

## BIGMAP POLICY ASSOCIATE SPEAKS AT BIOTECH CONGRESS IN KENYA

James Aketch Okeno, BIGMAP policy associate, traveled to Nairobi, Kenya, in September 2008 to speak at the First All Africa Congress on Biotechnology. Okeno discussed policy initiatives emerging in Africa to embrace biotechnology and presented information about biotech crops.

Okeno told attendees that although their country has been hesitant to adopt genetically modified crops, he believes they have nothing to fear. “Genetically modified crops in the U.S. go through rigorous tests to ensure their safety,” he said. “Kenya should not be afraid to adopt them. There are scientists at local universities and research institutions in the country that are qualified to work with these types of agricultural products.”

Okeno is on sabbatical from Moi University in Eldoret, Kenya, where he is a senior lecturer in the Department of Biotechnology teaching plant genetics. He was instrumental in raising funds to construct a biotech lab at the university. Okeno has also served as Director of Regulatory Affairs for the Africa Harvest Biotech Foundation International.



*James Aketch Okeno*