

Schools Feted for Emerging Top in Tree Planting Challenge in Arid and Semi-Arid Areas



PRESS RELEASE

Ielanthi, Kakunike and Ndelekeni Primary Schools Feted for Emerging Top in Tree Planting Challenge in Arid and Semi-Arid Areas.

- Mulching, drip irrigation, weeding and intercropping some of the innovations applied by students to ensure high-survival rates, amidst harsh climatic conditions.
- Green Initiative Challenge also launches Sixth Phase, bringing on board 100 more schools from Embu, Machakos and Kitui Counties.

Machakos, Feb 28th 2020: Ielanthi, Kakunike and Ndelekeni Primary Schools have today, been recognised as the top three schools that excelled in Phase IV of the Green Initiative Challenge (GIC) schools greening programme. Ielanthi Primary School, Machakos County, emerged top while Kakunike Primary School, Kitui County came second. At position three was Ndelekeni Primary School in Machakos County.

The Schools Green Initiative Challenge (GIC) is a programme that targets schools around the 7-Forks power stations in Embu, Kitui and Machakos counties, to raise environmental awareness and create an involvement of schools and students in improving their environment through a participatory and rewarding initiative.

In her speech during the award ceremony held at Ielanthi Primary School, KenGen PLC's CEO & MD, Mrs. Rebecca Miano lauded the efforts of the winning schools saying, " As we celebrate our achievements in GIC it is important to note that positive environmental actions serve to renew our commitment as KenGen, and our goodwill towards sound environmental management at all levels".

The project is designed as a challenge to participating schools, mainly due to the dry weather conditions in the areas, with prizes awarded based on the highest survival rate of seedlings and use of innovation with the best performing schools standing to benefit from education scholarships, infrastructural development, water tanks and rainwater-harvesting, and cash awards, among others. This encourages school children and communities to sustainably manage the woodlots, which provides the schools with renewable sources of wood fuel, reducing pressure on surrounding vegetation and forest resources.

Implemented by Kengen Foundation, Better Globe Forestry and Bamburi Cement, GIC is a 10 year program that targets to enrol 1,000 schools and greening a total of 460 acres with 324,300 tree seedlings as well as 113,956 fruit seedlings (passion and pawpaw). The programme also includes 2 capacity building sessions per year for all participating schools and comt Monitoring and Evaluation sessions per year.

The Phase IV Awards are a culmination of activities that began in 2018, with the enrolment of 100 schools from the three counties.

Mr. Joshua Choge, the Chairman of KenGen PLC emphasised the energy producer's commitment to environmental conservation through afforestation.

“KenGen as a company is committed to environmental conservation and has put substantial resources to sustainably safeguard the environment it shares with other communities at around areas of operations and the country at large.

It is with this in mind that the company continues to invest in long-term programs such as the GIC, which is dedicated to environmental conservation by promoting a tree planting culture with particular emphasis to the school children, who are indeed, the transformational agents for a better environment.”

During the Award Ceremony, the partners also announced the launch of GIC Phase VI, which brings on board 100 schools from Kitui, Machakos and Embu Counties. This addition brings to 600 the number of schools participating in the project since its launch in 2015. As part of the Phase VI activities, 100 “Green Teachers” and 100 Headmasters from the 100 recruited schools underwent a capacity building training on managing and nurturing their woodlots in various centres across the three counties.

“Bamburi Cement’s commitment to environmental sustainability is unwavering. We have dedicated extensive resources to environmental restoration, conservation, education and awareness. We are proud of some of the work we have done as demonstrated through our world-class environmental restoration showcases Bamburi Haller Park and Bamburi Forest Trails in Mombasa, as well as through collaborations with like-minded organizations like KenGen and Better Globe Forestry to execute sustainable environmental initiatives like the Green Initiative Challenge,” said Bamburi Cement Managing Director Seddiq Hassani.

Participating schools plant drought resistant - multi-purpose Senna siamea (Muveshi), Melia volkensii (Mukau) and Terminalia brownii (Muuku) tree seedlings on their specially designated 0.5 to 1 acre plots. Once maintained, the trees accord the schools an opportunity to diversify their income through sale of timber as well as non-timber products.

The KenGen Foundation Managing Trustee Anthony Igecha congratulated the winning schools saying, “The GIC is just one of the environmental projects that the Foundation implements with partners Bamburi Cement Ltd., and Better Globe Forestry. Our efforts are now bearing fruit as we expand to West Pokot and Turkana counties with an extension of the GIC with other partners. “

The ultimate goal of the GIC is to raise the awareness and participation of school children in environmental conservation and ultimately increase the country’s forest cover from the current 7% to 10% that is recommended by United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP).

The project will also contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gases through carbon sequestration, and the control soil erosion by increasing topsoil infiltration and reducing run-off.

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GIC Project Partners

About the KenGen Foundation

The KenGen Foundation was established by KenGen in 2012 to serve as the vehicle for up-scaling its Corporate Social Investment (CSI) programs. KenGen has been involved in Corporate Social Responsibility activities, specifically targeting communities living in

areas neighbouring its installations. This corporate effort has been driven by KenGen's commitment to being a responsible corporate citizen and its belief in adding value to the livelihoods of targeted communities by establishing relationships and implementing sustainable community projects. The effort has also been encouraged by the company's realization that it cannot operate in isolation from the environment around it.

About Better Globe Forestry Foundation

Better Globe Forestry Ltd focuses on poverty reduction through massive tree-planting and sustainable agricultural programs, microfinance schemes, educational programs and water supply for rural communities. It also publishes Miti, The Tree Business Magazine for Africa. Better Globe Forestry have established themselves as the leader in dry land afforestation. Through use of innovation and careful selection of correct tree species, they have established forests in semi-arid areas of Kitui and Lamu counties.

About Bamburi Cement Limited

Bamburi Cement Limited, a subsidiary of LafargeHolcim, and is the leading cement manufacturing and marketing company in the Eastern Africa region, having been operational for 63 years. It has three subsidiaries: Hima Cement Ltd (Uganda), Bamburi Special Products Ltd and Lafarge Ecosystems Ltd.

More information is available on Bamburi Cement Group website www.lafarge.co.ke

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