

EMPOWERMENT ECHO



Quarterly Newsletter



ISSUE NO.01

JAN-MARCH 2024

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From the CEO

Hello and welcome to the first edition of our quarterly newsletters.

This is a display of our interventions and interactions with communities in Emali and our stakeholders for the period January and March 2024. Our interventions were mainly guided by the need to respond to the challenges posed by effects of climate change experienced over time in Makueni and Kajiado counties. The counties have some of the worst effects of climate change with the year 2023 presenting one of the worst droughts experienced over time which saw losses of livelihoods for communities in the counties.

As a Child Focused organization, Emali Dedicated Children's Agency prioritized climate mitigation and adaptation programs to safeguard the wellbeing of children and communities in Emali. The interventions focused on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, strengthening of community livelihoods and resilience and youth vocational training. Through partnership with Kenya Community Development Foundation, Barnfonden, ChildFund New Zealand and ChildFund Kenya, we supported development of WASH infrastructure in Mithumoni community in Makueni and Nairataat Primary school in Kajiado which cumulatively will benefit over 2,000 people. Additionally, over 500 community members have been supported with assorted agricultural input and trainings that will see they produce enough food with the ongoing March-April rainfall. To support agro-pastoralists, the program partnered with ChildFund Kenya and Packaging Industries LTD to deliver tailored trainings and inputs for feed conservation through silage making too avoid future livestock loses. We continue to work with communities and partners to deliver trainings and support to communities in Makueni and Kajiado to promote adaptation and resilience to climate change.

This issue demonstrates our shared vision with communities as we work together to build resilience and sustainability. We do invite you to read on and to find out more on our work with communities by visiting our website on www.emalidca.org and find out how we can all build community resilience together.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V. Aduda'.

VICTOR ADUDA

Mama silage eco dairy extension Initiative

EDCA and Samli dairy cooperative have been steering Climate Smart dairy farming and cost-effective agricultural extension program which has proved instrumental in strengthening the resilience of both Makueni and Kajiado dairy farmers. These training initiatives conducted in Farmer Field School (FFS) in Nembuya with 200 farmers acquiring climate smart dairy and beef farming knowledge have played a pivotal role in equipping community members with essential skills and knowledge to navigate the challenges imposed by a changing climate such as drought induced closure of dairy cooperatives such as Samli.

The emphasis on sustainable practices by Animal Health Assistants (AHAs) such as pasture, fodder production and management such as silage making using Mama Silage bags, rotational grazing (paddock),

and the adoption of climate-resilient livestock breeds such as Sahiwal has empowered Maasai community to adapt to environmental fluctuations. Integrated livestock and crops system has not only enhanced productivity but also been contributing to environmental sustainability.

The capacity-building efforts, conducted, have left a lasting impact on the community, fostering a deep understanding of sustainable land management and livestock health. These initiatives have not only strengthened the community's ability to withstand climate-related adversities but have also fostered a more resilient and adaptive approach to dairy farming, ensuring a sustainable and secure livelihood for pastoralist households.





THE ART OF SUSTAINABLE LIVING:

Samli Dairy Farmers Cooperative Society Revival



Samli Dairy Farmers' Cooperative Society a legal entity registered in 2018 by the commissioner of cooperatives and an umbrella organization of dairy farmers within Emali/Mulala and Poka Kenyewa wards with 1450 farmers was revived after 13 months drought induced closure with Brookside providing market for the raw milk. The cooperative has farmers from both Makueni and Kajiado counties who are majorly subsistence and pastoralists respectively.

Plausibly, all the farmers have been fully engaged in food transformation such as agro – pastoralism and modulated pastoralism where they are currently bridging the gap between input supply, value addition and marketing. Through the dairy cooperative, farmers have found strength in unity, pooling resources and knowledge to navigate the complexities of the dairy industry such as drought Improved animal husbandry practices, learned from Farmer Field School and demonstration plots, have become the cornerstone of change. Farmers, once grappling with stagnant yields, witnessed a surge in milk production, translating to increased income.

The effects have been extending beyond economic gains communities flourished, children accessed better education, and the cooperative has become a nexus for shared knowledge and support. The project is not just about dairy; it is a narrative of empowerment, where farmers, armed with newfound skills, are transforming their lives, nurturing diversity with alternative livelihood initiatives, turning challenges into opportunities, and ensuring that the dairy cooperative is not just a project but a pillar of sustainable and thriving rural livelihoods.



Harvesting Health and Prosperity: The Moringa Honey Synergy

EMUKA Moringa cooperative and Emali Dedicated Children's Agency (EDCA) have been comprehending and embracing innovative agricultural projects by integration of Moringa cultivation with beekeeping practices. The initiative has created a mutual approach to community development especially for the women and youth. 10 local youths farmers are not only cultivating Moringa, known for its rich nutritional content, but are also actively engaged in beekeeping to produce high-quality honey.

The project provides comprehensive training in sustainable beekeeping techniques, emphasizing the importance of bees in pollinating Moringa flowers. This dual initiative not only enhances the economic prospects of the Maasai and Kamba communities through the sale of Moringa honey but also promotes environmental sustainability by fostering healthy bee populations.

The integration of Moringa with beekeeping intertwines agricultural productivity with ecological resilience. "Imagine the nectar from these highly nutritious Moringa flowers, that's exactly what comes in a jar of our EMUKA Moringa Honey".





Sewing machines for youths in vocational training

In a visionary effort to empower vocational students and enhance their vocational skills, Emali Dedicated Children's Agency (EDCA) started an initiative to provide sewing machines to aspiring tailors schooling at SpringHill Polytechnic Kwakakulu in Emali Mulala ward, Makueni County.

Being aware of the pivotal role of practical experience in shaping future careers, EDCA has equipped students with the tools necessary for sharpening their craft. By supporting polytechnic students with sewing machines, the initiative not only fostered hands-on learning but also encourages entrepreneurship within the fashion and textile industry.

These machines will serve as a gateway for students to translate their theoretical knowledge into tangible creations, nurturing creativity and self-reliance. Through the workshops, there will be a sense of enthusiasm and determination throughout the learning environment.

"The machines we received today will significantly enhance the quality of our training and better prepare our students for the job market," emphasized Nicodemus Mbwika, the Board Chairperson of Springhill Kwakakulu CTTI.

Promoting Hygiene and Health: Handwashing Stations for Nairataat Students

“Clean water and
sanitation for all”

Access to clean water and sanitation plays a pivotal role in safeguarding the well-being of students in our communities, promoting education, and contributing to sustainable development.

We installed handwashing facilities and provided access to clean water to students at Nairataat school. The provision of handwashing stations ensures that students have easy access to clean water and soap throughout the school day. This represents a proactive step towards mitigating the risks associated with inadequate hygiene practices.

We understand the critical importance of addressing hygiene issues in educational settings. By integrating handwashing into their daily routine, we empower our students to take ownership of their health and well-being, thereby reducing absenteeism due to preventable illnesses and promoting a conducive learning environment. These stations serve as tangible manifestations of our commitment to promoting health and well-being within the community.

"We sincerely thank Emali Dedicated Children Agency for the provision of water and hand washing points at our school. It will have a lasting impact in retaining our learners at school. It is said water is life. It will also help to clean our environment. Clean environment and good health are like identical twins. Our learners will be clean and therefore healthy," said Mr Lesira, Headteacher Nairataat School.



Mithumoni Water Project

As an integrated water, climate resilience and sustainable agriculture project that seeks to harness community resources to provide safe water supply while conserving the environment and promoting climate smart agriculture, a community water kiosk was constructed to completion and a 2km pipeline from Kikuu river to the community kiosk established.

The extended water pipeline will serve one kiosk with over 1500 community members and two schools in the area.

This was made possible by the remarkable corporation of the community who mobilized themselves to trench, lay the pipes and backfill as well as availing sand, construction stones and water where needed in fulfilling their community contribution bid.



Six Village-based assistants were trained on climate change and facilitated to cascade these trainings to the community where they reached 252 community members.

In enhancing climate smart agriculture as an approach towards adapting to climate change, 54 households from the area were trained on good agricultural practices and resourced with certified drought tolerant seeds each receiving 2kg KS20 green grams and 2kg DK8031 maize seeds. The seed distribution exercise was done prior to the onset of the March- April- May rainfall allowing the farmers enough time to prepare and plant.

The implementing team with support from a KALRO field officer will conduct regular field visits to these farmers to guide as well as monitor progress towards successful production.

International Women's Day Celebrations



"Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress."
#InspireInclusion

As part of the Makueni Gender Sector Working Group, EDCA had the honor of facilitating a team of 2 staff members, a GBV champion and a girl from our community to participate in the awe-inspiring International Women's Day celebration at Mbumbuni Grounds-Kisau Area.

The event, attended by over 500 participants, centered around this year's theme "Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress." It served as a platform to address pressing issues such as GBV, Femicide, defilement, and child abuse prevalent in the County.

Through collective efforts, the aim was to inspire a future generation committed to fostering a more just and equitable society. These initiatives have sparked increased awareness on gender equality, women's rights, and prompted collective community action.

Launch of Children Advisory Committee

EDCA's ambition to protect children aligns with the Children's Act 2022 which aims to safeguard the rights and welfare of children through establishment, provision, promotion, coordination, and supervision of child protection services. The organization alongside other CSOs engaging in child protection services within Mashuuru sub-county convened under the stewardship of the Directorate of Children Services at the sub-county office in Mashuuru on 26th March 2024 to launch the sub-county Children Advisory Committee.

The committee will advise the government on all matters relating to children and oversight children services. In the meeting, the partners deliberated on some of the child protection related issues and challenges in the area such as child marriages, FGM, child neglect, child labour and the progress of some of reported cases. A need to synergize in disseminating Children's Act 2022 was also noted.

The Children Act, 2022, is an act of Parliament to give effect to Article 53 of the Constitution; to make provision for children rights, parental responsibility, alternative care of children including guardianship, foster care placement and adoption; to make provision for care and protection of children and children in conflict with the law; to make provision for, and regulate the administration of children services; to establish the National Council for Children's Services and for connected purposes



Generation Green: Youth Voice for Climate Action

Meet Simeon Oleku, a youth climate change champion and Activist. Currently, a student at Kenyatta University pursuing a Bachelors Degree in Community Resource Management, he is passionate about advocating for climate change.

Tell us a bit about yourself and your background?

I grew up in a single mother household marked by the shadows of patriarchy and gender-based violence, I experienced firsthand the vulnerabilities of such environments. Despite the challenges, I pursued my education diligently, attending local primary and high schools before advancing to Kenyatta University for my undergraduate studies. This journey has shaped me into a determined and focused young changemaker, driven by a deep commitment to challenging social problems and advocating for equality and justice. My background fuels my passion for creating positive change, and I am dedicated to leveraging my experiences to make meaningful contributions to my community and beyond.

What inspired you to become a climate change champion and advocate?

Growing up in a community ravaged by the devastating impacts of climate change, I witnessed firsthand the profound injustices and inequalities perpetuated by environmental degradation. The loss of our livelihood due to drought-induced livestock deaths shook me to the core and fueled my determination to become a climate change champion and advocate. It was the realization that climate change is not just an abstract concept, but a pressing issue that directly affects the lives and well-being of vulnerable communities like mine.



Witnessing the disproportionate effects of climate change on marginalized groups ignited a fire within me to act and fight for climate justice, intertwining the human rights aspect into my advocacy efforts.

Could you share some of the organizations or initiatives you've worked with in the realm of climate change activism?

In my journey as a climate change advocate, I've had the privilege to collaborate with various organizations and initiatives dedicated to combating climate change and promoting Climate justice. I've worked closely with Pan Africa Climate Justice Alliance, to amplify the voices of those most impacted by climate change especially in Africa as a continent that bears the biggest brunt of climate change yet they're the least contributors of climate change. Additionally, I've engaged Policy Action Initiative to advocate for policy changes and systemic reforms that prioritize climate justice and equity. I also engaged with Nairobi Summer School on climate justice as an initiative that trains and amplify voices of young African Climate Activist.

What message do you have for fellow youth regarding the urgency of addressing climate change?

My message to fellow youth regarding the urgency of addressing climate change is one of unwavering determination and collective responsibility. We cannot afford to be complacent in the face of such a monumental threat to our planet and future generations.

“

I urge youths to educate themselves and others about the interconnectedness of social justice and environmental sustainability, and to leverage their voices and platforms to amplify marginalized perspectives in the climate conversation.

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The time for action is now, and it is imperative that we mobilize our collective energy and passion to drive meaningful change. Together, we have the power to catalyze a global movement for climate action and hold decision-makers accountable for their actions.

What specific actions or initiatives do you encourage other young people to take in combating climate change?

In terms of specific actions and initiatives, I encourage other young people to take an active role in advocating for sustainable practices, also find solutions that are likely to help in addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation. Engage in grassroots activism within their communities should also be seen among us as youths. Additionally, I urge them to educate themselves and others about the interconnectedness of social justice and environmental sustainability, and to leverage their voices and platforms to amplify marginalized perspectives in the climate conversation.

How do you envision your role in the fight against climate change evolving in the future?

I see myself continuing to advocate for climate justice on both local and global scales. Whether through policy advocacy, community organizing, or grassroots mobilization, I am committed to making a tangible difference in the fight against climate change. Moreover, I aim to inspire and empower the next generation of climate change champions, nurturing a legacy of environmental stewardship and social responsibility.



What are your long-term goals and aspirations in terms of your activism and academic pursuits?

My long-term goals and aspirations in terms of my activism and academic pursuits are deeply intertwined. I aspire to pursue further education in fields related to Environment, Development, or policy, equipping myself with the knowledge and skills necessary to enact meaningful change at both the grassroots and policy levels. Ultimately, I hope to contribute to the development and implementation of equitable and sustainable solutions to the climate crisis, guided by principles of justice and equity.

What support or resources do you think are crucial for empowering more young people to become climate change champions like yourself?

Crucial support and resources are essential for empowering more young people to become climate change champions. This includes access to education and training opportunities, mentorship and guidance from experienced activists, and funding and resources to support grassroots initiatives and projects. Moreover, creating inclusive and supportive spaces for youth to collaborate and exchange ideas is vital for fostering a sense of belonging and collective action. By investing in the empowerment of young people, we can harness their creativity, energy, and passion to drive meaningful change in the fight against climate change.



Local partners attending the Mid-Year Annual Operating and Planning Budget Review Meeting at JettInn Garden Hotel.



Communication Manager receiving certificate from Makueni County Deputy Governor Lucy Mulili and CECM Environment Dr Sonia Nzilani during the commemoration of World Wetlands Day.



A 5-day staff training meeting with Sarah Martha on local fundraising, report writing and communication.



Women from Poka Kenyewa and Emali- Mulala being taught on establishment of kitchen gardens as part of Regreening Africa Project.



Aflatoun club members at Ilaimirror Primary school establishing a tree nursery.



Godwill Bwire, Programs Manager, participating in a panel discussion during the Kenya Philanthropy Forum organized by East Africa Philanthropy Network in Wote.



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