

## University of Copenhagen Hosts WMI PhD Students

In 2012, we visited the University of Copenhagen (UC) in Denmark for a 3 month study visit. It was a very unique and enlightening experience that involved interactive sessions and experiential learning.

Although the average class was about six hours long, it was punctuated by regular short breaks after every hour. Our supervisors and lecturers were down to earth, friendly, humble and treated us more like colleagues; they were readily available for advice and consultation. University learning materials and academic resources were easily available and accessible through the University libraries, including the e-learning system known as *õabsolonõ*.

We had a chance to visit the homes of all our Professors. This experience gave us an opportunity to sample a variety of Danish cuisine and experience the Danish home and family settings; this social interaction relaxed the student-teacher relationship.

We also had an opportunity to prepare the Danish team a traditional home cooked Kenyan meal of ugali, kachumbari, mbuzi-fry, kuku choma and pumpkin soup. We visited a park where we saw a tree (*Prunus serrulata amaogawa*) that had been planted in honour of the late Professor Wangari Muta Maathai.

During the period of our stay, we resided in the Danida Fellowship Centre (DFC). It was excellent as there were activities and social events lined up every weekend such as trips and cooking clubs. Most importantly at the DFC we were able to interact with students from all over the world giving us an opportunity to experience and learn their cultures and build on each other academically.

We observed that many Danish people are conscious about their environment; many use bicycles to move about as opposed to vehicles; many preferred to use the stairs as opposed to the elevator. Further, through a lexicographic study we conducted, we found that this environmental consciousness cuts across from the young to the elderly; for instance, a majority of the Danes are conscious about sorting and recycling of household waste and other environmental conservation techniques. Additionally there exist several incentives for recycling certain materials thus encouraging the population to practice even more environmentally friendly practices.