

# Autobiography

## Introduction

My name is Maurine Wangechi Maingi, a proud Kenyan born in Naivasha, Nakuru County and raised in the serene town of Nyahururu. As a dedicated IT professional with a passion for cybersecurity and digital forensics, my journey has been a tapestry of diverse experiences, a relentless pursuit of knowledge, and unwavering commitment to making a positive impact in my community and beyond.

## Early Life and Education

Growing up in a close-knit family in Nyahururu, my early years were marked by curiosity and a keen interest in technology. My parents, who were both educators, instilled in me the value of education and the importance of hard work. I joined St Paul's Academy for my nursery school at the age of 4 years and later proceeded to 91 Municipality in 2002 for my primary education.

In Standard 3, I vividly remember being transferred to Kasuku P.C.E.A Academy/ Life then was just normal for a kid, and I had no passion for anything but just growing up and having lots of money. Being the last born I often joined my elder siblings in watching investigative movies with IT technicians sparking my passion for IT.

I sat for my KCSE in 2010, passed, and proceeded to Nyakiambi Secondary School in Nyandarua County. In form 3, I later joined Kerugoya Girl's High School which was a significant milestone in my life. High school was not just about academics; it was a period of personal growth, self-discipline, and self-discovery. I excelled in my

studies, particularly in science and mathematics, which further fueled my interest in technology.

I also actively participated in various clubs and extracurricular activities, including the Presidential Award Club, the Red Cross Club, and the Rangers Movement Club. These experiences taught me valuable lessons in leadership, teamwork, and community service. I finally sat for my KCSE in 2015 and I excelled well.

### College Years and Motherhood

After high school, I enrolled at the Nyeri National Polytechnic in 2016, where I pursued a Diploma in Information Communication Technology. In August 2017, I was blessed with a child which was a tough period for me. Being a first-year college student, and unemployed, I had to stay out of school for the whole of 2017 and raise my child until May 2018 when I returned to school for my second year. I joined Nyandarua National Polytechnic as a day scholar.

Balancing being a student and a mother was both challenging and rewarding. I had to multitask, but miraculously, I managed and graduated with a pass in 2019. I delved deeper into the world of IT, learning about programming, networking, web development, and system administration. The practical nature of the coursework provided me with hands-on experience, and I was fortunate to have supportive lecturers and parents who guided me every step of the way.

### University Life

My journey continued at Dedan Kimathi University of Technology in 2021, where I embarked on a Bachelor of Science in Information Technology. University life was a whirlwind of lectures, projects, and late-night study sessions. I immersed myself

in various subjects, from software development and data analysis to artificial intelligence and machine learning.

One of the highlights of my university experience was a group project in my second year where we developed a web application for a film management system. This project not only honed my technical skills but also taught me the importance of collaboration and effective communication.

In my final year project, I did a web development system for flood prediction, the system used a machine learning model to predict the occurrence of floods. This exercise helped me exercise my technical skills in AI, web development, and machine learning collaboration with my supervisors, Dr Elizabeth Mutua and Dr Patrick Gikunda, and achieve specific goals within the given time limit

Beyond academics, I was actively involved in extracurricular activities. As a member of the ADA Peer Educator program, I worked as an ambassador against drug and substance abuse, organizing awareness campaigns and workshops. My role in Peace Ambassadors Kenya allowed me to contribute to peace initiatives both on campus and in the broader community. These experiences enriched my university life, providing me with a sense of purpose, collaboration with my fellow comrades and the Student Welfare, and the opportunity to make a difference.

### Professional Development and Work Experience

My professional journey began with various internships and training programs that provided me with invaluable hands-on experience.

In early 2023, I joined the CyberSafe Foundation as a trainee in Digital Forensics and Threat Intelligence. Here, I learned the intricacies of cybersecurity, working

with tools like Spiderfoot and SIEM to analyze and mitigate cyber threats. I worked hand in hand with my fellow sisters in the organizations, my mentors, and our CEO Confidence Staveley. At the end of the training, we did a project on Harnessing Digital Footprint, researching on ways to protect our digital footprints from hackers and the dark web. This experience solidified my interest in cybersecurity and set the foundation for my future career.

Following this in 2022 January, I had the opportunity to work in the computer labs at Dedan Kimathi University of Technology. As a trainee, I was responsible for assisting students and staff with technical issues, managing the lab's IT infrastructure, and conducting workshops on various IT topics. I engaged in fixing any hardware issues, WIFI networking connection which we used tools like Packet Tracer and Wireshark for configuration. This role enhanced my technical skills and reinforced the importance of providing excellent support and service.

Another significant experience was my internship at the Nyahururu Subcounty Treasury in January 2019, where I worked as a trainee assistant to the District Accountant. Here, I gained practical experience in financial management and accounting, skills that will be valuable in my future career. Here I used tools like the IFMIS system, which is a management information system used for financial purposes in public service institutions for accountability.

Additionally, in January 2017, I worked as a trainee assistant to the clerk at the Head of Conservancy Central Highlands (Kenya Forestry Services). I was assigned in the office of the secretary where I was involved in administrative tasks and data management. This was really significant because it was at the beginning of my career.

## Certifications and Training

Recognizing the need to stay ahead in the ever-evolving field of cybersecurity, I pursued advanced training programs. Throughout my career, I have pursued various certifications and training programs to enhance my skills and stay updated with the latest developments in the field. From February to April 2024, I completed the ALX Africa Artificial Intelligence and Career Essentials training program. The program was vigorous because in 8 weeks we learned the basics of AI, and engaged with many AI tools through practicals and group work assignments. It provided me with advanced knowledge in AI and equipped me with essential career skills.

In December 2023, I joined the Cyber Secured India training and internship program, focusing on Cyber Security and Digital Forensics. This comprehensive program covered various aspects of cybersecurity, including threat analysis, incident response, and forensic investigations. The training I received here was instrumental in shaping my approach to cybersecurity and it intensified my passion for cybersecurity.

Another noteworthy training was the Kevin Mitnick Honor Mentorship and Training program, which I completed between August 2023 and February 2024. This program, was created to honor the renowned cybersecurity expert Kevin Mitnick by equipping cybersecurity enthusiasts with knowledge and skills to follow their passion. The program provided deep insights into ethical hacking, penetration testing, advanced security techniques, communication skills and project management. The mentorship I received during this period was invaluable, helping me refine my skills, group work and approach to cybersecurity.

## Skills and Professional Qualifications

Over the years, I have developed a diverse set of skills that have been crucial in my professional journey. My technical skills include proficiency in various computer software, such as Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Access, Adobe Acrobat, IFMIS system, QuickBooks, and AutoCAD.

I am also well-versed in programming languages such as JavaScript, HTML, CSS, and Python which I use for Web development, Software Development, and machine learning modeling.

In my university, I learned skills such as Object-Oriented Programming, Database Management Systems, Application Programming, Mobile Development, Simulation and Modeling, and Data Mining. My IT skills encompass networking, software development, project management, data analysis, artificial intelligence, machine learning, and cybersecurity.

In the field of cybersecurity, I have substantial experience using tools like Spiderfoot and SIEM, particularly in Digital Forensics and Threat Intelligence. These skills have enabled me to tackle complex technical challenges and deliver exceptional results in various professional settings.

## Personal Reflections and Behaviors

Throughout my journey, I have cultivated several personal values and behaviors that have been instrumental in my success. Effective communication is one of my core strengths, enabling me to maintain continuous communication with clients, colleagues, and stakeholders. My ability to work collaboratively has been crucial in

delivering outstanding business performance, whether in team projects or organizational initiatives.

I take pride in my excellent PC skills, which have been vital in my roles involving Microsoft Office packages and other computer software. Additionally, my accounting skills, honed during my time at the Nyahururu Subcounty Treasury, have equipped me with the ability to solve complex financial problems.

Reflecting on my journey, I am grateful for the experiences and opportunities that have shaped my career. From the early days of tinkering with computers to leading complex cybersecurity projects, each step has been a testament to my dedication and passion for technology.

I believe that continuous learning and adaptability are key to success in the rapidly evolving field of IT. As I continue to grow professionally, I remain committed to staying at the forefront of technological advancements and using my skills to make a positive impact.

Several key behaviors guide my professional and personal life:

1. **Driving Performance:** I strive to excel in all that I do, constantly seeking to be the best.
2. **Building Pride and Passion:** I uphold my employer's brand as the best choice in the market, instilling a sense of pride and passion in my work.
3. **Delighting Customers:** I go the extra mile to create 'magic moments' for clients, ensuring their satisfaction.
4. **Growing Talent and Capability:** I share my knowledge, experience, and best practices with my team, fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

5. Protecting and Enhancing Employer Reputation: I recognize the sensitive nature of the markets in which organizations operate and work diligently to uphold their reputation.

## Hobbies and Interests

Beyond my professional life, I have a range of hobbies and interests that contribute to my personal growth and well-being. I enjoy reading, which allows me to continually expand my knowledge and stay informed about the latest trends in technology and cybersecurity.

I also have a keen interest in sports and outdoor activities. Hiking and nature walks are some of my favorite pastimes, providing me with a sense of relaxation and rejuvenation. Engaging in these activities not only keeps me physically active but also allows me to connect with nature and reflect on my personal and professional goals.

## Future Ambitions and Goals

As I look to the future, I am driven by a desire to make significant contributions to the field of cybersecurity and digital forensics. My immediate goal is to further my education by pursuing a Master's degree in Cybersecurity. This advanced study will equip me with deeper insights and specialized knowledge, enabling me to tackle complex cybersecurity challenges effectively.

In the long term, I aspire to establish my own cybersecurity consultancy firm. This venture will allow me to leverage my expertise to provide comprehensive cybersecurity solutions to businesses and organizations, helping them safeguard their digital assets and protect against cyber threats. Additionally, I am passionate



about mentoring and empowering the next generation of IT professionals, and I plan to establish training programs and workshops to share my knowledge and experiences.

## Conclusion

My journey in the field of cybersecurity and IT has been one of constant growth, learning, and dedication. As I look to the future, I am excited about the possibilities and the opportunity to make a significant impact in the world of information security. With a strong foundation of skills, experiences, and values, I am confident in my ability to contribute meaningfully to the field and inspire others to follow their passion for technology.

Reflecting on my journey, I am grateful for the experiences and opportunities that have shaped my career and personal growth. From my early years in Nyahururu to my academic pursuits and professional development, each step has been a building block toward achieving my goals. My dedication to excellence, continuous learning, and making a positive impact remains unwavering.

I am excited about the future and the endless possibilities that lie ahead. With a strong foundation of skills, experiences, and values, I am confident in my ability to contribute meaningfully to the field of IT and cybersecurity and to inspire others to achieve their full potential.