



CHOICEHUMANITARIAN



**April-June
2023**

KENYA NEWSLETTER

INTRODUCTION

We are thrilled to share the latest updates from CHOICE Kenya as we continue our mission to address the challenges communities face. Over the past three months, our dedicated team has been actively engaged in projects centered around Economic Development, Health and Nutrition, Agriculture, and Education, all to foster sustainable and resilient communities. With the invaluable support and collaboration of stakeholders, partners, and the community, CHOICE Kenya is delighted to report that our efforts have yielded remarkable success. Together, we have positively impacted many individuals' lives, empowering them to overcome challenges, exploit their potential and take full advantage of opportunities.

In this quarterly newsletter, CHOICE Kenya is excited to share some of the key activities and achievements that have taken place between April and June 2023. CHOICE Kenya has implemented programs such as:

- innovative economic initiatives to uplift local entrepreneurs,
- training to improve access to healthcare and address nutritional needs,
- conduct farmer field schools that promote food security through increased production and incomes,
- educational programs fostering knowledge and skills for a better quality of life.

Through these efforts, CHOICE Kenya has made significant strides in all our focus areas. None of this would have been possible without the dedication, generosity, and tireless efforts of all those who have contributed their time, resources, and expertise to take the community forward toward achieving its vision. We extend our gratitude to every individual who has played a part in making these projects a reality.





As we reflect on our accomplishments, we are reminded of the immense power within collective action. By joining forces, we can create lasting change and build self-reliant and resilient communities that thrive despite poverty, adversity, and harsh conditions. We invite you to continue supporting CHOICE Kenya in its vision of a world where people everywhere have the choice and the means to live in peace, prosperity, and freedom.

Thank you for your unwavering support, and we hope this newsletter inspires you to join us in our mission to create resilient communities



FARMERS FIELD SCHOOL

Agriculture is the economic lifeblood of Kwale County. However, the county faces numerous challenges that hinder agricultural productivity, including insufficient and unreliable rainfall due to climate change, degraded agricultural land, and inadequate knowledge and access to modern farming techniques and inputs. To address this, CHOICE Kenya, in partnership with Pwani University and community members, embarked on a 'seed to seed' program to change the narrative.

In initiating this program, CHOICE Kenya convened a forum attended by officials from the National and Kwale County Governments and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) at Pwani University and other agriculture stakeholders. During the meeting, attendees could deliberate on the state of agriculture and propose possible solutions. It was agreed that under the tutelage of Pwani University technicians

from the Department of Agribusiness and Agricultural Sciences, three communities would establish (Mabesheni, Mackinnon, and Silaloni) Farmers Field Schools. These schools will serve as a pilot program in the program's first phase. Over the last three months, the Farmers Field Schools have made significant progress, including land preparation and planting of various crops, including maize, green grams, sorghum, groundnuts, cassava, and cowpeas, and in some cases, harvesting. Along the different phases, the Lecturers from Pwani University have conducted practical learning sessions with the farmers in these communities on best land preparation and planting methods, crop selection, water management, pest control, and soil improvement methods, among other lessons. The 104 farmers going through the farmer field schools will replicate the lessons in the individual farms.



- CHOICE staff measuring plots for preparation of planting



- Needs assessment meeting with Pwani University and Government officials.



-Dr. Ndiso conducting Agro-Ecology System Analysis (AESA)

VISITING MDENGEREKENI PRIMARY SCHOOL

Techlit Africa is a nonprofit organization that works with rural schools that provide computer laboratories for students to develop computer classes and offer a digital curriculum that includes computer coding, graphic design, and marketing. Techlit Africa has a project at Mdengerekeni Primary School in Kashani, Mombasa County. CHOICE Humanitarian is working with the organization to initiate a similar program in our areas of operation. Techlit strives to ensure everyone acquires digital skills to generate income in the digital economy.



DR. STEVEN D. PIERCE VISIT



“I came to understand that while intelligence and creativity and drive and innovation is distributed equally around the world, opportunity is not”

-Steve Pierce

CHOICE Humanitarian’s CEO, Dr. Steve Pierce, conducted training for the executive team of eleven community-based organizations representing 10s of villages and 1000s of people. The training aimed to impart knowledge on using the project cycle to keenly analyze the main cause of a problem the project is trying to address rather than working on solving the symptoms of the issue based on assumptions.



In early June, CHOICE Humanitarian’s CEO, Dr. Pierce, visited Kenya for the third time. During his visit, where he was accompanied by his wife, Stephanie Pierce, Steve conducted training on monitoring and evaluating (M/E) for the CHOICE Kenya team. The training aims to ensure CHOICE Humanitarian can quantifiably demonstrate its progress and impact on community development.

Through effective monitoring and evaluation, organizations can improve their efficiency, effectiveness and leverage their operations. With knowledge discerned from our M/E Program, we shall be able to learn and continuously improve our programs and the project design process as an organization. We shall collaborate, learn, and adapt properly for good results. Dr. Pierce met with the Deputy Governor of Kwale County and other county leaders during his visit to Kenya and had the privilege of visiting the Nyalani Dam project.

The visit's main aim was to explore collaboration opportunities with the County on development programs. The Nyalani dam plays a crucial role in water resource management for the community's domestic and agriculture to enhance food security and the well-being of community members in Kwale County.



Additionally, Steve visited various projects initiated and supported by CHOICE Humanitarian. The culmination of his visit was the handover ceremony at Kanjaocha Primary School, where together with the community, we celebrated the completion of two projects: the construction of a four-classrooms, a staff room, and a ferro-cement water tank. These projects have significantly improved the students' learning environment, exam results, and overall well-being.





ONGOING SECOND



- Mwangoloto officials showing CBO certificate registration



- CHOICE with Pwani University preparing for the first phase of Farmers Field School (FFS)





-Muungano community member

-Kanjaocha students learning in their new classroom



- CHOICE courtesy call to the deputy governor's office



QUARTER PROJECTS

- Dr. Steve Pierce having a conversation with Dr. Mulinge at Mbele Farmers Field School



CONSTRUCTING OF FERRO-CEMENT TANK AT KANJAOCHA PRIMARY SCHOOL

CHOICE Humanitarian conducted an expedition with its donors at Kanjaocha primary school in July 2022. During the expedition, the volunteers worked with the community to undertake various projects, including the construction of a four classroom construction project, building a natural fence at the school, building desks, training and mentorship for students, youth, and parents, and intercultural activities.

During the expedition, the volunteers were treated to sights of elephants crossing at the edge of the village. After the expedition, these same elephants entered the school compound looking for water after the water pan they shared with the community dried up. The elephants destroyed the plastic water tanks to quench their thirst. This disaster reached the ears of expeditioners, who had seen the effects of water scarcity in the village. With Brynn Larsen, her family leading the charge, the expeditioners conducted a funds drive to construct a permanent water tank at the school.

A groundbreaking ceremony was held by CHOICE Humanitarian, working in closely with the national and county government, community development organization (KADO CBO), parents, and students. The tank has a capacity of 30,000 liters. This exciting partnership is a major step towards securing clean and safe water for the school.



PREPARATION OF EXPEDITION



CHOICE Humanitarian met with the leaders and community members of Mwangoloto to prepare for the upcoming expedition. Mr. Mwalukuku, the Education Director, Assistant Chief, the MADO CBO members, and the Mwangoloto Primary School and Maji ya Chumvi Secondary School committees were also in attendance.

Maji Ya Chumvi Secondary School is the first secondary school in the sub-location and has a student population of 23 students. The nearest secondary school is 5 kilometers away. The school has been started, but it needs infrastructure. Therefore, working with the community, CHOICE Kenya will build the first classroom for the new school. The students are currently learning in a room lent by the Mosque. During a July Broadwater expedition, CHOICE Humanitarian and its supporters shall break ground for the first classroom.



FINANCIAL LITERACY TRAINING

Fatma Kassim, CHOICE Kenya Economic Development Officer, attended business training on how to facilitate the community members to start, grow, and improve their businesses. The training is provided by Interweave Solutions at the end of which trainees are certified and graduated with a Master of Business in the Street certificate. Fatma has been going through an online course to become a success ambassador and business trainer. She has undertaken 15 units.

Using this expertise, CHOICE Kenya will inject business and entrepreneurship training in its Adult Continuous Learning program that aims to give individuals business support services and training through trade and business mentorship.



MEDIA INSTITUTIONS & CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT



Pauline Awour, Communication Officer, attended training to improve her technical skills, and professional aptitude and gain insights into various media organizations and institutions. During a visit to the Kenya national broadcaster (Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC)), Y254, the National Assembly, Standard Media Group, and Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), among other leading media companies and institutions, Pauline acquired a deeper understanding of the content production process, sign department, camera angles, and communication techniques. She learned about the significance of youth content creation and the importance of platforms such as TikTok. Pauline interacted with the graphics, editing, sound, reporting, and program preparation teams.



LEARNING ORGANIC FARMING

Bevington Jumaa attended training at the Kenya Institute of Organic Farming (KIOF). The taught him how to equip farmers with knowledge and skills to practice effective agronomy and livestock production without using agrochemicals for controlling pests and disease, as well as conventional fertilizers for improving soil fertility. Organic farming is a system of agriculture that uses natural methods and available resources on the farm to maintain healthy soils and crops, conserve water, and promote livestock health.

During the training, Bevington learned various topics such as the introduction of organic farming, soil, and water conservation, composting, soil tillage, non-chemical pest control, organic animal husbandry, seed nursery establishment, container gardening, biomedicine, urban gardens, farm layout and evaluation, and agroforestry. Bevington thinks the training “changed his perspective on how farmers can find solutions for the problems they encounter in both crop and animal production. Solutions for their problems are within their farms”. Bevington was offered the opportunity to pursue a degree through distance learning from Kampala University because of his experience and practical involvement during the two-week training at the Kenya Institute of Organic Farming.

“Sustainable agriculture is related to the way ecological systems operate naturally. This changed my perspective on how farmers can find solutions for the problems they encounter in both crop and animal production in their farms. Solutions for their problems are found within, not outside their farm.”

- Bevington Jumaa.



WEWA'S SCHOLARSHIP JOURNEY

Wewa Mazara Mashaka grew up as the eldest in a family of 11 children in Kanjaocha village. He attended Kanjaocha primary school and due to his hard work, persistence, and good exam results, he got an opportunity to attend Presbyterian University.

However, while at the university, Wewa encountered difficulties meeting his financial obligations, which led him to drop out of school. When CHOICE Kenya met him, Wewa was making charcoal to support his family. Wewa met CHOICE during an expedition in his neighboring village at Kanjaocha. During the expedition, Wewa worked alongside the expeditioners and shared his life story, explaining the tremendous effort he had put into pursuing an education, only to run out of money before earning his degree, and becoming a teacher. One of the expeditioners was deeply moved by Wewa's story and reached out to CHOICE Humanitarian and offered his desire to provide him with a scholarship to complete his studies.

Wewa was blessed by this expeditioner's generosity and is about to earn his degree. During his break from school, Wewa gives back to his community by teaching at the local Junior Secondary School.



FARMERS FIELD SCHOOL



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