Annual Report 2024

Africa Harvest
BIOTECH FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL

Africa free from Hunger,
Poverty, and Malnutrition

Africa Harvest Biotech Foundation International

Annual Report 2024

Africa Harvest
BIOTECH FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL

Kenya . Zambia . South Africa

Citation:

Africa Harvest Biotech Foundation International 2024, Nairobi, Kenya

Website: www.africaharvest.org

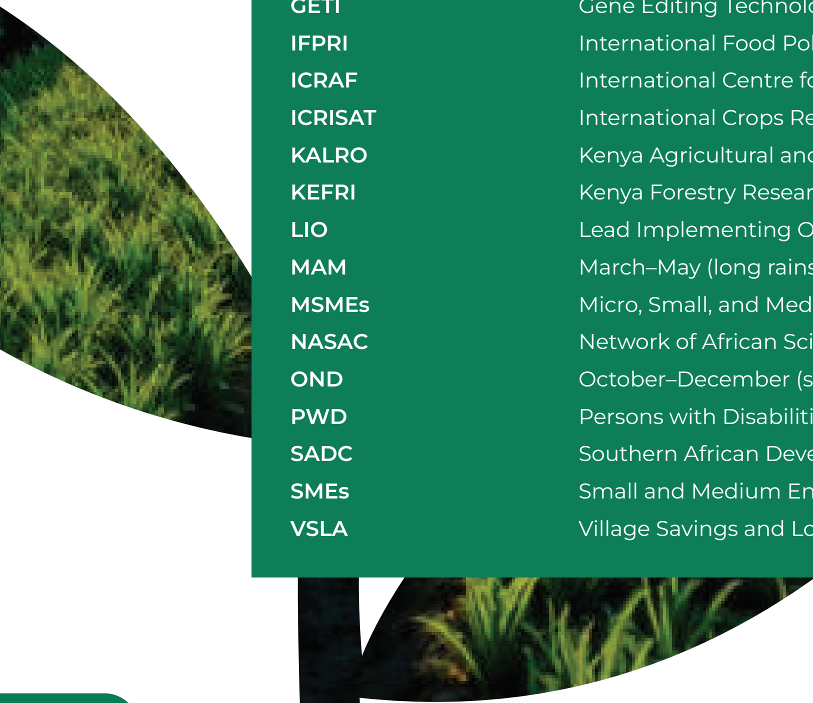
Content & Internal Editor: Yvonne E. Mwende

Design: Suave Marketing Communications

Content Credit: F Wambugu, N Mburu, K Oyugi, D Kagwiria, A Chege, E Mulama, A Aseta, R Nyaga, J Onyony, E Mutahi, M Ojow

Photography: Rose K. Nyaga, Yvonne E. Mwende

Acronyms and Abbreviations



Africa Harvest	Africa Harvest Biotech Foundation International
AMASA	Annual Meeting of African Science Academies
APET	African Panel on Emerging Technologies
AUDA-NEPAD	African Union Development Agency – New Partnership for Africa's Development
CAP	Community Action Planning
CASSCOM	County Agriculture Sector Steering Committee
CIO	County Implementing Officer
CIDP	County Integrated Development Plan
DTCs	Drought-Tolerant Crops
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GETI	Gene Editing Technology Initiative
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
ICRAF	International Centre for Research in Agroforestry
ICRISAT	International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics
KALRO	Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization
KEFRI	Kenya Forestry Research Institute
LIO	Lead Implementing Organization
MAM	March–May (long rains)
MSMEs	Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises
NASAC	Network of African Science Academies
OND	October–December (short rains)
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Association

Table of Contents

01 Message from the Leadership

Foreword by the Chief Executive Officer

Dr. Florence M. Wambugu

Chief Executive Officer

Africa Harvest Biotech Foundation International

2024 has been a year of momentum, impact, and alignment with our 2023–2027 Strategic Plan. Guided by our six strategic objectives, Africa Harvest has advanced its mission to transform agriculture in Africa, scaling innovation, strengthening market systems, enhancing resilience, and creating inclusive opportunities for women and youth.

Through the Drought-Tolerant Crops (DTCs) 4 Youth Jobs Creation project, we reached 73,511 young people across 10 counties. Seed worth 12.39 million was offtaken from 751 youth seed producers, of whom 67 percent were female.

Over 817 Village Savings and Loan Associations mobilized KSh 33.06 million in savings, unlocking capital for enterprise growth.

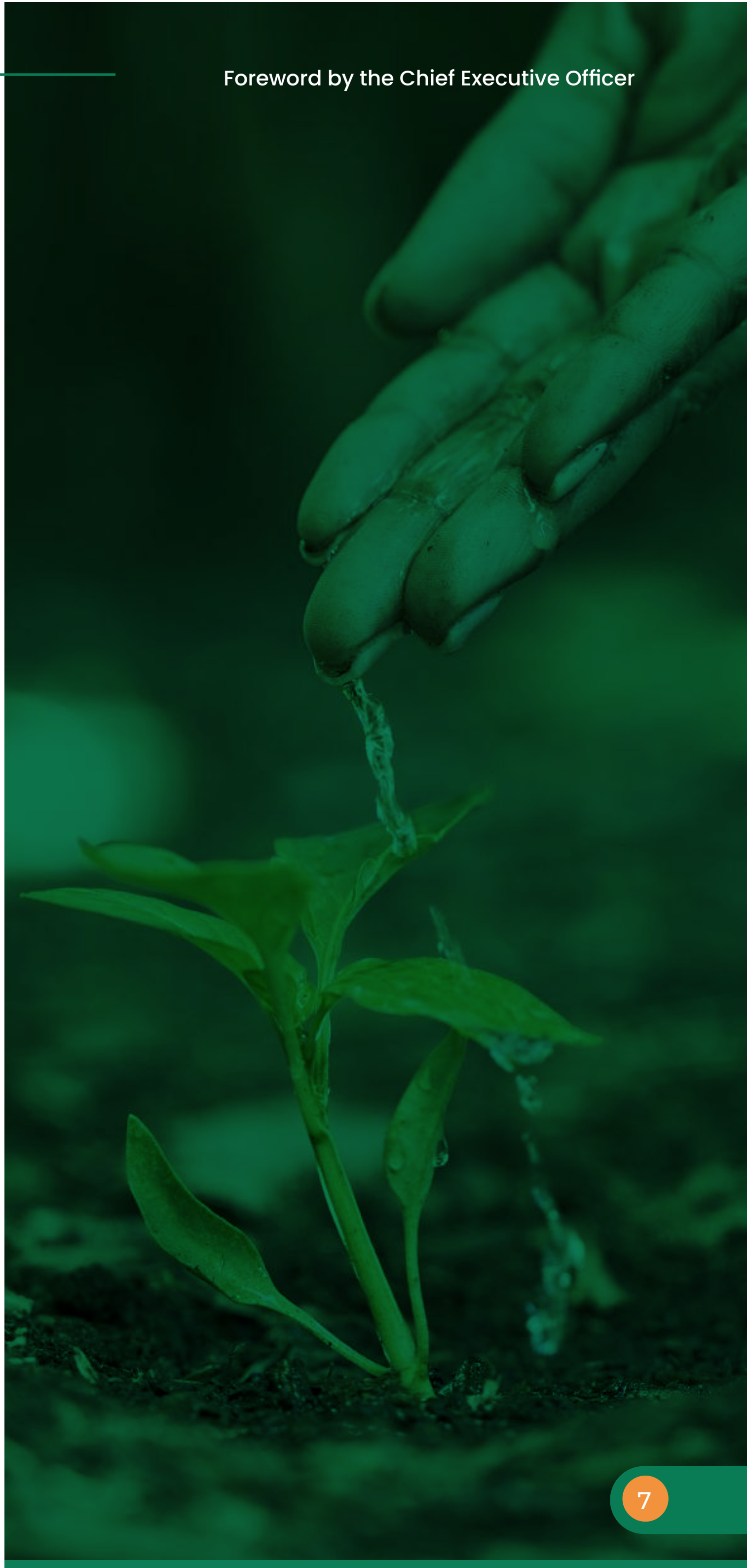
In the Restore Africa Programme, we have advanced climate-smart agriculture, strengthened community resilience by establishing seven demo plots; to promote targeted value chains and provide farmers with practical learning on Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs). Working closely with county governments and local stakeholders, we have nurtured priority value chains that will continue to support livelihoods while promoting environmental stewardship for generations to come.

Regionally, the Gene Editing Technology Initiative (GETI) expanded its network to over 700 stakeholders across East Africa, West Africa, SADC, Central Africa, and North Africa, driving policy harmonization and championing science-based innovations for food security.

These results are made possible by the partnerships we nurture with communities, governments, donors, research institutions, and the private sector. We have seen that when knowledge, technology, and determination converge, lives are transformed, markets are strengthened, and communities thrive.

As we look ahead, Africa Harvest remains steadfast in scaling proven solutions, championing inclusivity, especially for women and youth, not only to participate in but lead the continent's agricultural transformation.

" This year also marked a governance milestone: we launched the Kenya Country Board in April, Zambia Country Board in June, and the South Africa Country Board in August 2024."



Message from the

Board Chair

Prof. Abdullahi Jalloh

Board Chairperson

Africa Harvest Biotech Foundation International

As an International Board, our role is to ensure that the organization remains mission-focused, financially sound, and compliant with the regulatory frameworks in all the countries where we operate. I am pleased to report that we have stayed true to these principles while advancing our 2023–2027 Strategic Plan.

A major highlight of the year was the launch of the Kenya Country Board in April, Zambia Country Board in June, and the South Africa Board in August. These governance structures, fully compliant with national requirements, are already providing strategic oversights in their respective countries, ensuring that Africa Harvest's interventions remain locally relevant, credible, and responsive to emerging opportunities. Together with the International Board, they strengthen our continental footprint and enhance our capacity to steward resources responsibly.

The Board has been encouraged by the resilience and innovation shown by our teams and partners on the ground. The impressive results from the DTCs 4 Youth Jobs Creation project, the landscape restoration gains under the Restore Africa Programme, and the continental policy leadership through the Gene Editing Technology Initiative are proof that Africa Harvest is not only delivering programmes but also influencing sytems for long-term change.

We are grateful to all our stakeholders whose unwavering support has made these achievements possible. Your trust is our greatest asset, and we remain committed to ensuring that every investment in Africa Harvest generates a lasting, equitable impact.

As we look to the future, the Board will continue to champion good governance, strategic foresight, and results-driven leadership, so that Africa Harvest remains a catalyst for inclusive agricultural transformation across Africa.

02

About Africa Harvest

About Us

Vision

Africa free from Hunger, Poverty and Malnutrition.

Mission

To disseminate appropriate innovative agricultural technologies and institution approaches through the whole value chain to improve the livelihoods of rural communities

We contribute to the continental agenda (CAADP) and SDGs of 1. No poverty, 2. Zero hunger and improved food security and nutrition, 3. Gender Equality, 6. Clean water and sanitation, 8. Decent work and economic growth, 13. Climate action, and 15 Life on land

Strategic Objectives

Strategic objective 1:
Increasing production and productivity of at least 10 food crops and Livestock value chains across East Africa, West Africa, SADC and Central African countries.

Strategic objective 2:
To enhance incomes for smallholder farmers by intervening in agricultural market systems and policy.

Strategic objective 3:
To increase smallholders' resilience to climate change.

Strategic objective 4:
Scaling up and promotion of successful innovative agricultural technologies and models to improve crop and animal productivity across East Africa, West Africa, SADC and Central African countries.

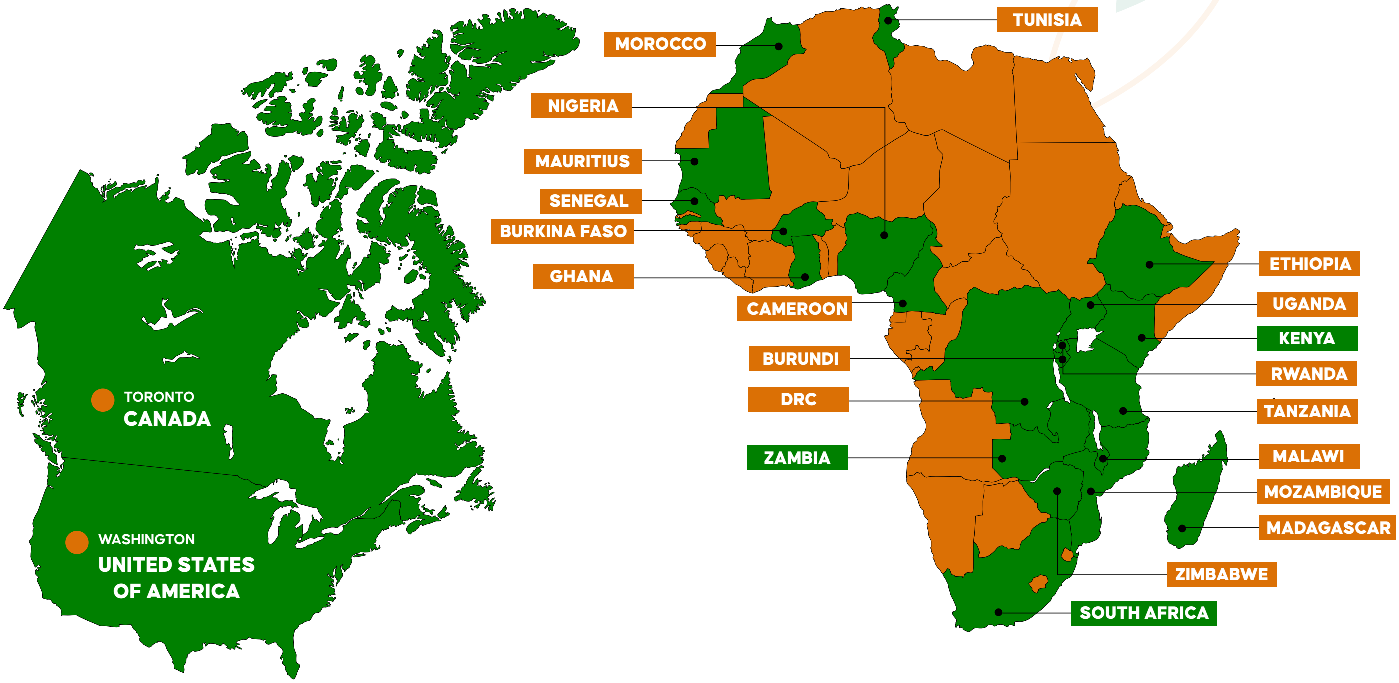
Strategic objective 5:
To establish a technical services unit to provide training and capacity building services for stakeholders in agriculture

Strategic objective 6:
A cross-cutting objective that seeks to promote women and youth employment along the agricultural value chain

Our Theory of Change

Impact	**Food Security, Nutrition and Incomes of Smallholder Farmers in Africa Improved**		
Expected Outcomes	Increased Crop Production and Productivity	Increased Access to Sustainable Markets	Increased Absorptive, Adaptive and Transformative Capacities to Climate Change
Intermediate Outcomes	Increased access to inputs Increased adoption to technologies Seed systems developed Improved post-harvest management Improved agronomic Practices	Increased participation of private sector including Blossom Market Growth Development Ltd to the market system Increased uptake of technology to agricultural value chains Enabling environment to market systems Active aggregation systems	Increased adoption of technologies that enhance resilience capacities Application of climate rist management strategies by smaller holder farmers
Outputs	- SHFs linked to financial services - SHFs linked to quality input suppliers - Seed multiplication center developed - Farmers trained on agronomic practices related to technologies - Productivity enhancing technologies disseminated to SHFs - New trials and pilots undertaken in partnership with research - Participatory research undertaken - Private and public sector linkages enhanced	- Farmer marketing institutions strengthened - Appropriate digital and scientific technologies deployed to enhance marketing activities - Systemic issues identified and addressed - Aggregation centers for smallholder farmers established - Market information systems developed - Policies reviewed and gaps identified - Public and private actors engaged in policy dialogues	- Crop and livestock insurance adopted - Increased adoption of technologies for climate change adaptation and natural resource management - Risk management strategies developed and implemented - Farmers accessing early warning information
Activities	- Linkage to suppliers of quality inputs - Improve farmers' access to finance - Farmers training on agronomy - Effective post-harvest technologies - Identifying and deploying new technologies - New trials and pilots in partnership with research institutions - Participatory impact assessment	- Facilitate participation of private sector/SMEs including Blossom in the market system - Strengthen farmers' institutions to effectively participate in the market system - Continuously identify systemic issues and opportunities for SH farmers - Facilitate establishment of aggregation centers - Facilitate access to market	- Promote crop and livestock insurance - Build capacity of farmers - Facilitate farmers to develop risk mitigation strategies - Early warning information dissemination

Our Footprints

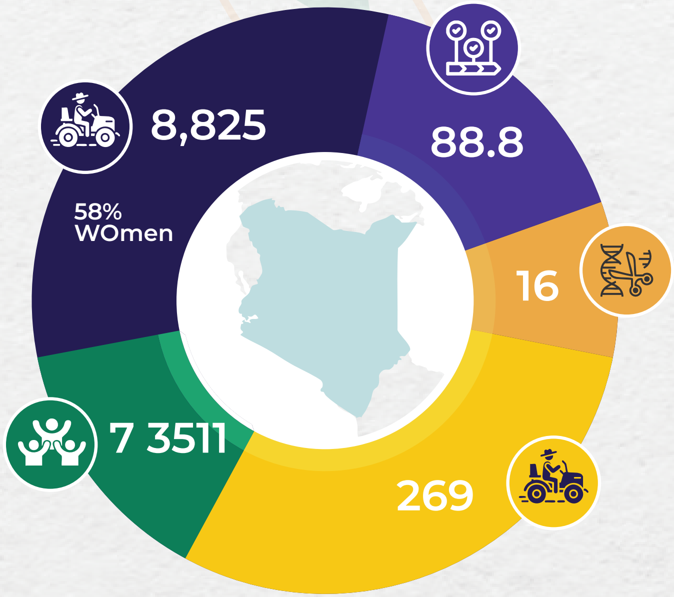


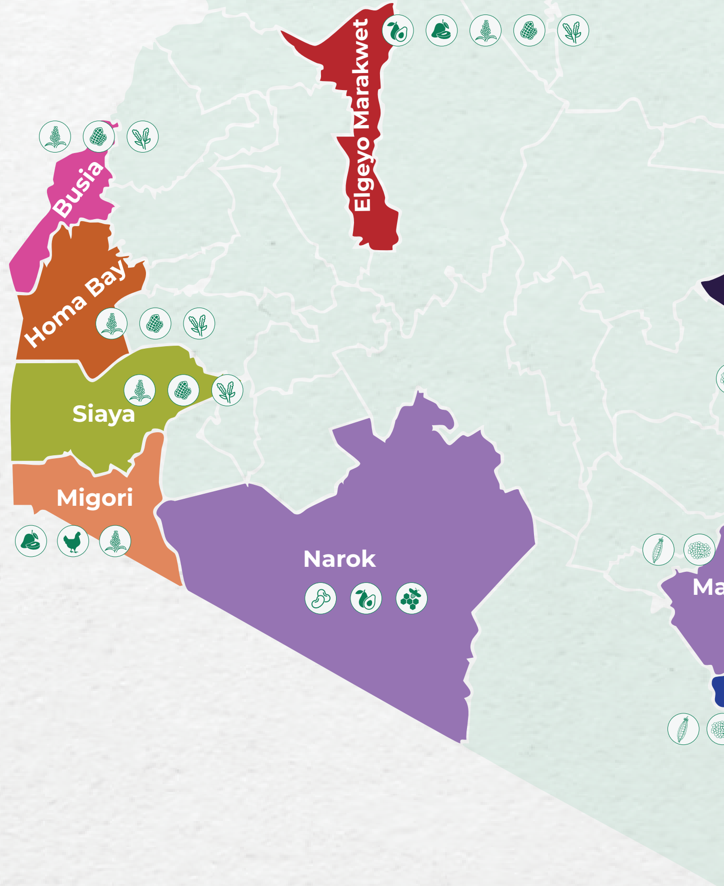
- Over 5 million Farmers Impacted
- 26 Projects Implemented
- 11 Crop Value Chains Developed
- 3 Livestock Value Chain Developed

03

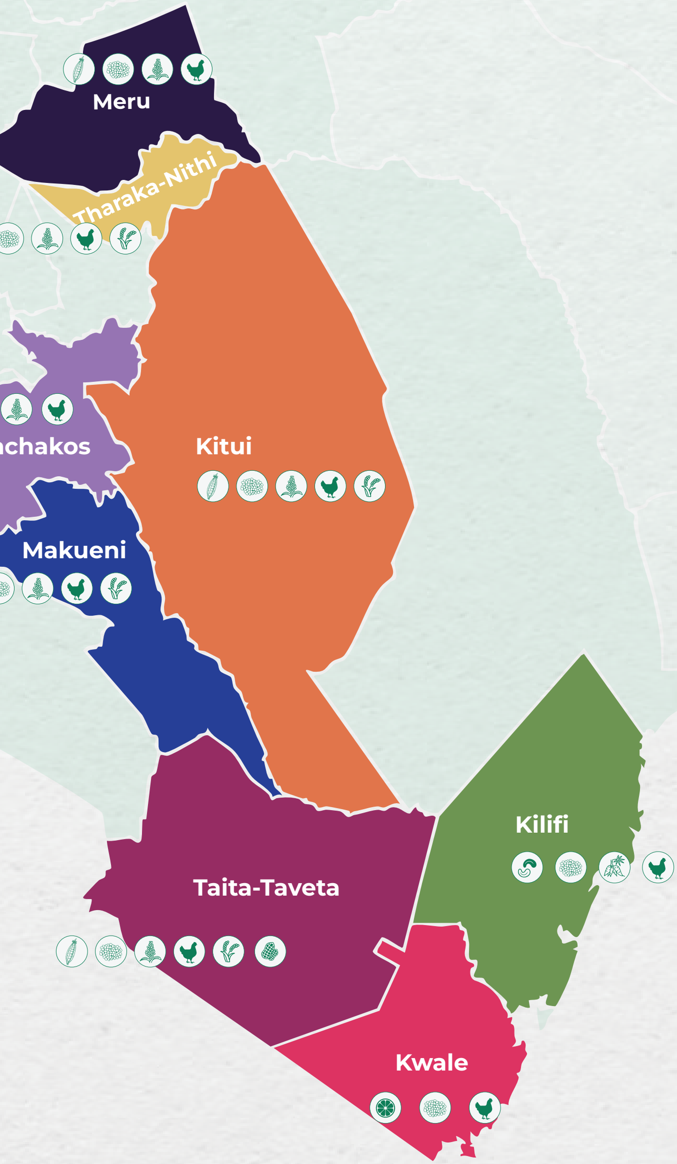
2024 at a Glance

Key Highlights & Milestones





- 8,825 of Youth in work (58% female)
- No of Youth reached (male, female & PWDs)
- 269 demo plots established
- 16 Countries included in Genome Editing Landscape Analysis
- 88.8 Metric Tonnes of Seed Distributed



- Cassava
- Cashewnuts
- Pigeon Peas
- Groundnuts
- Greengrams
- Avocado
- Sorghum
- Finger Millets
- Pearl Millet
- Indigenous Chickens
- Mangoes
- Apiculture
- Beans
- Citrus

04

Performance Overview & Impact Stories

Overview of the Year's Strategic Focus

Now in its third year, the Scaling Commercialization of Drought Tolerant Crops (DTCs) Technologies to Secure Dignified and Fulfilling Work for 120,000 Youth in Rural Kenya project, short name DTCs 4 Youth Jobs Creation project has made remarkable progress in creating avenues through which meaningful employment opportunities for young people in rural Kenya can be sustained.

The project continues to expand its reach, strengthen, diversify and deepen its interventions to enhance economic prospects for the youth, particularly young women. This has been achieved through a multi-pronged approach that includes increased access to improved seeds, targeted training interventions, and enhanced market access mechanisms.

Since its inception, the initiative has onboarded/registered 105,069 individuals to participate in the various interventions supported by the project.

From the number, 73,511 young people (53,258 F/ 20,253 M) aged between 18 and 35 have so far been reached with project interventions. Among these, 72 percent of those reached with project interventions are young women. Another 88,468 participants have also benefited indirectly by providing services to those receiving project interventions.

A total of 113.5 metric tonnes of seed valued at KSh. 12.39 million was off-taken from 751 youth seed producers of whom 67 percent were female during the 2024 calendar year (previous 498 youth seed producers, of whom 70 percent were female, during 2024). These seeds, procured by our partner, International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), were distributed to project participants for both the March - May MAM) long rain season and the October - December (OND) 2024 short rain season across the year, ensuring consistent access to quality, improved seed.

In parallel, a combined 88.8 metric tons of seed (various crops and seed varieties) were distributed to 37,163 participants for grain and seed production both for the MAM and OND 2024 seasons, indicating a substantial increase in marketable volumes and participation by the youthful seed and grain producers in markets, which is a key outcome of the project.

To support learning and adoption of best practices, 181 demonstration plots were established across the 10 counties of Machakos, Makueni, Kitui, Taita Taveta, Elgeyo Marakwet, Tharaka Nithi, Meru, Busia, Siaya, and Homa Bay, promoting the uptake of good agronomic practices and providing the youth and communities with a platform to learn and interact with improved technologies at the last mile.

Additionally, over 12,500 kg of foundation seed is expected from ICRISAT's 20-acre production fields at Kiboko, Alupe, and Kampi ya Mawe research stations, which are tailored to agro-ecological needs of the target regions. Further enhancing the seed supply system, 1,298 seed producers signed contracts and received 9,061 kg of foundation seed to support community-based seed production during the OND 2024 season.

These efforts have directly translated into improved productivity. The young people reported a 50 percent increase in yields for both sorghum and greengrams. Sorghum yields rose from 800 kg to up to 1.2 MT per acre, while greengrams increased from 400 kg to 600 kg per acre, driven by access to clean seed and improved farming techniques.

On the market side, the project has stimulated active participation of youth in seed and grain value chains. Seed worth over KSh. 32.2 million has been traded, with youth capturing 45 percent of the total sales, equating to KSh. 14.5 million. The growing demand for quality seeds, evidenced by Africa Harvest's intervention to procure extra seed for over 22,000 youth, points to an expanding market with untapped potential.

These interventions are further complemented by enterprise development, mechanization, and value addition training, positioning youth to tap into diverse revenue streams and increase their market competitiveness. The planned rollout of an E-commerce platform is expected to accelerate market linkages and support digital jobs, enhancing the scalability and sustainability of youth agribusinesses.

181 Demonstration Plots

800 kg - 1.2 MT
Sorghum yields rise per acre

400 kg - 600 Kg
Greengrams yields rise per acre

KSh. 32.2 million
Seed worth traded

45% Total sales captured by youths, equating to **KSh. 14.5 million.**

Value-Add training Interventions

As part of the project's three-pronged strategy, Sustain, Improve, and Increase, designed to deepen and enhance youth engagement, the consortium organized and conducted value addition capacity enhancement trainings during the reporting period.

The trainings aimed to strengthen participants' knowledge and practical skills in value addition and nutrition. Focus was placed on products derived from the project's target value chains, including peanut butter, cake, sorghum popcorn, saucy greengram balls, green gram samosas, blended flours, and sorghum pilau, among others.


Cicillia Zawadi, 26 years old, preparing doughnuts using pearl millet flour, in Taita Taveta County


Cathrine Mumina, 30, taking records of her baking business, where she uses sorghum and pearl millet flour.

The trainees were primarily youth engaged in value addition activities within the project. While some had already begun implementing value addition initiatives, others had only conceptualized ideas, but showed readiness to turn these ideas into action. The sessions combined both theoretical learning and hands-on demonstrations, delivered through a participatory approach that encouraged questions, presentations, and active involvement in practical exercises.

The trainees were primarily youth engaged in value addition activities within the project. While some had already begun implementing value addition initiatives, others had only conceptualized ideas, but showed readiness to turn these ideas into action. The sessions combined both theoretical learning and hands-on demonstrations, delivered through a participatory approach that encouraged questions, presentations, and active involvement in practical exercises.

Vivian Odhiambo, 25 years, holding a sorghum cake she had baked in Central Gem, Siaya County

In addition, a focus group discussion was held to capture deeper insights into the trainees' perspectives on value addition, as well as to co-develop individual and group action roadmaps to guide future implementation efforts.

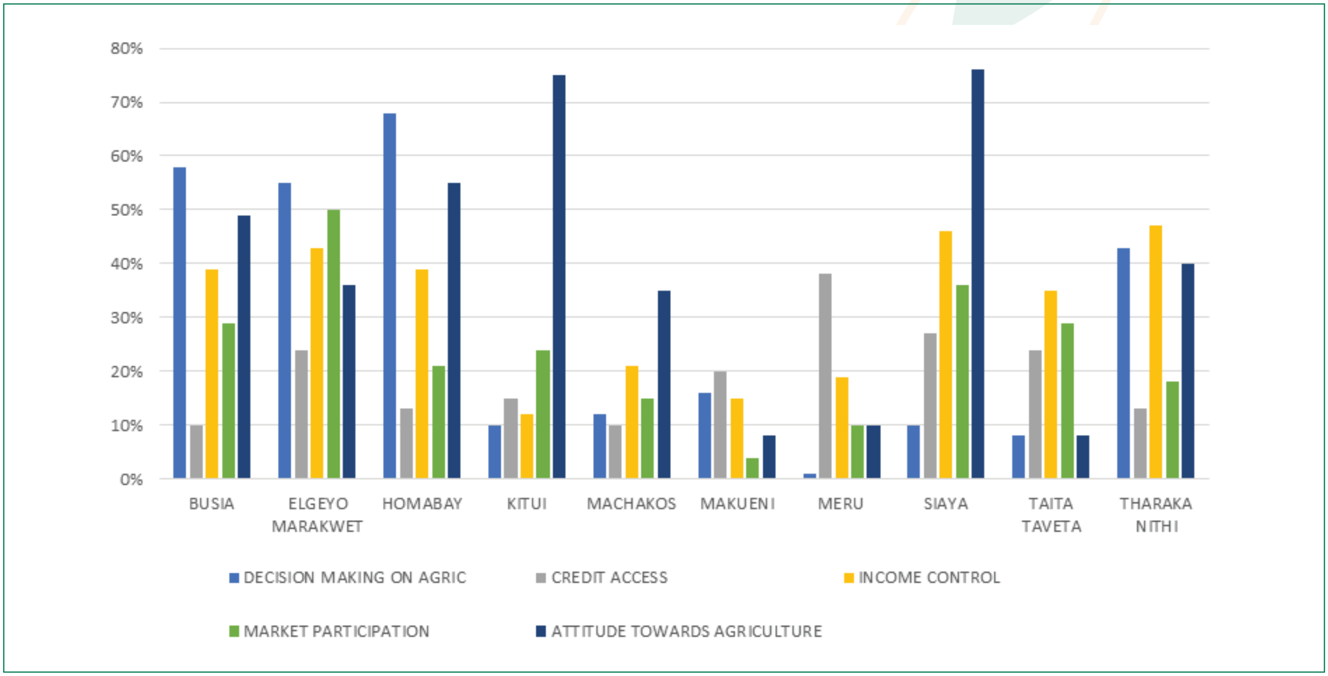
Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Analysis

A Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) analysis was carried out within the reporting year, providing critical insights and validating key project assumptions. The findings confirmed that women and youth continue to face limited control over productive assets, restricted access to agricultural innovations, and significant challenges in accessing credit. These barriers underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions to enhance access to resources, promote financial inclusion, and strengthen decision-making capacities, enhancing agency with the goal of advancing their economic empowerment.

The analysis further examined how the status of young women and men influences their participation and success within the project's prioritized value chains. It identified structural and socio-cultural barriers that hinder equitable participation, which the project is now addressing through targeted strategies to promote gender equality and social inclusion across the agriculture sector, particularly in the project areas.

Moreover, the assessment explored the intersection of gender, age, disability, and geographic location in shaping agricultural participation. These findings have informed the development of the project's learning agenda, contributed to the refinement of the gender action plan, and are guiding the integration of gender-transformative approaches throughout the project's design and implementation.

Comparative Analysis



Expansion of Outreach and Stakeholder Engagement

During the year, the project expanded outreach efforts to new sub-counties across all the 10 implementation counties. This involved the sensitization of sub-county officials in Meru, Tharaka Nithi, and Kitui, and the participation in County Agriculture Sector Steering Committee (CASSCOM) meetings in Siaya, Homa Bay, and Busia, which were held in March 2024.

These engagements were aimed at enhancing awareness and acceptance of the project within the counties, while also creating platforms to identify and engage potential partners for scaling interventions and leveraging local resources for greater impact.

In addition, participation in these forums provides an opportunity to contribute to and influence policies that impact youth in Agriculture at the counties.

The project also recorded increased political goodwill and interest from county stakeholders. The project team attended five CASSCOM meetings, providing opportunities to sensitize officials and agricultural partners on the project's objectives and progress. These forums sparked strong interest, particularly from County heads of agriculture, who expressed support for the project's role in promoting youth employment through agribusiness.

Moving forward, we plan to leverage this momentum to strengthen county-level partnerships and support the development of enabling environments through supportive policies for youth enterprise growth and their enhanced participation in agri-based interventions and activities.

Enhanced Financial Inclusion through the VSLA Model

Access to finance is one of key bottlenecks that limit the participation of youth in Agriculture and especially Agri-business ventures. The project sought to enhance access to finance for the youth, through the establishment and operationalization of Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs), starting in February 2024.

Continuous training and supervision of these groups resulted in the mobilization of savings totaling KSh. 12,799,838.00 (USD 99,998.00) across 1,202 active groups. During the same period, loans amounting to KSh. 13,986,844 (USD 109,272.00) were disbursed to members for diverse purposes, including investment in agriculture, productivity enhancement, and small business development aimed at diversifying income streams.

Lucy Waeni (28 yrs), Money Counter at Young Modern Farmers VSLA group, counting money in one of their weekly meetings

Overall, 14,538 project participants were trained and onboarded into the VSLA model. Out of 771 established groups, 72 percent of members were women and over 80 percent were youth. These groups collectively reported savings of KSh. 6.3 million and had issued over KSh. 5.7 million in loans to support enterprise expansion and other priority needs.

By the end of July 2024, the VSLA approach had gained significant traction, with participating groups having accessed KSh. 20,436,553.00 in loans and contributed KSh. 3,315,079.00 to social funds (set aside to assist the group members in social matters), underscoring the model's effectiveness in promoting access to affordable and sustainable financial services.

Members of Arise and Shine VSLA group at their poultry farm, a side business they started to increase their savings.

Gender & Safeguarding

Gender-based violence (GBV) continues to be a significant barrier to development, especially in agriculture. It not only harms the health and well-being of individuals but also decreases agricultural productivity, workforce readiness, and the overall resilience and competitiveness of market systems. Economically, it is estimated that GBV can cost some countries up to 2 percent of their gross domestic product (GDP). Within project implementation, GBV poses both a structural barrier and, at times, an unintended consequence if not adequately addressed.

In response to these challenges, Africa Harvest launched a digital safeguarding campaign focused on sexual harassment during the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. The campaign aimed to raise awareness about GBV in rural communities, highlighting the experiences and voices of young farmers. It included quotes and video footage of both project staff and young farmers sharing their understanding of GBV and its impact on their work and communities.

The campaign was widely shared across our digital platforms, including WhatsApp, X, Instagram, and Facebook. This increased visibility for the issue and fostered open dialogue and engagement among our followers and stakeholders in the agriculture sector. Social media users interacted with the content, shared their thoughts, and helped amplified the conversation within their networks.

In the short term, the campaign effectively raised awareness and brought attention to the often-overlooked issue of GBV in agriculture. It helped demystify the topic, created safe spaces for discussion, encouraged community members to take a stand against harassment and violence, and report violations through our toll-free line.

In the long term, the initiative is expected to contribute to a cultural shift in project areas, promoting safer and more inclusive working environments where sexual harassment is actively challenged. By empowering young farmers to speak out and embedding safeguarding principles in project communications and engagements, the campaign laid the groundwork for sustainable behavioral change. Ultimately, these efforts aim to enhance community resilience, protect productivity, and strengthen the overall integrity and inclusivity of agricultural systems.

Project Summary:

The DTCs 4 Youth Jobs Creation project is focused on scaling up the use of drought-tolerant crop technologies to support dignified and fulfilling work opportunities for 120,000 young people, 70% of them young women.

It targets six crop value chains: **Sorghum, Finger millet, Pearl millet, Pigeon peas, Groundnuts, and Green grams, and Poultry.**

The main activities involve engaging youth in seed multiplication, grain production, and value addition. This will be achieved through hands-on technical training and business development support to strengthen their capacity and boost productivity across the value chains.

Lead & Sub partners:

Africa Harvest Biotech Foundation International is the lead implementing partner, working closely with the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) as the supporting partner, in partnership with the Mastercard Foundation.

Intervention Counties:

Counties where the project is being implemented include **Busia, Homa Bay, Siaya, Elgeyo Marakwet, Kitui, Machakos, Makueni, Tharaka Nithi, Meru, and Taita Taveta.**

Project Key Highlights:

- So far, the project has reached 73,511 young people through different activities like hands-on training in seed multiplication and grain production for key value chains, value addition, and business development.
- A total of 65,253 youth (59% of them young women) has already transitioned into meaningful work opportunities across seed multiplication, grain production, and value-added products.
- Participants have produced and sold 594 metric tonnes of seed, valued at around USD 553,000.
- In total, 120,000 metric tonnes of grain have been produced and off-taken by participants, with an estimated market value of USD 58.7 million.

Learnings to date:

- Access to affordable and timely finance is a game changer for youth in agribusiness, especially those working in aggregation. The need for funds becomes most urgent during the offtake period when young aggregators need to buy produce from fellow youth involved in primary production. Without this cash flow, the whole value chain gets disrupted.
- A strong aggregation system helps young farmers reach better markets. Supporting youth to run and manage their own collection and aggregation centres and linking them to supply contracts with a variety of end users (especially processors), is one of the smartest ways to grow youth-owned agri-businesses into full-fledged SMEs.

We recorded relatively steady success in the Restore Africa Programme, where Africa Harvest convened and conducted value chain analysis workshops across the five target counties: Kwale, Kilifi, Elgeyo Marakwet, Narok, and Migori.

The value chains were identified from County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs), Stakeholder engagement forums, and Community Action Planning (CAP), and prioritized by the community during value chain analysis and ranking conducted with stakeholders in each County.

In Kwale County, the selected value chains are green grams, citrus, and improved kienyeji chicken. The project targets 69,834 households and aims to grow 3.5 million trees across 70,000 hectares. Implementation is underway in three sub-counties: Lungalunga, Shimba Hills, and Kinango.

In Kilifi County, the project focuses on four priority value chains: cassava, green grams, cashew nuts, and improved kienyeji chicken. It targets 57,841 households and supports the growth of over 3 million trees across 63,133 hectares. Implementation spans six sub-counties: Ganze, Magarini, Kaloleni, Malindi, Kilifi North, and Kilifi South.

In Narok County, three priority value chains were identified through value chain analysis: beans, avocado, and beekeeping. The programme targets 50,206 households and supports the growth of over 3,012,360 trees across 77,508 hectares. It is implemented across four sub-counties: Narok North, Narok South, Narok Central, and Transmara West.

In Elgeyo Marakwet County, the selected value chains are cassava, sorghum, avocado, and mango. The project targets 44,784 households and aims to grow over 3.5 million trees across 33,157 hectares. Implementation covers four sub-counties: Keiyo North, Keiyo South, Marakwet East, and Marakwet West.

In Migori County, the priority value chains identified are sorghum, mango, and improved kienyeji chicken. The project targets 14,009 households and supports the growth of 840,000 trees across 6,146 hectares. Implementation is currently focused on Nyatike Sub-County.

Demonstration plots establishment

In the year under review, seven demonstration plots were established across various counties to promote targeted value chains and provide farmers with practical learning on Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs).

In Kilifi County, two plots were set up in Mwanamwiga Ward, Kaloleni Sub-County, focusing on the cashew nut value chain, the polychloro variety. In Kwale County, one plot was established in Kikoneni Ward, Lungalunga Sub-County, where 50 citrus seedlings, including Pixie, Ponkan, and Valencia varieties were planted.

In Narok County, a demonstration plot was established in Olorropil Ward, Narok North Sub-County, focusing on the Hass avocado value chain.

In Elgeyo Marakwet County, two plots were established in Keiyo North Sub-County: one in Kapchemutuua Ward for Hass avocado, and another in Soy North Ward, where 30 mango tree seedlings of Apple Mango, Ngoe, Tommy Atkins, and Kent varieties were planted.

Finally, in Migori County, a demonstration farm was established in Kachieng Ward, Nyatike Sub-County, where 50 mango trees of the Apple Mango variety were planted.

Apart from GAPs training, 650 lead farmers also received training interventions on post harvest handling, value addition, agribusiness models, and group dynamics.

Beryl Opolo during a mango demo establishment in Migori County

Gender-Sensitive Market Assessments and Subsequent Validation

To achieve outcome 4, Restore Africa, led by Africa Harvest, is developing climate-smart agricultural value chains that will enhance the community's livelihoods in ways that support the planting and retention of trees for at least 30 years.

The outcome implementation, led by Africa Harvest, initiated a systematic, inclusive, and participatory process targeting key value chains across the five implementation counties. This process aimed to address bottlenecks and barriers while unlocking opportunities to enhance incomes, particularly for women and youth.

The gender-sensitive market assessment formed a critical step in this process and was underpinned by a three-tiered approach:

Participatory Identification and Prioritization of Climate-Smart Value Chains

In each of the target counties, stakeholders engaged in a collaborative process to identify and prioritize three climate-smart value chains. This exercise considered climate adaptability, relevance to the local context, potential for value addition, and inclusivity—particularly the active involvement of women and youth.

Analysis of Prioritized Value Chains

The selected value chains were then subjected to a detailed analysis to highlight systemic challenges and opportunities for improved performance. Key focus areas included gaps in production, aggregation, input access, post-harvest handling, and market integration.

Gender-Sensitive Market Assessment

This core phase focused on assessing the viability of the prioritized value chains within existing and emerging market systems. It included an in-depth examination of:

- Potential to increase household income across all actors in the chain, with particular attention to women and youth.
- Private sector engagement and profiling of agri-business development service providers.
- Market dynamics, including demand trends and competitive positioning.
- Availability and accessibility of gender-responsive financial products.
- Barriers and enablers affecting the participation of women and youth in value chain nodes, from production to market access.

The assessment emphasized equity and inclusion, ensuring that the specific needs, roles, and aspirations of women and youth were integrated into the design of viable and sustainable business models.

Validation Processes

To ensure relevance, accuracy, and stakeholder ownership, the findings from the market assessments were presented in county-level validation workshops. These forums brought together a broad range of actors, including government departments, lead farmers, youth and women representatives, private sector players, financial institutions, and local cooperatives. The validation process provided an opportunity to:

- Vet and enrich the assessment findings with local knowledge.
- Align proposed business models with county priorities and on-the-ground realities.
- Build consensus on the next steps, including capacity-building, market linkages, and access to finance.

This inclusive and gender-responsive approach lays the groundwork for strengthening production, productivity, and profitability in climate-smart value chains, while driving equitable income growth and economic empowerment for all.

The Gender-Sensitive Market Assessment report offers key insights into gender dynamics in agricultural markets, serving as a guide for policy, project implementation, and investment strategies aimed at improving gender equity.

Project Summary:

Restoring Landscapes and Livelihoods in East and Southern Africa with Climate Asset Management. The Restore Africa Programme is a community-led, nature-based carbon removal and land restoration programme that implements nature-based solutions through a collaborative approach.

Implemented through a collaborative, multi-stakeholder approach, the programme integrates livelihood improvement, land restoration, and carbon market development to address climate and environmental challenges while enhancing community resilience.

Spanning six countries—Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia—the project aims to restore 1.9 million hectares of degraded land and improve the livelihoods of 1.5 million farming families.

In Kenya, the programme targets:

250,000
Households

250,000
Hectares of degraded land restored

10.25 Million
Trees grown across designated counties

All activities are designed to be participatory, inclusive, and climate-smart, ensuring long-term sustainability for both landscapes and livelihoods.

Lead & Sub partners:

Kenya's Restore Africa programme is implemented by a consortium of organizations, with World Vision Kenya as the Lead Implementing Organization (LIO). Other consortium members include: Africa Harvest Biotech Foundation International, Green Belt Movement (GBM), International Centre (Cifor-Icraf) for Research in Agroforestry, Stichting Justdiggit Foundation (JDI), and Self Help Africa (SHA).

Intervention Counties:

Counties where the project is being implemented include Kwale, Kilifi, Elgeyo Marakwet, Narok, and Migori.

RESAf 2024 Highlights

• Building Smallholder Resilience to Climate Change: Smallholder farmers were trained in at least four climate-smart agricultural technologies, including terracing, mulching, vertical gardening, and the use of climate-resilient crop varieties.

• Enhancing Technical Capacity: In 2024, Africa Harvest trained 180 lead farmers who, in turn, supported farmer groups in diverse aspects of agricultural production. These included collective action, good agronomic practices, livestock husbandry, postharvest handling, enterprise development, and marketing.

• **Increasing Production and Productivity:**
Eight demonstration plots were established across five counties to showcase different value chains: cashew nut in Kilifi, mango in Migori and Elgeyo Marakwet, avocado in Narok and Elgeyo Marakwet, and citrus in Kwale.

• **Enhancing Incomes for Smallholder Farmers:**
The program identified and convened 15 categories of value chain actors, including off-takers of chicken, mango, cashew nut, cassava, avocado, and green grams. Financial institutions were engaged to improve access to capital, while input suppliers such as tree nursery operators and seed sellers (cassava, beans, and green grams) were onboarded to strengthen farmer support systems.

• **Gender and Inclusion Programming:**
Women and youth were actively promoted and integrated into employment opportunities along the agricultural value chain.

Key Learnings

• **Collaboration is Critical:**
Resource mobilization and community engagement are more effective and efficient when partners work together and support one another.

• **Value of Regular Monitoring and Contact:**
Consistent technical follow-ups are essential to sustain facilities such as demonstration sites, which can otherwise decline in value. Equally, frequent engagement with communities is necessary to maintain strong connections and ongoing participation in the project


NASAC
AMASA 2024
DECLARATIONS
LA TECHNOLOGIE
D'EDITION DE
GENES
STATEMENTS
GENE EDITING
TECHNOLOGY

Africa is facing unprecedented levels of food insecurity due to frequent droughts, emerging pests and diseases as well as general low productivity partly associated with the effects of climate change and use of low-quality seeds. Despite these challenges, the continent has not adequately benefited from new technologies and may be left out on gene editing technology as well.

Several African countries have taken positive steps to embrace gene editing technology and have either developed or are in the process of developing friendly regulatory frameworks for gene editing technologies. Nigeria, Kenya, Malawi, and Ghana have already published their frameworks, with Nigeria being the first on the continent to do so. Other countries like Benin, Eswatini, and Uganda have also established frameworks.

These frameworks aim to ensure the safe development, transfer, handling, and use of gene-edited organisms and products; However other countries lag behind and if the mixed approaches are not addressed, the continent may lose out on gene editing technology the same way it missed out on potential benefits with Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs).

Gene editing is the ability to target and control mutagenic breeding technologies to a specific gene or genes that enables plant breeders to make precise changes to the plant's genetic material and no foreign DNA is added; it mirrors changes that occur in nature with the new plant displaying desired characteristics such as drought tolerance, disease resistance, improved yields and nutritional value, and even limited allergens. It allows for improved breeding accuracy, with scientists able to introduce specific genetic traits with greater testability, enhanced predictability and accuracy.

Africa Harvest Biotech Foundation International and the Network of African Science Academies (NASAC) through the support of CropLife International developed the Gene Editing Technology Initiative (GETI) Project to enhance the capacity of African Gene Editing Practicing Champions to support the advocacy of the technologies that they are developing in their own institutions. The GETI Project, seeks to increase the capacity of the GETI working group to support development of enabling Biosafety Frameworks for the adoption of Gene Editing Technology in Africa though a strong voice driven by science.

This is being done through targeted communication and policy advocacy for development of conducive regulatory and biosafety systems to support the deployment of the technology from Public Research and University Institutions. The GETI project has continued to improve and expand the work of the Champions to ensure they remain active contributors to gene editing technology discussions.

The project's focus remains to empower the working group of African Gene Editing Champions to raise awareness and advocate for the adoption and utilization of Gene Editing Technology to improve food security in Africa. The project has the requisite capacities and capabilities to support the creation of an enabling environment through policy advocacy and communication for agricultural technologies transfer and adoption for sustainable development.

This effort has been enhanced by using the African Gene Editing Champions as a platform for targeting engagement with relevant stakeholders and decision-makers with an aim to create an enabling environment for regional harmonization of guidelines on gene editing technology, in synergy with a broad spectrum of stakeholders.

Key Achievements

- **Expanded Network and Database:**
  A refined network of 700+ stakeholders, including 26 GETI Champions from 25 African countries, continues to advocate for gene editing technologies across researchers, regulators, policymakers, and the public.

- **Policy Advocacy and Harmonization:**
  Four harmonized policy statements (Research, Regulatory, Policy, and Public) were endorsed by NASAC members from 21 countries. These were translated into French for broader regional accessibility and aligned with AUDA-NEPAD/APET frameworks

- **Strategic Leadership:**
  Five regional GETI focal persons were nominated to lead advocacy efforts in East, West, Central, North, and Southern Africa.'

- **Issue Sensing and Engagements:**
  Webinars were held in September 2023 and April 2024, providing platforms for experience sharing, capacity building, and stakeholder engagement, including input from AUDA-NEPAD's APET.

- **Media Advocacy:**
  GETI facilitated op-eds in mainstream media to build public understanding and support for gene editing. One featured article, "Embrace New Breeding Techniques for a Sustainable Food Future", was published in Kenya's Daily Nation.

- **Strategic Partnerships:**
  GETI Champions participated in high-level bioscience and regulatory forums, including AUDA-NEPAD and IFPRI events, enhancing visibility and alignment with complementary initiatives.

- **Technical Leadership:**
  In June 2024, the Africa Harvest-led consortium, which includes GETI Champions, won a major AUDA-NEPAD bid to conduct a Genome Editing Landscape Analysis across 16 African countries.

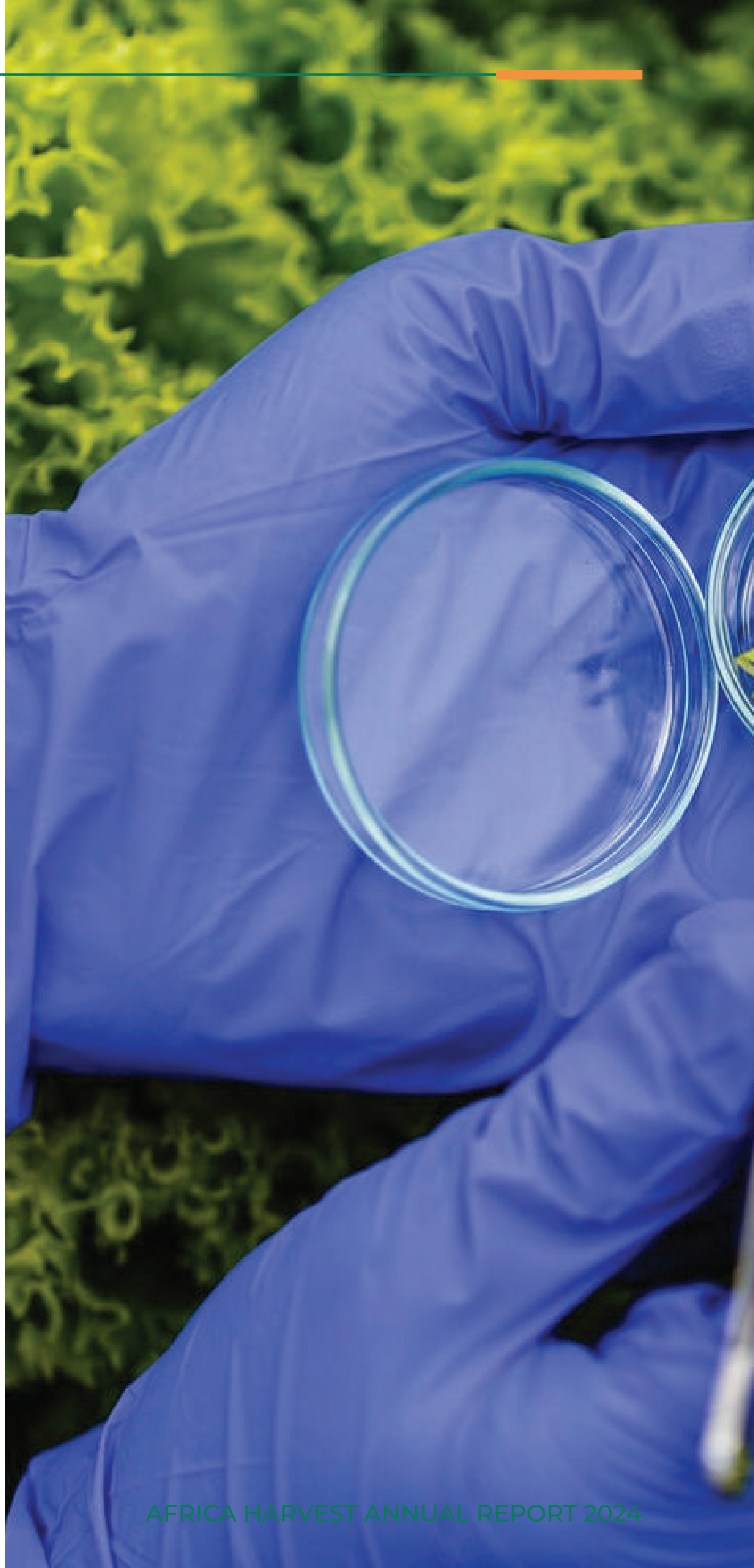
GETI Participation in AMASA

GETI Champions attended the Annual Meeting of African Science Academies (AMASA) 2024, which took place from November 26th to 28th in Algiers, Algeria. The meeting was hosted by the Algerian Academy of Science and Technology (AAST) at the International Conference Center (CIC) in Algiers. The event featured sessions designed to facilitate thematic presentations and group discussions, allowing delegates and experts to share their contributions. Over 150 delegates were in attendance, representing more than 30 science academies across the African continent.

Leveraging AUDA NEPAD Project on Genome Editing Landscape Analysis in Selected African Countries by supporting GETI Champions & Seeking Opportunities to Initiate or Strengthen Biosafety.

Africa Harvest is currently utilizing the trained and experienced GETI Gene Editing Champions to conduct a Genome Editing Landscape Analysis in sixteen selected African countries.

This initiative has been commissioned by the African Union Development Agency – New Partnerships for African Development (AUDA-NEPAD) and commenced in June 2024, with an expected completion date in July 2025.



The AUDA-NEPAD project aims to enhance the uptake of genome editing technologies by African Union Member States. This will be achieved through the development of user-friendly regulatory frameworks for gene editing, effective science communication, and advocacy efforts.

The ultimate goal is to promote viable, competitive, and sustainable agricultural production while transforming agro-industries to support the realization of Agenda 2063.

The Landscape analysis has been rolled out and the GETI Gene Editing Champions are involved in the exercise that cover 16 African countries, namely:

Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Morocco, Tunisia, Mauritius, Senegal, and Rwanda.

Project Summary:

Africa Harvest and NASAC through the support of CropLife International developed the Gene Editing Technology Initiative (GETI) Project to enhance the capacity of African Gene Editing Practicing Champions to support the advocacy of the technologies that they are developing in their own institutions. This is being done through targeted communication and policy advocacy for development of conducive regulatory and biosafety systems to support the deployment of the technology from Public Research and University Institutions.

Lead & Sub partners:

Africa Harvest Biotech Foundation International and the Network of African Science Academies (NASAC)

Intervention Counties:

Five regions of Africa (East, West, Central, South and North Africa).

Project Key Highlights:

Project refined database and network of GETI champions and Five (5) lead Champions from the Africa Harvest-NASAC GETI panel of experts were nominated to lead sub-regional activities.

All the 26 GETI Champions are willing to proceed with advocating for Gene Editing Technology.

A virtual Africa-wide gene editing meeting was organized, that provided a forum for AUDA-NEPAD's APET representative Dr. Silas Obukosia to provide input and and share on gene editing regulatory progresses in Africa.

This virtual session also served as a training platform for gene editing practitioners in Africa.

GETI Champions were facilitated to participate in events organized by complementary organisations, such as the following;

1. The Annual Meeting of African Science Academies (AMASA) 2024 held on 26-28 November 2024 in Algiers, Algeria.

- *GETI successfully launched the Gene Editing policy statements at a pre-dinner event on the 26th Nov 2024.*
- *Policy statements were distributed and discussed at AMASA 2024.*
- *Policy statements endorsed by the NASAC President Prof. Norbert Hounkonnou as well as presidents of over 30 science academies present in the meeting.*

- A scientific conference organized Jointly by Africa Harvest and the African Plant Genomics group from Max Planck Institute for Biology Tübingen, Germany, held in Nairobi in April 10-11 2025.

- GETI organized a TV talk/interview with trained GETI Champion, Dr. Magomere on the 17th, of April, on KTN News .
https://youtu.be/0J1WVEMyeQM?si=rq1TYDXabwVnSHyM
More country specific interviews are lined up.

- Project facilitated two GETI champions (Dr. Titus Magomere and Antony Aseta) to develop a Joint article titled *"Embrace new breeding techniques for a sustainable food future"* on the mainstream media in support of the Gene Editing Technology. The article published in one of the leading media outlets in Kenya- Daily Nation. The publication can be accessed via the link:
https://nation.africa/kenya/blogs-opinion/blogs/embrace-new-breeding-techniques-for-a-sustainable-food-future-4538758

- Africa Harvest used the trained and experienced GETI Champions in a Genome Editing Landscape Analysis in sixteen (16) selected African countries, commissioned by AUDA-NEPAD.

Learnings to date

01 Learning from Previous Experiences:

Drawing lessons from the implementation of genetically modified (GM) crops can inform the development of gene editing technologies and help avoid past pitfalls.

02 Capacity Building:

Investing in training and capacity building for scientists and researchers in Africa is essential for fostering local expertise in gene editing technologies.

03 Public Awareness and Engagement:

Addressing misinformation and building public understanding of gene editing technologies, including their benefits and potential risks, is essential for fostering acceptance and trust.

04 Stakeholder Engagement:

Engaging diverse stakeholders, including farmers (the public), researchers, policymakers, and civil society organizations, in the decision-making process is vital for ensuring that gene editing technologies are responsive to local needs and priorities.

05 Addressing Ethical and Socioeconomic Considerations:

It's crucial to address ethical concerns, potential socioeconomic impacts, and ensure equitable access to the benefits of gene editing technologies.

06 Importance of Regulatory Frameworks:

Developing clear, harmonized, and science-based regulatory frameworks is crucial for guiding the safe and responsible development and deployment of gene-edited crops.

06

It holds significant potential to address critical challenges in Agriculture in Africa and has the support from AUDA-NEPAD, CropLife International and many international organisations; The technology is African driven and led by informed African Scientists and there exists political goodwill in Africa, and the technology faces no political interference

.

Nazua Mtenzi, a farmer taking part in planting 50 citrus trees on her farm in Kikoneni, Lungalunga Subcounty, Kwale County

Impact Stories

How a Citrus farmer views trees as an investment for his golden years

" Over ten years ago, our area boasted numerous trees of different species. Most of them were mature, which is a stark contrast to the young trees and sparse tree coverage we see today,"

says John Mutuku

A farmer from Pongwe Kikoneni Ward in Lunga Lunga Sub-County, Kwale County.

At 59 years old, John, who was born and raised in Pongwe Kikoneni, is well aware of the adverse effects of deforestation on the region. "Trees with large trunks have become rare," he reflects nostalgically on his earlier years. As a lead farmer, John is hosting a demonstration farm where the Global EverGreening Alliance's Restore Africa Programme implementing partner, Africa Harvest, supported in planting 50 citrus trees, including Valencia, Pixie, and Ponkan varieties. This farm will serve as a model for other farmer groups and community members in the area.

Joining him in the tree-planting activity were his wife, Nazua Mtenzi, and a few farmhands. Nazua is excited that their farm will be used to teach other farmers about good agricultural practices in citrus cultivation. She also grows indigenous vegetables and passion fruits, among other crops, and was eager to participate in the tree-planting effort.

"We were informed that we can still plant other crops around the citrus trees to make the most of our space," says John. Farmers are interested in planting trees but worry that these trees will compete with their priority crops for space. "Most farmers work on inherited land, which has been subdivided into small parcels. Consequently, many have limited land, and they must prioritize various value chains," he explains.

The farmers I have spoken with have expressed concern that trees take up significant space on their farms, but I have encouraged them since the trees implemented in the Restore Africa programme are also income-generating." John adds.

However, John is optimistic. "When the trees mature, we will have plenty of fruits to harvest and sell, generating an income." He has another reason for his enthusiasm about planting trees: "My children are currently in secondary school, and in a few years, they will be leaving home, which means my wife and I will become empty nesters," he chuckles.

He further states, "Trees are an investment for me since they require minimal labor. As I age, I realise I

James Mutuku, Lead Farmer under Restore Africa Programme, inspecting his oranges on his farm in Kwale County

don't have much strength left for tilling the land. I want to make -my life easier in the future. The trees I have on my farm can sustain my wife and I in our golden years."

John is also grateful for the trust his community has placed in him, and he looks forward to training his group, Mwabadari Maendeleo Group B, which consists of 11 members, seven of whom are female, in good agricultural practices for citrus cultivation.

Nazua is confident that, “As we continue to plant more trees, we won’t be affected by the drought that affected us this year in the future.”

Eliud Mutahi, Project Manager for Africa Harvest under the Restore Africa Programme, expresses confidence in the citrus value chain selected by stakeholders in Kwale County.

“The citrus value chain will support land restoration, generate income for farmers, and strengthen market linkages since group entry into the market is much easier and more effective than individual efforts,” he explains.

“We were informed that we can still plant other crops around the citrus trees to make the most of our space,” says John.

"I am pleased with the progress we are making in this project. Now it is my responsibility to arrange field days on this farm where farmers can learn and share knowledge. I also plan to encourage our farmers to actively participate in managing the demonstration plot," says Yusuf Kiponda, the County Implementing Officer for Africa Harvest.

Smallholder farmers like John and Nazua are contributing to an initiative to plant 3.5 million trees in Kwale County, enhancing reforestation efforts and boosting agricultural productivity. Led by the Global EverGreening Alliance, the Restore Africa Programme is a farmer-driven initiative to combat climate change by restoring degraded landscapes across six countries in East and Southern Africa: Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

The programme integrates carbon sequestration, biodiversity restoration and sustainable farming practices, with a strong emphasis on community participation and Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR). It also aims to sequester over 11 million tons of carbon, significantly contributing to mitigating the impacts of climate change.

Meru youth tapping fortune from agricultural value addition

Lydia Njeri, 29, infront of her uji power shop, Chaaria Market, Meru County

It is dusty in this part of the country this season. In the near-moderate heat, 29-year-old Lydia Njeri Mwaura bends to mop her floor.

Tidying up after serving a client. Her back straightens, and she looks at us, beaming, "Karibu, Karibu," she calls joyfully.

In the quiet Chaaria market in Mwanganthia ward, Meru County, Njeri, an agripreneur, is making significant investments in her wet milling business, which integrates porridge vending, cereals retailing, and the sale of blended flours, earning a weekly profit of Sh100,000.

Njeri, a proud mother of two, operates a hive of enterprises that deliver much-needed support in value addition to various agricultural value chains.

“My responsibility is to improve the standard of the cereals grown in Chaaria, which includes pearl millet, finger millet, green grams, cow peas, and groundnuts by milling and giving them numerous usages,” said Njeri.

From her rented premises in Chaaria Market, which serves as both a milling hub and porridge café, she operates a wet milling machine (locally known as Kithii kia ucuru).

“In our milling business, we focus on value addition by wet milling pearl millet and finger millet using a machine known as ‘Kithii.’ We blend the two grains to produce porridge, which we serve on-site and also deliver to customers who place external orders,” she explained.

According to reports, pearl millet and finger millet are highly nutritious and packed with proteins, vitamins, antioxidants, and essential minerals like calcium, iron, and zinc.
The porridge made from these grains is especially favoured by the elderly, people with diabetes, children, and pregnant or lactating mothers.

Rich in dietary fibre and complex carbohydrates, the porridge provides sustained energy, supports blood and bone health through its iron and calcium content, and offers plant-based protein for muscle maintenance.

The Bachelor of Science in Agriculture graduate began her entrepreneurial journey in 2021 after losing her job when the company she worked for collapsed due to the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Setting up the business was a struggle because I didn’t have enough money. I secured a loan of Sh200,000 from a friend and purchased the porridge milling machine and a stock worth Sh5000 that has supported me to date,” said Njeri. Her innovation extended to formulating **"Uji Power,"** a fortified porridge made from a nutrient-rich blend of cassava, arrowroot, groundnuts, and milk.

The porridge gained popularity for its health benefits and taste, significantly increasing her customer base. Despite a tough start with little to no customers, she found a way to break into the market.

“I began hawking porridge as a strategic marketing move to create awareness about my new wet milling business. The goal was to attract more customers by also promoting the health benefits of the nutritious porridge in the market,” she stated.

Lydia Njeri, 29, mills Pearl millet and finger millet porridge using a wet milling machine at Chaaria Market, Meru County.

For Njeri, innovation flows like a well-tended stream. Using her unique milling machine, lined with a traditional clay interior that guarantees a smooth, porridge-perfect blend, similar to traditional stone milling, she not only produces nutrient-rich flour but also harvests a treasured by-product: pearl millet residue.

This coarse, raw delicacy is naturally rich in calcium and has found a special place among pregnant mothers, who now cherish it as a wholesome alternative to the stones found on supermarket shelves and kiosks.

"It's our very own traditional super snack," Njeri remarked with pride. "Our foremothers handed this down to us during their stone-milling days, rubbing millet between rocks to create the perfect porridge flour. I encourage expectant mothers to embrace it and share it with their children because it's as pure and natural as it gets."

Njeri utilizes the nutritious residue to feed her poultry and sells the surplus to other poultry farmers, thereby creating an additional source of income. The business saw a breakthrough in 2024 after she enrolled in the Drought Tolerant Crops for Youth Jobs Creation Program, implemented by Africa Harvest Biotech Foundation International (the lead partner), International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), in partnership with the Mastercard Foundation.

The training equipped her with vital business skills, resulting in improved operations and expanded services. "In 2021, we made around KSh 35,000 a week. Now, we are averaging Sh100,000 weekly, thanks to the training and restructuring of our services," she says. Determined to apply her newly acquired knowledge, she leased half an acre of land and began growing sorghum, thereby reducing the cost of purchasing raw materials for wet milling.

> **“In 2021, we made around KSh 35,000 a week. Now, we are averaging Sh100,000 weekly, thanks to the training and restructuring of our services,”**

Her first harvest yielded four 90kg bags, all of which were used in her milling business. She attributes part of her success to the program, which provides quality, improved seed as an incentive. Since joining the program in March 2024, Njeri has employed two staff members, 27-year-old Ruth Wairimu and 24-year-old Elosy Mukiri, further scaling her impact and creating employment for young people.

With improved earnings, she purchased a plot worth Sh800,000, which she plans to use to grow some of the cereals she currently sources externally. She says this will reduce operational costs and increase profit margins, as she won’t need to buy all the cereals she uses.

However, Njeri conceded to various challenges she has endured in the business and called for both government and non-government interventions to empower more young people and women in business.

She urges the government to reduce the cost of business licenses. She calls for greater collaboration between the public and private sectors to provide quality seeds and inputs for smallholder farmers. Since launching her business, Njeri has been paying an annual business permit fee of Sh3,000. However, in the 2023/24 financial year, the amount increased to Sh4,000, a cost she urges the Meru County government to reconsider for the sake of unemployed youth looking to venture into business. In total, she spends Sh7,200 on medical certificates and Sh4,000 on the business permit annually, costs she considers unfair for the survival of small businesses.

“The government should consider consolidating the different levies into one fair amount to encourage more youth to venture into business,” she said.

According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics report, in Kenya, micro, small and medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are vital to the economy, contributing approximately 40 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) and offering employment to an estimated 14.9 million Kenyans.

The DTCs 4 Youth Job Creation program seeks to scale commercialization of drought-tolerant crops technologies to secure dignified and fulfilling work for 120,000 young people in rural Kenya, 70 per cent of whom are young women. Njeri affirms the importance of empowering women, saying, “Empowering women ensures a stable family and society. When a woman is empowered, the whole community thrives."

To the unemployed youth fresh from school, Njeri has encouraged them to take the bold step of starting low. She recalled starting her business with just a five-litre can to vend the porridge, and that didn't stop her from getting to where she is today. "No one should be afraid of starting a small business.

Starting a porridge business requires little capital. Young people should try starting small if they can't find a large amount to start a business," she advised. The general agriculture professional also expresses her pride over her business path, which she says operates in line with her profession. She says the educated youth should not be discouraged by a lack of white-collar jobs. They should instead narrow their skills and knowledge towards the SMEs that offer a brighter promise to the Kenyan youth.

Njeri has attributed her success to her commitment she has rendered the job since the beginning. She noted that the majority of the Youth treat their job as a side source of income, hence ending up failing to accord their business the necessary attention it deserves.

"The majority might think I am not utilizing my university education that my parent gave me, but for me, I feel very okay, very comfortable working in this business. I took it as my main business and not as a side hustle," she said.

According to the World Bank, Kenya's unemployment rate stood at 5.6 per cent in 2023, reflecting a modest increase from 5.4 per cent in 2022. Youth unemployment remains a pressing concern, with 8.4 per cent of Kenyans aged 15–24 out of work.

While the overall rate appears relatively low, the quality of employment is a significant issue only 10 per cent of the workforce holds formal jobs, leaving many in unstable, low-paying informal roles.

Lydia Njeri, 29, mills Pearl millet and finger millet porridge using a wet milling machine at Chaaria Market, Meru County

Njeri hopes to extend her business by purchasing more flour milling machines to reduce the cost she incurs going to Meru town for flour milling.

She believes owning a flour mill will not only boost her income, but also save her customers the trouble of travelling to Meru town, which is about 18 kilometers away from Chaaria market.

“I spend Sh400 on transport to Meru for flour milling, plus extra charges for the milling service," she explained. "My goal is to purchase a flour milling machine within the next two years. It will be a more affordable option for customers in Chaaria, most of whom are farmers with easy access to cereals,” she noted.

Shangazi Masika, County Implementing Officer in Kilifi County, collecting cashew nuts seedlings from a nursery, for demo establishment

Cashew nuts demonstration establishment in Kilifi County, Kenya is a vital step in the world largest farmer-led land restoration project

Kilifi County is one of the five counties where the Global EverGreening Alliance's Restore Africa: Restoring landscapes and Livelihoods in East and Southern Africa with Climate Asset Management Programme is being implemented.

Located along Kenya's northern coastline, farming is a big part of the livelihood for the residents. Africa Harvest conducted a value chain analysis in Kilifi .

Africa Harvest conducted a value chain analysis in Kilifi and selected cashew nuts, Indigenous chicken, cassava, and green grams as the value chains that will be supported by the program

In November 2024, Africa Harvest in partnership with World Vision Kenya, established a cashew nut demonstration plot to serve as a learning center for farmers in Kilifi.

During the establishment, the farmers were trained in Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and had the opportunity to apply these lessons directly in the field.Speaking during an interview, Mr. Isaac Magwenje, whose farm was selected for the demonstration plot, explained that for many years, they only grew cashew nuts for consumption and did not think of it as a source of income. “We would only harvest a few cashew nuts, less than 1 kg, cook and eat them.

But after the training and with the cashew nuts that have been planted on my farm today, I will be able to get some money. This is more than a pension plan for me,” said Mr. Magwenje, who was ecstatic about the training he received from the project that would not only improve his production, but his income as well.

To promote meaningful partnerships, Africa Harvest worked together with the County Agriculture Office to provide training for farmers. Thomas Ngune, the Agriculture Officer for Kilifi County, conducted training sessions on various topics, including integrated pest management, land preparation, the use of manure and compost, and field and equipment sanitation.

“We are so happy about this demo plot since we have been eagerly waiting for it. This is a big step in our project!” Shangazi Masika, the County Implementing Officer (CIO) at Africa Harvest said.

Shangazi, born and raised in Kilifi, has been working very closely with farmers at the grassroots level, ensuring the smooth implementation of the program.

The establishment of the demonstration plot attracted over 50 lead farmers, who will cascade the knowledge to other farmers in their communities. More than 50 seedlings of cashew nuts were planted on Mr. Magwenje’s farm, and they will be monitored closely to ensure optimal growth and development.

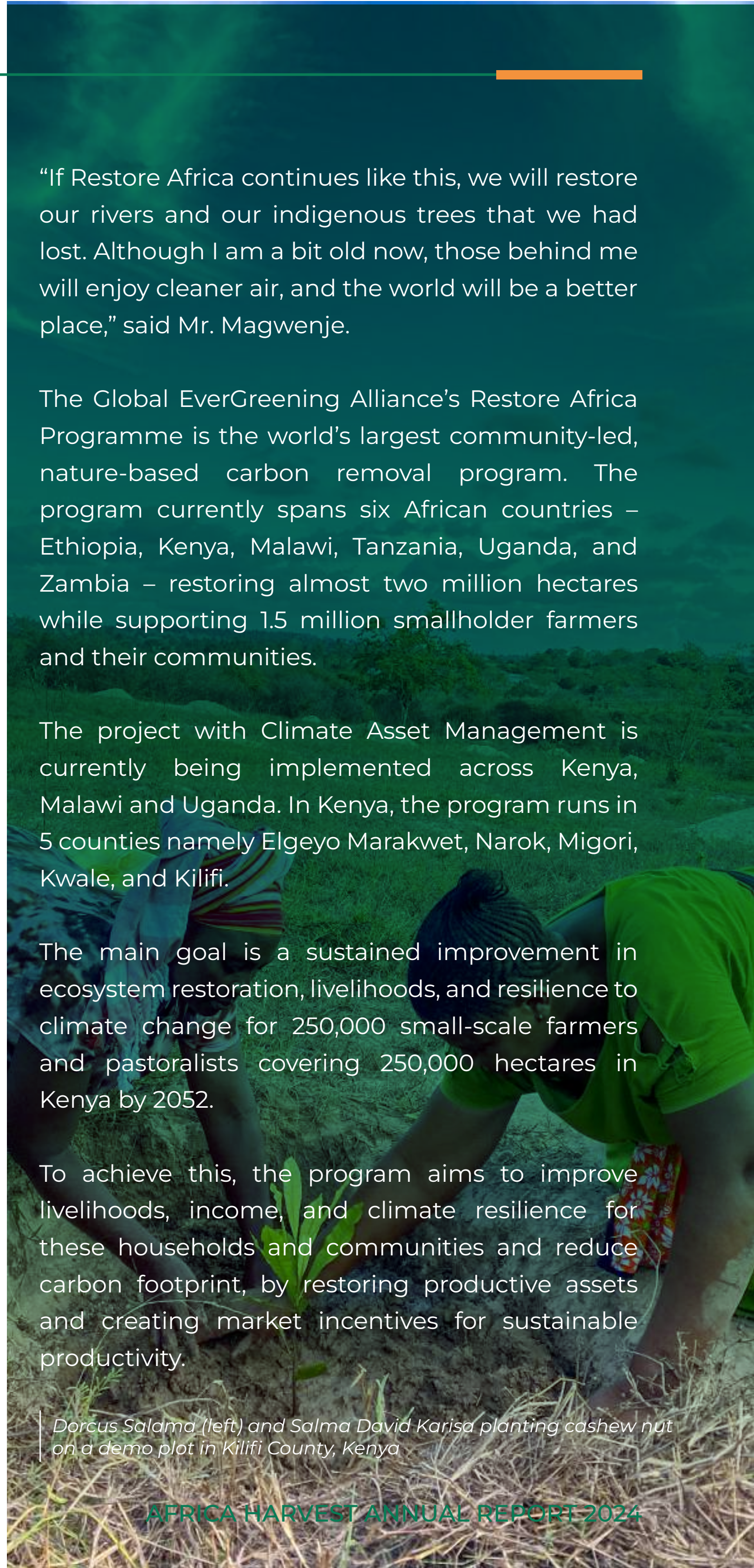
“If Restore Africa continues like this, we will restore our rivers and our indigenous trees that we had lost. Although I am a bit old now, those behind me will enjoy cleaner air, and the world will be a better place,” said Mr. Magwenje.

The Global EverGreening Alliance’s Restore Africa Programme is the world’s largest community-led, nature-based carbon removal program. The program currently spans six African countries – Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia – restoring almost two million hectares while supporting 1.5 million smallholder farmers and their communities.

The project with Climate Asset Management is currently being implemented across Kenya, Malawi and Uganda. In Kenya, the program runs in 5 counties namely Elgeyo Marakwet, Narok, Migori, Kwale, and Kilifi.

The main goal is a sustained improvement in ecosystem restoration, livelihoods, and resilience to climate change for 250,000 small-scale farmers and pastoralists covering 250,000 hectares in Kenya by 2052.

To achieve this, the program aims to improve livelihoods, income, and climate resilience for these households and communities and reduce carbon footprint, by restoring productive assets and creating market incentives for sustainable productivity.



Dorcus Salama (left) and Salma David Karisa planting cashew nut on a demo plot in Kilifi County, Kenya

Country Board Launches

Kenya, Zambia and South Africa Board Launches

In 2024, Africa Harvest strengthened its governance by launching the Kenya Country Board in April, the Zambia Country Board in June and the South Africa Country Board in August.

Fully compliant with the respective country requirements, both boards bring together seasoned leaders to provide strategic oversight, align programs with local priorities, and advance the 2023–2027 Strategic Plan.

Alongside the International Board, they form a robust governance framework that enhances accountability, responsiveness, and impact across the continent.

Kenya Country Board and Africa Harvest staff during the Kenya Country Board Launch in Nairobi, Kenya

From left to right_ Dr. Wilson Songa, Emily Wangari, Philip Wamahiu, & Dr. Felister Makini, during the Kenya Country Board in Nairobi, Kenya

Kenya Country Board Directors after receiving Africa Harvest_ Merchandize during the launch in Nairobi

From left to right: Loyiso Jiya, Luleka Mbete, Dr. Florence Wambugu, H.E. Prudence Mocumi (Board Chair), Maanday Bambeni, Pamela Bukashe, and Xhatisa Samana during South Africa Country Board in South Africa

Chipokota Mwanawasa, Zambia Country Board Member, addressing participants during Zambia Country Board in Lusaka, Zambia

Ms. Sylvia Banda, Zambia Country Board Chair, addressing participants during Zambia Country Board Launch in Lusaka, Zambia

Dr. Florence Wambugu (left) and Ms. Sylvia Banda (right) during the Zambia Country Board in Lusaka, Zambia

05

Board of Directors

Prof. Abdullai Jalloh
Chair, Board of Directors

Capt. Gilbert M. KIBE
Vice Chair & Treasurer

Dr. Florence Wambugu
Chief Executive Officer

Kingori Kariuki
Legal Counsel

Chipokota Mwanawasa
Board Member

Dr. Rose Gidado
Board Member

Nicholas Nyaga
Board Member

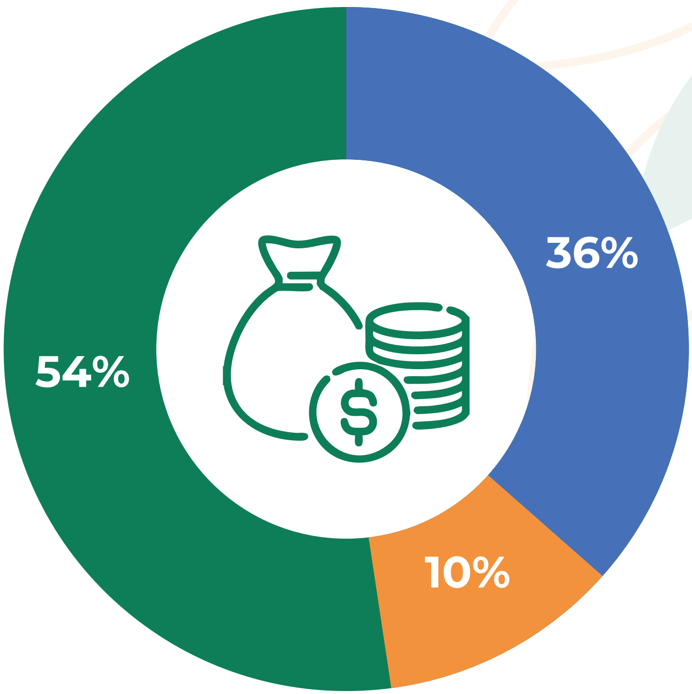
Dr. Tinga Jeremy
Board Member

Prof. Trust Beta
Board Member

04

Financial Report

Cost Allocations for 2024



Program expenses

General & Administrative expenses

Sub grants to partners & collaborators expenses

Africa free from Hunger, Poverty, and Malnutrition

Africa Harvest
BIOTECH FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL

Africa Harvest Biotech Foundation International Block A, 2nd Floor, Suite 6 Spring Valley Business Park Westlands

P.O. Box 642-00621 Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: +254 710 469 266
Email: info@africaharvest.org
Website: www.africaharvest.org