

FARMING SYSTEMS KENYA

Empowering Farming Communities.....

Volume 1, Issue 1

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Vision
**All farmers in the region
profitable and
sustainable**

Mission
**To equip smallholder
farmers from
subsistence to
profitable farming,
while achieving
household food
security and well being,
transfer and service
provision, advocacy
and networking.**

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QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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Dr. Raphael Kinoti

Message from the Executive Director

At 35 years of age, FSK is graduating from being a youth into adulthood; well, if the organization were a Kenyan human entity. We have come of age! This issue of our newsletter not only highlights our work but celebrates the achievements.

Yes, the communities that we serve continue to be faced with challenges ranging from drought to donkey theft and slaughter among others. We have engaged this bravely under our motto of **empowering farming communities!** Please read on and join us in this great journey of faith and action.

Water Reprieve to Drought stricken Community

Farming Systems Kenya has been implementing an Emergency Water trucking intervention for drought-affected area of Silale ward in East Pokot, Baringo County. In this area Communities are highly vulnerable to the impact of climate change, in recent years, rainfall has become more erratic and droughts are more frequent.

On 10 February the Kenyan Government declared a national drought emergency, with 23 of 47 counties affected. The number of food insecure and water stressed people more than doubled to 2.7 million compared to 1.3 million in August 2016. As long term solutions to water scarcity are developed, Farming Systems Kenya, supported by CWS Africa began Emergency Drought response program in Silale Ward, East Pokot Sub County, Baringo County. The interventions included water trucking, purchase and installation of water tanks to one school and community as well as peace building initiative. The water trucking assisted the community who had to walk for between 10 and 30 km in search of water for domestic use as well as for livestock.



Water trucking in Napeikore community, Silale ward, East Pokot sub County

Over 500 people, 3000 livestock of Napeikore community benefited from the intervention which saw 152,000 litres of water trucked and stored in two 100M³ masonry tanks for distribution to the community at the community water point. The community water management committees were responsible for maintaining

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the existing water facilities to ensure that community members have regular access to trucked clean water.

There is nothing more exciting than observing a little smile and happiness on people who are under difficult circumstances and when that happiness and relief are the result of your intervention it makes the excitement double. This is what we witnessed through our emergency project in East Pokot

Despite the intervention ,water and food still continues to be the most pressing need where most households are surviving with only one meal a day or none at all. Most households have resulted to harvesting wild fruit for their meals. The fruits require a lot of water; they



Children and youths picking wild fruits for food

have to boil them for over six hours while pouring the boiling water to reduce bitter and poisonous compounds in them to a level that is acceptable for consumption.

Women Empowerment In East Pokot

Empowering women to participate fully in economic life across all sectors is essential to build stronger economies, achieve internationally agreed goals for development and sustainability, and improve the quality of life for women, men, families and communities. Communities living in areas especially the ASALs of Kenya, observe that seasons are becoming increasingly unpredictable, with rains failing more frequently than before, leading to more dry spells and severe droughts .

Farming Systems Kenya together with our partners, collaborate with communities to provide leadership opportunities that encourage women to participate in stakeholder committees through leadership coaching, literacy training, business training, organizational mobilization and market access, enabling women entrepreneurs to sell their goods in the local community.

Women in pokot, who despite the devastating conditions,want to be self reliant and empowered economically, are engaging in various economic activities keen enough not to aggravate the same situation in the years to come and for their children. If this happens, then we can transform the economic and environmental position of these people to help create all round development to the people.

Through Livelihood improvement program FSK has reached out to 14 women and youth groups with over 1000 beneficiaries in Tangulbei ward, East Pokot Sub County.



Chepindany Kaptoyo upgraded her hotel in Loyeya

Feed and water for Donkeys During Drought

The groups practice table banking and were facilitated with over 1.5 Million to start up various enterprises.

Government intervention of various parts of the counties kicked off in February with one of the intervention being provision of feed to livestocks. However, working donkeys were being left out of current emergency response action. Through



the support of Brooke East Africa, FSK has supported over 7,900 donkeys with water provision in Narok and over 500 donkey in East Pokot and Mogotio Sub County.

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Due to the prolonged drought, the Livestock, including donkeys have had no feed at all, they have been surviving on the barks of trees, “we are so grateful to FSK and Brooke EA for remembering us and donating bales of hay to our donkeys, may God bless you,” Talai Keytany, a donkey hay beneficiary.

“No other organization is working here, it's only you and we appreciate the hay that has been delivered to us”, said Rev. John Nambair chairperson of Kadokoi Community CBO in Tangulbei ward East Pokot Sub County.

Mugo's Fellowship Education Fund Support 21 Students with 1st Term School Fees

The Mugo's Fellowship Education Fund's (MFEF) was established in September 2004 with a mission of according assistance to needy and disciplined students within the community through scholarships to realize their academic dreams. MFEF seeks to mobilize resources and actively involve the people of Nakuru and Kenya as a whole in contributing to the development agenda of realization of education by all and break the cycle of poverty in the communities. The Fund is managed by Farming Systems Kenya who are the secretariat. MFEF has continued to be enthusiastically welcomed by a cross-section of ardent education and development well wishers in Nakuru and Kenya as a whole.

Both individuals and organizations have continuously supported its efforts both materially and financially to promote access of quality education by the targeted beneficiaries.

The total applicants in first term 2017 were 23; 11 girls and 12 boys. However, those who benefited were 17 (8 girls and 9 boys) .

This included 1 student in university, 1 in college, 3 in boarding school and 12 in day schools. A total of Ksh. 202,506 was disbursed to the 17 students.

During the 12 years of existence, MFEF, under the scholarship scheme, has awarded scholarships to over 400 pupils and students. The Fund prides itself that 80% of the supported needy students who have cleared secondary school had direct entries to the university to pursue different courses while the rest 20% get admissions to technical colleges. One of the students supported from secondary school and university education has been an inspiration and mentor (role model) to many other needy students being supported, after he has furthered his

education to PHD level and currently lecturing in one of the local Universities in Kenya.



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Last year 2016, six students sat for their Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) and their performance was remarkable. All qualified to join University.

	NAME	SCHOOL	GRADE	GENDER
1.	Rebecca Omoro	Jomo Kenyatta High School	A-	Female
2.	Susan Obiri	Jomo Kenyatta High School	B-	Female
3.	Linda Awino	Langalanga Secondary School	B+	Female
5.	Samuel Mbuthia Wambui	Larmudiac High School	C+	Male
6.	John Chege	Solai Boys High Sch	C	Male

It is on the aforementioned that the Mugo's Fellowship is kindly requesting for your support towards this noble responsibility of empowering the bright, disciplined and needy students to realize their dreams through educational support.

Donkey theft and illegal slaughter menace

It has been developing slowly but steadily. Initially it looked like it would fizzle out. It is now clear that it can only get worse. Donkey theft and illegal slaughter. Narok, Nakuru and Bomet Counties have been worst hit, recording the greatest numbers in the Country. So far 60 cases of slaughter and over 200 cases of theft in Narok and over 80 cases of theft in Nakuru County have been reported.

On the night of 25th March 2017, our staff in Narok were notified of 52 donkeys that were stolen, hidden in the bush and ready to be slaughtered. A quick combined effort with the police saw the culprits arrested but unfortunately two donkeys had already been killed and skinned. They had a collection of 'tools of trade', complete with a chemical for anaesthesia! It is said that donkey skin can fetch tens of thousands in Kenya shillings in the black market in the country. FSK in collaboration with Brooke EA is working closely with the police to see that this case is successfully prosecuted. We are also taking care of the court specimen donkeys by providing them with feed, water and medical services.

FSK is collaborating with Brooke EA is joining hands with communities to stem this growing vice. Please join us in the fight.



Slaughtered and Skinned donkeys in Narok



Impounded donkeys being fed and watered at Narok Police station

Food Security.....what are the key challenges and possible solutions?

Access to sufficient food in a sustainable way is a fundamental human right. Poor yields in combination with the bulging population growth has often led to food shortages and in order to improve rural livelihood there is a big need for improved farming practices among smallholder farmers. Realizing this, Farming Systems Kenya took a shift to promote alternative agricultural technologies and approaches that are efficient and resilient with an aim of enhancing Food Security and improving livelihoods amongst the smallholder farmers in various counties to include Nakuru, Narok and Baringo. Such approaches include, conservation agriculture, dry land agriculture and organic farming which have become part of the technical packages of FSK and are disseminated through trainings and extension services to the farming communities we are working with. This growing experience and interest has prompted FSK to continuously seek partnerships and collaborations in transforming farming communities to better adopt sustainable production systems. During this quarter we have reached out to about 15 farmer groups with an average membership number of 30 per group.

Climatic conditions of the arid and semi-arid regions put high demands on farm water management. Water is the most limiting factor for agricultural production and low annual rainfall is often stated as a major reason for food insecurity. Increasing water availability for crops can be done by irrigation. However, due to lack of available water resources this is often not an option in the dry lands. A more feasible option is to utilize the limited amount of rainfall with higher efficiency. By increasing soil water content, supply and retention, crop yields can be improved significantly, and successful crop production can be made possible even in areas that are producing poorly under existing conditions. In dry regions without sources of water for irrigation and where rainfall is insufficient to cover the water demands of crops, water can be harvested in order to increase available water resources. Water harvesting and soil moisture retention are cheap and simple options for increasing soil moisture, and have successfully been used in dry land farming around the world.



FSK staff explaining to a farmer how to establish zai pit , this was during Nakuru ASK Show in 2016



Choice of crop is another solution to food insecurity

Zai Pit System

Zai Pit is one of the promising techniques for dry land agriculture especially where food insecurity is one of the main constraints to development.

The technique involves digging holes and excavating in grids, with a diameter of 15-20 cm and a depth of 10-15cm or more and filled with a mixture of soil and manure. They are spaced about 70 to 80 cm apart. It allows collection of 25% of rainfall of water. FSK experience concur with other findings that when it is well done it can increase yield by more than 150%.

Socio-economic and Environmental Benefits of Zai Pit System:

Zai pit system can be integrated with other techniques such as use of trenches, mulching, etc.

The dug holes can be used over a period of time provided they are fed with manure.

Zai pit system addresses issues on land degradation, soil erosion, and soil moisture stress.

Use of the Zai technique improves grain yields and the quality of the produce.

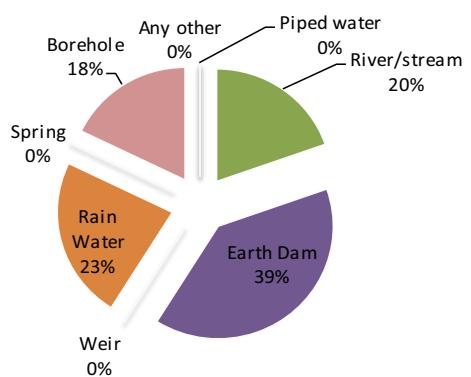
Planting pits improve soil fertility and agricultural productivity of several crops, thus more income.

Access to safe basic drinking water

With support from the French embassy to Kenya, under the Social Fund for Development, FSK has been able to relieve 100 households in Lomolo village Rongai sub county Nakuru, from the water stressed situation. The project has enabled the community members to harvest roof top rain water through provision of 1,000 litre plastic water tank and 10 meter gutters to each of the 100 project beneficiaries. Provision of water tank to the community members has enhanced the capacity of safe water storage among the household beneficiaries. Even during the dry season; the community members collectively purchase safe drinking water from a distance source by transporting using a water track and filling in their tanks.

Baseline report indicated that the beneficiaries were storing water in jerry cans of 10 to 20 litres which is not enough to meet domestic water need. Before the intervention, baseline report indicated indicated that majority of the community members (39%) walked a distance of 2 Km to fetch water from the earth dams within the area. Others who walk a distance of 6 km to fetch water from a private borehole were presented by 18%.

Those that indicated that they traveled longest distance of more than 7 KM to get water with better quality“ from Molo river were 20%, during dry seasons, majority of the community members depends on the water from the Molo river.



A summary indicating water sources in Lomolo village, Rongai sub county, Nakuru.



The intervention has cushioned the beneficiaries from traveling long distances in search of water. With the achievement of a tank and its associated benefits of clean water, household status of the beneficiaries has enormously improved.



Cows drinking water in an Earth dam in Lomolo village: poor quality of resource

Dual purpose goat project

Mahatma Gandhi, the great Indian leader, rightly described the goat as the poor man's cow' though it has proved over the decades to be more than just a cow. The Children's Hunger Relief Fund Small Grant Project has provided an opportunity for FSK to uplift the small holder farmers and their families in Kenya. The dairy goats provides both direct and indirect contributions and farmers have confessed to have had much more than just milk for family consumption since they have earned cash through the sale of male kids, saved the cash they used to buy milk with and being in the groups has resulted to more development and growth of every member, to mention but a few. The goats have proved to be a reliable insurance or bank.

Testimonies of Impact Stories in the Goat Project

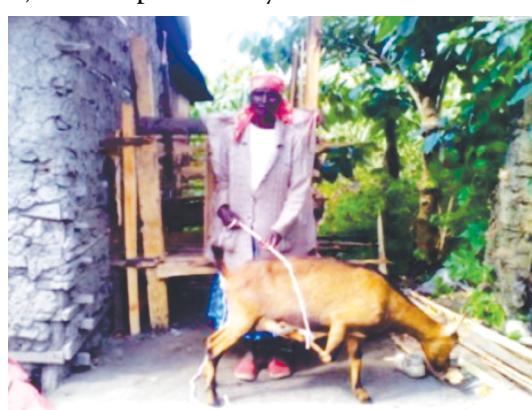
Born in Kiambu in the year 1940, Susan got married and her family moved to the Rift valley province where the husband had been employed. There was however an emergency state that took place in 1954 which claimed the life of her husband. They were blessed with 8 children who are now adults and have been married and brought forth 5 grandchildren. She now lives at her brothers' place in Engarusha.

Susan is a strong old widow aged 76; who has purposed to see the positive side of life. Through her enthusiasm she was able to join merry go rounds whose contributions were reasonable and through her commitment and devotion she was included in the Maziwa SHG. She actively attended the training and from her age she could share her vast experience in goat rearing making the class to be lively.

She however had a challenge of raising the total amount required to be contributed by each member as the commitment fee but she still had faith and hope against hope that she would succeed. Even without having given a cent towards the fee required she went a head to erect a goat unit with the assistance of her 3 grandchildren as trained and did her best to establish fodder for her goat.

Her expectations were met when FSK received extra amount as donation to support a needy farmer. She was proposed by the group to benefit from the donation and her goat was included in the number of goats to be delivered to that group. Tears were the only expression of her gratitude and appreciation; she opened her mouth, marveled and gave thanks to God. She approached her goat while dancing and singing.

She is very thankful for the support and her prayer is that may the person who donated receive blessings upon blessings for touching a life of an elderly lady who had nothing but only hope. The doe was in kid at the time of purchase and is expected to kid in December. The three grandchildren she lives with have also embraced their doe which they nicknamed Wendo meaning love; they have this assurance that their lives will never be the same again. They actively support their grandmother in fetching and feeding Wendo. Hurray for FSK/CHRF support program, we are proud of you were her remarks.



***Susan holding her goat
in front of her goat unit***

Poultry Project



Mrs. Koros standing in front of her poultry unit.

The improved breed of chicken is serving the community well in terms of their production, growth and potential to fetch income. The individuals mainly feed the chicken on maize, millet and chaff where 1 sack of chaff weighing 90kgs goes for 700/=. The improved breed takes 8 months to reach reproduction age. The chicken grows to achieve a weight capacity of between 3 kg and 5 kg. The individuals are taking home between 700/= and 1000/= for one chicken especially during the festive season.

The project has directly reached 2400 farmers households through the dairy goat project. It's still purposing to reach many more farmers within and without Nakuru County.

Donkey Donation Takes Place in Naivasha

In January 2017, Flamingo Flower Farm donated 48 donkeys to needy donkey owners in Naivasha. The decision was informed by the fact that the farm's grazing field for the donkeys had gotten small due to some developments that took place in the farm so the farm management considered that some 48 out of 88 donkeys in the farm should be donated out to some needy community members in Naivasha. The above information was communicated to Farming Systems Kenya (FSK). FSK did some needs assessments of the donkey owners in Naivasha and identified those who were in dire need of donkeys and organize on how they could be given the donkeys afterwards. The 48 donkeys finally handed over to the needy individuals and they were all very happy and grateful to FSK, Brooke East Africa (Brooke EA) and Flamingo Flower Farm.



Beneficiaries receiving a donkey at Flamingo flower farm

Impact of the Donkey Donation on Livelihoods:

FSK did a follow up visit on some beneficiaries of the 48 donkeys from the Flamingo Flower Farm one month after the donation so as to ascertain the impacts that they had on the livelihoods of the beneficiaries. During the follow up visit, the FSK Staffs were able to meet with 7 beneficiaries, of whom one (Mr. Kareithi) was interviewed. The other 6 were found transporting water with their new donkeys and were very happy and grateful to FSK, Brooke EA and Flamingo Flower Farm. From the donkey received, Mr. Kareithi said that he is very grateful to FSK, Brooke EA and the Flamingo Flower Farm for the donkey that was donated. He said that he is now earning a living from the donkey through a water selling business around Naivasha town, he earns up to

Ksh1300 on a good day and Ksh 500 on a challenging day i.e. when it is rainy hence (Ksh 900 per day) on average. From his income, he said that he saves Ksh 400 per day, which he deposits into a SACCO that he belongs to with an aim of getting a loan one day and purchasing himself and his family (wife and children) a plot. The remaining portion of his wages is utilized on the other daily basic needs for him and his family (Mr. David Kareithi is married and his wife is expectant).



FSK Vet- Dr.Keben (right) in a brief interview with Mr. Kareithi as he embrace his new donkey from Flamingo Flower Farm



Mr. Kareithi with his new donkey and a companion donkey (left) after supplying water to his clients

FSK Farriery Project Impact:

FSK in partnership with the Brooke EA has trained and issued farriery tools to a total of 11 farriers- 10 from Molo- Nakuru County and 1 from Nairekia- Nkare -Narok County. This was in response to addressing donkeys overgrown hooves challenge, which is not only an Animal Welfare issue but also a stumbling block to donkeys' effectiveness in service delivery to donkey owners. The training and issuance of farriery tools has also created employment to some community members. Below is an impact story of the farriery project:

A success story of Samuel Mwangi Local farrier who graduated in september 2016:

I appreciate the farriery skills I gained from FSK and Brooke EA. The farriery tool kit has made all the difference in my life. I no longer use the panga as I used to before I got the training. With the income earned from farriery work since September, I have managed to construct a three bedroomed semi permanent house, construct a donkey shelter which I didn't have before, a small room for a salon for renting it out. My life will never be the same again. I earn an average of Kshs. 600 per day. The health of my donkeys has improved because I no longer overwork them since I don't depend on them entirely for income. I can afford to buy feed and supplements for my donkeys. Farriery work is a gold mine for me since there are few farriers and the donkeys are many. I have embraced farriery work as an enterprise which I give it my best. I don't wait for the donkey owners to call me; I look for them in their homes, at market places and in the grazing fields. I not only hoof trim but also sensitize and advice donkey owners the importance of hoof care Says Mr. Samuel Mwangi from Jogoo donkey SHG in Kamara.

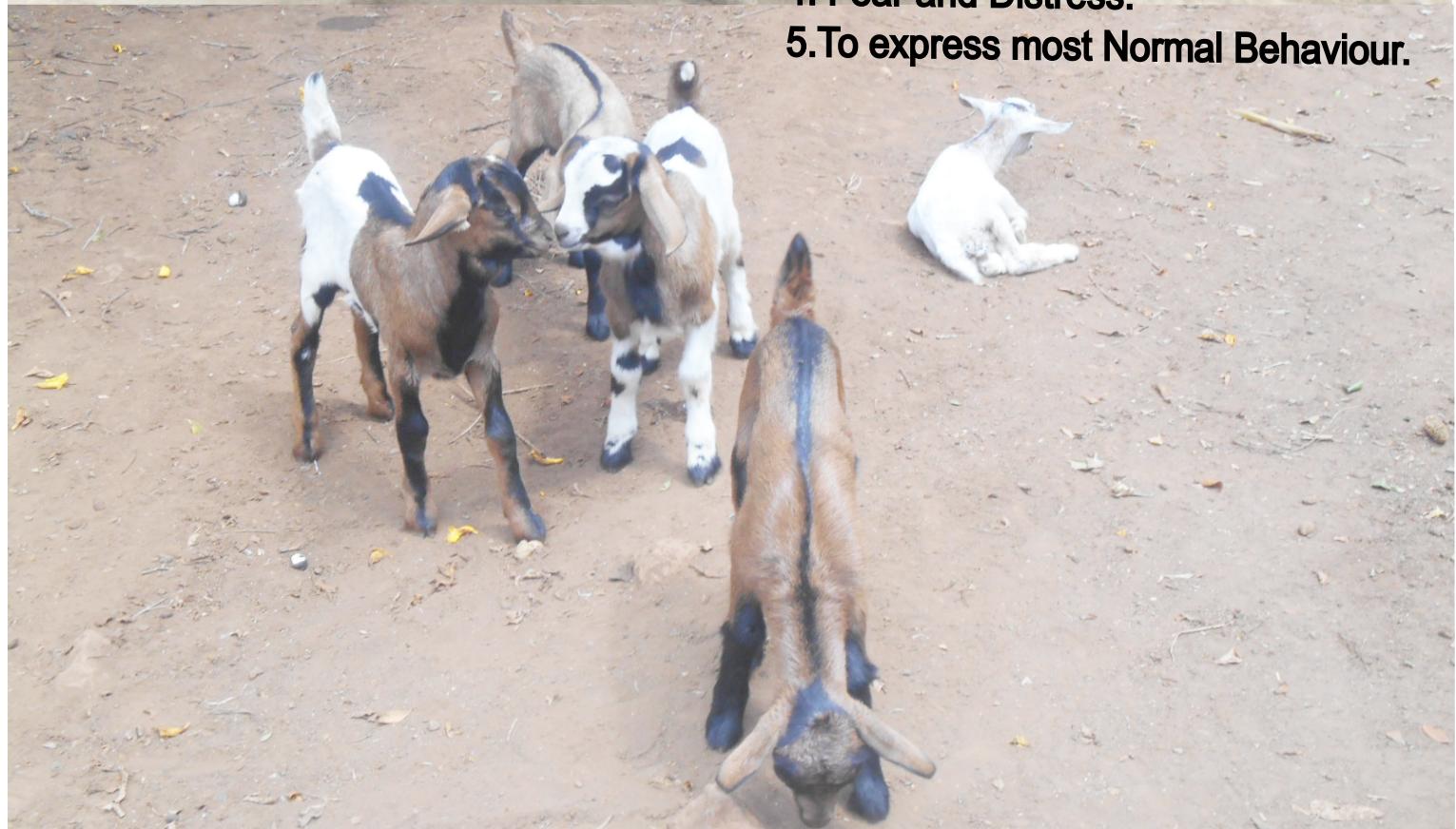


Mwangi demonstrating how to handle a donkey.

Animal Welfare Issues... Freedom From:



- 1 Thirst and Hunger.
2. Pain, Disease and injury.
- 3.Thermal and Physical Discomfort.
4. Fear and Distress.
- 5.To express most Normal Behaviour.



PARTNERSHIPS

.....building bridges in empowering farming communities

What we have achieved has been only possible through partnerships and collaborations that we have continuously established, thanks to the support of many partners in the public sector, private sector and civil society, including our donors and those who advocate and act with us. We're grateful to all those who have continuously supported and worked with us over time.

Effective transformation of farming communities who depend on natural resources for their livelihood calls for a wide and diverse range of stakeholders acting collaboratively.

In our upcoming strategic plan, one of our deliberate strategy is to build working partnerships and networks. FSK's focus will be bringing together government institutions, development partners, private sector and community groups to build partnerships, design or develop solutions and turn commitments into actions. Changing the course of conventional farming practices to sustainable efficient and effective systems requires a synergy of concerted efforts.

Stewardship around our work and whom we work with is an important core value to FSK. Our main aim is to be responsible, care and sustainably utilize all resources bestowed to us.

We would like to thank and recognize our partners and donors who have provided leadership and generous funding support for our work in transforming farming communities.

Brooke East Africa: Ongoing support on Equine Welfare Project

French Embassy to Kenya: Supporting Rongai intergrated Food Security Project.

Church World Service: Supporting Baringo Water and Sanitation Project in Kolowa, Mondi and Kadokoi.

Children Hunger Relief Fund: Providing support on dual purpose goat project.

County Governments – Nakuru, Narok and Baringo: they have continuously supported us by providing an enabling working environment, technical and resource mobilization support

Community Groups: They have played a key role in the implementation of project activities through participation and community contribution.



FSK Executive Director (first from right) and Programmes Manager (third from right) visited Cheptebo Training Centre to seek collaborations.

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Pictorials



Sunset in Baringo County

For More Information Contact

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