



## Annual Report 2024

# Executive Summary

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In 2024, Giving Hope Foundation made significant strides in empowering rural smallholder farmers in Hoima, Uganda through agroecology, climate action, and supporting **women's economic empowerment**. We welcomed 142 new farmers into our programs, expanding our reach to new villages. Our initiatives supported farmers with **agricultural input loans, sustainable beekeeping, tree planting**, and innovative **urban farming** techniques. All these efforts aimed at improving food security and economic resilience for rural smallholder farmers. DreamSave remained a strong solution that ensures all our **Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs)** are digitized and well managed. It also helps us to ensure that these farmers - mostly from poor backgrounds can access to financial inclusion. Climate action remained at the core of our work, with farmers receiving various training on bamboo growing and Grevillea tree planting.

Our clean energy program, supported by Global Giving, introduced **gasifier stoves** to reduce firewood dependency and promote biochar production. Meanwhile, our **agricultural demonstration gardens** continued to serve as valuable learning hub, showcasing innovative soil health techniques. The efforts ensure long-term environmental and economic benefits in rural communities.

Looking ahead to 2025, Giving Hope is committed to scaling up its programs by expanding **microloan access** for rural women, strengthening climate action initiatives, and implementing the Earth Rising grant for **soil health projects** in Hoima District. We extend our deepest gratitude to our partners, donors, and communities for their unwavering support in helping smallholder farmers in Uganda to grow their way out of extreme poverty.

We look forward to your continued partnership and support.





## Vision

To end extreme poverty among rural smallholder farming communities in Uganda.

## Mission

To build thriving grassroots communities where economic prosperity, environmental sustainability and well-being are balanced for the long-term benefit of all.

## Our Values

- ✦ **Creativity:** We encourage a safe and supportive space for experimentation and innovation to solve problems
- ✦ **Humility:** We show compassion and endeavor to understand, respect and value every individual
- ✦ **Integrity:** We do what we promise
- ✦ **Fairness:** We foster a culture that is equitable, diverse and mutually respectful; working towards relationships that are inclusive, trusting & participatory
- ✦ **Fun:** We value the enjoyment in creating, safe, friendly and productive working environments for everyone

We believe that true transformation must have a holistic approach, that empowers rural communities to build sustainable and resilient livelihoods. Our work is anchored in three key pillars.



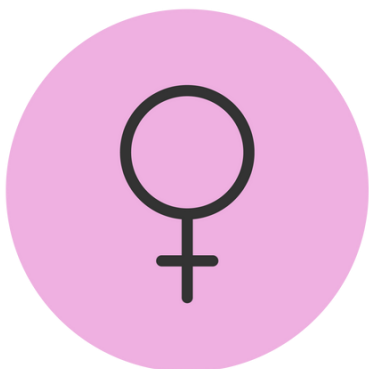
## 01. Sustainable Agriculture

The principle of agricultural sustainability dictates that we must meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. We are equipping rural smallholder farmers with the knowledge, tools, and resources to improve productivity while preserving the environment. We run programs to improve **soil health**, offer **seed loans**, **beekeeping**, and **backyard farming** which enhance food security, increase household incomes, and promote regenerative farming practices.



## 02. Climate Action

Climate change is a global issue that is affecting communities, lives, businesses and economies all over the world. This makes it imperative for smallholder farmers to adopt solutions that enhance resilience and sustainability. At Giving Hope, we are working to support more smallholder farmers in building resilience and adapting to climate change. We are supporting climate-smart practices such as **bamboo agroforestry**, **tree planting**, **biochar-based soil enrichment**, and **clean energy** adoption.



## 03. Women Empowerment

Economic empowerment allows women to control and benefit from resources, assets, and income. We have a special focus on empowering female farmers, as drivers for social change. We still recognize that men have an integral part in achieving healthy and thriving families. Through our **microloan program**, **leadership training**, and **entrepreneurship** support, we provide women with the resources they need to start and grow businesses, invest in their farms, and become community leaders.

# Contributing to Sustainability Goals

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At Giving Hope, our work is deeply linked to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This helps us ensure that our initiatives contribute to global efforts toward a more just, equitable, and sustainable future. Our programs are directly aligned with six key SDGs:



Smallholder farmers feed 80% of the world, yet they experience extreme poverty. We strategically integrate sustainable agriculture with climate action and livelihood improvement initiatives as a vehicle to end extreme poverty. We co-develop community programs that address unemployment, especially targeting youths and women.



Every household should have enough food to eat that is safe and nutritious. To achieve food security, we support smallholder farmers to transform their food systems, by adopting sustainable agricultural initiatives such as agroecology, soil health improvements, adopting organic products and mixed farming.



Healthy people are the foundation for healthy communities. Our climate-smart initiatives improve food security and nutrition, leading to healthier communities. Additionally, our initiatives reduce environmental risks such as deforestation, soil degradation, and exposure to indoor emissions among other benefits. All these actions contribute to healthier lives for rural farmers.



Gender equality is a necessary foundation for achieving peaceful, prosperous and sustainable rural communities. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) are core components to achieving our mission of ending extreme poverty. By integrating women and youths into decision-making and income-generating activities, we strengthen household resilience and community development.



Ensuring access to clean and affordable energy is crucial if we are to achieve economic growth and reduce environmental degradation. We help smallholder farmers access improved cookstoves and sustainable cooking fuels, which help reduce climate change and prevent diseases.



Every person on earth is being impacted by climate change in some shape or form. Extreme heat, changing rainfall and other climate change impacts put crop yields for smallholder farmers at risk. Our climate adaptation initiatives, such as bamboo growing, tree planting, and sustainable farming, help combat climate change and enhance resilience.

# Fighting Poverty through Beekeeping

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In 2024, we launched a program to promote beekeeping as a sustainable source of income for rural farmers. Beekeeping is not only a vehicle for biodiversity conservation but has proved a viable option to improve the earning capacity of poor rural farmers. Honey production per hive increases steadily as apiary management improves.

One Kenyan Top Bar (KTB) beehive can produce 50 kg of honey (during two harvesting seasons per year). Farmers could also earn extra income from additional by-products including bee pollen, propolis, bee bread, royal jelly, and beeswax.

After recognizing the potential of apiculture to enhance biodiversity, improve crop yields through pollination, and generate income, we trained 10 farmers in modern beekeeping techniques. These farmers went on to form the Beekeeping Farmers Group, where they meet regularly to share knowledge, and challenges as well as save money to buy group equipment.

Seven members received beehives which were donated by different individuals through our *Beekeeping campaign on GlobalGiving*. The farmers faced several challenges in colonising their hives, however, we are happy to report that all colonies are now well-established. We expect the first honey harvest in June 2025. This initiative not only provides an alternative livelihood for smallholder farmers but also strengthens climate resilience by fostering ecosystems that support pollinators and enhance local biodiversity.



# Microloans to Improve Livelihoods

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Again in 2024, we launched a microloan initiative to empower grassroots women entrepreneurs by providing both financial support and business training. Five women underwent intensive training in budgeting, marketing, and leadership. This equipped them with essential skills to grow their businesses. In December, each participant received a \$300 microloan to invest in their enterprises, allowing them to expand operations and increase household income.

***“In a recent survey, 86 percent of women under our Village Savings and Loan Associations reported that their quality of life “very much improved after joining us”.***



The women will benefit from a year of mentoring and monitoring. This hands-on approach will help them navigate challenges, and refine and optimise their business operations. At the end of the loan cycle, they will repay the funds, making them available for the next group of women entrepreneurs. This revolving loan model ensures the sustainability of the initiative, which will create a continuous cycle of empowerment. The funds for the program were raised through our fundraising campaign on *GlobalGiving* called *Micro-loans to rural women entrepreneurs in Uganda*.



Since August 2023, we have been running an ambitious *Soil Health Improvement Pilot Project*. The goal is to explore how organic bionutrient soil treatments can enhance soil fertility and boost crop productivity for smallholder farmers in Hoima. Now entering its fourth season, the project continues to provide valuable insights into sustainable soil management, helping rural farmers adopt environmentally friendly practices that improve long-term agricultural yields.

The trials include 36 experimental plots—12 each for maize, beans, and groundnuts. These are staple crops essential for local food security and economic stability in the Albertine region. The project utilises **rabbit urine** and **biochar** as organic soil treatments, leveraging their natural benefits to improve soil quality. Rabbit urine, rich in nitrogen, provides a readily available nutrient source for crops, while biochar enhances soil structure, which helps in moisture retention and supports beneficial microbial activity. 20 liters of urine and 15 kilograms of biochar were applied in various combinations, where we are testing how these treatments influence plant growth, soil conditions, and overall productivity.

We monitor plant health indicators, such as leaf texture, stem strength, and seedling emergence, alongside periodic soil assessments to track microbial activity and texture changes. Although resource limitations have prevented us from conducting detailed nutrient content and pH analysis, early observations suggest promising results. The treated plots display stronger seedling emergence, greener leaves, and improved water retention, signaling enhanced soil fertility. They have also generally yielded better seeds than untreated (control) plots. However, our trials have not yet shown resistance to common pests and diseases, this is an area we could look into studying in the future. We will continue to refine and recommend the best treatments for wider adoption by smallholder farmers in Hoima district and the Albertine region.



Achieving food sovereignty among rural smallholder farmers remains one of our main goals. We want to ensure that smallholder farmers have control over their food systems while promoting ecologically proven agricultural practices. In 2024, we expanded our agroecology programs by empowering farmers with knowledge and resources that enhance productivity while preserving the environment. We are helping farmers integrate regenerative farming techniques, such as intercropping, composting, utilising urine as a pesticide and fertiliser as well as amending their already degraded soils using biochar. These efforts are helping the farmers improve soil fertility and crop yields without reliance on expensive chemical inputs.

These efforts not only boost food security and household incomes, they also reinforce resilience against climate change. In 2024, we have focused on capacity-building through farmer-led training sessions. Our demonstration gardens have played a pivotal role in showcasing practical techniques including the benefits of diversified soil treatments and natural pest control methods. These knowledge-sharing initiatives have strengthened communal learning, fostering a culture where farmers support one another in adopting sustainable agricultural practices. The introduction of sack gardening and vegetable farming has further expanded food production possibilities, particularly for families in resource-constrained areas.

# Building Bamboo-Based Agroforestry

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Bamboo is a multipurpose, highly dependable plant with a wide range of potential applications. It can provide smallholder farmers with environmental, economic, and livelihood protection. Bamboo is also an excellent resource for carbon sequestration as one of the fastest-growing plants on earth.

Through our donators' generous support to our *Climate Change adoption for 100 Farmers in Uganda* campaign in 2022, we distributed 865 seedlings to 91 farmers in Kitoba sub-county, Hoima district. We have been monitoring the progress of the bamboo. The farmers have had follow-up training in pruning and maintenance techniques to ensure healthy growth and long-term productivity. We have also been supporting them to integrate bamboo with other initiatives like beekeeping and agroecology. These efforts align with our broader goal of conserving biodiversity and creating climate-resilient farming systems. While commercial harvesting is still 1-2 years away, the foundations for a sustainable bamboo-based economy are now in place. The smallholder farmers are happy with the initiative and are increasingly recognizing bamboo as a valuable resource for erosion control, construction and sustainable land use.



## Empowering Farmers through Rabbit Farming

Rabbit farming has emerged as a promising livelihood opportunity for smallholder farmers in Hoima, offering both economic and environmental benefits. Recognizing its potential, GivingHope launched a Rabbit Farming Project to provide farmers with an alternative source of income while improving soil health through organic waste utilization.

This year, we supported 10 farmers with training on rabbit husbandry, housing, feeding, and disease management. Each farmer received breeding stock to help establish their own small-scale rabbit farms.

Rabbits are not only a sustainable source of protein but also produce nutrient-rich manure and urine, which have proven highly effective in our ongoing *Soil Health Improvement Pilot Project*.

The farmers discovered that using rabbit urine was an effective alternative to synthetic fertilizers. This discovery is helping them migrate to organic farming and saving money from input costs.

However, they are facing challenges such as disease outbreaks and high mortality rates, especially for baby rabbits. We aim to strengthen training and monitoring in order to reduce these challenges. We hope that this project will serve as another option to help diversify farmer incomes and contribute to healthier, more resilient rural communities.





While 2024 brought significant achievements, we also faced several challenges which impacted our program implementation and our ability to reach more vulnerable farmers. These challenges required proactive planning, strategic adjustments and raising additional support. These include, among others:

1. **Lack of appropriate transportation for field operations:** We work in a challenging terrain that is hilly and with very poor roads. Our humble motorcycle is not only old but is not fit for its purpose, which often hampers our efforts to effectively support and monitor our members. To overcome this, we will prioritise fundraising for appropriate transportation to facilitate our fieldwork in 2025.
2. **Late loan repayment:** Despite efforts to provide flexible agricultural loans, some farmers struggled to meet repayment deadlines due to unpredictable harvests and market fluctuations. To address this, we plan to strengthen financial literacy training and introduce more adaptive repayment schedules.
3. **High rabbit mortality:** Our rabbit farming initiative faced setbacks due to disease outbreaks and attacks by wild animals. Moving forward, we will prioritize preventive health measures, improved housing structures, and farmer training in rabbit management.
4. **Limited operational funds:** While we have made significant progress, financial constraints limit our ability to expand outreach, procure necessary resources, and provide continuous support to farmers. This affects the sustainability of key initiatives such as microloans, training programs, and climate action projects. Securing additional funding remains a top priority going forward.



As we look ahead, we will expand our impact and deepen our engagement with rural communities in Hoima. Our vision of helping rural smallholder farmers out of extreme poverty is rooted in building sustainability and resilience and empowering women and youth.

In 2025, will leverage our present successes and lessons learnt to implement our current programs.

These are the key initiatives we will focus on:

- Increasing access to quality seeds, and expanding soil health improvement with emphasis on biochar application, composting, and organic fertilizer training.
- Work hard to provide more beehives, training, and market access for honey and other bee by-products.
- Train more farmers to adopt bamboo-based agroforestry and introduce value-addition techniques.
- Increase the adoption of improved cooking stoves so as to reduce reliance on firewood and exposure to indoor air emissions.
- Increase focus on supporting more women and youth and leadership skills.
- We will work hard to secure more funding in order to scale our impact by creating strategic partnerships. We will be looking for opportunities for knowledge-sharing, technical support, and co-implementation of projects.

# Partnering to Grow our Impact

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Partnerships are pivotal in facilitating and accelerating growth in the civil society in today's interconnected world. We are strategically working to create networks in order to leverage skills, expertise, and funds in order to achieve our mission of ending extreme poverty in the grassroots communities we serve. We are proud to be associated with the following institutions, and we look forward to continuing our collaborations.



We are active members of the **Agroecology Coalition**, where we participate in the Implementation and Research, Innovation, and Education Working Groups. This will help us support our beneficiary communities in building sustainable agriculture based on the 13 principles of agroecology.



We are grateful for the tireless Advisory support from **Backlund Ecology** to strengthen our work in sustainability. Backlund Ecology is a Denmark-based organization specializing in sustainable environmental solutions



In our efforts to best support research, policy, and operational implementation for nutrient recovery from underutilised organic resources, we are proud to be a part of the **Circular Bionutrients Economy Network** (CBEN). Through this collaboration, we are actively creating synergies to implement nutrients recovery from crop residues, and human excreta to produce fertilisers and soil amendments for farmers.



We are collaborating well with the **Action Network Worldwide** (and **Weltweit**), a coalition that serves as a platform for several social organisations with the same mission: Power to the People!



We are excited by the opportunity to strengthen our collaboration with the **Rich Earth Institute** further strengthened as our fiscal sponsor for the implementation project to improve soil health and enhance agricultural sustainability in Hoima District, Uganda. This project is being supported by Earth Rising Foundation.



Last but not least, we are glad to have been in partnership with **GlobalGiving**. Through them, we have been able to raise financial support for our projects from individuals from around the world.

# FINANCIAL STATEMENT

	2023	2024
INCOME	USD	USD
Revenue from Sales	\$6,098	\$6,114
Donations	\$11,666	\$ 11,694
Membership & Contributions	\$8,667	\$8,717
Other Incomes	\$3,486	\$3,611
TOTAL	\$29,916	\$30,136
EXPENSES		
Program Services	\$19,140	\$20,720
Operating Expenses	\$6,510	\$6,706
Fundraising	\$1,882	\$739
TOTAL	\$27,532	\$28,165

# Partner with us today.

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Please consider partnering with us today by making a gift to Giving Hope Foundation, which enables us to address pressing community priorities that are essential to ending extreme poverty.

Help us keep the work moving by donating at [www.gh-f.org/donate](http://www.gh-f.org/donate) or reach out to Nolbert ([nolbert@gh-f.org](mailto:nolbert@gh-f.org)) to learn more about partnering with us.

**“Separately, we can have an impact; but only together, on a solid foundation, can we build the future we all hope for”.**

Nolbert Muhumuza, Founder



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