

## **MY FIRST FIG: A PERSONAL REFLECTION ON 4YSAM & THE 10TH ISK CONFERENCE, MOMBASA 2025**

Leaving Nigeria for the first time felt surreal.

Passport in hand, yellow-fever card, Invitation letter, every document felt like a mountain. I kept asking myself, “Am I really doing this?” But the moment Mrs. Maria Bargholz Bentzen finalized my ticket and Surv. David Elegbede (FIG Africa Chair) started answering my endless questions, the fear turned into excitement. FIG didn’t just give me a grant, they gave me wings.

Touching down in Mombasa, the warm coastal breeze hit me, and suddenly Kenya didn’t feel so far from home. The Pridelnn Paradise Beach Resort became our little bubble of laughter, learning, and late-night chats. The conference venue was stunning, and the energy matched.

The sessions nourished my mind and soul.

Prof. Uchendu Eugene Chigbu reminded us that collaboration is the real key to Africa’s geospatial future. Surv. Stephen Djaba gave us the line I’ll never forget: “Inclusion is the new coordinates.” Nozipho Madlala taught me that “high-value content is true value” and pushed us to define our brands and tell our stories intentionally.

Three quotes still live rent-free in my head:

- “Humanity needs volunteerism to thrive, and volunteerism exposes you to new ideas.” – Albright Oburo
- “Study never ends; the name you make for yourself becomes a legacy when you are old.” – Surv Stephen Djaba
- “Hope is not just an idea; it is mapped out with involvement and intentionality.”

I didn’t just attend the conference, I served.

As part of the communications team, I designed some pre-conference flyers and volunteered on-site as photographer and content creator. Running around with my camera, chasing the perfect shot, editing recaps till the next day was exhausting, but seeing everyone’s smiles when the day’s highlight reel dropped made every second worth it.

After the conference, we explored Mombasa. We visited Fort Jesus, whispering centuries of history, the giant Mombasa Tusks, the chaotic charm of the Likoni Ferry, Kenya showed me beauty I’ll carry forever.

Most importantly, I found family. Nozipho, Fridah, Jecinta, Surv. Steve Djaba, your warmth turned strangers into lifelong friends. This trip was my first stamp in a passport, my first

leap out of my comfort zone, and my loudest reminder of why I fell in love with surveying: to use geospatial tools for climate resilience, to amplify underrepresented voices, and to volunteer for a future we all deserve.

Thank you, FIG Foundation, FIG Young Surveyors Africa, ISK, Fridah Mwangi, David Elegbede, and every single person who made this possible. I came home with new knowledge, and a heart bursting with purpose.

It's time to unlearn, relearn, and pay it forward; one community, one young girl, one map at a time.

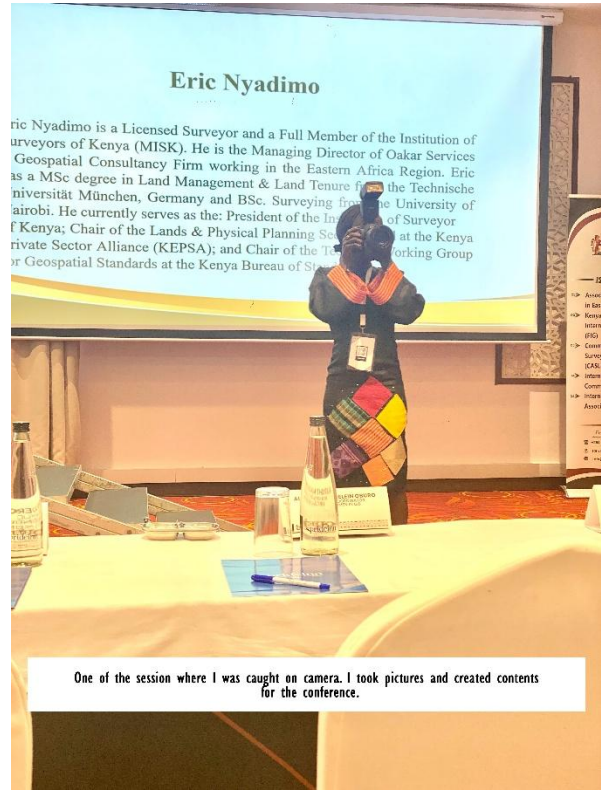
Oluwaseun Dorcas Adeniji

FIG Foundation Grant Recipient 2025

### PHOTO SPEAKS







One of the session where I was caught on camera. I took pictures and created contents for the conference.







We visited Likoni Ferry to have a view of what we saw at Kenya Port Authority



We also went to Fort Jesus National Monument



We visited the old Mombasa port as well