

2 SCALE



Highlights 2023

Implemented by



Financed by



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands



©2SCALE 2024

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	6
2. Key Achievements	9
2.1 Strategic achievements in 2023	11
3. Communication and PR efforts	21
4. Challenges and Actions taken	23
5. Recommendations based on achievements and results in 2023 ..	25

Abbreviations and acronyms

2SCALE	Toward Sustainable Clusters in Agribusiness through Learning in Entrepreneurship	MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
A3SEED	Accelerating Agriculture and Agribusiness in South Sudan for Enhanced Economic Development	MSMEs	Micro, small, and medium enterprises
AAP	Annual Action Plan	MTR	Mid Term Review
ABC	Agribusiness Cluster	NVI	National Veterinary Institute
AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area	PSC	Private sector contribution
AfDB	African Development Bank	PMT	Program Management Team
AHA	Andreas Hermes Academy	PPP	Public-private partnership
AMEA	Agribusiness Market Ecosystem Alliance	PrC	Partnership Resources Centre
APNI	African Plant & Nutrition Institute	R&A	Reflect and Adapt
BoP	Base of the Pyramid	R&C	Reflect and Consolidate
BMC	Business model canvas	R&W	Reflect and Wrap-up
BTL	Below-the-line	RSM	Reflect and Wrap-up
BSS	Business support service	RSM	Rotterdam School of Management (Erasmus University)
D&D	Diagnosis and Design	S3C	Sub-Sector Systems Change
DGIS	Directorate-General for International Cooperation	SACCO	Savings and Credit Cooperative
FMR	Financial Monitoring Report	SHF	Smallholder Farmer
FSSC	Food Safety Standards Certification	SMEs	Small and medium enterprises
GE-WEE	GE-WEE - Gender Equality and Women Economic Empowerment	SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
IAA	Inclusive Agribusiness Advisor	SW	Strategic Workstream
IAC	Inclusive Agribusiness Club	UII	Universal Impact Indicators
ICA	Informal Change Alliance	USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
IDS	Institute for Development Studies	VC	Value Chain
IFDC	International Fertilizer Development Center	VSLA	Village savings and loan association
ISFM	Integrated soil fertility management	WUR	Wageningen University & Research
IP	Impact Pathway		
ISS	International Institute of Social Studies		
LIS	Light Intensity Support		
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation		
M4C	Markers for change		
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning		
MFI	Micro finance Institution		
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (the Netherlands)		



1. Introduction

About the program

The Towards Sustainable Clusters in Agribusiness through Learning in Entrepreneurship (2SCALE) program incubates and accelerates inclusive business through partnerships with companies (mainly African small and medium enterprises [SMEs] and some Dutch/international companies) that want to build commercially viable African food industries through sustainable sourcing, based on mutually beneficial relations with smallholder farmers, and by serving local and regional base-of-the-pyramid (BoP) markets. These companies are the drivers of inclusive business; they are called inclusive business champions in the 2SCALE context.

The program sets up and supports partnership and business models with significant potential to attract, employ youth, engage and empower women, and to improve food and nutrition security, both at the grassroots level and at the consumer end of the value chain.

The Netherlands Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS), initially through its Sustainable Economic Development Department (DDE) and then through its Inclusive Green Growth Department (IGG), has invested in 2SCALE's "business as unusual" approach over the past 12 years to develop inclusive businesses for targeted value chains.

2023 Overview

2023 was a significant year for 2SCALE as it marked the last full-scale implementation of 2SCALE 2 activities. It also saw the launching of the Inclusive Agribusiness Clubs, serving as a network/platform for deliberating on inclusive agri-business, in all the 2SCALE countries. Additionally, the year was highlighted by a colorful celebration of the program's decade of experience in promoting the incubation and acceleration of inclusive business in Africa. This two-day pan-African workshop, organized in Abidjan, focused on the experiences in Francophone African countries. Furthermore, lessons from the 12 years of 2SCALE program implementation were systematically captured in the 2SCALE Academy, serving as an onboarding tool for new staff. This resource will be made available to outside audiences in the coming period to disseminate the 2SCALE approach.

By the end of December 2023, the program had achieved all, except one, the key targets as set in the Universal Impact Indicators (UIIs). When 2SCALE 2 started in 2019, limited results were realized between 2019 and 2020. The program focused mainly on setting up Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and building the capacity of the staff to facilitate complex PPP arrangements. COVID-19 restricted activities in 2020 and the early parts of 2021. With the opening of borders and lifting of restrictions, the program slowly started to gain momentum. The additional one-year cost extension of the program by DGIS allowed compensation for the lost time during COVID. Most of the PPPs had started to create an impact since the second half of 2021.

In 2023, the maturity of PPPs was evident, as the program clearly indicates in its approach that the PPPs are a means to an end - the promotion of food and nutrition security. As the PPPs mature, they should empower vulnerable communities. This was clearly witnessed in 2023 since 7 out of the 8 UIIs were fully achieved (in some case surpassed). Accordingly, the program benefited 1.9 million BoP consumers (the target was 1.5 Million). These consumers were served with better and affordable nutritious products that fits their unique aspirations. 1.1 million smallholder farmers, surpassing the target of 1 million, were empowered. These farmers were able to engage in a fair business relationship (input suppliers, financial service providers and off takers) and had improved productivity, income and food and nutrition security.

One of the impact areas that showed a significant positive gain in this reporting period was financial inclusion. Realizing this target has taken time since facilitating appropriate financial inclusion services takes time. The program employed a blended approach of using both formal and informal financial arrangements. Through this mixed approach 93 million Euro, against a target was 75 million worth of financial services was facilitated.

The implementation of sub-sector system change activities under the guidance of the Informal Change Alliance (ICA) made a significant contribution to overcoming challenges that are beyond the capacity of the PPP actors. This contributed significantly to the empowerment of farmers by improving their access to quality inputs (seeds, fodder, and financial services). Early signs of success have been substantiated by the growth of the ICA's capacity to influence the wider ecosystem setups in the respective sectors. More and more business and public sector actors are joining the initiatives as a testament to the success of the ICA activities.

One of the key elements of the 2SCALE approach is the concept of leveraging. The program promised to leverage two euros for every one-euro investment by DGIS. One euro from the PPP actors (BCs, SMEs, MSMEs and ABC actors) and another one euro from the financial institutions. DGIS has allocated 62 million euro for 2SCALE 2 and the program had already leveraged 162.77 Million Euros to promote sustainable food and nutrition in the targeted value chains from the PPP actors and financial institutions. This is a testament to the approach of the program that the leadership of business actors is fundamental for reaching development objectives without losing commercial viability.

In line with the recommendations of the Mid Term Review (MTR), the program had kick-started a new support mechanism for selected PPPs (that had already graduated from receiving 2SCALE support) of phases 1 and 2 as Light Intensity support (LIS). Strategic support was provided for these PPP actors by focusing on one or two key areas. This allowed the LIS PPPs to rejuvenate their business model and relationships with the actors.

The program faced several challenges in the reporting year. Global supply chain disruptions (because of the Russia – Ukraine war), conflict, and hyperinflation were the major obstacles that challenged the program and the PPPs. These challenges significantly limited the capacity of the farmers to invest, BCs to source from the ABCs (eg; in Nigeria, Ethiopia and Ghana). Security-related challenges restricted the movement of raw material from the producers to the BCs and also restricted the 2SCALE staff from traveling to provide support for the actors.

Adaptive management remained at the core of the 2SCALE approach in the face of the challenges faced in 2023. The program showed its capacity to accommodate the BCs and the ABCs request in their response to market signals. PPP plans were revised, and allocations of resource adjusted. The program also collaborated with the IFDC and SNV security management teams to ensure the safety and integrity of its staff.

During the year, the program invested heavily in its staff (mostly young). A three-day retreat for all 2SCALE staff was organized in Lomé, Togo in November to facilitate cross-learning and the sharing of experiences. A one-week leadership training was organized for the Extended Management Team members, which was facilitated by an experienced external organization. 2SCALE staff participated in several national and international events (eg, the International Agriculture and Animal Resources Show (SARA) in Abidjan, Micronutrient Forum in the Hague, SAM in Lomé -on Micro Finance, and the Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship Global Forum in Accra, Ghana. The second cohort of the Global Youth Mentorship Program was also launched.





2. Key Achievements

Despite challenges such as global supply chain disruptions, conflicts, and hyperinflation, the 2SCALE program made significant progress in 2023.

Launch of Inclusive Agribusiness Clubs

In 2023, the launch of Inclusive Agribusiness Clubs (IACs) across Nigeria, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Niger, Kenya, Ghana, and Mali established a comprehensive framework for sharing replicable (sustainable and inclusive) agribusiness practices. These initiatives have highlighted common challenges such as limited access to resources, gender, and youth inequality, and the lack of adoption of innovative approaches in agribusiness, particularly in rural areas. During the launch events, some key lessons learned identified include the significance of strategic partnerships and continued stakeholder engagement, the role of academia in research and community engagement, the importance of data-driven decision-making, and the need for financial independence and transparency to drive sustainable agribusiness ventures.

Furthermore, the IACs have identified specific thematic areas, such as financial inclusion, youth engagement, and technology adoption, tailored to the unique challenges of each country. The emphasis on local ownership, adaptation of the IAC model to suit local contexts, and the formation of steering bodies in some countries are crucial steps in ensuring the customization and replication of proven practices and models. As these IACs move forward, they are poised to drive sustainable and equitable growth, offering valuable insights and replicable models for similar initiatives in diverse regions. The establishment of partnerships, knowledge-sharing platforms, and the signing of memoranda of understanding (MoUs) underscore a commitment to ongoing collaboration, laying the groundwork for future initiatives and discussions based on replicable practices.

2SCALE 10th Anniversary and Replication Event

The 2SCALE 10th year Anniversary and Replication Event, held on the 6th and 7th at the Noom Hotel in Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire, showcased the transformative impact PPPs within the agribusiness sector through the 2SCALE Program. On both days, an average of 110 participants attended the event, most of whom are based in the Francophone countries where 2SCALE operates in. To ensure wider participation of staff from the 2SCALE consortium, partners and other stakeholders and online audiences, the event was livestreamed on the 2SCALE YouTube channel, which had an average viewership of over 270 YouTube users per day. To enhance networking and cross-country interactions, the event took a trade fair set up, whereby exhibition and networking opportunities were provided during breaks, as well as during the cocktail event on the evening of day one. Consequentially, 85% of the participants confirmed that they had made relevant business relations at the event, during the evaluation which was conducted at the end of day two using Mentimeter platform.

This celebration provided an excellent opportunity to exchange knowledge and experiences, as well as to explore the program's impact particularly in the francophone countries. During the two days, there were insightful discussions that highlighted the success stories, lessons learned and prospects of various partners who have been actively involved with 2SCALE since phase one. Key topics discussed included smart approaches to inclusive finance for Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs), with a strong focus on empowering smallholder farmers, gender and youth inclusion, inclusive green innovations, systems change, and marketing for the Base of the Pyramid consumers. 2SCALE's 10th Anniversary and replication event served as a testament to the vast potential within the African Agribusiness sector. It called upon all stakeholders in the public and private sectors to actively contribute to building and strengthening inclusive and sustainable partnerships for inclusive agri-business in agri-food sectors and industries.

One of the participants at the event gave a remark to the event's organizers stating: **"I was honored to participate in this celebration, thanks to your invitation, which allowed me to experience wonderful moments, business opportunities and discoveries. I learned a lot and loved it. Thank you again for the great luxury! It is an invitation for me to double my efforts, and to take up the challenges by drawing inspiration from other's experiences. It was a real pleasure for me to participate in ten years of 2SCALE in Ivory Coast! Long live 2SCALE! Long live the Partnerships!"**

PPP portfolio development: Following an extensive formalization process, the 2SCALE program has in its second phase, established a portfolio of 73 public-private partnerships (PPPs) across eight full implementation countries and two pilot programs. As of 2023, 47 of these PPPs remained active, with 16 partnerships closed or suspended due to various reasons. Among the active partnerships, staple crops, animal production, fresh produce, and soy and oil seeds were the primary focus areas. These partnerships were categorized into grassroots-initiated and lead firm PPPs, with efforts to support Phase 1 partnerships through light intensity initiatives. Ensuring partnerships contribute to inclusive development requires four key capacities: deliberation, alignment, transformation, and fitting. While some partnerships demonstrated promising maturity and business viability, others required further attention and support to advance through the program's phases. Notably, lead firm partnerships and those focusing on food system change exhibited faster maturity and resilience to market changes.



2.1 Strategic achievements in 2023

Acceleration and scaling of current partnerships through proven practices of replicable models: In 2023, the 2SCALE program achieved significant progress in advancing PPP governance at the local level, fostering business relationships among stakeholders, and ensuring the sustainability of coaching services. Efforts to strengthen partnership governance at the local level were aligned with ABC meetings, where actors collaborated to monitor partnership interventions' effectiveness. Facilitating business-to-business linkages among ABC actors promoted networking and maximized business gains, enhancing input and service utilization for increased productivity. Moreover, encouraging the development of internal Business Support Service Provider (BSS) arrangements aimed to ensure coaching continuity post-program. Actors in the value chain were supported to incorporate BSS roles into their business models, securing ongoing coaching support for ABCs by integrating coaching costs into the value chain's cost structure.

Deepening the impact on BoP Consumers: With the wrap up of phase II approaching, it is important to focus on enhancing the impact on low-income consumers, ensuring they have improved access to nutritious foods. How they are reached is paramount to the impression made by the products availed by the business champions. As a result, deliberate efforts have been undertaken to accomplish this goal.

Strengthening last mile distribution: Last mile distribution is important since this is the final touch point where the consumer interacts with the product. Simplifying access for the consumers has been a key element in shortening the customer journey through activities such as expanding the network of retailer outlets stocking products. Examples include: Nebnooma- rice PPP, Agroserve-Maize PPP in Burkina Faso, micro-distribution- Rockland PPP in Ghana, and piloting distribution- Siguida Yeelen, Keitala Negoce, and UCODAL PPPs in Mali.

Intensifying market activation: Business champions' internal marketing and distribution functions have been strengthened to activate the markets as opposed to depending on outsourced agencies. Most are now able to have their internal marketing and distribution and hands on support to assist the salespeople with the practice of best distribution methods.

Maximizing market channel diversification: The business champions have reached the BoP consumers in more ways than usual. For example, BioProtect listed its vegetables on an online platform (Garbar Yaal) in Burkina Faso, to reach more consumers. Selling to institutions such as schools and hospitals helps the business champions generate more revenues, and thus not increase the unit prices at the retail level (NanAlim Cassava – Burkina Faso).

Stronger private sector development and support for sustainability

In 2023, 2SCALE prioritized strengthening the organizational structures and operational excellence of the private businesses it partners with, particularly SMEs and MSMEs. This focus aimed to support growth and continuity, fostering appropriate relationships with like-minded entities and institutions. Initiatives such as country-based inclusive agribusiness clubs, SME conferences, and business-to-business connections were leveraged to facilitate growth. Organizations and microenterprises were equipped with tools such as BMC, reporting templates, manuals, and certifications like FSSC to enhance focus, effectiveness, and strategic direction.

Cato Foods Business Champion in a market activation in Ibadan, Nigeria



Improving the accessibility of chicken meat and by-products to consumers at the base of the pyramid

In Côte d'Ivoire, the end-of-year period is a good time to sell poultry. For years, chicken has been one of the best recipes for celebrating New Year's Eve. For poultry farmers, this is an occasion that offers many market opportunities, but which must be prepared from the beginning of the year. To build the capacity of poultry farmers in the KDS-2SCALE poultry partnership in Côte d'Ivoire, the programme facilitated a Business Model Canvas (BMC) workshop in the Korhogo's ABC earlier this year.

The overall objective of the BMC workshop was to jointly define the value proposition that the Poro Poultry Farmers Cooperative (SCARP) will offer to their low-income customers, as well as the most appropriate communication and distribution models to reach them. There was also work on the marketing plan and strategy to be put in place by the association as well as the definition of a brand to improve the visibility of the products.

Winning customers, offering value, distribution and financial optimisation were the main topics discussed during the training. For SCARP, which is involved in poultry partnership activities, this training came at the right time. With little organisational structure, SCARP was in dire need of a viable marketing strategy for all its members.

Following the BMC workshop, 2SCALE accompanied the members of the cooperative in the design and development of a visual identity. Thus, in order to be able to differentiate itself from the products on the market, the cooperative deemed it necessary to impose its brand.

Today, with its new logo embodying its image, SCARP's poultry products are visible in every corner of the markets. However, the cooperative does not intend to stop there. As part of its vision to gain a large share of the poultry market in Côte d'Ivoire during the end-of-year celebrations, SCARP recently initiated a series of consumer awareness campaigns with the aim of raising the cooperative's profile, increasing their sales volumes and, above all, raising consumer awareness of the importance of consuming animal protein.

It is in this same vein that on 8 October, a campaign was organised targeting restaurants and steakhouses in the city of Korhogo in order to map the distributors and inform them of the benefits of chicken while sharing some recipe ideas.

16 (sixteen) young people from the cooperative, including 4 young women, wearing SCARP branded t-shirts, went to meet 31 hotels restaurants and steakhouses. They also handed out flyers with a brief description of SCARP, the benefits of chicken, some ideas for chicken dishes such as braised intestines, chicken leg soups and telephone contacts.

As a prelude to this awareness campaign, the BSS (Business Support Services) engaged by 2SCALE in the field carried out two training sessions to enable the young agents to master the commercial discourse and understand the objective of these activities.

The awareness campaign also led to the visit of 7 new restaurants that expressed interest in future collaboration if continuous supply is guaranteed. As for existing customers, the cooperative wanted them to be visited in turn to assess their level of satisfaction and to win back those who are inactive. The latter mentioned problems related to the weight of the chickens, the cooperative's stock shortages and the strong competition with households during the holiday periods.

"During the holidays, it is difficult to find chicken, we are competing with households. I want to work with SCARP if they can deliver chickens continuously. There should be no shortage." says DJATA, a chicken seller.

The restaurant owners, for their part, showed great interest in the new menus presented. For some, it is above all a source of inspiration, of diversification of dishes and of clientele by offering, for example, chicken feet or intestines to a clientele with a more limited income. They testify:

"The recipe ideas are interesting. I will try them out with my customers. I already work with SCARP and it's going very well." says CHARLES.

As for some restaurant owners, they are not limited to the explanations given on the recipes, they want to have the leaflets to better test the dishes. This is the case of PELAGIE, a chicken seller in Korhogo.

The menus are interesting. Can I keep the leaflet?

This marketing strategy introduced by 2SCALE to the SCARP cooperative is a model that is being implemented in other PEAs of the poultry partnership in Côte d'Ivoire. In addition to restaurants and other chicken retailers, the strategy aims to facilitate access to poultry meat for low-income consumers.

In addition, for the past two years, SCARP has been organising a fair to promote the consumption of local chicken called "The 7 poultry days".

2SCALE, through this partnership, intends to support similar initiatives that allow for the popularisation of the consumption of chicken meat and products.

Consolidation of the impact of sub-sector system change trajectory:

In 2023, Strategic Workstream 3 focused on addressing sub-sector challenges within existing PPPs to accelerate inclusive business practices. Support was provided to business leaders and industry platforms to influence broader challenges within their sub-sector, resulting in growth for the business champions and improved performance of the entire sub-sector. System change initiatives demonstrated that significant impact is achievable in complex value chains with limited resources. As 2SCALE-2 approaches its conclusion, efforts were concentrated on consolidating the impact of system change activities. Attention was given to winding down activities and transferring responsibilities to relevant actors by June 2024, with a focus on empowering the Informal Change Alliance (ICA) and anchoring change responsibilities with business champions or other key players within the ICA. Public institutions were also engaged to replicate achieved changes and disseminate results to a wider audience. Out of eight change trajectories, five have been successful, particularly in their "proof of concept" phase, with potential for upscaling by the ICA in the future. A key lesson learned is the importance of a strong ICA and business champion in consolidating results and scaling impact.

Light-intensity support: In line with the MTR recommendations, 9 PPPs from phase one were selected for Light-intensity support in 2023. To understand the current challenges (as part of co-creation), a light Diagnosis and Design (D&D) process was facilitated for all the selected PPPs. Due to limited time and resources, the LIS PPPs developed one (exceptionally two) impact pathways. The main focus of the LIS PPPs was to join hands in overcoming major bottlenecks that the actors were facing after the exit of 2SCALE. The selected priorities vary across the LIS PPPs due to differences in context, but the following were the major focus:

- Improving access to better eco-efficient production techniques and inputs for SHFs. Due to improved access to these packages of inputs and practices, 152,000 SHFs had been empowered and 6,580 ha of land had been put under eco efficient production.
- Improving the capacity of the business champions in attracting affordable finance to further deepen their inclusive business model.
- Improving the competitiveness of the business champions through building internal capacity for last-mile distribution.

Youth engaged in seedling propagation in Ondo state, Nigeria



Gender equality and women's economic empowerment and youth inclusion

Gender: In 2023, a significant emphasis was placed on consolidating impact and implementing strategies to reinforce partners' confidence in adapting to change and managing progress effectively, particularly in terms of business and gender responsiveness capacities. Working with women entrepreneurs to enhance their leadership skills and mindset, along with providing insights into expanding their businesses, was highlighted. As a result, the main lessons learned are:

- **Time:** It takes time for actors to go from "let's include women because everyone says so" to "including women is helping the society and helping them become more economically stable and resilient". For this movement to keep going and contribute to SDG 05 (Gender equality), it is important to work with all actors on different ways to include women socially and economically in agribusiness value chains.
- **It is not the why, but the how:** Although many businesses and public institutions have willingly worked with 2SCALE to include more women, strategic questions still came out in terms of "we want to include more women, but apart from inviting them and giving them contracts, how else are we going to maintain our economic and social relationships?". The second lesson being facilitating the agency and voice of women - by having them at the centre of design for their impact is crucial to effectively engage, include and sustain women's opportunities. Lastly, there are actual business opportunities for third parties to address the two previous points. This entails facilitation, networking, and negotiation skills to help everyone back ambitious and motivated women-led businesses. This also entails following market demand and offering training and mentoring opportunities to women.

Overall, the gender team also observed that working on the 2 points above is key to sustainable inclusion and social cohesion especially when using business principles to reduce inequalities as 2SCALE does.

Youth: Employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for rural youth are increasing due to PPP interventions and expansion of Business Champion markets. This increased engagement and business relationships, making young entrepreneurs' work more visible to business champions and other value chain actors. This also led to increased youth adoption of new innovations in 2SCALE PPPs. Through necessary guidance, mentoring, support, and internship opportunities, Business Champions are fostering the growing interest of youth in the agribusiness industry. Youth are provided with professional services and networking opportunities via digital platforms. To ensure youth-friendly financial products and provide funding for youth-led agricultural businesses, targeted communication and engagement with financial institutions was necessary. PPPs and youth partnerships encourage original ideas and youth-led innovation to emerge in the development of solutions for jobs in the agriculture sector. Youth are interested in learning and new skills development in agribusiness partnerships and commit to participate in practice sessions and internships when offered opportunities from the business champions.

Young dairy attendant in Abuja, Nigeria





Financial Inclusion

2SCALE offered tailor-made support to PPPs based on their categorization. The rationale behind PPPs segmentation is based on the insights gathered from over 59 PPPs weighted and scored based on investment readiness criterion which categorized them into 4 segments (Diamond, Gold, Silver, and Bronze). Each category demonstrated its uniqueness on access to finance characteristics and all have their specific and differentiated financial barriers, with 60.5 % having barriers to entry (perceived high riskiness) due to their market size, team capacity, and leadership. 30.5% lack traction, innovations, technology, and scaling, with 9% of their businesses having evolved and improved since the interventions of 2SCALE in terms of social impact, environmental responsibility, as well as other ingredients necessary for climate financing. Preference was given to categories that need LIS, specialized (expert) intervention based on a specific weight - issues confronting ABCs that led to 87.2 % of external financing shortages despite their agribusiness entrepreneurship capacity.

Owing to the many types and aspects of risk in agricultural financing, particular attention was given to the different strategic financial organizations willing to provide or promote such financing based on best practices, financial foresight or management difficulties which led to shortages of finance despite good intentions and models. Out of 66 strategic financial institutions, only 19 matched their financial product to the business model of specific agribusiness companies. Misalignment of financial products from the suppliers of finance call for a broader effort to expand appropriate financial systems and products to deliver financial services – loans, savings, insurance, or payment services – to a wider client base – delivered responsibly and sustainably. For example, the portfolio of the 59 PPPs has the potential to attract around Euro 131M at the growth stage of PPPs that are post-revenue. However, only 3 diamonds, 5 gold, 4 silver and 13 bronze targeted Euro 65M, but ended up attracting Euro 11.9 M comprising a mix of venture and angel capital investments of 92% and 8% respectively.

While efforts to link the ABC actors with impact investors to expand the supply of equity finance for innovative start-ups and SMEs (through seed and venture capital co-investment funds and other activities to attract capital), effectiveness was hampered by a lack of readiness for (99% of demand-side ABCs actors) business to receive equity investment and mostly because all of them were equity-averse, unwilling to surrender any ownership stake in or even partial control of their firms, and the suppliers of finances considered them “uninvestable” mainly due to deficiencies in their team structure, marketing strategy, financial accounts, intellectual property protection, and other business areas. However, even if entrepreneurs are willing to consider equity and have investible projects, presentational failings contribute to many ABCs that are unable to pitch their ideas successfully to investors.

An increase of 18% to reach over 40% of Euro 7.3M pre-financed internal Value Chain (VC) Financing was accessed by youth and women in farming or as an entrepreneur, and they had control over the use of funds within their businesses and households. This was achieved through design features such as direct transfers and commitment digital savings accounts to enhance women’s control and protect against the demands of others. Digitizing VSLAs also presented many of these opportunities e.g. embedding credit and insurance into among others; the Tegemeo (Kenya) and Faranaya (Ghana) PPPs, which in turn challenged the laws and social norms where now women can apply for credit in their name. This was also made possible by leveraging on capabilities and essential services e.g. women who had acquired knowledge and skills, from other programs adopted faster these financial ‘social safety nets and networks’, and this proved that by shifting all the levers within our reach, we can improve the chances that we will collectively level the playing field in ways that improve the lives of women. Therefore, there is need to further mainstream gender across other existing financial inclusion program in a more systematic way.

VSLA meeting in Yambio, South Sudan



Addressing Access to Finance Hurdles leads to Improved Aggregation Capacity in Northern Ethiopia

In Northern Ethiopia, the partnership between 2SCALE and Ras-Gayint Multipurpose Farmers' Cooperative Union (MFCU) has the ambition to provide affordable, nutritious shiro for Base of the Pyramid (BoP) consumers. One of the set strategies to achieve this is integrating semi-automated bean-based-Shiro processing in the bean value chain. Over the past decade, the Business Champion, Ras-Gayint has been engaged in multiple business activities such as marketing of inputs, consumer goods supply, and grain marketing including the export of haricot beans. However, the Union's working capital has been limited to effectively finance the haricot bean business, and usually, this has been filled by linking with financial institutions for credit.

During the aggregation period, the union transfers cash to primary cooperatives as an advance payment to purchase haricot beans from farmers, at the price set by the Union. Most of this cash advance is usually obtained from loans given by commercial banks. However, accessing bank loans has not been easy for Ras-Gayint MFCU. Melkamu Fentahun, the General Manager at Ras Gayint explains:

To ensure that the union has consistent working capital, we always source for credit from financial institutions. Commercial banks are ready to finance and provide credit to the union. However, the process to get this money is always very tedious. Not only does the processing take very long, but they also require collateral, financial records, and too much paperwork. One must make so many trips to the bank before a loan is granted. Furthermore, interest rates are also high and not friendly to regular borrowers, especially those borrowing to finance a business. With such experiences, we had to seek viable and alternative solutions, and this was facilitated thanks to our partnership with 2SCALE.

Through capacity building and facilitation by 2SCALE, Ras-Gayint MFCU established a healthy and viable business relationship with Lidet and Rib Saving and Credit Cooperative (SACCO) Unions. Lidet SACCO Union is a rural financial institution located in Nefas-Mucha town near Ras-Gayint MFCU. Coincidentally, most of the members of Ras-Gayint MFCU are also members of Lidet SACCO Union. Similarly, Rib SACCO Union is a rural financial institution located in the south Gondar administrative zone. Partnering with these two financial institutions has been a game changer for Ras-Gayint. Melkamu narrates:

"We have experienced first-hand the impact of the facilitation done by 2SCALE. Thanks to this partnership, we have managed to build a viable and sustainable relationship with Rib and Lidet SACCO Unions. Trust has also been created and we no longer experience challenges accessing credit. For instance, in 2021, we received a total of ETB 13,000,000 (\$243,000) from Lidet which was a huge boost for our business. This year, we have so far received a total of ETB 79,850,000 (\$1,492,523) which was a loan from Lidet and RIB SACCO Unions i.e ETB 29,985,000 (\$560,467) from Lidet and ETB 50,000,000 (\$ 934,579) from Rib SACCO Union. This additional finance has been directed toward supporting the aggregation and processing of various bean varieties. In 2022, we have so far collected 300 metric tonnes of two bean varieties from primary cooperatives and we are yet to collect haricot beans from the just concluded season. This process has been made easier due to the financing we received."

2SCALE played a key role in facilitating discussions between Ras-Gayint MFCU and Financial Institutions. Demelash Seifu, the Inclusive Agribusiness Advisor for this partnership explains:

"Together with Ras Gayint, we saw the need to initiate and strengthen the relationship between cooperatives and Saving and Credit Cooperative Organisations (SACCOs). This is because SACCO's are more friendly and are not bureaucratic compared to commercial banks. Considering this and the immediate financial needs of the Business Champion, 2SCALE facilitated discussions with the management and board members of Lidet, Rib, and Ras Gayint Unions. The process was successful as they reached an agreement to immediately give loans to Ras Gayint without any collateral."

Consequently, this additional finance has seen more primary cooperatives expressing interest to join Ras-Gayint MFCU. So far, one more primary cooperative has joined and supplied 13 tonnes of haricot bean in the last season. Besides, the volume of haricot bean aggregated per Primary Cooperative increased significantly. For Melkamu, working closely with Rib and Lidet SACCO Unions has enabled smallholder farmers to remain loyal since primary cooperatives can offtake all their produce and pay cash.

I have also realized that both Lidet and Rib SACCO Unions have smallholder farmers at heart. They took time to understand our business and realized that we are working towards a common goal which is social empowerment. This common interest has also eased our working relationship. Amazingly, I can make a call to either of them and request for a loan without having to visit their offices! This has made us shy away from borrowing from commercial banks.

He adds.

Surprisingly, the growth of Ras-Gayint MFCU has seen banks approach Melkamu to borrow loans from them.

Improved aggregation and marketing

The increased working capital loan has led to the steady growth of Ras-Gayint MFCU. In 2021, the union aggregated, transported, and marketed more than 1700 metric tonnes of haricot beans. The engagement of the Union in the haricot bean business has also created a conducive environment for smallholder farmers by influencing the market to be competitive. Also, the price set by the Union is relatively better than the competitor's price by at least ETB 150 per quintal, which creates an incentive for farmers to be loyal.

"Our ambition is to produce more bean varieties for both local and export markets. Processing of shiro powder has also been initiated and we will focus on processing more quantities. Through our partnership with 2SCALE, we have advanced our expertise in this sector especially due to the capacity building they have given us. Our primary cooperatives have also been empowered and the working relationship with smallholder farmers is now strengthened. We are also happy that thanks to this partnership, the perception of the consumption of Haricot beans in Ethiopia is gradually changing. Farmers not only look at varieties like Awash-2 as cash crops but also as food for local consumption,"

adds Melkamu.

Building on 2SCALE experience through action research

In 2023, the program's MEAL efforts focused on leveraging the 2SCALE experience by conducting comparable action research across all program implementation countries, excluding pilot countries like South Sudan and Egypt. The primary aim of the research was to understand how terms of inclusion are structured within inclusive agribusinesses by evaluating the role of aggregators as intermediaries between SHFs and inclusive agribusiness champions. Specifically, the action research addressed key questions such as: (1) What factors enable or hinder aggregators in the middle of the agri-food chain from contributing to inclusive business? (2) How do the practices and operational rules of aggregators evolve to remain commercially viable within the context of inclusive agribusiness partnerships?

The terms of inclusion have been evaluated across four fundamental dimensions: (1) ownership - encompassing business equity shares and key project assets, (2) voice - including the capacity to influence crucial business decisions, mechanisms for reviews and grievances, and methods for addressing information access imbalances, (3) Risk - covering the sharing of commercial, political, and reputational risks, and (4) Reward - involving the sharing of economic costs and benefits, such as price setting and financial arrangements.

The study findings vary slightly across program countries due to differences in country context, commodity type, and partnership archetype. For example, in the Spice partnership in Ethiopia led by Damascene Essential A similar case study was conducted in Kenya to gain a comprehensive understanding of Agribusiness Clusters (ABC), with a specific focus on the role of aggregators in the Dairy Partnership led by KDPL. The study aimed to explore the terms of inclusion that define the roles of actors in the business model and the dairy value chain. The findings underscore the significant influence (voice) of aggregators in shaping cooperative decisions, fostering a strong sense of ownership, and promoting shared risks and rewards, demonstrating their commitment to the cooperative's success. However, the study recommended further customized training and support to enhance aggregator involvement in decision-making processes, provide intensive assistance in financial and business growth, and strengthen organizational development to ensure sustainable terms of inclusion for these vulnerable value chain actors.

The MEAL team has also conducted preparatory assessments for 14 Reflect and Adapt (R&A) and 34 Reflect and Consolidate (R&C) workshops, ensuring rigorous evaluations. Specifically, R&A workshop preparatory assessments identified risks and tensions affecting the growth and viability of inclusive business practices, while R&C workshop preparatory assessments emphasized evaluating partnership maturity in four inclusive development capacities (deliberative, alignment, transformative, and fitting). R&C preparatory assessments also examined success pathways and sustainability conditions for inclusive agribusiness practices. The choice between R&A or R&C preparatory assessments was based on a partnership quick scan, which includes several parameters gauging their maturity level.

The R&A preparatory assessments informed the program team with valuable insights into potential intervention areas, addressing prevailing risks and tensions with full program support, such as strengthening governance systems, agribusiness cluster setup and coordination, and promoting smooth supply chain integration. On the other hand, R&C preparatory assessments provided valuable evidence and inputs that guided the light intensity support dimensions and scopes before the complete phasing out of program support.

Oil PLC, aggregators, particularly women groups, act as intermediaries between the grassroots champion and women SHFs. These women groups, supported by the program, play a crucial role in ensuring terms of inclusion for smallholder farmers by representing them in price negotiations, facilitating ownership of economic resources like produce and land, and advocating for fair rewards in the value chain. However, their role in ensuring balanced risk-sharing among value chain actors is still developing, with farmers bearing most production and post-harvest risks. This insight prompted the program team to implement adaptive management measures during the partnership's light intensity support phase, focusing on introducing contract farming arrangements that incorporate effective risk-sharing components.

A detailed examination of Agribusiness Clusters (ABCs) within the Sorghum Public Private Partnership in Nigeria, with a specific focus on aggregators, the roles and interactions of ABC actors, and the aspects of inclusion and capacity building for vulnerable value chain actors through the ABCs, revealed a shift in mindset among those who previously operated as traditional "middlemen" and farmers. They have transitioned to become integrated co-actors in the two-step aggregation system of the sorghum PPP. The study highlighted how these actors established trust and navigate the delicate balance between competitiveness and loyalty when engaging with smallholder farmers and other ABC actors. This trust-building and collaborative balance represents unique aspects of the 2SCALE PPP interventions.



SAPHYTO

In Ghana, certified sorghum seed is largely unavailable in the market, which affects sorghum production. To resolve the shortfalls in the supply of certified seed, Faranaya Agribusiness Limited, in partnership with 2SCALE, initiated an Informal Change Alliance in 2021 to bring together players from the public and private sectors. Through this collaborative approach, it is expected that over 80MT of seeds will be availed to farmers-mainly smallholders- enough to cover 10,666 hectares of farmland.

Faranaya-the business champion in this partnership- is a commercial aggregator of sorghum that supports farmers in Northern Ghana to access markets for their produce and add value by engaging in primary processing. Considering the rising demand for sorghum, and the need for Faranaya to acquire more raw materials from farmers, stakeholders in the partnership identified the need to acquire and introduce improved sorghum seed varieties in the market. Achieving this requires a collaborative effort with input companies, government bodies, and research institutions among other key players. The sector change initiative was thus initiated in the partnership, to address the challenge of access to quality sorghum seed in Ghana.

Sub-sector-level engagements address challenges beyond the capacity of specific partnership actors to overcome but, if resolved, would have a sub-sector-wide effect.

Commercial production of certified open-pollinated sorghum seeds was thus initiated. At the same time, the importation and introduction of hybrid sorghum seeds in commercial quantities by a private sector player in the agri input market in Ghana also commenced. Faranaya Agribusiness, 2SCALE, Savannah Agriculture Research Institute (CSIR-SARI, Callighana, Peasant farmers, Seed Pac, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, and regulatory bodies (PPRSD-GSID) took the lead in this.

Two years later, this initiative has yielded significant results towards meeting the sub-sector objective of making open-pollinated certified seeds-specifically Kapala and Dorado- available for smallholder farmers. The target was to produce and distribute 2MT of foundation seed, which would then be multiplied by seed companies and growers. During a sorghum stakeholder meeting in 2022, 2SCALE through the Ghana Country Team Leader, Jalil Zakaria, presented the market opportunities in the sorghum seed sector given the rising demand and commercial usage of sorghum.

He said,

Sorghum is an important import substitution commodity and there is the need for increased local production to prevent organizations, especially brewery companies from importing it. With the improved seed varieties, farmers can now produce more, eventually meeting market demand.

Seed growers like SeedPac and peasant farmers did not disappoint and immediately embraced the initiative to produce open pollinated certified seeds in commercial quantities. CSIR-SARI and MoFA were tasked to train, register, and monitor the multiplication process, a task that they took up so well. Twenty seed growers were trained and registered with five seed growers picking up foundation seeds for multiplication.

Obed Asunka, the managing director of Faranaya was jubilant given the achievement of realizing the partnership ambition of availing improved sorghum seeds to smallholder farmers.

"As a farmer-based organisation offering strategic support to farmers in our catchment areas, we aim to increase sorghum production thereby growing our business. This breakthrough forms one of our biggest achievements in terms of increasing production from farmers. Improved seeds are fundamental to realizing higher production and consequently improving livelihoods due to increased incomes."

Remarked Obed.

Beni Joseph, a member of the Peasant Farmers Association of Ghana was equally happy with the gains the partnership has achieved in a span of two years. He said,

"Improved sorghum seed is a game changer for farmers. The farmer equally wants quality to improve his/her livelihood. The availability of sorghum seeds will make it possible for farmers to cultivate sorghum in large quantities and increase their income."

On 27th April 2023, Faranaya Agribusiness Limited, 2SCALE, and other partners hosted a seeds and inputs fair to showcase the results of the public and private partnership. It also created a platform for stakeholders to trade and share information.

The fair highlighted the market potential of sorghum seed and how both the private and public sectors can leverage this to produce certified seeds for the growing market demand. During the event, the Sub sector approach was communicated to smallholder farmers and other stakeholders in the value chain. Over 300 farmers purchased about 1.5MT of Kapala seeds, during the seeds and inputs fair.

CSIR-SARI encouraged stakeholders to sustain the initiative.

Dr. Peter Asungre, a sorghum plant breeder with the institute encouraged seed companies and growers to continuously contact them for breeder and foundation seeds respectively for multiplication since it is the surest way to maintain the quality of seeds and build farmer trust in the sorghum seed system.

Below are the key results achieved, that were showcased during the fair:

- CSIR-SARI has produced about 4MT of foundation seeds for multiplication by smallholder farmers.
- Seed-PAC and Peasant farmers through the supervision of Ghana Seed Inspection Division (GSID)-MoFA have produced 12MT of open-pollinated seeds out of which 3MT have undergone certification and are ready for the market.
- CalliGhana, leading the private sector approach has so far introduced 55MT of hybrid seeds since 2022 out of which 30MT is readily available for farmers in 2023.
- Faranaya has ordered 10MT of certified open-pollinated seeds for their farmers, in readiness for the planting season.

Speaking at the event, the 2SCALE Ghana Team Leader, Mr Jalil Zakaria challenged stakeholders to continue investing in the sorghum value chain given its market potential and demand for sorghum.

Adek Azantilow, lead person for GSID called on other NGOs and private institutions to invest in other value chains like millet that have equally received little attention in seed systems. He thanked 2SCALE for their initiative and encouraged them to continue the structuring of the sorghum seed system.

The success of this initiative is a step closer towards creating value for over 10,000 smallholder farmers especially women and young farmers in the sorghum value chain.

3. Communication and PR efforts

In 2023, the 2SCALE program's communications and public relations efforts were focused on increasing visibility and awareness of its initiatives. The program implemented a strategic communications plan that included a mix of digital, print, and event-based outreach.

Production of visual content tied to replicable inclusive business concepts: While we set to document three thematic videos in 2023, we surpassed this goal by documenting four main videos, and 9 mini videos less than 3 minutes long, across various countries in East and West Africa. The themes in the videos captured Youth Inclusion in agriculture, Women Economic Empowerment, sub-sector change initiatives, and one overall video capturing the 2SCALE Approach. In these videos, 2SCALE partners took the lead in telling the story of their journey with 2SCALE, highlighting the adaptive measures taken to not only be inclusive but be engaged in agribusiness sustainably. Dissemination of these videos is a continuous process that is ongoing in the first quarter of 2024, and beyond. These videos can be accessed via our Youtube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdj24ArTGqfU3Jua-uMtCPq>

Maximize thought leadership and media awareness opportunities. Given that this period presents an optimal opportunity to showcase the impact of the 2SCALE program to the external world, there has been a concerted effort to enhance media engagement across multiple countries. The program has been prominently featured in over 30 articles by various local and regional media outlets. The strategic utilization of media awareness opportunities, particularly during the launch of inclusive agribusiness clubs, the introduction of sub-sector change alliances, and the commemoration of the 10th-anniversary event, has resulted in heightened interaction with the media. Recognizing the media as a vital target audience is essential due to its potential to effectively disseminate the 2SCALE approach and its impact on both external and internal stakeholders.

Enhanced production of 2SCALE Francophone content: In 2023, there was closer collaboration between the communications team, and Country Team Leads from the Francophone countries, to enhance production of content from these countries. As a result, the four main videos documented covered stories from 2SCALE partnerships in Burkina Faso, Mali and Côte d'Ivoire. The videos were bi-lingual, to ensure wider and diverse audiences' coverage. Alongside our internal dissemination channels, more than ten media articles were featured in various mainstream media outlets across the Francophone countries, amplifying the communication efforts regarding our interventions and the 2SCALE Approach.

Development of phase 2 thematic papers and case studies: As we conclude the second phase of the program, it is important to document the lessons learned from these years. Replicable briefs were developed based on proven models and practices that can promote inclusion and or enhance competitiveness in the market. All thematic and cases studies were uploaded on the [2SCALE website](#) to ensure wider reach.

Vegetable producers from the SCS partnership in Mali





4. Challenges and Actions taken

Political instability and insecurity

Political instability and insecurity have been a major challenge in many countries in 2023. Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Mali, Niger and Nigeria are currently the most affected. This has slowed down progress in partnerships and led others to close.

In the Sahel countries, specifically Burkina Faso and Mali, the presence of terrorist groups in certain areas has caused a strong dysfunction of supply chains. This has led to difficulties in delivering inputs to farmers and challenges in marketing produce. Despite these obstacles, many actors, including small producers and Business Champions like BIOPROTECT (a vegetable partnership), have shown significant resilience by utilizing alternative channels to navigate sources of insecurity. However, these security issues still have a detrimental impact on trade negotiations. With support of 2SCALE new sourcing areas and ABCs have been put in place to provide sufficient supply.

In Ethiopia, four partnerships – Tsehay, Ras Gaint, Kesem, and Awash Olana – have been seriously affected by security challenges. As a result, Awash Olana was suspended because the smallholder farmers will need a long time to get back to vegetable production. The insecurity in Amhara Region continues to disrupt implementation under the Ras Gaint, Kesem, and Tsehay partnerships. The 2SCALE team was most of the time not able to travel on site and gave support from a distance. The enterprises continued operations as far as they could but on a much lower speed.

The program continues to work with IFDC and SNV security personnel to always ensure the safety of staff. Overall, the program team adapted the support to the circumstances in every case and continued to support the PPPs whenever possible.

Economic slow-down

The International Monetary Fund world economic update of October 2023 projects a sluggish global economy. Still emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, countries in sub-Saharan Africa have been hit by worldwide inflation, high borrowing costs, and a cost-of-living crisis. In many cases, inflation is still too high, borrowing costs are still elevated, and exchange-rate pressures persist. This is already being experienced in 2SCALE countries in various ways.

Ghana is experiencing high inflation, high cost of fuel and the depreciation of the local currency, affecting operations of the business champions and resulting in delays in the execution of activities. Elsewhere in Nigeria, the government's removal of the subsidy on fuel has led to an increase in prices of commodities, resulting in high operating costs for program implementation. In the other countries we have similar experiences.

As at last year, the program encouraged country teams to review Annual Action Plans (AAPs) at least every six months, as business is not linear, to help resolve any challenges that emerged. PPPs will continuously be encouraged to reexamine their AAPs and adjust activities accordingly.

Access to quality inputs

Access to quality seeds, fertilizers, and chemicals for farmers continues to be a challenge across the countries and value chains. In South Sudan, the seed sector is still underperforming, with most of the seeds in circulation being imported from neighbouring countries like Uganda and Kenya, making access difficult for smallholder farmers. In Mali, PPPs are having trouble obtaining quality agricultural inputs, and worse still, they come at a high cost. Partnering with seed projects such as Accelerating Agriculture and Agribusiness in South Sudan for Enhanced Economic Development (A3-SEED) is helping to improve access to seed.

Due to the high prices and the accessibility of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, in countries like Ethiopia, Mali and Burkina Faso there is an emerging interest for organic fertilizers. This is happening both at smallholder level (e.g. compost production and use) as well as the growing of a market for organic fertilizers, where companies step in to produce and commercialise.



5. Recommendations based on achievements and results in 2023

Despite the slow start of phase 2 due to prolonged and heavy approval process for BC selection and the global shock due to Covid-19, the program achieved the UII targets thanks to the additional resources provided by DGIS. UII 3 (Eco-efficient practices) is the only target that has not been achieved. This is partly due to the complexity of measuring this indicator.

Though quantitative targets were achieved, impact needs to be deepened through a careful strategy of consolidation in 2024 and possibly beyond (if phase 3 is approved by DGIS). Based on the assessment undertaken in all the PPPs through the Reflect and consolidation guideline, four key areas of consolidation were identified (also reflected in the phase 3 proposal); creating conditions to include the cost of ABC coaching into the cost structure of the value chain through internal BSS arrangement; improving supply chain coordination to reduce transaction cost and improve loyalty along the value chain; improve efficiency of BCs to tap opportunities in the BoP market; and building on the early gains of sub-sector change initiatives. These areas had been identified with the objective of deepening and scaling out impacts by making the business models survive competition in the absence of 2SCALE without losing the inclusive agenda.

In parallel with the consolidation of the business models, the program should focus on exchanging knowledge with local institutions that can take over the role of 2SCALE in incubating and accelerating inclusive agribusiness. The Inclusive Agribusiness Club initiatives started in 2023, should be further strengthened in 2024 as an anchor point for the actors to come together, network, and share experiences on common challenges and best practices in the sphere of promoting inclusive agribusiness.

Since quantitative targets have already achieved, in 2024 the program Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL) will focus on the qualitative measures that show the extent of impact and analysis of proven models for future replication and knowledge sharing.

Sorghum farmer in Northern Ghana during a seed fair event



Effects of climate change

The effects of climate change are being experienced in most countries, which is affecting implementation of the program. Kenya, like most other countries in East Africa, continues to experience prolonged drought and unreliable rainfall patterns. This is affecting most of the dry regions where partners source produce. Farmers had much lower yields or even none in some regions.

To alleviate and mitigate the impact of climate change, farmers have been encouraged and incentivized to adopt innovations such as water harvesting and conservation, use of renewable energy and other technologies that will lower cost of production. Water harvesting and conservation practices – Efforts in two of the drier areas (Kajiado and Kieni) saw farmers investing in water pans, drip irrigation, solar powered irrigation systems among other practices. This being an additional cost, 2SCALE worked alongside microfinance institutions, development partners and government projects to make it easy for farmers to learn, develop interest and afford these investments through arrangements such as check off payment plans.

Staff Turnover

In 2023, the program experienced a high staff turnover across the different countries. In some cases, much time has been needed to replace the colleagues who departed.

At the beginning of the year, three technical and one administrative staff in Ethiopia left. One was replaced quickly but we struggled to replace the others, which caused delays in implementation of some activities. Côte d'Ivoire was also heavily affected when three key staff members, including the Country Team Leader (CTL), left and their replacements also exited within a short time. The program took quick action to replace the CTL with a colleague from Mali but after few months the CTL also moved to another role within IFDC. These events led to slower implementation of activities on the ground in both countries.

Despite this challenge, the exit of some staff is creating opportunities to promote those who have remained with the program. Several colleagues within the program have filled the vacant roles. They continue to receive coaching through the mentorship program to ensure that they are successful. In addition, in many countries we also employ interns who can evolve to junior consultants if staff will move on.

Sweet n' Dried business champion, and staff exhibiting some of their products during an event







2SCALE

*Incubating and accelerating
inclusive agribusiness in Africa*