CGIAR

INITIATIVE ON
Diversification in East and Southern Africa

A farmer learns how to operate a hand tractor, gaining access to mechanized farming solutions that improve efficiency and productivity in the field.

Credit: Christian Thierfelder

CGIAR Research Initiative on

Diversification in East and Southern Africa

Annual Technical Report 2024

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The Artificial Intelligence (AI) software ChatGPT was used to support the editing of parts of this report, specifically to improve clarity, grammar, and style. ChatGPT was not used to generate the content of the report. All edits made with AI assistance were reviewed and validated by the authors to ensure accuracy, coherence, and alignment with the original intent.

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CGIAR Technical Reporting 2024

CGIAR Technical Reporting has been developed in alignment with CGIAR's Technical Reporting Arrangement. This annual report ("Type 1" Report) constitutes part of the broader CGIAR Technical Report. Each CGIAR Research Initiative/Impact Platform/Science Group Project (SGP) submits an annual "Type 1" Report, which provides assurance on progress towards end of Initiative/Impact Platform/SGP outcomes.

As 2024 marks the final year of this CGIAR Portfolio and the 2022-24 business cycle, this Type 1 Report takes a dual approach to its analysis and reporting. Alongside highlighting key achievements for 2024, the report also provides a cumulative overview of the 2022-24 business cycle, where relevant. This perspective captures the evolution of efforts over the three-year period. By presenting both annual and multi-year insights, the report underscores the cumulative impact of CGIAR's work and sets the stage for the transition to the 2025-30 Portfolio.

The 2024 CGIAR Technical Report comprises:

- **Type 1 Initiative, Impact Platform, and SGP Reports:** These annual reports present progress towards end of Initiative/Impact Platform/SGP outcomes and provide quality-assured results accessible via the CGIAR Results Dashboard.
- **Type 3 CGIAR Portfolio Practice Change Report:** This report provides insights into CGIAR's progress in Performance Management and Project Coordination.
- **Portfolio Narrative:** Drawing on the Type 1 and Type 3 reports, as well as data from the CGIAR Results Dashboard, the Portfolio Narrative synthesizes insights to provide an overall view of Portfolio coherence. It highlights synergies, partnerships, country and regional engagement, and collective progress.
- **Type 2 CGIAR Contributions to Impact in Agrifood Systems: evidence and learnings from 2022 to 2024:** This report offers a high-level summary of CGIAR's contributions to its impact targets and Science Group outcomes, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), for the three-year business cycle.

The Portfolio Narrative informs the 2024 CGIAR Annual Report – a comprehensive summary of the organization's collective achievements, impacts, and strategic outlook.

Elements of the Type 2 report are integrated into the CGIAR Flagship Report, released in April 2025 at CGIAR Science Week. The Flagship Report synthesizes CGIAR research in an accessible format designed specifically to provide policy- and decision-makers at national, regional, and global levels with the evidence they require to formulate, develop, and negotiate evidence-based policies and investments.

The diagram below illustrates these relationships.

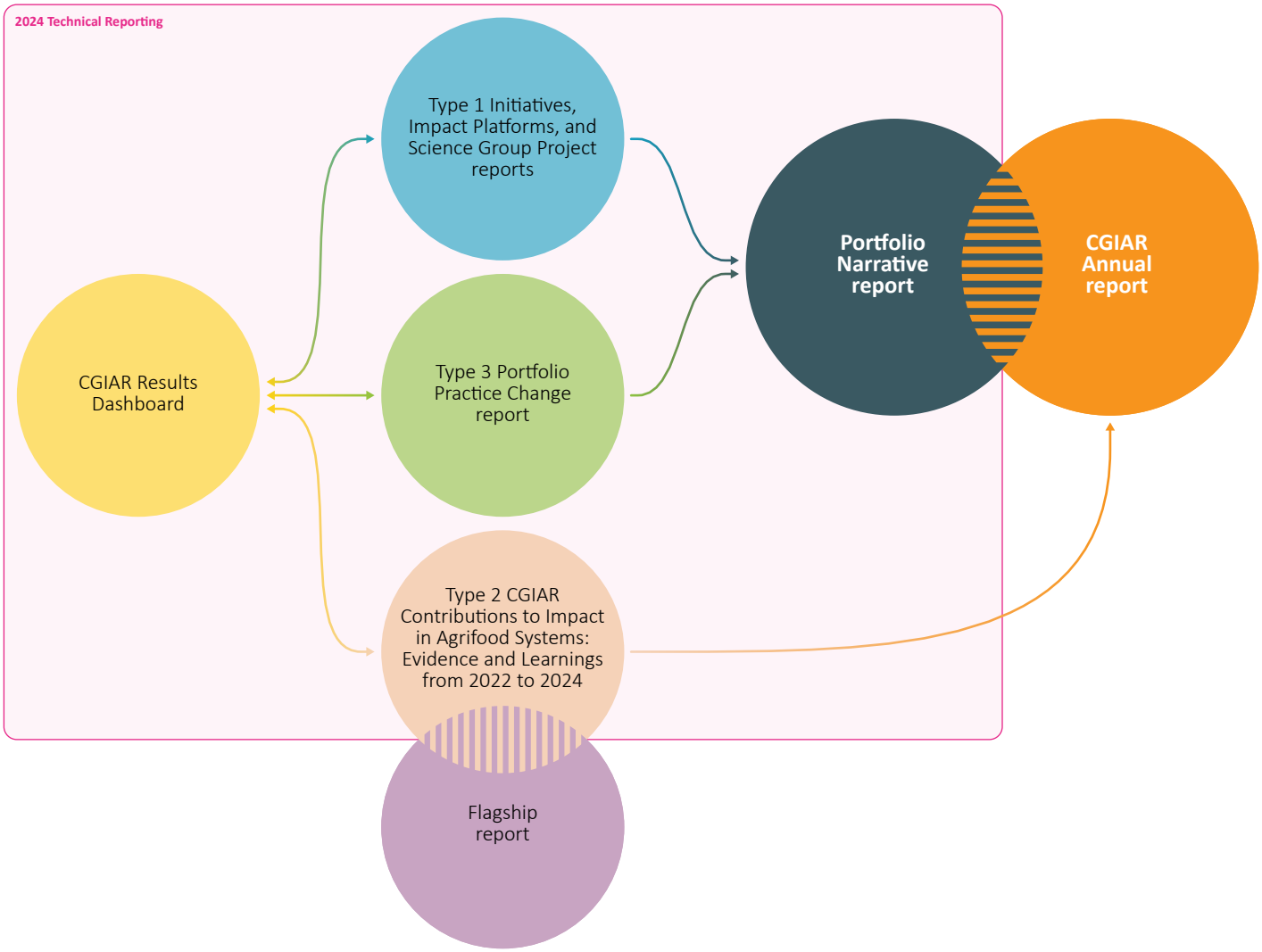


Figure 1. CGIAR's 2024 Technical Reporting components and their integration with other CGIAR reporting products.

Section 1: **Fact sheet, executive summary and budget**

Initiative name	Ukama Ustawi: Diversification for Resilient Agrifood Systems in East and Southern Africa
Initiative short name	Diversification in East and Southern Africa (Ukama Ustawi)
Initiative Lead	Inga Jacobs-Mata (i.jacobs-mata@cgiar.org)
Initiative Co-lead	Evan Girvetz (e.girvetz@cgiar.org)
Science Group	Resilient Agrifood Systems
Start – end date	01 January 2022 – 31 December 2024
Geographic scope	**Regions** East and Southern Africa · Region 2 **Countries** Eswatini · Ethiopia · Kenya · Madagascar · Malawi · Mozambique · Rwanda · South Africa · Tanzania, United Republic · Uganda · Zambia · Zimbabwe
OECD DAC Climate marker adaptation score[1]	**Score 2: Principal** The activity is principally about meeting any of the three CGIAR climate-related strategy objectives—namely, climate mitigation, climate adaptation, and climate policy—and would not have been undertaken without this objective.
OECD DAC Climate marker mitigation score[1]	**Score 1: Significant** The activity contributes in a significant way to any of the three CGIAR climate-related strategy objectives—namely, climate mitigation, climate adaptation and climate policy—even though it is not the principal focus of the activity.
OECD DAC Gender equity marker score[2]	**Score 1B: Gender responsive** On the top of the minimum requirements for 1A, the Initiative/project includes at least one explicit gender equality outcome, and the Initiative/project team has resident gender expertise or capacity. The Initiative/project includes indicators and monitors participation and differential benefits of diverse men and women.
Website link	https://www.cgiar.org/initiative/diversification-in-esa/

[1] The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) markers refer to the OECD DAC Rio Markers for Climate and the gender equality policy marker. For climate adaptation and mitigation, scores are: 0 = Not targeted; 1 = Significant; and 2 = Principal.
[2] The CGIAR Gender Impact Platform has adapted the OECD gender marker, splitting the 1 score into 1A and 1B. For gender equality, scores are: 0 = Not targeted; 1A = Gender accommodative/aware; 1B = Gender responsive; and 2 = Principal.
These scores are derived from Initiative proposals, and refer to the score given to the Initiative overall based on their proposal.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From 2022 to 2024, the CGIAR Research Initiative on Diversification in East and Southern Africa — Ukama Ustawi (UU) — played a pivotal role in transforming agriculture, strengthening food security, and building climate resilience across 12 countries in the region. Rooted in the values of partnership (***Ukama*** in Shona) and prosperity (***Ustawi*** in Swahili), the Initiative lived up to its name by forging deep collaborations and delivering impact at scale.

Ukama Ustawi's success in the region drew on, and scaled up, CGIAR's established strengths in East and Southern Africa (ESA), such as climate-smart agriculture, digital innovations, agribusiness support, and policy strengthening. At its core, the Initiative was built on a commitment to inclusivity across institutions and partners by embedding gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) framework across all its activities to ensure that women, youth, and marginalized communities actively shaped and benefited from agrifood systems transformation.

Section 2 of this report describes the achievements and impact of UU across ESA by focusing on five transformative shifts: promoting sustainable production, integrating innovations, enabling market-driven growth, strengthening institutions, and scaling systemically. By its final year, in 2024, UU achieved the following major milestones:

- Over 164,000 farmers were reached with climate-smart agriculture,
- More than **2.4 million farmers** (Munda Makeover TV show and digital agro-advisory) accessed bundled digital and financial services,
- **10 innovation packages** were deployed, reaching **2.7 million people,**
- USD 14 million was mobilized in blended finance to support agribusinesses and drive resilience in agrifood systems across **Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe**, and
- National policies that were influenced catalyzed **USD 734 million** in investments in Ethiopia, **Madagascar**, Tanzania, **and** Zambia.

Progress toward the theory of change (TOC) for each Work Package (WP) across UU (Section 3) is structured along the WPs, with WP 0, WP 5, and WP 6 as cross-cutting WPs, altogether aiming to transform maize-based agrifood systems in ESA through climate-smart agriculture, inclusiveness through GESI strategy and toolkit and GenderUp methodology, and scalable innovations. Section 4 illustrates the cumulative reported results at the output and outcome levels over the past three years. In total, 298 knowledge products were published, 59 innovations and 10 innovation packages were developed, and over 20,000 people were trained in the use of these innovations, as well as 13 policies/strategies strengthened.

UU achieved, and in fact overachieved, its End of Initiative outcomes (EOIOs) that drove climate-resilient agricultural transformation through strategic partnerships at the local, national, and regional levels, as shown in Section 5. True to its regional commitment, UU collaborated with eight CGIAR Centers, 117 private-sector innovators and organizations, and 13 financial institutions to provide digital agro-advisories and risk management solutions with agribusinesses to scale climate-smart solutions and collaborations with 89 local, regional, and national governments and institutions in ESA. With a remarkably strong Community of Spirit (CoS) network of over 360 partners, UU accelerated the adoption of sustainable farming practices and strengthened agrifood systems. Along with partners, UU also advanced its approach to link with other CGIAR Initiatives (see Section 6) by integrating diversification, digitalization, agribusiness solutions, scaling innovations, policy support, and gender-transformative pathways to reinforce cross-collaborations in the ESA region.

UU's effectiveness in leveraging partnerships and reaching impact at scale was underscored by designated funding from key development partners, including the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development / German Society for International Cooperation (BMZ/GIZ), Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad), Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC), and New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade (MFAT). This support enabled the Initiative to expand its original targets and amplify its impact across the region. Notably, MFAT's catalytic investment extended UU's EOIOs through 2025, ensuring continued momentum.

Through its multipronged, inclusive, and impact-driven scaling strategy, UU not only delivered tangible results across East and Southern Africa but also shaped the design of CGIAR's new USD-36-million Scaling for Impact Program, which starts in 2025, setting a new benchmark for future scaling Initiatives and securing a legacy of sustainability, resilience, and inclusion in the region's agricultural landscape .

	2022	2023	**2024**
PROPOSAL BUDGET	$11.57M	$13.94M	**$14.49M**
APPROVED BUDGET [1]	$5.05M	$11.09M [2]	**$12.99M** [2]

[1] The approved budget amounts correspond to the figures available for public access through the Financing Plan dashboard.
[2] These amounts include carry-over and commitments.

Scaling Week 2024, Nairobi, Kenya.
Credit: Bobby Shabangu

Section 2: **Progress towards End of Initiative outcomes**

Initiative-level theory of change diagram

This is a simple, linear, and static representation of a complex, non-linear, and dynamic reality. Feedback loops and connections between this Initiative and other Initiatives' theories of change are excluded for clarity.

CHALLENGE STATEMENT

- Climate change poses significant risks to agriculture in East and Southern Africa (ESA), endangering production valued at more than US$45 billion. Challenges include rising temperatures, shorter growing seasons, droughts, floods, and water scarcity. Maize, a key staple covering 75 percent of cropping land, faces a projected 15 percent decline in yields without adaptation, a threat compounded by degraded soils, poor inputs, and mismanagement. These issues cascade across food systems, causing pest outbreaks, disrupted supply chains, and worsening hunger, particularly among marginalized women and youth.
- Women provide more than 50 percent of agricultural labor and are critical to food security, yet they face persistent gender inequalities in productivity, wages, and opportunities. Youth make up most of Africa's future workforce: they are vital to agriculture's future but encounter barriers such as unemployment and lack of interest in the sector.
- Building resilience requires sustainable intensification (SI) of maize systems, crop diversification, and investments in agribusiness ecosystems. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) can drive economic development and climate adaptation, creating market opportunities for farmers and addressing gaps in inputs, finance, and capacity. Solutions exist but need rapid scaling through inclusive business models and blended capital investments targeting the "hidden middle" (actors between smallholder farmers and large agribusinesses).
- Transformative efforts must empower women and youth, promote healthier diets, and protect natural resources. Addressing hurdles such as limited access to resources, social inequality, and governance challenges is critical. The Ukama Ustawi (UU) Initiative provides a roadmap for strengthening food, land, and water systems in the next decade by leveraging existing solutions and fostering collaborative, inclusive growth.
- This holistic approach aims to build climate-resilient agrifood systems, reduce hunger, and harness the potential of ESA's people, particularly women and youth, as drivers of sustainable development.

SPHERE OF **CONTROL**

WORK PACKAGES

WORK PACKAGE 0

Establishment and operationalization of a comprehensive partnership network in the ESA region.

WORK PACKAGE 1

Diversify and sustainably intensify maize-based farming systems.

WORK PACKAGE 2

De-risk and digitalize production and supply chains to build resilience and improve productivity.

WORK PACKAGE 3

Support and accelerate value chain agribusiness enablers in maize-mixed systems.

WORK PACKAGE 4

Govern and enable multifunctional landscapes to promote sustainable diversification and intensification.

WORK PACKAGE 5

Empower and engage women and youth in agribusiness ecosystems.

WORK PACKAGE 6

Scale agrifood innovations and coordinate OneCGIAR and partner scaling activities in ESA.

0 ▶
1 ▶
5 ▶

SPHERE OF **INFLUENCE**

End-of-Initiative Outcomes

End-of-Initiative Outcome 1

0 1 2 4 5 6 Farmers, value chain actors, & consumers in maize-mixed systems are using climate-smart intensification and diversification practices.

End-of-Initiative Outcome 2

0 2 3 4 5 6 Agro-value chain actors regularly access reliable digital agro-advisory and agricultural risk management products and services.

End-of-Initiative Outcome 3

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 Agribusinesses improve their business sustainability offering scaled climate smart solutions.

End-of-Initiative Outcome 4

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 Improved collaborative governance and management of multifunctional landscapes.

End-of-Initiative Outcome 5

0 1 2 3 5 6 Women, youth and marginalized male small holder farmers and agri-entrepreneurs participating in Ukama Ustawi work packages and implementing partners interventions.

End-of-Initiative Outcome 6

1 2 3 4 5 6 Increased understanding and capacity of Ukama Ustawi partners to scale up.

Action Area Outcomes

Systems Transformation

1 2 4 6 **1** · Implementation partners (e.g. NARES, NGOs, private companies) actively support dissemination, uptake, and implementation of CGIAR innovations.

1 2 **2** · Due to CGIAR involvement, private sector actors invest in business practices or models that have the potential to improve livelihoods, climate resilience, promote sustainable and inclusive food systems, and boost consumption of healthy diets, especially among nutritionally vulnerable population groups.

4 **3** · National and sub-national government agencies use CGIAR research results to design or implement strategies, policies and programs which have the potential to transform food, land and water systems contributing to livelihood, inclusion, nutrition, environmental and climate resilience objectives.

2 4 **4** · National and local multi-stakeholder platforms are strengthened to become more effective and sustainable, addressing development trade-offs and generating strategies for effective food, land, and water systems transformation.

Resilient Agrifood Systems

1 2 3 4 5 6 **5** · Research institutions, government analytical units, and scaling partners in the Global South have improved knowledge, skills, access to data, capacity to develop tools, innovations, and undertake research to support transformation of food, land and water systems contributing to livelihood, inclusion, nutrition, environmental and climate objectives.

4 **6** · Global and regional institutions, such as funding agencies, international organizations, and coordinating bodies use CGIAR research evidence in the development of strategies, policies, and investments to drive sustainable transformation of food, land, and water systems contributing to livelihood, inclusion, nutrition, environmental and climate resilience objectives.

1 2 5 6 **7** · CGIAR partners develop and scale innovations that contribute to the empowerment of women and other social groups in food, land, and water systems.

Genetic Innovation

3 **8** · Research institutions, government analytical units, and scaling partners in the Global South have improved knowledge, skills, access to data, capacity to develop tools, innovations, and undertake research to support transformation of food, land and water systems contributing to livelihood, inclusion, nutrition, environmental and climate objectives.

1 **9** · CGIAR-NARS-SME networks use market segments, target product profiles to orient variety development and deployment towards those that provide larger scale benefits across the 5 Impact Areas.

SPHERE OF **INTEREST**

Impact Areas

Nutrition, Health & Food Security

1 2 3 4 5 6 9 · End hunger for all and enable affordable health diets for the 3 billion people who do not currently have access to safe and nutritious food.

· End hunger for all and enable affordable health diets for the 3 billion people who do not currently have access to safe and nutritious food.

Poverty Reduction, Livelihoods & Jobs

1 2 3 4 5 6 8 9 · Lift at least 500 million people living in rural areas above the extreme poverty line of US $1.90 per day (2011 PPP).

· Lift at least 500 million people living in rural areas above the extreme poverty line of US $1.90 per day (2011 PPP).

Gender equality, Youth & Social Inclusion

2 3 4 5 6 7 9 · Offer rewardable opportunities to 267 million young people who are not in employment, education, or training.

· Close the gender gap in rights to economic resources on, access to ownership of, and control over land and natural resources, for more than 500 million women who work in food, land, and water systems.

Climate Adaptation & Mitigation

2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 · Implement all National adaptation Plans (NAP) and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) to the Paris Agreement.

· Equip 500 million small-scale producers to be more resilient to climate shocks, with climate adaptation solutions available through national innovation systems.

Environmental Health & Biodiversity

3 4 5 6 8 9 · Stay within planetary and regional environmental boundaries: consumptive water use in food production of less than 2500 km3 per year (with a focus on the most stressed basins), zero net deforestation, nitrogen application of 90 Tg per year (with redistribution towards low-input farming systems) and increased use efficiency, and phosphorus application of 10 Tg per year.

Nick Meehan, Deputy High Commissioner at MFAT, presents a USD 20,000 de-risking grant to Josephine Takundwa, founder of Sesame for Life, having been announced as the winner for the second cohort of the CGIAR Food Systems Accelerator (CFSA) Program.

Credit: Mahlatse Nkosi

Summary of progress against the theory of change

Over the past three years, UU has embarked on a transformative journey—one that has not only delivered against its original ambition and TOC but has also catalyzed a new way of working for CGIAR in ESA. Conceived as a response to the daunting challenges facing agrifood systems in the region — climate change, malnutrition, land degradation, water scarcity, and economic marginalization — UU hypothesized from the outset that small, fragmented interventions would not suffice.

To meet the scale and complexity of the challenge, UU adopted a bold approach: coordinated, inclusive, and technology-enabled action, grounded in science and rooted in African realities. In its final year, 2024, the Initiative did more than just tie up loose ends — it set the stage for the future, inspiring and informing the design of CGIAR's new Scaling for Impact program, which started in 2025.

A Three-Year Journey of Transformation

Launched in January 2022, UU brought together diverse partners across ESA to co-develop and scale climate-smart solutions for maize-mixed farming systems. The Initiative's TOC outlined five transformative shifts essential for driving lasting impact in agrifood systems:

1. From subsistence to sustainable production by promoting diversification of maize and climate-smart, sustainable intensification practices.
2. From fragmented interventions to integrated solutions by bundling innovations with digital tools, financial services, and advisory support.
3. From donor-led development to market-driven growth by empowering small and medium agribusinesses to scale innovations, expand farmer reach, and unlock inclusive finance for resilient value chains.
4. From weak institutions to enabling environments by strengthening policies and institutions to support multifunctional and resilient landscapes.
5. From isolated efforts to systemic scaling by embedding robust scaling frameworks and forging strategic partnerships that helped shape CGIAR's (2025) Scaling for Impact Program.

Through iterative research, learning, and adaptation, each of these shifts was operationalized, tested, and scaled — with 2024 serving as a pivotal year of acceleration, consolidation, and impact.

Final-Year Milestones

As the final year of the business cycle, 2024 marked a turning point — not only for its impressive achievements but also for how it redefined the potential of science-driven agricultural transformation. UU pushed the boundaries of what integrated innovation can accomplish at scale. Key milestones from the year include:

- Over **59,000 farmers** adopted conservation agriculture and agronomic practices through participatory trials in 2024, contributing to a total of 164,363 farmers reached over the Initiative's three-year span.
- More than **2.4 million farmers** accessed bundled digital advisory services and financial products, accelerating the adoption of climate-smart solutions.
- Over **2.7 million people** were reached through the deployment of 10 co-developed innovation packages in 2023–2024 alone.
- USD 14 million **in blended finance** was mobilized to support the growth of climate-smart agribusinesses across the region.
- More than **80 trainers** were capacitated in key technical areas such as irrigation and landscape management, strengthening in-country delivery systems.
- Strategic policy support was provided to shape national frameworks, including Ethiopia's PPP Guidelines for smallholder irrigation, Madagascar's Climate-Smart Agriculture Investment Plan, and Zambia's GESI Toolkit for inclusive agricultural development.

Leveraging Science, Digital Innovation, and Agribusiness Support

UU tackled a key challenge in the region—not the absence of solutions, but the need to scale existing science-driven solutions in an inclusive, coordinated, and demand-driven way, particularly by agribusinesses. Many small and medium agri-enterprises in the region face barriers to growth due to limited access to technical expertise, financing, and climate-resilient tools. The CGIAR Food Systems Accelerator (CFSA) trained over 60 small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and mobilized USD 14 million in blended finance through partnerships with International Fertilizer Developent Center (IFDC), banks, and investors — bridging critical gaps in access to capital and technical support through the provision of technical assistance, from solar pump-sizing and irrigation scheduling to business model innovation and impact measurement. Private-sector service provider models were enhanced to deliver mechanization and irrigation services to farmers.

To further unlock scale and resilience, UU introduced several innovative financial and digital tools, including:

- A Credit-Scoring Tool for Zambia, which customized financing options for farmers in maize-based systems.
- Index-Based Flood Insurance for smallholders in southern Zambia, co-designed with local communities to meet the unique needs of flood-prone areas.
- A scaling strategy for climate-smart mechanization and irrigation lending, developed in partnership with CIMMYT and IWMI , enabling smallholders to purchase or lease machinery — boosting productivity while reducing climate risks.
- Mobile apps and digital platforms for climate advisories.
- Television programs like Shamba Shape Up and Munda Makeover, which reached over 2.3 million viewers with climate-smart content.
- Gamification tools like Shamba Showdown (here, here) to engage farmers in decision-making.
- Virtual reality tools to simulate agricultural innovations in immersive formats.

These tools helped bridge the gap between research and farmer practice — especially among youth, women, and marginalized groups. The 2024 Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) study confirmed behavioral change, while participatory monitoring showed growing demand for tailored digital services.

Grounding Innovation in African Realities

What set the Initiative apart was its ability to connect high-level science with local knowledge, entrepreneurship, and culture. In Zambia, Forest Africa Zambia Ltd., with CGIAR's support, developed the country's first baobab-based plant milk — creating new market opportunities while promoting indigenous foods and ecological sustainability.

In Zimbabwe, the SAVE-WY program, in partnership with Marondera University, established a revolving fund reaching 150 women- and youth-led households, unlocking agribusiness potential through community-based financing and mentorship. Across Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, GESI-focused agripreneurship efforts with Solidaridad localized business acceleration approaches, while 400 farmers in Malawi accessed market information and mentorship to improve competitiveness. In Malawi, the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) methodology supported 4,095 households to adopt conservation agriculture and strengthen joint decision-making. Across the region, over 59,000 farmers adopted agronomic practices through 204 mother trials, 4,483 baby trials, and 43 innovation trials.

Perhaps one of its most impactful contributions has been in the realm of policy support where the Initiative worked closely with regional organizations and national governments to co-develop roadmaps for sustainable land and water management, ensuring that research outputs informed national planning processes. UU also played a catalytic role in strengthening the enabling environment for scaling, supporting the development of Zambia's National Framework for Weather, Water, and Climate Services and the Tanzania Seed Sector Development Strategy, while aligning regional efforts through partnerships with the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA), the Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa (CCARDESA), the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN), and AKADEMIYA2063.

EoI-O 1

Farmers, value chain actors, and consumers in maize-mixed systems are using climate-smart intensification, diversification practices with improved water and land management.

164,363 farmers (52% female and 56% youth) are practicing **climate smart agriculture (CSA)** practices

59,457 farmers out of total used interventions that had a direct **positive effect on bio-diversity**, like **Conservation Agriculture (CA)** and **crop diversification**

32 value chain actors are promoting **CSA interventions**

Mechanization technologies in **Zambia**, **Zimbabwe** and **Kenya** are being used as influenced by UU

230 ha under irrigation by smallholder farmers primarily in **Ethiopia** and **Zimbabwe** with **33 solar pumps** installed to support irrigation and climate adaptation

12,033 ha of land is farmed under **nutrient dense crop varieties** with **49,973 consumers reached**

Promoted **iron-reach beans** and **orange-fleshed sweet potato varieties** in **Malawi** and **Kenya**

Promoted **nutrient-dense food** through school feeding schemes and SMEs

48 UU partners promoted **CSA** as a regular part of their operations model

EoI-O 2

Agro-value chain actors regularly access reliable digital agro-advisory and agricultural risk management (ARM) products and services that increase their climate resilience.

With the partnership with **Mediae**, **MMO** reached **2.3 million farmers and agro-value chain actors** with **50% being women**

Over 153,000 farmers accessed bundled digital financial services and are protected through **agricultural insurance**

In Zambia, the **Agro-Met Platform** enabled data-driven planning

In Ethiopia, risk management workshops within the **Agricultural Commercialization Cluster framework** informed national scale-up

Climate **credit-scoring tool** emerged for Zambia's maize-based systems, blending historical and seasonal data to tailor financing options

Index-Based Flood Insurance in southern Zambia was co-designed with communities to address flood-prone areas

Plant Village's NURU app scaled **to diagnose cassava pests in real time**

EoI-O 3

Agribusinesses improve their business sustainability offering scaled climate smart solutions supporting diversification, intensification and ARM of maize mixed systems.

64 agribusinesses (24 women run, 24 youth run, inclusive) adopted **climate smart solutions** through **cohort 1**, **cohort 2** and **bootcamp CFSA Programme for climate smart agribusinesses** and

Provided **technical assistance** in two critical areas: **Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) and Investment Readiness (IR)**.

CFSA programme raised **US$14 million in convertible notes, debt, grants, and equity** to scale sustainable agricultural practices and drive resilience in food systems in partnership with **IFDC-2SCALE**

US$818,451 value of support was offered to **SMEs** inclusive of market linkages and investor match making and business model refinement

7 partners, bilateral projects and CGIAR initiatives offered support to the **SMEs** (**cohort 1** and **cohort 2**)

EoI-O 4

Improved collaborative governance and management of multifunctional landscapes promoting climate resilient agriculture (including biodiversity) amongst east and southern African stakeholder.

Ukama Ustawi supported **9 policies and strategies** over three years and the project exceeded its target of **US$200 million** and catalyzed **US$734 million** in investment in the **Zambia Mechanization Strategy**, the **Climate Smart Agriculture Investment Plan in Madagascar**, and **Tanzania Seed Sector Development Strategy**

Supported **Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) for small scale irrigation** in Ethiopia with the **Ministry of Agriculture** and **Ministry of Irrigation and Lowlands**

Policy assistance process included Ministries of Agriculture and Irrigation in **Tanzania**, **Ethiopia**, **Kenya**, **Zambia**, **South Africa**, the **EAC**, **SADC**, and **COMESA**

8 strategic partnerships with **AGNES**, **AKADEMIYA2063**, **FANRPAN**, **ASARECA**, **CCARDESA**, **FARA**, **ASPIRES**, and the **AUC** were crucial in translating research into scalable impact

These 8 partners supported to codevelop the **two key platforms** - the **Learning Alliance** and the **ESA Policy Hub**

The **Nationally Determined Contributions Capacity Scorecard** assessed ESA's institutional capacities to implement climate commitments

EoI-O 5

Women, youth and marginalized male smallholder farmers and agripreneurs participating in UU WPs and implementing partners' interventions benefit and reduce livelihood risks through GESI targeted support and integration.

In collaboration with **Solidaridad**, the development of a **GESI Framework** and **innovative socio-technical strategies empowering women, youth, and marginalized male smallholders**

Supported **Ministry of Agriculture** to refine the **GESI guidelines** in Ethiopia

Empowered **4095 households** to sensitize stakeholders on **Gender Action Learning System (GALS) through Gender Transformative Approach (GTA)** in Malawi

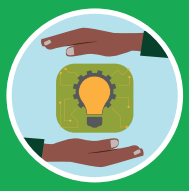
Provided a critical perspective and design of intervention for **youth engagement in agripreneurship** landscape in **Zimbabwe** and **Malawi**

GESI **capacity assessment and development strategy and toolkit** for agribusiness network actors in **Zambia**

Co-designed and piloted **GESI scorecards** as a tool to self-evaluate and assess performance and progress in **mainstreaming gender** in Ethiopia

GenderUp workshop was conducted on **responsible and inclusive scaling** of agricultural innovations with scaling partners in Zambia

EoI-O 6



UU partners have increased understanding and capacity to scale UU WP products, strategies, and innovations.

9 Innovation Packages and **50 innovation development** have been developed and used

Additionally,

5140 individuals including **2394 female participants** have enrolled in an **e-learning course on innovation and scaling**

Through **Scaling Hub** activities, dozens of scaling opportunities have been assessed, leading to the development of **7 impactful scaling strategies**

The new **US$36 million** investment underscores a commitment to scaling in East and Southern Africa through **Scaling for Impact Program**

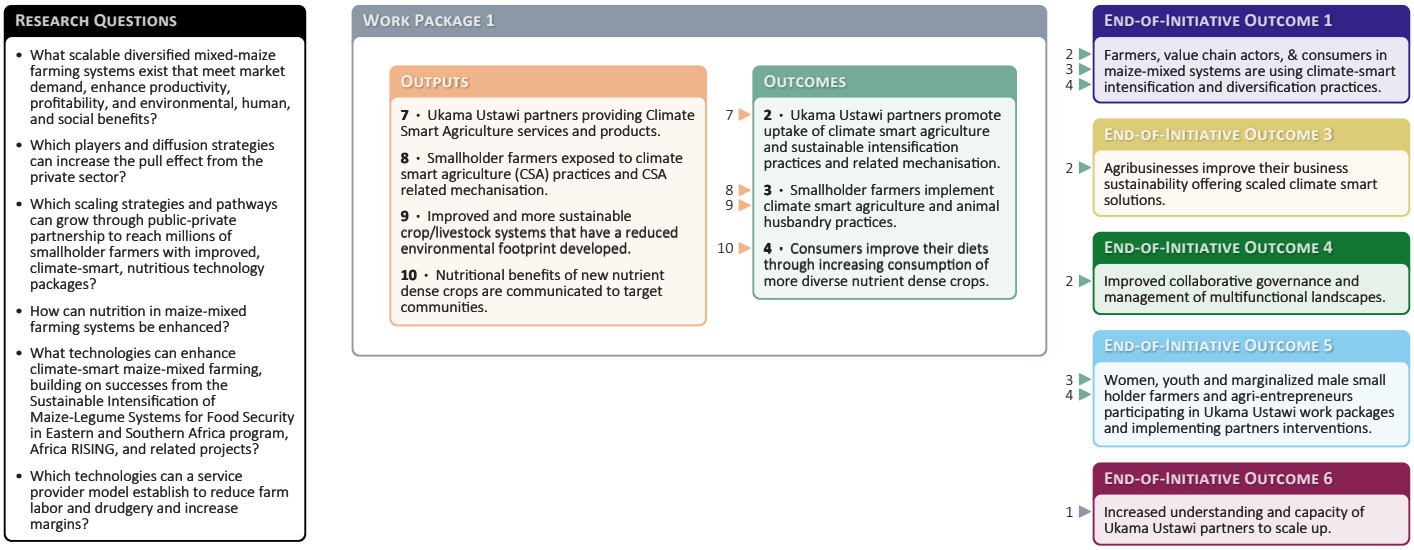
UU's **innovation portfolio** is serving as a key learning resource for future interventions beyond UU

The **Ukama Ustawi Scaling Fund** is implemented to **accelerate the adoption of high-impact agricultural innovations**

Wageningen University and **CGIAR**, in collaboration with **UU** are investing in advancing the **Science and Practice of scaling**

Section 3: **Work Package progress**

WP1: Diversify and sustainably intensify maize-based farming systems



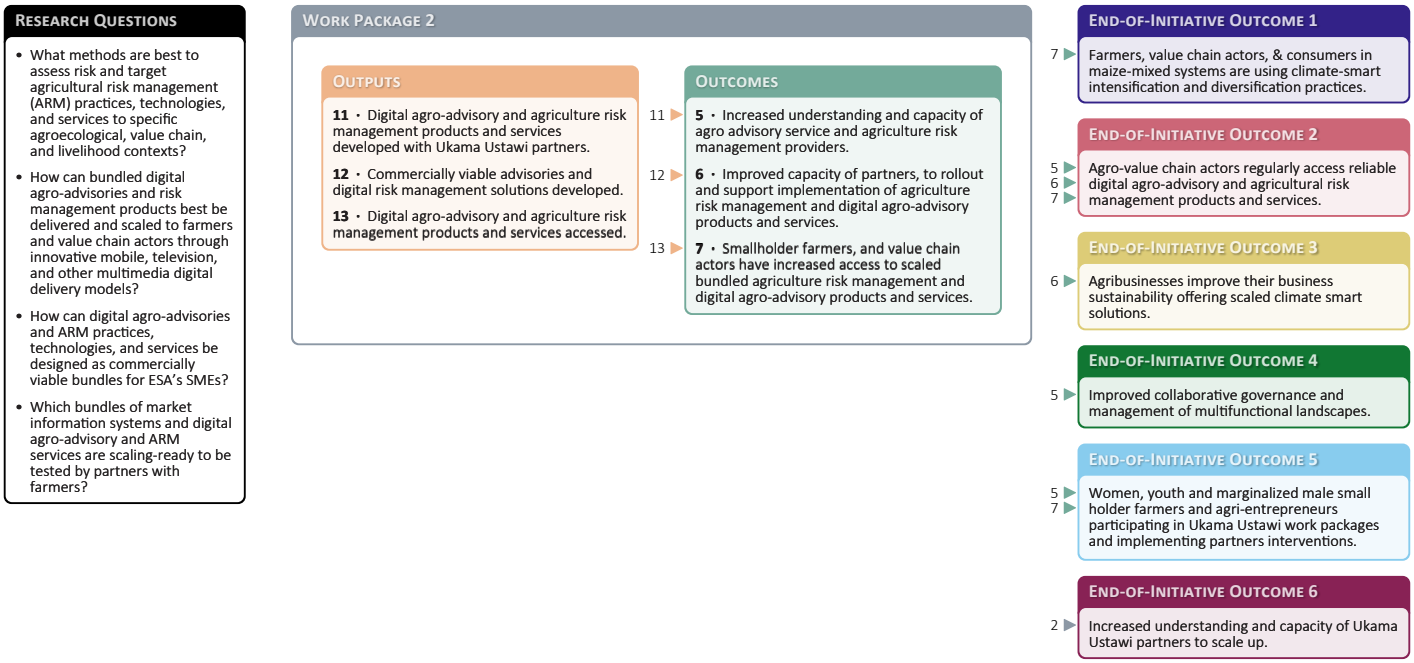
Work Package 1 progress against the theory of change

WP1 has continued to sustainably intensify and diversify smallholder maize-based farming systems in Ethiopia, Malawi, Kenya, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Since 2022, WP1 has used different methods to validate and scale agronomic, mechanization, livestock, and nutrition interventions. These methods were preceded by geophysical and socioeconomic feasibility and suitability studies that assessed what fits where for the different innovations. The mother-and-baby trial approach was used as the validation and scaling tool for agronomic interventions, with 204 mother trials, 4,483 baby trials, 43 innovation trials, and 2 on-station trials established across ESA. These were maintained throughout the project period, resulting in 59,457 farmers using agronomic interventions such as Conservation Agriculture. The service provider (SP) model was used to disseminate mechanization services to farmers through service providers (farmers that acquired machinery and gave services for a fee). In total, 16 service providers were established in Zambia and Zimbabwe, reaching about 16,743 farmers with services ranging from land preparation to postharvest.

The WP1 also successfully promoted sustainable crop/livestock interventions, with 56 lead farmers hosting demonstration sites impacting more than 40,000 farmers. To promote nutrition, the WP integrated community nutrition training, school feeding programs, product development, and value addition with private-sector and demonstration sites to promote foods such as iron-rich beans and orange-fleshed sweetpotatoes in Malawi and Kenya, resulting in more than 50,000 consumers of improved foods. To strengthen climate change mitigation and adaptation by scaling farmer-led irrigation development (FLID), the WP installed 33 solar pumps (in Ethiopia and Zimbabwe, 1 ha capacity each) to be used as living labs. The installation process engaged dialogue among suppliers, financiers, farmers, and policymakers. Additionally, over 80 trainers received intensive training on on-farm irrigation and landscape management to sustain the water supply for irrigation schemes.

Importantly, with the lead of the socioeconomics component, WP1 managed to carry out an intensive impact assessment survey study during the project's final year to assess the reach and extent of the use of innovations promoted by UU. The study revealed various extents of awareness and reach of UU and the interventions it promoted, ranging from 5 to 16 percent across the study areas in the five countries. Some interventions, such as minimum tillage, were familiar to 97 percent of the sample population. Awareness of UU's work was achieved through trials, training, exchange visits, etc. In total, and with spillovers, the efforts of WP1 resulted in about 164,363 users of different UU interventions. Without spillovers, 135,767 users were achieved. These users also bundled innovations, including agronomic and nutrition interventions used by more than 40,000 farmers. The efforts' successes depended on partnerships with stakeholders such as local governments, machinery manufacturers, and universities, which have now embedded climate-smart agricultural interventions in their own work. WP1 collaborated with other WPs, such as WP3, to train SMEs on sustainable agricultural practices, including Sesame for Life and Stable Foods. Additionally, WP1 partnered with WP4 to contribute to the development of the Mechanization Strategy in Zambia.

WP2: De-risk and digitalize production and supply chains to build resilience and improve productivity



Work Package 2 progress against the theory of change

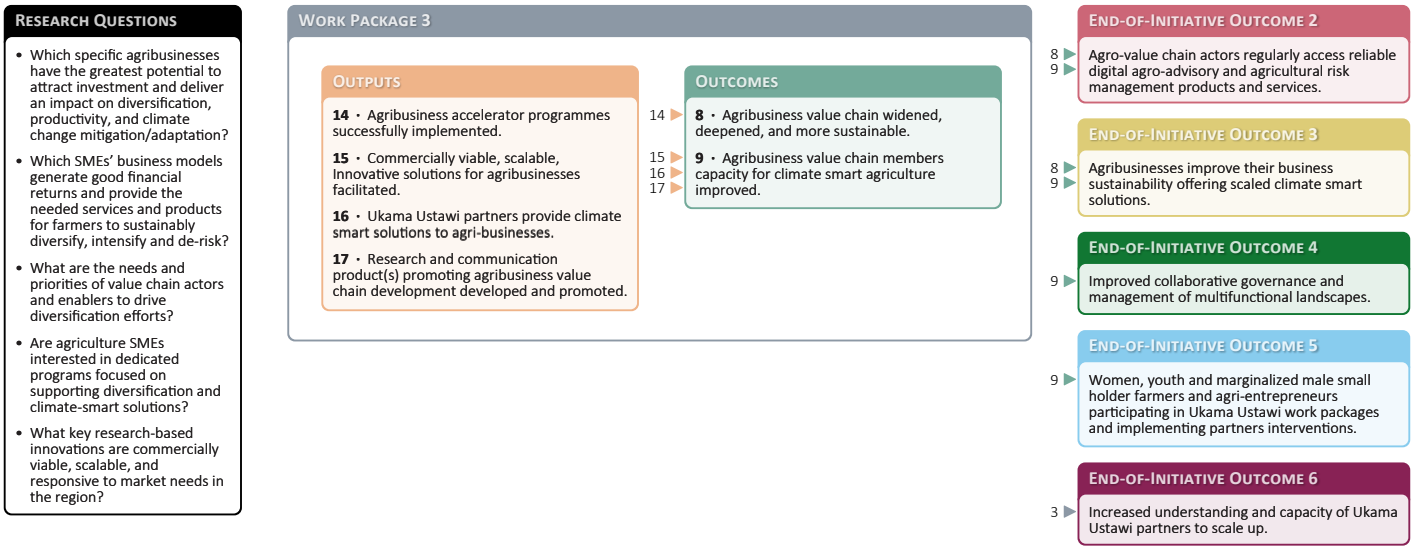
In 2022, the UU laid critical groundwork to strengthen smallholder resilience and diversification across ESA. The Initiative assessed promising business models for digital agro-advisories and agricultural risk management (ARM) by partnering with key African institutions, including the Zambia Meteorological Department, the Kenya Meteorological Department, the Mediae company, Usiku Games, the University of Reading, Mercy Corps AgriFin, the Busara Center for Behavioral Economics, the Agriculture Transformation Institute (ATI), Lersha, ACRE Africa, Agora Microfinance, and Financial Access Consulting Services. Early pilots included the Shamba Shape Up and Munda Makeover TV shows, which used edutainment to promote conservation tillage and climate-smart practices, as well as a Picture-Based Advisory system that delivered timely crop information through images. These innovative approaches showed early promise, inspiring collaborations with microfinance institutions to integrate climate considerations into credit products.

Building on this progress in 2022 and 2023, in 2024 the focus shifted to de-risking agriculture through expanded digitalization. A climate credit-scoring tool emerged for Zambia's maize-based systems, blending historical and seasonal data to tailor financing options. Workshops in Ethiopia explored de-risking crop commodities under the Agricultural Commercialization Cluster framework, reinforcing a commitment to regional impact. Alongside a growing body of research on behavioral drivers of insurance uptake, a climate agro-meteorological platform was rolled out in Zambia, enabling more precise analysis and adaptation planning. The Munda Makeover show and the Shamba Showdown interactive game connected these tools to everyday farming decisions. A KAP study (2023, 2024) highlighted how popular media could drive tangible shifts in farmers' behaviors.

By 2024, many pilot programs had matured into comprehensive models for risk reduction and productivity gains. Index-Based Flood Insurance in southern Zambia was co-designed with communities to address flood-prone areas, while Plant Village's NURU app scaled to diagnose cassava pests in real time. Financial products bundling insurance, credit, and digital advisory saw broader uptake, especially in Ethiopia together with Lersha, ATI and in Zambia together with the Ministry of Agriculture, Mercy Corps Sprout, Mediae, and ACRE Africa. Guided by GIZ and in partnership with the University of Reading and Community Markets for Conservation (COMACO), UU delivered trainings on the Participatory Integrated Climate Services for Agriculture approach. In parallel, climate-smart mechanization and irrigation lending gained traction designing a scaling strategy and concept that will allow smallholders to purchase or lease machinery that increased productivity while mitigating climate risks.

Spanning these three years, the Initiative's achievements rest on a shared vision: to combine digital innovation, science-based climate advisories, and tailored financial services to meet the diverse needs of smallholders. As it continues to refine and scale these solutions, UU laid the foundations to drive inclusive agricultural transformation across ESA.

WP3: Support and accelerate value chain agribusiness enablers in maize-mixed systems

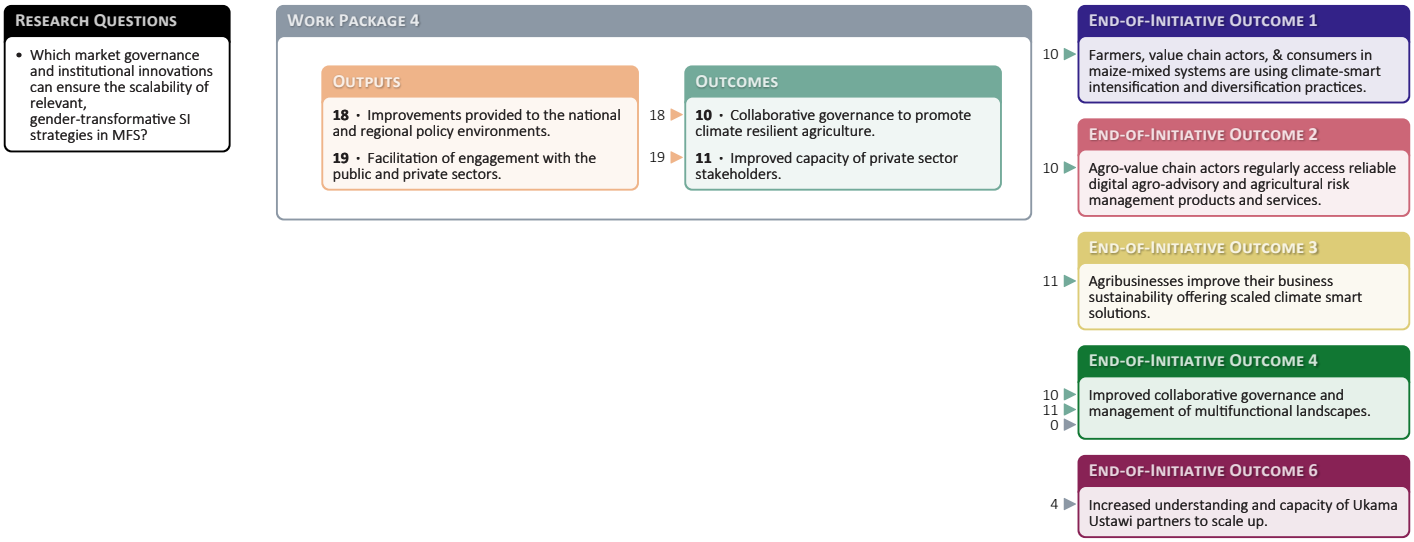


Work Package 3 progress against the theory of change

WP3 has made significant strides toward strengthening agribusiness value chains, promoting investment readiness, and scaling climate-smart innovations across ESA, with a particular focus on Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The CGIAR Food Systems Accelerator (CFSA) successfully onboarded two cohorts (cohort 1, cohort 2) since its inception in 2022, supporting 24 agribusiness partners (APs) with tailored science-based technical assistance to deliver climate-smart innovations at scale. The APs gained critical skills that enabled them to attract investments and implement inclusive business models while effectively measuring their impact. The APs ability to navigate agricultural challenges was strengthened, ensuring the sustainability and financial viability of their businesses. By placing specific emphasis and commitment to gender equality and social inclusion, the CFSA program was able to bridge the research and investment gap that exists for women and youth within the agricultural landscape. The program ensured that women and young entrepreneurs were represented and had access to the resources required to support their efforts toward innovation development and agricultural transformation. This holistic approach of the program capacitated the APs to responsibly scale climate-smart solutions within agricultural value chains. Through the three-day CFSA Bootcamp in Nairobi, Kenya, 40 SMEs were capacitated through science-based technical assistance, investor networking, and peer learning, equipping them with skills and networks for scaling their climate-smart solutions. The Bootcamp provided a platform for bridging the gap between research and development, combined with investment readiness support, thereby putting climate resilience at the forefront of agricultural transformation and financial sustainability among the agribusinesses in attendance. WP3 further recognized the financial constraints faced by agribusinesses, which hinders their ability to effectively scale their climate-smart innovations.

In partnership with the International Fertilizer Development Centre (IFDC), the CFSA program has been able to catalyze the mobilization of USD 14 million in debt, convertible notes, and equity. The funding that has been secured through impact investors, regional commercial banks, development finance institutions, and blended finance mechanisms has unlocked vital resources for the incubated agribusinesses to support sustainable agricultural practices and enhance the resilience of the sector. This strategic partnership has played a pivotal role in creating a strong pipeline for fundraising efforts and ensuring that agribusinesses remain investable and positioned for long-term success. As the demand for climate-smart innovations continues to grow, scaling the CFSA model to support more agribusinesses will be essential in driving long-term sustainability, reinforcing the Initiative role in transforming agrifood systems and fostering a resilient and inclusive agricultural landscape.

WP4: Govern and enable multifunctional landscapes to promote sustainable diversification and intensification



Work Package 4 progress against the theory of change

WP4 significantly advanced market governance and institutional innovations in ESA to scale sustainable intensification and diversification strategies. Key achievements included strengthening climate action, enhancing agricultural market governance and agribusiness, fostering knowledge sharing, and promoting gender inclusion. This evidence-based approach to strengthen policy and governance frameworks shaped investment plans and contributed to regional dialogues on food system transformation.

The Nationally Determined Contributions Capacity Scorecard assessed ESA's institutional capacities to implement climate commitments, while an updated assessment of climate change and agriculture identified barriers to climate-smart agriculture adoption. The national and regional policy dialogues (Tanzania, Kenya, Zambia, Central and Eastern Africa), which involved diverse stakeholders, outlined consensus-driven and actionable policy recommendations and investment priorities needed for sustainable intensification and diversification of maize-based crop systems.

The Scoping Study for Learning Alliance explored collaborative governance models, and the Participatory Scenario Development Report engaged diverse stakeholders in policy co-creation. Additionally, the Strategy Report on Aligning GESI Mainstreaming Guidelines provided a framework for integrating gender-responsive policies into regional agriculture.

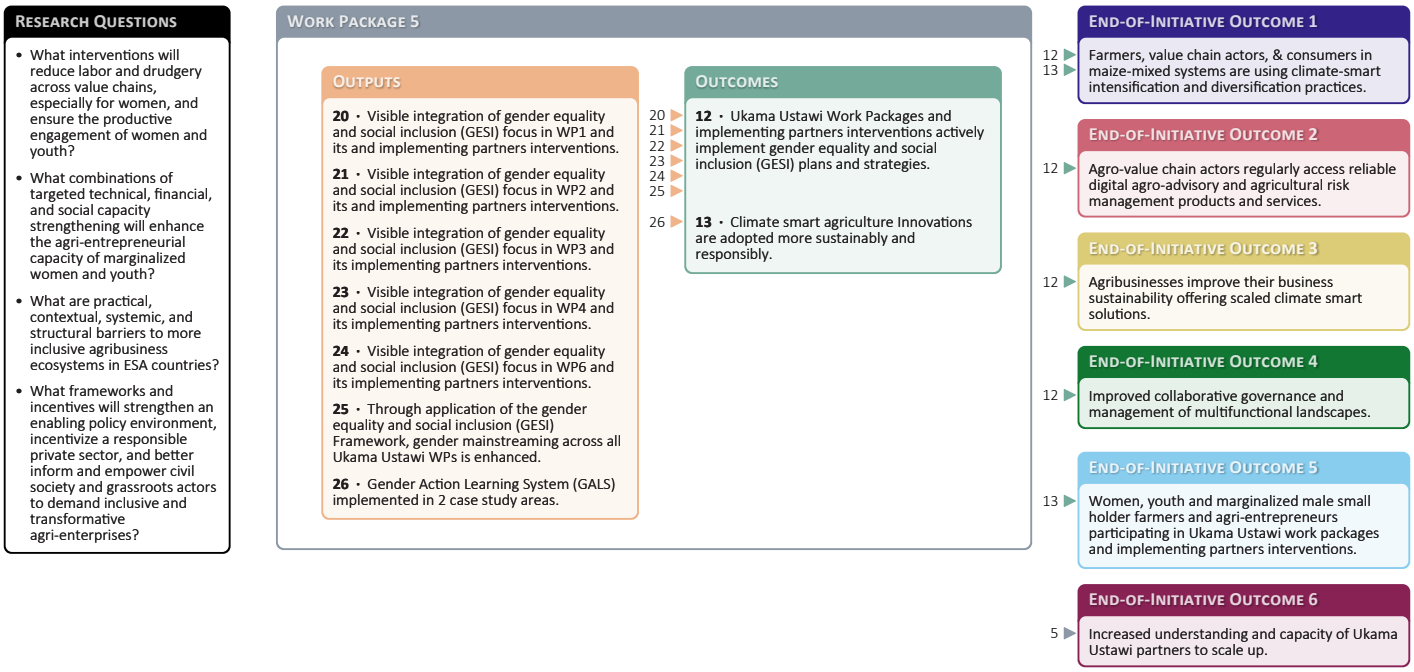
Key policy innovations included the National Framework for Climate Services for Zambia, developed with Accelerating Impacts of CGIAR Climate Research for Africa (AICCRA), to enhance climate resilience.

A memorandum of understanding between the African Union Commission, CGIAR, and the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme EX Pillar 4 (CAADP-XP4) Consortium fostered knowledge management for agricultural research and development. The Tanzania Seed Sector Development Strategy introduced key reforms, including improved seed certification and enhanced market access for women farmers.

Other water and climate policy outcomes included South Africa's National Consultation on Water and Climate Strategies, held with International Water Management Institute (IWMI) and extended at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27) in 2022; Madagascar's Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) Investment Plan, prioritizing climate-resilient technologies; and the CSA Regional Policy Dialogue in Pretoria, which advanced regional collaboration on water and nutrition challenges.

Through a strategic partnership with the Government of Ethiopia, the Initiative co-developed Ethiopia's Guidelines for Public-Private Partnerships in Smallholder Irrigation Development, strengthening irrigation governance, innovation financing, and risk-sharing. As part of the Food Systems Accelerator, technical assistance strengthened the ability of SMEs to navigate agribusiness barriers. Following UU, these initiatives will continue to generate social, economic, and environmental impact by strengthening enabling environments for innovations to reach scale, particularly those led by the private sector, across ESA.

WP5: Empower and engage women and youth in agribusiness ecosystems



Work Package 5 progress against the theory of change

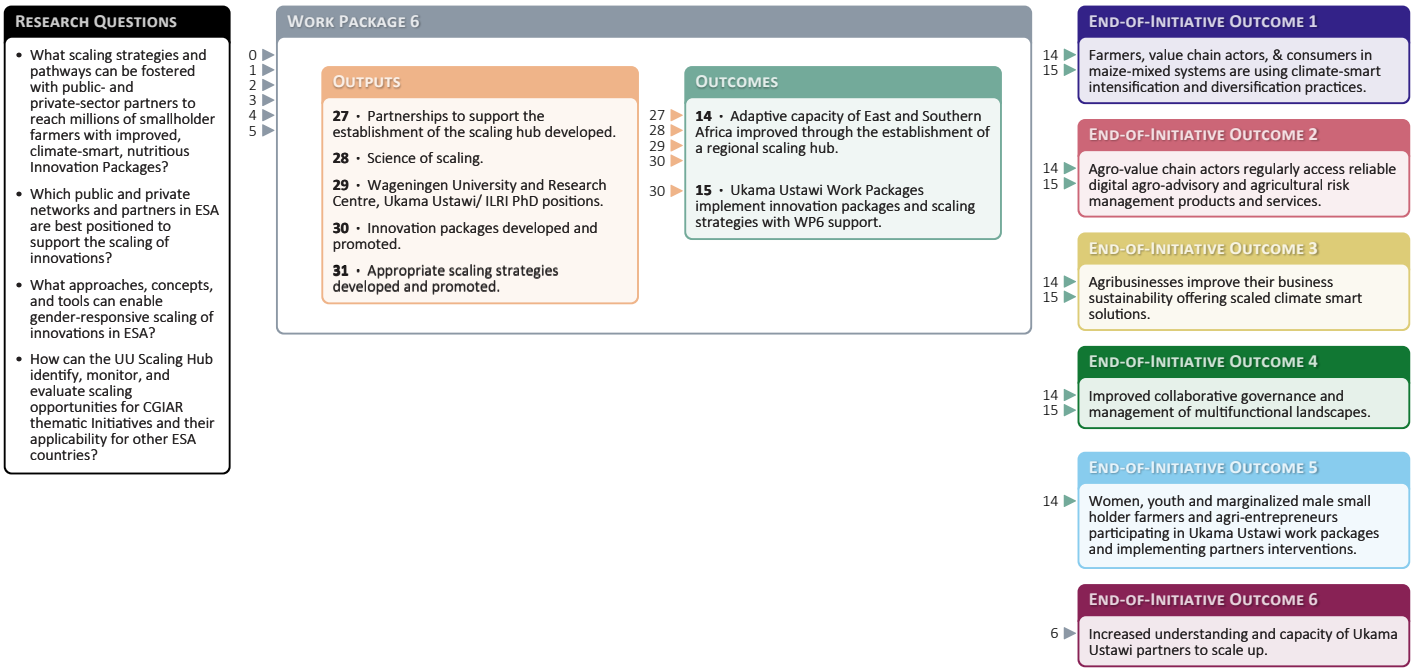
WP5 has significantly advanced the inclusive adoption and scaling of CA by fostering gender-responsive agricultural transformation, bridging policy and practice while improving livelihoods for women and youth.

In 2022, WP5 developed a GESI Framework to guide gender-responsive interventions across Ukama Ustawi's work packages. Based on literature reviews and stakeholder engagements in Ethiopia, Kenya, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, the Framework identified agribusiness entry points to reach, benefit, and empower women and youth. Key interventions included capacity building initiatives to transition women into decision-making roles and strengthening youth agency in agriculture. In 2023, WP5 facilitated GESI integration through application of the Framework (developed in 2022) and a meta-analysis on inclusive agribusiness in ESA. The approach was applied in CFSA via gender action plans and technical assistance, working closely with the local partner The Rallying Cry. In Zimbabwe, the team leveraged the GenderUp methodology for stakeholder engagement on GESI impacts within the context of mechanized conservation agriculture innovations. This methodology seeks to facilitate the development of inclusive scaling of innovations with a focus on gender and social inclusion.

The work culminated in 2024, with WP5 significantly advancing the inclusive adoption and scaling of conservation agriculture in Malawi, resulting in implementation of the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) methodology within households (4,095 households) across 10 communities under WP1 practicing CA. Great strides were made in strengthening inclusive governance for joint decision-making, with stakeholders able to share their perspectives on GALS as an inclusive approach to scaling innovations and fostering agency, leadership, and decision-making. Through WP5's activities in 2024, UU was able to support GESI policy interventions for the Ministry of Agriculture in Ethiopia in collaboration with WP4, which led to revision of the Gender Mainstreaming Guidelines — a practical tool that ensures the systematic integration of gender issues within broader agricultural initiatives, bridging the gap between policy and practice, enabling implementing actors to effectively apply, monitor, and institutionalize GESI interventions in agriculture. Additionally, in Zambia, capacity was strengthened for diverse stakeholders through the development of GESI capacity assessment strategy and toolkit for agribusiness network actors.

Support to agribusinesses was provided in Zimbabwe following collaborations with Marondera University, which established a revolving fund program known as the Sustainable AgriVentures for Empowered Women and Youth (SAVE-WY) Intervention Program, reaching over 150 households (specifically women and youth) in Mashonaland Central and Masvingo provinces. Similarly, in Malawi, GESI activities were able to provide mentorship, networking, and market information platforms to over 400 farmers to understand and better respond to agricultural market trends. With our partners, Solidaridad, and International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), agripreneurship engagements in Malawi, Zimbabwe, and Zambia enabled activities to be better contextualized for agribusiness acceleration.

WP6: Scale agrifood innovations and coordinate CGIAR and partner scaling activities in ESA



Work Package 6 progress against the theory of change

WP6 made significant progress across key pathways identified in the TOC, contributing to EOIO 6: increased understanding and capacity of UU partners to scale up. These efforts focused on developing and embedding scaling systems, methods, and tools within the Initiative, facilitating training and capacity building, creating opportunities to share scaling experiences, and fostering strategic partnerships and alliances to support a coherent scaling science and an enabling scaling environment.

Since 2022, WP6 has advanced the science of scaling through strategic partnerships and capacity development efforts. CGIAR's Innovation Packages and Scaling Readiness (IPSR), along with various other methods and tools, have been developed, tested, and integrated into UU's work. As a result, UU leads CGIAR's innovation Portfolio with:

- 50 innovations profiled and updated.
- 9 innovation packages co-created with partners.
- 7 scaling strategies developed.

UU's innovation portfolio has been shared with internal leadership, partners, and donors, serving as a key learning resource for future interventions beyond UU. Additionally, UU's Scaling Fund has been an essential mechanism for engaging with global initiatives, promoting promising innovations, and strengthening scaling capacity.

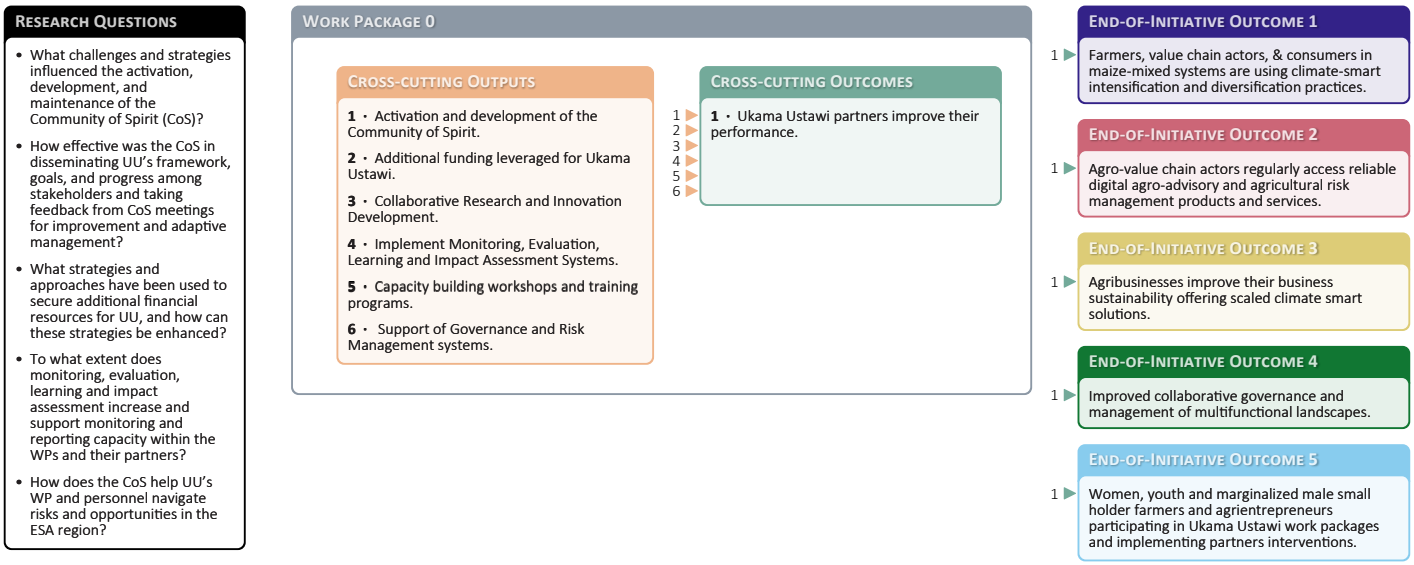
The scaling community within UU has expanded, creating synergies with CGIAR's Portfolio Performance Unit and other initiatives. The Scaling Hub has emerged as a central space for members to exchange knowledge, experiences, and challenges. This engagement happens through various platforms, including:

- Quarterly webinars
- A LinkedIn community focused on scaling
- An annual Scaling Week
- Many informal learning events

By strengthening collaboration and learning opportunities, WP6 contributed significantly to institutionalizing scaling science within UU and CGIAR at large, supporting both internal and external stakeholders in adopting evidence-based approaches to innovation management and scaling.

Scaling success of Ukama Ustawi Scaling Fund winners (2023-2024)

WP0: Establish and operationalize a comprehensive partnership network in the ESA region



Work Package 0 progress against the theory of change

The cross-cutting WP0 supported the Initiative by building, maintaining, and coordinating a UU Community of Spirit (CoS) as well as managing the Initiative's cross-cutting project management activities. The CoS comprised 184 CGIAR staff, 105 partners and consultants, 71 farmers, and 100 extension workers and other stakeholders; altogether, over 360 people were directly involved in the Initiative. The UU CoS started small but grew in size and ambition as the Initiative matured, jointly working toward the EOIOs.

In addition to the project management tasks, with additional funding, WP0:

- Supported partner capacity through an internship placement program,
- Developed interactive and research-driven Virtual Field Trips in hard-to-reach places for science communication and cross-WP knowledge exchange,
- Hosted a regional farmer ShareFair in Zimbabwe and a Solutions ShareFair in Ethiopia with WP3,
- Organized quarterly CoS meetings and annual Pause and Reflect workshops.

Work Package progress rating summary

WORK PACKAGE	PROGRESS RATING & RATIONALE
1	On track The WP1 impact assessment showed significant progress in promoting agricultural innovations across Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Among 12.5 million rural residents, 1.05 million (8.4 percent) were aware of UU activities, peaking at 16 percent in Kenya and Zambia. The Initiative reached 164,363 users, surpassing its 100,000 EOIO target by 36 percent (64 percent with spillovers). Women comprised 52 percent of beneficiaries, youth 56 percent, exceeding targets by 12 and 16 percent, respectively. Key stakeholders, including governments, manufacturers, and academia, have integrated climate-smart interventions into their programs, reinforcing the project's long-term impact on sustainable agricultural practices.
2	On track WP2 steadily advanced over the three-year period, aligning with its Plan of Results and Budget. Digital innovations, including climate information services and integrated climate-credit risk scoring, scaled from pilot to implementation, enhancing smallholder resilience. Edutainment initiatives like Munda Makeover and Shamba Showdown, along with Picture-Based Advisory systems, drove positive behavioral shifts. Minor pilot delays did not hinder success. Strong partnerships with meteorological agencies, finance institutions, and research bodies ensured sustainability. Overall, the Initiative remains on track, achieving key targets, with a green progress rating indicating successful milestone attainment.
3	On track The CFSA program achieved its EOIO targets, supporting 24 agribusinesses in the ESA region across two cohorts. In partnership with IFDC, it mobilized USD 14 million (2022–2024), reinforcing investment readiness. The Nairobi Bootcamp empowered 40 SMEs through technical assistance, investor engagement, and networking. With 57 percent of cohort 2 in growth and 86 percent post-revenue, efforts focused on long-term sustainability. Scaling efforts included refining the model for global use, developing an alumni network, and researching acceleration as a scaling pathway. These refinements strengthened the program's impact, ensuring continued support for agribusiness growth.
4	On track WP4 exceeded its EOIO targets by informing 13 policies/strategies that catalyzed USD 734 million in investments for strengthening climate action, enhancing agricultural market governance, and promoting gender inclusion. Policy efforts, such as the Nationally Determined Contributions Capacity Scorecard and national dialogues, helped shape climate-smart policies. The Tanzania Seed Sector Development Strategy improved certification and access for women. Additional innovations, including Zambia's Climate Services Framework and Ethiopia's Private Public Partnership (PPP) Guidelines, reinforced governance and financing. Cross-border collaboration on water and nutrition, along with SME support through the Food Systems Accelerator, further drove impact.
5	On track Efforts to integrate GESI across the Initiative's WPs led to development of a standardized GESI framework, driving landscaping studies in Malawi, Zimbabwe, and Zambia. Key achievements included GESI-focused collaborations on Munda Makeover (WP2), action plans for 30+ SMEs (WP3), inclusive policy design in Ethiopia (WP4), and the GenderUp scaling methodology for conservation agriculture (WP1 and WP6). The Gender Action Learning System in Malawi exceeded its 4,000-household EOIO target, empowering 4,095 households and 444 champions. This progress strengthened intra-household decision-making, market access, and sustainable agricultural practices, ensuring long-term inclusion and resilience.
6	On track WP6 progress over the three years consistently achieved or surpassed its target indicators, with the outputs and outcomes in line with the TOC.
0	On track WP0 progress and management was in line with the TOC and expectations. In particular, the cross-WP activities led to scaling efforts and amplified the Initiative's outcomes.

Scaling Week 2024, Nairobi, Kenya.
Credit: Bobby Shabangu

Definitions

On track

- Progress largely aligns with Plan of Results and Budget and Work Package theory of change.
- Can include small deviations/issues/delays/risks that do not jeopardize success of Work Package.

Delayed

- Progress slightly falls behind Plan of Results and Budget and Work Package theory of change in key areas.
- Deviations/issues/delays/risks could jeopardize success of Work Package if not managed appropriately.

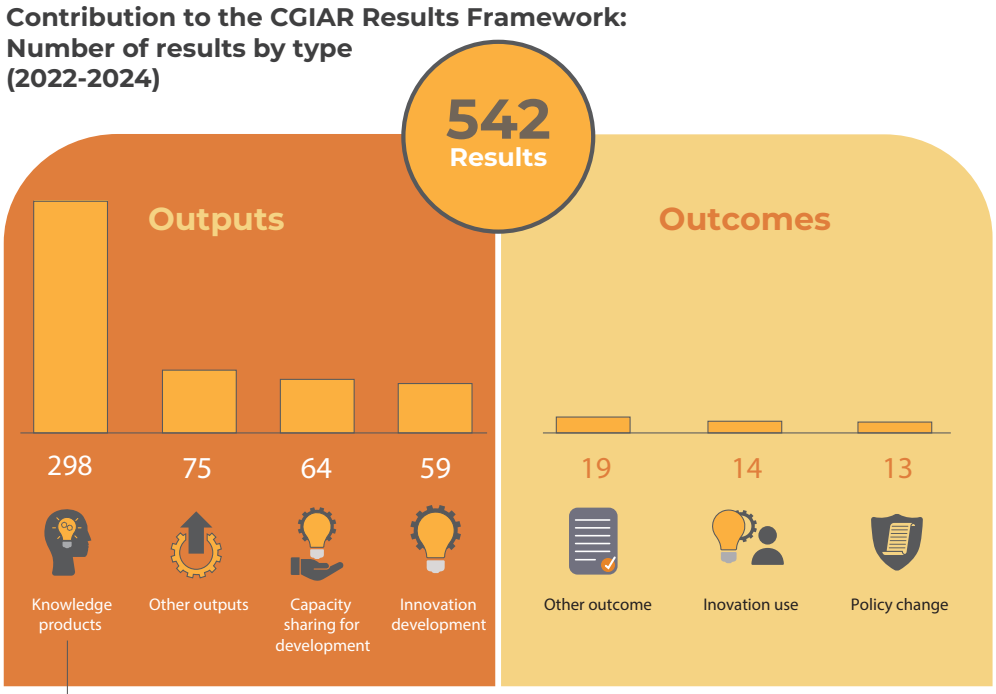
Off track

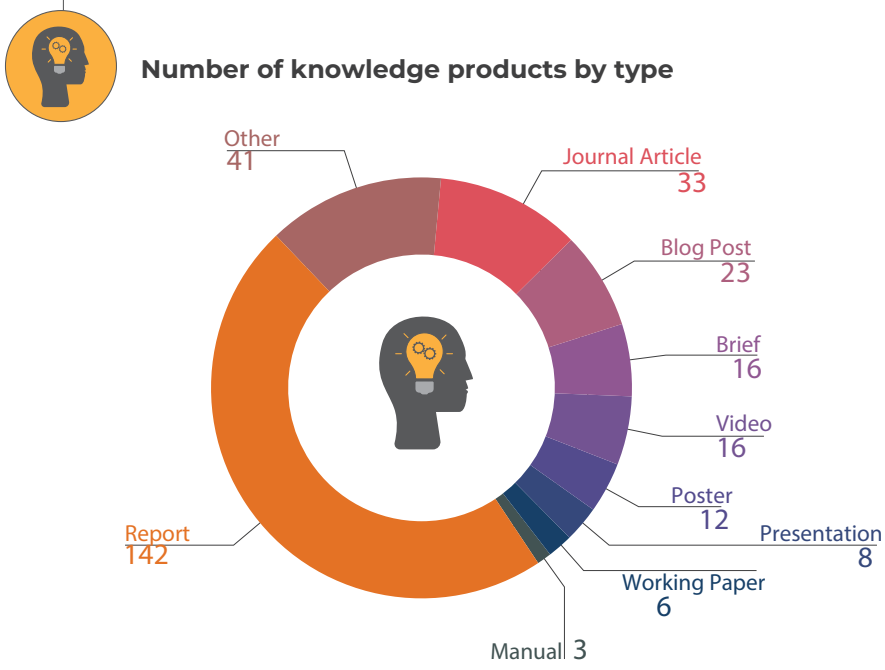
- Progress clearly falls behind Plan of Results and Budget and Work Package theory of change in most/all areas.
- Deviations/issues/delays/risks do jeopardize success of Work Package.

Section 4: **Quantitative overview of key results**

This section provides an overview of results reported and contributed to, by the CGIAR Initiative on Diversification in East and Southern Africa (Ukama Ustawi) from 2022 to 2024. These results align with the CGIAR Results Framework and Diversification in East and Southern Africa (Ukama Ustawi)'s theory of change. Further information on these results is available through the CGIAR Results Dashboard.

The data used to create the graphics in this section were sourced from the CGIAR Results Dashboard on 04 April 2025. These results are accurate as of this date and may differ from information in previous Technical Reports. Such differences may be due to data updates throughout the reporting year, revisions to previously reported results, or updates to the theory of change.

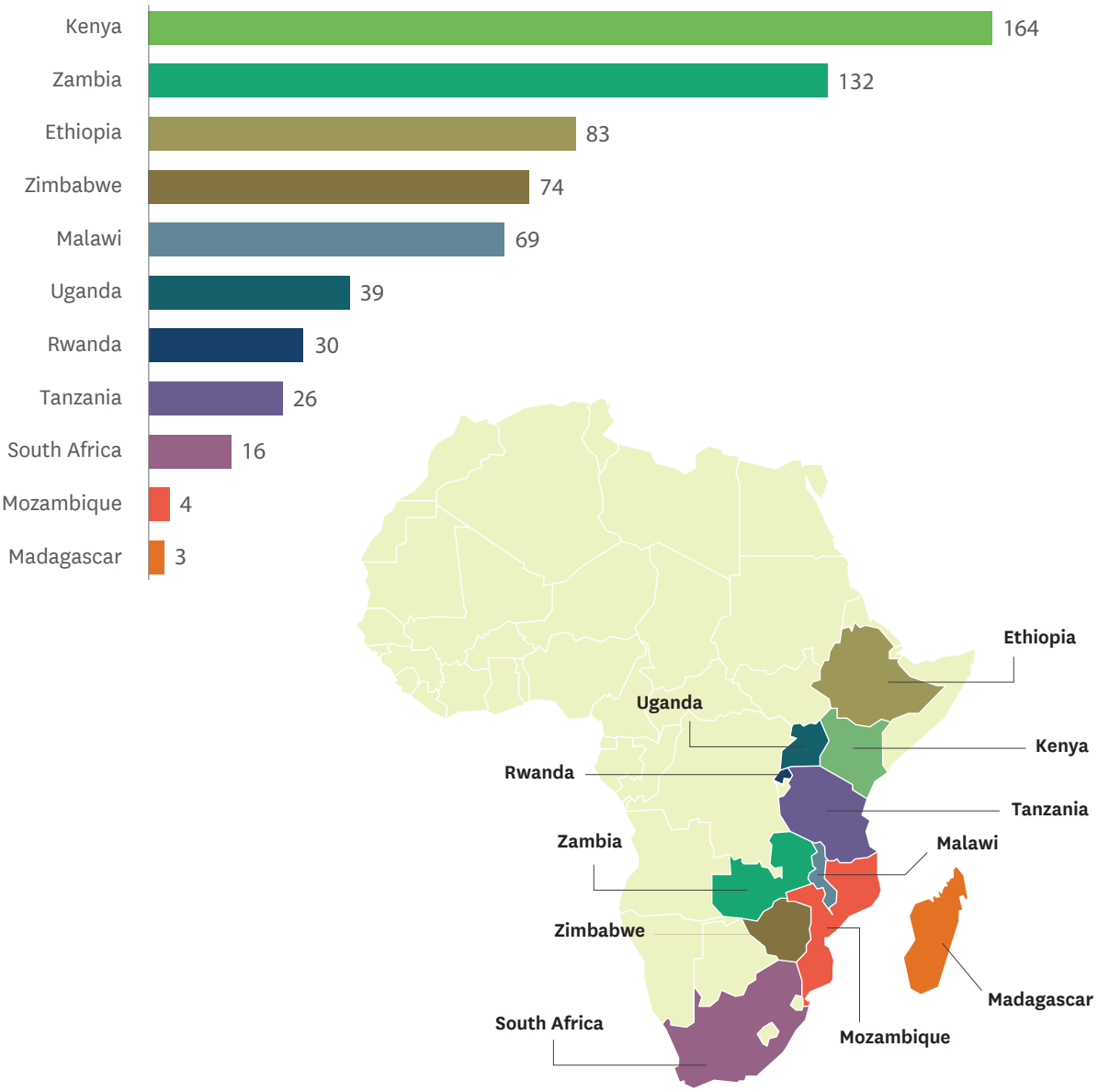




In its three-year period (2022–2024), UU reported a total of 542 results, including 64 capacity sharing results, 59 innovations developed, 298 knowledge products published, and 75 other outputs. At the outcome level, the Initiative ensured that 14 innovations were used, 13 policies/strategies were improved, and 19 other outcomes achieved.

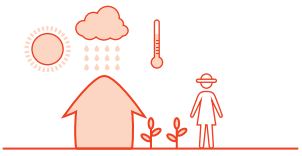
The cumulative effort to publish knowledge products was significant to the Initiative, which is reflected in the various types of knowledge products reported, including 34 peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters, 142 research reports, and 43 other technical documents published comprising working papers, discussion papers, case studies, manuals, and conference papers covering a range of related topics on crop diversification, climate-smart solutions, GESI, strengthening policy and governance frameworks, food security, and enhancing nutrition and climate resilience.

Most reported results by countries

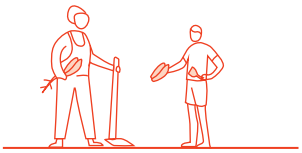


UU strategically prioritized Kenya, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, and Malawi between 2022 and 2024. As a result of MFAT funding that doubled the UU's EOIOs, in 2023/2024, UU continued to focus on the above mentioned countries but expanded its focus to include Tanzania, South Africa, Uganda, Rwanda, Madagascar, and Mozambique including strengthening policies and agribusiness support.

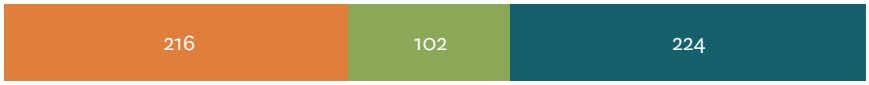
Impact Tagging



Climate change adaptation and mitigation

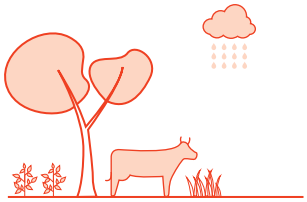


Gender equality, youth and social inclusion



Nutrition, health and food security

Poverty reduction, livelihoods and jobs



Environmental health and biodiversity

(1) Significant
(2) Principal
(0) Not targeted
Not applicable

UU adopted a GESI lens across all its WPs, focusing on how the Initiative's activities could empower women, youth, and marginalized and under-represented groups. The Initiative's activities also spanned all five CGIAR Impact Areas, which was typical of all CGIAR's Regional Integrated Initiatives (RIIs). Moreover, most of the reported results reflected a significant or principal effort toward achieving these impacts.

Innovations by readiness level

UU-led innovations were piloted in 2022 and built on the existing CGIAR Portfolio. In total, the Initiative developed 50 innovations over its three years as well as an additional 9 innovations in collaboration with other CGIAR Initiatives. The infographic shows that more than half of the reported innovations have reached the highest maturity level (Readiness Levels 8 and 9), proving that these innovations have been validated for their ability to achieve impacts. Among the innovations with lower maturity levels, 12 innovations advanced their Readiness Levels in 2024. A wide range of stakeholders, including researchers, policy actors, farmers, agricultural extension agents and various other value chain actors, have played vital roles in the achievement of these innovations.

Innovation package information

10

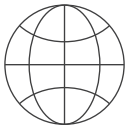
Innovation packages used

92

Experts contributed to Innovation Packaging and scaling readiness

38

Scaling partners involved in scaling innovations



4

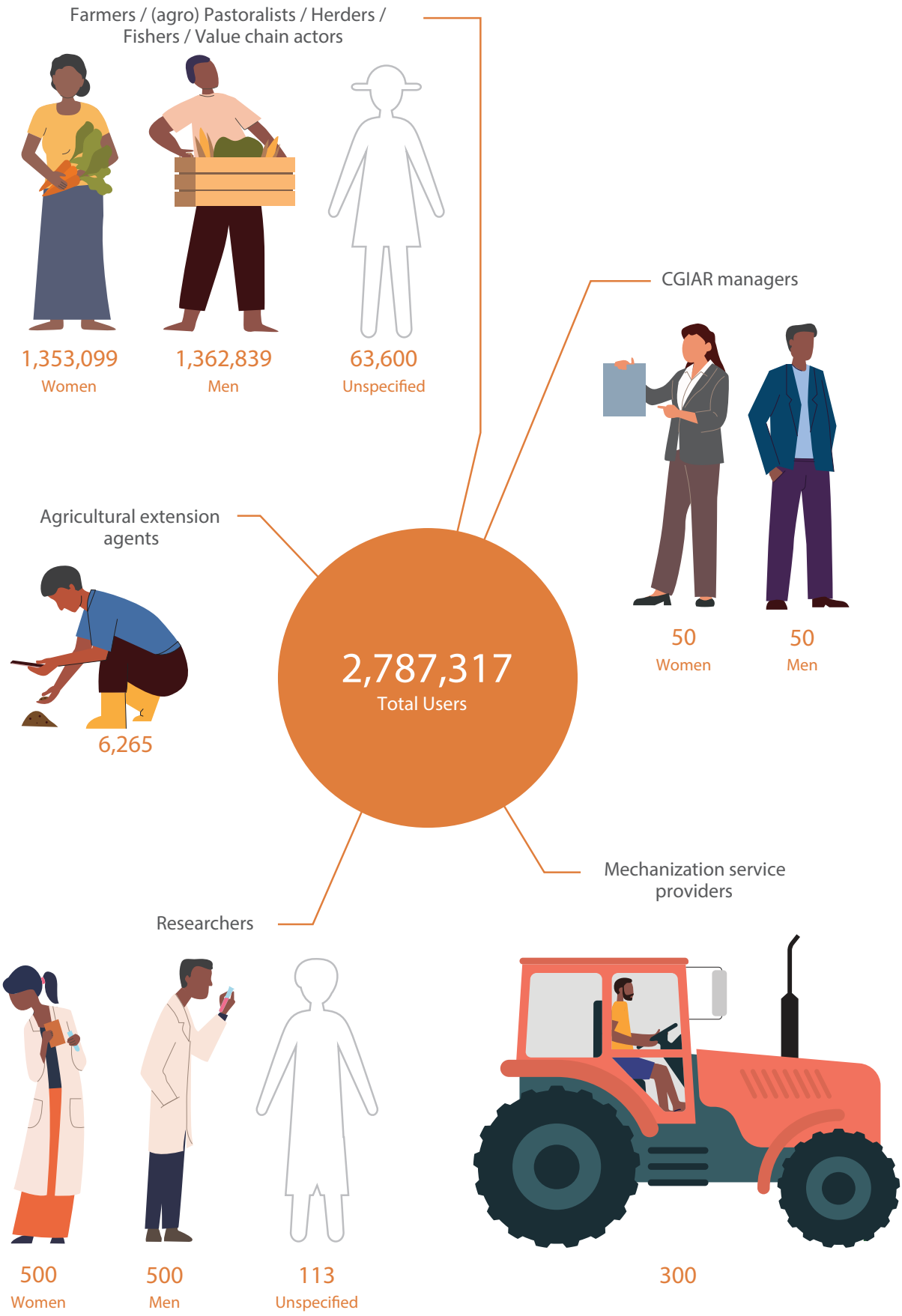
Countries for which Innovation Packages have been designed

7

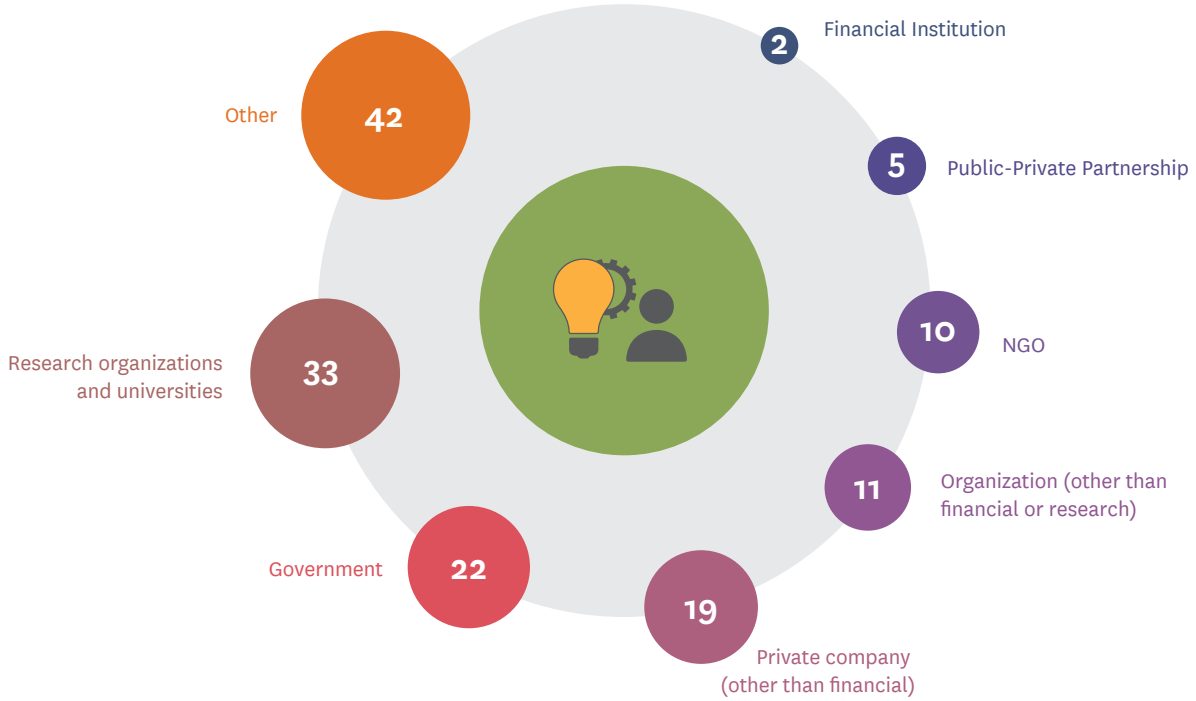
impactful scaling strategies developed

UU was an early adopter of developing Innovation Packages and was among the top three CGIAR Initiatives to report a higher number of packages. A total of 14 innovations used was reported over the years, of which the vast majority were developed as 10 Innovation Packages through an intense CGIAR IPSR pathway process across 4 countries (the remaining 4 innovations used were reported as non-IPSR innovation use at the outcome level). These innovation use cases spanned a diverse range of topics such as conservation agriculture based on minimum soil disturbance, crop residue retention, and crop diversification through rotation and intercropping systems; digital agro-advisories through the edutainment TV show, Munda MakeOver (MMO) ; mechanization starter packs; innovation portfolio management; scaling up orange-fleshed sweetpotatoes; and economical livestock management strategies. Collaboration with 38 scaling partners and 92 experts was instrumental in scaling up the innovations. Moreover, through Scaling Hub activities, dozens of scaling opportunities were assessed, leading to the development of 7 impactful scaling strategies .

Number of innovation users by actor type

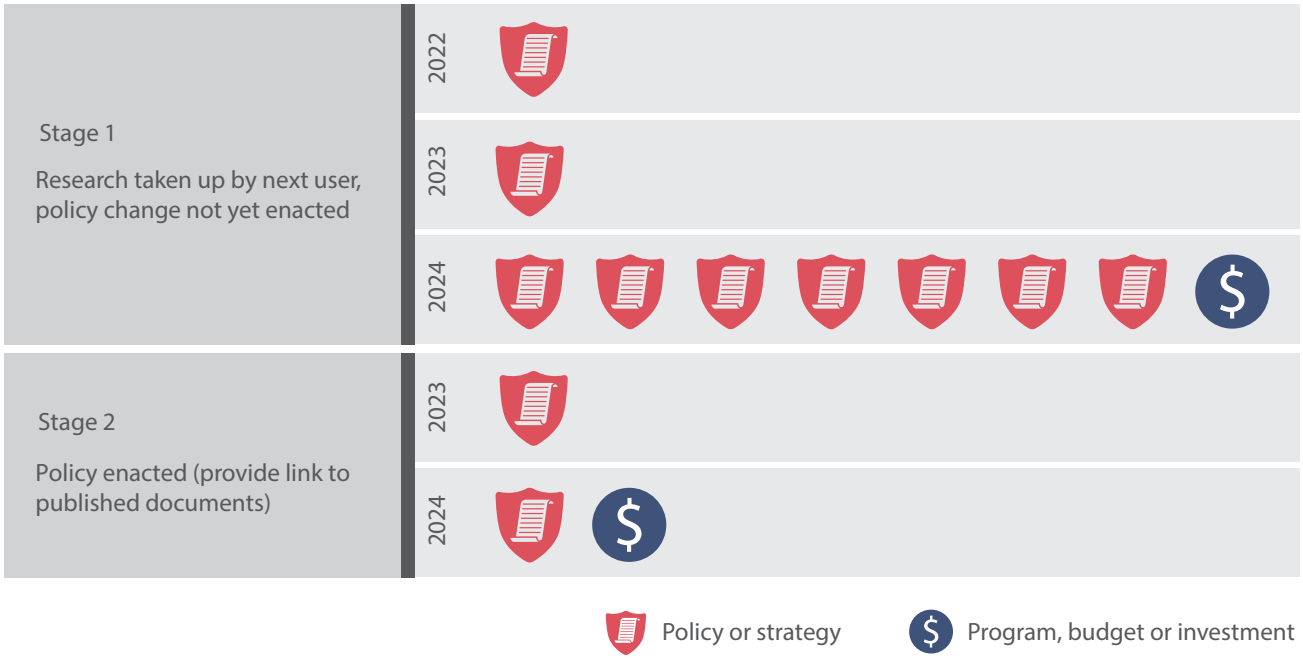


Innovation users by institution types



UU reported 14 innovation use cases that reached over 2.7 million farmers and value chain actors — including 1.3 million women — across 4 countries in ESA. This achievement was supported by 6,265 agricultural extension agents and the expertise of 1,113 researchers from NGOs, research organizations, and universities. The engagement and endorsement of 20 government ministries and departments played critical roles in scaling these innovations and embedding them into local innovation systems. Notably, the active participation of private companies and financial institutions further strengthened the Initiative's impact and reach.

Number of policies by stage and by type



Organizations whose policy has changed

Institution name	Institution acronym	Results
Association for strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa	ASARECA	2
Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa	CCARDESA	2
Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources (Ethiopia)	MOA - Ethiopia	2
African Union	AU	1
Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa	AGRA	1
CARE International	-	1
Department of Water and Sanitation (South Africa)	DWS	1
ECLOF International	-	1
Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research	EIAR	1
Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network	FANRPAN	1
Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa	FARA	1
Intergovernmental Authority on Development	IGAD	1
International Fund for Agricultural Development	IFAD	1
Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Elevage et de la Pêche	FIFAMANOR	1
Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries (Uganda)	MAAIF	1
Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (United Republic of Tanzania)	MAFC	1
Ministry of Green Economy and Environment, Zambia	MGEE	1
Ministry of Irrigation and Lowlands	MILLs	1
Sprout	-	1
Stable Foods Ltd	-	1
Batian Nuts	-	1
Shamba Records	-	1
The Insectary	-	1
Farm Depot	-	1
Agri Farmers Market	-	1

Strengthening policy frameworks was a central goal of UU and the Initiative made substantial contributions across the region. In total, 13 policies or strategies were improved with UU's support, including 4 where UU provided critical contributions to efforts led by other Initiatives.

A notable example was UU's collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and ASPIRES (Agriculture Sector Policy and Institutional. Reforms Strengthening) Tanzania in launching the Tanzania Seed Sector Development Strategy (TSSDS), which aimed to enhance seed system delivery and coordination. David Nyange, chief of party for the SERA BORA ("Better Policies") project, which was funded by the United States Agency for International Development, emphasized the significance of the TSSDS, stating: "The envisaged Seed Strategy will advance goals of national agricultural development strategies and programs such as the Agriculture Sector Development Programme II (ASDP-2, 2017/2018) and the Agenda 10/30 strategy for agricultural transformation (2022–2030), whose foundation is promoting agricultural productivity."

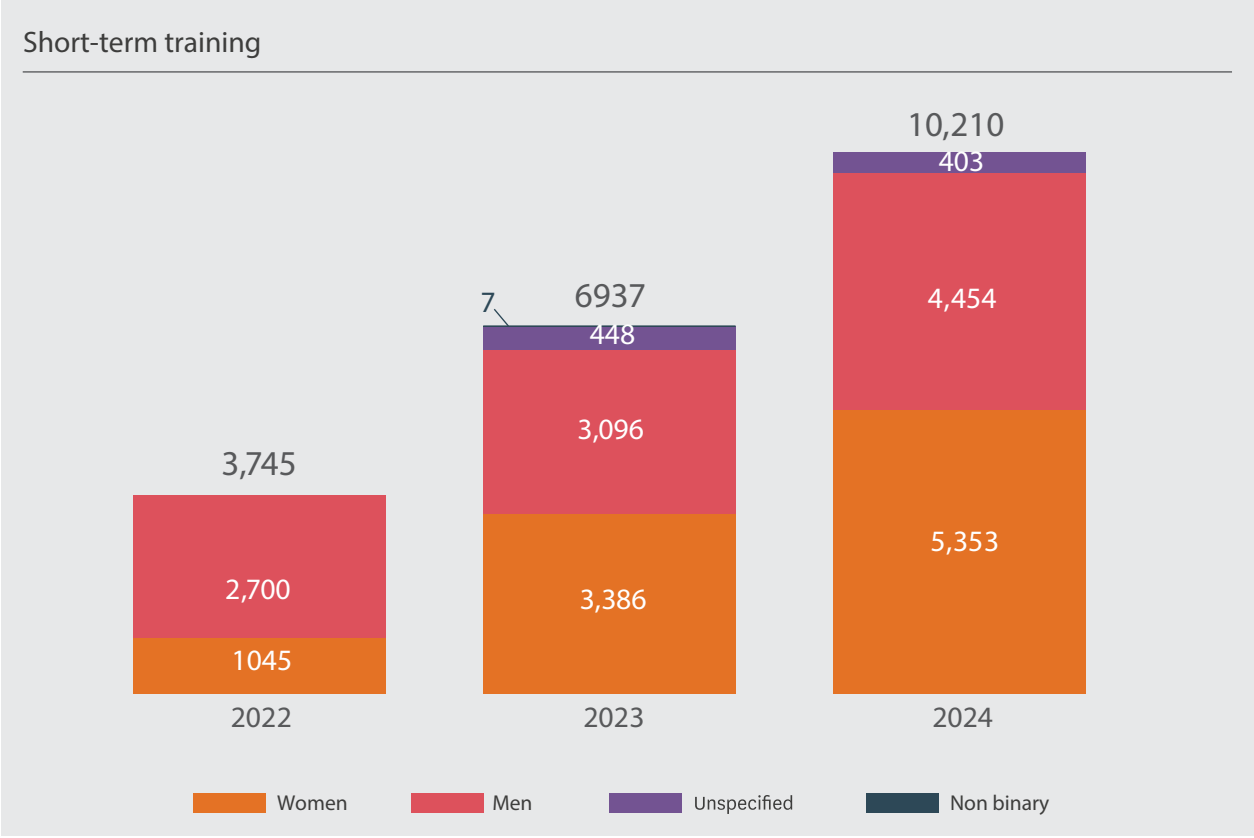
In Ethiopia, UU played a key role in supporting Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) for small-scale irrigation, working alongside the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Irrigation and Lowlands. This support directly benefited farmers such as Aman Gemeda from Adami Tulu Gido Kombolcha District, in Oromia, who shared: "There is no question that my agricultural activity will significantly transform to a larger scale, and getting enough food and ample income for my family will not be a problem anymore."

UU also contributed to a suite of strategic policy instruments, including:

- The National Framework for Weather, Water, and Climate Services in Zambia
- Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Mainstreaming Guidelines in Ethiopia
- Review of South Africa's revised Climate Change Strategy for the water sector
- The Climate-Smart Agriculture Investment Plan
- The Pretoria Declaration on Water Use in Agriculture and its linkages to nutrition
- Policy advocacy and resource mobilization through the CFSA

These efforts collectively demonstrate UU's multilevel policy engagement and its role in shaping inclusive, climate-resilient agricultural systems across ESA.

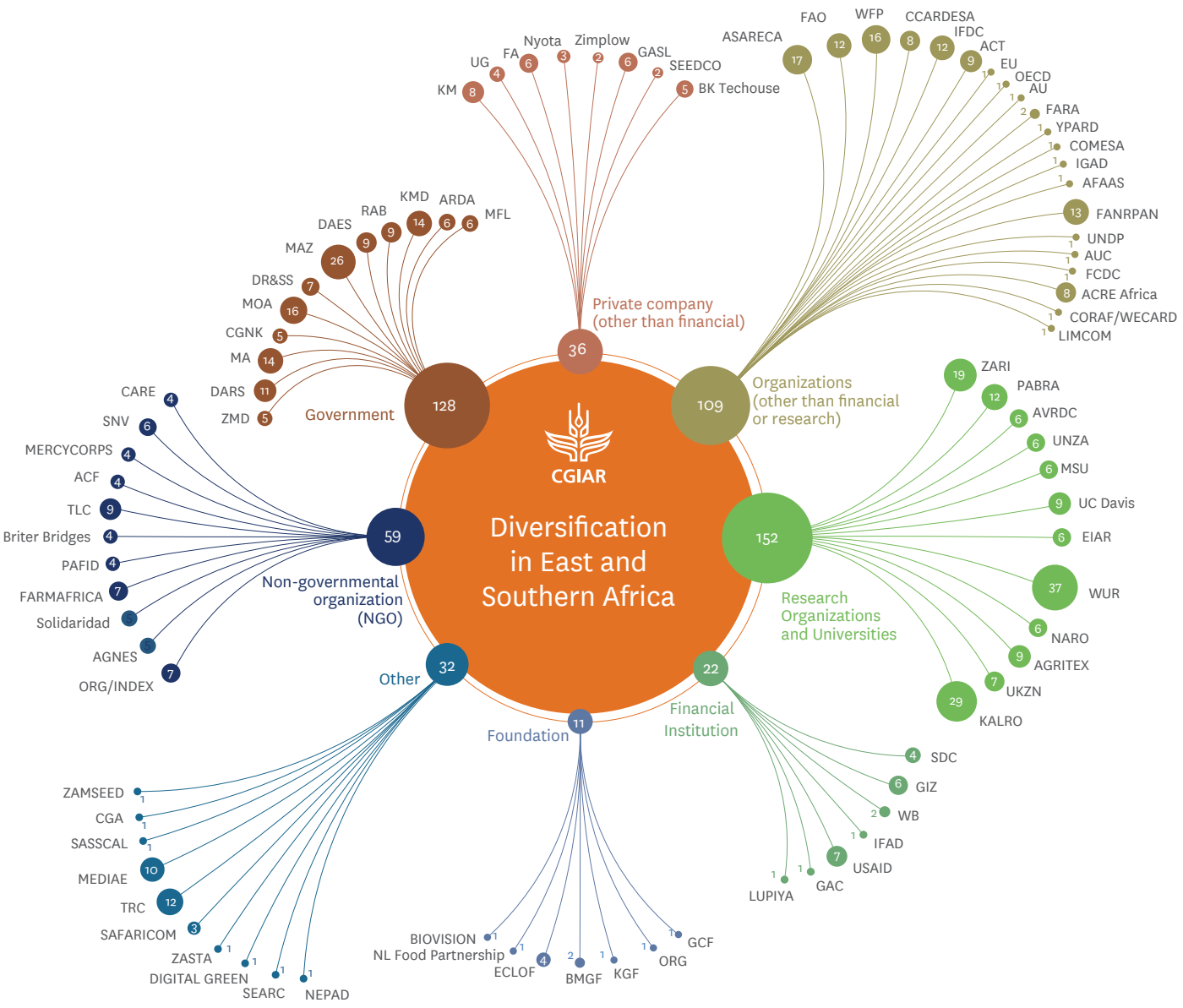
Number of individuals trained by UU



The UU Initiative trained over 20,000 individuals, resulting in meaningful shifts in knowledge and practices across target regions. Notably, 9,784 of the participants were women — demonstrating significant progress toward gender inclusivity. The graph illustrates a steady increase in the participation of women over the years, reflecting UU's deliberate integration of a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) lens across all its work package activities. The data presented pertains specifically to short-term training programs lasting less than three months.

A proud Zambian farmer standing her thriving sorghum field, demonstrating the impact of climate-smart agriculture in improving resilience and food security. Credit: Christian Thierfelder

Network of partners by partner type



Connections are sized by the number of reported results. Find the UU list of partners here.

Partnerships and Diversification in East and Southern Africa's (Ukama Ustawi) impact pathways

UU's localized partnerships were instrumental in advancing key impact pathways, supporting the scaling of innovations, strengthening agribusiness resilience, enhancing governance, and ensuring GESI in food-land-water system transformations. The CoS, as an umbrella partner mechanism, played a central role in fostering collaboration across different partners from different sectors and producing numerous results — 152 results with research institutions and universities, 128 results with governments, 36 results collaborating with private-sector companies, 200 results with NGOs and other organizations, 11 results with foundations, and 22 results with financial institutions, ensuring that diverse perspectives and expertise contributed to the EOIOs.

1. Strengthening the Scaling Ecosystem with African Institutions

UU has collaborated extensively with African research institutions and policy organizations to embed scaling frameworks and tools into national and regional programs. Partnerships with Zambia Agriculture Research Institute, Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization, Sidama Regional State Agricultural Research System, and Machinga Agricultural Development Division played critical roles in testing, adapting, and scaling climate-smart agricultural practices in maize-based systems.

The Scaling Hub, co-developed with Wageningen University and African partners, provided a space for shared learning, with Scaling Week evolving into a multi-partner, co-designed African-led knowledge exchange platform. Regional policy bodies, such as ASARECA, CCARDESA, AGNES, AKADEMIYA2063, and FANRPAN, were

instrumental in ensuring alignment with African agricultural policies and national development strategies.

2. Delivering Climate-Resilient Agro-Advisories and Risk Management solutions to 2.3 million value chain actors

Collaborations among CGIAR Centers (Alliance of Bioversity and CIAT, IWMI, IITA, IFPRI, CIMMYT); Mercy Corps AgriFin; the Busara Center for Behavioral Economics; Financial Access Consulting Services; Agora Microfinance Zambia; ministries of agriculture in Kenya, Zambia, and Ethiopia; private-sector innovators (ACRE Africa, Usiku Games, PlantVillage, Lersha); and local communities were instrumental in delivering reliable digital agro-advisories and ARM services. Their shared expertise, data exchange, and joint investments ensured context-specific solutions addressing climate vulnerabilities, enhancing productivity, and improving decision-making. By co-designing mobile applications, e-extension platforms, and climate-smart financial products, partners accelerated adaptation and enabled sustainable, scalable, and climate-resilient agricultural value chains.

3. Building Climate-Resilient Agribusinesses and Value Chains

The CFSA program, in partnership with African financial and business development organizations such as IFDC, The Rallying Cry, and Briter Bridges, has mobilized USD 14 million in financing for African agribusinesses, enabling them to scale climate-smart solutions. Local financial institutions and microfinance organizations co-designed investment strategies tailored for smallholder farmers and agripreneurs, reducing barriers to capital.

The Sustainable AgriVentures for Empowered Women and Youth program in Zimbabwe, implemented in collaboration with Marondera University, provided 150 women- and youth-led agribusinesses with critical financing, mentorship, and market access opportunities. Similarly, Entrepreneurs Community Solutions and Innovative Development, a youth-led African organization, led mentorship programs benefiting 800 farmers, strengthening youth participation in agribusiness acceleration.

4. Strengthening Governance and Policy for Climate-Resilient Agriculture

UU's partnerships with government agencies, regional policy organizations (ASARECA, CCARDESA, FANRPAN), and CGIAR programs directly influenced policy coherence, institutional capacity, and governance structures. Notably, collaborations with ministries of agriculture in Tanzania, Kenya, Zambia, and Ethiopia led to policy advancements such as the Tanzania Seed Sector Development Strategy and Ethiopia's revised Gender Mainstreaming Guidelines. These interventions helped to bridge the gaps between research, policy, and practice, ensuring the long-term sustainability of climate-smart agricultural transformations.

5. Localizing Knowledge and Innovation through the Community of Spirit (CoS)

UU's Community of Spirit (CoS) has been instrumental in ensuring that African voices led innovation adoption, scaling, and knowledge exchange. African-driven initiatives within CoS include:

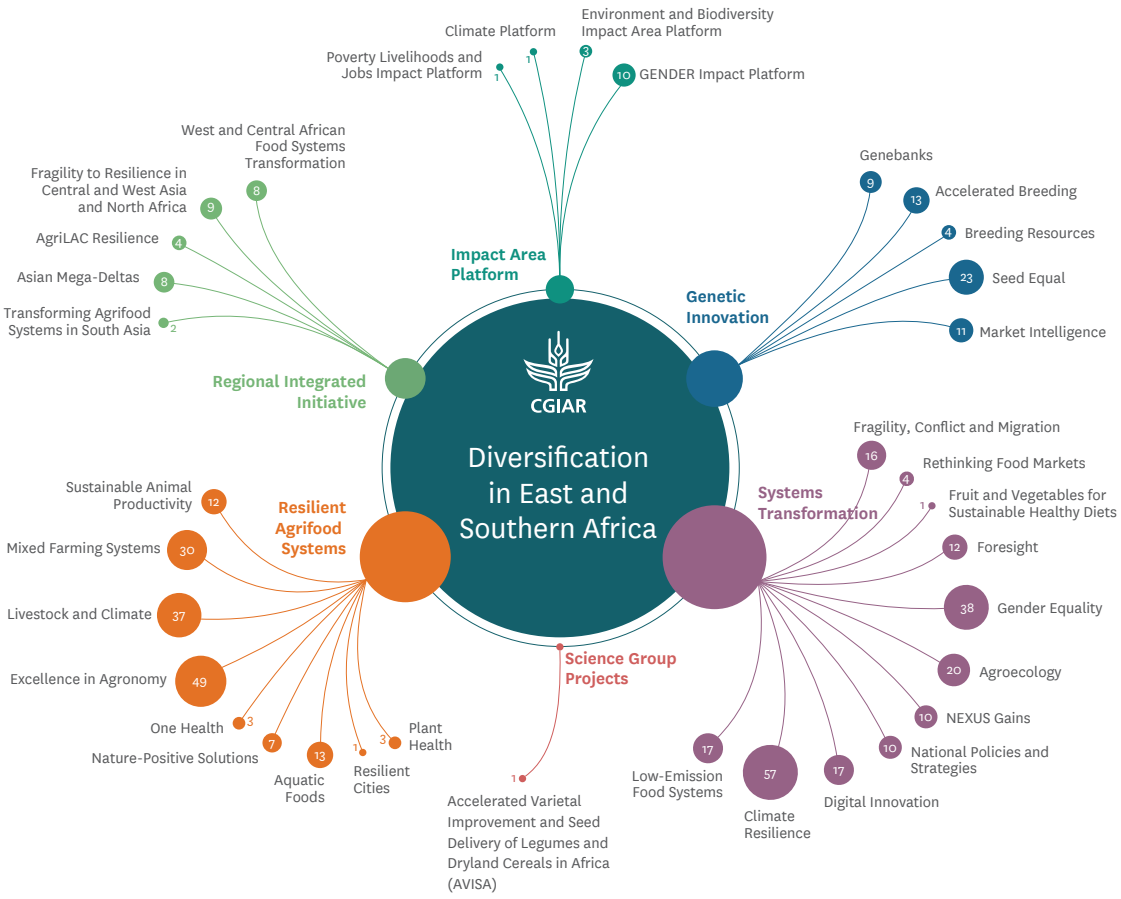
- ShareFair events in Zimbabwe and Ethiopia, bringing together African farmers, researchers, and agripreneurs to exchange best practices.
- A partnership with Albacox to develop Virtual Field Trips, expanding knowledge access in hard-to-reach African farming communities.
- A design sprint with BongoHive, an African innovation hub, driving local solutions for agricultural challenges.

UU's partnerships have been intentionally African-led and contextually embedded, ensuring that local institutions, agribusinesses, and policymakers drive agricultural transformation. By leveraging African research expertise, financial institutions, farmer networks, and policy actors, UU strengthened agrifood systems, improved climate resilience, and promoted GESI integration at scale. UU's Community of Spirit will continue to serve as a catalyst for knowledge exchange, ensuring that African innovation, leadership, and partnerships remain at the forefront of agricultural transformation efforts across ESA.

Plenary session during Scaling Week 2024, Nairobi Kenya
Credit: Bobby Shabangu

Section 6: **CGIAR Portfolio linkages**

Diversification in East and Southern Africa's (Ukama Ustawi) internal network of collaborations



Connections are sized by the number of reported results. Collaborations where only one result was reported with a linkage between two Initiatives are excluded.

Portfolio linkages and Diversification in East and Southern Africa's (Ukama Ustawi) impact pathways

The UU Initiative re-affirmed its strategic positioning in advance of CGIAR's climate-resilient agriculture agenda by synergistically contributing to the sustainability of agrifood systems in collaboration with other CGIAR Initiatives such as Foresight; West and Central Africa Food Systems Transformation; Livestock and Climate; Fragility, Conflict, and Migration; Climate Resilience; Asian Mega-Deltas; and Low-Emission Food Systems. Driven by its mantra of ***assess-apply-scale,*** its strategic WPs straddled mechanization, agribusiness, climate change policies, gender equality, and innovation scaling. The interlinkage of UU work with other Initiatives enabled the realization of its EOIOs.

For example, UU's collaboration with the Climate Resilience Initiative within the Systems Transformation space produced 57 results delivered at scale. These collaborative efforts resulted in de-risked agriculture with innovative digital services and financial products (EOIO 2). UU also collaborated with the Excellence in Agronomy Initiative (shared 49 results) to deliver tailor-made, climate-smart agriculture to millions of farmers across the region, contributing to diversification and sustainable intensification (EOIO 1). Other Initiatives included Gender Equality (38 shared results), Livestock and Climate (37 shared results), Mixed Farming Systems (30 shared results), among others.

Through cross-Center (e.g. Alliance of Bioversity and CIAT, IWMI, IITA, and WorldFish) and cross-pooled-project/programs (e.g. AICCRA, and Pan-African Bean Research Alliance (PABRA)), agribusiness acceleration in ESA (EOIO 3) and innovation scaling through the Scaling Hub and creation of a special Scaling Fund was achieved (EOIO 6). This extended to collaborations with policy dialogue bodies in the region such as AGNES to create enabling environments for sustainable crop diversification and trade within the region (EOIO 4). UU also ensured effective and wide GESI collaborations within UU and beyond with other CGIAR Initiatives and Platforms (EOIO 5).

Overall, by linking to other Initiatives, UU demonstrated its commitment to a TOC that promised a systems approach with co-designed diversification and intensification, de-risking agriculture through digitalizing, agribusiness solution, enabling environment, innovation scaling, and applied gender transformative pathways.


DIESEL ENGINE

Section 7: **Key result story**

The USD 734-M Spark: How Ukama Ustawi Cultivated a Resilient Agricultural Future by Catalyzing Investment in National Agrifood Systems

Ukama Ustawi (UU) has enabled USD 734 million in policy and investment design to transform agricultural production and value chains across Eastern and Southern Africa

Local entrepreneurs discuss packaging and distribution at a small-scale agro-processing facility in Zambia, showcasing value addition through bottled local beverages.

Credit: Christian Thierfelder

Primary Impact Area

Contributing Initiative

Climate Resilience and Excellence in Agronomy

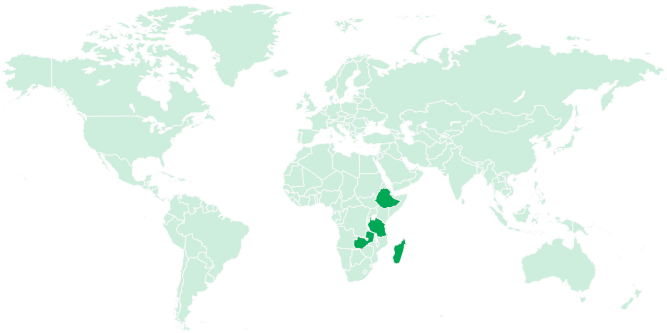
Contributing Centers

IWMI · ILRI · Alliance of Bioversity and CIAT · IITA · ICRISAT · CIMMYT · WorldFish · AfricaRice

Contributing external partners

Zambia Meteorological Department · Zambia Ministry of Agriculture · Mamadi & Company · Agricultural Sector Policy and Institutional Reform Strengthening (ASPIRES) Tanzania · Madagascar Ministry of Agriculture · Livestock, and Fisheries · Ethiopia Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Irrigation and Lowlands

Geographic scope



Regions: Eastern and Southern Africa

Countries: Ethiopia · Zambia · Tanzania · Madagascar

Ukama Ustawi (UU) has played a significant role in strengthening agricultural systems across 12 East and Southern African countries by fostering partnerships and mobilizing significant investments. Through its innovative operational model, UU strategically supported USD 734 million in agricultural investments, exceeding its initial USD 200 million target. This funding, leveraged by governments and development partners, goes into scaling climate-smart innovations, enhancing value chains, and strengthening resilience to transform food systems, improve livelihoods, and drive sustainable agricultural growth across the region.

Agriculture is the backbone of Africa's economy, yet millions of smallholder farmers still struggle with low productivity, climate shocks, and limited market access. However, there is a massive public and private financing gap of approximately USD 180 billion a year in sub-Saharan Africa for agriculture[1]. Investing in agricultural transformation isn't just about food; it's also about livelihoods, resilience, and economic growth.

One of UU's most significant contributions was in Zambia's agricultural mechanization sector. By aligning and coordinating with key stakeholders, UU helped shape the Zambia Mechanization Strategy, which targets USD 184 million investment in farm mechanization. This Initiative increased access to modern farming equipment, thereby improving the productivity and efficiency of smallholder farmers. In Ethiopia, UU co-developed an innovative Public-Private Partnership Strategy to provide smallholders with access to private-sector resources and innovative water management solutions.

In Madagascar, where farmers face severe climate risks, UU played a crucial role in development of the Climate-Smart Agriculture Investment Plan (CSAIP). By integrating climate risk assessments with investment planning, CSAIP provided a structured roadmap for building resilience in key agricultural value chains, including rice, maize, and beans. This strategic approach attracted USD 250 million in funding from the World Bank, channeling investments into climate-resilient seeds, irrigation expansion, and digital agro-advisory services.

Access to quality seeds has long been a challenge in Tanzania. Recognizing this, UU facilitated collaboration among 150 stakeholders to co-develop the Tanzania Seed Sector Development Strategy (TSSDS) 2024. This initiative aimed to enhance seed production, distribution, and financing mechanisms. Furthermore, UU supported the launch of the Fertilizer and Seed Security Initiative, which is on track to secure USD 300 million in investments for seed infrastructure, expanded agro-dealer networks, and improved access to inputs. The initiative is expected to create 20,000 jobs, particularly benefiting women and youth, and double cereal and oilseed yields by 2030.

The legacy of Ukama Ustawi lies in its ability to create an enabling environment for sustained investment. As Africa continues to navigate the challenges of a changing climate and evolving agricultural demands, Initiatives like Ukama Ustawi serve as a powerful blueprint for how innovation, collaboration, and investment can create a more food-secure and prosperous future.

> Ukama Ustawi is more than an Initiative — it's a movement that has shifted the paradigm for agricultural investment in Africa. By mobilizing over USD 734 million, we've demonstrated what's possible when science, policy, and partnerships align with purpose. This is not just about numbers; it's about transforming the lives and livelihoods of millions across Eastern and Southern Africa, building a resilient, inclusive, and climate-smart agricultural future.
>
> Inga Jacobs-Mata, Director for Growth and Inclusion, IWMI/Ukama Ustawi Lead

1 https://www.avpa.africa/the-state-of-agricultural-financing-in-africa/

2022 key result story

Agricultural mechanization transforming East and Southern Africa's farming sector

2022 key result story

Munda Makeover teaches climate-smart agriculture to 3 million people each week

2023 key result story

Co-developing mechanization solutions for sustainable and inclusive farming in East and Southern Africa

2023 key result story

Ukama Ustawi cross-cutting platforms are driving co-creation and scaling of bundled socio-technical innovations that drive diversification efforts in East and Southern Africa

CGIAR

INITIATIVE ON

Diversification in East and Southern Africa

Setting up camera during the Virtual Field Trip on Drip irrigation in Makonde, Zimbabwe.

Credit: Dennis Choruma