

AGRA Impact Series



Kenyan farmer transforms village productivity after training in regenerative agriculture

After gaining skills in regenerative agriculture, Fridah Muendo, a farmer in Kenya's Makueni County now harvests up to 10 bags of maize from each acre of cultivated land, up from three.

The 33-year-old mother of three resides in Kinyongo Village of the Kaiti Constituency, one of the regions in the East African country that has been adversely affected by climate change leading to extreme weather fluctuations.

The region also suffers from rapid land degradation and a limited access to extension services, in addition to weak input and output market linkages.

It would have been a bleak future for Ms Muendo and her family had she not been selected by the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) as one of 114 farmers to attend training in Regenerative Agriculture (RA) and Climate Smart Agricultural (CSA) practices and technologies. The training was held in September 2020.

The seminar educated her on such techniques as minimum or zero tillage, cover cropping,

intercropping, crop rotation, composting, use of organic mulch, agro-forestry, cultivation of drought tolerant crops, certified seed usage, and soil and water conservation strategies.

Ms Muendo was also trained on the creation of business-to-business linkages as well as post-harvest management skills.

Today, just a few months after the training, Ms Muendo has reduced her production costs by one-third, improved the quality of her farm's soil and increased her crop yields.

"Before I started to use RA practices and technologies, I would only harvest three bags of maize per acre. Now I harvest an average of 6 to 10 bags per acre," she said.

Through the entrepreneurial skills and connections gained from the training, she also set up a cereals store to support the offtaking of grains from farmers in her village and surrounding neighborhoods. From her store, she also sells post - harvest handling equipment such as hermetic bags, hand shellers and tarpaulins.

All these new entrepreneurial ventures have increased her net monthly income from about KES 10,000 (USD 92) to KES 30,000 (USD 275), a 200% increase.

Now considered an expert, Ms Muendo is regularly consulted by farmers in her village. She has, so far, trained 73 more farmers on RA and CS technologies, using mother and

baby demonstration plots, where she teaches land preparation, seed spacing and crop protection.

“When the farmers are introduced to RA for the first time, they usually have concerns on its efficiency. However, the increased harvests serve as evidence of success. Today, we apply RA and Climate Smart Agricultural practices and technologies in all our farms,” Muendo said.

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Fridah Muendo

Farmer, Makueni County
