



**Building Sustainable
Agriculture in Africa**



Table of contents

Africa's smallholder farmers feed the continent and manage vast natural resources, yet they remain among the most vulnerable. SAF-A recognizes that sustainable transformation requires more than aid—it needs smart partnerships, scalable business models, and locally driven solutions.

About SAF-A	3
The Board Chair	4
The Executive Director	5
2024 Performance at a Glance	6
The Challenge	7
Our Theory of Change (ToC)	8
Seed Systems Development	9-10
Climate Resilience and Inclusive Finance Solutions (CRIFS)	11-12
Agri-Entrepreneurship Development (AED)	13-14
Voices of Our Farmers – success stories	15-16
2024 Financial Performance Overview	17
Board of Directors	18



Year of Rebirth

SAF | AFRICA
Sustainable Agriculture Foundation

Who is SAF-A?

The Sustainable Agriculture Foundation (SAF) -Africa is a non-profit legacy organisation of the Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture (SFSA).

Refer to the legacy publication here:

https://www.syngentagroup.com/sites/default/files/2024-09/Syngenta%20Foundation_Legacy%20Book.pdf



Formed in 2024, and officially launched in May 2025, SAF-A will continue to improve farmer incomes and food security by providing smallholder-relevant innovations, helping farmers access these innovations through markets, and addressing barriers in the agricultural value chain. Additionally, SAF-A will scale up the adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices and foster the empowerment of women, youth, and disadvantaged groups.

What we do

- Catalyzing access to quality, affordable, and climate-smart seed technologies.
- Developing agri-Entrepreneurs offering all agricultural needs of farmers.
- Designing Climate Resilience and Inclusive Finance Solutions.
- Developing Catalytic entities that ensure sustainability of initiatives.
- Research and Development.

Be part of the change

We invite partners to support our impact by co-designing, funding, and implementing flagship programmes that benefit smallholder farmers.



OUR VISION

A world in which smallholders, communities, and nature thrive together.



OUR MISSION

Scaling up collective action on markets and innovations so that farming can better serve smallholder families, rural communities, and nature.

SAF-A is a member of the Sustainable Agriculture Foundations International Association (SAFIA).

SAFIA operates as a commonly branded federated network across Asia and Africa. While each member organisation retains its identity, they benefit from shared services, methodologies, and a global knowledge network.

The Board Chair



MANDLA NKOMO

Chair and member, Board of Directors

"Our work advances the cause of inclusive, sustainable and farmer-centric agriculture space in Africa."

We will harness the power of techniques, technologies and practices that help farmers mitigate the impact of climate change and give them adaptation options - thereby improving their resilience through climate and inclusive finance solutions.

Our work will continue to strengthen agripreneurs and their ability to provide farmers with the tools and services they need. These agripreneurs are rooted in farming communities, but well aware of global realities. Our models in this regard will continue to be refined for context and hyperlocality.

Agriculture all over the world, and in Africa particularly is facing an ever-changing and complex risk matrix - our insurance and risk mitigation work, that has spawned effective instruments like the work of Acre Africa are game changers. However, as the agricultural context and environment changes, so should our response. We continue to seek your partnership to mount an effective response.

We have an opportunity to lean in more on building an effective incentive mechanism for climate action and practices at farm level - through our work on carbon credits. The gaps that continue to slow the growth of this sector and limit the flow of benefits to farmers need our urgent response. Building more credible Measuring, Reporting, and Verification (MRVs) system, transparent markets for carbon trading will help deliver value at farmer level, where the actual transformative activities take place.

We live in interesting periods, global development will never be the same again, the times indeed are changing. As SAF- Africa we choose to look neither to the left or the right but keep our focus on the farmer - the most transformational player in the ecosystem. Partner with us to build farmer centric solutions in this fast-changing environment.

I thank you.

Fellow sustainability shapers,

I had the greatest pleasure on 22nd May 2025 to officially launch our new entity to continue building sustainable agriculture in Africa through a refreshed organisational model. This was a momentous step for us as an organisation. As the inaugural chairperson, my task has been to ensure we stay the course and continue to build on the legacy that our work has been associated with over time.

From our roots as the Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture to the transition to become SAF - Africa, we have maintained a commitment to this continent, its people and have been guided by a clear vision of a continent where smallholders and their communities thrive together with nature. SAF-A stands as a unique institution.

Such a vision requires unique partnerships and instruments. All of us represent an element of that partnership matrix that will deliver on the vision and mission of Scaling up collective action on markets and innovations so that farming can better serve smallholder families, rural communities, and nature. As a team we maintain our commitment, to always lead, learn and innovate within seed systems - catalysing access to quality, affordable, and climate-smart seed technologies through a unique variety commercialization approach.

The Executive Director



LUCY KIOKO

Former Executive Director

"Continuing with a new, locally led organisation was a profound honour, ensuring that impactful innovations and operations benefiting smallholders across Africa would be fully realized rather than left incomplete."

Optimizer, Mentor, and Agri-Architect.

Lucy served as Regional Director for Syngenta Foundation East Africa (SFEA) – now rebranded as Sustainable Agriculture Foundation (SAF) – Africa and registered as SUSAG FOUNDATION-AFRICA – from 2022 until June 2025. A fulfilling time for her!

The 27th of June 2024 will remain a memorable day for a long time. It was the day that the Syngenta Group granted permission to select entities to continue their work after the winding up of the Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture.

Welcome to the first SAF-A Report, our annual publication showcasing progress, achievements, and impact.

This inaugural edition covers activities and accomplishments from 2024, with future updates on 2025 developments forthcoming in the 2026 edition.

I wish the new entity every success as the team carries the legacy forward – continuing the important journey of innovating and taking practical actions to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers.

In the weeks that followed, the magnitude of the task before was clear. The Foundation's legacy was extensive, distinguished, and deeply rooted, presenting significant expectations to uphold. Yet, we approached this responsibility with strength and a deep connection to that legacy, fully committed to moving forward!

Just as we began implementing plans to re-strategize, rebrand, and launch our new organisation, USAID initiated a review of its foreign aid development assistance. This unexpected development significantly disrupted our momentum, affecting our new projects, our team, and our partners. Despite these uncertainties, we successfully rebranded and officially launched on May 22, 2025. You can watch the event here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HNxTRBYrdo>. The Sustainable Agriculture Foundation Africa (SAF-A) is up and running. Developing agri-entrepreneurs that offers all agricultural needs of farmers. Designing Climate Resilience and Inclusive Finance Solutions. Developing catalytic entities that ensures sustainability of initiatives and addressing specific needs through research and development.

I wish the new entity every success as the team carries the legacy forward – continuing the important journey of innovating and taking practical actions to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers. It was a great pleasure to pioneer the transition with such a vibrant organisation with an exemplary and passionate team.

I hope you enjoy reading SAF-A's first annual update. SAF-A is keen to meet potential partners and explore ways to discuss, co-design, fund, and implement flagship programs that benefit smallholder farmers across Africa.

SYNGENTA FOUNDATION EAST AFRICA, a company incorporated under the Companies Act as a Company Limited by Guarantee, officially changed its name on Monday, 22 July 2024, to: SUSAG FOUNDATION-AFRICA.

2024 Impact at a Glance and 2030 Targets

**0.45 Million**

Smallholders Using Innovations (Targeting 1.5 Million by 2030)

**\$13 Million**

Value of SAF-A Supported Products and Services
(Targeting 50 Million by 2030)

**184,000**

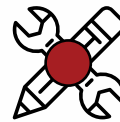
Women Reached
(Targeting 300,000 by 2030)

**733**

Supported Enterprises
(Targeting 2,000 by 2030)

**30%**

Jobs Created for Women
(Targeting 50% by 2030)

**452,500**

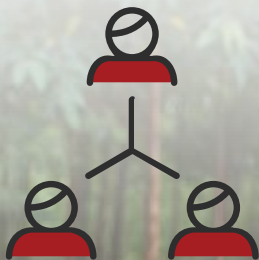
Jobs Created /Sustained
(Targeting 2 Million by 2030)

**877**

People with Disabilities Reached
(Targeting 1,410 by 2030)

**29%**

Jobs Created for Youth
(Targeting 40% by 2030)

**166,000**

Youth Reached
(Targeting 228,000 by 2030)



The Challenge

Few agricultural development organisations effectively address the diverse climate-smart innovations needs of smallholder farmers across different local contexts.



Low income, productivity, and resilience

The phrase “low income, productivity, and resilience” refers to three interconnected challenges faced by smallholder and family farmers in Africa, as highlighted in the SAF-A Theory of Change.



Systemic Neglect by Key Stakeholders

Smallholder farmers are consistently overlooked or underserved by major institutions that could support them:

Research institutions: Develop innovations but often not tailored to smallholder needs.

Technology providers: Design tools and digital platforms that are too expensive or complex.

Financial institutions: View smallholders as “high-risk, low-return,” denying them credit, insurance, or savings products.

Policymakers: Create national agricultural policies that favor large-scale farms or fail to include smallholder voices.



Environmental Degradation (Soil, Water, Biodiversity)

The natural resources that farming depends on are being depleted or damaged:

Soil degradation: Loss of fertility, erosion, compaction, salinization.
Water scarcity: Drying rivers, falling groundwater levels, pollution.

Biodiversity loss: Fewer pollinators, natural pest controllers, and diverse crops.



Climate Change Impacts (Shifting Weather Patterns)

Farmers face increasingly unpredictable and extreme weather, including:

Erratic rainfall (delayed onset, early cessation, dry spells).
More frequent droughts and floods.
Rising temperatures affecting crop growth and pest cycles.
Increased pest and disease outbreaks (e.g., fall armyworm).



Need to Increase Productivity Without Expanding Farmland (Sustainable Intensification)

Farmers must produce more food per hectare – but without clearing forests or converting natural ecosystems into farmland.

This approach is called sustainable intensification.

Why Expansion Isn't an Option:

Environmental cost:
Deforestation > biodiversity loss, carbon emissions, disrupted water cycles.
Land scarcity: Available arable land is limited and often already degraded.

Policy and global goals:
Commitments to protect ecosystems (e.g., UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, CBD targets).

Over 80% of African farms are smallholder-run

Our Theory of Change (ToC)

Outcomes and Impacts to Improve Agricultural Development

Inputs

1. Catalyzing access to quality, affordable, and climate-smart seed technologies
2. Agri- entrepreneurs offering a comprehensive agricultural solution to farmers
3. Climate Resilience and Inclusive Finance Solutions
4. Monitoring, evaluation, research, development and communication
5. Catalytic entities that ensure sustainability of initiatives

Outputs

1. Number of smallholders using SAF-A innovations
2. Value of SAF-A supported products and services
3. Number of supported Enterprises
4. Number of youths reached through SAF-A interventions
5. Number of women reached through SAF-A interventions
6. Number of jobs created/sustained

Outcomes

1. Increased Income from SAF-A supported products by smallholders and Agri-Entrepreneurs
2. Improved farm productivity
3. Increased number of jobs created for youth and women
4. Empowered smallholders using Innovations
5. Strengthened resilience to climate change and reduced environmental degradation
6. Operation of catalytic entities that ensure the sustainability of initiatives through catalytic entities

Impact

1. Thriving, climate-resilient smallholder communities across Africa
2. Reduced poverty and improved nutrition, gender equity, and youth employment
3. Sustainable food systems that protect soil, water, biodiversity, and climate.
4. Contribution to global goals (SDGs) on poverty, climate action, and zero hunger

Assumptions

SAF-A's Theory of Change is based on the assumption that holistic, context-specific interventions, supported by a robust public-private partnerships (PPP), can effectively overcome systemic barriers—such as limited access to finance, technology, and markets – to empower smallholder farmers across Africa. This approach recognizes that addressing these challenges requires coordinated efforts among diverse stakeholders, including research institutions, government agencies, private sector actors, and farming communities, to ensure innovations are demand-driven, scalable, and sustainable.

By fostering such integrated collaboration, SAF-A aims to bridge gaps in agricultural research, extension, and service delivery, enabling smallholders to increase productivity, resilience, and incomes in a manner aligned with local contexts and global development goals.

Seed Systems Development



Work Stream Overview

SAF-A's Seeds2B accelerates smallholders' access to and adoption of climate-smart, nutrient-rich, and market-preferred high-quality seeds of underutilized and adapted crops through a multi-partnership approach.

Seeds2B collaborates with breeders to strengthen the capacity of both public and private sector stakeholders, address variety commercialization challenges with targeted interventions, and deliver end-to-end, practical solutions on the ground.

Project Highlights in 2024

Accelerated Varietal Improvement and Seed Delivery of Legumes and Cereals in Africa (AVISA). The Accelerated Varietal Improvement and Seed Systems in Africa (AVISA) project aims to enhance agricultural productivity, food security, and livelihoods for smallholder farmers across Tanzania and Nigeria by improving access to quality seeds, promoting varietal turnover, and fostering commercialization of climate-smart crop varieties such as common beans, groundnuts, cowpea, and sorghum.

Key achievements

- **Seed System Strengthening:** AVISA implemented innovative, demand-driven, and supply-responsive seed system models, including Community Managed Seed Supply (CMSS) and Quality Declared Seeds (QDS), to increase availability, accessibility, and affordability of certified and high-quality seeds.
- **Partnerships and Capacity Building:** The project collaborated with National Research Agencies (such as TARI and NAS), private seed companies, seed producer cooperatives, NGOs (e.g., Community Agribusiness Partners), and farmer organisations. It delivered technical training on seed production, certification, agronomy, and business management, emphasizing inclusion of women and youth (30-43% participation).
- **Market Development and Commercialization:** The AVISA project facilitated stronger market linkages by integrating off-takers (traders/exporters/processors), promoting product portfolio management, and supporting the licensing and commercialization of publicly bred varieties. Demonstration plots, seed fairs, exhibitions, and small seed pack distributions raised awareness and adoption among over 50,000 farmers.
- **Early Generation Seed (EGS) Production:** To ensure a sustainable seed supply, AVISA supported EGS production through technical assistance, infrastructure investments, and risk mitigation models. Seed companies like DASPA are investing in mechanization and irrigation to scale seed multiplication.
- **Economic Impact:** The project has supported the production and sale of over 300 metric tons of QDS and basic seeds valued at approximately USD 96,000 in Tanzania, and 286,000 kilograms of improved seeds worth USD 269,000 in Nigeria. Grain aggregation through Farmer Hubs in Nigeria

Seed Systems Development Cont'd

has generated over USD 1 million in revenue, strengthening farmer incomes and market participation.

- Policy and Regulatory Support: AVISA contributed to improving seed sector policies, including plant variety protection frameworks, licensing procedures, and registration toolkits, enabling a more enabling environment for seed system growth.

Project Partners

1. International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT)
2. Foundation for Sustainable Smallholder Solutions – Nigeria
3. Community Agribusiness Partners (CAP)

The Partnerships for Seed Technology Transfer in Africa (PASTTA).

The Partnership for Seed Technology Transfer in Africa (PASTTA II) aimed at enhancing production and uptake

of quality seeds of robust varieties for ten priority food crops (potato, bean, cowpea, fonio, groundnut, maize, pearl millet, sesame, sorghum, and soybean) in four African countries: Kenya, Mali, Rwanda, and Senegal. The project aligned its objectives with USAID's Global Food Security Strategy (GFSS 2017-2021), which emphasized the importance of increasing the availability and accessibility of climate-resilient agricultural technologies, fostering inclusive economic growth, and building resilience to climate shocks.

Key Achievements

PASTTA contributed to a future long-term transformative impact on smallholder farmers by improving seed access, promoting gender inclusion, fostering innovation, and building the capacity of farming communities. See the Summary snapshot below:



293,539

Smallholder farmers accessed and used certified seeds of new/improved varieties.



6,726 MT

Total seeds produced



\$12,004,494

Total value of improved seed sales from production and other sources.



32,391

Capacity Building Events



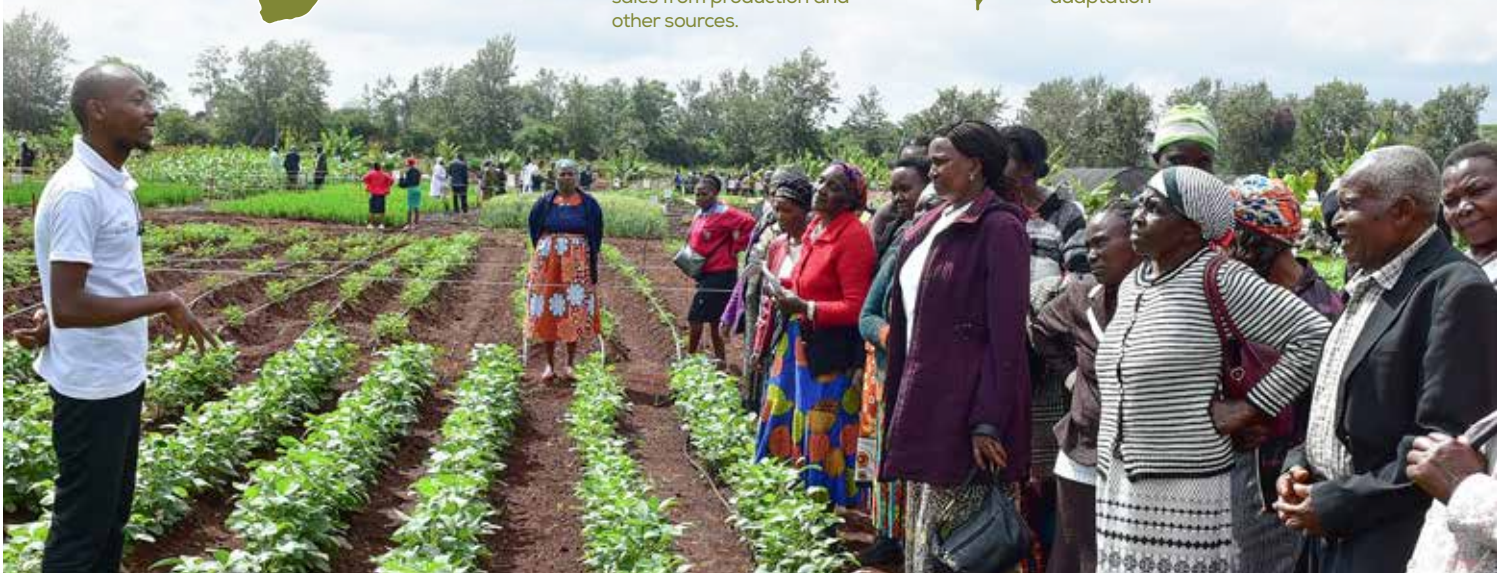
15,691

Farmers impacted through capacity-building activities 39% women



137

Varieties trialed for performance and adaptation



Climate Resilience and Inclusive Finance Solutions (CRIFS)



The Climate Resilience and Inclusive Finance Solutions (CRIFS) workstream expands upon SAF's legacy of agricultural insurance by developing market-led financial ecosystems to support smallholder farmers and value chains in adapting to climate risks.

CRIFS integrates climate finance, ESG frameworks, and inclusive financial models, positioning SAF as a key partner for impact investors, Development Finance Institutions, and development agencies focused on sustainable agricultural development.

It develops climate-smart financial solutions that strengthen market ecosystems, improve financial access, and drive sustainable growth in agriculture. CRIFS aims to lead in delivering ESG-compliant, impact-focused financial products that contribute to climate adaptation, food security, and long-term economic stability in Africa.

Key Focus Areas

1. Strengthening Market Ecosystems for Climate Resilience
2. Advisory Support for Climate Finance and ESG Integration
3. Facilitating Blended Finance and Impact Investments

Project Highlights

Africa Agriculture Adaptation Atlas (AAA)

The Africa Agriculture Adaptation (AAA) Atlas was launched to support African stakeholders in identifying, testing, and applying climate adaptation strategies through data-driven insights.

In 2024, the project focused on building awareness, piloting tools, engaging institutions, and setting foundations for national implementation in 2025.

Key Achievements

a. Regional Launch & Awareness

- ATLAS introduced across Africa Network of Agricultural Policy Research Institutes (ANAPRI) partner countries.
- Early awareness sessions held during ANAPRI policy dialogues.
- First regional pilot training in Nairobi (late 2024) with 40 participants (policy + research).

b. Technical Foundations

- Training manual and evaluation instruments developed.
- Core notebooks piloted: Evaluate Climate Risk, Analyze Women's Exposure to Climate Hazards, Estimate Economic Returns on Adaptation.
- Initial user feedback collected (timeouts, data gaps, usability).

c. Institutional Engagement

- Through ANAPRI (African Network of Agricultural Policy Research Institutes) Partnerships were established with Makerere University (Uganda), University of Ibadan (Nigeria), SUA (Tanzania), University of Ghana, and EPRN (Rwanda).
- Governments signaled interest in using Atlas data for policy and planning.

Climate Resilience and Inclusive Finance Solutions (CRIFS) Cont'd

In 2024, the AAA Atlas moved from design to implementation, with significant progress in regional awareness, technical development, institutional partnerships, and early use cases. These achievements laid the groundwork for expanded national training and policy integration in 2025.

Project Partners

1. CIAT (Alliance of Bioversity International & CIAT)
2. ANAPRI (African Network of Agricultural Policy Research Institutes)
3. RCMRD (Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development)
4. ATI (Agricultural Transformation Institute)
5. AGNES (African Group of Negotiators Experts Support)

Financial Education Window (FEW) - Zambia

The FEW Project working using a Training of Trainer model where Branch Managers (BMs) are trained by partner experts, and then the BMs train Village Champions (VCs), who in turn train farmers in their communities. This approach ensures wide reach, community ownership, and sustainability.

Major Achievements

The FEW trainings reached 30,659 farmers, including 16,618 through digital platforms. Participation rates ranged between 30–55% across communities, with strong engagement from both youth and women. As a result, farmers developed a greater appreciation for crop insurance, leading to increased demand for Agora Micro Finance (AMZ) insurance products. Many farmers also started budgeting and planning ahead of the farming season, enabling them to make more informed financial decisions. They also adopted climate-smart practices such as crop rotation, residue retention, and the use of certified seeds, including soybean varieties supplied by Synergy Seeds (Dina variety) and Afriseed (Kafue variety), which improved soil fertility.

The project further gained strong buy-in from local leadership, with District Commissioners (DCs), Ministry of Agriculture officers, and headmen expressing their appreciation and support for its efforts.

Future Projects and Planned Activities

1. Scale-Up: Expand training to additional districts, with a stronger emphasis on youth and women participation.
2. Climate-Smart Focus: Broaden awareness modules to include advanced climate-smart practices and their linkage to financial risk management.
3. Digital Integration: Launch mobile-based FE and insurance awareness tools to complement in-person training.
4. Expanded Insurance Products: Collaborate with insurers to provide more tailored products for smallholder farmers.
5. Enhanced Partnerships: Deepen engagement with agro-input suppliers and financial institutions to strengthen farmers' access to seeds, credit, and savings tools.

Donors and Implementing Partners

1. Donor: Swiss Capacity Building Facility.
- Implementing Partners:**

2. Sustainable Agriculture Foundation – Africa (SAF-A): Project Lead
3. Agora Microfinance Zambia (AMZ): Financial education and access to insurance.
4. Agriculture and Climate Risk Enterprise Ltd (ACRE Africa): Insurance awareness and product design.
5. Viamo: Digital training platform reaching farmers using SMS and IVR (Interactive Voice Response)

Project Partners

1. Synergy Seeds and Stewards Globe: provision of certified soybean seed (Dina and Kafue varieties).
2. Ministry of Agriculture: Extension and local coordination.

Agri-Entrepreneurship Development (AED)



Agri-Entrepreneurship Development (AED)

The Agri-Entrepreneurship Development Portfolio's main objective is to innovate and develop solutions that drive last-mile service delivery to smallholder farmers. This is achieved through the Farmers' Hub model – a one-stop shop where smallholders can access:

- Inputs (seeds, fertilizers, crop protection, animal feeds & products)
- Financial services (VSLA, input credit, insurance)
- Mechanization (soil preparation, planting, spraying, harvesting)
- Market access (aggregation, storage, transport, offtake)
- Advisory & extension (GAP training, safe chemical use, demonstrations, soil health, farm planning)

Through this portfolio, SAF-A has strengthened farmer-led enterprises, built inclusive value chains, and expanded opportunities for women and persons with disabilities (PWDs).

Combined 2024 Achievements

- **Farmers Reached:** Over 46,804 smallholder farmers reached directly across Kenya and Tanzania.
- **Agri-Entrepreneurs Developed:** 473 Agripreneurs established and supported, evolving into viable Agri-enterprises offering services to local farmers. Successfully graduated 187 Agripreneurs who

completed Business Development Services (BDS) mentorship and coaching, equipping them to qualify and operate as sustainable enterprises

- **Sales Revenue Generated:** Agripreneurs generated USD 3,215,384 (Kshs 418 million) in 2024 from service delivery and aggregation.
- **Farmers Trained:** 40,000+ farmers trained on Good Agronomic Practices (GAP), soil health, water management, agroforestry, post-harvest handling, and climate-smart agriculture.

Project Goals and Focus Beneficiaries

Potato for Livelihoods Project (Kenya, 2024–2025)

The program seeks to improve the livelihoods of communities living along the south-west Mau forests through the creation of alternative income-generating activities and increasing production and productivity to reduce their reliance on forests for their subsistence thus reducing pressure on forest resources.

12,000 beneficiaries with 3,000 being smallholder farmers (with emphasis on women & youth) in Nakuru and Kericho counties promoting potato value chain.

Global Labour Program – Inclusive Futures (Kenya, 2021–2026)

Aims to demonstrate that a set of relational capacity building interventions along value chains (sorghum) lead to improved levels of employment among people,

particularly women and men with disabilities, as well as improvement in the protection of their labor rights. 10,000 farmers (at least 1,410 PWDs in Migori, Homa Bay, Kisumu Counties).

Economic Empowerment Program (EEP) – Tanzania, 2023-2025

The overall goal of the project is to enhance proportionate access to formal employment (including self-employment) and inclusion in the workplace for people with disabilities.

250 Farmers in Mkalama District, with targeted support to women and farmers with disabilities (65).

Nutrition In City Ecosystems (NICE) – Kenya, 2021-2029



The Nutrition In City Ecosystems (NICE) is a global initiative and part of the thematic section on food systems by the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC) and implemented by a consortium comprising Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute (Swiss TPH) ETH Zurich, Sight and Life Foundation and Sustainable Agriculture Foundation (SAF). In Kenya the project is implemented in the counties of Busia and Bungoma with an overarching goal of improving nutrition and health and to reduce poverty among city populations especially women, youths and vulnerable populations.

The NICE project aims to realize this objective by increasing the supply and demand of nutritious foods produced using agroecological practices and promoting advocacy for local food systems governance.

Central Highlands Ecoregion Foodscape (CHEF) 2025-2026

A program by the Nature Conservancy (TNC) that aims to promote sustainable farming practices, enhancing biodiversity conservation and building

social-ecological resilience within the central highlands of Kenya through implementing initiatives that will promote access to freshwater by people and nature, livelihoods empowerment, and improved land health.

SHAYIRI Project 2024 - 2025

Funded by Diageo through Sightsavers, this project aims to support Diageo's goal of building a disability inclusive barley supply chain through provision of training on agribusiness, gender and disability inclusion, facilitate access to farm inputs, provide additional reasonable accommodation to farmers with disabilities to access mechanization services required during land preparation and harvesting.

Eburru Smallholder Empowerment Program (ESEP) 2025-2027

A project supported by the Rotary Club of Gachie (RCG) and Rotary E-Club of Global Trekkers (REGT) which seeks to empower smallholder farmers in Eburru in Nakuru county to diversify and engage in production of high market value crops and re-afforestation activities.

China-Africa Ag Value Chain Opportunities 2024-2025

Market Intelligence study to provide prioritized value chain analysis in specific agricultural commodities in Kenya and Tanzania ensuring inclusive agricultural transformation (IAT) objectives are met whilst leveraging new export-market growth opportunities in the China-Africa agricultural cooperation. The Gates Foundation grant aims to analyze and unlock sustainable Africa-China agricultural partnerships, specifically focusing on certain crop value chains that benefit smallholder farmers i.e. Cassava, dried Red Chili and Avocado.

Financial Partners

1. Equity Bank Ltd
2. Kenya Commercial Bank Ltd
3. Kingdom Bank
4. UNAITAS Sacco



Voices of Our Farmers – Success Stories



Empowering Seed Entrepreneurs to Close Seed Gap

In an inspiring move towards agricultural sustainability, our Seeds2B team in Kenya joined forces with the National Agricultural Research System (NARS) and dedicated seed merchants. Our collective mission? To significantly increase the availability of certified seed potatoes for smallholder farmers.

The hard work yielded positive results: increased production, progress towards sustainability, and a new generation of empowered seed entrepreneurs with a bright future. Take the story of Susan Yaipan, a smallholder from Narok County, Kenya.

"I am among the pioneering farmers who have completed specialized training in certified seed production entrepreneurship, a program born from the collaboration between the Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organisation (KALRO) and the SAF-A's Seeds2B initiative. This training is a cornerstone for a sustainable future that benefits all in the potato supply chain.

This initiative has been a game-changer in the field of certified seed production, thanks to the tireless efforts of SAF-A's project officers. This program has been instrumental in providing comprehensive training to me and 35 other entrepreneurs. The curriculum includes crucial good agricultural practices and highlights the vital role of plant health measures. This valuable education has enabled us to successfully produce and market more potato seed, thereby enhancing our income and expanding the availability of certified seeds."

A young Woman's Journey Turns Her Life Around

"SAF-A became my destiny helper."

SAF-A supports the entrepreneurial drive of smallholder farmers, with a focus on young people. With access to training and support, farmers can find new ways to improve their livelihoods.

Ruth Kabiru is a young agri-entrepreneur and founder of Crop Care Hub in Nakuru. She works with over 250 smallholder farmers, helping them access farm inputs and connect to markets.

Ruth shared her experience at the SAF-A rebranding and launch event on 22nd May 2025.

"After finishing college in 2021, I wanted to get into agriculture but was unsure where to start. At a farmers' exhibition in Njoro, I met a SAF-A project officer who introduced me to the Farmers' Hub Model. I then followed up with many questions and



calls, seeking guidance. I became a beneficiary of the Potato for Livelihood project, which supports forest communities with alternative income sources. I was also connected to government agencies for training in potato production. I shared what I learned with other farmers registered at Crop Care Farmers' Hub."

Ruth began with 3,000 apical cuttings of potato and now manages five acres with different seed classes. Access to certified seeds is improving in her area.

Although she studied finance, Ruth now helps farmers get inputs, advice, and mechanisation services. Her community now looks to her for agricultural knowledge and support.

Youth Group Finds Good Customers for Fingerlings



"By empowering our youth to become successful fish producers, we're not just growing businesses, we're cultivating consumption of healthy nutritious diets." Edwin Pamba.

Edwin Pamba is the chairman of Goodwill Fingerlings Producers Youth Group in Busia. His members sell their fingerlings to people rearing fish in ponds or lake cages. They also grow African Leafy Vegetables such as Black Nightshade. The group learned about the NICE Small Grants Initiative during aquaculture training at one of the Farmers' Hubs in the NICE project. Edwin and colleagues decided to apply.

"We got a solar panel and water pump as well as high-quality brooders for tilapia and catfish", Edwin proudly reports. Group members use the pump for irrigating their vegetables as well as for the fish tanks. "We have now hatched more than 4,000 tilapia fingerlings, worth over 32,000 shillings", he adds.

The catfish will follow soon. "We sell them by weight", Edwin explains. "10-15g fingerlings can fetch ten shillings, the smaller ones are worth about eight. We sell them to networks organized through the county fisheries and agriculture offices."

The group is not yet as strong as Edwin would like. It can be difficult to advance certain activities if not all members are willing to engage.

Further challenges include predators on the fish and the high cost of feed; However, the members look forward to a brighter future. "We hope to get stronger

over the next five years", Edwin underlines.

"We aim to strengthen our governance, secure our present investments, and expand our portfolio by investing in lake fish cages."

When the Rain Fails, Farmers Prevail

The multistakeholder macro resilience bundling program in Zambia has successfully concluded, marking a significant milestone for smallholder farmers. Supported by the Swiss Capacity Building Facility and Swiss Re Foundation, the program scaled up access to bundled solutions – seeds and crop protection – designed to enhance resilience in the face of challenges like the recent devastating El Nino-induced drought.

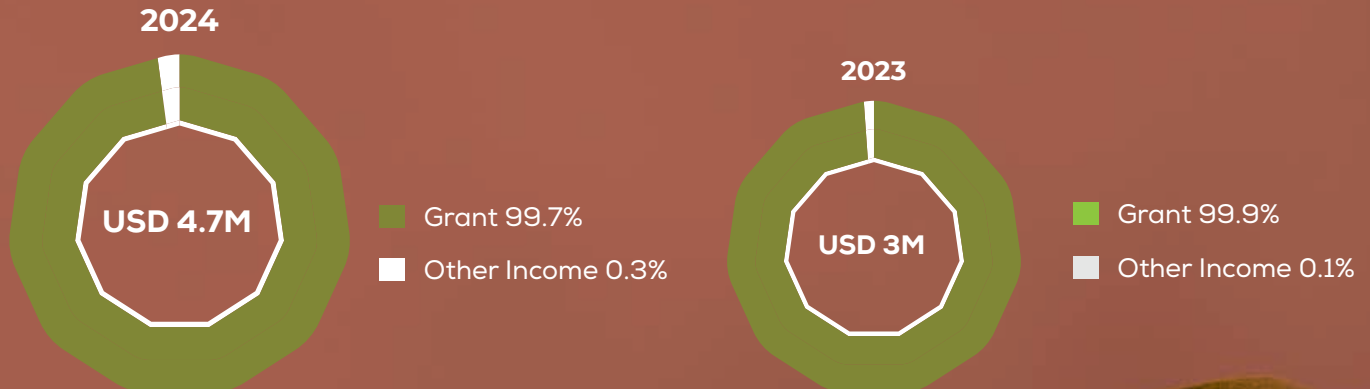
Led by the Sustainable Agriculture Foundation (former Syngenta Foundation), this initiative united a dynamic network of partners, including ACRE Africa, Synergy Seeds Zambia, Syngenta Crop Protection Zambia, and Mayfair Insurance. Together, they empowered farmers with tools and resources to secure their livelihoods, while uncovering valuable lessons to guide future resilience-building efforts.

To ensure sustainability, the initiative will gradually reduce premium subsidies, empowering farmers to take ownership of their risk management. "At the same time, our financial literacy program, in partnership with Agora Microfinance, is paving the way for voluntary insurance uptake, especially after the challenges of the 2023/24 drought. This phased approach will help create lasting resilience and financial inclusion for smallholder farmers across Zambia.



2024 Financial Performance Overview

INCOME



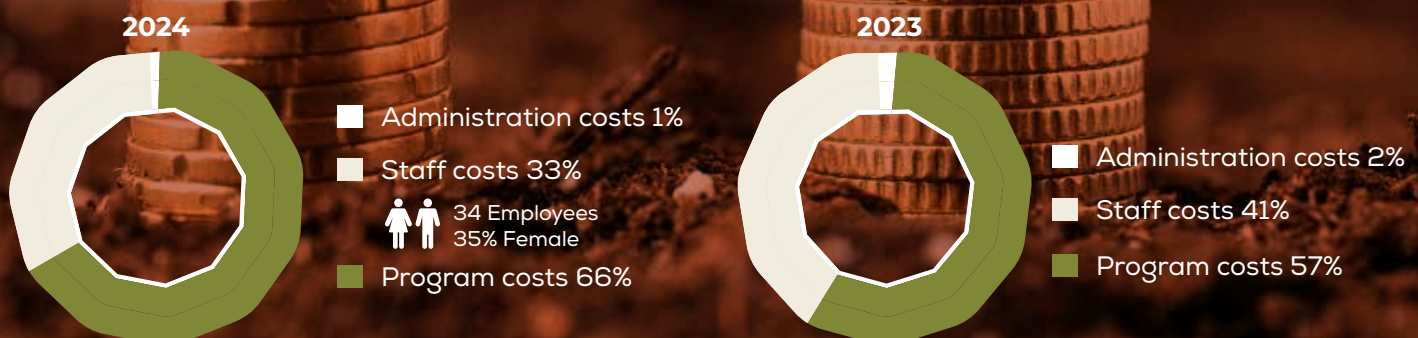
During the year ended 31st December 2024, the organisation recorded strong financial performance, with total revenue increasing by 57% from USD 3M in 2023 to USD 4.7M in 2024. This growth was primarily driven by the successful onboarding of new grants and strategic partnerships established during the year.

GRANTS



EXPENDITURE

Expenditure rose by 77%, from USD 2.6M in 2023 to USD 4.6M in 2024, reflecting the expansion in project activities implemented during the year.



Audit Overview

The organisation's financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2024 were independently audited by Lexan and Associates, who issued an unqualified opinion.

Board of Directors

The SAF-A Board of Directors is responsible for providing overall governance, strategic direction, and fiduciary oversight to ensure the organization fulfills its mission effectively and ethically. It safeguards the organization's assets, ensures compliance with legal and donor requirements, oversees financial integrity and risk management, and holds the Executive Director accountable for performance. It also guides policy, upholds transparency and accountability to stakeholders, and promotes sustainability through strategic partnerships and resource mobilization.



MANDLA NKOMO

Chair and member, Board of Directors

Mandla currently serves as the CEO of Partners in Food Solutions. He has worked across the agrifood sector, working to integrate farmers into profitable value chains and access technology in agricultural production. He is a firm believer in the African food and agriculture potential.



ANNE MBAABU

Member, Board of Directors

Anne is a value chain development and trade policy expert. Anne held various roles at AGRA and was the first Executive Director of the East African Grain Council.



LUCY KIOKO

Member, Board of Directors

Lucy is the former Executive Director of SAF-A. She is an Agricultural Systems expert and is experienced in smallholder, food, and market systems.



SAF | AFRICA

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Let's Connect!

