



*Transforming Lives Through Agribusiness*

# KILIMO TRUST ANNUAL REPORT FY2024/25





GRAMEEN  
FOUNDATION

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# Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>CEO</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>KT</b>	Kilimo Trust
<b>MT</b>	Metric Tons
<b>R-YES</b>	Rural Youth Employment Support
<b>GFCs</b>	Good Food for Cities
<b>R4iCSA</b>	Reduce - Re-Use - Recycle Rice Initiative for Climate Smart Agriculture
<b>VC</b>	Value chain
<b>USD</b>	United States Dollar
<b>KM</b>	Kilometers
<b>FY</b>	Financial Year
<b>Ltd</b>	Limited
<b>Ugx</b>	Uganda Shillings
<b>IPRC</b>	Integrated Polytechnic Regional College
<b>IFAD</b>	International Fund for Agricultural Development
<b>BMZ</b>	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.
<b>SMEs</b>	Small and Medium Enterprises

# MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Dear valued partners, funders, stakeholders, and friends,

It is my honour to present the Kilimo Trust Annual Report for FY2024/2025—a year defined by resilience, innovation, and meaningful impact across the East African Community. This financial year, we continued to advance our mission of transforming regional agricultural value chains by empowering farmers, strengthening markets, and championing sustainable food systems.



Our collective efforts enabled us to support more than **88,000 farmers and value chain actors**, including **over 10,000 youth**, through skills development, technology adoption, and market linkages. Together with our partners, we facilitated structured trade of agricultural commodities worth over \$10 million and worked closely with farmers and cooperatives to adopt improved technologies and regenerative practices, laying the foundation for inclusive growth and climate-resilient agriculture. These achievements are a testament to the dedication of our implementing partners, funders, and the dynamic communities we serve.

As we look ahead, our focus remains on scaling impactful models, strengthening regional trade, and driving innovation in agricultural systems. We will continue to nurture strong partnerships that enable farmers to access profitable markets, adopt climate-smart technologies, and improve household nutrition and incomes.

I extend my sincere appreciation to our funders, governments, private-sector partners, and the incredible Kilimo Trust team whose passion and commitment make our mission possible. Together, we are building resilient, food-secure, and prosperous communities across East Africa.

**Dr. Birungi Korutaro**

CEO - Kilimo Trust

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dr. Birungi Korutaro'.

# 2024/2025 Achievements

## Reduce, Re-Use, Recycle Rice Initiative for Climate Smart Agriculture – Phase II (R4ICSA II)

R4ICSA II is a regional project implemented in Uganda and Kenya to improve incomes and food security for rice-farming households and value-chain actors. The initiative promotes regenerative and sustainable rice systems by testing and scaling innovative technologies and management practices, including the productive use of rice by-products, while strengthening the enabling environment for climate-smart agriculture.



**3,270 MT**

of organic input products (biochar) were supplied to Rice, coffee and horticultural farmers by bio-input companies.

**10,077**

farmers and VC actors adopted regenerative agriculture practices, solutions and technologies

**11,958**

farmers trained on regenerative agricultural practices in rice

**17%**

increase in yields

# 2024/2025 Achievements

## Rural Youth Employment Support (R-YES)

R-YES is a youth agribusiness incubation project that supports rural youth to access self-employment and wage opportunities through integrated agribusiness hubs. Funded by IFAD and BMZ, the project builds skills, incubates youth-led enterprises, strengthens labor market linkages, and generates evidence to inform policies that scale sustainable youth employment models.



4,101

youth were employed or started small agribusiness enterprises after project support.

## Agri-Youth Employment (AYE)

The Agri-Youth Employment (AYE) Project creates dignified jobs for youth, women, and persons with disabilities within Rwanda's dairy value chain. The initiative supports recruitment, skills development, and entrepreneurship for farmers and service providers—including milk collection centers, feed suppliers, processors, and veterinary services—to build sustainable livelihoods and strengthen dairy sector performance.



137

youth employed in the dairy sector as farm managers

# 2024/2025 Achievements

## KUNGAHARA

Kungahara supports horticulture farmers to boost their production and consumption of healthy, sustainable, and nutritious food. Funded by the European Union through Rikolto and implemented by Kilimo Trust and ADECOR in Musanze and Nyabihu Districts, Rwanda, the project targets to benefit at least 6,000 farmers in Irish potatoes, fruits, and vegetables value chains.



7,037

(37% Females and 359 People with Disabilities)  
horticultural farmers and VC actors using structured  
trade arrangements

43,344 MT

of horticultural commodities worth over USD 9M  
traded through structured markets.



# 2024/2025 Achievements

## Enhancing Access to Markets for an Inclusive Agricultural Transformation (EAMIAT) in Eastern Uganda

EAMIAT promotes inclusive and sustainable trade opportunities for farmers and MSMEs in Eastern Uganda using an anchor-firm model. The project strengthens structured markets, improves post-harvest handling and quality management, supports innovative agricultural finance mechanisms, and fosters a conducive policy environment to increase the volume and value of safely traded agricultural commodities.



**360 MT**

agricultural commodities  
(maize, beans, and rice)  
traded

**44,758**

**(44% Female, 42% Youth)**

farmers and VC actors trained  
on postharvest handling and  
quality/safety management  
systems in priority VCs (rice,  
beans and maize), linked  
to markets and agriculture  
financing mechanisms

**1,634**

farmers accessed  
post-harvest  
technologies  
(threshers and  
modern storage  
facilities) to reduce  
post-harvest losses  
and improve food  
safety.

# 2024/2025 Achievements

## Good Food for Cities (GFC)

The Good Food for Cities (GFC) project supports farmers to increase the production and commercialization of affordable, healthy, and nutritious food using regenerative and other sustainable production practices. Funded by Ricolto, the GFCs is implemented by Kilimo Trust and ADECOR in Rubavu district, Rwanda to contribute to increase incomes and job creation for smallholder producers of health, sustainable, and nutritious (HSN) foods.



198 MT

MT of horticulture commodities (carrots, cabbages, red onions, garlic, broccoli) traded

USD 145,698

worth of horticulture commodities (carrots, cabbages, red onions, garlic, broccoli) traded

879

farmers and VC actors adopted regenerative agriculture practices (mulching, zero tillage, composting)

35

jobs created through the project interventions



# 2024/2025 Achievements

## Agripath



AgriPath is a multi-country initiative that empowers smallholder farmers to transition to sustainable agriculture through effective digital advisory services. Implemented in Uganda and Tanzania by Kilimo Trust with global partners, the project tests agent-facilitated, self-service, and hybrid delivery models to identify what works best in combining digital tools with local extension support for improved productivity and resilience.

**9,118**

smallholder farmers empowered through access to digitally supported agricultural advisory services.

## Inclusive Services Delivery for Employment Creation (ISEC)

The Inclusive Agri-Services Delivery for Employment Creation (ISEC) Project enhances youth employment in Rwanda's avocado and chili value chains. Funded by AGRA, the project equips young people with technical and entrepreneurial skills, promotes adoption of innovative agri-technologies, and strengthens business linkages with suppliers and off-takers to increase incomes and market participation.



**3,010**

farmers and VC actors sold commodities (chili and avocado) using structured trade arrangements

**3,796**

farmers and VC actors trained and linked to markets for chili and avocado commodities and services

**323 MT**

of commodities (chili and avocado) traded

# 2024/2025 Achievements

## Accelerated Innovation Delivery Initiative (AID-I)

Accelerated Innovation Delivery Initiative (AID-I) strengthens vegetable value chains in Arusha and Kilimanjaro regions of Tanzania by accelerating the adoption of improved seeds, technologies, and post-harvest innovations. The project supports farming households to access quality inputs, reduce post-harvest losses through structured markets, and improve nutrition through greater availability and consumption of diverse, nutrient-rich vegetables.



7,433

**(50% female, 40% youth)** farmers and vendors trained on good post harvest management of horticulture produce and linked to high value markets

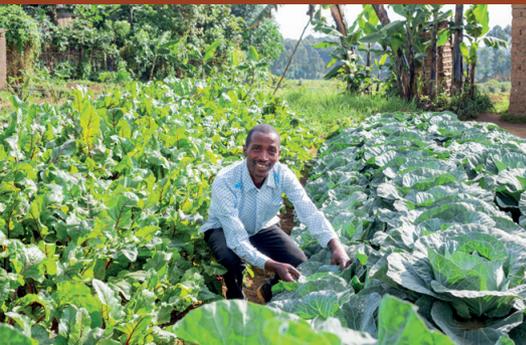
Over USD 3,000

worth of horticulture commodities traded

3,000

farmers and VC actors traded horticulture commodities using structured trade arrangements

# Cumulative achievements FY2024/2025



**9,472**  
Youth reached

- ▶ 2,101 (ISEC)
- ▶ 4,101 (R-YES)
- ▶ 3270 (AID-I)



**47,533 MT**  
of commodities  
traded



Over  
**USD 10M**  
worth of commodities traded



**15**  
Business linkages

- ▶ 3 (ISEC)
- ▶ 5 (GFC)
- ▶ 9 (AID-I)



**12,590**

Proportion of farmers  
and VC actors adopting  
improved technologies  
and management  
practices



**88,768**

Total number of farmers  
and VC actors benefiting  
from KT interventions  
disaggregated by age and  
gender



**288**  
SMEs supported

- ▶ 3 (ISEC)
- ▶ 279 (R-YES)
- ▶ 6 (AID-I)



**4,136**

jobs created by KT interventions

# Pictorial of the major events in FY2024/2025



CEO as a panelist in hackthon organized by IFAD at the AFSF2024



KT staff at the AFSF



CEO speaking at the 1st edition of the media roundtable in Kampala



Journalists at the media roundtable in kampala



KT, IFAD staff alongside R-YES youth

A photograph of a man with a joyful expression, smiling broadly, standing in a lush field of tall green corn plants. He is wearing a dark, short-sleeved button-down shirt. The background is filled with the vibrant green leaves of the corn, creating a sense of a healthy and productive agricultural environment.

# SUCCESS STORIES...



## Rwanda's Veggies: Growing Health and Wealth

Every afternoon, the Kotibanya Cooperative in Rubavu District in Rwanda's Western region is a beehive of activity. The air is filled with the sounds of laughter and lively chatter as farmers offload sacks overflowing with fresh produce.

**F**rom carrots, cabbages, onions, and beetroots to cauliflower, everywhere you look is a vibrant display of colours as farmers proudly showcase their harvest.

Inside the collection centre, women meticulously clean the vegetables, preparing them for the market while the men sort and package what's ready for transportation.

Established in 2013, the cooperative was meant to connect local producers with consumers and

markets within and outside the country. Yet the road wasn't always smooth. For years, the cooperative struggled with challenges in production, postharvest handling, and market access, as well as limited knowledge of sustainable farming.

This began to change two years ago, when the farmers began receiving training on regenerative agriculture practices—methods that enhanced soil health and productivity through techniques like composting.

“Before the Good Food For Cities (GFC) project was introduced, we did not know much about regenerative agricultural practices because we relied on chemical fertilizers, which depleted our soils over time,” says **Jean D’mour Fils Habumugisha**, the president of the cooperative.

The shift towards sustainable agricultural practices saw farmers embrace composting, crop rotation, and other regenerative methods, which dramatically increased their yields. This surge in productivity has fueled the cooperative’s growth, attracting new members.

“With the increased production and expansion of membership, our cooperative now collects up to 40 tonnes of carrots per day, up from just eight tonnes in 2019. Our biggest market is Kigali, where we send at least five trucks full of vegetables per day,” says **Habumugisha**.

The cooperative also embraced contract farming by establishing agreements with buyers and transportation services, securing consistent market access. This stability ensured that cooperative members received fair, timely payments without worrying about unscrupulous buyers.

“We have team at the cooperative responsible for tracking all produce brought by farmers to the collection center and monitoring what goes to the market. Due to these arrangements, our farmers are confident of getting their income and no longer meet any losses from buyers who used to cheat us,” **Habumugisha** says.

Funded by the Belgian Government an organization known as Rikolto and implemented by Kilimo Trust, the project seeks to increase production and commercialisation of affordable, healthy, and nutritious food produced using regenerative and other sustainable production practices.

Famous for its fertile volcanic soils and favourable climate, Rubavu District has become Rwanda’s top vegetable producer, driving local agriculture and playing a crucial role in the country’s food supply. This agricultural productivity not only sustains local demand but also boosts exports to neighbouring Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Agricultural products are among Rwanda’s key exports. In the 2023/2024 financial year, data from the National Agricultural Export Development Board (NAEB) shows the country generated \$839.2 million from agricultural exports.

But despite this abundance, Rubavu District faces alarming rates of malnutrition, especially among children under five years old, making it the district with the highest cases of malnutrition and stunting in the country. According to the 2019-2020 Rwanda Demographic Health Survey, an astounding 40% of children in the Western Province, which includes Rubavu, suffer from stunting.

The stark reality in Rubavu highlights a troubling imbalance. Vegetables are low in calories but high in nutrients, such as vitamins, minerals, and fiber. And while farmers in the region produce them in plenty, many households still face food insecurity and poor nutrition. A significant proportion of the community sells their agricultural produce for income, often leaving them without sufficient nutritious food for themselves.

“Malnutrition and stunting are persistent challenges in this region, and it’s deeply troubling that, despite our land’s productivity, so many families struggle to access the nutrients they need,” says **Ishimwe Pacifique**, the vice mayor in charge of social affairs in the district.

*“That is why we’re working closely with development partners, including Kilimo Trust, to educate our communities on nutrition and promote more balanced diets.”*

Many farmers in the region sell more than 85 percent to 100 percent of their home-grown vegetables, leaving their families with less varied, less nutritious diets and at risk of malnutrition.

“When we began, our focus was on helping the farmers to improve the productivity and incomes from farming vegetables by empowering them with regenerative agricultural practices, proper postharvest handling, and linking them with markets. But we immediately realised that they were also struggling with nutritional issues,” says **Thomas Gahimano**, an Agronomist with Kilimo Trust.

*“We decided to incorporate an aspect of nutrition in the project, through which we are sensitising communities on the importance and components of a well-balanced diet. It’s very important for us to strike the balance between earning a living and having healthy families,” Gahimano says.*

To accomplish this, the project is working with community leaders who lead the sensitisation efforts in each sector—the smallest administrative unit in the country.

“Before working with Kilimo Trust, many people in Rubavu District believed that a meal of potatoes and beans was sufficient. Now, we understand that vegetables are essential and should be part of every meal,” says **Mutabazi Daniel**, the president of Cooperative des facilitateurs agricoles de Rubavu (COFAR)

So far, more than 2,000 farmers in the region have established their own kitchen gardens at home. One such farmer is Murangamirwa Bernadete, who takes care of her three-year-old grandchild in the Bugeshi sector at the border with the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

“We no longer have issues of poor feeding because we learnt how to cook a balanced diet. We now know the importance of carbohydrates, proteins, and vitamins in our diets.

*“When I am cooking, I make sure all nutrition components are considered so that my household eats a balanced diet,” she says, adding that the good agronomic practices she has learnt have also improved the productivity of her vegetables, especially cabbages.”*

The project has also partnered with local schools to establish school kitchen gardens where the students get a hands-on learning experience on the principles of a balanced diet and sustainable practices, including soil health, water conservation, and biodiversity.

This initiative not only supplies fresh vegetables for school meals but also cultivates a generation of informed and proactive young people who understand the significance of sustainable food systems.

“We are confident that the knowledge the students acquire in school on kitchen gardens can also be utilised at home by helping their parents establish the kitchen gardens and prepare healthy and nutritious meals,” **Gahimano says.**

So far, the initiative has been implemented in 16 schools, while it will be scaled up to 54 more. Schools avail space for the demos; students bring compost from their homes and provide labour, while the project provides seeds and technical assistance.

Across Africa, malnutrition remains a significant challenge, with an estimated 86 million children below five facing various forms of malnutrition, according to the African Union(AU).

The GFC Project, which runs from July 2022 to June 2026, has also introduced new technologies such as charcoal coolers that help reduce the post-harvest handling issues faced by both farmers and traders of the vegetables in the district.





## Tackling the Silent Crisis of Post-Harvest Losses in Uganda

For many years, Julius Kabole, a maize and rice farmer with Yetana Farmers Group in Kibiniko, Mbale, Eastern Uganda, has watched his hard-earned harvests disappear before his eyes. The pain in his voice is unmistakable as he recalls seasons of devastating loss.

“Last year, I harvested 900 kilograms of maize, but by March, I was left with just about 400. Watching all that hard work go to waste was painful. I didn’t know the problem was how I was storing it—pests had attacked the grain,” Kabole says as he displays a handful of damaged maize—grains eaten through, full of holes and dust.

“I not only lost the quantity, but what remained was also difficult to sell,” he adds.

His struggle with post-harvest handling begins right after harvest.

“Threshing by beating with sticks not only damages my grains and reduces their value, but it is also very labor-intensive and takes a lot of time,” he says.

The lack of proper threshing facilities has meant relying on outdated, manual methods that harm his harvest. Beating rice and maize with sticks causes grain breakage and contamination, which lowers the quality and market value of his produce.

Kabole's experience mirrors a crisis facing many farmers across Uganda. They spend months tending their crops, but after harvest, much of the food is lost to pests, poor storage, and increasingly unpredictable weather patterns linked to climate change.

The numbers tell a sobering story that resonates through many farmers in Uganda.

“We did a survey and realized that a farmer loses 20–30% of their produce before it reaches the market,” says **Alex Ewinyu**, Technical Assistant at Kilimo Trust. *“That’s about three bags out of ten—lost through spillage during transportation or threshing, poor drying, and contamination. One of the biggest threats is aflatoxin, a toxic mold that develops when grains are stored with high moisture content in poorly ventilated conditions.”*

These figures echo global patterns. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates that one-third of all food produced worldwide is lost or wasted. In Uganda alone, FAO estimates that more than 17.6% of grains—including maize, millet, and rice—are lost annually due to poor post-harvest handling, translating to nearly 2.8 million metric tonnes of wasted food and income.

Uganda is a key grain exporter in the region. In 2023, it exported over 310 million kilograms of maize—worth around \$89 million—primarily to Kenya, Rwanda, and South Sudan, but this trade remains vulnerable. Aflatoxin contamination and poor quality standards have led to rejections and even temporary bans from importing countries, threatening not only livelihoods but also Uganda's reputation in the regional market.

The challenge is compounded by limited infrastructure and climate variability. Most small-scale farmers still store their grain in rudimentary shelters or in sacks on the floor, exposing their harvests to pests, moisture, and rot. Changing rainfall patterns make proper drying increasingly difficult, particularly affecting women farmers who often bear primary responsibility for post-harvest processing.

In the rolling hills of Kween District, Hellen Cheptegei faces her own version of this universal struggle. She farms four acres of maize annually and harvests about 100 bags that she sells to traders at around UGX 80,000 for each 100-kilogram bag.

“Too much rain during harvest time is a nightmare,” **Hellen says**, her voice reflecting years of frustration. *“We only get a few hours to dry our maize.”*

Her challenges compound with each season. *“Before, as farmers, we used to dry our grains in the farm, and even after harvest, we’d store them in places that lacked ventilation. It was a constant struggle,”* she recounts. Poor drying practices don't just reduce the quantity—they affect price. *“Some traders would even force us to part with about 10kg per bag for them to accept our grains, just because they weren't dry enough.”*

Recognition of this widespread crisis has sparked a comprehensive response through the EAMIAT project—Enhanced Access to Markets for Inclusive Agricultural Transformation. Funded by AGRA and implemented by Kilimo Trust, the initiative spans Eastern Uganda's Busoga, Bugisu, and Sebei sub-regions, working with over 100 farmer cooperatives and organizations.

The project's approach addresses the interconnected nature of post-harvest challenges.

“Our intervention focuses on two key priorities: first, equipping farmers with the knowledge of proper post-harvest practices; and second, ensuring they can access the right technologies and materials to reduce quality losses,” **Ewinyu explains.**

*“We are linking farmers to essential post-harvest equipment—like shellers to minimize grain breakage and contamination, and tarpaulins to dry produce safely off the ground. We also promote the use of hermetic storage bags, which create an airtight environment that suffocates pests and prevents moisture absorption, allowing farmers to store grain longer without spoilage and enabling them to fetch better prices in the market.”*

However, adoption faces significant barriers. Hermetic bags, which are proven to reduce spoilage by up to 98%, remain out of reach for many farmers due to an 18% Value Added Tax that significantly inflates their cost. A typical hermetic bag costs about UGX 9,500 (\$2.60) in Uganda—a substantial investment for smallholder farmers earning less than \$2 per day. This policy barrier effectively prevents the very farmers who need these technologies most from accessing them, undermining food security and income generation efforts.

The training is complemented by a market-focused approach that connects farmers and cooperatives with major grain buyers both within Uganda and in neighboring countries like Kenya.

“By empowering both farmers and cooperatives, we want to ensure the quality of grain is sustained right from the farmer to the market,” says Ewinyu. “If cooperatives and farmers can guarantee good quality grain, the off-takers will guarantee a ready market and premium prices as part of the grain trade agreements.”

The transformation is most evident at the cooperative level, where individual gains combine to create collective market power.

Mr. Bogere Hakim, Manager of Bukawa Area Cooperative Enterprise in Nakigo sub-county, Iganga District, leads a cooperative that serves 1,506 individual farmer members through 11 primary societies.

“In this bulking arrangement of putting our produce together and marketing for farmers, we used to struggle a lot to meet the quality standards expected by the buyers,” Hakim explains. “One of our main clients in Tororo has a testing lab where they test the produce before buying. If there's any aflatoxin, it gets rejected—making it costly to transport it back and find another buyer.”

That rejection marked a major turning point for the cooperative. It now relies on trained community-based agents—farmer leaders who receive specialized training and equipment to work directly with members on quality control.

Agents now use moisture meters to test grain before aggregation, ensuring only properly dried produce enters the cooperative's bulk sales. The cooperative has also made aflatoxin control a priority right from the farm level, adopting East African Standards to

guarantee that their maize, beans, and rice meet regional quality benchmarks. Last year alone, they marketed 642 metric tonnes of maize, 42 metric tonnes of rice, and 66 metric tonnes of beans.

“Now that we have the knowledge, it means we’re going to increase our sales volumes because every buyer will want to buy from us. Previously, they were just buying any grain—not graded—but now we’re grading the grains right from the farm level,” **Hakim observes.**

The success of cooperatives like Bukawa reflects broader systemic changes supported by government agricultural officers. Rose Nabirye, District Agricultural Officer for Mbale District, emphasizes the importance of strategic partnerships in scaling these improvements.

“With support from Kilimo Trust, we’re seeing real progress in post-harvest handling. Farmers are learning how to dry and store properly, reduce aflatoxin risks, and work in groups to bulk and access markets,” she explains. “These steps are helping them protect their harvests and increase their income. When farmers store better and sell together, they not only reduce losses but also attract better buyers and prices.”

Agriculture remains a cornerstone of Uganda’s economy—contributing 24% to the national Gross Domestic Product, employing 70% of the workforce, and generating 42% of export earnings, according to the latest statistics. But sustaining this momentum will require more than just good harvests.

Tackling policy hurdles, such as the VAT on essential storage technologies, and investing in rural

infrastructure to support proper grain handling are critical next steps. As climate change continues to disrupt traditional farming cycles, Uganda’s role as a regional grain supplier will hinge on how swiftly these post-harvest solutions can reach the millions of small-scale farmers who feed the nation.

# Our Key Partners

Funding Partners	
Current	Past

Private Sector			
Kenya	Rwanda	Tanzania	Uganda

Implementing partners			
Kenya	Tanzania	Rwanda	Uganda



#### **Kilimo Trust Head Quarters**

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