

ANNUAL REPORT

2023

Transforming
lives and growing
prosperous futures

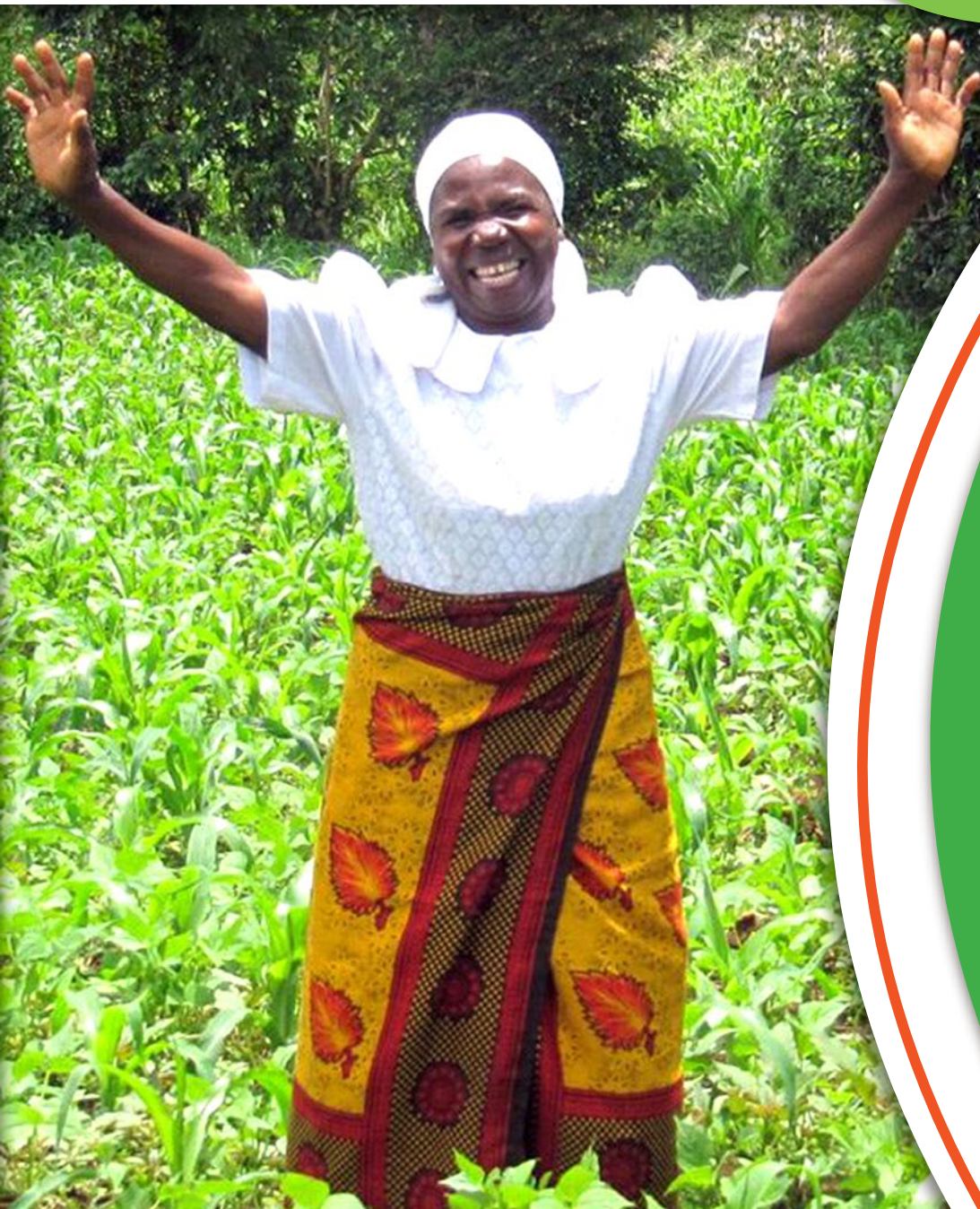






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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Pillars of Just Earth

Just Earth partners with local churches in Kenya to help bring social, environmental, spiritual, and economic transformation in communities.

Agriculture accounts for 20 percent of Kenya's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), playing a critical role in its economy and in its ability to raise the economic welfare of the 16.1% of its population, who are below the internationally recognised poverty line. According to the World Bank (2023), economic growth in Kenya is

unevenly distributed across the country and given the importance of agriculture in rural areas of Kenya where poverty is more prevalent, the sector's importance in poverty alleviation is crucial.

The increase in the population of the country has led to sub-division of agricultural land into smaller land portions, hence the need for intensive farming systems and sustainable agricultural practices. Just Earth ('JE') empowers the rural poor towards improved livelihood and enhanced resilience to environmental shocks through its four strategic pillars:



THE FOUR STRATEGIC PILLARS OF JUST EARTH

Just Earth partners with local churches in rural Africa to help bring spiritual, economic, social and environmental transformation in impoverished communities.



Economic Pillar

A school without walls in which farmers learn better farming techniques to enable them to achieve higher yields, more diversified crops and better income in order to improve their livelihoods.

Spiritual Pillar

The Kingdom Life Bible study works to change lives in a holistic way. Farmers are facilitated through this course during the two years in a field school.



Environmental Pillar

Promoting planting of trees, diversification of crops, land and animal care, household climate change adaptation and sustainability.

Social Pillar

Ensuring school attendance, orphan and widow care as well as nutrition and food safety.



The Economic Pillar

Farmers undergo an intensive and practical two-year programme in Farmer Field Schools (FFS) of up to 36 farmers each. The curriculum comprises modules in crop/ livestock production, agri-business, soil and land management, climate change mitigation and adaptation with emphasis on organic farming, value chain development and nutrition among others. Each trained farmer reaches out, on average, to 4 neighbours through farmer-to-farmer extension. Farmers are helped via subsidised loans, to purchase the quality farm inputs needed to raise productivity.

The Social Pillar

This pillar focuses on general improvement in welfare of families in terms of school attendance, food and nutrition security, food safety, improved housing and household assets. Food produced on the demonstration plots is used to support orphans, widows and other vulnerable community members.

The Environmental Pillar

Emphasis is put on climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies at household level, planting of trees, reclamation of degraded lands, soil conservation, organic farming, protection of environmental biodiversity and sustainability.

The Spiritual Pillar

Farmers are spiritually enriched through the Kingdom Life course during the two years of FFS learning.

1.2 Major outcomes in 2023

- 10 New FFS were commissioned with a total membership of 223 in 4 Anglican Church of Kenya diocese in Western Kenya. The total number of FFS was 16 comprising 389 active members.
- 2,340 direct beneficiaries from FFS training and 9,360 more people benefitted indirectly through JE farmers sharing their knowledge with farming neighbours.
- Graduation of 141 farmers (31 male, 110 female) from 5 FFS.
- Training of 22 new FFS facilitators including 2 from the DRC.

- 7 Field days attended by 1,400 farmers where local communities visited FFS demonstration plots to learn from FFS farmers about the vision and impact of JE.
- One field day at the Bishop Muge Avocado farm which attracted widespread interest in the County, with 734 visitors attending.
- Two Kingdom Life reviews and two mind-set change workshops.
- 14,500 trees planted by FFS members.
- Twelve Pre-FFS training sessions for 2024 schools.
- Farmers earned KES 17,743,520 (c. £89K/ \$113K) from their sale of crops.
- Visit to the Democratic Republic of Congo by JE Kenya staff to determine feasibility of FFS piloting in the diocese of Kindu.

We continue to be very grateful to our many partners for generously supporting the work of JE.

This work consistently lifts the very poor and vulnerable out of extreme poverty in a holistic manner, and gives them both dignity and life choices for their families that they could not otherwise access.

We often hear it said that children are sent out to beg – but that thanks to the FFS, they no longer have to beg.

On their behalf, we say – Thank You.

1.3 FFS Commissioning in 2023





1.4 Graduation celebrations in 2023





2.0 THE ECONOMIC PILLAR

2.1 General maize production and acreage

389 households benefitted directly from FFS training, and 1,556 neighbouring households benefitted indirectly through our JE farmers passing on their learning.

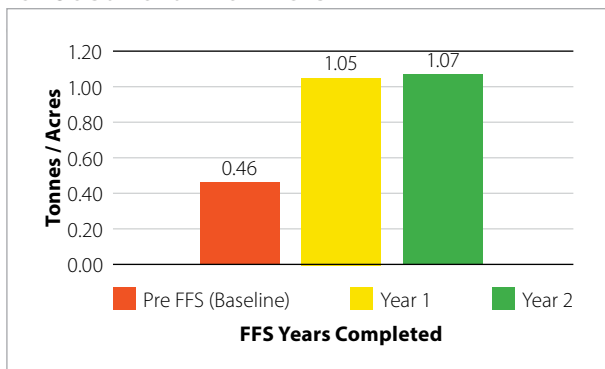
JE Farmers earned KES 17,743,520 (~ UK£89k / US\$113k) from the sale of their surplus crops which represent a 65% increase per farmer over their 2022 equivalents.

Maize yields were 2.5 times higher in 2nd year schools than were achieved pre-school. This was despite some regions experiencing very difficult weather conditions (both drought and flooding experienced in a number of regions) in 2023, compared to weather conditions in the pre-FFS baseline period.

The charts illustrate these overall results.

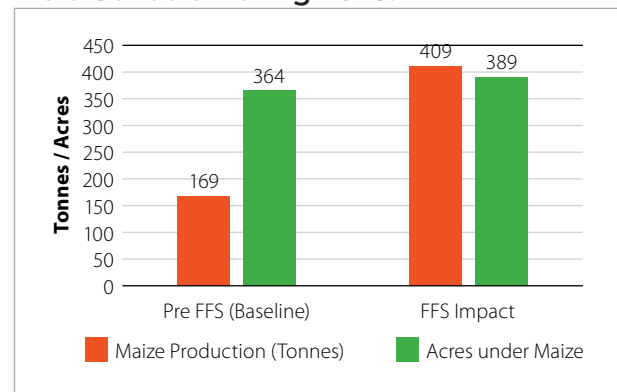
Baseline and Production data was collected from each farmer in order to facilitate tracking of changes in yields, and this enables detailed assessment of the impact of

Trend in Maize Yield / Acre (Tonnes/Acre) for Just Earth Farmers

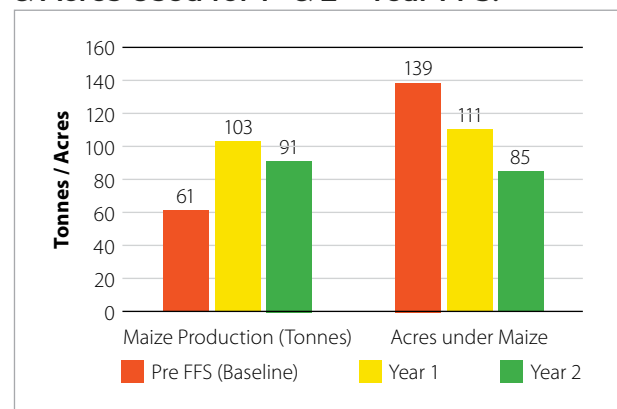


'Maize yields were 2.5 times higher in 2nd year schools than were achieved pre-school.'

Total Maize Production (Tonnes) & Acres Utilized for All Farm Field Schools During 2023.



Total Maize Production Trend (Tonnes) & Acres Used for 1st & 2nd Year FFS.



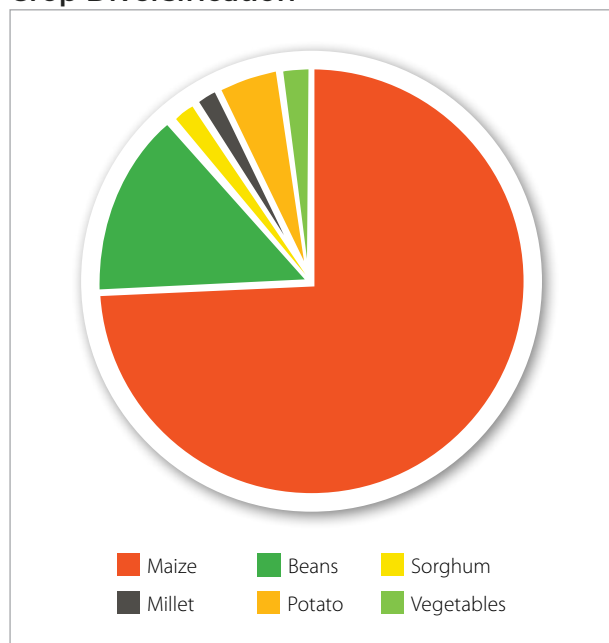
the FFS learning programme. Full detail to individual FFS level is available. The impact of regional weather variations on individual FFS yields was unusually high, as the following illustrates:

	Best FFS Yield Improvement	Weakest FFS Yield Improvement
Year 1 FFS	3.3 times baseline	1.6 times baseline
Year 2 FFS	4.4 times baseline	1.2 times baseline

2.2 Income from crop sales

There is evidence of crop diversification, overcoming years of traditional emphasis on maize and providing better nutrition overall. Farmers sold crops which included maize, beans, millet, sorghum, cassava, potato, sweet potato and vegetables. The following chart shows 31% of income coming from non-maize crops.

Crop Diversification



‘Farmers are trained on livestock production techniques at the FFS including housing and disease control.’

2.3 Livestock

Farmers are trained on livestock production techniques at the FFS including housing and disease control for dairy, sheep, goats, chicken, pigs and bee keeping. Pasture and fodder production including legumes and fodder trees are integrated in the demonstration plot design to give the farmers hands on experience to transfer to their farms.

A majority of the FFS members practice mixed farming whereby crop farming complements livestock keeping, as crops and crop residues are sources of fodder, whereas livestock manure is key to organic crop farming and environmental sustainability.





3.0 THE ENVIRONMENTAL PILLAR

3.1 Introduction

This pillar is key in promoting environmental resilience through adoption of climate change adaptation strategies at farm level. This is becoming more urgent as the cumulative impact of adverse climate change becomes more pronounced.

Farmers are trained on land management techniques such as organic farming, soil erosion control, contour farming, mulch farming, conservation tillage, planting of fallow crops and grazing land management. They were also encouraged to plant a minimum of 25 trees each, of which 5 must be fruits, in order to improve household nutrition.

3.2 Climate Change Adaptation Strategies

The most commonly used climate change adaptation strategy was use of compost/farm yard manure, mulching, contour farming to control soil erosion and digging of ditches to minimize waterlogging.

The impact of these practices is far reaching, from managing risk of loss of topsoil through erosion due to heavy rainfall to improving soil stability and fertility to reducing dependency on artificial, petrochemical based fertilisers. This is often the first time that farmers have encountered practical steps they can take to protect the long-term health of their farm land.



Mulching at Genesis Chesito FFS, Kitale Diocese.

Number of Farmers adopting Climate Change Strategies					
Ditches	Contours	Fallow crops	Compost/FYM	Zero Tillage	Mulching
124	123	55	254	36	148

The FFS training programme is continually being adapted to improve land usage, and a strategic decision is being implemented which aims to significantly reduce the reliance upon petrochemical based fertilisers through a combination of zero tillage and use of high quality composted and farm yard manure materials.

3.3 Tree Planting

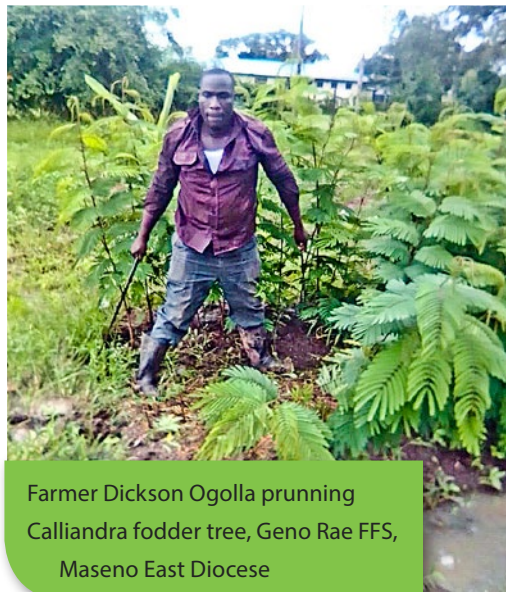
A total of 14,507 trees were planted by FFS members, bringing the total number of trees planted through

Just Earth intervention to 183,112. Each Year 1 FFS was supplied with agro-forestry tree seeds to establish a nursery and produce tree seedlings for distribution to farmers in Year 2. The trees planted in 2023 were:

Agro-forestry	4,744
Indigenous	2,723
Exotic	5,055
Fruit Trees	2,092
Total trees planted	14,614



Facilitator Tobias with Mr and Mrs Paul Lemokiel, Canaan Lelam FFS.



Farmer Dickson Ogolla pruning Calliandra fodder tree, Geno Rae FFS, Maseno East Diocese



Pre-FFS training at Kapretwa Parish, Kitale Diocese.



4.0 THE SOCIAL PILLAR

4.1 Introduction

Farms are routinely visited during the course of a 2 year FFS. Farm judging and documentation of success stories then takes place towards the end of Year 2 of a FFS to evaluate the impact of the programme at farm level. This tests a number of key aspects, including:

- Technology transfer from the demonstration plot to the household as well as dissemination to neighbours.
- Efforts to conserve the environment and land management.
- Testimonies of spiritual growth through Kingdom Life course and evidence of support to vulnerable members of the community.

Improved livelihood is reflected in better housing, food and nutrition security, improved school attendance as parents can pay fees for their children and supply school requirements as a result of better income. 42 out of the total of 166 farms in the Year 2 FFS programme were visited.

Two example success stories from the farm visits are presented below:

4.2 Selly Paulo, Canaan Lelan FFS – Kapenguria Diocese

Selly Paulo is a member of Canaan Lelan FFS, Kapenguria Diocese. Aged 42 years, Selly is married to Paulo Tokio and they have 2 children. Before joining FFS, Selly used to harvest 2 (90kg) bags of maize from half an acre. After two years training, she now produces 9 bags from the same farm due to using well-prepared Farm Yard Manure from her cows, goats and chicken. Selly has also



diversified into growing of potato, vegetables, beans, passion fruit and Tamarillo fruit.

Selly is grateful for FFS training which she says has enabled her and her husband to be fully employed on their 6-acre farm. Since joining FFS in 2022, she has planted 69 trees which comprise 49 indigenous (Elgon Teak and Podo) and 20 Tamarillo fruits. She keeps some cows, sheep and indigenous chicken. From the sale of



her farm produce, Selly pays school fees for her children and is putting up a permanent house.

As a result of Kingdom Life training, Selly reaches out to the needy in the community by sharing her farm produce. She also participates actively in church projects through generous giving and the Lord blesses the work of her hands.

4.3 Canaan Ropile FFS, Nkoilale, Narok – from shrub land to abundance

The recently graduated Canaan Ropile FFS is situated in Iturisho village, Nkoilale in Narok South Sub-County, adjacent to the Masai Mara National Reserve, globally renowned for the rich diversity of wild animals and the annual wildebeest migration.

Before the FFS was started, the Maasai community in Nkoilale were not familiar with crop farming. Access to green vegetables was difficult, and the women had to purchase the commodity very expensively at local markets.

Just Earth in partnership with the Full Gospel church in Nkoilale, established a FFS with a total membership of 66 women. A demonstration plot was provided by the local Pastor Thomas Kimaren. JE repaired a community borehole and installed a solar powered irrigation system for the demonstration plot. This transformed a dry semi-arid area into a source of abundant fresh vegetables for the community.

After two years of training, covering especially in vegetable growing and pasture establishment, 55 women graduated. They have learnt and adopted

‘Improved livelihood is reflected in better housing, food and nutrition security, improved school attendance. 42 out of the total of 166 farms in the Year 2 FFS programme were visited.’



appropriate tools for land preparation and general crop management. The FFS demonstration plot has a good crop of pastures which the members have been buying for their livestock. A wide range of vegetables have also thrived and been added to local diets. The

women have also adopted kitchen gardening to grow their own green vegetables for household consumption, utilizing abundant farm yard manure and securing them from livestock and wildlife by using locally available material.



Canaan Ropile FFS members celebrate their graduation on 23/11/23.



5.0 THE SPIRITUAL PILLAR

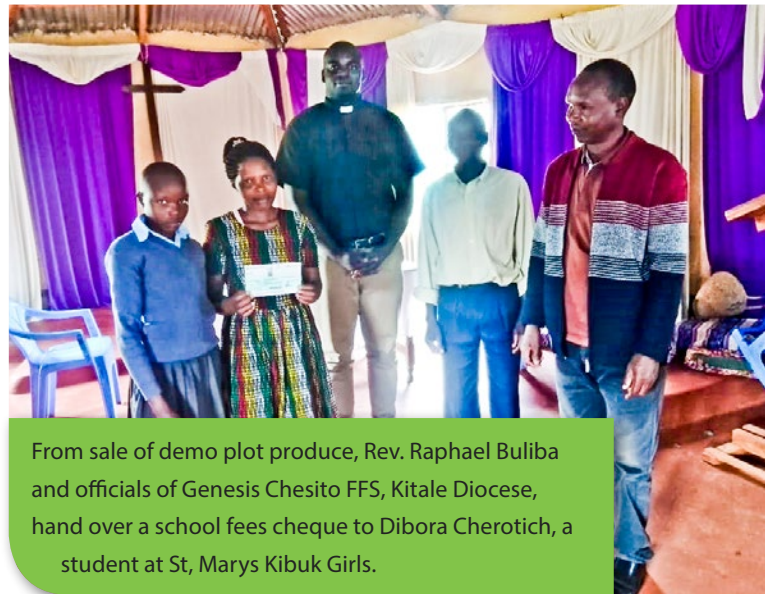
5.1 Introduction

The spiritual pillar is a core part of JE FFS and works in partnership with local church leaders. They are key in facilitating Kingdom Life Bible Study and carrying out pastoral visits to the farmers in their homes, sometimes accompanied by JE facilitators. The aim is to change the lives of farmers in a holistic way so that the person grows as well as learning improved farming techniques. Rural poverty often afflicts a person's confidence and sense of self-worth. Breaking this pattern is a key objective but can be challenging where mind-sets have become long entrenched.

5.2 Mind-set change training

Just Earth in partnership with Roots to Fruit, an organization led by Rev Canon, Dr. Dennis Tongoi, carried out two mind-set change training sessions targeting senior church leaders (including three local ACK bishops), JE staff and local church leaders with farm schools.

This knowledge has been cascaded to FFS members and is an integral module in pre-FFS training. This is expected to help the farmers in overcoming innate and cultural barriers to technology adoption and ownership of the



From sale of demo plot produce, Rev. Raphael Buliba and officials of Genesis Chesito FFS, Kitale Diocese, hand over a school fees cheque to Dibora Cherotich, a student at St, Marys Kibuk Girls.

FFS process that has direct implication on transformation of livelihoods.

5.3 Demonstration plot income and utilization

Local church leaders ensured that 80 per cent income from the sale of crops on the demonstration plots was used in supporting orphans, widows and other vulnerable individuals. The beneficiaries are members of the community where the FFS is located, identified by FFS members.

Sales of demonstration plot produce totalling KES 301,335 was achieved during 2023, and of that KES 248,523 was used to support the needy in the locality through a variety of actions, including:

- Feeding widows, orphans and the elderly, and
- Paying school fees for needy children



6.0 2024 PLANS AND REQUIREMENTS

6.1 2024 Farmers Field Schools

Planning for the 2024 FFS's is complete, and the launch of 11 new schools and the start of Y2 of 10 existing schools is now well underway.

This is the first time since 2019 that the Year 1 and Year 2 FFS programmes will be unaffected by the disruption caused by the COVID pandemic, and this is a welcome development.

The JE team, both Kenyan and UK based, are focussing on a number of strategic matters, including:

- Accelerating the move towards more rapid adoption of climate change adaptation strategies. In particular this requires the deployment of zero tillage methodologies, and the substantial reduction in reliance on non-fossil fuel based fertilisers. This is a far-reaching, and essential, change.
- Establishing a Kenyan income base for the work of JE, focused on the Avocado farm at the Bishop Muge Mission Centre in Kitale Diocese.

6.2 Bishop Muge Avocado Farm in Kitale

The Avocado farm was established in the summer of 2022, and is a nine acre avocado plantation at Bishop Muge Mission Centre Kitale. Plants are now well established, with minimal loss. The location benefits from irrigation fed by a solar powered borehole. This enables plants to be irrigated each plant twice a week.

The location is also being used to grow a cover crop (Desmodium) which is used as part of the climate change programme when new FFS's are being established,



Avocados at first flowering and fruiting.



Farmers field day.

as well as providing a useful cash income before full Avocado production starts, likely during summer 2024.

The Avocado project has attracted much interest locally, so that a field day was carried out in late 2023 in partnership with the County Government of Trans Nzoia and other stakeholders. This enabled sharing of knowledge and skills on avocado production on what the County Government considers to one of the flagship enterprises in the County. This in turn may offer opportunity to local farmers to develop their own Avocado operations, further benefitting the local economy.

6.3 People

JE could not deliver its work without the skills and commitment of the Kenyan team. We are very grateful to them for their commitment to this work. The team comprises the following:

1. Philip Amoi – Director of Operations, Administration and Human Resource
2. Rev. Dr. Rael Taiy – Director of Agronomy
3. Rev. Laban Otiato – Spiritual Pillar Director
4. Festus Owuor – Field Manager
5. Noel Lanya – Accounts Clerk
6. Caleb Nyapinda – Driver/Administrative Assistant/Trainer
7. Reuben Wanyonyi – Manager Bishop Muge Avocado Farm

In addition, we have a large team of facilitators who deliver the face-to-face training at the FFS's. They are chosen from those who have successfully completed a FFS, have shown an exemplary response to the training and also an aptitude to lead and train others. After dedicated training they lead the work at the FFS's.

This year a team of 33 facilitators will deliver training at the 22 FFS's we will be running. Fees paid to facilitators are another potential source of income for those who have been through the FFS programme themselves.

6.4 Financial Position

We ended 2023 with a stable financial position, and this gives us confidence for 2024. Additional funds will allow us to expand our programmes. The constraints arising from the COVID pandemic hindered our ability over the period 2020 to 2022 to meet trainee farmers face to face at the FFS's, but the committed support of our partners brought us safely through that time.

The 2024 programme will cost around GBP 240,000 to deliver (around US\$305,000), and this should directly transform the lives of over 570 families and an estimated 3,420 household members. And indirectly it should influence another 2,280 households and the lives of 13,680 individuals.



JUST EARTH KENYA
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH RETURNISHO FULL GOSPEL CHURCH
Certificate of Training
Awarded to:
Felister Koshal
For successfully completing a 6-month Training and Field Practical Training
in Crop Production, Livestock Production, and Family Business Management
from June 2011 to May 2012
Conducted at **KANJAN BURET F.F.S. KENYA, U.S.A.**
The Training is in partnership of Just Earth Kenya and
First Steps Church USA

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IN PARTNERSHIP WITH RETURNISHO FULL GOSPEL CHURCH
Certificate of Training
Awarded to:
Njivai Koshal
For successfully completing a 6-month Training and Field Practical Training
in Crop Production, Livestock Production, and Family Business Management
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