

SNAPSHOTS

from the
FIELD

Khady Sarr among her raised cabbage beds. The Gambia, 2022



**Self Help
AFRICA**

selfhelpafrica.org



A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

I'm delighted to present my first *Snapshots from the Field*, as CEO of Self Help Africa.

Since joining earlier this year, I have been continually inspired and motivated by the amazing farmers, and the Self Help Africa staff who work with them day in, day out.

This work is more important now than ever.

In 2022, over 258 million people in 58 countries around the world experienced acute food insecurity. This is a worrying 34% increase on the previous year*.

The effects of the ongoing climate crisis are having a devastating impact on food security in many of the communities where Self Help Africa is working. Across the continent last year, nearly 57 million people were in crisis - facing malnutrition, loss of livelihood, and tragically for many - starvation and death.

Against this backdrop, Self Help Africa's newly launched five year strategy underscores how critical our work is going to be in the years ahead.

It will be vital to mobilise farming communities and give them the skills, the training and the resources that they need - if the poorest and the most vulnerable in Africa are going to be capable of confronting the challenges that climate change poses for us all.



OUR STRATEGY

Our new strategy is available to read online:

selfhelpafrica.org/uk/strategy2023-2027/



With a new strategy, and expanding into seven new countries - there was an opportunity to refresh our branding - which you'll see throughout our newsletter!



* <https://www.fsinplatform.org/report/global-report-food-crises-2023/>

From Surviving...

SWEET POTATO SUCCESS IN MALAWI

Balaka, in southern Malawi, is one of the country's poorest regions. In the past few years Balaka has been facing extremely dry seasons and floods. As a result, 45% of the population have faced food insecurity.

Now, a Self Help Africa initiative focused on enhancing incomes and food security is helping to not only improve family nutrition, but open up a range of enterprise opportunities for local women.

Farmers were provided with nutrient rich sweet potato vines, and received training in managing and maintaining the crop, as well as how to cultivate new vines to sell on. They also learned about the various ways harvested sweet potatoes can be used - such as making juice and how to use them for baking!



Sweet Potato Bread Rolls
produced by Tiyanjane Bakery.



Brenda Lipenga, Tiyanjane
Bakery Secretary, Malawi, 2023

“Through this bakery, I have paid my school fees for my child, another woman has opened a tearoom and another has a salon.”

Set up as part of the project, the Tiyanjane Bakery supported women bakers to expand and develop their baking skills, using sweet potato seeds and flesh, at a time when raw materials were becoming increasingly expensive and they were finding it harder to make ends meet. This women's bakery group have since increased their profits and are producing nutritious bread from local ingredients which they sell to the community.



BEANS WITH BENEFITS FOR REFUGEES IN UGANDA



Today, almost 1.5 million refugees live in Uganda, which is one of the world's top five hosting countries for refugees and displaced people.

Susan Jua and her family fled conflict in South Sudan in 2006, arriving in Uganda homeless and penniless; with no land and limited ability to earn a living.

After more than a decade of struggling, Susan joined a new Self Help Africa initiative aimed at improving the

food, nutrition and income security of refugees and host communities in Adjumani County in Uganda's far north-west.

Susan received 25kg of iron rich beans to plant, along with some training on crop management. Susan now harvests more than 200kg of beans! After using what is needed for meals at home, she trades the remainder in a small shop she has established.

Just over 1000 people participated in the scheme where beans, orange sweet potato vines, tomato, onion and cabbage seeds were distributed.

In addition, farmers received training in 'demonstration farms' in the locality. The group worked together, learned together and shared skills - which are then passed on to the wider community.

Savings and Loans groups were established by farmers who can now save their earnings and re-invest back into their family farms.



To watch an interview with Susan – scan the QR code with your phone



MAGICAL MILLET!

For widowed Incha Mbaye, a small scale farmer in The Gambia, growing enough nutritious food to feed her six-strong household was an ongoing challenge.

Increasingly unpredictable weather caused by climate change was badly affecting harvests for the basic crops Incha grew on her small plot. The health of her family was suffering because their diet lacked iron and basic nutrients.

Along with other local women, she joined a Self Help Africa farmer group focused on 'climate-smart' farming in her village. The farmers were provided with drought resilient pearl millet seeds, which are more nutritious than the traditional millet variety they had previously grown.

Incha has since harvested hundreds of kilos of pearl millet - enough to feed her family, and produce more seeds for the next farming season.

Consuming wholegrain millet has made the family healthier and stronger. Their finances have also



Incha Mbaye with some of her millet crop. The Gambia, 2022.
Photo by Jason Florio

improved as Incha no longer has to buy extra millet to make up the shortfall, instead becoming a seed multiplier and providing other farmers with seeds in her region.

"Despite the poor weather conditions, the pearl millet will always survive," she said. "I feel happy I am now able to support my neighbours to improve their lives with the quality seeds that I share with them."

Did You Know?

The United Nations has declared 2023 the International Year of Millets to raise awareness of the crop's climate-resilience and nutritional benefits.

Millets are a group of small grains - technically seeds - that are often grown on lands with poor soil or limited irrigation. Millets can be used both in their original grain form or as flour.



Plant a MEMORIAL TREE



Planting trees in memory of a loved one is a way to honour their legacy in a unique and poignant way.

Trees can be a physical and tangible representation of a person's time on Earth and allow them to continue to have a positive impact on the planet even after they have left it.

Self Help Africa is planting Memorial Trees in Africa as a way for our friends and supporters to honour their deceased friends and relatives, which will also leave a lasting legacy in their memory.

Trees not only provide food, shade and shelter in rural poor communities, but also help to rehabilitate and regenerate degraded landscapes for generations to come.

The initiative is part of our annual 'One Million Trees' Campaign. For every 10 trees that we plant in Africa we will also arrange through our local partners to **plant one new native tree here at home in the UK and Ireland.**



Memorial Tree gifts in honour of your loved ones start from **£50**, for which 50 tree seedlings will be planted in Africa, and a further 5 native trees will be planted here in the UK & Ireland by our local partners, Trees on the Land.

To find out more about these unique and special gifts contact Monica on monica.morison@selfhelpafrica.org

Visit www.selfhelpafrica.org/uk/legacytrees

WALK THE CAMINO

In May, a group of supporters from the UK & Ireland joined us for a walking challenge, taking on the last 100km of the Portuguese Camino, over five days. Steph, one of our fundraisers, shares her experience:

We walked the last 100km of the Portuguese Way, starting in a town called Tui and finishing in Santiago de Compostela, as all the Camino routes do. This region of Spain is called Galicia and it has prolonged rainy periods, but every day the sun was shining, not a poncho in sight!

We walked through beautiful forests and countryside and occasionally you'd come across a stand in the middle of nowhere, selling cold drinks, fruit or trinkets.

Everyone we travelled with and met along the way, were so genuine, supportive and kind. There is a like mindedness and camaraderie, as you're all on the same path, working towards the same destination.

It was great to switch off, meet new people and spend time outdoors. It genuinely felt like being in a Camino bubble for the week, where all you were thinking about was getting from A to B, enjoying



the scenery along the way. You felt a real accomplishment at the end of each day.

Santiago de Compostela, where the Camino finishes, is a beautiful city and it's tradition to finish the walk, by attending the pilgrim's mass in the Cathedral.

Having completed 100km, and getting your Camino 'passport' stamped in each town along the way, you receive an official Compostela certificate, as recognition of your achievement.

We're proud to have collectively raised over £12,000 for Self Help Africa - and grateful to all who sponsored us and sent words of support and encouragement along the way.

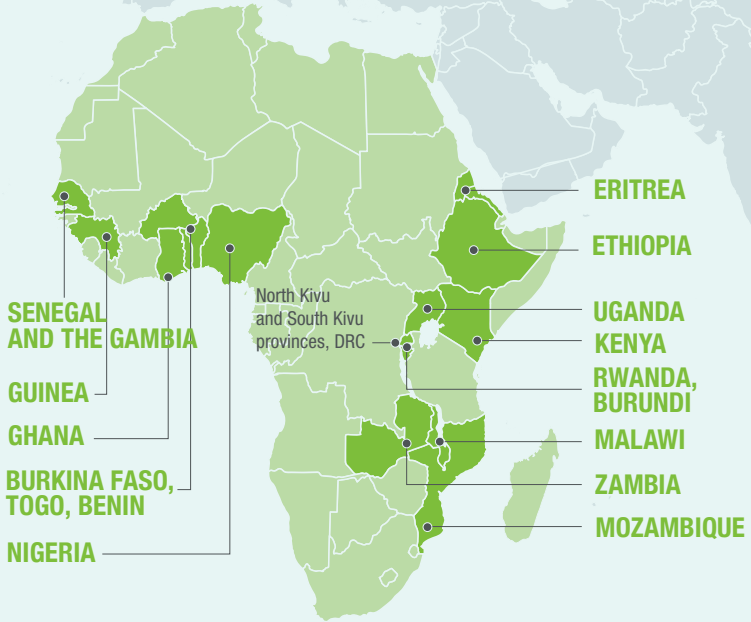
If you're interested in walking the French Way with us in May 2024, we'd love to hear from you - e-mail steph.smith@selfhelpafrica.org to find out more.

Walking, running and cycling - we're taking on all kinds of challenges in 2024!

Visit selfhelpafrica.org/uk/events to find out more.



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**Self Help
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Zainabu, a beneficiary of the shea butter project, Ghana



◀ Scan with your smart phone to
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Thank you