

# Take it off



Anthony Igeche.

## GREEN AGENDA

The KenGen Green Initiative has greatly improved schooling for students in Kitui and Embu schools, as well as taught them environmental conservation

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Green is a colour of growth and rebirth. It renews and restores depleted energy. One reliable source of green is that of trees and some schools in Kitui and Embu; arid and semi-arid areas, are testament to how growing of trees in their schools has made an indelible positive difference to their environment.

The trees have not only added to the beauty of the school, but also created a more conducive environment to learn. The schools, which are beneficiaries of Green Initiative Challenge (GIC) under the KenGen Foundation Environment Pillar boasts of woodlots with more than 13,000 trees. In November 2013, KenGen Foundation took up the model of the GIC from the Ministry of Education and Kenya Forestry Services.

As a way of inculcating a culture of afforestation and conservation of natural resources in schools, KenGen Foundation donated 24,000 tree seedlings to schools in Embu and Kitui counties in the first phase of the project, which have transformed the initially brown topography into green. "The GIC has not only transformed the schools, but also the community. People in the area now view the schools as little havens because their homes are still dry and even want to take their goats to graze there

## Planting life into kids' hearts



### ABOUT THE GIC PROJECT

- Phase 2 of GIC project targets 919 schools in 10 years. The project is implemented in phases of two years, after which the winners of the challenge are awarded.
- KenGen is partnering with Bamburi Cement, Better Globe and Kenya Forestry Services.
- 120 million has been invested in GIC project's phase 2.
- The project donated 300 commercial tree seedlings and 104 fruit seedlings (Pawpaw and yellow passion) in Phase 1.

since the grass cover has grown significantly," says Anthony Igeche, a senior programmes officer at KenGen Foundation, on how the trees have improved the aesthetics of the schools.

*Cassia Siamea*, a unique species of tree that grows fast, is one of the two species of trees introduced to the schools. The tree also serves as a source of fuel that conserves the environment, since its branches can be cut for fuel without necessarily felling the trees.

Cognizant of the fact that these

areas are dry and keeping trees alive would be a daunting task, KenGen Foundation designed the project as a challenge. As a way of motivating the schools to participate, the foundation awards schools with the highest survival rate and those that exhibit a high level of innovation in caring for the trees with cash awards, trips for the students and water tanks.

The success of the first phase, through a tree survival rate of 55 per cent, acted as a great motivational factor to upscale the project, leading to the launch of Phase two in November 2015. Phase two has now extended to Kitui County adding up to 120 schools participating in the project from the three counties.

The schools not only benefit from commercial trees, but also fruit seedlings from which they earn money through the sale of fruits. According to Igeche, the communities have embraced the programme, making the foundation consider involving the communities in tree planting by introducing family woodlots in their homes. According to a World Bank report, Kenya's forest cover as at 2015 was 7.8 per cent, making the country one of the lowest ranked. Igeche urges more corporates to engage in initiatives that will help boost the countries' forest cover and mitigate the adverse effects of climate change. To him nothing is more inspiring than seeing an area entirely transformed. "These children will become environment ambassadors in future, by investing in them through inculcating environmental awareness, we are sure to have a bright one," says Igeche.

DIY:  
CASH IN TRASH  
WITH Faith Chebet @chebetkorir

## Easy to make DIY gifts for him

Shopping for men can be hard and sometimes a shop gift just doesn't send the perfect message. Instead of buying something from the gift shop or anywhere else, try and make your own unique gift. It's cheaper and you can add your own creativity.

### Mustache bag

Dress up a boring ceramic mug with a cheeky mustache that brings some character to his morning coffee. All you needs is a plain mug, a sharpie, a mustache stencil and a porcelain paint pen, which you can find at most craft stores.

### Custom wear

With a little help you can create a totally unique shirt. This can be a family project; encourage kids to get creative with their drawings, or have them write the classic messages such as, "I love you dad."

### Wine bowtie present

Add a quirky finishing touch to your gift by sticking a bowtie to the wrapped present. It's an easy addition that makes a huge difference.

### Recycled cardboard desk organiser

Cut three tubes into different heights. Cover each tube with wrapping paper. Glue three together, (two tall ones for pens and pencils and one short one for paper clips). Cut a heart shape out of cardboard large enough to cover the bottoms of the three tubes. Cover the heart with decorative paper. Glue the heart to the bottom of the three tubes.

### Alphabet photo frame

Choose magnetic letters. Cut the shape of a heart out of a piece of cardboard the same size as the letters. Glue photo on cardboard. Cut an additional heart out of felt. Cut the inner section of the heart out to create the frame. Glue letters and heart together. Letters should be level to allow it to stand on a desk.



## News brief

### Kenya among top nations in green power

Kenya has developed the fourth largest geothermal energy in the world, putting the country among top green energy economies. The latest *Renewables Global Status* report shows that the amount of geothermal energy in

Kenya's national grid expanded to a total of 600 megawatts (MW) by the end of 2015. Geothermal energy now accounts for over a quarter of the country's total power capacity of 2,333MW. Turkey set up the largest geothermal

capacity of 159MW last year, followed by United States (71MW), Mexico (53MW) and Kenya (20MW) at fourth position. Japan came in fifth having added 7MW of steam energy to its power matrix while Germany was sixth (6MW).

Kenya is ranked as the eighth largest producer of geothermal electricity in the world. The country has an untapped potential of 10,000MW of steam energy in its Rift Valley basin where a series of exploration works are ongoing. -allafrica.com