

# TARDA NEWS

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

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HIGHLIGHTS

## PUTTING REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT



The Departmental Committee on Regional Development of the National Assembly (Kenya), led by Chair Hon. Peter Lochakapong convened a retreat to deliberate on the Budget Implementation Monitoring for FY 2025/2026 from 27th to 30th August 2026.



**ACCOUNTABILITY THAT REACHES  
THE GROUND**



**TARDA TURNS ATHI BASIN  
FINDINGS INTO A ROADMAP FOR  
RESILIENCE**



**TARDA STRENGTHENS  
CLIMATE INTELLIGENCE FOR  
THE TANA AND ATHI BASINS**

## FROM BUDGET ALLOCATIONS TO DEVELOPMENT IMPACT: PUTTING REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

How effectively public resources are implemented matters because behind every budget line is a community waiting for a road, water, irrigation infrastructure, livelihoods, climate resilience and improved economic opportunity.

The Departmental Committee on Regional Development of the National Assembly (Kenya), led by Chair Hon. Peter Lochakapong convened a retreat to deliberate on the Budget Implementation Monitoring for FY 2025/2026 from 27th to 30th August 2026, bringing together the leadership of Regional Development Authorities to examine progress, challenges, resource utilization and the development outcomes being delivered across their respective mandates. Leading the TARDA delegation was Managing Director, Mr. Liban Roba, alongside the leadership of other Regional Development Authorities.



For TARDA, this is more than a review of expenditure. It is an opportunity to demonstrate how public resources are being translated into water security, irrigation, agricultural productivity, resilient infrastructure, environmental conservation and improved livelihoods across the Tana and Athi River basins.

With communities facing increasing pressure from climate variability, water insecurity, food production challenges and infrastructure gaps, every resource must deliver measurable value where it matters most — on the ground.

The engagement reinforces the importance of strong parliamentary oversight, institutional accountability and evidence-based implementation in ensuring that regional development investments respond to the realities and priorities of the communities they are intended to serve. The real measure of a budget is not what is allocated. It is what changes because it was implemented.

### ACCOUNTABILITY THAT REACHES THE GROUND

TARDA led by Managing Director Mr. Liban Roba held an Entry Conference Meeting on 17th August 2026 with the Office of the Auditor-General (OAG), to commence the audit of the Authority for the financial year ended 30th June 2026. At face value, an audit is about financial statements, procurement, assets, budgets, internal controls and compliance. But its significance goes far beyond the paperwork. For the millions of people who live, work and depend on resources across the Tana and Athi River Basins, strong public accountability matters because public resources ultimately translate into water, irrigation, food production, environmental conservation, infrastructure and livelihoods.



The audit will examine, among other areas, the lawfulness and effectiveness of the use of public resources, budget credibility, procurement and contract management, asset management, human resource practices, internal controls, risk management and governance. This is important because every shilling entrusted to a public institution must deliver public value. For communities across the basins, that means strengthening confidence that resources allocated for development are managed responsibly, projects are implemented as intended, and institutional systems remain capable of delivering on TARDA's mandate. The OAG entry conference therefore marks more than the beginning of an audit cycle. It is part of the broader process of strengthening transparency, accountability and institutional performance in service of the people and ecosystems of the Tana and Athi Basins.

## TARDA TURNS ATHI BASIN FINDINGS INTO A ROADMAP FOR RESILIENCE

What happens to a river upstream is felt by communities downstream. On 10th August 2026 TARDA Management, led by Managing Director Mr. Liban Roba, received findings from a nine-day field data collection exercise across the Upper and Middle Athi River Basin to inform the Integrated Athi River Basin Development Plan.

The exercise took our teams across Kiambu, Kajiado, Nairobi, Machakos and Makueni — assessing water resources, catchments, irrigation systems, dams and conservation initiatives, while engaging communities whose lives and livelihoods depend on the basin. The Athi

Basin holds enormous potential for water security, agriculture and livelihoods. But that potential faces pressure from pollution, riparian encroachment, soil erosion, siltation, declining flows, unregulated sand harvesting and pressure on critical water infrastructure. For communities, these pressures can mean unreliable water supplies, threats to agricultural production, flooding and exposure to unsafe water. The exercise also identified community conservation efforts and restoration opportunities.

At Thwake Dam, the findings highlighted the scale of what integrated water infrastructure can deliver — water supply, irrigation, hydropower and flood management — while reinforcing the need to protect the catchment and address pollution upstream. For TARDA, this is more than a technical exercise. It is about ensuring that planning responds to what communities are experiencing on the ground. The evidence will inform practical interventions in water resource management, catchment restoration, climate resilience, flood-risk reduction, irrigation development and inclusive socio-economic development.

Good planning starts with good data. Good data must ultimately translate into safer water, productive land, healthier ecosystems and better livelihoods. The Plan will provide a coordinated roadmap for protecting the basin while unlocking its potential for the millions who depend on it.



## TARDA STRENGTHENS CLIMATE INTELLIGENCE FOR THE TANA AND ATHI BASINS



Climate resilience starts long before the rains arrive. On August 21st, 2026 TARDA's Weather Monitoring Committee engaged with the Kenya Meteorological Department to deepen technical understanding of weather observation, forecasting, numerical modelling, hydro-meteorological information and early warning systems. The timing matters. With forecasts pointing to the possibility of El Niño conditions in the coming months, the window to prepare is now — not when rivers are already rising, farms are flooded and communities are responding to damage. The engagement is part of TARDA's efforts to strengthen how climate information is translated into early action across the Tana and Athi River Basins. This includes exploring stronger data-sharing mechanisms, improved weather and hydrological monitoring, action-based forecasting and more effective dissemination of timely advisories to communities and other water-resource users. For TARDA, being equipped means more than having equipment. It means having the right information, the right systems, the right technical capacity and the right partnerships to anticipate risks and support informed decisions. From flood preparedness and water resources management to drought resilience and agricultural planning, better climate intelligence can help communities move from reacting to disasters to preparing for them.

Evidence. Planning. Action. Impact.

## YOUTH ARE NOT JUST THE FUTURE. THEY ARE SHAPING THE PRESENT

On 12th August 2026 at Machakos University, TARDA joined Youth for Sustainable Development, young people and stakeholders to commemorate #InternationalYouthDay2026 under the theme, “Youth Advancing Multilateral Cooperation Through Technology and Partnerships.”

The theme speaks directly to a changing development landscape where technology, innovation and collaboration are increasingly central to how communities respond to climate change, water insecurity, unemployment and other development challenges.

For TARDA, meaningful youth empowerment goes beyond participation in events. It means creating space for young people to contribute ideas, apply technology, build enterprises, access opportunities and become active partners in sustainable development across the Tana and Athi River Basins.

From water and agriculture to environmental conservation, digital innovation and climate resilience, there is enormous scope for young people to turn challenges into solutions.

The engagement provided an important platform for young people to exchange experiences, build networks and explore how partnerships can open pathways for innovation, livelihoods and inclusive growth.

As TARDA advances its development mandate, we recognize that the success of tomorrow’s water, agricultural, environmental and economic systems will depend in part on the skills, ideas and ingenuity of the generation coming through today. Empowering youth is not simply about preparing them for tomorrow. It is about giving them a stake in shaping the solutions we need today. Empowering Youth. Building Tomorrow.



## PLANNING TODAY FOR STRONGER, MORE RESILIENT COMMUNITIES TOMORROW

On 3rd August 2026 TARDA participated in the State Department for ASALs and Regional Development's Virtual Stakeholder Consultation on the FY 2027/28 Budget Estimates and Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), contributing to discussions that will shape development priorities across Kenya's ASALs. For the millions of people living within the Tana and Athi River Basins, these consultations are more than a budgeting exercise—they are an opportunity to influence investments that improve livelihoods, strengthen climate resilience, enhance water security, expand irrigation, protect ecosystems, and unlock sustainable economic opportunities.

Representing the interests of the 19 counties under its mandate, TARDA, alongside the Regional Development Authorities as well as NDMA Kenya is championing priorities that support resilient infrastructure, food security, environmental conservation, disaster risk reduction, and inclusive regional development, ensuring that public resources are directed where they can deliver the greatest impact for communities.



## FROM DRYLANDS TO OPPORTUNITY: BEEKEEPING CREATING NEW LIVELIHOODS IN MERU

In the ASAL communities of Thangatha Ward, Tigania East, where climate variability continues to challenge traditional livelihoods, beekeeping is opening a practical pathway to income, resilience and environmental stewardship.

On 24th August 2026, TARDA joined the Office of the Deputy President, the Meru County Government and the Tigania East Constituency leadership in empowering vulnerable community groups through capacity building and the distribution of modern beehives in Igarii Location, along the Meru-Tharaka Nithi border.

Eight community groups received hands-on training on apiary establishment, hive management, honey harvesting, grading, processing and value addition, led by TARDA's Tana Basin Regional Coordinator, Mr. Joses Mugambi. The initiative equips beneficiaries with the skills needed to turn beekeeping into a sustainable enterprise rather than a one-time intervention.

The programme also encouraged the groups to organise into a cooperative, creating opportunities for collective processing, better market access and stronger bargaining power.

For ASAL communities, resilience is not built through relief alone. It is built by investing in livelihoods that work with the environment, generate income throughout the year and strengthen household economic security.

Every hive distributed today is an investment in food security, biodiversity, local enterprise and a more climate-resilient future.



## TARDA STRENGTHENS DELIVERY FOCUS AS GOVERNMENT ENTERS FY 2026/27 DELIVERY CYCLE

TARDA participated in a consultative engagement with the Chief of Staff and Head of the Public Service, Mr. Felix Koskei on 26th August 2026 as the Government takes stock of progress in implementing its development agenda. The engagement underscored the importance of completion, accurate project classification, evidence-based reporting and timely resolution of implementation bottlenecks across Government institutions. For TARDA, this provides an opportunity to take a structured look at the Authority's projects and programmes across the Tana and Athi River Basins—identifying what has been completed, what remains outstanding, the factors affecting implementation and the actions required to move each intervention forward. Where financial, legal, procurement or institutional constraints affect delivery, these will be clearly identified and addressed through the appropriate channels. Equally, completed interventions will be supported by verifiable evidence of results and impact. As the Government moves into the FY 2026/27 delivery cycle, TARDA will focus on consolidating progress, resolving outstanding actions and ensuring that priority interventions translate into measurable results for the communities, water resources and ecosystems within its mandate. Delivery is strengthened when progress is clearly understood, gaps are identified early and action follows.



## TARDA JOINS STAKEHOLDERS IN KARURA HYDROPOWER EIA ENGAGEMENT

On 11th August 2026 TARDA participated in an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) stakeholder engagement for the proposed Karura Hydropower Generation Project in Embu County.

The engagement, coordinated by PANAFCON and KenGen, brought together

representatives from KenGen, TARDA, the County Government of Embu, County Commissioner's Office, WRMA, KALRO, KFS, KWS and community-based organisations.

TARDA Tana Basin Regional Coordinator Mr. Joses K. Mugambi made a presentation on the Authority's mandate and environmental conservation role, which was positively received by KenGen and the PANAFCON consulting team. The engagement also opened opportunities for collaboration between TARDA, KenGen and PANAFCON in environmental conservation, buffer-zone management, tree planting, construction and surveying. KenGen and PANAFCON further invited TARDA to participate in a similar engagement planned for Mwingi, Kitui County. The participation reinforces TARDA's commitment to ensuring that development and environmental stewardship remain closely connected across the basins.



## TARDA AND KENGEN STRENGTHEN ENVIRONMENTAL COLLABORATION IN MWINGI

On 19th August 2026 TARDA once again participated in a stakeholder engagement on the proposed KenGen-initiated Karura Hydropower Generation Project, bringing together key stakeholders including the County administration, Kenya Forest Service (KFS), NEMA, KALRO, WRMA and local administration officials.

Representing TARDA Management, the Tana Basin Regional Coordinator, Mr. Joses K. Mugambi, highlighted the importance of integrating environmental conservation into development planning, particularly around dam buffer zones.

As a symbol of collaboration, TARDA and KenGen joined other stakeholders in planting tree seedlings at the Mwingi Deputy County Commissioner's office, reaffirming their shared commitment to environmental conservation and restoration along dam buffer zones.

The engagement further strengthened opportunities for collaboration between TARDA, KenGen and stakeholders in promoting sustainable development and protecting the ecosystems that support communities within the basin.



## EXTERNAL AUDIT CULMINATES IN RIPARIAN TREE PLANTING AT TARDA MACHAKOS CONSERVATION WEIR

On 31 August 2026 TARDA hosted a team of External Auditors at its Athi Basin Regional offices as part of the Authority's Annual Audit exercise. The audit engagement provided an opportunity for the auditors to review the Authority's operations, programmes and activities within the Athi Basin Region, while assessing compliance, accountability and the effectiveness of systems supporting TARDA's mandate. The exercise concluded with an environmental conservation activity at the TARDA Machakos Conservation Weir, where the audit team joined TARDA staff in planting trees along the weir's riparian zones. The tree-planting activity provided a practical environmental dimension to the audit engagement, reinforcing the importance of protecting riparian ecosystems as part of sustainable water resource management. Riparian vegetation plays an important role in protecting water bodies by helping to reduce soil erosion, stabilize riverbanks, filter surface runoff and support biodiversity. For TARDA, whose mandate is anchored in the integrated development and management of the Tana and Athi River Basins, protection of such ecosystems is closely linked to the sustainability of water resources and the communities that depend on them. The activity at the Machakos Conservation Weir also demonstrated how institutional accountability can extend beyond financial and operational oversight to include responsibility for the natural resources entrusted to public institutions. By combining the audit engagement with a conservation activity, the exercise provided an opportunity for the External Auditors and TARDA staff to participate directly in an initiative supporting environmental restoration and climate resilience within the Athi Basin.

The Authority continues to promote integrated approaches to basin management that recognize the interconnection between water resources, ecosystems, infrastructure and communities.



## NATIONAL VALUES SENSITIZATION SECTION

### HUMAN RIGHTS

These are the fundamental freedoms and inherent entitlements that human beings are entitled to. They are legally guaranteed by law and protect individuals and groups against actions which may interfere with their freedom and human dignity. Human beings are all equally entitled to these rights without discrimination regardless of nationality, place of residence, sex, ethnic origin, birth, age, race, religion, language, or any other status. Article 21 of the Kenyan Constitution gives obligations to state and every state organ to observe, respect, protect, and fulfil the rights and fundamental freedoms in the Bill of Rights. Human Rights are enshrined in the Bill of Rights chapter 4 of the Kenyan Constitution. Article 19- 57 which lists and explains all rights and fundamental freedoms to be enjoyed by all Kenyans without discrimination. These rights are categorised in two groups;

I. Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

II. Civil and political rights,

Human rights are guided by the principles of

**1. Equality and non-discrimination:** The principle refers to the notion that all human beings are entitled to the same human rights without any distinction on grounds of race, color, ethnicity, disability, gender, age, language or religion.

**2. Participation and inclusion:** All people are entitled to active, free and meaningful participation in contribution to and enjoyment of all the rights. The goal here is to give people the power to improve their own communities and influence their own destinies.

**3. Interdependence:** All rights are interlinked and for enjoyment of one right the rest have to be in place, the right to education for instance can only be realized if the beneficiaries are in good health.

Indicators of human rights.

1. Observance of the rule of law.
2. Equality of all people before the law.
3. Equal access to social services/ amenities.
4. Freedom of expression.