

# MY AUTOBIOGRAPHY

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**JOHN DENG**

September 2024

## **Introduction**

I'm John Denge, and I'm thrilled to share my life story with you. It's a journey filled with ups and downs, lessons learned, and unforgettable moments. I was born into a loving family in the town of Kisumu, Kenya. My parents, Everlyn and Musa Robert Ouma, have always been my pillars of support.

As the second born in a family of six—three boys and one girl—and my both parents I've had the joy of growing up surrounded by siblings who have become my closest friends and allies. Our home was always bustling with activity, filled with laughter, love, and the occasional sibling rivalry.

My father, Robert, is a hardworking farmer who has instilled in me the values of dedication and perseverance. From him, I learned the importance of tending to the land with care and respect, and the satisfaction that comes from reaping the fruits of one's labor.

On the other hand, my mother, Everlyn, is a savvy businesswoman with a keen eye for opportunity. She has taught me the importance of being resourceful, adaptable, and never giving up in the face of adversity. Her entrepreneurial spirit has been a constant source of inspiration in my life.

Growing up in Kisumu, I've witnessed the beauty of Kenya's landscapes and the warmth of its people. It's a town filled with vibrant culture, bustling markets, and a strong sense of community.

As a child, I had a lot of responsibilities, and one of them was to take our goats and cows to the fields to graze. I walked for miles with my animals, carefully watching over them, and making sure that they didn't stray into the neighbouring farms. It was a tiresome task, but it taught me the importance of hard work and how to care for animals.

Despite the endless chores, I still found time to play with my siblings and other children from the village. We invented games with makeshift toys like wooden sticks and kites made from dried banana leaves. We also played with marbles and the traditional game of "cha baba na cha mama" commonly played by the Meru kids.

One of my fondest memories from my childhood was my dedication to the Presbyterian church at only seven months that was later followed by baptism. This consequently led to my love to serve as a Sunday school teacher hence getting the nickname "mwalimu" (teacher).

In this autobiography, I'll take you along as I share the highs and lows, the good times and tough times of my life journey. But it's not just about me—it's about the people who've influenced me, the friends who've laughed and cried with me, and even the strangers who've crossed my path.

Life is like a journey, full of surprises and adventures. Through this book, I hope to show you what it means to be human, to face challenges, and to keep going.

## **Early Years**

As the sun went down and the night fell, our home became cozy and filled with laughter. Evenings were special - we'd sit around the fire, sharing stories that made us smile long after the fire had died out.

Kisumu, our town in Kenya, was always alive with activity. From busy markets to fun festivals, there was always something happening. It was here that I learned about our rich Kenyan culture, which became a big part of who I am.

Growing up, I loved exploring nature. Whether it was playing in the fields, helping my dad with his farming, or listening to my mom's stories, I cherished every moment. These experiences taught me to appreciate the simple things in life.

Being the third of six siblings - five boys and one girl - meant I had to learn to get along with others. We had our disagreements, but we always came together in the end, sharing laughter and creating memories.

With the love and support of my family, I learned important lessons about life, love, and resilience. These early years shaped who I am today, and I'm grateful for the memories we made together.

## **School days**

My journey through school was like a colorful adventure, full of new experiences and exciting challenges that helped me grow. From my earliest days at Mbita point Primary School to my current studies at university, each step has been a building block in my education.

I started my schooling at Mbita point international Primary School in 2008. It was a bustling place, with kids running around and teachers guiding us through our lessons. I remember the thrill of making new friends and learning new things every day. From learning to read and write to exploring numbers and science, my primary school years were a time of discovery and wonder.

In 2017, I moved on to Mbita Secondary School for my high school education. It was a big change from primary school, with more subjects to study and new responsibilities to manage. But I embraced the challenge, immersing myself in my studies and extracurricular activities. Whether it was participating in sports events or preparing for exams, each day brought new opportunities to learn and grow.

Now, I am currently pursuing my studies at university. It's a different environment altogether, with lectures, seminars, and a whole new set of experiences to navigate. But I'm excited to continue learning and exploring new fields of knowledge.

Throughout my school journey, I've been fortunate to have supportive teachers, caring friends, and opportunities to discover my passions and interests. Each school has played a unique role in shaping who I am today, and I'm grateful for the lessons learned and memories made along the way.

## **School Fees Nightmares**

As an 18-year-old fresh out of high school, I was excited to join university and pursue my dream career. However, the excitement was short-lived as I quickly realized that the cost of tuition and living expenses were beyond my means. My family was unable to foot the exorbitant fees required to join the university, and I had to look for alternatives.

The idea of taking out a student loan crossed my mind, but I soon discovered that I would need a co-signer, and my family was not in a position to provide one. I was stuck between a rock and a hard place since I was not eligible for financial aid given that my family's income did not match the threshold required.

Despite my efforts to get funds from friends and relatives, I still could not raise the required fees to join the university. I found myself in a tight spot, devastated and hopeless. I had always known that education was the key to success, and a chance to join the university would undoubtedly provide me with not only education but also a chance to develop my skills and access better job opportunities.

It was at that point that I decided to take a gap year to save up for tuition fees. I took on a few odd jobs, such as gardening, babysitting, and house cleaning, and focused on saving every coin I could. Although the jobs paid little, the money I was saving would help me foot the university fees.

Yet, even this was not without its own set of challenges - I struggled with feelings of doubt, fear, and self-doubt. Doubt that I would be able to raise enough funds and fear that

I might never be able to achieve my dream of getting a university education. Despite these challenges, I was motivated by my desire to get an education, and I persevered.

After a year of hard work and diligence, I finally managed to raise the funds required to join the university. I learned that with hard work, commitment, and patience, anything is possible. This struggle has taught me the value of hard work, determination, and persistence. It has also given me a sense of pride and accomplishment knowing that I managed to raise the funds on my own.

## **University Life**

My journey at Dedan Kimathi University of Technology is an ongoing adventure, filled with exciting opportunities and challenges. I am pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in computer science, where I immerse myself in numbers and problem-solving.

University life isn't just about attending lectures and studying textbooks; it's a chance to explore my interests and develop new skills. Alongside my main course, I'm pursuing a minor degree in communication skills. I believe effective communication is crucial for success in any field, so I'm eager to enhance this skill alongside my mathematical studies.

Outside of academics, I've taken on an exhilarating challenge—I'm undergoing training to become a referee for the Football Kenya Federation (FKF). With my Class Three certification, I am now able to officiate FKF matches up to the regional level.

Training as an FKF referee is teaching me valuable lessons in leadership, decisionmaking, and teamwork. It requires quick thinking, clear communication, and the ability to remain calm under pressure—skills that are essential both on and off the field.

Balancing my academic studies with referee training isn't easy, but it's teaching me the importance of time management and perseverance. Whether I'm studying complex mathematical equations or officiating a football match, I approach each task with dedication and determination.

As I continue my journey at Dedan Kimathi University of Technology, I eagerly anticipate further opportunities for growth and learning. From mastering mathematical concepts to refining my communication skills and officiating football matches, each experience contributes to my personal and professional development.

## **hustling as comrade**

Being a student in campus can be challenging, especially when it comes to finances. Despite having access to student loans, scholarships, and bursaries, some students may still struggle to make ends meet. As a result, many students engage in hustling activities to supplement their income and sustain themselves in campus. I am one of those students.

My hustle involves buying and selling clothes, shoes, and accessories. I source the items from various suppliers, both locally and internationally, and sell them to fellow students and other customers. I also advertise my products on social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram, to reach a wider audience. Through this hustle, I have been able to earn some extra income and sustain myself in campus.

Apart from buying and selling, I also offer services such as photography and graphic design. I have honed my skills in these areas through personal practice and online courses, and I offer them to fellow students and other clients at a reasonable fee. These services have enabled me to make some extra income and develop my skills in the process.

I have also participated in several paid surveys and focus groups. Companies and organizations usually conduct surveys and focus groups to get feedback on their products or services, and they pay participants for their time and opinions. These surveys and focus groups have provided me with an opportunity to make some extra income and give my opinion on various products and services.

Moreover, I have worked as a part-time tutor to primary and high school students. I offer my services during the weekends and holidays when I am free from my studies. This hustle has enabled me to earn some extra income and share my knowledge and skills with others.

Hustling has been instrumental in sustaining my life in campus. It has enabled me to earn some extra income, develop my skills, and gain valuable work experience. I encourage fellow students to explore various hustling opportunities that align with their interests and skills. Hustling is not only a way to make extra income but also a way to develop essential life skills that will be useful in your future career.



## **Passion in Charities**

Throughout my life, I have always had a passion for engaging in charitable activities.

This passion continued to grow when I transferred to Dedan Kimathi University, where I discovered numerous opportunities to get involved in charitable activities. Dedan Kimathi University offers various initiatives and programs that enable students to engage in charitable activities, which has given me a platform to give back to society and make a positive impact.

One of the programs that caught my attention was the Community Service Program. The program provides an avenue for students to participate in different community projects, including health and sanitation, environmental conservation, and education, among others. This program allowed me to partner with various organizations to provide aid to vulnerable communities. Through this program, I participated in various activities such as visiting orphanages, cleaning up public areas, and teaching children in underprivileged areas.

Another way I engaged in charitable activities was through the various clubs and organizations at Dedan Kimathi University. For instance, the Red Cross Club in the university offers an excellent opportunity for students to participate in charitable activities such as blood donation drives, disaster response and management, and public health campaigns. This club has been instrumental in helping me fulfill my passion for engaging in charitable activities and make a positive impact on society.

Furthermore, the university's student government also organizes various charity events throughout the academic year. For instance, the student government organizes fundraising activities to support various initiatives, such as building water wells in drought-stricken areas, providing food and shelter to the homeless, and donating educational materials to underprivileged children.

Through these activities, I have realized that engaging in charitable activities is not only about giving back to society, but it also helps me grow as an individual. By working with different organizations, I have been able to develop essential skills such as teamwork, leadership, communication, and problem-solving. I have also learned to appreciate the value of community service and the positive impact it can have on society.

## **Rediscovering my Talents and Hobbies**

Rediscovering a passion can be a life-changing experience. It can reignite a sense of purpose, enhance our well-being, and provide us with a renewed sense of fulfillment. For me, rediscovering my passion in football has been a transformative experience that has enhanced my physical and mental well-being.

Growing up, I was passionate about football, and I participated in various competitions at both local and national levels. However, when I joined Dedan Kimathi University, I became so focused on my academics and other activities that I neglected my passion for playing football. As a result, I lost touch with the sport and stopped participating in games activities.

However, during my second year in campus, I decided to visit the university main football pitch to reconnect with the sport. The first few times I played were challenging, and I struggled to regain my stamina and form. Nevertheless, I persisted, and over time, I began to enjoy the sport once again.

playing football has numerous benefits, both physical and mental. Physically, playing football is an excellent form of exercise that strengthens muscles, improves cardiovascular health, and helps maintain a healthy weight. Mentally, football provides a sense of relaxation, reduces stress, and enhances overall well-being.

playing football has had a positive impact on my life, both in terms of my physical and mental well-being. Since rediscovering my passion for football, I have developed a regular playing routine that has improved my overall fitness and health. Moreover, playing has provided me with an opportunity to unwind, de-stress, and improve my mental health.

Rediscovering my passion for swimming has been a life-changing experience that has enhanced my physical and mental well-being. It has reminded me of the importance of pursuing our passions and the impact that they can have on our lives. I encourage everyone to explore their passions and pursue activities that bring them joy and fulfillment.

## **Hiking and Explorations**

One of the great benefits of attending Dedan Kimathi University is the proximity to stunning natural landscapes and hiking trails. The university is located in Nyeri County, which is surrounded by beautiful forests, hills, and mountains, providing students with excellent opportunities for hiking and exploration.

As a student at Dedan Kimathi University, I have had the opportunity to go on several hikes and explore the surrounding areas. One of the most popular hiking destinations is the Aberdare Ranges, located a few kilometers away from the university. The Aberdare Ranges offer a range of hiking trails, from easy to challenging, providing something for everyone.

Another great hiking destination is Mt. Kenya, the second-highest mountain in Africa. Mt. Kenya is located a few hours away from the university, making it an ideal destination for weekend hiking trips. The mountain offers several trails, including the popular Sirimon and Chogoria routes, providing stunning views of the surrounding areas.

Apart from hiking, Dedan Kimathi University provides students with opportunities to explore the rich cultural heritage of the area. The university is located in a region that is home to various indigenous communities, such as the Kikuyu and Agikuyu. Students can engage in cultural tours and visit historical sites, such as the Karatina market, the Mau Mau caves, and the Baden-Powell Museum.

Moreover, the university has several student organizations that focus on outdoor activities, such as hiking, camping, and nature conservation. These organizations provide students with an opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals and explore the surrounding areas while promoting responsible tourism and environmental conservation.

Dedan Kimathi University offers excellent opportunities for students to engage in hiking and exploration activities. The proximity to stunning natural landscapes and cultural heritage sites provides students with an opportunity to unwind, connect with nature, and learn about the rich history and culture of the area. I encourage all students

to take advantage of these opportunities and explore the surrounding areas. It is an excellent way to de-stress, meet new people, and make unforgettable memories.

## **opening a saving and credit account**

Opening a SACCO (Savings and Credit Cooperative Organization) account is a good way to save money and invest in shares, as SACCOs often offer competitive interest rates and investment opportunities for their members. However, it's important to do your research and choose a reputable and financially stable SACCO to work with.

Regarding the gift of a 4-acre land from a parent, this can be a significant asset that may appreciate in value over time. It's important to ensure that the transfer of ownership is done legally and in compliance with any relevant laws or regulations. This may involve working with a legal professional to draft a transfer of ownership document, filing the necessary paperwork with government agencies, and paying any applicable fees or taxes.

It's also important to consider the long-term financial implications of owning property, such as property taxes, maintenance costs, and potential liabilities. Working with a financial advisor can help ensure that you have a solid plan in place for managing the costs and risks associated with property ownership.

Overall, opening a SACCO account and receiving a gift of property were positive steps toward building long-term financial security.

## **Embracing Challenges and Opportunities**

Every day at Dedan Kimathi University of Technology brings new challenges and opportunities for growth. Currently, I am fully engaged in my academic pursuits, attending lectures, participating in discussions, and tackling assignments with enthusiasm.

Studying Mathematics and Modeling Processing is both stimulating and demanding. I immerse myself in the intricacies of mathematical theories and computational methods, constantly seeking to deepen my understanding and refine my problem-solving skills. With each lecture and tutorial, I am challenged to think critically, analyze complex problems, and develop innovative solutions.

In addition to my academic studies, I continue to pursue my minor degree in communication skills. This complementary course provides me with invaluable tools for effective communication, whether it's presenting research findings, collaborating with peers on group projects, or engaging in discussions with faculty members.

Outside of the classroom, I devote time to my role as an FKF referee. Officiating matches requires a unique blend of focus, composure, and decisiveness. I approach each game with a sense of professionalism and integrity, striving to ensure fair play and uphold the spirit of the sport.

Balancing my academic responsibilities with my extracurricular pursuits can be challenging, but I have learned to manage my time effectively and prioritize tasks accordingly. Whether it's attending lectures, studying for exams, or officiating matches, I embrace each opportunity with dedication and determination.

As I navigate the complexities of university life, I am grateful for the support of my professors, classmates, and mentors who inspire me to excel and pursue my passions. Their guidance and encouragement fuel my ambition and motivate me to push beyond my limits.



## **following what i love**

Every day at Dedan Kimathi University of Technology is like stepping into a world of new chances and ways to learn. I'm studying for my Bachelor of Science degree in BBIT, which means I get to explore numbers and solve puzzles.

But learning isn't just about books and lectures. I'm also taking a minor degree in communication skills. This helps me talk to people better and share ideas in a clear way, whether it's presenting in class or talking to friends.

Apart from studying, I'm also training to be an FKF referee. It's exciting, but it's not always easy. Sometimes there's a lot of pressure, and I have to make quick decisions. But each match teaches me something new and helps me become better at handling tough situations.

Despite the demands of my academic and extracurricular pursuits, I remain committed to maintaining a healthy work-life balance. I prioritize self-care, time management, and stress management techniques to ensure that I thrive both academically and personally. Whether it's taking breaks to recharge, staying organized with my schedule, or seeking support from peers and mentors, I am proactive in managing my well-being and achieving my goals.

Balancing everything can be tricky, but I make sure to take breaks and look after myself. Whether it's taking a walk or talking to friends, I find ways to relax and recharge so I can keep doing my best in everything I do.

As I reflect on my journey at Dedan Kimathi University of Technology, I am grateful for the myriad opportunities that have enriched my university experience. From pursuing my passions in mathematics to honing my communication skills and officiating football matches, each endeavor has broadened my horizons and shaped my future aspirations.

As I look back on my time here, I'm thankful for all the opportunities that have come my way. From studying math to learning how to communicate better and even refereeing matches, each experience has taught me something valuable.

## **Overcoming Challenges\*\***

Life at Dedan Kimathi University of Technology has its ups and downs, just like any journey. One of the biggest challenges I faced was managing my time effectively. With classes, assignments, referee training, and other responsibilities, it sometimes felt like there weren't enough hours in the day.

There were moments when I felt overwhelmed, unsure if I could keep up with everything. But I learned to prioritize tasks, break them down into smaller steps, and ask for help when needed. With perseverance and determination, I found ways to overcome these challenges and stay on track.

Another obstacle I encountered was academic pressure. Some subjects were more difficult than others, and there were times when I doubted my abilities. But I reminded myself that it's okay to struggle sometimes, as long as I keep trying my best. I sought support from professors, classmates, and academic resources, and gradually, I began to feel more confident in my abilities.

Balancing my academic studies with extracurricular activities like refereeing also presented its challenges. There were weekends when I had to officiate matches instead of relaxing or studying. However, I learned to manage my schedule efficiently, making time for both my studies and my passion for football.

Despite the obstacles, every challenge I faced taught me valuable lessons and helped me grow stronger. I learned the importance of resilience, perseverance, and adaptability in overcoming adversity. These experiences not only shaped me as a student but also as a person, equipping me with the skills and determination to face whatever challenges may come my way in the future.

## Career Path

Developing a passion for agriculture and being one of the top investors in the country can lead to fulfilling careers that make a positive impact on society. Both fields require dedication, hard work, and a commitment to excellence. As a student, it is essential to explore these passions and develop a plan to pursue them after campus.

Agriculture is a crucial sector of the economy that provides food, income, and livelihoods to millions of people. Developing a passion for agriculture can lead to a fulfilling career that involves working with farmers, managing agricultural operations, and improving agricultural productivity. To pursue a career in agriculture, it is essential to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge through education, internships, and work experience. Moreover, exploring different aspects of agriculture, such as crop production, animal husbandry, and agribusiness, can provide insights into different career paths within the sector.

Being one of the top investors in the country is another field that provides an opportunity to make a significant impact on the economy and society. Developing a passion for investing can lead to a fulfilling career that involves analyzing markets, identifying investment opportunities, and managing investment portfolios. To pursue a career as a top investor, it is essential to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge in finance, economics, and investment strategies. Moreover, gaining practical experience through internships, mentorship, and networking can help aspiring investors succeed in the field.

After campus, pursuing these passions can involve various paths, such as further education, internships, apprenticeships, or direct entry into the workforce. Moreover, it is essential to seek mentorship, network with professionals in the respective fields, and remain committed to lifelong learning and professional development.

Developing a passion for agriculture and being one of the top investors in the country can lead to fulfilling careers that make a positive impact on society. It is essential to explore these passions, acquire the necessary skills and knowledge, and develop a plan to

pursue them after campus. Remember that pursuing your passions requires commitment, hard work, and dedication, but the rewards are worth it in the long run.

## **conclusion**

In writing this autobiography, I've embarked on a journey through the tapestry of my life, weaving together the threads of my experiences, challenges, and triumphs. As I reach the end of this narrative, I find myself filled with a profound sense of gratitude for the opportunity to reflect on the path I've traveled.

Through the highs and lows, the moments of joy and sorrow, I've discovered the resilience of the human spirit and the power of perseverance. Each chapter of my life has shaped me into the person I am today, imbuing me with strength, compassion, and a deep appreciation for the beauty of existence.

As I close this chapter of my autobiography, I carry with me the lessons learned and the memories cherished. I am reminded that life is a journey, and each step forward brings new opportunities for growth and self-discovery.

To those who have accompanied me on this journey—family, friends, mentors, and even strangers who have crossed my path—I extend my heartfelt gratitude. Your presence has enriched my life in ways beyond measure, and I am forever grateful for your love, support, and guidance.

As I look toward the future, I do so with a sense of optimism and excitement, eager to embrace the adventures that lie ahead. Though the road may be winding and the destination unknown, I am confident in my ability to navigate the twists and turns with courage and grace.

In closing, I leave behind this autobiography as a testament to the beauty of the human experience and a celebration of the remarkable journey we all share. May its pages serve as a source of inspiration, encouragement, and hope for those who dare to embark on their own quest for self-discovery.

With gratitude and anticipation,