



**Self Help
Africa**



Embracing **Change**

Strategic Plan 2017 - 2021

selfhelpafrica.org



Yendoukou Assibi and Anne Kolani are members of a women's enterprise group in Nasiette village, Northern Togo.

Contents

SECTION ONE		
1	Who We Are	4
1.1	Our Vision	4
1.2	Our Mission	4
1.3	Our Values	4
2	Who We Work With	4
3	What We Do	5
3.1	Agriculture	5
3.2	Agri-Enterprise	5
3.3	Our Specific Goals	5
4	Where We Work	6
5	Strategic Direction	7
5.1	Nuanced Market-based Approach in Existing Countries of Operation	7
5.2	Expansion into More Fragile States	7
6	Our Model	7
7	Scale of Impact	8
8	Our Way of Working	8
SECTION TWO		
1	Strategic Objectives	9
1.1	Food and Nutrition and Income Security	9
1.2	Agri-Enterprise Development	10
1.3	Influence and Awareness	12
2	Cross-Cutting Themes	13
2.1	Gender & Inclusion	13
2.2	Youth	13
2.3	Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA)	13
2.4	Innovation & Technology	14
3	Enabling the Organisation	15
3.1	People	15
3.2	Processes	15
3.3	Systems	16
3.4	Governance	16
3.5	Organisation Summary	16
4	Financing the Plan	17
4.1	Diversification of Funding/Income	18
4.2	Continued Investment in Public Fundraising	18
4.3	Expansion of Institutional Fundraising Capacity	18
4.4	Programme Efficiency/Economies of Scale	18

Malidadi Chilongo pictured in her rice field in Kaphika, Malawi.



1. Who We Are

Self Help Africa (SHA) is an international development organisation headquartered in Ireland and the UK, with operations in nine countries across East, Southern and West Africa.

We work with smallholder farmers, farmer associations, cooperatives and agribusinesses to help rural poor households to grow and sell more food, improve diets, diversify and grow incomes, and make their livelihoods more sustainable and resilient to external shocks. We also work to raise awareness of the issues affecting these communities, and represent their interests at policy and institutional level.

Our work impacted 290,000 households (approx.1.8 million people) in Africa in 2014. Our ambition is to reach one million households by 2021.

2. Who We Work With

We work with rural poor communities in sub-Saharan Africa.

Smallholder Farmers

Although the majority of the highest growth economies in the past 20 years have been in Africa, growth has been largely concentrated in capital cities and other urban areas and has largely bypassed smallholder farmers. 90% of rural populations are engaged in agricultural production, but smallholders are among the most food insecure, undernourished and climate vulnerable people on the planet. They face many constraints including limited access to technology and information, limited capacity in terms of marketing, storage and processing, and limited resources in terms of capital and risk management. Food quality is poor, household diets do not provide adequate nutrition, and families have limited

1.1 Our Vision

Our vision is an economically thriving rural Africa.

Our vision is aligned to the recently agreed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).^{1,2}

1.2 Our Mission

To support sustainable livelihoods for Africa’s smallholder farmers.

1.3 Our Values

- **Equality:** We believe in equality. People are equal in rights and must be treated with respect and dignity.
- **Innovation:** We are conscious that finding effective solutions requires innovative thinking combined with a pragmatic approach.
- **Learning:** We strive for the highest quality standards in our work and encourage a culture of constant learning and improvement.
- **Accountability:** Accountability and transparency is central to all our actions and use of resources.

opportunities to diversify their activities, find markets for their produce, and have alternate means of earning an income. SHA works with smallholders to increase food security and to reduce inequalities in the creation and distribution of income and wealth. While the definition of smallholder farmers varies from country to country, our targeting looks at the size of the landholding, level of food security, income, availability of markets and the levels of vulnerability to risk and competitiveness. The term “smallholder” refers to smallscale and subsistence-level families farming in resource poor conditions, operating with few purchased inputs and limited technology. Accordingly, our target group is a diverse group of women and men, whose access to and tenure of land and resources varies according to their gender, age, disability, health and HIV status.

3. What We Do

SHA focuses on agriculture and enterprise.

3.1 Agriculture

Investments in agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa are up to 11 times more effective at reducing poverty than investments in any other sector³. The majority of Africans living in extreme poverty with insufficient access to food are, ironically, engaged in agriculture.

Many of these smallholder farmers live in marginalised, diverse and harsh growing environments, with poor quality soil and limited irrigation options. They are reliant on increasingly inconsistent rainfall and lack access to agricultural inputs, finance, information and technology. Yet they are responsible for nearly all of Africa’s food production.

3.2 Agri-Enterprise

We also focus on agri-enterprise - means by which rural poor farmers can earn an income from market oriented production through individual, group activities and formal small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) - for two key reasons. The first is that smallholder farming is an extremely vulnerable livelihood. By investing in agri-enterprises we will make livelihoods more resilient by increasing and diversifying rural household income streams.

The second is that agricultural development is increasingly seen as key to sustainable and equitable economic growth in Africa⁴. If matched with improved infrastructure,

smart business and an enabling political environment, trade policies and a dynamic private agribusiness sector, the World Bank estimates that agriculture and agribusiness, together, could command a US\$ one trillion presence in Africa’s regional economy by 2030⁵.

3.3 Our Specific Goals

Given that the majority of Africa’s poor are engaged in agriculture⁶, it is difficult to imagine how equitable growth is possible without development in the sector.

As Africa’s population continues to grow, agricultural development - both the increase in quantity and quality of food that is grown - is essential for the continent’s future food security⁷. For these reasons SHA focuses primarily on agriculture, agri-enterprise and household nutrition.

Our goals are to work with rural communities to:

- 1) Improve food, nutrition and income security for smallholder farming families.
- 2) Support the establishment and growth of inclusive, profitable and sustainable agri-business.
- 3) Support improvement of the policy environment for small-scale producers and their families.

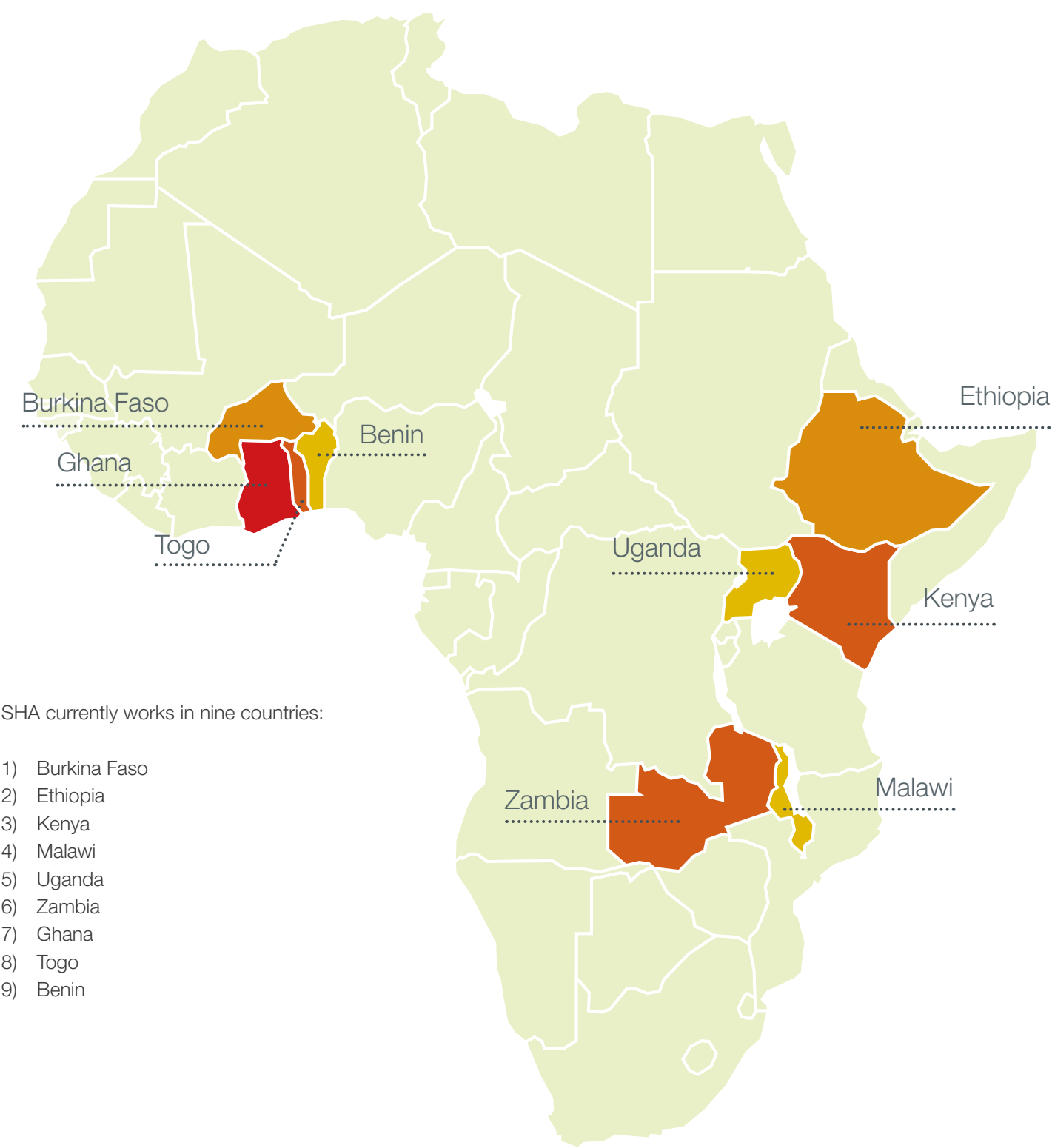
Our work is influenced by several over-riding themes which influence everything we do:

- 1) Gender & Inclusion
- 2) Youth
- 3) Climate Smart Agriculture
- 4) Innovation & Technology



Habibou Tiendrebeogo harvesting beans in Nomgana Village, Plateau Central, Burkina Faso.

4. Where We Work



5. Strategic Direction

5.1 Nuanced Market-based Approach in Existing Countries of Operation

Over the past five years, 11 of the world's 20 fastest growing economies were in Africa⁸. The macro-level 'Africa Rising' story has truth but it is distorted by low-income baselines and skewed by the impact of resource extraction⁹. Economic growth in Africa has tended to correlate with rising inequality¹⁰. This is because many people in Africa's booming economies continue to lack resources necessary to share in their countries' economic success – access to information, capital and markets, particularly those living in rural areas where the incidence and severity of poverty consistently exceeds urban poverty¹¹.

The result is that these groups get left further and further behind while the gap between rich and poor widens. The plight of those excluded from the benefits of growth, living in embedded 'poverty pockets', is further compounded by likely reductions in donor funding for programming in countries with promising macro-level economic indicators. For this reason, we remain committed to our current countries of operation acknowledging the often alarming rates of stunting, indicative of extreme food and nutrition insecurity. We will adopt different strategies to address these needs, also recognising the increasing market potential offered by the growing economies.

5.2 Expansion into More Fragile States

We have been focused on hunger eradication since our inception but due to progress and change in Africa many of our operating countries have seen considerable improvement. Hunger and poverty is increasingly concentrated in fragile and conflict affected states. In 1990, just 20% of poor people lived in fragile countries; this has now increased to 50% and equates to 1.5 billion people. Furthermore, of the world's 16 most hunger afflicted states, 12 are in Africa but we are currently only operational in two of them – Zambia and Ethiopia¹².

To stay true to our founding values and vision of an economically thriving and resilient rural Africa, we must expand our operations into those countries where the hunger problem is most severe and where agronomic interventions offer significant impact. To broaden further the support SHA can provide in such circumstances, in the coming years the organisation will also develop humanitarian response mechanisms within a carefully structured framework that is aligned to our core work.

Therefore, while we will maintain our existing operational footprint, we will also establish operations in at least two of the following more-fragile states: Eritrea, South Sudan, DRC, Niger and/or Mali. This country expansion will be based on an in-depth analysis of the operating environment and identification of gaps in development support through needs assessments of local population.

6. Our Model

Ours is a two pronged programme approach.

- 1) Market-based programming with increased use of enterprise models (e.g. public-private partnership, social enterprises, impact investments, etc.) in

current high-growth countries of operation.

- 2) Expansion of our traditional programme model into more fragile states and improved targeting of embedded 'poverty pockets' in current countries of operation. Develop appropriate methods to respond in humanitarian crisis situations.

Geographic Focus	Fragile States/Poverty Pockets	Developing Economies
Approach	Agricultural Production	Market-Based
Key Area of Focus	Hunger, Nutrition & Livelihoods	Cooperative/Enterprise Development
Staff Needed	Agronomists, Nutrition, Gender and Capacity Building Advisors	Enterprise Advisors/Business Development and Investment Specialists

7. Scale of Impact

Key measures of success for this strategic plan include:

- 1) One million smallholder households supported.

2) Average increase in income of 100% of smallholder farmers.

3) Reduction in stunting of children under five by 5%.

4) 30 agri-enterprises supported to scale their operations to regional/national markets.
- 5) Increase in turnover for supported agri-enterprises by more than 10%, year on year.

6) 10 policies influenced for pro-smallholder sectoral reform at national and international level.

7) Increase in profit/surplus of agri-enterprises supported, year on year.



IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA AGRICULTURE IS ELEVEN TIMES MORE EFFECTIVE AT REDUCING POVERTY THAN OTHER SECTORS¹³

8. Our Way of Working

SHA is a different type of INGO as evidenced by our deep commitment to the following ways of working:

Promoting Market-based Solutions - We champion viable, value for money solutions that will have a lasting impact in a functioning market, without continuous subsidy or grant support.

Working in Partnership - We partner with a variety of organisations; ranging from smallholder farmer groups and cooperatives, national and district level government and research institutions to international organisations. We aim to embed skills, knowledge and experience-sharing within these bodies. We believe in south-south and triangular cooperation as a necessary complement to all the work we do.

People Helping Themselves - We support local

communities to work together and establish the links they need to create their own solutions, which builds on local concepts of ‘progress’ and ways of organising.

Investing in People – We recognise that most promising new agricultural technologies are knowledge-intensive and typically require substantial investments by farmers themselves. Their adoption and impact depend on farmer education outside formal schooling, such as farmer field schools, demonstration plots, etc.

Empowering Farmers’ Organisations – We believe that small farmers need to co-operate through organisations and clusters in order to achieve competitiveness. Participation in a farmers’ organisation is crucial to achieve leverage in contracting and price negotiations, and to have their voice heard in policy making at national and international levels.

1. Strategic Objectives

Six Pillars

There are six strategic objectives contained in this plan. These will allow SHA to deliver upon the plan’s objectives. They are: delivery of **Food and Nutrition Security, Agri-Enterprise Development, Influencing & Advocacy** and a series of **Cross-Cutting Themes**. To facilitate delivery of the strategy there are further objectives on **Enabling the Organisation** and **Financing the Plan**. All of our work in the 2017-2021 period will be monitored and measured against these objectives.

1.1 Food and Nutrition Security

Objective 1 - Improve food and nutrition security by helping create sustainable income for smallholder farmers.

Why it is important:

In sub-Saharan Africa one in four people suffers from chronic hunger¹⁴. Despite a reduction in the percentage of undernourished people in absolute terms, the number of people suffering from under-nutrition has increased by over 50 million in the past twenty years as economic growth fails to keep pace with population increases¹⁵. Approximately one-third of all stunted children live in Africa and the prevalence of hunger and childhood stunting increases exponentially in fragile states and embedded ‘poverty pockets’¹⁶. Children who suffer from

chronic malnutrition experience life-long effects, failing to achieve their maximum potential which has knock-on effects on economic development.

Over the years, efforts to address hunger placed a major emphasis on improving food security through interventions at national, regional and global levels with a focus on increasing production of the main staple. However, even by increasing production of major crops, smallholder households will not be able to produce all of their own food and dietary requirements¹⁷. Furthermore, smallholder farming, particularly at subsistence level, is an extremely vulnerable livelihood. Lifting people out of this vulnerable situation through income diversification is required for human dignity as well as economic development¹⁸.

Food Security:

There are four main pillars to support Food Security:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| ► Access | → | Own production, livestock, purchase, barter exchange food |
| ► Availability | → | Available in markets, seasonality, growing |
| ► Utilisation | → | Combining foods, harvesting, storage, sale |
| ► Stability | → | Global markets, climate change, security/insecurity |

Food, Nutrition and Income Security:

It is clear that the agricultural sector has huge potential for inclusive and equitable economic growth¹⁹, but smallholder farmers cannot take advantage of such opportunities without access to inputs, information, capital, markets and technology. SHA is working with smallholder famers on the following key areas:

- Improving household food security through increased production, diversification and seasonal availability of food
- Improving feeding and care practices for all household members, including WASH
- Capacity building around cooperative formation, operation and management.
- Improving market access
- Identifying and supporting diversification into alternative, higher-value produce (e.g. nuts, honey, dairy, meat)
- Identifying and supporting value addition

(e.g. cleaning, processing, packaging, storage, and certification)

- Facilitating access to credit, mobile banking and other financial services as agriculture insurance

We address hunger and chronic malnutrition by taking a nutrition sensitive approach to all our interventions, ensuring household food and nutrition security is prioritised through measuring indicators such as reductions in the hunger period and increased dietary diversity.

Food Nutrition & Income Security



1.2 Agri-Enterprise Development

Objective 2 - Support the establishment and growth of inclusive, profitable and sustainable agri-business.

Why it is important

While agriculture as a sector has seen a resurgence in investment over the past decade, the focus by governments, donors and the development sector

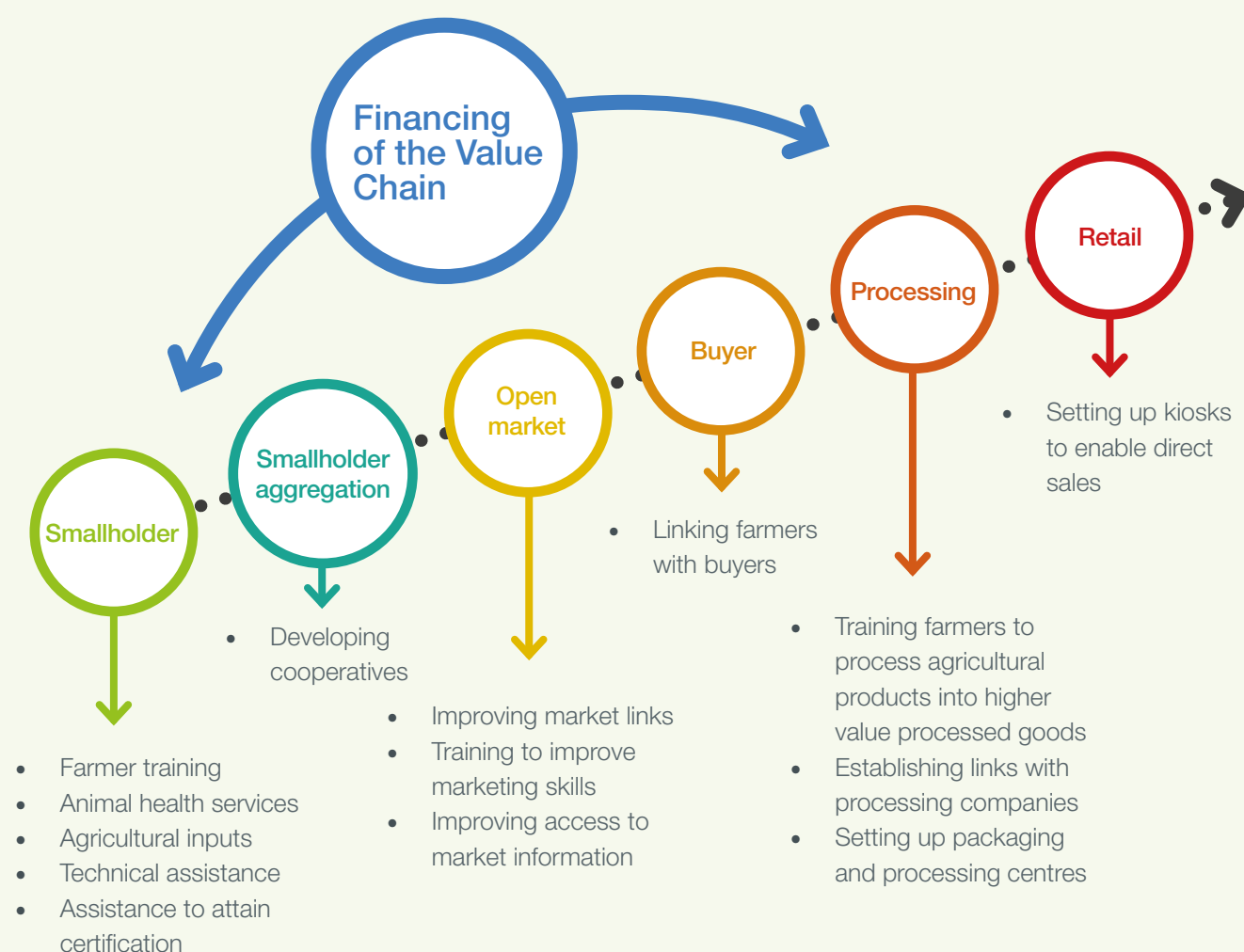


has been primarily on agricultural production. With at least 70% of the population engaged in agriculture, it is estimated that the sector accounts for just 15% of the continent's total GDP, generating approximately \$100 billion a year²⁰. Development of the private agribusiness sector is essential for the sustainable development of Sub-Saharan Africa²¹ and with the correct level of investment, it is forecast that the sector could move from a current value of \$280 billion to more than \$1 trillion in less than 20 years²².

Successful agri-enterprise/agribusiness investments also stimulate agricultural growth through the provision of new markets and the development of an input supply sector²³.

SHA will act as an incubator for established businesses and an accelerator for partner enterprises who wish to scale. SHA's main role will be providing expertise which will help make supported enterprises investment-ready and linking them with the impact investment community. The diagram below illustrates the range of areas in food value chain/systems where SHA supports farmers.

SELF HELP AFRICA: Where in the Value Chain?



What we will do

- Provide entrepreneurship training for farmer groups and processors.
- Support agri-enterprises and cooperatives with scale-up ambition and potential in the development of business plans and training in business skills, such as accounting, management, governance.
- Source technical advice and second operational management expertise.
- Link smallholders and their associations to microfinance facilities.
- Link agri-enterprises and cooperatives to finance facilities and source seed capital.
- Invest directly in high potential social enterprises.
- Develop local distribution networks by supporting local agricultural input enterprises.
- Establish strong links between farmer-led enterprises and the private sector.

How we will improve:

- Incorporate value chain sector analysis into our country level strategic planning process, identifying priority value chains in each core country of operation.
- Adopt a more explicit M4P (making markets work for the poor) thinking – ensuring complete view of the market system and value chain.
- Develop the impact investment capacity within the organisation.
 - ▶ Support partners' enterprises with consulting services, technical advice and early stage equity capital as needed.
 - ▶ Facilitate linkages with larger/dedicated impact investment firms as partner enterprises grow.
- Develop an agri-enterprise investment portfolio.
- Hire business, finance and investment specialists with emerging market experience.
- Build working relationships with larger agribusinesses and input suppliers.
- Develop the fee-for-service management consultancy arm of the organisation for reinvestment in agri-enterprise.

Key indicators of success:

- Farm gate price/income differential attributed to SHA supported enterprises.
- Number of smallholder-enterprises who realise a



financial benefit as a result of the programme's activities per year and cumulatively.

- Net additional income accrued to smallholder-led enterprises.
- Number of additional paid jobs created from smallholder-led agri-enterprises.
- Total profit from our social investment portfolio available for reinvestment in other projects.

1.3 Influence and Awareness

Objective 3 - Influence policy on behalf of smallholder farmers.

Why it is important:

Although the smallholder community is by far the largest voting bloc across Africa, its voice is often not heard or is simply ignored when policy is being shaped. The failure of most African governments to live up to their Maputo Declaration commitments – to spend 10% or more of national income on agriculture – is a clear example of this democratic deficit. Similarly smallholders do not have sufficient access to international networks to voice their grievances directly to populations in the developed world.

What we will do:

- Be active members and leaders on pro-farmer advocacy platforms.
- Produce evidence-based research and consolidate our position as an ‘expert’ agricultural development organisation.
- Attend and provide contributions at national fora across Africa as well as leading global workshops and conferences.
- Share innovative models and technologies with leading players in the sector.
- Influence sector reform in areas of agriculture, nutrition and enterprise development.
- Raise awareness and nurture support at home for smallholders in Africa by playing an active leadership role in Ireland on development education.

How we will do this:

- Develop an organisation-level influencing strategy.
- Build influencing capacity among personnel in field offices.
- Generate evidence of lessons learned in the field.
- Develop a systematic approach to evaluating influence.
- Further develop working relationships with key government ministries and relevant regional and international bodies.
- Play a leadership role in Ireland on development education.
- Develop a consultancy capacity which responds to calls from other development agencies, governments and private sector actors and allows SHA to influence development thinking and strategy development accordingly.
- Work with schools to encourage support for development education.

Key indicators of success:

- Number of research initiatives that lead to change in policy and/or practice.
- Number of contributions to handbooks/manuals of sufficient significance to inform accepted best practices.
- Number of innovative technologies/models developed, shared and implemented at scale.
- Number of school principals expressing support for development education activities.
- Number of strategic and targeted development education grants administered.



Timothy K Mtonga and his wife Christine with their grandchildren Memory, Agnes, Diless and Issac. Timothy is a goat farmer in Chiwayu village, Zambia.

Anne Marie Venegba with her grandchildren in Zambrebonghin village, Burkina Faso.



2. Cross-Cutting Themes

2.1 Gender & Inclusion

Women carry out the bulk of agricultural production but do not have equal access to markets, land and other resources such as credit, education, extension services and inputs. Women own just 1% of agricultural land, receive only 7% of extension services and access less than 10% of agricultural credit²⁴. Many factors perpetuating poverty and hindering economic development in our countries of operation are rooted in gender inequality.

The ‘missed potential’ in agricultural productivity from failing to invest in women is great. Given the prominence of women among Africa’s smallholders, gender equality is essential to achieving our goals and will, therefore, remain a constant feature of our work.

Other vulnerable groups include people living with HIV/AIDS and people living with disability who experience numerous barriers to participating in development programmes, including negative attitudes, lack of access to training and poor self-confidence.

Access to livelihood opportunities is fundamental to ending the cycle of poverty, we will endeavour to include the specific needs of vulnerable groups in our programme activities.

All activities undertaken by SHA will promote discussion and mutual understanding of issues between women and men around gender roles, unequal workloads and decision making to raise awareness, inform programming and address gender inequality. Ultimately, across all of our work, we will seek to increase

women’s voice, choice and control; their voice in collective spaces (producer associations, cooperatives, family home etc.), their decision-making power (choice) and their control over economic resources produced as a result of their labour.

2.2 Youth

We recognise the importance of ensuring our work is of value to young people. In sub-Saharan Africa approximately 40% of the population is under 15 and nearly 70% is under 30²⁵. The majority of these youths live in rural areas.

Rural youth are the future of food security, yet the challenges they face in accessing land and credit, their negative perception of agriculture, and the lack of non-farm jobs mean that they are increasingly looking to move to urban areas. Overcoming these challenges and creating agri-enterprises are the key to addressing these issues.

In line with the Malabo Declaration²⁶, SHA will seek to ensure young smallholders are targeted and engaged in all programme activity. Our agri-enterprise objective will include employment goals for rural youth.

2.3 Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA)

Natural disasters have always occurred but climate change is intensifying the frequency and impact of severe adverse weather conditions, which impacts on how much food is produced and where. A temperature



Ethel Khundi is rearing improved breed pigs in Phiranjuzi, Malawi.

increase of just two degrees will result in a potential reduction of agricultural production of 30%. Every region of the world is at risk but in Africa, the poorest communities and people in fragile environments, such as drylands, mountain areas and coastal zones are the most vulnerable and will be particularly affected. This is because they often lack the basic means to enable them to cope or recover. All of our programmes strive to build smallholders' economic and climate resilience through natural resource management and a climate smart approach in order to deliver long-term, sustainable impact. The three main objectives of our CSA approach are applied across all SHA programme objectives:

- 1) Increasing agricultural productivity in a sustainable manner, to support equitable gains in farm incomes, food security and rural development
- 2) Adapting and building the resilience of agriculture and food security systems to climate change at multiple levels
- 3) Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture

Ultimately our CSA approach focuses on agricultural productivity with emphasis on the integrated management of natural resources and on resilience - in particular on the temporal nature of resilience. New climate risks require changes in agricultural technologies and approaches to improve the lives of those still locked in food insecurity and poverty and prevent the loss of gains already achieved.

2.4 Innovation and Technology

Africa is undergoing an unprecedented period of rapid technological change, with the majority of the poorest quintile of sub-Saharan African households now having at least one mobile phone and African internet usage predicted to increase 20-fold between 2015 and 2020. Mobile banking and payment technologies are driving transactional activity and economic growth across the continent.

We believe that technological innovation is vital to helping smallholders mitigate threats while availing of opportunities in this increasingly complex environment. Innovative networking platforms, for example, allow smallholders to take advantage of opportunities resulting from economic growth, while innovative drought resistant seed varieties and water conserving irrigation systems reduce their vulnerability to the ever-increasing threat of climate change. Meanwhile mobile technology and innovative peer-to-peer platforms present multiple opportunities for financial inclusion, insurance provision, market access and information sharing²⁷. Accordingly, we will seek to integrate the latest technologies in all of our programming activity.



Elcanah Tchongwe pounding flour in Wasambo, Malawi.

3. Enabling the Organisation

We recognise that elements of this strategy entail significant change for the organisation. Accordingly we need to invest in human resources, structures and systems to ensure we are equipped to realise this change.

This will entail investment, capacity building, structural overhaul, systems development and adaptation. Outlined below are our internal organisational objectives, which we believe are necessary to achieve our programme goals, scale up our impact and contribute to lasting change in Africa.

3.1 People

In order to support desired growth and structural change we need to invest in people. This will involve investment in the following skillsets:

1) Experienced development professionals with expertise in:

- Agriculture
- Natural Resource Management
- Climate-Smart Agriculture
- Nutrition
- Gender
- Youth
- Technology
- Partner Capacity Building
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Policy and Influence

2) Private sector, business/enterprise development professionals with a track record of success in emerging markets to:

- Conduct market assessments, supply and demand surveys, write business plans and effect turnarounds

for our clients in Africa.

- Manage small-scale equity investments with qualified agribusiness partners.
- Serve as operations and general managers to build local enterprise management capacity.
- Conduct value chain and market analysis.
- Build and maintain relationships with the impact investment sector and development finance institutions.

We will need to invest in individuals with experience of working in stable market based economies as well as more fragile areas.

3.2 Processes

We are committed to efficient financial procedures and controls to be accountable and transparent, comply with legal obligations, monitor our performance against expected outcomes, measure value for money and follow good practice.

We have made significant investment in creating a comprehensive human resource management function during the last plan period. This plan will see continued investment in human resource staff and systems and ensure we have a comprehensive performance management systems in place.

We will increase our monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) capacity to ensure we can continue to demonstrate impact and foster a culture of learning. This will entail investment in systems and personnel to measure impact at the beneficiary household level, which will in turn inform programme design. This will also include performance reviews against expected

outcomes, annual internal audits in each country and post-programme evaluations. Learning from our experience, measuring our performance, demonstrating value for money and sharing good practice are essential for us to be accountable to our beneficiaries, donors and supporters.

Country and department strategic plans will be aligned to the organisation strategy and developed in consultation with staff, board and other stakeholders. Each department is required to produce an annual plan, which demonstrates its planned contribution to specific objectives within the strategic plan and are required to report to the board quarterly on progress.

In addition, individual management and staff appraisals reflecting key measurements and performance will be directly linked to this overall strategic plan.

3.3 Systems

We will continue to invest in our management information system (Salesforce) and build staff and

board capacity to use this resource effectively. We will upgrade our financial system (PS Financials) and continue to enhance financial controls.

3.4 Governance

As part of the Self Help Africa merger, we undertook a formal membership and board renewal process. We have completed this process to ensure our board and its committees are skills based, and have the required competencies to match our size and ambition.

We will continue to strength our membership to ensure that the organisation continues to have a robust and competent governance foundation.

3.5 Organisation Summary

2021 will see a much larger and more diverse organisation from multiple perspectives.

From...Today	To...2021
One Context	Dual Track Approach <ul style="list-style-type: none">Developing EconomiesMore Fragile States
Eight Core Operating Countries	At Least 10 Core Operating Countries <ul style="list-style-type: none">Expansion to at least two new countries of operation.
Limited Economies of Scale	Economies of scale and efficiency <ul style="list-style-type: none">Larger OrganisationIncreased ImpactReduced Cost per Beneficiary
One Type of Staff Expertise (primarily)	Two Types of Staff Expertise <ul style="list-style-type: none">Traditional Development Professionals (Both stable and fragile context experience)Business/Enterprise Development Specialists
Donor Funding Dependence	More Diversified Funding Base <ul style="list-style-type: none">Expanded Unrestricted Public GivingOptimum Leverage of Unrestricted IncomeImpact Investing Capacity

4. Financing the Plan

In line with our ambition to increase our influence, our aim is to grow SHA's programme expenditure from a level of €21 million in 2016 to in the region of €30-40 million in 2021. This expenditure will be mirrored by proportional increases in income over the period of the plan.

In order to be more efficient with how we utilise our unrestricted income streams, we plan to leverage this valuable resource to raise higher levels of institutional funding, changing the mix from 1: 2.5 in 2015 to 1:4 by 2021.

The income mix will also be impacted by diversification of income streams to include researching and entering new public fundraising markets, returns from investments in social enterprises, selling consultancy services and increased tendering for fee based contracts.

This will entail several key changes in our funding strategy.



Stephen Mweruka (centre) attends a fruit tree demonstration plot in Ibanda, Uganda, with trainer Irwaniro Kikyenkye.

4.1 Diversification of Funding/Income

Despite recent progress we remain overly reliant on funding from large institutional donors (principally, Irish Aid and the Department for International Development). As funding from these sources gets scarcer, particularly for programming in high growth countries, we plan to further diversify our funding base. This will be achieved by:

- Expanding into new fundraising markets outside of Ireland, the UK and the US.
- Developing corporate engagement and public private partnerships.
- Adopting a market-based approach that ensures financial sustainability.
- Investing in social enterprises with the potential of surplus dividends.
- Continue to compete for fee based consulting tenders, where appropriate.

We will remain primarily reliant on public and institutional funding but our goal for 2021, is to generate at least 10% of our overall income from alternative sources.

4.2 Continued Investment in Public Fundraising

We will grow public fundraising by leveraging our current Irish and UK committed giving database. Early in this strategic period we will make significant investment to reinvigorate this database with comprehensive strategies around, Donor Retention, Reactivation, Upgrade and new Donor Recruitment.

We will accelerate investments in larger fundraising markets, namely the US and UK, and by exploring other market opportunities around the world.

4.3 Expansion of Programme Fundraising Capacity

We will grow our institutional fundraising by:

- Strengthening and enhancing our current reputation for good quality work.
- Expanding our funding relationships to include non-traditional donors, such as Gulf and BRIC donors.
- Enhancing our partnerships with core donors such as Irish Aid and DFID.

Effectively this strategy will involve growing our institutional income at a faster pace than our public/voluntary/unrestricted income. We believe this to be possible due to the increased availability of funding for agriculture and enterprise and our increased

attractiveness given our scale and financial stability.

We will invest part of our unrestricted reserves to build our institutional fundraising team over the plan period, while maintaining a prudent level of reserves to reduce risk.

A key issue we will address during this strategic period is the fact that our current funding mix is under-leveraged. We have established a 4:1 institutional to public funding ratio as optimal and we aim to achieve this by 2021.

We will also see a diversification of our income base by geographic source, which today is largely dependent on Ireland and the UK both from a public fundraising and an institutional fundraising perspective.

This will entail a significant increase in our EU and US funding, which is under-represented currently and an organised expansion of our donor reach to other geographies worldwide. Accordingly, we will add resources to our institutional fundraising team to target the various EU donor institutions along with other donors in continental European countries. We will also expand our US investment in SHA Inc., to target more donors in the US.

4.4 Programme Efficiency / Economies of Scale

We will enhance operations in our eight core programme countries with the aim of leveraging our existing infrastructure as much as possible and to achieve economies of scale in each country.

This will entail an increase in average programme spend per country. This trajectory will see us greatly increase our direct spend efficiencies with our programme spend ratio targeted to exceed 90% by 2021.

Notes

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**Self Help
Africa**

Kingsbridge House, Parkgate St, Dublin 8,
Ireland
Westgate House, Dickens Court, Shrewsbury,
SY1, UK 1QU, United Kingdom
14 Dufferin Street, London, EC1Y 8PD,
United Kingdom
41 Union Square West, Suite 1027, New York,
NY 10003, USA



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Ethiopia.