BOMA
RURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR PROSPERITY WITH DIGNITY

AFRICAN WILDLIFE FOUNDATION

Sustainable Outcomes and Improved Livelihoods (SOIL)

REPORT

July 2025 to June 2026



Implementation Country: KENYA

Cohort 1 has graduated. In just twelve months, 2,700 of Northern Kenya's most vulnerable pastoralist households completed the full journey from extreme poverty toward self-reliance, walking away with thriving businesses, KES 18.6 million in collective savings, and community water and land systems that will serve them for years to come. This report tells that story, and shows how these hard-won lessons are already shaping an even stronger Cohort 2.

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Executive Summary and Reflections

BOMA expresses deep appreciation to The Light Foundation for its generous investment and continued thought partnership in improving the lives of the poorest and most vulnerable women and children in last-mile communities of Northern Kenya.

The Sustainable Outcomes and Improved Livelihoods (SOIL) project, Entrepreneurship and Ecological Restoration for Improved Food Security and Child Well-being in Marsabit, Northern Kenya, empowers ultra-poor households in Africa's drylands to build food security and nutrition, climate resilience, and sustainable livelihoods. Over the five-year project period (2024 to 2029), SOIL aims to reach at least 27,000 children and 30,000 pastoralist and agro-pastoralist households, with a shared goal that 90% of participating households will be resilient, food secure, well-nourished, and capable of meeting their basic needs.

The July 2025 to June 2026 reporting period marked a significant milestone: the completion of the Cohort 1 implementation cycle in Marsabit County. The 2,700 households enrolled at the start of the cohort have now moved through the full graduation pathway, from targeting and training through grant support, mentorship, deliberate linkages and referrals to sustainable resilient interventions and exit. This report therefore presents end-of-cohort results, the assets and capacities Cohort 1 households carry beyond direct programme support, and the learnings that will shape the design and scaling of Cohort 2.



Cohort 1 closes with a strong graduation profile. Under women's economic empowerment, 2,687 women (99.5% of target) were trained, mentored, and linked to markets and financial services. All 900 Business Groups established remained active at exit, with 899 achieving at least 25% growth in business value, and 1,782 households (66%, against a 50% target) reported alternative income sources at exit. All 155 VSLAs are operational and formally registered with the Ministry of Social Services and a key sustainable pathway, having cumulatively mobilized KES 18.6 million in member savings, of which KES 5.4 million circulated as loans to meet household needs/emergencies and grow businesses. Together, these results indicate that participating households exited the cohort with the enterprises, skills, savings mechanisms, and market connections needed to sustain and grow their incomes independently. Under food security and nutrition, 2,571 caregivers (95%) were trained in climate-smart agriculture, 750 households established kitchen gardens producing eleven newly introduced indigenous vegetable varieties, and adopting households confirmed use of garden produce for home consumption, with around 100 households now selling surplus to local markets.

Community-based nutrition surveillance was established on a scale, with 1,810 children under five (99%) assessed with MUAC baselines and 55 malnourished children referred for treatment through Community Health Promoters, with notable recovery rates from malnutrition by cohort close-out. Cooking demonstrations emerged as the cohort's most effective behaviour change approach, shifting household food consumption practices, including first-time adoption of nutrient-rich foods such as Lake Victoria sardine, engaging men in household nutrition to growing and preservation of these nutritious foods. Nine of ten targeted schools operate active kitchen gardens and all ten run clubs promote nutrition, hygiene, and conservation, reaching 546 children directly and a further 4,726 through peer outreach.

Under community resilience and biodiversity, the programme leaves durable shared assets in place: rehabilitated water infrastructure serving over 2,450 households and 18,000 livestock, 51 households and 4 schools equipped with rainwater harvesting, four income-generating community tree nurseries holding over 13,000 seedlings, 27.03 acres of rangeland restored with 1,771 water-harvesting bunds, a clean energy partnership with Solar Sister Kenya that distributed 100 cookstoves and 332 solar systems while they trained local clean energy entrepreneurs, and a Community Forest Association at the final stage of formation in Hurri Hills. Because these are community-level systems rather than individual transfers, they will continue serving Cohort 1 households beyond exit while forming the resilience backbone for incoming cohorts.

Alongside these achievements, the cohort cycle underscored clear areas for improvement that will shape the next phase. Kitchen garden adoption (28%) lagged behind training coverage (95%), confirming that awareness alone does not convert to practice without sustained household-level coaching. Formal market and financial system linkages, for Business Groups and VSLAs, remain the principal gap in the graduation pathway, constrained by weak market infrastructure and limited rural financial service penetration and documentation barriers now partly resolved through completed VSLA registration. School feeding integration through PTAs, secondary business establishment, and outreach beyond the participant base also under-performed, while climate variability, water scarcity, and the failed October to December 2025 rains constrained agricultural and nature-based enterprise results. The cohort also demonstrated the need to standardize nutrition screening and to adapt monitoring tools to capture the collective, group-level activity that increasingly characterizes how participants are organized.

These experiences directly inform Cohort 2 priorities: pairing training with intensified household coaching from the outset, layered interventions like resilience designs, systematizing market and financial linkage processes, deliberately integrating Community Health Promoters within programme structures, standardizing screening protocols, front-loading school and PTA engagement against the school calendar, strengthen collaboration with key partners (government and private sector) and finalizing revised monitoring tools ahead of Cohort 2 onboarding. BOMA looks forward to carrying these learnings into the next cycle, and to continued partnership with The Light Foundation in demonstrating that ultra-poor pastoralist households can durably graduate from extreme poverty while restoring the landscapes they depend on.

2,687 Women trained & linked to markets (99.5% of target)	**KES. 18.6M** Mobilized in VSLA member savings
2,687 Women trained & linked to markets (99.5% of target)	**2,450+** Households reached by rehabilitated water infrastructure

Strategic Objective 1: 13500 (Cohort 1) children in households achieve adequate food security, nutrition, and dietary diversity

Result Area	Indicator	Target	Achieved
Outcome 1.1: Participating households practice nutrition-sensitive subsistence kitchen gardening			
Output 1.1:1: Enhance the capacity of participants to adopt resilient agriculture practices (highly productive and drought-resistant seeds, multipurpose trees, organic manure)practice nutrition-sensitive subsistence kitchen	**# of caregivers trained in climate-smart agriculture** gardening	2700	**2571 (95%)**
Output 1.1.2: Caregivers supported to establish and maintain kitchen gardens producing diverse and nutritious foods, contributing to improved household and child dietary diversity	# of caregivers coached to create kitchen gardens growing diverse, nutritious foods	2700	**750 (28%)**
Output 1.1.3: Participants linked to agricultural extension services, NGO and private sector partners, and relevant programs to access and adopt climate-smart agricultural practices and drought-resilient food production technologies.	# of participants linked to government agriculture extension workers, NGO partners, value chains, private sector partners, and other programs	2700	**648 (24%)**

Outcome 1.2: Children have improved health from better nutrition and food security			
Output 1.2.1: Children under five linked to Community Health Promoters and assessed for nutritional status using MUAC to establish baseline data for early identification and monitoring of malnutrition (27,000)	# of children (under five) with MUAC baseline	1840	**1810 (99%)**
Output 1.2.2: Community Health Promoters supported to refer children identified with malnutrition to appropriate health facilities for timely case management and treatment.	# of children under five with malnutrition cases referred to health facilities to access health services.	108	
Output 1.2.3: Women organized into VSLAs and trained on essential child nutrition, WASH, disease prevention, family planning, child rights, and household wellbeing to strengthen caregiving practices and community health resilience.	# of VSLA members who have received targeted training on nutrition and WASH.	2700	**2429 (90%)**
Outcome 1.3 Primary schools in target communities provide nutritious school meals for children			
Output 1.3.1: Kitchen Gardens Established within targeted schools.	Number of Smart Agricultural practices (kitchen Gardens, Poultry farms) established.	10 (1 each targeted school)	**9**
	Number of Smart Agricultural practices (kitchen Gardens, Poultry farms) that are still active at exit.	At least 6 established (Smart Agricultural establishments) schools	**9**

Output 1.3.2: Link to ongoing school feeding initiatives and/or mobilize caregivers through Parent Teacher Associations to prepare nutritious meals for pupils.	Number of school feeding programs successfully integrated with Parent Teacher Association (PTA) participation for the preparation of nutritious meals for pupils	10 school feeding programs across the 10 mapped/identified schools.	**2**
	Number/percentage of parents in attendance during the feeding programs **(Non-program participants**)	50% of non-participant in each school (10 schools)	**35**
	Percentage of program participants in attendance during the PTA nutritious feeding program meetings	2690 (70% of program parts). (1833 parts)	
Output 1.3.3: Collaborate with teachers to form/ use existing school clubs to promote child-centred water, hygiene, sanitation and health/nutrition awareness messaging and additional life skills for children.	Number of schools with active clubs promoting child-centred water, hygiene, sanitation, and health/nutrition awareness messaging.	**10**	**10**
	Number of trainings on water, hygiene, sanitation and nutrition offered	7 trainings/ Conservation talks as per the AWF curriculum.	**7**
	Number of children in attendance during 7 training club meetings	Number of children in attendance during 7 training club meetings	**546 (109%)**

Outcome 1.1: Participating in households practice nutrition-sensitive subsistence kitchen gardening



As Cohort 1 reached the end of its implementation cycle, the project consolidated its investment in caregivers' capacity to adopt resilient agricultural practices and establish household kitchen gardens as a pathway to improved household nutrition.

1. Climate-smart agriculture training: By cohort end, 2,571 caregivers (95% of the 2,700 target) had been reached through VSLA-based training on appropriate technologies for food production, preparation, and storage. Training covered drought-resistant production techniques, use of organic manure, and multipurpose trees, practices selected for their suitability to climate-vulnerable dryland contexts.

2. Kitchen garden adoption: 750 caregivers, representing 29% of those trained and 28% of the overall target of 2,700, established nutrition-sensitive kitchen gardens producing diverse, nutritious foods over the cohort period. End-of-cohort follow-up confirmed that all adopting households are using their garden produce for home consumption, and approximately 100 households across several locations are now selling surplus produce to local markets.

3.Dietary diversification: Eleven indigenous vegetable varieties, including cowpea, jute mallow, African nightshade, purslane, pumpkin, sweet potato leaves, spider plant, and amaranth – were introduced and are being grown and harvested for household consumption.

4. Extension linkages: 648 participants (24% of the 2,700 target) were linked to government agricultural extension services, NGO partners, private sector actors, and complementary program over the cohort cycle, expanding access to climate-smart technologies, inputs, and technical guidance. From the context of the project implementation area, not all households and regions are suitable for agricultural activities and hence the extension services are limited to specific locations. For livestock, the household heads and males use traditional herbs to treat livestock as opposed to expected utilization of the vet extension services. Through the program, there is some progress in adoption of government extension vet services and eventually early adopters will influence the other pastoralist communities. These relationships are external to the program and therefore remain available to households beyond exit.



Cohort 1 closes with near-complete training coverage but a substantial gap between training (95%) and adoption (28%). This is the clearest lesson this outcome carries into the next cycle: awareness-raising alone does not convert to practice in this context, and Cohort 2 will pair training with intensified household-level coaching, localized water harvesting and grey water innovations and follow-up from the outset to accelerate and sustain adoption.

Emerging Results and Household Level Change

Adoption was strongest in locations with active mentorship and consistent household follow-up, notably Hurri Hills, Balesa, and Loyangalani, where participants embraced gardening at both household and group level, a pattern that directly validates the coaching-intensive approach planned for Cohort 2. Households consuming their own vegetables report reduced food expenditure, freeing income for savings for other priorities such as children's clothing, health and school levies. The gardens also generated unanticipated income opportunities by cohort close. In Loyangalani, one participant now supplies indigenous vegetables to the sub-county Nutrition Department alongside community sales, earning KES 600 to 800 per week. In Balesa, a participant specializing in vitamin A-rich, orange-fleshed sweet potato earns KES 900 to 1,500 per week from community sales. The Ministry of Health has additionally begun rolling out cooking demonstrations for participants, reinforcing the nutrition value of the new crops. These cases demonstrate that where kitchen gardens are sustained, they function simultaneously as a source of dietary diversity and household income, which is precisely the kind of self-reliant food production the graduation model aims to leave at exit.

Participants explained how kitchen gardens improved household food access and, in some cases, created small income opportunities. *"My kitchen garden has changed what my family eats. I grow spinach, amaranthus, pumpkin and cowpeas right outside my door. I no longer buy vegetables, and I sometimes sell the surplus to my neighbours."*— SOIL participant



Participants from the Samaki Business Group tending to their kitchen garden in Loiyangalani

Factors Constraining Wider Adoption



BOMA Training Officer Nelson Nyabola leads participants in the hands-on preparation of traditional vegetables.

The adoption shortfall is attributable to a combination of contextual and capacity factors, each of which informs the design of the next cohort cycle:

- Water scarcity and harsh climatic conditions
- Limited access to agricultural inputs
- Competing household priorities
- Limited production knowledge across a wider range of crops
- Cultural barriers, as vegetables, are traditionally regarded in some pastoralist communities as livestock feed rather than human food
- The need for sustained household-level mentorship and follow-up throughout the cohort cycle, not only at training

As Cohort 1 reached the end of its implementation cycle, the project consolidated community-based nutrition and health services for children under five, comprising early malnutrition screening, referral to treatment, and caregiver capacity strengthening, working in close collaboration with Community Health Promoters (CHPs) and government health facilities.

Nutrition Surveillance and Referral

1. Early identification: By cohort end, 1,810 children under five (99% of the 1,840 target) had been assessed and had MUAC baseline data recorded, establishing strong community-level nutrition surveillance and early detection of children at risk of malnutrition across Cohort 1 households.

2. Referral and treatment: 55 children identified with malnutrition were referred through Community Health Promoters (CHPs) to health facilities for case management and treatment over the cohort period, against a target of 108. Referral numbers are caseload-dependent: the target assumed a higher incidence of malnutrition among screened children than was identified. End-of-cohort follow-up confirmed that referred children accessed services, with households further supported by their VSLAs to sustain care, and several children were recorded as having recovered by cohort close. These results point to the value of functional referral pathways and close collaboration between programme mentors, CHPs, and government health services in addressing acute malnutrition.

3. The cohort experienced some inconsistencies in the regularity of screening across locations, which limited the programme's ability to track malnutrition trends over the cohort cycle. Standardized screening frequency and record-keeping will be embedded in Cohort 2 from the outset.

Caregiver capacity Strengthening

1. Nutrition and WASH training: By exit, 2,429 VSLA members (90% of the 2,700 target) had received targeted training on child nutrition, WASH, disease prevention, family planning, child rights, and household wellbeing, confirming the effectiveness of VSLAs as platforms for delivering health and nutrition content at scale across the cohort.
Participants described a shift from simply having food to paying greater attention to nutritional quality and children's needs. *"Through the different trainings, we came to understand that it is not only about having food, but also about eating nutritious food. Nowadays, we pay more attention to providing healthier meals and to what children need for their growth."*— SOIL participant.

2. Cooking demonstrations: 1,556 participants (58% of target) were trained in food preparation and preservation skills through practical cooking demonstrations, one of the cohort's most effective social and behaviour change (SBC) approaches. Household follow-up after training confirmed adoption of the new skills and regular consumption of indigenous vegetables, reducing reliance on purchased exotic vegetables and easing household food expenditure. Two participants from Hurri Hills emerged as community champions, themselves leading a cooking demonstration for teachers and learners at Hurri Hills Primary School, the kind of locally owned capacity the graduation model is designed to leave behind at exit.

3.Engaging men and households: To broaden household-level adoption, 40 male household members and children in Qorka and Barambate participated in cooking demonstrations. In subsequent monthly meetings, 10 male participants confirmed they had begun growing and consuming indigenous vegetables and were actively supporting their spouses in applying the new food preparation skills, an encouraging sign of household food norms shifting durably as the cohort exits.

Training content covered maternal, infant, and adolescent nutrition; food preparation and dietary diversity; food safety, preservation, and appropriate technologies; WASH; and gender and household wellbeing.

Key Observations and Emerging Learning



By the close of Cohort 1, community-based screening, referral, and caregiver training were functioning as an increasingly coherent system, with strengthened coordination between communities, CHPs, and health facilities positioned to outlast direct programme support. The cooking demonstration approach proved particularly powerful in shifting food attitudes. A notable example was the introduction of Lake Victoria sardine (omena), a low-cost food rich in protein, calcium, and omega-3 fatty acids, which participants initially resisted. Through practical demonstrations that improved preparation and taste, participants tried the food for the first time and responded positively; eight households in North Horr and Qorka subsequently purchased sardines for home consumption, and traders in Malabot expressed interest in stocking them commercially. This illustrates how well-designed, hands-on SBC approaches can overcome entrenched food taboos and expand dietary diversity, a lesson that will directly shape the SBC design for Cohort 2.

Outcome 3: Primary Schools In Target Communities Provide Nutritious School Meals For Children



School Based Food Production

The project closed the cohort period with strong results in school-based climate-smart agriculture. Nine of the ten targeted schools operate active kitchen gardens, already exceeding the end-of-project target of six active establishments, producing vegetables and drought-resilient crops such as green grams and cowpeas that supplement school feeding. The gardens double as living classrooms: learners participated directly in land preparation, planting, mulching, watering, and crop management, building practical agricultural skills and nutrition awareness. Encouragingly, this learning is already extending beyond the school gate, with two learners from Loglogo and Merille comprehensive schools independently starting poultry-keeping at home. Because the gardens are embedded in school routines and managed with teachers and learners, they are well positioned to remain active beyond Cohort 1.

School Feeding and PTA Engagement

Progress on integrating school feeding with Parent Teacher Association (PTA) engagement remained limited, and this closes as the weakest-performing area under this outcome for Cohort 1. Two of the ten targeted schools (Arapal and Hurri Hills) held PTA meetings on school feeding during the second school term, reaching 35 non-participant parents and 17 programme participants, well below the attendance targets. The shortfall reflects late engagement of PTAs relative to the school calendar within the cohort cycle. The assets built this cohort, namely established school gardens and rising community awareness, carried forward, and PTA mobilization will be scheduled against the school calendar from the very start of the Cohort 2 cycle to recover this ground.

School Clubs and Health, Nutrition, and Environmental Education

School clubs delivered strong results by cohort end. Active clubs are operational in all ten targeted schools (with environmental clubs in nine), promoting child-centered messaging on nutrition, hygiene, sanitation, environmental conservation, and climate-smart agriculture. All seven planned trainings under the AWF curriculum were delivered, directly reaching 546 children against a target of 500 (109%). Club members then became multipliers, extending awareness to a further 4,726 learners through school assemblies. Environmental learning tours across the ten schools gave learners practical exposure to agroforestry, sustainable land use, kitchen gardening, and water conservation. At Hurri Hills Comprehensive School, an exercise to identify and document indigenous crops, paired with a cooking demonstration, reached 142 learners and 13 teaching and non-teaching staff, building knowledge of locally available but under-utilized nutritious crops.



Pupils from the Arapal Primary School Environmental Club with their patron in the school garden.

Key Learnings From Cohort 1

1. Training and mentorship of teachers, patrons, and headteachers proved the single strongest accelerator of school-based nutrition and conservation activity, and this investment should front-load the Cohort 2 school engagement cycle.

2. Practical, hands-on approaches such as gardens, cooking demonstrations, and learning tours drove higher participation, retention, and ownership than classroom messaging alone.

3. School clubs are sustainable, low-cost channels for scaling nutrition and conservation awareness into households and communities, with learners acting as change agents; they represent a durable asset that persists beyond the cohort.

4. Late engagement of PTAs slowed integration of community-supported school feeding; for Cohort 2, PTA mobilization will be planned against the school calendar from the first term.



Strategic Objective 2: Women's Economic Empowerment And Household Resilience

The SOIL programme made strong progress toward Strategic Objective 2, which aims to support 2,700 women (Cohort 1) to apply entrepreneurship and livelihood skills to establish diversified and profitable micro-enterprises, improve household incomes, support children's wellbeing, and graduate households out of extreme poverty.

Overall, implementation demonstrated significant achievements in entrepreneurship training, business establishment, financial inclusion, and business growth among participating women. Results were strengthened through a combination of skills development, market linkages, grant support, VSLA strengthening, and ongoing coaching and mentorship, contributing to increased household resilience and livelihood diversification.

Strategic Objective 2: 5,400 women have used entrepreneurship skills to start and run diversified profitable micro-enterprises, increase incomes streams for children wellbeing and graduate their households out of extreme poverty.			
Outcome 2.1 Women's capacity in entrepreneurship enhanced			
Result Area	**Indicator**	**Target**	**Achieved**
Output 2.1.1: Women trained and mentored in entrepreneurship and livelihood skills to enhance economic empowerment and self-reliance.	# of women trained and mentored in entrepreneurship and livelihood	2700	**2687(99.5%)- Deaths and migration**
Output 2.1.2: Women entrepreneurs linked to market opportunities and financial services to support business growth and financial inclusion	# of women entrepreneurs linked to markets and financial products	2,700	**2,687(99.5%)**

Output 2.1.3: Bio-enterprise opportunities—including herbal plants, gums, and resins—identified and mapped in collaboration with NMK to support sustainable natural resource-based livelihoods.	Number of NTFPs (Non Timber Forest Products) identified and promoted by the project.	3 value chains identified and promoted	**3**
	Number of entrepreneurs linked NTFPs.	180 (70%).	**180**
	Number of participants with NTFPs enterprises.	7% (180 participants)	**135 (75%)**
Output 2.1.4: Women coached to identify and establish diversified income-generating activities to improve household economic resilience.	% of households with alternative income sources at exit	(50%) 1350	**1,782 (132%)**
	# of Business Groups who have established a secondary business because of project support	(50%) 450	**15 (3%)**
Outcome 2.2 Women entrepreneurs establish businesses that benefit their households and improve their children's wellbeing			
Output 2.2.1: Women supported to co-create viable business concepts and develop tailored business plans for enterprise development.	# of Business Groups who have established a secondary business because of project support	900	**900(100%)**

Output 2.2.2: Market assessment insights on child well-being used to inform the development of innovative and inclusive women-led enterprises across diverse value chains.	**#** Actioned recommendations from the market assessment	1	**1**
	# of enterprises (VSLAs, Bgs) established or expanded based on market assessment recommendations focused on children's well-being	450	**900**
Output 2.2.3: Women received cash grants to operationalize newly developed enterprises and stimulate local economic activity.	**#** of women-led nature-based businesses designed. focused on children's well-being	5	**4**
	% of Bgs that are active at exit		**900 (100%)**
	% of Bgs whose Business Value has grown by 25% (of the total grant) at exit	75% (675)	**899 (100%)**
	# of business groups established.	900	**900**
Output 2.2.4: Enterprises trained to produce and supply diverse, nutritious foods to improve household access to healthy dietary options.	# of Business groups stocking and selling nutritious food	(50%) 450	**541(120%)**

Output 2.2.5: Women organized into business groups or cooperatives to facilitate produce aggregation, market access, financial inclusion, and value addition.	# of Business groups linked to markets, formal financial service providers and value chain development support.	900	**156 (17%)**
Outcome 2.3 Women have access to and actively use savings and credit to expand their businesses and support their family needs			
Output 2.3.1: Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) established or strengthened to promote collective savings, access to credit, and financial resilience at the household level	# of VSLAs formed	155	**155**
Output 2.3.2: VSLAs trained on financial literacy, emphasizing purposeful saving and responsible borrowing to meet household needs such as children's education, health, nutrition, and emergency preparedness.	# of women trained in children's education, health, nutrition, and emergency preparedness.	2700	**2687(99/5%)**
Output 2.3.3: VSLAs linked to formal financial institutions to expand access to larger credit facilities and promote long-term financial inclusion.	# VSLA of groups linked to markets, formal financial service providers and value chain development support.	155	**155**

Outcome 2.1: Women's Capacity In Entrepreneurship Enhanced.



The project closed the cohort with near-complete achievement in strengthening women's entrepreneurial and livelihood capacities.

Entrepreneurship training and mentorship: By cohort end, 2,687 women (99.5% of the 2,700 target) had been trained and mentored in entrepreneurship and livelihood skills. The small shortfall reflects natural attrition through deaths and migration over the cohort cycle. Sustained mentorship helped participants translate training into working enterprises throughout the period.

Market and financial linkages: The same 2,687 women (99.5% of target) were linked to market opportunities, financial services, business support systems, and value chains, meaning every woman who completed the training pathway exited with active market and financial connections in place, positioning them to continue trading beyond direct programme support.

Income diversification: 1,782 households (132% of the target of 1,350, equivalent to 66% of all Cohort 1 households against a 50% target) reported alternative income sources at exit. This is a key graduation outcome, demonstrating reduced reliance on single income streams and materially stronger household economic resilience at cohort close.

Women illustrated how livelihood diversification expanded their economic roles and sources of income.*"I am a small businesswoman. I diversified my income generating activities through livestock business, operating a small shop, selling vegetables, and making and selling traditional Samburu and Rendille belts."* — SOIL participant.

Secondary business establishment: 15 Business Groups (3% against a target of 450) established secondary businesses through project support. The indicator assumed that BG participants will start secondary businesses as a group but we learned that they prefer to start as individuals so that other family members can learn and participate in these secondary businesses. While 15 BGs diversified income individually, expansion into additional group enterprises remained constrained by limited capital, thin local markets and environmental conditions. Enhanced targeted Business Group mentorship and market analysis will be built into the next cohort cycle to address this. In collaboration with AWF and the National Museums of Kenya, the project identified and promoted three Non-Timber Forest Product (NTFP) value chains as sustainable nature-based livelihoods: gums and resins in Laisamis, beekeeping in Hurri Hills, and beadwork in Mt. Kulal. Direct support focused on the 180 participants targeted for active NTFP enterprise engagement, of whom 135 (75%) were engaged by cohort end, while broader awareness, demonstration, and market engagement activities reached participants and non-participants across the three landscapes. In Hurri Hills, positive business results among 15 trained bee-keepers generated community demand for the enterprise. Four additional VSLAs (100 partici-pants) from Guba and Qonchora villages were identified for expansion, and the project procured 77 Langstroth beehives and associated tools, bringing the number of participants supported in the beekeeping value chain to 63 following installation and training. In Mt. Kulal, the Shangayo Self-Help beadwork group generated KES 26,500 (approximately USD 205) during the period from the sale of key holders, bracelets, and belts, with earnings supporting household needs and reinvestment in materials.

Gum and resin production was constrained by the failed October to December 2025 rains and off-season conditions. Nonetheless, the Ntumo village group aggregated and sold 58.5 kg of gum arabica, earning KES 15,210 (approximately USD 118) for 15 women, and a further 60 kg of black frankincense, sold at KES 200 per kilo to Merille Catholic Church on behalf of Kitale Dio-cese for KES 12,000 (approximately USD 93). To secure future supply, groups such as the Nalotu Tree Nursery Self-Help Group began establishing seedlings of gum and resin producing trees near homesteads, linking enterprise development directly to environmental restoration.

Together these results leave a functioning foundation of nature-based enterprises at cohort close, with clear entry points for scale-up in the next cycle

Outcome 2.2: Women entrepreneurs establish businesses that benefit their households and improve children's wellbeing

This outcome closes as one of the strongest areas of Cohort 1 performance, supported by structured grant processes and continuous business coaching and mentorship.

1.Business establishment: All 900 Jump Grant applications were completed, and all 900 Business Groups were established and remained active at exit, representing 100% achievement against both the establishment target and the 80% activity-at-exit target. High survival rates at exit are a central marker of graduation model success.

2.Business growth: 882 Business Groups (98%) achieved at least 25% growth in business value relative to the total grant amount at exit, substantially exceeding the 75% target and confirming effective grant utilisation and genuine enterprise growth.

3.Nutrition-sensitive enterprise: 541 Business Groups (60%) were stocking and selling nutritious foods at cohort end, against a target of 50%. This reflects deliberate integration of nutrition objectives into enterprise coaching and directly improves household access to nutritious foods in remote markets.

4.Market and financial linkage: 156 Business Groups (17% against a target of 900) were linked to markets, formal financial service providers, and value chain development support. This closes as the principal gap under this outcome and signals the need for stronger market systems engagement and commercial mentorship, including buyer negotiation and financial integration, in the next cycle.

Outcome 2.3: Women have access to and actively use Savings And Credit



The project consolidated substantial gains in community savings systems and financial literacy over the cohort cycle.

1. VSLA performance: All 155 targeted VSLAs were formed and remained operational at cohort end. Through routine savings, participants cumulatively saved KES 18,607,822, of which KES 5,407,932 was distributed as loans, enabling members to meet household needs and respond to emergencies. The VSLAs functioned as platforms for savings mobilisation, credit access, emergency preparedness, and household financial resilience.

2. Financial literacy: 2,429 women (90% of target) received training on financial literacy, children's education, health, nutrition, and emergency preparedness, with mentorship helping translate knowledge into improved savings discipline and household financial decision-making.

3. Institutional registration: All 155 VSLAs (100%) completed registration with the Ministry of Social Services, securing registration cards and certificates. Formal registration is a durable asset that outlasts the cohort and opens pathways to partnerships, financial services, and market opportunities.

4. Formal financial inclusion: Only 12 VSLAs (8% against a target of 155) were linked to formal financial institutions by cohort end. Persistent barriers include limited financial readiness, documentation requirements, low institutional penetration, and limited rural financial service coverage. With registration now complete across all groups, the principal documentation barrier has been removed, and accelerating formal linkages will be an early priority in the next cycle. Beyond formal linkages, the programme strengthened household resilience through strategic connections to value chains and services. Participants accessed opportunities in beadwork, poultry, nature-based livelihoods, and livestock trade. In Kalacha, the Wolqabanna VSLA was linked to the Ministry of Agriculture and received 50 metres of piping to improve water access for its group garden. Through linkage to World Vision drought emergency funds, 59 VSLA members across four locations received a total of KES 590,000, cushioning households against drought shocks. Engagement with mobile wholesalers also improved the availability and transport of fresh groceries, enabling Lishe Bora participants to consistently stock nutritious foods and contributing to improved household dietary diversity.

Participants explained how savings and small loans helped households meet urgent needs while protecting productive assets. *"Before joining the VSLA, whenever we faced food shortages or another emergency, we often had to sell livestock, sometimes at very low prices. Now, through our monthly savings and access to small loans from the group, we can meet urgent needs without immediately selling our animals."*— SOIL participant.

Focus Group Discussions with VSLAs on Training Delivery

Ten VSLAs across three locations were visited to gather participants' feedback on the training and support delivered at both VSLA and business group levels, including content, delivery methodology, timing and delivery channels. All VSLAs visited confirmed that the sessions were beneficial and that no topic should be removed, with most participants identifying cooking demonstrations and kitchen gardening as the most impactful trainings received. Regarding session length, eight of the ten VSLAs indicated that most sessions were too long and recommended shorter sessions, greater use of visual aids and more practical delivery approaches instead of lecture-based methods. The VSLAs had also received share-out training, which they found somewhat complicated; as a result, each VSLA developed its own share-out approach and timeline. Participants' inputs and suggestions were documented and will inform the redesign of training delivery for the second cohort, with particular attention to simplifying and standardizing share-out guidance.



Overall Performance Assessment

Cohort 1 closes with strong performance under Strategic Objective 2 in entrepreneurship and livelihood training, business establishment and survival, business value growth, household income diversification, and VSLA strengthening. The project built durable entrepreneurial capacity and left in place 900 active enterprises, 155 registered savings groups, and diversified household income streams that contribute directly to household wellbeing and resilience. Particularly notable achievements include near-universal training coverage, 100% business activity at exit, 98% of groups achieving business value growth, and majority engagement in nutrition-sensitive enterprise. The weaker performance areas, namely market linkage development, formal financial inclusion, secondary business establishment, and the pace of nature-based enterprise scaling, share a common thread: they depend on connecting community-level enterprises to external systems and actors. For the next cycle, the programme will prioritise market systems strengthening, formal financial service access building on completed VSLA registration, and more commercially oriented enterprise coaching to support long-term sustainability and expansion.

Strategic Objective 3: Increased Community Resilience and Biodiversity

Strategic Objective 3 seeks to strengthen community resilience to climate-related shocks while promoting sustainable biodiversity management through community awareness, natural resource management, environmental restoration, climate-smart technologies, and strengthened partnerships with local stakeholders. Unlike the household-level graduation pathway, this objective operates at landscape and community level over the full project period. As Cohort 1 closed its implementation cycle, the programme established strong foundations across water infrastructure, ecosystem restoration, clean energy access, and community governance structures, positioning these systems to serve both exiting Cohort 1 households and incoming cohorts. Several activities remain at early implementation stages, with some targets pending joint finalization with AWF and government stakeholders.



Half moon bund in Marsabit County for harvesting rainwater, stopping soil erosion, and restoring the degraded land

Strategic Objective 3: Increased Community Resilience and Biodiversity			
Outcome 3.1 Increased Community Resilience			
Result Area	**Indicator**	**Target**	**Achieved**
Output 3.1.1: Community members reached through outreach activities increasing awareness of extreme weather risks and impacts on natural resources	Number of awareness weather risk community meetings held.	100 (community groups/meetings) 500 for the entire project	**97**
	Number of community members reached with awareness raising messages (Nonparticipants).	3,500	**392**
	Percentage/Number of project participants attending/present during community meetings.	At least 80% of (2690 total participants)	**2166**
Output 3.1.2: School children engaged through targeted outreach sessions.	Number of school going children reached the target schools	500 Learners (50 members per school **from clubs**- 10 school) Number of topics per Learner (What is the minimum threshold per participant?)	**546 (109%)**
	Number of schools reached with outreach messages	10 schools	**10**

Output 3.1.5: Water infrastructure upgraded or constructed to increase reliable access for domestic use, livestock, and irrigation.	Number of community water points rehabilitated by the project	3 water points, 1 per region (Lais-amis, Mt Kulal and Hurri Hills)	**2**
	Number of community water points rehabilitated by the project	30 Hhs yr1, 30 Hhs yr 2 (60 Hhs) Chrt 1	**2450**
	Number of institutions (schools) accessing water to support club activities (Kitchen activities, Poultry farming, Fruit trees)		**4**
	Number of assessment report	2 Assessment reports on water infrastructure and upgrading	**2**
Output 3.1.6: Demonstrations of energy-efficient cooking technologies conducted to promote adoption of cleaner and fuel-saving	Number of participants **trained** in the use of efficient cooking methods. **cooking stoves**	174(84 yr1)	**100**
	Number of participants trained in the use of efficient fuel options. (Solar system)	258(120 yr1)	**332**
	Number of participants who received the **cooking stoves.**	109	**100**
	Number of participants who received the **solar system.**	324	**332**
	Number of local cook stove fabricators (ToTs) trained	9	**0**

Output 3.1.7: Communities connected with private sector providers to facilitate a ccess to affordable clean cooking technologies	Number of partnerships with private sector providers identified and partnered with	2	**1**
	Number of house-holds linked to private sectors to enable them access clean cooking solutions	900	**432**
Outcome 3.2 Community structures are strengthened to manage biodiversity			
Output 3.2.1: Communities engaged to document and integrate traditional knowledge and practices into natural resource management to enhance productivity and nutritious food availability. cooking methods	Number of community engagement initiatives that effectively incorporate traditional ecological knowledge into ecosystem restoration	6	**8**
	Number of tree nurseries established	4	**4**
Output 3.2.2: Fruit tree planted through preservation initiatives promoted to improve household nutrition and vitamin intake.	Number of acres under fruit trees planted	500 fruit trees **total** 250 fruit trees per year	**500**
	Number of farmers engaged in fruit trees planting	100 farmers total 50 farmers per year	**100**
Output 3.2.3: Community groups trained in crop rotation and food diversification practices to strengthen livelihood resilience and nutrition	Number of community group participants trained on best agricultural practices/Agro Forestry	450	**450**
	Number of Acres under agro-forestry	100 acres project 5-year target	**50**

Output 3.2.4: Land restoration interventions implemented to generate alternative income streams and supply essential agricultural	Number of community-led land restoration initiatives rolled out for reseeding	6 Sites	**8**
	Number of community members who are members of the CFAs (Sensitized on CFA roles)	TBD Approx 300 but to be communicated on the final number	**17**
	Number of Forest Management plan developed.	1	**0**
	Number of forest restoration activities conducted	1	**0**



Outcome 3.1: Increased Community Resilience



Community awareness on climate risks and natural resources (Output 3.1.1). By cohort end, 97 community outreach meetings (97% of the 100 annual target) were conducted across Hurri Hills, Laisamis, and Mt. Kulal, reaching 2,558 community members with sensitization on climate change impacts and adaptation, sustainable natural resource use, early warning and response systems, and food security and nutrition linkages. Participation among project participants was strong, with 2,166 attending against a target of at least 80% of the 2,690 total participants, meaning Cohort 1 households exited with direct exposure to climate risk and adaptation messaging. Outreach to non-participants reached 392 against a target of 3,500, and widening community-level reach beyond the participant base will be a deliberate focus of the next cycle. In Hurri Hills, 406 households received polythene tubes to support indigenous tree seedling production. Early behavioral change is already visible: communities have begun advocating for grazing management, households are planting trees for food and nutrition, and community members participated actively in conservation awareness events, including songs and poems performed during the International Day of Forests.

School-based climate and conservation education (Output 3.1.2) All 10 targeted schools were reached, with 546 learners (109% of the 500 target) engaged through environmental learning tours and school-based training on agroforestry, climate-smart agriculture, vegetable production and preservation, and water conservation and hygiene. Schools are actively implementing conservation practices, including kitchen gardens, tree planting, and soil and water conservation structures, embedding environmental stewardship in institutions that will continue serving the community across cohort cycles.

Natural resource assessment and preparedness materials (Outputs 3.1.3 and 3.1.4) Two planned activities did not advance during the period: the natural resource assessment report and action recommendations were not finalized, and no IEC materials were developed or distributed, pending implementation planning and agreement of targets between AWF and BOMA. Both are prioritized for early completion in the next cycle so that assessment findings can inform restoration planning and awareness materials can support the widened community outreach noted above.

Water infrastructure development (Output 3.1.5). Water access recorded some of the strongest resilience results of the cohort period. Two of the three targeted community water points were rehabilitated and are functional, with water pans now supporting approximately 2,450 households and 18,000 livestock in one catchment and a further 1,000 households and 2,000 livestock in others. At household level, 51 households (against a Cohort 1 target of 60) were supported with rooftop rainwater harvesting systems, with functional systems collecting approximately 9,000 litres at 90% capacity. Four schools (meeting the target of 4 of 10 identified) were equipped with functional rainwater harvesting systems supporting school club activities including kitchen gardens and poultry. A dam liner system collected 212,940 litres, sustaining herbal nursery operations. Both planned water infrastructure assessment reports were completed. Looking ahead, 13 additional VSLAs comprising 261 households have been identified for the next phase, with infrastructure works commencing towards the end of the reporting year. These are shared community assets that will continue serving Cohort 1 households after exit while extending benefits to incoming cohorts.

The community explained how improved water access reduced daily burdens and supported domestic and livestock needs. *"Water harvesting systems and water pans have saved women and children hours of walking during dry spells. We now have water near the homestead for livestock and domestic use."*— SOIL participant.

Clean energy access and enterprise (Outputs 3.1.6 and 3.1.7). Implementation was launched through a formal partnership with Solar Sister Kenya Ltd, which distributed 100 energy-saving cookstoves and 332 solar systems, training all recipients in their use. Solar system distribution exceeded its target of 324, while cookstove distribution reached 100 against a target of 109, and training of local cookstove fabricators (9 targeted) had not yet commenced by cohort end. Beyond distribution, the partnership seeded a locally owned clean energy market. Thirty-nine participants interested in clean energy entrepreneurship (13 from Hurri Hills, 20 from Mt. Kulal, and 6 from Laisamis) were linked to Solar Sister for business support, with the 20 Mt. Kulal participants completing training in clean energy business development. Each trainee received branded promotional materials and a starter kit of seven solar lighting units, one energy-saving firewood cookstove, and one charcoal cookstove, supplied on credit. Participants sell the technologies within their communities, retain the profit, and repay the stock value to Solar Sister, creating self-sustaining local clean energy entrepreneurs whose businesses will outlast the cohort cycle. In total, 432 households were linked to private sector clean cooking solutions against a target of 900, and a second private sector partnership (target of 2) will be pursued in the next cycle to close this gap.

Outcome 3.2: Community Structures Strengthened To Manage Biodiversity



Traditional knowledge and tree nurseries (Output 3.2.1) Eight community engagement initiatives incorporating traditional ecological knowledge into ecosystem restoration were delivered, exceeding the target of six. All four targeted tree nurseries were established and are functional: the Baliti group with 10,000 seedlings, Arapal with 2,225, Badha Hurri Herbal Group with 578 seedlings spanning 11 indigenous medicinal tree species, and Nalotu with 291. Indigenous knowledge is embedded in nursery practice, including greywater irrigation and homestead-based nurseries for medicinal and gum-resin trees. The nurseries are already income-generating, with the Baliti group earning KES 250,000 and Arapal KES 6,350, demonstrating that conservation infrastructure can simultaneously function as a nature-based enterprise.

Fruit trees, agroforestry, and food diversification (Outputs 3.2.2 and 3.2.3) All 500 targeted fruit tree seedlings (mango, pawpaw, and orange) were distributed to participant households, schools, and tree nursery groups, engaging the full target of 100 farmers, with a 60% survival rate contributing to household nutrition and dietary diversification. A further 259 fodder tree seedlings (Moringa and Leucaena) were distributed to 450 trained participants (305 participants and 145 non-participants) following sensitization on agroforestry, intercropping, and soil and crop diversification, with previously distributed seedlings recording a 90% survival rate. An additional 2,500 fodder seedlings supported restoration during the International Day of Forests. Fifty of the 100 acres targeted under agroforestry over the five-year project period are now established, keeping this indicator on track at the project midpoint.

Land restoration (Output 3.2.4) Community-led restoration exceeded its site and structure targets, with 8 restoration initiatives rolled out against a target of 6 and 1,771 semi-circular bunds constructed against a target of 1,625, engaging 296 community workers and providing cash-for-work income alongside ecological restoration. A total of 20.63 acres were restored across three sites, with a further 6.4 acres newly added at Kutur and Nachapaa, and reseeding conducted with 90 kg of Eragrostis superba grass seed. Acreage restored remains well below the 150-acre target, reflecting the early stage of site-level works relative to structure construction; with bunds now in place and community work teams established, acreage conversion is expected to accelerate in the next cycle.

Community Forest Association formation (Output 3.2.5) The establishment of the Hurri Hills Community Forest Association advanced to its final stages in collaboration with the Kenya Forest Service and county government. Seventeen community representatives were engaged, forest user groups were identified, and community sensitisation was conducted across target villages, culminating in the election of village-level user group leaders, management committee members, and executive officials. To strengthen the newly elected leadership, 16 committee members (12 men and 4 women) received training on group dynamics, governance, constitution and by-law development, leadership roles, and institutional management. The Participatory Forest Management Plan (PFMP) roadmap was drafted and terms of reference agreed among AWF, KFS, county government, and communities. The next cycle will focus on formal CFA registration and development of the PFMP to guide the sustainable use and conservation of Hurri Hills Forest, establishing permanent community governance over the forest resource.

Overall performance assessment

Strategic Objective 3 closes the cohort period with durable community-level assets in place: rehabilitated water infrastructure serving over 1,400 households and 18,000 livestock, four income-generating tree nurseries holding over 13,000 seedlings, restored and reseeded rangeland with 1,771 water-harvesting bunds, a clean energy distribution network anchored by trained local entrepreneurs, and a Community Forest Association at the final stage of formation. Because these are shared systems rather than individual transfers, they will continue benefiting Cohort 1 households beyond exit while forming the resilience backbone for incoming cohorts. Areas requiring attention in the next cycle are clearly identified: completing the natural resource assessment and IEC materials, widening outreach beyond the participant base, finalizing the third community water point, commencing cookstove fabricator training, securing a second private sector energy partnership, accelerating restoration acreage, and completing CFA registration and the PFMP. These carry-forward actions are concentrated in activities dependent on partner coordination and multi-year timelines rather than community uptake, which has been consistently strong.

Programme sustainability strategy

As part of ensuring the SOIL programme interventions are sustained beyond the project period, the month of June being the last of month of mentorship and monitoring. The focus shifted to engaging participants and key stakeholders on exit strategies; this is to ensure successful and accountable close-out by validating completion of all programme deliverables, documenting results and lesson learnt, strengthening sustainability mechanism through smooth transition to community and government structures. Participants exit meetings were conducted at VSLAs level with key messaging on participants preparedness beyond the project cycle, this included training participants on VSLAs operation post programme cycle, strengthening linkages opportunities through ensuring all VSLAs are registered to formally engage, assessing the level of community preparedness to manage and own key community resilience interventions with level of support needed. These strategies have been documented with key recommendations to ensure continuity and sustainability.

Key Program Learnings



The close of Cohort 1 provided an important opportunity to consolidate learning generated through implementation, field learning visits, learning workshop, and mixed endline assessment. These processes enabled the program to examine how changes occurred, the conditions under which different approaches worked, and what these insights mean for the design and delivery of Cohort 2. Six learnings stand out, each with direct implications for Cohort 2

1. Practical testing and visible household benefits were the bridge between nutrition knowledge and sustained practice. Evidence from Cohort 1 showed that practical experience made nutrition and food production messages more believable and relevant than information alone. Kitchen gardens demonstrated that nutritious vegetables could be produced locally, while subsequent cooking demonstrations strengthened households' ability and willingness to prepare and consume foods they had already grown. Nutrition and male engagement sessions similarly became more meaningful where families applied the learning through poultry keeping, egg consumption and joint decisions about children's and household diets. The learning is therefore not simply that demonstrations are effective, but that behaviour changes deepened when households moved from awareness to practical testing, visible benefit and repeated use. Cohort 2 will organize behaviour change support around this progression and assess success through sustained household practice rather than training attendance alone.

2. Caregiver agency enabled nutrition awareness to translate into earlier screening and care seeking. Cohort 1 showed that nutrition learning shaped household food practices and influenced how caregivers responded when they noticed changes in a child's condition. The Family MUAC experience demonstrated that caregivers who recognized warning signs and had access to a simple screening tool could initiate a check and seek confirmation from a Community Health Promoter rather than waiting for routine outreach or visible deterioration. Nutrition awareness therefore became actionable when caregivers had the confidence, practical means and accessible support required to respond. Cohort 2 will strengthen caregiver-initiated identification and establish standardized screening protocols, schedules and record keeping to consistently document screening, CHP assessment and referral.

3. Women's economic gains translated into child and household wellbeing when resources were timely and women could influence their use. Cohort 1 participants described using enterprise income, savings and credit to purchase food and essential household items, meet school expenses, respond to illness and manage emergencies. The evidence showed that business growth did not automatically translate into similar household benefits. The pathway was shaped by the reliability of income, whether resources were available when needs arose, women's access to and influence over their use, and household decisions about resource allocation. Cohort 2 will therefore examine how women's economic gains contribute to food access, education, healthcare and other household priorities alongside enterprise performance and income diversification.

4. VSLAs functioned as household resilience infrastructure. Cohort 1 participants experienced VSLAs as locally controlled systems through which they could access resources during food shortages, health needs, school expenses, business demands and other shocks. This reduced reliance on distress selling of livestock and helped households protect productive assets during difficult periods. Some groups also used pooled resources for collective livelihood activities and reinvested the proceeds into the group fund, extending their contribution beyond individual saving and borrowing. The value of VSLAs therefore lay in the combination of accessibility, flexibility, trust and collective action and could not be fully understood through savings and loan totals alone. Cohort 2 will build on this wider function and assess how VSLAs contribute to consumption smoothing, emergency response, productive investment, protection of household assets and collective livelihood activity.

5. Commercial viability depended on functioning market relationships and continuing technical support systems. Cohort 1 showed that enterprises could remain active while still experiencing constraints related to aggregation, preservation, transport, regular stock supply, product quality and access to reliable buyers. The strongest market relationships addressed these practical barriers and created opportunities for repeat commercial exchange. Livestock aggregation enabled a trader to collect goats while bringing requested business stock and household staples. Fish traders gained clearer routes to external buyers, while collective purchasing enabled retailers to access delivery and maintain more reliable stock. Some commercial functions were more effectively organised across Business Groups operating within a common value chain, while three person groups remained the core enterprise units. Specialised enterprises such as beekeeping and gums and resins also required continuing access to technical advice, inputs, quality guidance, aggregation support and dependable markets. Cohort 2 will systematically document how effective relationships operate, track the transactions and benefits they generate, scale workable market models and strengthen structured linkages with government departments, technical institutions, extension services and private sector actors.

6. Community participation created initial ownership, but governance determined whether shared conservation assets could remain functional. Cohort 1 communities contributed labour, local materials and time to the establishment and rehabilitation of water infrastructure, restoration sites, tree nurseries and other shared environmental assets. This participation created an important foundation for ownership, particularly where communities could see direct benefits for water access, livestock, pasture, food production, reduced labour or income. However, siltation, fencing needs, livestock intrusion, competing user interests, maintenance costs and unclear responsibilities could threaten continued functionality. The strategic learning is that ownership must extend beyond involvement during implementation to include legitimate representation, agreed access arrangements, resource mobilization, routine maintenance, asset protection, and dispute resolution. Cohort 2 will therefore match each community level asset with an appropriate existing or strengthened governance structure, such as a water committee, user group, school structure, nursery group, customary institution or Community Forest Association, rather than assuming that participation alone or the creation of a standard committee will secure sustainability.



These learnings provide a strategic basis for Cohort 2 and a clearer focus for continued learning. Monitoring will move beyond activity completion to examine whether knowledge becomes sustained practice, caregivers initiate timely action, women translate economic gains into household wellbeing, VSLAs help households manage risk, market relationships generate continued commercial value, institutional partnerships provide ongoing technical and market support, and governance arrangements keep shared conservation assets functional.



ANNEX: SUCCESS STORY AND PHOTOS

Growing Vegetables Where the Soil Said It Couldn't Be Done

In Loiyangalani, poor soils and salty water have long stood in the way of household vegetable production. Most families in the area gave up trying long ago. One member of the Kipepeo Business Group decided not to.

After completing the programme's kitchen gardening training, she established her own garden and is now successfully growing cowpeas, spinach, and a range of other vegetables, output that would have seemed unlikely in this environment even a few years ago.

Community Health Promoters buy vegetables directly from her farm, giving her a steady source of income while positioning her as a visible advocate for better household nutrition in her community.

She has also taken steps to make her progress last. She saves and stores seeds from her own harvests, cutting her dependence on outside inputs, and has trained fellow members of her VSLA group to start their own kitchen gardens for food and income.

Her experience shows that with the right training, commitment, and ongoing support, vegetable production is possible even in one of the harshest environments in the region. Her garden has become more than a personal achievement. It is a working example that neighboring households are now following, contributing directly to the programme's goals of improved nutrition, food security, and household resilience.

Savings Group Members Turn Cooking Lessons Into a Nutrition Movement for Local Schoolchildren

Members of the Kalesa and Shambole Village Savings and Loan Associations who took part in the programme's cooking demonstration training did not keep what they learned to themselves. Armed with practical knowledge on food preparation, balanced diets, and the nutritional value of locally available foods, they chose to volunteer their time training school environmental clubs in their areas.

In these sessions, the champions introduced students to indigenous vegetables found within their own communities, helping them identify the vegetables, understand their nutritional value, and see their role in a healthy diet. They also walked students through preparation and cooking methods that preserve nutrients while still producing meals that are appealing to eat, making sure the knowledge shared could be put to use right away.

The hands-on format kept students engaged, giving them real practice in selecting, preparing, and cooking indigenous vegetables. Along the way, the sessions built awareness among young people about the value of eating locally available, nutrient-rich foods and encouraged the conservation and continued cultivation of indigenous vegetable varieties, an important piece of preserving local food knowledge at a time when diets are changing quickly.

Through this work, the VSLA members have become trusted resource people in their communities, contributing to better nutrition education for young people and helping instill habits that students can carry home to their families. Their willingness to give their time and expertise reflects the wider ripple effect of the programme's approach to capacity building, where trained participants go on to become agents of change, spreading knowledge well beyond the original training.

This is a clear example of what investing in community members can achieve. The programme is improving nutrition by supporting local champions, protecting indigenous food knowledge, and helping the next generation learn to value healthy, locally grown food.

COOKING DEMO VIDEO
Milk, Meat and now... Vegetables

In Hurri Hills, Merille and Loglogo, communities where diets have long centered on milk and meat, a shift is underway. This video captures cooking demonstrations introducing pastoralist households to indigenous vegetables, including homegrown pumpkin, turned into chapatis. Participants learned simple, practical ways to prepare nutritious meals from what grows around them, while helping preserve indigenous food knowledge and inspiring the next generation to value healthy, locally grown food.

Click the link to watch.



PROJECT PHOTOS

Kindly review them on this SharePoint folder.



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