



 **FARM AFRICA**

Seeds of change

Focus on
Kenya

Welcome to our fourth issue of Seeds of Change, an edition focused on how your support has enabled four Farm Africa programmes to drive real change for rural communities in Kenya.

Agriculture is an essential part of Kenya's economy, with three quarters of Kenyans depending on the crops they grow and the animals they keep for their livelihoods and survival.

As a country that is classified mainly as arid or semi-arid, climate change is a significant threat to the lives and livelihoods of people in rural Kenya. Adapting to the climate is vital for farmers, to ensure they can withstand the impacts long-term.

Other challenges such as a growing population, ecosystem degradation and unsustainable farming practices pose a risk to agricultural production and productivity and leave rural communities vulnerable to food insecurity.

Farm Africa supports small-scale farmers, women and young people in Kenya to adopt sustainable agriculture practices, from regenerative

agriculture to fish farming, so they can make a living and lift themselves out of poverty.

Our technical experts provide farmers with advice on growing climate-resilient crops, accessing finance and markets, building resilience to climate change and tapping into the carbon market.

All Farm Africa projects empower women to lead the way, and our Sustainable Agricultural Value Chain Enterprises in central Kenya (SAVES) project is no exception. Using a network of inspiring Village-based Advisors (VBAs), many of whom are women such as Felista, whose uplifting story is featured on page 4, the project promotes the use of nutritious, drought-tolerant crops, water-efficient agronomic practices and sustainable agriculture to help farmers stabilise their crop yields despite climate challenges.

On page 6 you can read how fellow VBA David, a participant in our Strengthening Regenerative Agriculture in Kenya (STRAK) project, is also supporting farmers to boost their resilience to climate change

through using regenerative farming. He's demonstrating how to use animal manure and compost as fertiliser, and how to harvest and store rainwater ready for the dry season.

By supporting initiatives like our Displaced and Refugee Youth Enabling Environment Mechanism (DREEM) project - featured on page 8 - you are helping growing enterprises and rural agribusinesses generate jobs and income, boost productivity, and manage natural resources sustainably. DREEM moves beyond traditional aid models focused on basic survival by fostering an enabling environment where refugees and host communities can build resilient, market-driven livelihoods.

Through programmes such as Youth in Sustainable Aquaculture, you are also helping create sustainable work opportunities for young people - who make up 25% of Kenya's population and 84% of its unemployed. Turn to

page 10 to see how the Mida Marine Conservation group's crab fattening business is creating youth jobs while conserving mangroves.

With your support, Farm Africa can create more stories of change - not just in Kenya, but across eastern Africa.

“Farmers can do a lot if they are facilitated with knowledge,” he says. “With the right knowledge, many people can farm sustainably.”

David

Farmer and Village-based Advisor (VBA),
Embu County



Johnthan Safari holding one of the crabs undergoing the fattening process.

Photo: Farm Africa/Maurice Goga



Fabiola Nzoyikorera at her flour milling shop in Kakuma

Photo: Farm Africa / Bertha Lutome

Felista leads change

In Wamumu, in Kirinyaga County, Kenya, Felista Nyakio is transforming sustainable farming into a thriving business that is creating a decent living for other farmers in her community without destroying the Earth they rely on.

As a Village-based Advisor (VBA) trained through Farm Africa's SAVES project, funded by AGRA, Felista helps local farmers grow more, earn more and farm more sustainably. She supports over 100 farmers directly and reaches more than 200 more with training sessions and practical farming advice delivered at demonstration plots.

Training as a VBA opened a new chapter for Felista. The project equipped her with practical skills in farming advisory services, agribusiness management and digital marketing – helping her train farmers while building her own successful agribusiness.

Community impact

With Farm Africa's support, Felista puts her training into action, promoting

sustainable and regenerative farming practices, including using certified seeds, using mulch to improve soil health and growing vegetables in kitchen gardens.

These techniques and skills help farmers improve their food security and incomes while reducing crop losses, and have enabled Felista to turn training into a thriving livelihood.

Farming as a business

For Felista, farming is both a passion and an enterprise. She grows maize, beans, leafy vegetables and rice. As well as selling her own produce, she makes money by supplying farming inputs such as seeds; milling other farmers' rice and selling it in bulk online.

Felista says, "That's where my passion came out. I not only train, but I'm an agripreneur. Take my rice field where I do most of my farming: after doing the farming, I mill the rice and sell it. I'm not just doing agriculture; I'm doing agriculture and business."

Felista holding handfuls of rice before and after milling.



"The main reason I do farming is because of three key things. One, I feed my family. Two, agriculture is business: I make money out of it. Three, I create employment."

Felista
VBA, Kirinyaga County

Photo: Farm Africa / Camilla Turner ➤



The rice harvest at a field belonging to Felista.

Looking ahead

With demand growing, Felista is planning to open an input and retail shop to bring quality seeds and market access closer to farmers in Wamumu Ward.

Her goal is simple: empower farmers with the tools, knowledge and markets they need to thrive.

Felista knows that when farmers can grow their own food, it can transform families' finances, freeing up money that would have been spent buying food for other essential needs, like school fees and buying seeds for the next season.

Felista's work shows that farming shouldn't cost the Earth. With the right support, farming can feed people sustainably, provide a proper living for farmers and renew the natural world.

Watch Felista's video ➤



"When you do your own farming and have food, you can do other things, because the expenses a family has is food. So, if you grow your own maize and beans, you will be fully equipped."

Felista
VBA, Kirinyaga County,

📍 Kirinyaga

Photo: Farm Africa / Camilla Turner ➤



Felista Nyakio on her farm.

Nature-friendly farming

Farmer and Village-based Advisor David is helping build a more sustainable future in Embu County. By sharing his knowledge with more than 200 local farmers, he is strengthening climate resilience, improving livelihoods and conserving the environment for generations to come.

When David wakes up at 5.30 am each morning in Embu County, his day begins with a prayer of thanks.

After breakfast of cassava or arrowroot grown on his farm, he heads outside to feed his chickens and rabbits before starting the day.

Through Farm Africa's STRAK project, funded by the IKEA Foundation, through AGRA, he has learnt and adopted regenerative farming practices.

As a VBA, David divides his time between managing his own farm and supporting hundreds of other farmers in his community.

He grows maize, beans and vegetables (such as cassava and sweet potatoes), keeps chickens and raises fish. He also has a kitchen garden where he grows spinach and sukuma wiki, a popular, nutrient-dense vegetable.

"My land helps me produce food for my family. The income from farming also helps me pay my children's school fees."

Climate resilience

Embu County faces increasingly unpredictable weather, making water conservation more important than ever.

To combat the effects of climate change, David has embraced regenerative farming practices that recycle nutrients from farming byproducts and help soil retain moisture.

Animal manure is used to fertilise crops and crop residues are turned into compost and returned to the soil. He also grows brachiaria grass, a type of nutritious and drought-tolerant fodder, for his goats.

To protect his farm from drought, David harvests rainwater during the wet season, collecting runoff from roads and rooftops and storing it for later use. He also recycles nutrient-rich water from his fishpond to irrigate vegetables and other crops.

Alongside water harvesting, David

"If agriculture goes wrong, nothing else gets a chance to grow. Everyone depends on food produced by farmers."

David

Farmer and Village-based Advisor (VBA)

◀ Photo: Farm Africa / Camilla Turner



David Mwaniki is displaying his Black soldier fly (BSF) farming, at his farm in Embu County

is planting more trees, which greatly improves water retention in the soil.

As well as encouraging other farmers to plant more trees, he also promotes good agricultural practices, such as using certified seeds, crop rotation, mulching and microdosing fertiliser.

A positive outlook

Thanks to these measures, David feels optimistic about the future. "Personally, I'm not worried about climate change because I am putting measures in place to address it," he says.

Two days a week, David leaves his own farm to visit farmers across the area. As a VBA, he works with around 210 farmers, sharing practical knowledge and helping them adopt more sustainable farming methods.

"Farm Africa has helped us a lot by training Village-based Advisors," David says. "As I received the training for free, I use my free time to share it with other farmers."

Through demonstrations on his own farm, David shows other community members how integrated farming systems can improve productivity and protect natural resources.

"Farmers can do a lot if they are facilitated with knowledge," he says. "With the right knowledge, many people can farm sustainably."

David is one of 320 VBAs trained by the STRAK project. Together these VBAs cascaded training to nearly 55,000 more farmers, 64% of whom are women.

📍 Embu

Watch David's video ➡



Fabiola's porridge business fights malnutrition

In the heart of Kakuma refugee camp, Kenya, where many rely on humanitarian aid for survival, Fabiola Nzyikorera, founder of Amazing Food Company, is not only tackling malnutrition but also creating employment, promoting education, and fostering dignity among fellow refugees.

Fabiola, a 35-year-old refugee from Burundi, arrived in Kakuma with limited resources but a passion for farming and food production. With support from the Displaced and Refugee Youth Enabling Environment Mechanism (DREEM) project, implemented by Farm Africa in partnership with the Mastercard Foundation and World University Service of Canada (WUSC), she has built her own resilient, market-driven livelihood.

"When I arrived, I saw that the porridge flour provided by the World Food Programme (WFP) was not enough," Fabiola recalls.

"I knew that with the right ingredients, I could create something more nutritious and accessible for the community."

A new beginning

This insight led her to start Amazing Food Company. At first, she produced just 60 to 80 kg of porridge flour per week, working alone. But as demand grew, she expanded her team, employing four people.

Today, Amazing Food Company has grown into a thriving business producing up to 700 kg weekly, employing 14 people, eight of whom are permanent staff.

The company produces two types of porridge flour. Amazing Family Porridge, made from a blend of maize, wheat, sorghum, sesame, rice, groundnuts, finger millet and soybeans, is designed for children, expectant mothers and breastfeeding women.

"Both products are fortified with essential nutrients, helping reduce malnutrition."

Fabiola

Founder of Amazing Food Company

◀ Photo credit: Farm Africa / Bertha Lutome

Fabiola offering porridge flour to women from the community.

Photo credit: Farm Africa / Bertha Lutome



The Special Porridge, made from soybeans and sesame, targets adults suffering from chronic health issues like diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure.

"Both products are fortified with essential nutrients, helping reduce malnutrition in Kakuma," Fabiola says proudly.

Business skills

The turning point for Fabiola came when she joined DREEM and improved her business skills.

"The DREEM project helped me scale my business. I bought a milling machine from the profit I made selling the flour, moved to a larger production space and even installed a fence to secure the area. Now, I can meet demand consistently."

The wider impact

The impact of the programme has been far reaching, benefiting not just Fabiola's household but the broader community.

"With improved income, my three children now attend private schools, access better healthcare and enjoy balanced meals," she shares.

"I employ women, men, and persons with disabilities. We also collect used plastic bottles through a network of over 300 women. In return, I give them porridge flour for their children. Many of these children were malnourished; now, they're strong, healthy and going to school."

Fabiola's porridge has also been a lifeline for many.

"I am living with an orphaned child whose parents died when he was 10 months old," says Nahimana Gorette, a mother in Kakuma.

"He was severely malnourished, therefore I started collecting plastic bottles to get porridge flour from Fabiola. Just three months later, my child is healthy and has even started walking comfortably."

📍 Kakuma



Protecting mangroves and livelihoods

Crab fattening is supporting mangrove conservation by giving local communities economic incentives to invest in protecting the mangrove ecosystems where crabs live.

Mangroves are an important ally in the global fight against climate change, storing carbon three to five times more efficiently than terrestrial forests. Their diverse ecosystems provide breeding and feeding grounds for many species of fish, birds, insects and reptiles. They are also important for coastal communities who rely on the fish and crabs, and on the protection provided by the mangroves against storms and erosion.

Despite their importance, mangrove cover in the Western Indian Ocean region has decreased by around 4.5% between 1996 and 2020, threatening the livelihoods of millions of people living by the coast. A common driver of mangrove loss is the use of mangrove wood as energy and building material.

Along the Mida Creek in Kilifi county in coastal Kenya, the unsustainable exploitation of mangrove trees has spurred a group of young eco-friendly entrepreneurs into action.



Photo credit: Farm Africa / Maurice Goga

The young women and men of the Mida Marine Conservation group are united by a common goal: to develop sustainable businesses that protect mangrove vegetation.

Group member Hussein Mdata explains, "Local communities were overharvesting the mangrove trees as a source of income, which was harmful to the ecosystem. We came up with the group to protect the mangroves."



Johnthan Safari holding one of the crabs undergoing the fattening process.

Photo credit: Farm Africa / Maurice Goga

Crab fattening

After joining Farm Africa and the Mastercard Foundation's Youth in Sustainable Aquaculture (YISA) programme, the group decided to specialise their business in crab fattening: the process of rearing juvenile soft-shelled crabs until their shells harden, signalling maturity. The crabs are placed in cages, fed, monitored, and harvested once they reach a marketable weight, usually between 700 grams and one kilogram.

Initially, the group lacked technical knowledge, but with training and support from Farm Africa, they quickly learnt and set up 100 crab cages. "These cages serve as learning hubs

for all 15 members, helping us practise and master the best techniques in crab farming. The goal is to sell the matured, hardened crabs to generate income."

The business model

Despite losing some crabs to theft and disease in their first round they sold 17 crabs: "We managed to sell 10 kg: these were the 17 crabs that had fully matured," explains Hussein.

The business is now generating income, with members who have dependants prioritised when it comes to job allocation.

"We came up with a system for the 10,000 Kenyan shillings that we raised. Those who do feeding and monitoring are members who have families. One of the aims of setting up this project was to have an alternative income-generating activity," says Hussein.



"So we decided to motivate them. Thirty per cent of the proceeds will be given to those who are doing feeding and monitoring as a stipend. And 70% would be reinvested into the project by buying other crablets, feed and helping in the construction of a restaurant," he adds. The future is looking positive, for both the group members and mangrove conservation.

"Farm Africa gave us the training through the YISA programme, and we began to understand how to properly manage and fatten the crabs. We also gained valuable marketing skills. We've made real progress."

Hussein Mdata
Kilifi

Photo credit: Farm Africa / Maurice Goga



Members of the Mida Marine Conservation Group taking part in the Youth in Sustainable Aquaculture (YISA) project in Kenya.



“If Farm Africa can continue supporting more Village-based Advisors, it can change agricultural systems in a very short time and people will have money in their pockets.”

David Mwaniki Village-based Advisor (VBA)

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