



Walking with the farmer

Annual Report 2024



Field-proven solutions
for a sustainable,
food-secure future



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ACRONYMS

AFAAS	African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services
AGRA	Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa
CA	Conservation Agriculture
CB	Capacity Building
CSIA	Community Savings for Investment in Agribusiness
EA	Extension Agent
FLPC	Farmer Learning Production Cluster
HDSD	Household Dietary Diversity Score
ICRISAT	International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics
IFDC	International Fertilizer Development Center
IITA	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
ISFM	Integrated Soil Fertility Management
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JIRCAS	Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences
KSADP	Kano State Agropastoral Development Project
MOA	Market-Oriented Agriculture
MOFA	Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NSA	Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture
OSCA	One-Stop Center Association
PHRDG	Policy and Human Resource Development Grant
PHTC	Production, Postharvest and Trade Center
PSP	Private Service Provider
PwD	People with Disabilities
RA	Regenerative Agriculture
SAFE	Sasakawa Africa Fund for Extension Education
SHEP	Smallholder Horticulture Empowerment and Promotion
SPIS	Solar-Powered Irrigation System
TNF	The Nippon Foundation
UN	United Nations
WFP	World Food Programme



Ayo Vicky utilizes PHM equipment, such as a tarpaulin, while winnowing her maize at Apeitolim OSCA, Napak District, Uganda (Photo: Priscilla Naisanga)

CHAIR'S MESSAGE



Dr. Amit Roy
Board Chair, Sasakawa Africa Association

2024 was a year of significant progress for SAA in advancing our Five-Year Strategy (2021–2025). Amid global uncertainty, **SAA remains a steady force, offering something rare: sustainable, field-proven solutions grounded in trust, collaboration and strong partnership with Africa's rural communities.**

A key highlight of the year was the launch of C4SEAS, the Coalition for Strengthening Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services in Africa, which SAA coordinates with the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS). As a flagship program under the Soil Initiative for Africa (SIA), C4SEAS is translating high-level policy into farmer-centered action. With support from The Nippon Foundation and a growing coalition of partners, SAA is already advancing strategic workstreams in human capital development, digital tools, policy alignment and learning. 2024 also saw the publication of **A Basket of Regenerative Agriculture Technologies for the Improvement of Soil Health in Africa, authored by our Regenerative Agriculture (RA) Lead** and C4SEAS Coordinator, Dr. Stella Kabiri. This practical guide reflects our commitment to science-backed, farmer-centered solutions that restore soil fertility and climate resilience.

Our broader programs continued to deliver results across our focus countries. In **Uganda**, we improved dietary diversity through Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture (NSA) and community learning. In **Nigeria**, biofortified crops and agro-processing skills empowered thousands, especially women and youth. And across **Ethiopia** and **Mali**, we strengthened seed systems, youth enterprises and cooperatives, supporting more inclusive, sustainable growth.

These achievements are no coincidence. They are the result of SAA's integrated approach, which links innovation with inclusion, policy with practice, and vision with action. As Chair, I am proud of the dedication shown by our teams, partners and the communities we serve. On behalf of the SAA Board and staff, I want to thank our donors, led by The Nippon Foundation, for their continued support, trust and encouragement.

Together, we are working toward a more resilient, inclusive, and food-secure future for Africa.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Shuichi Suzuki
President, Sasakawa Africa Association

In March 2025, I was deeply honored to assume the role of President of Sasakawa Africa Association (SAA). I extend my sincere gratitude to the Board of Councilors and Directors for their confidence, and to the entire SAA team for their warm welcome. I would also like to acknowledge the leadership of my predecessor, Dr. Makoto Kitanaka.

With a background in international business, I recognize the importance of innovation, collaboration, and sustainable solutions in driving meaningful and lasting impact. These principles are strongly embedded in SAA's mission and approach.

Since its founding in 1986, SAA has walked alongside Africa's smallholder farmers, consistently delivering practical solutions grounded in the realities of the field. At the heart of our work lies a core belief: strengthening local capacity through robust agricultural extension systems is key to achieving lasting transformation in African agriculture

Today, the solid foundation built over decades is gaining increasing recognition from a growing network of partners. This has opened new and promising avenues for collaboration with governments, multilateral institutions, and the private sector. **At a time when agricultural extension is gaining momentum in global development discourse, SAA's consistent approach is increasingly seen as both relevant and effective.**

As global development priorities continue to evolve, often marked by shifting funding landscapes and emerging challenges, SAA's mission remains more vital than ever. In this dynamic context, we are especially grateful for the steadfast support of The Nippon Foundation, our founding and core donor since 1986, as well as the valuable contributions of our other partners and supporters who make our work possible.

Thank you for your continued trust. I look forward to working with all our partners and stakeholders to advance our shared commitment to improving the lives and livelihoods of Africa's smallholder farmers.

ABOUT SAA

The Sasakawa Africa Association (SAA) is an international non-governmental organization dedicated to transforming agriculture and improving the livelihoods of smallholder farmers in sub-Saharan Africa. Established in 1986 by philanthropist Ryoichi Sasakawa, former US President Jimmy Carter and Nobel Laureate Dr. Norman Borlaug, SAA provides science-based, practical solutions to enhance the productivity and resilience of farming communities.

Active in 12 countries, with core programs in Ethiopia, Mali, Nigeria and Uganda, SAA promotes Regenerative Agriculture (RA), Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture (NSA) and Market-Oriented Agriculture (MOA). Its work focuses on strengthening agricultural value chains, facilitating technology transfer, and improving food, nutrition and income security in rural communities.

SAA places strong emphasis on building the capacity of extension systems and value chain actors, with particular focus on empowering women, youth and people with disabilities (PwDs). By equipping extension workers and farmers with essential skills and tools, SAA promotes the adoption of innovative, sustainable and climate-smart agricultural practices.

Collaboration lies at the heart of SAA's mission. The organization works closely with national governments, research institutions, universities, the private sector and farming communities to advance inclusive agricultural development and achieve a food-secure future for Africa.



Vision

To support Africa to fulfill its aspirations in building sustainable and resilient food systems

Mission

Catalyzing knowledge sharing with African farmers and enabling food, nutrition and income security in their communities

Our Approach

We aim to fulfill our vision, mission and organizational objectives through:

Knowledge Creation:
Co-create technologies and methodologies that advance business-orientated agriculture

Knowledge Packaging:
Introduce flexible technology packages based on community needs

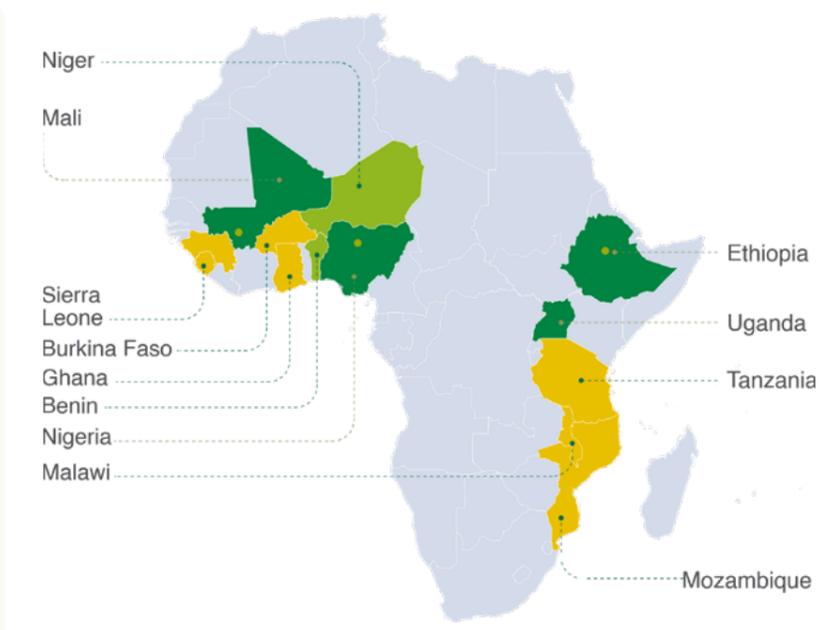
Knowledge Transfer:
Exchange information between farmers and other stakeholders

Country Hubs

- Countries with a country office**
 - ✦ Ethiopia
 - ✦ Mali
 - ✦ Nigeria
 - ✦ Uganda

- Countries with a project office**
 - ✦ Benin
 - ✦ Niger

- Countries with capacity building program**
 - ✦ Burkina Faso
 - ✦ Ghana
 - ✦ Malawi
 - ✦ Mozambique
 - ✦ Sierra Leone
 - ✦ Tanzania



Partner Universities/Colleges with Legacy SAFE* Curricula

Benin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Abomey-Calavi 	Mozambique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catholic University
Burkina Faso	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nazi Boni University 	Nigeria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adamawa State University • Ahmadu Bello University • Bayero University • Bowen University • Federal University of Dutsin-Ma • Illorin University • Michael Okpara University • Obafemi Awolowo University • Usmanu Danfodiyo University
Ethiopia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arba Minch University • Bahir Dar University • Haramaya University • Hawassa University • Jijjiga University • Jimma University • Mekelle University • Samara University 		
Ghana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kwadaso Agricultural College • University of Cape Coast 	Sierra Leone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Njala University
Malawi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lilongwe University 	Tanzania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sokoine University
Mali	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Colleges of M'pessoba, Same and Samanko • Rural Polytechnic Institute for Training and Applied Research (IPR-IFRA), Katibougou • University of Ségou 	Uganda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makerere University

SAFE (Sasakawa Africa Fund for Extension Education) was a sister initiative of SAA that, in collaboration with African universities and agricultural colleges co-developed demand-driven curricula for mid-career agricultural extension agents. The SAFE program has been integrated into SAA's broader capacity building efforts.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

SAA envisions a food-secure and prosperous rural Africa where smallholder farmers lead productive and resilient lives. Our mission is to address major development challenges – such as climate change, soil degradation, malnutrition, food insecurity, youth unemployment and rural poverty – through sustainable agricultural transformation.

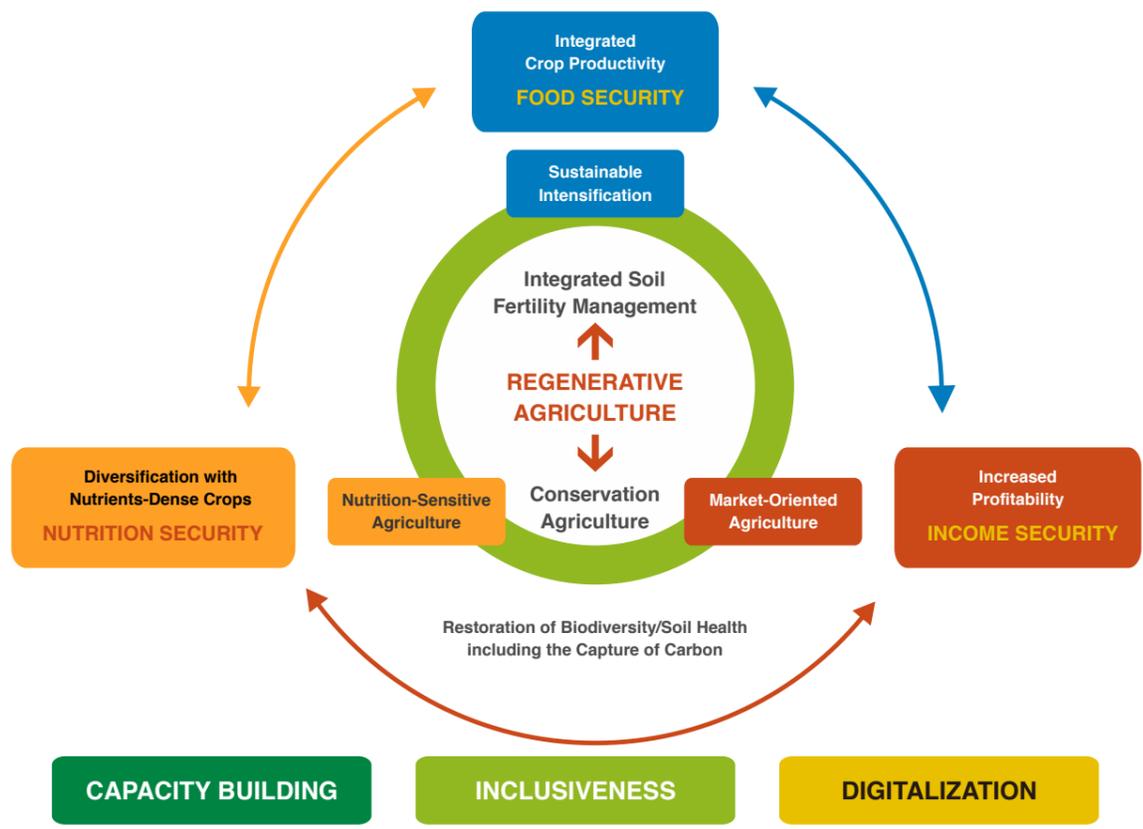
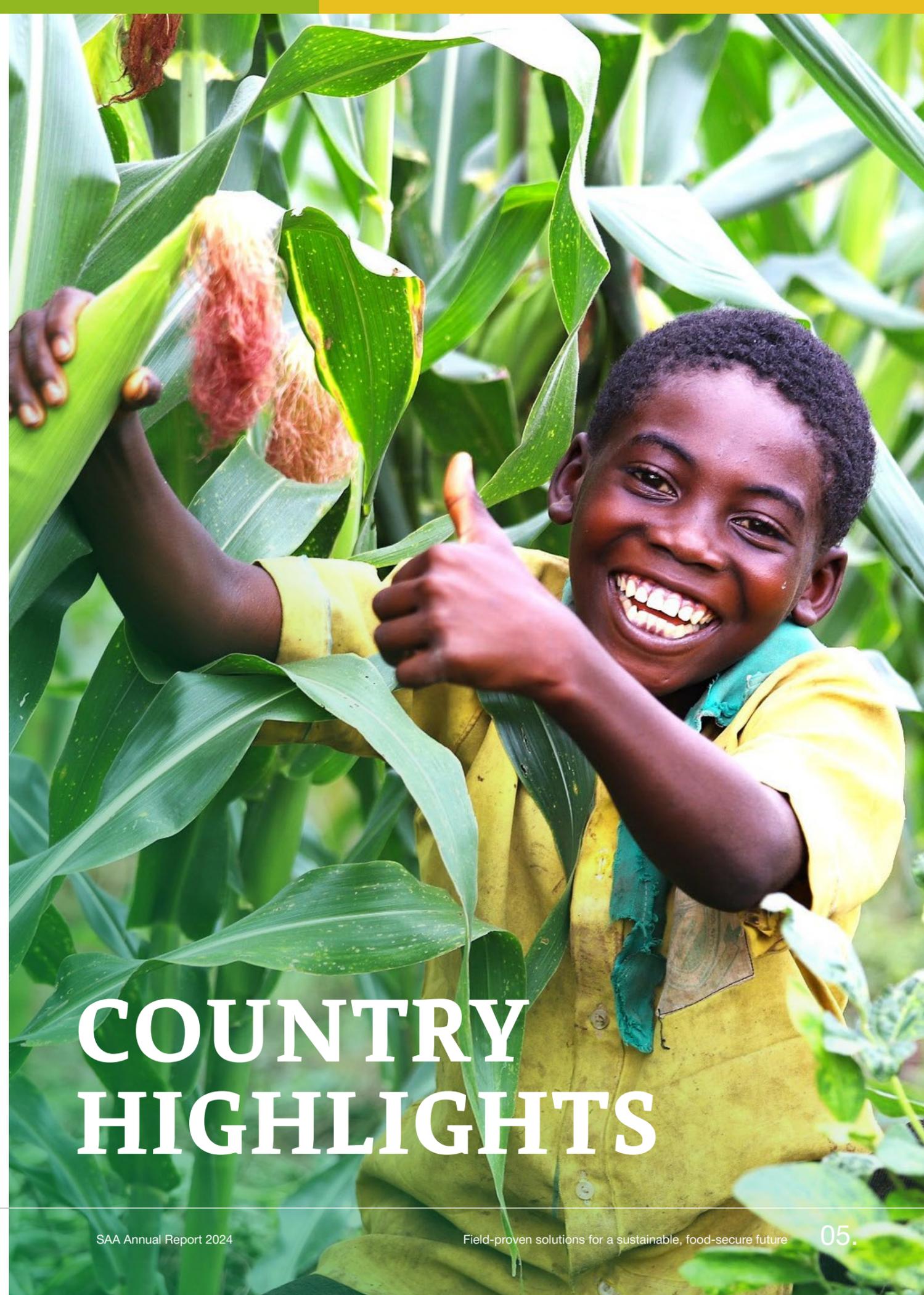
To achieve this mission, **SAA promotes climate-resilient, market-oriented practices that enhance productivity, nutrition and income generation for smallholder farming households.** Central to our strategy is the advancement of Regenerative Agriculture (RA), including **Conservation Agriculture (CA)** and **Integrated Soil Fertility Management (ISFM)**, to improve soil health, sustainably boost yields and build resilience to climate shocks, while protecting natural ecosystems.

To combat malnutrition and hidden hunger, SAA supports the **production and consumption of nutrient-dense, biofortified crops and promotes diversified cropping systems to improve dietary diversity and household nutrition.** We also champion the concept of farming as a business, nurturing farmer entrepreneurship and strengthening Private Service Providers (PSPs). These efforts improve access to inputs, advisory services, finance and markets, fostering sustainable agri-businesses and strengthening local value chains.

Capacity development is at the heart of SAA's strategy. We partner with farmer organizations, national extension systems, academic and research institutions to drive innovation, knowledge sharing and effective service delivery. **Inclusivity is a guiding principle**, with efforts to engage women, youth and people with disabilities (PwDs) integrated into all our interventions.

As a vital enabler, **we leverage digital technologies to deliver e-extension and digital advisory services**, share real-time market and weather information, and enhance access to finance and agricultural inputs. Our interventions are aligned with **national policies, regional frameworks like CAADP, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, particularly SDG 1 (No poverty), 2 (Zero hunger), 5 (Gender equality) and 13 (Climate action). In support of these efforts, we work with our strategic partners to enable the scaling of proven extension models and lay the foundations for long-term sustainable development across Africa.

Using a farmer-centered, results-based approach, SAA tailors interventions to local contexts while driving sustainable, inclusive development. Ultimately, this approach strengthens the productivity, resilience and entrepreneurship of Africa's smallholder farmers, contributing to food security and rural prosperity.



COUNTRY HIGHLIGHTS

ETHIOPIA



Dr. Fentahun Mengistu
Country Director, Ethiopia



In 2024, SAA-Ethiopia expanded its geographic coverage, community reach and programmatic scope, operating across six regions: Addis Ababa City, Amhara, Central Ethiopia, Oromia, Sidama and Tigray. Activities spanned 16 woredas, 68 kebeles and two universities, reaching 53,019 individuals, including 15,831 women, 7,817 youth and 40 people with disabilities (PwDs). These interventions were delivered through both the core project funded by The Nippon Foundation, and through several extra-core projects supported by AGRA, Bayer, FOLU, MOFA Japan, PHRDG and RTI/USAID.

During the year, over 10,969 smallholder farmers (4,125 female) and 937 extension agents (142 female) were trained across our three strategic pillars under both core and extra-core projects.

Regenerative Agriculture (RA)

SAA-Ethiopia scaled Regenerative Agriculture through Farmer Learning Production Clusters (FLPCs), and promoted the use of Solar-Powered Irrigation Systems (SPIS).

Adoption rates were impressive:

92%



of target farmers applied three or more RA practices

74%



achieved high crop diversity (over six crop types)

55.4%

of farming communities implemented key ISFM practices

51%



adopted Conservation Agriculture (CA) practices.

Productivity increased significantly compared to 2021:

+74%



Wheat

+149%



Faba bean

+100%



Haricot bean



Inspection of potato seed production at Kerekicho Kebele Angacha Woreda (Photo: Binyam Tesfay)

Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture (NSA)

Throughout 2024, we focused our efforts on intensifying the technological base of NSA model villages. Another key focus was incorporating high-value, climate-resilient and nutritious crops like avocado, soybean, pro-vitamin A maize and pearl millet, along with potato processing and poultry production.

These activities led to measurable improvements in food security and postharvest practices among targeted households:



79%

reached an acceptable food consumption score



66%

recorded a high dietary diversity score



52%

adopted hermetic storage



33%

used postharvest machinery

Market-Oriented Agriculture (MOA)

Our work in MOA led to:

477%

increase in household income from the baseline



37%

of wheat produced sold through farmers' market outlets



Capacity Building (CB)

Capacity development remained a key pillar and focus area:

23

new modules were developed for university level training programs



144

extension agents (53 female) graduated from SAA's long-term training



34

development agents (13 female) received entrepreneurship training



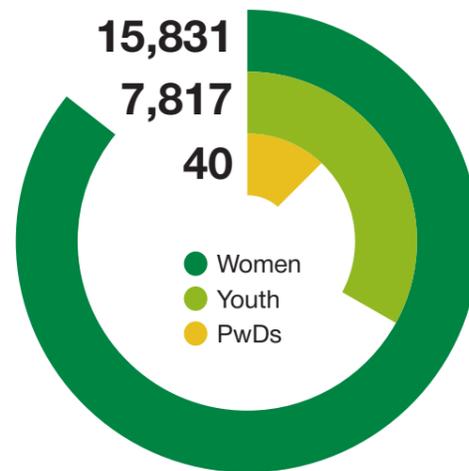
550

students (246 female) enrolled in the program

Inclusiveness

In 2024, SAA-Ethiopia implemented a range of interventions under its three strategic pillars to support smallholder farmers, with a focus on reaching women, youth and PwDs. These interventions included training, demonstrations and income-generating initiatives in key areas such as composting, forage development, soil and water conservation, agroforestry, permagardening, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), biochar and vermiwash preparation, postharvest handling, nutrition, agro-dealership, farm services, savings and credit.

In total, our core and extra-core projects reached 53,019 beneficiaries, including:



Community members actively participate in a nutrition education session using illustrated materials on Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture (NSA), facilitated by SAA in Raya-Boda Kebele, Ana Sora District (Photo: Samson Adefris)

Digitalization

We used digital advisory tools, particularly Talking Books and mobile applications like Mae'd Farm Suit, to complement face-to-face outreach:

17

EAs & HEWs

338

Farmers

received training on Talking Books and other digital tools

10,563

people reached via Talking Books



4,877

individuals on average reached via Talking Books

945

farmers received cascaded agricultural information from EAs who had accessed Mae'd Farm Suit

33% Female

45% Youth

29% Female

34% Youth



Development Agents (DAs) receive on-the-job training in basic computer skills at Gubeta Arjo Farmers Training Center, Negele Arsi District (Photo: Abebe Tekle)

Recognition & Awards

In 2024, SAA-Ethiopia was honored with certificates awarded by various organizations, including:



Agricultural Economics Society of Ethiopia (AESE)



Authority for Civil Society Organizations (ACSO)



Ethiopian Cooperative Commission (ECC)



Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR)



University of Gondar (UoG)



Mr Tariku's diversified permagarden demo in Raya-Boda Kebele, Ana Sora District (Photo: Lulu Taye)

Our Key Partners in 2024

In 2024, SAA-Ethiopia strengthened partnerships across public, private and development stakeholders, looking to catalyze, synergize and scale our impacts to sustainably transform and grow local food systems.

A funding agreement was signed with AGRA, Bayer East Africa Ltd., FOLU and RT/USAID for projects in Ethiopia. Additionally, we signed a partnership agreement with Farm Radio International (FRI) to disseminate RA knowledge via radio programs and networks.

01 Foundations and NGOs

- AGRA
- Farm Radio International
- Rocky Mountain Institute

02 Government / public sector

- Authority for Civil Society Organizations (ACSO)
- Ethiopian Agricultural Business Corporation
- Ethiopian Cooperative Commission
- Ethiopian Ministry of Agriculture
- MOFA Japan

03 International development agencies

- JICA
- RTI/USAID

04 Private sector

- Amplio Co
- Bayer East Africa Ltd
- Dagim Kennedy Engineering & Trading PLC
- Green Agro Solutions / LERSHA
- Green Scene Energy PLC

05 Research and technical institutions

- EIAR
- CIAT
- ICRISAT
- IITA
- JIRCAS

06 Regional / multistakeholder institutions

- AGRA
- FOLU

MALI



Dr. Hamado Tapsoba
Country Director, Mali



In 2024, SAA-Mali implemented a wide range of interventions across nine Production, Postharvest and Trading Centers (PHTCs): Dacoumani, Didieni, Dioumara, Guéssébougou, Koloniboundio, Monzombléna, Samanko, Siranikoro and Tiola. Favorable rainfall contributed to a generally satisfactory cropping season. **During the year, 6,260 farmers (51% female) and 219 extension agents were trained in technical and entrepreneurial practices** aligned with SAA's three strategic pillars.

Regenerative Agriculture (RA)

Yields of key crops (maize, sorghum and pearl millet) increased by nearly 54% from 2023. This increase was primarily due to optimal rainfall conditions, combined with the adoption of improved soil and water management practices. Demonstration plots facilitated uptake, and the application of ISFM and Conservation Agriculture (CA) was strong across the target regions.

Key achievements include:

82%

of farmers applied ISFM practices, focusing on composting and judicious use of chemical fertilizers



65%

adopted CA techniques such as crop rotation, intercropping and minimum tillage



Yields increased:

41%

Maize

88%

Sorghum

31%

Pearl millet

479

lead producers accessed certified seeds



18%

reduction in climate-related yield losses



Green Field Day held in Dacoumani in partnership with the National Directorate of Agriculture (Photo: Kadidiatou Kone)

Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture (NSA)

Efforts to improve household nutrition had strong results, with 71% of target households achieving a Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS) over six. Highest scores were recorded in Tiola (7.9), Guéssébougou (7.3) and Didieni (6.4).

Other notable results include:

1,813 

people (1,745 female) trained to prepare local dishes with high nutritional value

877 

women trained on maternal nutrition

1,889 

producers (471 female) received training on postharvest management

Market-Oriented Agriculture (MOA)

Incomes in target areas improved by 19%, from CFA 572,128 (USD 994.77) to CFA 681,482 (USD 1,184.82) annually.

Production results were also impressive:

52% 

of producers marketing more than 50% of their produce within structured markets

43% 

of producers adopted SHEP approach

352+ 

tons of maize and groundnuts recorded as 'intended to sell' from producers in six PHTCs

Capacity Building (CB)

During 2024, SAA-Mali supported the training of 20 youth (10 females) in entrepreneurship and agro-processing at the IPR/IFRA Katibougou, also known as the Technology Village. This initiative aimed to both strengthen the institution's financial sustainability and enhance the practical training of students in agrobusiness and agro-economics.

At the University of Ségou, we helped to establish a demonstration plot at the Sonicoura farm:

163 students from the Faculty of Agronomy and Animal Medicine (FAMA) took part in the demonstrations

78 studying agricultural extension (28 female)

85 studying sustainable food crops (35 female)

Additionally, we organized an educational visit for students to observe extension services and farmer cooperatives supported by SAA-Mali in Bla in the Ségou Region. These initiatives collectively enhance hands-on learning, promote gender inclusion, and strengthen the linkage between academic training and real-world agricultural development.

Inclusiveness

SAA-Mali continued to support inclusive education, gender parity and equitable access across all our strategic pillars and projects.

Our programs are designed to ensure the active participation of youth, women and marginalized groups, including people with disabilities (PwDs), in agricultural development and capacity-building efforts. In the RA pillar, we focus heavily on gender parity, ensuring equal representation of men and women in all activities. Our NSA work also prioritizes the participation of women, who represent the majority of beneficiaries.

We are pleased to report that:

30%+

of MOA project participants are women, with our teams promoting their involvement in value chains and income-generating activities

50/50

participation rate between men and women achieved across our Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and Capacity Building (CB) projects

Digitalization

During 2024, we engaged in digital capacity building at the University of Ségou, with training on digital data collection tools. A program review confirmed that 68 young people took part in the training and 46 of those participants were female.



Students participate in an M&E data collection training conducted by SAA at the University of Ségou (Photo: Kadidiatou Kone)

Our Key Partners in 2024

2024 was marked by a continued strong partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture through national and regional directorates. Similarly, SAA-Mali's partnerships with universities and agricultural extension training centers were consolidated through joint missions and sessions on agricultural entrepreneurship.

01 Government / public sector

- Ministry of Agriculture
- National Directorate of Agriculture (DNA)
- Regional Directorates of Agriculture of Ségou, Sikasso, Bougouni, Koulikoro, Kita, Kayes, Dioila, Koutiala and Nioro du Sahel
- Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation

02 International development agencies

- Embassy of Japan
- Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Niger
- JICA
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

03 Private sector

- APCAM
- ASSEMA
- AGRISEM
- CREFOD
- Cultisain Sahel
- Nyèsigiso
- RMCR

04 Research and technical institutions

- Agricultural Colleges of M'pessoba, Same, and Samanko
- ICRISAT
- IER
- IFDC
- IPR-IFRA of Katibougou
- KIT
- JIRCAS
- University of Ségou



SAA team with representatives of partners micro finance institutions (Photo: Kadiatou Kone)

NIGERIA



Dr. Godwin Atser
Country Director, Nigeria



In 2024, SAA-Nigeria worked across 14 states (Abia, Adamawa, Benue, Gombe, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Osun, Sokoto and Yobe) as well as the Republic of Benin, directly impacting 549,375 farmers. Core funding focused on 12 of the 14 states (excluding Niger and Yobe) and trained 9,000 farmers (40% female) in climate-smart, productive and market-driven agricultural practices.

Amid economic and climatic challenges, our interventions focused on building resilience and sustainability through Regenerative, Nutrition-Sensitive and Market-Oriented Agriculture (RA, NSA and MOA).

Regenerative Agriculture (RA)

Throughout the year, we encouraged and enabled farmers to adopt RA practices, with a view to increasing yields, reducing losses linked to climate change, and enhancing soil health.

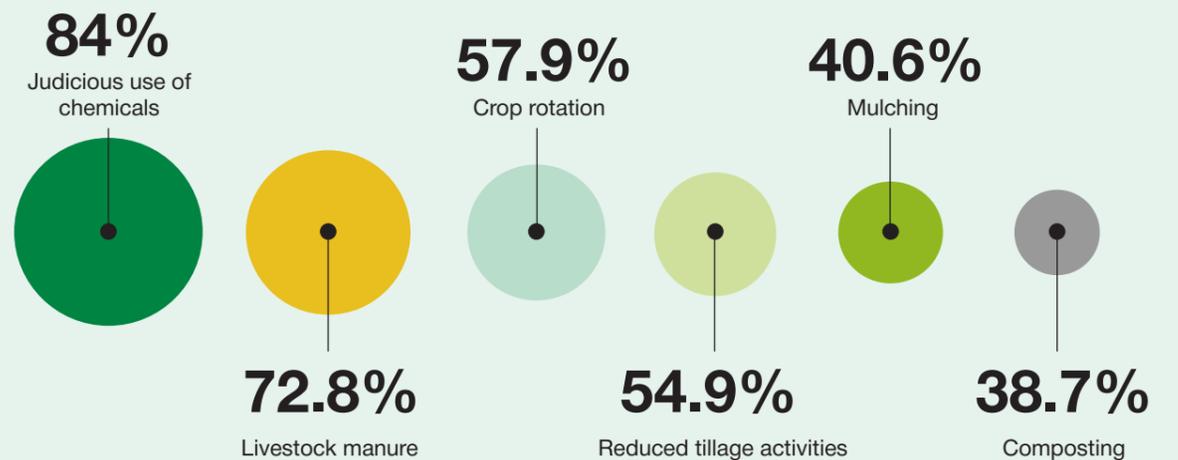
These activities led to key achievements and encouraging adoption rates:

360

community demonstration plots established using RA techniques such as diversified strip cropping, intercropping, biochar, bokashi, composting, crop rotation, Urea Deep Placement, minimum tillage and Integrated Pest Management (IPM)



Adoption rates among trained farmers:



Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture (NSA)

We promoted nutrient-dense crops and supported farmers to reduce postharvest losses, while providing training in key NSA techniques and approaches.

Results were impressive:

5,800

farmers cultivated biofortified Sosat millet



73%

of farmers trained in NSA adopted the use of PICS bags



Postharvest loss reduction:

18.6%
rice

16.9%
maize

85

women group members trained in improved rice parboiling techniques (**63% adoption**)



165

women cooperative members trained in backyard vegetable gardening, leading to household food diversification



Market-Oriented Agriculture (MOA)

Through our MOA interventions, we helped to strengthen agribusiness skills, market linkages and enterprise development. These efforts helped to drive real progress:

137.8%

increase in average household agricultural income

56%

of farmers in target areas engaged in 'Farming as Business'

USD 3,000

savings target achieved by Salama women farmers' Multipurpose Cooperative Society (MPCS) in Gombe state



A farmer and CBF show off bumper harvest under AGRA project in Niger State (Photo: Moses Nongoatse)

Capacity Building (CB)

We partnered with 13 institutions across Ghana, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone, comprising 11 universities and two agricultural colleges. Of these, eight universities have adopted the SAFE Demand-Driven Curriculum. Key achievements are as follows:

extension agents received short-term training

258

144

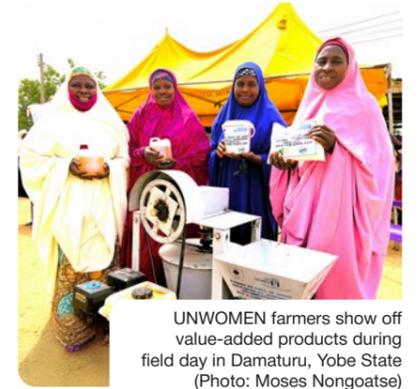
women and youth trained in agribusiness

20

farmers (21 female) trained in the Family Business Garden concept

50

farmers (7 female) trained in kenaf utilization



UNWOMEN farmers show off value-added products during field day in Damaturu, Yobe State (Photo: Moses Nongoatse)

Inclusiveness

SAA-Nigeria emphasized equity and inclusion across its interventions. Noteworthy milestones include:

318

women trained in RA, NSA and MOA



65

youths trained in safe agrochemical handling and enterprise management



42

People with Disabilities (PwDs) trained on agribusiness and now engaged in poultry, goat and sheep rearing as well as backyard maize production, contributing to livelihood restoration and dignity



Digitalization

Digital capacity building efforts continued via multiple platforms. These efforts helped to drive real progress:

60

extension and advisory service providers (28 female) trained in digital marketing, including social media and email campaigns



116

frontline extension agents trained in KoboCollect for real-time data collection



3,800+

farmers engaged via the AGROPONTO platform, streamlining marketing and reducing middleman interference in rice trade



Our Key Partners in 2024

During the year, SAA-Nigeria fostered and cemented partnerships intended to raise additional resources and create impact at scale. For example, we signed Memoranda of Understanding with Jigawa State Government and Gombe State to help scale interventions into new geographies. In addition, we jointly developed an action plan with the Islamic Development Bank that led to the organization of a high-level meeting in Kano State.

01 Government / public sector

- Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
- State Governments: Benue, Gombe, Jigawa, Kano, Kwara and Nasarawa

02 International development agencies

- Gates Foundation
- GIZ
- Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition
- Islamic Development Bank

03 Regional / multistakeholder institutions

- African Development Bank
- African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services
- AGRA

04 Research and technical institutions

- ICRISAT
- International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA)
- Universities and colleges: Adamawa State University, Mubi; Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria; Akperan Orshi Polytechnic, Yandev, Benue State; Bayero University, Kano; Bowen University, Osun; College of Agriculture, Science and Technology, Lafia, Nasarawa State; Federal University Dutsima; Michael Okpara University, Umudike; Othman Danfodio University, Sokoto; University of Ilorin

Recognition & Awards

In 2024, SAA-Nigeria received an Award for Excellence from The African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services.



MOFA beneficiaries celebrate the first 'momigalite' briquettes produced in Assakio, Nasarawa State (Photo: Moses Nongoatse)

UGANDA



Robert Anyang
Country Director, Uganda



In 2024, SAA-Uganda built on insights from the 2021-2023 strategic implementation period to scale proven innovations. Focusing on Abim and Otuke districts, our work drew on core funding from The Nippon Foundation and additional funding from Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA). These efforts reinforced sustainable growth across our three core pillars, emphasizing youth-led agribusiness services and measurable impact.

A major shift was the transition from Community-Based Facilitators (CBFs) to Commercial Community-Based Facilitators (CCBFs), enabling over 150 youth to deliver agribusiness services, including mechanization, climate-smart technologies and financial linkages. Strategic partnerships with financial institutions such as Vision Fund, UGAFODE and Centenary Bank also enabled us to expand access to credit, helping farmers to invest in productivity-enhancing technologies.

Regenerative Agriculture (RA)

During the year, our RA initiatives led to the widescale adoption of sustainable farming techniques. In total, we facilitated training for 12,930 farmers (7,658 female) in RA and advanced agronomic practices, leading to notable achievements:

Through adoption of eight RA practices, yield increases were achieved:

123.5%
maize

60%
beans

7,446
farmers embraced climate-smart practices



47%
reduction in production costs through regenerative techniques



56%
soybean

54.2%
maize

45.2%
rice

15
National Performance Trials (NPTs) for wheat established in Karamoja



While cutting soybean postharvest losses to: **1.65%**

Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture (NSA)

In NSA, we achieved significant improvements in food security and household nutrition. For example:

7



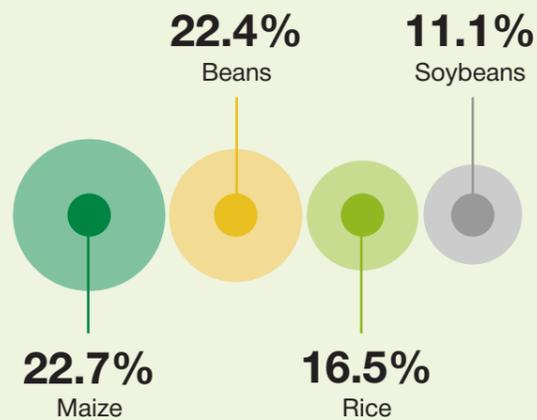
nutrition model homes established, contributing to a fourfold increase in household dietary diversity score

39%



rise in food-secure households in MOFA-supported areas, plus increase in HDDS from 6.5 to 8.1

Reductions in postharvest losses:



Nutrition Gender Awareness training in Isingiro District (Photo: Daniel Sejjemba)

Market-Oriented Agriculture (MOA)

MOA interventions, such as the One Bag Initiative (OBI) and One-Stop Center Associations (OSCAs), enabled us to achieve:

55%



increase in household incomes

674



new jobs created through OSCAs

1,172



farmers trained in safe agrochemical use

28,077.22 MT

of agricultural produce marketed through OSCAs

USD 0.9 Million

mobilized through Community Savings & Investment in Agriculture Associations (CSIAs)

USD 0.6 Million

in loans accessed by farmer groups

We also saw a 10% rise in farmers adopting a business mindset approach to agriculture, fostering long-term sustainability.

Capacity Building (CB)

Through the Rwenzori Agroecology Project, SAA-Uganda collaborated with Mountains of the Moon University (MMU). This partnership led to:



trained in RA, small-scale mechanization and digital tools (Jaguza app, M-Omulimisa)



Akullo Margaret from Obang Ber Widows Group being trained to operate a walking tractor, Otuke District (Photo: Chris Kugonza)

Our efforts also strengthened curriculums, internships and community engagements for e-extension and agroecological education.

Inclusiveness

In addition to the rollout of our youth-oriented CCBF model, we facilitated hands-on training for Makerere University students via supervised internships, further strengthening youth engagement in agriculture.

150

youth agripreneurs empowered under CCBF



Zika youth showcasing the efficiency of motorized sprayers, Luwero District (Photo: Priscilla Naisanga)

15

Makerere University students trained via internships



NSA coordinator checking the quality of rice during PHM youth training, Tororo District (Photo: Priscilla Naisanga)

58%

women participation in agricultural training



Digitalization

We continued to equip extension agents with digital tools for improved extension services and farmer engagement, while deploying ICT infrastructure to enhance access to market information.

These activities led to:

150

extension agents equipped with digital tools



IT infrastructure installed at OSCAs in Apetolim and Bala

Development of audio-visual IEC materials for farmer education



CCBFs introduced to the virtual Agronomist platform for soil analysis, GAPS identification, and farmer profiling in Uganda (Photo by Christine Kyomugisha)

Our Key Partners in 2024

On the partnership front, SAA-Uganda continued to collaborate with government stakeholders, donors and private sector partners, helping to shape a resilient, competitive and inclusive agricultural ecosystem.

01 Foundations and NGOs

- International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR)
- MasterCard Foundation

02 Government / public sector

- Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF)

03 International development agencies

- African Development Bank (AfDB)
- World Bank
- World Food Programme (WFP)

04 Private sector

- NASECO
- Nile Fresh Produce
- Pearl Seeds
- SeedCo
- Tulima Solar
- Wella Uganda

05 Regional / multistakeholder institutions

- Centenary
- Equity Bank
- Opportunity Bank
- Stanbic
- The Microfinance Support Centre
- UGAFODE

06 Research and technical institutions

- International Rice Research Institute (IRRI)



Mr. Sasakawa visiting youth in Zirowe, Luweero District (Photo: Chris Kugonza)

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS



Dr. Mel Oluoch

Strategic Partnerships Director, SAA

SAA prioritizes strategic partnerships as a cornerstone of its mission to advance agricultural development and ensure food, nutrition and income security across Africa. These goals are achieved by pooling resources, expertise and technologies to deliver sustainable, coordinated programs.

In 2024, we expanded our collaborations to scale agricultural innovations, enhance smallholder livelihoods, and support national and continental development goals. Partnerships spanned local governments, NGOs, private sector actors, ministries of agriculture, research institutions, universities, farmer associations, and multilateral/bilateral agencies.

A notable collaboration with the African Development Bank, funded by Japan's Ministry of Finance through PHRDG, supported Regenerative Agriculture (RA), postharvest management and private sector development in Ethiopia, Nigeria and Benin. Additional partnerships with the Islamic Development Bank, Lives and Livelihoods Fund and the Kano State Government targeted agricultural productivity and value chain improvements in Nigeria. Also in Nigeria, our ongoing collaboration with AGRA enhanced crop value chains. Meanwhile, the Netherlands Government continued to support seed systems and productivity technologies in Niger and Mali, and MOFA Japan facilitated the transfer of innovations across several African countries.

During the year, we strengthened private sector engagement through partnerships with: input suppliers and agro-dealers to improve access to quality inputs; off-takers and processors to link farmers to reliable markets; and agri-tech startups to promote digital solutions in extension, finance and marketing. The Private Service Provider (PSP) model remained vital for rural entrepreneurship and sustainable service delivery.

We also aligned our programs with national development priorities and supported reforms in extension services, food security strategies and technology dissemination. Collaboration

with national and international research institutions, CGIAR centers, NARES and universities enabled the validation and dissemination of climate-smart technologies. This work also supported curriculum development for extension agents and future agripreneurs.

Through partnerships with farmer organizations and civil society, SAA promoted social equity, community-led monitoring, and inclusive participation for women, youth and people with disabilities (PwDs). These activities demonstrate our commitment to institutional and human resource development. We also leveraged digital tools, including precision farming software and mobile-based platforms, to empower farmers with real-time data and market access.

And finally, throughout 2024 SAA engaged in a number of high-level policy forums, including AFSF, COP29, the Africa Fertilizer and Soil Health Summit and various OECD events, plus other dialogues hosted by continental and sub-regional agriculture research forums. Participation in these events strengthened our role in shaping continental agendas, and reinforced our leadership in sustainable, inclusive and market-driven agricultural transformation in Africa.



Kano State Deputy Governor Alhaji Aminu Gwarzo and SAA Chair Dr. Amit Roy at the KSADP high-level workshop, Kano State, Nigeria



SAA team at the African Fertilizer and Soil Health Summit (AFSHS), Nairobi, Kenya

C4SEAS: Translating Soil Health Strategies into Farmer-Led Action



Dr. Stella Kabiri

Lead, Regenerative Agriculture and C4SEAS Coordinator

Africa's soil crisis threatens agricultural productivity and food security across the continent. To address this urgent issue, SAA collaborated with the Africa Union, AUDA-NEPAD and FARA to support the coordination of the Soil Initiative for Africa (SIA) and the Africa Fertilizer and Soil Health Action Plan (AFSH-AP, 2023 - 2033), which have set out a bold vision for restoring soil health. But policy alone won't change the soil; extension systems must carry that vision to the ground – which is where C4SEAS comes in.

The Coalition for Strengthening Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services in Africa (C4SEAS), co-coordinated by SAA and AFAAS, plays a central role in supporting the implementation and coordination framework of the Africa Fertilizer and Soil Health Action Plan.

C4SEAS adopts a holistic approach to enhancing Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services (AEAS). It does this by assessing and improving existing models, promoting inclusive and context-specific methodologies, mobilizing resources, strengthening institutional capacities, and fostering collaboration among stakeholders to expand farmer access to soil health technologies and sustainable fertilizer management solutions. C4SEAS is a strategic platform that unites leading institutions - including AGRA, AFAAP, AFAAS, CABI, CGIAR, CRS, FARA, IITA/TAAT, RUFORUM and others - to reimagine agricultural extension as a transformative driver of soil and water solutions across the continent.

With more than 35 years of grassroots impact, SAA is supporting the steering of C4SEAS as a co-facilitator and co-convenor, committed to transforming fragmented advisory

services into pluralistic, farmer-centered systems. The coalition is advancing four priority workstreams:

01. Training next-generation extension agents through regional hubs in East, West and Francophone Africa.
02. Deploying digital tools that provide localized AI-enabled soil advice even in low-connectivity areas.
03. Aligning national policies and AEAS investment roadmaps in pilot countries.
04. Capturing and sharing field insights to shape continental policy and amplify farmer voices.

For SAA, coordinating C4SEAS is not just a role, it is a continuation of its mission to empower African farmers. With over 2.5 million reached and a presence in 17 countries, SAA is helping to make Africa's soil strategy actionable: field by field, farmer by farmer.



In 2024, SAA published *A Basket of Regenerative Agriculture Technologies for the Improvement of Soil Health in Africa*, authored by Dr. Stella Kabiri. Drawing on material obtained from SAA field work, this extension guide sets out technologies for on-farm use and demonstration via our Farmer Learning Platform models.

The technologies are based on indigenous African knowledge, holistic management and cutting-edge crop and soil science. Combined, they aim to promote soil health, integrated soil fertility, water conservation and climate-smart practices.

THE NIPPON FOUNDATION

Message from Yohei Sasakawa, Chairman of TNF



The Sasakawa Africa Association (SAA) was founded in 1986 by my father, Ryoichi Sasakawa together with former US President, Jimmy Carter and the Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Dr. Norman Borlaug. Since that time, SAA has stayed true to its mission. Guided by the founding spirit of 'Never Give Up', and under the slogan of 'Walking with the Farmer', we have remained resolutely committed to a field-based approach to enhancing food production among smallholder farmers.

In 2024, I had the opportunity to visit Uganda and see SAA's work firsthand. I was especially moved by a young man who had previously been struggling as a motorcycle taxi driver, but who now runs a thriving farm business with support from SAA. His story reminded me how agriculture – long seen as a labor-intensive, high-risk and largely subsistence activity – can now offer real opportunity and dignity for youth. I also met President Yoweri Museveni, who expressed deep appreciation for SAA and pledged continued support.

In an era of global uncertainty, I believe SAA's consistent, people-centered approach is more important than ever. I sincerely thank the SAA team and partners for their dedication and look forward to our onward journey.



About

The Nippon Foundation (TNF), established in 1962 as an independent, non-profit organization, is funded by motorboat racing revenues. Operating under a legislative mandate, TNF conducts philanthropic activities to foster positive societal change. Committed to generating innovative ideas and implementation expertise, TNF supports six key areas: maritime and ship-related projects, overseas cooperative assistance, children's welfare, disaster relief, disability support, social welfare, culture, and innovation. Under Chairman Yohei Sasakawa, TNF has supported SAA for over 36 years.



Courtesy visit to H.E. President Yoweri Museveni by former Nippon Foundation Chairman Yohei Sasakawa and the SAA management team at State House (Photo: The Nippon Foundation)

LEADERSHIP

(as of December 2024)

Founders

- Ryoichi Sasakawa, Founder, The Nippon Foundation
- Norman E. Borlaug, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate
- Jimmy Carter, Former US President

Honorary Advisors

- Yohei Sasakawa
- Hon. Professor Ruth Khasaya Oniang'o

Board of Councilors

- Jiro Aikawa
- Hiroshi Ehara
- Takeju Ogata
- Fumio Watanabe

Board of Directors

- Amit Roy
- Makoto Kitanaka
- Oumou Camara
- Krsitin Davis
- Keiichi Shirato

Auditor

- Akinori Sugai

Senior Staff

- Emiko Mutsuyoshi, Managing Director
- Mel Oluoch, Director, Strategic Partnerships
- Stella Kabiri, Lead, Regenerative Agriculture
- Fentahun Mengistu, Country Director, Ethiopia
- Hamado Tapsoba, Country Director, Mali
- Godwin Atser, Country Director, Nigeria
- Robert Anyang, Country Director, Uganda

APPRECIATION

Dr. Makoto Kitanaka

Former SAA President

We extend our sincere gratitude to our former President, Dr. Makoto Kitanaka, who stepped down at the end of his term in March 2025. During his tenure, Dr. Kitanaka provided steady and gracious leadership, guiding SAA through critical transitions with wisdom, generosity and calm. His contributions are deeply appreciated and will be long remembered.



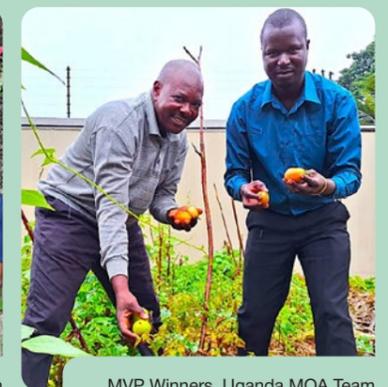
SAA AWARDS

At the 2024 SAA Staff Awards, the Nigeria Finance Team – Abdul Abdulrasheed, Aminu Gidado and Aminu Masud – received the MVP Award for Support Teams for enhancing financial transparency and efficiency.

The Uganda MOA Team – Julius Okoboi, Ande Okiror and Kyomugisha Kamubona – won the MVP Award for Program Teams for their impactful work on the One Bag Initiative.



MVP Winners, Nigeria Finance Team



MVP Winners, Uganda MOA Team

FINANCIAL REPORT

		2023(USD)	2024(USD)	
Overview	Total Ordinary Income	15,552,672	15,851,063	
	Total Ordinary Expense	14,091,319	11,393,259	
	Total Net Assets	7,471,126	11,067,005	
	Cash balance at the end of the year	11,654,983	8,834,071	
Details of Expense	NF Core Project			
	Operating Expenses	4,294,623	4,138,328	
	Management Expenses	2,383,489	2,040,541	
	Extra Core Projects			
	AGRA (Ethiopia)	0	14,904	
	Bayer(Ethiopia)	28,368	38,343	
	RMI (Ethiopia)	0	15,155	
	Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan (Ethiopia) 2023	534,526	125,066	
	ISSD-Sahel (Mali)	951,466	503,247	
	Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan (Mali)	341,426	172,35	
	GAIN (Nigeria)	0	7,295	
	AGRA-N (Nigeria)	276,259	400,205	
	KSADP (Nigeria)	2,643,263	2,613,482	
	UN Woman (Nigeria)	18,526	4,742	
	Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan (Nigeria)	498,092	218,877	
	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (Nigeria)	85,185	0	
	IITA (Nigeria)	20,876	25,835	
	PHRDG-AfDB (Nigeria, Benin)	9,100	114,921	
	WFP-Karamoja (Uganda)	882,685	10,239	
	Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan (Uganda) 2023	524,703	522,083	
	FAO	0	21,200	
	Others (Ethiopia/Mali/Uganda/Nigeria)	598,733	0	
	Total Income:		14,826,890	



Green feed chopping demo for silage preparation at Erba Buliyo Kebele, Ana Sora District



Training on hermetic storage using PICS bags under the PHRDG project in Alagye Doma, Nasarawa State, Nigeria (Photo: Moses Nongoatse)



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