NAKURU IRRIGATION ACCELERATION PLATFORM (NIAP)

PARTNERS' FIELD DAY









Date: 8th March 2019

Venue: Elim Farm, Njokerio, Njoro Sub-County, Nakuru County

Submitted to: Nakuru IAP Partners

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1.0. Background

On 16th January Nakuru IAP and Seed Potato project partners met at Egerton University and agreed to hold a partners field day on 8th March at Elim Farm, Njoro. Elim farm was selected because it is a medium scale irrigated farm (6 acres) operating on commercial basis. It was easily access and close to Egerton University.

Partners agreed to plant demonstration plots for display and to each contribute KES 10,000 towards the field day. Lachlan Africa planted early maturing cabbages, capsicums and squash. Egerton University seed potato project planted nine (9) potato varieties from ADC molo and the seed unit planted millet and beans under irrigation. Elim farm committed to take care of the trials with support of the plot owners. The local County extension staff agreed to send out invitations to farmers from Njoro and to conduct on-farm training session during field day. The IAP was tasked to invite project partners – farmers, TVET institutions and exhibitors and plan the event.

A graduate intern – Ann Kamande was recruited to support the planning, implementation and reporting of the partner's field day. She was also tasked to support other activities such as the OCAT and case study trainings, project meetings and other assignments. Ann is master's student in Community Studies and Extension.

This report provides a highlight of the field day achievements, lessons and recommendations.

2.0. Overview of Partners' Field day

2.1 Venue

The field day was held on 8th March 2019 at Elim Farm, Njokerio. The farm is situated approximately 2km from the University main gate at Wright center. It is a 6 acre farm with well-established irrigation system with drip lines, huge tank and commercial water selling point. It specializes in growing cabbages, tomatoes, peas, spinach, kale and passion fruits. It has a piggery and fisheries unit and was setting up an orchard. The crops are sold at farm gate to merchants who then sell them in nearby shopping centers and markets.

2.2 Objectives

The objectives of the field day were to explore opportunities available for the acceleration of irrigated agriculture in Nakuru County by leveraging stakeholder partnerships in the agriculture sector. By bringing stakeholders together in such a forum was a way of creating synergy among actors, educating farmers on available technologies and how to ease the implementation of such technologies. This was expected to translate into adoption, leading to more and longer cropping cycles, increased yields, food sufficiency, wealth and employment creation, as well as rural

regeneration and development within the County. The IAP was also testing and refining the field day co-investment model. The event also celebrated the International Women's day.

2.3 Program

Guests and farmers were registered on arrival. Thereafter, they toured farm plots. The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Irrigation (MoALFI) staff form the Njoro office were stationed at the various plots to explain about the crops and answer any questions that farmers and students had concerning the crops in the field and other general questions. Egerton University students as well as private sector actors such as Lachlan Africa also assisted farmers in the field. Farmers and guests, then engaged with service providers at the exhibition stands that were displaying their irrigation technologies, inputs and services.

The second session was a sit down forum on irrigation and climate smart agriculture. It was opened by Prof. A. Kibe, Irrigation platform and seed potato projects coordinator. The County Meteorological Director gave a presentation on Climate change and Climate smart Agriculture. Next followed presentations by Sun Culture and Davis and Shirtliff on *Opportunities in Irrigated Agriculture*". Private sector input providers were represented by Lachlan Africa. The Njoro Sub-County Agriculture Officer made the official address and highlight the vast potential of harvesting and using water for agriculture in Nakuru County. The CEC Agriculture was held up in the international women's day event, but was in time to participate in the debrief session. Lunch and refreshments were served, after which guests departed at their own pleasure.

2.4 Participants

There were over 250 participants drawn from all levels of agriculture value chain. These included over 150 farmers drawn from within Njoro Sub-county as well as Potato and irrigation platform farmers from Mauche, Lare, Likia, Elburgon, Subukia, Solai and Gilgil. Project farmers were expected to cascade lessons to their members. There were 10 exhibitors each represented by 2-3 staff. Sixty students from Egerton University and Baraka Agricultural College attended as co-facilitators and co-learners. Nine members of staff from the MoALFI Njoro and County office were present as mobilizers, facilitators of the learning process, invited guests and project staff.

2.5 Exhibitors

There were 10 exhibitors during the field day. Those providing various irrigation technologies included Eunidrip which sells and installs drip systems, Sun Culture who sell and advocate for

solar water pumping systems and Davis and Shirtliff who offer a wide array of services including water abstraction and purification technologies, pumping and drip irrigation systems.






KEPHIS was on hand as an advocate of the use of certified seed to ensure higher productivity of crops. Private sector suppliers of seed, fertilizer and agrochemical were: Syngenta, Lachlan Africa and Hangzhou. Egerton University Sacco was present as a financier while National Potato Council of Kenya (NPCK) came as a market linkage facilitator for those in the potato value chain. NPCK also educated farmers on the importance of diversification of planted potato varieties to meet market demands. TAGDev students exhibited value added products from the potato value chain and demonstrated how local youth can create employment through value addition. They also encouraged farmers to consider growing varieties that are required by processors to improve the market potential of their crop.

3.0. Results

3.1. Achievements

We surpassed our target of 200 participants. Over 250 farmers, exhibitors, students, ministry staff and other stakeholders attended the event. Farmers and students were educated on various crops and their husbandry practices, climate change and available technologies they can use. Farmers' questions on husbandry, pest and disease management were answered by the Agriculture Ministry staff. Officials of farmer associations were present and urged farmers to join so as to have a collective voice in policy making and lobbying for better prices of farm produce.

NPCK educated farmers on the many varieties of potato available for production and the benefit of diversifying by planting processing varieties such as Unica and Dutch Robijn. Illustrations were provided for farmers to see the benefit accruable through value addition Vis a Vis attempting to market produce during a glut. The importance of planting certified seed was emphasized by KEPHIS as a means of reducing the incidence of disease on farmer fields, hence reducing production cost as well as the high yield potential of the same.

Various exhibitors showcased their products and services and established linkages with farmers who are their customers. The establishment of direct relationships ensures that farmers can get high quality products and improve their production while industries improve their bottom line. Information on government services available to farmers such as the current farmer e-registration for input subsidy and extension service delivery was also disseminated. Farmers also registered on a sheet provided by the ministry for follow-up purposes. Two partners planted demonstration crops and seven exhibitors each contributed KES 10,000 towards the field day costs.

Both participants and exhibitors were satisfied with the event. Exhibitors reported having been satisfied with the turn out for the field day. They were pleased with the farmers' eagerness to learn and their engaging attitude. Farmers were pleased with the opportunity to engage with all actors along the value chain and learn about the possibilities in terms of livelihood improvement through crop diversification and irrigation. Students said, they had learnt a lot from the farm tour, exhibition stands, speeches and interactions with various value chain actors.







3. 2 Challenges

The management of the demo plots was not to the expected standard as the farmer was busy with his regular crops. In future it was proposed that the Ministry extension staff can assist in supervising farm employees. The field day was conducted on the farm which made it difficult to set up for the exhibitors on uneven ground, but the exhibitors were very accommodating. The suppliers of tents and exhibition tables were late in setting up. Fortunately, the program started with the farm tour and the Ministry staff were on hand to receive participants. Due to late confirmation by some exhibitors, budgeting not was fluid until the last week. Two exhibitors arrived for the field day without booking.

3.3 Lessons

This model of field day that included actual planting of demo crops, farm tour, education sessions and a market place is a sustainable and useful learning platform. Each value chain actor was able to play their strategic role and contribute their expertise and resources. Mobilizing farmers using

the ward agricultural officer proved effective and secured the support of the ministry office in the execution of the field day. This kind of collaboration should be fostered for more fruitful outcomes. Farmers are willing learners and turned out in larger numbers than planned.

More local on-farm learning opportunities should be availed. Although the primary focus of the field day was irrigation acceleration, farmers got a wide array of information on various topics. This approach was effective in retaining their numbers and interest to end of day. For future field days, the plan should accommodate more numbers in budget ahead of time. If budgets allow, one supplier can be used for whole event to ensure efficient delivery of materials.

4.0 Way Forward

In order to spur more interest and investment in irrigated farming, it was proposed that farmers need to be supported to visit other model irrigation farms. The CEC agriculture committed to provide a bus for a farmer's exchange visit to a 50 acre commercial irrigated farm in Mayela, Naivasha. The Njoro SCAO and Irrigation platform facilitator were tasked to organize the visit and inform her. Farmer to farmer learning can then multiply information to larger groups. The County Irrigation Officer committed to support groups that need expertise to install water dams, ponds and irrigation systems. The CEC explained about the youth agribusiness platform and invited youth to join it. Egerton under graduate students seeking internship were also urged to apply to the County. The Irrigation acceleration platform members agreed to continue pushing the agenda to the fore within the County.

5.0 Expenses

The budget of KES 106,000 was contributed by the Nakuru Irrigation platform (KES 36,000) and seven exhibitors (KES 70,000) who committed to make payment. By the start of the field day, one exhibitor had paid, two paid cash during the event and four promised to pay after the event. As at the time of writing this report, the project team was following up on the four payments.

6.0 Annexes

6.1. Participants list

The participants' list is not attached.

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