

THE FSK Update

Vol 1. ISSUE 3



Dr. Immaculate Maina- Nakuru County Executive Committee Member for Agriculture Livestock and Fisheries Launching FSK Vision 2050 together with Mr. Paul Mugo-Chairman FSK board of directors and DR. Raphael Kinoti - FSK Executive director on 13th December 2017.

The greatest
asset for
any entity
is the capacity
to renew itself.

The capacity to begin a new; doing what you have been doing but in a new style. A saying goes that the only constant thing in the world is change. I also remember the words of my Professor in the University that "you either change or the change changes you. It is on this background that FSK has consciously chosen to respond to change by looking back over our 37 years of existence and asking "what will we be doing in the next 37 years?"

This thinking gave birth to the FSK's vision 2050 which we launched in December 2017. The activities whose highlights you read in this issue stem out of this new drive. We want to see a "vibrant, profitable and sustainable farming communities in Kenya". In our highlights in this issue, we have focused on activities geared towards increased production. We are however launching big ventures in value addition, processing and marketing. Our current heartbeat is value chains. We envisage profitable farming ventures all the way from farm to fork. We welcome you to walk through this issue with us as we celebrate these humble accomplishments.

Dr. Raphael Kinoti - FSK Executive Director

VISION

A vibrant, profitable & sustainable farming community in Kenya.

MISSION

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



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EMPOWERING FARMING COMMUNITIES Through Value Extension Service (VES).

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FARMERS GET CREDIT FOR INPUTS!

By Kenneth Gaitho - FSK Project Officer- Business Development



Mrs. Norah Jepkurui & Leonard Langat of Kelelwet youth group in Lomolo, Rongai Sub-County overwhelmed with joy after purchasing inputs through FSK credit support.



Mrs. Loise Wanjiku of Mauche-Ndeffo Credit and Saving Cooperative receiving a cheque from FSK Officer.

FSK has offered 20 smallholder farmer groups in Nakuru County the opportunity to prepare the land, buy certified seeds and fertilizer by offering credit to the farmers. This has gone a long way to allow the farmer buy farm inputs and pay in installments spread over twelve months' period. Apart from these core products, the farmers who have registered with FSK Micro-Enterprise Program can access extra products including solar lamps, water tanks, dairy goats among other agricultural inputs.

SOIL TESTING EXTENSION SERVICES.

By Isaac Maina - FSK Soil Technician



FSK staff taking soil sample in Mau Narok, Nakuru County

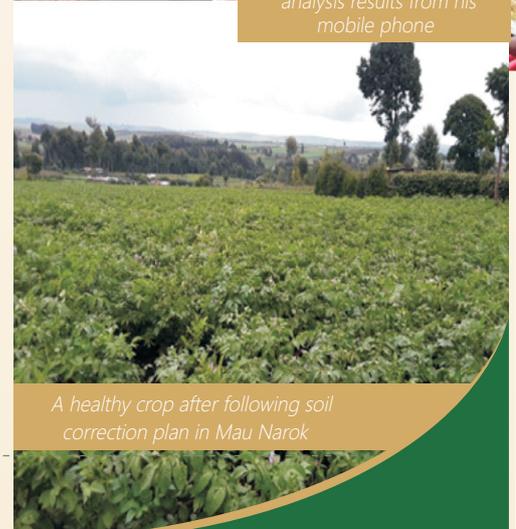
All you need to know about your soil fertility solutions

Soil degradation has led to reduced yields hence soil testing becomes the solution. At FSK we have the digital equipment for Testing your Soil which is Accurate, Fast, Reliable & Affordable. The Soil Machine will provide you with current soil status, which give us, the soil correction plan i.e. actions to be taken before, as well as at planting and during topdressing where applicable.



FSK staff explaining soil analysis results from his mobile phone

Currently, we have been able to carry out soil testing in several counties. We have noticed that some of our early clients have already realized the importance of soil testing, as it allowed them to minimize on input cost and maximize on output hence achieving their targets. The soil correction plan gives farmers the actual amount of agricultural lime, compost or animal manure and type of fertilizer to use thereby enabling farmers to make an informed decision.



A healthy crop after following soil correction plan in Mau Narok



TRANSFORMING VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES OUT OF EXTREME HUNGER AND POVERTY

By: Martin Mwiti - Crops, Environmental & Natural Resource Officer

Through the support of French Embassy in Kenya under Social Fund for Development (SFD), FSK continues to enhance community livelihoods through Improved Food Security and Income in Lomolo, Rongai Sub- County.

This has been achieved through implementation of 3 components as follows:

Livestock Component - Dual Purpose Goat (DPG)

The project has provided 55 dual-purpose gala goats (5 bucks and 50 does) to the 100 beneficiaries in Lomolo.

The goat component - is designed to ensure long-term sustainability, which is the basis of the pass on approach, this component is been delivered through community-managed breeding stock. The group members with the bucks (male goats) have been trained to become buck keepers and collaborate with group members on matters pertaining group dynamics, breed improvement and goat health.

This pass on goat model is intended to specifically address; High Child malnutrition, poor breeding stock and Low household incomes.

Promoting high-value traditional crops - Sweet potato and Cassava

Through Value Extension Service (VES) model, in collaboration with KALRO Njoro, and with support from SFD, FSK



Community members in Lomolo weeding their established cassava plot.

has introduced four selected clones of sweet potato (KENSPO 1, 2, 3 and 4) amongst 100 households in Lomolo village. These are clones from new breeding lines: Orange-fleshed and yellow-fleshed cultivars that tolerate drought and high temperatures, good sources of carotene which is a promising development for farmers especially in Arid and Semi-arid lands (ASAL). Sweet potato is not only a drought tolerant crop but can produce more food per litre of water than most grains, which has made the crop increasingly important in ASAL regions.

Sweet Potatoes



The project has also introduced improved cassava cultivar in Lomolo. The crop component has the following potentials: Value addition, Household food security and improved nutrition, Climate-smart agriculture as well as low cost of production.

Water component - Rainwater harvesting for household use

Women and children, bear the burden of walking miles at a time to gather water from streams and ponds - full of water-borne disease. Lomolo village is not an exception; it is a very dry and marginal area, with only one permanent river (Molo River) which is about 7km away from the village. The community members also travel a distance of 6km to fetch water from a private borehole.



Janet Lang'at, one of the project beneficiary in Lomolo fetching water from her tank.

Since the provision of rainwater harvesting kit (1000 litres tanks and 10mtres gutters) community members in Lomolo has continuously experienced the benefits of rainwater harvesting, these includes: Reduced water-borne diseases, improved school attendance of the pupils with ill health resulting from water-borne diseases, reduced time and burden by women and children in search of the commodity and reduced household bill.

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



MAUCHE DONKEYS IN NAKURU COUNTY ENJOYING THE COMFORT OF PROPER SADDLES

By . Purity Njoroge-FSK Programme Coordinator

THROUGH SADDLE MAKING.

A woman is a powerful change agent when empowered. 5 women in Mauche and one in Naishi- Lare have committed themselves not only to be good ambassadors of donkey welfare but also to make proper saddles and harnesses for donkeys in Njoro Sub County.

Njoro is a high potential area where the majority of the population depend on farming for their livelihood. Donkeys, therefore, play a key role in the farm. They are used to transport farm produce from the farm to the market, water for other livestock and domestic use, firewood and feeds for livestock in the farm. Donkeys are referred to as "co-wives" by women by the virtue of the burden donkey lifts from them. Donkeys work almost daily to meet the basic needs of the owners. Due to poor harnessing, the donkeys experience harness related lesions, which affects their body condition. Similarly, the owners did not have the skills of making proper harnesses until FSK through the support of Brooke EA trained the community on how to make proper saddles and harnesses with the required materials- sisal sacks, soft material like blankets, feathers, and sheep wool

FSK INPUT.

FSK with the Support of a local expert with harness making skills from Agricultural Technical Development center (ATDC) - MOA Nakuru County, trained over 100 women on how to make the saddles and harnesses. 6 out of these women stood out. They were very passionate and interested to take up the saddle making as an enterprise. FSK supported them with a small startup capital of KES. 25,000 to purchase saddle-making materials. The group has so far made 54 saddles ready for sale to the group members. The women are not only passing on the skill to their own but also to other groups in other counties where FSK is working .i.e. Naivasha, Baringo, Narok and Bomet. One saddle pack costs KES.800. With adequate Capital and proper marketing of the



Nakuru County Executive Committee Member for Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Dr. Immaculate Maina buying saddles from Mauche women .



Mr Maiwa from ATDC Training Mauche Women on Saddle Making

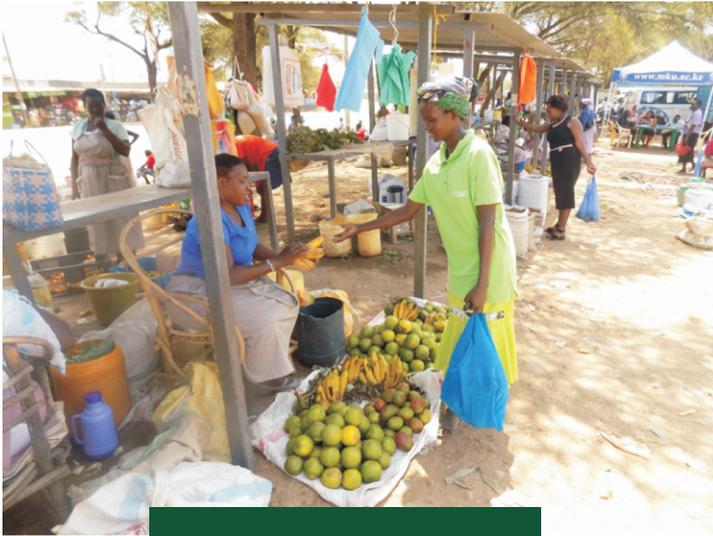
TESTIMONIALS.

"I am proud to be identified with donkeys. Actually, the donkey has taken me to new places- Meru for peer-to-peer visit, Naivasha, Narok and Baringo to train on saddle making. All that I have has come from the two donkeys I own. I will live to be a good ambassador for donkey welfare" - Eunice Njeri- Nyakeo women group chairlady.

ANSWERED PRAYER FOR DROUGHT RESPONSE

The Story of Ruth Kipkurgat

By Mike Gichumbi - ER & DRR Officer



Ruth buying fruits for her family

At 34, Ruth Kipkurgat has taken it upon herself to provide for her six children and ensure that none of them drops out of school for lack of school fees like she did. The severe drought, experienced in the area for over one year now, made it very difficult for her: "before it was a bit bearable because although we did not have enough money for food, at least the sun was not as severe so some of my crops would survive and we would have some additional food. Now my rocky garden looks more like a desert and none of my crops survived the scorching sun!"

Ruth is very grateful for the emergency response project as she explains that no other public or private entity had ever come to their relief before despite their many attempts in seeking for aid. "My back and waist were always paining, accompanied by frequent migraines. The doctors told me that it was a result of carrying two 20 litre jerricans of

water per trip to the lake to fetch water every day for the last 25 years of my life" She further explains that due to the fact that Lake Baringo is teeming with crocodiles and hippos, she cannot let her remaining goats go drink directly from the lake as they will be eaten by crocodiles; neither can she send her children due to fear of hippo attacks. Being a devoted Christian, Ruth decided to seek for divine intervention by constant prayers and she thus believes that the timely intervention of the project was actually her prayers being answered.

The community in Moinonin agreed on digging a water pan as the cash-for-work activity; this not only served to help them get easy access to water but was also as a source of much-needed cash to both meet their needs and also start saving with a micro-credit women's group so that she can get a loan to start a small business. *"I can now afford to provide my children with a balanced diet since I have the cash to buy fruits and vegetables. Before the project, all I could afford was maize flour and black tea, and even then mostly on credit from the friendly shopkeepers"*, explains Ruth. She further adds that the cash has helped her complete a new two-roomed house, next to her current thatched house, which had stalled for lack of funds to buy windows and erect a roof. She says that the project was not only timely but also relevant as the community decided on the activities to be implemented and the selection of beneficiaries was conducted openly and fairly.

Ruth Showing the new House she is Completing

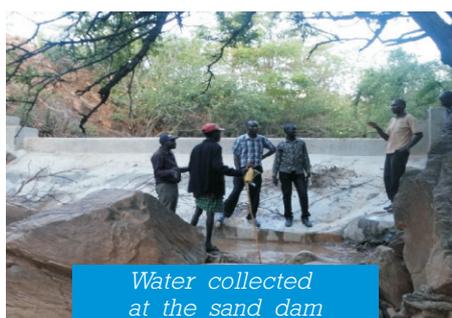




Grave Water Shortage | Hope and Life Rekindled

By: Kenneth Gaitho - FSK Project - Business Development Officer/WASH

In Barpello Location, Kolowa Ward, Baringo County lies Cheposaniak village. A Village in the middle of acacia shrubs with a scenic view of Barpello hills. Unknown too many is the struggle the community had to walk many kilometers in search for water. The grave water shortage in the area led to the community members who are pastoralists to keep migrating every time drought hit. For women and children especially, the crisis was real. It affected every minute of the day. Due to the water challenge, the community could not grow food, build permanent houses and could not send their children to school. Without water, the community possibility of breaking out of the cycle of poverty was incredibly slim.



Water collected at the sand dam

With Support from Church World Service (CWS) and Farming Systems Kenya (FSK), conducted sand dam site survey and Cheposaniak village had one of the best sites. The area was bushy with no road leading to the identified site. The local administration and community elders were involved in the site survey.

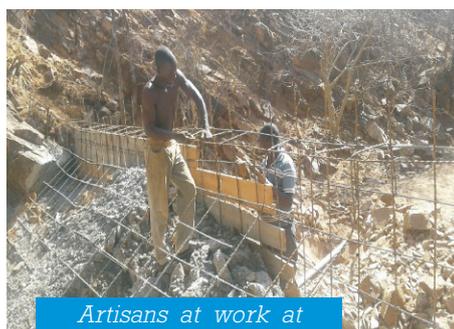
The community was mobilized and sensitized on the proposed project where they organized themselves into a group, selected Water Management Committee and roles for implementation and expectations for the sand dam project were agreed on. As part of community contribution towards the project, the community contributed sand, clearing the bush to the sand dam site, hardcore, ballast and their time during training meetings.

The sand dam was completed in good time just before the May rains. The sand dam was able to collect water and has completely matured.

The community is currently accessing water at this sand dam for both domestic consumption and for their livestock.

The sand dam project benefitted 85 households (595 individuals) directly and close to 50 households (350 individuals) indirectly. As a result of the sand dam project, more families have come to live in the village and due to the water availability, they have started crop farming especially the vegetable in their small farms. Women have been relieved walking the long distances while some of their children have gone to school and have more time to study without interruption due to water shortage.

When a water solution is resolved, sustainable agriculture is possible. Children get back to school instead of collecting dirty water all day, or being sick from waterborne illnesses. Parents find more time to care for their families, expand minimal farming to sustainable levels, and even run small businesses.



Artisans at work at Cheposaniak sand dam

THE BEST OPTION FOR NUTRITIOUS MILK

By Catherine Mutemi - FSK Livestock Officer

Mrs Njeri, a 46-year-old woman and a mother of 4 children is an active member of Uwezo Farmers group, Subukia that received goats in December 2015. She was not amongst the first beneficiaries of the goats when they were delivered but was fortunate to get a pass-on from a goat that was in kid upon delivery. In mid-2016, the doeling was served and has kidded a male kid.

From her milk production record, the goat gives an average of 1 liter of milk daily. This amount is used by the family to supplement food eaten in the home. She reported that this amount is enough for the family to make tea and feed the youngest child. There was a dry spell mid this year for about two months, despite the dry season the goat did not lose condition compared to few cows kept in the village by her neighbors. While neighbors cows dried from producing milk completely his goat continued to provide milk. She has realized that the cost of production is relatively low and thus a return from a goat is high. From her meticulous estimates, a liter



Mrs Njeri Smiling with her goat and kid



Mrs Njeri Goat unit

of goats milk goats at KES.80, she milks for 180 days and this averagely gives a total of 180 liters of milk per lactation period. This will give an income of KES.18, 000. This is an amount she could not dream of raising or saving in a year. She intends to raise the young buck and sell to local farmers to upgrade their indigenous flock. At one year, the appendix buck will go for KES. 8, 000. She is very grateful to CHRF/FSK dairy goat project, "I can comfortably host a guest in my place since Muthaka; the goat whose name means the pretty one will provide quality milk. Initially, my family members didn't think that they could consume goats milk due to the buck taint smell in the milk, but these upgraded goats, their milk don't smell, they all enjoy it" she concludes.

2017 HIGHLIGHTS FOR MUGO'S FELLOWSHIP EDUCATION FUND (MFEF)

By: Lydiah Gacheri - MFEF Chairlady Committee

In the beginning of the year, the Fellowship planned a Career Talk with the beneficiaries. This event took place on April 11th, 2017 at FSK Centre -Kiamunyi. The day was successful having 21 students from various schools who managed to interact with FSK Staff, Rev. Kahunya- Chaplain and Mr Willy Tanui who was the Guest speaker. The topic of the day; Discover your purpose.



A group photo for 2017 beneficiaries with FSK staff and the Fellowship Patron.



Mary receiving a cheque from the Patron Mr. Paul Mugo and NLPF Planning Council.

Beneficiaries:

In the year 2017 the number of applicants increased making 2017 having the highest number of applicants compared to the previous years. 87 students from High schools, Colleges and University qualified to get the bursary of a tune total of KES. 670,743 was dispatched.



FSK Staff Congratulating Mary for Her good Results

Among the beneficiaries, we had 4 candidates who sat for 2017 KCSE. Mary Njoki Mbugua despite her many challenges they faced as a family she did all her best. Some years back, her father was diagnosed with diabetes, which resulted in the loss of eyesight he could no longer work to provide for the family. Mary's school fees accumulated until Madam Vivian from Uhuru High school approached the secretariats of the Fellowship requesting Mary to be assisted so that she could continue her education. In the year 2015 Mary managed to be among the MFEF beneficiaries until she finished high school in 2017.

"I had no hope because nothing was working for our good. My dad could no longer work to provide for us this making our mum the breadwinner of the family. My school fees accumulated until my teacher Madam Vivian brought me a form to fill requesting a bursary from Mugo's Fellowship. Later on, I could not believe it when I was told by that I managed to get the bursary from the Fellowship. They have supported me through the years until I did K.C.S.E exams. I just thank God for giving me the favour to be among the beneficiaries. I gave a promise to the Fellowship to do my best in my studies and I managed to score B- of Average grade point (AGP) 55 in 2017 this being a direct qualification for a public university. As a family we are grateful for everything may God bless MFEF for giving me the scholarship", Said Mary who had brought her results to the office.

Thanks to FSK Development Partners



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