



*Celebrating 20 Years of
Feeding the Region*

Annual Report

2025



Table of Contents

Message from the President	3
Message from the CEO	4
Executive Summary	5
About Us	7
Stakeholders	8
EAFF Footprint	10
EAFF Core Functions	11
Our Strategy	12
Key Strategic Priorities	13
Outputs by Strategic Objective	14
2025 Numbers Dashboard	15
2025 Projects	16
2025 Projects	19
Taking the Concept of Aggregation to scale	17-19
Leveraging Digital Technology	20-22
Taking Provision of Economic Services to Scale	23-25
Advocating for Supportive Policies	26-28
Improving Capacity of Members to Discharge their mandate	29-32
Driving farmer-led Climate Action	33-37
Youth & Women Inclusion	38-41
Land	42-44
Communications and Campaigns	45-46
Partnership & Collaboration	47-48
Farmers Congress & EAFF@20	49-52
EAFF Members Spotlight	53-60
Partners	61





Foreword

Message from the President

The year 2025 marked a defining milestone in the journey of the Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF) as we celebrated two decades of championing the voice, dignity and economic empowerment of smallholder farmers across our region. What began in 2005 as a bold vision to unify farmer representation had grown into a dynamic regional movement, representing over 25 million farmers across 10 countries.

This anniversary came at a time of profound transformation and uncertainty in global and regional food systems. Climate change, shifting trade dynamics and evolving financing landscapes continued to reshape agriculture in unprecedented ways. Yet, amid these challenges, one truth remained constant: smallholder farmers were central to the resilience, sustainability, and prosperity of our economies.

Throughout 2025, EAFF strengthened its position as a trusted advocate and partner ensuring that farmers were not only included but prioritized in policy, investment, and innovation spaces. From high-level global engagements such as the UN Food Systems Summit and COP30 to grassroots mobilization across member countries, the Federation consistently advanced a clear message: farmers must be recognized as key drivers of development, not passive beneficiaries.

Our commitment to climate resilient agriculture, inclusive trade, and digital transformation continued to guide our work. Initiatives such as the expansion of the e-Granary platform and targeted support for women and youth reflected our belief that the future of agriculture lay in innovation, equity and opportunity.

As we looked ahead, EAFF remained steadfast in its vision of building a prosperous and cohesive farming community in Eastern Africa. We continued to strengthen partnerships, scale impact and advocate for systems that placed farmers at the center of economic and policy decisions.

I extended my sincere gratitude to our members, partners and stakeholders who walked this journey with us. Together, we not only shaped the future of agriculture we strengthened the foundation for a more food-secure and prosperous region.



Ms. Elizabeth Nsimadala
President
Eastern Africa Farmers Federation

Foreword

Message from the CEO



The year 2025 was one of strategic growth, operational impact and renewed purpose for the Eastern Africa Farmers Federation. In a rapidly changing environment defined by climate uncertainty, market volatility and constrained funding flows, our focus remained clear, delivering tangible, measurable value to our member organizations and the millions of farmers we represent.

This Annual Report reflected both the resilience of smallholder farmers across Eastern Africa and the collective progress achieved through our programs, partnerships and advocacy efforts. During the year, EAFF made significant strides in strengthening farmer organizations, expanding market access, mobilizing finance and scaling digital innovation.

Through platforms such as e-Granary, we continued to bridge critical gaps connecting farmers to markets, financial services and knowledge. At the same time, our investments in capacity building, climate-smart agriculture and agribusiness development contributed to transforming farming from a subsistence activity into a viable and competitive enterprise.

Our advocacy works also delivered meaningful results. By ensuring farmer representation in key regional policy platforms and influencing agricultural and climate frameworks, we helped shape an enabling environment where farmers could thrive. These efforts were complemented by strong partnerships across governments, development agencies and the private sector, which remained essential in scaling our impact.

However, the year also highlighted persistent challenges particularly in accessing sustainable funding, navigating climate risks and addressing structural market inefficiencies. These realities informed how we positioned the organization moving forward.

As we moved toward 2026, our strategic focus centered on scaling innovation, strengthening institutional capacity and deepening farmer-centered solutions. We continued to adapt, innovate, and lead ensuring that EAFF remained a responsive and impactful organization in an evolving landscape.

I extended my sincere appreciation to our members, partners, Board and staff for their unwavering commitment and collaboration. Together, we built a resilient, inclusive and prosperous agricultural future for Eastern Africa.

Mr. Stephen Muchiri
Chief Executive Officer
Eastern Africa Farmers Federation

Executive Summary

In 2025, the Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF) strengthened its position as the leading regional voice for smallholder farmers across Eastern Africa. Representing 24 national farmer organizations in 10 countries and a constituency of more than 25 million farmers, the Federation advanced its mission to promote inclusive agricultural growth, regional trade, climate resilience, and farmer-led economic transformation.

During the year under review, EAFF delivered measurable impact across policy advocacy, market development, digital innovation, capacity building, and climate action. Through strategic partnerships with governments, development partners, and the private sector, the Federation mobilized significant financial and technical resources that enabled farmers to access markets, finance, knowledge, and climate-smart technologies.

A key highlight was the continued expansion of the e-Granary platform, which connected hundreds of thousands of farmers to financial services, extension support, and structured markets. The platform demonstrated the transformative potential of digital agriculture in reducing transaction costs, improving productivity, and increasing farmer incomes.

EAFF also made notable progress in strengthening farmer organizations across the region. Through targeted capacity-building initiatives, governance support, and knowledge-sharing platforms, national farmer organizations enhanced their institutional effectiveness, accountability, and service delivery to members. These efforts were complemented by large-scale training programs that equipped farmers with skills in agribusiness development, financial management, and climate-smart agriculture.

In the area of market development, the Federation facilitated structured trade, business-to-business linkages, and access to finance, enabling farmers to participate more competitively in regional and international markets. These interventions contributed to increased incomes, expanded market access, and the transformation of farming into a more viable and profitable enterprise.

EAFF maintained a strong presence in regional and global policy platforms, ensuring that the voices and priorities of smallholder farmers were reflected in key agricultural, trade, and climate policies. Advocacy efforts resulted in improved representation of farmers in decision-making processes and contributed to more inclusive and responsive policy frameworks.

Climate resilience remained a central pillar of EAFF's work. Through partnerships and targeted programs, the Federation supported the adoption of climate-smart agriculture practices, strengthened farmers' adaptive capacities, and advocated for increased access to climate finance. These efforts positioned farmers as active agents in climate action and sustainable food system transformation.

The Federation also prioritized inclusivity by advancing programs focused on women and youth empowerment. These initiatives expanded access to skills, finance, and entrepreneurial opportunities, reinforcing agriculture as a viable and dignified livelihood for the next generation.

Despite these achievements, EAFF operated in a challenging environment characterized by an evolving funding landscape, climate variability, market constraints, and policy implementation gaps. These challenges underscored the need for continued innovation, stronger partnerships, and more sustainable financing mechanisms.

As the organization looked ahead, EAFF remained committed to scaling its impact through digital transformation, institutional strengthening, and farmer-centered solutions. By building resilient, inclusive, and market-driven agricultural systems, the Federation continued to play a critical role in improving rural livelihoods and advancing food security across Eastern Africa.





Eastern Africa Farmers Federation is a regional, non-political and non-profit organization. It is incorporated in the societies act of Kenya in 2005. EAFF membership comprises of 24 apex farmer associations; co-operatives and commodity associations in 10 countries in Eastern Africa: Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania (Zanzibar), Rwanda, Burundi, Ethiopia, Djibouti, DR Congo, South Sudan and Eritrea. Representing approximately 25 million farmers majority being smallholder farmers involved in crops, livestock (both intensive and extensive), blue economy, forestry and apiary. Our work is guided by strategic orientations emanating from grassroot to national consultations and is anchored on principles of members' ownership, subsidiarity, coherence and accountability.



OUR VISION

A prosperous and cohesive farming community in Eastern Africa.



OUR MISSION

To represent, lobby and advocate for Eastern Africa farmers' interests and build their capacities.



OUR GOAL

To contribute towards improved rural livelihoods and alleviate poverty in the Eastern Africa Region.

Our Stakeholders



OUR KEY STAKEHOLDERS

In its mission to empower regional farmers by advocating pro-farmer policies that support agricultural development and trade, the Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF) collaborates with a diverse range of stakeholders. These dynamic relationships allow EAFF to leverage expertise, resources, and networks to ensure that farmers in the region have access to the tools, knowledge, and markets necessary for long-term success.



Farmers and Farmer Organizations

one of our primary stakeholders are the national and regional farmer organizations that represent smallholder farmers. These collaborations strengthen our ability to advocate for farmer-centric policies and drive the adoption of agricultural best practices across the region.



Development Partners

EAFF actively engages with international development organizations such as the African Development Bank (AfDB), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), USAID, and the European Union. These partnerships provide critical support for capacity building, research, and financing to further agricultural development in Eastern Africa.



Government Agencies

EAFF ensures that farmer concerns are heard at the highest policy-making levels. These collaborations are crucial in shaping agricultural policies that enhance productivity and support value addition for better market outcomes.



Research and Academic Institutions

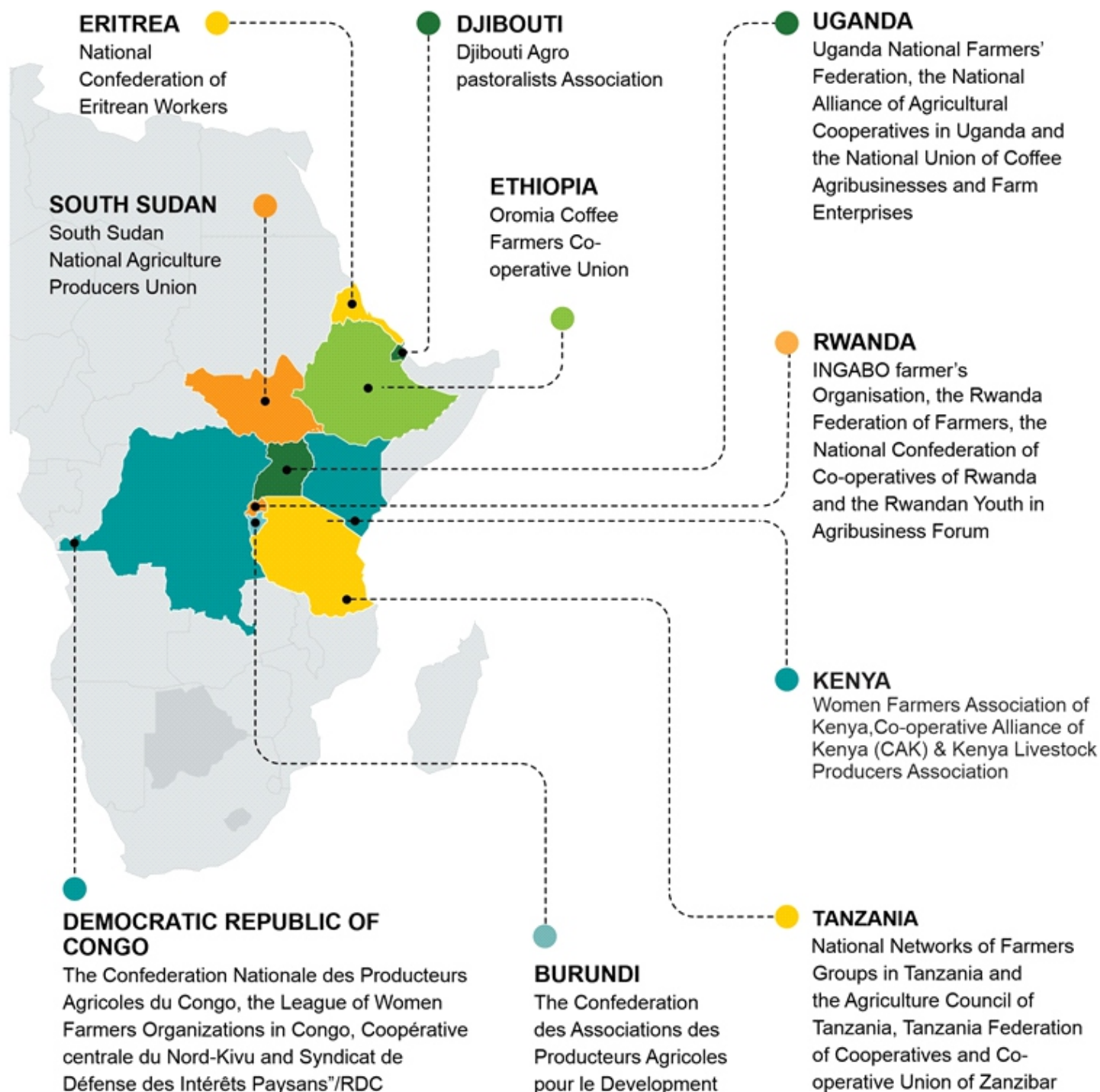
Partnerships with research bodies and universities enable EAFF to facilitate knowledge transfer, innovation, and the development of technologies that are tailored to the needs of smallholder farmers.



EAFF Footprint

EAFF membership comprises of apex farmer associations; co-operatives and commodity associations in 10 countries in Eastern Africa, i.e. Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania (Zanzibar), Rwanda, Burundi, Ethiopia, Djibouti, DR Congo, South Sudan and Eritrea.

The following are the respective members of EAFF per country;



EAFF Core Functions

A	Regional Farmer Empowerment Lobbying and advocacy for farmers' rights, interests, and representation at all levels.	● Advocacy ● Rights ● Representation
B	Facilitation of Trade Promotion of regional integration, trade, and entrepreneurship across agricultural markets.	● Regional Integration ● Trade Promotion ● Entrepreneurship
C	Food Security & Sovereignty Enhancement of food security, food sovereignty, and poverty alleviation in rural communities.	● Food Security ● Food Sovereignty ● Poverty Alleviation
D	Information Management Appropriate acquisition, packaging, and dissemination of agricultural data and intelligence.	● Data Acquisition ● Information Packaging ● Dissemination
E	Women & Youth Engagement Active and inclusive engagement of women and youth as drivers of agricultural development.	● Women Empowerment ● Youth Empowerment ● Inclusive Development
F	Natural Resources & Biodiversity Conservation of natural resources, biodiversity protection, and sustainable ecosystem management.	● Resource Conservation ● Biodiversity Protection ● Sustainable Ecosystems





Our Strategy

The Eastern Africa Farmers Federation is currently implementing its third strategic plan, 2021–2028 themed, "***Transforming Smallholder Agriculture into a Rewarding Investment***". The plan provides the long-term framework guiding the organization's efforts to transform smallholder agriculture and strengthen farmer-led development across Eastern Africa. The strategy focuses on improving the livelihoods of farmers through enhanced market access, policy advocacy, institutional strengthening, climate-smart agriculture and inclusive value chain development.

Since the beginning of the strategy period, the organization has prioritized empowering farmer organizations, promoting sustainable agricultural practices, strengthening regional and continental partnerships and supporting agribusiness opportunities for women and youth. The plan also emphasizes food security, resilience to climate change and increased participation of farmers in policy and trade processes, including regional integration initiatives such as the AfCFTA.

By 2025, significant progress has been made in strengthening farmer institutions, expanding stakeholder collaboration, enhancing knowledge sharing and promoting market-oriented agriculture. The strategic plan continues to guide efforts toward building resilient food systems, improving farmer incomes, and ensuring that smallholder farmers remain central to agricultural transformation and economic development.



The strategy focuses on improving the livelihoods of farmers in the Eastern Africa region



Key Strategic Priorities



OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Five strategic priorities that drive EAFF's mission to strengthen farmer organizations and transform food systems in Eastern Africa.



TAKING AGGREGATION IN USE TO SCALE.

We aim to develop and scale farmer collectives as vehicles for aggregation. By facilitating economies of scale and scope, these collectives will enhance farmers' bargaining power and improve access to markets.



LEVERAGING DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY.

We will develop and scale ICT platforms that serve as knowledge hubs for smallholder farmers. By providing access to vital information, we empower farmers to make informed decisions and adopt best practices.



TAKING PROVISION OF ECONOMIC SERVICES TO SCALE.

Our strategy includes the development of digital platforms that facilitate commercial transactions. These platforms will connect farmers with buyers, streamline supply chains, and enhance market access.



ADVOCATING FOR SUPPORTIVE POLICIES.

We are committed to improving the capacity of EAFF and our national and sub-national member organizations to provide economic services to their members. By strengthening our implementation support to partners, we can enhance the effectiveness of our initiatives.



IMPROVING CAPACITY OF MEMBERS TO DISCHARGE THEIR REPRESENTATION MANDATE

We are enhancing the capacity of EAFF and our member organizations to discharge their representation mandate through effective policy advocacy. By engaging with policymakers and stakeholders, we aim to influence policies that support smallholder farmers and promote sustainable agricultural practices.

CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

These themes are integrated across all our strategic interventions to ensure inclusive, resilient and sustainable farming systems.



1. CLIMATE CHANGE

Building climate resilience and promoting sustainable agricultural practices across the region.



2. YOUTH & WOMEN

Empowering youth and women as key drivers of innovation, leadership and inclusive growth.



3. LAND

Promoting secure land rights and sustainable land management for productive livelihoods.

Outputs by strategic objective



The Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF) concluded 2025 with a comprehensive portfolio of interventions that collectively demonstrate measurable, scalable and sustainable progress across all five Strategic Pillars and both Cross-Cutting Themes of its Strategic Plan. This report maps every programmatic output and institutional achievement against the Federation's strategic framework, providing a transparent account of how resources, partnerships and activities translated into impact for over 25 million smallholder farmers across 10 Eastern African nations.

2025 Numbers Dashboard



2025 Projects



OUR PROGRAMME PORTFOLIO



RESEARCH & INNOVATION



01 FO4ACP Programme

Climate-smart farming systems, capacity and extension support.



02 SOLFOOD

Sustainable optimization of local food systems and community-based models.



03 Fo-RI Programme

Farmer-led research and innovation initiatives.



POLICY & ADVOCACY



04 DEPRIN

Nutrition policy innovation and resilience.



05 Farmers' Policy Influencing Capacity

Evidence-based advocacy strengthening for farmers.



06 Need-Based Advocacy

Regional policy engagement and influencing mechanisms.



YOUTH & CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT



07 AYA Youth Platform

Youth leadership and engagement in agriculture.



08 Youth for Transformative Food Systems

Entrepreneurship, skills development and innovation support for youth.



DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION



09 CMT Exchange

Knowledge exchange and digital collaboration across the region.



10 Digital Resilience in Nutrition Policies

Data-driven insights and digital solutions for better policy outcomes.



TECHNOLOGY SCALING & INNOVATION



11 UPSCALE

Scaling farmer-centred technologies for impact at scale.



13 Land Policy in Partnership with International Land Coalition

Promoting equitable and sustainable land governance for food security.



12 Agricultural Knowledge & Innovation Ecosystem

Innovation hubs, learning networks and partnerships for sustainable impact.



14 The BIO4AFRICA Project

Supporting the deployment of the bioeconomy in rural Africa through the development of bio-based value chains and solutions.



Strategic Objective

1

Taking the concept of
aggregation in use to scale



1.0 Structured Market Linkages: Reaching 1.5 Million Farmers

EAFF's most ambitious aggregation target in 2025 was market linkage at scale. More than 1.5 million farmers gained access to structured markets for maize, beans and horticultural products. Structured markets characterised by formal contracting, transparent pricing and quality standards offer a fundamentally different income proposition compared to informal spot markets. The measurable outcome, an average income increases of 20% per household among participating farmers. This is not a marginal gain; for families living close to subsistence, a 20% income increase means the difference between food security and hunger, between school fees paid and children withdrawn from school.



1.1 Membership Growth: Expanding the Federation's Collective Reach



Over two decades, EAFF has evolved from a modest regional collective of seven-member organisations in five countries into a powerful continental voice. In 2025, this trajectory reached a significant milestone, the Federation now encompasses 25 apex farmer organisations spanning 10 Eastern African nations, representing a massive constituency of over 25 million smallholder farmers. This scale of aggregation is foundational it gives EAFF the mandate, legitimacy and numerical strength to negotiate on behalf of smallholders at every level from local cooperatives to the African Union.

The most recent chapter in this growth story is the landmark admission of the Women Farmers Association of Kenya (WoFaAK) as the Federation's 25th member.

As a national umbrella organisation, WoFaAK is dedicated to dismantling the structural and economic barriers that prevent women from achieving their full potential in agriculture. By addressing the specific hurdles that impede profitable and sustainable agricultural enterprises for women, WoFaAK works to ensure women farmers are not just participating in the sector but leading it to improve family livelihoods. The inclusion of WoFaAK signals a deepened commitment to inclusive growth: by integrating a dedicated focus on women's agricultural entrepreneurship into the regional strategy, EAFF ensures that its expansion is as impactful as it is expansive.



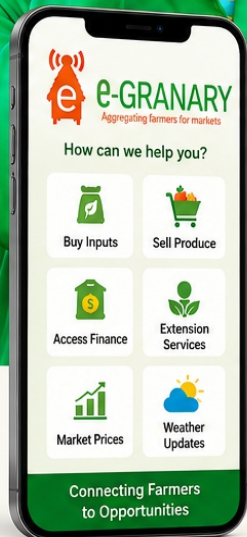
Strategic Objective

2

LEVERAGING DIGITAL
TECHNOLOGY

1.1 Driving Farmers Digital Ecosystem

Innovation is at the heart of EAFF's work and nothing demonstrates this better than *e-Granary*. What began as a simple mobile platform has grown into a game-changing digital ecosystem for farmers. *e-Granary* is a mobile-based platform that brings farmers and service providers together. It facilitates the meeting of demand and supply for agricultural inputs and outputs, lowers transaction costs, and reduces risks making it easier for banks, insurers, and agribusinesses to serve smallholder farmers profitably.



This risk reduction is critical, it makes it commercially viable for banks, insurers and agribusinesses to serve smallholder farmers profitably, closing a market gap that has historically excluded small-scale producers from formal financial and commercial systems.

A DIGITAL ECOSYSTEM THAT CONNECTS EVERYONE



FARMERS



INPUT SUPPLIERS



BUYERS & MARKETS



FINANCIAL SERVICES
(BANKS & INSURERS)



EXTENSION PROVIDERS



AGRIBUSINESSES



Lower transaction costs



Reduced risks



Increased access



Stronger incomes

BY THE END OF 2025
253,000+
FARMERS CONNECTED
across
Kenya, Uganda
and Rwanda



THROUGH E-GRANARY, FARMERS CAN ACCESS



Affordable finance



Quality inputs



Tailored extension services



Reliable markets



All from
their mobile
phones

THE PLATFORM RECORDS OVER

90,000+
MONTHLY VISITS



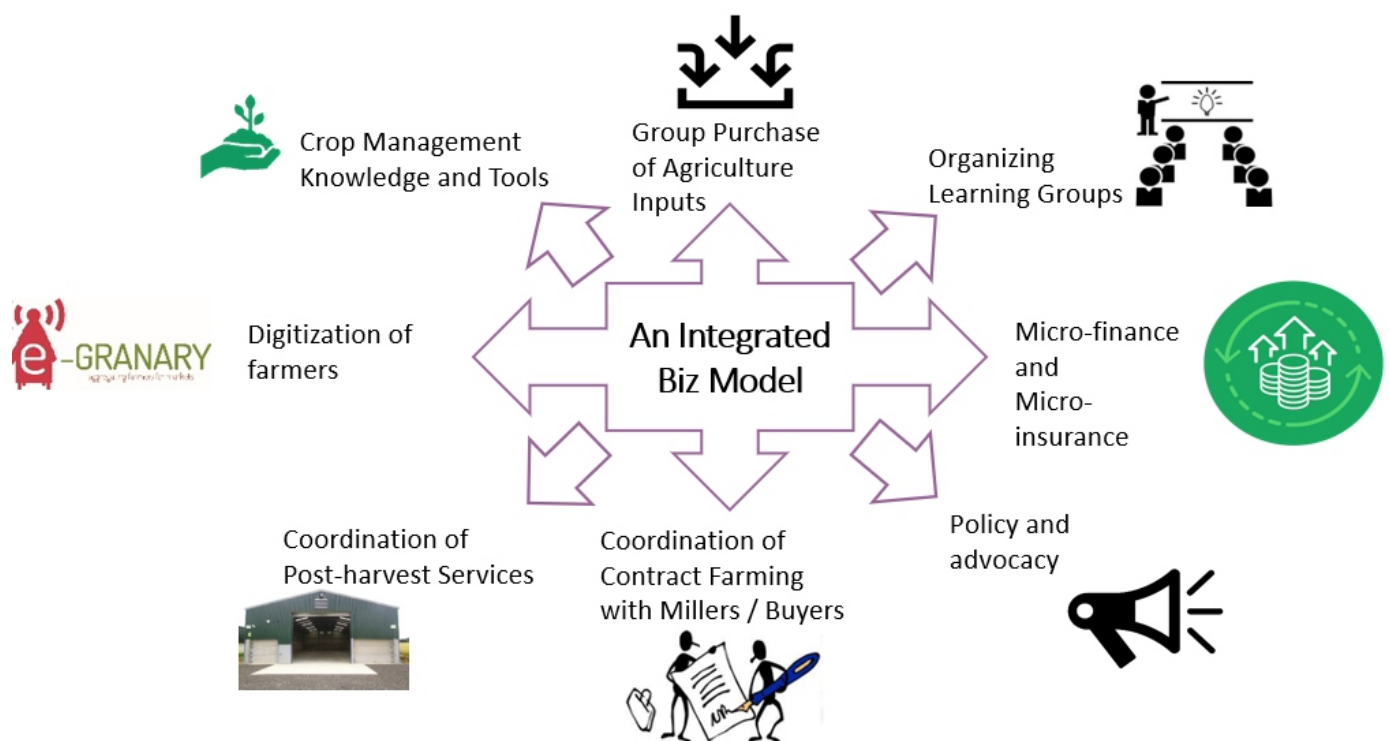
ITS IMPACT IS UNAMBIGUOUS

94%
OF ACTIVE USERS

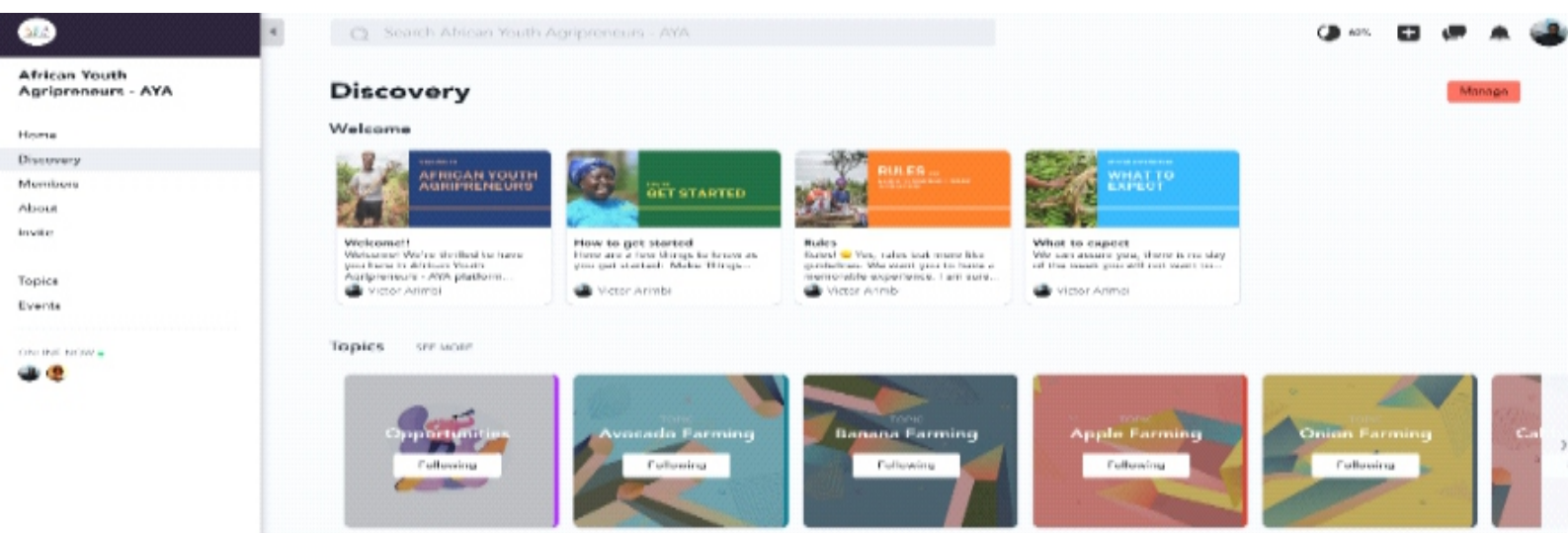
reported a direct increase
in their revenue as a
result of using e-Granary.



★ This is among the highest user-reported impact rates in agricultural technology across Sub-Saharan Africa.



1.2 Digitally Connecting Young Agripreneurs



E AFF also maintains the AYA (African Youth in Agribusiness) marketplace in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO). This digital marketplace currently connects over 5,000 young farmers to buyers, service providers, financial institutions and economic opportunities, creating the networks that responds to the youth demand for increased access to experience sharing, learning and mentorship opportunities. It contributes to the overall objective of fostering rural youth networking and meaningful engagement in agri-food systems.

We are a community that provides a space for rural youth agripreneurs to share knowledge and opportunities, engage in peer-to-peer learning network, participate in thematic dialogues, access agribusiness online courses; mentorship; coaching and do-it-yourself innovation toolkits relevant to their ventures.

Our focus is to enable the growth and sustainability of youth-led agribusinesses and contribute to diverse advocacy efforts of young women's involvement in the agri-food system value chain.





Strategic Objective

3

**TAKING PROVISION OF ECONOMIC
SERVICES TO SCALE**

3.1 Mobilising Capital for Agriculture

EAFF has established itself as a pivotal financial architect for the agricultural sector successfully bridging the gap between small-scale producers and essential capital. Many smallholder farmers have historically been excluded from formal financial systems due to perceived risk, lack of collateral and high transaction costs. EAFF's work in 2025 directly attempted to address this structural challenge by forging strategic alliances with government bodies, international development partners and private sector investors.

Through these alliances, the Federation mobilised over USD 4 million in direct funding in 2025. This financing enabled farmers capacity building, youth and women mentorship, purchase of quality seeds and inputs at the beginning of the growing season rather than waiting for post-harvest income, breaking a cycle of under-investment that keeps many smallholders trapped in low-productivity agriculture.



3.2 Building Farmer-Entrepreneurs



Central to Pillar 3 is EAFF's conviction that agriculture is a business and that farmers must be equipped with the commercial tools, financial literacy and market intelligence to operate successful agricultural enterprises. The Federation's business development work in 2025 focused on three inter-related pillars of farmer enterprise capacity: governance, financial management and agribusiness development.

Over 200 farmers and cooperative leaders participated in intensive training programmes designed to bridge the gap between traditional subsistence practices and the requirements of modern market-oriented enterprise. Governance training instilled principles of democratic and ethical leadership, ensuring that cooperatives are managed in the interests of all members. Financial management training promoted long-term sustainability and fiscal discipline helping cooperatives maintain accounts, conduct audits, and manage loans responsibly. Agribusiness development training equipped leaders with the commercial tools required to transition from subsistence farming to competitive market participation.





Strategic Objective

ADVOCATING FOR SUPPORTIVE
POLICIES

4



4.1: Shaping the African Agricultural Agenda

The Federation's influence was felt at the highest levels of advocacy. At the African Union Summit on Food Security in Addis Ababa, EAFF presented its Regional Food Systems Policy Brief to the AU Commission, ensuring that the voices of East African producers reached the heart of continental decision-making. This was further reinforced by EAFF's contribution to the Extraordinary Summit on CAADP, where it helped shape the standards for pan-African agricultural transformation.

Closer to home, the Federation convened the Eastern Africa Farmers' Congress in Kigali, Rwanda. This landmark event culminated in the adoption of a strategic set of resolutions designed to guide the regional agricultural agenda for the next four years.

Ground-level mobilization remained a cornerstone of the year's success. EAFF orchestrated 60 national-level policy advocacy sessions, a massive undertaking that facilitated direct dialogue between over 4,800 farmers, policymakers and development partners. These efforts led to a major institutional victory the successful lobbying for permanent smallholder farmer representation on the EAC Agricultural and Rural Development Committee, ensuring farmers now have a seat at the table where regional decisions are made.

Beyond representation, EAFF acted as a vital architect of regional commerce. By participating in the COMESA Regional Food Balance Sheet meetings and the Annual Public-Private Dialogue on Food Trade and Investment, the Federation embedded farmer interests directly into regional trade laws and investment frameworks.

Special emphasis was placed on the future of the industry through the EAC Youth in Agribusiness Forum. Here, EAFF championed effective financing framework policies specifically designed to foster youth inclusion in finance, ensuring that the next generation of agri-entrepreneurs has the capital necessary to thrive.

Recognizing the existential threat of environmental change, EAFF took a proactive stance at COP meetings. By negotiating for stronger climate action and influencing future policy directions, the Federation advocated for the mobilization of essential climate finance. These efforts were specifically aimed at providing farmers with the resources needed to enhance their adaptation strategies and build long-term resilience against a shifting climate.





Strategic Objective

5

IMPROVING CAPACITY OF MEMBERS TO
DISCHARGE THEIR REPRESENTATION
MANDATE

5.1 Institutional Strengthening of National Farmer Organisations

The strength of EAFF's regional advocacy and market facilitation work depends fundamentally on the institutional health of its 25-member organisations. A Federation is only as strong as its members and EAFF's 2025 work placed significant emphasis on ensuring that National Farmer Organisations (NFOs) across all 10 countries have the institutional systems, leadership capabilities and operational standards required to serve their members effectively and represent them credibly in policy spaces.

Targeted technical support was provided directly to 15 NFOs, reinforcing their institutional foundations from the ground up. The primary mechanism was a strategic sub-granting system that provided resources for organisations to modernise their internal operations. By adopting improved governance frameworks and robust financial management systems, these NFOs established rigorous accountability structures streamlining internal processes while significantly bolstering their credibility and transparency with international funders and stakeholders.



5.2 Governance and Leadership Development

EAFF institutionalised annual CEO forums and governance training as a flagship platform for peer learning, accountability and leadership development among member organisation leadership. These forums have become central to EAFF's capacity-building architecture: they bring together the chief executives of member organisations to share experiences, address common challenges and collectively raise standards of practice across the Federation.

Through these forums, members have strengthened financial management systems, improved audit practices, updated HR policies, and developed operational manuals resulting in more professional and transparent organisational operations. The forums also serve as spaces for peer accountability, where leaders can hold each other to commitments made and celebrate progress achieved. Critically, EAFF used these forums to champion inclusive governance by supporting the integration of youth and women structures into member organisations, ensuring that representational bodies reflect the demographics of the farming communities they serve.



5.3 Regional Knowledge Exchange



The Federation recognises that the agricultural challenges facing Eastern Africa frequently transcend national borders whether in the form of shared commodity markets, transboundary pest and disease threats, or common policy environments. To address this reality, the Federation facilitated 8 regional knowledge exchange forums in 2025, creating structured platforms for cross-country peer learning. Among them were 2 regional exchange forums focused on potatoes and dairy. The two events were attended by farmers from Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, and Tanzania. These forums enabled farmer organisation leaders, extension workers, and agribusiness practitioners to share innovative solutions, compare approaches, and adapt best practices from one context to another.

By facilitating these cross-country dialogues, EAFF ensured that a successful innovation in one nation could be adapted and replicated throughout the entire region. This peer learning model is highly cost-effective as it leverages existing knowledge within the Federation rather than relying solely on external expertise. It also builds lateral relationships between member organisations, strengthening the Federation's collective resilience and cohesion.





6

**DRIVING FARMER-LED
CLIMATE ACTION:
EAFF's climate achievements
2025**



Since the Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF) first dedicated its Farmers' Congress in 2021 to climate action, the Federation has intentionally integrated climate change into its regional agenda. This commitment has strengthened the voice and influence of farmer organizations in climate advocacy, while equipping them with the knowledge, partnerships, and policy engagement platforms needed to address pressing climate-related challenges. Farmers are now better positioned to respond to the increasing impacts of droughts, floods, pests, and erratic rainfall, which continue to threaten food security, livelihoods, and natural resources across the region. Recognizing both the risks and opportunities associated with climate change, EAFF has continued to champion resilient and sustainable food systems transformation. Through strengthened collaboration, advocacy, and farmer-centered solutions, the Federation has positioned itself as a respected regional, continental, and global actor in advancing climate resilience and sustainable agricultural development.

Strategic Entry Points

EAFF's climate change work is structured around the following priority areas:



Enhancing knowledge and capacity

Strengthening farmers' knowledge and skills on climate-smart agriculture, climate adaptation, and resilience building.



Strengthening engagement in policy and advocacy

Supporting evidence-based advocacy by conducting research and developing policy recommendations at local, regional, and global levels.

Strategic Entry Points

EAFF's climate change work is structured around the following priority areas:



Developing farmer-relevant and demand-driven research

Promoting practical research to support informed national and regional policy decision-making.



Formulating and communicating collective positions

Advancing member organizations' positions on major global policy processes such as the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement.



Building knowledge and capacity on climate finance

Equipping farmers and member organizations with the skills and knowledge needed to access climate financing opportunities, including the Green Climate Fund and other global financing mechanisms.



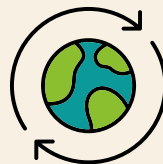
Key Activities in 2025

EAFF has significantly expanded its climate-related activities since 2021. Among others, key activities included:



Policy dialogue and capacity building

EAFF hosted multiple capacity-building events for its Secretariat and member organisations. These included sessions on needs-based adaptation advocacy, farmer participation in climate negotiations, and regional dialogues under the Africa Climate Summit and UNFCCC COP processes. Collectively, these engagements have amplified farmer voices and better prepared members to contribute to national, regional and global climate negotiations, policy development and advocacy. In addition, EAFF members have articulated clear advocacy positions in the form of call-to-action statements, setting out farmers' priorities and requests to governments and negotiators. Such statements strengthen the visibility and influence of African farmers in shaping climate outcomes.



Global Goal on Adaptation

In June 2025, EAFF and ICCRAA co-hosted a regional workshop titled "Enhancing Farmer Engagement on the Targets and Indicators of the Global Goal on Adaptation." The workshop helped to build awareness among EAFF members of the technical work underway on adaptation indicators relevant to food and agriculture. Farmer organisations proposed refinements aligned with farmer realities and regional adaptation priorities.

Key Activities in 2025

EAFF has significantly expanded its climate-related activities since 2021. Among others, key activities have included:



Climate finance

In partnership with FFORA, EAFF has championed efforts to make climate finance more accessible to farmers. This work has included training members in proposal development and raising awareness of financing mechanisms such as the GCF and GEF. EAFF also convened a major workshop in Dar es Salaam in 2025, bringing together donors and partners to explore solutions for unlocking climate finance for farmer organisations.



Regional adaptation dialogues

EAFF, together with the East and Southern Africa Smallholder Farmers' Forum and Seed Savers Kenya, convened farmers, journalists and influencers from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and Ethiopia. These meetings highlighted the critical role of farmers in driving agricultural adaptation and identified both barriers and innovative solutions to strengthen resilience in farming systems.



Research and knowledge generation:

Evidence generation has been a cornerstone of EAFF's climate agenda. Working with partners, EAFF has commissioned and produced research and policy analysis on critical issues, including:

- Refining the Global Goal on Adaptation indicators through farmer perspectives (2025): capturing farmer organisations' recommendations for adaptation measurement frameworks.
- From Baku to Belem: Key insights and next steps for climate and agriculture (March 2025): unpacking the key outcomes of COP29 and the implications for African agriculture.



Strategic Objective

Youth & Women Inclusion



Youth and women are not simply beneficiary groups in EAFU's work they are central to the transformation and long-term sustainability of the agricultural sector. Women produce the majority of food consumed in Eastern Africa while facing systematic barriers to land ownership, credit access, cooperative membership, and leadership positions. Young people represent the future of farming, but many are deterred by the perception that agriculture is a low-status, low-income livelihood a perception that EAFU is actively working to change by demonstrating that modern agriculture is a sophisticated, profitable and dignified career path.

EAFU's approach to youth and women inclusion is not additive it is mainstreamed across all five Strategic Pillars. Every aggregation initiative, every digital platform, every economic service, every advocacy session and every capacity building programme explicitly considers how it will create opportunities for, and remove barriers facing, women and young people. The dedicated programmes described below sit atop this mainstreamed foundation.



Building a Generation of Agri-Entrepreneurs

In 2025, EAFF made significant and measurable strides in youth empowerment across the region. Over 200 young individuals received training through EAFF-supported programmes, equipping them with the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in modern agricultural enterprise, from production systems and quality standards to financial management, market negotiation and digital tool use. These training programmes are designed not just to improve knowledge but to change participants' relationship with agriculture from a subsistence livelihood of last resort to an enterprise of choice.

EAFF maintains the AYA (African Youth in Agribusiness) marketplace in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO). This digital marketplace currently connects over 5,000 young farmers to buyers, financial service providers, input suppliers and extension services, creating the networks of opportunity that sustainable youth agricultural enterprises require. The AYA marketplace is more than a trading platform it is a digital community of practice for young agri-entrepreneurs, enabling them to share knowledge, identify market opportunities, and build the professional relationships that underpin commercial success.



E AFF's commitment to women's empowerment in 2025 centred on three interconnected areas: land rights, leadership development, and cooperative governance transformation. The Federation provided specialised programming to over 100 women through intensive training focused on land rights (understanding and asserting their legal entitlements to land), leadership (building confidence, communication, and advocacy skills) and financial access (navigating banking systems, managing credit, and accessing investment).

These are not cosmetic interventions. Women who understand their land rights are better positioned to invest in their farms, obtain credit against their land and resist dispossession. Women who develop leadership skills are more effective advocates in cooperative governance structures traditionally dominated by men. Women with financial literacy are more capable of building profitable businesses and managing household finances sustainably. The training is already producing results: these women are utilising their strengthened voices and enhanced skills to transform the governance of cooperatives and lead their communities toward more sustainable and equitable agricultural practices.

At the EAC Youth in Agribusiness Forum, EAFF championed financing framework policies that promote youth inclusion in formal financial systems addressing at the policy level the systemic barriers that individual young farmers face when seeking credit. Women and youth perspectives are also mainstreamed into EAFF's advocacy at the AU, EAC, COMESA, and UNFCCC levels, ensuring that inclusive agricultural development is not a peripheral concern but a central plank of the Federation's policy platform..



Strategic Objective

8

LAND



The year 2025 marked a pivotal moment in EAFF's land governance agenda. Through sustained advocacy, strategic partnerships and targeted capacity development, the Federation advanced the rights and interests of family farmers particularly women and youth in accessing, using and benefitting from land across Eastern Africa.

Key Achievements

In 2025, EAFF continued to position farmers as credible and influential actors in national, regional, and global land governance processes. Through strengthened collaboration and strategic partnerships, EAFF forged alliances with governments, civil society organizations, and development partners to promote coordinated action on equitable land access and inclusive agricultural development.

As part of these efforts, EAFF advocated for improved land access for youth and women, contributing to their recognition as priority beneficiaries within national and regional land governance frameworks. This advocacy reinforced the importance of inclusive policies that address structural inequalities affecting vulnerable groups in the agricultural sector.

Building on these engagements, EAFF worked closely with key actors responsible for developing agricultural and inclusion blueprints to influence policies and implementation frameworks. These efforts ensured that the perspectives and priorities of smallholder farmers were integrated into planning and decision-making processes at multiple levels.

To further strengthen farmer representation, EAFF participated in various committees and working groups shaping continental and regional frameworks on resource access and agricultural transformation, including the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), YENKASA, and the World Rural Forum (WRF). Through these platforms, EAFF contributed to policy dialogue and promoted the interests of smallholder farmers across Eastern Africa.

Key Achievements

In addition, EAFF coordinated high-level stakeholder forums aimed at strengthening member representation and amplifying farmer voices in policy and decision-making spaces. These forums provided opportunities for constructive engagement between farmers, policymakers, and development partners on critical land and resource governance issues.

EAFF also participated in the Global Land Forum organized by the International Land Coalition (ILC) in partnership with the Colombian National Organizing Committee. At this global gathering, EAFF advanced understanding of the complex political, economic, environmental, and social linkages between land governance and food security. The forum also provided an important platform for presenting the perspectives and experiences of Eastern Africa's smallholder farmers within international discussions on land rights and sustainable development.

Alongside its policy and advocacy work, EAFF prioritized capacity development initiatives aimed at strengthening the resilience and productivity of family farmers. The organization built the capacity of farmers in land use and productivity management, equipping them with practical tools and knowledge to improve returns on investment from their land holdings. EAFF also supported capacity development on the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) policy requirements, enabling smallholder farmers to better understand compliance obligations and adapt their land-use practices to emerging international standards.

EAFF further enhanced mobilisation and systems strengthening efforts by bringing together land actors including farmers, civil society organizations, governments, and development partners to support more resilient and inclusive small-scale farming systems. This was achieved through a combination of advocacy, capacity building on best practices, and sustained policy engagement. In collaboration with other Regional Platforms under the auspices of the International Land Coalition (ILC), EAFF also contributed to joint responses addressing the needs of family farmers and supported the development of shared road maps for land governance reform.

To ensure long-term impact, EAFF developed and initiated the implementation of action plans aimed at strengthening small-scale farming systems across the region. These action plans deliberately integrated critical cross-cutting priorities, including gender inclusion and climate resilience. Particular emphasis was placed on ensuring that women and youth are meaningfully represented in land planning and decision-making processes, while also linking secure land tenure to long-term investments in climate-smart agriculture and sustainable land management practices.





In 2025, the Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF) strengthened its communication and visibility efforts to amplify the voices of family farmers across Eastern Africa. Through strategic media engagement, digital storytelling, advocacy campaigns and knowledge-sharing platforms, the Federation increased awareness of key agricultural issues while positioning farmers as central actors in food systems transformation, climate resilience and rural economic development.

EAFF leveraged both traditional and digital media channels to communicate the impact of its programmes, policy advocacy initiatives and farmer-led innovations.

COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

The Federation produced and disseminated timely communication products including press releases, policy briefs, newsletters, social media content, success stories, videos and photo features highlighting the experiences and achievements of farmers, cooperatives, women and youth across the region.

Throughout the year, EAFF implemented targeted media campaigns on climate-smart agriculture, agribusiness development, land governance, digital inclusion, agricultural financing and youth participation in agriculture. These campaigns contributed to increased public engagement and strengthened awareness among policymakers, development partners and the wider public on the critical role of family farmers in achieving food security and sustainable development.

EAFF also strengthened relationships with journalists, media houses and communication partners to improve agricultural reporting and ensure farmer perspectives were represented in national and regional conversations. Media coverage of EAFF activities increased significantly during the year, enhancing the Federation's visibility and reinforcing its credibility as a leading voice for farmers in Eastern Africa.

Digital communication remained a key pillar of outreach in 2025. Through active use of social media platforms, webinars, online campaigns and virtual learning sessions, EAFF expanded its engagement with stakeholders across the region and beyond. The Federation's digital platforms facilitated real-time information sharing, promoted farmer success stories and enhanced access to knowledge and market information.

Key communication achievements in 2025 included:

- Increased media visibility and stakeholder engagement across regional and international platforms.
- Enhanced digital outreach through consistent social media campaigns and online engagement.
- Production of impactful farmer stories, videos and publications showcasing programme outcomes.
- Strengthened advocacy communication supporting policy influence and farmer representation.
- Improved knowledge sharing among farmer organizations, partners and agricultural stakeholders.
- Through these efforts, EAFF continued to use communication as a strategic tool for advocacy, learning, visibility and farmer empowerment, ensuring that the voices and experiences of family farmers remained at the centre of agricultural transformation in Eastern Africa.





Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations



Partnerships and Collaboration

In 2025, the Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF) continued to strengthen strategic partnerships and collaborative engagements aimed at advancing the interests of family farmers across Eastern Africa. Recognizing the importance of collective action and multi-stakeholder cooperation, the Federation deepened its engagement with development partners, regional institutions, research organizations, and private sector actors to expand opportunities for farmers and enhance the impact of its programmes.





During the year, EAFF initiated and strengthened discussions with organizations such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), African Development Bank (AfDB), Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the European Union (EU), Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), and One Acre Fund to explore strategic collaboration in areas including climate-smart agriculture, agricultural finance, digital transformation, policy advocacy, youth and women empowerment, food systems transformation, and sustainable agricultural value chains.

These engagements created important pathways for knowledge exchange, joint programming, resource mobilization, and regional advocacy aimed at improving the resilience and livelihoods of smallholder farmers. Through these partnerships, EAFF continued to position itself as a credible regional voice for farmers and a trusted partner in driving inclusive agricultural development and food security across Eastern Africa. The Federation also maintained strong collaboration with farmer organizations, civil society networks, research institutions, and regional platforms to amplify farmers' voices in policy processes at national, regional, and global levels. This collaborative approach contributed significantly to strengthening farmers' participation in agricultural governance, climate discussions, and sustainable development initiatives throughout 2025.





Feature Story

Twenty Years of Feeding the Region: EAFF's 6th Farmers Convention Charts a New Course for African Agriculture

Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF) convened its 6th Farmers Convention, Congress and Exhibition at the Kigali Serena Hotel from 30 September to 2 October 2025. Drawing more than 200 delegates from across the globe, the three-day gathering brought together smallholder farmers, government leaders, development partners, financial institutions, and private sector players all united by a single, urgent purpose: building more sustainable, resilient, and inclusive food systems for Eastern Africa and the continent at large.

The 2025 edition carried particular weight. It marked EAFF's 20th anniversary, a milestone the Federation celebrated under the theme *"20 Years of Feeding the Region."* Since its founding in 2005, EAFF has grown into a formidable regional voice, representing smallholder farmers across 10 nations and championing policies and programmes that have shaped the lives of millions. Held in collaboration with Rwanda's Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI), the convention was both a celebration of that legacy and a candid reckoning with the work that remains.

Convened every four years, the EAFF Farmers Convention and Congress is the Federation's premier platform for deliberating on the most pressing agricultural challenges facing Eastern Africa. This year, more than 10 exhibitors joined delegates to showcase innovations and technologies shaping the region's agricultural future.

The programme covered a broad range of thematic areas: the changing landscape of agriculture and food trade across Africa; climate change and adaptation for smallholder farmers; promotion of agri-food trade within and beyond the continent; agricultural innovations and technologies; the roles of youth and women as drivers of transformation; the institutionalisation of farmer organisations and the perennial challenge of agricultural finance access, affordability and farmer-friendly instruments. Four strategic objectives anchored the Convention: promoting dialogue and knowledge exchange on sustainable food systems; enhancing the inclusion of youth and women in agriculture; fostering innovation and technology adoption among farmers; and building strategic partnerships for increased investment and policy influence.



6TH EASTERN AFRICA FARMERS FEDERATION

Farmers Congress and Exhibition 2025

THEME: "TOWARDS MORE SUSTAINABLE FOOD AND FARMING SYSTEMS"



The convention opened with a stark challenge from Rwanda's Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Mark Cyubahiro Bagabe. Speaking against a backdrop of compounding pressures, climate shocks, high trade costs and widening trade deficits. Hon. Bagabe pointed to a figure that framed much of the three days' debate: Africa's annual food import bill of \$70 billion. "We are meeting under the theme towards more sustainable food and farming systems at a time when we are experiencing climate shocks, high trade costs and actually trade deficits," Minister Bagabe said, warning that persistent food dependency was feeding a broader crisis of unemployment, particularly among youth.

EAFF President, Elizabeth Nsimadala echoed that urgency with equal directness. "As a continent, we are seated on a time bomb," she said. The \$70 billion import bill, she argued, is the product of decades of chronic underinvestment in agriculture and a failure to honour commitments already made. "Twenty years now since the Maputo Declaration, countries committed to allocate 10 per cent of their national budgets to the agriculture sector. But none of the African countries has actually allocated 10 per cent." Most, she noted, hover around 3 per cent, with Rwanda among the few making meaningful progress.

Financing, she said, compounds the problem. Despite agriculture's central role in African economies, bank loans to the sector average just 5 per cent of total lending, while interest rates often exceed 24 per cent. "It's really a wake-up call for all ecosystem actors in agriculture to invest in agri-food systems," Nsimadala said.



Deliberation to resolutions

Three days of intensive deliberation produced a set of concrete, actionable resolutions the collective voice of Eastern Africa's farming communities and a clear signal of intent for policy, investment, and advocacy in the years ahead.

Food Systems Transformation.

EAFF and its member National Farmer Organisations (NFOs) resolved to actively participate in national food systems processes while coordinating action at the regional level. This includes leveraging the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) to open new markets for smallholder farmers and ensuring that farmers are architects not merely beneficiaries of agricultural investment plans at both national and regional levels.

Climate Action.

Recognising that the climate crisis is not an abstract threat but a daily reality for millions of smallholder farmers, EAFF committed to engaging actively in the design and implementation of national and regional climate strategies. The Federation will work to amplify farmers' voices in global climate policy processes, ensuring those who bear the greatest burden of climate change have a seat at the table where decisions are made.

Youth Engagement.

Africa's demographic dividend will only materialise if young people are genuinely integrated into agriculture. EAFF pledged to professionalise youth engagement, building entrepreneurship skills, investing in youth-led innovations, and creating frameworks that position young people as decision-makers in a modernised, future-ready agricultural sector.



Deliberation to resolutions

Agricultural Finance.

EAFF committed to advocating with renewed urgency for increased access to finance including climate finance for farmer organisations and their members. The Federation will push specifically for lower interest rates and farmer-friendly loan mechanisms that reflect the real risks and realities of smallholder farming.

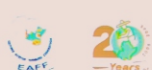
Land Rights

Recognising land as the foundation of food security and livelihoods, the Congress resolved that EAFF would advocate for land rights that protect smallholder farmers, pastoralists and indigenous communities. Gender-inclusive land rights particularly for women farmers will be a central pillar of this advocacy, alongside active engagement in national and regional land policy processes.



private sector strategy identifies priority value chains that could increase intra-African trade, production, and employment

Value chain prioritization criteria	Criteria	Description
1. Feasibility	Ability to overcome barriers to trade and production within short time frame (<5 yrs)	Contribute to sustainable GDP growth
2. Economic growth	GDP	Contribute to creation of employment
3. Inclusivity	Employment	Include a balance of low and high complexity goods, with the latter requiring more technical know-how to produce/manufacture/sell
4. Environmental sustainability	Product complexity	Enable high participation rate and creation of economic opportunities for Women (i.e. share of labor force), Youth (i.e. share of employment) and SMEs (i.e. share of total SMEs)
5. Environmental sustainability	Women, youth & SMEs	Support value chains that are environmentally sustainable in their production and trade processes – proved by level of CO2 emissions



The AfCFTA private sector strategy identifies priority value chains that could increase intra-African trade, production, and employment

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Spotlight on EAFF Members



Across Eastern Africa, farmers continue to demonstrate resilience, innovation and determination in the face of evolving agricultural, climate, and market challenges. In 2025, members of the Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF) played a vital role in advancing sustainable agriculture, strengthening food systems and feeding the region. These stories highlight the experiences, achievements and impact of EAFF members across the region. They reflect how farmers, cooperatives, youth and women-led organizations are transforming livelihoods, embracing innovation and building stronger farming communities



From 34 member cooperatives to Africa's Largest Coffee Union

In 1999, 34 small coffee cooperatives in Ethiopia's Oromia region came together with a shared ambition, to give smallholder farmers a stronger voice in the global coffee trade. Twenty-five years later, that alliance has evolved into the Oromia Coffee Farmers' Cooperative Union (OCFCU), a farmer-owned institution representing more than 562,000 producers and widely regarded as one of Africa's most successful cooperative movements.

At its core, OCFCU was founded on a simple reality: individual farmers have little bargaining power in international commodity markets. Coffee prices are determined far from the hillsides where the crop is grown, and the farmers who cultivate it often receive the smallest share of its value.

"OCFCU exists because individual farmers cannot negotiate global markets alone," says General Manager Dejene Dadi. "Together, they gain bargaining power, stability, and dignity."

That principle has guided the union's growth from the beginning. What started with 22,691 members has expanded into a network of 413 primary cooperatives spanning Ethiopia's coffee-growing regions. More than 64,000 of its members are women, making OCFCU not only the largest coffee cooperative in Africa, but also one of the continent's most significant farmer-led institutions. It is also a flagship member of the Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF).





Building Ownership Across the Value Chain

From the outset, OCFCU understood that market access alone would not transform farmers' livelihoods. To retain more value, producers needed ownership within the supply chain itself.

Over the past two decades, the union has invested heavily in farmer-owned infrastructure. It established coffee processing facilities in Gelan, Kaliti, and Dire Dawa, alongside warehouses, quality-control laboratories, central trading centers in Addis Ababa, and its own transportation fleet. One of its most strategic investments is the One Koo Coffee roasting facility, which enables the union to export roasted coffee instead of relying solely on raw green bean sales. By moving further into value addition, OCFCU keeps a greater share of profits within the cooperative system and among its members.

At the farm level, the union provides agricultural inputs, agronomic training, storage facilities, and access to credit. These services help reduce the risks that smallholder farmers routinely face, including post-harvest losses, price volatility, and pressure to sell crops immediately due to financial constraints.

Certifications That Unlock Premium Markets

OCFCU has also built one of the most extensive sustainability certification portfolios of any agricultural cooperative in Africa. Its coffees are certified under Fair Trade, Rainforest Alliance, EU Organic, USDA NOP, JAS Organic, Bird Friendly, and CAFE Practices standards.

These certifications are more than symbolic. They open access to premium buyers in Europe, North America, and Japan, where demand for traceable and sustainably produced coffee continues to grow. Buyers in these markets often pay higher-than-commodity prices, allowing farmers to earn stronger returns while adhering to environmental and social standards that support long-term sustainability.

The union is now exploring carbon trading as an additional revenue stream, positioning its members as contributors to climate resilience through the protection of forests and sustainable landscapes.





Modernizing for the Future

Rapid growth has also brought new institutional challenges. OCFCU has acknowledged the need to modernize its financial and operational systems to keep pace with its expanding membership base.

In response, the union has launched a digitalization program designed to improve traceability, streamline operations, and speed up payments to member cooperatives. Diversifying export markets and expanding value-added production remain central to its long-term strategy, particularly as global coffee markets become increasingly competitive and volatile.

Project on Climate Change and Resilience

The objective of this component is to strengthen the capacity and increase awareness among coffee producer beneficiaries and relevant stakeholders on climate change and climate resilience. This will be achieved through structured training programs and localized capacity-building activities designed to be practical, culturally acceptable, and sustainable within the community.

In addition, the union is working to invest in carbon credit initiatives to access international markets. This initiative is expected to generate benefits for farmers while contributing to global efforts to reduce the impacts of climate change.

To further support farmers and reduce environmental harm, the project will facilitate the importation and use of solar panels for home consumption. The project will also support the implementation of carbon footprint measurements and carbon management practices for the coffee value chain, helping to improve production efficiency and reduce emissions.



Recognition Beyond Ethiopia

In November 2025, OCFCU's achievements received national recognition at the Ethiopian Coffee Authority Awards. The union earned top honors for highest foreign currency earnings among cooperative unions, outstanding export performance, and third place for high-quality coffee processing.

For an organization built on the belief that farmers should benefit more fairly from the crops they grow, the awards represented more than commercial success. They affirmed the viability of a model once considered too ambitious for smallholder agriculture: cooperative ownership, shared infrastructure, and direct participation in global markets.

For EAFF and other farmer organizations across the continent, OCFCU stands as proof that African farmers can do more than supply raw commodities. From the forested highlands of Oromia to cafés in London, Tokyo and New York, the union demonstrates that farmers can own, govern, and compete within global value chains not as passive suppliers or aid recipients, but as equal participants in the industry they sustain.





WoFaAK Empowering Women Farmers through Forage & Dairy Production

In 2025, the Women Farmers Association of Kenya (WoFaAK) strengthened its commitment to empowering women farmers by equipping them with knowledge and skills on forage and dairy production. This was through a partnership with the Nourishing Prosperity Alliance: Forage for Animal Growth in East Africa (NPA-FORAGE) project, implemented in partnership with Land O'Lakes Venture37.

The NPA-FORAGE initiative was to build a commercially viable and climate-smart forage market to strengthen the competitiveness of the dairy sector in Kenya and Ethiopia. Working alongside global and regional partners including International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Corteva Agriscience and Forage Genetics International, the project placed women's and youth economic empowerment at the center of its work by improving access to information, strengthening leadership capacities of women-led organizations, and promoting equitable market opportunities.

WoFaAK achieved a significant milestone in six months by training over 10,000 dairy farmers and forage producers in Meru County through a sustainable farmer-led approach. This achievement demonstrated not only the scale of outreach but also the power of community-driven knowledge sharing.

At the heart of the success was the Farmer Training of Trainers (WoFaAK members), with the aim of strengthening local capacity and ensure long term sustainability of knowledge transfer. Through this approach lead women and youth farmers were equipped with technical and leadership skills and were supported to train fellow farmers in their communities thus creating local champions who continue extending knowledge and support beyond the project life.



The ToTs, 50 in total were capacity built on key areas including forage production and management, business and entrepreneurial skills, soil health, gender, leadership, and governance, communication, Lobby & Advocacy. The trainings moved beyond traditional agricultural extension and focused on empowering farmers with practical and actionable knowledge to improve both productivity and profitability. Farmers gained skills in forage production and conservation, feed quality improvement, enterprise management, and market understanding, enabling them to transition from subsistence farming practices to more commercially viable dairy enterprises.

A notable outcome from these engagements was the increasing interest among farmers, particularly women and youth, in technology and innovation. Farmers expressed a growing desire to adopt solutions that could: Reduce labor intensity in farming operations; Improve efficiency in forage production and handling; Increase dairy productivity; and Enhance profitability and business performance.

This signaled an important shift in farmer aspirations. Women farmers were not only adopting improved agronomic practices but were also actively seeking smart and scalable solutions that could modernize their enterprises and strengthen resilience.

Beyond the numbers, the initiative strengthened women's confidence, leadership, and participation in decision-making processes within households and communities. Women increasingly viewed agriculture not simply as a livelihood activity, but as a business opportunity capable of creating lasting social and economic change





Across Rwanda, a quiet transformation is underway as young people increasingly embrace agribusiness supported by innovation and technology. At the centre of this shift is the Rwanda Youth in Agribusiness Forum (RYAF), a youth-led platform established in 2016 by the Government of Rwanda, the Ministry of Agriculture, and FAO, which continues to work to remove barriers limiting youth participation in agriculture.

The Rwanda Youth in Agribusiness Forum (RYAF), in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO Rwanda), concluded a three-day training on vertical farming on July 30, 2025. The training targeted RYAF members and brought together 39 youth agripreneurs across two cohorts. The training aimed to strengthen youth capacity in sustainable urban agriculture, with a focus on vertical farming as a climate-smart solution for food production in land-constrained and urban environments.

Participants received hands-on practical training in the design, installation, and management of vertical farming systems, as well as exposure to hydroponics and greenhouse production techniques. The training also emphasized agribusiness competitiveness, productivity enhancement, and sustainable food system development.



Participants described the training as impactful and skills-enhancing. Dieudonne Haragirimana, one of the participants said the training provided practical exposure to vertical farming as a solution for sustainable agriculture and expressed commitment to applying the knowledge gained.

Munezero Cedrick noted that the training equipped him with concrete skills to support sustainable urban agriculture and strengthen agribusiness competitiveness.

Benjamin Niyomukunzi highlighted the hands-on experience in hydroponics, vertical farming and greenhouse management as key to advancing sustainable food systems.

Donatile Mukandayisenga, founder of Dona Farm Fresh Ltd, emphasized the value of learning how to cultivate efficiently on small land areas using vertical farming techniques.

RYAF and FAO Rwanda reaffirm their commitment to empowering youth with innovative agricultural skills that support resilient food systems, job creation and agribusiness development. The training forms part of broader efforts to promote youth engagement in climate-smart agriculture and strengthen the role of young agripreneurs in transforming Rwanda's agri-food systems.



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