

TARDA NEWS

TANA AND ATHI RIVERS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

MINISTRY OF EAC, THE ASALS, AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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HIGHLIGHTS



...transformation of key value chains in agriculture-
tea, coffee, rice, sugar, dairy, horticulture, nuts,...



...TARDA partners with
Office of the First Lady...

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Strengthening Kenya's Rice Value Chain: Progress Under The BETA Agenda

TARDA is privileged to have been represented by our Managing Director Mr. Liban Roba at a midterm review meeting chaired by H.E. Deputy President Kindiki Kithure that was convened on 14th May 2025 to assess progress on the transformation of key value chains in agriculture- tea, coffee, rice, sugar, dairy, horticulture, nuts, cotton and edible oils, for food security and economic empowerment under the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA).

Rice production is a vital pillar under the BETA "Reduce Imports" agenda, and Kenya's per capita rice consumption has more than doubled in the past decade, rising from 12kg in 2016 to 28kg in 2022, with demand continuing to grow. Yet local production currently meets less than 20% of total consumption — the rest is met through imports.

To reverse this trend, the Government targets an expansion of rice acreage from the current 77,000 acres to over 806,000 acres by 2027 — through a mix of irrigation, upland, and lowland systems.

At TARDA, we are contributing to this national effort through the revitalization and commercialization of the Tana Delta Irrigation Project (TDIP). 500 acres under rice yielded 1,375 tons in the most recent season (Dec 2024 – Mar 2025), and expansion to 1,225 acres is underway. Our forward plan is ambitious — leveraging Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) to develop 17,300 acres under commercial rice cultivation, expected to produce over 71,000 metric tonnes of milled rice annually. This will directly support food security, create over 15,000 jobs, and improve livelihoods across 17 rural villages in the Lower Tana.

The TDIP Rice Program aligns with Vision 2030, MTP IV, the BETA Agenda, and the National Rice Development Strategy II (2019–2030) — all of which recognize rice as a strategic food crop. It is also our contribution to #SDG2 (Zero Hunger), #SDG8 (Decent Work), and #SDG9 (Industry & Infrastructure).

As TARDA, we remain committed to working with national and county governments, the private sector, and development partners to unlock Kenya's rice potential and reduce our reliance on imports.

TARDA partners with the office of the first lady to advance fruit tree seedling initiative under presidential directive

On May 5th 2025, TARDA, under the leadership of our Managing Director Mr. Liban Roba Duba, was honoured to launch a transformative collaboration with the Office of the First Lady Kenya under the MaMa Doing Good, led by Mr. Arnold Kipchumba.

This partnership aims to scale up the production and distribution of fruit tree seedlings across the country—aligning directly with H.E. President William Ruto's directive to plant 15 billion trees, including 5 billion fruit trees, as a dual strategy to increase Kenya's forest cover to 30% and strengthen food security. *(Continues in the Next Page)*



Fruit trees offer a unique solution that sits at the intersection of climate action, economic empowerment, and household resilience. Through this initiative, TARDA is taking decisive steps to:

1. *Expand access to quality fruit tree seedlings*
2. *Restore degraded landscapes using productive species*
3. *Boost household income and food supply*
4. *Strengthen community resilience to climate change*

TARDA is committed to driving this agenda—not only as an implementing agency, but as a dedicated partner in Kenya’s green and inclusive transformation.

We sincerely thank Her Excellency the First Lady and her team for their visionary leadership and shared dedication to uplifting communities across Kenya.

This is how we grow a greener, stronger, and more food-secure Kenya—seed by seed, step by step.

Coordinated Dam Safety Action As Tarda Joins Government Agencies In Responding To Rising Inflows

TARDA Managing Director Mr, Liban Roba on 16th May 2025 represented the Principal Secretary, ASALs and Regional Development, Mr. Harsama Kello at a joint press briefing held at Masinga Dam alongside PS Energy, Mr. Alex Wachira, and KenGen CEO, Eng. Peter Njenga.

With the heavy inflows being experienced at the time from the upper Tana catchment, Masinga and Kiambere Dams—critical components of the Seven Forks hydropower and water regulation system—had exceed their full supply levels and were spilling.



As of 15/05/2025;

- **Masinga Dam (1057.16 masl) was spilling through its side channel free overflow crest, designed to safely handle floods up to a 100-year return period.**

- **Kiambere Dam (700.30 masl) was spilling through its gated spillway, ensuring controlled flow releases downstream.**

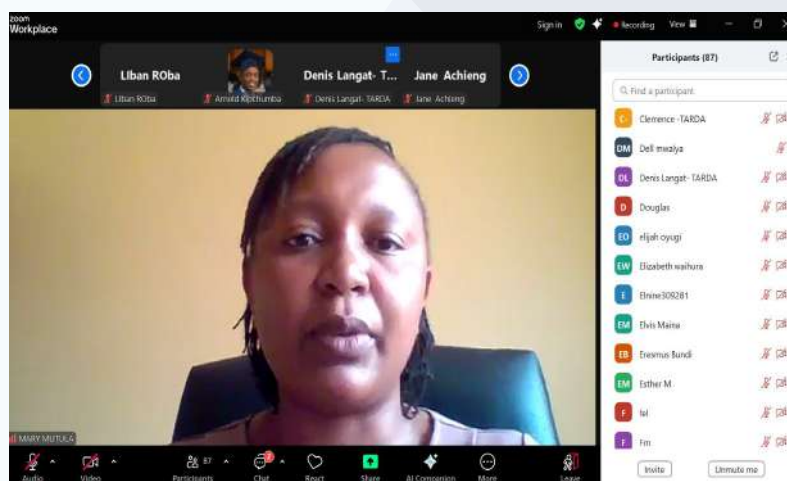
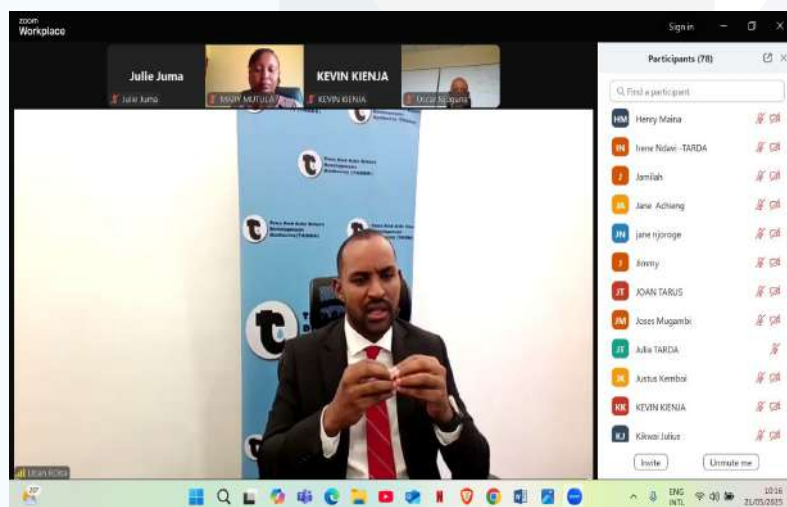


These structural responses are part of the engineered safety systems built into both reservoirs to manage floodwaters, safeguard infrastructure, and sustain regulated water supply and energy generation. These spillages are not emergencies—they are part of planned, engineered safety protocols to manage excess inflows due to persistent rains in the Upper Tana catchment, and they require coordinated action to protect downstream communities. This event is a critical reminder of the importance of coordinated, multi-agency preparedness and response.

As TARDA, our role in basin-based resource management and early warning coordination is more crucial than ever. We will continue to work closely with the relevant agencies and local communities to monitor the situation and mitigate potential risks.

We continue to urge residents in downstream areas to remain alert and follow guidance from official government channels.

Highlights From The May Edition Of The #developmentdialogues



TARDA was honoured to host the 3rd Edition of the #DevelopmentDialogues—a convening space for bold conversations and practical solutions toward integrated, climate-smart, and community-driven development within the Tana and Athi River Basins.

Our Managing Director, Mr. Liban Roba, who was also a panelist opened the session by framing the urgency of the challenges we face—climate change, deforestation, population growth, and the need to perceive water as a vital, finite resource that must be managed holistically from source to discharge.

The Ministry of Water and Sanitation through Eng. Chemeril emphasized key reforms, including the Water (Amendment) Act 2024, which strengthens basin-level governance and introduces critical shifts such as micro-irrigation and small-scale water storage to address both food security and climate variability.

We were especially proud to have TARDA Board Director and Water Engineer, Mr. Robinson Gaita, deliver remarks calling for the establishment of a standing forum on climate finance—a space where institutions can work to make projects bankable to international standards and attract scalable investments.

Key highlights included:

Oscar Njuguna from Equity Bank Kenya underscoring the importance of de-risking climate finance and supporting local economies around water resources.

Mary Mutula from Tuboreshe Pamoja championing gender-responsive solutions—from improving water quality and household access to ensuring women's representation in governance and safer water access points.

Arnold Kipchumba from MaMa Doing Good, urging greater youth participation in climate planning and innovation, with emphasis on skilling and embedding young people in policy and budgeting frameworks. These discussions reaffirmed what we at TARDA deeply believe—climate resilience begins at the community level, and long-term impact requires inclusive, basin-based collaboration.

We thank all our speakers, partners, and participants who contributed to this dynamic conversation. As we look ahead, TARDA remains committed to championing integrated water resource development, climate adaptation, and food security across our mandate areas.

Tarda Named Key Partner In Presidential 5,000 Fruit Tree Seedling Drive



This announcement was made as TARDA collaborated with the Office of the First Lady Kenya – MaMa Doing Good, the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change & Forestry,, Kenya Forest Service, and the local community for a tree planting programme at Corner Baridi, Ngong Hills, where 3,000 acacia tree seedlings were planted in a spirited effort to restore our natural heritage.

TARDA was represented by the Tana Basin Regional Coordinator, with the Authority recognized for its sustained commitment to climate action, catchment conservation, and national food security.

During the event, TARDA was requested to facilitate the delivery of 5,000 assorted fruit tree seedlings to State House Kenya, an initiative that will support the establishment of a Presidential Garden and bolster greening efforts in schools across the country—a significant step towards institutionalizing climate action and environmental stewardship at the highest level.

This collaboration is another bold step toward achieving the goals of the National Landscape and Ecosystem Restoration Strategy, in line with Kenya's climate resilience ambitions and the global call for nature-based solutions.

TARDA remains steadfast in our mandate to conserve our vital river basins and ensure sustainable livelihoods for generations to come.

Innovating Water And Development: TARDA Joins UoN Innovation Fellowship 3rd Cohort



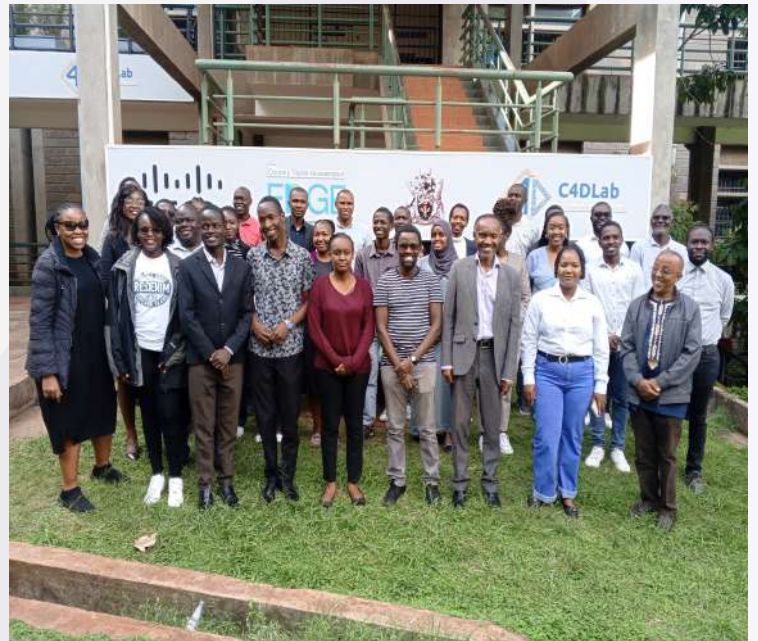
TARDA is proud to be part of the 3rd Cohort of the University of Nairobi C4DLab Innovation Fellowship as a Client Partner. The official launch held on 30th April 2025 of the Fellowship marks a bold step forward in bridging the gap between knowledge and impact — and we're excited to collaborate in shaping practical solutions for the challenges facing our region. The TARDA Team were received by Dr. Sam Ruhiu who will head the Fellowship. Over the next several months, TARDA will work alongside a dynamic team of multi-disciplinary fellows from the University of Nairobi, bringing together minds from engineering, design, development studies, and tech. Working together to tackle real-world challenges drawn from TARDA's mandate— particularly around sustainable water resource management, climate adaptation, and community-centred development.

Our participation in this Fellowship is more than a partnership. It is a statement of belief in the power of Kenyan youth, in the strength of public-academic collaboration, and in the urgency of co-creating practical, scalable innovations that speak to the lived realities of the communities we serve.

This Fellowship is hosted under the SID Industry Project with support from the AFRETEC Project and is anchored on Human-Centered Design and Challenge-Based Learning. It's an opportunity for reflection, imagination, and rethinking the future — together.

At TARDA, we believe the solutions to our region's toughest challenges lie not in isolation, but in innovation rooted in empathy, data, and shared purpose.

We look forward to a powerful of learning, co-creation, and impact.



Shaping Solutions For Kenya's River Basins!



On 16th May 2025 TARDA had the pleasure of joining a high-energy client briefing session at the C4DLab with the University of Nairobi Innovation Fellows.

Now entering Week 2 of the 3-month fellowship, the fellows are tasked with co-creating evidence-based, scalable solutions that respond to real needs on the ground. We're not just imagining a better future—we're engineering it.

We presented some of the most urgent climate-related challenges confronting the Tana and Athi River Basins today—challenges that are not theoretical but real, immediate, and unfolding around us: flooding, drought, water scarcity, and the strain on basin ecosystems and infrastructure.

The Innovation Fellowship couldn't have come at a more critical time. With widespread rains being experienced across the country, the need for data-driven, context-aware and scalable innovations has never been more evident. These Fellows are not just participating in an academic exercise—they are co-creating practical responses to climate shocks affecting millions.

We're excited to see where innovation, data, and collaboration can take us!



Towards A Plastic-free Future: TARDA ENGAGES IN WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY 2025 PLANNING



Through our Athi Basin Regional Office the TARDA on 29th April 2025 participated in the Machakos County Government planning meeting for World Environment Day 2025, reaffirming our commitment to collaborative environmental action.

This year's global theme — "Ending Plastic Pollution" — aligns with our shared responsibility to address one of the most pressing environmental challenges of our time. During the session, stakeholders reviewed the 2024 celebrations and identified key lessons to strengthen this year's event.

We are pleased to support the decision to host the 2025 World Environment Day (observed every year on 5th June) at Athi River Market, one of the region's most affected areas by plastic waste. The selected site offers a powerful platform for impactful action and community engagement.

Proposed activities include:

- **Market clean-up**
- **Tree planting**
- **Awareness creation**
- **Recognition of Environment Champions**

As an Authority, TARDA remains committed to environmental stewardship through strategic partnerships that empower local communities and promote sustainable ecosystems.

We look forward to playing an active role in this year's celebration — and in building momentum for a cleaner, greener future for all.



Trees For Rivers, Action For Climate

Activities Ahead Of World Environment Day In Top Gear

On 6th May 2025, TARDA was honoured to take part in a collaborative tree planting activity organized by the Machakos County Government at Crystal Rivers.

Together with fellow members of the County Environmental Planning Committee, we planted over 200 trees along the banks of the Athi River—a shared effort to protect and restore one of the region's key water resources.

This exercise marks the start of a series of build-up activities leading to World Environment Day on June 5th. It also aligns with broader county and national goals of enhancing tree cover, rehabilitating degraded ecosystems, and promoting environmental responsibility across all sectors.

As the agency charged with integrated natural resource management in the Tana and Athi River Basins, TARDA values such multi-stakeholder efforts that turn environmental plans into visible, impactful action on the ground.

We commend the leadership of Machakos County, particularly the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, for driving local solutions to global challenges. We remain committed to playing our part in sustainable watershed management—because restoring our rivers begins with the choices we make today.

Tarda Joins Lukenya University For Community Engagement On Environmental Conservation

On 2nd May 2025, TARDA joined Lukenya University and other government department stakeholders for a community engagement meeting focused on environmental conservation and the empowerment of local communities and CBOs.

The training emphasized the vital roles ecosystems play in sustaining life on Earth, including their ability to regulate the water cycle, prevent soil erosion, enhance air quality, purify the air, combat climate change, protect flood zones, and reduce water pollution. The training also highlighted the importance of providing food, protecting land, encouraging biodiversity and habitat preservation, and promoting water conservation.

As part of its commitment to environmental sustainability, TARDA entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on environmental conservation for the 2024/25 financial year. Through this partnership, TARDA donated 50,000 assorted tree seedlings, contributing to the planting of over 500,000 trees, with an impressive 89% survival rate.





Looking ahead, TARDA is excited to strengthen this collaboration in the upcoming 2025/26 financial year, with a 5-year plan focused on conserving the River Athi Riparian zones. The new phase will also emphasize community and CBO sensitization on tree nursery establishment and management, while incorporating sustainable practices and water conservation efforts.

The community engagement programme culminated in a tree planting initiative along the River Athi Riparian zones. The second phase of

the MOU between TARDA and Lukenya University will also address fruit tree production in community tree nurseries, furthering the goal of environmental sustainability and community empowerment. Meaningful steps are being taken toward a greener and more sustainable future.

Empowering Community-based Development In Meru



TARDA is honoured to have joined forces with Micro and Small Enterprises Authority - MSEA, the County Government of Meru, Ministry of Agriculture, PWD Microfinance Meru, and a powerhouse of women farmers for a high-impact engagement with Usawa CBO in Kathigu, Imenti — a group leading the way in fish farming, beekeeping, dairy, and tree nurseries.



Fresh from presenting TARDA's Strategic Plan 2025–2027 to Meru's top leadership, our mission on the ground was clear: turn community effort into sustainable, income-generating enterprise.

Representing TARDA, Mr. Joses Mugambi emphasized the urgent need for:

Value addition training – starting with banana processing & honey refinement

Tree nursery excellence – to scale climate-smart forestry

Access to catalytic financing – via the Youth Fund, Women Fund, and NYOTA grants

With the right support, Kathigu holds the potential to host its own cottage industry.

Monthly follow-ups are now scheduled to

fast-track formalization, unlock targeted support, and build a resilient local economy from the ground up.

This is development where it matters. This is TARDA in action.

Machakos Goes Green: Rooting Our Commitment To Conservation



TARDA was honoured to participate in the launch of the Machakos Goes Green Campaign ON 21st May 2025 at Komaranch Primary School—an initiative that powerfully echoes our mandate to conserve, restore, and sustainably manage the ecosystems of the Tana and Athi River Basins. In collaboration with other stakeholders— Kenya Forest Service, WE FLARE, SeedballsKenya Tuboreshe Pamoja and Women for Women Empowerment—we planted 500 tree seedlings, marking the first milestone toward a bold target of 20,000 trees. This tree-planting activity also coincided meaningfully with the

International Day for Biodiversity, whose 2025 theme is “Harmony with Nature and Sustainable Development.” It is a timely reminder that forest restoration is not just an act of greening landscapes—it is an investment in water security, biodiversity, food systems, and the resilience of our communities.

As the agency tasked with integrated basin-based development, TARDA recognises the central role healthy ecosystems play in sustaining river flows, regulating climate, and safeguarding livelihoods. Forests are the lungs of our watersheds and the guardians of our future.

We applaud the school community and our partners for their active involvement in this greening mission. Through such collective action, we continue to turn policy into impact—one tree at a time.

Transforming Land, Securing Kenya's Future

Led by our Managing Director, Mr. Liban Roba, TARDA was honoured to host the IFC - International Finance Corporation team on 27th May 2025 led by Hans Shrader, in a strategic meeting to discuss the progress of the Land Commercialization Initiative (LCI)—a bold, government-led effort to unlock Kenya's agricultural potential through private investment. The LCI, implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and supported by IFC, seeks to convert underutilized public land into high-impact agricultural hubs. TARDA is proud to contribute to this national agenda by making select parcels at Kiambere and Masinga available for large-scale, sustainable farming.

Kiambere 1,000 acres

Kiambere 2,045 acres

Masinga 500 acres

This initiative aligns with Kenya's Vision 2030 and the Agricultural Sector Growth and Transformation Strategy (ASTGS), targeting:

Over KSh 65 billion in private investment

Creation of 1.1 million jobs

Boosting food security and agro-industrial growth

At TARDA, we remain committed to ensuring that public assets are harnessed for national development, food security, and economic empowerment.



TARDA team with Representatives from IFC



Strengthening Livelihoods Through Irrigation: Community Engagement At Kibarabari



On 30th May 2025 TARDA conducted a community engagement exercise at the Kibarabari Smallholder Irrigation Project in Kandara Constituency, accompanied by area administration personnel and local leaders. This impactful initiative covers 431 acres and is set to benefit over 1,500 residents directly and indirectly.

The visit provided an opportunity to interact with beneficiary communities, assess progress, and reaffirm TARDA's commitment to inclusive and community-driven development. progress possible.

Highlights of the project include:

- *Rehabilitation and elevation of the intake weir, now fully operational*
- *Installation of a 1.6km pipeline with 160mm and 110mm mains*
- *Functional air valve systems and stable water pressure*
- *Water reaching farms and households along the pipeline stretch*
- *The project exemplifies TARDA's mandate to harness water resources for sustainable agriculture, economic empowerment, and food security across the Tana and Athi River Basins.*

We thank the area administration and all stakeholders for their collaboration in making this



Accelerating Sustainable Water Access, One Conversation At A Time



On May 8th 2025, TARDA participated in the Water, Sanitation & Irrigation Conference hosted by the Ministry of Water, Sanitation and Irrigation in Nairobi. This strategic forum brings together key players from government, development partners, private sector and financiers to chart a sustainable path forward for water, sanitation, and irrigation in Kenya.

With Ksh. 995 billion needed to achieve universal access, the spotlight is on innovative financing—through Government funding, donor support, commercial lending, and Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs). Currently, Kenya stands at 73% water coverage, 69% improved sanitation, and only 22% of its irrigation potential developed.

TARDA is proud to contribute to the discussions shaping the sector's future—because access to water is not just a basic right; it's the foundation of economic growth, health, and resilience.

#END