

A brief report on the Philosophy Working Group workshops in Nairobi, May 2026

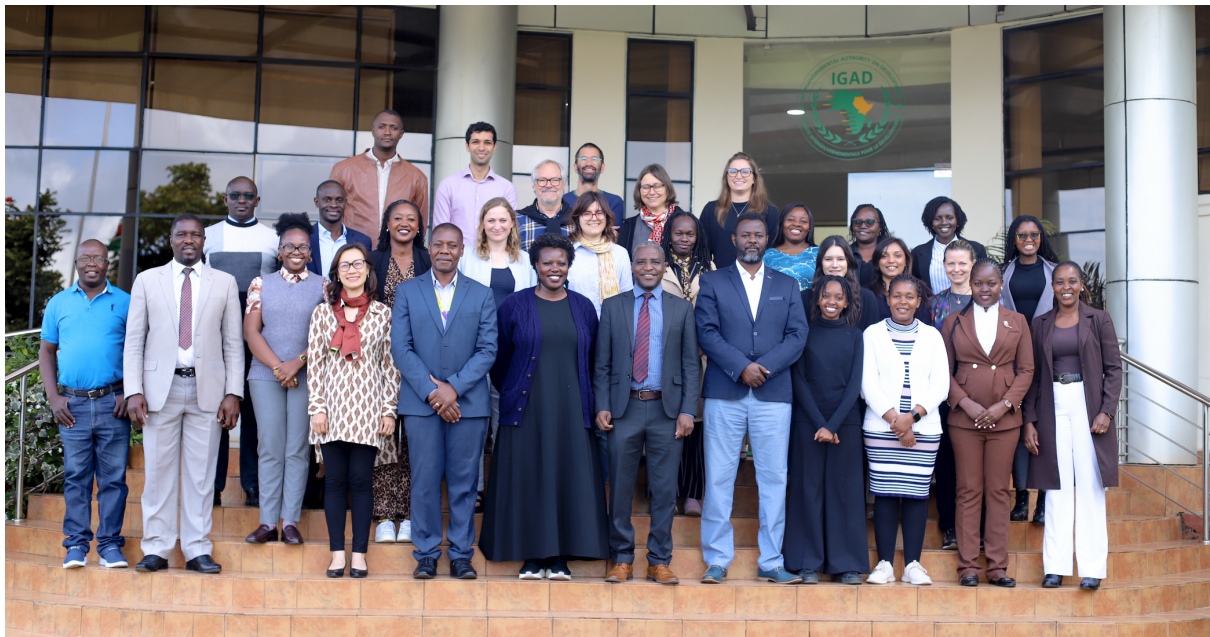
ICPAC, Ngong, Kenya, 25-29 May 2026

During the last week of May, the [MCR Philosophy Working Group](#) held two workshops in Nairobi, Kenya, hosted at the MCR ICPAC regional hub with additional support from the Kenya Meteorological Department. The main event was a 3-day workshop entitled ‘Building Ethical Foundations for People-Centered Climate Science’, which followed on from an earlier workshop held in Paris, France in October 2024. The main event was preceded by a 2-day MCR-only workshop, to take advantage of the presence in Nairobi of a range of participants from across MCR.

The main workshop involved about 35 participants (see top photo below), mostly from East Africa, but also from Niger, South Africa, United States of America, Argentina (2), UK (2), Germany (4), France, Switzerland, India and Nepal. The East African participants came from a wide range of backgrounds, including health, ethics, environmental law, and climate. The programme featured keynote presentations and panel discussions, with lots of time allocated for general discussion. The first day focused on methodologies, and the second day on institutions. The third day consisted of reflections, followed by a field trip in the afternoon (see middle photo).

Much of the programme focused on the ultimate purpose of science, which is improving people’s lives. (It has always been so.) Yet in its quest for ever-increasing sophistication, science can sometimes lose its way. Climate science is no different in both respects. Accordingly, there was much discussion of what ‘people-centered climate science’ means, which is a theme that is central to MCR. Points that arose included (i) the importance of meaningful influence, not just tokenistic inclusion; (ii) the importance of trust, noting that funding structures encourage competition; and (iii) the need to place more value on local knowledge. A strong sense emerged from the group that within the Majority World/Global South, there is often enough knowledge for experts to take a leading role in the development of climate information, and not have to rely on the Minority World/Global North, *provided that their own knowledge is recognized*. This raises the issue of epistemic justice, which is an important theme in philosophy of science. There was also some discussion on how generative AI might change things from this perspective. A formal, detailed workshop report will be published in due course.

The MCR-only workshop included about 18 participants (see bottom photo), with representatives of the Philippines (ADMU) hub and the Education Working Group joining remotely for part of the time. There was no formal agenda: after an extended ‘tour de table’, informal discussions were led by the represented MCR hubs together with the three MCR Working Groups. This also provided an opportunity to reflect on the purpose of MCR, and how it might evolve in the future.



Participants in the main workshop, together with Representatives of the Directors of ICPAC & KMD. Absent from the photograph were Julia Mindlin and Fiona Spuler.



Group photo from the field trip to the Nadupoi Maasai Women's Cooperative.



Participants in the MCR-only workshop. From left to right: Back row: Patrick Kinyua, Nishadh Kalladath, Fiona Spuler, Vincent Lam, Michaela Hegglin, Aglaé Jézéquel, Julia Mindlin, Ted Shepherd, Julieta Cánneva, Anna Sörensson; Middle row: Linda Ogalla, Shachi Truong, Aditi Modi; Front row: Lilian Kongani, Winnie Khaemba, Patricia Nying'uro, Abdi Fidar (Director ICPAC), Masilin Gudoshava.