Nakuru Small Holder Farmers Association (NASFA) Meeting Report

Venue: Agriculture Training Center

Date: 27th March 2019





NASFA is the acronym for Nakuru Small Holder Farmers' Association. Formed in 2015 with the vision of being the voice of small holder farmers in Nakuru County, the association has since engaged in various forums with stakeholders to bring to the fore issues affecting their members.

The one-day meeting was attended by 11 participants. NASFA officials included three executive committee members and representatives from Subukia, Njoro, Nakuru north and Kuresoi North and South Sub-Counties. A model farmer from Nakuru East sub-County and a youth representative were also present. The meeting was facilitated and financed by the Nakuru Irrigation Acceleration Platform (NIAP). The Nakuru IAP is supported by SNV through the Swart water for Agriculture program.

The objectives of the meeting were to:

1) Develop a draft 3-Year strategic plan for the association
2) Brainstorm on a Climate Smart Agriculture proposal in response to SNV call

The meeting began with a word of prayer at 9:30 am after which a brief session of introductions followed. Next participants shared their expectations. Members expected to deliberate on the way forward for the association, find a way of getting data on the groups and individual members of NASFA, define roles, activities and mobilize support for communication and movement of officials among others. All present engaged fully giving their ideas towards the strengthening of the association to achieve envisioned objectives and broaden their scope and impact.

Outcomes

1) Draft Strategy Content

The strategy drafting process started with a short PowerPoint presentation on Strategic planning process. The first session was dedicated to a critical appraisal of the association's progress. Key highlights included: a membership of over 6,000 small holder farmers spread throughout Nakuru County, a formal structure from grass root (ward level) to Sub-County and County level, recognition by state and non-state

stakeholders and good understanding of the agriculture sector. The two ongoing projects in partnership with Egerton University had enabled NASFA to support establishment of demonstration centers in 10 clusters. The Irrigation project is funded by SNV Kenya, while the potato project is funded by RUFORUM and MasterCard Foundation since 2017.

The participants collectively carried out an analysis of the political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal (PESTEL) context in which the association operated, prevailing changes and how the association needs to adjust to be in tandem. Thereafter, a SWOT – Strengths, weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis was done to critically evaluate its areas of ability and find out where partnerships would be beneficial to complement areas of weakness, existing opportunities and how to mitigate external risks. NASFA representatives identified financing of activities and communication as major challenges. The frequent elections and change of member group leaders made continuity of vision and activities difficult. The wide geographical span of some sub-counties made it difficult for members to attend meetings and activities.

Next Steps: Ann Kamande, the Rapportuer committed to prepare and send the 7-8 page draft strategy by Friday 29th March 2019. A working group consisting of Mwenja –Chairman, Karangathi - Secretary, Mercy – Member and Rahab – IAP Facilitator were tasked to review and finalize the document.

2) Draft Proposal

The afternoon session was used to develop the proposal outline for climate smart agriculture (CSA) project in response to a call from SNV and support NASFA's sustainability. NASFA members identified key issues on Climate change in the County, the competence and partnerships they have acquired in this area, activities that would enhance farmer knowledge, skills and attitudes on CSA. With the assistance of the facilitator, they identified priority areas of engagement as well as expected outcomes. It was agreed that the rapportuer would send the outline by Monday 1st April 2019 to Karangathi. He would work on the document and send to Chairman and Facilitator for review.

3) NASFA Board Meeting

It was agreed that there was need to hold an official NASFA board meeting as it had been awhile since the last one. Nakuru Irrigation platform was asked to provide support and the facilitator agreed. The agenda will include: presentation of the 2018 report, set up of the three sub-committees, filling the three vacant sub-County positions for Rongai, Nakuru East and West Sub Counties and review of the 2019 calendar of activities. Meanwhile it was agreed that Mr. Gathua, would represent Nakuru East as he has vast experience in organizing several field days and a member from Ndarugu CBO would represent Nakuru West Sub-County. The chairman will consult members on a suitable meeting date in April.

4) Access to Markets

The chairman reported that contracts for the long season at Kenya Defence Forces Factory were now closed. However, there is room to negotiate for next financial year starting 1st July 2019. Following the Njoro Canning Factory visit he and Nakuru IAP members were exploring how the market can be revived.

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