



# MAENDELEO PUANI

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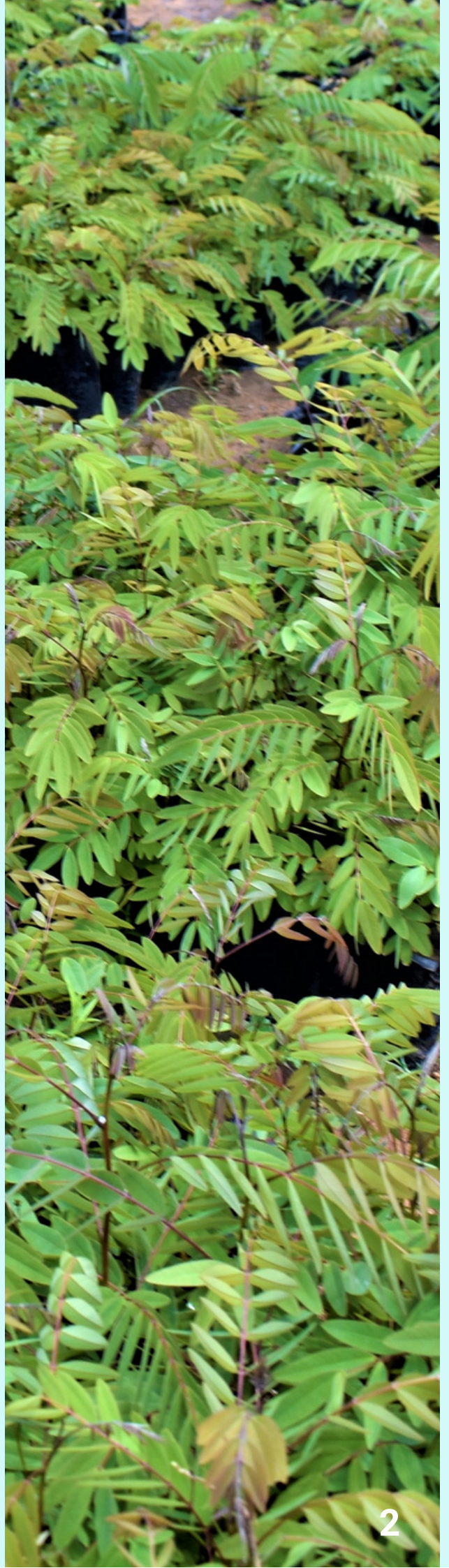
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# THE COAST DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Coast Development Authority is a State Corporation established by an Act of Parliament No. 20 of 1990 (Cap 449), with the mandate to provide integrated development planning, coordination and implementation of projects and programmes within the whole of Coast Region (Mombasa, Kwale, Kilifi, Taita-Taveta, Tanariver and Lamu Counties), including the southern part of Garissa County (Ijara and Fafi) and the Kenya's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and for connected purposes.

## VISION

To be the lead agency in implementing sustainable integrated development.

## MISSION

To accelerate socio-economic development through innovation, planning, coordination and partnerships in implementation of integrated programmes, value-addition and environmental management.

## DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

CDA employs a participatory, multi-sectoral and integrated development approach that considers all related factors in sustainable utilization and management of the natural resources for the region's economic development. CDA works with stakeholders in the planning, formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of its projects/programmes with the aim to improve the socio-economic well-being of the communities through sustainable exploitation and management of the natural resources. This is in line with its vision and mission.

CDA is guided by strategic plans which form the basis of CDA's commitment and guiding principles. This Strategic Plan (2018/19-2022/23) is the fourth strategic plan which aims at addressing the needs and aspirations of the Coast region communities in line with the Regional Development Policy, Vision 2030 based on three "pillars" (the economic, the social and the political), Sustainable Development Goals and Kenya Kwanza Bottom - Up Transformation Agenda (Growth in new jobs created and Growth in Incomes which is to be implemented through Agriculture, MSMEs, Affordable housing, Digital and Creative economy and Health).

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the new edition of Maendeleo Pwani Publication where we journey through the current progress and resilience. In the face of the ever-evolving tapestry of our nation's challenges, our responsibility as the Coast Development Authority (CDA) takes on even greater significance. We find ourselves at a pivotal juncture, where the looming shadow of climate change casts an undeniable impact on our country. This reality propels us to rise to the occasion, to not only weather the storm but to emerge with practices that are as robust as they are resilient.

As climate change continues to reshape our environment, we at CDA are steadfast in our commitment to crafting strategies that ensure our communities not only adapt but flourish. It is through innovation, foresight and a relentless pursuit of sustainable practices that we navigate these uncharted waters. Our mandate, woven into the very fabric of our existence, becomes more vital than ever.

We transform challenges into opportunities, reimagining our landscapes through an inclusive lens that upholds the safety and dignity of every individual.

CDA's mission – to accelerate socio-economic development through innovation, planning, coordination, and partnerships in implementation of integrated programs, value-addition, and environmental management – takes on renewed vigor.

Our vision is unwavering – to be the lead agency in implementing sustainable integrated development. This vision is not confined to words on paper; it reflects in every action we undertake, every project we initiate and every partnership we forge.

Within our expansive 103,326 km<sup>2</sup>, the task at hand is both intricate and profound. By linking our mandate to the pressing needs of our time, we channel our efforts into food security, cultivating sustainable economic opportunities and championing environmental conservation as non-negotiable pillars of progress.

Yet, we recognize that our efforts, though earnest, are but a part of a larger symphony. To truly transform our region, we call upon the collective power of public support. As you read these pages and witness the stories of progress, we encourage you to be part of our journey. By embracing productivity, sustainable practices, and a shared commitment to our coastal heritage, we can magnify the impact of our endeavors manifold.

Together, we weave a narrative of resilience, innovation, and progress – a story that resonates not only across the coastal shores but throughout the heartlands of our nation.

**Mzee Mwingi Mzee**  
**CHAIRMAN**  
**COAST DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

# MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR

Greetings Kenyans!

Welcome to our latest edition of our quarterly newsletter 'Maendeleo Pwani'. We're excited to share some of our most recent achievements and updates with you.

This issue marks the beginning of a new financial year which offer new opportunities for collaboration, networking and support for community development. We have witnessed uncertainties of economic projections throughout the world, subject to decisions related to combating inflation, dealing with the impact of Russia's war in Ukraine, and continuing supply chain challenges among other issues.

What hasn't changed is our commitment to implementing cost effective strategies and programmes that maximize our ability to help and accomplish our mission. Seizing every opportunity to promote inclusive growth through sustainable exploitation of the natural resources to accelerate regional and national economic growth.

CDA recognizes that reviving productivity growth focused on fostering innovation offers a unique opportunity to redouble our efforts to accelerate the region's transition to green, resilient and inclusive development.

Our programmes are designed to build resilience through integration of nature-based solutions that create wealth while simultaneously supporting economic programmes that promote growth opportunities that benefit its people and contribute to a more sustainable future.

CDA has rolled out short-term and long-term programmes that enhance climate change adaptation and mitigation, create new jobs, while securing existing ones and protecting the environment to increase forest cover.

CDA recognizes the great potential of the Kenya's coastal and marine resources when sustainably exploited will increase economic growth, livelihoods, jobs and improve ocean ecosystem.



The Authority has successfully implemented projects that build resilience to climate Change & adaptive capacity of vulnerable communities in Kenya.

We are increasingly focused on ensuring that development translates into prosperity for all citizens and spread wealth gains more equally among the people.

We appreciate the confidence bestowed upon us by our stakeholders and look forward to working with you.

*Mohamed Keinan Hassan, PhD, OGW*  
**MANAGING DIRECTOR**  
**COAST DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

# ECHOS OF TRANSFORMATION: KENYAN

## FARMS REDEFINED

The construction of the Mwache Dam in Kwale is underway following a groundbreaking ceremony officiated by President William Ruto early this year. Mwache Dam is an 87.5 meter-tall concrete gravity dyke, impounding 118 million cubic meters expected to boost the water supply for Kwale and Mombasa counties. When complete, the project is expected to boost food security by putting over 2,000 hectares of land under irrigation in Kwale County.

CDA Managing Director Dr. Mohamed Keinan says Mwache dam when in full operations will ensure continued contribution to food security and economic growth, prosperity and poverty alleviation in the region.

To increase the economic lifespan of the reservoir, livelihoods and food security of the local populations, CDA is implementing catchment restoration activities which include: contour ploughing, 'Fanya Juu' terracing, rock terracing, riparian marking and pegging, construction of gabions and afforestation.

'Fanya Juu' terrace farming has been identified as one of the best methods of controlling soil erosion and reduce future dam siltation.

### **So, what is 'Fanya Juu' terrace farming?**

It is an agricultural practice that rearrange farmlands or turn hills into farmlands by constructing specific ridged platforms. The purpose of terrace farming is to intercept water in a designated channel and remove it via constructed erosion resistant ditches. This proves the efficiency of terracing to stop erosion and contribute to soil conservation.

To increase the land acreage under conservation, CDA has adopted mechanized terracing through the use of Vallerani system. So far, a cumulative total of 195km (600ha) of terraces have been established in the Mwache watershed: Mwachiga, Mazola Mnyenzi, Upper Mwache, Mwang'ombe Ngoni & Nyongoni WRUAs.

Mwache farmers have embraced terrace farming despite the unreliable rain patterns. CDA supports 60% in construction of terraces done on each farm, while the remaining 40% is completed

by the individual farmer. As a result of the successful adoption, farmers have seen an increase in their harvest from two to fifteen bags of maize per acre.

The Mwache Catchment Management is being implemented by the CDA Project Implementation Unit (CDA PIU) in partnership with the Water Resources Authority (WRA), Water Resource Users Associations (WRUAs), Kwale County Government, the Kenya Forestry Service (KFS), the Kenya Forest Research Institute (KeFRI) and the local community within the watershed.



# KENYA AND ITALY PARTNER FOR DEVELOPMENT IN MALINDI



The second phase of the 'Malindi Integrated Social and Health Development Programme' (MISHDP) was officially launched on 28th March 2023 in Malindi. The ceremony was presided over by the Permanent Secretary, State Department of the Arid and Semi-Arid Areas & Regional Development, Dr. Idris Dokota in the presence of coastal leaders, representatives of Italian government and beneficiary community in Kilifi County.

The event marked the beginning of the long-awaited project which aims to transform the social and economic development of residents of Malindi and Magarini Sub-County through interventions in the sectors of education, health, and infrastructure development. The three year programme is financed by the Government of Italy through a concessional loan of Euros 6,395,373.

Some of the projects to be rolled out include: the construction of Mjanaheri – Ngomeni tarmac road, construction of an intensive care unit at the Malindi Hospital, a Bi-pass foot bridge across River Sabaki connecting Burangi & Sabaki villages, construction

of educational facilities in Ngomeni secondary, Ngomeni primary, Burangi primary, Midodoni primary and Rasi primary schools and the introduction of an award scheme for best performing students at Ngomeni Secondary School. The first phase of MISHDP was successfully completed in 2012. The completed projects in MISHDP-I are in operation and serving the local population. The Phase I focused on construction, rehabilitation and expansion of health facilities, education facilities, sea wall and boreholes, furnishing of completed facilities and enterprise development on fishermen in Malindi and Magarini sub-counties.

This project is in line with the government's bottom-up economic transformation agenda designed to improve access to basic services for the residents of Malindi and Magarini sub-counties of Kilifi County. When complete the community driven project will transform communities' livelihoods not only in Kilifi County but also the whole country at large.

# ENGINEERING SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS TO WATER CRISIS



With a population of 4.6 million and 70.8% living in the rural areas rely on rainfall for subsistence farming; Coast region population faces a huge deficit of water supply 261,941m<sup>3</sup> against the growing water demand of 312,486m<sup>3</sup> per day.

Water scarcity has turned into a notable challenge in the region. Climate change, population growth, urbanization, water pollution, and poor management of water resources have aggravated the issue of the water crisis, which affects economic activities,

food security, education, and health. These challenges are especially evident in rural areas where people lack access to safe water for domestic use. The water crisis is not just a public health crisis, it's also an economic crisis.

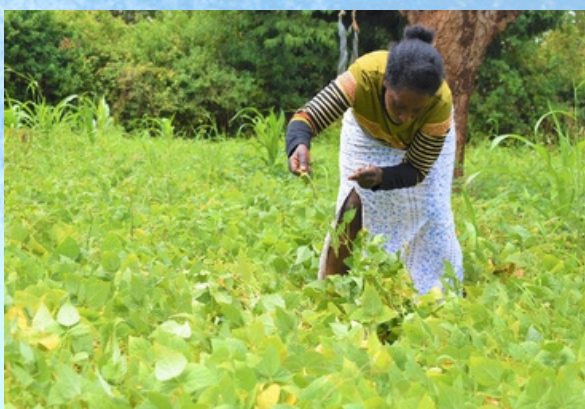
To address the water crisis, Coast development Authority has identified construction of dams as long-term solution and drilling of boreholes, construction of water pans as short-term answer to positively impact productivity, reduce healthcare costs, and intensely increase work and school attendance, contributing to the overall economic growth in the region. The Authority in the year 2022-2023 constructed boreholes and water pans worth Ksh. 400 million in Kwale, Kilifi, Taita Taveta, Tana River and Garissa counties.

CDA Managing Director Dr. Mohamed Keinan says increasing access to reliable water assures community development that contributes to economic transformation. "69% of our operations are on arid and semi-arid land supporting mainly livestock, agriculture and wildlife. CDA is committed to fund, implement and maintain clean water systems that are sustainable for the long-term", he says.

## How Clean Water Access Affects the Economy

At Coast Development Authority, our mission goes beyond drilling boreholes and construction of dams. We understand that in order for a water project to be successful, we need to be on the ground, collaborating with benefiting publics to ensure that every project we build is customized to solve the unique challenges of the community thus driving economic development for generations.

According to a UN report, three out of four jobs are moderately to heavily dependent on water. Therefore, when there is a shortage of or problems with access to water, it limits the possibilities for economic growth. Communities without reliable, clean water face multiple problems such as stunted growth, increased disease rates, reduced education rates, agricultural and developmental failures and food insecurity.



*Virginia Ndanu farms beans under the Kasokoni Irrigation Scheme, Taveta.*



## The Impact of Clean Water in Action

Nearly five years ago, we broke ground in Nakuruto community, Taveta. A community severely impacted by the water crisis since Kenya received its independence. Prior to implementation, Taveta faced acute water distress that hindered economic growth, limiting the very resources needed to develop.

When we first met this community, their economy was suffering from a high percentage of unemployment, and due to a lack of funds, many young adults were stranded at home because they could not afford college or high school, some lacked capital to start viable economic ventures, nearby schools lacked clean drinking water and the Kasokoni irrigation scheme was not in operation due to lack of adequate water to support farming.



***Provision of water for domestic use: Four primary schools access clean drinking water for students.***

The community mostly relied on the support from the government and other institutions for food and other basic resources, but through CDA Nakuruto solar powered water project we have provided clean reliable water for domestic, livestock and irrigation to over 3000 residents. The project revived the operation of Kasokoni irrigation scheme which in turn has opened up over 300 acres under irrigation. Farmers mostly farm high value crops such as tomatoes, onions, vegetables, bananas, maize, beans among others. Farmers reap hefty from sale of farm produce and have increased acreage under irrigation. The also projects provides safe drinking water to four primary schools, provide water for domestic and livestock use within the locality

**With the implementation of two boreholes, life started to turn around with clean water.**

Currently, the community has three water kiosk that they run where all funds pulled from it go into the upkeep and maintenance of the system. The irrigation scheme constituted a committee that oversees equal distribution of water and the residual finances are used to support maintenance of the irrigation infrastructure. At the water kiosk there are several businesses that have recently sprouted up- there is a vendor selling water jerry cans, there's an increase in kiosk supplying fresh farm produce. All this and more are directly related to the Nakuruto water project in the community. With the availability of clean drinking water, they are able to use the spare time they once used searching for water to empower themselves economically.

Women who used to carry water on their backs for long distances are now able to run small businesses in the community to support their families, men who had bought bodabodas to help fetch water from far off places are now using these bodabodas to earn extra money for their families, and farms have flourished in the community as there's time to work on individual projects rather than collect water.

The economic development of Taveta has grown by leaps and bounds since the implementation of the Nakuruto solar powered water project, businesses have grown, and new income generating ventures have blossomed in the community both as a direct and indirect effect of the project.

# CDA SCOOPS TOP POSITION AT THE MOMBASA INTERNATIONAL ASK SHOW



*H.E Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, EGH, awards a trophy to officials of Coast Development Authority during the official opening of the Mombasa International ASK Show.*

H.E Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua graced CDA stand during the official opening of the Mombasa International ASK Show and commended CDA for work well done in transforming communities' lives through adoption of climate smart initiatives in agriculture and trade.

The DP said economic growth and employment creation lies in sustainable utilization of natural resources. He urged CDA to intensify its efforts to address food insecurity and drought focusing on long and short-term measures that are sensitive to climate change and sustainable environment conservation.

CDA competed against private and public entities and won top position in the category of 'Best Organization in Community Projects. CDA put up a breathtaking display of ongoing and completed development programs in the region, a splendid display of value addition projects that attracted hordes of show-goers, including college and school students.

The Authority won two other awards – second best in Blue Economy Projects and third best Government Ministry Stand.

"We have prepared well for the show. My staff spent time here in the weeks before the show. We have to demonstrate to the public what we are doing to help boost food production and value addition to the crops, fish and livestock we produce," said Dr. Mohamed Keinan, CDA Managing Director.

The five-day event was a convergence point for showcasing technological innovation in agriculture, entrepreneurship and service delivery in line with the theme of the Show "Promoting Climate Smart Agriculture and Trade Initiatives for Sustainable Economic Growth". Judges were impressed by CDA stand which offered educative information on modern agriculture driven by simple technologies and climate smart agricultural practices.

CDA sponsored Maendeleo Dance Group who performed at the stand and the arena attracting throngs of people to the stand by singing and dancing Mijikenda/Swahili songs.

The authority also sponsored Mazeras Girls High School who composed a unique poem that captivated the audience with a unified performance and well-articulated CDA's achievements aligned with the Government's Agenda 'Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda ( BETA) during the official opening and also performed on Saturday when CDA Managing Director was appointed Chief Guest of the day.

Coast Development Authority participation in the 2023 Mombasa International ASK Show increased awareness of its programs and positioned the Authority as the ideal development wheel in the region.



*CDA Managing Director presenting projects implemented by the Authority to His Excellency Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua at CDA ASK stand.*

# CDA'S INNOVATION SHINES IN ZIMBABWE

Coast Development Authority triumphs once again in the African Public Service Day (APSD) event held on 21st to 23rd June 2023 in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

This year's African Union (AU) 9th APSD 2023 theme "The Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) will require A fit for purpose African Public Service administration to succeed" required the participating African Countries to enter into competitions through innovations that are aligned to the theme.

The innovation competition was based on categories below:

1. The Best Managed Organization Award
2. The Best Innovation in Citizen Centered Service Delivery Award
3. The Most Accountable and Transparent Organization Award

CDA's innovation 'Mangrove Restoration in Sandflats Desert' was declared 'Winner' in the 'Best Managed Organization Award' in a highly contested category. The innovation which was recognized to be contributing to the Africa Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) through carbon sinks and restoration of marine ecosystems and was proposed for replication in other areas in Kenya and the whole Africa Continent.



*CDA scoops an award during Africa Public Service Day celebrations organized by African Union in Zimbabwe.*

The CDA's Managing Director, Dr Mohamed Keinan Hassan, OGW, congratulated the team members 'Pamela Ngure, Beatrice Kavemba & Fredrick Mwabili for this achievement.

This continuous remarkable achievement of the organization is through the support of our State Department of the ASALS and Regional Development and parent Ministry of East African Community (EAC), the ASALS and Regional Development.

Also, we recognize the Adaptation Fund that had funded the 'Kenya Climate Change Adaptation Programme (KCCAP) through which CDA was able to undertake the mangrove restoration. The Authority implements its projects through participatory approach involving all relevant stakeholders especially benefiting communities and institutions.

During the APSD 2022 event held at KICC in Nairobi, Kenya; CDA was ranked 2nd position on their innovation 'Community Based E-Projects Monitoring and Knowledge Management System' that was innovated during the Covid-19 pandemic period to easy project monitoring.



*CDA team presenting during the adjudication on CDA's innovation 'Restoration of Mangroves in sand Flat Deserts using the Hydromodification Technology'.*



Group photo of CDA Board of Directors, Coast Regional Commissioner Ms. Rhoda Onyancha during a field visit to the Integrated Fruit Processing Plant (IFPP) in Tana River.



CDA Board of Directors inspecting mango pulp production at the IFPP in Tana River.



Group photo of the CDA Chairman and Managing Director at the Mombasa International ASK Show 2023.



Group photo of the CDA Managing Director, Director Mgandi Kalinga, DCS Pamela Ngure and the staff at the Mombasa International ASK Show 2023.

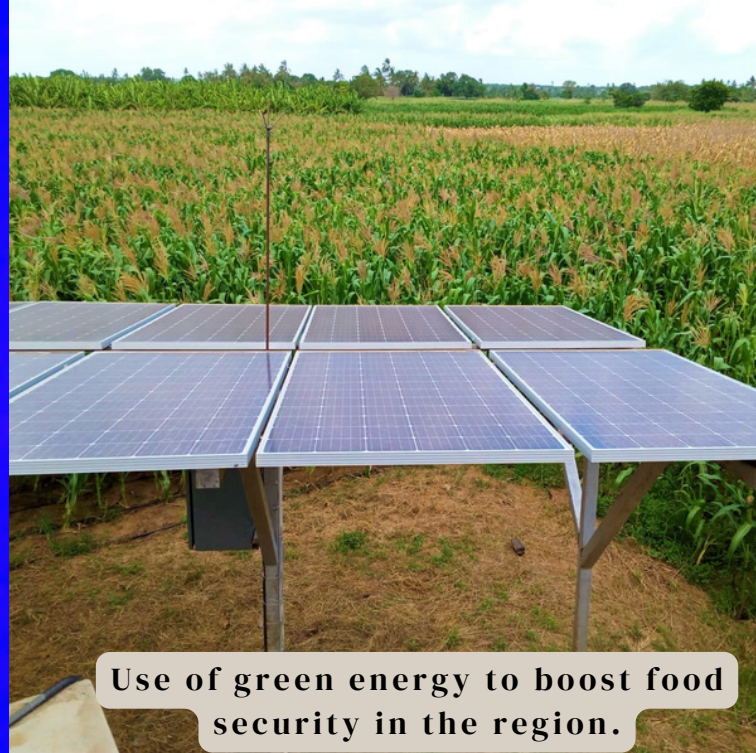


CDA Staff celebrating after scooping an award during the Africa Public Service Day held in Zimbabwe.

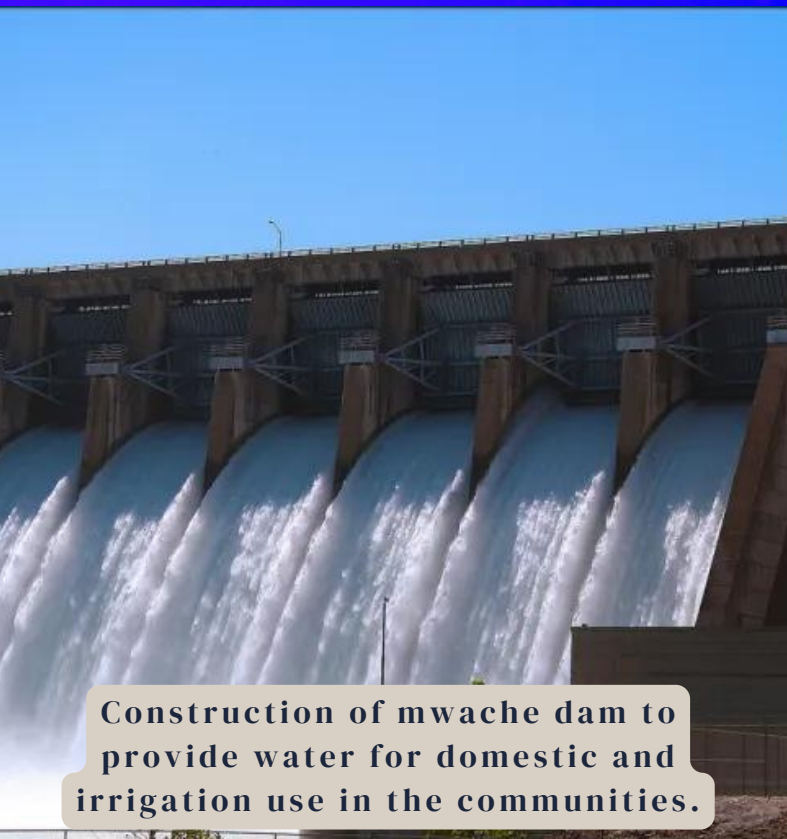




**Empowering communities plant trees for a greener future.**



**Use of green energy to boost food security in the region.**



**Construction of mwache dam to provide water for domestic and irrigation use in the communities.**



**Construction of water pans to ease the effects of climate change by providing water to the communities.**



**Reducing post harvest losses through value addition.**



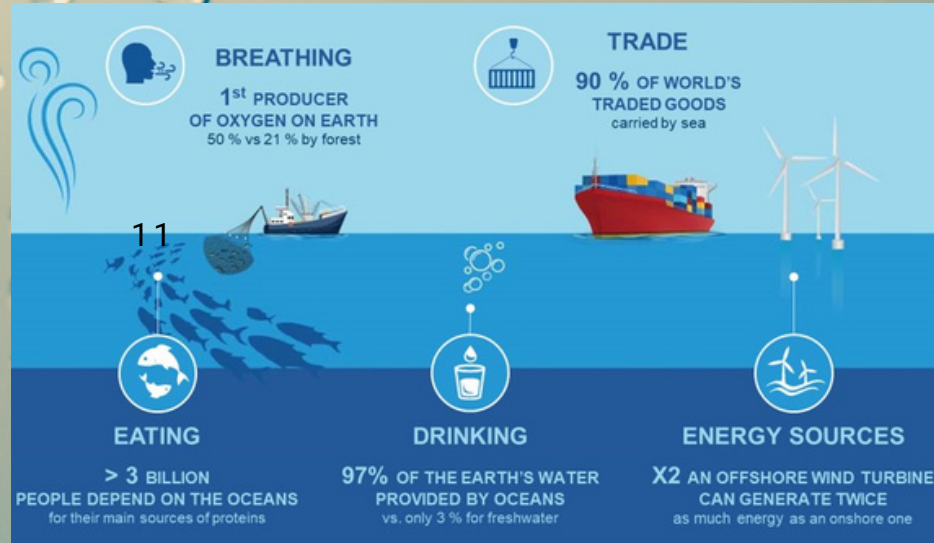
**Mangrove restoration using hydromodification technology**

# THE BLUE ECONOMY AND ITS VALUE

## BLUE ECONOMY AND ITS VALUE

The blue economy, also known as the sustainable ocean-based economy, encompasses the balanced utilization and preservation of coastal environments. Its definition varies among organizations, with the World Bank characterizing it as the responsible exploitation of ocean resources for economic growth, job creation, and ecosystem conservation. The United Nations perceives it as an array of sectors and policies determining the sustainability of ocean resource usage. The Centre for Blue Economy views it as the combined impact of oceans on economies, emphasizing environmental sustainability and the ocean's potential for growth in developed and developing nations.

The blue economy holds significant advantages, prompting its integration into the Global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Aligned with SDG 14, "Life below Water," this concept focuses on the sustainable management and preservation of oceans, seas, and marine resources. In line with Kenya's Vision 2030, President William Ruto identifies the blue economy as a pivotal factor for the nation's progress, foreseeing the potential for its contribution to triple the current GDP. Presently, the blue economy supports nearly 2 million livelihoods through fishing, trade, and shipping endeavors.



## DID YOU KNOW?



Coral reefs occupy less than  $\frac{1}{4}$  of 1% of the earth's marine environment, yet these thriving underwater ecosystems are home to 25% of the entire planet's marine life. Often referred to as the rainforests of the sea, their incredible species diversity rivals that of the mighty Amazon jungle and it is said that the number of fish species that live within just two acres of healthy coral reef is more than the total number of bird species in all of North America.



# TESTIMONIALS

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## MARAFI FARMERS FIND FORTUNE IN BEE KEEPING

The collaboration between the National Counter Terrorism Center (NCTC) and the Coast Development Authority (CDA) under the EU has been of great significance to the success of several Self- Help Groups in Kilifi County.

This collaboration has provided essential financial support to communities, enabling them to acquire modern equipments, improve infrastructure and implement sustainable practices towards a better livelihood. The Bore Climate Change group is one of the groups that has benefited from it.

In Marafa, a group of passionate individuals has come together to combat climate change while creating sustainable livelihoods. The group of twenty people formed the Bore Climate Change Group and partnered with Arsenal Football Club and successfully transformed acres of land into a thriving Forest now called 'Arsenal Forest' in Africa. With determination to create a sustainable livelihood, the group decided to venture into bee keeping where they received support from the CDA - NCTC livelihood programme. They received 40 modern beehives providing them with an opportunity to harness the potential of their growing forest.



Taking charge of their destiny, the group's coordinator Mr. Katana sought training in bee keeping from a renowned figure called Silvia Pirelli popularly known as "Mzungu wa Nyuki" in Malindi.

This mentor, whose name epitomizes his expertise in bee keeping, imparted valuable knowledge and insights to the group giving them hope and aspirations on thriving with bee keeping.

Through their passion and dedication, the Bore Climate Change Group has acquired extensive bee keeping skills. Their knowledge, coupled with their unwavering motivation, serves as a driving force behind their remarkable success. The group's members have invested countless hours in training and learning best practices, ensuring the highest quality honey production.





## CONT'

A month after the installation of the modern bee hives, bees started to swarm around the hives motivating Bore members that they are on the path to success. Each hive holds the promise of producing 20 liters of honey a testament to the profound impact the livelihood project of the CDA- NCTC collaboration is meant to have which can now be termed as “cash cow”.

Esther Karisa one of the group members said that, bee keeping has become more than just a business for them; it is a way of life. The skills they have acquired have motivated them to work harder each day, knowing that their efforts are making a positive impact on both their community and their environment.

The economic benefits are not just a dream anymore; they are on the horizon. The Bo Group has meticulously crafted a marketing strategy, paving the way for the honey to reach near and far markets. The sweet aroma of success now permeates the air, reminding the community that they are nurturing not just a cash cow, but also a sustainable source of income for future generations.

The group members have expressed their gratitude to the partnership between NCTC and CDA, under the EU. “It has empowered us, helped turn our dreams into reality and create a better future for ourselves and our families,” says Katana, Group Coordinator.

Today, the Bore Green Umbrella Self-Help Group's legacy shines brightly, demonstrating how unity, collaboration, and passion for nature can create a future where dreams take flight like bees pollinating flowers. Their journey in bee keeping, set within the Arsenal Forest of Marafa, Kilifi County, Kenya, showcases the power of community-driven initiatives in combating climate change while generating sustainable income. Their story inspires others to embrace change, nurture nature and unlock the true potential that lies within each of us.



# BOOSTING FOOD SECURITY WHILE COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE



Mama Nelly also known as Mama Mnavu from Chakama, Malindi relies on irrigation farming to earn a living and provide for her family daily needs.

Her farming methods emphasise on moisture retention, crop rotation and use of organic fertilisers. Nelly farms cabbage, maize, tomatoes, Okra, brinjals, Butternut and array of vegetables ( Mchicha, sukumawiki, Mnavu) which thrive very well on the farm.

She was inspired to venture into irrigation farming after successfully practicing rain-fed agriculture for a period of time, but when she desired to continue farming, sadly the rain season was over. Mama Nelly smiling as she harvests a bunch of spinach vegetables ready for sale to a customer in Chakama, Malindi.

## Mama Nelly harvest spinach ready for sale

Many buyers come from as far as Bamba, Malindi, Mariakani to buy fresh vegetables in bulk and sale in retail which is quickly bought within a short time. Her total sales emanating from sale of vegetables alone is Ksh. 5000 per day. With such kind of sustainable income she is able to meet her family basic needs and also expand her farming business successfully. "I cannot imagine how I would be earning income without irrigation." she says.

Coast Development Authority has identified small holder irrigation projects as a way to improve food security in the face of prolonged droughts and increasingly severe floods facing Coast region. The projects increase food security through supply water for irrigation farming, livestock production and domestic use, thereby build the community's resilience to climate change and improve their living standards. The Authority also capacity build farmers on good agricultural practices, catchment restoration activities, provide farm inputs, infrastructure development and help them form co-operatives to aid in marketing their produce.

She says drought and delayed rainfall has negatively affected her vegetable farming and it is upon this background, that she was motivated to venture into irrigation farming after realising there is a big demand fresh vegetables as people shift to healthy eating in many homesteads. "If there is food in the house, then everybody is happy. If there is no food in the house, then your husband is angry. No one is happy. To me food is happiness, and it is security." Says Nelly.



# PRIORITIZING MENTAL HEALTH AT WORK



In the modern workplace, mental health is a critical factor for both employees and businesses. The impact of stress and mental health challenges on productivity and overall well-being is significant, making it essential to create supportive work environments.

### Supportive Work Place

Employers can take proactive steps to nurture mental health in the workplace which include:

1. **Open Communication:** Foster a culture where employees feel comfortable discussing their mental health challenges without fear of stigma.
2. **Work – Life Balance:** Offer flexible schedules and time-off options to reduce burnout and stress.
3. **Mental Health Programs:** Provide access to resources like Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) and stress management workshops.
4. **Training:** Educate employees and managers on recognizing signs of mental health issues and providing support.
5. **Work load management:** Ensure that workloads are reasonable, preventing stress and burnout.

### Personal Responsibility

How employees can contribute to their own mental well-being:

- Self- Care: Prioritize self-care activities, including exercise, relaxation and adequate sleep.

- Set Boundaries: Maintain a work-life balance by avoiding excessive overtime and disconnecting when off the clock.
- Support network: Seek support from colleagues and friends when needed.
- Seeking Help: Don't hesitate to consult mental health professionals if issues persist.

### THE WIN-WIN

Promoting mental health at work benefits both employees and businesses. It enhances job satisfaction and productivity while reducing the costs associated with stress-related challenges. By fostering a culture of open communication, providing resources, and encouraging a work-life balance, workplaces can create a healthier and more resilient workforce. Employees, in turn, can prioritize self-care and seek help when necessary. Together, we can build workplaces where mental health is a central concern, leading to a more thriving and productive workforce.



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