Biovision Africa Trust

Annual Report

2023

**BvAT appreciates the editorial team of
Dr. David Amudavi, Ms. Venancia Wambua and
Ms. Caroline Mwendwa.**

Biovision Africa Trust

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Acronyms & Abbreviations

ACS	Africa Climate Summit
ADFNS	Africa Day for Food and Nutrition Security
AOC	African Organic Conference
ARSO	African Organisation for Standardisation
ASBPP	African Seed and Biotechnology Programme Platform
ASTGS	Agricultural Sector Transformation and Growth Strategy
BMZ	The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
BvAT	Biovision Africa Trust
BVF	Biovision Foundation for ecological development
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CLO	Country Lead Organization
COVID – 19	Coronavirus disease
CSC	Continental Steering Committee
ECCAS	Economic Community for Central African States
ECHO	ECHO community
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EOA-I	Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative
ESA	Ecological Sustainable Agriculture
EU	European Union
DREA	Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture
FCP	Farmer Communication Programme
FFA	Farmer Field Assistant
FFO	Farmer Field Officer
FiBL	Research Institute of Organic Agriculture
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation
Icipe	International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology
IKEAF	IKEA Foundation

KALRO	Kenya Agriculture and Livestock Research Organization
KBC	Kenya Broadcasting Corporation
KCOA	Knowledge Centre for Organic Agriculture in Africa
KHEA	Knowledge Hub for Eastern Africa
LDF	Louise Dreyfus Foundation
MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries
MOALFC	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives
MT	Master Trainers
NOAP	National Organic Agriculture Policy
NOGAMU	National Organic Agriculture Movement of Uganda
ROAM	Rwanda Organic Agriculture Movement
PELUM	Participatory Ecological Land Use Management
PGS	Participatory Guarantee System
RECs	Regional Economic Committees
RAC	Regenerative Agriculture Conference
RIA	Regulatory Impact Assessment
SAT	Sustainable Agriculture Tanzania
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SFA	Smart Farmer Africa
SGL	Standard Group Limited
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SSNC	Swedish Society for Nature Conservation
TBC	Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation
TLRI	Tanzania Livestock Research Institute
TOFARI	Tanzania Forestry Research Institute
ToToF	Training of Teams of Facilitators
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNFSS	UN Food Systems Summit
WFD	World Food Day
ZEF	Centre for Development Research Bonn University

Acknowledgements

Special gratitude goes to our strategic partners and donors whose support made possible implementation of our programmes over the reporting period. Specifically, this goes to Biovision Foundation for Ecological Development (BVF) of Switzerland for supporting the Farmer Communication Programme (FCP) in East Africa; the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC) for supporting the African Union Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) Initiative and its Continental Steering Committee's Secretariat; and the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) for supporting the Knowledge Hub for Organic Agriculture in Eastern Africa as part of the Knowledge Centre for Organic Agriculture in Africa (KCOA) project through German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ). We are also very grateful to the African Union for entrusting us with the noble responsibility of hosting its Secretariat for the EOA Initiative.

We are grateful to our Board of Trustees for its guidance in ensuring the organization focuses in achieving its mandate and objectives. We acknowledge the contribution of all our implementing partners: development organisations, research institutions, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development in Kenya, for their openness to collaboration that led to greater impact of our activities.

We appreciate the media partners including Standard Group, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation, and others whose role as vehicles of dissemination cannot be underscored enough. The public was adequately made aware about our organization's role in contributing to provision of extension services to farmers in Kenya and around the continent through its various programmes.

To all our farmers who have given us the opportunity to serve them, through our various interventions, your belief in our goal to contribute in improving livelihoods made the impact we have so far achieved possible.

Last but not least, we salute BvAT staff, whose commitment to duty, and the teamwork of a shared vision brought to life the organisation's goals.

Message from the Chair, Board of Trustees

The year 2023 presented great opportunities for BvAT to take its position in continental and global platforms, as a champion for Ecological Organic Agriculture. Indeed, we took the front seat in steering conversations around the potential of agroecology in mitigating global risks such as food insecurity, and vulnerability in the face of climate change.

The conferences, and summits held nationally, regionally, and internationally with great vigour in advancing the sustainability agenda, speak of the inherent will to not only empower the farming community to remain resilient, but also to create an enabling environment for stakeholders to take a firm stand on sustainable food systems.

The 1st Eastern Africa Agroecology conference that drew participants from 20 countries across the world was a harbinger that stamped the clarion call for all states to reconsider the potential agroecology offers in reversing the failing production systems. The call to action from this conference which presents a workable roadmap to a sustainable future, is indeed an invitation to all stakeholders involved to take their strand in weaving this desirable future that is within our reach.

The recognition by partners in these major conferences that took place in the year including the EU's side event of the COP 28, the Africa Climate Summit, the Africa Day for Food and Nutrition Security, the 5th African Organic Conference, and the National Food Systems Transformation conference, all of which BvAT's Executive Director was a major speaker, demonstrate the footprint BvAT is making in the advocacy for a food secure Africa.

I laud the Executive Director and his entire team for a year of stellar performance in achieving our organizational goals, at institutional and projects implementation levels. We can only move forward with the continued support we receive from our esteemed development partners and donors. We are privileged to advance similar agenda of contributing towards sustainable food systems within our continent.

Ms. Anna A. Onyango

Chairperson and Trustee

Message from the Executive Director

The year kicked off with a bang as we hosted one of the most successful agroecology conferences, one of its kind bringing together researchers, donors, policy makers, practitioners, farmers, and other stakeholders in the agroecological sector from all corners of the world. The conference was indeed a trail blazer, bringing to the fore the forgotten force that lies within agroecology. It stirred a cause among many to revive efforts towards restoring that which we have lost in maintaining sustainable food systems.

The year 2023 marked the third year of implementation of our five-year strategic plan and we can confidently say, we are well on our way to successful actualization. It is in this year that we scaled to great heights in advocacy, network expansion with likeminded partners and made headways in diversifying our resource base.

I am also excited at the new opportunities our efforts drew in the year. Most commendably, the new strategic partnerships we acquired with GIZ, in rolling out a new project in Western Kenya, a project albeit whose short-term plan, turned around many lives for targeted small-scale farmers in Busia and Kakamega counties. The testimonials we have recorded demonstrate the impact achieved through this project.

In the same breath, in partnership with Louis Dreyfus Foundation (LDF) we have expanded our wings to Nakuru County in Rift Valley region and Kitui County, of Eastern Kenya, two of the regions with greatest impact potential. Extending further, we broke ground in Arid and Semi-Arid (ASAL) areas with the Native People and the Environment Project (PEP), supported through CABI Switzerland, which aims to support the communities in the ASAL areas of Isiolo and Baringo counties of Kenya and region around Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania to reclaim degraded rangelands. All these efforts demonstrate that the resources we inject in various projects are practically bearing fruits, in improving the livelihoods of small-scale farmers, and more partners are recognizing this impact.

Our efforts locally continue to bear fruits as more sections of the economy embrace principles and practices of agroecology in formulating policies and designing programmes. This is evident as various county governments are now paving way for agroecology-based policies and strategies. Two counties where our presence is strongly felt already have agroecology policies and there are several other counties in Kenya that have started working on their county agroecology strategies.

We continue to hold hands with other partners to actualize the agenda of food security as witnessed in the National World Food Day event held in Kakamega County, where BvAT took centre stage in collaborating with other major organizations led by FAO, to organize and support the celebrations. We have indeed taken up our seat on tables that matter when it comes to advocating for improved livelihoods for small scale farmers.

To staff of BvAT, you have proven that a team dedicated to a cause in which it believes, cannot fail. It is fulfilling to steer such a formidable team.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. David Amudavi (PhD)

Governance Structure

- The Board of Trustees (BoT) is composed of 5 trustees and the Executive Director as Ox-officio member and it's headed by the Chair. It is responsible for the organization's strategic direction, legal obligations, and organizational effectiveness.
- Senior Management Team (SMT), is composed of heads of programmes and departments and headed by the Executive Director, who reports to the Chair of the BoT. It is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the organisation.
- The members of Board of Trustees are as follows:

Ms. Anna A. Onyango
Chairperson and Trustee

Development practitioner with 39+ years of experience working in the Kenya's agricultural sector. Formerly, Agriculture Secretary in the State Department for Crops Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Development.

Mr. Andreas Schriber
Founding Trustee & First Chair

Co-Founder and former CEO of Biovision Foundation (2003-2020).

Prof. Christian Borgemeister
Trustee

Director of Ecology and Natural Resources Management Department at the Centre for Development Research (ZEF) of the University of Bonn, Germany.

Dr. David Amudavi
Executive Director

Ex-Officio Member.

Dr. Janet Edeme
Trustee

Head of Rural Development Division, Acting Head of Agriculture & Food Security Division, African Union Commission and Chairperson of the AU Continental Steering Committee (CSC) of the EOA Initiative.

Prof. Judith Wakhungu
Trustee Emerita

Kenya's former Ambassador to France, Portugal, Serbia and Holy See.

Prof. Onesmo K. Ole-MoiYoi
Trustee Emeritus

Senior Visiting Scientist at the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (icipe).

Biovision Africa Trust Staff

1. BvAT Staff during the annual retreat in Mombasa
2. Representatives from BvAT participate in the 5th African Organic Conference, in Kigali Rwanda
3. BvAT Executive Director Dr David Amudavi plants a tree during the World Food Day Celebration in Bukura (ATC), Kakamega

About Biovision Africa Trust (BvAT)

Vision

A food secure African continent with healthy people living in a healthy environment.

Mission

To alleviate poverty and improve the livelihoods of rural communities in Africa through disseminating relevant information and building the capacity of farmers and partners for the ecological transformation of African agriculture and food systems.

Overall goal

To sustainably improve the health and prosperity of people in Africa while conserving the environment with agroecology and ecological organic agriculture as a basis for all life.

Core values

- **Environmental stewardship**
- **Accountability and transparency**
- **Gender inclusivity and Non-discrimination**
- **Efficiency and effectiveness**
- **Integrity**

PRIORITY AREAS

Information & Communication

Generation and dissemination of knowledge and information on ecologically sound and useful innovations in human, animal, plant, and environmental health.

Research & Development

Support applied and social sciences research into special issues and challenges facing smallholder farmers in order to provide useful and practical solutions.

Capacity Development

Support educational and empowerment programmes amongst small-holder communities in partnership with other players from the industry, public sector, and civil society.

Resource Mobilization

Seeking and providing grants and technical assistance to public charitable trusts or organizations working with rural communities to promote ecologically sustainable agriculture and development.

Our Areas of Operation

Programmes & Projects of BvAT

In the year 2023, BvAT had the following projects implemented in the continent and beyond:

i. The Farmer Communication Programme

ii. The African Union Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative

iii. Knowledge Centre for Organic Agriculture in Africa

iv. Other BvAT Projects

- Native Plants for Environment and People (Native PEP) Project
- Louis Dreyfus Livelihood Diversification Project

i) The Farmer Communication Programme (FCP)

The FCP employs multifaceted pathways to provide up to date information and knowledge on ecologically sustainable agriculture to smallholder farmers in Kenya and Tanzania with spillovers to other farmers in Africa. The programme made its first footprint in enhancing farmers' knowledge on sustainable agriculture in 2005 through The Organic Farmer Magazine. The farmer communication later expanded to include The Organic Farmer Radio and Infonet, a web-based knowledge platform, in 2007. In 2009 the FCP grew to establish field-based extension services through the Farmer Communication Outreach pathway. In the same year, building on the successes of TOF Magazine, Mkulima Mbunifu Magazine was started in Arusha, Tanzania. It is gratifying that each communication pathway has evolved to become fully fledged stand-alone but providing synergies to others under the FCP.

In spite of research institutions innovating and generating new knowledge relevant to smallholder farmer needs, the chronic challenge of reaching the smallholder farmer with the right information persists. BvAT provides an excellent opportunity through its FCP in addressing this gap. Our programme's work is motivated by evidence that validated and relevant information improves the farmer's livelihoods; environmentally, socially and economically.

ii) Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative (EOA-I)

The Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative (EOA-I) is a continental initiative that holds promise for increasing the productivity of Africa's smallholder farms, with consequent positive impacts on food security. The propelling idea for this initiative emerged after the African Union Commission (AUC) supported a workshop in Kenya in 2011, which resulted in the development of the concept note, proposal and later formation of a Central Steering Committee (CSC) on organic agriculture.

Seeing value in this outcome, the AUC then broadened the membership of this committee by including in it representatives from the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in Africa, NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, Farmers Organizations, Civil Society Organizations (CSO), Donors, Private Sector Agriculture based organizations, African Organic Network (AfroNet), Organic Certification bodies, Research Institutions, Academic Institutions, Ecological Organic Agriculture Industry Institutions or Networks and Development Partners. As a measure of its support, the African Union Commission proposes the Chair to the Continental EOA Steering Committee.

The initiative has been implemented in Africa since 2012 first on a pilot basis in six countries, namely Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Nigeria and Zambia. The rollout has risen to eight (8) countries – four in Eastern Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania) and four in West Africa (Mali, Nigeria, Benin, and Senegal), with an overall goal of mainstreaming ecological agriculture into national agricultural production systems, plans and policies.

iii) Knowledge Centre for Organic Agriculture (KCOA)

The Continental Digital Knowledge Platform is part of the KCOA project coordinated by the GIZ. The overall objective of the project is to introduce knowledge hubs successfully as an innovative strategy for promoting organic agriculture with actors in the regions of West, East, and Southern Africa.

For Eastern Africa, the overall goal of the project is to ensure the integration of Ecological Organic Agriculture into the various countries' agricultural systems. The KCOA Project aligns with the Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative (EOA-I).

The project focuses on four main action fields:

1. **Collecting/preparing knowledge in organic agriculture:** Validated technical and methodological knowledge for the promotion of organic agriculture, including processing, is prepared for the context of the participating countries and stakeholder groups.
2. **Dissemination of knowledge to many users:** Validated knowledge, strategies and good practices in the field of organic agriculture, adapted to the contexts of the countries participating in the regional knowledge hubs, are disseminated to various target user groups.
3. **Networking within agricultural value chains:** Key actors in the organic agriculture value chains of the participating countries in the three regions network in an exemplary manner for replication.
4. **Advocacy:** Promoting practices, systems, and knowledge that prioritize ecological sustainability, social justice, economic viability, and gender equality in agriculture and food systems. In this context, the main pillars of advocacy are i) communicating and raising awareness about the benefits of AE/OA practices to shift public perception towards more sustainable food systems; ii) promoting policies and political dialogue that create a viable environment for a widespread adoption of AE/AO in multiple-levels and especially that support smallholder farmers and their networks; iii) establishing cooperation and networks between organizations and individuals involved in the agroecological and organic movement by leveraging resources to expand their visibility, influence, and impact.

Other BvAT Projects

i) Native Plants for Environment and People (Native PEP) Project

Native PEP's project's main goal is to improve rural livelihoods in East Africa by selecting and using native plants for land regeneration and community forests within a holistic and sustainable land use approach. It is implemented In Baringo County and Isiolo Counties, including bordering regions in Laikipia, Meru, Samburu and Marsabit Counties of Kenya and in Northern Tanzania in Arusha Region and adjacent areas in Kilimanjaro (Hai District) and Manyara Regions (Simanjiro District), mainly covering a belt from Lake Manyara to Arusha and Moshi (Kilimanjaro Region).

The project's objectives are to:

- Restore degraded land with a diverse species of locally adapted plant species.
- Providing feeds for livestock.
- Reduce soil erosion.
- Improve nutrition for the communities.
- Provide sources of income.
- Plant Microclimate.

The project is implemented in partnership with CABI, CETRAD, TLRI, TOFARI and The University of Nairobi.

ii) Louis Dreyfus Livelihood Diversification Project

This is a 3 – year project that is set to kick off in the year 2024. The Project aims to promote selected agroecology practices to enhance food and nutrition, strengthen access to markets and improve resilience of livelihoods by smallholder farmers specifically women and youth in Kitui and Nakuru counties of Kenya.

Project objectives are to:

1. Enhance adoption of agroecological farming practices (agroforestry, water harvesting techniques, soil health management, crop rotation, crop diversification, soil protection, conservation agriculture, etc.) among smallholder women farmers and youth.
2. Develop a revolving fund scheme of livestock production (small ruminants -improved dairy goats and rabbits) and bee keeping as alternative livelihood sources.
3. Enhance capability to access and control resources through establishment of local level institutions (VSLAs) for farmers and youth to access financial and market functions/services for supporting agroecological farming transitions.
4. Enhance access to markets by small holder farmers by supporting existing agroecology-enterprises (SMEs) to off-take farmers produce and ensure farmers are making profits from agroecological farming.
5. Enhance delivery of project goals and objectives through structured management and monitoring and evaluation.

A farmer checking his compost manure

BvAT Key Achievements

The success of our efforts is in the number of lives we change through the interventions designed to: Empower the small-scale farmer with information on agroecology in order to increase yields and improve their livelihoods; Lobbying for markets and trade; and advocating for favourable policies and enabling environments.

The following are the results achieved in the above listed areas:

RESILIENT LIVELIHOODS

	BvAT TOTAL
People reached through awareness creation on AE/EOA per channel used.	29,295,067
Farmers trained on AE/EOA	21,237
Champions (farmers, extension agents, and other value chain actors) who promote AE/EOA .	3,164
Knowledge products developed and disseminated.	1,978

DYNAMIC MARKETS & TRADE

	BvAT TOTAL
Farmers who have been facilitated and acquired certification.	789
Markets for organic products supported.	83
Consumers reached through awareness campaigns.	4,800,000

ENABLING POLICY & INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

	BvAT TOTAL
Farmers who have been facilitated and acquired certification.	41
Stakeholders participated in advocacy and lobby forums, meetings, workshops.	1017
Policies, programmes, plans, strategies, at sub-national, national, regional, and continental mainstreamed/developed to support AE/EOA.	23

1.1. RESILIENT LIVELIHOODS
Programme Key Achievements

RESILIENT LIVELIHOODS	fcp	KCOA	EOA
People reached through awareness creation on AE/EOA per channel used.	5,534,286	15,019,435	8,741,346
Farmers trained on AE/EOA	4,195	3,515	13,527
Champions (farmers, extension agents, and other value chain actors) who promote AE/EOA	149	1,542	1,473
Knowledge products developed and disseminated.	1,627	249	102

DYNAMIC MARKETS & TRADE	fcp	KCOA	EOA
Farmers who have been facilitated and acquired certification.	21	258	510
Markets for organic products supported.	15	6	62
Consumers reached through awareness campaigns.	3,940,256	15,000,000	8,727,819

ENABLING POLICY & INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT	fcp	KCOA	EOA
Stakeholders participated in advocacy and lobby forums, meetings, workshops.	229	62	600
Policies, programmes, plans, strategies, at sub-national, national, regional, and continental mainstreamed/developed to support AE/EOA.	-	-	23

15,405 farmers were directly trained on ecological practices through the farmer resource centres spread in 11 counties in Kenya.

418,402 people reached through training activities complemented by information disseminated through other FCP channels including Infonet.

3 million reached through TOF Radio.

49, 820 readers reached through Mkulima Mbunifu.

63,184 reached through TOF Magazine.

4,927 reached through Digitalized content.

A pilot DIGITALIZATION project was implemented from 2019-2022 and entailed digital farmer trainings on via SMS, and WhatsApp. Within these communication channels over 2'000 farmers were reached. Bulk messages via SMS demonstrated to be a cost-effective way to reach large numbers of farmers while app-based support for in-person trainings has enhanced efficacy of existing approaches to trainings. Interactive Voice Recordings (IVR) were tested in Mali in West Africa with a view of extending the same to East Africa in 2024.

FARMER COMMUNICATION Outreach

The OUTREACH teams in the 13 farmer resource centres carried out field activities focused on training farmers on on-farm agroecological technologies and practices. The county governments of Bungoma, Kisii and Makueni donated to FCP office space within government premises to support BvAT activities signifying goodwill, ownership, and recognition of BvAT/FCP's work. Profiling of farmer groups continued and carried out by project field teams. Training of Trainers (TOT) training workshop was held for 10 TOF Ambassadors (TOFAs) under the Regenerative Agriculture project jointly implemented with Enviu East Africa in Makueni County. In addition, 70 lead farmers were selected and enrolled under the Regenerative Agriculture project.

KHEA/ KCOA

3,515 farmers from across the 5 countries of Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Madagascar. were trained by KHEA Hub during the year.

Altogether, the project has reached and directly trained **3,515 farmers** from the five countries.

Agroecology and Organic Agriculture Champions (farmers, extension agents, and other value chain actors) who promote AE/EOA

- Field staff also undertook farmer home visits in follow-up to training activities done and working closely with field staff and 58 Organic Farmer Ambassadors (TOFAs) who provided additional support to reach more farmers.
- The TOFA concept was adopted for outreach with knowledge that farmers learn better from fellow progressive farmers. MkM put more effort in mobilizing lead farmers to take part in the outreach activities to complement readership of the magazine.
- The lead farmers assisted in deepening knowledge on agroecology and improve adoption. The FCP field teams worked closely with government extension staff and journalists to reach and train farmers. To this endeavour, 30 government extension staff were trained on agroecology practices focusing on soil health. Moreover, 28 journalists journalists were trained on basics of agroecology.

KHEA/ KCOA

During the reporting period,

08 Master Trainers (5 from Madagascar and 3 from Tanzania [3 women and 5 men]) were trained by the KHEA Hub, facilitated by an expert from IFOAM Organics International. The Training included the approach of agroecosystems for organic agriculture / agroecology and the tools for the methodology for training.

31 This brought the number of Master Trainers in the five (5) KHEA participating countries to 31.

75 Similarly, fifty-seven Multipliers were trained on Agroecology / Organic Agriculture in Madagascar.

1,542 Champions

The total number of agroecology and organic agriculture champions under the KHEA project.

Knowledge products (type) developed and disseminated

59,740 copies of MkM magazine were produced and distributed in 2023

59 articles on agroecology published.

182 radio programmes (35 Kiswahili radio programmes; 60 vernacular radio programmes; 87 community radio programmes)

110 datasheets reviewed and updated.

KHEA/ KCOA

- Working with five eastern Africa countries, the KCOA collected and validated 93 Knowledge Products spread in the areas of production, processing and aggregation, Socio-cultural, political, and human aspects, environment, marketing and economics.
- These knowledge products are also in different languages and formats to cater for different user groups who have different capabilities and preferences for the language and formats they'd like to access information in.
- These knowledge products were accessible to 731 multipliers registered on the DKP from across the continent who are working to educate and empower farmers across Africa through the KCOA's five hubs.

1.2. DYNAMIC MARKETS & TRADE

Farmers who have been facilitated and acquired (or in the process of) certification e.g. PGS, Kilimo Hai, 3rd Party Certification, etc.

- Under the KHEA project, ten nominees were selected in Kenya, five being Multipliers for the PGS TOT training. The objective of the training was to create a pool of accredited PGS ToTs and Accessors. In Rwanda, ROAM and key stakeholders held a workshop facilitated by Natureland on the development of PGS ecosystem.
- The KHEA Hub conducted a regional workshop with participants from 6 countries that was aimed at providing theoretical knowledge and practical skills to enable KHEA partners to establish and manage PGS initiatives effectively. The Country Implementing Partners (CIPs) under the KHEA project continued supporting PGS groups towards achieving certification.
- In total nine PGS groups were supported in certification via alternative / participatory guarantee systems (PGS) in 4 countries: 1 in Kenya, 2 in Rwanda, 2 in Uganda and 4 in Tanzania.

People reached through awareness campaigns

A total of **5,534,286 people** were reached with information on ecological practices and agrifood through FCP channels as follows:

Infonet
418,402

Outreach
15,405
(6,753 females: 8,653 males)

TOF Radio
3,000,000
(1,000,000 - Kiswahili; 1,600,000 - Vernacular; 400,000 – Community)

TOF Magazine
63,184

Digitalized content
4,927

KHEA/ KCOA

As part of the consumer awareness, the KHEA hub conducted a number of interventions disseminating organic agriculture knowledge. The information was majorly disseminated using the KHEA social media handles i.e on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube channels and the dissemination of the Organic Agriculture (OA) knowledge progressed well.

1. PELUM Kenya organized two online webinars on "Azolla Cultivation for Animal Feeds" and IPM for Sustainable Food Production. The aim was to capacity build the multi-pliers and the public on azolla cultivation. The webinar reached over 11,000 accounts with 3,600 views.
2. The dissemination of OA knowledge in the KHEA Hub reached the following:
    - **TV:** 2,507,500 viewers
    - **Print:** 1,500 readers
    - **Radio:** 1,000,000 listeners
3. The KHEA online presence continued to grow, reaching many more numbers with OA messages and updates of the project implementation. By end of 2023, the KHEA accounts at online platforms had the following numbers:
    - **Facebook:** 981 Likes; 40,734 followers and 1.2K Friends and 1,280 post reach
    - **Twitter:** 6,779 Followers, 5.2K Tweet Impressions and 1,778 profile visits
    - **LinkedIn** 3,015 Followers, 4.8 K Post Impressions with 841 connections.
    - **YouTube** 1,205 Subscribers.
4. The KHEA Hub, through PELUM Uganda, participated in a social media Campaign *"My Food is African"* organized AFSA from July 24-29, 2023 in relation to the #KnowWhatYouEat campaign. The main objective of the campaign was to promote traditional Africa Foods, dishes, and diets.
5. The KHEA Hub posted 10 blogs of farmer success stories on the Multiplier Network Platform (KCOA Blog section). These are success stories from multipliers and farmers trained under the project, sharing experiences gained from the knowledge shared with them and how they have benefited from it. Below are the links of the articles uploaded to date:
    - Uganda KHEA Multiplier – Female: https://kcoa-africa.org/an-ignited-passion-for-organic-farming/
    - Uganda KHEA Farmer – Female: https://kcoa-africa.org/hidden-gold-in-rabbits-droplets/
    - Rwanda Framer Group: https://kcoa-africa.org/the-transformative-journey-of-coprobio-cooperative-through-mushroom-farming/
    - Kenya KHEA Multiplier – Female: https://kcoa-africa.org/the-multiplier-effect-in-kithambongi-village-in-kenya-2/
    - Uganda KHEA Multiplier – Male: https://kcoa-africa.org/farming-is-my-passion-onesmus-asiimwe/
    - Uganda KHEA Multiplier – Male: https://kcoa-africa.org/galiwango-reaping-millions-from-organic-farming/
    - Tanzania KHEA Farmer – Male: https://kcoa-africa.org/organic-farming-will-protect-your-soil-health/
    - Uganda KHEA Farmer – Female: https://kcoa-africa.org/prossy-nkabi-a-farmer-with-an-inspiring-home-garden-i-can-make-pigs-fly/
    - Tanzania KHEA Farmer – Female: https://kcoa-africa.org/the-power-of-bokashi/
    - Uganda KHEA Multiplier – Male: https://kcoa-africa.org/a-boost-for-beans/
    - Uganda KHEA Multiplier – Male: https://kcoa-africa.org/kakande-albert-retired-his-corporate-job-and-settle-with-farming/
6. The KHEA hub also participated in documenting key knowledge and success stories in the KCOA Newsletter. 4 issues were published in 2023 and below are the links;
    - https://biovisionafricatrust.org/giz-knowledge-centre-for-organic-agriculture-in-africa-newsletter-issue-no-9-december-2023/

- https://biovisionafricatrust.org/giz-knowledge-centre-for-organic-agriculture-in-africa-newsletter-issue-no-8-october-2023/
- https://biovisionafricatrust.org/giz-knowledge-centre-for-organic-agriculture-in-africa-newsletter-issue-no-7-june-2023/
- https://biovisionafricatrust.org/giz-knowledge-centre-for-organic-agriculture-in-africa-newsletter-issue-no-6-february-2023/

7. The KHEA hub also supported KHEA multipliers from the country implementing partners to participate in the 5th African Organic Conference in Rwanda under the theme; *"Strengthening resilient & sustainable food system in Africa through Organic Agriculture".* The conference was rich with diverse sessions addressing critical topics such as global challenges affecting African food systems and innovative business models for sustainability in Africa, Inspiring discussions shaping the future of resilient and sustainable food systems. KHEA Multipliers exhibited organically produced products but also shared organic agriculture knowledge with the public and participants of the conference.
8. Still in line with consumer awareness, the KHEA Women (Multipliers & Farmers) in Agroecology from Uganda & Kenya participated in the #WomeninAgroecologyXpoUg2023 themed *"Harvesting Her Power: African Woman Leading Agroecological Transformation."* This was organised and hosted by PELUM Uganda. The KHEA hub joined @pelum_uganda, @Afsafrica, @PelumKenya & @pelumzimbabwe & partners in celebrating & amplifying the role of African Women in scaling up Agroecology.
9. The KHEA hub through PELUM Uganda joined in celebrating the Agroecology Week of Action 2023. During this week of action, KHEA Multipliers exhibited agroecological products. PELUM Uganda partnered with like-minded organizations to amplify the voices of all agroecology actors through different forums, topics, and exposures and these were showcased during their 3 different brand events. The entire week gathered more than 200 people per day visiting the different stalls.

Farmer adding manure to his onion garden

1.3. ENABLING POLICY & INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Multistakeholder forums convened/participated in for AE/EOA policy changes and lobby

The Twentieth meeting of the Continental Steering Committee (CSC) of the African Union Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative (EOAI) was held successfully in Kigali, Rwanda on 11th and 12th December 2023. During the meeting, the CSC reviewed and endorsed the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Review of the EOAI Strategic Plan (2015-2025) being supported by the EU through its Desira-Lift Initiative.The CSC also revised the road map of the review process to be in line with the Post Malabo Agenda discussions.

The 4th cycle of the AU Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) made the EOAI Secretariat busy throughout 2023 due to its tight road map. Major activities involved backstopping Member States (MS) in data collection, cleaning, validation and analysis. After submission of the data into the Electronic Biennial Review platform (eBR), the secretariat supported the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in another similar process of review, validation and analysis before submitting the final data to the AUC. Overall, 42 out of a possible 55 countries collected data on the three three EOA and Agroecology indicators.

Parameter 3.1i d: Organic fertilizer use.

Organic fertilizers are captured under the indicator 3.1i, under Total fertilizers use (N+P2O5, N+P2O5+K20 and organic fertilizers) in Kg. The provided data are in "kg" of organic fertilizer used, and not disaggregated into microelements (N, P and K). Therefore, the provided organic fertilizer figures cannot be added to the inorganic fertilizer data in terms of nutrients but weight. It is relatively simple to track inorganic fertilizers, which are industry-made and clearly traded with known codes.

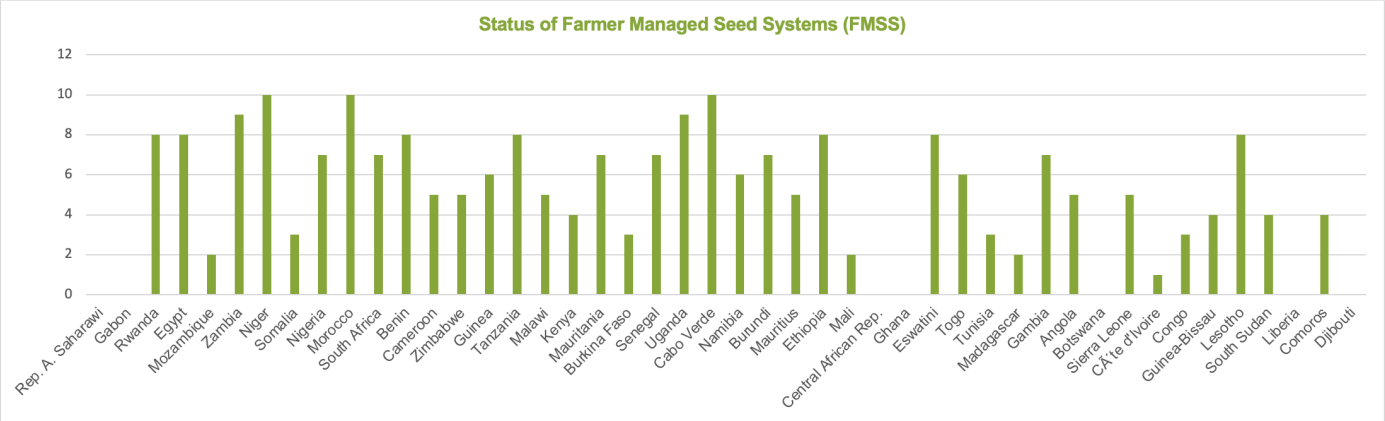
Overall 47 Member States submitted data into the e-BR system. 21 countries submitted complete datasets and on total fertilizer use parameter for the first time. Compared to arable lands, six countries submitted various quantities of organic fertilizer used in 2022 and these included Rwanda (5,684 kg/ha), Togo (623 kg/ha) and Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (194 kg/ha), Egypt (98 kg/ha), Burundi (55 kg/ha), and Ethiopia (38 kg/ha). The remaining 15 countries reported lower volumes, ranging between 1 and 3 kg of organic fertilizer per ha. The other 26 countries either had no data on organic fertilizers, or reported zero kg of fertilizers, between 2015 and 2022.

The figures suggest that there could be different ways of capturing or estimating quantities of "organic fertilizer". Some countries probably reported the estimates of composts produced and used at the farm level (e.g., Rwanda, Burundi), while others reported the commercialized, well packaged, and standardized organic fertilizers. Increasing focus on enhancing soil health through interventions that improve crop yield, crop quality, and environmental sustainability by mainstreaming use of organic fertilizers into the agriculture sector is paramount.

Developing and standardizing procedures of measuring nutrients in organic fertilizers and soil amendments and training farmers on how to use them will significantly contribute to improved and sustained soil health. Such procedures can be used to authenticate organic fertilizer products and bring transparency to the organic fertilizer industry.

Parameter 3.1viii: Seed Performance Index and Status of Farmer Managed Seed Systems in national seed policy instruments and institutional arrangements.

A total of 43 countries reported that in some way there is national discussion around Farmer Managed Seed Systems (FMSS). A total of 18 countries recorded progress above 70% meaning they have presence of enabling conditions such as policy, strategy, proclamation, ordinance and investments or programmes in place. Partial recognition of FMSS by governments in the rest of the countries was reported.



Parameter 6.1ii: Agriculture area under Ecological Organic and Agroecological (EOA) practices in ha.

A total of 33 countries, representing 60% of the total of 55, reported on share of agriculture land under EOA/ Agroecology. Overall, 17 countries are on track on having targeted share of agricultural land under Sustainable Land and Water Management (SLWM). The country with the highest land under EOA was Botswana (25.6million hectares) and the smallest was Liberia reporting only 2 hectares. While this could be a data related issue, large discrepancies were recorded in the way countries reported on this indicator.

In the current EOA project countries (under SDC support), Mali emerged as the country with the highest land under EOA reporting 3.2 million hectares, followed by Benin (1.0 million hectares), Ethiopia (1.0 million hectares), Morocco (1.0 million hectares), Uganda (505,000 hectares), Tanzania (286,000 hectares), Kenya (123,000) and Nigeria (58,000 hectares). Other countries that had considerable land under EOA are Tunisia (325,000 hectares), Egypt (116,000 hectares) and South Africa (97,000 hectares). Countries with considerably smaller land on EOA include Equatorial Guinea (510 hectares), Mozambique (1404 hectares) and Cameroon (1969 hectares). The 60% reporting success rate for this indicator is clear indication that EOA data is available, and countries could aim at reporting at 100% in subsequent cycles.

These new developments are informative of the progress towards mainstreaming EOA into National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIPs) and Regional Agricultural Investments Plans (RAIPs) by 2025 as stipulated in the EOA Initiative Strategic Plan (2015-2025). The EOA Initiative has already commenced the plan to review the current SP in preparation of developing strategy for the period 2025-2035.

It's worth noting that the EOA Initiative Strategic Plan coincides with the ongoing discussion on post Malabo and the future of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Biennial Review Report (BRR) planning which will also be for a period of ten years (2025-2035). This is an opportunity to align the EOAI with post Malabo outcomes as will be projected in the next period of CAADP BRR.

Recommendation:

There is evidence that EOA/AE data is available and can be collected by countries. Therefore,

i. Disaggregate the parameters that differentiate between conventional and EOA/AE practices to inform countries more on how the different agricultural sub sectors are performing and to further inform policy and investment decisions. e. g. Access to Advisory services parameter, Investments in agriculture etc.

ii. Strengthen national data collection and reporting on EOA indicators: Sensitization and training of countries on EOA practices and technologies, data collection for disaggregated parameters.

iii. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) framework should closely collaborate with the EOAI and the African Organization for Standardization (ARSO) to develop certification, standards, tariffs, and general trade protocols that offer opportunities for organic farmers and make organic products more attractive and competitive.

iv. Develop and standardize protocols of measuring nutrients in organic fertilizers and soil amendments to document well quality and quantity of organic fertilizers.

v. The recently developed AU framework for harmonizing seed systems in Africa should be adapted along with the FMSS road map developed by the EOAI and endorsed by the ASBPP in Kampala in May 2022.

Conclusion:

Regions where the EOA Initiative has active projects (Eastern and West Africa) have performed better on EOA indicators than regions without focus on EOA Initiative. A more continental approach by the EOA Initiative is more desirable to foster regional balance and facilitate collection of representative data to be drawn from all the 5 regions of Africa. Increased government support for EOA will likely ameliorate many of the institutional barriers that limit EOA policy formulation processes.

Indeed, a well-organized and highly motivated sector, with common goals and a common analysis of the current situation, obstacles, and opportunities, and policy formulating strategies with clear division of roles and functions, would be a strong positive force at all policy formulation levels. Stakeholder inclusivity and involvement is extremely crucial for the relevance of the decisions in EOA policy formulation, coordination, and planning initiatives.

The AU EOA Initiative calls upon development partners to join its coalition of donors that are currently supporting EOA/AE interventions in research and applied knowledge, knowledge management, markets and value chains development, youth and women, advocacy and policy, institutional and capacity development across Africa.

Stakeholders participated in advocacy and lobby forums, meetings, workshops, etc

The 5th Africa Organic Conference (5th AOC) was held on the margins of the 20th AU Continental Steering Committee (CSC) meeting at the Marriot Hotel in Kigali from 13th to 14th of December 2023. Last year's conference brought together over three hundred participants to Kigali while others took part virtually. The AOC acts as the platform for EOAI Non State Actors and is convened by AfrONet with support from the AUC and its EOAI Secretariat. During the conference, there was change in the governance of AfrONet's board. AfrONet has a new President, Mr Chariton Namuwoza from Uganda. Mr. Namuwoza is also the CEO of National Organic Agricultural Movement of Uganda (NOGAMU).

A farmer harvesting indigenous vegetables (amaranth)

EOA-I Highlights

1st Eastern Africa Agroecology Conference held at Safari Park Hotel(March 21-24 2023) reaching 600 delegates

Number of Participants	600
Honourable delegates	Hon. Fred Bwino Kyakulaga, the State Minister of Agriculture in Uganda
Participating countries	20
Name of countries	Belgium, Colombia, Ethiopia, France, Switzerland, Germany, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Tanzania, United States, Rwanda, United Kingdom, Italy, Malawi, Netherlands, Sweden, Ghana, United Kingdom, and Liechtenstein.
Main Donors	SDC, SSNC, GIZ, Biovision Foundation, NCBA, GIZ Western Kenya
Main Partners	SwissAid, SNV, ENVIU, Agroecology Coalition, Pelum Kenya, KOAN, BIBA, ISFAA, ROAM, TOAM, Pelum Uganda, Seed Savers, Slow Food Kenya, Slow Food Uganda

With funding support from SDC as seed funds, BvAT and its strategic partners (Pelum Kenya, KOAN, BIBA, MOA, ICRAF) held the 1st eastern Africa agroecology conference.

The conference was attended by participants from over 20 countries around the globe. Participants hailed from parts of Africa, Europe, North and South America and Asia, to be part of this timely event themed *'Strengthening resilience and sustainability in food systems for environmental and social economic development'.*

The conference had the following sub-themes:

1. Production, productivity, scalling up and sustainability of farming systems based on environmentally based technologies and methodologies.
2. Best practices towards food security, nutrition, consumption, and health: Soil health, farmer managed seed systems.
3. Ecological organic trade, markets, and economy.
4. Institutional and policy drivers for agroecology transformations.
5. Women and youth in agroecology.

Speaking during the event, Dr David Amudavi, the Executive Director of Biovision Africa Trust, expressed gratitude over the overwhelming attendance of delegates from all parts of the world, which turned the regional conference into an international conference.

In his speech, read by Mr. Leonard Kubok Director, Capacity Building and Knowledge Management in the State Department for Crop Development in Kenya, the Chief Guest Hon Mithika Linturi, Minister of Agriculture in Kenya underscored the pivotal role played by the women and youth in promotion and adoption of agroecology. "Women and youth among other marginalized groups play a key role in agroecology and therefore I commend the support given to these groups by players in the sector," he stated.

Passionate participants among them actors in the development sector, farmers, representatives from various national governments, the donor fraternity and researchers engaged in candid discussions on the opportunities that lie in agroecology, as a solution to the overbearing effects of climate change. The conference featured eye opening presentations by researchers, exhibitors of agroecological technologies, and practices as well as farmers' whose effort in adopting agroecology have borne evident results in improving livelihoods.

Hon. Fred Bwino Kyakulaga, the State Minister of Agriculture in Uganda applauded the attendees' for demonstrating their conviction in the potential of agroecology in transforming food systems in Africa. He remarked that the lively participation is proof of belief in what they advocate for.

Among key presentations made was by Dr. Hans Herren, the president, at Biovision Foundation who gave a compelling analysis of the milestones achieved in adoption of agroecology in various countries and the opportunities of further advancement.

While launching the call to action following the deliberations, Ms. Venancia Wambua, the Ecological Organic Agriculture – Initiative (EOA-I) project manager at Biovision Africa Trust said, "The Eastern Africa Agroecology conference has been a great success and shall be held every two years going forward." She reiterated that Biovision Africa Trust, the convener of the conference will work with its partners, most of whom were key participants in the conference, to bring to life the ideas born from the deliberations as presented in the call to action.

Among the countries represented in the conference include Belgium, Colombia, Ethiopia, France, Switzerland, Germany, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Tanzania, United States, Rwanda, United Kingdom, Italy, Malawi, Netherlands, Sweden, Ghana, United Kingdom, and Liechtenstein.

The conference culminated with visits to organic farms in Machakos, Kiambu, and Nairobi counties.

1.4. RESILIENT INSTITUTIONAL STABILITY

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR PERIOD ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2023

Description	**Notes**	**2023**	**2022**
Income			
Restricted income		USD	USD
Grant income	2	3,879,393	3,961,621
Interest income	3	2,894	563
		3,882,287	3,962,184
Unrestricted income			
Overhead recoveries & other incomes	4	306,548	291,939
Total income		4,188,835	4,254,123
Expenditure			
Research and project activities	5	2,373,245	2,458,005
Personnel expenses	6	974,533	928,438
Travel cost	7	168,347	105,525
Project administration costs	8	160,051	136,558
General expenses	9	171,535	244,817
Audit & consultancy	10	34,576	88,841
Finance expenditure	11	0	0
		3,882,287	3,962,184
BVAT Core Expenses		**242,056**	**217,155**
Total Expenditure		**4,124,344**	**4,179,339**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		64,492	74,784

Introduction

Biovision Africa Trust's financial statements for the period ending 31st December 2023 were audited by Ernst and Young Certified Public Accountants. The organization received Unqualified opinion on the financial statements. BvAT continues to grow with a current liquidity ratio of 1.79. In Uganda, BvAT has collaborated with various partners to have the National Organic policy endorsed for approval and passing at the National Assembly. This has been possible through the support received from SDC under the EOA Initiative.

Project Expenses

BvAT invested a total of 4,124,344 million US dollars in implementation of projects in the financial year 2023. This was an equivalent amount invested in the previous year of USD. 4,179,339

The grants helped bring about visionary projects and drive change in Kenya, eastern and Western Africa through Implementation of the organization's programmes: Farmer Communication Programme (FCP), Knowledge Centre of Organic Agriculture (KCOA) and Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) programmes, respectively.

Revenue

BvAT received various grants within the financial year 2023 with the major contributors comprising of, SDC, GIZ and Biovision Foundation. In total BvAT registered revenue amounting to USD. 4,188,835 inclusive of a core grant amounting to USD. 306,548. The organization realized a fund reserve amounting to USD. 64,492. The positive balance was allocated to BvAT CORE fund to support organizational and institutional growth.

Administrative Expenses.

The administrative expenses for the financial year 2023 amount to USD. 1,134,585 corresponding to 28% of BvAT's total expenses.

Financial Result

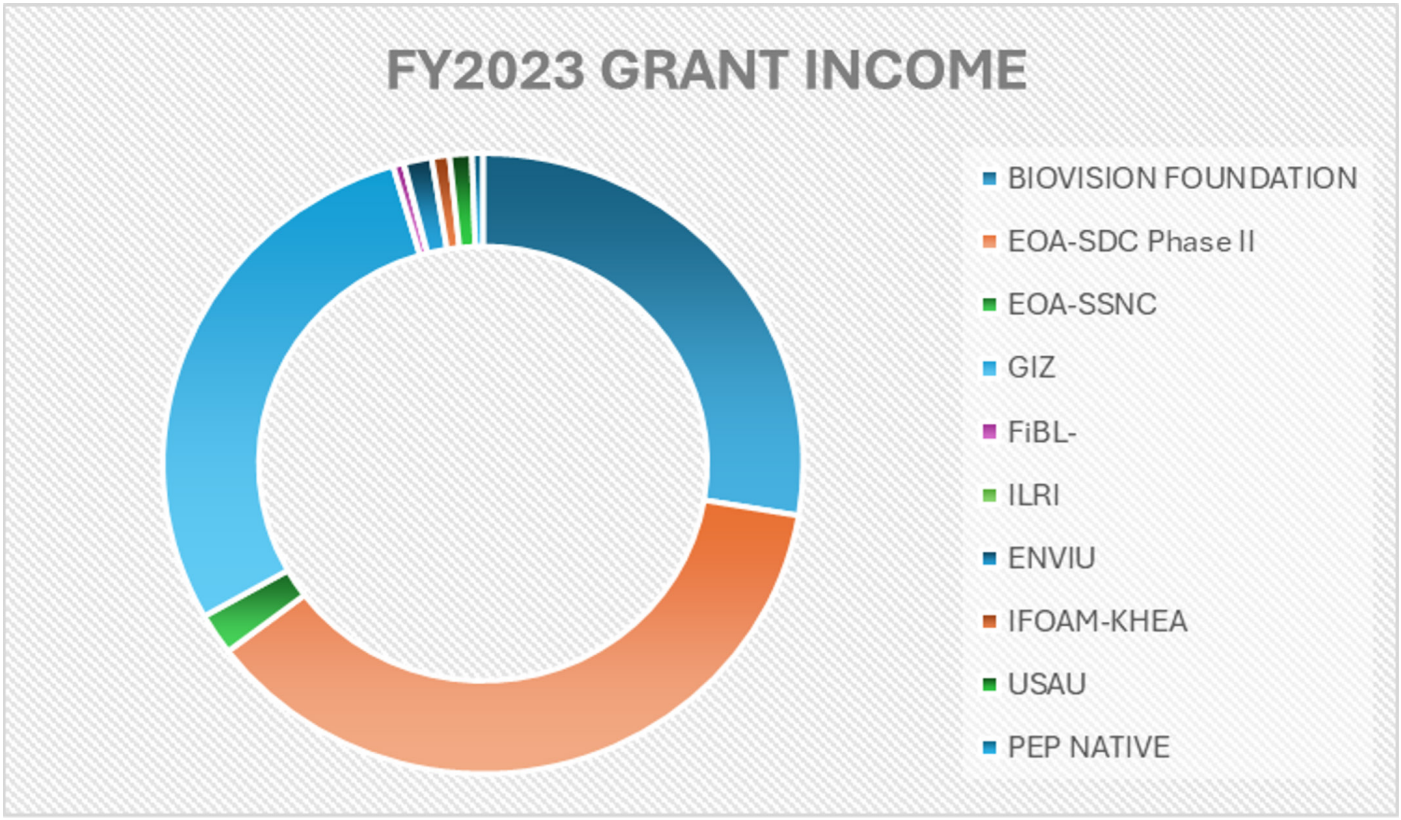
BvAT recorded a positive change financially. The Organization's Liquidity ratio increased from a positive 1.19 to 1.79 compared to the financial period 2022. The organization's financial health continues to grow steadily and allows for increase in investment, savings, and payment of outstanding liabilities.

STATEMENT OF THE FINANCIAL POSITION

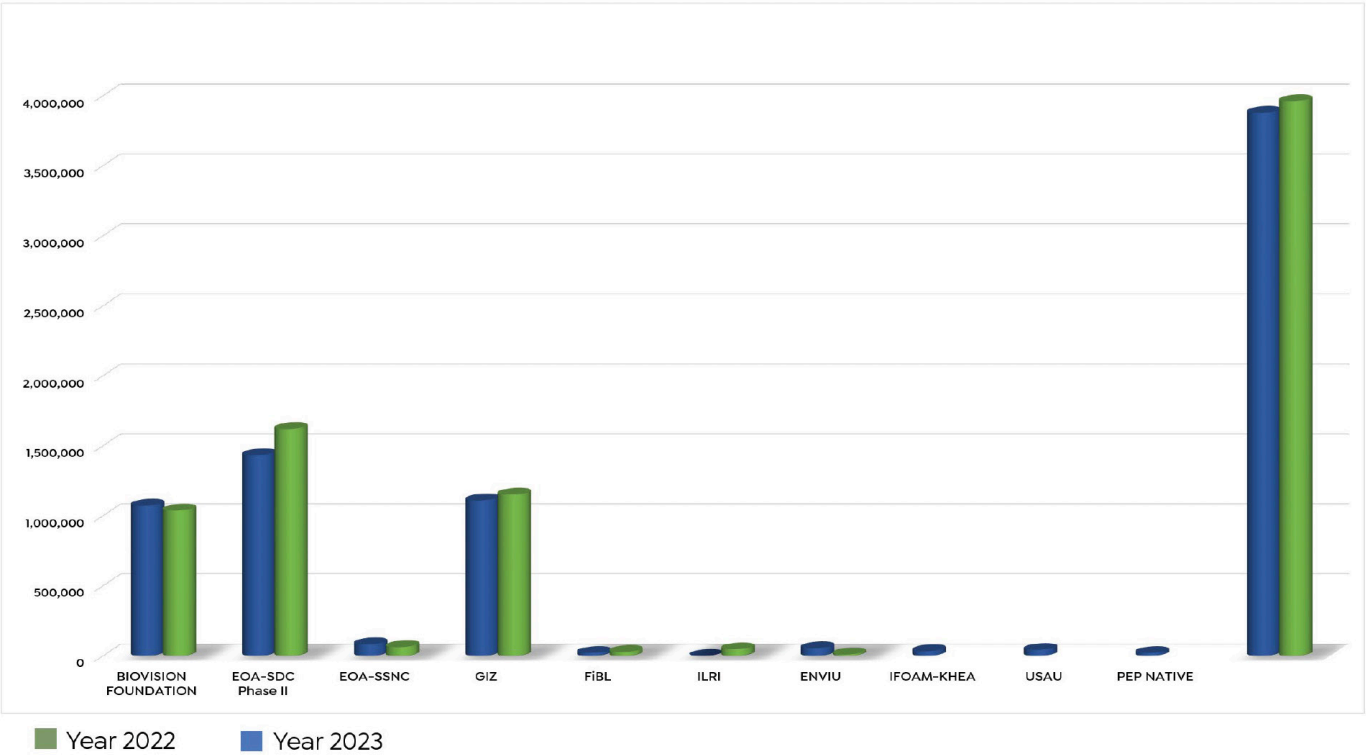
Description	**Notes**	**2023**	**2022**
Assets		**USD**	**USD**
Non-current assets			
Property and Equipment	11	7,838	8,330
Total non-current assets		7,838	8,330
Current assets			
Receivables from implementing partners	12	434,575	428,174
Receivable from Biovision Foundation	13	8,179	201,270
Other receivables and Prepayments	14	201,656	67,792
Cash and cash equivalents	15	1,395,826	1,620,975
Total current assets		2,040,236	2,318,211
Total assets		2,048,074	2,326,541
Fund balance			
Fund reserves	16	448,192	383,700
Current liabilities			
Payables	17	339,664	293,085
Deferred income	18	1,231,236	1,625,892
Fundraising	19	28,982	23,864
Total current liabilities		**1,599,883**	**1,942,841**
Total liabilities		**2,048,074**	**2,326,541**

Outlook

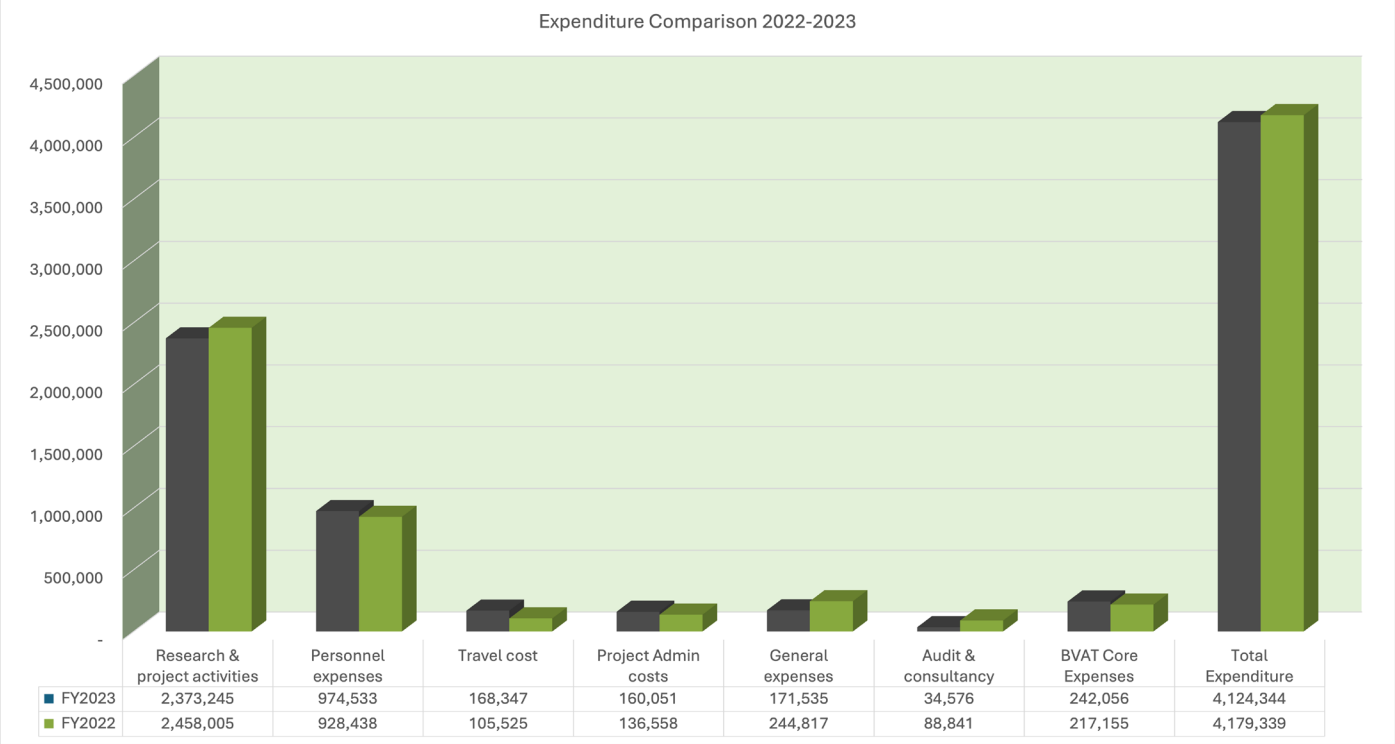
Biovision Africa Trust looks to the future with confidence and expects to fundraise and commit USD. 4,102,283 to implementation of projects in 2024. We would like to express our sincere thanks for the trust our loyal donors have placed in us. Their contributions form the basis of our independence. Our partners and donors' contributions enabled us to engage sustainably in our priority programme areas thus attaining our goal as Biovision Africa Trust (BVAT) which is to alleviate poverty in Kenya and other the African countries.



The Pie chart demonstrates the funding received in 2023.



The bar Chart demonstrates the funding received in 2023 and 2022.



	Research & project activities	Personnel expenses	Travel cost	Project Admin costs	General expenses	Audit & consultancy	BVAT Core Expenses	Total Expenditure
FY2023	2,373,245	974,533	168,347	160,051	171,535	34,576	242,056	4,124,344
FY2022	2,458,005	928,438	105,525	136,558	244,817	88,841	217,155	4,179,339

The bar Chart demonstrates the expenditure movement between 2023 and 2022.

Human Resources

BvAT staff establishment stood at 49 by the end of the year 2023. This number has slightly increased due to establishment of a new position for project officer to manage the new GIZ project for rural livelihood improvement for western Kenya.

Ten interns went through the BvAT internships programme in the year 2023 and were placed in various programmes and departments to learn and support in implementations of activities in respective programmes.

Employee separations for the year 2023

Throughout the year, four staff voluntarily exited BvAT to pursue their personal interest.

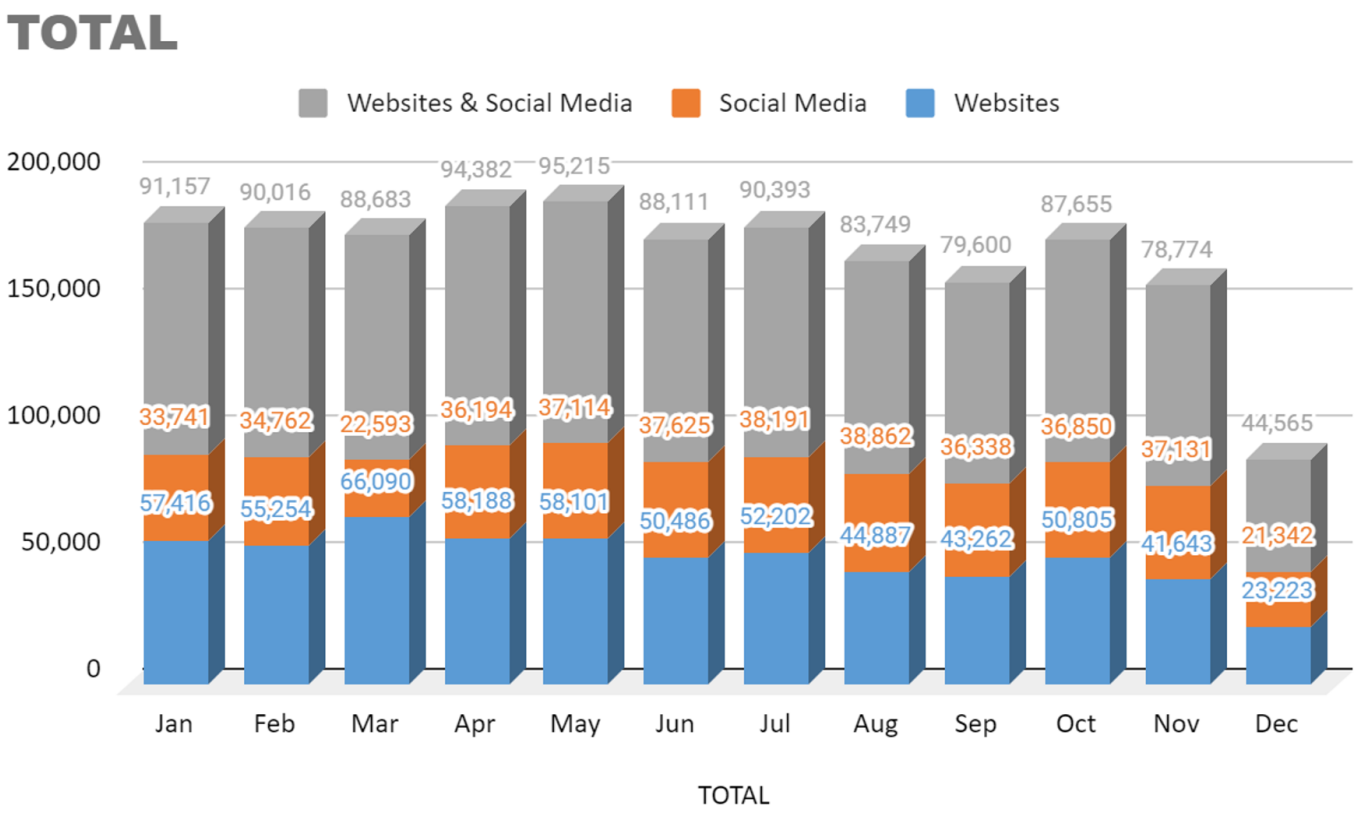
Staff development and capacity building undertaken during the year 2023

During the year 2023, 23 Staff were supported in various training courses to sharpen their competencies and skills and consequently improve their work performance. Some of the courses that staff were supported to undertake were; Practical project management and sustainability, monitoring evaluation, accountability and learning for development professionals, strategic leadership development programme, Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) and data analytics and knowledge management for development

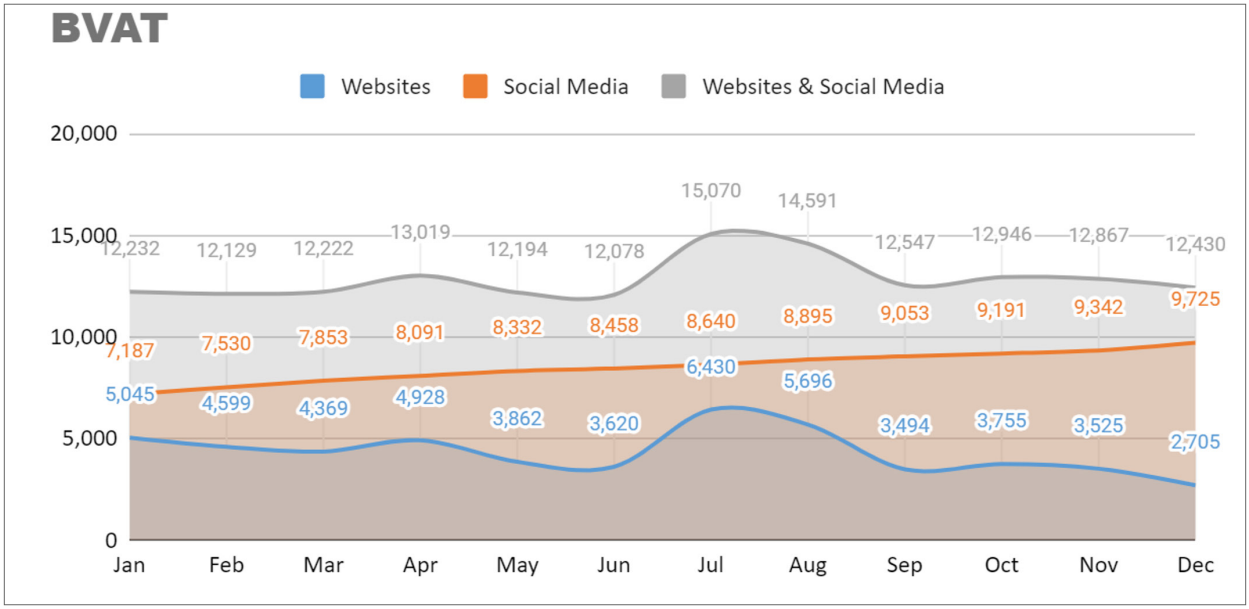
Visibility and online engagement

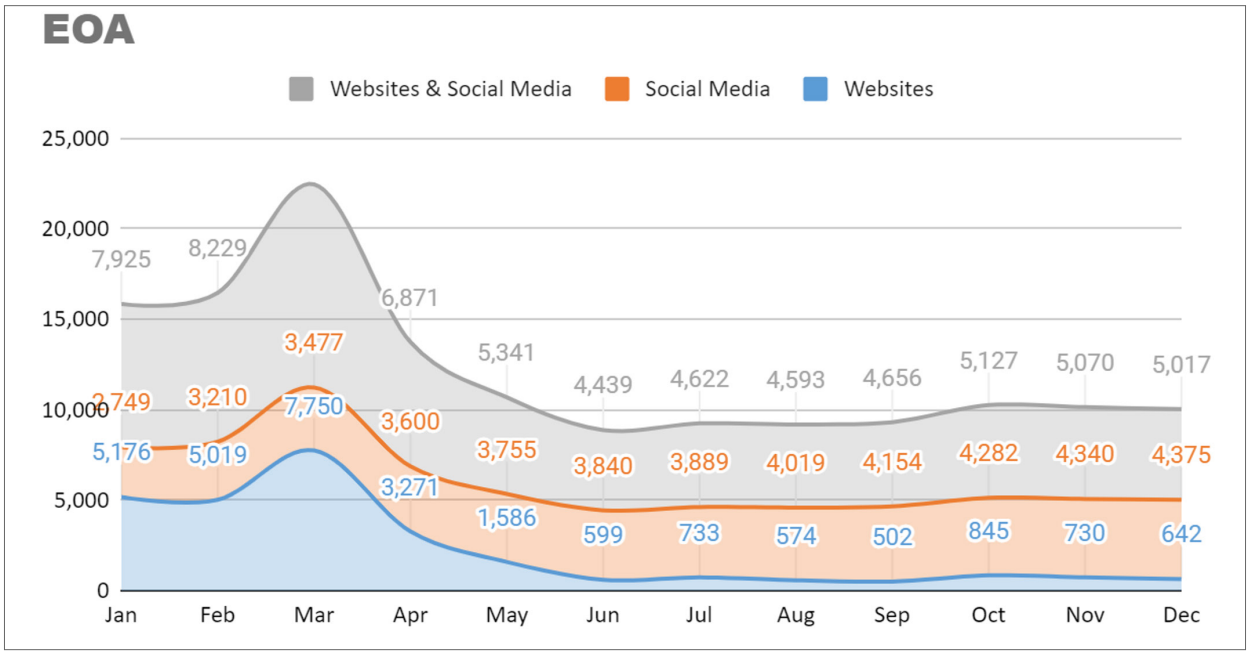
2023 began with strong and steadily increasing online activity, peaking in May. The year concludes with a significant drop in engagement, highlighting the impact of seasonal variations on online presence. These trends underscore the importance of strategic planning to maintain consistent engagement throughout the year.

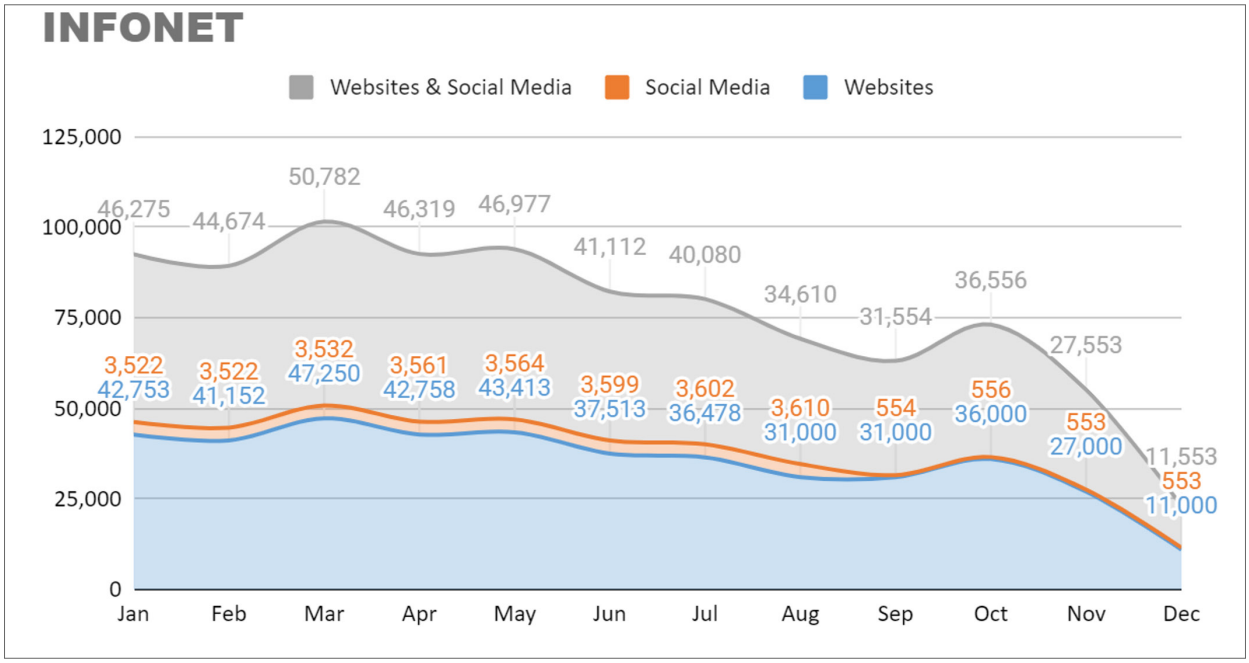
Month	BVAT	EOA	KCOA	INFONET	TOF	TOTAL	CUMMULATIVE
Jan	12,232	7,925	4,549	46,275	20,176	**91,157**	**91,157**
Feb	12,129	8,229	4,739	44,674	20,245	**90,016**	**181,173**
Mar	12,222	11,227	5,139	50,782	9,313	**88,683**	**269,856**
Apr	13019	6,871	5,312	46,319	22,861	**94,382**	**364,238**
May	12,194	5,341	5,561	46,977	25,142	**95,215**	**459,453**
Jun	12078	4,439	5,789	41,112	24,693	**88,111**	**547,564**
Jul	15070	4,622	6,113	40,080	24,508	**90,393**	**637,957**
Aug	14591	4,593	6,380	34,610	23,575	**83,749**	**721,706**
Sep	12547	4,656	6,598	31,554	24,245	**79,600**	**801,306**
Oct	12946	5,127	6,816	36,556	26,210	**87,655**	**888,961**
Nov	12867	5,070	6,895	27,553	26,389	**78,774**	**967,735**
Dec	12430	5,017	6,689	11,553	10,656	**46,345**	**1,014,080**



Social Media & Websites Activity per programme







Summary of Fundraising & Resource Mobilization Efforts

Submitted Proposals	18
Networking Meetings	9
Successful Proposals	4 (BopInc/IKEAF - O Farms II, ARFSA (Dutch Govt), LDF, ZEF)
Ongoing Proposals	1 (EU Proposals with Naturland; other consortia are in the process of forming up)
Potentially Promising Proposals	3 (Agroecology Promotion Programme by the SDC to further support - EOA Initiative; EOA GAP Project for 2025, GIZ - Alliance for Food Product Quality project in - East Africa)

The Resource Mobilization team engaged in various fundraising and resource mobilization efforts throughout 2023. This year, the team submitted a total of 18 proposals to various funding organizations, participated in 9 networking meetings to establish and strengthen partnerships, and secured funding for 4 proposals. The successful proposals include partnerships with BopInc/IKEAF for the O Farms II project, the Accelerating Resilient Food Systems in Africa (ARFSA) initiative funded by the Dutch Government, the Louis Dreyfus Foundation, and Bonn University. Additionally, the team closed the year with three potentially promising proposals. These promising proposals are the Agroecology Promotion Programme by the SDC and the Alliance for Food Product Quality (AfPQ) project in East Africa by GIZ. A notable success was the approval of a proposal by the University of Bonn for the ZEF project. The Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation has shown interest in supporting the Agroecology Promotion Programme to mainstream EOA into agricultural production systems, a project involving several partners like Biovision Foundation and IFOAM Organics International, with a total budget of 55,250,000 CHF over four years.

The team also made significant strides through networking meetings. Discussions with Trocaire have opened possibilities for funding support for activities such as radio programmes and policy briefs. LDF has already provided a grant of 300,000 EUR for implementing a project in Kenya starting April 2024, focusing on agroecology and sustainable agriculture practices. Fert and BvAT shared valuable information with CGAs on working with farmers, while Porticus identified BvAT as a potential partner for a regenerative agriculture programme in East Africa. The IKEA Foundation agreed to consider a concept from BvAT following the completion of the current BopInc Programme.

The team faced several challenges, such as securing sufficient and predictable funding amidst dynamic donor priorities and coordinating efforts across various stakeholders with competing priorities and limited resources. Staying updated on shifting donor priorities and funding trends also required constant adaptation of strategies. Despite these challenges, there were inspiring developments ahead. An integrated expert on Resource Mobilization is envisaged to join BvAT, bolstering the team's fundraising efforts. Looking forward, the team aims to secure more partnerships to support fundraising, targeting high commissions and embassies in the country/ies. They plan to continue competitive bidding and follow up with contacts established in 2023, fostering relationships with organizations like Porticus.

1.5. SUCCESS STORIES

Makueni farmer turns a barren farm into a thriving food forest

By Caroline Mwendwa

Florence Mwakavi in her regenerative piece of land.

Florence Mwakavi is a small-scale farmer in Wote, Makueni County. She owns three acres of land where she has been growing maize, cowpeas, beans, and pigeon peas for several years until the land became unfertile. Soil degradation resulted to extremely poor yields to the extent that she had to forfeit a portion of her land. "I was used to planting the same type of crops year in, year out and the farm grew lesser and lesser productive. It got to a point where I left parts of the land uncultivated, since despite the hard work of planting, I ended up not harvesting anything," says Florence.

The part of land that she had left uncultivated had proven unproductive for seasons, and it was covered by a thicket of wild grass. This was until John Mutisya, an extensionist from Biovision Africa Trust, who is based in Machakos County paid her a visit.

"We had just rolled out a project dubbed 'regenerative agriculture' in the lower Eastern Kenya, through a collaboration between ENVIU and Biovision Africa Trust, aimed at restoring depleted lands back to productivity. Florence Mwakavi was lucky to be one of the farmers selected for this project," says Mutisya.

According to Mutisya, regenerative agriculture is a sure way to restore degraded land back to productivity, and it works because the farmer employs techniques that feed the soil. What goes into the soil is more than the crops draw from it, and overtime there is accumulation of nutrients season after season, making it sustainably productive.

In regenerative agriculture, a piece of land should not have less than ten varieties of crops. Crop diversity enhances productivity as different crops serve different purposes in the soil biology, pest management and shading, etc.

"In my farm now I have over ten varieties of crops including: pigeon peas, beans, cowpeas, sweet potatoes, maize, citrus trees, bananas, papaya, mango trees, fodder trees such as Leucaena, acacia, and Sesbania," says Florence.

After harvesting, all the residue is reused in the farm. Maize stalks and other plant parts remaining are left to cover the ground. By the next planting season, all mulch will have decomposed further enriching the soil with more organic matter. As this process continues, season after season, there will be no need to weed the farm; all the farmer requires to do is to retrace the planting holes and plant the seeds.

In the first season of adopting these technologies in her farm, Florence harvested a full 90 Kg bag of maize from the 1/8th of acre piece of land that she had earlier neglected. Additionally she harvested beans, cowpeas, fruits, and vegetables from the same piece of land.

"Once organic matter accumulates in the soil by repeated practice of these techniques season, after season, Florence's farm will be highly productive, she will never need synthetic fertilizers to grow her crops, as the more she plants, the more the soil acquires organic matter," says Mutisya.

Caroline Mwendwa is the Project Officer of The Organic Farmer Magazine.
Email: *cmwendwa@biovisionafrica.org*

Farmer expands poultry enterprise after learning azolla farming from the TOF Magazine

By Miriam Makato

Azolla ponds in Mr. Muindu's farm

"I learnt on how to grow azolla from The Organic Farmer Magazine, and with the help of Hand in Hand East Africa, I obtained the starting material to establish the farm,"

Wilson Muindu,
a farmer based at Kyai.

Poultry farming has gained popularity in Kenya due to the ease in management and fast returns, as compared to other livestock enterprises such as dairy cattle keeping. However, this sector has faced a major challenge-an increase in feed prices, which has caused small scale farmers to reduce the number of birds kept in the farm. This has been the case with Wilson Muindu, a farmer based at Kyai, Kangundo Sub County. The challenge had made him reduce the bird population in his farm by a half. However, after learning about azolla farming for poultry feeding, he has since restored his flock from 20 birds to 40.

Muindu learnt about azolla farming for the first time through Plant Village and sought to gather information on how to establish an azolla pond for his poultry. On reading The Organic Farmer Magazine Issue 209, which detailed the steps and benefits of growing azolla, he employed the tips shared and established a demonstration plot. "I learnt on how to grow azolla from The Organic Farmer Magazine, and with the help of Hand in Hand East Africa, I obtained the starting material to establish the farm, which is now a demonstration plot where other farmers come to learn," says Muindu.

After establishing the pond, the azolla multiplied, and the first harvest was done in 2 weeks. After that, harvesting is done on daily basis, and he harvests 1 kilogram daily. Harvesting is done using a tea sieve, after which the azolla is cleaned and fed to the poultry. Azolla has nutritive values to poultry such as: proteins, fatty acids, amino acids and vitamins (A, B12 and beta carotene). The best way to feed azolla is by incorporating it in 15% of the poultry feed.

Other than feeding azolla for his poultry, Wilson also sells it for propagation to farmers, at Ksh 1000 per kilogram. This has boosted the farm's income. He has also increased the bird population to 40, which is a commendable progress.

With increase in poultry feed prices, farmers can grow azolla in the farm as a supplement feed and also earn income. This will increase farm production, and diversification.

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How TOF Radio changed Dennis Koech's fortune

By Antony Nandunga

"I have finally been able to sustain myself without having to incur debts as has been the case before."

Dennis Koech,
a farmer from Nakuru County.

Dennis Koech a youthful farmer from Nakuru County, Rongai area has been passionate about poultry farming. He had ventured in poultry farming by purchasing a few birds most of which he lost to diseases caused by, poor housing and feeding. He was devastated to a point of giving up and did not know the next steps to take to save the few birds that had survived the outbreak. This was until April 2023 when after listening to a radio programme aired on Radio Maisha through TOF radio project, he followed through with a call to the officer who had been hosted in the show, Mr Antony Nandunga, an extensionist working with Biovision Africa Trust, stationed in Bungoma County.

Mr Nandunga, took him through trainings on how to construct a good chicken house that will protect the chickens from harsh weather, and predators, using locally available material. He further guided him on a feeding programme that is cost friendly. Koech took interest in the idea; he constructed the unit and bought 20 indigenous chicken to add to his previous stock with an intention of meeting the market demand. Today Koech has gotten it right as he has managed to raise 120 indigenous chickens, 80 being chicks and 40 mature birds. He has also managed to sell 19 mature cocks at ksh 1000 each, and 19 mature hens at ksh 800 each, getting a total of ksh 34200 within a month. "I have finally been able to sustain myself without having to incur debts as has been the case before," says an excited Koech.

Koech has also adopted use of natural herbs including aloevera, black jack and pepper to help control diseases among his flocks, this has enabled him to reduce cost of production. From the money he got from the sale of his chickens he purchased a dairy goat and the remaining amount he invested in producing beans and butternuts in his two-acre piece of land. He also uses manure he gets from his flock to grow vegetables for subsistence and the surplus he sells to neighbours.

BvAT Farmer communication programme (FCP) has been a key pillar in disseminating information on good agriculture practices and also creating awareness on why farmers should revert to organic farming. Dennis agreed that Radio has a huge fun base and in order to reach other farmers like him who are die hard radio listeners, we have to create more educative programmes of that kind. He also believes that without the right information farmers cannot progress as was his initial experience.

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KCOA Success story

Prossy Nkabi: a farmer with an inspiring home garden- "I can make pigs fly" By Pamela Magino

Ms. Prosy Nkabi attending to her crops.

Ms. Prosy Nkabi, is one of those people you would say can make pigs fly; a statement to mean she can do the impossible.

This is an observation you make right from her home garden, which is rich in variety yet located in a very small, enclosed compound at her home in Bulamu Gayaza, Wakiso district.

Initially, Nkabi used to spray her plants with chemicals that were bought from the market. These she says left a negative impact on her health. She also narrates that the chemicals used top stick on her crops for so long to the extent of reaching harvesting time while they're still evident which was harmful to her health

Through Parents Empowering Children & Youth Uganda (PECYU), an organization she belongs to, Nkabi was invited for a training by her friend and multiplier Mr. Kayemba Mathias who was under Knowledge Hub for Organic Agriculture in Eastern Africa (KHEA) project through PELUM Uganda.

She had always heard about organic farming but never really understood the concept in its entirety thus this training provided a perfect opportunity for her to learn. "I was interested in knowing what organic plants were, what requirements one needed to practice organic farming, and its importance," Nkabi said.

Pamella Magino is the communication officer for KCOA
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This has however changed following a training she recently undertook organized by PELUM Uganda aimed at training farmers to make organic fertilizers. Nkabi is now able to set up her small home vegetable garden that consists of green pepper, sweet pepper, dodo, Sukuma-wiki, eggplants, bitter berries, rears chicken and many other things.

This has inspired her neighbours to admire her freshly green-looking garden, and now come seek advice from her, and occasionally buy from her these vegetables. Her worries of consuming toxic chemicals are no more following the introduction of organic farming.

"I can eat a raw tomato from my garden, all I need is to wash off the dirt, and munch it straight away with no fear of toxic chemicals," says Nkabi.

Nkabi is ecstatic about the network she has acquired through agro-ecology but finds the preparation for organic products quite tedious. She says a lot of Ugandans still don't understand the value of organic food hence making it difficult to find market for their crops over the inorganic crops.

To read more success stories, visit these links:

https://kcoa-africa.org/blog/
https://khea-africa.org/success-stories/

1.6 STATEMENTS FROM PARTNERS

Ministry of Agriculture, Machakos County

> **"As a Department of Agriculture and Food Security we have collaborated with BvAT in farmer group trainings and field days. The organic farmer magazines distributed to farmers monthly have been and continue to be very instrumental in dissemination of technologies and best practices in agriculture. This has greatly contributed to improved nutrition security and livelihoods in the County."**
>
> **Eunice Sakong –** Crops Development Officer, Machakos County.

PELUM Uganda

Over the past five years, our partnership with Biovision Africa Trust has yielded significant results. In Uganda, we've collaborated on several impactful initiatives. Together, we've co-hosted the regional Knowledge Hub for Organic Agriculture and Agroecology in Eastern Africa (KHEA), along with the Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative (EOA-I). Through these endeavours, we've played a key role in influencing the integration of agroecology and organic agriculture into various policies, strategies, and plans.

Notably, our work with BvAT has led to the development and endorsement of the Uganda Organic Agriculture policy. Additionally, we've championed farmer-led research aimed at converting organic waste into valuable fertilizers like biochar. This demonstrates our commitment to driving sustainable agricultural practices at both local and national levels.

Our partnership is particularly commendable given the growing adoption of agroecology and organic agriculture by farmers and government entities. We take pride in the impact we've made on policy advocacy and stakeholder engagement, which has not only influenced national-level decision-making but also informed regional advocacy efforts.

From grassroots initiatives to high-level policy discussions, our collaboration has been instrumental in advancing the cause of agroecology and organic agriculture. Moving forward, we remain dedicated to nurturing and strengthening this partnership, recognizing its pivotal role in driving meaningful change within these sectors and promoting sustainable food systems.

Josephine Akia Luyimbazi (Mrs)
Country Coordinator
PELUM Uganda.

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The impact achieved through KCOA partnership

Agroecology is widely recognized as a pathway towards sustainable, resilient, and fair agri-food systems, contributing to the advancement of SDGs. It promotes a multidisciplinary, inclusive, and integrated approach to sustainable rural development. It reconciles land, natural resources, and people – assuring that no one is left behind.

Since 2018 the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) almost doubled its funding volume for agroecological projects within the rural development portfolio.

As part of BMZs agroecological projects, GIZ implements Knowledge Centre for Organic Agriculture and Agroecology in Africa (KCOA). KCOA is a collaborative country-led partnership that aims to scale up the adoption of organic and agroecological farming practices through a network of five Knowledge Hubs in Africa. Within KCOA, the implementing organisations have four main objectives: to improve access to knowledge on organic agriculture and agroecology; to strengthen the technical and professional capacity of multi-pliers; to foster networking and to strengthen relationships in the sector; and to strengthen actors in their advocacy activities. The Knowledge Hubs were established in all regions of the African continent. The project aims at establishing networks and strengthen civil society organizations and stakeholders in the field of organic farming and agroecology and to support them in disseminating knowledge. Access to knowledge on organic farming and agroecology is improved for the local population, through the work of local partners that collect traditional knowledge, prepare information in local languages, create target group-oriented formats and disseminating knowledge products via a Digital Knowledge Platform. Moreover, multipliers support smallholder farms in 18 countries through a multi-level training approach, addressing topics of production, sustainable management of their land and local marketing of their products. Altogether, the project promotes the protection of ecosystems, builds resilient food systems, and supports smallholder farms in adapting to climate change.

Co-creation and dissemination of knowledge (including South-South-Exchange) and strengthening the working relationships between representative from the value chains, civil society, private sector and state organizations, contributing to build strong partnerships for the achievement of goals. Collaboration across societal sectors has emerged as one of the defining concepts of international development in the 21st century. Initially in part a response to the limitations of traditional state-led, top-down development approaches, partnership has grown to become an essential paradigm in sustainable development. KCOA supports the involved organizations to form partnerships to maximize the value created by collaboration towards the Sustainable Development Goals. KCOA has a clear Collaborative Advantage to promote organic and agroecological farming in Africa.

Florian Peloschek

Advisor Digital Knowledge Platform / responsible for Knowledge Hub Eastern Africa
Knowledge Centre for Organic Agriculture and Agroecology in Africa (KCOA)

World Food Day Celebrations

World Food Day (WFD) is observed on 16th October every year in remembrance of the founding of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in 1945. The day is observed in more than 150 countries with the aim of revitalizing international and national solidarity in the combat against hunger, malnutrition and poverty. It is also meant for countries to take stock and celebrate the strides made towards eradication of these scourges as well as strengthen the resolve to address them.

The National World Food Day celebration for 2023 was hosted by the County Government of Kakamega at Bukura Agricultural Training Centre (ATC) on 26th October 2023. Towards realization of this day, the County Government brought on board key stakeholders and partners in agricultural development to support in the planning and hosting the event. Biovision Africa Trust came on board during this process, and through The Organic Farmer Radio supported the publicizing of the event by producing 9 farmer live and participatory radio shows, video feature themed 'Water is life, water is food leave no one behind' and photography. In addition, Biovision Africa Trust also supported 4k clubs from neighbouring schools to participate in the celebrations as well as setting up a demonstration plot where agroecological technologies were exhibited.

On behalf of the County Government, we would like to thank BvAT for the successful collaboration in organizing and hosting this event.

Emmanuel Kariuki
County Chief Officer – Agriculture and Irrigation.
Kakamega County

World Bee Day 2023

World Bee Day (WBD) is observed on 20th May every year to draw attention of the global public to the importance of preserving bees and other pollinators. The declaration of 20th May as a World Bee Day was a consensus declaration by the United Nations General Assembly.

Bees contribute directly to food security by allowing different plants, including many food crops, to produce by acting as pollinators. Honeybees and stingless bees are key levers for conserving biodiversity, which is a cornerstone of The Sustainable Development Goals. Beekeeping has been recognized as one of the best practices for improving livelihoods of poor farming communities without much investments.

In 2023, The World Bee Day Celebration was held in Baringo County with the theme "Bee engaged in pollinator-friendly agricultural production".

Apiculture Platform of Kenya (APK) has been collaborating with National Government, State Department of Livestock Production, UNFAO, the Host Counties and different stakeholders in the apiculture value chain to host the event. Documentation and dissemination have been a challenge in the beekeeping sector and in this regard, APK partnered with Biovision Africa Trust to help in documenting the events as well as the dissemination of the same through the print media, television and social media. These efforts have created a lot of interest from farmers, public and private sector players who have shown interest in venturing into beekeeping value chain. Apart from documentation and dissemination, BvAT has fully participated by exhibiting during the World Bee Day Celebration to create more awareness to the public on the good work they are doing.

Information sharing is key in improving farmers' livelihoods and the role played by Biovision Africa Trust in ensuring documentation and dissemination of information is commendable.

Fredrick Otieno
Apiculture Platform of Kenya.

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Africa
Trust