple Sequence Repeats (SSR) Markers. A paper presented at the 13<sup>th</sup> Symposium of the International Society of Tropical Root Crops (ISTRIC) in Arusha, Tanzania, 10<sup>th</sup> –14<sup>th</sup> Nov 2003.

Gichuru, V., Rubaihayo, P.R., Lubega, G.W., Aritua, V., Mukasa, S., Edema, R., Wasike, S. and Adipala, E. 2003. A preliminary analysis of diversity among East African sweet potato cultivars using morphological and Simple Sequence Repeats (SSR) Markers. A paper presented at the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Symposium on Sweet potato and Cassava 14<sup>th</sup> –17<sup>th</sup> June 2005 in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia. Published in the conference proceedings. Funded by CTA (Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation).

Gichuru, V., Ocimati, W., Buruchara, R., Okori, P., Tusiime, G., Opio, F. and Ugen, M. The role of other crops in developing integrated pest management (IPM) of bean root rots. A paper presented at PABRA (Pan African Bean Research Association) Meeting, 31<sup>st</sup> October 2005 in Kampala, Uganda.

Gichuru, V., Ocimati, W., Buruchara, R., Okori, P., Tusiime, G., Opio, F. and Ugen, M. The role of other crops in developing integrated pest management (IPM) of bean root rots. A paper presented at the Bean IPM Promotion Project Review Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2006 at the Regency Hotel in Kampala.

Gichuru, V., Buruchara, R., Okori, P., Opio, F. and Ugen, M. Identification and characterisation of *Pythium spp.* of major crops in southwestern Uganda. A paper presented at the American Phytopathological Joint Meeting held in Quebec City, Canada in July 29<sup>th</sup> –August 2<sup>nd</sup> 2006.

Gichuru, V., Buruchara, R., Okori, P., Opio, F. and Ugen, M. Pathogenicity of bean pathogenic *Pythium spp.* on major crops in a bean-based cropping system. A paper presented at the American Phytopathological Joint Meeting held in Quebec City, Canada July 29<sup>th</sup> –August 2<sup>nd</sup> 2006.



Virginia Gichuru. Media and solidarity in Northern Uganda. A paper presented at the UNIV 2006 International Congress on the subject of Projecting Culture: The Language of the Media organised by the Instituto per la Cooperazione Universitaria (ICU) held in Rome, Italy on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2006.

### **Poster**

Gichuru, V., Rubaihayo, P.R., Lubega, G.W., Aritua, V., Mukasa, S., Edema, R., Wasike, S. and Adipala, E. 2003. Assessment of diversity among East African sweet potato cultivars using morphological markers. A paper presented at 6<sup>th</sup> African Crop Science Society Conference, 12-17<sup>th</sup> Oct. 2003, Nairobi, Kenya .

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### **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

- American Society of Microbiology (AMS)-Member Number: 56128820
  - American Phytopathological Society (APS)-Member Number: 192718
  - Member of the African Network of Internationalization of Education (ANIE)
  - Member of Strathmore University Ethics Review Board(SU-ERB)
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### **COMUNITY SERVICE**

#### *Strathmore University*

- Active mentor to students at Strathmore University.
- Participated in various community and social projects in Kibera, Southlands slums, Nyahururu, Ugunja, Kitui and Eldoret while based at Strathmore University.
- Organised professional and cultural activities for Strathmore University students together with Keri Study Centre

#### *Pwani University*

- Social projects in Kilifi Hospital with Pwani University students
- Professional talks to Pwani University students in collaboration with Tewa Training Centre
- Professional talks and social projects with Technical University of Mombasa students

## **REFEREES**

Professor Ismail Ateya,  
Lecturer & Acting Dean, Research  
Strathmore University,  
Madaraka Estate Ole Sangale Road  
P. O. Box 59857 00200  
City Square Nairobi Kenya  
Email: [iateya@strathmore.edu](mailto:iateya@strathmore.edu)  
Cell: +254733450550

Dr. Robin Buruchara,  
Director, PABRA (Pan African Bean Research Alliance),  
International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT-Nairobi)  
c/o International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE) Duduville Campus Off  
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Deputy Principal Academic, Research and Outreach,  
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Chair of Department-Biological Sciences,Pwani University,  
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