**Milimani Notes**

The project manager’s name is Ruben. The women’s group consists of roughly 20 farmers. Milimani provides produce for much of Wamba. Crops include: Sweet potatoes (over 100,000 with a variety from India), Bananas, Kale, leeks, radish, cabbage, spinach, Aloe Vera tree, potatoes, tomatoes, Bee Hives to produce honey and many more.

Irrigation:

American donor Ernie B. supplied tanks and piping system. TSP provided the well. The well has also been enhanced with a pump and generator which always the water to be pumped from underground into the three holding tanks. The addition of the pump and the generator has increased the yield of the well to the point where it would be able to supply water for all of Wamba. The system they use is composed of tubing that is directly linked to the irrigation tubs. They use drip irrigation because it uses the least amount of water. There is a cheaper version being promoted by the government that is composed of a refillable tub with four attached drip tubes for the price of 500 ksh (about $6.50). Each tube would water 25 plants making for a total of 100 plants. The bucket would need to be filled once a day and it would give 20 liters of water. This is being marketed to people who do not have access to the generator and pump and who would be irrigating separate plots of land outside of Milimani.

Division of Land

Each farmer has their own plot and reaps the profits from their own plot. They also must buy their own seeds. A small portion of the land (roughly 1/3) is being set aside for the profits to go purely to groups savings. The project income for the coming year with the Farm Management Plan is 4 million Ksh (approx $52,000). Surplus funds are deposited into savings accounts at a bank in Isiolo (3 hours from Wamba). There is a group account as well as individual accounts. Initially people contributed 40-50% of their earnings to the group account. Group funds are used to invest in Milimani to pay for things such as: watchmen, fuel, seeds, equipment, etc.

Sustainability

Although the well has been intregral to the women’s group, it relies on multiple sources of water: rains, river, well. The people like to use the river water to water their plants when possible (right after rains) because there are lower mineral levels in the water which is better for agriculture, but for most of the year the rely on water pumped from the well to water their plants. The group uses manure rather than fertilizer because not only is it less expensive, but is also better for the soil. Fertilizer leeches when the rains come. They also use small tools and practice shallow tilling because there is very little topsoil and underneath it is all rock.

Day of Visit

Upon our visit farmers from around Wamba had come to learn agricultural techniques and water conservation from Milimani. They were forging partnerships with people such as the head of the District Ministry of Agriculture. A variety of ministry members had come to demonstrate cheap agricultural tools to the potential new farmers. The ministry was also awarding Ruben a bike because Milimani had been named the most successful farm in all of Samburu. A coalition of people (government, local, NGO) are working to use Milimani as a model for farming in the Samburu region. Some communities have already sent delegates to come and look and the processes being used at Milimani and learn how they can adapt them in their own communities.

\*See Flip videos for the personal stories of two women working at Milimani.