#### **DIVERSITY EDITION**



The African Biodiversity Network is a regional network of individuals and organisations seeking African solutions to the ecological and socioeconomic challenges that face the continent.



**APRIL-JUNE 2018** 

### **IN THIS ISSUE**

**BIODIVERSITY** Role of diversity at the farm level

NATURAL HEALING The use of ancient methods and traditional seed knowledge

SACRED NATURAL SITES The big ritual ceremony at the Nkunguru sacred natural site by Kithuri clan, Tharaka Kenya

YOUTH AND CULTURE Empowering the youth through organic farming



Earth Jurisprudence is a philosophy of law and human governance that is based on the idea that humans are only one part of a wider community of beings and that the welfare of each member of that community is dependent on the welfare of the Earth as a whole.

# ABN NEWS CONTENTS





Empowering the youth through organic farming



Natural healing: the use of ancient methods and traditional seed knowledge



The big ritual ceremony at the Nkunguru sacred natural site by Kithuri clan, Tharaka Kenya

# Editor's Note

11

Food sovereignty is being threatened by multinational corporations that subjugate the farmer through the promotion of GMOs and related technology. These corporations court policy makers and the government to persuade them to adopt such technologies and cement them into law.



or millennia, African communities have lived together in the spirit of Ubuntu – the brotherhood and sisterhood of communal living. Ubuntu is exhibited in such sayings as 'it takes a village to raise a child' and 'together we stand, united we fall'. In the same vein, it takes a community to support a farmer.

In our Diversity Edition of our ABN Newsletter, we embark on stories that exhibit the Ubuntu spirit. Such stories include a smallholder farmer who practises agroecology in enhancing food sovereignty and securing livelihood for their household. This farmer relies on neighbouring farmers for trade and exchange of seed among other practices. This seed and related knowledge surrounding it has been passed down from one generation to another, building community resilience and strengthening food sovereignty.

Across Africa, food sovereignty is being threatened by multinational corporations that subjugate the farmer through the promotion of GMOs and related technology. These corporations court policy makers and the government to persuade them to adopt such technologies and cement them into law. Alone, the smallholder farmer is at their mercy. However, by joining forces, smallholder farmers can push back against these multi-national corporations in ensuring food sovereignty for their households, their communities and the nation at large.

And what happens when Sacred Natural Sites and Territories are desecrated? Calamities such as sickness, death, floods and famines can befall communities where these sites are located. And when this does happen, community ecological governance systems have to be deployed. These sites must be cleansed to curtail the calamities that have visited the communities. This knowledge is in the custody of community elders. As spiritual leaders of the community, such elders too may be consecrated as healers and diviners to ensure that all is well in their communities. This was the case that led to the big ritual ceremony at the Nkunguru sacred natural site by Kithuri clan, Tharaka Kenya.

As always, we hope that you enjoy your read and welcome any feedback you have.

Karen Nekesa Samukoya Communications and Advocacy Officer, African Biodiversity Network

#### Funded by:









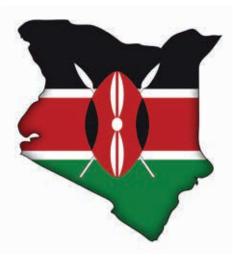
# **Snippets**



#### WHEN COMMUNITIES GOVERN

African communities have had a healthy respect for their natural surroundings since time immemorial. They recognise Mother Earth as the spring from which their abundance flows and revere her. As such, they have set aside sacred sites for their worship of Mother Earth. These sites include mountains, lands, rivers and forests and their access, as sacred sites, is restricted. Such sites have rich biodiversity which has been protected as a result. The governance of these sites is a community affair: from elders as custodians of these sites, to all community members being involved in the rituals that are held here. Ultimately, it is this communal governance that enhances the preservation of these sites.

#### **KENYA AT A GLANCE**



Official name: Republic of Kenya Capital city: Nairobi Area: 582,650 km2 (224,960 sq mi) Population: 45 million Currency: Kshs; KES Internet domain: (.ke) Country prefix: +254 Official languages: English, Kiswahili

The ABN Secretariat is based in Kenya. ABN's partners in Kenya include Institute for Culture and Ecology (ICE), Rural Initiatives Development Programme (RIDEP) and Maendeleo Endelevu Action Program (MEAP)

### ECOLOGY AND FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Ecology is agriculture that is environmental-friendly while food sovereignty ensures ownership of the whole cycle that is agriculture – land, labour, seed, markets and so on – remains with the community. Ecology and food sovereignty are tied at the hip in that one feeds into the other. For example, the practices that ecology advocates for are the very foundation of food sovereignty. These practices include biodiversity, natural breeding, compositing, seed preservation and exchange and inter-cropping.

### **TALKING POINT**

Advocacy and networking remain great tools for sharing information and presenting a united front in achieving a common goal. Now, more than ever, civil society organisations have to speak with one voice regarding some of African's problems especially those that are linked with the well-being linked with the well-being of Africa's population. These include mining, genetic engineering, land grabbing and corporate agriculture.

### INDIGENOUS AND TRIBAL PEOPLES CONVENTION, ARTICLE 3

- Indigenous and tribal peoples shall enjoy the full measure of human rights and fundamental freedoms without hindrance or discrimination. The provisions of the Convention shall be applied without discrimination to male and female members of these peoples.
- 2. No form of force or coercion shall be used in violation of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the peoples concerned, including the rights contained in this Convention.

#### FEEDBACK

Do you have any questions you'd like to ask or comments you'd like to make? We would love to hear from you. Email us at abnsecretariat@africanbiodiversity.org or write to us at African Biodiversity Network P.O. Box 6271-01000 Thika, Kenya. You can also interact with us on our Facebook page at African Biodiversity or follow us on twitter @africanbiodiv

ABN News is published by the African Biodiversity Network. We acknowledge our Partners for contributing articles and stories towards the success of ABN News as a strong advocacy mouthpiece.

## Biodiversity

# Role of Diversity at the farm level

How can households ensure their food security and livelihoods in the advent of global warming and climate change? KARANGATHI NJOROGE takes us on a farm tour where the farmer has integrated agroecology and indigenous food crops as the basis for securing his family's welfare.



aendeleo Endelevu Action Program (MEAP) has been implementing a community livelihood project (CLIP) that promotes agroecological farming and indigenous food crops in Kenya. It is under this project that the organisation implements Community Seed and Knowledge (CSK) activities.

Samson Wachira is one of the farmers involved in agroecological farming. The farmer has diversified his farm by growing a lot of crops and trees as well as raising livestock. An analysis of the crops and trees on his farm established that the following crops and trees were being grown: chilli, amaranth, black night shade, onions, Irish potatoes, Napier grass, pigeon peas, pyrethrum, sorghum, tobacco, cypress trees, grevillea trees, bananas, rosemary, African spinach, goose berries and spider weed. He also keeps dairy cows, dairy goats and indigenous chickens.

The diversity at the farm is important since growing a variety of crops ensure food security at household level; household members have some food that is of good nutrition throughout the year. Some crops fetch better prices compared to others in the market and this ensures that the family earns better income. In the advent of climate change, the household always harvest some produce from the farm despite changes in weather pattern. Some of the crops are drought tolerant and do well with less rain.

Similarly diversity, likewise, reduces the farmer's vulnerability to the global economic crisis since he is not dependent on super markets and other global economic chains/ systems. Rather the farmer accesses all foods and spices from his farm as well as other supplies like milk and meat. Further, the farmer is in control of their seeds and farming hence he is able to produce a variety of foods he needs without external influence since he is able to set his priority enterprises at the farm level.

Livestock, also, contributes significantly to improving the livelihood of the farm household members through provision of milk, manure, meat and money through sale. Manure builds soil fertility and enhances crop production thus, crop and livestock diversity at the farm demonstrates interdependence since the livestock also feed on crops.

Diversity at farm level insulates farmers from being adversely affected by climate change effects. Wachira says that over the last three years, he has developed a calendar for growing crops and that one particular cycle is for growing Irish potatoes and sweet potatoes. He observed that Irish potatoes require a lot of water and do well during the long rains season. On the other hand, sweet potatoes are drought tolerant and, therefore, do well during the short rain seasons.

Wachira makes sure that he grows the Irish potatoes during the long rains season. Towards the end of the season, he establishes sweet potatoes. This cropping cycle ensures that his family gets Irish potatoes during the long rains season and sweet potatoes during the short rains season and hence there is food supply



# 11

The diversity at the farm is important since various crops ensure food security at household level, and ensure the household members have some food that is of good nutrition throughout the year. throughout the year. The other cycle is growing of indigenous vegetables. He plants the vegetables every two weeks. This cycle ensures that the family has vegetables throughout the year.

Another aspect that Wachira considers important is timing. He says that during the seasons, he has established timing for different crops. For example, since few farmers in the area grow pearl millet, he waits for two months after farmers plant their maize and then he plants the pearl millet. By the time the millet produces heads, there is plenty of food for birds and so the millet does not get destroyed by the birds. Of course, different crops have different timing throughout the year in order to tap the ecological and social contexts that would favour the crop. Wachira explains that even livestock requires careful timing as well to tap on opportunities. For example, if calving of the dairy cow coincides with the period when there is a lot of forage, the calf grows fast and gets well-nourished as opposed to when there is less forage since its mother is not well-fed.

Wachira explains that all enterprises on the farm should be located according to how they are related to each other. For example, when constructing livestock pens or zero grazing units, one should consider how manure will be used in the farm. Understanding his relationship supports good planning and ensures efficiency at the farm and utilises space well. When the farm enterprises are laid out on the basis of their relationship, the farmer is able to maximise on production, save time and effectively manage the enterprises with ease.

Diversity at farm level, therefore, not only reduces vulnerability of the household to climate change and makes it more resilient, but it also improves farm livelihood.

#### Karangathi Njoroge

Project Coordinator, Maendeleo Endelevu Action Program



### 11

Diversity at farm level, therefore, not only reduces vulnerability of the household to climate change and makes it more resilient, but it also improves farm livelihood.







Photo: Wachira sharing how he grows a variety of crops and their interdependence. The farmer has diversified his farm by growing a lot of crops and trees as well as livestock.

# **NATURAL HEALING:** The use of ancient methods and traditional seed knowledge

Though often derided as inferior and undermined by the proliferation of fake traditional healers, traditional medicine is as relevant today as it ever has been. Ideally traditional and modern medicine should complement each other. We visit a healer in Benin to discover more.

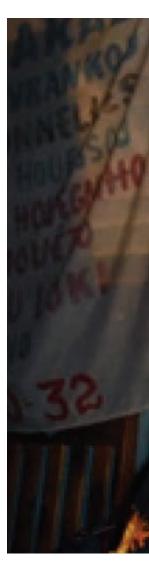
nago Houessou is a traditional healer and herbalist based in Avrankou, Benin. She is sought out by community members who have heard of her powers and skills. Anago became a healer through spiritual election; it is not a role that automatically passes on through generations in the same family. She is considered a Sappiata, a form of divinity, who has been bequeathed healing powers through an ancient tradition, and who can heal people using ancient methods and plants.

Her connection with GRABE-Benin is through the herbs and plants that she uses in her work; she works with the organisation to safeguard and grow some very rare plants that have medicinal qualities. GRABE-Benin also document her work and helps her to be in contact with others, nearly all women, who follow the same path.

Anago lives in a small compound in a semirural area, where plants and herbs grow in abundance, carefully cultivated for their healing qualities. Her knowledge of what will work for what ailment or illness has been built up over many years, augmenting what she originally learned from others who were healers before her.

Anago makes her own medicines, whether they be for internal digestion or for external application. She has a workshop where plants are crushed or ground, and are often mixed with water to form medicines. She also has a consulting room, where patients are diagnosed and treated. She treats people for physical injuries and for many other diseases; for example, she has a particular yellow lotion, made from a variety of seeds, which is used to treat malaria victims.

Anago does not see her role as one of replacing modern healthcare. She feels what she does very much complements doctors and nurses in the local hospital, for example, and she sometimes refers patients to the hospital if she feels they may receive more relevant treatment there. At the same time, the hospital sometimes refers people to her, especially where they are unable to diagnose their ailments.

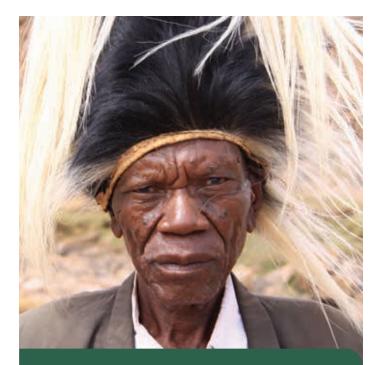


In one case, a man was involved in a traumatic accident which resulted in his leg being crushed. The hospital recommended amputation as the only course of action. Appalled at this prospect, he sought traditional help. After two weeks of receiving regular applications of a herbal balm, his pain ceased, and after two months, he walked again.

There are Sappiata throughout Benin, and Anago has been helped by GRABE-Benin to connect to these traditional healers, and to exchange ideas and methods with them. "I am still learning", she says. There are 22 other women healers in her contact group, all knowledgeable and committed to keeping alive the tradition of using natural methods and plants to treat sick people.

Her role as a traditional healer has given Anago status within her community, but she does not accept any payment for what she does. "My passion is to help people, to cure them; this is my gift, and I must share it with others – that is enough for me". "My passion is to help people, to cure them; this is my gift, and I must share it with others – that is enough for me".





### 21<sup>st</sup> May World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development

### Theme 2018: Towards access to culture for all

The United Nations defines culture as a set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs. The United Nations further notes that culture is at the heart of contemporary debates about identity, social cohesion, and the development of a knowledge-based economy; with three-quarters of the world's major conflicts having a cultural dimension.

The World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development celebrates the plurality of cultures across the globe. It recognises that respect for the diversity of cultures, tolerance, dialogue and cooperation, in a climate of mutual trust and understanding are among the best guarantees of international peace and security.

The day provides us with an opportunity to deepen our understanding of the values of cultural diversity and to advance the four goals of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions adopted on 20 October 2005: support sustainable systems of governance for culture; achieve a balanced flow of cultural goods and services and increase mobility of artists and cultural professionals; integrate culture in sustainable development frameworks; and, promote human rights and fundamental freedoms.



### 22<sup>nd</sup> May International Day for Biological Diversity

### Theme 2018: Celebrating 25 years of action for biodiversity

The International Day for Biological Diversity is purposed to create awareness on issues biodiversity. It takes cognisance of the fact that that though there is growing recognition that biological diversity is a global asset of tremendous value to present and future generations, the number of species is being significantly reduced by certain human activities. The Convention on Biological Diversity is the international legal instrument for "the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources" that has been ratified by 196 nations.

Positive developments regarding biodiversity include adoption of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 whose mission is to "take effective and urgent action to halt the loss of biodiversity in order to ensure that by 2020 ecosystems are resilient and continue to provide essential services, thereby securing the planet's variety of life, and contributing to human well-being, and poverty eradication. To ensure this, pressures on biodiversity are reduced, ecosystems are restored, biological resources are sustainably used and benefits arising out of utilisation of genetic resources are shared in a fair and equitable manner; adequate financial resources are provided, capacities are enhanced, biodiversity issues and values mainstreamed, appropriate policies are effectively implemented, and decision-making is based on sound science and the precautionary approach."

### **5th June World Environment Day**

### Theme 2018: Beat plastic pollution (if you can't reuse it, refuse it)

The World Environment Day encourages worldwide awareness and action for the protection of the environment. First celebrated in 1974, it has expanded to become a global platform for public outreach that is widely celebrated in over 100 countries. The day calls for practically action – as an individual, as a group or as an organisation – to do something that impacts the environment positively.

At the individual level, you can help tackle plastic pollution by saying no to single use plastic such as drinking straws and plastic packaging for soft drinks and drinking water. Instead, carry along a glass soda bottle to exchange for another soda as well as pour the soft drink into a glass instead of using a straw when taking your soda.

The day is hosted is different countries each year, in the course of which the host country's environmental challenges and how to tackle them are addressed. The 2018 event was celebrated in India, with the theme focused on the particularly pressing environmental concern that is plastic pollution.



### 16th June Day of the African child

### Theme 2018: Leave no child behind for Africa's development

The Day of the African Child is commemorated on June 16 of each year. The day is meant to create awareness and advocate for the rights of children in Africa, key among these being education. The day has its origins in the Soweto uprising of 1976. Then, children in Soweto demonstrated to have quality education as well as to be taught in their own languages. The apartheid regime responded by massacring them.

Later, the Organisation of African Unity, the precursor to the African Union, instituted this day to remember those killed and maimed in the Soweto uprising and which occurred on the same date. The 2018 theme is "Leave no child behind for Africa's development." The theme builds on the momentum created by the DAC 2017 theme "The 2030 agenda for sustainable development for children in Africa: Accelerating protection, empowerment and equal opportunity." It does so by emphasising the need to mainstream children's rights in all (Agenda 2030) developmental programmes implemented by Member States.



## Sacred Natural Sites

# The Big Ritual Ceremony at the Nkunguru Sacred Natural Site by Kithuri Clan, Tharaka Kenya.

Desecrating Sacred Natural Sites and Territories can bring calamity to an individual, their family or the whole community. Such calamity includes sickness, death, drought and famines. And should it be found that these sites have been desecrated, communities believe it is imperative that cleansing ceremonies are conducted to ward off calamity. In this, as SIMON MITAMBO narrates, knowledgeable elders lead the community to cleanse these sites.



*uratho* is the moment in Tharaka seasonal calendar when the big rain sets in. *Muratho* in Tharaka language means "start". It marks the start and the beginning of a new year in Tharaka community calendar. In the Gregorian calendar, *Muratho* falls in the month of October (*nyanya*). During this period, Tharaka community experiences full sense of

new life and new beginnings after the long dry spell in August (*muthanthatu*) and September (*mugwanja*). Some plants begin to regenerate while some animals start to demonstrate certain characteristics and behaviour. For instance, certain trees like the baobab and the acacia begin to flower and regenerate while animals and insects like bees travel from the North to the South. The sky is clear during the day and cloudy at night. The territory experiences little rains on the onset of proper *Muratho* rains. These little rains are known as the *mpara migaa*. *Ndinda nkethero* is another little rain that comes during the harvest time. This is how time and space come into play in Tharaka territory.

At the centre of all these, are the ritual ceremonies which form the bedrock



 $(\uparrow)$ 

Photo: Elders play a pivotal role as they lead such rituals as they are knowledgeable about the indigenous knowledge and practices.

of Tharaka customary order. The main ritual is performed at the Sacred Natural Sites and Territories (SNS&T). This ritual is known as *Kuragira Mburi*. The elders of Kithuri clan made a breakthrough in conducting this longawaited ceremony. The Kithuri clan is popularly known in Tharaka as the clan of the spiritual priest. This leader brought people of Tharaka from Mboa; the original home where they were held captives by their enemies, the Nguu Ntuune (red coloured people). This ritual of Kuragira Mburi is sometimes confused with Kwangia Mburi. The two are different. According to Mzee M'Mwenda wa M'Kiriinya, Kuragira Mburi means "sacrifice of a goat". This is directed to cleansing a particular Sacred Natural Site that has been desecrated. On the other side, Kwangia Mburi, means "healing the territory with a goat". This is directed at cleansing the whole territory in readiness to receiving the rains and other gifts from Mother Nature. The elders from Kithuri did Kuragira Mburi. On the material day, six elders went up the rocky Nkunguru Sacred Hill to conduct the ritual ceremony. It had emerged that certain worms were eating and destroying their crops. It was reported that these worms were not being managed even by use of the strongest pesticides. This is how they came to discover that someone had desecrated their Sacred Natural Site.

# Preparations for the ritual ceremony

After the elders had done their investigation and discovered that a man by the name Gakabu wa Karere wa Mainda from Kanjogu clan had desecrated their site through burning, they demanded that he give them a goat for sacrifice as is in accordance with the law of the territory. Gakabu is married to a lady from Kithuri clan, and so he could not give a goat from his shed as this could not be used for sacrifice and so he went to the market to buy one. This goat was presented to the elders. The elders were few in number because the process of doing a ritual of this kind requires adherence to certain dos and don'ts. One of these is to abstain from sex for eight days - four days prior in preparation for the ceremony and another four after the ritual ceremony. The elder who is allowed to conduct the ritual ceremony should come from a particular family within the larger clan. In this case, it was M'Kanamba wa M'Gitonga. This particular kind of a custodian is very knowledgeable on matters of community ecological governance on Sacred Natural Sites and Territories.

# Taking the bull by the horns

For many years in Tharaka, Sacred Natural Sites and Territories went without cleansing after desecrations; one after another. One could tell this through listening to various community dialogues where elders had heated dialogues. The conclusion of these community dialogues pointed to the fact that rain failure and other misfortunes begetting the community were as a result of neglecting the ritual of Kuragira Mburi at their Sacred Natural Sites and Territories. From one community dialogue to another, the elders agreed that a ritual was necessary. According to Mzee M'Mwamba M'Kunyia, "Sacred Natural Sites and Territories are crying up to God for help. God is punishing people with the calamities of drying rivers and frequent droughts and destructive worms."

The Kithuri clan was the first to take the bull by the horns. Two of their Sacred Natural Sites and Territories were desecrated; Nkunguru and Mwambia. This had resulted in the invasion of their crops by strange worms that could not be managed even by use of the strongest pesticides. The whole village was losing their crop harvest due these worms. Nkunguru is in the form of a huge rock while Mwambia is in the form of a thick forest. So far the clan has done a ritual at Nkunguru. Now, what remains is to do another at Mwambia. They see Sacred Natural Sites and Territories as operating in a network. It is only when they have also done a ritual at Mwambia that they will feel things will be well for the community. They had to start with Nkunguru and then go to Mwambia. The process takes time to clarify the process and make the next steps. The other Sacred Natural Site in the network for the Kithuri clan is Kamacundu. This is a peculiar one as the elders never conduct rituals here. Instead the Sacred Natural Site does its own ritual to cleanse itself. It does this by taking an action against whoever desecrates on it. It can even kill and punish on its own.



Photo: Conservation of Sacred Natural Sites and Territories is a communal affair. Members of the ABN had the privilege of attending the ceremony.

(↑)



### **Ritual Performance**

Each clan has its own Sacred Natural Sites and each clan has its own governance system around how they conduct ritual ceremonies. There are certain clans that go it alone while others go with another clan. For instance, Kithuri clan conducts a ritual ceremony on their own while a clan like Gankuyu Bwairi goes with another clan; Kamugemia clan. Gankuyu holds the fore legs while Kamugemia holds the hind legs. What is very critical is that the right steps are followed and respected while doing the rituals on Sacred Natural Sites and Territories. After the ritual ceremony, Kithuri clan uses blood and intestines to put off the ritual fire. The foreleg (Guoko) is eaten by those who participate in the ritual ceremony. A he goat or a lamb of one colour is used for the ritual ceremony. Conducting ritual ceremonies at the Sacred Natural Sites and Territories still remain as something that requires deeper community dialogues that will take time for different clans. Those ahead like the Kithuri clan will remain as an inspiration to others. Some clans have already been inspired to conduct ritual ceremonies. They are doing community dialogues in readiness for the rituals.

#### Simon Mitambo

General Co-ordinator, African Biodiversity Network (ABN)

## Youth & Culture

# Empowering the youth through organic farming

There is unity in strength. This seems to be the story of a group of youth who started an association to produce organic vegetables. HUSSAIN ENDRIS narrates how ISD empowered them to change their lives.

We are children of farmers. We have completed secondary education up to Grade 10. Since we didn't obtain the pass mark to allow us continue with higher education, we started working with our parents on traditional farming. It was in December 2012 that Alemayehu from the Institute for Sustainable Development (ISD) came to me and a friend of mine. He explained that the place we lived in was very suitable to produce vegetables. He advised us to form and work in an association. We took his advice and formed a group of 12 youth in our village who were not addicted to Khat or cigarettes.

After that ISD facilitated training for us at Hote Secondary School in Dessie. Then we started a saving account with 2,250 birr as the initial deposit and which was raised from all 12 members from the per diem we got from the training. ISD staff then came to all our homes and convinced our parents to give us land so that we could all work on it. They taught us about modern agriculture and compost preparation and use. ISD also took us on several experience sharing visits in different parts of the country.

We also learned about different techniques in agriculture. We encountered several challenges when we started producing organic vegetables. Yet, once we got used to organic agriculture we became very productive. Before ISD introduced vegetable production we only produced maize twice a year. Now, thanks to the different production and farming techniques we learned we also produce vegetables.

Our youth group has been given space in Haike Town to display and sell its produce. Consumers don't know the difference between organic vegetables and non-organic ones. As a result, the price of both products is the same. In addition, since we sell our produce in a shop, consumers assume it's expensive. Now, as a solution to this marketing problem, ISD has helped us create links with distributors and hotels.

After seeing our success, ISD mobilised another organic vegetable producing group of 11 youths. We have benefited a lot working in associations. We now have ease of access to more farmland and even financial credit to extend our work. In the future we plan to increase our vegetable produce distribution in Haike Town and even reach markets in Addis Ababa. We now have 20,000 birr (1,000 USD) in our savings account.

ISD is like a second parent to me. I am happy I learned so many farming practices from different parts of Ethiopia. I appreciate the ISD staff for their motivation and relentless efforts to help us improve. They have shown us how we can use natural means of preventing pests, improving crop productivity and much more. We, in turn, have shared this knowledge with farmers in our community. I wish ISD would grow from being 20 to 40 years old and more.



Hussain Endris Chairman, Haike Estena Organic Vegetable and Fruit Producers Youth Association

# THINK GREEN

"Agroecology improves resilience to climate change. Climate change means more extreme weather-related events. The use of agroecological techniques can significantly cushion the negative impacts of such events, for resilience is strengthened by the use and promotion of agricultural biodiversity at ecosystem, farm system and farmer field levels, which is materialised by many agroecological approaches."

- Olivier De Schutter Former UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food.

**PRINCIPLES EDITION** 

JULY - SEPTEMBER 2017

The African Biodiversity Network is a regional network of individuals and organisations seeking African solutions to the ecological and socio-economic challenges that face the continent.

### Matters of Principle Guiding our way through challenging times

### ALSO

REGIONAL CENTRES: The way forward for ABN?

ΔRN

MYSTICAS: A new start to the day

SAYING NO TO PLASTIC Can EJ find answers to the challenges of our plastic addiction?

ECOLOJAH: a school with an eco-heart



Visit and download our other publications on our website <u>www.africanbiodiversity.org/publications</u>



@AfricanBiodiv

 $\square$ 

