



Photo: Lisa Murray

# From the Field

Autumn / Winter 2024

# Staff spotlight:

## Asaye Asnake

Asaye, Farm Africa's Regional Programme Support Manager in Ethiopia, has been with the organisation since 2014. Inspired by Farm Africa's work to unlock the transformative potential of sustainable and effective agriculture, he found the perfect match for his expertise and ambitions.

### What do you enjoy most about your work?

Seeing the consistent delivery of projects and their lasting impact on rural livelihoods is incredibly rewarding.

### Can you describe a typical day at Farm Africa?

A typical day involves overall project management, including planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of projects and programmes. I offer technical support to teams at various levels. My day includes preparing donor and review reports, developing technical manuals on climate-smart agriculture and natural resource management, and ensuring effective project implementation across multiple countries.

### Could you share some highlights from your time working at Farm Africa?

There are many things that make me proud. We're transforming the lives of smallholder farmers, pastoralists, and



forest communities. Our promotion of sustainable practices and climate-smart agriculture is making a big difference. We're empowering women and youth, and boosting local economies through better market systems and access to finance. Our active engagement in research and partnerships is driving innovation and progress. Overall, seeing the lasting positive changes and improved livelihoods in rural communities has been incredibly fulfilling.

### If you could share a message with our UK supporters, what would it be?

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to our generous supporters in the UK. Farm Africa firmly believes that "Our work can talk about us," and I have personally witnessed the transformative changes in the lives of the beneficiaries. Your support has been instrumental in driving these changes, and we deeply appreciate your continued kindness.



# Waitrose Foundation and Farm Africa

Photo: Lisa Murray

An award winning partnership driving climate resilience

Since 2017, Farm Africa and the Waitrose Foundation have been proudly working together to uplift farmers' livelihoods and establish sustainable supply chains for Waitrose & Partners' fresh produce in Kenya.

Our climate resilience project across Mount Kenya, South Rift, and North Rift has empowered around 4,500 flower growers to thrive in the face of climate change. By introducing renewable energy solutions like solar-powered pumps and energy-efficient stoves, we've helped farmers reduce costs, improve health, and protect the environment—all while enhancing their quality of life.

We've also encouraged farmers to diversify their incomes through poultry rearing, beekeeping, and agroforestry, making their livelihoods more resilient. The creation of 100 village savings and loan associations has been a huge

**“A wonderful initiative. This is a good example of what all food and beverage retailers should be doing to ensure sustainability right through the supply chain.”**

**Judges' comments**

Third Sector Business Charity Awards

Our partnership was recognised in May 2023 when it won the 'Food & Beverage Charity Partnership of the Year' award at the Third Sector Business Charity Awards.

success, with members collectively saving an impressive 3.4 million Kenyan Shillings.

Gender equity has been a cornerstone of our project, inspiring women to step confidently into income-generating activities and household decision-making. For instance, women who once believed stove-building was solely men's work completed our training with the confidence and skills to become artisans themselves. This transformation is a testament to the positive change we're driving together.

# Restoring the rangelands: An environmental and community success

In recent years, the Ethiopian Central Rift Valley has faced severe challenges, including land degradation, declining water levels in Lake Abijatta, and significant food insecurity affecting around 1.9 million people.

Addressing these issues required innovative solutions and strong community involvement.

Lake Abijatta, located in Abijatta-Shalla Lakes National Park in the Oromia Region, has shrunk by 66.6 square kilometres in the period from 1972 to 2015.

The park, established in 1963, covers 887 square kilometres and is vital for bird conservation, hosting over 450 species, including migratory birds from Europe and Asia.

However, the park has struggled historically with conflict with local communities, population pressure and poor resource management. These issues have led to environmental degradation, such as deforestation, overgrazing and soil erosion, threatening the park's unique ecosystems.

As part of the Nature-based Solutions for Sustainable and Inclusive Development (NSSID) programme, funded by the Embassy of Sweden in Ethiopia, **Farm Africa has led a remarkable project through the Mansa Participatory Rangeland Management Cooperative.** This initiative aimed to enhance natural resource management for resilience and economic development in the Central Rift Valley (CRV).

Though initially met with skepticism, the cooperative was established after extensive discussions and community engagement. Since its successful formation, it has actively rejuvenated the rangelands by overseeding with 200 kilograms of Rhodes grass and safeguarding the area from human and animal interference.

**In just 18 months, working in partnership with local communities, we achieved transformative results:** 95% of the degraded rangeland was restored, turning barren landscapes into vibrant grasslands that support wildlife and reduce soil erosion. This transformation has also revitalised Lake Abijatta, improving water quality and increasing fish stocks, which has brought increased food security for local people and new economic opportunities for local fishermen.

To boost their economic circumstances, the cooperative engaged in bull fattening and grass harvesting, generating significant profits for its 462 members. The project has also resolved longstanding conflicts between the park and surrounding communities, fostering trust and collaboration.

Meke Abegaz Uga, a cooperative member, explained how before the cooperatives establishment; **"We had never felt that the park belonged to us." But, now, the whole community sees the benefit of protecting the park.**

This project highlights the success of community-driven sustainability, offering a model for environmental restoration and improved livelihoods everywhere.

**"The park has been inscribed in our hearts and minds. As you can see, it's not fenced with wire or any wooden material, but all members of the cooperative, men or women, elders or youngsters, are protecting it."**

**Ade Rameto**  
Cooperative Member, CRV Ethiopia

Members of the Mansa Cooperative walk across grasslands restored under their management.



# Leave a lasting legacy

In eastern Africa farmers are the backbone of their communities, with 70% of the population relying on agriculture for their livelihoods.

Yet, they face persistent challenges such as extreme weather conditions, pests and droughts.

As a supporter of Farm Africa, we know that you share our vision of a resilient rural Africa, where both people and the environment thrive. That is why we invite you to consider a powerful way to secure that future: by leaving a gift in your Will to Farm Africa.

## The power of planning the future

Long-term planning is crucial for the sustained impact of our work. Leaving a gift in your Will to Farm Africa allows us to make strategic, future-focused decisions, ensuring that we can continue to support those in need, no matter what challenges arise. It means we can provide ongoing assistance, education and innovation in farming techniques to help communities in rural eastern Africa thrive.

## Why your legacy matters

A gift in your Will is more than a donation; it is a lasting testament to your values and commitment to a better world. Your legacy will equip smallholder farmers with the knowledge and resources necessary to adapt and succeed in the face of future challenges and ensuring their resilience for generations to come.

**Our dedicated team are available to address any questions you have about leaving a gift to Farm Africa in your Will.**

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# Meet Jenifa: taking her farming to new heights

In rural Tanzania, the majority of the population works in small-scale farming. However, smallholder farmers face many challenges that hinder their productivity and financial stability, such as lack of quality seeds and fertiliser, inadequate knowledge of agricultural practices, and insufficient post-harvest handling of crops.

**Female farmers are particularly disadvantaged.** Women's lack of land ownership means they are often excluded from decisions about crops, and they lack the collateral needed to qualify for loans to buy quality inputs.

As part of the Farm to Market Alliance, since April 2022 Farm Africa has been working with the World Food Programme to tackle these issues with an approach that places women at the forefront of its business development efforts.

39-year-old **Jenifa** a dedicated farmer and agricultural extension officer, saw this as an opportunity for change. She took the initiative of establishing her own agricultural supply business. Initially trading from her home, she began by sourcing supplies and services for her neighbours and nearby farmers.



With support from the Farm to Market Alliance, Jenifa has been able to realise her full business potential. She has quickly become a pivotal agro-dealer, extending her assistance to over 2,000 farmers in her community.

Thanks to success of her business, she has been able to purchase her own tractor, so that she can offer tractor services to the community. She has also invested in other agricultural machines, with plans to expand her range to meet the demand.

Jenifa explained happily: **“The FtMA programme serves as our bridge to a diverse community of partners, each contributing their expertise to help us elevate our agricultural practices to new heights.”**

**450+**  
species  
of bird

“The lake, which was almost dry, has now recovered; fishes that had disappeared for 30 years are now back. To our surprise, bird species have returned. These birds had been gone for many years.”

Restoration of Abijatta-Shalla Lakes habitat in the Central Rift Valley, Ethiopia – hosting over 450 bird species (p 3&4)



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## Where your money's going



In every £1 we spend:



87p on charitable activities



8p on support costs



5p on fundraising

 **FARM AFRICA**

3-5 Bleeding Heart Yard  
London  
EC1N 8SJ

Registered charity no. 326901 (England & Wales)



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**FUNDRAISING  
REGULATOR**

Cover: Jane tends to roses in a greenhouse at Ravine Roses, part of our work with the Waitrose Foundation in Kenya.