



STRATEGY 2023 – 2027

Sustainability
and resilience in a
changing climate



Bandana, a leader in her local Women's Business Centre,
from Gongarampur, Khulna, Bangladesh





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INTRODUCTION

The Self Help Africa strategy 2023 – 2027 outlines how we will pursue our vision of sustainable livelihoods and healthy lives for all in a changing climate.

In a world confronted by climate change, population growth, pressure on resources and widening inequality, there has never been a greater demand for the services we provide.

For more than 50 years, we have been focused on ending poverty and hunger through community-led and market-based approaches. Our experience working with rural communities and smallholder farmers during this time has honed our expertise in addressing climate change and its impact on food production and the environment. We describe ourselves as a ‘pro-profit, non-profit’ as we believe that equitable economic development is key to ending poverty.

The predominant focus of our work has been on sub-Saharan Africa - a region where global hunger and extreme poverty are most acute - but recent developments have also taken us to Bangladesh and Brazil.

While our core work is with small-scale farming families, who make up the majority (75 per cent) of the extremely poor in Africa, we also implement projects that support communities facing grave humanitarian crises, and we assist farmers and farming cooperatives in sourcing profitable markets locally, regionally and internationally for their produce.

We collaborate with national businesses seeking to create jobs, add value, and develop markets that enable smallholder farmers to trade their goods. We also seek relationships



Fatou Sall, calpi bean producer from Louga, Senegal.
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with international businesses and corporations seeking opportunities to invest, collaborate, and develop markets that contribute to economic growth in Africa and poorer regions of the world.

During the last strategic plan, 2017 to 2021, and its subsequent extension to 2022, the organisation grew and developed considerably in scale and impact, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Our capacity to do so demonstrated our ability to be agile in rapidly changing contexts. This remains vital given the ever-worsening impacts of climate change and the conflict in Ukraine on the countries within which we work.

Our structures have had to become more resilient. We have strengthened our capacity in procurement, safeguarding and internal auditing, for example. Our Programme Technical Team has expanded and now comprises technical advisors with expertise in climate-smart agriculture; enterprise development; gender; nutrition; water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); dairy and livestock development; natural resource management; and clean energy. Private

sector development and support remains a core focus. We are building our agri-enterprise work, supporting a portfolio of companies through two EU challenge funds in Kenya and Zambia.

We are strengthening our crisis response capacity in the countries and communities where we have an established presence, focusing on our strengths – income and livelihood support and WASH.

In August 2021, United Purpose and CUMO Microfinance were also integrated into the organisation. This significant organisational development has brought additional technical skills and new thematic areas to our work. We have expanded our footprint in West Africa to now include Burkina Faso, the Gambia, Guinea, Nigeria and Senegal as well as adding Bangladesh, Brazil and Mozambique to the list of countries we work in. Figure 1 shows the organisation’s current countries of operation.

The addition of CUMO Microfinance to Self Help Africa will enable us to increase our efforts to improve access to finance for individuals and micro and small enterprises.

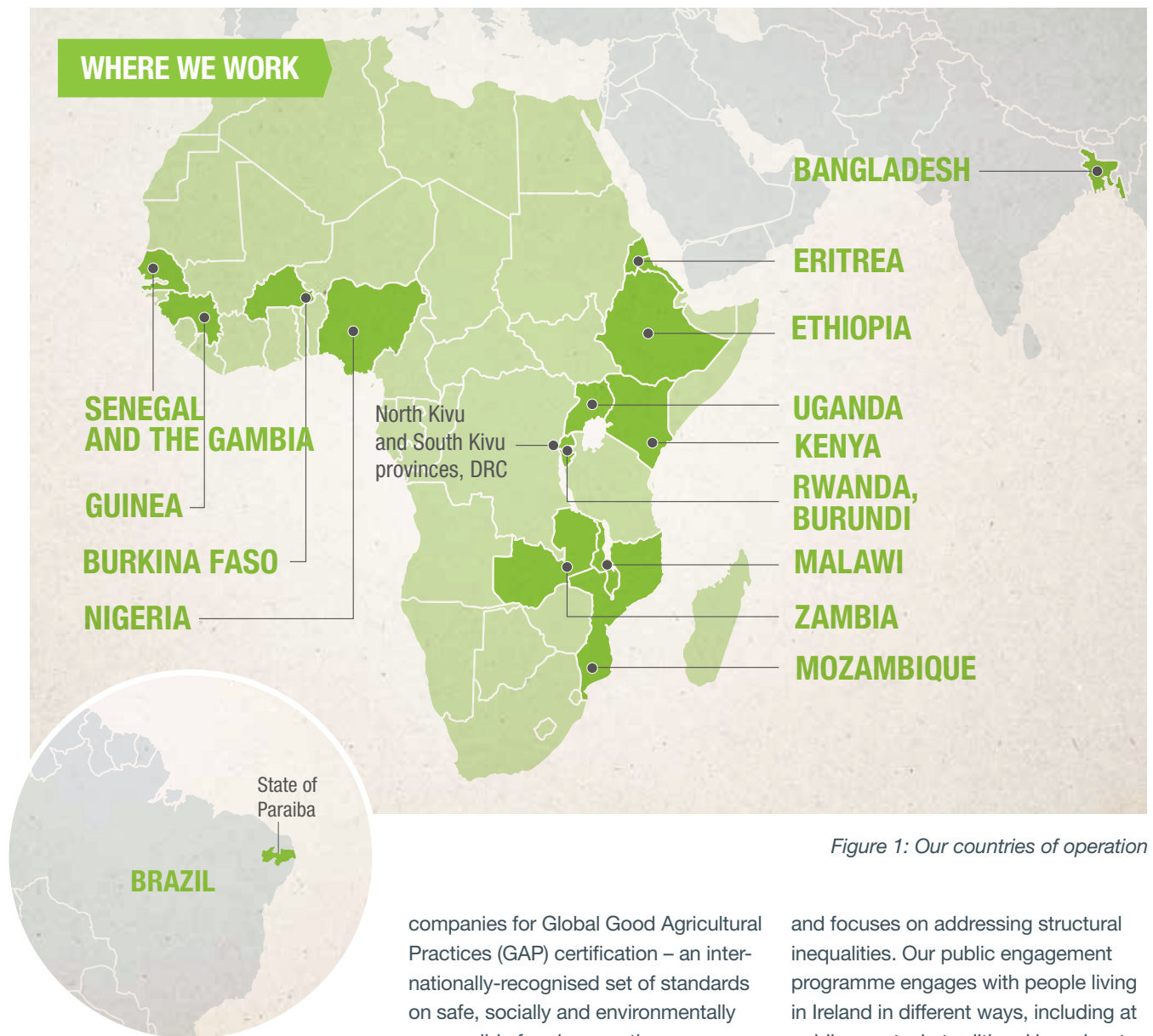


Figure 1: Our countries of operation

The doubling in size and scale of our operations has been complemented by gaining an additional 600 staff. Establishing appropriate infrastructure to complete the integration and maximise the potential opportunities for the communities we support is ongoing.

Partner Africa is focused on improving the working conditions and livelihoods of vulnerable workers and producers in Africa to prevent exploitation, and continues to provide ethical auditing and consulting services to improve conditions for workers and work towards the eradication of modern slavery in international supply chains. It is expanding its services to include assessing

companies for Global Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certification – an internationally-recognised set of standards on safe, socially and environmentally responsible farming practices.

TruTrade provides market brokerage services and national and international trade facilitation between smallholder farmers and private sector off-takers.

CUMO Microfinance improves the lives of the rural poor by taking financial services to the doorsteps of remote and difficult to reach communities, with a special focus on women.

The aim of our Development Education programme is to educate and inform people in Ireland about the root causes of injustice and poverty, locally and globally. This work links with our policy and systems strengthening in countries

and focuses on addressing structural inequalities. Our public engagement programme engages with people living in Ireland in different ways, including at public events, in traditional broadcast and print media, and by using Self Help Africa's website, extensive social media presence and other online platforms.

In addition, Self Help Africa is the lead agency, in consortium with Concern Worldwide and The City of Dublin Education and Training Board Curriculum Development Unit (CDU), on Irish Aid's funded WorldWide Global Schools (WWGS), which is Ireland's national Global Citizenship Education (GCE) programme for post-primary schools. The aim of the programme is to increase the number of post-primary schools engaging in quality global citizenship education by providing a comprehensive range of supports.

What informed our strategy

Environment and stakeholder consultation

Climate change is the environmental factor likely to have the greatest impact over the period of this strategy. Other trends include the transition from traditional funding models, the increased focus on enterprise, greater inclusion of the voice of stakeholders in programme design, the localisation of development, rapid urbanisation, climate finance, inclusive leadership and digitisation.

The number of people facing acute food insecurity and requiring food assistance globally has almost doubled since 2016. The UN World Food Programme estimates that 49 million people face emergency levels of hunger with more than 800 million people going to bed hungry each night. The adverse impact of the Russian invasion of Ukraine on the availability and price of staples and vegetable oils such as wheat, sunflower oil and maize has been enormous. In March 2022, global commodity prices recorded by the UN Food and Agricultural Organization hit record-breaking highs. This situation, set against the backdrop of the climate crisis, suggests an uncertain and dangerous period ahead. It is difficult to find concerted and effective global action or political pressure to address the issue of climate change and extreme weather events - development programmes are having to adjust to the new levels of uncertainty. It is claimed that three million livestock perished in southern Ethiopia and semi-arid parts of Kenya during 2021. The plight of millions of people across the continent of Africa, still reeling from the impact of Covid, is further driven by the war in Ukraine. The conflict is contributing to the rising cost of living, cost of fertiliser, energy, and lack of wheat – a trend which is likely to continue impacting negatively over the next five years. Conflict is the greatest driver of hunger. The UN estimates that nearly two thirds (60 per cent) of the world's hungry live



in conflict zones, including in northern Mozambique and parts of Nigeria. As stated by An Taoiseach, the head of the Government in Ireland, at the UN General Assembly in 2021, climate change and conflict are intrinsically linked. It is this phenomenon that is forcing many to leave their homes and join the various migration routes.

It was imperative that the development of this Self Help Africa strategy was inclusive and that voices from across its organisations were heard. Multiple stakeholders informed the direction and priorities for the next five years. The consultation process included workshops with staff, one of which was a workshop with Country Directors who had, in turn, consulted with their teams, who reflected in-country needs. There were also 16 interviews with key staff from across the organisation as well as Board members, donors and partners. More than 300 staff contributed their views via an online survey and the organisation's trustees were consulted and kept informed of progress throughout.

These stakeholders identified the collective key strength of our organisations being the support we give communities to build sustainable livelihoods and thriving businesses. They reaffirmed the need for the organisation to respond to the contextual issues outlined above and requested the development of a more synergised and integrated organ-

isation that can demonstrate its impact with greater clarity. There were calls for an internal culture that supports staff well-being and for a drive to increase funding to allow us to support more people.

The feedback was taken on board and we are grateful to all those who have contributed their thoughts and feedback for their support in developing this strategy. We look forward to working with them during the next five years.

Today, the Self Help Africa organisation comprises Self Help Africa, Partner Africa, TruTrade and CUMO Microfinance – organisations that work across low-income countries to end poverty through innovation and enterprise.

All other strategies - whether at country programme level, thematic level or Partner Africa, CUMO and TruTrade level - ultimately fall within the framework of, and are aligned to, this organisational strategy.

Our organisation has been strengthened by a series of mergers and integrations of Ireland- and UK-based not-for-profits, including Gorta, Self Help Africa, Harvest Help, TruTrade, Africa Now, War on Want NI, United Purpose and CUMO Microfinance. The organisation is not intending to engage in further mergers over the next five years and will instead focus on organic growth.

OUR STRUCTURE

We are a group of organisations, working in partnership with others, and committed to delivering a common mission. The members of our group are depicted below.



Includes Self Help Bangladesh and Self Help Brazil



Self Help Africa is the trading name of Gorta

Figure 2: Our structure



Munira Kadir (10) from Dire Lafto, Amhara Region, Ethiopia.

OUR VISION

Sustainable livelihoods
and healthy lives for all
in a changing climate



Akello Shaming, Atiira Youth Farmers' Group,
Atiira Parish, Uganda.

OUR MISSION

We aim to alleviate hunger, poverty, social inequality and the impact of climate change through community-led, market-based and enterprise-focused approaches, so that people have access to nutritious food, clean water, decent employment and incomes, while sustaining natural resources.





OUR VALUES

IMPACT

We are accountable, ambitious and committed to systemic change

INNOVATION

We are agile, creative and enterprising in an ever changing world

COMMUNITY

We are inclusive, honest and have integrity in our relationships

OUR BEHAVIOURS

VALUE	PRINCIPLE	BEHAVIOUR
IMPACT We are accountable, ambitious and committed to systemic change	Accountable We consistently deliver on what we said we'd do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We transparently and regularly communicate about challenges, opportunities and progress, trusting that what we say will be listened to constructively and openly. We respect and adhere to our culture, policies, systems and processes. We ensure high quality monitoring, evaluation learning and making improvements to the difference we make, our impact.
	Ambitious We strive to continually do better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We enable communities, partners colleagues and all we collaborate with to be effective. We co operate with others to find synergies. We influence and challenge to bring about systemic change. We are inspired to do so, by the communities and partners we work with and what we've learnt.
	Commitment We keep focused on what really matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We keep aligned to our shared strategy and we keep this dynamic and relevant in consultation with our stakeholders. We ensure ownership of our strategy through co creating it enthusing people to take responsibility and make the greatest difference possible. We strengthen resilience. We prevent burnout and help ensure balance by prioritising health and well being.
INNOVATION We are agile, creative and enterprising in an ever changing world	Agile We appreciate we have to change to keep being effective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are driven to remain flexible, be proactive and reattune to emerging situations. We ensure whatever needs to be decided centrally is done so responsibly and fairly, whilst giving clear autonomy to country programmes and our subsidiaries to respond with agility to changing circumstances. We maintain composure in difficult situations, finding ways to keep ourselves and others focused and constructively moving forwards.
	Creative We find solutions, not dwelling on problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We enable people to lift their horizons, excel and create ideas together. We encourage different thinking and new ways of doing things. We have a learning culture, where time is taken to reflect, learn and share what will be helpful to others, especially from our setbacks. We enable people to feel trusted and safe to share their thoughts and trial better ways forward. We ensure a no blame culture so people are not fearful of making mistakes.
	Enterprising We know being enterprising is in our DNA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are passionate about enabling pioneering approaches that are generated by the communities and partners that we work with. We are dedicated to facilitating the growth of business enterprises that can accelerate sustainable livelihoods. We have dynamic, participatory, innovative ways of designing and delivering our strategies and programmes.
COMMUNITY We are inclusive, honest and have integrity in our relationships	Inclusion We have inclusive relationships and feel connected to people with whom we work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We connect with team and community members regularly and in meaningful ways. We ensure fair treatment and opportunity for all by promoting diversity, equality and inclusion and eradicating prejudice and discrimination. We address challenges related to representation and participation at all levels. We ensure voices and perspectives from across the organisation and communities we work in are heard. In doing so, we appreciate and respect everyone's input.
	Honesty We know honesty enables trust and transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We give and receive feedback in respectful, open and constructive ways. We provide spaces where people can feedback in safe ways without experiencing defensiveness. We have direct conversations with people rather than talking about them to others in order to build trusting relationships.
	Integrity We maintain safe and ethical working environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We practice integrity in all that we do by choosing to do what is right over what is fast, easy, or comfortable. We are committed to ethical, responsible working practices. We act safely. We always challenge unsafe behaviour. We practice a strengths based approach, recognising and appreciating others on their good work and being willing to ask for help.



Hellen Cheputorwa from Amudat District, Uganda



WASH clinic, Benue state, Nigeria



Fish farming in cages in Lake Kariba, womens' group Siavonga, Zambia

OUR STRATEGY

OUR WORK

Vision: Sustainable livelihoods and healthy lives for all in a changing climate

Mission:
We aim to alleviate hunger, poverty, social inequality and the impact of climate change through community-led, market-based and enterprise-focused approaches, so that people have access to nutritious food, clean water, decent employment and incomes, while sustaining natural resources



Sustainable landscapes, resilient food systems and healthy communities



Sustainable businesses, decent employment and thriving economies

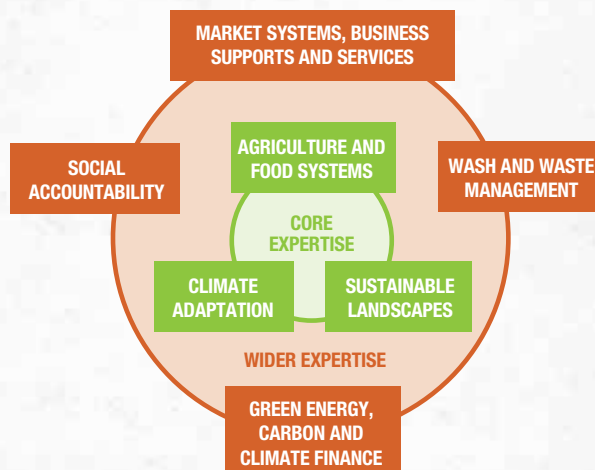


Crisis response and resilience

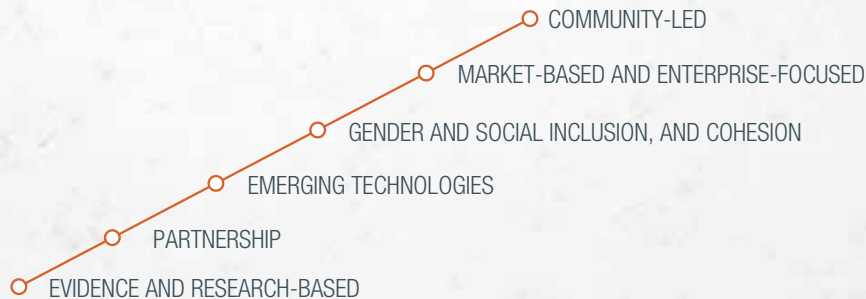


System strengthening and an enabling policy environment

OUR EXPERTISE



OUR APPROACH



OUR ENABLERS



Financing models and funding



Synergies, organisation development and alignment



Culture, people and resourcing



Demonstrating impact

2023-2027 Strategy:

What we will do

We alleviate hunger and poverty through economic and social change to create sustainable livelihoods and healthy lives. This is underpinned by a commitment to localisation, and community-led and market-based approaches. We ensure people have access to safe nutritious food, water, decent employment and incomes, without degrading their natural resources. We do this from fragile

contexts through to emerging economies. We also seek to drive social change through policy and advocacy work that engages institutions and the wider public in our countries of operation and globally.

Our strategy is based on the concept that access to knowledge, markets and investment builds sustainable livelihoods for communities in all contexts, whether crisis-hit, fragile, vulnerable or developing. We believe humanitarian

aid, development programmes and peacebuilding are not linear processes and that they are all necessary at the same time. Our approach to the humanitarian, development, peace nexus therefore focuses on delivering context specific and conflict sensitive support to respond to the spectrum of humanitarian, peace and development needs in communities. This approach is based on three principles: coordination, collaboration and adaptation.

1. Agriculture and food systems

We consider agriculture key to reducing hunger poverty in rural areas and to driving growth that prioritises the poorest. It is fundamental to the sustainable food systems we promote, which are required to address chronic undernutrition and deliver healthy, safe, nutritious and affordable diets in rural and urban areas.

People, especially women, must also have the resources and agency to make positive decisions about their diet and lives. In Africa, 80 per cent of agricultural production comes from smallholder farmers, who are mostly rural women, yet they do not have equal access to land and other resources such as credit, markets, education, extension services and inputs. Women own just one per cent of agricultural land, receive only seven per cent of extension services and access less than 10 per cent of agricultural credit. In Africa, most factors perpetuating poverty and hindering economic development are rooted in gender

inequality. Overcoming these kinds of gender inequalities can have powerful economic and social impacts, so we place particular focus on the role of women farmers.

To ensure food systems are sustainable, those involved in producing and processing food must enjoy decent and safe employment and incomes. Communities must be able to address their own development needs through bottom-up, decentralised community-led planning, with governments held accountable for the delivery of planned commitments.

Self Help Africa uses the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework as the basis for community planning. Planning at all levels takes climate change into account, using current trends and future climate models to assess and mitigate risks in agriculture and enterprise. It also integrates climate risk assessments and responses into community-based planning.

Flora Nyirangaba, Kazinga Trading Centre, Kamwenge District, Uganda



2. Sustainable landscapes

Where we work, land is primarily used for agriculture and its success is dependent on a healthy ecosystem. There is a well-established link between natural resource degradation, poverty and economic loss. For example, the World Bank (2021) estimates that forest cover loss between 1990 and 2015 cost Uganda's economy US\$1.2 billion. Economies highly reliant on natural resources, such as many in sub-Saharan Africa, are effectively trapped in a vicious cycle in which increasing

demand on natural resources contributes to poor and unsustainable management of the same, leading to their further depletion. In the long term, this diminishes ecosystems' abilities to support livelihoods, ultimately contributing to poverty and economic loss. The situation is exacerbated by the effects of climate change and vulnerability to climate extremes.

We will continue to build resilient ecosystems and landscapes for sustainable livelihoods and job creation.



Assiatou Baldeh from Mansjang Kunda, The Gambia. ©Jason Florio

3. Climate adaptation

All of our work is designed and implemented through an environmental, sustainability and climate adaptation lens as we believe this is essential to achieving the global UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Climate Smart Agriculture and agro-ecology approaches are central to all our work supporting sustainable agricultural development. Our agriculture interventions are designed to achieve ecological intensification of production systems while increasing the climate resilience of farmers, farming communities, agro-entrepreneurs, and food systems at large.

This serves to promote the sequestration of carbon in soils and biomass. An increase in climate finance and opportunities for funding and investment from a range of actors will help ensure

landscapes remain a public good and that governments, farmers, pastoralists and communities have legal ownership of the carbon and the right to earn an income from sequestering it.

The rise in atmospheric carbon and the weakening of marine resources is critically endangering marine ecosystems, ecosystem services and, consequently, the so-called 'Blue Economy' (the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, better livelihoods, and jobs while preserving a healthy ocean ecosystem). As part of our work on sustainable landscapes, we will develop our support to estuarine and coastal communities to restore, protect and enhance the ecosystem services provided by the coastal and littoral zones.



Tree planting, Baringo, Kenya

2023-27 Strategy:

Strategic objectives, metrics and actions

Our aim over the next five years is to transition communities from long-term poverty to securing or creating employment that gives them greater control over their futures and brings their communities a better quality of life.



Our core work has four focus areas:

- 1 Contributing to sustainable landscapes, resilient food systems and healthy communities.
- 2 Supporting the growth of inclusive, profitable and sustainable businesses that can provide services and decent employment for communities. We view the private sector as pivotal to communities' long-term sustainability and shaping their transition to self-reliance.
- 3 Continuing to react and respond to both long-term and sudden onset crises in communities where we have a presence, and seeking to improve resilience.
- 4 Strengthening systems and cultivating an enabling policy environment, to maximise the potential success of these focus areas.

The first three of these focus areas represent the various contexts in which people find themselves, while the fourth focuses on creating the environment and systems required to maximise the chances of success.

This work will be supported by four “enabling” strategic objectives in the following areas:

- Financial models and funding;
- Synergies, organisation development and alignment;
- Culture, people and resourcing;
- Demonstrating impact.

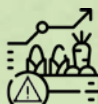
AREAS OF STRATEGIC FOCUS



Sustainable landscapes,
resilient food systems and
healthy communities



Sustainable businesses,
decent employment and
thriving economies



Crisis
response and
resilience



System strengthening
and an enabling policy
environment



Financing models
and funding



Synergies, group
development and alignment



Culture, people
and resourcing



Demonstrating
impact

KEY METRICS

Food security:

80%

of supported households are food
secure with acceptable dietary diversity



Water, sanitation and hygiene:

2M

people are supported to
access safe drinking water
and basic sanitation services



Business support:

>250,000

enterprises reached by financial
institutions and fintech solution
providers we support



Access to markets:

10,000

supported enterprises report
improved access to markets



Supply chain audits:

5,000

businesses audited to improve supply
chain processes by meeting ethical,
business and environmental standards



Decent jobs:

1.7M

in supported
enterprises



Disaster risk management
(DRM):

ALL

communities have
DRM plans in place



Local partnership:

75%

of programmes implemented
through local partners



Annual organisation
income:

**€55-
€60M**



Increase in
in-country funding:

30%




Culture:

"Great place to work"

Impact measurement:

Tools in place in all countries

that measure our impact against the Sustainable
Development Goals (SDGs) by end of 2023



The following are our strategic objectives. Achieving them will help ensure the delivery of Self Help Africa's Mission from 2023-2027. The metrics are designed to be clear and measurable indicators of success in achieving these objectives. The actions outline how these strategic objectives will be met.

Jennifer Adong Jamila, a market vendor from Ayilo Refugee settlement, Adjumani, Uganda

SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPES, RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES



Strategic objective:

Contribute to the equitable stewardship of ecosystems for well-functioning food and water systems, ecosystem services, human well-being and quality of life.



Metrics

- 80% of households supported are food secure throughout the year.
- 80% of households supported achieve an acceptable level of dietary diversity.
- Two million people are supported to access safe drinking water and basic sanitation services.
- 8% inflation-adjusted average increase in household living income for supported households.
- 80% of the 4,000 ha covered by Natural Resource Management plans and activities are in good ecosystem health.
- Disaggregated data by gender.

Actions

- Deliver interventions in the following areas of core expertise: food systems – agriculture and nutrition; wash and waste management; sustainable landscapes; green energy; carbon and climate finance; social accountability; business support and services / fintech / access to finance; disaster risk reduction; public engagement and development education; gender.
- Ensure all interventions are designed with reference to climate trends and predictions.
- Support interventions that build local capacity to provide sustainable, equitable and well-managed access to safe water and sanitation services.
- Support access to markets and social protection systems to ensure that all project participants have a living income.
- Support communities and governments to develop and implement effective natural resource management plans that deliver sustainable ecosystem services.
- Ensure all interventions consider social, cultural and traditional norms and attitudes, and strengthen women's access to, and control over, resources and decisions.
- Create opportunities for youth in agriculture and natural resource-based enterprises.
- Support interventions and policy initiatives that promote the transition to sustainable energy sources and the green / circular economy.
- Develop relationships and partnerships to increase effectiveness.
- Work with / leverage the vibrant information and communications technology (ICT) sector to provide innovative solutions to service delivery and risk management.

SUSTAINABLE BUSINESSES, DECENT EMPLOYMENT AND THRIVING ECONOMIES

Strategic objective:

Support the growth of inclusive, profitable and sustainable businesses that provide services and decent employment for communities.



Metrics

- >250,000 individual clients / sole traders, organisation enterprises, social and commercial enterprises reached by financial institutions and fintech solution providers we support.
- 10,000 enterprises report improved access to markets through the support of the organisation, of which >20% have adopted green technologies we have promoted.
- Audit the supply chains of 5,000 businesses to improve their supply chain processes by meeting ethical business and environmental standards.
- 1.7m decent jobs (safe environment, fair wage, job security) in enterprises we have supported.
- 4,000 female business leaders trained and mentored.
- Disaggregated data by gender.

Actions

- Facilitate access to finance and business development services to help create businesses, particularly those that are female- and youth-led.
- Support small-medium enterprises to gain fair market access and serve local, regional and international markets.
- Build ethical local, regional and international supply chains by supporting local businesses to adopt responsible business practices and develop an overall social compliance framework to support this, in consultation with local businesses.
- Ensure business and human rights international frameworks are at the core of what we do throughout the organisation.
- Advocate equal opportunities in enterprise management and the provision of business skills, leadership training and mentoring to women and youth.
- Provide technical support to assist enterprises in transitioning to sustainable energy sources and the green / circular economy.
- Develop strategic partnerships with banks and financial institutions to promote enterprise development.
- Leverage the vibrant ICT and fintech sectors in all countries in which we work to provide innovative solutions to finance, risk management, supply chain management and market access challenges to the SME sector.

CRISIS RESPONSE AND RESILIENCE

Strategic objective:

Support communities to prepare effectively for and respond to chronic and acute humanitarian shocks.



Metrics

- All communities we work with have completed risk assessments and have disaster risk management (DRM) plans in place.
- Capability to respond to sudden onset crises in eight countries.

Actions

- Map risk of all projects and countries for likelihood of sudden and slow on-set crises.
- Integrate disaster risk reduction (DRR) and Early Warning Systems (EWS) into programmes with flexible programme design to respond rapidly to crises.
- Further build capability to respond to sudden onset crises through mapping and building of capability in WASH and livelihoods, creation of a roster for crisis response, relevant HEAT training for frontline staff, development of effective crisis management group and country humanitarian focal points.
- Position the organisation as one, with significant crisis response capacity, by increasing the profiling of humanitarian responses and engagement with humanitarian donors.
- Establish a crisis response fund to enable rapid response with the aim of leveraging additional donor funding.
- Develop and maintain relationships and partnerships with, and active engagement in, UN cluster meetings and national humanitarian response bodies at national and global levels.

SYSTEM STRENGTHENING AND AN ENABLING POLICY ENVIRONMENT



Strategic objective:

Embed our approach in policy influencing, system strengthening, social accountability and the localisation agenda.

Metrics

- Increase percentage of programmes implemented through local partners from 50% to 75%.
- 300 engagements working towards changes in the legal, policy and institutional frameworks, to which the organisation contributes, through policy influencing and systems strengthening work.
- 100 governance and social accountability initiatives delivered across the organisation for equitable and inclusive development.
- The public improves its understanding of global inequality and root causes of poverty (including climate change impact) and increases its support for the overseas development assistance (ODA) programme (via survey conducted by SHA before and after events).

Actions

- Define the organisation's 'systems strengthening' and social accountability approach, and incorporate it into our work, with government and partners, to benefit communities.
- Build organisation and community skills, which enable the identification of systemic barriers to sustainable, inclusive services, and work to overcome these root-cause issues.
- Build a comprehensive partnership and localisation strategy to strengthen the capacity of local partners and communities to understand and better articulate their rights and concerns, to engage in policy and advocacy, and to hold government and duty bearers to account.
- Develop evidence-based outputs / media that demonstrate climate-resilient food and farming systems to influence policy and best practice in favour of small-holder / women farmers.
- Adopt a lifelong learning process, working with schools, youth, adult and community education sectors in Ireland and UK.

FINANCING MODELS AND FUNDING

Strategic objective:

Maintain and expand funding base for all our income streams including public and institutional donors and contracts, and increase collaboration with the private sector.



Metrics

- 90% of funds expended directly on projects.
- Our social enterprises meet their annual budget approved income generation goals.
- Annual organisation income of €55-€60m.
- No one donor provides more than 25% of organisation income over the five years.
- Financial reserves maintained to cover budgeted, committed, unrestricted expenditure as necessary.

Actions

- Continue implementing donor account management processes for key donors / partners, staying abreast of donor trends and future plans.
- Diversify the organisation's funding base.
- Review and adapt subsidiary business models, as appropriate.
- Ensure value for money approach, including cost recovery, continues to be built into all programmes.
- Consolidate approaches for, and management of, carbon and biodiversity credit trading.
- Review existing policy and report on use of unrestricted income and use of reserves.
- Continue building reserves in keeping with best practice to ensure the organisation can sustain shocks in a changing environment.

SYNERGIES, GROUP DEVELOPMENT AND ALIGNMENT

Strategic objective:

Unify and strengthen the organisation as a solid working platform which maximises opportunities and delivers future growth with a clear return on investment (ROI).



Metrics

- 30% increase in in-country funding, highlighting diversification of donor and income sources within the organisation.
- Three large scale awards from institutional donors that involve joint programming within the organisation by the end of December 2024.
- Improved interaction between entities in the organisation, as evidenced by focus groups and survey.
- Back-office systems are proven to be robust and able to sustain significant shocks as evidenced by a technical and business assessment and bi-annual review.

Actions

- Further develop organisational structure and clarify roles and responsibilities of the different entities.
- Develop formal shared services model for the organisation.
- Review and develop Board and Management Team's resourcing and capability gap analysis.
- Build our capabilities and identity by incorporating learning and best practice into all our activities, and promoting and disseminating distinct expertise and approaches throughout the organisation.
- Complete the full integration of United Purpose, maximising all synergies, into the organisation.
- Provide high quality dataset to the Management Team to facilitate informed decision-making.
- Implement a technical and business process assessment to assess robustness of back office systems and address any gaps, and planned bi-annual reviews.
- Maintain highest levels of governance.
- Continue to develop systems through which we strengthen expertise and reputation in core and wider expertise.

CULTURE, PEOPLE AND RESOURCING

Strategic objective:

Cultivate a culture of accountability, belonging, wellbeing and safety, prioritising the creation of a safe space, where people can speak up and be heard.



Metrics

- Achieve 'Great Place to Work' and 'Investors in Diversity' accreditations.
- Attrition levels to be below 5%; Commitment to training for all staff to average three training days per staff member per year; every country with over 75 staff to have a dedicated HR resource.
- 15% of appointments and promotions made internally.
- All staff trained at least annually in safeguarding.
- Disaggregate data by gender.
- Specific feedback mechanisms and respective action plans in place.
- Practices that help balance work and life responsibilities set up by year end 2023.

Actions

- Define organisation values. Embed and assess alignment of values with behaviours and systems to enable transformation.
- Ensure genuine two-way conversation where employees can input into decision making. Strengthen support to underrepresented or marginalised staff to promote full inclusion. Encourage people to question, challenge and speak up. Keep people safe and protect those who disclose concerns.
- Nurture an environment that actively supports and values difference. Strengthen feedback mechanisms, including whistleblowing procedures.
- Continue to implement and develop staff surveys and other feedback mechanisms to gauge staff satisfaction levels. Seek comments and questions on current practices, and proposals for innovative approaches for programme development and greater efficiency.
- Enhance our prioritisation of safeguarding by promoting a culture of ownership.
- Strengthen organisational horizontal and vertical accountability mechanisms.
- Review, update and implement an equality, diversity and inclusion action plan, including targets.
- Expand existing staff consultation committee to facilitate a global mechanism. Ensure it has a voice and formal access to trustees.
- Continue to create opportunities for staff development and career progression through continuous learning, internal promotion and transfers to encourage staff to develop.
- Increase investment in HR resources.
- Invest in leadership potential.
- Review employment packages across the organisation.
- Cultivate greater observation of work-life balance guidelines – (including but not limited to flexible working, ensuring employees take holidays and protecting employees' mental health).

DEMONSTRATING IMPACT

Strategic objective

User-friendly, data-driven evidence of the effectiveness of our work is shared internally and externally to positively influence our work and others and to attract more support.



Metrics

- Impact measurement tools in place in each country by the end of 2023.
- Produce quarterly impact statements that provide insights, personal testimonies and data that can be shared across social media channels.
- Improve our reputation among major donors by effectively and clearly demonstrating the impact of our work (measured by donor feedback).
- Disaggregated data by gender.

Actions

- Strengthen feedback mechanisms with communities.
- Develop a common approach to measuring impact at country level.
- Guided by a common approach, establish impact measurement tools in each country that put individual, partner and community feedback at the centre of our learning and measure our impact against the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Nurture partnerships with academic institutions for long-term, post-project assessment of the impact of our work.
- Develop and implement an impact communications approach, to include:
 - o Segmentation of target audiences, including donors, and the appropriate message and media to communicate impact.
 - o Regular communication, both internally and externally, via impact statements that provide insights, personal testimonies and data / infographics.
 - o Increase in and tracking of presentations at conferences and the publication of our research and findings.

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

To be effective, the strategy must drive all activity throughout the organisation. What we do day-to-day must link to the strategy and, ultimately, our values, vision and mission.



Sumaiya, aged 16, is an active member of the adolescent club we run as part of the Leadership to Ensure Adequate Nutrition programme in Bangladesh. Information sessions on nutrition and hygiene have inspired her to raise awareness in her local community.

To achieve this, the strategy will be cascaded into operational plans for all entities and functions, and, ultimately, into the goals and performance metrics for all employees. Each country will develop a five year plan, which details how they will implement this strategy at an operational level. Standard templates and processes for operational plans and related reviews will be developed and implemented.

The strategy will remain flexible and annual reviews of the strategy will be led by the CEO. An ability to respond to changing dynamics and circum-

stances is critical, so agility has been factored into the strategy implementation. A review of the external and internal environment will be built into the implementation and review processes and, where necessary, appropriate modifications or recalibration may be made. It will be imperative that any such changes, their rationale and resulting amendments to operational plans and individual goals are implemented and communicated clearly and consistently throughout the organisation.

STRATEGY REVIEW

Strategy implementation is overseen by the Board and its committees. It is supported by a process of regular updates at Board meetings from the CEO and the Management Team on all strategic, financial and operational matters.

We will track and report on our progress in implementing this strategy through:

- Regular updates to the Board on operational plan milestones, targets and key performance indicators by all entities and functions;
- An annual review of strategy by the Board and Management Team;
- The organisation's annual reports and financial statements;
- The updating of stakeholders at meetings, including the Annual General Meeting, and through internal communication channels and regular reports;
- Other impact measurement methodologies, which will be defined as part of this strategy;
- External audits and reviews from donors and other key stakeholders.

Ilboudo Yabré, market gardening in Guasma Village, Bousse, Burkina Faso





Poni Annet Oliver, Farmer, Kiyandongo
Refugee Settlement, Uganda



Self Help Africa is the trading name of Gorta

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