



National
Irrigation
Authority

UNYUNYIZI NEWS

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“We are providing water for Irrigation to ensure Kenya is food secure”

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Rotavator preparing land for rice planting in Bunyala Irrigation Scheme

Chief Editor's Note

The fifth issue of Unyunyizi News is out and something interesting to read especially during this trying period.

The third and fourth quarters have definitely had their fair share of challenges, one beyond what we would have imagined; the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, we salute your brevity and commitment in helping manage and mitigate the pandemic in whatever ways you have; staying home, sanitizing and washing hands, keeping social distance among other measures recommended by the Government. In this issue, we take you through the various success stories of Irrigation farmers during the quarter 3 and 4 because their success is our success. We also take you through the modern rice farming techniques practised in schemes. In addition, do you remember the rice planting process in the fourth issue? Did you plant some? If you did, in a couple of weeks it will be ready. For this reason, to prevent post-harvest losses, we will take you through the post-harvest management of rice. Further, we will enlighten you on two more out of the 17 values we share as a nation. The issue also captures a lioness of our times. She is a woman who did not let the social stereotypes hold her back from pursuing her passion.



Mr. Daniel M. Nzonzo- Principal Corporate Communication Officer

Currently, she holds the position of Chief officer, Information and Communication Technology in the Authority.

Last but not least, we keep our promise of capturing some of your opinion on how as a citizen you are contributing to the national food security basket. In the next issue, we would love to know how COVID-19 has affected your farming practices. Our social media platforms as well as email address are open for you to share your feedback.

Enjoy the read.

Word from the CEO



Mr. Gitonga Mugambi- CEO National Irrigation Authority

I sincerely hope that everyone is adhering to the Government's directives on mitigating this deadly virus. The COVID-19 pandemic is spreading and affecting more countries ours included. With that, the daily life and well-being of people around the world has been disrupted.

As an institution, we have put our best foot forward in undertaking our core mandate of providing water for irrigation as we observe the Presidential directives

given with regard to the virus.

We have limited our travel activities, encouraged staff to work from home, provided the security guards with masks, gloves and hand held thermometers for temperature scanning of all persons entering the premises, promoted regular and thorough Hand-washing by employees and stakeholders, through installing several hand washing points around the premises. Hand rub sanitizers have been provided to all offices in the Head Office and Schemes. We have also installed sanitizing dispensers along the hallways and corridors around the premises and made sure our work place is clean and hygienic by regularly disinfecting them.

While some of us offering critical services are working from the office, majority of our staff are working remotely. We urge stakeholders to reach us through our provided contacts and social platforms to ensure continued service delivery. We will continue to offer our services using the existing IT and Communication infrastructure. We sincerely hope that we will be able to go back to normalcy very soon. In the meantime, we look forward to continuing our work diligently and effectively.

RICE FARMING TECHNIQUES IN THE NEW AGE

By Daisy Chanzu

As years go by so does the world evolve and adapt to changes especially the world of technology which seems to be part and parcel of every aspect of life. Rice have not been left behind in joining the bandwagon by employing the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) and Water Saving Rice Cultivation (WSRC) technologies first introduced and practiced in Mwea Irrigation Scheme(MIS).



Rice farmers in Bunyala Irrigation Scheme transplanting using the SRI system

Until August 18, 2009 when farmers at the Scheme familiarized themselves with the SRI technology and later the WSRC, a lot of water went into waste and the yields did not match the production cost. To put this into perspective, Let's take a look at each of the systems and what they entail:

As explained by Dr. Raphael Wanjogu, the Chief Research Officer at the Authority, SRI practice produces better grains with stronger aroma that improves their market demand, uses less seeds reducing production costs, saves 30% water and are practicable with all rice varieties. Under conventional methods, transplantation of seedlings is done at a rate of two (2) seedlings per hole with twenty (20) by twenty (20) centimeters. Water levels are raised to an average of five (5) centimeters after transplantation and after ten (10) days a farmer is needed to do gapping to replace dry and weak seedlings. On the other hand, under SRI, 8 – 15 day old seedlings with 3 leaves are grown in a raised nursery bed. Single seedlings are planted with a minimum time interval between the time they are taken out from the nursery and planted carefully at a shallow depth (1-2 cm). Planting at grids of either 20 x 20 cm or 25 x 25 cm

(or 30 x 30 cm or even wider if the soil is very fertile) using a rope or roller marker to achieve precise inter-plant distances to facilitate inter-cultivation.

Transplanting single young seedlings has several benefits including:

- No transplanting shock if transplanting is done carefully,
- No competition for nutrients, water and space within a hill,
- Wider spacing enables all leaves to be photo synthetically active unlike with crowding where lower leaves do not get enough exposure to sunlight for photosynthesis,
- Earlier arrival within a better growing environment in the main field extends the time for filleting,
- Seed requirements are reduced and
- Much greater potential for tilling and root growth.

On the other end, WSRC is a strategy meant to save on water during dry seasons. It involves five main technologies: use of healthy seedlings, hand leveling, line planting, improved weeding and intermittent irrigation. “This system is a sister to the SRI system” explains Dr. Wanjogu.

As established in several researches done on the technology, for instance by Prof. Bancy Mati who established upon trials of SRI technology, it gave more yields with high water saving.

The Authority is keen on advising farmers on the best farming practises so as to increase rice yields and enhance Kenya's food basket as well as meet Rice consumption requirements.

“ SRI system is a set of improved practices used in managing of rice plants through soil, water and nutrients management”

ABANDONING FISHING NETS FOR A GREEN GOLD.

By George Maina



Farmers in Lower Kuja Irrigation Scheme harvesting Rice

National Irrigation Authority is well felt in the Western Region of Kenya especially for its irrigated rice farming activities in an expanse majorly known for fishing. The Authority has further intensified rice farming not only in Ahero, West Kano and Bunyala Irrigation Schemes but also currently in Lower Kuja Irrigation Scheme, Nyatike, Migori County.

Close to the shores of L. Victoria within the Lower Kuja River basin you find Lower Kuja Irrigation Scheme. For the longest period, residents have made a living through fishing but with the introduction of rice farming by the Authority, fishermen have abandoned their nets and as they say it is one of the best choices they have made so far. "Rice farming has changed our lives. We are able to get enough food and funds to support our families and educate our children. In fishing sometimes it was hard to support and educate our children because you are not guaranteed to find fish in the lake. You just wake up every morning to try your luck but here in farming you are guaranteed of harvest. Venturing in rice farming is one of the best choices I have ever made in life" said Kevin Otieno; a farmer in the scheme during a recent visit.

The scheme has a potential of 84,000 acres to be put under production. Currently about 3,000 acres are being utilized for the production of paddy as expansion activities goes on to realize the projects full potential. Each acre produces

an estimate of 40 bags which costs Kshs. 3,000 per bag translating to Kshs. 120,000 per acre. The Authority believes that the full potential of Lower Kuja will be realized once the construction of a Dam which is currently in the tendering stage is complete. The Authority is also happy that the farmers are embracing rice farming in the scheme despite the challenges of inculcating them into farming since the scheme was started. The Scheme has so far contributed to the Big 4 Agenda under Food Security and Nutrition not only for the locals but also for the nation at large.

Once the full potential of lower kuja is realized, Kenya will have enough rice for consumption. Currently Mwea Irrigation Scheme is the leading producer of rice in Kenya. It produces a third of what is needed to feed Kenyan people under 30,000 acres. Lower kuja Irrigation Scheme potential is 84,000 acres which is capable of producing three times what Mwea Irrigation Scheme produces.



Farmers Transplanting Paddy.

“A region well known for fishing turned to rice growing region”

Post-harvest management of Paddy

By Brendah Rajwayi

Did you plant rice after reading our forth issue? Have you been a rice farmer all through? Then you probably know how painful the sting of post-harvest loses can be. This article therefore seeks to cover you from the wound of post-harvest loses of paddy. As described by Dr. Raphael Wanjogu, the Chief Research Officer at the Authority, post-harvest management of paddy refers to the series of processes as well as any handling techniques and treatments applied to the crop just harvested from the field for the purposes of edibility, value addition and increment of shelf life. Post-harvest management of the crop is important as it determines the quality of grain, mill recovery rate as well as minimize losses that can be controlled.

The several stages of post-harvest management of paddy include; field drying, threshing, shed drying, cleaning, grading, storing, weighing and milling before it is fit for human consumption.

The first step to post-harvest management of paddy is field drying. Paddy should not be harvested before it has achieved 18-22%wb (wet basis). This can be tested manually by biting between teeth. It should be firm but not crumbly. "When the wb is above 22% the paddy is considered not ripe for harvesting," states the Western Kenya Irrigation Schemes Manager, Mr. Joel Tanui. He further states that when the wb is below 18% it risks shattering should it absorb any moisture. It is important for you to take note not to harvest your paddy before about 85% of the grains in the field have changed colour from green to a matured yellow. After ensuring that the moisture content is right for harvesting is the cutting of the paddy straws. This can be done using a combined harvester or manually using a sickle or knife. When using a sickle or knife, ensure you cut the straws about 4cm from the ground. Mr. Tanui recommends the use of a combined harvester because it reduces labour costs as well as post-harvest loses by about 30%.

Threshing is the second step and involves separating the grains from the paddy straws. This can be done manually by beating and whipping against a framed object or by use of winnowing machines. This process should be done on the day of harvest. Should they stay overnight, then the paddy straws should be dried first before they are threshed.

The third stage is shed drying the grain to a moisture content safe for milling (14% wb) and storing in a dry place. Delayed drying, incomplete drying or ineffective drying reduces the quality of the rice grain. The paddy grains are spread on a plastic

sheet or canvas and turned every 30 minutes as they dry. Quick drying causes the grains to crack and will result in broken grains when milled hence farmers are advised to dry their paddy in a sheltered area away from direct sunlight or any sudden rain. Farmers should also ensure that the surface temperature of the grains being dried does not rise above 36 0C.

Cleaning the paddy by separating it from any foreign particles is the fourth stage and is important as it increases the milling efficiency, decreases damage of the milling machines as well as decreasing post-harvest loss.

The other important stage is the milling of the paddy. The good grain is milled to remove the outer skin, hull and bran to reveal the white kernel and endosperm of the grain that is used as food for humans. The by-products can be used for other purposes such as animal feed or flour for making rice cakes.



Mr. Joel Tanui threshing paddy straws with farmers in Ahero Irrigation Scheme.

The sixth stage which is rice grading involves visual observations and moisture content measurements. Visual observations will indicate whole grains, broken grains, off-type grains, coloured grains and the presence of any un-milled paddy. They are then packed and stored as graded.

Last but not least is the storage of rice. To prevent any loses by adverse weather, moisture, micro-organisms, rodents or any other pests, the rice being stored should have grain moisture content of below 14% wb. The rice bags should also not be paced directly on the floor rather on a rack. Dr. Wanjogu states that the longer one wants their rice to stay, the lower its moisture content should be.

You can now start preparing for the harvest of your paddy.

Highlights



1. CS Ministry of Water, Sanitation and Irrigation Sicily K. Kariuki (Mrs), EGH accompanied by senior officers from the Ministry and National Irrigation Authority flagging off Lorries distributing fruit tree seedlings across the Country during the launch of the initiative in Kasarani, Nairobi.

2. Dr. Fred O. Matiang'i (Left) accompanied by PS Water Sanitation and Irrigation, Joseph W. Irungu, CBS (2nd Left) and Authority's Chairman Hon. Eng Joshua Toro (Right) during the Launch of Nginda Irrigation Project in Murang'a County.

3 PS, Ministry of Water Sanitation and Irrigation PS (center) together with PS for Crops Development Prof. Boga (Left) and Chair of parliamentary committee on Environment and Natural Resources Hon. Kareke Mbiuki (right) and other Government officials in the Galana Kulalu Model farm

4. CS Ministry of Water, Sanitation and Irrigation CS Sicily K. Kariuki (Mrs), EGH (Left) accompanied by the Authority's Chairman Hon. Eng. Joshua Toro and other senior officers during a field visit to Riamukurwe Irrigation project in Nyeri County.

5. The Authority's staff refilling hand sanitizers in the Head Office to comply with Covid-19 prevention safety measures.

6. The Authority staff working under the measures and behavioral protocol issued by the Ministry of Health during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Misconceptions about the Authority

“National Irrigation Authority only builds irrigation infrastructure.”

National Irrigation Authority is not only mandated to build Irrigation Infrastructures but also has its functions expanded in the Irrigation Act 2019 as follows;

1. Develop and improve irrigation infrastructure for national or public schemes;
2. Provide irrigation support services to private medium and smallholder schemes, in consultation and cooperation with county governments and other stakeholders;
3. Provide technical advisory services to irrigation schemes in design, construction supervision, administration, operation and maintenance under appropriate modalities, including agency contracts, as may be elaborated in regulations to this act;
4. Undertake irrigation development, including infrastructure, in national or public and smallholder schemes, including schemes which traverse or straddle more than one county;
5. In consultation with county governments, facilitate formation and strengthening of irrigation water users' associations at scheme level for operation, maintenance and management;
6. In consultation with the county governments and other stakeholders facilitate formation and strengthening of scheme management committees at scheme level for management of the schemes;
7. In consultation with the county governments and other stakeholders facilitate formation and strengthening of dispute resolution committees at scheme level for the resolution of disputes relating to scheme management;
8. In consultation with the cabinet secretary, the cabinet secretary for the time being responsible for finance, and the county governments raise funds for the development of infrastructure in national, public and smallholder schemes under appropriate mechanisms, including under agency contracts;
9. In consultation with the cabinet secretary and county governments, co-ordinate and plan settlement on national or public irrigation schemes, as well as schemes which traverse or straddle more than one county and determine the number of settlers thereof;
10. Provide technical advisory services on a commercial basis, on irrigation water management, including water harvesting and storage, and waste water recycling for agricultural use to all schemes under appropriate modalities, including agency contracts;
11. In collaboration with county governments, the private sector, civil society organizations and other stakeholders, provide technical advisory services to community and smallholder irrigation schemes concerning design, construction supervision, administration and maintenance of irrigation infrastructure under appropriate modalities, including agency contracts;
12. Facilitate linkages between and among the national government and county governments, private sector, civil society organizations, communities and other stakeholders for the provision of support services to irrigation water user associations;
13. Provide land in national irrigation schemes for public purposes;
14. In collaboration with county governments and other stakeholders, promote the marketing, safe storage and processing of crops, animal and fish products grown or produced on national and other irrigation schemes and to liaise in this regard with other responsible state agencies and organizations;
15. In collaboration with county government and other stakeholders and government agencies carry out periodic researches to determine and make recommendation on fair prices for crops, animals and fish products grown or produced on national and other irrigation schemes;
16. Prepare and submit to the cabinet secretary, through the principal secretary, annual and other periodic reports concerning the performance of its mandate and functions; and
17. Advise the cabinet secretary, through the principal secretary, on any matter in connection with the development, maintenance, expansion and availability of irrigation support services.

OPINION NOOK

These are few responses received on how some of the Kenyan citizens are contributing to the national food security basket.

Mary

"I have a greenhouse that I grow tomatoes for my consumption and for sale. I sell a lot of tomatoes in Naivasha markets and through this I contribute to the food basket"

Nahashon

"I contribute to food basket by changing the mode of farming and following outlined farming practices. I do this by embracing the agribusiness aspect of farming to make sure that I not only improve my farm output but also have surplus to take to the market"

Penina

"I have a small piece of land in Kitui that I grow cabbages. I sell to people in my area and in Kitui town. Through this I contribute to the food basket"

Bidan

"Am an agriculturalist by profession, I advise people on crop diseases and the best methods of farming. People have benefited from my advice which has resulted to production of high yields in my area. Through this I contribute to the food basket"

Gradwell

"I work in the largest coffee plantation in Kenya. I take care of the coffee from plantation period to harvesting period. It's because of me and my fellow workers every Kenyan is enjoying good quality of coffee in their homes. Through that I contribute to food basket"

Moses

"I contribute to food basket through practicing commercial farming"



Eva

"Being a resident in Nairobi, and all the contaminated foods, I opted to practice garden farming in my rented balcony which has been feeding my family since 2017."









In the next issue we would love to hear your thoughts on how Covid-19 has affected your farming practices. Kindly leave us your thoughts on any of our social media handles.

Thank you for your continued responses. Your feedback is highly appreciated.

How to keep yourself and others safe from Covid-19

HOW CAN WE KEEP OURSELVES AND OTHERS SAFE

 Regularly wash hands with soap often or rub with alcohol based sanitizer	 Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth to transfer virus by hand	 Disinfect all 'high touch' surfaces regularly	 Keep in touch with friends and family for mental health
 Always wear a face mask when in public places	 Maintain social distance and avoid people with flu-like symptoms	 Use disposable tissue or cover your mouth and nose under flexed elbow when you cough or sneeze	 Stay at home and avoid travelling when you have flu-like symptoms

NATIONAL IRRIGATION AUTHORITY

National Irrigation Authority stands together with Kenyans as we face the greatest fight in our history as our culture and way of life is in danger. The battle for our lives won't be won by few. We must come together and fight this pandemic. To survive we must keep ourselves and others safe. Let's not allow pain and suffering to rain upon our heads.
Let's Keep Safe Stay at home

A session with the ICT Iron Lady

By Rhoda Mbuvi

Ms. Nancy M. Wambugu is the Chief Officer, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) at the National Irrigation Authority. She has zealously worked and made impact in this field she says it is more of a passion than profession for over 15 years. In the spirit of keeping social distancing which she believes should be referred as physical distancing we are impelled to engage through a Google duo video call as she takes me through different aspects of her life sipping an homemade pineapple and chia seeds smoothie.



Nancy M. Wambugu, Head of ICT Division

Introduce Ms. Nancy to us.

"Ms. Nancy is a young at heart lady blessed with one adorable child. A staunch Catholic. I grew and schooled in Mukurwe-ini Constituency, Nyeri County, for my Primary and Secondary education. After my O levels, I did a diploma in Computer Science which earned me a job at my first working station: Bees Communication Ltd as a computer trainer, later at Coda Corporation as an ICT Network Administrator and at my first Government institution; Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS) as the Deputy Information Technology (IT) Manager from where I did my degree in Computer Science. I have also completed my MSc in Information Security at Strathmore University."

"I believe that education put in practice whether higher or not is all that is needed in today's job market. Everyone has certificates. All that matters is what you can do."

Introduce me to your entry to the job market.

She starts by assuring me that it has not taken the hand of a "godfather" but God. Remarkably, in all the four (4) jobs, Ms. Nancy says she saw adverts in different newspapers, applied and got the jobs. "For KEPHIS, I emerged the best out of 384 applicants." "I joined the Authority as the Senior ICT Officer and I have since risen to be the Chief Officer in charge of the division which is comprised of energetic, hardworking IT experts in different fields. A team I respect, value and enjoy working with."

How would you describe your experience as a female leader?

She sips her smoothie. "I am blessed to have worked in Institutions with the right working systems implemented rightly by result oriented management team." "If the systems are right, leadership is easy. The Authority has the right systems all round for instance promotion which comes by merit." She continues to say that the right attitude, focus and

persistence in doing the right thing for the Authority has helped her pull through the challenges.

It is said "women are judged more by fellow women." Have you experienced such? What appeal would you pass to fellow ladies in regards to supporting others in leadership?

I agree that women can be their own worst enemies. It is saddening that I have experienced it; a situation that almost brought me to resigning. I felt low; very low, but thanks to overwhelming support I received from fellow male colleagues, I worked through the situation and emerged out stronger.

Her advice to fellow ladies; "If only we knew the value of the time we misuse hating. If only we came together-being the majority in the Kenyan population- and have the right attitude we would do great things. Make a change."

She reminds me of a quote by Selene Kinder, 'I wish that more women realized that helping another woman win, cheering her on, praying for her, or sharing a resource with her does not take away from the blessings coming to them. In fact, the more you give, the more you receive. Empowering women doesn't come from selfishness but rather from selflessness'

It is also believed that women are more prone to emotional outbursts. How do you manage?

"I agree. First I had to identify my emotional weakness because I came to the realization that I needed to have emotional balance to be able remain calm and think straight during a stressful situation or crisis not only at my working environment but also at home."

"I am short tempered and I choose to deal with it. So when I find myself in such a situation. I take a break. Take a deep breath and count 1 to 10. It calms me and I don't find myself making rush decisions that I will regret later."

What inspires you to keep on?

She responds with a quote by Eleanor Roosevelt.

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"To handle yourself, use your head; to handle others, use your heart." She says it is important for a leader to understand his/her team, put him/herself in their shoes and come to their level to understand them to lead them. Leading as you mentor.

How do balance your profession, family and your social life?

"The Wheel of Life model has worked with me. Balancing my work, family, social life and religion. All aspects need to be balanced to keep the wheel moving. The balance is proved to create happiness and success."

Later after the interview I googled about the wheel of life model and I found out that the idea behind it is to identify the areas, dimensions or aspects of your life and arrange them as areas or spokes around a wheel. The circle represents your life, the whole of you. The pieces of the pie, or spokes, are the parts your life: the areas, roles, or aspects of the whole.

Out of the many successes you have accomplished, which of them is the most fulfilling?

"In 2012, I got a trophy from the now Governor of Nyandarua County, Francis Kimemia, the then Head of Public Sector in Kenya for pronounced contribution in ICT service delivery in the Public Sector. It felt good."

"At the Authority, I take pride of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. When I joined the Institution, operations were done manually. It broke my heart to see the finance team literally spending the night in the office computing financial statements. This changed with the installation, adoption and implementation of the ERP System. This success brings a lot of satisfaction in my heart."

ICT advancements. How do you keep yourself updated?

"ICT is dynamic. Actually before grasping an advancement, a newer version comes up. To keep myself updated I have subscribed to several online journals and I network widely in ICT oriented groupings." "In my division, we have quarterly meetings where we not only evaluate our achievements but also update ourselves on these technology advancements."

Have you had any system hacking at the Authority?

NO. "I have expertise in network and security management. I am passionate about system security and we have put the necessary measures at the Authority. Though we once got an attack that never saw the light of day."

Your take on cyber bullying?

"Everyone can be a victim and all we need to know is, "Nothing is for free in this cyber space. Think twice before you click that link."

What is the most interesting thing in your line of work?

"The ability to maneuver in a male dominated waters, even worst in the public sector where the players tend to put down your ideas."

Your advice to youngsters in ICT field (survival tactics)?

"ICT is a solution to so many problems in this world. Identify a problem, use ICT to solve it. Run with it. Take the perfect example of M-pesa and automated banking."

ICT and COVID-19. What adjustments have come by at the Institution?

"We have been prompted to give internet connectivity and provide the necessary ICT support to the staff to enable effective productivity as they work from home. We are also interacting with our stakeholders through bulk SMS to spread the message on dealing with the pandemic."

"Personally, I am putting in place all the measures given by the Government and actively advocating the same to my loved ones."

Nancy's favorite dish.

She drools for ugali served with greens mixed with meat (preferably goat meat).

Hobbies?

Ms. Nancy sideline is swimming which she is self-taught and loves socializing.

Best read so far?

She is a reader with her best 3 read being: Power of Positive Thinking by Norman Vincent, How to win friends and influence people by Dale Carnegie and Top performance by Zig Ziglar.

In your lazy day, are you a movie person, sleeping or?

She laughs. "None of them. On a lazy day I read listening to my favorite music (reggae) enjoying a glass of wine. In other days I bake. I love baking".

Your Mantra?

"Nancy, when you wake up every morning, you have two choices to make: to be happy or sad. Choose happiness."

DEMOCRATIC AND ACCOUNTABLE SHARING OF POWER

By George Maina



In the last issue we familiarized you with two of the seventeen National Values that you are expected to uphold as a Kenyan: patriotism and national Unity. I believe you were encouraged to love your motherland, you are loyal and devoted to it by paying taxes, protecting national resources and working hard to build Kenya. In this issue we delve into sharing and devolution of power, and democracy and participation of the people.

National Irrigation Authority is not exempted from promoting the national values and principles.

According to National Values and Principle of Government policy (2013), sharing and devolution of power is a governance system in which power, political, economic and social resources are distributed between the national and county levels of Government and which empowers people at the grassroots to make decisions on matters that affect them. This gives people in all parts of the country power to make decisions and be involved in all matters of the government which eventually promotes democratic and accountable exercise of power. It also fosters national unity by recognizing diversity, the right of communities to manage their own affairs and the interests and rights of minorities and the marginalized communities.

On the other hand, democracy and Participation of the people refers to a political culture of involving people at all levels of decision making; where everyone is equally bestowed with the powers to exercise personal skills, access information, utilize opportunities, elect

their representatives, express their views, and participate in governance without prohibition. People get involved in all levels of decision making through methods such as participation and voting during elections, offering oneself as a candidate for political office, in debating public issues, attending community meetings and in petitioning the government and even protesting. The Irrigation Act 2019, enables the Authority to practise this values through continually involving the communities around its schemes and projects involving communities in participation during formulation and implementation of projects, strategies, policies and matters revolving around irrigation as one way of promoting democracy and participation of people.

The Authority has the responsibility to adhere to these values. As a Kenyan, are you in practicing at your level?



*“ The people who own the country ought to govern it”
John Kay*

THE GREEN PATCHES OF TURKANA

By Johnbosco Obonyo



Maize in Katilu Irrigation Scheme

I had always associated Turkana County with livestock raiding, insecurity, dryness, hunger, drought and death until I recently visited the region. National Irrigation Authority has changed this narrative to a song of joy, abundance and life through its irrigation projects including Katilu, Morulem, Lokubae, Elelea Irrigation schemes among others. The sights and the impact of these projects to the locals and the region at large are evidently breathtaking.

The drive from Lodwar to Katilu Irrigation Scheme via Lokichar town is sluggish with few activities going on but the scenario is different when we arrive in the farms. Farmers, especially women are busy harvesting maize, as trucks wait on the edge to transport the bumper harvest to their homes and to the market. The songs and the smiles in their faces tell a transformed healthy green region. "Irrigation has saved us from hunger. Most of the farmers have left their livestock to till the land hence the livestock raiding has minimized. Insecurity has also reduced." Said the area Chief from her farm.

In Morulem we are greeted with vibrant farmers in high spirits singing folk songs and working harmoniously to desilt a canal as they prepare for the planting season. The unity from the old to the young, male and female is amazing. "We appreciate what the Authority has done to us and we are committed to play our part to have enough to feed ourselves, be able to afford health care and our children's education." Said Mercy Akiru; a farmer in the scheme.

The narrative is same in Lokubae where

farmers are preparing their farms for cropping. In Elelea, the farmers have opted to camp in their farms and concentrate on farming by giving it more time and energy. This is quite inspiring as it shows their determination and resilience towards adopting irrigated agriculture for all season food production.



Farmers display bumper harvest in Katilu Irrigation Scheme, Turkana County

Farmers in Turkana are very generous and they share their surplus harvest with neighbours who are yet to embrace farming. "Most of the times, we share our harvest with our neighbors who are yet to get a piece to crop. I cannot see my neighbor lacking when I have something to share." Said Epakan a farmer in Elelea. We are humbled by their gratifying gesture as they share their farm produce; sorghum, maize and watermelons as we ended up our visit.

The Authority's efforts has stopped the locals from relief food dependency. The opening of scheme has attracted most of the local people to the activities in the scheme thus reducing idleness, drunk-ness as well as construction of permanent residential houses.

"Irrigation has saved us from hunger. Most of the farmers has left their livestock to till the land hence the livestock raiding have minimized. Insecurity has also reduced." Said the area Chief from her farm.

VISION

Water to every irrigable acre

MISSION

Provide and Coordinate Sustainable Development and Management of Irrigation Services in Kenya

Contact us

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