



Strategic Plan

2026 - 2030



DETAILED VERSION

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PELUM KENYA

Strategic Plan

2026 - 2030

DETAILED VERSION

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FOREWORD

It is with humility and collective resolve that I present the PELUM Kenya Strategic Plan 2026–2030. This plan reflects our renewed commitment to advancing agroecology as a transformative pathway towards ecological justice, sustainable livelihoods, and resilient, dignified lives for smallholder farmers, pastoralists, and fisherfolk across Kenya and beyond.

Grounded in deep consultation, learning, and grassroots experience, the strategy sets out five bold, interconnected thematic areas to advance its mission and vision: Advocacy and Policy influences Climate Action, Women and Youth in Agroecology, Market Development and Institutional Capacity. Strengthening these thematic areas will be implemented through the network's strategic intervention approaches: Policy Influence and Advocacy for Agroecology, Capacity Development, Networking, Research, and Knowledge Management.

As a Board, we reaffirm our dedication to nurturing a strong, values-driven, and member-rooted network. We remain committed to accountable and inclusive governance that amplifies the voices of farmers, communities, and local organizations, those at the forefront of ecological transformation.

We are particularly encouraged by the focus on long-term sustainability, including strategies for diversified resource mobilization and strategic partnerships. These will strengthen our ability to grow, adapt, and continue walking in solidarity with communities towards food sovereignty and climate justice.

On behalf of the Board, I express heartfelt appreciation to all those who shaped this plan, including member organizations, staff, development partners, and allies. Let this strategy serve as both a compass and a call to action as we continue to build a just, regenerative, and agroecological future for Kenya.



Janet Mumo
Chairperson,
PELUM Kenya Board of Directors

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am delighted to present the new PELUM Kenya Strategic Plan 2026–2030. This strategy marks a significant moment in our shared journey to advance agroecology, ecological land use, and community-led transformation in Kenya and beyond.

The process of developing this plan was participatory and inclusive, shaped by the contributions of our member organizations, grassroots actors, development partners, county and national governments, and allies in the agroecology movement. Their collective wisdom, experiences, and commitment have informed a strategy that is both responsive and forward-looking.

The Strategic Plan is informed by lessons gained from the previous strategic implementation period and is cognizant of the current trends in the agroecology ecosystem, which collectively have informed the Theory of Change that will guide the implementation of the 2026–2030 strategy. Thus, If PELUM Kenya builds a resilient, well-governed network; shapes an inclusive, enabling policy environment for agroecology and smallholder farmers, pastoralists and fisherfolk rights; ensures equitable participation, leadership, and access to resources for women, youth; builds community climate resilience through regenerative and ecosystem-based approaches; and facilitates structured, fair, and diverse markets for agroecological products, then smallholder farmers, pastoralists, and fisherfolks will be empowered, prosperous, healthy, and resilient because these strategic conditions will have driven broad adoption of agroecological practices, unlock fair income and food sovereignty, and consolidate strong, resilient local food systems supported by enabling institutions and markets.

This Theory of Change positions the network to respond to the challenges of climate change, inequality, and unsustainable agricultural practices, while building on the innovations and strengths of our members and communities. On behalf of PELUM management, I wish to thank the Board of Directors for their strategic leadership, the Secretariat for their dedication, and all our members, staff, and partners for their unwavering support as we implement this new plan. We sincerely appreciate AGILE Consulting for their technical expertise and professional facilitation of the strategic planning process, which helped shape this practical and forward-looking roadmap for the network.

As we embark on this next phase, we invite all stakeholders to walk with us to deepen solidarity, co-create solutions, and collectively advance agroecology for the well-being of people and the planet.



Ms. Rosinah Mbenya
Country Coordinator, PELUM Kenya

Table of Contents

FOREWORD	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST TABLES	v
LIST OF FIGURES	v
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	ix
 CHAPTER ONE: INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT AND STRATEGIC PLANNING	
FRAMEWORK	1
1.1. Introduction	1
1.2. History of PELUM Kenya	1
1.3. Strategic Plan Development Process	2
 CHAPTER TWO: SITUATION ANALYSIS	4
2.1. Introduction	4
2.2. Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025: Implementation Performance Review	4
2.2.1. Institutional Strengthening, Networking, and Capacity Development	4
2.2.2. Policy Influence and Advocacy on Agroecology	6
2.2.3. Climate Change Resilience and Natural Resource Management	7
2.2.4. Agro–Enterprise and Markets Development	8
2.2.5. Women and Youth in Agroecology	9
2.2.6. Monitoring and Evaluation	10
2.2.7. Resource Mobilization	11
2.3. Lessons Learnt During the Previous Strategic Plan Implementation	11
2.4. SWOT and PESTLE Analysis	14
2.4.1. SWOT Analysis	14
2.4.2. PESTLE Analysis	16
2.5. Stakeholder Analysis	19
2.6. Key Trends and Drivers	23
2.6.1. Momentum Towards Advancing Agroecology Policies	23
2.6.2. Climate Change and Soil Health	23
2.6.3. Organic Market Access and Inclusive Certification Systems	24
2.6.4. Digitalization of Extension and Knowledge Sharing	24
2.6.5. Consumer Awareness and Demand for Healthy Foods	24
2.6.6. Shifting Funding Priorities Toward Sustainability and Local Ownership	24
2.6.7. Shift Toward Agri-food Systems Approach	25
2.7. Foundational Elements	25
2.7.1. Vision	25
2.7.2. Mission	25
2.7.3. Core Values	25
2.7.4. Operating Principles	25
2.7.5. Value Proposition	26
2.8. Geographical Coverage of the Network and Membership	26
2.8.1. Nairobi and Central Zone (NCZ)	26
2.8.2. Upper Eastern & Northern Kenya Zone (UENKZ)	27
2.8.3. Lower Eastern and Coastal Zone (LE CZ)	27
2.8.4. Rift and Western Kenya Zone (RWKZ)	27

CHAPTER THREE: DELIVERY OF 2026-2030 STRATEGIC PLAN	29
3.1. Introduction	29
3.2. Illustrative Pathways of Change	29
3.3. Our Approach	32
3.4. Strategic Focus Areas	33
3.4.1. Advocacy and Policy Influence	33
3.4.2. Women and Youth in Agroecology	39
3.4.3. Climate Action	42
3.4.4. Market Development	44
3.4.5. Institutional Capacity Strengthening	48
3.5. Aligning with National, Regional and Global Frameworks	50
CHAPTER FOUR: GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT AND CORDINATION	52
4.1. Introduction	52
4.2. Governance and Organization Structure	52
4.3. Strategy Implementation and Responsibilities	53
4.4. Risk Analysis and Mitigation Measures	54
CHAPTER FIVE: BUDGET AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION	57
5.1. Resource Requirements	57
5.2. Resource Mobilization Strategies	60
CHAPTER SIX: MONITORING EVALUATION REPORTING AND LEARNING (MERL)	61
6.1. Introduction	61
6.2. Levels of Monitoring	61
6.2.1. Outcome level Monitoring	61
6.2.2. Output level Monitoring	62
6.2.3. Process Level Monitoring	62
6.3. M&E Strategy	63
6.4. MERL Framework	64
6.5. Monitoring and Implementation Framework	65
ANNEX	66
Annex 1: PELUM Kenya Governance/Organogram	66
LIST TABLES	
Table 1: SWOT Analysis	14
Table 2: PESTELE Analysis	16
Table 3: Stakeholder Analysis	19
Table 4: Roles and Responsibilities per implementing actor	53
Table 5: Risk Analysis	55
LIST OF FIGURES	
Figure 1: Illustrative Results Chain / Pathways of Change	29
Figure 2: The Illustrative Theory of Change	31

ACRONYMS

AI	Artificial Intelligence
ASALs	Arid and Semi-Arid Lands
ASTGS	Agricultural Sector Transformation and Growth Strategy
B2B	Business to business
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CIDP	County Integrated Development Plan
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DKP	Digital Knowledge Platform
EAC	East African Community
EOA-I	Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
FLLoCA	Financing Locally Led Climate Action.
GALS	Gender Action Learning System
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism
GYSI	Gender, Youth, and Social Inclusion
HR	Human Resource
ICT	Information and communications technology
IFOAM	International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements
IPM	Integrated pest management
IPTT	Indicator Performance Tracking Table
KALRO	Kenya Agricultural & Livestock Research Organization
KAOP	Kenya Agricultural Observatory Platform
KOAN	Kenya Organic Agriculture Network
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MER	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting
MERL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, and Learning
MIS	Management Information System
MOs	Member Organizations
MoVs	Means of Verification
MSC	Most Significant Change
NCCAP	National Climate Change Action Plan
NAS-FST	National Agroecology for Food System Transformation Strategy
NRM	Natural Resources Management
OCA	Organizational Capacity Assessment
OECD-DAC	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development Assistance Committee
PELUM	Participatory Ecological Land Use Management
PESTEL	Political, Economic, Sociological, Technological, Legal and Environmental
PGS	Participatory Guarantee Systems
PM&E	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation
PMERL	Participatory Monitoring, Evaluation, Reflection and Learning
PWDs	Persons With Disabilities
SAA	Social Analysis and Action
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change



PELUM Kenya Members and partners capacity building workshop on cross-border trade in Nakuru, 2025



PELUM Kenya Members and partners capacity building workshop on cross-border trade in Nakuru, 2025

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

1. Agroecology:

A form of agricultural system that maintains ecological processes and increases biological diversity by applying ecological, social, and art practices and principles for the production of safe food.

2. Ecological Land Use Management (ELUM):

Is the use of land resources to meet the needs of the current generations while maintaining the potential/productivity/capacity of the same resources to be used by future generations and to maintain the ecological balance/ecosystems.

3. Ecological Organic Agriculture:

A farming system that applies ecological principles and is economically viable, embraces social fairness and environmental safety with the production of food while maintaining the biophysical resources, including soil, water, and biota, with no adverse impacts on the wider environment.

4. Resilience:

Ability of the PELUM Kenya network, smallholder farmers, and pastoralists to withstand, absorb, and recover from negative eventuality that may bring shock and stress in the system and continue to grow despite them.



Seeds diversity by MOs

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The PELUM Kenya 2026-2030 Strategic Plan outlines a bold and transformative agenda to advance agroecology, sustainable food systems, and inclusive development across Kenya. Developed through a consultative and participatory process involving Member Organizations (MOs), rightsholders, partners, and stakeholders, this strategy builds on the progress and lessons learned from the 2021-2025 strategic period. It responds to an evolving operating environment shaped by climate change, economic inequality, shrinking civic space, and shifting national and global development priorities.

This Strategic Plan is anchored on five strategic themes: Advocacy and Policy Influence, Women and Youth in Agroecology, Climate Action, Market Development and Institutional Capacity Strengthening. These themes are grounded in a clearly articulated Theory of Change that envisions empowered, prosperous, healthy and resilient communities adopting agroecology as a pathway to food sovereignty, ecological sustainability, and social equity.

The implementation of this strategy will be guided by a robust Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, and Learning (MERL) framework that integrates participatory and results-based management principles. The framework, supported by a detailed Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) matrix, ensures systematic tracking of progress, generation of evidence, and learning to inform adaptive management and strategic decision making. Governance and coordination will be upheld through a strong Secretariat, zonal structures, and active engagement of MOs, under the oversight of the Board of Directors and the General Assembly.

Aligned with Kenya's Vision 2030, the African Union's Agenda 2063, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and continental agroecology frameworks, this Strategic Plan positions PELUM Kenya as a key actor and convener in shaping agroecological transitions and advancing community-led development.



2024 Green Action Week (GAW) by PELUM Kenya



2024 Green Action Week (GAW) by PELUM Kenya

CHAPTER ONE: INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT AND STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK

1.1. Introduction

Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM) Kenya is a national network of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working with smallholder farmers and pastoralist communities to promote agroecological principles and practices. It is the Kenyan chapter of the broader PELUM Association, which was established in 1995 and now comprises over 280 member organizations across 14 African countries, including Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Botswana, South Africa, Malawi, Swaziland, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Rwanda. PELUM Kenya has grown steadily to include 68 active Member Organizations (MOs) distributed across four operational zones: Nairobi and Central, Rift and Western, Lower Eastern and Coast, and Upper Eastern and Northern Kenya. The strength of the network lies in its grassroots reach and ability to foster collaboration, learning, and shared action among organizations working to advance ecological land use and sustainable livelihoods.

1.2. History of PELUM Kenya

PELUM-Kenya started with other Country Chapters in 1995, and where all new Country Secretariats were to be hosted by the member organizations. In Kenya, the onus to do this went to the Sustainable Agriculture Community Development Programme (SACDEP)-Thika, who provided adequate support through assisting in fundraising. It also received funds, for the first time, from Africa 2000 Network. In 1996, the members of PELUM-Kenya appointed six-member pioneer board members and initiated two pioneer programmes that are the Capacity Enhancement Programme (CEP) and the Management and Development Programme.

In 2002, the country secretariat disengaged from SACDEP-Kenya, which had designed and developed a regional programme that provided a foundation for its take-off. The membership by this time had grown to sixteen member organizations, including SACDEP-Kenya, C-MAD, RODI-Kenya, INADES, Intermediate Technology Group (ITDG), and now Practical Action, and Baraka Agricultural College (BAC), among others.

In 2003, its first-ever Strategic Plan (2003 – 2007) was drawn. Besides, PELUM-Kenya started acquiring assets during the same period. Three vehicles were acquired between 2003 and 2012. In 2004, two key programme areas, i.e., Campaign Advocacy and Lobbying (CAL) and Research and Information Management (RIM), were added. These were followed by the development of an institutional website one year later. In 2007, the organization was finally registered as a company limited by guarantee in Kenya.

There was a 2-year lapse used to design and develop the second Strategic Plan (2010-2014). During this period, firm structures of PELUM-Kenya emerged and included the Board, the Annual General Meeting (AGM), the Country Working Group (CWG), and the Management Team. The board meets at least twice per year, the AGM once a year, and the CWG once per year. The management meeting is more frequent, and it comprises senior staff at the Country Secretariat. In 2011, the institution acquired a one-acre demonstration plot in the outskirts of Thika Municipality. The membership has also increased from sixteen (16) to sixty-nine (68) MOs. In 2012, PELUM Kenya introduced Result-Based Management (RBM) as well as initiated the review of the second Strategic Plan.

All the way through this period, 2016-2020, PELUM Kenya's work focused so much on Climate Change Adaptation, Agribusiness, Sustainable Natural Resource Management, Resource Mobilization, Internal Capacity Building, Networking & Collaboration, and Monitoring and Evaluation. In the years 2021-2025, during its fourth strategic plan developed during a time when the network was celebrating 25 years since inception, PELUM Kenya's work focused on policy influence and advocacy on agroecological practices, capacity enhancement and networking, Agro-enterprise and market development, climate change resilience and natural resources management, and women and youth inclusion in agroecology. Women and youth inclusion was introduced to the strategic plan for the first time in 2021

In 2019, the organization transitioned from being hosted by SACDEP to occupying its own independent offices, a milestone that strengthened its operational autonomy and identity. In 2021, PELUM Kenya underwent an important leadership transition as the founding leadership phase came to a close and a new executive leadership took office. In 2023, the Network marked another historic moment with the election of its first-ever woman Chairperson, underscoring its commitment to inclusive and progressive governance.

1.3. Strategic Plan Development Process

The development of PELUM Kenya 2026 – 2030 Strategic Plan was anchored on a participatory, inclusive, and evidence-informed approach that ensured strong stakeholder ownership and contextual relevance. An in-depth desk review was conducted, examining institutional documents, including the outgoing 2021–2025 Strategic Plan, evaluation reports, and relevant policy frameworks at the national, regional, and global levels. A detailed review of the 2021–2025 Strategic Plan was undertaken to draw lessons, identify high- and under-performing areas, and understand contributing factors behind the outcomes achieved. This analysis highlighted both the successes and implementation gaps of the outgoing strategy, providing practical recommendations to inform the direction of the new plan. Complementing this was a comprehensive situational analysis using Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities,

Threats (SWOT) and Political, Economic, Sociological, Technological, Legal and Environmental (PESTEL) frameworks to assess internal capabilities and external dynamics influencing the agroecology and sustainable development landscape.

A central component of the process was broad stakeholder engagement, which enabled the collection of diverse and representative insights. Data was gathered from Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIs), with farmers and pastoralists, staff members, board members, Member Organizations (MOs), funding partners, and strategic partners.

The insights gathered from these engagements were synthesized and discussed in a two-day strategic planning workshop involving staff, board members, and MOs. The participatory session was instrumental in rethinking the vision and mission, refining the Theory of Change, and prioritizing strategic focus areas using the Pareto Principle to ensure high-impact outcomes. To ensure effective implementation and long-term sustainability, the strategy development process, staff were involved in the consultative design of a comprehensive Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting (MER) framework, a detailed cost implementation plan, and a sustainability and risk management framework. These components were developed to support accountability, guide resource allocation, and anticipate potential risks throughout the strategy period.

Validation marked the final stage of the strategic planning process, bringing together key stakeholders to review and provide feedback on the draft Strategic Plan. Their inputs were carefully synthesized and incorporated, ensuring that the final document was both reflective of stakeholder priorities and aligned with PELUM Kenya's institutional vision.

CHAPTER TWO: SITUATION ANALYSIS

2.1. Introduction

As part of the strategic planning process for 2026-2030, a comprehensive performance review was undertaken to assess progress against strategic objectives, interrogate outcome-level changes, and generate learning to inform future programming. The review utilized a mixed-methods approach combining results tracking, document analysis, and feedback from Member Organizations, rightsholders, staff, Board, and development partners. It examined both quantitative performance metrics and qualitative shifts in capacity, influence, and resilience across the network. The assessment focused on performance under six strategic themes and cross-cutting enablers, highlighting progress, gaps, enabling factors, and systemic constraints. The insights distilled from this review have provided a robust evidence base for adaptive strategy design and recalibration of institutional priorities for the 2026–2030 period. A summary of performance under each thematic area is presented below, with a detailed analysis.

2.2. Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025: Implementation Performance Review

PELUM Kenya's 2021–2025 Strategic Plan focused on five core objectives: 1) Institutional strengthening, 2) Advocacy and Policy advocacy, 3) Climate change resilience and Natural Resources Management (NRM), 4) Agroenterprise and markets development, and 5) Women and youth inclusion. The focus areas were supported by cross-cutting efforts in monitoring and evaluation (M&E). The review of the 2021–2025 Strategic Plan assessed performance against set targets to highlight high achievements and underperforming indicators, as highlighted below by theme.

2.2.1. Institutional Strengthening, Networking, and Capacity Development

This focus area aimed to enhance the internal systems, governance structures, and collective capabilities of PELUM Kenya and its member organizations to deliver coordinated, effective, and sustainable agroecological programs.

During the previous strategic period, PELUM Kenya made significant strides in institutional strengthening, surpassing most of its targets. Capacity-building initiatives grew by 289%, and successful project implementation rose from 32% to 80%. The organization's asset base expanded by 122%, while financial resources increased by 70%. Networking and collaboration also improved, with joint initiatives increasing by 200%, networking forums by 80%, and high-level partnerships by 70%. Knowledge management saw the development of eight data tools, exceeding the target, and increased database usage. These gains were driven by efficient staff, expanded zonal programming, increased funding, joint planning with MOs, and adoption of a multiplier approach.



Youth Training on Agroecology Value Chain Skills & Social Media Marketing.



Training on Composting in correctional facilities by a PELUM Kenya member.

However, gaps remain in human resource development, which declined by 8%, and audit-related performance was not fully assessed. Going forward, a renewed focus on human resource development is essential to match the organization's growth. Financial oversight mechanisms should be reinforced through improved tracking systems and regular audits. Further investment in zonal-level data tools and a centralized Management Information System (MIS) will enhance knowledge management and evidence-based decision-making. Positioning institutional development as a strategic theme anchored in robust systems, coordinated learning, and resource mobilization will enable PELUM Kenya and its members to scale impact and deepen sustainability across the network.

2.2.2. Advocacy and Policy Influence

This strategic objective focused on positioning PELUM Kenya as a leading voice in agroecology-related policy and governance, through evidence-based advocacy, coalition building, and grassroots mobilization. PELUM Kenya achieved great strides in establishing itself as a leading voice in agroecology policy and governance, exceeding many targets. Seventeen (17) national and county policies incorporated agroecology, climate, gender, or youth agendas – far exceeding the target of five (5) – and member organizations were involved in twelve (12) policy and legislative processes.



PELUM Kenya Country Coordinator making opening remarks during the 2nd National Agroecology Symposium, 2025

The organization was also involved in six (6) climate reforms and took part in more than fifteen (15) high-level climate governance spaces. They were underpinned by enabling factors, including the launch of the National Agroecology Strategy for Food System Transformation (2024 – 2033), recognition of agroecology in continental frameworks such as Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative (EOA-I) countries and enhanced engagement with government stakeholders.

However, the strategy lacked budget tracking and fell short on women and youth inclusion in land governance; it set a strong foundation for multi-level, evidence-based advocacy.

The next strategy should prioritize the development of disaggregated, realistic indicators differentiating between county, national, and regional levels, and between policy formulation and integration. Budget tracking should be embedded into advocacy frameworks to ensure that policy gains are matched by adequate public financing. Targets for land governance should be backed by specific projects that enable women and youth to meaningfully access and control land. To strengthen impact, PELUM Kenya should integrate research and evidence generation into its policy work, supporting data-driven advocacy through partnerships, case studies, and targeted analysis. Furthermore, policy advocacy should be supported by a clear resource mobilization strategy, focused on sustaining civic engagement, coalition building, and implementation monitoring. Positioning policy influence as a sustained, multi-level effort rooted in MOs-driven engagement and strengthened by robust tracking systems will enable PELUM Kenya to deepen its contribution to agroecological transformation and inclusive governance across Kenya and the region.

2.2.3. Climate Change Resilience and Natural Resource Management (NRM)

This strategic objective focused on strengthening the ability of smallholder farmers and pastoralists to withstand and recover from the impacts of climate change and natural disasters through sustainable natural resource management, resilience-building, and the adoption of localized climate adaptation measures.

PELUM Kenya recorded strong grassroots outcomes in climate resilience, rehabilitating 25 degraded sites against 20 targets and supporting over 3,000 smallholder farmers and pastoralists to recover from climate shocks – this surpassed the target of the period (240). These successes were driven by the expansion of climate-focused programming within the network, supported by co-funding and sub-granting arrangements that allowed Mos to implement context-specific restoration and adaptation activities. The active involvement of communities and a strong presence at the grassroots level also contributed to success in ecosystem rehabilitation and shock recovery. However, adoption of sustainable NRM practices and climate adaptation measures fell short, partly due to unclear indicators and lack of baseline data, highlighting the need for more measurable and context-specific approaches in future programming.

2.2.4. Agroenterprise and Markets Development

This strategic objective focused on positioning PELUM Kenya as a leading voice in agroecology-related policy and governance, through evidence-based advocacy, coalition building, and grassroots mobilization. The goal was to influence the integration of agroecology, climate change, gender, and youth priorities into national, county, and regional policy frameworks.

PELUM Kenya achieved significant outcomes, including a 58% increase in household incomes (target 30%), a 90% reduction in agrochemical use (target 70%), and substantial gains in value addition and market access, with 63 farmer groups engaging in processing and 79 accessing structured markets. The market share for agroecological products grew by 75%, driven by targeted capacity building, awareness campaigns, training, and linkages to buyers. However, gaps in product data, branding differentiation, and a lack of a unified Agroenterprise strategy limited the ability to influence market systems at scale. Going forward, it should include conducting regular market intelligence (including consumer surveys and value chain analyses) as well as structured consumer engagement through campaigns and media.



A farmer showcasing avocado grown using agroecological bioinputs(1)

2.2.5. Women and Youth in Agroecology

This strategic focus area aimed to enhance the meaningful participation, leadership, and economic empowerment of youth and women within the PELUM Kenya network and among smallholder farmers, ensuring that agro-ecological transformation is inclusive and equitable.

PELUM Kenya made strong progress in youth engagement, with active participation in agroecology rising from 5% to 71% (target: 50%), and seven agroecological innovations were developed or replicated by youth and women (target: 10). This was supported by zonal-level exposure, training, and participatory methods that encouraged locally driven solutions. However, leadership and economic empowerment outcomes fell short—only 30% growth in leadership (target: 40%), five groups reported income gains (target: 100%), and five accessed financing (target: 200%). These gaps were linked to cultural norms, low institutional capacity on inclusion, and a lack of systems to track innovation.

The next strategy should prioritize the development of gender- and youth-specific programs. Capacity building for MOs and staff on gender equity, youth inclusion, and shifting social norms will be essential. Proven tools such as the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) and Social Analysis and Action (SAA) should be mainstreamed across projects. In addition, PELUM Kenya should support the identification of value chain nodes that align with youth and women's interests, such as aggregation, service provision, and agroecological enterprises, and provide targeted support, including technical assistance, financing, and mentorship. Persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups should also be integrated through inclusive programming at both strategic and zonal levels. Strategic interventions aimed at improving financial access and facilitating meaningful participation in land and resource governance can help bridge the current gaps between participation, leadership, and economic empowerment.



Youth engagement in Sustainable
Agriculture & Agromarkets

Positioning gender and youth inclusion as a core, cross-cutting agenda anchored in MO-driven implementation and supported by robust tracking, training, and cultural change strategies will be critical for ensuring that PELUM Kenya's agroecological transformation is inclusive.

2.2.6. Monitoring and Evaluation

This strategic objective focused on strengthening PELUM Kenya's internal monitoring and evaluation systems to enhance results-based planning, implementation, and reporting across departments and projects.

The target for tools development was exceeded, with 6 M&E tools created and in active use, against a target of 5. Additionally, 80% of staff were reported to be knowledgeable about their roles in M&E, showing a significant improvement from a baseline of 21%, an indication of progress toward mainstreaming M&E across departments. Results-based implementation and reporting were applied in 80% of projects, indicating a shift from activity tracking to outcome and impact-oriented monitoring.

These achievements were driven by the existence of an overarching PM&E policy, sustained capacity building, cross-learning among MOs, inter-departmental collaboration, dedicated resources, a supportive board and management team, and the positive engagement of both staff and MOs. Making M&E a shared responsibility across all departments strengthened staff engagement and significantly improved the quality and consistency of reporting. Building on these gains, there is a need to further strengthen and institutionalize M&E systems to support effective planning, implementation, and accountability. A key step in this direction is to reposition M&E as a core management function integral to planning, decision-making, and learning rather than viewing it as a technical or support service.

This shift will help embed M&E more firmly into strategic and operational processes. Quarterly updates of the Indicators Performance Tracking Table (IPTT) should be implemented for internal performance tracking, alongside annual strategic plan reporting to the board. Enhancing data quality and analytical capacity will also require the recruitment of additional M&E personnel, such as a data analyst or MEL assistant. The development of a centralized Management Information System (MIS) and a Digital Knowledge Platform (DKP) should be prioritized to enable real-time data access, knowledge sharing, and continuous learning. Moreover, the creation of standardized data collection and reporting tools for MOs, a comprehensive M&E framework, and an indicator definition checklist will help ensure consistency, reliability, and clarity in reporting across the network. Further, it will be essential to sustain continuous capacity building for both staff and MOs to fully embed results-based management practices throughout all departments and program areas.

2.2.7. Resource Mobilization

PELUM Kenya recorded significant gains in resource mobilization during the 2021-2025 strategic period, with annual income growing by an average of 70% between 2021 and 2023, peaking at Kes 240 million in 2023. This growth enabled the successful rollout of impactful programs in agroecology, policy advocacy, women and youth, Agroenterprise and markets development, capacity enhancement, and climate change resilience, supported by a diverse portfolio of development partners including Bread for the World, Biovision Foundation, SSNC, GIZ among others. However, the decline in income to Kes 199 million in 2024 signalled emerging funding volatility and the need for greater financial resilience. Despite strong donor confidence and programmatic alignment with global priorities, key gaps persisted, including the absence of a structured resource mobilization strategy, limited engagement with the private sector, and low fundraising capacity among member organizations.

To address these gaps, the next strategic plan should prioritize the development and implementation of a long-term resource mobilization strategy, strengthen MOs' capacity to attract and manage funding, and explore alternative financing mechanisms such as climate and impact finance, social enterprise models, and strategic private sector partnerships. This will be essential in sustaining growth, enhancing autonomy, and ensuring the financial sustainability of the network.

2.3 Lessons Learnt During the Previous Strategic Plan Implementation

The review of PELUM Kenya's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan, combined with extensive stakeholder feedback, provided valuable insights into areas of success, persistent challenges, and opportunities for improvement. These lessons form a critical foundation for refining and strengthening the organization's strategic approach, ensuring greater impact, long-term sustainability, and alignment with emerging trends in agroecology and ecological land use.

1. Institutional strengthening and capacity development:

Notable progress was achieved in institutional development, with an 80% success rate in project implementation, a 289% increase in capacity-building initiatives, and significant growth in both financial and physical assets. However, human resource capacity declined by 8%, and a reduction in audit management findings was not monitored. This is an indication of the need to prioritize staff development, strengthen internal systems, particularly HR and financial accountability, and ensure that institutional growth is matched by operational effectiveness.

2. Advocacy and Policy influence:

The organization exceeded its advocacy targets, contributing to 17 policies and participating in over 15 high-level forums. However, the failure to track budgetary allocations for agroecology and the low participation of women and youth in land governance (only 45 out of 500 targeted) highlighted weak links between policy gains, financial commitment, and grassroots inclusion. Future efforts must embed mechanisms for budget

tracking and strengthen inclusive advocacy that ensures women and youth can influence policy implementation and resource allocation. In addition, the network should strengthen its capacity for research and documentation to inform evidence-based policy engagement. This includes systematically generating and packaging knowledge products that capture grassroots experiences and agroecology outcomes. The network should also build awareness and capacity among key stakeholders, including the Secretariat, Board, and MOs to promote the strategic use of research outputs in advocacy, programming, and learning.

3. **Climate Change Resilience and Natural Resource Management:**

Interventions in climate resilience yielded positive outcomes, including the rehabilitation of 25 degraded sites and support for over 3,000 farmers to recover from climate-related shocks, surpassing the set targets. However, limited data on the adoption of sustainable natural resource management practices and climate-smart innovations highlighted weaknesses in tracking behavioural and systems-level change. This calls for strengthening of monitoring systems, emphasizing quality of implementation, and supporting the scaling of localized innovations while integrating resilience indicators into routine program reporting.

4. **Agro-enterprise and Markets Development:**

While household incomes rose by 58% and agrochemical use declined significantly, the volume of agroecological products and structured market engagement was not adequately captured. Farmers reported difficulties accessing premium markets, pointing to weak post-production. There is therefore a need to build structured market linkages, expand value addition, and promote affordable certification systems to enable farmers to benefit fully from agroecological production.

5. **Women and Youth Inclusion:**

Youth participation improved significantly, rising from 5% to 71%, and some innovations were recorded. However, leadership representation, income gains, and financing access for youth and women remained far below target. These gaps call for stronger integration of youth and gender as cross-cutting themes, with specific interventions focused on economic empowerment, leadership development, and inclusive financing mechanisms.

6. **Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E):**

The development of six M&E tools and increased staff understanding of M&E processes reflected growing institutional commitment. However, fragmented systems, underutilized digital tools, and weak feedback loops were considered as hindrance to the strategic use of data. This calls for modernization of MEL systems, integrating real-time data platforms and using evidence to drive adaptive programming and learning.

7. **Relevance and Impact:**

Across all stakeholder groups i.e., board, staff, partners, MOs, and farmers, agroecology-focused interventions were affirmed as highly relevant and impactful. Interventions in climate resilience, agroforestry, soil regeneration, and diversified production directly contributed to improved food security, household incomes, and community-level resilience. These results affirm that agroecology should remain central to PELUM Kenya's strategy, with an expanded role in addressing broader food systems, nutrition, and climate adaptation agendas.

8. **Sustainability:** Farmers across counties noted that after project closure, benefits often diminished due to limited follow-up and weak institutional capacity at the grassroots level. This reinforces the need to embed sustainability mechanisms within program design, strengthening local organizations, promoting peer learning, and enabling communities to co-lead interventions and manage their own development pathways

9. **Resource Mobilization Diversification:** Partners recognized PELUM Kenya's strong program delivery but highlighted its heavy reliance on donor funding as a key vulnerability. This limited long-term planning, innovation and program continuity. They recommended diversifying funding through social enterprise models, private sector partnerships, climate and impact financing, and by strengthening MOs' fundraising capacity.

The key lesson is that financial sustainability requires a deliberate resource mobilization strategy that leverages PELUM's strengths and expands access to flexible, diverse and long-term funding sources.

2.4. SWOT and PESTLE Analysis

2.4.1. SWOT Analysis

A comprehensive SWOT analysis was conducted to assess PELUM Kenya's internal capacity and external operating environment. The analysis highlights key institutional strengths, including a committed team, strong governance structures, a growing membership base, and a diversified funding portfolio that provide a solid foundation for growth. At the same time, internal weaknesses such as staffing gaps in critical thematic areas, limited digital integration, and over-reliance on donor funding present challenges that must be addressed. Externally, growing demand for safe food, momentum around agroecology policies, and expanding partnership opportunities offer strategic openings for the network. However, risks such as the resurgence of GMOs, shifting donor priorities, and political unpredictability underscore the need for adaptive planning and sustained advocacy. The summary table below outlines the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, along with strategic implications and recommended responses to guide implementation.

Table 1: SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Strategic Implications	Strategic Responses
Competent and committed team	Enhances the network's ability to deliver on its mission and sustain operations	Develop a clear retention and succession plan to maintain institutional memory and capacity
Increasing interest in membership (31 organizations expressed interest in 2025)	Signals strong visibility and credibility of PELUM Kenya	Develop and implement a structured membership growth and engagement strategy
Strong and member-driven board	Strong strategic oversight, strengthens institutional governance, and ensures accountability in resource allocation	Leverage board expertise to strengthen fundraising and strategic partnerships
Robust internal policies and procedures that are consistently implemented	Promotes accountability and institutional effectiveness	Regularly review and update of policies to align with growth and strategic focus
Extensive Coverage	Expands opportunities for learning, collaboration and influence	Strengthen inter-country collaboration and joint programming
Diversified donor portfolio	Enhances financial sustainability	Build long-term donor relations and explore innovative financing options
Functional zones with active staff	Enables decentralized implementation	Restructure zones to improve efficiency as the network expands
Thematic committees and diverse member expertise	Supports strategic thinking and innovation across focus areas	Strengthen coordination of thematic committees for synergy and cross-learning

Strengths	Strategic Implications	Strategic Responses
Strong external relations with government, networks and donors	Builds credibility and broadens influence in policy and advocacy	Deepen strategic partnerships, especially for joint fundraising and policy influence
Increased interest from partners to collaborate	Opportunity to expand reach and impact	Strengthen joint initiatives with strategic partners and stakeholders
Weaknesses	Strategic Implications	Strategic Responses
Limited financial autonomy of zonal offices due to overreliance on the secretariat for funding	Slows down localized implementation and reduces autonomy	Build zonal fundraising capacity and allocate seed grants for zonal innovation
Over-reliance on donor funding	Poses sustainability risks if donor priorities shift	Diversify income sources and explore alternative financing models (e.g., enterprise funds)
MOs with varying capacity levels	Affects quality of sub-granting, reporting, and implementation	Build MO capacity through regular OCA and targeted training programs
Limited integration of digital tools – with continued reliance on manual M&E processes	Delays in data access and reporting, reduced efficiency in program delivery and limited ability to track performance in real time.	Prioritize digitalization including MIS and document management systems
Evolving responsibilities not reflected in existing role definitions	Reduces staff effectiveness and morale	Conduct HR audit and revise job descriptions to reflect actual roles and responsibilities
Strategic gaps in specific programmatic themes e.g. youth engagement	Limits coherence, effectiveness, and scalability of interventions, leading to missed opportunities for impact, stakeholder alignment, and resource mobilization in critical focus areas	Develop and institutionalize thematic strategies across the network
Opportunities	Strategic Implications	Strategic Responses
Growing consumer demand for safe, healthy food	Potential for value chain, product development, and digital marketing	Support product development, market linkages, digital access, and business incubation
Momentum for agroecology policies at county and national level	Opens space for national and county level engagement and technical support	Support county governments to domesticate National Agroecology for Food, System Transformation Strategy and develop implementation frameworks

Opportunities	Strategic Implications	Strategic Responses
Growing recognition of agroecology and alignment with emerging frameworks like the Kampala declaration	Creates opportunities for regional influence, alignment with continental frameworks, and access to partnerships and resources.	Position PELUM Kenya in global/continental and regional forums to show-case agroecology success
Threats	Strategic Implications	Strategic Responses
Push for GMOs, conventional agriculture and synthetic inputs	Undermines agroecological gains and farmer seed sovereignty	Strengthen farmer awareness and evidence-based advocacy against GMOs through campaigns and biosafety education
Political instability and policy shifts	Disrupt project implementation and funding flow	Enhance adaptive planning, diversify funding, and engage policymakers to sustain continuity across political transitions.
Shrinking donor funding and shifting priorities.	Reduced financial support for agroecology initiatives.	Broaden funding base, build donor relationships, and explore social enterprise models

2.4.2.: PESTLE Analysis

PELUM Kenya operates within an increasingly complex and evolving external environment that presents both opportunities and risks for agroecological transformation. Key political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal factors continue to influence the policy landscape, funding flows, community engagement, market access, and the overall operating space for civil society. Strategic shifts in governance, funding dynamics, demographic transitions, climate variability, and digital disruption require the network to remain agile, responsive, and forward-looking. This strategic plan takes into account these macro-level trends and their implications for programming, partnerships, and policy engagement. The table below summarizes the PESTEL analysis and outlines proposed strategic responses to guide adaptive implementation and resilience-building over the plan period.

Table 2: PESTLE Analysis

Political	Strategic implication	Proposed strategic option
Policy shifts and changing regimes	Disrupt program continuity and realignment of national priorities	-Strengthen engagement with both national and county governments across regimes -Build flexibility into programming cycles
Restrictive laws (e.g. Public Benefit Organizations Act)	May reduce civic space and limit CSO operational freedom	Collaborate with CSO networks to safeguard civic space; engage in advocacy on enabling legal frameworks

Political	Strategic implication	Proposed strategic option
Unstable tax and regulatory regimes	Increases operational costs and complexity	Conduct regular risk assessments; maintain financial and legal compliance; advocate for farmer-friendly tax policies
Economic	Strategic Implication	Proposed Strategic Option
Shrinking donor space and shifting funding trends	Threatens sustainability of programs and core operations	Diversify funding through social enterprises, private partnerships and philanthropic foundations
Inflation and national debt	Reduces purchasing power, raises implementation costs	Optimize budgeting processes and engage in joint programming to share resources
Social	Strategic implication	Proposed strategic option
Youth bulge and unemployment	High pressure for job creation and inclusion in agriculture	Incubate agroecology enterprises for youth; offer leadership and entrepreneurship mentoring
Rural-urban migration	Reduced rural labour force and knowledge transfer	-Design incentives for youth to remain and invest in rural areas; promote rural innovation hubs -Promote urban and peri-urban agroecology initiatives
Gender inequality	Limits women and youth participation in agroecology leadership and decision-making	Integrate gender inclusion tools (GALS, Social Analysis & Action); develop gender-disaggregated indicators and targets
Cultural norms (land inheritance, gender roles)	Restricts access to land, capital, and leadership roles	-Promote intergenerational dialogue and land succession planning; support culturally responsive agroecology programming -Advocate for inclusive land use policies
Social	Strategic implication	Proposed strategic option
Perceptions of agroecology	Low awareness slows adoption	Collaborate with research institutions to generate and disseminate evidence-based insights on the effectiveness and impact of agroecology

Technological	Strategic implication	Proposed strategic option
Limited integration of emerging digital technologies	Constrains access to market information, training opportunities, real-time data collection, and digital service delivery	-Promote inclusive digital literacy programs, and deploy decentralized MIS tools -Integrate AI into knowledge systems, extension tools, and monitoring frameworks
Proliferation of GMOs and increased dependency on commercial seed systems	Threatens seed sovereignty, erodes biodiversity, and conflicts with agroecological values	Champion seed sovereignty through anti-GMO advocacy, promotion of indigenous seed systems, and evidence-based policy engagement.
Digital misinformation on agroecology and seed systems	Creates confusion and distrust among farmers and the public, slowing adoption of agroecology	Build a strong digital presence with consistent messaging on accurate, evidence-based information on agroecology
Legal	Strategic implication	Proposed strategic option
Limited domestication and operationalization of the NAS – FST at county and institutional levels.	Limits integration of agroecology into planning, budgeting, and institutional support at decentralized levels	Advocate for full domestication and implementation of the strategy across counties and relevant ministries through coordinated policy engagement
Incoherent agricultural regulations (e.g., conflicting GMOs and seed laws)	Undermines confidence in agroecology and weakens policy advocacy efforts	Engage in inclusive, multi-stakeholder policy dialogue and reform processes.
Lack of certification frameworks for agroecological enterprises	Limits market access and consumer confidence on agroecological products	Advocacy to establish agroecology-specific certification standards and labelling frameworks
Environmental	Strategic implication	Proposed strategic option
Climate variability (drought, floods, etc.)	Reduces productivity, increases risk for smallholders	Promote climate-resilient agroecology practices and technologies
Soil degradation and biodiversity loss	Weakens long-term sustainability of agroecological systems	Scale soil regeneration and biodiversity conservation programs
Carbon markets	Current frameworks offer potential financing but may exclude smallholders and fall short on climate impact.	Promote inclusive carbon finance, build farmer capacity, and engage in advocacy to align markets with agroecological goals.

2.5. Stakeholder Analysis

Effective delivery of PELUM Kenya's strategic priorities requires meaningful engagement with a diverse ecosystem of stakeholders who influence, support, or are directly impacted by agroecological transformation. As a network-driven organization, PELUM Kenya recognizes that its ability to drive systemic change hinges on building strategic alliances, nurturing collaborative platforms, and aligning with actors across policy, practice, research, markets, and grassroots action. This stakeholder mapping exercise identified and analysed key actors, internal and external, based on their roles, interests, influence, and expectations. The analysis serves as a foundational tool for designing engagement strategies, fostering mutual accountability, and ensuring the strategy remains responsive, inclusive, and grounded in co-creation with rightsholders and partners across sectors and scales.

Table 3: Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholders	Stakeholder Expectations from PELUM Kenya	PELUM Kenya Responsibility
Internal Stakeholders		
Board	• Strategic and Oversight • Accountability and policies compliance • Visibility of the organization and network's impact	• Submit periodic updates • Provide strategic option • Engage the board early in planning
Staff	• Clear direction and strategy • Job security • Professional / career development • Enabling work environment • Transparent leadership • Fair remuneration	• Provide a conducive work environment. • Strengthen internal systems • Encourage performance management • Provide remuneration commensurate with roles and responsibilities
State Actors		
National Government & State Agencies	• Partnerships for capacity building and extension services on agroecology • Policy engagement and technical input: Support to align policies. Laws and development plan with agroecological principles • Alignment with national development priorities • Technical collaborations • Data and evidence sharing	• Engagement in policy dialogues. • Collaborate with the national government in formulation of policy and laws. • Support the government with technical and financial resources • Compliance with regulations • Knowledge sharing • Align initiatives with national strategies
County Government	• Partnerships for capacity building and extension services • Policy engagement and technical input: Support to align policies and development plans (e.g., CIDPs) with agroecological principles • Alignment with counties development priorities	• Collaborate with county governments in formulation of policy and laws • Support the government with technical and financial resources. • compliance with regulations • Align initiatives with counties strategies

Stakeholders	Stakeholder Expectations from PELUM Kenya	PELUM Kenya Responsibility
State Actors		
Academia & Research institutions	• Opportunities for field research, data, innovation piloting, policy inputs etc. • Research uptake and dissemination • Data sharing • Participation in knowledge platforms	• Create knowledge exchange platforms • Codevelop studies • Fund field level action research
Nonstate Actors		
Development/Donor Partners	• Accountable and transparent use of funds • Impactful programming • Evidence based reporting • Clear outcomes on agroecology, climate change, policy influence etc. • Innovation, and value for money • Strategic alignment	• Ensure accountability • Deliver results • Share timely and evidence-based reports • Maintain strong donor relations
Member Organizations	• Technical support and capacity building based on their need areas • Exposure and networking platforms; • Representation in policy spaces / shared platform for policy influencing • Leadership and Coordination of the network operations • Visibility, networking platforms and partnerships • Funding linkages	• Organize/convene networking platforms • Build capacities of the members • Mobilization and channelling of resources • Facilitate learning
Rightholders / Communities (Smallholder farmers, Pastoralists, Women, Youth, etc.)	• Active involvement in PMERL processes • Training on agroecological practices • Support for market access • Representation in policy arena • Tangible livelihood improvements • Access to information, markets, climate adaptation solutions • Participation in decisions	• Empowerment through training • Facilitate access • Create feedback and accountability channels

Stakeholders	Stakeholder Expectations from PELUM Kenya	PELUM Kenya Responsibility
Non State Sector		
Private Sector (consumers, traders, input suppliers, Agro-processors etc.)	• Market access/linkages with producers • Capacity building on organic quality standards • Capacity building on organic value chains • Reliable partnerships	• Facilitate B2B linkages • Support standard adoption • Promote inclusive markets
Media	• Access to stories and credible content on agroecology • Capacity building on Agroecology • Access to field activities, project data, and success stories • Visibility for public interest stories	• Identify and engage environmental and agricultural editors and journalists • Sustain the collaboration with media • Provide press kits and stories • Build/Enhance media relations • Support agroecology media engagement
Service Providers (Consultants/ ICT/Auditors/Facilitators etc.)	• Clear ToRs/terms of engagements • Timely payment • Professional partnerships	• Contracting transparently and competitively • Monitor delivery • Ensure ethical engagement
Networks/Alliances /Other CSOs	• Joint advocacy for food sovereignty, agroecology, and social accountability • Campaign and movement support • Access to grassroots intelligence • Synergy, visibility and different levels (local, national, continental, global) engagement • Evidence contribution to continental policies • Shared learning	• Lead/coordinate CSO alliances • Contribute to policy content • Link local to national advocacy efforts • Represent national voice • Share best practices • Build continental solidarity



PGS Readiness Assessment at
Nutonya SHG, Nzuleni Kitui County



Cooks Alliance Chefs Training on Zero waste Cooking during
the 2025 GAW event in Nakuru.

2.6. Key Trends and Drivers

PELUM Kenya's strategic outlook is informed by a range of emerging continental and national trends that are reshaping the landscape of agroecology and Ecological Land Use Management, offering both opportunities and imperatives to enhance its relevance and amplify its impact.

2.6.1. Momentum Towards Advancing Agroecology Policies

Agroecology is increasingly gaining recognition within national and county policy spaces. The development of the National Agroecology Strategy for Food Systems Transformation (NAS-FST) has served as a catalyst for embedding agroecological principles into Kenya's devolved systems. Counties like Murang'a, Vihiga, West Pokot, and Makueni have already developed agroecology policies, with other counties developing their frameworks. This signals a shift toward sustainable, inclusive, and resilient food systems across all governance levels and reinforces the need for engagement in policy advocacy at the county and national levels while also building the internal capacity to influence public budgeting and ensure grass-roots inclusion in policy formulation and implementation.

Strengthening collaboration with government and civil society coalitions will be critical to translating policy gains into action and resources at the community level.

2.6.2. Climate Change and Soil Health

Agroecology is central to achieving climate resilience, particularly in the context of land regeneration and soil health. The growing alignment between national and county priorities—evident in frameworks such as the 2024 Nairobi Declaration on Soil Health and the FLLoCA program—underscores the urgency of adopting community-led, climate-smart approaches. Agroecological practices such as composting, agroforestry, cover cropping, and integrated pest management contribute directly to restoring degraded soils, enhancing water retention, and increasing biodiversity. These ecological practices strengthen the adaptive capacity of farming systems while reducing vulnerability to climate shocks such as droughts and floods. By building on its experience in farmer-led restoration and adaptation, PELUM Kenya is uniquely positioned to scale agroecological models that not only improve soil health but also embed resilience into local food systems.

Through investment in local innovations, development of community-based resilience indicators, and access to climate finance, agroecology offers a practical and transformative pathway for confronting climate risks and achieving long-term sustainability.

2.6.3. Organic Market Access and Inclusive Certification Systems

Growing demand for organic and sustainably produced food is opening up opportunities for structured market development. However, many smallholders in Kenya continue to face barriers to accessing premium markets partly due to limited certification options, poor post-harvest infrastructure and weak aggregation systems. This presents an opportunity for PELUM Kenya to take a leadership role in building inclusive market systems through scaling Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS), supporting value addition and forging linkages with buyers and institutional markets.

2.6.4. Digitalization of Extension and Knowledge Sharing

Digital tools are transforming how extension, certification, and knowledge-sharing are delivered. This transformation is visible in government-backed innovations such as the KALRO Selector and Kenya Agricultural Observatory Platform (KAOP), which are enabling data-driven, location-specific agricultural advisory. However, uneven infrastructure and digital literacy, especially among women and older farmers, highlight the need for inclusive strategies. There's growing momentum toward integrated digital systems for monitoring, training, and knowledge management to ensure marginalized groups are actively involved in this digital shift.

2.6.5. Consumer Awareness and Demand for Healthy Foods

Consumer interest in organic, safe, and sustainably produced food is growing, especially in urban centers. This is driving the emergence of local niche markets and influencing purchasing behaviour. It reflects a broader trend toward healthier and safer consumption and presents a growing opportunity to strengthen agroecological value chains. Building rural-urban market linkages, enhancing product branding and investing in consumer education are becoming essential for positioning agroecological products competitively. This shift underscores the importance of visibility and trust in product quality, which can enable farmers to access premium markets and grow sustainable agro-enterprises.

2.6.6. Shifting Funding Priorities Toward Sustainability and Local Ownership

The funding ecosystem is increasingly shifting from donor driven models to more diversified and locally anchored approaches. Development partners are increasingly expecting local institutions to take on greater leadership in resource mobilization, coordination and sustainability. There is also a growing interest among funders in supporting integrated approaches that align with climate action, biodiversity, soil health, and inclusive economic development, especially those backed by strong policy frameworks and grassroots implementation. This signals the need to reposition within a changing funding landscape. The trend points toward a strategic imperative to diversify financing beyond traditional donors by strengthening internal fundraising capabilities.

2.6.7. Shift Toward Agri-food Systems Approach

The adoption of the Kampala Declaration (2025) marks a continental transition toward a holistic food systems agenda that prioritizes sustainability, nutrition, equity, and inclusion.

2.7 Foundational Elements

2.7.1. Vision

Empowered, prosperous, healthy and resilient communities.

2.7.2. Mission

To champion agroecological principles and practices for sustainable and resilient livelihoods among small holder farmers, pastoralists and fisherfolks.

Slogan: Networking for a greener Africa.

2.7.3. Core Values

Commitment to partnership, participation and networking:

PELUM Kenya will strive to establish linkages with strategic partners and strive to ensure Member Organizations work towards a common goal.

Commitment to gender equity and social inclusion:

PELUM Kenya recognizes the needs for our work to reflect and promote respect for youth and women empowerment. Additionally, PELUM Kenya will work with other like-minded partners to promote equality and dignity especially with regards to the agricultural communities.

Transparency and accountability:

As PELUM Kenya we will hold ourselves accountable for ethical behaviour and responsibility for our action while maintaining integrity in our performance and advocating for the same among member organizations

Quality Service delivery:

PELUM Kenya will endeavour to deliver its mandate while maintaining professionalism and delivery of the highest standard to its beneficiaries.

2.7.4. Operating Principles

1. **Diversity:** Showcasing the diversity of Ecological Agricultural practices amongst members within and without the Network.
2. **Learning and Knowledge Management:** Enable learning for experiences and best practices sharing among members & other actors through net working with others.
3. **Membership:** Ensure that PELUM Kenya is a member-driven Network.
4. **Innovation:** Encourage and support innovativeness across the Network.

5. **Sustainable Ecosystem:** Always striving towards an ecosystem that is healthy and sustainable.
6. **Advocacy:** Advocate on Agricultural ecological issues in favour of small-scale farmers & pastoralists. The network is guided by its stand against GMOs and toxic inputs.
7. **Inclusive Practices:** Promoting inclusive practices at all levels as the basis of ownership, empowerment and sustainability.
8. **Participation:** Recognize participation as an enabling & empowering process (everybody's opinion matters, participation is drawn from the members, enhances ownership of the processes, has the strength of inclusiveness, and accommodates).

2.7.5. Value Proposition

PELUM Kenya is a nationally recognized network of civil society organizations advancing agroecological transformation for resilient, inclusive, and sustainable food systems. Leveraging over two decades of grassroots movement-building, policy engagement, and member-driven action, the network connects local communities, practitioners, and decision-makers to scale agro-ecological solutions across Kenya. Through its decentralized zonal structure, strong partnerships, and evidence-based advocacy, PELUM Kenya strengthens the capacity of smallholder farmers, pastoralists, and fisher folks to promote agroecological practices and principles, influence policy processes, access inclusive markets, promote women and youth in agroecology and strengthen institutions' capacity. This integrated approach positions PELUM Kenya as a trusted catalyst for agroecology, climate resilience, and equitable food systems in Kenya.

2.8. Geographical Coverage of the Network and Membership

At the time of developing PELUM Kenya's 2026-2030 (July-December 2025), the network comprised sixty-eight (68) member organizations distributed in four (4) networking zones. The coverage of these zones is outlined as follows:

2.8.1. Nairobi and Central Zone (NCZ)

At the time of developing this strategic plan, the member organizations in this zone were 18: Effective IPM Association (EIPMA); Arid Lands Information Network (ALIN); CARITAS Nairobi; Community Action for Rural Enhancement (CARE) Murang'a; Community Sustainable Development Empowerment Program (COSDEP); Grow Bio-Intensive Agriculture Centre of Kenya (GBIACK); Institute of Culture and Ecology (ICE); Kenya Organic Agricultural Network (KOAN); Organic Agriculture Centre of Kenya (OACK); Resources Oriented Development Initiative (RODI – Kenya); Self Help Africa (SHA); Sustainable Agriculture Community; Development Program (SACDEP) Kenya; Youth Action for Rural Development (YARD), Aid link-Ireland, Koppert Kenya, Hand in Hand Eastern Africa (HIHEA), Micro Enterprises Support Programme Trust (MESPT) and Action Africa Help International (AAH-I).

2.8.2. Upper Eastern & Northern Kenya Zone (UENKZ)

At the time of developing this strategic plan, the member organizations in this zone were **16**: Anglican Development Services (ADS) Mt. Kenya East; Caritas Meru; CEFA-Kenya; Community Initiatives for Rural Development (CIFORD); Food for the Hungry (FH) Kenya; Laikipia Permaculture Centre (LPC); Pastoralists Community Initiatives and Development Assistance (PACIDA); Rural Initiatives Development Program (RIDEP); Caritas Nyahururu; Institute for Peace Development and Innovation (IPSIA); Strategies for Agro Pastoralists Development (SAPAD); Rural Children and Women Empowerment Programme (RuCWEP); TAI Sacco Community Based Organization (CBO); Centre for Research and Development in Drylands (CRDD); Equal Foundation; and Merti Integrated Development Programme.

2.8.3. Lower Eastern and Coastal Zone (LECZ)

At the time of developing this strategic plan, the member organizations in this zone were **13**: Anglican Development Services (ADS) Eastern; Benevolent Institute of Development Initiatives (BIDI); Christian Impact Mission (CIM); Community Sustainable Agriculture and Healthy Environmental Program (CSHEP); INADES Formation-Kenya (IFK) Katoloni Community Based Organization; Kitui Development Centre (KDC); Neighbours Initiative Alliance (NIA); Taita Taveta Wildlife Forum (TTWF); Utooni Development Organization (UDO); Dryland Natural Resource Centre (DNRC); Holy Ghost Fathers Marafa Parish; Institute of Participatory Development, and COMUNDO 3000 Friends Farm.

2.8.4. Rift Western Kenya Zone (RWKZ)

At the time of developing this strategic plan, the member organizations in this zone were **21**: Anglican Development Services (ADS)-Western Community Rehabilitation and Environment Protection Program (CREPP); Vi Agroforestry (VIAFP); Development in Gardening (DIG); Support for Tropical Initiatives in Poverty Alleviation (STIPA); Rural Energy and Food Security Organization (REFSO); Community Mobilization Against Desertification (C-MAD); Agriculture Community Empowerment Programme (ACEP); Bio-Gardening Innovations (BIOGI); Baraka Agriculture College (BAC); Maendeleo Endelevu Action Programme (MEAP); Manor House Agricultural Centre (MHAC); The mission of Tenwek Hospital Community Health & Development; Slow food Convivia Association of Kenya (SFCAK); Sustainable Mobilization of Agricultural Resource Technologies (SMART) Initiatives; Trans Community Organization (TRANSCOM); Network for Eco farming in Africa (NECOFA); Agriculture Improvement Support Services (AGRISS); Ripple Effect Kenya; Agency for Cross Border Pastoralists Development (APaD); and Indigenous Women and Girls Initiative (IWGI).

CHAPTER THREE: DELIVERY OF 2026-2030 STRATEGIC PLAN

3.1. Introduction

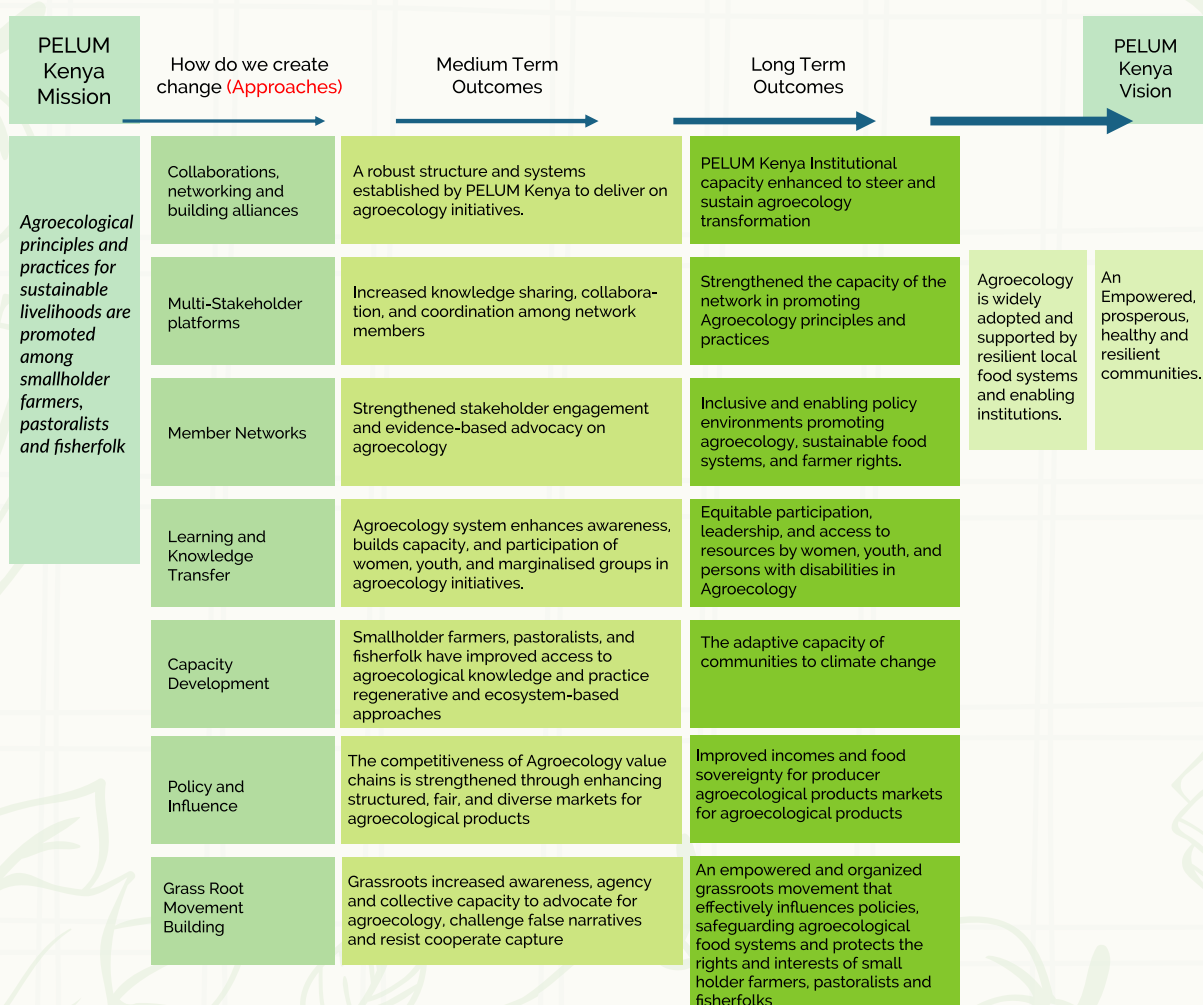
Building on the performance of the previous strategic period, and informed by comprehensive stakeholder consultations, internal assessments, and external context analyses, including SWOT and PESTLE frameworks, PELUM Kenya has made a strategic shift toward a more impact-driven and adaptive approach. The network has adopted a Theory of Change that will guide the design and implementation of development programs over the 2026-2030 period. This Theory of Change is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and anchored in five interrelated strategic themes that reflect PELUM Kenya's commitment to agroecological transformation, inclusion, and resilience.

3.2. Illustrative Pathways of Change

The diagram below illustrates PELUM Kenya's Pathways of Change, outlining how the organization's strategic approaches lead to desired outcomes over time. It connects the mission to medium- and long-term results that contribute to the overall vision of empowered, prosperous, and sustainable communities

Figure 1 Illustrative Results: Chain / Pathways of Change

Theory of Change

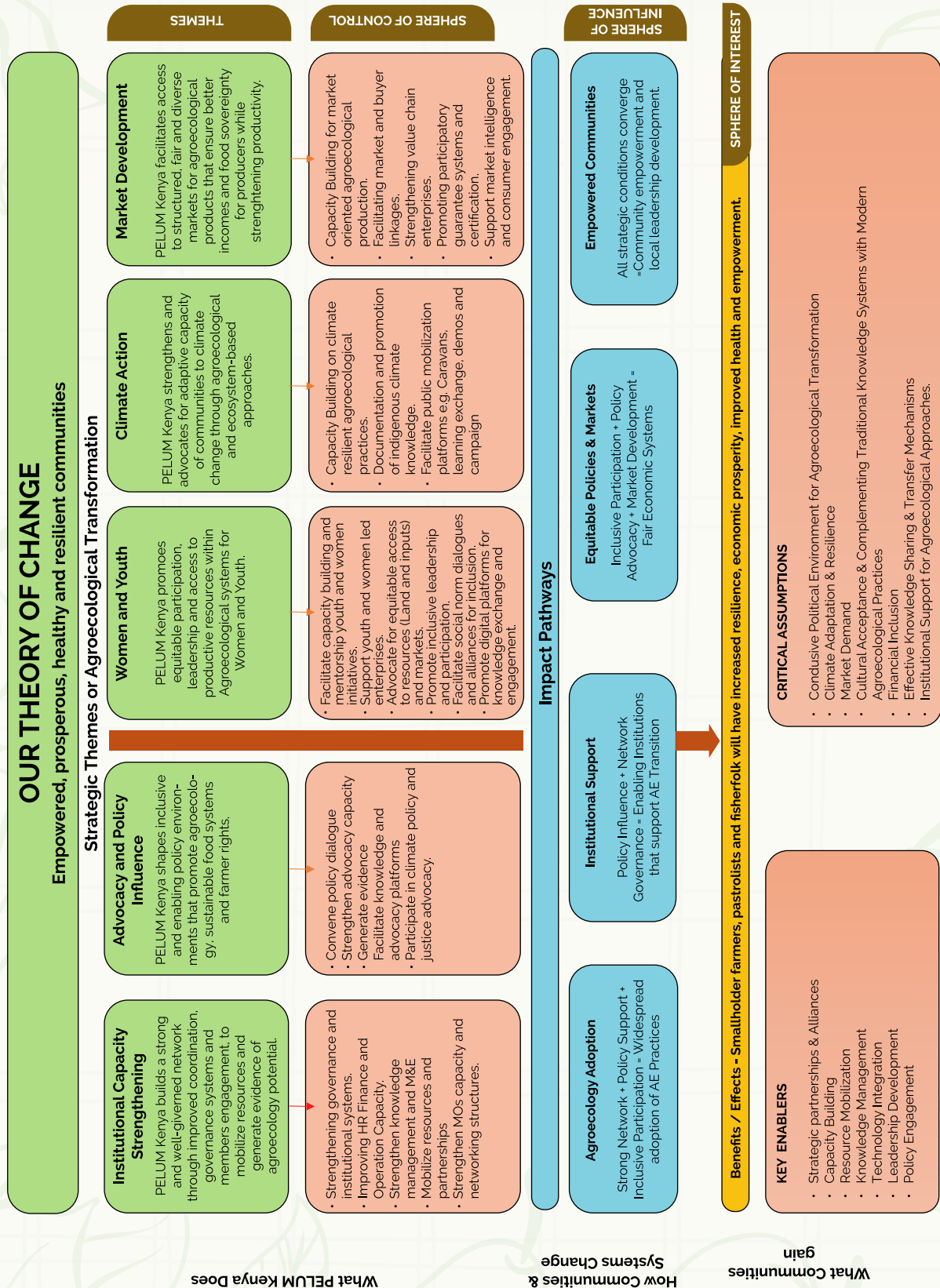


PELUM Kenya's theory of change in the 2026-2030 strategy is best summarized by the statement below:

If PELUM Kenya builds a resilient, well-governed network; shapes an inclusive, enabling policy environment for agroecology and smallholder farmers, pastoralists and fisherfolks rights; ensures equitable participation, leadership, and access to resources for women and youth ;builds community climate resilience through regenerative and ecosystem-based approaches; sustains an informed grassroots movement, and facilitates structured, fair, and diverse markets for agroecological products, then smallholder farmers, pastoralists, and fisherfolks will be empowered, prosperous, healthy, and resilient because these strategic conditions will have driven broad adoption of agroecological practices, unlock fair income and food sovereignty, and consolidate strong, resilient local food systems supported by enabling institutions and markets.

Figure 2 below represents the illustrative Theory of Change.

Figure 2: The Illustrative Theory of Change



3.3. Our Approach

To effectively achieve its mission and strategic objectives, PELUM Kenya will implement the following core approaches. These approaches are designed to strengthen partnerships, enhance coordination, build capacity, and amplify impact across its network and beyond. They form the foundation of the organization's operational and programmatic delivery over the strategy period.

1. Collaborations, Networking, and Building Alliances:

PELUM Kenya will strengthen collaborations with government agencies, civil society, academic institutions, and the private sector. By fostering vibrant networks and engaging in multi-stakeholder platforms, PELUM Kenya aims to enhance visibility, share innovations, and scale proven agro-ecological models. Strategic alliances will be pursued to amplify collective influence, mobilize resources, and drive systemic change in favour of agroecology and smallholder farmers.

2. Multi-Stakeholder Platforms (MSPs):

The organization will actively convene and engage in multi-stakeholder platforms that promote dialogue, coordination, and shared learning among key actors in the food and farming systems. These platforms will be instrumental in joint action planning and influencing policy.

3. Member Networks:

PELUM Kenya will leverage the strength of its Member Organizations to foster synergy, peer learning, and joint implementation. The network will play a central role in championing agroecology, driving innovation, and coordinating advocacy at local and national levels.

4. Learning and Knowledge Transfer:

The organization will promote systematic documentation and dissemination of experiences, best practices, and innovations in agroecology. Knowledge sharing will be facilitated through publications, Participatory Action Research, learning events, digital platforms, and farmer-level exchanges to enhance visibility and adoption.

5. Capacity Development:

Capacity strengthening for both the Secretariat and Member Organizations will remain a priority. PELUM Kenya will provide technical support, training, and institutional development to enhance program delivery, governance, and advocacy effectiveness across the network.

6. Policy and Influence:

PELUM Kenya will engage in evidence-based advocacy to influence national, regional, and behold policies that support agroecology and farmer rights. Strategic partnerships, policy dialogues, and grassroots mobilization will be key to advancing inclusive and enabling policy environments. The organization will amplify farmer voices and contribute to participatory policy processes for systemic change. The organization will lead key campaigns to raise issues affecting smallholder farmers, pastoralists, and fisherfolk.

7. Grassroots Movement Building:

PELUM Kenya will enhance its grassroots awareness on matters related to agroecology to enhance and enforce an informed community that is able to resist any false narratives. Efforts to enhance farmer independence from corporate capture will be heightened.

3.4. Strategic Focus Areas

To effectively advance agroecological transformation in Kenya, PELUM Kenya will focus on five interconnected strategic themes. These areas are designed to respond to current challenges, leverage existing strengths, and position the network for sustainable impact at grassroots, national, and regional levels.

- **Strategic Focus 1: Advocacy and Policy Influence**

Goal: To shape inclusive and enabling policy environments that promote agroecology, sustainable food systems, and farmer rights.

- **Strategic Focus 2: Women and Youth in Agroecology**

Goal: To promote equitable participation, leadership, and access to resources for women and youth in agroecological systems.

- **Strategic Focus 3: Climate Action**

Goal: To strengthen and advocate for the adaptive capacity of communities to climate change through agroecological and ecosystem -based approaches.

- **Strategic Focus 4: Market Development**

Goal: To increase access to structured, fair, and diverse markets for agroecological products that ensure better incomes and food sovereignty for producers while strengthening productivity.

- **Strategic Focus 5: Institutional Capacity Strengthening**

Goal: To build a resilient and well-governed network capable of effectively delivering agroecological initiatives and influencing change.

3.4.1. Advocacy and Policy Influence

Kenya's agricultural policy and investment landscape remains insufficiently aligned to support the transition toward agroecological and sustainable food systems. Although agriculture is a key pillar of the economy, only 3–3.3% of the national budget is directed to the sector far below the 10% commitment set in the Maputo Declaration. This underinvestment constrains the scaling of agroecological innovations and weakens institutional capacities.

Additionally, regulatory frameworks such as the Seeds and Plant Varieties Act (Cap. 326), particularly the 2012 amendment, restrict the exchange and sale of uncertified seeds including traditional and indigenous varieties. This limits the functioning of Farmer-Managed Seed Systems (FMSS), diminishes agrobiodiversity, and exposes smallholder farmers to economic and legal vulnerability. The complex certification process further discourages local seed entrepreneurship and innovation.



A farmer showcasing maize farmed using agroecological bioinputs



PELUM Youth showcasing her value-added agroecological products

Further, despite some policy frameworks that recognize agroecology such as the National Agroecology Strategy for Food Systems Transformation (NAS-FST), their implementation remains a matter of importance. Further, emerging policy issues and directives require immediate advocacy and campaign mechanisms securing the rights of smallholder farmers, pastoralists and fisherfolks. Key areas that will inform the advocacy campaigns will be guided by the network advocacy strategy.

Key to its advocacy work will be the network's stand against toxic inputs including Geetically Modified Organisms (GMOS) and toxic agrochemicals. The network will focus on building a grounded, informed grassroots movement that is able to resist toxic inputs. Further, a focus on enhancing capacities on alternatives through capacity development, documentation, and networking will be central.

To bridge these policy gaps, PELUM Kenya will advance targeted advocacy to reform laws, enhance public financing for agroecology, strengthen institutional capacity, secure rights of smallholder farmers, pastoralists and fisherfolks and foster citizen engagement to drive demand for healthy, sustainable, and locally produced food.



Field Visit to an Agroecological demo farm during the Nakuru County Extension staff training on agroecology

Strategic Focus 1: Advocacy and Policy Influence

Goal: To shape inclusive and enabling policy environments that promote agroecology, sustainable food systems, and farmer rights

Strategic Objectives	Key strategies	Expected Outcomes
1.1: Advocate for enabling policies and increased investment on agroecology at national and county levels	- Facilitate county and national policy dialogues on agroecology. - Facilitate the development and implementation of County and national level policies - Build capacity of member organizations, farmers groups, and CBOs to engage in policy formulation and monitoring. - Strengthen institutional capacities for policy design and implementation. - Engage in advocacy for increased agroecology budget allocations - Organize campaigns geared towards securing rights of smallholder farmers, pastoralists and fisherfolks. - Institutionalize and host the National Agroecology Symposium as an annual advocacy and learning platform. - Participate in local, national, regional and international policy forums. - Partnership and collaborations	- Improved policy coherence and investment in agroecology. - Enhanced Member Organization capacity for agroecological advocacy. - Stronger farmer, pastoralist and fisherfolk voice and representation in decision-making spaces. - Increased visibility and political commitment for agroecology
1.2: Promote evidence-based research, data generation, and knowledge sharing to inform policy and practice	- Commission, publish and widely share studies on agroecological practices, bio-inputs, and seed systems. - Develop participatory documentation tools and digital knowledge platforms. - Strengthen farmer-led research and innovation networks.	- Increased evidence base for agroecology advocacy. - Increased awareness and uptake of local innovations. - Strengthened recognition of indigenous knowledge and practices.

Strategic Objectives	Key strategies	Expected Outcomes
	• Advocate for integration of agroecology into school and training curricula. • Organize public showcases and exhibitions of local innovations. • Develop platforms for documentation and dissemination of research and grassroots knowledge • Promote visibility and uptake of local agro-ecological innovations through knowledge exchange platforms and public showcases. • Strengthen farmer-led innovation, experimentation, and knowledge exchange	
1.3: Promote and advocate for the conservation and protection of farmer-managed seeds (FMS), food systems, and traditional knowledge	• Undertake soil health campaigns and Participatory Action Research • Advocate for integration and legal recognition of Farmer-Managed Seed Systems (FMSS) within national and county seed policies and laws. • Support participatory Action Research, documentation, and dissemination of indigenous seed and food knowledge. • Promote farmer-led innovation, seed fairs, and public exhibitions to showcase traditional and indigenous crop varieties. • Strengthen community and intergenerational knowledge transfer on seed sovereignty and local food cultures. • Zonal seed fairs	• Member networks effectively champion agroecological production systems, resulting in stronger soil health and resilient seed system • Policy reforms initiated or adopted to recognize and support FMSS at national and county levels. • Community seed banks or seed fairs supported to conserve indigenous varieties. • Increased public awareness and positive perception of farmer-managed seeds and indigenous foods, measured through outreach and media visibility.

Strategic Objectives	Key strategies	Expected Outcomes
		Strengthened intergenerational knowledge transfer and community capacity for seed and food sovereignty.
1.4: Promote inclusive Water governance for agroecology transition	- Policy advocacy on water governance - Capacity building	Institutionalized, equitable water-sharing frameworks that guarantee long-term water rights for agro-ecological producers
1.5: To increase transition of farmers from highly hazardous inputs to sustainable agroecological practices	- Expos/foras - Media engagement - Documentation - Capacity building	Increased use and adoption of sustainable bio-input alternatives for agroecology transition



ISFAA Policy and Law TWG meeting

3.4.2. Women and Youth in Agroecology

Kenya's agriculture sector remains critically shaped by inequality. According to the 2022 Kenya Demographic and Health Survey, only 25% of women aged 15-49 own agricultural land, just 3% own land individually, while the majority do so jointly or informally, and 62% of women who own land lack title deeds. Despite women constituting the backbone of food production, they are often excluded from decision-making, access to finance, information, and leadership roles.

At the same time, youth participation in agriculture has declined sharply, from 60.7% in 1995 to 28.5% in 2020, with the youngest age group (18-25) having only 8.1% reporting agriculture as their primary livelihood. These trends underscore the need for strategic intervention to reverse marginalization and build equitable opportunity. Moreover, these inclusion gaps are most pronounced among youth, women, and marginalized groups in rural and ASAL regions, where landlessness, limited access to agricultural inputs, and weak legal protection compound vulnerability. Without deliberate efforts to tackle discriminatory norms and structural barriers, agroecological transitions risk reinforcing existing inequities. Establishing a dedicated women and Youth focus area ensures that PELUM Kenya places equity at the Center of its strategy -empowering women and youth, promoting access to land and finance, and fostering inclusive leadership and innovation in agroecological ecosystems.

Under this strategic focus area, PELUM Kenya seeks to promote the active participation of youth, women, and persons with disabilities (PWDs) in agroecology by addressing barriers such as limited access to land, knowledge, capital, and decision-making spaces. Through capacity building, mentorship, inclusive policy engagement, technology, and structured partnerships, this area will support youth, women, and PWDs-led agroecological enterprises, shift harmful norms, and strengthen inclusive, sustainable food systems.



2025 International Youth Day Celebration in Machakos

Strategic Focus 2: Youth and Women in Agroecology

Goal: To promote equitable participation, leadership, and access to resources for women, youth in agroecological systems

Strategic Objectives	Key strategies	Expected Outcomes
2.1: To fast track and inspire the leadership and active engagement of women & youth in agroecology	• Strengthen the capacity of youth and women led organizations and enterprises through tailored training, mentorship, and enterprise support services. • Strengthen the capacity of youth and women led organizations to engage meaningfully in the agroecology movement and policy dialogue. • Promote inclusive representation of youth and women in agroecology policy spaces. • Advocate for equitable access to land and inputs for youth and women.	• Strengthened institutional commitment to youth and women to leadership in agroecology • Growth of inclusive, youth and women-led agroecological enterprises • Strengthened representation, visibility and influence of youth, women, and PWDs in agroecology policy and governance • Increased access and control to productive land, inputs, and tools for youth and women • Expanded market access for youth- and women-led agroecological products • Improved profitability and sustainability
	• Enhance market, finance, and infrastructure access for youth- and women- led agroecological enterprises. • Sensitize against restrictive norms through inclusive community dialogues. • Facilitate equitable representation and participation of youth and women, in agroecology policy engagement. • Strengthen advocacy for inclusive agroecological food systems by promoting the voice and agency of marginalized groups through transformative social norm change. • Forge strategic alliances with institutions that promote gender equality, youth empowerment, and social inclusion in agriculture • Strengthen leadership capacity of women and youth through mentorship and peer learning. • Promote intergenerational knowledge exchange to enhance inclusive leadership. • Establish inclusive platforms for women and youth to influence policy	• Enhanced visibility and influence of youth, women, and PWDs in agroecology policy and governance • Shifts in attitudes and social norms toward gender equality and youth empowerment in agroecology • Strengthened institutional commitment to inclusive agroecological development • Increased number of women, youth, and PWDs taking up leadership roles in Mos and community structures • Enhanced leadership confidence and participation of women, youth, and PWDs in decision-making spaces • Strengthened representation and influence of marginalized groups in agroecology and policy discourse

Strategic Focus 2: Youth and Women in Agroecology

Goal: To promote equitable participation, leadership, and access to resources for women, youth in agroecological systems

Strategic Objectives	Key strategies	Expected Outcomes
2.2: Leverage digital platforms and innovation for knowledge sharing and engagement	• Strengthen youth engagement through digital learning and networking platforms at zonal and national levels. • Promote the use of digital tools for agroecological marketing, extension, and peer learning. • Collaboration and partnership with women and youth focused institutions	• Improved youth engagement through accessible digital knowledge platforms • Strengthened knowledge exchange and collaboration across the network • Increased use of innovation and ICT in youth and women-led agroecological initiatives
2.3: To increase ownership of resources (land, skills, information, finance, markets) for women and youth in agroecological systems.	• Capacity building • Documentation • Campaigns, dialogues and narrative building	• Enhanced shifts in attitudes and social norms toward gender equality and youth empowerment in AE
2.4: Enhance sustainable income growth and economic resilience of youth and women through agroecological enterprises	• Value chain development • Capacity building • Exhibitions, caravans, learning forums	• Enhanced growth of inclusive, youth and women-led agroecological enterprises

3.4.3. Climate Action

Kenya's smallholder farmers—who produce over 70% of the country's food, face growing threats from the interlinked crises of climate change, land degradation, and biodiversity loss. According to the Kenya Climate Change and Health Strategy 2024–2029, an estimated 6.5 million people are affected by severe droughts each year, with water scarcity disproportionately impacting vulnerable populations, especially in Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs). These climate extremes have led to widespread agricultural losses, livestock deaths, displacement, and resource-based conflicts. Between 2014 and 2018, the Government of Kenya declared a national drought emergency affecting 23 counties, and from 2019 to February 2023, more than 508,000 people were displaced across five counties due to worsening climate conditions. The continued degradation of natural ecosystems further undermines rural livelihoods and food security.

Agroecology presents a transformative solution to these challenges by promoting regenerative, community-led adaptation through nature-based approaches such as integrated pest management (IPM), agroforestry, and soil and water conservation. Soil health is the second largest potential sinker of greenhouse gases. These practices align closely with the National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP) and the National Agroecology Strategy (2024), both of which emphasize climate-resilient agriculture and ecosystem restoration. PELUM Kenya is well-positioned to lead in this space, leveraging its strong grassroots presence to promote farmer-led innovations, enhance climate governance, and advance sustainable livelihoods. This strategic theme will strengthen the adaptive capacity of smallholder farmers and pastoralist communities while contributing meaningfully to Kenya's national climate resilience goals. Climate justice campaigns and advocacy measures will be undertaken from a local to global level calling for the urgent recognition of agroecology as a climate resilient pathway.



Desertification training in Laikipia targeting MOs from ASALs and Pastoral Communities, 2025

Strategic Focus 3: Climate Action

Goal: To strengthen and advocate for the adaptive capacity of communities to climate change through agroecological and ecosystem-based approaches

Strategic Objectives	Key strategies	Expected Outcomes
3.1: Strengthen the network capacity on climate resilience	• Documentation, publication and scaling up of climate resilience best practices • Organize campaigns that are geared towards enhancing agroecological practices adoption for resilience • Capacity building of network members on climate resilience practices through workshops, exchange visits on soil health, rangeland management, climate resilience etc • Hold zonal level climate caravans • Document indigenous and cultural practices that deepen climate resilience and environmental action • Campaigns on climate justice and climate finance	• Restored ecosystems with improved soil health and biodiversity • Enhanced agroecological practices adoption and resilience • Enhanced capacity of MOs on climate resilience • Enhanced accessibility to indigenous knowledge on climate resilience • Increased public awareness and mobilization on climate justice and equitable access to climate finance.
3.2: To influence implementation of Climate Financing policies/programmes and plans among smallholder farmers, pastoralists and fisherfolks	• Strengthen stakeholder capacity on agroecology principles that enhance climate resilience. • Engage in climate justice forums to advocate for agroecological solutions. • Leverage public mobilization platforms(caravans) to advance awareness and action on agroecology and climate resilience. • Hold learning and exchange forums for pastoral communities on climate resilience • Establish demonstration plots and learning sites to showcase the best Sustainable Land Management practices in the arid and semi-arid areas	• Increased uptake of climate-resilient practices and technologies among farmers • Strengthened local food systems through adaptive and sustainable production methods • Improved rangeland and pasture management among pastoralist communities • Increased resilience of pastoral livelihoods to climate variability

Strategic Focus 3: Climate Action

Goal: To strengthen and advocate for the adaptive capacity of communities to climate change through agroecological and ecosystem-based approaches

Strategic Objectives	Key strategies	Expected Outcomes
3.3: Advocate for climate justice and social governance through multi-level engagement and advocacy	• Engage in local, national, regional and international climate fora • Support and advocate for the development and review of County and national level climate change policies and processes such as FLoCCA, NDCS, NAIPS • Document Indigenous knowledge on climate change mitigation and adaptation practices, ensuring such practices are integrated into learning and policy advocacy. • Collaboration and partnership building with relevant climate change institutions • Facilitate pre and post UNFCCC COP meetings and support the Country position	• Increased equitable participation of Member Organizations in climate-related decision making • Improved MOs accountability and governance in climate and natural resource management • Enhanced commitment by member institutions to adopt and champion sustainable water conservation practices and catchment management.
3.4: To promote use of renewable energy and energy-saving technologies	• Capacity Building for communities • Support clean energy savings technologies	• Improved use of renewable energy sources

3.4.4. Market Development

Market development for agroecological products is a critical theme for PELUM Kenya's strategy, given the systemic barriers that limit the economic viability of agroecological farming. Most Member Organizations struggle with limited access to structured markets, weak aggregation systems, and minimal capacity for value addition—factors that restrict farmers from earning fair returns on ecological produce (PENELI IV Baseline Study, 2022). In Kenya, post-harvest losses for perishable products like fruits and vegetables reach up to 30% due to inadequate storage, handling, and processing infrastructure (FAO, 2021). Furthermore, a study by Biovision and IFOAM (2020) highlights the lack of supportive policies, including the exclusion of agroecological produce from public procurement systems and limited recognition of alternative certification schemes like Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS). Despite growing consumer interest in healthy and sustainable food, awareness and demand for agroecological products remain low, as shown in KOAN's market trend reports (2020–2022).

Without deliberate investment in digital marketing platforms, policy advocacy, value addition, and consumer education, agroecological producers will remain marginalized in Kenya's agri-food economy. Institutionalizing market development as a standalone theme positions PELUM Kenya to tackle these bottlenecks, unlock economic incentives for ecological production, and drive a just transition to sustainable food systems. PELUM Kenya recognises the importance of local markets in enhancing agro-ecological principles such as culture and food traditions, and also cushioning farmers from systemic infrastructure challenges and related climate emissions associated with long value chains while enhancing the human right to food. PELUM Kenya has in the past, successfully supported local markets for agroecological products and will scale up local territorial markets. This is the pillar that will focus on capacity building of alternative bio inputs.

This thematic area will focus on the food system approach and will work on the value chain from production to marketing. Soil health and seed systems and alternative bioindustry will form a central part of its interventions. PELUM Kenya's focus in this area aims to empower farmers by enhancing their capacity to develop high-quality products, engage in competitive markets, and access business development services. Through a combination of training, certification, consumer awareness, digital platforms and enterprise incubation, the strategy promotes the commercialization of agroecological produce including indigenous foods. These efforts contribute to increased incomes, cultural preservation and environmentally sustainable food systems.



Culinary skills demo on ensuring zero waste from agroecological produce

Strategic Focus 4: Market Development

Goal: To increase access to structured, fair, and diverse markets for agroecological products that ensure better incomes and food sovereignty for producers

Strategic Objectives	Key strategies	Expected Outcomes
4.1: Enhanced network capacity on territorial market development and food systems	• Strengthen the capacity of Member Organizations in market-oriented agroecological production and compliance with food safety standards • Build business and marketing skills across the network. • Facilitate linkages with local markets and buyer groups. • Support MOs to promote farmer-managed seed systems for adaptive indigenous varieties. • Strengthen agroecological value chains through circular economy training, and support for aggregation, processing, and packaging. Advocate for PGS and alternative • certifications to enhance market access and consumer trust. Capacity building network on alternative bio inputs including • seed systems. Build a network of Trainers of Trainers (ToTs) within member • organizations to scale up capacity on agroecological practices. Facilitate inter-member exchange and learning visits to high-per- • forming agroecological enterprises and innovation hubs. Documentation and profiling of local territorial markets	• Increased capacity of member organizations to support producers in meeting market demands. • Enhanced participation of member organizations in promoting territorial markets. • Improved capacity of member organizations to assure quality, traceability, and consumer trust in agroecological products. • Increased market recognition and competitiveness of the network's products.
4.2:: Enhanced accessibility of bio-input for agroecological transition	• Capacity building • Bio inputs production enterprises • Research and documentation • Trade fairs and exhibitions	• Increased availability, adoption, and commercialization of quality bio-inputs through strengthened research, documentation, certification, and market access systems.
4.3: Expand market opportunities through structured linkages, incubation, enterprise development and advocacy.	• Promote market access and knowledge exchange through trade fairs, farmer buyer forums, and cross-learning visits. • Advocate for policies that recognize and support local market systems.	• Strengthened market systems and new market pathways for producers • Increased number of viable agroecological enterprises. • Evidence-based programming and decision-making.

Strategic Objectives	Key strategies	Expected Outcomes
	• Hold campaigns that support local territorial markets e.g. My Food is Kenyan campaigns • Conduct participatory market research studies and consumer surveys. • Strengthen market intelligence systems to track and disseminate trends in agroecological products • Document successful enterprises and market development interventions • Increase public awareness and engagement in agroecology. • Organize interactive consumer –producer events. • Develop educational materials on the value of agroecological foods.	• Informed policies that support inclusive market development • Increased public knowledge and appreciation of agroecology • Higher consumer demand for sustainable and healthy food options.
4.4: Promote production and consumption of agroecological products	• Capacity building and awareness creation • Agroecological demonstration farms • School feeding programmes • Agroecological expos, fairs and campaigns	• Increased consumer awareness and demand for agroecology and enhanced adoption of sustainable agroecological and circular economy practices

3.4.5. Institutional Capacity Strengthening

Institutional strengthening is critical for PELUM Kenya to enhance its effectiveness as a network of over 68 Member Organizations (MOs) working across all the 47 counties to promote agroecology and sustainable land use. As documented in the PENELI IV Baseline Study (2022), many of PELUM Kenya's MOs face institutional capacity gaps, including limited capacity in monitoring and evaluation, weak internal governance structures, and inadequate systems for knowledge management and resource mobilization. Additionally, the PANORAMA case study on PELUM Kenya's zonal networking model highlights the need for stronger coordination mechanisms and peer learning structures to maximize synergy across the network. Strengthening institutional systems at both the Secretariat and member levels will enable the network to operate more cohesively, attract and manage resources more effectively, and influence agroecological policy and practice at both national and county levels for smooth efficiency and sustainability. Investing in governance, digital systems, staff development, and communication will thus be essential for scaling impact and sustaining PELUM Kenya's leadership in the agroecology movement in Kenya.

Under this strategic focus area PELUM Kenya aims to strengthen both the PELUM Kenya Secretariat and its network of MOs to operate more effectively and sustainably. It will focus on improving internal systems such as human resources, finance and monitoring and evaluation; enhancing staff skills and digitizing operations to improve efficiency. The Secretariat will build its capacity in fundraising, communication, and partnership development to ensure long-term sustainability. At the network level, the focus will be on strengthening the governance, leadership, and operational capacity of MOs through targeted training, mentorship by stronger MOs, joint initiatives, and knowledge-sharing. These efforts will enable both the Secretariat and MOs to better support agroecology and advocacy work at the grassroots level.

Strategic Focus 5: Institutional Capacity Strengthening

Goal: To build a resilient and well-governed network capable of effectively delivering agroecological initiatives and influencing change

Strategic Objectives	Key strategies	Expected Outcomes
5.1: Strengthen institutional governance, operational systems and human resource capacities of the Secretariat	• Enhance staff capacity building in core operational and technical areas • Strengthen institutional policies and systems in human resources, finance, sub-grants, and operations to enhance organizational efficiency and accountability. • Skill set analysis and annual job description reviews • Strengthen HR unit and performance management systems • Digitalization of operations (HR, finance, M&E) • Review overheads policy and develop a sustainability strategy • Strengthen governance system and hold Annual General Meetings and Board meetings	• Strengthened institutional systems for efficient service delivery • Improved staff productivity and competencies • Functional, well-resourced HR unit • Digitized and efficient operations • Better managed institutional costs • Long-term financial sustainability spaces

Strategic Objectives	Key strategies	Expected Outcomes
5.2: Strengthen knowledge management, research, innovation and evidence-based programming	• Develop knowledge management platforms and tools • Strengthen M&E systems, tools and digital platforms • Link reporting frameworks to national, regional and global agendas (e.g., SDGs) • Promote research and innovation for informed decision-making	• Functional knowledge management systems that support internal learning and innovation • Improved documentation and use of evidence for programming and advocacy • Strengthened M&E capacity across the Secretariat and MOs • Organizational reporting aligned with global development goals and frameworks
5.3: Strengthen resource mobilization, communication, visibility, and strategic partnerships	• Develop and implement resource mobilization strategy • Enhance staff capacity in fund-raising and donor engagement through targeted training and performance appraisal. • Develop and roll out a communication and visibility strategy • Strengthen social media and digital presence • Build partnerships and participate in key local, regional, and international forums • Engage high-level champions to influence policy and funding spaces	• Diversified funding sources and improved financial sustainability • Increased organizational visibility and engagement with wider audiences • Enhanced staff capacity in proposal development and donor engagement • Stronger partnerships for joint programming and advocacy • Improved influence in policy and resource mobilization spaces
5.4: Vibrant PELUM Kenya network for effective service delivery	• Build MO capacity in governance, leadership, M&E, financial and resource mobilization • Promote joint programming, exchange visits, and learning platforms among MOs • Strengthen Member Organizations through regular Organizational Capacity Assessments (OCAs) and targeted capacity development support. • Review and strengthen zonal networking structures • Develop and roll out the PELUM Kenya Academy with modular and virtual content • Develop MO recruitment and retention strategy	• Strengthened institutional capacity of Mos • Improved governance and leadership within MOs • Increased collaboration, learning and cohesion among MOs • Functional zonal structures providing localized support and coordination • Improved grassroots delivery of agroecology through empowered and capable MOs

3.5. Aligning with National, Regional and Global Frameworks

PELUM Kenya's 2026–2030 Strategic Plan is anchored in and contributes to key national, regional, and global development frameworks that promote sustainable agriculture, food systems transformation, environmental conservation, and socio-economic inclusion.

At the national level, the strategy aligns with the aspirations of the Agricultural Sector Transformation and Growth Strategy (ASTGS) 2019–2029, which emphasizes farmer commercialization, market access, and sustainable land use. It also supports the implementation of the Kenya Climate Smart Agriculture Strategy (2017–2026) by advancing agroecological practices that build resilience, enhance biodiversity, and reduce emissions. In addition, the plan is aligned with county and national agroecology strategies and policies such as Kenya's National Agroecology Strategy for Food System Transformation (nas-FST) 2024 – 2033, which seeks to institutionalize agroecology as a pathway to sustainable food systems, climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, and inclusive rural livelihoods. The plan further complements county-level agricultural development action plans and policies that prioritize climate adaptation, nutrition-sensitive agriculture, and inclusive value chains.

At the regional level, the strategy is aligned to the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) under the African Union's Agenda2063 echoed in the recent Kampala CAADP Declaration,2025 which advocates for sustainable food systems, inclusive rural transformation, and increased investment in ecological agriculture. The plan also supports the East African Community (EAC) Vision 2050, particularly in promoting sustainable natural resource management and regional trade in ecological products.

Globally, the strategy contributes to the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly SDG 1(No Poverty), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), SDG 13 (Climate Action), and SDG 15 (Life on Land). The plan is also in line with the emerging priorities of the UN Food Systems Transformation Pathways, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). By aligning with these frameworks, PELUM Kenya positions itself and its Member Organizations as critical actors in driving agroecological transformation that is locally rooted and globally responsive.



PELUM Kenya staff meeting in 2025 at SACDEP Kenya.



Farmers preparing to exhibit variety of agricultural products in the 2nd Agroecology Symposium

CHAPTER FOUR: GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT AND CORDINATION

4.1. Introduction

During the 2026–2030 strategic period, PELUM Kenya will uphold a robust governance and coordination structure rooted in participatory leadership, transparency, accountability, and shared learning. The network's institutional effectiveness will continue to be anchored in its Member Organizations (MOs), with the Annual General Assembly serving as the highest decision-making body. Governance and oversight functions will be executed by the Country Board of Directors, while the Secretariat will lead in strategy implementation, coordination, and operational management. To ensure responsiveness, coherence, and grassroots engagement, the network will continue to leverage its four zonal structures and strengthen internal systems that facilitate timely communication, joint planning, and knowledge sharing across the network. This structure is designed to reinforce collective ownership, institutional resilience, and alignment across all levels of the network. The network will align itself to the PELUM Association regional structures while upholding its country constitution.

4.2. Governance and Organization Structure

The Annual General Assembly will remain the supreme policy and decision-making body, composed of all Member Organizations (MOs), and will meet annually to review strategic progress and set policy direction. The Country Board of Directors, elected by the Annual General Assembly, will provide oversight and strategic guidance to the Secretariat, ensuring representation of the diverse regions and thematic areas within the network. The Secretariat, led by the Country Coordinator, who will be responsible for executing board decisions, coordinating program implementation, and ensuring alignment with the strategic plan. To enhance operational effectiveness, the Secretariat will operate through technical units including Programmes, Finance and Administration, Monitoring & Evaluation, and Communications. PELUM Kenya will also strengthen its collaboration with county governments and regional platforms through decentralized coordination frameworks to enhance grassroots ownership and alignment with devolved structures. See Annex 1 for a detailed organogram.

Additionally, PELUM Kenya will deepen its engagement with the PELUM Regional Association, ensuring strategic alignment with regional priorities, contributing to cross-country learning, and participating in governance processes at the regional level. This relationship will enhance policy influence, shared advocacy, and institutional coherence across the PELUM network in Eastern, Central, Southern Africa and behold. Lastly, thematic Working Committees will be set up for each thematic area with expertise drawn within and outside the network to support the implementation of the strategy.

4.3. Strategy Implementation and Responsibilities

Effective implementation of this Strategic Plan will rely on clearly defined roles and collaboration among various actors within the PELUM Kenya network. Governance, coordination, and execution will be guided by a structured system that promotes accountability, participation, and synergy across all levels. Each actor, from the Annual General Assembly to grassroots MOs will play a distinct and complementary role in delivering the strategic objectives. The table below outlines the implementation framework.

Table 4: Roles and Responsibilities per implementing actor

Actor	Key Roles and Responsibilities
Annual General Assembly	- Serve as the highest decision-making body of the network. - Review and approve the strategic direction and policies. - Elect Board members and receive annual reports and audits. - Uphold network values and foster collective accountability.
Country Board of Directors	- Provide governance oversight and strategic guidance. - Approve operational plans, budgets, and performance reports. - Monitor compliance with policies, legal, and financial obligations. - Support resource mobilization and strategic partnerships.
PELUM Kenya Secretariat	- Lead day-to-day coordination and implementation of the Strategic Plan. - Offer technical support, facilitate M&E, and ensure reporting. - Mobilize financial and technical resources. - Represent the network in national, regional, and global engagements.
Zonal Steering Committee	- Provides strategic leadership and direction for zonal projects implementation - Strengthen coordination, collaboration and knowledge sharing among MOs and key stakeholders in the zones. - Oversee zonal programmes progress, and ensure accountability for results - Promotes zones advocacy and policy engagements - Supports resource mobilization and sustainability of initiatives implemented
Thematic Working Committees	- Support peer learning, innovation, and technical knowledge sharing. - Contribute to program design, policy dialogues, and review processes. - Facilitate collaboration among MOs working in similar thematic areas.

Actor	Key Roles and Responsibilities
Member Organizations (MOs)	- Implement field-level activities in line with the Strategic Plan as may be necessary -Engage with farmers, communities, and county stakeholders. -Collect and share grassroots data, success stories, and lessons. - Participate in planning, reflection, and capacity building forums.
Partners and Stakeholders	- Support implementation through funding, technical assistance, cocreation and collaboration. - Participate in multi-stakeholder platforms and policy processes. - Contribute to research, innovation, and knowledge sharing

4.4. Risk Analysis and Mitigation Measures

PELUM Kenya acknowledges that the successful delivery of its 2026–2030 Strategic Plan depends on proactive identification and management of internal and external risks. Key threats include staff turnover, weak internal systems, climate shocks, shifting policies, economic instability, and exclusion of youth and women. To address these, PELUM Kenya will implement a risk-informed planning approach, embedding regular risk assessments, internal controls, and scenario planning into its operations. Strengthening governance, financial capacity, and resilience-building across the network will be prioritized. Additionally, the organization will enhance advocacy to safeguard enabling environments and diversify funding through innovative financing models to ensure long-term sustainability. The matrix below summarizes the major risks and mitigation strategies

Table 5: Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Strategic Implication	Risk Mitigation Measures
Internal Risks				
1. Reduced participation or disengagement of member organizations may weaken the network's impact.	Medium	High	Emphasizes the need for co-created, relevant programs and sustained member engagement to maintain network cohesion and legitimacy.	Regular engagement, tailored support, and incentives to maintain relevance
2. Weak Monitoring, Evaluation, and Knowledge Management (MEKM) systems may undermine learning, accountability, and informed decision-making.	Medium	High	Signals the need for a robust MEKM framework to enable adaptive management, strategic learning, and evidence-based decision-making.	Build MEL staff capacity, update tools, establish documentation systems, and improve data use and dissemination..
External Risks				
1. legal frameworks may not prioritize agroecology, or may be influenced by powerful multinational actors.	Medium	High	Reinforces the urgency of sustained policy advocacy and alliance-building to protect and elevate agroecology in national agendas.	Policy co-creation, continuous lobbying, and strategic alliances with decision-makers.
2. Increased frequency of climate shocks and environmental degradation may disrupt agroecological production systems.	High	High	Positions climate resilience as a core strategic theme, requiring program innovation and resource mobilization.	Promote climate-resilient practices and adaptation strategies such as agroecology.

Table 5: Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Strategic Implication	Risk Mitigation Measures
External Risks				
3. Over-reliance on donor funding may threaten the sustainability of policy and advocacy efforts.	High	High	Highlights the urgency of diversifying funding models to enhance institutional sustainability and program continuity.	Diversify funding sources through foundations, consortia, and innovative financing.
4. Cultural and societal norms (Structural barriers) restricting young women's engagement in agro-based enterprises	High	High	Positions gender norm transformation as essential for inclusive enterprise development and youth empowerment.	Entrenched gender norms limit young women's ability to participate in or lead agroecology enterprises.

CHAPTER FIVE: BUDGET AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

5.1. Resource Requirements

Implementing the PELUM Kenya Strategic Plan requires a clear commitment of financial resources aligned with the strategic priorities, implementation approaches, and programme activities outlined in the strategy. The Resource Mobilization Strategy aims to ensure a coordinated, predictable, and sustainable approach to mobilizing and managing resources to support implementation of the Strategic Plan. This includes strengthening partnerships with development partners, expanding funding sources, and enhancing internal systems for financial management, accountability, and reporting.

The resource mobilization focus for the 2026–2030 period builds on lessons from previous strategy implementation, existing donor relationships, and emerging opportunities in agroecology, climate action, and food systems transformation. Based on these projections, **PELUM Kenya will require approximately KES 2,290.4B** to implement the Strategic Plan across the five strategic focus areas. To meet achieve the budgets , PELUM Kenya will diversify its funding base, strengthen strategic partnerships, and enhance fundraising capacity across the network, including zonal structures and Member Organizations. The organization will also prioritize strong donor engagement, transparent financial stewardship, and efficient use of resources.

Table 6: Budget and Financial Projections for 2026-2030

Strategic Focus Areas	Strategic Objective	Years				Total	
		2026	2027	2028	2029		2030
1. Advocacy & Policy Influence	1.1 Advocate for enabling policies and increased investment on agroecology at national and county levels	66,251,000	66,251,000	66,251,000	91,563,401	100,419,729	416,590,220
	1.2 Promote evidence-based research, data generation, and knowledge sharing to inform policy and practice	6,528,500	6,528,500	6,528,500	12,724,744	12,168,218	55,280,396
	1.3 Promote and advocate for the conservation and protection of farmer-managed seeds (FMS), food systems, and traditional knowledge	6,487,000	6,487,000	6,487,000	21,391,502	13,874,777	75,161,299
	1.4 Promote inclusive Water governance for agroecology transition	3,743,100	3,743,100	3,743,100	8,247,966	7,330,363	32,326,990
	1.5 To increase transition of farmers from Highly Hazardous inputs to sustainable agroecological practices	3,293,100	3,293,100	3,293,100	5,967,116	5,673,928	24,756,205
	Sub - total	86,302,700	86,302,700	86,302,700	139,894,729	139,467,015	604,115,110
2. Women and Youth in Agroecology	2.1 To fast track and inspire the leadership and active engagement of women & youth in agroecology	63,333,000	63,333,000	63,333,000	72,538,012	74,189,054	340,561,890
	2.2 To leverage digital platforms and innovation for knowledge sharing and engagement	8,939,000	8,939,000	8,939,000	10,348,010	9,990,246	46,968,653
	2.3 To increase ownership of resources (land, skills, information, finance, markets) for women and youth in agroecological systems	16,625,000	16,625,000	16,625,000	19,245,516	20,207,791	91,863,620
	2.4 Enhanced sustainable income growth and economic resilience of youth and women through agroecological enterprises	19,180,000	19,180,000	19,180,000	22,203,248	23,313,410	105,981,607
	Sub-total	108,077,000	108,077,000	108,077,000	124,334,785	127,700,501	585,375,770
3.Climate Action	3.1. To strengthen the network capacity on climate resilience and adaptation	24,760,000	24,760,000	24,760,000	24,760,000	24,760,000	123,800,000
	3.2. To influence implementation of Climate Financing policies/programmes and plans	8,100,000	8,100,000	8,100,000	8,100,000	6,500,000	38,900,000
	3.3. Advocate for climate justice and social governance through multi-level engagement and advocacy	14,900,000	14,800,000	14,900,000	15,600,000	14,900,000	75,100,000

Table 6: Budget and Financial Projections for 2026-2030

Strategic Focus Areas	Strategic Objective	Years					Total
		2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	
	3.4: To promote use of renewable energy and energy-saving technologies	7,600,000	7,600,000	7,600,000	7,600,000	7,600,000	38,000,000
	Sub - total	55,360,000	55,260,000	55,360,000	56,060,000	53,760,000	275,800,000
4. Market Development	4.1 Enhanced capacity of PELUM Kenya Network on territorial market development and food systems	29,932,700	31,429,336	33,000,805	34,650,843	36,383,383	165,397,063
	4.2. Enhanced accessibility of bio-input for agroecological transition	30,609,000	32,139,450	33,746,427	35,433,746	37,205,431	169,134,047
	4.3 Expand market opportunities through structured linkages, incubation, enterprise development and advocacy	22,127,000	23,233,350	24,395,019	25,614,771	26,895,505	122,265,642
	4.4. Promote production and consumption of agroecological products	17,492,000	18,366,600	19,284,931	20,249,177	21,261,635	96,654,342
	Sub - total	100,160,700	105,168,736	110,427,182	115,948,537	121,745,954	553,451,094
5. Institutional Capacity Strengthening	5.1 To strengthen institutional systems, governance, and human resource capacities of the Secretariat	8,630,000	8,038,000	8,646,800	10,232,480	10,235,728	45,783,008
	5.2 To enhance knowledge management, research, innovation and evidence-based programming	9,130,000	13,019,000	12,389,950	12,100,248	11,199,310	57,838,507
	5.3 To strengthen resource mobilization, communication, visibility, and strategic partnership	8,600,000	8,600,000	8,600,000	8,600,000	8,600,000	43,000,000
	5.4 To strengthen capacity of MOs	21,650,000	22,060,000	25,346,000	26,125,600	29,818,160	124,999,760
	Sub - total	48,010,000	51,717,000	54,982,750	57,058,328	59,853,198	271,621,275
	Total	397,910,400	440,145,626	456,484,193	493,296,378	502,526,668	2,290,363,265

5.2. Resource Mobilization Strategies

To achieve sustainable financing for the 2026–2030 strategy period, PELUM Kenya will implement resource mobilization strategies aimed at enhancing financial resilience, reducing overreliance on restricted donor funding and ensuring flexibility in responding to emerging priorities. The aim will be to achieve diversified funding, strengthening donor relationships, and enhancing fundraising capacity at the zonal level. The following strategies will be applied:

- **Expanding funding sources:**
Prioritize diversifying the funding base by engaging a broader mix of own funds, donors and growing unrestricted income streams to enable flexibility in responding to emerging priorities and supporting core functions.
- **Strategic partnerships and collaboration:**
Strengthen public and private partnerships to support joint programming, co-funding, and knowledge exchange to enhance resource mobilization, expand reach, and increase the organization's influence.
- **Strengthening financial autonomy and fundraising capacity of zonal structures:**
The capacity of Zonal staff and MOs on proposal development, partnership engagement and financial planning shall be enhanced to empower them to design and lead resource mobilization initiatives tailored to their regional contexts.
- **Strengthening donor engagement and retention:**
Maintain regular visibility and engagement with current and potential donors through continuous communication and reporting on impact. This will help build strong, trust-based relationships and ensure long-term donor commitment.
- **Enhancing financial stewardship and internal efficiency:**
Strengthen internal financial systems and adopt cost-effective implementation approaches to maximize the impact of available resources. Consistent reporting of results and prudent resource use will reinforce donor confidence and position the PELUM Kenya as a transparent and accountable partner.

CHAPTER SIX: MONITORING EVALUATION REPORTING AND LEARNING (MERL)

6.1. Introduction

Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, and Learning (MERL) are central to PELUM Kenya's commitment to accountability, continuous improvement, and strategic effectiveness. The MERL system enables evidence-based decision-making, fosters adaptive management, and facilitates the documentation and communication of results to stakeholders. Anchored in participatory principles, digital innovation, and alignment with national, regional, and global frameworks, MERL will serve as a key enabler of strategic delivery during the 2026–2030 period.

The MERL strategy provides a comprehensive framework for tracking progress towards the strategic goal and objectives, aligned with the five strategic themes of this plan. It is designed to monitor inputs and resources, assess the implementation of activities and outputs, and measure outcome-level results and long-term impact. The framework will also support systematic data collection, analysis, and reflection across all levels of the network, enhancing the capacity for adaptive learning, accountability, and evidence-informed programming.

6.2. Levels of Monitoring

PELUM Kenya will monitor this Strategic Plan at three key levels to ensure effective implementation, learning, and accountability. At the organizational level, monitoring will focus on tracking progress toward the overall goals using high-level indicators. At the programme and project level, the focus will be on measuring the results of specific activities, such as those related to natural resources, climate action, training, and market development. At the community level, Member Organizations and local groups, including farmers and pastoralists, will take part in giving feedback and tracking progress through participatory processes. This approach helps ensure that the plan stays relevant, inclusive, and responsive to real needs. Monitoring will cover three main areas: outcomes (long-term change), outputs (short-term results), and processes (how well activities are delivered, including participation, timeliness, and quality)

6.2.1. Outcome level Monitoring

Outcome level monitoring will primarily be conducted by the MERL Desk on an annual basis and by external experts at the midline and endline of the strategic plan period. This level of monitoring will assess changes in knowledge, attitudes, practices, and broader systemic transformations among programme participants and the communities served. It will also examine the extent to which the overall objectives of the strategic plan have been achieved and how the interventions have improved the lives of Member Organizations (MOs) and their target communities. The monitoring will generate evidence of both direct impacts on beneficiaries and wider ripple effects that contribute to societal

transformation. Tools such as the Most Significant Change (MSC) stories will be used to capture and share success stories for learning and dissemination. To strengthen attribution, outcome mapping will be adopted to link observed changes in beneficiaries to the specific interventions implemented. This will involve the unique identification of project beneficiaries and analysis of trends across outcome indicators. Robust tools will be developed to track changes in the lives of direct beneficiaries as well as the multiplier effects experienced by indirect beneficiaries.

6.2.2. Output level Monitoring

Output level monitoring will be conducted on a quarterly basis, primarily by thematic leads responsible for each strategic focus area. This monitoring will assess the extent to which planned activities and deliverables have been implemented, with particular focus on tracking the number of direct and indirect beneficiaries reached. Tools such as activity monitoring logs, activity reports, and field assessment reports will be used to collect data on the type of activities undertaken and the reach of each intervention. This process will help the organization measure progress against output indicators, ensure timely delivery, and generate insights for adaptive management across programme areas.

6.2.3. Process Level Monitoring

Process level monitoring will be undertaken by all staff to assess the quality and effectiveness of day-to-day implementation processes. This will involve reviewing the content and delivery of services to ensure alignment with project documents and planned outputs. Quarterly review meetings among project staff will be used to evaluate whether services delivered to beneficiaries adequately cover the intended topics and respond to identified needs. In addition to programmatic monitoring, financial monitoring will be conducted by the PELUM Kenya Finance Team, particularly in cases where sub-grants to Member Organizations are involved. Prior to project implementation, baseline studies will be conducted to establish benchmarks for measuring progress, alongside needs assessments to identify priority areas for Member Organizations and project beneficiaries especially with regard to capacity building. Process monitoring will also examine the relationship between budget allocations and performance, using Value for Money (VfM) analysis to assess efficiency and effectiveness. Activities will be reviewed to confirm alignment with project budgets, and brainstorming sessions among project teams will serve as a key mechanism for internal reflection and learning. Reports generated through this process will inform continuous improvement, and a mid-term review of the Strategic Plan will be conducted in 2028 to assess progress toward the set goals and overall performance.

6.3. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Strategy

PELUM Kenya's M&E strategy is grounded in participatory, inclusive, and results-based management principles. It is designed to support evidence-based decision making, promote learning, and enhance transparency and accountability across the network. The strategy employs a combination of continuous, real time data collection, periodic reviews, and active engagement of stakeholders ensuring that programme performance is regularly assessed and adjusted as needed. Innovative tools such as mobile data collection and data visualization platforms will be used to increase efficiency, improve data accuracy, and facilitate timely reporting and decision making.

As a network, PELUM Kenya recognizes that effective M&E is fundamental to the successful implementation of this Strategic Plan. The integration of M&E is guided by several core assumptions: (a) M&E supports project managers, partners, and donors in understanding the extent to which programmes are achieving intended objectives and generating desired outcomes; (b) it enhances transparency and accountability in the use of resources-financial, human, and material; (c) it provides accurate and timely information that gives implementers a clear view of the status of interventions; (d) it helps identify good practices and lessons from operational experiences that can be applied to improve programme performance; and (e) it offers strategic direction for the design of future programmes and projects.

Throughout the implementation period, the M&E system will be guided by key principles including results-based management, participatory approaches, gender-responsive monitoring, and digital integration. The core components of the MERL strategy will include: continuous real time data collection; periodic review and reporting (quarterly, annually, midline, and endline); use of digital tools and platforms for data management and visualization; continuous capacity building for staff, Member Organizations, and partners in M&E best practices; integration of indigenous and local knowledge systems; and cross-sectoral application of MERL processes across all strategic focus areas to support holistic learning and adaptation.

6.4. MERL Framework

PELUM Kenya's MERL framework is aligned with global and regional standards, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, and relevant continental development agendas. The framework follows a logical results chain that links inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts, focusing on contribution rather than attribution. Emphasis is placed on outcome-level indicators that reflect behavioural, systemic, and community-level changes, while fostering continuous learning, adaptation, and evidence-based programming. The Country Coordinator holds overall responsibility for the administration and implementation of the Strategic Plan, under the direct oversight of the Board of Directors.

The coordinator is supported by the MERL unit/officer, Head of Programmes, thematic leads, programme officers, and other PELUM Kenya staff to ensure coordinated and effective execution of the strategy.

To ensure a smooth and effective MERL process, the following strategies will be adopted:

- The Head of Programmes, MERL unit/officer, and thematic leads, with support from the finance team, will develop annual operational plans outlining activities, budgets, indicators, and means of verification (MoVs).
- The Head of Programmes and MERL unit/officer will coordinate with programme staff to track and report on progress against these operational plans on a quarterly basis, assessing project performance and outputs.
- Thematic leads and programme officers will continuously monitor their respective areas of implementation and submit quarterly progress reports to the Head of Programmes, who will compile comprehensive reports for submission to the Country Coordinator and/or Board of Directors.
- Quarterly and annual review and reflection meetings will be held between programme and finance teams to assess progress and jointly develop forward-looking operational plans aligned with reviewed outcomes.
- The Head of Programmes, together with the MERL unit/officer and finance team, will prepare an annual report capturing financial performance, programmatic achievements, lessons learned, and key challenges encountered during implementation. This report will be disseminated to stakeholders and partners.

At the end of the strategic period, an external consultant will be engaged to conduct an independent impact assessment of the Strategic Plan's implementation and to support the development of the next strategic plan based on the findings and recommendations.

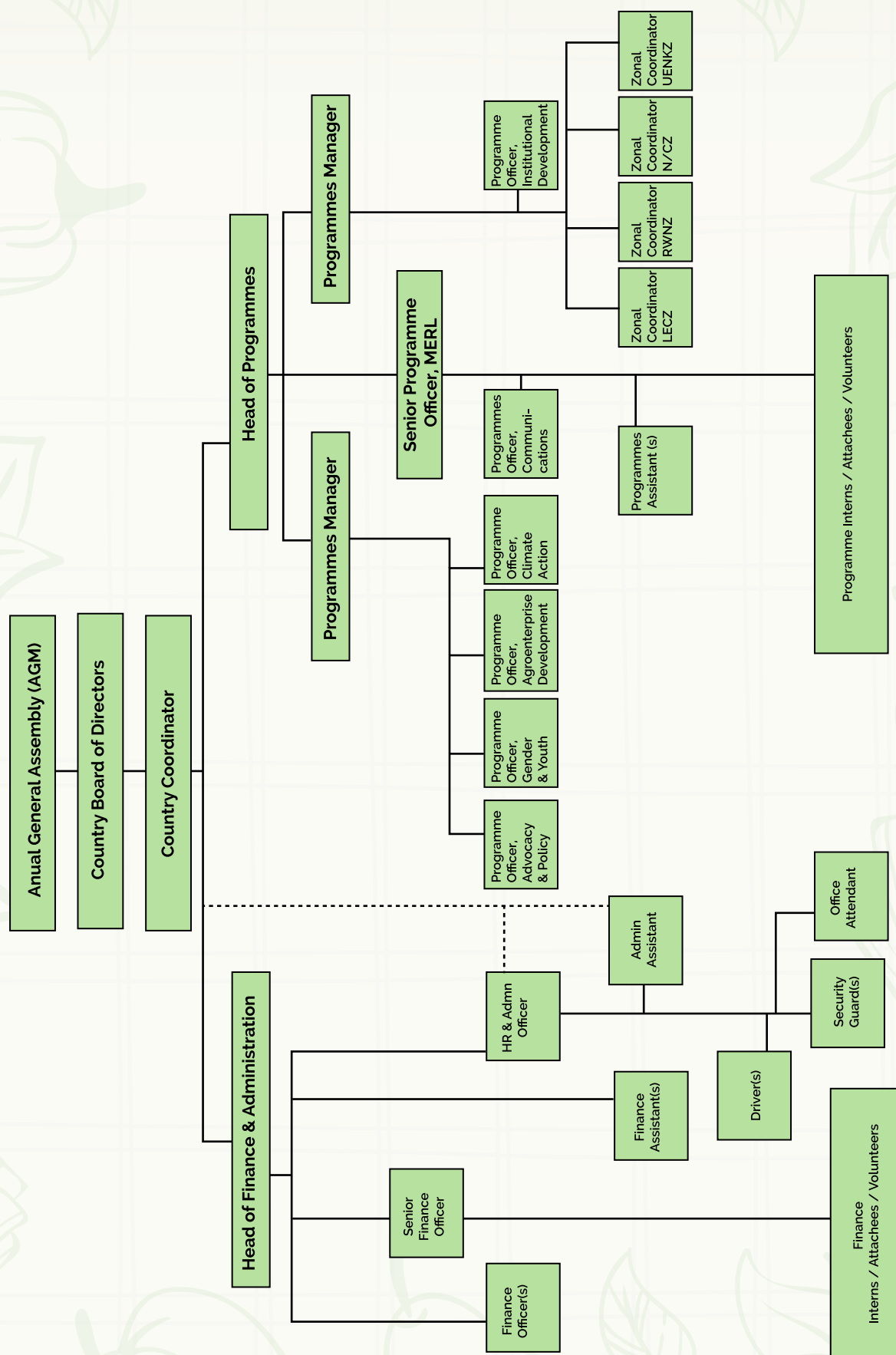
6.5. Monitoring and Implementation Framework

PELUM Kenya recognizes the importance of systematic monitoring and evaluation at the programme level to effectively track implementation progress, assess outputs, and measure programme effectiveness. The M&E matrix serves as a practical tool to translate the Strategic Plan into measurable and actionable components. It provides a detailed, activity-specific framework that links strategic objectives to clear indicators, data sources, responsible actors, and timelines. This matrix operationalizes the strategy by ensuring that each effort is results-driven, measurable, and aligned with the overall organizational goals. It enhances accountability and learning across all levels of implementation. The matrix outlines key indicators for each of the result areas around which the strategic theme objectives are organized (refer to Annex 2 for the full framework). Monitoring and Implementation Results Framework is a core component of PELUM Kenya's Strategic Plan. It provides a structured and results-oriented mechanism for tracking progress, assessing performance, and informing strategic decision making across all levels of implementation.

The framework outlines clear linkages between the strategic objectives, thematic focus areas, and expected results, supported by defined indicators, baselines, targets, and timelines. It enables the systematic collection and analysis of data to monitor inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts. Through regular reporting, reflection, and learning processes at both the Secretariat and MOs levels, the framework ensures timely feedback, accountability, and adaptive management. It also facilitates the aggregation of results across thematic areas, allowing the network to demonstrate its collective contribution to agroecological transformation, community resilience, and inclusive development. This integrated results framework strengthens organizational effectiveness, enhances transparency to stakeholders, and provides a robust basis for learning and continuous improvement throughout the strategic plan period.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: PELUM Kenya Governance/Organogram



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