

INNOVATING PEOPLE: KAMALE VILAGE, ITHUMULA/MALUMA SUB-LOCATION

Mutua Isika, G-C.M Mutiso and Milu Muyanga

In Kamale village lives Mrs. Kavuu Kyalo (Photo 6.4), who can't hide her joy as a result of the sand dam project. "The evidence is all over", she declares. Kavuu plants vegetables (tomatoes and kale) and tree seedlings for sale. She says that she has intensified these activities by a factor of three after the sand dam project. Through selling of vegetables and seedlings, she has managed to buy livestock, build a farm house (see the photo below) worth Ksh 100,000 and meet school fees expenses. "I'm relieved of looking for casual labour to look for money to pay school fees for my children. My



school going children are not send home for school fees nowadays", Kavuu says.

Even though Kavuu's husband, Mzee Kyalo, never attended the training sessions offered by SASOL, Kavuu managed to teach her husband most of what was learnt. The training sessions covered lessons on food budgeting (measuring family annual food requirements, keeping enough food for the household, cooking the right amount of food and selling what is considered a surplus the right time), soil conservation (terracing, tree planting and making compost manure) and sanitation (building toilets and personal cleanliness).

Robert Mwanzia reveals that he is making about Ksh 10,000/= and Ksh 6,000 from vegetable and tree seedling sales during the three dry months. He says as a result of the sand dams, there is prolonged moisture retention by the farms thus increased farm output. John Kimanthi of Kaangweni village shares similar sentiments. He adds that after the training, terracing, water boiling, tree planting and vegetables planting and literacy levels have gone up among some households.

Mr. Kithome Kavivu advised that the training was appropriate for women because the courses cantered on their roles, e.g. food budgeting. It was noted that majority of the participants were men. It is only in Kyangala and Syanduini village where the number of women either equalled or was grater that that of the male counterparts.

Mzee Mutua (Photo 6.3) has 290 banana plants, 120 oranges trees, 100 pawpaws, 40 mango trees, 50 citrus trees and 40 avocado trees. He embarked on this prosperous project after the SASOL training. His estimated annual income from bananas alone translates to Ksh 130,000. Other fruit plants are about to start bearing fruits. Mzee Mutua laments that he greatest challenge will be market for his produce.

We should note that SASOL does not have the capacity to organise extension. As part of the leadership and natural resources training for dam leaders some of the production potential is discussed. It is therefore clear that the innovations in production- utilising the sand dam water- is essentially people driven. What is clear is that once a few people are trained they are able to train

others informally. This way innovative knowledge is passed on to many more people than the ones taking part in the formal SASOL training seminars.



Photo 6.4: Kavuu Kyalo and Family Beside Their Newly Constructed House

It should also be noted that innovations are part and parcel of extensive social and production changes the full extent of which will be documented later. Perhaps part of the change is tied up with new visions and the capacity of local communities to get the message that their own development is in their hands. This is a spin-off of implementing the project in a participatory way. By so doing, SASOL has empowered the communities to design their futures.