

Regional Authorities.

January 17, 2012

Regional Development Authorities should focus on research and feasibility studies to identify viable investment opportunities in their areas of jurisdiction and realign development plans to value addition and agri - processing to provide ready markets for small scale producers instead of competing with them, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Regional Development Eng. Carey Orege has said.

In a speech read at the official opening of a meeting to review a report on best practices within the RDAs, the Permanent Secretary noted that after initial successes of projects that have benefited Kenyans, Regional Development Authorities seem to have lost focus and instead digressed to areas covered by other institutions as well as programmes of socio- dimensions in nature.

These he said, had reduced the stature of RDAs as opposed to the role designed by the government through the various Acts of Parliament of transforming the regions into vibrant economic blocks by mobilizing host communities in making optimal use of natural resources unique to their regions.

The Permanent Secretary called on RDAs to finalize their resource mapping to guide the Counties within their regions on integrated development, adding that if properly handled, it would firmly anchor RDAs in a unique niche both nationally and in the Counties for the development of master plans and as information resource banks.

He said the Ministry of Regional Development Authorities is improving its staff strength in the Directorate with a view to enhancing its capacity in technical backstopping and supervision.

He said the Ministry had also provided support in areas such as restructuring to enhance efficiency and quality of service. He called on RDAs to implement the programme saying unless managerial and technical capacities were competitively achieved; implementation of desired programmes and projects would not be realized.

He said the Ministry had vigorously campaigned for enhancement of its budget to benefit RDAs and they should rise up and claim their space especially in the implementation of flagship projects identified in support of vision 2030.

The Regional Development Authorities were established between 1974 and 1985 with the mandate to spur regional socio-regional development thorough sustainable utilization and conservation of natural resources by planning, development and implementation as well as co ordinating integrated basin based programmes and projects, such envisaged development included provision of hydropower, water supplies for irrigation, domestic and industrial use, flood control as well as environmental conservation.

ENDS.

TARDA

January 17,. 2012

Tana and Athi Rivers Development Authority (TARDA) should exploit its resources to facilitate development in their areas of jurisdiction, The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Regional Authorities Eng. Carey Orege has said.

“You have a lot of resources and if properly utilized, you could become one of the richest parastatals in the country “, said the Permanent Secretary.

The government, he said, was determined to promote equitable development in the country and would through the Regional Development Authorities promote projects aimed at poverty reduction among various communities countrywide.

He noted that the new Tana Delta Irrigation Project (TDIP) guest house in Garsen was a unique investment and when completed, could attract high spending tourists to the area, generating income to sustain the Authority’s projects.

Speaking at the signing of TARDA’s performance contract for 2011/2012 in his office, the Permanent Secretary challenged the Management to mobilize funds from development partners and streamline their projects for the sake of development.

He asked TARDA to set achievable targets and pledged the Ministry’s support to enable the Authority to attain its goals.

“Your failure will be our failure and we shall therefore make follow ups to ensure you meet your targets”, he said.

He advised TARDA to obtain title deeds for their land to secure their investments and avoid confusion over land ownership in the wake of the new political dispensation including transition to the County governments.

He asked the management to consider reviewing salaries of dedicated employees to boost their morale and seek community support through Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives including provision of scholarships to needy students in schools near their projects.

Acting TARDA Managing director Mr. Peter Bwogero disclosed that plans are under way to establish an emergency fodder project in drier areas to provide hay to farmers during drought.

He disclosed that TARDA had deployed a new manager to Masinga tourist resort to streamline the facility after years of neglect. The new team he said had turned the project from a loss to a profit making venture, recording full bookings during the Christmas holidays The facility which is located at Masinga Hydropower dam site has a capacity of 54 self contained rooms plus 120 tented quarters. It is mainly used by local institutions to run workshops.

Ends.