

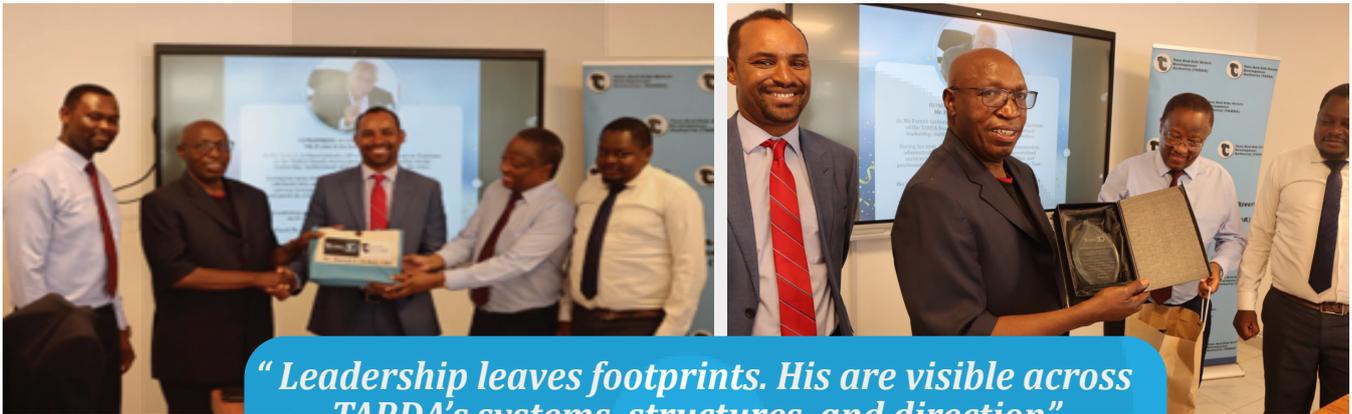


TARDA NEWS

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

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HIGHLIGHTS

Honoring the Service of Our Outgoing Chairman



“Leadership leaves footprints. His are visible across TARDA’s systems, structures, and direction”.

On 19th January 2026, TARDA marked the conclusion of the tenure of the Chairperson of the Board of Directors, Mr. Patrick Gichuru Gichohi, CBS, and we did so with deep appreciation for a season of steady leadership and meaningful institutional progress. During his tenure, TARDA underwent deliberate reforms that strengthened its foundations and positioned the Authority for more effective mandate delivery. Under his stewardship, the Board provided firm governance oversight that enabled the restructuring and decentralization of the Authority’s administrative and human resource architecture—deploying skilled teams to regional offices and bringing decision-making closer to the river basins and communities we serve. He championed prudent financial stewardship, including the optimization of TARDA’s physical assets through the relocation of Headquarters to Authority-owned premises—unlocking significant annual savings and reinforcing long-term sustainability. Board expenditure was rationalized through disciplined governance controls, reflecting a leadership style grounded in accountability and value for money. Mr. Gichohi also prioritized partnerships as a strategic lever for integrated basin development. Through collaborations with national research institutions, universities, county governments, and international partners, TARDA strengthened its technical depth, research uptake, climate adaptation capacity, and role as a convening institution linking science, policy, and implementation. As he exits office, we recognize a Chairperson who led with clarity of purpose, respect for institutions, and a firm belief in TARDA’s role in driving water, land, and community-centered development aligned to national priorities. Present during the Farewell were the Alternate Director to the Principal Secretary, State Department for ASALs and Regional Development, Mr. Fredrick Juma, and Independent Board Members Eng. Robinson Gaita and Mr. Charles Mwalimu. The TARDA Management Team was led by Managing Director, Mr. Liban Roba. We thank Mr. Patrick Gichuru Gichohi, CBS, for his service, leadership, and contribution to the Authority’s journey—and wish him well as he transitions to the next chapter.

FROM SOURCE TO SERVICE: WATER INFRASTRUCTURE THAT CHANGES OUTCOMES

“Clean, reliable water is no longer a promise—it’s flowing”.



The Kamburaini-Irighathi Borehole Project in Narumoru, Kieni East (Nyeri County) is now complete, strengthening water security for 380 households within the upper Tana Basin. For TARDA, this was never just about drilling a borehole. The project delivers a fully integrated water system—from groundwater verification to solar-powered abstraction, storage, reticulation, and protected community water points. The outcome is a resilient, dependable water supply that reduces climate risk, eases pressure on surface water sources, and supports livelihoods, sanitation, and local productivity. This is basin-based development in action: infrastructure designed to last, aligned with environmental stewardship, and anchored in long-term community stability. Not just water for today—water security for the future.

“ Practical infrastructure. Real outcomes. Lasting impact”.

MOMENTUM IS BUILDING FOR WORLD WETLANDS DAY 2026



TARDA, through its Athi Basin Regional Office, participated in a wetlands site visit and the inaugural planning meeting for World Wetlands Day (WWD) 2026, convened by the Machakos County Government on January 21st and 22nd 2026. The engagement followed a meeting that marked the official start of coordinated preparations for the 2026 celebrations and brought together national and county government institutions, regulators, civil society, and community-based organizations.

During the meeting, stakeholders agreed to host the World Wetlands Day 2026 celebrations at Metuma Spring in Mutituni Ward, Machakos Sub-County, citing its ecological value, cultural significance, and suitability within the available planning timeframe. The meeting adopted the 2026 theme, “Wetlands and Indigenous Knowledge – Preserving Cultural Heritage,” reinforcing the role of traditional knowledge in wetland conservation and sustainable livelihoods..

MOMENTUM IS BUILDING FOR WORLD WETLANDS DAY 2026 CONT.....



Key activities proposed for the celebrations include ceremonial tree planting, capacity building on fruit tree propagation and value addition where TARDA will play a technical support role—cultural presentations by local schools, and structured community and leadership engagements. Participants also aligned on core logistical and budgetary needs and agreed on a collaborative approach to resource mobilization and stakeholder engagement.

The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to early action, community involvement, and inter-agency coordination to deliver a focused, impactful, and culturally grounded World Wetlands Day 2026 celebration in Machakos County.

WORLD WETLANDS DAY 2026 PREPARATIONS TAKE SHAPE IN EMBU

Embu County begun preparations for **World Wetlands Day 2026**, guided by the global theme: *“Wetlands and Indigenous Knowledge: Preserving Cultural Heritage.”* On **January 27th 2026**, TARDA together with other stakeholders from **Nema Kenya, Kenya Forest Service**, met with Embu County Commissioner Mr. Wanyonyi to align on plans for the 2026 celebrations and reaffirm a shared commitment to wetland conservation and cultural preservation.



Key areas of focus included:

- Planned activities for the celebrations
- Identification of a suitable host site
- Strengthening stakeholder collaboration and community involvement
- Integrating indigenous knowledge into wetland conservation efforts
- The engagement marked an important step toward a coordinated and inclusive World Wetlands Day 2026—one that places communities, heritage, and ecosystems at the centre.

LIVING INFRASTRUCTURE: WETLANDS POWER KENYA'S WATER, CLIMATE, AND FOOD FUTURE

January 2026's Edition of the #TARDADevelopmentDialogues held on 29th was high energy and even higher impact as practitioners, regulators, researchers, and community champions converged to unpack one big idea: *Wetlands work best when science and indigenous wisdom move in lockstep.*

From the Tana Delta to Ondiri Wetland, the conversation made it clear that wetlands are not just scenic landscapes; they are working infrastructure for water security, climate resilience, biodiversity, and livelihoods. Key takeaways from the dialogue: Basin-level thinking is non-negotiable. Wetlands, rivers, dams, and catchments function as one connected system. Managing them in silos is yesterday's playbook. Community-led conservation delivers results.

The Ondiri model showed how reclaiming encroached land, planting indigenous trees, and shifting farmers to low-impact practices can bring back lost biodiversity and clean up critical water sources. Catchment restoration is climate adaptation in action. Ongoing large-scale reforestation across TARDA-managed basins is directly reducing erosion and sedimentation while stabilising flows for downstream users. Indigenous knowledge is a strategic asset.

Treating communities as co-researchers, documenting traditional practices, and passing knowledge to younger generations strengthens long-term stewardship. Policy and enforcement need sharper tools. Better wetland mapping, gazettement, pollution monitoring, and coordinated multi-agency action are essential to stay ahead of encroachment and contamination. Technology can amplify, not replace, tradition.

Digital tools and AI can help archive languages, practices, and local conservation methods, keeping cultural intelligence alive and usable. The dialogue also spotlighted practical next steps: scaling citizen science, deepening community-academia partnerships, promoting low-impact agriculture near wetlands, and tightening coordination between the Tana and Athi Rivers Development Authority, Nema Kenya, Water Resources Authority, Kenya Forest Service and county governments. In short, the session reframed wetlands from "protected areas" to "productive, living systems" that anchor food security, water supply, and green growth.

As World Wetlands Day activities gather momentum nationwide, TARDA will continue driving catchment restoration, stakeholder collaboration, and policy input to ensure wetlands remain a cornerstone of sustainable basin development.

SENSITIZATION SECTION



NATIONAL VALUES: OUR FOUNDATION FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

“National values are not abstract ideals. They are constitutional obligations that guide how public institutions operate, how public officers behave, and how services are delivered to citizens. For TARDA, these values anchor our legitimacy, inform our decision-making, and shape our daily interactions with stakeholders across the Tana and Athi basins”.

In this sensitization, we focus on the first cluster of national values under Article 10 of the Constitution of Kenya: Patriotism, National Unity, and the Rule of Law.

1. Patriotism (Uzalendo)

Patriotism is the active commitment to the well-being, integrity, and progress of Kenya. In public service, patriotism goes beyond symbols or sentiment—it is demonstrated through ethical conduct, responsible stewardship of public resources, and prioritizing the public interest over personal or sectional gain. **At an institutional and individual level, patriotism is demonstrated through:**

- Strict adherence to the Constitution, laws, and approved policies
- Responsible management and protection of public assets and resources
- Payment of taxes and compliance with statutory obligations
- Participation in democratic and civic processes, where applicable
- Reporting corruption, maladministration, or unethical conduct through established channels;
- Delivering services with diligence, professionalism, and integrity, regardless of personal circumstances or pressure.

For TARDA staff, patriotism means placing the Authority’s mandate and the public good at the center of every decision and action.

2. National Unity (Umoja wa Kitaifa)

National unity refers to the peaceful coexistence, mutual respect, and inclusion of all Kenyans, regardless of ethnicity, region, religion, gender, or social background. It is the foundation of stability, development, and effective public service delivery.

Kenya’s diversity is a strength. Within TARDA, unity is reflected in:

- Respectful and professional working relationships across departments, regions, and cadres
- Fair and impartial service delivery to all communities within the Authority’s area of jurisdiction
- Non-discrimination in decision-making, recruitment, procurement, and stakeholder engagement
- Promotion of collaboration with County Governments, communities, CBOs, and national institutions without bias or exclusion.

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3. The Rule of Law (Utawala wa Sheria)

The rule of law is the cornerstone of governance. It requires that laws are clear, publicly known, applied consistently, and enforced without fear or favor. No individual or institution is above the law.

Upholding the rule of law means:

- Acting strictly within approved legal, policy, and procedural frameworks
- Applying rules equally, regardless of rank, influence, or personal relationships
- Respecting due process in procurement, human resource management, disciplinary actions, and service delivery
- Ensuring transparency, accountability, and documentation in all official actions
- Cooperating with oversight bodies and complying with audit, regulatory, and legal requirements

Importantly, the rule of law is a shared responsibility—requiring commitment from the State, institutions, and individual public officers alike.

Our Collective Responsibility

Patriotism, national unity, and the rule of law are not optional values. They are constitutional imperatives that must be reflected in how TARDA plans, implements projects, manages resources, engages stakeholders, and serves the public.

All TARDA staff and stakeholders are therefore expected to:

- Internalize these values;
- Demonstrate them consistently in their daily duties, and
- Uphold the highest standards of integrity, fairness, and professionalism.

By doing so, we strengthen public trust, safeguard institutional credibility, and advance TARDA's mandate in a manner that is lawful, inclusive, and aligned with Kenya's constitutional vision.