

# CLIMATE CHANGE: ADVOCACY INTERVENTIONS IN WESTERN KENYA

**D**espite contributing very little towards the global greenhouse gas emissions, developing countries are bearing the brunt of catastrophic events resulting from changes in the climate. Meager financial resources and low technological capacity further enhance the challenges that developing countries face in their attempts to better adapt to this 'new' global phenomenon.

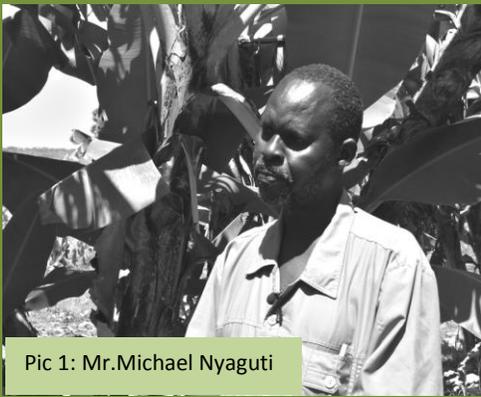
Rural communities are the biggest losers in the wake of climate change, with communities losing livelihoods and lives every passing year. Sectors such as agriculture which support a majority of rural communities are continuously affected by erratic weather patterns, intense floods and prolonged droughts.

Sustainable Environmental Development Watch (SUSWATCH), a Non-Governmental Organization in Kenya, has been working closely with rural communities in the western Kenya counties of Kisumu and Homabay to develop county climate change policies. This would enable the flow of devolved climate finances towards adaptation interventions that have been identified by the communities.

In its activities, the organization has capacity built representatives of community based organizations on county budgets and participation in other county planning meetings such as the development of the 5 year, County Integrated Development plans (CIDPs) and Annual Development Plans. This is to enable the selection and implementation of community focused climate change adaptation projects within the counties.

In addition, communities have been trained on business development strategies, such as community savings, value addition and the adoption of climate smart technologies for agriculture, energy and water.





Pic 1: Mr. Michael Nyaguti

Mr. Michael Nyaguti of Magnam Environmental network, one of SUSWATCH's programme beneficiaries, applauded the efforts that the organization is making to impart knowledge to the communities. "SusWatch Kenya has taken us through trainings on the budget making process, the CIDP and the ADP and these trainings have really boosted participation in county government decision making processes." He said during a brief tour of his farm. "The teachings received in the trainings have also encouraged me to take steps in adapting climate smart agriculture technologies. I now practice mixed farming and cultivate paw paws, bananas, sweet potatoes, vegetables and cassava among other crops. My farm is now a model farm in the community."



Pic 2 and 3: Kales and a paw paw plant at Nyaguti's farm

In addition to their work with the communities, SUSWATCH has had several encounters with county government officials from all scales of the devolved government functions. From the Chief Executive Committee members to the technical officers of relevant departments. They have created awareness on climate change and its impacts, which cuts across all the main economic sectors of the country.



Pic 4: Training session for County government officials in Kisumu

Building on its engagement with the county government, the organization, alongside other key stakeholders and the Directorate of Climate Change of Kisumu County, a climate change bill and policy have been formulated and are ready for tabling at the county assembly after approval by the Executive.

The same efforts have been replicated in Homabay County, with the process of a Homabay County Climate Change policy having been initiated. The county has already established a climate change secretariat and a Climate Change Technical Committee which will spearhead the development of the policy.

The development of these policies will set the stage for the counties to be able to receive and properly utilize County Climate Change funds that come as a prerogative of the Kenya Climate Change Act of 2016.

To boot, the legislations will be advantageous in the counties as they can be used to tap into the global climate funds such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) among other climate funds.

To tackle the climate change debacle, its important that governments, civil society, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders work together in order to help in mitigation and adaptation actions for securing the livelihoods of the Kenyan citizenry.