Mid-Term Evaluation Report

Creating Rural Opportunities for Youth and Women through Climate Resilient Entrepreneurship in Kenya

HAND IN HAND EASTERN AFRICA (HiH EA) & THE IKEA FOUNDATION PROGRAM
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Finally, we would also like to congratulate the commitment of the research team and field research assistants who together with our technical backstopping experts were responsible for the successful accomplishment of the assignment. We hope that this report will provide the necessary and effective progress assessment, lessons learned and recommendations for the IKEA Foundation programme aimed to create rural opportunities for youth and women through climate resilient entrepreneurship in Kenya to enable HiH EA to achieve all the targeted outputs and outcomes for the programme.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hand in Hand Eastern Africa (HiH EA) has commissioned a Mid-Term Evaluation for a 4-year programme in Kenya on “Creating rural opportunities for youth and women through climate resilient entrepreneurship” funded by IKEA Foundation programme. The programme was coordinated and implemented by HiH EA, starting in 2016 to 2020. The mid-term evaluation was commissioned by HiH EA, in consultation with Hand in Hand International (HiHI), the Hand in Hand network’s coordination and support office based in London. The programme targets 43,200 impoverished women and young people in Kenya to thrive as Eco-entrepreneurs and inspiring 4,800 future business leaders at Entrepreneurship Clubs in primary and secondary schools. Brooklyn Economic Consulting Ltd was selected to implement the programme mid-term evaluation in May 2018 by HiH EA. The midterm evaluation study was guided by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development/ Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) criteria. The study used a mix of participatory tools to conduct the evaluation and analyze both the quantitative and qualitative data collected. The analysis was done using SPSS and N-Vivo software. The evaluation conducted; desk review, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with programme partners and beneficiaries in Embu, Bomet, Busia and Homabay branches, Key Informant Interviews (KII’s) with programme stakeholders and the programme implementation team, observations and individual interviews with programme beneficiaries. A total of 386 interviews of beneficiaries and 93 students interviews and including KII’s, Case studies and FGD’s were administered. Below is the summary of findings and recommendations.

KEY FINDINGS

Relevance

The HiH EA and IKEA Foundation programme and its different activities were found to be in line with policies, strategies, and priorities of the beneficiary communities, target Counties within the branches of (Embu, Bomet, Homabay and Busia). The programme was relevant to the core needs of beneficiaries especially reducing poverty levels, creating climate resilient enterprises, food security which the beneficiaries highly appreciated. The procedures used by HiH EA for assessment and choice of the beneficiaries for the programme within the intervention counties were relevant and effective and the programme had a strong focus on women and youth. Overall beneficiaries and partners confirmed that HiH EA and IKEA Foundation programme continues to meet their needs and expectations and further appreciated the critical role HiH EA plays in creating rural opportunities for youth and women through climate resilient entrepreneurship. Findings were that 98% of the beneficiaries were actively participating in group activities across all the 4 programme branches while 2% of the beneficiaries had their groups not functioning well. The main reason why the 2 % groups were not functioning well is group dynamics, social disparities and misinformed expectation by the groups. On training, savings module was well articulated and hence most of the beneficiaries acknowledged it was beneficial.

Effectiveness

The evaluation established that the HiH EA and IKEA Foundation programme were well on course in achieving its target indicators as set out in the programme monitoring and evaluation framework and that deviation if any were informed by the results of yearly internal performance monitoring process. The HiH EA / IKEA Foundation programme has helped create linkages between the beneficiaries, County Government and private sector partners. The programme is of interest to various private sector partners such as sweet potato processing plant in Bomet, County Governments and credit providers who are keen to learn from the programme and even replicate the success of the programme. There is evidence that beneficiaries have been able to access enterprise incubation fund of USD
100 and even repay the loan(s). The programme cumulative group saving is KES 31,529,212 at 2018 and this target has surpassed year two projections, which is a positive indicator for the programme. The programme has shown great progress in creating more entrepreneurs, increasing the productivity of agricultural productivity, reducing poverty and streamlining gender among the beneficiaries. In addition, the group member’s currently accessing the improved credit access through SHG is 25,587 under the HiH EA and IKEA Foundation programme. Finally, the programme beneficiaries demonstrated more need for business development services in order to continue managing and improving the performance and growth of their enterprises.

**Efficiency**

In terms of efficiency, the evaluation found the overall programme to be efficient and all expenditures were within the allocated budget lines. The mid-term evaluation noted that the budget utilization for the programme was within the allocated estimates and wherever necessary reallocation was done from other programme lines. HiH EA should consider adjusting the recurrent budget and allocating more funds to climate change activities and core programme activities. The evaluation findings show that even under difficult circumstances that prevailed during programme implementation i.e. the Kenya election period and poor road networks, the overall assessment is that the programme was efficient and HiH EA internal financial and donor reporting protocols were used in managing the programme and this ensured that all the funds are accounted and utilized for the budgeted purposes only. Finally, in terms of efficiency, capital costs expenditure, reports, assessments, and publication were found to be more efficient.

**Impact**

The midline evaluation has established that the programme has contributed to the reduction of poverty rates in Embu (38.1%); Bomet (48.6%); Homabay (41.7%) and Busia (64.9%). However, in general, the proportion of Kenyans living on less than the international poverty line (US$1.90 per day in 2011 PPP) has declined from an average of 46.8% in 2005/06 to 36.1% in 2015/16, according to the Kenya Economic survey of 2017. Further training the beneficiaries have reported increased production especially along sweet potato, cassava, dairy, tree planting, and avocado value chains thereby increasing their incomes, food security, and nutritional security.

The evaluation found programme beneficiaries planting sweet potatoes, passion fruits, cassava, ground nuts have been able to access local markets in their counties to sell the products. The programme has been able to catalyze entrepreneurial skills among the beneficiaries which have created at least 2 jobs’ per enterprise with 24,366 enterprises created to date, this, therefore, represents 47,732 jobs created to date. The programme has also demonstrated achievement of anticipated impacts in terms of roles of the group’s functions such as social cohesion, improved social networks, financial improved food, and nutritional security.

**Sustainability**

The evaluation team noted critical aspects that will guarantee the sustainability of the positive impact of the programme. Adoption of the climate resilient practices by the beneficiaries’ i.e. indigenous vegetables production, soil conservation, pest-resistant crops and livestock including business development services training on entrepreneurship will continue to support progress and stability of beneficiaries’ enterprises. In respect to saving and lending, the beneficiaries through their respective groups have initiated monthly saving and lending schemes, where members have benefited from the loan(s) thereby supporting their livelihoods. These will go a long way in providing a source of revenue to finance and sustain their group activities after the closure of the programme. Currently, women

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1 This represents the number of people employed full time as a result of beneficiaries enterprises, they are either beneficiaries themselves, relatives, neighbours e.t.c
and youth in the programme have taken important roles in farming, entrepreneurship and leadership’s roles in their respective groups which they did not have before the programme i.e. previously beneficiaries did not have good functioning groups and leadership by women was low in the programme areas. HiH EA has to continue working on the programme exit strategy where they should formalize all their agreements with their partners so that they can continue to supporting the groups’ beneficiaries after the closure of the IKEA Foundation programme. Finally, partnerships with women enterprise fund, Kick start international, Anglican development fund and Agriculture Sector Development programme were noted as an achievement and strength for the programme.

Key Recommendations

- The evaluation team recommends the strengthening of Programme Operation Management Committee (POM). The POM will play an oversight and quality control function. It will meet once every three months to discuss the progress of the programme and provide technical advice to the HiH EA management committee during quarterly and annual review meetings.

- HiH EA should strengthen linkages and build strong relationships with other actors in the agricultural and non-agricultural value chains, based on the experience of the evaluation team establishing a multi-stakeholder platform comprising the Government, private sector and value chain actors can bear even better results. The forum will provide a platform to inform private sector development strategy as well aid in market segmentation based on the products demanded and the required quality standards. The strategy will be instrumental in identifying actions the various actors will play in the value chains and identify gaps and potential opportunities for private sector engagement in the development of business potentials in Embu, Bomet, Homabay and Busia counties. In addition, the forum will also aid in inculcating and enhancing the production of high-quality market-oriented products and hence improve the household’s income which will eventually lead to poverty reduction.

- It’s important for HiH EA to strengthen effective monitoring, learning and reporting system to monitor weekly, monthly and annual reporting internally and involving other relevant stakeholders. The evaluation team recommends the immediate recruitment of the Programme Advisor to support HiH EA team in the overall management of the programme especially technical issues revolving market linkages/market development and quality aspects of various enterprises. Finally, HiH EA business relationships officers should increase the frequency of monitoring all beneficiary groups to weekly basis and report groups performance to head office on a weekly basis.

- HiH EA should continue working with the relevant actors such as the financial institutions (Banks, Micro finances and Saccos i.e. banks, Saccos, microfinances e.t.c), County Departments of Agriculture, Youth and Gender Affair’s and private sector since this builds on the sustainability of the programme and enable programme beneficiaries to continue accessing services from these institutions.

- HiH EA should enhance the linkages of beneficiaries’ to the Business Development Services (BDS) such as marketing, financial management, product development, savings among others and their involvement in the agricultural and non-agricultural enterprises. The BDS will help better improve performance beneficiaries’ enterprises and results in improving the returns on investments which is the most important performance indicator.

- Given the low literacy levels among the beneficiaries, the evaluation team recommends continued business skills (savings, marketing, and financial management) training for this group of beneficiaries till the end of the programme in 2020 to ensure that they continue to advance, and diversify their enterprises.

- HiH EA should consider engaging a quality assurance consultant to review training manuals, verify programme activities and streamline the programme outputs to ensure works meets international acceptable standards.
• The evaluation team also recommends the inclusion of pictures/videos during trainings in order to assist the illiterate beneficiaries in understanding the training package in the easiest way. In addition, the programme should also consider entering into partnerships with farm input providers such as agro-dealers because they hold a great promise for the achievement of agricultural development, especially in rural areas.

• It is necessary for HiH EA to have a contract with their partners/stakeholders that capture any changes in roles and responsibilities, especially in the context of HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme timelines.

• It is also necessary for the HiH EA to have an e-learning platform for their staff as well as their beneficiaries. This can also be extended to other platforms such as mobile-phone-based and social media.

• HiH EA should also be linked to the beneficiaries to the companies that construct greenhouses, they would, in turn get all the package of things such as irrigation systems, water facilities, and other inputs that come with the establishment of a greenhouse. In this way, they will be paying for the service while benefiting from the production and marketing of their produce.

• HiH EA should try as much as possible to facilitate the groups to create several social networks even with the non-group members in a structured manner to enable good practices, like collective buying, to be adopted organically outside of the group. This will further create incentives to non-group member to join the groups and facilitate in the expansion of the groups, otherwise, the beneficiaries groups will only get smaller, not larger, which will undermine the collective action purpose of such organizations.

• HiH EA should also consider liaising with the county governments to exploit the possibility of these governments in focusing on at least one successful value chain as a case and facilitate all the necessary investments and technical support to the beneficiaries in a sustainable manner.

• HiH EA should ensure that their exit strategy is fully grounded in a knowledge management strategy especially the one derived from their training modules evidence, and an advocacy strategy that is well embedded with specific evidence from their four pillar theory of change.

• HiH EA should support the efforts that are geared towards making group mobilization component to be more gender-focused by undertaking gender diagnostic training. This will ensure that the targeted number of women and youth are attained within the next phase of the project. This can be achieved by improving/building on the good practices when targeting women specifically by taking gender as a core to their business entrepreneurship and climate resilient strategy in terms of measurement and accountability.

• HiH EA should also provide an enabling framework in terms of human resources and operational. This can be achieved through the recruitment and development processes that should be continually evaluated and adjusted on a need to need basis to avoid subtle biases against women, especially on leadership training, skill development, and empowerment roles.

• HiH EA should consider linking the beneficiaries’ especially young women and men to climate change-related early warning information providers and/or platforms in order to enhance their performance in risk-mitigating activities, to choose the most appropriate action in response to an early warning for necessary adaptation, and mitigation measures and hence contribute to the achievement of its outputs.
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# ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BDS</td>
<td>Business Development Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>BROs</td>
<td>Business Relation Officers</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBOs</td>
<td>Community Based Organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>FGDs</td>
<td>Focus Group Discussions</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIH EA</td>
<td>Hand in Hand East Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information Communication Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>IKEA</td>
<td>Ingvar Kamprad Elmtaryd Agunnaryd</td>
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<td>KES</td>
<td>Kenya Shillings</td>
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<td>KII's</td>
<td>Key Informant Interviews</td>
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<td>LPG</td>
<td>Liquefied Petroleum Gas</td>
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<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
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<td>NGOs</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>NHIF</td>
<td>National Hospital Insurance Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSSF</td>
<td>National Social Security Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD/DAC</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development/ Development Assistance Committee</td>
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<td>PMC</td>
<td>Project Management Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Purchasing Power Parity</td>
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<td>SACCOS</td>
<td>Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies</td>
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<td>SDGs</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
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<td>SHG's</td>
<td>Self-Help Groups</td>
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<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Packages for Social Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOR</td>
<td>Terms of Reference</td>
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1. INTRODUCTION
Hand in Hand Eastern Africa (HiH EA) has commissioned a Mid-Term Evaluation for a 4-year programme in Kenya on “Creating rural opportunities for youth and women through climate resilient entrepreneurship”. The mid-term evaluation was commissioned by HiH EA, in consultation with Hand in Hand International (HiHI), the Hand in Hand network’s coordination and support office based in London. The programme will help 43,200 impoverished women and young people in Kenya thrive as Eco-entrepreneurs, while inspiring 4,800 future business leaders at Entrepreneurship Clubs in primary and secondary schools. For thousands of children, the results will be transformative in building their inquiring minds and in developing their full potentials. The main socio-economic activities in Busia and Homabay Counties are fishing and agriculture, while that of Bomet and Embu counties is agriculture.

1.1 Programme Context

The IKEA Foundation-funded programme is being implemented in four branch offices located in the following counties of Kenya: Embu, Homabay, Busia, and Bomet. The critical steps for the programme are outlined in the HiH EA and IKEA Foundation programme. This is the theory of change, where the programme has four explicit and interlinked components, which are expected to achieve various outcomes. The four components are illustrated in Figure 1 and they were expected to be beneficial to the beneficiaries in the following ways; Group formation will play a critical role in facilitating the access of both technical and financial aspects that promote the adoption of efficient and effective livelihoods options by its members. The groups will also enable the members to be more competitive since they will easily do what would have been difficult individually than when they are a group like social cohesion, savings mobilization, and climate-related or environmental management services among others. Furthermore, groups are expected to be effective pathways that link the communities and the external entities like credit providers, inputs and output markets, as well as governments and other financial institutions.
The project also aimed at inculcating entrepreneurship in school-going children through the formation of climate resilient and entrepreneurship clubs in both primary and secondary school. This was achieved through the formation of school clubs that targets pupils/students of ages between 12-17 years. Besides, the project focused on enhancing the adoption of various climate-related adaptation strategies and hence creating an adaptive capacity of the beneficiaries. The main indicators such as those presented in the HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme log frame have clearly outlined targets to business skills, and climate resilient trainings as the necessary conduits of information dissemination. These can also be effectively done through beneficiary groups/organizations since they are powerful in accelerating transformation of farm production and marketing practices by making beneficiaries/members aware, prudent and knowledgeable. This will also enable beneficiaries/members to effectively meet and manage their household food security status since it requires collective efforts for boosting production, creating support structures, a culture of experimentation, and adoption of appropriate modern production technologies and innovations (Adema et al., 2014). The beneficiaries who are members of groups and have also been effectively trained were expected to be better producers and more competitive to use microfinance that are acquired through various credit linkages that includes but not limited to HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme incubation fund, government credit fund, group credit, bank, and SACCOs among others. This microfinance was given through groups for specific production/income generation activities, with collateral from fellow members will act as a binding force. This is because credit access is critical for rural development as a policy perspective especially when targeting the vulnerable and disadvantaged group of the population such as women and youth (Alesina et al., 2013; Cole and Mehran, 2011)

Market linkages through groups were also expected to convert production surpluses and entrepreneurship skills into income generating activities through opportunities for value addition and marketing (Muravyev et al., 2009; Robb and Watson, 2010; Peng and Wang, 2017). Beneficiaries/members who collectively access the markets through community market blocks benefit most on economies of scale, productivity, safety standards, and assurance of continuity of supply to buyers (Jung, 2010). Moreover, the groups will enable its members to efficiently and effectively
negotiate for better prices, acquire inputs in bulk, and thus enhances their profit margins (DeLancey, 2014). Additionally, the adoption of green enterprises within the sectors of agriculture, forestry and Agroforestry, renewable energy and waste management by the community through groups were also expected to be hubs for enhancing the local environment in a sustainable manner. These green enterprises were expected to establish structures within the groups towards the development of environmentally sound processes and enterprises that channel surplus production to bulk buyers and organized traders; and serve as platforms for accessing useful products, services, training and information to the beneficiaries. Additionally, any development in rural and peri-urban areas especially in developing countries can only be successful and sustainable if the youth are also targeted (Awogbenle and Iwuamadi, 2010)

The mid-term evaluation team found that the above sub-components are logical, relevant and valid for the realities on the ground, especially by targeting vulnerable women and youth. They directly responded to the needs and priorities of these vulnerable community members as they expressed them in the interviews and group discussions. However, the plan of simultaneously working on all of the above within the limited programme period is strenuous, especially with existing realities and the target areas. The group beneficiaries/members’ interviews revealed that they expect more support especially from both county and national government and other relevant stakeholders towards the achievement of various and robust livelihood outcomes.

1.2 Evaluation objectives

The overall objective of the final evaluation was to make an independent assessment of the IKEA Foundation programme paying attention to the impact of the programme actions against its objectives. It is also aimed at identifying key lessons and to propose practical recommendations for follow up and future similar programmes. The mid-term evaluation has the following objectives as provided in the terms of reference:

- To assess progress against targets
- To assess the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework
- To assess the quality of programme implementation
- To analyze what went well, not so well and what can be improved
- To assess lessons learned
- To provide recommendations for follow-up

1.3 Rationale for mid-term evaluation

Programmes are designed to attain defined goals among target beneficiaries. Since they involve the use of resources, it is important to know whether they are working or not. If they are working, what are their precise effects on the target groups. A mid-term evaluation is conducted for an ongoing programme and it serves two immediate purposes: decision-making and taking stock of initial lessons from experience. Specifically, a mid-term evaluation provides a programme or programme manager with a basis for identifying appropriate actions to (a) address particular issues or problems in design, implementation, and management, and (b) reinforce initiatives that demonstrate the potential for success. As noted by Khandker et al., (2010) this is critical for promoting accountability in resource allocation, filling knowledge gaps on what works or doesn’t and how changes in well-being are attributable to a programme or policy intervention.
1.4 Expected outputs and deliverables

- Inception report detailing the mid-line evaluation design, methodology, sampling methodology & sample frame, survey tools, work plan and data collection tools
- Draft mid-line evaluation report
- A power point presentation highlighting key findings from the mid-line will be presented at a feedback meeting to be held after completing the draft report.
- Final mid-line report
- Copies of original and cleaned data sets with the codebook

2. METHODOLOGY OF THE MID TERM EVALUATION

2.1 Mid-term Evaluation approach

In order to address the themes presently discussed, Brooklyn Economic Consulting Ltd evaluated the programme based on the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria\(^2\). These are Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, and Sustainability. The evaluation process was guided by the programme proposal, the logical framework and the terms of reference (TOR). These documents aided the consultant to evaluate the programme objectives and results of the programme to support climate-resilient entrepreneurship in Embu, Bomet, Busia and Homabay Counties. The evaluation adopted participatory research approaches which combined both qualitative and quantitative study methods. These were triangulated through beneficiaries’ survey (quantitative); focus group discussions, case studies and key informants (qualitative). Desk review of the programmes documents, reports, budgetary documents and site visits (observations) were also carried out. These methods were used to determine evaluation data and to ensure effective measurement of programme results/outcomes and impact of the programme.

The team undertook a 3-phase process to conduct this mid-term evaluation.

PHASE 1: Preparation
- Familiarisation
- Desk review
- Mapping of stakeholders
- Tool development

PHASE 2: Fieldwork
- Individual surveys, FGDs & KII
- Case studies

PHASE 3: Analysis and Reporting
- Data cleaning, analysis & visualisation
- Report dissemination

OUTPUT:
- Inception Report
- Data
- Pictures/Recordings/Verbatim
- Report and recommendations
- Presentation of key finding
- Mid-term Evaluation report

Figure 2: Representation of the Evaluation Process

\(^2\) http://www.oecd.org/dac/
2.2 Sources of data and Sampling

Brooklyn Economic Consulting Ltd conducted this research in a participatory manner, interviewing beneficiaries in Embu, Bomet, Busia, and Homabay in programme Counties. A mix of purposive, two-stage stratified sampling was used to identify the primary sampling units. This was based on the population reached in target areas, with specific samples differentiated by beneficiary categories (gender and youth). For this study we purposively sampled the Embu, Homabay, Busia and Bomet counties where HIH EA IKEA Foundation programme is being implemented. Our sampling frame was women and youth in the four counties while the sampling unit will be women and youth, HiH staff, organizations or government agencies in the target areas. Using this approach, the margin error of 5% and confidence level of 95% our sample was 384 respondents. This was then distributed proportionately to target counties and further, a sample of 96 paired interviews for school pupils was conducted in the target counties. The summary is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Stakeholders and beneficiaries interviewed and the corresponding tool used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of data</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Specifics</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>Programme beneficiaries</td>
<td>Programme beneficiaries</td>
<td>386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chairpersons of SHG’s</td>
<td>Chairpersons of SHG’s</td>
<td>136</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pupils survey</td>
<td>Pupils survey</td>
<td>93</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FGDs (16 conducted)</td>
<td>FGDs (16 conducted)</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Implementers &amp; Partners</td>
<td>HiH EA staff</td>
<td>KII's</td>
<td>22</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Partner NGOs/CSOs</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>County department of Education, Agriculture</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>and Youth affairs</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Community leaders</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>School management</td>
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</table>

The sample size distribution in each branch was as follows; in Bomet 138 beneficiaries were contacted, while 63, 107, and 78 beneficiaries were contacted in Embu, Busia, and Homabay respectively. Besides, the students/pupils from 8 and 6 schools in Bomet, and Homabay respectively were interviewed, while 5 schools from Embu and 5 schools from Busia were also interviewed. In each branch, 4 FGDs were conducted, and 8 key informers (4 HiH staffs, 2 stakeholders, and 2 representatives from Partners/NGOs/CBOs/SACCOs) were also interviewed in each branch.
2.3 Training of enumerators and piloting the research tools

Becoconsulting Ltd recruited the research assistants/enumerators from its database to assist in the survey. All the research instruments developed for the assignment were tested in order to ascertain their suitability in actual field conditions. Survey manager with the support of a team of field surveyors conducted the pre-testing exercise to 3% of the selected beneficiaries in Kiambu County. The feedback from the pre-testing exercise helped in identifying problems in the tools and it was also used to address ambiguities and other sources of bias and errors.

2.4 Data analysis and reporting

Data collected was recorded and reviewed daily for analysis and review by the research team: in practice, it gave the research team the opportunity to monitor the relevance, consistency, and accuracy of all the data collected by the survey team from a logical, contextual and technical perspective. The assessment team conducted morning and evening debriefs with field teams to address any issues and/or confirm trends in the data. After data collection was completed the research team cleaned and analyzed data using tools detailed in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Data Analysis Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Collected</th>
<th>Analysis tool</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Households, Traders and producers indicators</td>
<td>SPSS/Stata and Excel</td>
<td>• Indicators chosen were analyzed using SPSS and Stata. • Graphs for key indicators generated using Excel were presented as summarized in the report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGDs &amp; KII s</td>
<td>Nvivo</td>
<td>• Content analysis was performed using Nvivo to draw-out thematic connections between respondents and visualize qualitative findings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.5 Study Limitations and Constraints

The evaluation exercise faced a number of challenges as summarized below;

i. Heavy rains experienced in some branches such as Busia and Embu limited the amount of time in the field.
ii. Long distances to the beneficiaries’ sites and a limited amount of time from the programme beneficiaries.
iii. There were some beneficiaries who declined to be interviewed by the evaluation team.
3. KEY FINDINGS

3.1 Introduction

HiH EA programme aims at reducing poverty through job creation and works with the marginalized, vulnerable poor rural and peri-urban smallholder farmers (80% women) to help them lift themselves out of poverty through the power of entrepreneurship. The programme focuses on the rural sector, where the majority (about 80%) of the poor reside, 25% of whom are food insecure (Muravyev et al., 2009; Robb and Watson, 2010; Peng and Wang, 2017). Furthermore, the programme seeks to boost the local community economic status through its objectives of enhancing food security, agriculture production, business, and climate resilient training, diversification of income generating activities, credit linkages, and value addition to production and market linkages. Addressing these issues has become crucial for sustaining the economic and social empowerment of its poorest citizens to enable programme participants to lift themselves out of poverty and vulnerability. The programme interventions were found not to be restricted to agriculture but aimed at creating rural opportunities for youth and women through climate resilient entrepreneurship in Kenya. The mid-term evaluation team considers this an essential area which the programme was exploring and might lead the development of the necessary pathways towards considerable progress in Kenya’s efforts to end poverty alleviation and hence contribute to the achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs).

3.2 Characteristics of the beneficiaries

The demographic characteristics of the beneficiaries gathered in this evaluation were gender, age, marital status, education level, and occupation. In addition, households, group, and community accessibility to other socio-economic and institutional factors (income, training, credit, markets, necessary information, farm labour, waste management, and infrastructural services) were considered. All these variables were linked to the ability of the beneficiary household to create entrepreneurship opportunities that contribute to improved livelihood options and poverty alleviation.
The results are presented in the following sections, and it reveals that out of the 386 contacted beneficiaries from a sample of 134 beneficiary groups, the majority were females (293, 75.9%) while the remaining 24.1% (93) were males (Figure 3). This was attributed to the fact that the programme was mainly targeting women and youth and that they are basically on track towards achieving their goals and objective of creating mutual support to about 80% women. Additionally, the majority are from Busia (111, 28.8%) followed by, Homabay (72, 18.7%), and finally, Embu (67, 16.3%).

Moreover, the analysis was also done using demographic factors across the gender and the region/branch of the beneficiaries and the results on age distribution (Figure 4) indicate that the majority (28.0%) of female beneficiaries are between the ages of 36-45 years, while the same category of age constituted 25.8% of male beneficiaries. A similar trend was also observed across all the regions/branches except in Embu where the majority (36.5%) constituted the beneficiaries of ages between 46-55 years. Furthermore, the youth beneficiaries of between 18-35 years constitute 26.2% females, and 21.6% of males, with the majority of them coming from Bomet (32.8%), and Homabay (30.6%). Age is an important factor especially with respect to the training packages that are provided by the project. This is because it is believed that young people tend to capture the skills faster than the old, and hence the age categories require different packages of training modules as well as skills that are developed.

Figure 3: Distribution of beneficiaries by gender and region/branch

Credit 2: Cassava bulking site in Homabay County
Figure 4: Age distribution based on gender and region/branch of the beneficiaries.

The evaluation findings (Table 3) further revealed that 76.1% of female beneficiaries are married with 16.7%, 3.8%, and 1.4% are widowed, never married/single, and separated respectively. A similar trend is also observed when distributed across all the four regions/branches with the majority in Bomet being married (82.9%), widowed (7.1%), and never married/single (6.4%), while the majority in Busia being married (75.7%) and widowed (22.5%). In addition, 74.6%, 9.5%, and 7.9% of the beneficiaries from Embu are married, widowed, and never married/single, while 86.1% and 13.9% of the beneficiaries from Homabay are married, and widowed respectively.

Table 3: Summary of the marital status of the beneficiaries by gender, and region/branch

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Gender/Sex</th>
<th>Region/Branch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female (n=293)</td>
<td>Male (n=93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>76.1%</td>
<td>92.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never married/single</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, the results (Table 4) majority (30.7%) of the female beneficiaries have not completed their primary level of education, while the majorities (32.3%) of the male beneficiaries have managed to complete their secondary level of education. This clearly indicates that females in the study area, where the HiH EA/ IKEA Foundation programmes were implemented are not getting equal access to education and the same trend is being witnessed across the four regions/branches of the study area. The HiH EA has tried to bridge the education/skills disparities through their
training modules where they train their beneficiaries on various important aspects that will improve their business skills as well as different packages of the required market and credit information.

Table 4: Summary of the marital status of the beneficiaries by gender, and region/branch

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education level</th>
<th>Gender/Sex</th>
<th>Region/Branch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female (n=293)</td>
<td>Male (n=93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>4.8% 2.2%</td>
<td>1.4% 8.1% 3.2% 4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary completed</td>
<td>22.5% 23.7%</td>
<td>25.7% 17.1% 17.5% 30.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary incomplete</td>
<td>30.7% 17.2%</td>
<td>15.0% 43.2% 22.2% 31.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary on-going</td>
<td>1.4% 2.2%</td>
<td>3.6% 0.0% 1.6% 0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary completed</td>
<td>14.7% 32.3%</td>
<td>25.7% 10.8% 31.7% 6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary incomplete</td>
<td>18.1% 9.7%</td>
<td>12.1% 16.2% 17.5% 22.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary on-going</td>
<td>0.3% 0.0%</td>
<td>0.7% 0.0% 0.0% 0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary completed</td>
<td>6.1% 9.7%</td>
<td>11.4% 4.5% 6.3% 2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary incomplete</td>
<td>0.0% 1.1%</td>
<td>0.7% 0.0% 0.0% 0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University completed</td>
<td>0.7% 1.1%</td>
<td>2.1% 0.0% 0.0% 0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University incomplete</td>
<td>0.3% 0.0%</td>
<td>0.7% 0.0% 0.0% 0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University on-going</td>
<td>0.3% 1.1%</td>
<td>0.7% 0.0% 0.0% 1.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With regards to the evaluation results (Figure 5) on the occupation of the beneficiaries of HiH EA programme has revealed that most (58.7% females, and 50.5% males) are farmers, while (30.4% female and 34.4% male) are self-employed females and males respectively. Those who are self-employed are doing businesses such as bodaboda, dressmaking, hairdressing, food kiosks, and other type’s trades. The same trend is also seen from the disaggregation across all the four regions/branches.
The results (Table 5) show that males’ beneficiaries have the highest mean (KES. 13,729.05) of their monthly income from their main occupation with a maximum of KES. 120,000, while female beneficiaries have a mean monthly income of KES. 8,226.02 with a maximum of KES. 70,000. Additionally, the lowest mean monthly income of the beneficiaries is from Busia (KES. 7,445.96), and Bomet (KES. 9,877.86), while the highest is from Embu (KES. 10,397.22), and Homabay (KES. 11,425.00). However, this income levels do not translate to the overall household welfare and it could be attributed to the higher levels of demands to meet other households’ basic needs and additional enterprises owned by the beneficiaries. This implies that the majority of the beneficiaries are constrained in accessing the necessary means towards the achievement of more monthly income as showed by their main occupation in Figure 5 above. Finally, the evaluation resulted in unique cases where two beneficiaries had incomes of Ksh 120,000 and Ksh 100,000 and these two specific cases the beneficiaries were involved in non-agricultural enterprises and such resulted in an increase of their incomes.

Table 5: Summary of income of the beneficiaries by gender, and region/branch (KES)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender/Sex</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>8,226.02</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>12,582.31</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>120,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13,729.05</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>13,108.26</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>70,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region/Branch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bomet</td>
<td>9,877.86</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>13,877.32</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>120,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Busia</td>
<td>7,445.96</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>10,218.65</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>54,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embu</td>
<td>10,397.22</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>12,039.29</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>70,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homabay</td>
<td>11,425.00</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>15,071.38</td>
<td>500.00</td>
<td>100,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 This is the total sample size for the mid-term evaluation N = 386
4 The beneficiary whose income was Ksh 120,000 was involved in non-agricultural activities.
4. FINDINGS ON RELEVANCE

The relevance of the IKEA Foundation programme concerns the extent to which activities employed under the programme respond to the priorities and needs in the target groups in the four counties, and contributes to achieving the objectives of the IKEA Foundation programme. In this mid-term evaluation, the relevance has been assessed along the following evaluation questions:

4.1 How well is the programme responding to the stated needs and requirements of the target beneficiary groups?

“As a youth I didn’t have capital to invest either in farming or business. After training by Hand in Hand I was one of the members who qualified to get the loan. I used the loan to get farm inputs for tomatoes and sukumawiki. I also purchased pesticides for control of pests and diseases. I was able to sell the produce to other members of the group and I also sold them at Loorateng market. I made good money over five months and repaying the loan was not a problem. I cleared it within six month compared to repayment period of one year” – Youth Beneficiary Homabay Branch

The HiH EA/ IKEA Foundation programme has responded very well to the major needs and requirements of women and youth especially with respect to the principal challenge of insufficient access to knowledge, information and entrepreneurship skills. This is because of poor and inadequate education and training, which limits productivity and the acquisition of entrepreneurship skills. While insufficient access to basic knowledge and appropriate information can hinder the development of entrepreneurial ventures. Particularly in Kenya, there is a distinct need to improve rural women’s access to basic trainings on entrepreneurship skills, while youth should be encouraged to participate more effectively in agricultural, environmental, and entrepreneurship skills through their education more generally, and particularly, through various avenues such as entrepreneurship clubs, business and climate resilient trainings among others. Therefore, for an efficient and effective agricultural, environmental, and entrepreneurship training and education, there must be a pathway that can be adapted to ensure that these skills meet the needs of a rural vulnerable group of the population. Consequently, HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme adopted a four-pillar theory of change model as illustrated in the context of the programme, where they have managed to mobilize 1,449 groups to be formed while adopting others that were in existence towards enhancing an effective mobilization of resources among the beneficiaries. While mobilizing the formation of groups, the programme ensured that gender rules have been followed in addition to other requirements by the Kenyan laws such as registration, development of the constitution, election, and a plan among others. The mid-term
evaluation team found that the majority (98.0% females, and 98.9% males) are currently participating actively in group meetings and activities (Table 6). This implies that the beneficiaries of the inactive groups are no longer working together and are likely to drop out of the programme. A similar trend is also observed when disaggregated across the four region/branches where the programme was implemented.

**Table 6:** The level of beneficiaries’ participation in group meetings and activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Participation</th>
<th>Gender/Sex</th>
<th>Region/Branch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n=293)</td>
<td>(n=93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Active</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active participation</td>
<td>98.0%</td>
<td>98.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bomet</td>
<td>Busia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n=140)</td>
<td>(n=111)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Active</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active participation</td>
<td>97.9%</td>
<td>97.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the aforementioned findings, we can authoritatively suggest that the formation of groups created a solid entry base and acts as the necessary conduits which the programme have been using to provide training on the importance of working as a team since many of their needs could not have been managed individually. Therefore, the evaluation results revealed that majority (61%) of the beneficiaries in Bomet branch have received training in Value chain and Market linkage, while those from Busia (67%) have received enterprise development training, Embu (40%) have received credit access. Additionally, 48% of the beneficiaries have completed all training modules and accessed enterprise incubation fund in all the branches. The indicated training modules included climate change resilience, credit access, enterprise development, financial management, value chain and market linkages.

The programme has also managed to tailor these training in a way that encourages saving mobilization, and currently, 125 groups with a total of 2825 beneficiaries (64.7% are females, while 35.3% are males) have been encouraged to open a bank account and each group have managed to save up to an average of KES 129,078.56 (Table 7). Furthermore, Embu and Homabay branches are indicated by the mid-term evaluation results to be leading in terms of their saving culture, while Busia and Bomet branches indicate a low level of beneficiaries’ motivation to save. Overall the HiH EA/ IKEA Foundation beneficiaries have cumulative savings of Ksh 31,529,212 representing 59% of their targeted cumulative savings at the end of year four of the programme.

**Table 7:** Summary of current group savings across the HiH EA Branches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Branch</th>
<th>Mean (Ksh)</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Minimum (Ksh)</th>
<th>Maximum (Ksh)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bomet</td>
<td>84,088.57</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>102,684.50</td>
<td>3,000.00</td>
<td>500,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Busia</td>
<td>62,225.00</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>93,114.69</td>
<td>3,000.00</td>
<td>480,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embu</td>
<td>277,305.26</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>683,590.96</td>
<td>13,000.00</td>
<td>3,000,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homabay</td>
<td>181,935.71</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>454,386.50</td>
<td>4,400.00</td>
<td>240,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>129,078.56</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>353,134.72</td>
<td>3,000.00</td>
<td>3,000,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Moreover, individual beneficiaries were also having their own personal saving accounts in a bank, MFI/SACCO’s, merry-go-round/table-banking/groups/home where they were individually saving. The mid-term evaluation results (Figure 6) indicate that the majority (96.8% males, and 95.9% females) were having savings in their own personal saving accounts. A similar trend is also observed across all the four branches as indicated by the mid-term evaluation
results. The results further show that 30.3% of the beneficiaries are saving in the banks, 8.1% are saving in MFI/SACCOs, 20.2% are saving at home, and 68.1% are saving at group through table banking.

![Figure 6](chart.png)

**Figure 6:** The level of beneficiaries who save in bank/MFI/SACCO’s/table-banking/groups e.t.c

Inadequate access to financial services was identified by HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme as the main principal challenge constraining rural development. Most financial service providers are reluctant to provide their service that includes credit, savings, and insurance to rural women and youth due to their lack of collateral and financial literacy, among other reasons. Therefore, promoting financial products catered to these vulnerable groups of women and youth, through training programme and start-up/incubation funding opportunities can all help remedy this issue. The mid-term evaluation team supports this idea since it is an efficient and effective pathway, especially if they are encouraged to group themselves into informal savings organizations can also prove useful in this respect.

The programme has also provided the necessary pathways for linking all the beneficiaries who have completed the training modules to credit services, such as HiH EA incubation fund, and other financial services providers within their areas. The mid-term evaluation results (Figure 7) indicated that 55.9% of male beneficiaries and 57.0% of female beneficiaries had accessed credit financial services. Some of these beneficiaries (27.5%) have been given an incubation fund by HiH EA as seed money that can be invested in a viable and/or potential business opportunity either in agricultural and non-agricultural sectors, and the majority of the beneficiaries have been given this funds at a rate of KES. 10,000 each on a need-basis approach. This fund was treated as a loan that was supposed to be repaid within 12 months, and other beneficiaries in the group act as a guarantor to each other. In addition, other beneficiaries (52.3%) who needed more funds were also linked by the programme to other financial providers such as banks and microfinance institutions which appeared from the evaluation to have been working with the beneficiaries in providing loans. Besides, 41.7% of the beneficiaries have also accessed credit from the group funds/savings. The groups were also trained by the programme staff to use their savings as collateral and lend to the members, or even seek more loans from the bank using their savings as collateral. Furthermore, Homabay branch shows the highest number of beneficiaries who wanted credit facilities and have had access to these services, while
the Bomet branch shows the least rate of credit access by the beneficiaries. This could be linked to the fact some of these beneficiaries are involved in agricultural activities, which are prone to various challenges that could lead to a loss of their investment which is worst if the expected income from such sources is going to be used to repay the loans.

Moreover, the programme ensured that the incubation funds given to the beneficiaries should be invested in enterprises/activities that are going to generate more income to the group and households in order to enable the beneficiaries to meet other households’ basic needs and thus improving their food and nutrition security and reduce poverty.

Figure 7: The level of beneficiaries who had accessed credit/loans
Figure 8: The level of entrepreneurship of the beneficiaries by gender, and region/branch

The mid-term evaluation results (Figure 8) revealed that 44.4% of the female beneficiaries and 48.4% of male beneficiaries contacted were having various non-agricultural enterprises that include but not limited to petty trade (20.2%); shop (retail, wholesale, supermarkets) (10.8%); food kiosks (8.9%); dressmaker and mitumba\(^5\) (8.4%); bakery, bodaboda\(^6\), repair work (5.7%); hairdressing (3.8%); and restaurant and hotels (1.4%); among others.

For the case of agricultural enterprises that are used for both subsistence and commercial purposes, the mid-term evaluation results indicate that all the beneficiaries are operating crop enterprises that includes but not limited to maize (28.5%); beans (18.5%); kales or sukuma wiki (6.7%); Bananas (5.4%); cassava (4.4%); avocado (4.2%); millet (3.6%); sweet potatoes (3.6%); and Tea (3.2%); among others. Furthermore, 95.1% of the contacted beneficiaries are operating livestock enterprises with the majority (38.9%) being local cows, followed by local chicken (31.3%), local goats (11.5%), improved cows (4.8%), and sheep (4.7%), among others. Some of the best cases of the programme are; passion fruit farming, tissue culture bananas farming, cassava farming, sweet potatoes farming, tree planting, groundnut farming, and dairy farming among others. Women have also actively participated in the programme; they have received training on better farming techniques, value addition, and marketing, savings and business management. As a result, more poor women are now engaging in income generating activities through the employment opportunities created through the programme.

\[\text{Percentage of Beneficiaries} \]

\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Region/Branch} & \textbf{Female (n=293)} & \textbf{Male (n=93)} \\
\hline
Homabay (n=72) & 44.4% & 55.6% \\
Embu (n=63) & 45.8% & 54.2% \\
Busia (n=111) & 45.9% & 54.1% \\
Bomet (n=140) & 40.0% & 60.0% \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

\[\text{Have non-agricultural Enterprises} \quad \text{No non-agricultural Enterprises}\]

“\text{The program has indeed helped vulnerable people in the community. Women are now also involved in entrepreneurship activities. Before the program started many of us women were idle with no work to do}.”

\textit{Women group leader, Bomet Branch}

\(^5\) Mitumba are second hand clothes
\(^6\) Bodaboda are motorbike taxis
The other challenge identified by HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme was that women and youth have limited access to markets especially direct markets, as without such access this group of people will not be able to engage in viable and sustainable agricultural enterprises. Therefore, access to markets for women and youth is becoming even more difficult due to the growing influence of high-end markets such as supermarkets and the rigorous standards of their supply chains. This stringent standard includes product quality and quantity, production requirements, among others that can only be met if these groups of beneficiaries can pool their efforts and ensure that they embrace collective action. Furthermore, women in particular face additional constraints in accessing such markets especially in Kenya, due in part to the fact that their freedom of movement is sometimes limited by cultural norms. The mid-term evaluation team supports this idea because improving access to education, training and market information can all facilitate women and youth’s access to markets, with niche markets offering particularly significant opportunities for young farmers. In addition, facilitating their involvement in women and youth groups can be similarly beneficial in this respect. In this respect, the programme have not made a lot of progress as far as market linkages are concerned because the mid-term evaluation results (Figure 9) indicated that out of 183 female beneficiaries who had accessed the market, only 38 of them had been linked to specific buyers, and majority were doing by themselves with some having been linked by HiH EA programme. These results imply that 79% of these beneficiaries have not been linked to markets and hence a need to establish the viable market options/opportunities that can enable these vulnerable group of the population to get access to specific buyers. This move will eventually allow them to shift from subsistence to market-oriented kind of production. In addition, 75% (59,15) male beneficiaries have not been also linked to specific markets, and the same scenario is observed across the four branches i.e. Bomet (87, 25: 71%), Busia (68,16: 76%), Embu (30, 9: 70%), and Homabay (57, 3: 95%) does not have any market linkages despite them having made the effort to access the market. The beneficiaries that have been linked to the specific markets are supplying products such as cassava in Homabay and Busia branches, sweet potatoes in Homabay and Bomet branches, and soya beans in Embu branch.

Figure 9: The level of access to markets and market linkages among beneficiaries
Difficulties in accessing and adopting green micro-enterprises were also identified by HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme as the main challenge to strengthening women and youth’s involvement in agriculture and environmental conservation practices. Green micro-enterprises can provide more sustainable livelihoods in the long run and can be more labour intensive and ultimately involve more value added. However, rural women and youth may not have the skills (or access to the necessary enterprise skills-upgrading opportunities) to partake in the green enterprise economy. The mid-term evaluation team supports this idea because improving women and youth’s access to education and training including the formal and informal micro-green enterprise training is of critical importance to redress this mismatch in skills. In view of the above, the programme utilised the modules of their trainings in an orderly and sequential manner so as to enable the majority of the beneficiaries to establish and/or expand their sustainable and resilient enterprises, while promoting the adoption of environmentally friendly practices at business and household levels, as well as the creation of green businesses. Additionally, the linkages to credit and markets provided to beneficiaries were aimed at reducing the major competitiveness bottleneck, and constraints, as well as several market failure in order to allow them, improves their group and household welfare while taking care of the environment. However, the market linkages have not been done so much and hence need to improve it going forward.

The programme has also encouraged the beneficiaries to adopt various green micro-enterprises on the group plots as well as on their respective farms, as shown by the mid-term evaluation results. Figure 10 indicated that majority (66.7% males, and 68.6% female) are aware of, and have adopted the green micro-enterprises. The results further show that the highest level of adoption is in Bomet (84.3%), followed by Embu (68.3%), Homabay (63.9%), and Busia (50.5%). This can be attributed to the fact that beneficiaries from Bomet branch are more willing and embrace the adoption of these enterprises given their agro-ecological situations.

![Figure 10: Beneficiaries who are aware of, and have adopted various green practices](image)

Accordingly, the main green practices that have been adopted by the beneficiaries include; forestry/afforestation and agroforestry, smart agricultural practices, renewable energy, and waste management and recycling. The mid-term evaluation results (Figure 11) finds that majority (89.8% females, and 96.8% males) have planted various tree
species in their farms, and the disaggregation across the branches revealed the same trend of agroforestry services with Bomet branch leading with (97.9%), and the least is Homabay (86.1%).

**Figure 11:** Beneficiaries who have implemented some form of agroforestry in their farms

The program also focused on promotions of the use of renewable energy and they have even linked the beneficiaries with major providers of various renewable energy devices such as solar energy providers, clean cooking stoves (Jikokoa, Kunikoa), bio-gas, and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), among others. The mid-term evaluation results (Figure 12) revealed that 58.65% of the beneficiaries are using Mkopa solar, 21.52% use jikokoa, 6.75% are using kunikoa and LPG gas, while 0.42% are using biogas among other renewable energy options.

**Figure 12:** The level of use of renewable energy by the beneficiaries such as Jikokoa
Moreover, the program mobilized the beneficiaries to consider protecting their environment by adopting improved waste management practices such as use of bio-fertilizers, certified organic manure, briquette (Charcoal, cow dung, sugar cane bagasse, and waste paper), plastic recycling, water recycling, and paper recycling. The mid-term evaluation team found that majority (60.1% females, and 51.6% males) have adopted various improved waste management aspects, with majority (71.4%) coming from Bomet branch, and 69.8% are from Embu branch (Figure 13). Furthermore, the most adopted waste management practices includes; polythene plastic recycling (34.7%), and livestock manure use (19.1%) among others.

Figure 13: The level of adoption of improved waste management aspects among beneficiaries

In conclusion, the programme has made substantial progress towards addressing the needs of the targeted group of beneficiaries and they are currently on track given that they still have another phase to improve and restructure some of the necessary adjustments towards meeting the programme objectives.

4.2 How relevant are the School Clubs and are they demonstrating impact amongst the target beneficiaries that is attributable to the programme?

“Almost all members of the club are eager to start and grow their own business in future as a result of training received through HiHI/IKEA project. They would only require financial support and further guidance” School head teacher Busia Branch

“…….Yes it has helped because through involving them in manual work like tree planting it makes them responsible people. It has also taught them that hard work pays. Some of the pupils have told me that they want to be self-reliant in future and help other members of the community to prosper” School head teacher Homabay Branch
The other main challenge identified by HiH EA/IKEA foundation program to be constraining the enterprise development in Kenya is youth’s limited access to entrepreneurship skills especially at early ages of their life. Although access to entrepreneurship skills is fundamental to starting a business, it can often be difficult for young people to attain it especially in Kenya, where access to finance is a major challenge constraining them. In addition, lack of entrepreneurship skills and motivation to youths might not be realised even if the finances are availed to them due to the critical role of these skills for successful businesses. Therefore, the program focused on the establishment of entrepreneurship clubs in both primary and secondary schools to assist youth in acquiring entrepreneurship and climate resilient skills, while learning with a forward-thinking, interactive and market-based teaching element. As part of the program, students in primary and secondary schools were mobilized and supported to start climate resilient entrepreneurship’s clubs within their school. This was aimed at (i) encouraging students to explore new opportunities and consider the potential of self-employment, (ii) sensitize students on issues of climate change and raise awareness on adaptation practices, and (iii) increase leadership skills and self-confidence. In this regards, therefore, the mid-term evaluations team applauds this move since it is complementing the main recommended pathways of combating poverty across the developing countries. The program has been implemented in schools in accordance to the original program guidelines and in conformity with the ministry of education guidelines/policies.

The mid-term evaluation results indicated that all of the pupils/students were aware of the entrepreneurship and climate resilient activities that have been taught in their school by HiH EA. The pupils were aware of HiH EA/IKEA Foundation program; leadership trainings (32%), soil and water management (11%), club/group management (23%), entrepreneurship training (53%), and tree planting (93.5%), among others. Besides, individual pupils/students have also implemented some of these activities on their own either in school or at home that includes; water harvesting (17.2%), waste management (9.7%), climate mitigation practices (17.2%), creation of entrepreneurship opportunities (16.1%), building of gabions and terraces (4.3%), and tree planting (94.6%) with an average of 61 trees at home and 70 trees at school, among others. The results (Figure 14) further revealed that 76.3% of the pupils/students have been trained on climate change or weather variability related issues. Of these, 82.8% have benefited most from such trainings from entrepreneurship clubs (47.3%), HiH EA/IKEA program staffs (65.6%), and family and friends (24.7%), among others.

Credit 4: Tree planting by Nyalenda primary school pupils in Homabay County
Accordingly, the participation of pupils/student in entrepreneurship clubs has had other indirect positive benefits such as improvement of school discipline as reported by the school head teachers and over 50% of the students confirming they would like to be self-employed in the future.

".........entrepreneurship clubs has helped so much because by involving our students in manual work like tree planting it has made them responsible people. The members of the club are really doing well, some of the members are discipline and leading in their classroom. Other pupils want to be associated with the club so that they can also improve their discipline and performance." School head teacher Busia Branch

### 4.3 Are there avenues to strengthen the market linkages approach?

The HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programmes’ theory of change, puts emphasize of market linkages as the last component because market access for beneficiaries means the ability to acquire inputs and services, and the capability of them to deliver their products to buyers. Nevertheless, women and youth face numerous challenges while trying to access markets, even beyond the constraints faced by another group of people in general, in particular in Kenya. In this regards, the mid-term evaluation team acknowledges the fact that the programme is half-way in terms of its schedule and the number of beneficiaries who have been linked to markets are still low. Therefore, in the context of increasing population, increased consumer awareness, urbanization, nutritional sensitivities, the demand for higher value and processed foods, combined with the rise of supermarkets in Kenya, it is important to tailor the production systems of these beneficiaries towards meeting these developments. In
addition, aspects of economies of scale, productivity, compliance of quality and safety standards should also be considered in order to enable the beneficiaries to get access to these high-value markets. In this regards, greater emphasis should be put in backward linkages of the beneficiaries to input providers such as agro-vets/dealers and other stakeholders in order to allow them to improve their productivity and hence meeting the market requirements and consistently supply such markets. For instance, the installation of irrigation facilities requires higher amounts of capital which might not be at disposal of an individual beneficiary or a group, and hence, the linkage can ease this challenge by ensuring that they are given on credit programmes such as hire purchase arrangement. Finally the HiH EA / IKEA Foundation programme should strengthen the formation community based organization and cooperatives including bulking centers among the beneficiaries to ensure the access to market linkages are strengthened.

5. FINDINGS ON EFFECTIVENESS
The effectiveness of HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme was evaluated by assessing the extent to which the programme has been attaining its outputs or objectives so far. The critical factors that are positively and negatively influencing the programme, as well as the management effectiveness, were also evaluated. Data collected from the field visits to the four branches of the programme and observation was used to establish the extent to which the programme implementation had been achieved. Key informant interviews (KII), and focus group discussions (FGDs) were used to give insight into the factors that influence the effectiveness of the programme. Through a comprehensive review, the outcomes indicators of the programme were identified in the monitoring and evaluation framework or log frame for comparisons with actual achievements. However, most of the indicators or outcomes are
still work in progress, given that the programme is mid-way in its implementation. In this mid-term evaluation, the effectiveness has been assessed along the following evaluation questions:

5.1 Is the programme on track to meet all outcome and output targets by the end of the programme?

Overall, the mid-term evaluation team found that the HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme has been effective in achieving its output and outcome targets which are set in their monitoring and evaluation framework. The evaluation results indicate that the programme managed to implement their theory of change in an orderly and targeted manner, with a clear and inter-related component towards the achievement of its goals. Specifically, the level of poverty among the beneficiaries has drastically reduced from the level it was during the inception of the programme. This is evident by contribution to poverty reduction across all the branches from 40.8% to 38.1% in Embu during the baseline; from 50.7% to 48.6% in Bomet; from 43.1% to 41.7% in Homabay; and from 66% to 64.9 in Busia. The achievement of this was also contributed by various other development projects that were rolled out by the government and other stakeholders. Additionally, the programme has also managed to encourage afforestation through increase in the number of trees planted by the beneficiaries to an average of 8 trees in Embu and Busia, while in Bomet and Homabay the beneficiaries planted an average of 144 and 7 trees respectively. This programme has contributed to increased forest cover to 1.1% in Busia, 13% in Bomet, 9% in Embu, and 3% in Homabay according to Kenya open data network.

Climate resilient entrepreneurship strategies are on track towards the reduction in poverty and creation of future opportunities for rural women, and youths and thus enhancing their self-reliance, income-generating potential and resilience to mitigate and adapt to climate change in a sustainable manner. Furthermore, the programme also focused on pathways towards improving the job opportunities and household income among the beneficiaries. The evaluation results indicate that the beneficiaries who had a lower bound (less than KES. 3000, and between KES. 3000-6000) have increased in numbers by 2.7% and 2.4% respectively, while those with KES. 6000-9000 and those with above KES. 9000 have drastically reduced by 4.4%, and 1.7% respectively. This could be attributed to the electioneering period which had negative effects on the business fraternity, coupled with long periods of drought that was witnessed in the year 2017 in most parts of Kenya. Saving mobilization was also the key component of the programme, and as at now the equality ratio for women's and men's average contribution to household income 1:50 female: male (KES.8, 979.68: KES.13, 702.80 per month) for youth (18-35 years) and 1:1.56 female: male (KES.10, 495.14: KES.16, 365.99 per month) for adults of above 35 years.

The programme progress on strengthening the adaptive capacity of the beneficiaries to climate change through improved resilience to shock in both their household and business has been found by the mid-term evaluation team to be on track. This is supported by the finding that 34.6%, 16.7%, and 23% of youth members, indicates that their
agricultural/livestock productivity have been constant, fluctuating, and increasing respectively. While on the other hand, 57.7%, 42.3%, and 77% of members above 35 years reported their agricultural/livestock productivity to have been constant, fluctuating, and increasing respectively. In addition, 28.27% of the beneficiaries have reduced the dependence on non-renewable natural resources for cooking; 58.65% for lighting; while 58% have adopted improved waste management practices. Moreover, 13.7% are practicing rainwater harvesting technologies though the majority of the beneficiaries still go to fetch water on communal water sources. Besides, 49.2% of the beneficiaries from Embu, 33.3% from Homabay, and 38.7% from Busia have diversified their income sources. These groups of beneficiaries constitute 43.7% of females, and 50.5% of males, while the youth constitute 48.5%, while the older members are 44.3%.

Additionally, the programme aimed at improving the food security status of the beneficiaries’ household, and the mid-term evaluation team have used a coping strategy index to assess the food insecurity situation of the beneficiaries’ households. The findings on the food insecurity situation of the beneficiaries from coping strategy index (CSI) calculations indicate that Bomet branch has the highest level (57.1%) of beneficiaries who are at risk of moderate food insecurity, followed by Embu (49.2%); Busia (38.7%); and the least (33.3%) are from Homabay branch. This is a reflection of beneficiaries’ monthly incomes, where Bomet and Busia branch have the lowest income, while Homabay branch has the highest income levels. The programme also aimed at empowering the beneficiaries to drive change and participate in decision-making on household and community level on issues pertaining to income and climate change. The mid-term evaluation found that 45.5% females and 60% males actively participate in decisions of allocation of income in their households, which is generated and spent by them.

The identification, creation and promotion of micro-enterprises among the beneficiaries was an important component of the programme. This is because it could lead to an increase in knowledge and skills of the group member in order to establish new or enhance existing income-generating activities. The findings revealed that 68.6% female and 66.7% male beneficiaries currently own enterprises. Of these 68.3% of them were from Embu, 84.3% from Bomet, 63.9% from Homabay, and 50.5% from Busia branches.

Market linkages have been identified as an engine for rural development. The programmes’ progress revealed an improved level of market linkages and an increase in the competitiveness of products and services among the beneficiaries despite the fact that it’s not fully developed as expected. This is supported by the evaluation findings where 24.7% and 10%, female and male youth respectively have been linked to specific buyers. While 30.6% and 26.0% of older female, and male members have also been linked to various market outlets. This has enabled the beneficiaries to increase their average monthly income to KES. 6,824.12 and KES. 9,425.56 for youth and above 35 years female members respectively. On the other hand, their male beneficiaries have increased their average monthly income to KES. 12,682.05 for youths, and KES. 11,106.55 for those above 35 years. They have also managed to employ an average of 2 people per enterprise across all the branches. In general, the programme has enabled the majority of the beneficiaries to improve their welfare in almost all the areas they were interested in. This includes the adoption of climate-resilient practices, waste management, water harvesting, and management of group dynamics across all the branches.

Furthermore, 29.8% of girl students and 21.7% of boy’s students have indicated a preference for entrepreneurship over salaried employment, which implies that the establishment of climate resilient and entrepreneurship clubs in schools have a critical contribution towards entrepreneurship among youth across the four branches. Additionally, 72.3% girl students and 80.4% boy students demonstrated an understanding of climate change and its implications.
for their potential future business and household activities. In conclusion, the programme is on track, however based on the overall state of the activities given their timelines; it is too early to arrive at definitive findings on overall programme effectiveness.

5.2 Should the programme adjust any work streams to achieve the outcomes of the programme?

The evaluation team has noted that the programme implementation schedule has been followed to the letter by the implementation tea. Hence, as a result most of the indicators are on track. The trainings that the beneficiaries have received include; group formation, saving mobilization, credit access and market linkages. In school entrepreneurship clubs the programme has provided trainings to pupils/students on; leadership and life skills, entrepreneurship training and climate change mitigations measures. However, various aspects need bits of adjustments, which are as enlisted as follows;

- Enterprise incubation fund should be sufficient to meet the needs of the beneficiaries and should consider flexible repayment modes. This is because some of the beneficiaries require higher amounts of capital in order to adopt various production technologies such as irrigation systems, green-houses, and water systems, among others. However, these are not possible with the current programme budget allocation. In addition, they were merely given one month prior to the repayment of the loan. Thus making them unhappy with the repayment arrangement given the lack of immediate returns in agro-based enterprises. Therefore, in view of the above, the evaluation team recommends that the beneficiaries can be linked backward with the input providers such as agro-dealers and technology providers, so that they can easily access production inputs and systems sustainably. For instance, if they are linked to companies that construct greenhouses, they would, in turn, get all the package of things such as irrigation systems, water facilities, and other inputs that come with the establishment of a greenhouse. In this way, they will be paying for the service while benefiting from the production and marketing of the products produced.

- The training modules should also include videos of successfully operated enterprises in other areas, with easier to understand packages. This is because the beneficiaries’ levels of education are very low. This would facilitate them to easily understand the training skills as well as enhance the implementation of these important skills. Besides, the modules should also consider enhancing and/or incorporating regular farmer field days in order to provide them with an opportunity to learn from other beneficiaries from other branches, and/or from input providers such as extension officers, and agro-chemical industries on the most appropriate ways of dealing with production challenges. Finally, the programme should also consider introducing ICT or e-learning of the training modules, especially through mobile phone-based information access platforms for all age categories of beneficiaries. This will enhance the dissemination of important innovation across all the branches and between the beneficiaries in a specific branch.

- The programme, in general, should also train the beneficiaries, and group leaders on the importance of statutory obligations, either as an individual or a group. These include the payment of taxes, and other social welfare schemes such as NHIF and NSSF, which go a long way with enhancing their health, productivity. This ultimately, maximizes their potential in contributing to food and nutrition security, and poverty alleviation.

- For effective and efficient market linkages, the programme should consider introducing the aspects of consumers with regards to market-oriented production. This is because the current market demand has been mainly influenced by consumer awareness, urbanization, and infrastructure, coupled with safety
standards and requirements which have made the entry into high-end market chains to become very difficult. Therefore, for successful and sustainable entry and/or linkages into such market chains, the programme should ensure that the beneficiaries are aware of, and are adhering to the safety standards and requirements from such chains. In addition, the programme should also the beneficiaries to reliable and efficient transportation services since most of the products are agro-based and linked hence the element of perishability should be addressed in order to minimize the chances of post-harvest losses along the value chain. If possible linking the beneficiaries with processing firms would provide the best pathways for them because it allows them to concentrate on production, while also benefiting from the value addition of the products.

- The climate resilient entrepreneurship clubs should also be enhanced among and between students from different schools especially if the programme introduced exchange programmes between schools since different schools have different activities, and even if they are the same, the strategies used may vary from one school to another, and hence, provide a learning pathways across different cadre of students with the main focus on green micro-enterprises.

- The programme should also consider collaborating with county government in some of the aspects that deemed fit towards the creation of rural opportunities for youth and women through climate resilient entrepreneurship programmes.

5.3 What are the key drivers and barriers affecting the delivery of results for the programme?

The programme implementation shows good progress has been made towards the achievement of the intended outputs and objectives. This is largely attributed to several factors such as staff motivation, training of trainers, targeted and relevant to needs of beneficiaries, targeting value chains, adherence to the county rules, as well as the willingness of beneficiaries. All these factors have enabled the programme to run smoothly and effectively monitor their progress. The evaluation team found that the staffs of HiH EA across all their branches are of the right caliber, and this has made their theory of change to be implemented in an efficient and effective way. This is supported by the fact that the management turnover was very low since the majority of the staffs have stayed in the programme for more than one calendar year. In addition, the HiH EA staffs are generally satisfied with the internal partnership and relationship with each other, and especially with the coordination among their management and other partners which normally takes place through formal steering committee meetings, partner meetings at senior management level, and informal coordination at staff level in their four branches across the country. At the time of the mid-term evaluation, there was at least one HiH EA business relation officer (BRO) staff member who was embedded with field activities in specific programme sites, and they have really done a good work. This was also enhanced by the provision of appropriate training to the staffs on a regular basis so as to enable them to provide the relevant and up to date information on technology, innovations, and linkages among others. The programmes also establish target value chains in their four branches that were location specific based on the intensity and recommendation from the county agricultural department. This created a kind of mutual benefits for all the relevant stakeholders, and hence, improves the acceptability and adoption of these value chains by the beneficiaries.

In spite of these great and important drivers towards the delivery of the results, a number of barriers have been highlighted by the evaluation team and it includes; high prevalence of shocks/risks, limited capacities and capabilities of the beneficiaries, high level of diversity of groups, lack of relevant stakeholders for collaboration, lack and/or limited availability of collateral, higher dependency syndrome, lack of input and output markets, lack and/or poor infrastructure, higher levels of post-harvest losses, and lack and/or limited access to financial services, among others. These factors have in one way or another affected the delivery of the results of the programme. For instance,
higher prevalence of unexpected shocks/risks like drought, floods, pest and diseases, among others has negatively affected the agricultural production and marketing of products through many avenues, such as crop loss or livestock death, and low productivity which in turn reduces the ability of the beneficiaries to repay the loans, and hence making it difficult for them to exit poverty. This is exacerbated by their limited capacities, and the capability to respond to these shocks/risks, and/or mitigate their impacts on their livelihoods. Another example is a high level of diversity of beneficiaries groups, which is associated with diverse objectives that make it difficult for the programme to link them to markets. This is because of the more diverse the groups the lesser the benefits from collective action through economies of scale, training packages, as well as facilitation/linkages to productive enhancing strategies. Finally, limited and/lack of collateral, coupled with lack of input and output markets, as well as poor infrastructural development in the rural area has limit the performance of the programme especially with respect to credit and market linkages.

5.4 What innovations have been deployed to reach targets?

The programme has been implemented with the aim of creating rural opportunities for youth and women in particular, through climate resilient entrepreneurship in Kenya. So far the programme theory of change has been progressively implemented and the beneficiaries have acknowledged the benefits they are deriving from the programme activities. This has also been associated with various innovations such as the adoption of water harvesting technologies like improved waste management practices such as the use of polythene papers to make beads. Other innovation includes the provision of incubation funds as seed money for investment has proved to be very effective especially as a learning tool for credit access and repayment. Finally, the introduction of climate resilient entrepreneurship clubs in school is also a new model with an innovative mind-set of imparting entrepreneurship skills, which enhance the adoption of environmentally friendly practices among the school-going children. The project has also used bulking sites/demonstration plots as an innovative idea within the project in order to reduce the cost of getting seedlings/planting materials. This will further inculcate various aspects that will improve the establishment and expansion of businesses as well as improve the transition of successful business entities from one generation to another, especially going forward.

6. FINDINGS ON EFFICIENCY
6.1 To what extent does the programme deliver results on time and on budget against agreed plans?

The evaluation team noted that the HiH EA and IKEA Foundation programme has been efficient in terms of budget utilization and achieving the expected outputs. The programme had allocated a budget of GBP 587,372 thousand for programme implementation for year one but the actual expenditure was GBP 351,645. In year two the programme allocated a budget of GBP 592,027 Thousand, while the actual expenditure was GBP 580,948 thousand as at July 2018. HiH EA managed to operate its activities within the programme budget lines in year one while in year two there
were budget lines that exceeded their allocations such as distributable goods & supplies, infrastructures; communications & visibility; conferences & meetings and climate change activities. HiH EA managed to keep this budget over heads within the budget estimates. The evaluation noted that the programme utilized 24% of the budget on staff costs and 76% on running project activities. The programme also recruited additional expertise from consultants for specialist programme activities which is very critical in achieving the programme targets. HiH EA has placed a leak proof financial management system that tracks all the financial matters for the programme and ensures all the activities expenditures are accounted.

6.2 Are there any areas where the programme can make cost savings or improve efficiencies?

The evaluation team recommends the adoption of e-learning modules to train their beneficiaries in order to limit the costs of physical presence training, provide simplified pamphlets to beneficiaries to learn more about the project, and undertake training of core modules to groups at branch level so that many groups can be trained together. These approaches will enable HiH EA to save funds and allocate to others aspects of the programme.

6.3 Monitoring and evaluation

The programme has in place management information system that tracks and keeps bio information of all beneficiaries and activities conducted. The evaluation also found HiH EA conducts annual internal progress review for the programme components which highly commendable. However, the evaluation recommends the improvement of HiH EA monitoring system to enable it to measure progress towards results and identify programme lessons learned. The proposed improvement should enable the field staff, programme staff and business relationship officers to report on their work and management to track daily planned activities. HiH EA needs to formulate more approaches to document and share lessons learnt with the broader audience such writing articles on Seeds of Gold magazine, Newspapers and Internet blogs. Finally, HiH EA should consider engaging a quality assurance consultant to review training manuals, verify programme activities and streamline the programme outputs to ensure works meets international acceptable standards.

7. FINDINGS ON SUSTAINABILITY

“The sustainability measure has been incorporated into the HiHI/IKEA Foundation project is the market linkages. We have collaborated with HiHI/IKEA project to provide market for passion fruits farmers and this will continue between us and the farmers after hand in hand has exited. We are also working with Hand in hand to incorporate green houses in their initiatives so as farmers can grow their seedlings instead of buying from us”

HiH EA program partner

Based on the findings of the mid-term evaluation, the element of sustainability can only be achieved if the programme considers involving the county government, and other relevant stakeholders such as processors, and exporters, among others. This will ensure that the training of beneficiaries in business entrepreneurship skills and training of
trainers on agro-processing and value addition can be successfully and sustainably utilized. Therefore, to assess the sustainability of the programme, the following evaluation questions are discussed.

7.1 To what extent is there evidence that the benefits delivered by the programme will be sustained after the programme ends?

The HiH EA/ IKEA Foundation programme provided an incubation fund of KES. 10,000 to a beneficiary who have managed to complete their training modules on a need basis under its credit linkage component for the establishment or expansion of their enterprises. This amount was also expected to enable the beneficiaries to run the enterprises and generate a return while, learning on how to effectively manage and repay such credit facilities/services and thus, enhanced their investment further. The capacity of the beneficiaries in earning incomes from a combination of HiH EA incubation fund, and their own income generating enterprises has empowered them to further get access to credit facilities in other financial institutions such as banks, MFIs, and SACCOS among others. Furthermore, it enabled them to meet the cost of efficiently and effectively adopt appropriate climate change mitigation measures such as economical use of resources; eco-friendly materials; tree planting to reduce soil erosion; facilitation of organic farming groups and cultivation; and promotion of renewable energy in cooking, lighting while meeting other aspects of household and enterprise development.

“We now have community based organizations and also farmers associations. These are registered bodies that ensure continuity of the various value chains started as a result of HiH EA /IKEA Foundation program. They also form a source of market linkages to the embers as they can be able to market their produce collectively” HiH EA program Staff

The evaluation team found that the potential for sustainability of entrepreneurship training skills, and the established linkages with credit providers and markets, at current levels, is high. However, the programme has not clearly identified how further skills improvements will be sustained without additional and further refresher courses. Therefore, the programme should consider collaborating with relevant stakeholders like the county government departments so as to assist the beneficiaries towards the achievement of continuity. Furthermore, the natures of the mobilized beneficiary groups in its current form are not sustainable due to higher dependency syndrome as identified by the evaluation team. This is because the majority do not have a capacity of vision to grow their groups and even become community-based organizations or savings and credit cooperative societies (SACCOs). Therefore, the programme should try as much as possible to facilitate the groups to create several social networks even with the non-group members in a structured manner to enable good practices, like collective buying, to be adopted organically outside of the group. This will further create incentives to non-group member to join the groups and facilitate in the expansion of the groups, otherwise, the beneficiaries groups will only get smaller, not larger, which will undermine the collective action purpose of such organizations.

“……we also identified lead farmers whom we empower and they are able to train other members on the various types of climate resilience practices. We also do visit the members on a need basis in order to ensure sustainability of the enterprises and also to assist them in case of any challenge” HiH EA program Staff
With regards to the targeted value chains in each branch, the programme currently does not have the systems, processes, and pathways in place to ensure that the specific value chain results will be sustained, beyond the inherent sustainability of outcome-level changes described for the beneficiary’s income-generating enterprises, and the established credit and market linkages. Therefore, the programme should also consider liaising with the county governments to exploit the possibility of these governments in focusing on at least one successful value chain as a case and facilitate all the necessary investments and technical support to the beneficiaries in a sustainable manner. Finally, the programme should ensure that their exit strategy is fully grounded in a knowledge management strategy especially the one derived from their training modules evidence, and an advocacy strategy that is well embedded with specific evidence from their four pillar theory of change. This will be an important strategy especially if the county governments are to be the sole owners of the programme results as they take it up for continuity purposes such as the farmer-extension linkages that are currently being rolled out across the country, due the relative simplicity and applicability of the theory of change. This is in particular, the organization of farmers into groups and strengthening the capacity of county government extension workers to engage with beneficiary groups. However, this can only be possible if the county government improves the efficiency and effectiveness of their extension workers, otherwise, other NGOs and other development partners might be a better priority in this course. In conclusion, therefore, the general overview of the evaluation team as far as sustainability of HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme is concerned, in combination with the opinion of the stakeholders, it is early to determine the sustainability of the programme but with anticipated robust credit and market linkages that are yet to be established across the four branches, it has a huge potential for impact and sustainability. The sustainability will be realized once all the beneficiaries are effectively linked to sustainable credit providers, and markets that are fully operational. Majority of the stakeholders and beneficiaries were of the view that the programme is still in progress and needed more time to realize its sustainability component in full.

7.2 What are the key factors that ensure the functionality and sustainability of the Self-Help Groups, enterprises and clubs?

The groups that are working with the HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme while implementing their theory of change programme among the vulnerable groups of youth and women towards the creation of viable opportunities for poverty reduction are very functional and dynamic. This is because of the HiH EA strategy of community entry, where they involved all the relevant stakeholders during the formation of these beneficiaries groups, and the adoption of the groups that were in existence while ensuring that the relevant statutory requirements and procedure are met, and adhered to respectively. Furthermore, the programme also ensured that all the incorporated groups are duly registered at the registrar office in the ministry of social services, and they follow all the required group management aspects. The programme also provided training to the group beneficiaries on various aspects that include; conflict resolutions, elections, and governance in order to reduce free-riding and other moral hazardous behaviour among the members. The programme also provides leadership training to the group beneficiaries (Figure 15) in order to help them to effectively and efficiently manage their group and takes them to the next level. The evaluation results indicate that the majority of the beneficiaries indicated the presence of leadership empowerment especially to the vulnerable group of the population such as women and youth.
The programme also ensured that they target groups that contain specific group of beneficiaries (women, youth, and students), with the promotion of a specific and localized targeted value chains, which were also allowed as one of the forms of diversification strategy. Finally, the incubation funds provided by the programme to the beneficiaries were tied to the group and the other beneficiaries were guarantors of the loanees, and thus enhancing their social cohesion as well as the functionality of self-help groups, and promoted specifically targeted value chain enterprises. Moreover, the project has managed to promote the mobilization of members to self-help groups that are currently very active and this can be enhanced to form community-based organizations (CBOs) which are an important sustainability factor. Furthermore, the mobilized groups were also trained on savings mobilization which acts as a base for credit access to its members even when the project has ended.

7.3 In order to ensure sustainability, are there other partners, approaches etc. that we should consider?

The programme has so far managed to mobilize the beneficiaries to form groups and developed a saving culture in order to build the base for further linkages with the necessary institutions, and service providers. The programme also provides business and climate resilient training which was complemented by needs-based vocational skills training, which has enabled the beneficiaries to establish/expand sustainable and resilient enterprises while keeping proper records their activities both within their groups and households by themselves. Furthermore, the climate resilient training sensitizes has enabled the beneficiaries to understand various aspects of climate change and the associated shock/risks as well as enhanced their capacity and/or capabilities to respond to these climate-related shocks/risks in an effective and sustainable manner through the adoption of green micro-enterprises. These green micro-enterprises have also promoted environmentally friendly practices at business and household levels while building social cohesion within and across the communities. In this regards, therefore, it is necessary to ensure that the beneficiaries have been helped to build a social relationship in the community while promoting access to the

**Figure 15:** Beneficiaries perception level on the presence of leadership empowerment in their groups
services offered by various institutions such as Kenya forest services, county governments, and other relevant stakeholders.

“HiH EA/IKEA Foundation project should use group members of already trained groups as their trainers. This is because other women will identify with them because they come from the same area. They also can see what the beneficiary group members have done and would easily agree to adopt everything they are trained on” Beneficiary Embu Branch

The programme has further built viable linkages between beneficiary groups and the local institutions such as banks, government funds, and microfinance institutions, among others for accessing necessary services. Additionally, some of the socially excluded group beneficiaries have also managed to get access to new opportunities for representing the other beneficiaries in other forums such as regional entrepreneurship workshops organized by the programme with their collaborating partners. The proportion of beneficiaries who have also managed to get access to HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme enterprise incubation fund, government youth, and women fund, and other financial institution services have increased, and ultimately enables them to get access to modern production technologies. These new technologies have in turn enhanced the beneficiaries’ productivity and thus have made them improve their supply to the potential markets/buyers on their produce. An increased level of awareness on women empowerment has also created the rights and privilege for the vulnerable and discriminated group of women in accessing their respective rights such as being a member of a group, taking leadership positions, and getting access to services such as credit, and information among others. The vital registration system of beneficiaries groups promoted by the programme has worked as a basic record for claiming the resources allocated for improved livelihoods, and poverty alleviation. Such increased access of registration services by the disadvantaged beneficiaries groups, especially the youths, has enhanced their access to other basic services from the local institutions, county, and national government while being forced to also follow the lay-down such as arranging subsequent budget in the government-funded programmes. In conclusion, the programme should also consider tailoring their remaining part in line with the county government development plans, for instance, the county government of Bomet is currently promoting and implementing the adoption of tissue culture bananas, and grafted avocados among smallholder farmers across the county. In this regards, it would be imperative for the programme to collaborate with them especially in training provision in order to ensure that this enterprise is fully in operation even after the programme timeframe.
8. FINDINGS ON IMPACT
8.1 What are some of the indirect benefits of the programme?

The goal of HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme is to contribute to the creation of opportunities for youth and women through climate resilient entrepreneurship pathways in Kenya. A strengthened business-oriented system especially among the vulnerable group of the population like youth, and women, will sustainably improve their food security and nutrition at household-level and hence, contributing to poverty alleviation. Overall, the programme has so far made meaningful progress towards the overall goal, and the most essential programme results and objectives. Across all the four branches, there are significant signs of emerging positive impact. The programme has linked the beneficiaries who have managed to form and register groups, and must have mobilized saving, and completed the training on various issues that include; business and financial management, as well as climate resilient entrepreneurship skills. This is an irreversible change and provides beneficiaries with access to relevant and appropriate information they did not have before, which will resolve the majority of their questions on business management, and environmental problems. In addition, early credit interventions through enterprise incubation funds have improved access and knowledge about, affordable seed money where the majority of the beneficiaries have learned how to utilize even a small amount can lead to a big income generating activities. Furthermore, linking beneficiaries to lucrative markets have also improved their access to high-value chain markets even though they are still very low across all the four branches. Finally, the beneficiaries who managed to complete the training modules on technical skills, leadership, and empowerment were given a certificate of participation, and completion, which has also enabled them to get access to other credit facility, especially from the government such as women and youth enterprise funds. Climate-resilient training on the adaptation, and mitigation measures of climate-related challenges have led to enormous awareness campaigns across the beneficiaries’ community towards the adoption of appropriation risk reduction strategies such as tree planting, water harvesting, and use of improved waste management practices. This in itself has created a very conducive environment where everyone is proud of, and has also contributed to a change of mindset towards environmental conservation which has even ease the adoption of relevant policy options. These achievements, together with direct programme investments in strengthening the capacity of the beneficiaries, have already yielded small but important improvements in their welfare at both the household, and the group levels.

8.2 To what extent has the theory of change been demonstrated in the log-frame? Is the theory of change still valid?

Based on the evaluation findings, the HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme theory of change has clearly been demonstrated to be very effective and yielding some good impact so far. This is supported by the activities and outputs of the four components of the theory of change despite the fact that they have not yet come to full
completion. The potential benefits of group formation, saving mobilization, as well as well-targeted training, and linkages are high, especially if HiH EA finds a way to effectively link farmers with sustainable resources, and markets. To date, the component enterprise development and market linkage components of the theory of change have not made significant linkages to beneficiaries. That said, the exploratory work is yet to be undertaken by HiH EA on the potential of lucrative markets, especially which are extremely relevant to the agricultural entrepreneurship, and business sector as a whole. Furthermore, there are also indications of emerging negative impacts attributable to programme interventions, where there is a risk of unmet expectations among beneficiary group leadership and members as to the future role and sustainability of the groups beyond the programme timeframe. Similarly, there is a risk of disappointment among beneficiaries as to the potential of new group focus due to unmet expectations of the distribution of incubation funds to the majority of the group members. Nevertheless, the programme theory of change is still valid, given that the beneficiaries have benefited so much from the programme activities including saving mobilization, training, and credit linkages which have enabled them to meet other necessary and important factors of production as well as other household needs. This is supported by the fact that, the beneficiaries, who have gone through all the stages, have acknowledged and recommended the same for others to join and learn.

9. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

9.1 Gender and Youth

The case for gender and youth are the paramount pillars of any economic development policy perspective and its equality context is founded on both human rights and economic arguments policies. As such, closing gender gaps must be a central part of any programme to create more sustainable and inclusive economies opportunities in the societies. Therefore, in order to identify barriers to greater gender equality it is important to promote gender equality in education, employment and entrepreneurship, especially, from an early age onwards, towards the achievement of better economic opportunities for women by raising their overall level of human capital and labour productivity. In this regards, therefore, the HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme in its implementation policy strived to promote the inclusion of a gender perspective

“HiH EA/IKEA Foundation program should use group members of already trained groups as their trainers. This is because other women will identify with them because they come from the same area. They also can see what the beneficiary group members have done and would easily agree to adopt everything they are trained on” Beneficiary Embu Branch

Credit 9: Beneficiaries of Namalenga Women Group in Homabay County
while implementing the programme whose main aim was to create rural opportunities for specifically youth and women through entrepreneurship. This is because women remain under-represented as entrepreneurs, yet they make a key contribution to household incomes and economic growth, and hence, fostering entrepreneurship is a key policy goal, which share the expectation that high rates of entrepreneurial activity will bring sustained job creation and boost the development of new products, processes, and organizational innovation that will ultimately lead to poverty alleviation. In particular, the programme targeted marginalized and vulnerable poor rural and peri-urban smallholder farmers (80% women) to help them lift themselves out of poverty through the power of entrepreneurship. Furthermore, the programme has made some progress towards bridging the gender inequality gap, by developing and providing tools and expertise to identify and reduce barriers to women’s economic, and social participation; by sharing knowledge and experience on good climate resilient practices; and, by making gender visible and relevant in entrepreneurship and leadership processes. The Programme has given adequate attention to gender equality in their theory of change, where the composition of group members indicates that 75.9% of the beneficiaries are women, and only 24.1% are male. The focus of the gender-related indicators in the programme is on women’s participation in decision making and access to resources (finance), while running the enterprises independently. The evaluation results on target achievement have indicated a higher proportion of women reached even though it has not reached the target, and hence, the need to support the efforts to make the group mobilization component to be more gender focused by undertaking gender diagnostic training. Gender issues at the groups have been noted where women were involved in farming activities (production and marketing), and often controlled household income generation units, while men control the decisions on the purchase of inputs for farming and spending of household income. This, therefore, stresses the need for the provision of efficient and effective training to more women on improved farming practices and financial literacy.

Moreover, the project mobilized youths of between the age of 18-35 years as the catalyst for building social cohesion within and across the communities as well as establishes viable income-generating enterprises. In addition, the project also mobilized young youths from primary and secondary schools of between 12-17 years through the establishment of entrepreneurship clubs in their schools. These particular interventions has helped them build social relationship in the community while promoting access to the services offered by various institutions as well as establishment on environmentally friendly practices at business and household levels. The involvement of youths and pupils/students has also helped to improve the local environmental systems and adoption of climate resilient practices within their institutions and homes as they played the critical role of implementing the green entrepreneurial activities while paving a more productive and sustainable way out of poverty for becoming youth. In conclusion, therefore, it is critical to provide more and better information about entrepreneurship as an attractive career option, both for young women in schools and for women outside the labour force who are considering starting or getting back business. In addition, there is also a need to encourage female-owned enterprises to consider putting up instruments to stimulate their start-ups and small enterprises, towards high-growth firms as well as growth and development into medium-sized and larger businesses.
The HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme targeted 80% women and 40% youth that were to be reached through the implementation of their four pillar theory of change, especially under component 1, where they intend to mobilize groups of between 10 to 20 members to be formed. In addition, the programme also aimed to target school going children of between the age of 12-17 years, through the establishment of climate resilient entrepreneurship clubs in schools. So far, the programme has managed to reach 75.9% of women beneficiaries, 25.1% of the total beneficiaries are youth, and 81.71% of the targeted numbers of students have been achieved. Based on the evaluation findings and observation, the programme should improve/build on good practices when targeting women specifically by taking gender as a core to their business entrepreneurship and climate resilient strategy in terms of measurement and accountability. This can be achieved if diversity and inclusion are integrated into their business entrepreneurship and climate resilient strategy with clear measurable targets set. The accountability will be evaluated using the key performance indicators in order to highlight the progress. In addition, the programme should also provide an enabling framework in terms of human resources and operational. This can be achieved through the recruitment and development processes that should be continually evaluated and adjusted on a need basis to avoid subtle biases against women, especially on leadership training, skill development, and empowerment roles. This will in turn go a long way in addressing the broader social context such as cultural and societal traditions which can create barriers for women’s empowerment.

Furthermore, the programme can also improve/build on good practices when targeting young women and men, though the adoption of modern information and communication technologies (ICT) such as: social media platforms, modern technology that includes; greenhouses, irrigation as well as provision of scholarships and internship programme along the target value chains. The internship programme can be achieved by attaching young youth who have just completed colleges in specific farming places so that he/she can learn, advice and have practical experience on value-chain related issues. Information communication technologies (ICTs) have recently been proven to be highly cost-effective instruments for collecting, storing, processing, and disseminating information about risk. Early warnings on severe weather conditions, market movements, and pest and disease outbreaks are directed to farmers using information services such as mobile phone-based information access platforms, and hence limiting potential losses. Farmers and other entrepreneurs can also access advisory services remotely to support their decisions related to risk-mitigating activities or to choose the most appropriate action in response to an early warning for necessary adaptation, and mitigation measures. Therefore, the programme should consider linking the beneficiaries’ especially young women and men to such service providers in
In order to enhance their performance and hence contribute to the achievement of its outputs, and objectives. This in combination with the provision of their effective and efficient skill development, tailor-made online training, and empowerment, will also go a long way towards building their leadership skills.

“For the women they are now more empowered and independent and do not have to depend on their husbands to cater for all their needs. For the youths they have been given hope for a better future as they can start a business on their own hence create a job for themselves” HiH EA program Staff Homabay Branch

9.3 Training

In general, the evaluation team found that the mode of training delivery was very effective and efficient and the majority of the beneficiaries had benefited from these forms of trainings. The trainings focus on business and climate resilient issues that include business and financial management, vocational skills, and climate resilient practices. The training modules focused on the basics of business, bookkeeping, business registration, financial analysis, and relevant skill training. In addition, the climate resilient training sensitized the beneficiaries on basic climate change related issues, and seeks to promote the adoption of environmentally friendly practices at business and household levels, as well as the creation of green micro-enterprises. This provides an important platform where the beneficiaries learn on different climate change-related shocks/risk as well as the relevant and appropriate adaptation and mitigation measures toward cushioning and/or reducing the negative effects such shocks/risks on their livelihood assets and hence preventing them from falling into the poverty trap. The evaluation team have found that the main adaptive measures that have been taken up by the beneficiaries include; crop diversification, drought-resistant crops, irrigation, and rain harvesting, while the mitigation measures includes improved waste management practices; tree planting to reduce soil erosion; organic farming and cultivation; and use of renewable energy in cooking, lighting and other aspects of household and enterprise development. The evaluation team also recommend the inclusion of pictures/videos during training in order to assist the illiterate beneficiaries in understanding the training package in the easiest way. In addition, the programme should also consider entering into partnerships with farm input providers such as agro-dealers because they hold a great promise for the achievement of agricultural development, especially in rural areas. This has been necessitated by the inability of a single institution by itself, to achieve the task of improving farmers’ livelihoods and especially, in different agricultural value chains. This is where there is an urgent need to mobilized and organized beneficiaries in order to provide synergy and sustainability of deployed innovations on agricultural production and field trials for experimentations and demonstrations. Consequently, there is an increasing need for institutional alliances that strive to unite a wide variety of programmes and organizations around shared research and development objectives towards unlocking their latent potential and hence contribute to the achievement of a mutual goal such as food security and poverty reduction among the vulnerable poor.

“HiH EA/IKEA Foundation project should use group members of already trained groups as their trainers. This is because other women will identify with them because they come from the same area. They also can see what the beneficiary group members have done and would easily agree to adopt everything they are trained on. ” 

HiH EA Beneficiary Embu Branch
10. LESSONS LEARNT

The programme took an important first step of ensuring that the beneficiaries form groups, and officially registered them, while also establishing their management team. Additionally, the programme ensured the development of tailor-made training modules, identification of viable value chains as well as securing offices and employment of highly qualified staff, all of which required a considerable amount of time. In view of the above, the evaluation team was of the opinion that the specific programme management team for IKEA Foundation programme should have been established during the inception phase of the programme. However, the evaluation team learned that it was an important aspect for the programme to initiate their implementation phase as well as grounding their theory of change by ensuring that the beneficiaries have been mobilized to form groups. This is because it is easier to work with groups and even cost effective especially when they are to be provided with training and other services that are critical for the establishment of enterprises in a sustainable manner. Furthermore, the programme also adopted a unique way of targeting the vulnerable persons with the main focus of women and youth, an area that has been neglected by the majority of the development partners. Finally, the programme also ensured that all the recruited beneficiaries were trained on how to save and manage their savings by themselves, which is a critical factor for success stories and sustainability.

Moreover, the evaluation team also learned that the programme was implemented in areas/counties of varied/diverse agro-ecological as well as economic and social aspects while focusing on value chains that are best-suited to specific agro-climatic conditions. This was an important aspect especially when the results are to be extrapolated to the entire country, as well as when the targeted value chains are to be promoted since it cuts across almost all the existing agro-systems in the country. Additionally, the targeted value chains can be further promoted by the county governments which are mandated by law to promote agricultural activities. County governments can provide the necessary forms of equipment and machinery for value addition and processing, including refrigerated trucks that are particularly necessary for products such as tissue culture bananas, avocados, cassava, groundnuts, miraa, and soya beans. This will eventually ensure that the beneficiaries are producing market-oriented products and hence, becoming competitive in their production and marketing.

The evaluation team also found that it was imperative for the programme to ensure that the beneficiaries who have completed the training modules be linked to credit and markets. This will enable them to meet the necessary production and marketing technologies as well as ensured that the product reached the destined high-value markets. Furthermore, the provision of enterprise incubation funds was a noble idea since it acts as seed money which was used like a training model to enable the beneficiaries to learn how to use even the little money wisely and further ensure that they learn how to repay them. Furthermore, linkage of beneficiaries to markets is an important aspect for their enterprises and acts as a platform of convincing other people to join them and hence contributes to poverty alleviation.

The programme also promoted the adoption of climate change adaptation strategies, and resilient measures into enterprises, and entrepreneurship, which is a critical component given that the world most devastating challenges currently are climate change-related shocks/risks. This is because if the beneficiaries adopt the promoted practices and strategies, they will eventually have green micro-enterprises which will, in turn, reduce the impact of climate change and hence contribute to environmental sustainability. Furthermore, the option of also promoting climate resilience and entrepreneurship through school clubs was an important aspect that has not been widely used by other development partners. This is an important aspect because it will ensure that climate change-related aspects are inculcated to the pupils and students at their tender age which will, in turn, ensure that they grow up developing their entrepreneurship skills.
CONCLUSION
There is high potential for creating rural opportunities for youth and women through climate resilient entrepreneurship in the programme counties; Embu, Homabay, Busia, and Bomet where the benefits from HiH EA and IKEA Foundation programme will go a long way in reducing poverty whilst benefiting the environment. The evaluation found that the programme was well thought of and timely in solving the problems of poverty and the negative impacts of climate change. Furthermore, the programme is relevant to the needs of all target beneficiaries and is well aligned to the priorities, plans and policies of Government of Kenya, HiH EA and IKEA Foundation programme.

Relevance
The HiH EA / IKEA Foundation programme is relevant to the National, County Development plans and United Nations Sustainable development goals of reducing poverty, environment protection, gender, and youth support. The programme is more relevant to smallholder farmers, poor and vulnerable women in the programme Counties in solving the duplex problem of poverty and negative impacts of climate change. These beneficiaries have been trained, exposed to better farming skills, saving practices, credit access, and market linkages, this is critical in ensuring improved climate resilient entrepreneurial skills and also critical for sustaining the positive gains of the programme beyond scope of the programme after year 2020.

Effectiveness
HiH EA adheres to the programme implementation timelines to ensure all the activities are implemented as planned in the programme work plan across all the branches. Timely provision of training to beneficiaries is key to ensure the success of this programme, including follow up training on group dynamics, leadership and entrepreneurship’s skills including other relevant and efficient pathways. The training should be streamlined to beneficiaries operating in the same enterprises and those who are in close proximity. Generally, HiH EA should utilize the 3rd and 4th quarter of 2018 to ensure all beneficiaries have completed the requisite training modules.

The HiH EA / IKEA Foundation programme has helped create linkages between the beneficiaries, County Government and private sector partners. The programme is of interest to various private sector partners such as a sweet potato processing plant in Bomet, County Governments and credit providers who are keen to learn from the programme and even replicate the success of the programme. There is evidence that beneficiaries have been able to access the enterprise incubation fund and even repay the loan (s). However, the majority of the beneficiaries indicated the amount should be increased and the repayment should be streamlined to various enterprises of the beneficiaries. The programme has shown great progress in creating more entrepreneurs, increasing agricultural productivity, reducing poverty and gender mainstreaming among the beneficiaries. Finally, HiH EA should consider both forward and back market linkages such as inputs providers and product market access.

Impact
The midline evaluation has established that the programme beneficiaries have been successful in adopting training modules including climate resilient practices in their farms and households. Through these trainings the beneficiaries have reported increased production especially along sweet potato, cassava, dairy, tree planting, and avocado value chains. The impact on increased markets is strong in relation to sweet potatoes, cassava and avocado farmers who have been successful in collective marketing which has resulted in increased incomes among the farmers. The evaluation found that entrepreneurial training and the incubation fund have been the most important catalysts to ensure the success of the programme. The programme has also demonstrated unanticipated impacts in terms of roles of the group's functions such as social cohesion, improved social networks, financial improved food, and nutritional security.
Sustainability
The evaluation results show that the sustainability of beneficiary groups will depend on the prolonged benefits that accrue in working as a group and the potential group dynamics. This group working relationships as enabled beneficiaries to access credit, learn from one other, improve social cohesion and also prompted others to formalize their groups into community based organizations. The formalization of these groups will guarantee the sustainability of these groups after the closure of the programme. Training on climate resilient agricultural practices such as; tree planting, farm irrigation, planting of climate resilient crops among others have been also adopted by neighboring smallholder farmers as a result of learning from programme beneficiaries. HiH EA has also linked some of the beneficiary groups to produce buyer, credit providers and government programme such youth fund and affirmative action fund and all this will be critical in sustaining the positive gains of the IKEA Foundation programme.

Crosscutting issues
The HiH EA / IKEA Foundation programme targeted to support 80% female beneficiaries under the HiH/IKEA Foundation programme, this approach has been important in supporting poor and vulnerable women. The women who have been involved have benefitted with various trainings including; savings, leadership, farming etc. and this has enabled women to increase their incomes and therefore improve food and nutritional security. In order for this benefits accrued to be sustained future training activities should include beneficiaries partners, spouses or family to enable appreciate the contribution of the programme to their lives. The schools’ entrepreneurship clubs have managed to change the mindset of students and have resulted in them appreciating farming and entrepreneurship as a source of livelihood. The students have been involved in planting trees and selling seedlings which have contributed to increased school incomes. The training modules were found to be well structured and delivered effectively by HiH EA staff and were well adopted by the beneficiaries. However, the evaluation team found that the training process was at different stages for various groups while there were those who had completed all the modules. Therefore HiH EA should increase the pace of programme implementation to ensure all the groups complete all the training modules. The IKEA Foundation programme has a management information system that tracks implementation of the programme including the bio- data of the beneficiaries. The system has allowed the programme staff to track the implementation of programme activities across all the Counties and hence ensured that planned activities are executed efficiently.

Efficiency
In terms of efficiency, the evaluation found the overall programme to be efficient and in line with year 2 allocated budgets. The programme used 24% of the year two budget on recurrent expenditures and 76% of the budget core programme activities. The evaluation noted though there was a reallocation of budget line from one activity to another however all were done without affecting the implementation of the targeted activity. Finally, the programme MIS system should be improved to be able managed all the programme activities efficiently.

Lessons Learnt
HiH EA has managed to engage other organizations and government partners with the aim of enhancing the programme and sharing own knowledge. One key partner Farming Systems Kenya has adopted theHiH EA training approach to their programmes. This approach of integrating training, followed by HiH EA is efficient in the mobilization of beneficiaries, sharing knowledge and facilitating market access locally and in neighboring Counties. Generally, the evaluation team found the HiH EA approach to IKEA Foundation programme got early success in terms of beneficiaries adoption of climate resilient practices, improved savings and entrepreneurship’s skills among
the beneficiaries. Finally, for the programme to be successful in providing market linkages there is a need for HiH EA to conduct an analysis of the main causes of market failures in order to design an effective market development/linkage intervention strategy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

• The evaluation team recommends the establishment of a Programme Management Committee (PMC) comprising the M&E manager, M&E officer, Branch Managers, and Programme Agronomist. The PMC will play an oversight and quality control function and will meet once every two months to discuss the progress of the programme and provide technical advice to the HiH EA and IKEA Foundation programme management committee.

• HiH EA should strengthen linkages and build strong relationships with other actors in the agricultural and non-agricultural value chains, based on the experience of the evaluation team establishing a multi-stakeholder platform comprising the Government, the private sector, financial service providers, and value chain actors can bear even better results. The forum will provide a platform to inform private sector development strategy. The strategy will be instrumental in identifying actions the various actors will play in the value chains and identify gaps and potential opportunities for private sector engagement in the development of business potentials in Embu, Bomet, Homabay and Busia counties.

• It’s important for HiH EA to strengthen effective monitoring, learning and reporting system to monitor weekly, monthly and annual reporting internally and involving other programme beneficiaries. The evaluation team recommends the immediate recruitment of the Programme Advisor to support HiH EA team in the overall management of the programme especially technical issues revolving market linkages/market development and quality aspects of various enterprises.

• HiH EA should enhance the linkages of beneficiaries’ entrepreneurs to the Business Development Services (BDS) and their involvement in the agricultural and non-agricultural enterprises. Lack of BDS involvement may hinder the better performance of the beneficiaries’ enterprises; involving them will help to improve value addition to the products sold based on market demands and in return, the proportion of post-harvest loss will be reduced, the quality will be improved and consequently, the profitability to the enterprises will increase.

• HiH EA through its partners should lobby with the County Governments in their programme Counties to prioritize infrastructural development such as products aggregation points, bulking and marketing blocs, in order to support and improve enterprises of their beneficiaries. Also, it’s important for HiH EA to create strong linkages to financial service providers which will be necessary to improve access to credit services to programme beneficiaries.

• Intensify the training and capacity building activities for women group leaders and group members in self-monitoring and management of their loans and enterprises. They should be facilitated to diagnose issues and attempt to resolve these amongst themselves and with programme support. Also, members should be sensitized on the importance of government-provided services such as NHIF⁷ and NSSF⁸ so that they can join and enjoy the benefits.

• The amount and loan terms of enterprise incubation should be readdressed to match the needs of the beneficiaries and therefore the evaluation team recommends the value of enterprise to be increased and repayment terms made flexible to match the type enterprises owned by the programme beneficiaries.

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⁷ National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF)
⁸ National Social Security Fund (NSSF)
HiH EA should consider study tours to selected high performing groups to other programme counties to learn from others and also identify other enterprises.

Given the low literacy levels among the beneficiaries, the evaluation team recommends continued business skills training for this group of beneficiaries to ensure that they continue, advance and diversify their enterprises. Despite the noted progress made towards the programme outcome indicators of increased economic empowerment of women, there need for more support to sustain the already gained benefits of the programme. Finally, unfamiliarity with the business formalities and regulations such as trade licenses, tax rules, and other requirements appears to be a disincentive for many beneficiaries to engage in businesses and hence the programme should be its importance.

HiH EA should consider engaging a quality assurance consultant to review training manuals, verify programme activities and streamline the programme outputs to ensure works meets international acceptable standards.

The evaluation team also recommends the inclusion of pictures/videos during training in order to assist the less educated beneficiaries in understanding the training package in the easiest way. In addition, the programme should also consider entering into partnerships with farm input providers such as agro-dealers because they hold a great promise for the achievement of agricultural development, especially in rural areas.

It is necessary for HiH EA to have a contract with their partners/stakeholders that capture any changes in roles and responsibilities, especially in the context of HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme timelines.

It is important for the HiH EA to consider an e-learning platform for their staff as well as their beneficiaries. This platform should be compatible with mobile phone USSD platforms and mobile applications to ensure quality and efficiency in learning.

HiH EA should also be linked to the beneficiaries to the companies that construct greenhouses, they would, in turn, get all the package of things such as irrigation systems, water facilities, and other inputs that come with the establishment of a greenhouse. In this way, they will be paying for the service while benefiting from the production and marketing of their produce.

HiH EA should try as much as possible to facilitate the groups to create several social networks even with the non-group members in a structured manner to enable good practices, like collective buying, to be adopted organically outside of the group. This will further create incentives to non-group member to join the groups and facilitate in the expansion of the groups, otherwise, the beneficiaries groups will only get smaller, not larger, which will undermine the collective action purpose of such organizations.

HiH EA should also consider liaising with the county governments to exploit the possibility of these governments in focusing on at least one successful value chain as a case and facilitate all the necessary investments and technical support to the beneficiaries in a sustainable manner.

HiH EA should ensure that their exit strategy is fully grounded in a knowledge management strategy especially the one derived from their training modules evidence, and an advocacy strategy that is well embedded with specific evidence from their four pillar theory of change.

HiH EA should support the efforts that are geared towards making group mobilization component to be more gender-focused by undertaking gender diagnostic training. This will ensure that the targeted number of women and youth are attained within the next phase of the project. This can be achieved by improving/building on the good practices when targeting women specifically by taking gender as a core to their business entrepreneurship and climate resilient strategy in terms of measurement and accountability.

HiH EA should consider linking the beneficiaries’ especially young women and men to climate change-related early warning information providers and/or platforms in order to enhance their performance in risk-mitigating activities, to choose the most appropriate action in response to an early warning for necessary adaptation, and mitigation measures and hence contribute to the achievement of its outputs.
REFERENCES


Other documents referenced;

1. Hand in Hand East Africa Baseline Report
2. Various Hand in Hand East Africa and IKEA Foundation programme documents
3. Hand in Hand East Africa website. Available at: http://handinhand-ea.org/
4. IKEA foundation website: Available at: https://www.ikeafoundation.org/
5. Observation during field survey in Embu, Bomet, Homa bay and Busia branches.
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<td>22</td>
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ANNEX 2: CASE STUDIES
Case Study on Passion Fruit Farming in Bomet County

Unlucky farmer finds a perfect replacement

Richard Langat is a passion fruit farmer at kapsangaru village, Bomet County. He is also the chairman of KAPSANGARU FUTURE Tree group which has 20 members. Richard used to be a successful maize farmer, but in the recent years his production had been declining due to a maize disease which was predominant in the south rift region especially in Bomet County. The year 2017 was his worst year since he lost all the maize to the disease. He was not able to pay school fees for his children and even to meet other basic needs like buying food and clothing. He had to sell most of his assets to make the ends meet.

Richard like most farmers in Kapsangaru was devastated and he tried to seek answers from ministry of agriculture offices in Bomet to no avail. Luckily in June 2017 he attended Bomet trade fair to try and learn what he could do to replace his dismally performing maize enterprise. He came across Danhen ltd representatives who were displaying passion fruits seedlings in their stand. They explained to him on the importance of the passion fruits and referred him to a farmer in Ndaraweta who was already growing the passion fruit. After having a sit down with him and witnessing how the crop was doing, he was really encouraged and he decided to give it a try.

The main challenge Richard faced was raising capital of 10,000 to buy seedlings, wire and posts. He borrowed the amount from his daughter and she gave him the sum from her universities helb loan. He used the capital to buy 150 seedlings @ KES. 40 per seedling and bought a barbed wire amounting KES. 4,000. He then planted the seedlings on 0.2 acre piece of land. During the same year his Kapsangaru Future Tree group was approached by HiHEA/IKEA Foundation programme staff and they agreed to work together.

Since the engagement with HiHEA/IKEA Foundation programme, Richard and the other members of Kapsangaru Future Tree group have been trained on conflict resolution mechanisms, climate resilient techniques, value addition, how to access credit, on clean cooking stoves, on marketing skills and on importance of savings. With the help of HiHEA/IKEA Foundation programme staff, Kapsangaru Future Tree group has set up passion fruits, tissue culture and avocado demonstration farms.

HiHEA/IKEA Foundation programme has linked Richard and other passion fruit farmers to a buyer known has Emarald fresh limited, which buys their produce at a competitive prices. The availability of a guaranteed market has made Richard not to do value addition even though he has received training on the same. Richard used to earn KES. 2,500 per week from his 0.2 acres of passion fruits, but after the trainings from HiHEA/IKEA Foundation programme on better management methods he currently earns up to KES. 14,000 per week.

Richard is indebted to HiHEA/IKEA Foundation programme for training they have received as a group which is comprised of both male and female. He believes the project is very relevant to Bomet County context where women need empowerment, there is widespread youth unemployment and climate resilient entrepreneurship skills are deficient.
Case Study on Miraa Farming in Embu County

From stressful city life to a successful farmer

Judy Wanjiru Njeru is a small scale farmer in Siakago, Mbere North sub-county, Embu County. She is a member of Cianyi ithaga women group. Jane used to work as a casual laborer in one of the firms in Nairobi. In the year 2005 she unfortunately lost her job and she decided to quit the city life and retreated to her rural home in Siakago. She used the little savings she had to start a retail shop business. The business was not doing well because there were other similar enterprises offering the same products. She decided to plant Miraa which was the most common cash crop in her area. Judy had her kids in school and she had difficulties in paying their school fees and providing other household needs from Miraa proceeds and profits from her shop. Luckily her Cianyi ithaga women group which they had formed for merry go round activities was approached by HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme staff. He explained to them about HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme and its objectives and they agreed to work with them. Through the HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme they have been trained on several issues e.g. conservation of the environment, making organic manure, financial management, business management, how to access credit, on market access, on how to do value addition, group relations, how to prepare products such as jam, juice, cake and detergents, dairy farming and on crops such as passion fruits, grafted avocado and cassava. Judy became interested on cassava production because of its ability to do well during the dry spells. She was guided by HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme staff on all the requirements for the cassava production. She did plant the crop on a 0.5 acre piece of land and to date she has not regretted her decision. Though she has diversified to; passion fruits, Miraa, Maize, pawpaw, sorghum, mangoes, beans, lemons, arrowroots, bananas, poultry and pigs’ enterprises, cassava remains to be her most profitable enterprise.

Through the HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme, she has been linked to a buyer for her cassava produce throughout the year. Judy is so optimistic that her dream of becoming a real estate owner is soon going to come to pass due to her increased earnings from her farm enterprise and from her retail business. Judy is of the opinion that the HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme is inspiring the youth and women to form and join groups so that they can be involved in activities that ends the vicious cycle of poverty. Judy concludes by saying that “I have am so grateful to the HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme, they have offered me trainings on financial skills, marketing and business management and it has made better manage my shop, hence increasing my profits. Through their training I have been able to make and package cakes, jam, and detergents in my shop. Moreover, the proceeds from cassava farming have been high due to the market linkage and trainings offered by HiH EA/IKEA Foundation programme. Leaving the city to practice agri-business was the best decision of my life”
## ANNEX 3: GREEN MICRO-ENTERPRISES ADOPTED ACROSS BRANCHES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region/Branch</th>
<th>Bomet</th>
<th>Busia</th>
<th>Embu</th>
<th>Homabay</th>
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<td>Waste management</td>
<td>45.3%</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
<td>49.2%</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
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<td>Charcoal brickets</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recycled beads</td>
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<td>Forestry</td>
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<td>Bee keeping</td>
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<td>1.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
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<td>Hay production</td>
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<td>.9%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
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<td>Smart agriculture</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
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<td>36.5%</td>
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<td>Livestock</td>
<td>46.8%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>39.7%</td>
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<td>Green house</td>
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<td>Irrigation</td>
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<td>Hydroponics</td>
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