



**FARMING  
SYSTEMS  
KENYA  
(FSK)**

# THE FSK UPDATE

**Vol. 1, ISSUE 2**



## WELCOME TO OUR NEWSLETTER

### A LITTLE ABOUT **FARMING SYSTEMS KENYA**

Farming Systems Kenya is a registered NGO established in 1981 to offer agricultural and community development service to rural small-holder farming communities

Farming Systems Kenya has been and continues to be in the forefront in fighting poverty.

Our main agenda is to enhance food security through development of agriculture in Kenya and beyond. The main focus has been the smallholder farmers who constitute 80% of the Kenya's farming community. We achieve this through improving their crops and livestock productivity hence enhancing income and food security. We introduce appropriate technologies, help farmers cut down production costs; we provide agribusiness linkages as well as creating community structures that act as platforms for agricultural policy influencing.

FSK has realized that to help smallholder farmers start a new enterprise or expand an existing enterprise credit is of great essence. We therefore undertake agribusiness enterprise incubation. FSK further undertakes core activities in donkey welfare and water, sanitation and hygiene programmes. These interventions target mainly ASAL areas where the donkey is such a critical animal. We welcome you to take a journey through our highlights. Please do not forget to give your response



### VISION

**A vibrant, profitable & sustainable farming community in Kenya**

### MISSION

Facilitate the transformation of the **farming community** into entrepreneurs through **innovative technology** transfer



**CROPS & LIVESTOCK INTEGRATION FOR IMPROVED FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS**

Page 2



**ABOUT NEDDY MY DONKEY, MY LIFE**

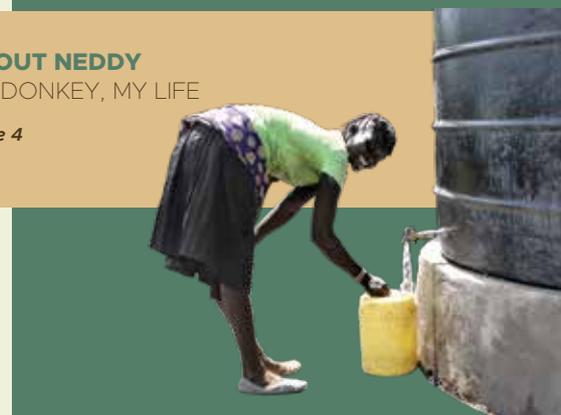
Page 4

## EMPOWERING FARMING COMMUNITIES

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## CORE VALUES

**Christian**  
**Professional**  
**Innovative**  
**Stewards**  
**Respectful**

## ABOUT NEDDY

“MY DONKEY,  
MY LIFE”



by  
**Purity Njoroge**  
FSK Programme Coordinator

Neddy did not own a donkey in 2013 when the Brooke East Africa project started but after she joined the group, she bought two donkeys from group savings, which she has been working with for her livelihood. The group has helped her to pay school fees for her children and support the husband in meeting other family expenses.

In her group of 20 members, each member contributes 500 Kenyan Shillings (Kshs) weekly, which they give

one member Kshs. 10,000 on a weekly basis. When she got her money, she was able to open a small shop and an M-pesa shop, which earns her an income of Kshs. 15,000 per month. Since she is busy in her shop, she hires out her two donkeys, which bring her an income of Kshs.4000 per month.

Neddy is now a happy mother who is able to provide for her family. “My donkeys gets treatment when sick and farriery service when hooves are overgrown because I can afford to pay for the services. I’m a grateful for Brooke East Africa and Farming Systems Kenya for their support”, remarks Neddy

*Neddy in Cream and white top*



# CROPS & LIVESTOCK INTEGRATION FOR IMPROVED FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS

by Robert Kipyego - FSK Crops, Environment and Natural Resource Officer

In responding to community needs, FSK is working with 100 households in Lomolo village, Rongai Sub-county in Nakuru; who are the beneficiaries of Rongai Integrated Food Security Project, funded by the French Embassy in Kenya through Social Fund for Development (SFD). The main purpose of the project is to improve food security and income in Rongai Sub- County, Nakuru.

The project is seeking to integrate



**Members of Kelelwet Youth group in Lomolo, Rongai Sub-County, inspect their newly established sweet potato farm.**

crops and livestock to enhance food security and livelihoods. In collaboration with KALRO Njoro, FSK has introduced four selected clones of sweet potato in Lomolo



**“Sweet potato is now proving to be a promising crop for the community than a crop such as maize which is facing numerous challenges such as necrosis disease and army worm infestation” says the area Chief.**

village. These are clones from new breeding lines that tolerate drought and high temperatures, which is a promising development for farmers especially in Arid and Semi-arid lands (ASAL) where droughts are frequently experienced.

Sweet potato is a potential remedial crop for farmers because of its high productivity and low input requirements, while its usefulness for both food and feed (dual-purpose) makes it attractive in areas where land availability is declining and with low fertility.

Dual purpose goats (DPGs) such as Gala provides economic stability to households, cash buffer as well

as capital reserve, thus adding further stability to the production system.

The project integrates both crop and dual purpose goat production



**Members of Siriat Women Group in Lomolo receives Gala goats.**

with an objective of solving food security and improving socio-economic status of the community members through production of traditional high value crops and increasing goats' milk production.

Lomolo community is grateful to FSK and French Embassy for the support granted to them

# FARMING GOD'S WAY

*An industry that feeds you is an industry worth fighting for*

*by Martin Mwiti- FSK Agribusiness intern*



*Farmers preparing a kitchen garden*

The third week of June 2017 commenced with a trip to Cheptebo Agricultural Training and innovation Centre (CATIC) where three of our staff joined farmers from east Pokot for an exposure training on agriculture for the farmers. The farmers who are pastoralists have lost most of their livestock to drought these are becoming more rampant due to climate change and variability. There is need for the farmers to venture into other resilient income

generating activities. With an aim of responding to this problem FSK sponsored a group of farmers to undergo a training at CATIC on dryland agriculture. The team was also trained on how to develop other farm enterprises to include, poultry farming, dairy farming, bee keeping, conservation farming, kitchen gardening, nursery establishment and management, greenhouse production, mango production, water management and soil conservation. "Farming Gods Way" is a set of principles that are drawn based from the Bible. These principles tagged together with functions of farm management and technology to ensure adherence to good agricultural practices intended by God. The main focus here, is a Godly solution to food security and poverty alleviation through the

principle of stewardship rather than ownership. To achieve Farming Gods Way; one has to acknowledge God alone, consider his/her ways, understands God's ALL sufficiency to break dependency syndrome. Farming Gods Way further considers that what you sow is what you reap; you should tithe, give offering to God and Stake your claim through God in all areas of your life including your Farm work. In summary, Farming Gods Way considers the sustainability and profitability of a farm enterprise, which is, underpin by the transformation of our lives by God.



*Group photo during the graduation day*

## WATER FOR LIFE

*by Kenneth Gaitho -*

*FSK Business Development Officer/Project Officer*



*Cheptakar Merkamar at her Kitchen Garden Farm*

Cheptakar Merkamar is a community member in Cheposaniak village in Kolowa. She dropped out of school in class seven because of peer pressure from her friends. The parents were constantly on the move, migrating in search of pasture and water, which affected her learning. At one point, Cheptakar insisted on returning to school. Unfortunately, this request was turned down by her own parents, instead arranging for

her to get married. Currently she is a mother of five children with her first born in class 7 in a boarding primary school. Cheptakar and her husband are very keen to see that their children get better life in future by providing them with education, which they themselves did not get the opportunity to complete.

During construction of Cheposaniak sand dam, Cheptakar participated with other community members in gathering of gravel and sand to use for sand dam construction. The construction of the sand dam, Cheptakar used to walk for 10 kilometers to Barpello to fetch water. Worse of all, during the drought season, she lost most of her livestock. Through a series of

agricultural trainings offered by FSK, Cheptakar is now engaged in farming activities. She has established a kitchen garden farm at her homestead where she has planted kales. "We thank God for the sand dam project, it is full of water and now I don't have to walk 10 kilometers like before. I have time to attend to my kitchen garden and am not worried of what my family eat. My kitchen garden is giving me enough kales, while I sell the surplus for cash, am able to get 100 Kenyan Shillings every day which helps me meet other family needs"

The support rendered by FSK and CWS to this community is tremendously transforming them to have better livelihoods.

## ABOUT BENSON

# DAIRY GOAT FARMER

by Catherine Mutemi – FSK Livestock Officer



Mr. Benson is a passionate dairy goat farmer in Rongai. He is 42 years old, a husband and a father of four. He benefited from the dairy goat project back in 2010 after a big hit and loss he experienced from the 2007/2008 post-election violence. This claimed all his livestock i.e. 3 cows and 4 goats as well as loss of 120 bags of maize and 34 bags of beans.

FSK interacted with the Internally Displaced Persons at the Rongai camp and with time, they were able to form a group and later benefited from the dairy goat project. This was a good start with many members being very positive about it.

Mr. Benson received his goat which he named “Susy” in 2010 and to date she has been an encouragement giving him the courage to dive deeper into livestock farming. Susy has kidded 8 times to date, bringing forth five female kids and three males. Mr. Benson has earned Kshs. 84,000 from the sale of Susy's offspring's and since she is now aging, he has one of Susy's daughter named Diana who has now kidded twice. During the previous dry spell experienced in Rongai in the last three months, Susy has supplied the family with 2.5 liters of milk each day and Diana 1 liter per day. They have been enjoying tea and milk for the younger son despite of the less rains received.

From his perspective, good management is the core in realizing higher production. He has dedicated his life in farming and livestock keeping with a business mind being his driving force. He does his best to ensure the goats have enough feeds, served on time and are dewormed. Disease cases are minimal in his farm since he is strict on hygiene and regular vaccination practices.

Besides the dairy goats, he has started a poultry project where he has 130 birds. At the beginning of June, he was able to sell 30 birds to an interested farmer from Nakuru and earned a total of Kshs. 16,000. He now has 80 birds remaining with a majority of them at their laying stage. He intends to purchase an incubator from the income he earned from the sale of poultry to achieve optimal hatchery and reduce the rearing period between the hen and the chicks.

He also desires for other farmers within his neighborhood to develop and has given a young doe-ling to a widow and two hens



**Benson feeding his chickens**

to another needy family, he encourages them to rear them and build a flock from them.

Through the group, he has been able to borrow some money from the group kitty, lease land and farm maize over the years and last year he harvested 60 bags. He sold 50 bags to maize millers and earned Kshs. 150,000. He always has goals set to achieve each year's, this enables him to be a good investor. He has bought six plots of land over the last 3 years, has paid fees for his university son and two daughters in high school as well as financed his farming activities.

*“Thanks to FSK for the dairy goat's project and the emphasis on group formation. This has been a bridge to success to most of the group members and has nursed the wounds they had from the post-election violence. May be I would have been dead back then due to the stress from the losses, indeed you are God sent”* he concludes joyfully.



## BOMET COUNTY

# TRANSFORMED WATER VENDORS

by Victor Cheruiyot  
Community Development Officer Bomet

“Punda Mwerevu” group in Mulot and Longisa Donkey transporters have ventured into the business of water supply by using donkeys. Since water is a scarce commodity in the area, the need of the commodity is supplied by use of donkeys. This has rendered an opportunity for the donkey owners/users in the area to venture into water supply business to make a living out of it. The problem is worsened during dry spells.

The community in Mulot are using donkeys to fetch water; however, most of the donkey owners and donkey users are not aware of the animal welfare issues, which include, Lack of proper harness, lack of hoof trimming and poor prevention of eco parasite.

One of the developments is that these groups have been registered under social services. One of the groups “Punda Mwerevu” with a membership of 20 have embraced the spirit of working together towards using donkeys constructively to enhance their livelihoods.

By working together and having a common goal, the group members are able to meet their needs through table banking and merry go round by pooling resources together. It is through this and creation of awareness amongst their peers, community members are now getting a sense of rightfully working with donkeys. It is only through imparting donkey welfare skills to the donkey groups that will enable them to improve on animal welfare issues.



Donkey owners at a water point

This puts a double burden on the donkey comprising their health, thus preventing them from working efficiently. It is only through our gradual interventions that we have mobilized the donkey owner/users into groups to enable us have a platform of creating awareness and training on animal welfare issues.



# RESILIENCE OF A POKOT GIRL

Faith Kapkomor is one of a kind; at 21 years, she is the first born in a single-mother family of nine. She is also a single mother of one and is currently six months pregnant. Faith is one of the few educated girls in her village; she has completed her secondary school education and has good leadership skills evidenced by the way she led her CFW group to complete the activities, which in a conservative patriarchal society like East Pokot is very rare. Faith has suffered through the drought trying to raise her own child while helping her mother feed her younger siblings yet she always wears a smile despite the hardship that she and her family have been going through. She says of the situation before the emergency project intervention, “We were eating wild fruits because we did not have food and our livestock died; about 100 cows and more than 50 goats. That is also what we were boiling then feeding to our children because our situation was desperate”.

Faith further added that her younger siblings had been sent home from school due to a school fees balance of KES 350; they would rather have spent this money on buying food than school fees. She said that being six months pregnant had further complicated the already difficult situation since she, as the first born, was supposed

to be the one taking the lead in helping out her mother to go fetch water and do odd jobs to get some money for food. However, she could not walk the long distance to the weir and neither could she do any odd job, such as burning and transporting charcoal to sell. The situation was further aggravated when three family members who are their neighbor’s died; she said, “Two children of our neighbor were walking home from looking for wild fruits and one collapsed and died. The other child rushed home but on reporting also collapsed and died. When their father saw this he took a rope and hanged himself therefore all of us in our village have been very sorrowful”.

According to her, the emergency response project has been a lifesaver due to its timely intervention as she says that the dire situation could have led to more deaths since there had been a long delay in getting relief food from the government, that they had been promised. She said, “We have used part of the cash to stock food and pay school fees for my siblings”. She added that she plans to use the rest of the money to buy three goats and three chickens, which will then reproduce and she can sell the goats and eggs to raise income for her family in the long term. “Even the baby I’m carrying in my womb is eating well and I hope

the baby will be born healthy”, she added. Like her name, she said that faith in God had kept them going through the drought since most of the promises of relief food and other humanitarian aid they had received had not been honored.

On the project implementation, Faith said that she was happy with the way beneficiaries were identified and selected, particularly the fact that each household was allocated one beneficiary slot and therefore it was inclusive for the Mondri community. She also said that the identification of ten vulnerable unconditional beneficiaries who benefited from the cash was a good gesture that the community was grateful. Due to the famine occasioned by the drought, she added that it would have been very difficult for the beneficiaries to participate in the cash for work activities were it not for the food that was bought for them as lunch. She added that it was very practical that the tools were bought for the beneficiaries instead of them having to bring their own from home. However, Faith was of the view that for a similar project in future, the number of working days could be increased so that the community could finish a bigger project as this one was limited by time.

*Faith with her friends (other beneficiaries)*



# THE “PAPIC” MAGIC BEHIND SUCCESSFUL C.P.D WORKSHOP

by Dr. Liaulo Joseph – FSK Veterinary Officer - Narok



Dr. James Kebe (FSK) making a presentation in CPD workshop Narok on 22/6/2017

Dr. Raphael Kinoti (FSK) making a presentation during CPD workshop 25/10/2016 in Narok

Farming Systems Kenya was accredited by Kenya veterinary Board to provide veterinary continuous professional development (CPD) by 2016. 34 years since it was born (1981) by accreditation only does not guarantee an organization, institution or a company to organize very successfully CPD workshops. FSK has so far organized two successfully workshops in Narok, that has seen participants increasing in number (63 participants in 2016 and 80 participants 2017). For the veterinary professionals to consider attending your CPD workshops and refer them to a colleague it requires a number of things abbreviated as ‘P.A.P.I.C.’:

**Presenters**- Should ensure that the participants neither underrate them,

nor bored. They should be composed and passionately understand their specialized areas. Their academic qualification given that professors and certificate holders in the veterinary field attend the workshop. Their experience and presentation personality.

**Awareness** - Campaign to ensure that the information reaches many people. Use both digital platforms i.e. Facebook, WhatsApp’s, group emails and other available media, then remember to use other means like posters and phone calls and verbal communication. Repeatedly remind them when the dates approaches and be consistency to the original information i.e. Theme, charges and venue.

**Partnership** - with relevant stakeholders (Companies,

organization, county government and other institution or individuals) This makes the organization known, accepted and relevant to the current development, a part from reducing the cost.

**Innovation** - The personnel s involving in the preparation of the workshop needs to be innovative enough to make the workshop unique, ensure that the professionals who attend the workshop gains an additional knowledge and skills rather than just CPD points that will contribute toward their daily life socially, academically and economically.

**Content** -The content of the sessions should be very informative, educative and relevant to the current problems and be realistic.

## Recognition of the FSK Development Partners and CPD 2017 workshop partners

The generous support of our partners has greatly assisted to widen the participation in the workshop. Much appreciated



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