



Photo: Farm Africa / Bertha Lutome

From the Field

Spring / Summer 2026

Staff spotlight: Bertha Lutome

Bertha joined Farm Africa in May 2024 as a communications officer. She is based in Nairobi, Kenya and visits our projects across eastern Africa, interviewing participants and sharing the stories of the progress they are achieving.



Describe a typical day at work

I usually start the day by working on my activity plan. I work with the project managers to see which areas they would like me to document, and I plan my schedule of visits. From there I proceed to the field, meeting project participants and capturing their stories and photos. Back at the office I edit the stories and select the best photos to share with Farm Africa staff and supporters.

What is your favourite part of your job?

My favourite part is meeting the farmers we work with and getting to hear the impact our projects are having

on their lives. That is what gives me joy – seeing how the participants' lives have been transformed with Farm Africa's support.

What has been your proudest achievement working for Farm Africa?

When I was fairly new, I secured live press coverage of the launch of a new project in central Kenya. That was a proud moment for me. I also feel really proud when I see the photos I've taken being shared with Farm Africa supporters. That is a true reflection of how one picture can speak 1,000 words.

If you could share a message with Farm Africa supporters, what would it be?

Please keep holding our hand, keep supporting us so that we can empower smallholder farmers in the rural parts of Africa. Together we can make Africa a great continent, we can work towards creating sustainable farming practices that will enable the farmers to thrive. And not just the farmers alone, but also their communities at large.



Nourishing the future, with your support

We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who supported our recent winter appeal. Together you have raised over £56,000!

The appeal focussed on the story of Janet, a mother from Karamoja, Uganda, a remote area where mothers often struggle to provide a nutritious diet for their children.

With your support, Janet and other mothers in her community have learnt how to grow new crops, including varieties of beans, sweet potatoes, maize and local greens that are rich in iron and vitamins. The project also runs practical cooking lessons where mothers can learn how to plan and prepare balanced meals using the crops they have grown.

Florence (pictured) is also part of the project. Alongside Janet, Florence has been learning how to grow and cook a nutritious, balanced diet for her children. And she is already seeing the benefits:

"We now know how to feed our families with dark green vegetables to balance our diets. Before we had just been feeding only beans, beans, beans. We never knew that a vegetable can better the life of our children. So since I joined Farm Africa, I can now feed my kids with different vegetables and my kids are doing well. Most diseases have reduced."

"I have also learnt how to improve my cooking, like when I am cooking sorghum, instead of eating only sorghum alone, I put some butter, eggs and milk in it. So I find I get a fuller diet than before. Before, I would only serve a one-food meal. My children enjoy the new food!"



On behalf of Janet, Florence and all the farmers we work with, thank you once again for supporting Farm Africa. Together we are building change - not just for today, but for generations to come.

Sisters are doing it for themselves!

When Baleynesh looks back on her life just a few years ago, she remembers the uncertainty that came with depending entirely on rain-fed farming.

Living in Ethiopia's Bale Zone, she faced increasingly unpredictable weather patterns and shrinking harvests. And like most women in her area, she had no way to access the money she needed to invest in new ways to earn a living.

Farm Africa knows that women like Baleynesh have huge economic potential. With the right support, women can learn new ways to earn an income and transform their families' futures. That's why, as part of the Forests for Sustainable Development (FSD) programme, Farm Africa has been working to establish 102 women-only Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs).

These groups offer women who have little or no access to formal banking a safe place to save, borrow and build the financial skills needed to diversify their incomes. Each VSLA sets its own rules, elects leaders, meets weekly and manages funds collectively.

The system is simple: women pool their financial resources by making a weekly contribution, including a small contribution to the group's social grant fund.

They then make loans to each other on agreed terms and share out an agreed amount of accumulated savings and profits at the end of each yearly cycle.

Along the way, they learn budgeting, record-keeping and business planning - strengthening their confidence, independence and future earning power.

Members meet weekly to pay in their savings contributions, discuss loan requests and consider social grant needs. To help women begin their income-generating activities, Farm Africa also provides start-up support where needed.

"Farm Africa supported me and other members with six chickens to get started. After a time, the sale of eggs and chickens supported my saving contributions," explains Baleynesh.

Baleynesh used her first loan from the group to purchase school clothing and exercise books for her two daughters.

At the end of each yearly cycle, members receive their 'share-out'. Like many, Baleynesh has invested these payments in livestock.

"I used this to purchase a sheep with its lamb, adding extra from my own savings. With my second share-out I bought a sheep and five more chickens."

Baleynesh's investments are starting to pay off. The regular income from egg sales now covers her weekly savings contributions and pays for her day-to-day expenses.

And with her growing flock of sheep, she has a long-term source of income that will help lay the foundation for a secure future.

Baleynesh is confident that this is just the beginning. "I have many thanks for Farm Africa. Your support has been practical and life changing."



Photo: Farm Africa / Mehnanit Gebremichael

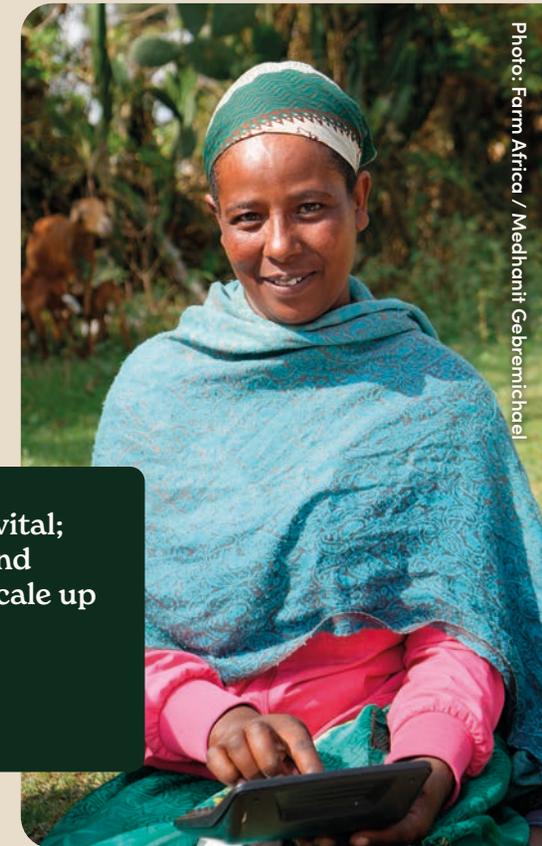


Photo: Farm Africa / Mehnanit Gebremichael

"Farm Africa's support has been vital; they provided me with training and close follow-up. I have a plan to scale up more into other business types."

Baleynesh
Member of women-only VSLA

The FSD programme is led by Farm Africa and SOS Sahel Ethiopia, with funding from the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Ethiopia.



Win big with Farm Africa's Weekly Lottery

We're making it even easier for you to support farmers in eastern Africa by playing the Farm Africa Weekly Lottery.

For as little as £1 you could be in with a chance of winning £25,000 every week, but not only that, you'll also be helping farmers to change their lives.

We know that you understand our vision of a resilient rural Africa, where both people and the environment thrive. Every time you play the lottery, your support will mean that more farmers receive the training they need to build lasting change for generations to come.

Simply follow the URL or scan the QR code to start playing today! For more information and to read the terms and conditions please visit

farmafrica.affinitylottery.org.uk



Seedlings of success

Yohana, a smallholder farmer from Tanzania's Dodoma Region, has always dreamed of earning a living by producing fruits, vegetables and tree seedlings on a large scale.

He started by planting trees around his farm and the local community, but with limited agricultural and business skills, it was hard for him to make the progress he desired. Water sources were unreliable and livestock often grazed on his plot, destroying his crops. And he struggled to access the quality seeds and tree seedlings he needed to grow his business.

When he was given the opportunity to join the NOURISH project, Yohana didn't hesitate. Keen to grow his knowledge and experience, he attended agroforestry training where he learnt how to cultivate trees and crops together to achieve the best results. He also learnt about nursery management so he could produce high-quality tree seedlings to sell.

Yohana has worked hard to achieve his ambition. He has set up a small tree nursery, specialising in trees that bear high-value fruits such as papaya and guava. He also produces trees that fix nitrogen to improve soil fertility and fast-growing trees that offer shade and wind protection.

Applying his agroforestry training, he grows his trees alongside his food crops, in ways that strengthen the farm's resilience. And he has installed drip irrigation on his farm, to manage water efficiently and boost productivity.

Yohana's hard work is really paying off. So far, he has sold over 20,000 seedlings to local farmers and buyers from neighbouring districts – earning enough to increase his farm from a quarter of an acre to an acre. And now he is producing a daily supply of fresh fruit for the families living in his village, the future is looking sweeter for everyone!

“I have now fully employed myself in agriculture. I get enough money to run my household and continue to invest in agriculture.”

Yohana
Smallholder farmer



Photo: Farm Africa

Thank you for your ongoing support. Our 40th year was one of our best yet thanks to your generosity.

With you by our side, we want 2026 to be our biggest year yet.
Together we can ensure more farmers across eastern Africa
have the skills and tools they need to thrive.



Photo: Farm Africa / Medhanit Gebremichael

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