



BOOSTING THE RESILIENCE OF SMALLHOLDERS THROUGH REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE

JULY 2020 – OCTOBER 2021 | EMBU COUNTY

Embu County heavily relies on the agricultural sector both as the principal source of food and nutrition and as the backbone of the economy. The majority of the population (70%) derives their livelihood from crop production and livestock keeping.

The key value chain commodities produced by majority of the farmers are maize, dairy cattle, bananas and beans. The region's favourable rainfall patterns and high agricultural potential position it as one of the leading food baskets of Kenya.

Nonetheless, the growing population and climate-related shocks present a threat to agricultural productivity due to ongoing land subdivisions, soil degradation as a result of overgrazing, over-cropping, erosion and poor farming methods.

Through training 50 farmer groups with 200 members each, the regenerative agriculture project will increase production and incomes and boost the resilience of farmers in

Embu through reformatory agricultural practices that will improve soil health and food security in the face of climate change.

Extension services in the rural community will be enhanced through a private sector-led model of village-based advisors (VBAs) who will offer the technical skills needed to increase the uptake of good agricultural practices in regenerative agriculture.

Furthermore, the VBAs will play a critical role in linking farmers to both input and output markets so as to boost their household incomes.

Collective marketing and aggregation of produce will be improved through mobilisation and training of aggregators in post-harvest management and grain quality.

The adoption levels of best practices and lessons learned will be disseminated through workshops and case studies.

WE ARE WORKING WITH

- 10,000 farmers
- 100 Village-based Advisors (VBAs)
- Three aggregators

OUR PARTNERS

- Cereal Growers Association (CGA)
- International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR)
- County Government of Embu, Department of Agriculture

The Regenerative Agriculture initiative is funded by the IKEA Foundation through the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa. It is being implemented in Embu County by Farm Africa.





STRENGTHENING PRIVATE SECTOR-LED EXTENSION SERVICES

The initiative will develop a technical curriculum in good agricultural practices for regenerative agriculture and business management.

The training courses will be delivered to 100 private village-based advisors (VBAs) and six ward agricultural officers, who in turn will train the 10,000 farmers.

The VBAs will also play a critical role in linking farmers to both input and output markets.



INCREASING PRODUCTIVITY THROUGH REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE

Regenerative agriculture involves farming practices that rejuvenate soil health.

The initiative will encourage an inter-cropping system of maize and the nitrogen fixing climbing beans which are high yielding alongside agroforestry crops such as Calliandra Calothyrsus and Leucaena Spp to improve soil fertility and provide staking material for the climbing beans.

We will work with village-based advisors to establish 50 demonstration plots to spur faster uptake and transfer of skills to individual farms.

To enhance collective marketing systems, the initiative will build the capacity of three aggregators in warehouse management and grain quality, and develop seasonal marketing strategies and production plans for them.



BOLSTERING LEARNING AND DISSEMINATION PROCESSES

To promote increased knowledge and awareness of regenerative agricultural practices among farmers and other key stakeholders such as the county government, the initiative will spearhead learning sessions through collaborative workshops.

Moreover, adoption levels of good agricultural practices will be documented in the form of comprehensive case studies so as to highlight the lessons learned in regenerative agriculture technologies and the village-based advisor (VBA) business model.

