

Community Agriculture Programme Sector

Warm reception as Victor and Laura of GLS visit Community Partners

By Paul Karanja, Deputy Executive Director, SACDEP

Victor del La Rey and his colleague, Laura Benning, from GLS Future Foundation for Development, got a warm reception on a visit to SACDEP partners in February 2022. GLS has been a funding partner of SACDEP for about 30 years. Here follows a few highlights of their visit.

Ragia forest, Nyandarua County

The visiting team witnessed forest rehabilitation in and around Ragia forest. The Ragia Community Forest Association has partnered with SACDEP to plant indigenous trees in areas where exotic cypress and pine plantation had been harvested. This drive seeks to restore the natural ecosystem of the forest.

Lusoi Hill restoration

In Laikipia, the team visited the Lusoi Hill Community Forest Association. The association is rehabilitating what was a bare and degraded hill before they joined hands with SACDEP. The project runs a facility which hosts organized groups of pupils to enjoy and learn about the environment in a program popularly known as Schools and Youth Environmental Conservation in Action, "SAY-ECA." The pupils are the future champions of the environment. The visitors found a group of pupils in session.

Cultural heritage

Before the team left Laikipia County, they were hosted by Good Start Self Help Group in Ngenia village. The hosts showed how they save, propagate and share indigenous seeds and plant varieties. Most indigenous seeds and plant materials are extinct so



Victor del La Rey of GLS Germany chats with pupils of Rwanyambo Primary School in February 2022. The pupils' parents are members of the Ragia Community Forest Association, one of the community partners of SACDEP.

Ngeni's efforts are crucial to the conservation of this rare cultural heritage.

Wildlife Conservation

In Kajiado County, the team started off at Kitenden Conservancy. There are several like it in the group ranches of Olgulului, Shompole and Rombo. Interaction with game rangers amplified the value of motorbikes and communication gadgets supplied by SACDEP. According to the rangers, improved surveillance and rapid response had resulted in reduced poaching in the conservancies. Revenue from tourist visits had also gone up.

Lifeline

Before leaving Kajiado, the team also visited the Eluai Borehole at Olgulului, which serves locals as well as Maasai herders from Tanzania in search of pasture and water. It was a joyful trip which gave Victor and Laura first hand knowledge of the partners of GLS and SACDEP.

I can't wait to take this home, Bravo CSAEA!

By Abigail Siteyian Sempeta, student at CSAEA

I am a Maasai girl from Oloitokitok in Kajiado County and a proud student of the College of Sustainable Agriculture for East Africa (CSAEA). My people are cattle keepers. I am among the few outliers in the community who have ventured into farming but to study the same.

As I complete my studies at CSAEA in a few weeks time, I cannot wait to take this knowledge to my people back home. Besides the practical lessons in college, it is the learning during field attachment which has had the most impact on me.



Abigail stirs the boiling mixture of ingredients as she shows Kianjege Group members how to make bio-pesticides at Kathare village, Kirinyaga County, during her field attachment in April 2022

I was attached to Kirinyaga Project Area under the supervision of Ms Rahab Njoki, the staff of SACDEP in charge of Kirinyaga. She became my mentor as she introduced me to the community groups in her quiet, unassuming way. The groups were Njega, Kathare, Gituto, Neema and Cosoa. The members grow coffee, bananas, vegetables and maize.

Right from our initial interactions they wanted to learn how to make bio-pesticides. Their active participation motivated me to share with them virtually all that I knew on the subject. The coffee and vegetable farmers were particularly keen, perhaps because pest control has always been a major challenge.

Community Agriculture Programme Sector

Market linkage turns fortunes round for Tana River farmer

By Alphonse Chepsat, Project Officer, Tana River

Ms Faida Mohamed is a member of Pamoja Self Help Group in Kipini Village, Tana River County. She grows maize and simsim on her quarter acre of land. While she often harvested more than enough for her family needs, her wish was to get an outlet which would give her better prices for the surplus. When she shared her concern with me I linked her up with a contact in Malindi where she sold two bags of simsim at Ksh. 14,400. That was close to double the price at her local market. The proceeds motivated her to increase the area under cultivation as



Faida Mohamed on her simsim farm

she hoped to reap more from the new market linkage. Five of her neighbors have since ventured into simsim farming seeing the prospects of better markets.

Programmes and Resources Development (PRD), lifeline of SACDEP

By Ngugi Mutura, Executive Director, SACDEP



An aerial view of CSAEA with Kilimambogo hills in the background. Much of the work on new office, sports and accommodation infrastructure was concluded in the period in review.

The lifeline of any Institution is the programmes they ran. Such programmes enable the organization achieve its mission as viewed through the documented original vision. PRD facilitates the growth of SACDEP by:

1. Building capacities of existing personnel while soliciting for engagements among valuable associates who have needed external initiatives.
2. Identifying and engaging qualified committed and highly productive Human Resource.
3. Expanding fixed assets which include land

and buildings.

4. Providing Technical and administrative support to the PMT and the Board of Trustees.
5. Undertaking financial Resource mobilization and management of funds and assets.
6. Providing mentoring structures for managers and staff within the Organograms.
7. Expanding knowledge and skills on technical matters on S.E.A administration, Management and Human Resource Development.

Financial literacy curbs bad debts for Banks Without Walls

By Paul Warui, Stores Officer, Finance

Debt management has made or ruined many finance institutions. The story of Imperial Bank which collapsed due to poor credit management is all too familiar in Kenya. Our interaction with leaders of Banks Without Walls (BWWs) in different regions have shown that bad debt management is one of three major challenges they face. The other two are related to it and they are poor record keeping and lack of budget plans.

Our role is to facilitate the leaders of these groups to improve on their record keeping, follow up on bad debts and help members make and stick to budget plans. This enhances ownership leading to better performance. We trained 55 group leaders on these issues. The leaders were drawn from three counties:

1. Kajiado County 15
2. Nyandarua County 30
3. Embu County 10

Agriculture Development and Training Centre (ADTC), Thika

By Rita Murugi, Assistant Housekeeper, ADTC

We the staff of ADTC take pride in seeing guests whom we serve come back as repeat customers.

This tells us that they enjoyed the service offered in their previous visit. We are keen to know what they enjoyed so

that we can do it even better and where they may not be happy we make necessary changes.

Between January and June 2022 we had 402 visitors who came in 10 different groups. Among repeat customers were PELUM KENYA, SNV, BIBA and SACDEP.



The Agricultural Development Training Centre (ADTC) Thika is a serene, family-friendly facility suitable for organized group conferences or family vacation.

Children are also very good marketers as they tell their friends and other family member about the places they enjoyed visiting and what they liked about those places.

Tell a friend about us and we promise to make their stay with us memorable.

Environmental Learning Centers Sector

Lusoi Hill, Restoring a treasure lost

By Nancy Ndiga, Manager, Environmental Learning Centers

A visit to Lusoi Hill gives one a sense of renewal, the freshness that comes with the first rains after a long dry spell. The hills have seen the best of times when elephants and other animals roamed the land with the natural balance unaffected. Then came humans. They cut trees for timber. Cleared the land for cultivation. Killed the animals for meat. And the hills fell silent. The howls of the wild dog, the laughter of the hyena, the horns of the elephant were no more.

With the coming to force of the Forest Conservation and Management Act No.

34 of 2016, the Kenya Forest Service (KFS) opened doors for concerned parties like SACDEP to join efforts in restoring lost forests and their ecosystems. The Environmental Learning Centers Sector of SACDEP is working closely with both KFS and the local Community Forest Association on a program to rebuild an ecosystem which will support forest regrowth, tourism, livelihoods and environmental awareness.

A plan of action has been drawn and only awaits consent from the Chief Conservator of Forests after which the path to rebirth of Lusoi Hill will start in earnest.