

"Nourishing Our Donkeys: A New Era of Care in Central Sakwa"



“In Gombe and Maranyona Villages, Bondo Sub-County, a quiet revolution is happening—donkeys are finally being recognized for their essential role in households. Traditionally, donkeys here would fend for themselves, grazing on whatever they could find as they worked tirelessly, even resorting to eating dust or trespassing into farms. Nutritious food for donkeys was unheard of. In this semi-arid region of Siaya County, crops like Napier grass were reserved solely for cattle and other livestock.

However, change is underway thanks to STIPA’s intervention. As part of the local self-help group Punde Nyalo SHG with a membership of 37 people, we have come to realize how critical proper care for donkeys is. As the secretary of the group I think the training on the Five Animal Welfare Domains, we have been able to learn that donkeys, like all animals, deserve proper shelter, nutrition, and socialization. They are not just beasts of burden; they are vital contributors to our livelihoods.

STIPA’s did a survey that revealed a very big gap in donkey nutrition. STIPA in collaboration with a representative from Bondo Sub - County Crops department took us through the planting and maintenance process for Rhodes grass since it is a drought resistance crop. Challenged by the training, our group members decided to use our vast bare lands that are never used to plant Rhodes Grass. Two farmers offered their land for planting for demonstration purposes. Due to heavy rains in the past season, one farm was completely flooded and therefore we planted utilized one acre farm where we were able to harvest 11 bales of grass, each weighing 25 kilograms from the first cutting. We now expect a better harvest in the second harvest from the ratoons that look really good. This marks the first time in our community that a deliberate effort has been made to ensure donkeys have a continuous source of nutritious food.

Now, we have a secure food supply stored in our hay barn supported Brooke East Africa and STIPA, not just for donkeys, but for other livestock as well. This initiative has inspired every donkey owner in the group to plant grass at the household level, ensuring that all donkeys in the community receive the care and nutrition they deserve.” Pauline narrated.

Photos of the Fodder Production Process



Planting of the Rhodes Grass in March 2024



Pulling of weeds from the Farm



Field visit to the Farm



Cutting of the Fodder



A member tying the grass for transportation



Load of Fodder on a cart