



COMMUNITY IMPACT

NEWSLETTER - 2021

MISSION STATEMENT

"We seek to empower communities through the promotion of access to education, sustainable livelihood, environmental stewardship and human rights".

VISION

"A World where communities are empowered to live dignified lives"



Mary Githiomi,
Country Director, IAS K

FROM THE COUNTRY DIRECTOR'S DESK

IAS K, we are excited to present to you the first issue of "Community Impact" Newsletter. I am delighted of the fact that IAS K could share its achievements in a nutshell through the Community Impact Newsletter 2021. As our audience, we would like to keep you updated on our activities and major achievements.

IAS K focuses on empowering communities to live dignified lives. This has continued to be progressively achieved through a combination of efforts from the team and various stakeholders.

As a young organization, having been registered locally about 4 years ago, we have grown to a population of over 20 staff who are diverse with different expertise and experiences.

IAS K has over the years been an affiliate of the global IAS. In 2017, the organization was registered as a national entity with a local Governing Board. Project offices are currently located in Tana River and Tharaka Nithi Counties. Recently, IAS K expanded to 3 more counties during the first half

of the year 2021. With Nakuru, Kajiado and Kilifi Counties, IAS K Projects are now running in 5 Counties as per the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan.

In the new counties, different issues are being addressed by various stakeholders/partners. In Nakuru and Kilifi Counties, we are building capacity and synergy among local churches for sustained impact of social accountability interventions in Kenya. **(Contd. Pg2)**

A (From. Pg1)
Additionally, we received a grant from the Embassy of Japan to empower 5 primary schools in Tharaka Nithi County through creation of rain water harvesting system. This will ensure sustainable water supply for school children during dry seasons. The project will use the schools as an important link to reaching individual families and communities through activities such as rain water harvesting, environment conservation and behavior change campaigns which include creating awareness of sanitation, hygiene and water.

Over 10,000 school going children are fed through the school feeding program popularly known as Plate for Plate (P4P) funded by Linas Matkasse, a private donor based in Sweden. Swedish Mission Council (SMC) and Centre for Church based Development (CKU) are funding Resilience projects as we work towards "Building Resilient Communities". When COVID-19 pandemic struck the world over, our donors were kind enough to allow us to redesign our projects to address the pandemic challenges. Various activities were undertaken within the communities we work with.

IAS K has continuously lobbied to influence the government policy for children facing barriers to learning through the Inclusive Education (IE) program implemented in Tana River County. The

project is funded by Civil Society in Development (CISU), a Danish donor through IAS Denmark. As IAS K, we aspire to **"Leave No One Behind"** in our endeavors to offer quality education to all children regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have as envisaged by SDG 4. In addition to training on Inclusive Education pedagogy, teachers have also been trained on Functional and Educational Assessment while the community's advocacy strategy has been key for children facing barrier to learning.

I am elated to talk about the recent appointment of IAS K as the Chair Kenya4Resilience (K4R) Network. K4R is a network that brings together different organizations and individuals with resilience interest as we seek to build resilient communities. The newest "Kid in the block" is a 3 year Resilience project under Kenya For Resilience Consortium (K4RC) which is being implemented in Tana River county funded by SMC

We gladly look forward to more growth and "Community Impact", by partnering with various stakeholders in the 5 target counties and beyond!

Mary Githiomi, Country Director, IAS K



Jonah Cherutich,
IAS K Programmes Manager

FROM THE PROGRAMME MANAGER'S DESK

In short **Community Impact** newsletter is a game changer not only to the IAS K family but also to the communities that we passionately work for. We are delighted that we can be able to share in detail but also summarized change that we have managed jointly with the community. It gives me great pleasure, to report that despite the Covid-19 situation in Kenya, IAS K has grown from one stride to the other.

This year, IAS K received approvals for three projects; one from the Embassy of Japan, where five schools will benefit from "Sustainable water supply in Tharaka Nithi County".

Two, IAS K received approval from Centre for Church-based Development (CKU) to support a feasibility study in Kajiado West Sub County namely; Strengthened resilience interventions for marginalized sections of Kajiado West communities in Kenya. Lastly, IAS K together with other partners in the Kenya for Resilience Community of Practice, received funding from Swedish Mission Council to be implemented in Tana River County namely; Kenya4Resilience Consortium (K4RC).

In addition to the above project, IAS K is currently implementing a school feeding programme in Tharaka Nithi County where over 10,000 pupils in 37 schools are being supported. Further, over 5,000 households have been supported with Solvatten containers that purify water for domestic use in Tharaka Nithi County. This project has also been extended to Kilifi and Wajir Counties with each receiving 360 units. In addition, partners in Full Gospel Churches of Kenya (FGCK) and Free Pentecostal Fellowship in Kenya (FPFK) based in Kilifi and Nakuru Counties respectively, have been supported to build the capacities of their leaders in 20 branches. Tana River currently implements Civil Society in Development (CISU) funded Inclusive Education (IE) project as well as Income Generating Activities (IGAs) targeting families of People With Disabilities (PWDs) and civil society groups aimed at boosting their economic challenges.

As we usher in a new dawn and amidst Covid-19 challenges, the organization will continue to reach out to individuals, organizations, institutions and government so as to positively impact the vulnerable in society.

This is expected to help in the realization of IAS K's motto: "PassionForHumanDignity"

ADAPTIVE FARMER *By Jacob Nthiga*

John Kanyaaru is a farmer from Maragwa Location in Tharaka Nithi County. He is married and is a father of two boys and two girls of whom three are in primary school level and one is a toddler. John lives with his family in a ten acre piece of land that he bought few years ago purposely for grazing his animals. Being a community member from Maragwa, he heard about water harvesting project run by International Aid Services Kenya in partnership with Mukujia Self-Help Group (MSHG) and Kianda Cereals Producers (KCP). He got interested because he had been thinking of how to solve the long term water scarcity experienced in the area. This was all in vain, despite his struggle and attempt to find a solution, until September 2020 when he saw some light.

Happy John, as anybody else could be after making some achievement, has a story to tell.

“*Since I am brought up in Maragwa, I can't forget how hard life is here as pertaining water scarcity. There is no permanent river in this location apart from Tana River that borders Tharaka Nithi County and Kitui County which is over 23 Kilometers from my homestead. The source of water here is shallow wells dug in the river beds of seasonal rivers which last for only one month after rain season. In early eighties, the government sunk few boreholes which are also far from my area and all the water is salty and is mostly used for livestock. Late nineties, an earth dam was dug about 3 Kilometers from my homestead and the water lasted only for two months. I was accustomed to digging shallow wells in the lower side of the earth dam that could sometimes go up to 20 Feet in depth making it too risky for my wife and children. Other community members also started digging theirs exposing more people to risk of falling inside. Apart from shallow wells, I started constructing stone and earthen embankments along the gullies within my farm which held water for only two weeks, which was fine with me. In the year 2020, I heard about water harvesting project that was being implemented in*

Maragwa by IAS K and was interested in joining. I consulted with the Chairlady, MSHG and Project Officer-IAS K, who encouraged me to source for funds to cater for excavation cost once the project begins. One hour pan was charged Kes9,000 and I managed to pay for one hour and a one hour water pan was excavated. Right now, it has some water that is expected to last for more than two Months.”

Asked what he feels now after getting his own water source and what he is planning to do, John had this to say.

“*I am so happy having this water pan now for my water problem is permanently solved and has increased friendship and good will among my neighbors who are also benefiting from it. I am planning to expand the size of the water pan so that I will harvest enough water for my livestock and for setting up a small kitchen garden and fruit orchard. I shall also increase the number of my goats from 50 to 300 and 20 cattle. Again, I shall construct a big and good house for I shall incur zero water cost for preparation of building bricks and construction work.”*

Speaking about water harvesting to the community, John said,

“*There is need for other members of the community especially from Maragwa location to embrace water harvesting of any form because it is the only way that can end water problem in the area. There is more benefit from water harvesting such as water availability, time saving for other economic purposes, safety for women and children who are mostly engaged in water activities, environment improvement among others. I also encourage organizations, National and County Governments to put more efforts in putting up water harvesting structures in the area and to mobilize and sensitize community members on water harvesting.”*



Photos of John at his water pan in Maragwa, Tharaka North Sub County, Tharaka Nithi County.



1. A group of Manyirani farmers during one of the trainings. 2. A section of a group presenting their findings during the Manyirani farmers training session. 3. Delivery of two, 20,000 Ltrs water tanks to the Nanighi and Chewele communities in Tana River County, Kenya, to facilitate efficient water storage in the wake of the devastating effects of floods. 4. Distribution of Non-food items in Nanighi community in Tana River County, Kenya, by IAS Kenya courtesy of the Danish Emergency Relief Fund. 5. Distribution of Non Food items in Tana River. 6. Food distribution to residents of Bura, Tana River County in the camps of Nanighi and Chewele who were adversely affected by heavy floods. This distribution was done courtesy of the Danish Emergency Relief. 7. IAS K Country Director and Governing Board. 8. Mary Githiomi, IAS K Country Director and Rose Kimani, IAS K Governing Board Chair during the IAS K Policies Launch. 9. A number of policies that were launched during the IAS K Policies Launch. 10. John Muthengi Assistant Chief Kamwathu Sub-Location in Tharaka North Sub County, demonstrating how Solvatten works. 11. Mr. Abraham Nthiga a Clerk at the Maragwa Chief's Office training Solvatten beneficiaries. 12. Mrs Kirema dispalying her Solvatten container at her home compound. 13. Nthoa Primary School environment conservation club pupil, during planting of trees around the school. 14. Pupils of LifeFrontier School, Madogo, Tanariver County during a class lesson. IAS K ensures equal access and sustained provision of quality learning opportunities to all children. 15. A farmer from the Manyirani Water Project showing the benefits he has drawn. 16. Hellen Karithi, a beneficiary of the SMC Water Pans Project irrigating her farm with harvested rain water from her water pan. 17. Issuing of goats as a resilience project to support families with children with disabilities. 18. Water level at one of the water pans at Hellen's farm - established by the project in Nthoa Cluster. Four months on the water pan still has water. 19. One of the Water Pans full to the brim during rain season in Tharaka County. 20. A farmer pumping water from the water pan to his farm.



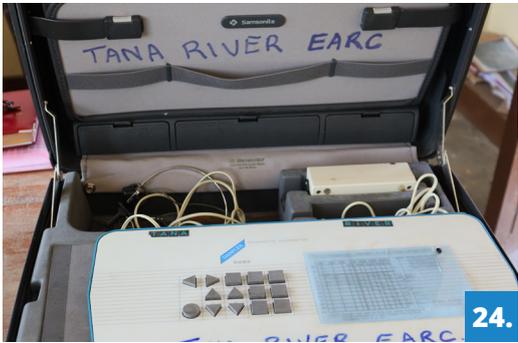
21.



22.



23.



24.



25.



26.

21. Pupils of Igumo Primary School during lunch break. Food served courtesy of Linas Matkase's Plate for Plate School Feeding Programme. 22. Plate for plate School Feeding programme at CCM Kaongoni Primary School. 23. Steve Mwaura - Inclusive Education Focal Point - IAS Global, during Awareness Campaign on the importance of taking children for assessment at the Educational Assessment Resource Center (EARC) in Hola, Tanariver County. 24. A digital audiometer at the Educational Assessment Resource Center (EARC), Hola, Tanariver County. 25. A child living with disability at Life Frontier School - Madogo, Tanariver. This is one of the IAS K's Inclusive Education model schools. 26. One of the model schools Kalkacha Primary school fitted with ramps to ensure easy access for children using assistive devices.

THARAKA NITHI - A STRONGHOLD IN PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

I joined IAS K in May 2009 as a project officer in our Tharaka Nithi office although before then I was engaged with the organization on short contracts in Kenya and South Sudan.

During the same period I also served in Nakuru and Baringo Counties implementing a Peace Project which IAS K did in partnership with FPFK- Langalanga.

My passion for joining IAS K was and still is seeing a transformed society through the different interventions that we do.

I have been able to see a number of villages in Tharaka Nithi which is a semi-arid place transformed from relief dependency to self-sufficiency.

Being part of the team that started from relief interventions to working with farmers on alternative livelihoods to promote resilience, has contributed to a tremendous growth in my life all round over the years. This has given me great fulfillment. I have learnt a lot through the organization, something which has led me to handle more and more responsibilities. My title has changed from Project Officer to Project Coordinator and currently Programme Support Manager while also serving as the Civil Society Development (CSD) Focal Point. Working with and through other Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) has multiplied the organization's work as the target CSO's reach out to more people.

One of the lessons I have learnt is that " as we work to create light for others, we naturally light our own way".

I am so grateful to IAS K for the opportunity to serve the communities in need and the endless support to ensure that I have what I need, to do so. **God bless IAS K.**



Bernard Omondi,
Program Support Manager/CSD Focal Point
IAS K, Tharaka Nithi Office

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN TANA RIVER

The Inclusive Education (IE) Project activity implementation is currently in the third year of the second phase and being implemented in Tana River Sub-county, in Tana River County. The targeted communities are Kalkacha and Bondeni, with a population of 500 and 700 households, respectively.

The IE activities being implemented include:

- Capacity building of Civil Society groups in advocacy and lobbying on the rights of girls and social inclusion of CWDs.
- Trained teachers conducting assessments of Special Needs Education (SNEC) and advising or referring where the needs arises.
- Supporting meetings for the IE network; monthly meetings between CS groups and project staff to share lessons learnt and synergy
- Facilitation of the girls' and IE clubs in the model primary schools of Kalkacha and Bondeni and exchange visit for the trained teachers in Functional and Educational Assessments.

In 2021, the IE Programme has had exchange visit for the trained teachers, EARC Officer and 3 programme staff. They visited special institutions like: Bombolulu and Likoni Association for the Physically Disabled of Kenya (APDK), Sahajjanab Special School, Kongowea Primary School Special Unit and Ziwani School for the Deaf.

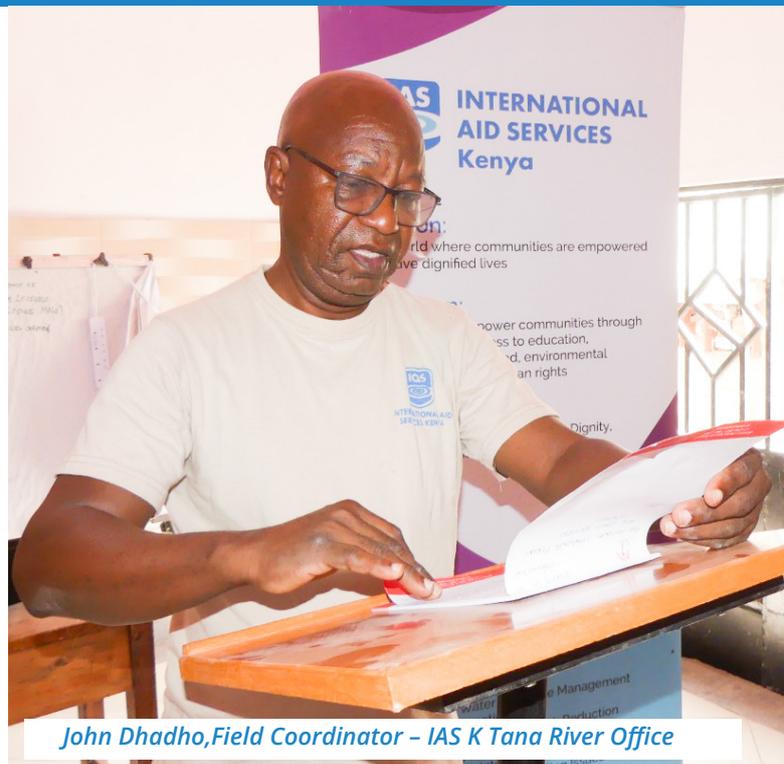
We have also had Refresher MEAL Training for the Civil Society (C.S) groups and programme staff conducted by the Global IAS team.

Additionally, as a programme we are excited over having had a successful installation of Kalkacha water project as an Income Generating Activity for 45 most vulnerable households.

Moreover, there has been a project activity of distributing female Galla goats at Bondeni for 50 vulnerable households. The goat's IGA committee has now registered with the Gender and Social Development Department. They now have a certificate and in progress of opening a bank account.

IAS K also launched an IGA project, whereby the CS groups own equipment for hire. The IGA project items have been hired on several occasions and the groups have been able to make some profit. The HAKISAWA IGA committee has also registered with the Gender and Social Services Department, as well as opening a bank account. Through these IGAs, we aspire to empower the community, sustain the advocacy activities and develop families so that they can move from dependency to interdependency status.

The Field Monitoring and Follow up tools are now being steadily utilized by both the CS groups and programme staff.



John Dhadho, Field Coordinator - IAS K Tana River Office

Other successes that we have had recently include the Assessment and Outreach Clinics, at the EARC Hola and the target villages, respectively. These clinics are continuous weekly activities conducted by the trained teachers on weekends under the support-supervision of the Special Needs Education (SNE) Officer and the Civil Society Organization (CSO) in charge.

Assessment of Children with Disabilities (CWDs) at the EARC Hola, is from all over the Tana River Sub-county and not just the model schools' villages. This is owing to the concerted efforts in awareness creation and advocacy on social inclusion of girls and quality Inclusive Education (IE) for CWDs.

Phase 3 of the 9 year IE programme will commence in 2022.

KNOW YOUR OFFICER

“Working as a Project Officer for Plate for Plate has brought with it extensive advantages. I joined IAS K in 2017 to work in the school feeding program in Tharaka Nithi County.

I was assigned 13 primary schools, which I worked very hard to achieve the set goals of the project. The feeding program is benefiting 37 public primary schools within Tharaka Nithi County through provision of lunches during school days.

It was my dream to work in the social work field so that I would help the vulnerable and needy people in the society. Every day I use my expertise to educate students and empower communities.

I realized that for transformation to take place to these little children, I need to go beyond the confines and this happens by dedicating extra time.

In schools, I talk to students, teachers, parents and guardians about how the school feeding program (plate for plate) plays a significant role towards improving performance, curbing regular absenteeism, improving health and hygiene of students.

I hold meetings with relevant authorities to ensure all planned activities are achieved.

It is true that children here in Tharaka Nithi are bright. The only challenge is the many obstacles that hinder them from pursuing their dreams.

Some of these obstacles include hunger, poverty, deep cultural practices, and negative views towards education among other challenges. Indeed, there is always light at the end of the tunnel. I can attest to the fact that the plate for plate project has really contributed towards unlocking some of these challenges.

Through “Student-of-the-month” awards, many children have realized their dreams.

My hobbies, travelling and socializing have enabled me to do my work with ease. Distributing foodstuff in schools every month, doing monitoring visits and interacting with pupils has enabled me to cultivate great relationships.

Sometimes I engage in student counseling and through such close engagements I win their hearts. Many students have openly shared with me how they lost confidence in continuing with their education. Majority of the households in the



James Mwirigi
IAS K, Tharaka Nithi Office (Plate for Plate Project)



area, where these students come from, are farmers who are dependent on rain fed agriculture.

With the consistent insufficient rainfalls they have been subjected to high levels of poverty due to food insecurity. Today there is more transformation in schools and families than there was, before plate for plate intervention. Back then, students would break for lunch and fail to return for afternoon lessons.

I am grateful to Linas Matkase - Plate for Plate Programme (School Feeding), for swift efforts in Tharaka Nithi for it has helped meet the urgent needs of vulnerable school going children.”

Editor:

Elizabeth Mwendu

Photographers:

*Elizabeth Mwendu, Edwin Muthuri,
Dafu Omar, Job Mainye*