

Dr. Eusebius Juma Mukhwana

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PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATE FOR KANDUYI CONSTITUENCY



Dr. EJ. Mukhwana (R) admires new maize variety: He has the agricultural development of Kanduyi at heart. Vote him in for great changes!



Dr. Eusebius Juma Mukhwana was born on 1st August, 1965 in Kibabii village, Kanduyi Division, Bungoma District, Western Kenya. He is the 8th born child of the late Thomas Mukhwana Wanyonyi and Annah Namarome. His siblings include Jordina Mutori (teacher), the late William Simiyu (teacher), Mary Nyongesa (Development Worker) Eng. John Situma (Engineer), Matthew Murunga (teacher) the late Euphrasia Nyongesa, Alice Wafula (Accountant), Ignatius Wangila (teacher), Mariam Yusuf (Secretary), Videlis Nangekhe (Secretary), Isaac Opicho (Accountant), among others. Mzee Thomas Mukhwana had 5 wives with 30 children.

Dr. Mukhwana went to Kibabii village school from 1973 to 1980 where he sat for the Certificate of Primary Education (CPE), which he passed very well with 33 points out of the possible 36. He then joined Kibabii High School for his secondary school education between 1981 and 1984 when he sat for the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) which he passed with distinction (division one). While in Secondary School, he loved Basketball, Wildlife Conservation and Agriculture. He was a school prefect from form one to form four. He also grew his own food crops at school and at home as was expected of agriculture students.

During the school holidays, Dr. Mukhwana spend much of his time working on his father's numerous farms (ploughing, weeding, harvesting) and looking after cattle. He had a very keen interest in Animal Health from a very early age. After his 'O' levels, he remained in Kibabii High School to pursue his Advanced Level studies (KACE) in Mathematics, Biology and Chemistry between 1985 and 1986. He got 3 principals in all the subjects and a Subsidiary in General Paper. In his academic work, Dr. Mukhwana was greatly influenced by the earlier

success of his elder brothers especially John and Matthew who had proceeded to university to study Engineering and Education respectively, after their secondary level studies. In 1986, he underwent a 3 months' training at the National Youth Service College at Gilgil where he learnt among other skills, physical fitness, military drills, discipline, National Development and Combat. While at the University, he served as the Chairman of the Bungoma University Students Association (BUSA).

He later proceeded to the University of Nairobi's College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences to pursue a Bachelor's Degree in Veterinary Medicine between 1987 and 1991. He graduated in 1991 with a distinction in Veterinary Medicine (BVM) and was immediately enrolled into a Master's Degree program in Pharmacology and Toxicology in the same university.

In 1993, he graduated with a Distinction in the Master's Degree (MS.c) in Pharmacology and Toxicology. After graduating, he was employed as a Veterinary Officer with the Food and Agricultural Research Management (FARM-Africa), a British Charity in Samburu and Marsabit districts of Northern Kenya. While there, he developed a keen interest in helping poor people in vulnerable circumstances owing to the difficult nature of the arid environment in Northern Kenya. He learnt that if pastoral communities living in the arid and barren areas of Kenya can survive and fend for themselves, then his own people of Western Kenya with fertile land and abundant rainfall should be living a rich life - since it was some kind of heaven compared to the latter. But this had never been the case for a long time. The people of Western Kenya were wallowing in poverty with rampant food insecurity and high levels of malnutrition. About 60% of the people lived below the poverty line (earn one dollar per day). The work in Northern Kenya opened his eyes to the plight of his own people – high levels of poverty, hunger, malnutrition and exploitation by middlemen in the market place.

In 1995, he left FARM-Africa and joined the Manor House Agricultural Centre in Kitale as its Executive Director. Manor House trains farmers and School leavers on how to use Sustainable Organic Agriculture to

improve farm productivity. In 1997, Dr. Mukhwana joined Moi University as a Lecturer in Pharmacology and Toxicology in the faculty of Health Sciences, but his heart was not here, it was with the farmers. In 1998, he decamped from the white lab coats and Ivory Tower of the university to go back to where he always belonged – the farm lands. A year earlier in 1997, he had helped found the Sustainable Agriculture Centre for Research, Extension and Development in Africa (SACRED-Africa), whose main purpose was to work with farmers to improve their agricultural productivity, food security and income. Dr. Mukhwana is the founder Director of SACRED-Africa.

In the next 8 years, he steered SACRED-Africa into a reputable and formidable agricultural NGO in Western Kenya, employing more than 30 people and had developed its own training, research and demonstration facilities on the outskirts of Bungoma town. SACRED-Africa has been in the fore front of championing the rights of small-scale farmers especially policies that hinder their growth and development. It has also helped them to adopt new soil fertility improving technologies and improvement of the marketing of their produce while protecting and enhancing the environment.

During his career, Dr. Mukhwana has published over 30 papers in reputable journals and written many books in the area of helping small scale farmers to improve their lives. In 2003, he was declared “Man of the Year” by the American Biographical Institute for his outstanding contribution to the development of humanity. In 2004, he received a Head of State Commendation (HSC) from His Excellency Hon. Mwai Kibaki the president of Kenya for his “distinguished role of championing the course of poor small scale farmers in Kenya”. Dr. Mukhwana is currently the chairman of the African Agricultural NGOs Network with its headquarters in Ghana. He is also the chairman of Nzoia Water Services Co. Ltd. (a giant company that treats and supplies water and sanitation services) to four towns in Western Kenya namely: Kitale, Bungoma, Webuye and Kimilili, all with a total population of 600,000 people. He is a member of trustees of Sang'alo Institute of Science & Technology, the Kenya Agricultural Research Institute, Kimukung'i, Bukembe and Khachonge secondary schools.

Dr. Mukhwana is married to Lucia Jemutai, a daughter of a prominent farmer from Uasin Gishu district near Eldoret (Mzee Arap Sang' (Kendelo). They have four children: Ian Wafula, Tony Wekesa, Pauline Naliaka and Alex Wanyonyi. In 1993, Dr. Mukhwana started Nomadic Veterinary Services in Bungoma and Ngong towns. This was his way of practicing what he preaches – that the people of Western Kenya can establish and manage profitable business enterprises.

Dr. Mukhwana has had a distinguished career in the rural areas using his vast knowledge and skills to help small scale farmers to improve their lives. In his own words, “His role has been that of waking up his people to grab opportunities that have helped them to improve their own lives”. These efforts have yielded extra ordinary results and have made Dr. Mukhwana one of the most influential people in the region in the recent times. In 2006 he started SACRED Training Institute which teamed up with Moi University to bring the first ever University campus to Bungoma District. He has dedicated much of his work to his parents, the late Mzee Thomas Mukhwana and Mama Annah Namarome for their foresightedness in education, success and achievements, a thing that has been a source of great inspiration to their children and the Basakali clan (to which Dr Mukhwana belongs) over the years.

MY VISION FOR KANDUYI

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES FOR KANDUYI CONSTITUENCY

1. Roads and Infrastructure

1.1 Many of the constituency roads are impassable during the rain seasons. Some of the bridges and culverts are absent or have been washed away during the rain season, hence cutting off communication. The poor road network has hindered agricultural production and marketing as well as effective provision of social services.

1.2 Most market centres in the constituency do not have electricity, which in turn has inhibited the development of industrial activities. Some of the important centres that are not yet (properly) connected to electricity include Mechi Meru, Mwibale, Ekitale, Bukembe, Lwanda,

Buema, Bukusu, Sazuri and Ndengelwa. Within Bungoma town, areas such as Sio, Sinoko, Khalaba, Mjini and Musikoma also need electricity.

1.3 Constituency's water resource potential has not been fully exploited to meet domestic and industrial demand. The few operational water schemes in the constituency such as the Bungoma Water Supply serve only a few people while important urban centres such as Bukembe, Kongoli, Ekitale, Kanduyi, Mayanja and even residents of estates in town have no water at all. Though there is plenty of sub-surface water in the area, this has not been well harvested.

The answer ...

Consequently, if elected to parliament, Dr. Juma Mukhwana would do the following:

- Upgrade murrum and earth rural roads within Kanduyi Constituency.
- Construct bridges to link people and facilitate marketing of agricultural produce.
- Help bring and connect electricity to major urban centres within the constituency.
- Upgrade and where possible, tarmac roads serving estates within Bungoma municipality.
- Expand the Bungoma water supply scheme to meet the needs of the residents of Bungoma town, Bukembe, Ndengelwa, Mabanga, Kanduyi and Ekitale.
- Expand the sewerage system within Bungoma town to serve dwellers.
- Complete the Kibabii water supply so as to served the residents of Mayanja, Kibabii and Kanduyi centres.

2. Poor Marketing Systems

Since liberalization of the grain marketing sector in 1992, the farmers of Kanduyi have experienced enormous problems in marketing of their agricultural produce. This has led to the invasion of market centres by unscrupulous middlemen, who exploit small scale farmers in the area

because they lack: Capital, storage, transport, collective action and business acumen.

The answer

If Dr. Mukhwana is elected to parliament, he will:

- Work with farmers to enable them access collective marketing associations and co-operatives.
- Build the capacity and strengths of existing Co-operative Societies.
- Help link farmers with profitable and socially acceptable markets in Nairobi.

The making of the “man of the people”

By Bob Wekesa

The walls of Dr Eusebius Juma Mukhwana's office in the leafy Mucai Drive suburbs off Ngong Road tell it all. Certificates of excellence and recognition adorn the office competing for space with pictures in which he is captured with various dignitaries. In one picture he is receiving an award from the UN-Habitat Executive Secretary Anna Tibaijuka while in another one he is addressing an international conference and yet in another momentous image he is having an evidently hearty chat with Ford Foundation Kenya Country Representative...

A quick glance at the spacious office reveals a man whose hands are full, what with books, papers CDs and DVDs stacked allover the place. As the interview commences, calls-local and international- flow in at a fast and furious pace as his two mobile phones compete for response with the landlines. Clearly Dr Mukhwana is a busy man! Indeed after politely welcoming us to the office, he launches into the passion of his life- improving the lot of Kenyan farmers.

Much of the busy-ness and energy that Dr Mukhwana exudes revolves around his exemplary work with the Sustainable Agriculture Centre for

Research, Extension and Development in Africa (SACRED-Africa), the Non Governmental Organization he mooted in 1997. In just one decade, this NGO has churned out innovative interventions calculated at improving the lot of long suffering small scale farmers. Starting off the organization with little more than an idea on how poor farmers in Western Kenya could reap more from their farming activities, Dr Mukhwana has gone on to scale the heights of civil society culminating in a superlative collection of enviable recognition, countless paper presentations and publications and leadership of supra-national organizations.

“Since my days at the University of Nairobi, I had always been troubled by the fact that Kenyans engaged in agriculture as a means of livelihood were getting poorer and poorer. In the early 1990s, the liberalization of the agricultural sector further worsened the plight of the farmers with famine and hunger pangs becoming the norm even in areas endowed with arable land. One morning, I decided that I would not sit by and watch the hapless farmers continue suffering when I thought I had ideas that could arrest the situation”, Dr Mukhwana told *African Examples* during the interview quickly pointing out that the NGO's first offices was a small space in Bungoma town.

With a few like-minded people, Dr. Mukhwana started SACRED Africa as an operation that he would run while he lectured pharmacology and toxicology at Moi University. Only a year later, Dr Mukhwana would realize that the decision to set up the NGO required undivided attention. He quit his fairly stable teaching job as a lecturer in the Faculty of Health Sciences, Moi University and jumped into the deep end of seeking solutions for farmers who at this time were very easy prey to prowling middlemen who paid pittances for agricultural produce making non sense of the peasant's labor.

“Indeed at the time of formation of SACRED Africa, many farmers in parts and of Rift Valley and Western Provinces had abandoned farming activities and as a result, food insecurity in this region that is considered the bread basket of the nation had set in. This was the contradiction that we sought to redress”, he explains, fishing out statistics and data and newspaper cuttings to back his narration. From the outset, Dr. Mukhwana points out; the work he had cut out for himself on a voluntary basis was going to revolve around enhancing agricultural production, achieving food security and elevating agriculture as a means of income generation.

From these lowly beginnings but fired by the motivation that “there is no challenge that is insurmountable”, Dr Mukhwana painstakingly piled up reputation for the organization with the result that it is now internationally recognized and its efforts widely replicated across the world. Currently SACRED Africa employs about 40 professionals 3 of them with PhD and more than 6 with masters degrees in areas of agriculture, economics and sociology. Last year saw to a major milestone for the NGO when it partnered with Moi University to offer courses in agricultural courses at the organization's training, research and demonstration centre in the outskirts of Bungoma town. This was a major development as this venture literally brought a university, with all its benefits, to the door steps of the predominantly agricultural community.

Yet the Moi University campus in Bungoma, with a branch also jointly run in Nairobi, is but one of the many incremental developments that Dr. Mukhwana has presided over in a career marked by illustrious deeds. One of the brilliant innovations that has won Dr. Mukhwana and SACRED Africa international accolades is the concept dubbed maize market movement and based on establishment of cereals banks in much the same way savers put their money in banks or invest.

“The cereal banks phenomenon operates on the principle that during harvest time, farmers have excess supply of cereals but a few months later, they are usually in the throes of starvation because they would have exhausted their stock by selling cheaply to middlemen”, explains Dr. Mukhwana, as he adds that within a short period after the harvests and particularly between January and May the selfsame farmers who would have been selling their maize (and other cereals like sorghum and millet) would be buying maize at double and even triple prices often from the same middlemen.

“The SACRED Africa intervention reclines on the fact that to address the challenges of quality and quantity that put off large scale millers from buying maize from small scale farmers, they pool together their produce as a prerequisite to fetching better prices and wielding the market”, he says. Indeed, SACRED Africa has not only been helping farmers fetch better prices from millers, but so successful has this approach been that it has been replicated in Uganda, Malawi and Zambia. The refreshing concept has also attracted researchers from universities and other research organizations. The UN Millennium village in Sauri Siaya, has introduced the concept of cereal banking to help improve production and marketing of agricultural produce.

Besides the marketing end of things, Dr Mukhwana's work has also embraced strategies calculated at increasing agricultural production.

Talking about the soil fertility project that looks to improve and boost the efficacy of soils in parts of Western Kenya, he says: "We are working on over 300 sites in 7 districts in Western Kenya. The idea is to find out which soil improving technology works best where, at what cost and with what returns. We are also undertaking seed variety testing (with new maize, Soya, groundnut, rice and green gram varieties) to accelerate adoption of seed technologies emanating from national and international research and breeding systems". Indeed these are but the tip of the iceberg in terms of the cutting edge projects and programs that Dr. Mukhwana provides leadership for.

While Dr. Mukhwana is better known and associated with SACRED Africa, he is indeed a wearer, nay juggler, of many hats. He is currently the Chairman of the African Agricultural NGOs Network with its headquarters in Ghana a position for which he is unfortunately better known abroad than here at home. He is also the Chairman of Nzoia Water Services Co. Ltd. a giant company that treats and supplies water and undertakes water sanitation services to four towns in Western Kenya namely: Kitale, Bungoma, Webuye and Kimilili, all with a total population of 600,000 people. He became the chairman of this body through election by civic leaders in the region. He is a member of trustees of Sang'alo Institute of Science & Technology a leading agricultural college in Western Province as well as serving on the trusteeship of the Kenya Agricultural Research Institute. He is board and chairman of various secondary schools.

During his extensive career, Dr. Mukhwana has published over 30 papers in reputable journals and written many books in the area of helping small scale farmers to improve their lives. In 2003, he was declared "Man of the Year" by the American Biographical Institute for his outstanding contribution to the development of humanity. In 2004, he received a Head of State Commendation (HSC) from His Excellency Hon. Mwai Kibaki the president of Kenya for his "distinguished role of championing the course of poor small scale farmers in Kenya".

Dr. Mukhwana's achievements are not by default. The forty two years old veterinary doctor holds both bachelor's degree in veterinary medicine and a master's degree in pharmacology and toxicology from University of Nairobi's College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences.

Before plunging into the civil society world and proceeding to initiate a revolution in just ten years, he gained experience from various organizations. He first cut his teeth in working with impoverished communities immediately after his master's degree when he worked for Food and Agricultural Research Management (FARM-Africa), a British Charity in Samburu and Marsabit districts of Northern Kenya. In his own words, he realized that what FARM Africa was doing for people of Northern Kenya was badly needed in Western Kenya and elsewhere in Kenya. That is why he chose to start SACRED Africa.

In 1995, he left FARM-Africa and joined the Manor House Agricultural Centre in Kitale as the executive director. Manor House trains farmers and School leavers on how to use sustainable organic agriculture to improve farm productivity. In 1997, Dr. Mukhwana joined Moi University as a Lecturer in Pharmacology and Toxicology in the faculty of Health Sciences. However he quickly realized that rather than turning out in the white lab coats, he would rather have worked with farmers at the grassroots. Only a year later, he left the university and delved headlong into what is now the success story. As fate would have it, Dr. Mukhwana rendezvous with Moi University would recur nine years down the line when he signed the memorandum of understanding with the institution for the joint academic venture.

As a parting shot, Dr. Mukhwana points out that he is now exploring the meeting point of leadership and rural development and urges readers to watch this space.

Dr Juma Mukhwana recently hosted the former UN Secretary General, Dr Koffi Annan in Bungoma. See story in pictures:



**Dr Juma Mukhwana (right) with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan,
July 2007**



**Dr Juma Mukhwana (Left) with UN Secretary General Koffi Annan,
July 2007**



**Dr Juma Mukhwana (right) with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan,
July 2007**