

UNYUNYIZI NEWS



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Editor's Note



I am excited to present to you the second (2nd) edition of our newsletter. I am also happy that the rains have poured and the already excavated reservoirs will harvest water that farmers

can use for irrigation when the rains subside.

In this issue, we bring to you successful stories from some of our irrigation schemes and projects in Turkana County, introduce you to engineering life and highlight on the progress of the ongoing household irrigation water storage programme at household and community levels.

We have indulged in keeping records straight by looking into some misconceptions around the Board's services; a section we intend to have in every release.

We request you to share with us on what comes to your mind first when you hear of NIB, through our email; communication@nib.or.ke with the subject **OPINION NOOK**. We will **sample some your feedback** in the next release.

Welcome, enjoy the read.

Word from the GM's Office



I take this opportunity to congratulate everyone (NIB staff, the government, farmers and the general public) for the efforts put towards promoting Food and Nutrition security in Kenya.

The Board continued to monitor the implementation progress of the Household Irrigation Water Storage Programme (water pans) at household and community levels to ensure that we enhance water storage for food production through all seasons.

The second phase of the project is currently ongoing across various counties within the Country.

The programme is geared towards enabling the farmers to take up irrigated agriculture throughout the year and alleviate over-reliance on rain-fed agriculture that has

been murred by unreliable and inconsistent rainfall patterns.

The programme also seeks to empower the small holder farmers to become a self-reliant entity, able to provide for his or her household and in the long run contribute to the National food basket.

I urge everyone not to be frail but be vigilant, and let not the challenges faced pull you down, but be an opportunity for you to better your life.

And in the famous words of Thomas Jefferson "Agriculture is our wisest pursuit, because it will in the end contribute most to real wealth, good

"I urge everyone not to be frail but be vigilant, and let not the challenges faced pull you down, but be an opportunity for you to better your life."

morals, and happiness" I encourage you in your own way to actively invest in agriculture as it is a source of livelihood and in the long run the combination of our efforts will contribute to the Kenya food basket and make Kenya a food secure nation.

Irrigation at a scope



By Daisy Chanzu

More often than not when Turkana County comes to mind, the assumption of drought, extreme hunger and death always comes into play and to an extent, the delusion of hopelessness is portrayed especially due to the harsh weather conditions. However, this is not the narrative about 130Km from Lodwar town wherein lies the Katilu Irrigation scheme on a 2000-acre parcel of land that the Government through the National Irrigation Board intends to upscale to more than 10,000 acres in future. The scheme is considered a haven even by the residents themselves due to the vast food production such as maize, sorghum, cow peas, kales (sukuma wiki), bananas, green grams amongst many others which sprout from the dry parched land. Upon arrival, one might mistake it for somewhere in central or western Kenya, far from it, as it is still part of the same Turkana which is termed as “a dry/famine” stricken land. The land is astonishingly green with life springing from it unlike what is thought of it. It is actually mind blowing due to the implausible statistics that show that Turkana can feed itself in future once the land under irrigation is up scaled.

The irrigation scheme is subdivided in such a way that each farmer gets an acre of land to irrigate, with more than 1,400 farmers benefiting from the scheme. The

scheme which began in 1966 with the mandate of settling nomadic families from famine camps in Turkana was not always filled with a rosy tale of success nor was it quite stable. It was not until 1970 when it was revived back to its feet by the joint effort between the Ministry of Agriculture who provided sporadic costs in partnership with the Food and Agricultural organization who not only provided capital but also technical personnel. To further curb the farmer’s main challenge of lacking market for their produce which is often in abundance, the National Irrigation Board stepped in alongside the World Food Program to link the farmers with market: where the produce is sold to traders in Lokichar, Lodwar and Kakuma refugee camp through WFP while some is supplied to the National Cereals Produce Board. When it comes to pricing: a 90kg bag of maize goes for Ksh.3000, a bag of kales for Ksh.1, 500-Ksh.2000, watermelons for Ksh.200 - Ksh.300, with tomatoes going for Ksh.2000-Ksh. 3000 per crate, and green grams are outsourced by the local schools a kilo going for Ksh.120. This is courtesy of the National Irrigation Board and their partners who have linked the farmers with their market. It has seen the farmers benefit to an extent of earning the farmers Sh.4.2 million in 2018 which they were able to share amongst themselves

Diving deeper into some of the

technicalities of the scheme, NIB has introduced the use of gravity fed system as a means of the water supply while the farmers have adopted the basin as compared to the furrow/channel type of irrigation which is more cost efficient. Despite the desperate outcry caused by drought from most parts of Turkana County and some parts of the Country as well, in the south the tale is one of blessings and more so, hope as the residents here are fortunate to have more than enough food for consumption as well as surplus for sale to others.

Apart from Katilu Irrigation scheme, NIB has also established other irrigation schemes in Turkana County: Lokubae, Elelea, Koliuro, Nadapal, Loborot/Nabuin, Nadoto, Morulem, Naoros, Lojokobwo/Kalemunyang, Lokipetot, Nakamane, and Turkwel/Kabulkor.

Morulem, Lokubae and Elelea get their water from River Kerio while the rest get their water from River Turkwel.

The irrigation projects which are currently cropping are; Koliuro, Nadoto, Nadapal, Naoros, Kalemnyang/Lojokobwo, Nakamane, Turkwel and Kalemuyang phase two. To many, it may seem as a surprise but cropping is on-going in these schemes despite Turkana County being a famine-stricken area and this is because of the resilience shown by the farmers to beat all odds by using the available water to irrigate their farms.

What more can we say, irrigation is the way forward if we are to achieve food security as a nation. A step at a time makes up for the efforts from the farmers and the Board which are now paying off blooming and bumper harvests. Nothing beats the satisfaction of a well fed society and as Hugh Auden would say “Thousands have lived without love, not one without water” and as a Board we are determined to run with our vision and ensure every irrigable acre has water.

IN THE MONTH OF APRIL...

The month of April has been an eventful one with the Board realizing strides worth taking note of.



The Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Irrigation Hon. Mwangi Kiunjuri accompanied by PS State Department of Irrigation, Prof. Fred Segor and NIB GM/CEO, Mr. Gitonga Mugambi in an inspection tour of the household irrigation water storage programme with a view of assessing their implementation progress. The project is aimed at enhancing water storage at household and community level for irrigation and other agricultural practices in line with the Big 4 agenda on food and nutrition security.



The Governor, Kisumu County Prof. Anyang' Nyong'o kept his promise by giving out a cheque worth Kshs. 11.25M to help farmers in Ahero Irrigation Scheme crop for the coming season. It was delivered by the County's Chief Executive Committee Member of Agriculture. Farmers in the scheme had incurred 100% crop loss in their last season due to hailstones downpour on the night of February 27, 2019.



Sorghum covering 200 acres of land in Koliro Irrigation Project in Turkana County is ready for harvest. Each acre is estimated to give out 8-10 90kg-bags of the crop. Maize covering 120 acres of land will also soon be ready for harvest, producing 10-12 90kg bags of maize per acre.

Water to every irrigable acre

By Modest Chabari

The National Irrigation Board through the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Irrigation has initiated the Household irrigation water storage project for enhanced agricultural productivity in the country by year 2022.

The scope of the project is providing localised access to water by construction of water harvesting and storage infrastructure in various counties with an aim of improving agricultural water management for enhanced productivity.

The programme in return ensures food security by supporting provision of water for irrigation at both the local level and consequently, national level. This subsequently contributes to a sustainable supply of raw materials for agro-based industries, create employment and income generation at the local and national levels.

This project is geared into empowering the small holder farmer in the County to venture into intensive small scale farming and reduce over re-

liance to rain fed agriculture which is now being affected by the lack of sufficient and reliable rains due to climate change.

The implementation of the project will ensure access to water for irrigation and other agricultural practices by communities.

Management of water resources in Kenya, being a scarce resource is a daunting task and will require innovative approaches.

The project targets all counties in the Country and its implementation was set up into different phases with the pilot

phase being complete and Phase 2 and 3 currently ongoing.

The pilot phase targeted 14 counties that harvested 3.4M cubic metres volume of water. These are: Baringo, Nakuru, Kajiado, Kirinyaga, Uasin Gishu, Murang'a, Nyandarua, Nyeri, Laikipia, Meru, Tharaka Nithi, Isiolo, Samburu and Kiambu.

Farmers from the above mentioned counties are benefiting from the programme with some having a change of livelihood due to the positive effects of the water pans.



Farmers Fortunes

For instance Mr. John Mbuthia a farmer in Nyandarua County has been planting tomatoes and cabbages for the last one year with ease due to availability of irrigation water from the water pan. On



a good season he is able to make a profit of more than Ksh 400,000 from his farm. This has enabled him to send his three sons to university and hopes that they will learn of new ways of farming and come back to use the knowledge in his farm.

In Laikipia County, Mr. Titus Mugendi, a retired teacher has ripped his fortune with pineapples and fish rearing. He claims that the water pan has helped improve his livelihood and is able to share with his neighbors when he has a bumper harvest. His dream is

to see more young people pick up farming and put to use the vast ancestral lands on farming.



The program has encouraged the diversification of crops under cultivation and encouraged fish and livestock keeping. This gives a farmer different sources of income in case the water levels are low for irrigation one can turn into fish or use the water for livestock rearing to provide income and food for the household.

The second phase is an expansion of the pilot phase targeting 20 counties to harvest about 3M m³ volume of water. In the recent years, conflicts arising from competition for water resources between communities has increased to an extent of loss of lives and live-

lihoods. This has further been exacerbated by climate change where we are experiencing longer dry periods resulting in prolonged droughts and extreme wet seasons leading to floods.

The Household irrigation water storage project seeks to

address the above issue and in the long run contribute to the Big4 agenda on Food and Nutrition security.



Fallacies about the Board's services

"NIB only irrigates rice in Mwea Irrigation Scheme."

TRUTH METER

The Board manages 7 public schemes in Kenya, (Mwea, Bura, Tana, Ahero, West Kano, Bunyala, and Perkerra). In addition, we run two research stations namely Mwea irrigation Agricultural Development and Ahero Irrigation Research Station and two subsidiaries (Mwea Rice Meals Ltd. and Western Kenya Rice Meals). The seven (7) public schemes have embraced crop diversification. Apart from the seven irrigation schemes, the Board also has 209 irrigation projects spread across the country being implemented under the Expanded National Irrigation programme and a host of other large scale irrigation projects such as Lower Nzoia, Galana-Kulalu, Lower Kuja, Rwabura, Mwea

Irrigation Development Project among others.

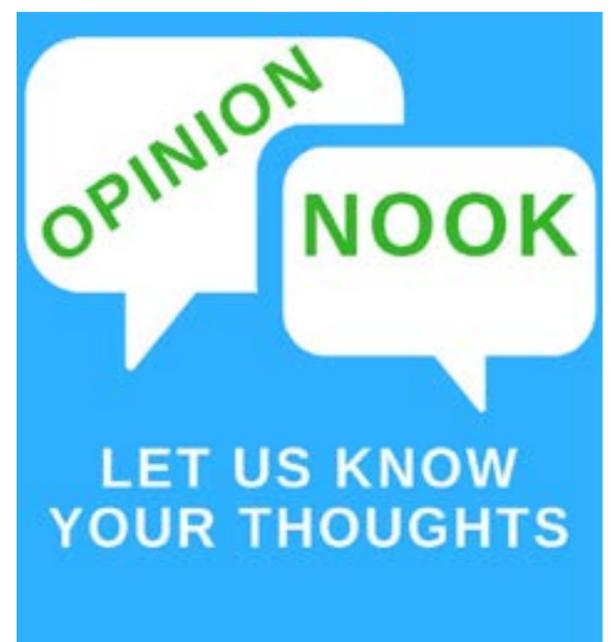
The Board is also implementing 9 mega dams which are at different implementation and procurement stages. These are Thiba Dam in Kirinyaga County, Thuci in Embu County, Rwabura/Thiririka in Kiambu County, Lowaat in Turkana County, Radat in Baringo County, Kiakivai Dam in Makueni County, Gogo in Migori County, Lower Subukia in Nakuru County and High Grand-Falls in Kitui and Tharaka Nithi Counties.

The implementation progress of Thiba Dam is at 22% while the rest of the dams are at different procurement stages.

OPINION NOOK

This is a new segment in our newsletter which requires your engagement. Let us know what you thought when you first heard of NIB. Reach out to us through our social media pages; @NIBKenya on twitter and National Irrigation Board (N.I.B) on Facebook as well as our email address communication@nib.or.ke.

Looking forward to your feedback.



Dialogue Corner



An audience with Eng. Raphael Ogendo by Rhoda Mbuvi

Who is Eng. Raphael Ogendo?

I am the Deputy General Manager (Infrastructure and Engineering development Services) at the National Irrigation Board. A holder of B.Sc. Agricultural Engineering from Egerton University and currently pursuing a M.Sc. in Agricultural and Rural Development in Kenya Methodist University (KeMU). I am married with two (2) sons, one (1) daughter, and a grandfather of four (4).

How would you describe your job to a child?

Children learn easily through the sense of seeing, so using the rains, when it pours, the grass blossoms, crops germinate; grow to maturity, then they are harvested for consumption or for commercial use.

In the same concept, as an engineer, my work is to apply water on land from rivers, dams (which is like water in a basin) to enable farmers to crop, produce and make a living.

How is your typical day?

Smiling...I wake up at 5:30 am, take four (4) glasses of water, prepare for work, take my breakfast (fruit salad), read a verse from the Holy Bible then leave for work. Getting to work on or before 7am, I look at my in tray; clear pending duties brief the GM/CEO on the infrastructural irrigation development services and move on with my roles/meetings.

At 1pm, I break for lunch, which is majorly traditional

vegetables served with starch of choice, take a light supper; have some time to see/read on current affairs, politics, soccer then rest for the day.

What three words would you use to describe your role at NIB?

Coordinating engineering solutions.

What is your biggest achievement so far (professional/personal)?

Among many achievements, when I was a Provincial Irrigation Engineer in the former Rift Valley Province sometimes in 2012/2013, I oversaw initiation and implementation of 10 irrigation projects in Turkana County, which transformed the norm of famine to excessive harvest. It was a nice fulfilling experience.

Do you have a mentor? Who?

My dad.

Professionally, I have other seasoned engineers I look up to like Eng. Nyanguti.

What do you like most about your job?

The fulfilment I get after seeing starving people producing in their farms, getting healthier, making a difference in the society.

What advice would you give to new entrants?

Engineering is a good profession, which requires one to be diligent and versatile. If you are honest in it, disciplined and live

within its standards/ethics, you will excel.

What is your memorable face palm moment?

When I got unbelievable news, that floods had swept the intake weir to one of our major projects. It was very embarrassing.

What is your personal mantra/motto?

“You cannot get to the top when you are living like everyone else. Make a difference”

Given a chance, who would you like to be for a day at the office?

Mmmh... helping Yvonne at the registry section to carry files.

When was the last time you laughed so hard, that you cried?

Recounting the laughter, he says it was back in his college life. He also laughed so loud and cried tears of joy when his mother made a joke on how it took 10 years to have a thorn totally removed from her leg.

“She has embraced it.” He added that everyone should work passionately from his/her position.

What do you do in your low moments?

I go to the gym. It is relaxing. I also meet my friends to brainstorm on diverse topics of life; it gets me moving.

Reach out to us through our website and social media pages. Let us interact!

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The graphic features four circular icons: a globe, the Facebook 'f' logo, the Twitter bird logo, and the YouTube play button logo. The background is a blue gradient with faint text.