



## **Promoting Donkey Care and Protection through Donkey Friendly Homes (DFH) initiative in Kitui County**

For a long time, donkeys have been neglected or given a very low profile in several spheres of animal husbandry practices (proper nutrition, veterinary attention and housing) as compared to other domestic animals i.e., cattle, goats, sheep and chickens despite their immense socio-economic contribution. These makes the animal underprivileged with limited provision of best care and protection, ranging from lack of proper veterinary attention, prolonged working hours, poor feeding and watering and lack of proper housing thus exposing them to adverse weather conditions, attack by wild animals (predators) and Theft.

Caritas targets a self-sustained intervention on **donkey care and protection**; where animal husbandry, best welfare practice and protection measures are adopted. To advance this Caritas Kitui launched a campaign initiative dumped Donkey Friendly Home (DFH), officially unveiled by Kitui County Deputy Governor Hon. Dr. Wathe Nzau. This initiative targets to ensure a **safe, secure and welfare friendly home** for donkeys as other livestock.

The approach targets household transformation where each member takes his/her role in donkey care and protection thus donkey friendly home (equal participation for all). There has been a critical gap where women have only been given a sole role as donkey care givers assisted by children. With DFH the Women, Men, Boys and Girls are encouraged to play a role on care giving by being compassionate to animal needs. Thus, making it friendly home for animal.

The basis for the initiative requires owners to construct a shelter for donkey(s) with a feeding and watering amenities using the locally available materials. In addition, adopt all basic husbandry and care practices on animal welfare (Ecto Management, wound management, proper harnessing and tethering practice) through use of Mentorship framework for the groups. The shelter serves to ensure that donkey is protected from adverse weather conditions, attack by wild animals and any attempted theft. In addition, the feeding and watering trough ensure access to better nutrition for animals.

At pilot stage media popularization has been conducted through local radio stations. This has been through One talk show conducted (county FM), production of pamphlets and direct community awareness creation at group level.



Donkey Friendly  
Home flyer.pdf

The current uptake on the initiative shows a positive reception whereby on scale-up Caritas Kitui target to make the initiative competitive and participatory across Kitui county through media

engagement and formulation of awarding system for the best farmers on Donkey Care and Protection at household level.

Caritas supported **8 groups with 10 iron sheets each**, in order to construct a model shelter for learning at group level and the at least 2 members construct one at household level. The group contribution was through provision of **fitos and labor work for the construction**.

### Success

Caritas Start up targeted 24 shelters to be constructed over a period of 3 months (Q4). Over 46 have been done where groups have bought the additional iron sheets with full labor work and materials still being contributed by group members. The 8 groups have started a merry go round on shelter construction an initiative that will see all members having shelter for animals.

Caritas Kitui targets to this holistic approach; addressing more than one welfare and husbandry gaps while integrating the protection to ensure sustainable intervention on donkey welfare and protection. Popularization and awarding system for best donkey care Champions to be adopted for donkey owners who excel on this.

The administration is appreciating the initiative and the approach as well though and targeted for transformation. Thus, Caritas will work with local administration on scale up for the Pilot in Mwingi West and North.



Figure 1: Donkey owners/users following proceedings during Donkey Convention Forum on Husbandry and launch of Donkey friendly homes 9th Dec.2021 at Musila Gardens-Mwingi Central Subcounty.



Figure 2: Chief guest and Deputy Governor Kitui County Dr Wathe Nzau making his opening remarks during Donkey Convention Forum on Husbandry and launch of Donkey friendly homes 9th Dec.2021 at Musila Gardens-Mwingi Central Subcounty.



Figure 3: Mwingi West sub county OCPD making remarks on the role of security organs in the safeguarding the donkeys during Donkey Convention Forum on Husbandry and launch of Donkey friendly homes on 9th Dec.2021 at Musila Gardens-Mwingi Central Subcounty.



Figure 4: The official launch of donkey friendly homes by the Deputy Governor Dr. Nzau Wathe on 9th Dec.2021 at Musila Gardens-Mwingi Central Subcounty.



Figure 5: A model Donkey friendly home constructed by a donkey owner through Caritas Kitui support in Thitani-Mwingi west.



Figure 6: Mary Musili from Twiyike women group in Mwingi central checking on her donkey from a model shelter constructed with support from her fellow group members, an adoption to community Donkey protection initiative (DFH).