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CARIS KENYA NEWSLETTER

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Pomp and color filled the air as more than 4000 participants clad in hot pink t-shirts came together for the Caris Kenya end of the year celebration. It was a coming together of the old and new participants.

The event was preceded by 9 weeks of intensive growth initiative by Caris staff, together with community volunteers and Trainer of trainers [ToTs], across six sub locations. 2474 new participants were identified and 159 TTGs were formed.

The colorful event was graced by Caris Foundation President, Kathy Halbert and Vice President, Christopher Harmon.

Participants and groups that met qualification standards for various awards were recognized and awarded. Among those awarded was Nyevu Kaingu, she had the highest yield of green grams, a cash crop promoted by Caris Kenya in 2018. She boosted her status in the community by buying a dairy cow from the proceeds. A cow is a status symbol in her community.

Caris Kenya celebrated 10 years of service with a fellowship meal and ‘walking down memory lane’ by some of the staff members. It’s was a joyous occasion.

Margaret Kihara, the young at heart and very vibrant spiritual development facilitator turned 70!! Caris staff celebrated her 70th birthday with a meal. Margaret is a very delightful person.

Caris Kenya Staff have done exemplary work, we are finishing the year strong and the groundwork for 2019 is laid. Congratulations to all Caris Kenya staff, participants and other stakeholders. We have finished strong!!

Happy Holidays to you and your families...2019 beckons and the work of demonstrating grace continues...

JANE W. GITAIHI
Deputy Director & Finance manager
CARIS KENYA NEWSLETTER

CARIS EXPANDS SERVICES TO SIX SUB-LOCATIONS

BY EMMANUELLA KINDA

Caris Kenya has 2474 new participants. In October and November, the organization managed to expand its services to six new sub locations; Mere, Mongotini, Msabaha, Kakuyuni, Mkenge and Mijomboni. With an increased workforce, Caris formed 159 Tuajalie Tujisaidie groups [TTG], with Mongotini emerging the highest with 32.

Selection of 8 team leaders was done to provide guidance to other staff and village elders who would take part in expansion. Program manager Peter Thoya was in charge of Mere team, Program coordinators Duncan Ziro and Rose Fondo were responsible for Kakuyuni and Mijombini respectively, Community facilitator Sara Ziro [Mkenge], Agriculture facilitator Edward Nyiro [Mongotini], Program Officers Jerilyne Ikonga, Michael Kombe and Karisa Samuel were responsible for Msabaha A, B and C.

Teams had 8 members; Caris staff and village elders. Tuesday was a family visit day; teams visited homes inviting families to village meetings. Wednesday was a village meeting day; Caris staff addressed villagers on organization’s programs and requested interested women to join. Thursday was the first meeting of TTGs formed.

Teams covered entire villages. Expansion to new area begun on October 2, 2018 ending on November 29, 2018. All together, Caris Kenya’s area of work has expanded to 11 sub locations and 4428 participants. Scheduled expansion for next year will focus in Kaloleni sub counties.

A fraction of Tuajalie Tujisaidie group [TTG] participants at the end year get together held on December 5, 2018 in Kakuyuni sub location.
LEFT: Caris program officer Michael Kilumo addresses village elders and colleagues in Msabaha - B ahead of family visits on Tuesday October 16, 2018. Photo by Emmanuella Kinda

BELOW: Caris Agriculture facilitator Edward Nyiro addresses a village meeting at Kanyangwa in Mongotini sub location on Wednesday November 28, 2018. Photo by Doreen Kalama.
LEFT: Caris program coordinator Duncan Ziro [right] updates the TTG growth scoreboard on Wednesday, November 14, 2018 at the organization’s office.

Photo by Emmanuella Kinda

BELOW: Community volunteer Silas Nguma facilitates Ushindi TTG in Msabaha on Tuesday, November 27, 2018.

Photo by Michael Kilumo
Nyevu Kaingu [right] shows the cow she purchased from her green grams proceeds to Caris Foundation leaders [second from right] President and co-founder, Kathy Halbert, and Vice president Christopher Harmon [second left]. Caris leaders were accompanied by Deputy director Jane Gitahi [left], Program manager Peter Thoya and Agriculture facilitator Edward Nyiro [third from right].

BY EMMANUELLA KINDA

Nyevu Kaingu emerged the best green gram farmer, harvesting 372 kilograms from an acre of land. The farmer who hails from Viragoni village in Madunguni sub location, planted green grams pure stand. Mrs. Kaingu together with 34 other farmers cultivated the crop at the initiative of Caris Kenya.

More than 3 tonnes [3391.5 kilograms] were harvested from 34.5 acres of land compared to 2.2 tonnes last year. Agriculture is among the programs of Caris Kenya which aims to boost food security and provide a source of income to participants.

Upon learning of Caris plans to provide free green gram seeds to farmers, Nyevu consulted her husband. “I cultivate maize every rain season,” Nyevu said. “Together with my husband, we decided to try something different.”

Caris staff were at hand to guide farmers on land preparation. Caris Kenya Agriculture facilitator Edward Nyiro says they showed farmers land preparation methods depending on the size of seeds. Mr. Nyiro together with Caris Program Officer Karisa Samuel advised Nyevu on planting techniques. “They measured and cut out two sticks to use in planting,” Nyevu said. The planting sticks ensured uniform spacing. Caris staff assisted in purchase of pesticides on her behalf. “I am so thankful that they were also faithful in getting me the right fertilizers and pesticide from Malindi since I couldn’t travel there myself,” she said. When the crop reached flowering stage, she was advised to use a fruit and flower spray. The crop flowered in two weeks.
after application. After the first harvest, she sprayed again. Her crop developed new pods. They guided her on how to tackle pests and diseases. She believes working together enabled her to have a high yield.

Expenses associated with crop management were low. She has recovered costs from proceeds of selling green grams. “Other TTG members chose not to cultivate this crop, fearing the cost of labor,” said Nyevu. “I am glad that I have a testimony that green gram cultivation is not costly as some participants believe.”

The fifty-seven year old benefitted from educational field visits to model farms and a green gram workshop. Educational visits to the best farms was a recap of the past so that other farmers could learn where they had gone wrong.

“At the workshop we taught them how to keep records of proceeds from the green grams,” said Edward. Farmers learnt grading and storing. According to Caris Agriculture facilitator, this is the first time that a farmer has harvested such a high yield on an acre of land.

“Since I began working in agriculture I have never received such a record,” said Mr. Nyiro. He lauded Nyevu for her determination and hard work. “She followed instructions every step,” he said. “She even kept records of the lines harvested.”

Through proceeds from green gram selling she has established an income generating activity. She purchased a cow. A cross breed heifer. Which means she is expecting to sell milk when it calves down. Nyevu says she will continue to cultivate green grams in the future.

Nyevu Kaingu harvests green grams at her farm in Madunguni on Tuesday September 18, 2018.
1. Sidi Kabagazi spread out green grams to dry at her home in Malimo sub location on October 19, 2018.
Photo by Karisa Samuel

2. Caris staff celebrate the organization’s 10-year anniversary with food and drinks on October 5, 2018.
Photo by Emmanuella Kinda
3. Community volunteers who assisted in expansion to new area are trained on TTG facilitation at Ganda polytechnic on November 30, 2018. In attendance was Caris Kenya International facilitator James D. Reppart, Program manager Peter Thoya and Program coordinator Duncan Ziro. Photo by Duncan Ziro

4. Caris staff celebrate Margaret Kihara’s 70th birthday at the organization’s office on November 23, 2018. Margaret is a spiritual formation facilitator and has worked with the organization for ten years. Photo by Doreen Kalama
Dismes Katana, a Tuajalie Tujisaidie group [TTG] participant from Madunguni sub-location had a steady income from farming. Mrs. Katana sold maize, sugarcane, mangoes, cassava, bananas, coconuts and vegetables from her farm situated on the banks of Sabaki River. Proceeds from farm produce coupled with her husband’s salary from his hospitality job sustained their family. “I could get Kshs. 12,000 from selling sugarcane,” she remembers. “The area along the river was fertile and irrigation was quite easy.” Through an agriculture initiative launched by Caris Kenya, she established a home garden for family consumption. She planted green amaranthus vegetables [mchicha], solanum nigrum [mnavu], and cherry tomatoes.

Dismes Katana and her grandchild at the farm in Madunguni on August 13, 2018. Dismes practices succession planting of maize on sections of the farm. In the image above, maize is two months old while in the below picture, its ready for harvest.

BY EMMANUELLA KINDA

NEW BEGINNING FOR A FARMER AFTER DEVASTATING FLOODS
Unknown to Dismes, life was about to change. Early in 2018 her husband lost his job. Then Sabaki River broke its banks in April 2018, wreaking havoc to families who lived near it. Despite prior floods warning by the National Meteorological Department, Kilifi county residents experienced severe losses. According to Kenya Red Cross, two people lost their lives, hundreds of homes were swept away as well as farm crops. Her two acre farm was destroyed. “I lost the farm produce which was my only source of income” said Dismes.

The mother of seven begun selling vegetables from her home garden. “I am grateful that Caris staff encouraged us to grow vegetables,” she said. “Otherwise my family would have had a tough time.” She sold vegetables to her neighbours at Kshs. 20 per bunch. As a result of the floods, demand for farm produce rose. Buyers came from as far as Mombasa County. They were in search of farmers who could provide farm produced goods and crops, in bulk. This prompted Dismes to utilize six acres of land her family owned. The farm was located two kilometers from the river. “I took a loan of Kshs. 2000,” she said. Through this loan from her TTG, she prepared 3.5 acres for planting. With assistance from family, she planted maize, tomatoes, okra and moringa.

Planting on this land had challenges. First, river water was inaccessible. Secondly, she needed funds to purchase manure to make the soil fertile. At her home, a tap installed years back by Malindi Water and Sewerage Company [MAWASCO] solved the irrigation problem at a cost. A subsequent loan of Kshs. 8000 from her TTG enabled her to purchase manure, seeds and pay for planting and water expenses. Dismes established successive plantings for maize, tomatoes and okra. She made several smaller plantings at timed intervals which created a continuous harvest over an extended period of time. “Using this method, I can harvest maize three times in a year,” she said.

“The floods affected farmers some of who are TTG participants,” said Josephine Karisa, a Caris community facilitator for Madunguni sub location. “It’s great to see how Dismes pulled through by turning her home garden into an income generating project.”

Each week, Dismes sells farm produce in bulk to Mombasa buyers. “I get a profit of Kshs. 8000 every month,” she said. She plans to expand into livestock rearing and water melon cultivation.
Grace To All