



## Press Release

### **EQUITY GROUP FOUNDATION AND KENYA FOREST SERVICE PLANT 7,000 TREES AT VARIOUS UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI CAMPUSES**

**Nairobi, 18<sup>th</sup> May 2021...** Equity Group Foundation and Kenya Forest Service have today joined University of Nairobi in their annual tree planting exercise at a drive to plant 7,000 trees at various campuses as they enhance efforts to mitigate against adverse effects of climate change.

The effort is in line with Equity's ambitious conservation project to plant 35 million trees across the country, and also to support the government's goal of increasing the country's forest cover to 10% by 2022.

The University of Nairobi (UoN), which plants trees annually as part of their environmental rehabilitation efforts received 5,000 seedlings from Equity Group Foundation and 2,000 seedlings from the Kenya Forest Service. The 7,000 trees will be distributed across various campuses based on availability of space including; 2,000 trees at the Wangari Mathai Institute of Peace and Environmental Studies, 200 trees in the students' halls of residence, 400 trees in the College of Biological and Physical Sciences, 500 trees in the School of Law, 200 trees in the School of Business, 700 trees within the UoN estates, 500 trees in the College of Health Sciences, 500 trees at the University's Kenya Science Campus and another 2,000 trees at the College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences.

Commenting during the launch of the initiative, University of Nairobi Vice Chancellor Prof. Stephen Kiama said, "As a university, we recognise that each of us has a big role to play in contributing to environmental conservation. What started out as a plan to plant 200 trees has been up scaled 35 times through our collaboration with Equity Group Foundation and Kenya Forest Service. We are proud to work with like-minded partners in this noble tree planting event and urge all Kenyans to plant a tree this rainy season."

The 7,000 trees are estimated to cover at least 5 hectares of land and is a mix of indigenous and fruit trees. A preference selection made based on their ability to survive longer, their resistance to diseases and the low cost of maintenance.

"By planting trees today, we are securing the future, lives and livelihoods of our children and their children. Equity Group Foundation focuses on promoting the conservation of natural resources through expanding forest cover, improving water security and providing renewable energy and energy sufficient technologies as smart alternatives to traditional and polluting energy sources." said Polycarp Igathe, Equity Group, Chief Commercial Officer.

As of April 2021 Equity had planted over 4 million trees and distributed 260,000 clean energy products through EGF's Energy and Environment Pillar and is set to plant another 5 million trees through its branch network of 190 branches by end of year. "We have tasked each Equity branch to collaborate with KFS, the communities and institutions around them to plant trees and achieve this target. We shall also be adopting more forest blocks for rehabilitation and working with communities to reduce reliance on forests as a source of wood-fuel and adopt agroforestry." added Polycarp.

Kenya Forest Service Chief Conservator of Forests, Julius Kamau speaking at the event said, "Today is a testament that when the public and private sector come together, this can be for the greater good of the community. We are making a call to action to all Kenyans to join us in this initiative, let us take advantage of the long rains to each plant one or two trees as this will take us closer to the 10% forest cover." said Julius.



Equity Group has partnered with Kenya Forest Service (KFS) in their 35 million trees, tree planting initiative. KFS will provide technical support including; the identification of hotspots that require urgent tree cover and/or rehabilitation of degraded forests; mapping out agro-ecological zones and identification of suitable tree species for planting; identification of high-quality tree seedlings stocks across the country; and support by KFS officers and staff at local levels to supervise the proper planting and maintenance of the trees.

Julius Kamau further said, “Planting 7,000 trees in an urban area in one morning is no small feat. We are keen on having a good success rate for the trees that we have planted today by ensuring that these are nurtured to maturity. We appreciate both Equity and the University of Nairobi for taking the bold step to be active players in the conservation of Nairobi’s eco-system.”

The tree planting exercise was launched at the Wangari Mathai Institute of Peace and Environmental Studies while the other 8 campuses planted their set of trees concurrently with support from KFS and Equity branches.

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### **About Equity Group Foundation**

Equity Group Foundation (EGF), the corporate implementing foundation of Equity Group Holdings Plc, has as its mission to champion the transformation of lives and livelihoods for 100m people in Africa by 2024 through the design and implementation of innovative programs that leverage Equity Group’s infrastructure and partnerships to create shared value. Established in 2008 as the Group’s social engine, the Foundation delivers economic opportunities, capacity, tools, and technologies that enable individuals and businesses to increase productivity, resilience and share in socio-economic growth. EGF responds to the continuum of issues that challenge the socio-economic advancement of the people of Africa, especially low-income individuals, and families. EGF’s Creating Shared Value [CSV] strategy provides social development initiatives in Education and Leadership Development, Food and Agriculture, Health, Financial Inclusion and Entrepreneurship Development, Energy and Environment and Social Protections for the most vulnerable citizens. EGF’s programs are underpinned by technology, innovation, and synergy as a central means to launch, nurture, and scale up Africa’s next generation of successful leaders and entrepreneurs delivered to all communities in which Equity has operations.

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