

10/08/1999

The Guardian

By George Nyembela, PST, Arusha

## **New Environmental Organization Takes off in Arusha**

Traditional Irrigation and Environmental Development Organization started its operations early this month as a new non-governmental organization (NGO).

Speaking at the Nane Nane celebrations market yesterday at Thomi Grounds here, the Irrigation Advisor, Mr. Jan Moejes, said the basis of this NGO was formed during the past ten years when traditional irrigation project (TIP) was launched.

During these years TIP worked through the district councils of Arumeru, Mwanga, Same, Lushoto, Iringa, Mpwapwa and Kilosa as a strategy to reach farmers in traditional irrigation areas, he added.

The irrigation advisor said during the present phase (1997-2000) it was decided to institutionalize the TIP programme into an NGO in order to ensure the continuation of TIP activities for the years to come.

"The target of TIP is the small-scale farmer living in the catchment areas of traditional irrigation systems. A characteristic of traditional irrigation system is that they have been constructed by farmers themselves and are farmer managed and operated," said Mr. Moejes.

The advisor said that improvement of traditional irrigation systems means not the improvement of civil structures and lining only. But, he said, farmers are also trained in water management in order to make a more efficient use of the most limited resource, water.

Farmers are reached through the already existing water user groups. They have to conserve their soils before any assistance can or is provided to improve the irrigation system.

The TIP, which is under the Netherlands Development Organization (SVN), consists of four main components, which are traditional irrigation, soil and water conservation, participatory land use planning and organizational strengthening.

With headquarters in Moshi, Kilimanjaro Region, the TIP started its operations ten years ago. It has been working in very close collaboration with water user groups, district councils, and other NGOs dealing with irrigation, soil and water conservation and land use planning.