



Tana and Athi Rivers Development Authority (TARDA)

TARDA NEWS

TANA AND ATHI RIVERS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MINISTRY OF EAC, THE ASALS, AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE NO. 23
JUNE 2025
HIGHLIGHTS

Field To Nation: Reclaiming Food Sovereignty In The Tana Delta



Snippet:

TARDA is honoured to have hosted Chief of Staff and Head of Public Service Mr. Felix Koskei EGH, to the heart of Kenya’s most ambitious public irrigation project — the Tana Delta Irrigation Project (TDIP) on 27th June 2025

In other news...

TARDA joined national World Environment Day celebrations on 5th June at Tharaka University under the theme “Ending Plastic Pollution.”



TARDA Joins Climate Reality Leadership Training In Nairobi



Head of Public Service Mr. Felix Koskei EGH in TDIP



TARDA is honoured to have hosted Chief of Staff and Head of Public Service Mr. Felix Koskei EGH, to the heart of Kenya's most ambitious public irrigation project — the Tana Delta Irrigation Project (TDIP) on 27th June 2025. The Chief of Staff was accompanied by P.S. State Department for ASALs and Regional Development Mr. Kello Harsama and P.S. State Department for Irrigation Mr. Ephantus Kimotho. They were received by TARDA Managing Director, Mr. Liban Roba, leadership from Agri All Africa as well as area Administration Officials.

This visit marked a timely opportunity to spotlight TDIP's growing role in advancing the Government's Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) — particularly in scaling up local rice production, improving rural livelihoods & strengthening climate-smart irrigation systems. Kenya produces about 180,000 metric tonnes of milled rice per annum; this is against a national consumption estimated at 650,000 metric tonnes per annum. According to the National Rice Development Strategy 2019-2030, the annual consumption of rice is increasing at a rate of 12%, when coupled with an estimated population growth of 2.7%. It is expected that the country will need an estimated 1,290,000 tonnes by 2030.

The success of TDIP is therefore very crucial in improving the food security level of the country contributing to achieving the government's objectives as set out in Vision 2030, the BETA Agenda as well as UN Sustainable Development Goals, and demonstrates how targeted investment in water infrastructure and land productivity can directly support national food security.

We are grateful for the high-level recognition and remain committed to scaling basin-based agricultural development for sustainable growth across the Tana River Delta and beyond.

World Environment Day 2025



TARDA joined national World Environment Day celebrations on 5th June at Tharaka University under the theme "Ending Plastic Pollution." The event, graced by Cabinet Secretary Dr. Deborah M. Barasa and Governor Muthomi Njuki, brought together key government agencies and stakeholders in a united call for environmental protection. Key Highlights for the celebration were:

- 16,000+ tree seedlings planted in Gautwa Wetland (2,000), Kiili Hills (12,000), and Tharaka University (5,000) under TARDA's Catchment Conservation Programme.
- Pre-event activities included clean-ups, plastic collection drives, tree planting, school quizzes, and environmental dialogues across Tharaka Nithi County.
- Field visits showcased ongoing

conservation in Chuka Igamba Ng'ombe and community-led wetland restoration in Tunyai.

• TARDA donated trophies and medals, and its technical team, led by Mr. Leonard Muchiri, took part in the celebrations.

- TARDA was recognized for supporting eco-friendly apiculture, with a live demo on plastic-free beekeeping by Erasmus Bundi.
- These efforts reaffirm TARDA's commitment to climate action, sustainable watershed management, and community-led solutions.

In Machakos County, celebrations at Mavoko Market were graced by Deputy Governor Hon. Francis Mwangangi, who emphasized cross-sector collaboration and community action. The celebrations took place in Athi River Subcounty at Mavoko Market, bringing together partners committed to reversing plastic waste pollution and promoting sustainable living. His call to action emphasized the need for stronger cross-sector collaboration and greater community participation in addressing the plastic menace threatening our ecosystems and water resources. During the event, TARDA was honoured with a recognition certificate for its steadfast commitment to environmental conservation efforts across Machakos County.



TARDA Joins Climate Reality Leadership Training In Nairobi

As a lead agency in basin-based development, TARDA participated in the Climate Reality Project Leadership Training held from 12-14th June 2025. This high-impact three-day convening brings together change-makers from across the region to strengthen climate knowledge, amplify local solutions, and equip participants with advocacy tools to drive meaningful environmental action.



Highlights included:

- Inspiring opening sessions on bold climate leadership in Kenya and East Africa.
- A deep dive into global climate science led by former U.S. Vice President Al Gore.
- Strategic talks on climate finance, green industrialization, and resilience.
- Hands-on workshops on capacity building, storytelling, and action tools.

The training affirmed the Authority's commitment to integrating climate resilience, ecosystem restoration, and sustainable innovation in all its programs, also enhances TARDA's resolve to strengthen early warning systems, restore degraded ecosystems, and support communities in building adaptive capacity.

Dryland Agriculture Conference



TARDA was part of a two-day event on 17th and 18th of June for the Dryland Agriculture Conference. The event brought together key stakeholders, including the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, agricultural experts, scholars, farmers, students, and other partners. Vital discussions were held on crops, livestock, soil health, nutrition, gender inclusion, technology, and community engagement. Director of Resource Planning and Development at TARDA, Irene Ndavi, shared key insights on integrating regenerative

agriculture into dryland farming systems informed by over 20 years of hands-on experience in: Catchment restoration, Agroforestry, Sustainable land management.

As an Authority, we're actively restoring ecosystems and transforming livelihoods across a vast 138,000 km² region—home to over 20 million Kenyans across 19 counties. Our work shows that regenerative agriculture is not just theory—it is practical, scalable, and urgently necessary.

Over the past two years we've been turning that vision into action through:

1. 2 million+ tree seedlings planted across 7 counties
2. 42,000 fruit trees for agroforestry distributed
3. 3 smallholder irrigation schemes supporting over 2,300 households
4. 6 solar-powered boreholes serving 10,000+ traders and 5,900 livestock
5. 1,300 acres rehabilitated in the Tana Delta Irrigation Project, yielding 1,375MT of rice
6. Farmers trained in sustainable land use, fodder production and beekeeping

....and so many more initiatives...

These aren't just numbers—they represent restored dignity, economic opportunity, and resilience in the face of climate volatility.

TARDA remains committed to building climate-resilient food systems grounded in regenerative practices, especially in the dryland regions that need it most.



Irene Ndavi

Director, Resource Planning and Development,
Tana and Athi Rivers Development Authority (TARDA)

Irene Ndavi is a distinguished development strategist and environmental planner with over two decades of experience in sustainable agriculture, catchment management, and integrated resource planning. Currently serving as the Director of Resource

Planning and Development at the Tana and Athi Rivers Development Authority (TARDA), Irene has been instrumental in shaping and implementing regional strategies that enhance community resilience, food security, and environmental restoration.

Her expertise lies at the intersection of policy, science, and community action—driving practical solutions in agroforestry, water resource management, and regenerative agriculture across Kenya's critical ecosystems. Irene's leadership has been central to the Authority's efforts in rehabilitating degraded river basins and aligning regional development with national adaptation priorities.

From spearheading feasibility studies and resource mobilization initiatives to guiding transformative agricultural projects in dryland regions, Irene brings a rare blend of technical depth and visionary leadership. Her voice on this panel—under the sub-theme "Exploring Practical Approaches To Integrate Regenerative Agriculture Into Existing Farming Systems"—will be shaped by years of first-hand engagement with vulnerable communities, policy institutions, and environmental science.

A respected voice in government and development circles, Irene Ndavi continues to champion inclusive, evidence-driven approaches to restore ecosystems for climate-resilient food production in Kenya and beyond.

Bridging Innovation And River Basin Resilience...

The Authority was honored to have hosted University of Nairobi C4DLab Innovation Fellows a dynamic team of young professionals focused on developing technology-driven and community-rooted solutions for climate adaptation. In the session, held on 23rd June 2025 at TARDA's Headquarters, Managing Director, Mr. Liban Roba, shared a briefing on the Authority's broad mandate from integrated river basin development and sustainable water management to catchment restoration and food security initiatives across 19 counties. He also highlighted key challenges:

- *Increasing severity of floods and droughts in the Tana and Athi basins.*
- *A widening gap between data and actionable decision-making.*
- *The urgent need for practical, scalable innovation.*

The Fellows are developing nature-based adaptation models that harness ecosystem power to build resilience. These include smart early warning systems, sustainable land use practices, and community-led conservation efforts.

Their energy and vision were inspiring and we look forward to continued collaboration as we work to protect ecosystems and secure livelihoods for generations to come.



#THE END