



# BUILDING SMALLHOLDERS' RESILIENCE THROUGH REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE

**MARCH 2022 – OCTOBER 2025 | EMBU AND THARAKA NITHI COUNTIES**

**Agriculture is an essential part of Kenya's economy, directly contributing 25% of the total gross domestic product (GDP) and another 27% indirectly through linkages to other sectors, and accounts for 65% of Kenya's export earnings.**

Like other parts of the country, Embu County, one of the leading food baskets in Kenya and Tharaka Nithi, a semi-arid county where over 40% of the county's population lives below the poverty line (less than one dollar a day) are facing a host of challenges and threats. These include ecosystem degradation, climate variability and change, and unsustainable production methods among others, thus threatening agricultural production and productivity, as well as food and nutrition security.

Since 2020, Farm Africa and AGRA have been promoting regenerative agriculture to enhance land productivity in Embu County. As a result, the farmers who were engaged

in the Regenerative Agriculture project reported a 20% increase in harvest thus escaping total crop failure following reduced rainfall in 2021.

The improved production was attributed to regenerative agriculture practices such as cover cropping, mulching, minimum tillage, use of well decomposed farmyard manure, agroforestry, micro-dosing, intercropping and use of bio fertilisers.

These were found to have contributed to reduced moisture loss and soil enrichment that strengthened crop resilience to drought.

As a scale-up to the initial phase, Farm Africa and AGRA will influence the adoption of RA best practices at policy level (county government and research institutions), commercial level (input distribution and output marketing) and at smallholder farmer level (increased adaptation to climate change and income).

## WE ARE WORKING WITH

- 50,000 farmers
- 250 Village-based Advisors (VBAs)
- 200,000 indirect beneficiaries

## OUR PARTNERS

- Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO)
- Ministry of Agriculture Livestock and Fisheries (MoALF)
- County Governments of Embu and Tharaka Nithi Departments of Agriculture
- Cropnuts
- Tertiary institutions
- Aggregators
- Digital technology and financial services providers
- Seed companies
- Markets

The Regenerative Agriculture initiative is funded by the IKEA Foundation through the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa. It is being implemented in Embu and Tharaka Nithi Counties by Farm Africa.





## DEVELOPING MARKET-ORIENTED BUSINESS MODELS TO ENHANCE ADVANCEMENT OF REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE

We are doing this by identifying and promoting incentive mechanisms such as aggregation, pay-for-work, insurance, etc for Village-based Advisors (VBAs) to provide RA extension services.

We are also leveraging financial institutions to improve access to finance for agribusinesses, VBAs and smallholder farmers adopting RA practices. Additionally, the project is providing business development services (BDS) to traders, processors, and VBAs.

To improve produce quality, we are providing training to 250 VBAs on post-harvest handling and storage.



## ENHANCING FARM PRODUCTIVITY AND RESILIENCE THROUGH REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE

Regenerative agriculture involves farming practices that rejuvenate soil health.

The project is training 250 VBAs in Embu and Tharaka-Nithi on best RA practices, technologies and home garden establishment. Through the kitchen garden initiative, increased fruit and vegetable production and consumption at household level will be enhanced.

Digital platforms to support e-extension, input and market output systems for VBAs and farmers are also being employed.



## IMPROVING GOVERNMENT CAPACITY TO ENFORCE ENABLING POLICIES FOR RA

To promote adoption of regenerative agriculture practices at the national and county levels, the project is identifying and mobilising policy makers for capacity building on policies in RA such as reviewing the National Agriculture Sector Extension Policy (NASEP). Policy briefs are also being developed for sharing with other counties.

To ensure appropriate dissemination models for RA innovations are developed, the project is developing and disseminating knowledge on best RA innovations for use by institutions as well as organising policy lobbying workshops with county project steering committee members.

