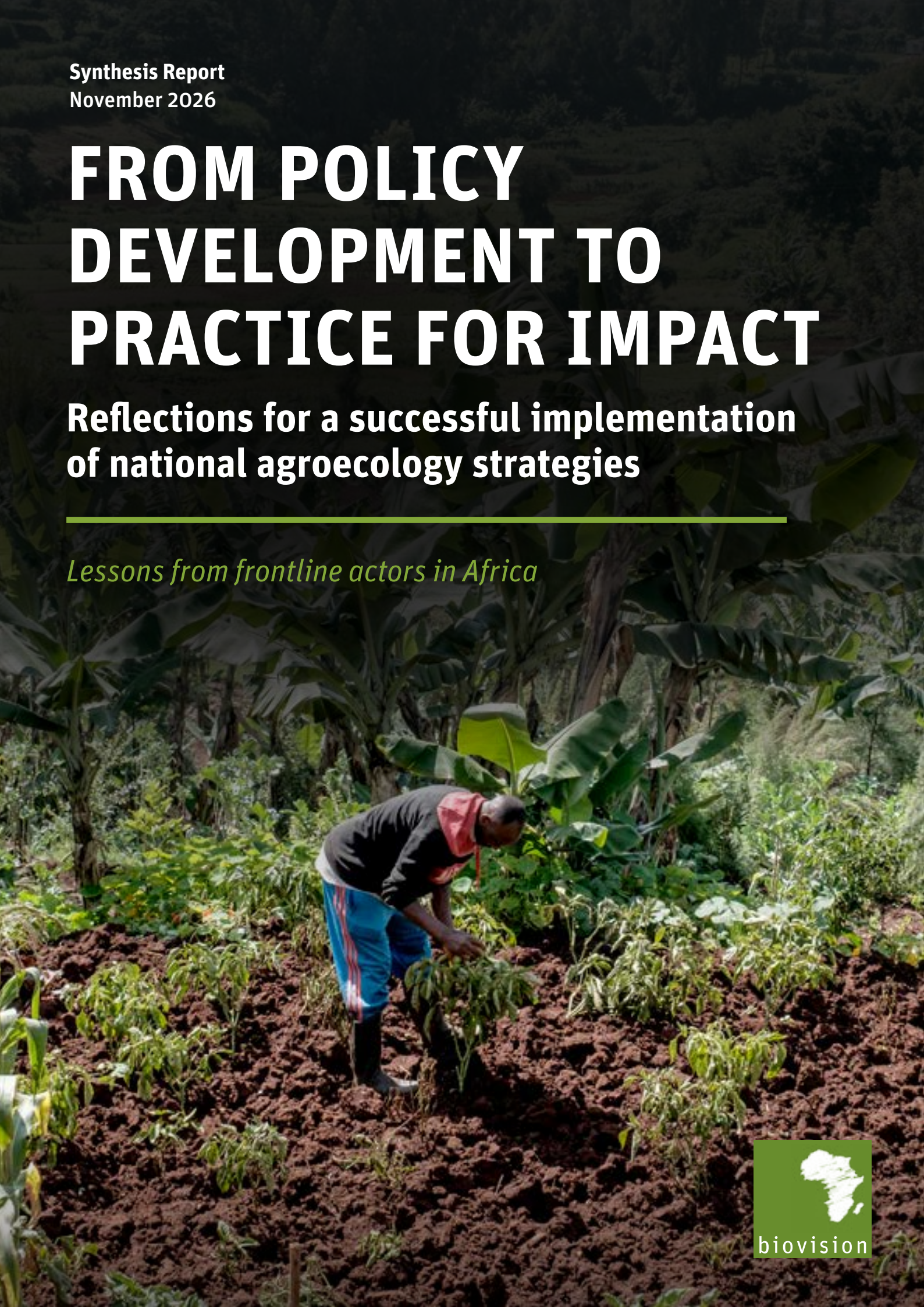
Synthesis Report
November 2026

FROM POLICY DEVELOPMENT TO PRACTICE FOR IMPACT

Reflections for a successful implementation of national agroecology strategies

Lessons from frontline actors in Africa



biovision



Executive Summary

Across Africa, National Agroecology Strategies (NASs) are gaining momentum as government frameworks for advancing food system transformation through agroecology. Among the African countries represented in a NAS Community of Practice (CoP), a peer-learning platform for actors involved in NAS development and implementation, five had an approved NAS and were moving into early implementation by mid-2026, while eight were developing their strategies. As this movement matures, the central challenge is shifting from policy development to implementation: how can broad strategic ambitions be translated into coordinated, financed and sustained action? **Experience from the CoP suggests that implementation readiness is shaped across the NAS cycle.** Countries already implementing a NAS need to strengthen and adapt the institutional, coordination and financing arrangements required to sustain action, while countries still formulating a strategy have the opportunity to build these conditions in from the outset.

NAS implementation depends on a wider ecosystem of enabling conditions. Frontline actors involved in NAS processes have identified **eight selected enabling factors:** a financing strategy; effective coordination and governance; sequenced pathways and models for rollout; strategic prioritisation of catalytic interventions; policy, legal and institutional mainstreaming; strengthened capacity of implementing actors; monitoring, evaluation and learning; and broad stakeholder engagement and communication. These factors are interconnected and are not exhaustive. **This report examines four** in greater depth, namely (1) **prioritisation**, (2) **rollout pathways**, (3) **coordination and governance**, and (4) **financing**, because they emerged repeatedly through recent CoP exchanges and early implementation experience, particularly in Kenya and Tanzania. They should not be understood as more important than the other enabling factors.

Prioritisation turns broad strategies into a manageable implementation agenda

NASs often contain a large number of objectives and interventions, but implementation cannot begin everywhere and on everything at once. Collaborative prioritisation can help stakeholders move from a broad strategy towards a **coherent and manageable portfolio of actions**, clarify where efforts and resources should be concentrated, and create clearer propositions for government and financiers.

Experience from Kenya and Tanzania points to an iterative process: agree transparent criteria; identify interventions with the greatest strategic value; organise them into complementary portfolios; and sequence them over time. Useful criteria include expected impact, catalytic or enabling effects, feasibility and the readiness of implementing actors. Prioritisation is therefore more than ranking interventions. It requires asking what enables what, which investments need to come first, and how a combination of interventions can reinforce one another. Early “stepping stones” may establish capacities, institutions or market conditions that make larger investments possible later.

Implementation pathways need to match context, readiness and opportunity

Prioritisation also concerns **where and how implementation starts**. There is no single rollout model for a NAS. Different interventions may require national implementation, subnational delivery, concentration within selected landscapes or territories, or targeted approaches focused on particular sectors, regions or groups. Pilot and demonstration initiatives can be used within any of these models, while approaches may evolve as implementation expands.

The choice should reflect the country’s governance structure, institutional mandates, available capacities and resources, stakeholder dynamics and political opportunities. Concentrating early efforts where there is readiness, strategic visibility or potential to create critical mass can generate learning and visible results while building momentum for wider implementation. Kenya’s county-level pathways and Tanzania’s combination of national coordination with selected implementation landscapes illustrate how rollout approaches can be adapted to different institutional contexts rather than following a fixed model.

Coordination must connect actors, institutions and decisions, not simply create another committee

NAS implementation cuts across ministries, levels of government and a wide range of non-government actors. It therefore requires an institutional home for coordination, but **coordination is an ongoing function rather than simply a structure**. Committees or task forces are useful only if they can keep actors engaged, connect implementation to government processes, facilitate decisions, coordinate resource mobilisation and maintain an overview of progress.

Emerging experience highlights several conditions that can strengthen this function: government anchoring and leadership; clear mandates, roles and decision-making procedures; links with existing government coordination structures; representation of relevant state and non-state actors; and sufficient staff capacity and operational resources. Strong government ownership also matters at the individual level. Well-positioned internal champions can help sustain political attention, navigate institutional resistance and keep implementation anchored when personnel or political priorities change. Trust, working relationships and shared ownership matter throughout implementation. Where these relationships were built during formulation, they can provide a strong foundation. Where implementation is already underway, they need to be actively maintained and strengthened through transparent communication, inclusive decision-making, regular engagement and joint problem-solving.

Financing is part of implementation design

Financing should not be treated as a question to address once implementation priorities have already been decided. **Financing choices shape prioritisation, sequencing and rollout**, while implementation decisions determine what types of finance are appropriate. NAS actors therefore need a resource mobilisation strategy that considers what needs to be financed, who requires resources, which financing sources and instruments are suited to different needs, when finance is required and how it will reach implementing actors.

No single source of finance can support the full agroecological transition. Domestic public resources, international development finance, philanthropy and private capital perform different functions and need to be combined strategically. Public and grant finance will remain particularly important for functions that generate broad public benefits but limited direct financial returns, including coordination, research, extension, farmer support and participation.

Private and repayable finance can play a stronger role where activities or enterprises have credible revenue models. Emerging financing architectures in Kenya and Tanzania illustrate how different financing needs can be connected across four interlocking components: research, training and technical assistance; transition finance; business investment; and coordination.

Together, these components help frame the transition as a connected financing portfolio rather than a collection of isolated projects. Early catalytic investments do not need to cover the full cost of transition, but they should deliberately create the capacities, institutions, evidence and market conditions on which subsequent investments can build.

Domestic public resources are especially important for institutionalising implementation over time, yet agroecology competes within already constrained agricultural budgets. Mobilising these resources therefore often means **connecting NAS priorities to existing government priorities and budget processes**, rather than relying only on new funding lines. Entry points can include development plans, public procurement, agricultural investment plans, subsidy programmes, climate and biodiversity commitments and externally financed programmes implemented through government. This requires early engagement with ministries of finance and planning, a clear understanding of budget cycles and decision points, credible costing and proposals framed around the objectives governments are already seeking to achieve.

From strategy to sustained implementation

The emerging lesson across these experiences is that a NAS is not an endpoint. Its value lies in helping governments and food system actors organise a transition: agreeing where to focus, creating workable implementation pathways, establishing the institutional connections required for collective action and mobilising finance around country-defined priorities.

These elements need to reinforce one another. Priorities without coordination can remain fragmented; coordination without resources cannot sustain implementation; and finance that is disconnected from agreed priorities can pull implementation in competing directions.

For countries already implementing a NAS, the task is to strengthen and adapt these arrangements as experience accumulates, implementation expands and new challenges emerge. For countries still developing their NAS, there is an opportunity to anticipate these needs and build them into the strategy process from the outset. In both cases, implementation requires continuous learning, institutional strengthening and adjustment as countries move from policy ambition towards sustained change at scale.



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List of Abbreviations

AFAT	Agroecology Financing Analysis Tool
CSBAG	Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (Uganda)
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
COSOP	Country Strategic Opportunities Programme
CASSCOM	County Agricultural Sector Steering Committee (Kenya)
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EbAM	Ecosystems-based Adaptation for resilient Watersheds and Communities in Malawi
FISP	Farmer Input Support Programme (Zambia)
FSRP	Food Systems Resilience Program
GCF	Green Climate Fund
IFAD	International Fund for Agriculture Development
JASSCOM	Joint Agricultural Sector Steering Committee (Kenya)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MSP	Multistakeholder Platform
NAS CoP	NAS Community of Practice
NAIP	National Agriculture Investment Plan
NASIP	National Agri-Food Systems Investment Plan (Kenya)
NAS	National Agroecology Strategy
NAS-FST	National Agroecology Strategy for Food System Transformation (Kenya)
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NEOAS	National Ecological Organic Agriculture Strategy (Tanzania)
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
PLANAPO	National Plan on Agroecology and Organic Production (Brazil)
NTCA	National Technical Committee on Agroecology (Kenya)
PGS	Participatory Guarantee System
PSA Alliance	Partnership for Social Accountability Alliance
RAFT	Regenerative and Agroecological Food Systems Transitions
RALAF	Regenerative and Agroecological Landscapes Acceleration Facility
UgIFT programme	Uganda Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfers programme (Uganda)

About this document

Why this report

Across Africa, countries are increasingly developing National Agroecology Strategies (NASs) and beginning to implement them as frameworks to support food system transformation through agroecology. While progress varies considerably across countries, with most still in the formulation and adoption stages and others in the early stages of implementation, a common challenge is emerging: how can strategies be translated into effective action? This report explores that question by sharing practical lessons, challenges and opportunities emerging from countries as they move from policy development to implementation.

The reflections presented here draw on a year-long process of exchange and learning within a NAS Community of Practice (NAS CoP), which brings together practitioners, policy makers, civil society organisations (CSOs), research institutions, development partners and other stakeholders actively involved in NAS development and implementation. The NAS CoP has generated a rich body of practical experience and collective reflection[1]. Rather than providing universal answers or a comprehensive assessment of NAS processes, this report synthesises selected lessons that have surfaced across countries and contexts, while drawing particularly on the implementation experiences of Tanzania and Kenya.

Although the primary focus of this report is implementation, many of the insights presented are equally relevant for countries still developing their NAS. Reflections across the NAS CoP suggest that successful implementation is often shaped during the formulation phase, when countries establish priorities, governance arrangements, coordination mechanisms and financing approaches that will later determine how effectively strategies can be put into practice. While the experiences synthesised in this report are drawn primarily from countries in Africa, many of the reflections and lessons may also be relevant to actors advancing agroecology policy processes in other regions.

Where these lessons come from

The lessons presented in this report originate from a year-long process of exchange and learning among members of a NAS CoP. The analysis draws on:

- Individual experiences of countries at different stages in a NAS process (i.e. formulation, adoption and/or implementation);
- Peer-to-peer exchanges among policy actors (i.e. government representatives, CSOs, research institutions and technical partners) working on NAS processes;
- A regional workshop, held in 2025 in Dakar, Senegal, which brought together policy actors from 13 African countries to reflect on implementation pathways, coordination mechanisms and resource mobilisation challenges related to NAS processes;
- Follow-up virtual exchanges, bilateral discussions and expert consultations.

Who this report is for

Although NASs are government-owned policy frameworks, they are typically developed and implemented through collaboration between government institutions and a wide range of non-government stakeholders. This collaborative nature is reflected in the intended audience for the report.

This report is intended primarily for:

- Government actors involved in the formulation, adoption and implementation of a NAS;
- CSOs, farmer organisations, research institutions and other stakeholders supporting NAS formulation, adoption and implementation;
- Development partners, donors and financing institutions interested in supporting NASs and agroecological transitions;
- Other food system actors interested in policy approaches for scaling agroecology.



The report has three main objectives:

- **Share emerging implementation lessons** from countries in Africa that are advancing NAS development and implementation;
- **Provide practical reflections and examples** on how countries can operationalise strategies through prioritisation, coordination, governance and financing approaches;
- **Strengthen peer-to-peer learning** among actors working to advance agroecological transitions through national policy processes.

The reflections presented in this report draw primarily on the perspectives and experiences of government and civil society actors engaged in NAS processes.

The perspectives and roles of other actors in agroecological transitions, including private sector actors, agroecological enterprises, value chain actors and research institutions, are not explored in depth in this publication.

What this report covers

Implementation of a NAS depends on multiple enabling factors, including financing, governance, coordination, capacity development, monitoring and learning systems, policy coherence and institutionalisation, and stakeholder engagement and communication.

This report focuses particularly on the implementation priorities that emerged repeatedly through NAS CoP reflections:

- Prioritising and sequencing interventions;
- Establishing effective governance and coordination mechanisms;
- Mobilising financial resources for implementation, including domestic public finance.

While capacity development, monitoring and evaluation, policy coherence, and stakeholder engagement and communication are recognised as equally important implementation drivers, they are not examined in depth in this publication and warrant dedicated analysis in future work.

Beyond NASs, many of the implementation lessons presented in this report may also be relevant to subnational and regional agroecology policy processes, where similar challenges of prioritisation, coordination, governance and resource mobilisation often arise.

How to navigate this report

The report is organised around the transition from strategy development to implementation.

Chapter 1 provides an update on NAS developments across Africa and highlights emerging insights from both formulation and early implementation experiences.

Chapter 2 explores the implementation gap and introduces key enabling conditions needed to move from policy development to action.

Chapter 3 examines approaches for prioritising, sequencing and rolling out NAS interventions.

Chapter 4 focuses on governance, coordination and the broader implementation ecosystem needed to sustain action over time.

Chapters 5 and 6 address resource mobilisation, including external financing from development partners, philanthropic organisations and other non-public sources, alongside strategies for increasing domestic public investment in agroecology.

Ultimately, the experiences presented here suggest that developing a strategy is only the beginning. Achieving meaningful change requires sustained effort to build the institutions, partnerships, capacities and financing mechanisms that can turn strategic ambitions into action for impact and change.

[1]This collective learning has been documented through a series of policy briefs, technical resources and other knowledge products developed by the NAS Community of Practice. These are available at Agroecology Infopool (2026). National Agroecology Strategies. Additional resources on National Agroecology Strategies are available through the Agroecology Coalition

1.

A GROWING MOVEMENT: NATIONAL AGROECOLOGY STRATEGIES GAINING MOMENTUM

This chapter introduces National Agroecology Strategies (NASs), explaining what they are and how they are being developed across the world, with a particular focus on Africa. It also explores the role of NASs in enabling agroecological transitions and their role within the broader landscape of public policy and institutional reform.

1.1 From agroecology recognition to NASs

In response to the multiple interconnected crises affecting both food systems and the planet, agroecology is gaining increasing recognition as a holistic approach to transforming agrifood systems. Food systems are not only highly vulnerable to challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss and soil degradation, but are also significant contributors to many of these crises. **By addressing the environmental, social and economic dimensions of food production in a holistic way, agroecology can help strengthen food security, halt and reverse biodiversity loss, improve soil health and increase climate resilience while reducing the negative impacts of food systems**. International scientific assessments and expert panels, together with a growing number of public institutions, civil society organisations (CSOs) and farmers' movements, increasingly recognise the potential of agroecological approaches and highlight the rising costs of inaction[2].

Alongside this growing recognition, there is increasing awareness that **agroecological transitions require supportive public policies, institutional coordination and long-term government engagement**. This has contributed to growing interest in the role that national and territorial strategies can play in enabling and scaling agroecological transitions. In this context, governments around the world have developed or are developing NASs. While these strategies are typically led by ministries of agriculture, their development and implementation commonly involve strong engagement from CSOs and other stakeholders. These organisations play a key role by contributing technical expertise, facilitating multistakeholder dialogue, supporting implementation on the ground and advocating for accountability and continuous improvement. As a result, **NAS processes provide a valuable reflection of the priorities, opportunities and constraints experienced by agroecological actors within a country**.

But what exactly is a NAS?

A National Agroecology Strategy is an official government framework that defines how a country will promote, scale up, finance and institutionalise agroecology within its food system. Depending on national legal frameworks and political contexts, these instruments may take different forms. In most cases, they take the form of a policy. In some countries, however, they are adopted as laws (e.g. Law No. 21/2021 and its implementing decree, D.D.G. 273/2025, Region of Sicily, Italy) or decrees (e.g. Decree 128/2025 on Agroecology and Resolution 228/2025 in Cuba). In addition, NASs can have different framings and don't always explicitly mention agroecology but are anchored on the principles and elements of agroecology. For example, some countries use other names, such as National Ecological Organic Agricultural Strategies (e.g. Benin and Tanzania). A global overview of NASs was developed by the Agroecology Coalition in 2026 as inspiration for the many new initiatives sprouting across the globe[3].

IT IS BECOMING CLEAR FOR MANY LEADERS THAT AGROECOLOGY ACHIEVES SPECIFIC PRIORITY OBJECTIVES FOR OUR GOVERNMENTS AND FINANCE INSTITUTIONS: FOOD SECURITY, CLIMATE, PRODUCTIVITY. WE MUST ENGAGE THEM AND USE THIS OPPORTUNITY.

— Participant, peer-to-peer exchange

[2]For selected scientific evidence and examples of recognition and support for agroecology by expert panels, public institutions, civil society organisations and farmers' movements, see Annex.

[3]Agroecology Coalition, National Agroecology Strategies

NASs include interventions designed to activate the benefits of agroecology to increase food security, support climate change adaptation and mitigation, halt and reverse biodiversity loss, foster soil regeneration and improve the wellbeing and incomes of smallholder farmers. Regardless of their format, their **core objective** is the same: **to create an enabling environment for the transition toward agroecological food systems**.



Beyond this, **NASs are thus seen as a foundation for:**

- sensitisation of policy makers to the benefits of agroecology;
- building consensus among stakeholders on priority interventions that can drive change in food systems;
- a shared strategic framework to align the programmes and investments of government and non-government actors around agreed priorities;
- a structured portfolio of investable initiatives for donors, governments and investors, providing collective impact;
- a balanced, high-impact approach embracing both "push and pull" measures mobilising actors in farming and value chains while at the same time developing a strong pull via market initiatives;
- monitoring agroecological transition;
- developing a roadmap for policy reforms and harmonising policy instruments.



1.2 NASs are gaining ground, particularly in Africa

Early pioneers like Brazil have developed NASs from as early as 2012, and they have expanded these policies since then (see Box 2 in Chapter 2). In recent years, a new wave of NAS development has emerged across continents. In Africa, multiple countries have developed or are developing NASs as a framework for transforming food systems through agroecology (see Figure 1).

Among the African countries represented in the NAS Community of Practice (NAS CoP), countries are at different stages of NAS development. As of July 2026, five have an approved NAS in place and are moving into early-stage implementation, while eight are developing their NAS. Beyond these national strategies, there are also regional and subnational strategies and efforts. For example, the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) Motion on Agroecology provides a regional framework for advancing agroecology across the East African Community.

NAS developments across Western, Eastern and Southern Africa as of August 2026

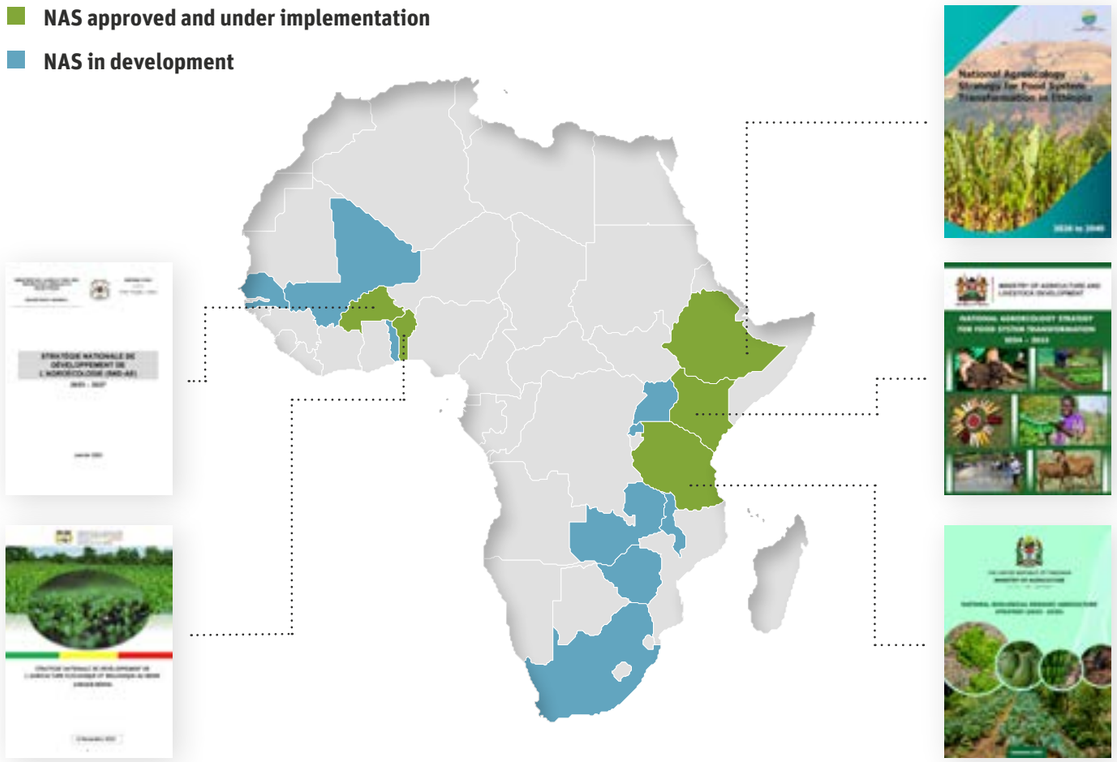


Figure 1: *NAS developments in selected countries in Africa. Based on participants of the NAS CoP. Updated August 2026.*

Key features of NASs in Kenya and Tanzania, as their implementation experiences inform many of the lessons presented in this report.

Table 1: *Key features of NASs in Kenya and Tanzania, as their implementation experiences inform many of the lessons presented in this report.*

Kenya: National Agroecology Strategy for Food System Transformation (NAS-FST)	
Timeframe	Approved in **2024**, covering **2024–2033**.
Key features	Emphasis on policy coherence with existing frameworks. Implementation is foreseen with strong support from subnational (county) authorities and actors.
Coordination body	NAS is coordinated through the National Technical Committee on Agroecology (NTCA). The NTCA connects with existing national and county coordination structures and with wider multistakeholder platforms.
Prioritisation of actions	The NTCA has used four criteria – **impact, catalytic/enabling effect, feasibility and readiness of implementing actors** – to prioritise the 166 NAS-FST actions and inform initial geographic implementation choices.
Rollout	**Dual national–county model.** Several priority counties have been selected, combining frontrunners and counties at earlier stages. Counties can domesticate the NAS-FST through different pathways, including county policies, strategies, action plans, projects or hybrid approaches.
Implementation so far	Early implementation is focused on prioritising interventions and counties, developing **county domestication pathways**, for instance supported by generalised guidelines for counties, strengthening coordination across national and county levels, linking NAS priorities to national investment planning, developing an extension and training manual and developing a dedicated **NAS-FST M&E framework** aligned with existing monitoring systems.
Financing approach	NAS-FST priorities are being linked to broader investment planning, including the **National Agri-Food Systems Investment Plan (NASIP) 2026–2030**.

Tanzania: National Ecological Organic Agriculture Strategy (NEOAS)	
Timeframe	Approved in **2023**, covering **2024–2030**.
Key features	Focus on developing and implementing supportive policy instruments, investments and partnerships for upscaling ecological organic agriculture interventions throughout food system elements. Implementation of NEOAS will involve the adoption of the existing government systems while acknowledging the public-private partnership (PPP) arrangement.
Coordination body	Coordinated through a government-led **NEOAS Implementation Task Force (ITF)**. Resources have also been secured for a dedicated NEOAS Implementation Coordinator to support coordination.
Prioritisation of actions	In 2024, the ITF prioritised the 12 NEOAS objectives into six **multi-year priority intervention packages**, subsequently structured into **four strategic investment areas** with concrete catalytic interventions.
Rollout	**National coordination combined with landscape implementation** in three initial areas: the Lake, Northern and Central zones. The approach seeks to concentrate complementary interventions, build critical mass and generate lessons for wider scaling.
Implementation so far	Early implementation has focused on establishing the ITF, prioritising and sequencing interventions, developing investment propositions, establishing initial implementation landscapes and strengthening implementation capacity through a dedicated coordinator. A participatory guarantee system (PGS) provides one example of sequencing a short-term enabling intervention with subsequent medium-term investments.
Financing approach	Prioritisation has been explicitly linked to resource mobilisation.



1.3 The role of NASs within agroecological food system transformation

A NAS is an important instrument for anchoring and driving agroecological transitions of food systems, but it is only part of a broader landscape of public policies, institutional reforms and societal action. **Rather than providing a complete roadmap for agroecological transitions, a NAS can serve as an umbrella framework that helps anchor agroecology** within public policies, strengthen coordination across sectors and create political legitimacy for agroecology actors and civil society engagement. The value **lies not in being an endpoint, but in catalysing and aligning necessary action**, while providing an entry point for mainstreaming agroecology across the wider policy landscape.

Realising this requires strong **policy coherence beyond a country's Ministry of Agriculture**, where a NAS is typically anchored. The priorities outlined in a NAS need to be translated into legislation, regulations, targeted policy instruments and concrete programmes, while being integrated into other relevant sectoral strategies and legal frameworks, such as those governing seeds, trade or public procurement. At the same time, achieving an agroecological transition may require additional reforms beyond those explicitly identified in the NAS to address systemic barriers and enable lasting change – for example, in the domains of health and education.

One promising pathway to strengthen policy coherence is the integration of NASs and their priority interventions into broader policy frameworks such as National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs). Zambia provides an early example: although its NAS is still under development, insights and priorities emerging from the NAS consultation process have already been integrated into the country's NBSAP (see Box 1). This illustrates that the value of a NAS lies not only in the final strategy itself, but also in the process, which can help mainstream agroecology across other policy frameworks.

Importantly, **a NAS should remain open, inclusive and connected to the diversity of agroecology actors operating beyond formal policy platforms**. NAS processes can strengthen the visibility, legitimacy and negotiating power of participating actors, but agroecological transitions are also driven by organisations, movements and practitioners that may not be formally involved in NAS processes or whose work falls outside identified implementation priorities. Maintaining open participation, continuous dialogue and flexible formulation and implementation platforms is therefore critical to ensure that NASs contribute to broad and plural agroecological transitions rather than narrowing them to a limited set of actors or agendas.

Box 1: Mainstreaming agroecology in Zambia's NBSAP 3.0

Zambia's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 3.0 demonstrates how agroecology can be embedded across biodiversity policy. Beyond recognising agroecology under the sustainable agriculture target, the strategy promotes concrete measures such as strengthening community seed banks, supporting on-farm conservation of indigenous seed varieties, diversifying farming systems, expanding agroforestry and reducing the use of highly hazardous pesticides through the provision of agroecological alternatives. The NBSAP also includes indicators to monitor progress, including the area under agroecological management and the number of community seed banks. Together, these measures illustrate how biodiversity policies can translate agroecological principles into concrete actions and measurable outcomes.

Key messages from the NAS Community of Practice (CoP)

- **Momentum for national agroecology policy is growing, even where a NAS is not yet in place.** Countries are progressing at different speeds and through different policy pathways. NAS development is one expression of a broader movement to institutionalise agroecology, and progress should not be measured only by whether a strategy has been formally adopted.
- **Building political support for agroecology requires evidence that speaks to government priorities.** Practitioners emphasised demonstrating how agroecology contributes to objectives that already matter politically, such as food security, productivity, incomes, health, climate resilience and economic development, and framing the case in language decision-makers can use.
- **Countries do not need to navigate NAS processes in isolation.** Different stages of NAS development across Africa create opportunities for peer learning, with countries able to adapt experiences, tools and policy approaches developed elsewhere rather than starting from scratch.
- **A NAS can provide a common reference point for mobilising action beyond government.** While a NAS is a government-owned policy framework, practitioners see value in using them to align public institutions, civil society, farmers, research, enterprises and development partners around nationally agreed directions for agroecological transformation.



Recommendations

Non-government actors:

- **Maintain sensitisation and advocacy towards government throughout NAS formulation and implementation.** Mobilise evidence of agroecology's impacts and frame it around government priorities and objectives to sustain political support and strengthen policy coherence, including as political agendas shift and key staff change.
- **Draw on experience from other NAS processes to strengthen national advocacy and policy development.** Use emerging examples, tools and lessons from other countries, as well as relevant regional and global momentum, to demonstrate what is possible while adapting approaches to the national context.
- **Broaden and strengthen participation in NAS processes.** Continue to involve non-state actors, particularly farmers and farmer organisations, and build their capacity to contribute effectively to NAS formulation, implementation and advocacy.

Governments:

- **Use the NAS process as a shared platform for aligning action around nationally agreed priorities.** Engage meaningfully with non-government actors throughout formulation, implementation and monitoring, and create space for different actors to identify how their programmes, expertise and activities can contribute to the wider transition.
- For existing platforms, **continue to invite and support new actors** that are relevant for NAS implementation but may not yet be at the table.
- **Integrate the NAS and core NAS interventions into broader policy areas** such as biodiversity conservation, climate resilience and food security where agroecology delivers results towards government objectives.

Finance community:

- **Finance the advocacy, capacity development and coordination functions** essential for effective formulation and implementation of NASs.
- **Sustain and strengthen support for existing multistakeholder NAS processes.**
- **Support early dialogue and peer learning in countries beginning a NAS process.** Fund exploratory exchanges between government and non-government actors and enable them to learn directly from countries with more advanced NAS experience.

2.

FROM STRATEGY TO ACTION: LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter is about understanding what accelerates implementation of National Agroecology Strategies (NASs) and what enables their successful implementation. It highlights eight enabling factors that governments and non-government actors should consider and secure, among others, during the planning phase.

2.1 From policy momentum to implementation challenges

As outlined in Chapter 1, a growing number of countries in Africa have developed or are currently developing a NAS. Yet turning these comprehensive but not always operational frameworks into concrete, impactful action is challenging. Accelerating implementation remains a recurring priority.

Many NAS implementation challenges are not unique to agroecology but reflect long-standing constraints that affect public policies more broadly. These constraints include inadequate infrastructure and human resources at implementation level, inadequate governance and limited budgets (see Chapter 6), as well as slow-moving administrative structures, budget cycles and approval processes that are often poorly adapted to transformative agendas. Rigid institutional structures tend to resist change, while governments simultaneously face "strategy overload", with new strategies continuously added to an already crowded policy landscape, leading to neglect of lower-priority policies such as agroecology compared to other development pathways.

In addition, **implementing NAS interventions at scale is particularly challenging** because it requires far more than technical adoption, but rather a holistic transition of the food system ecosystem, from input supply to markets. It demands deep institutional transformation and entails shifts in rules, responsibilities, incentives and mindsets. Many factors come into play, challenging a successful scale-up:

- **Successful agroecological pilots often operate in "protected" conditions**, driven by motivated champions, tailored to local contexts and benefiting from intensive technical support from researchers or project staff. At scale, policies must function under **routine budget constraints, within limited institutional capacity and across diverse political and socio-economic contexts**.
- **Capacity gaps become visible at scale.** Due to agroecology's integrated nature, scale-up requires effective **coordination mechanisms** across actors and sectors, **robust data systems for monitoring and enforcement**, and a shift from external support to genuine **institutional ownership** beyond individual projects – processes that take time and sustained investment.
- **Political economy constraints intensify.** With many NAS interventions focusing on equity, rights, redistribution of resources and ecological sustainability, vested interests (including at the individual level) become more vocal, underlying power relations more visible and policy trade offs more explicit, while political commitment may weaken once reforms move beyond experimentation.
- **Financing is harder to sustain than to start.** Without **early financial planning** and sufficiently robust evidence to convince decision-makers, pilots risk remaining isolated "islands of success" rather than scalable models.

Still, **examples of successful agroecological policy implementation have emerged**, notably in Brazil and in Andhra Pradesh, India, demonstrating that these governance and institutional challenges can be overcome (see Box 2).



WHY DO SO MANY PROMISING SOLUTIONS FAIL TO SCALE UP INTO GREAT POLICY? THERE IS NOT ENOUGH IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE TO HELP US SOLVE THIS QUESTION.
— Participant, peer-to-peer exchange

Box 2: Agroecological policy implementation at scale: examples from Brazil and Andhra Pradesh, India

Brazil – coordinating policy implementation across government. Brazil offers an example of an agroecology policy rollout with its National Plan on Agroecology and Organic Production (PLANAPO). Launched in 2024, this plan triggered the simultaneous integration of agroecology actions across multiple government bodies (197 initiatives managed by 14 ministries and seven agencies). PLANAPO has mobilised multiple policy levers for stronger rollout. Its programmes have targeted rural women (with more than 100,000 women supported), increased farmers' access to land and healthcare, and mobilised USD 72 million in technical assistance for over 40,000 family farms in Brazil. Through PLANAPO's family farming programme, more than 100,000 microcredits with low interest rates have been disbursed to agroecological projects, providing USD 380 million of funding[4].

Andhra Pradesh, India – enabling large-scale adoption through sustained public support. The Andhra Pradesh Community Managed Natural Farming programme illustrates how strong political commitment, sustained public investment, institutional ownership and coordinated extension services can enable the large-scale adoption of agroecological practices. Starting with an initial group of 40,000 farmers, the programme has expanded to reach 1.8 million farmers by 2026[5].

2.2 Creating the conditions for NAS implementation: 8 enabling factors

In view of the challenges outlined above, many elements must be considered when planning and moving into implementation. Frontline actors involved in NASs have identified eight enabling factors that can turn these strategies into effective on-the-ground action. **Many of them are best secured during the NAS development process, long before launch.** NAS formulation is therefore not only about defining policy objectives and interventions; it also offers an opportunity to prepare the institutions, capacities, partnerships and delivery mechanisms needed to put them into practice.

Just as important are the relationships that connect this implementation ecosystem. Inclusive NAS development processes can build trust, shared understanding of priorities and actors' respective capacities, and working relationships that make later coordination, joint problem-solving and collective action easier.



[4] Agroecology Coalition (2026) - Brazil's country brief

[5] The Andhra Pradesh Community Managed Natural Farming programme has earned recognition

The eight enabling factors for implementation are not exhaustive, but together they provide a practical framework for strengthening implementation readiness:

1. **A financing strategy** (see Chapter 5) that articulates a budget with multiple funding sources and financing instruments is a cornerstone for resource mobilisation for NAS implementation. It aims to catalyse new financial sources and align or repurpose existing ones to provide sustainable long-term financing for agroecological investments, while remaining flexible, given the dynamic nature of agroecology. A financing strategy also provides a sequence for engagement with financiers, including the early engagement of donors and involvement of finance and planning departments.

2. **Coordination mechanisms with clear governance mandate and structure** (see Chapter 4) are essential to align the efforts of institutions, agencies and partners, ensuring synergy, avoiding duplication and maximising political support and collective impact. These mechanisms should enable both vertical coordination (between line ministries with decision-making authority and agroecological stakeholders) and horizontal coordination, including inter-ministerial and stakeholder collaboration. Effective coordination structures should build institutional bridges, ensure inclusive representation of actors that are key for NAS implementation and be governed by clear decision-making mandates and processes.

3. **Pathways for rollout** (see Chapter 3) are structured, adaptive and phased approaches designed to transition a NAS from planning to full implementation. They define the sequencing of actions and NAS interventions and how these are scaled across the country over time. Pathways may include a decentralised rollout model (e.g. at the county level), geographic phasing or expansion through networks of pilots, among other models.

4. **Identification of prioritised catalytic interventions** (see Chapter 3) ensures early collective focus on the most important interventions and clear investable priorities for donors and governments. It helps focus initial efforts for fund mobilisation and deployment, generating early successes that can strengthen buy-in for broader implementation[6]. This step should occur during the last phase of the NAS development process or be the first step after adoption.

5. **Mainstreaming agroecology in existing policy, legal and institutional frameworks** helps create a coherent and durable enabling environment for implementation. This includes aligning NAS priorities with other policy frameworks and commitments, translating them into concrete policy instruments and institutional responsibilities, and embedding them in relevant planning and budget processes. Greater policy coherence can improve implementation efficiency, while institutionalisation helps sustain implementation beyond individual projects or changes in personnel.

6. **Strengthening the capacity of actors** for designing, implementing and monitoring NASs is another cross-cutting lever. It involves reinforcing the capacity of implementing institutions, including their human, institutional, financial, technical and physical capacities. It covers for instance upskilling personnel (e.g. on legal enforcement or financial literacy) and providing the necessary tools and methodologies to plan and execute NAS interventions.

7. **Monitoring, evaluation and learning systems** that are impact-oriented allow tracking of implementation of the planned interventions and corrective measures on areas needing improvement. They generally include a results framework, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) arrangements, risks and uncertainties management, reporting management and reporting plans.

8. **Stakeholder engagement and communication** (see Chapter 3). NAS implementation requires a broader mobilisation of many actors. Multistakeholder platforms (MSPs) are an efficient way to inform, mobilise and coordinate key stakeholders in NAS implementation.

The next chapters will explore more deeply four of these enabling factors for implementation – financing strategy, coordination mechanisms with governance arrangements, pathways for rollout and prioritisation of catalytic interventions – drawing on recent experiences of frontline actors.

IT IS CRITICAL TO INVOLVE ALL LINE MINISTRIES FROM THE VERY BEGINNING. THIS HELPS IMPLEMENTATION AND GUARDS AGAINST POLITICAL SHIFTS IN GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP.

— Participant, peer-to-peer exchange

See guidance on how to prioritise NAS interventions in Chapter 4 of "Biovision Foundation (2024)". National Agroecology Strategies in Eastern and Southern Africa: Lighthouses for food system transformation

3.

PRIORITISING ACTIONS AND SELECTING IMPLEMENTATION PATHWAYS: MAKING A NAS OPERATIONAL

This chapter zooms in on key building blocks for National Agroecology Strategy (NAS) implementation: the strategic prioritisation of catalytic interventions, the sequencing of pathways and the selection of rollout models. It discusses practical methods for prioritising interventions, developing implementation pathways and designing an effective rollout, illustrated by country experiences.

3.1 Strategic prioritisation of catalytic interventions

Food systems transformation requires simultaneous action across multiple intervention areas by multiple stakeholders, government actors and funders. A NAS can help bring together and map the many objectives, interventions and responsibilities that stakeholders agree to take on, and how they coordinate their work. Yet not everything has to happen at once. Nor can all interventions be financed from day one. So, what comes first?

Prioritisation requires a well-facilitated, inclusive process. Collaborative prioritising of NAS interventions is key to effective implementation, coordination of actors and an impactful rollout of new strategies. One could say that a NAS is not a strategy until there is agreement on clear priorities and sequencing.

Benefits of collaborative prioritisation:

- Agreement among stakeholders on priorities and where to focus efforts and resources;
- Collective stakeholder focus on the most catalytic interventions;
- Clear, investable priorities presented to government and donors;
- Effective sequencing and coordination of actions in a roadmap for rollout and implementation.

In most cases, prioritisation is an iterative process that gradually translates a broad national strategy into a coherent and manageable set of coordinated actions and investable opportunities. One of the greatest challenges is deciding what not to prioritise – it is difficult to "kill your darlings". With many NASs containing well over 100 interventions, and stakeholders championing different priorities, an inclusive and structured process is needed to build agreement on where to focus first, while also identifying priorities that align with emerging funding opportunities without compromising national ownership.

While every country will follow its own pathway, experiences from Kenya and Tanzania highlight four practical steps: agree on prioritisation criteria; narrow broad strategies into a coherent and manageable portfolio; sequence interventions; and decide where implementation should start.

1. Agree on transparent prioritisation criteria

Agreeing on criteria for prioritisation before selecting individual interventions can provide a useful foundation for decision-making. A common set of criteria provides a shared basis for assessing options, builds stakeholder consensus, makes trade-offs explicit and reduces the risk that individual institutional or organisational interests will drive the selection of priorities.

Kenya's National Technical Committee on Agroecology, which leads coordination for the country's National Agroecology Strategy for Food Systems Transformation (NAS-FST), selected four criteria for the prioritisation of interventions:

- **Impact** – potential contribution to agroecological transitions benefiting people and the planet;
- **Catalytic/enabling effect** – potential to enable other actions or scaling, for example by generating success stories, strengthening markets or strengthening implementing capacity;
- **Feasibility** – political timeliness and acceptability, and prospects for financing through national budgets or external funders;
- **Readiness of implementing actors** – existing capacity within government and non-government organisations to implement.

Kenya's National Technical Committee on Agroecology applied these criteria to prioritise interventions from the 166 actions contained in the NAS-FST. In Kenya's devolved governance system, these criteria later informed the selection of priority counties for the initial implementation phase, with attention to the specific roles of national and county governments (see below).

WHEN WE WORK ON EVERYTHING, WE WORK ON NOTHING WELL.
— Participant, peer-to-peer exchange

2. Narrow broad strategies into a concrete, coherent and manageable portfolio

Once prioritisation criteria have been agreed, they can be applied to systematically identify the interventions with the greatest strategic value. This process typically involves **moving from broad strategic objectives to strategic intervention areas** – for example, agroecological inputs or market development. Maintaining a balance between "push" and "pull" measures helps sustain coherent momentum by simultaneously strengthening agroecological production and developing markets for agroecological products.

Prioritisation does not end with selecting the most important interventions. These priorities must be shaped into a coherent and manageable portfolio for implementation. This typically involves:

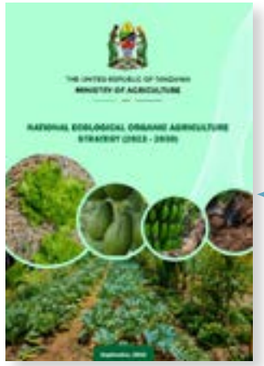
- Grouping related actions into strategic intervention areas;
- Identifying concrete priority interventions within each area;
- Adding core detail to the priority interventions to support implementation and financing discussions;
- Coordinating responsibilities and next steps.

Developing these priorities is rarely a one-off exercise. Several rounds of refinement are often needed as stakeholders balance different interests and gradually converge on a manageable portfolio.

For example, the Implementation Task Force (ITF) of Tanzania's NAS – the National Ecological Organic Agriculture Strategy (NEOAS) – conducted a stakeholder prioritisation exercise in May 2024 to kick off implementation and prepare for engagement with international funders at a donor convening in Arusha. The exercise resulted in **six multi-year intervention packages**, which were subsequently repackaged into an investment portfolio structured around **four strategic areas specifying concrete catalytic interventions**[7] for ecological organic agriculture (EOA). This created a real foundation for shaping broad intervention areas into a consensus portfolio of investment opportunities for dialogue with potential funders. A Tanzania investment opportunities dashboard[8] also provides detailed, region-specific investment opportunities for philanthropic funders, bilateral and multilateral donors, development finance institutions, national governments and private investors wanting to align finance with NEOAS.

MWANZO WA JAMBO NI NGUMU.
"THE BEGINNING OF A TASK IS THE MOST DIFFICULT."
— Kiswahili proverb





12 listed objectives in NEOAS

1. Enhance capacity of institutions for research, training and extension systems in disseminating EOA technologies and practices.
2. Promote availability and accessibility of EOA inputs and appropriate farm machineries.
3. Strengthen Information and Communication Technology system to access and disseminate EOA information.
4. Strengthen networking, capacity in EOA sub-sector organizations and institutional coordination framework.
5. Ensure compliance of standards and certification of EOA products at affordable cost.
6. Facilitate development of EOA value chains.
7. Strengthen environmental conservation using Ecosystem-based Adaptation and Nature-based Solution.
8. Mainstream cross-cutting issues in EOA sub-sector.
9. Facilitate acquisition and accessibility of financial resources for EOA investment.
10. Facilitate development and use of irrigation infrastructure in EOA production systems.
11. Enhance availability, accessibility and utilization of land for EOA.
12. Increase the business and trade volumes of EOA products in the national, regional and international markets.

6 coherent, synergistic NEOAS priorities

Make EOA inputs available
Strengthen local and national EOA input supply chains.

Bring EOA knowledge to smallholder farmers
Upscale peer-to-peer and research-to-farmer dissemination of best EOA practices.

Expand market access for farmers
Expand training and tools for affordable guarantee systems and development of local and regional markets.

Mainstream EOA in village land-use planning
Develop best practice in upscaling EOA via village land-use planning.

Foster investments across EOA value chains
Develop and increase availability of financial products for EOA value chains and entrepreneurs.

Coordination, capacity building and governance

4 strategic intervention areas

Each with a package of investment opportunities for donors/investors

- **Ecosystem coordination & capacity of implementing actors**
- **Farmer capacity building**
- **Scaling bio-inputs**
- **Expanding market access**

Figure 2: *Tanzania's prioritisation process for NEOAS implementation, narrowing 12 strategic objectives into six priority intervention packages and four strategic investment areas.*

3. Sequence interventions

Prioritisation also requires deciding when interventions should happen. Some interventions create enabling conditions that allow larger or more complex interventions to succeed later.

It is useful to distinguish between:

- enabling stepping stones that establish capacities, institutions or market conditions; and
- medium-term investments that build on these foundations to achieve larger-scale impact.

Thinking in these terms can help create early momentum while preparing the conditions for longer-term transformation. Sequencing should also factor in whether interventions have the economic and institutional foundations needed to be sustained and enable subsequent investments.

An example from Tanzania is the prioritisation of participatory guarantee systems (PGS) among many market access interventions. The NEOAS ITF designed a short-term "stepping stone" initiative, followed by three mid-term investments upscaling PGS uptake, expanding PGS market pathways and strengthening the institutional platform behind PGS.

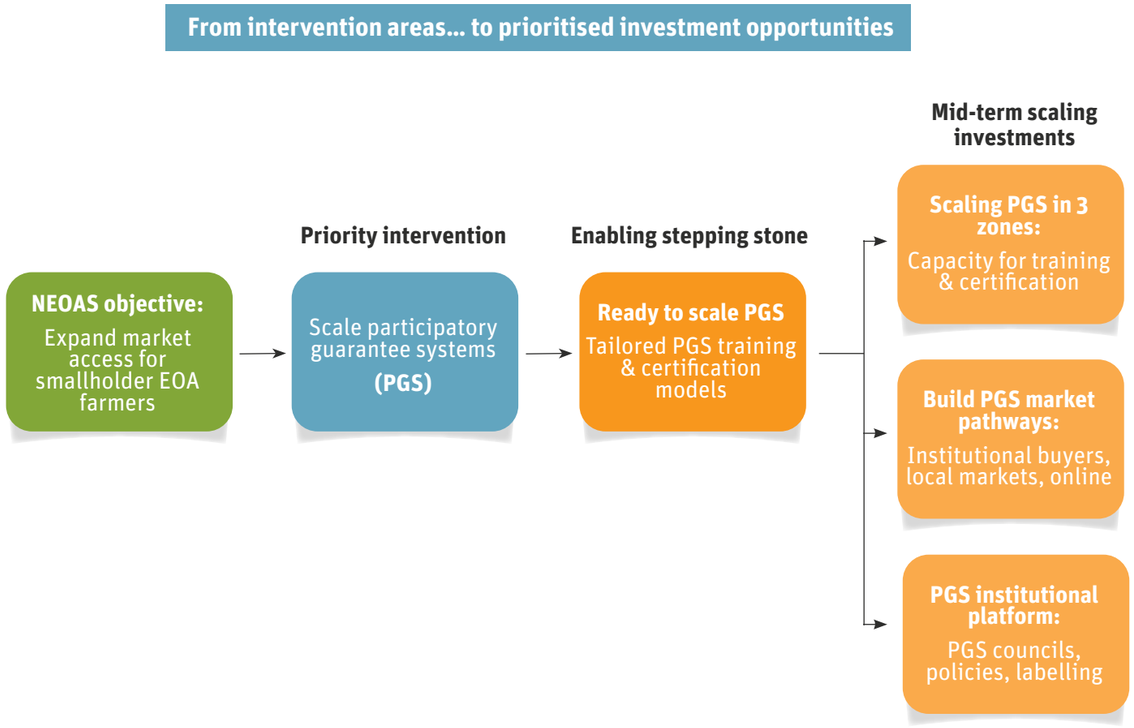


Figure 3: *Example from Tanzania of sequencing a priority intervention: using an enabling PGS stepping stone to prepare for medium-term investments by donors, government or investors in market access and institutional development.*

[7] See lessons from efforts to form clear, actionable interventions in Chapter 5 oof Biovision Foundation (2024). National Agroecology Strategies in Eastern and Southern Africa: Lighthouses for food system transformation

[8] RAFT Tanzania investment dashboard

4. Decide where implementation starts

Prioritisation is not limited to interventions; it also applies to geography and implementation pathways. Countries may need to determine whether implementation should begin nationally, through subnational governments or in selected landscapes, while pilot or demonstration approaches can be used at different scales within these rollout models (see next section).

When selecting from national or local implementation pathways, or deciding whether pilot approaches are needed, the prioritisation criteria outlined above (step 1), which were used in Kenya – impact, catalytic effect, feasibility and readiness – can inform these choices. Depending on the context, additional considerations may include:

- The national governance structure and the degree of centralisation;
- Political agendas or windows of opportunity at national or subnational levels;
- Capacities of government or non-government actors;
- Stakeholder dynamics;
- The use of pilot or demonstration approaches to test and document lessons for future scaling;
- Whether existing initiatives can already generate and share lessons for wider implementation, or whether a new pilot or demonstrations are genuinely needed.

Kenya adopted a dual national–county implementation model, selecting seven priority counties that reflected diverse agroecological contexts, production systems and levels of readiness. Using the prioritisation criteria outlined above, the National Technical Committee on Agroecology (NTCA) deliberately combined frontrunner counties with those at earlier stages of implementation to foster peer learning and the exchange of good practices. Murang'a County, which had already developed its own County Agroecology Strategy, served as an early leader, while six additional counties were selected through this structured prioritisation process.

- Priority 1 counties: Murang'a, Vihiga and Kilifi
- Priority 2 counties: Makueni, West Pokot, Marsabit and Nakuru

Tanzania combined national coordination with three initial implementation landscapes in its Lake, Northern and Central zones to concentrate efforts, build critical mass and generate lessons for future scaling.

WE NEED NEW THINKING ABOUT WHAT IS CATALYTIC, WHAT ENABLES WHAT. IT COULD BE LIGHTHOUSE INITIATIVES.
— Participant, peer-to-peer exchange



3.2 Choosing a rollout model

Most NASs in Africa are still in early implementation phases, so experience with different rollout models remains limited and continues to evolve. Emerging practitioner reflections nevertheless suggest that **how implementation is rolled out matters**: the chosen approach can help motivate and unify actors, create implementation momentum, make the NAS visible in practice and shape how implementation expands over time.

NAS implementation can follow different rollout models depending on the interventions prioritised, the governance context, implementation capacities and objectives. A NAS does not necessarily require one model for the whole strategy, and the approach may evolve as implementation progresses and scales. Some decisions concern where and through which level implementation is concentrated, while others concern how interventions are introduced and expanded over time.

Possible models include:

- **Nationwide implementation**, where an intervention is introduced across the country. This may be particularly relevant for measures that fall under a national mandate, such as legislation, regulation, taxation or other fiscal measures.
- **Subnational rollout**, where implementation is led through selected counties, districts, regions or other decentralised authorities, particularly where these actors hold important implementation mandates and capacities.
- **Landscape or territorial rollout**, where complementary interventions are concentrated in selected areas to build synergies and critical mass.
- **Targeted rollout**, focusing implementation on particular regions, sectors or groups according to identified needs or strategic opportunities.

These models are not mutually exclusive. Different NAS interventions may require different approaches. Any of these models can also begin through pilot or demonstration initiatives and be phased over time, expanding to additional territories, actors or interventions as learning, capacity and resources develop.

Factors that can inform the choice or combination of rollout models include:

- **Governance and decentralisation**, where mandates, implementation responsibilities and resources sit within government;
- **Readiness and capacity**, where government institutions, civil society organisations and other implementing actors are prepared to act, including where existing government commitments, infrastructure or other resources can provide a foundation for implementation;
- **Potential for critical mass**: whether concentrating complementary interventions could generate stronger synergies and impact;
- **Political opportunities**: whether particular national or subnational agendas provide momentum or support for implementation;
- **Stakeholder dynamics and partnerships**, where existing relationships, networks and coordination structures can help mobilise and align actors around implementation;
- **Learning and demonstration needs**: whether testing an approach first could generate evidence and inform subsequent scaling;
- **Strategic visibility**: whether a particular location, initiative or launch moment can visibly demonstrate NAS goals and benefits, helping build political commitment, attract support and create momentum for wider implementation.



Box 3: Rollout models in practice: experiences from Tanzania and Kenya

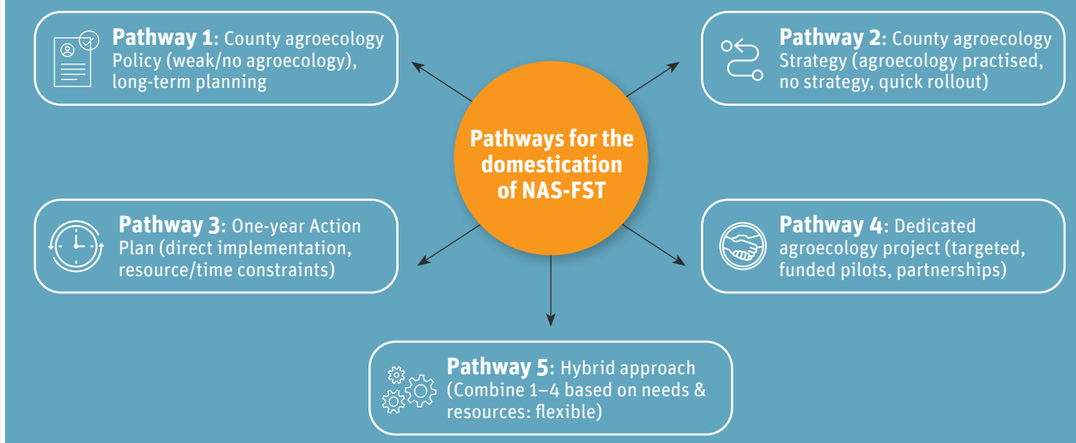
Tanzania – choosing a rollout area for readiness, visibility and demonstration

Tanzania combined national coordination with implementation in selected landscapes. The Central Zone, including Dodoma and Singida, offers several strategic advantages for early implementation. Its semi-arid conditions provide an important setting to demonstrate how agroecological approaches can strengthen resilience to drought and climate variability. Its proximity to the national government in Dodoma gives implementation there high strategic visibility. And the Bihawana Training Center, a government facility made available to the ecological organic agriculture movement, provides an existing institutional anchor for demonstration and training. The Central Zone therefore illustrates how the choice of a rollout area can factor in **implementation readiness, demonstration of value and strategic policy engagement**, while generating lessons and momentum for wider scaling.

Kenya – multiple pathways for county-level rollout

In Kenya's devolved governance system, county governments play a central role in implementing agricultural policy. Rolling out the NAS-FST therefore requires a process of domestication: translating national priorities into county-level policies, strategies, plans or projects that respond to local institutional arrangements, planning frameworks and food system contexts. Kenya's County-Level Domestication and Implementation Guide for NAS-FST recognises that counties start from different levels of readiness and therefore may follow different pathways. It presents five options: a County Agroecology Policy, a County Agroecology Strategy, a one-year Action Plan, a dedicated agroecology project and a hybrid approach. The choice depends on factors such as existing policy and legal alignment, the extent to which agroecology is already mainstreamed, available time and resources, and stakeholder support. The example shows how subnational rollout can be adapted to different local starting points while maintaining alignment with a common national framework and working through the political, planning and legislative processes relevant to each county.

5 pathways for the domestication of the National Agroecology Strategy (NAS-FST)*



* *Kenya's five pathways for domesticating the NAS-FST at county level. Adapted from the County-Level Domestication and Implementation Guide for the National Agroecology Strategy for Food System Transformation (2024–2033), Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, Kenya (2026).*

Key messages from the NAS Community of Practice (CoP)

- **Collaborative prioritisation is not simply about ranking interventions.** It can help stakeholders agree where to focus, coordinate responsibilities and sequence actions and investments more effectively.
- **Priorities need to form a coherent and manageable portfolio.** Complementary interventions that reinforce each other are easier to coordinate, implement and present as a clear proposition to government and other financiers.
- **Prioritisation is an iterative process.** Several rounds of refinement may be needed to move from a broad strategy to a set of interventions that is sufficiently focused, actionable and ready for implementation.
- **There is no single rollout model for a NAS.** National, subnational, landscape, pilot or targeted approaches may suit different interventions, and these models can be combined or evolve as implementation progresses.
- **Where and how implementation is concentrated matters.** Focusing efforts where there is readiness, political opportunity or potential for critical mass can generate learning, visible results and momentum for wider implementation.



Recommendations

Non-government actors:

- **Build collaborative prioritisation into NAS development or early implementation.** Support an inclusive, well-facilitated process to agree transparent criteria, identify catalytic priorities and their sequencing, and maintain a coherent mix of interventions rather than advancing disconnected organisational priorities.
- **Translate agreed priorities into clear propositions for implementation and engagement.** Use them to align ongoing initiatives, clarify where different actors can contribute, and continuously engage government, planning and financing actors around a common set of priorities rather than separate projects.
- **Use national agroecology symposiums and other periodic convenings as implementation moments.** Review progress, showcase emerging results, reconnect actors around NAS priorities, identify synergies between ongoing initiatives and agree on next steps for implementation.

Governments:

- **Lead prioritisation and rollout decisions as part of NAS implementation planning.** Work with non-government actors to agree priorities and sequencing, clarify national and subnational responsibilities, and select rollout pathways that reflect readiness, existing capacities and resources, political opportunities and the potential to build critical mass.
- **Use agreed NAS priorities to open concrete implementation pathways within government.** Embed them in national and subnational planning and investment processes, and use government engagements with bilateral and multilateral partners and international fora to mobilise support around country-defined priorities.

Finance community:

- **Support the enabling work behind prioritisation and rollout, not only individual interventions**. This can include multistakeholder prioritisation processes, rollout planning, coordination capacity and the capacities of actors expected to implement agreed priorities.
- **Align support with country-led priorities and sequencing.** Engage with the portfolios identified through NAS processes and be prepared to support enabling stepping stones, pilots or other rollout approaches that countries identify as necessary for wider implementation, rather than creating parallel priorities.

4.

COORDINATION OF A NAS AND ITS GOVERNANCE

This chapter explores how the coordination of National Agroecology Strategy (NAS) implementation can be organised and governed. This includes the arrangements through which implementation is coordinated, who participates, how roles and responsibilities are distributed and how decisions are made. Drawing on emerging experiences from Kenya, Tanzania and Ethiopia, it highlights key considerations for establishing coordination arrangements, ensuring sufficient capacity and resources, connecting actors and governance levels, and defining clear roles and decision-making processes. It also outlines core coordination functions, from stakeholder and government engagement to resource mobilisation and the tracking of implementation progress.

4.1 Establishing coordination arrangements for implementation

Moving from a NAS to implementation requires action across different ministries, levels of government and administrations, and the inclusion of non-state actors. Effective coordination and governance are critical to keeping actors engaged, connecting implementation efforts and maintaining political and institutional ownership. There is no single model for how this coordination should be organised. Institutional mandates, existing coordination structures and stakeholder landscapes differ between countries, and most NASs are still at an early stage of implementation.

Emerging experiences from Kenya and Tanzania illustrate different approaches to organising coordination and point to a number of considerations for countries moving into implementation. Both countries have established government-led structures to coordinate NAS implementation, anchored in the ministry responsible for agriculture, but their institutional arrangements, composition and degree of formalisation differ. These experiences underline the importance of considering coordination arrangements early, defining clear roles and decision-making processes, and dedicating sufficient capacity and resources to make coordination work.

Coordination arrangements provide an institutional home for steering and maintaining an overview of NAS implementation. Their role is not to implement all NAS interventions themselves, but to **connect actors and activities, facilitate joint decisions and maintain links between implementation and government processes**. Depending on the national context, this function can be performed by a dedicated NAS coordination committee or task force, an existing government structure, or a combination of different arrangements.

Lessons from Kenya, Tanzania and Ethiopia in establishing coordination arrangements

Anchor coordination within government while involving relevant actors. As NASs are public policy plans, government has a central role in their coordination. Anchoring the coordination function in a responsible ministry can strengthen institutional ownership and provide links to government planning and decision-making. An important function of the coordination mechanism is to bring together the different parts of government needed for implementation – something that is not a given even for cross-sectoral policies. This can include different departments within the ministry responsible for agriculture, other relevant ministries (e.g. of environment, health, education, cooperatives or finance), state agencies such as regulatory and standards bodies, and, where relevant, decentralised government structures. At the same time, agroecological transitions involve actors beyond government. Coordination arrangements therefore need mechanisms to engage farmer organisations, civil society (e.g. consumer associations), research and academic institutions, private-sector actors (e.g. processors, manufacturers or marketing organisations) and other stakeholders relevant to implementation.

Kenya, Ethiopia and Tanzania illustrate how this can take different forms. In Kenya and Ethiopia, the institutional arrangements for coordination were already partly defined in the NAS itself, including representation from different government institutions and non-state constituencies. Kenya's National Technical Committee on Agroecology (NTCA) provides a formal space for coordinating the NAS and linking its implementation with relevant government structures. Tanzania's Implementation Task Force (ITF) is less formally defined in terms of its membership, illustrating that coordination structures can vary considerably even when they fulfil similar functions.

WE MUST MAP AND ENSURE CAPACITY AMONG IMPLEMENTING ACTORS – BOTH THE MINISTRY AND INVOLVED CSOS!
— Participant, peer-to-peer exchange

Clarify mandates, roles and decision-making processes. Establishing a committee or task force is only a first step. Effective coordination also depends on clarity about what the structure is responsible for, who participates, how decisions are made and how responsibilities are divided between the coordination structure and actors implementing specific interventions. Formal mandates, terms of reference or provisions within the NAS itself can help clarify these questions and institutionalise coordination beyond particular individuals, supporting continuity when individual representatives or government leadership change.

Decision-making arrangements are particularly important where coordination structures need to agree on common priorities, respond to funding opportunities or develop joint products such as resource mobilisation strategies. They can also help ensure that different constituencies have meaningful opportunities to participate in decisions. Beyond formal rules, the relationships between actors matter: existing collaborations, institutional interests and historical tensions can influence how effectively a coordination structure functions in practice.

Begin coordination planning during NAS formulation. Coordination arrangements are often needed immediately after a NAS is approved. Considering them during the formulation process can therefore facilitate the transition from strategy development to implementation. The formulation process provides an opportunity to discuss which institution should anchor coordination, which actors need to be represented, how the structure connects to existing government mechanisms and what mandate and resources it requires. Kenya's experience shows how elements of the institutional architecture can be incorporated into the NAS itself early on.

Resource the coordination function. Coordination requires time, staff capacity and operational resources. Meetings need to be convened, stakeholders engaged, information shared and follow-up ensured between meetings. Where these functions depend exclusively on voluntary or in-kind contributions from participating organisations, maintaining momentum can be difficult. Countries and partners therefore need to consider how the coordination function itself will be resourced alongside the financing of implementation activities.

A dedicated coordinator can provide continuity between meetings and help translate decisions of a coordination structure into follow-up. However, such a position also requires a clear mandate, reporting lines and relationships with the institutions and actors represented in the coordination structure.

Connect with existing coordination structures and across levels of government. NAS implementation does not take place through a single coordination mechanism. Coordination arrangements should therefore connect with existing institutions and mechanisms that can support implementation across sectors and levels of government, in line with the chosen rollout model. In Kenya, for example, the NTCA is expected to work with existing national and county-level structures: County Agricultural Sector Steering Committees (CASSCOMs) support implementation at county level, while a Joint Agricultural Sector Steering Committee (JASSCOM) helps harmonise implementation across counties. Ethiopia similarly envisages links between national coordination and subnational structures. This helps embed NAS implementation within existing institutional arrangements rather than creating parallel structures.

Box 4: A dedicated coordinator to support NAS implementation – experience from Tanzania

Stakeholders in Tanzania have secured resources for hiring an Implementation Coordinator for their NEOAS. During the process, Tanzania's Implementation Task Force (ITF) put weight on competencies, experience and personal attributes needed to drive core tasks in policy implementation. Key functions of the coordinator include:

- Multistakeholder coordination – practices that support coordination of stakeholders and inclusive and agile decision-making in the ITF;
- Supporting formation and operations of working groups on central implementation areas;
- Monitoring and reporting on progress towards implementation;
- Coordination of resource mobilisation for core intervention areas;
- Maintaining and strengthening engagement with ministries, mobilising evidence and stakeholders in advocacy;
- Communication, transparency and inclusive dialogue mobilising stakeholders.

See NEOAS Terms of Reference here.



Checklist: Key considerations for effective NAS coordination and governance

While institutional arrangements will differ between countries, the experiences emerging from NAS implementation point to several factors that can strengthen coordination and governance:

- **Early consideration:** coordination arrangements are already considered during NAS formulation to facilitate the transition to implementation;
- **Clear institutional anchoring and mandate:** actors understand where responsibility for coordination lies and how the coordination structure relates to existing government institutions and mechanisms;
- **Alignment with the rollout model:** coordination arrangements reflect how implementation is intended to unfold (i.e. in line with the rollout model), including the connections needed across national and subnational governance levels;
- **Government leadership:** the responsible government institution remains actively engaged and provides the political and institutional connection required for implementation of a public policy;
- **Appropriate representation:** relevant ministries, state agencies and non-state constituencies are represented or have clear channels through which they can engage;
- **Clear roles and responsibilities:** the distinction between coordinating implementation and implementing specific activities is understood, including the respective roles of the coordination structure, its members and other implementing actors;
- **Transparent decision-making:** procedures are in place for agreeing priorities, responding to opportunities and making decisions that affect different actors;
- **Sufficient resources and capacity:** the practical costs of coordination, including staff time, convening, communication and follow-up, are recognised and resourced;
- **Continuity and institutionalisation:** coordination does not depend exclusively on particular individuals, and arrangements can withstand changes in personnel or leadership;
- **Attention to actor dynamics:** formal structures are complemented by attention to trust, relationships and potential tensions between participating actors.

Note: This checklist can be used to assess existing coordination arrangements or guide their design as implementation gets underway. It is not intended to prescribe a single coordination model, but to help identify whether the key conditions for effective coordination have been considered and adapted to the country's institutional context and chosen rollout approach.

4.2 Core functions of coordination

Once coordination arrangements are in place, their value lies in the functions they perform. These functions will evolve as implementation progresses and may be distributed across different institutions rather than concentrated in one committee.

Maintaining stakeholder engagement and communication. NAS implementation involves actors that may not all participate directly in the formal coordination structure. Regular communication can provide transparency on implementation progress, make opportunities for engagement visible and maintain connections with the wider community of actors working on agroecology. Periodic stakeholder meetings or existing national agroecology events can provide spaces to share progress, discuss challenges and identify opportunities for collaboration.

Connecting implementation across government. Coordination needs to reach beyond the government representatives formally participating in a NAS committee or task force. Implementation may require engagement with ministries responsible for finance, environment, health, education and other sectors, as well as regulatory and other state agencies.

Coordination structures can facilitate this engagement by providing strategic guidance to relevant ministries, departments and agencies on the measures needed to advance NAS objectives. This function is, for example, formally assigned to the coordination structures in Kenya and Ethiopia. Maintaining these connections can help integrate NAS priorities into relevant policies, programmes and government planning and budgeting processes.

Box 5: How existing multistakeholder platforms can support NAS implementation – experience from Kenya

Existing multistakeholder platforms (MSPs) can complement formal NAS coordination arrangements by connecting them to a broader community of actors. **They should not, however, be understood as a necessary component of NAS governance or as structures established specifically to implement a NAS.** Their mandates can be considerably broader, and NAS implementation may be only one area of their work.

Kenya illustrates this relationship. Existing MSPs bring together government, farmer organisations, civil society, research organisations, private-sector actors and other stakeholders around agroecology. These platforms can provide access to expertise and networks, identify actors able to contribute to particular implementation priorities and create spaces for broader dialogue, collaboration and accountability. Technical or thematic groups emerging from these networks can also contribute to specific priorities, such as sectoral policy reform, capacity development or resource mobilisation.

The formal NAS coordination structure and wider MSPs therefore perform different but potentially complementary functions. The former provides institutional coordination of NAS implementation, while the latter can widen participation and connect implementation to the broader agroecology movement. Tanzania's experience, where NAS coordination is proceeding without an equivalent dedicated MSP, further illustrates that countries can organise this relationship in different ways.

Box 6: Monitoring NAS implementation – Kenya's NAS monitoring and evaluation framework

Kenya is developing a dedicated monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework for its National Agroecology Strategy for Food Systems Transformation (NAS-FST), aligned with existing monitoring systems and indicators. Its objectives illustrate the different functions that M&E can fulfil in supporting and steering NAS implementation. The official objectives of the NAS-FST M&E framework in Kenya are to:

- Track implementation progress of the NAS-FST;
- Assess the effectiveness of NAS-FST interventions in achieving intended outcomes and impacts;
- Generate credible evidence for policy, planning and investment decisions;
- Strengthen learning and adaptive management in NAS-FST implementation;
- Enhance accountability and transparency among implementing actors;
- Harmonise agroecology monitoring at national and county levels;
- Support national, regional and global reporting commitments.

Supporting strategic coordination and prioritisation. Coordination structures can help maintain an overview of implementation activities and identify areas where joint action is needed. Depending on the issue, temporary or longer-term working groups can bring together actors with relevant expertise around specific priorities. Coordination structures can also connect national implementation with relevant regional and international agroecology initiatives, helping to align efforts, exchange experience and link NAS implementation to relevant international commitments. In Ethiopia, facilitating such collaboration and engagement is formally included among the functions of the national coordination structure. This can help translate broad participation into focused action while maintaining alignment with the overall NAS priorities and implementation pathway.

Coordinating resource mobilisation. Financing opportunities may emerge through government budgets, development partners, philanthropies or other sources. Coordination structures can help connect these opportunities to agreed implementation priorities and facilitate joint approaches to funders.

Within government, this can include coordinating engagement around annual planning and budgeting processes and building relationships with institutions such as the Ministry of Finance.

Resource mobilisation should build on a clear prioritisation of interventions rather than becoming a collection of disconnected funding opportunities.

Keeping track of implementation progress. Coordination structures also need sufficient information on what is being implemented, where progress is being made and where bottlenecks are emerging. Their role does not necessarily require establishing a separate monitoring system. Where possible, information on NAS implementation can align to existing national, subnational or sectoral monitoring arrangements and information provided by implementing actors. The purpose is to provide the coordination structure with enough evidence to support learning, decision-making, communication and continued political engagement.

Ultimately, coordination structures are enabling mechanisms rather than implementers in their own right. **Their contribution is to create the institutional connections, decision-making processes and shared direction that allow the many actors involved in NAS implementation to work towards common priorities.** Designing these arrangements to fit the national context, resourcing them adequately and adapting them as implementation evolves can help sustain momentum beyond the adoption of the strategy.

Key messages from the NAS Community of Practice (CoP)

- **NAS implementation requires a strong and structured coordination ecosystem to thrive.** An appropriate institutional architecture is needed to coordinate, monitor and sustain implementation. This should lean on whole-of-government and multistakeholder principles and be inclusive of farmers, civil society, private sectors and other relevant actors.
- **Government ownership and strong internal champions are essential for keeping NAS implementation politically anchored.** A strong NAS committee chaired by a well-connected and convinced government actor can help sustain Ministry of Agriculture and wider government engagement, navigate competing policy agendas and internal resistance, and secure institutional continuity and alignment with broader government coordination structures.
- **Coordination is an ongoing function, not a structure.** A coordination committee or task force is only the institutional vehicle. What matters is what it does: maintaining engagement, connecting government processes, prioritising action, mobilising resources and tracking progress.
- **The coordination ecosystem relies on trust, not procedures alone.** Effective implementation platforms should not be treated only as technical coordination mechanisms. They must also build shared ownership, transparency, collaboration, adaptive learning and collective accountability across the agroecology movement.



Recommendations

Non-government actors:

- **Participate actively in NAS coordination structures and associated MSPs**, depending on membership arrangements, to bring field experience and technical expertise into implementation discussions and help keep governments accountable for agreed NAS objectives, milestones and commitments;
- **Contribute to monitoring, policy alignment and collective capacity** by providing evidence, implementation data and practical insights, and identifying policy opportunities where agreed NAS priorities can be advanced.

Governments:

- **Institutionalise NAS coordination structures** with clear mandates, senior-level leadership, defined roles for ministries, agencies and non-state actors, and formal links to existing government coordination bodies;
- **Invest in ownership, coordination and monitoring capacity** by anchoring leadership within the Ministry of Agriculture, securing access to dedicated coordination or secretariat support regardless of where these functions are hosted or funded by government, and keeping M&E frameworks nationally owned, feasible and aligned with wider policy, budget and monitoring processes.

Finance community:

- **Fund the institutional architecture for implementation** rather than only individual interventions. This should include NAS coordination structures' operations, MSP secretariats, implementation coordinators and monitoring systems.

WE NEED CONSTANT ADVOCACY AND DEMONSTRATED RESULTS TO MAINTAIN POLITICAL WILL.
— Participant, peer-to-peer exchange

5.

FINANCING AGROECOLOGICAL TRANSITIONS

This chapter examines how financing approaches can be integrated into the implementation planning of National Agroecology Strategies (NASs). It explores how countries can combine funding sources around a resource mobilisation strategy, connect investments through an interlocking financing architecture, match financing models to different transition needs, sequence investments over time and coordinate finance around nationally agreed priorities.

5.1 Financing as an integral part of implementation planning

As countries move from strategy development to implementation, financing is clearly a decisive factor shaping whether NASs can move beyond policy ambition into sustained action.

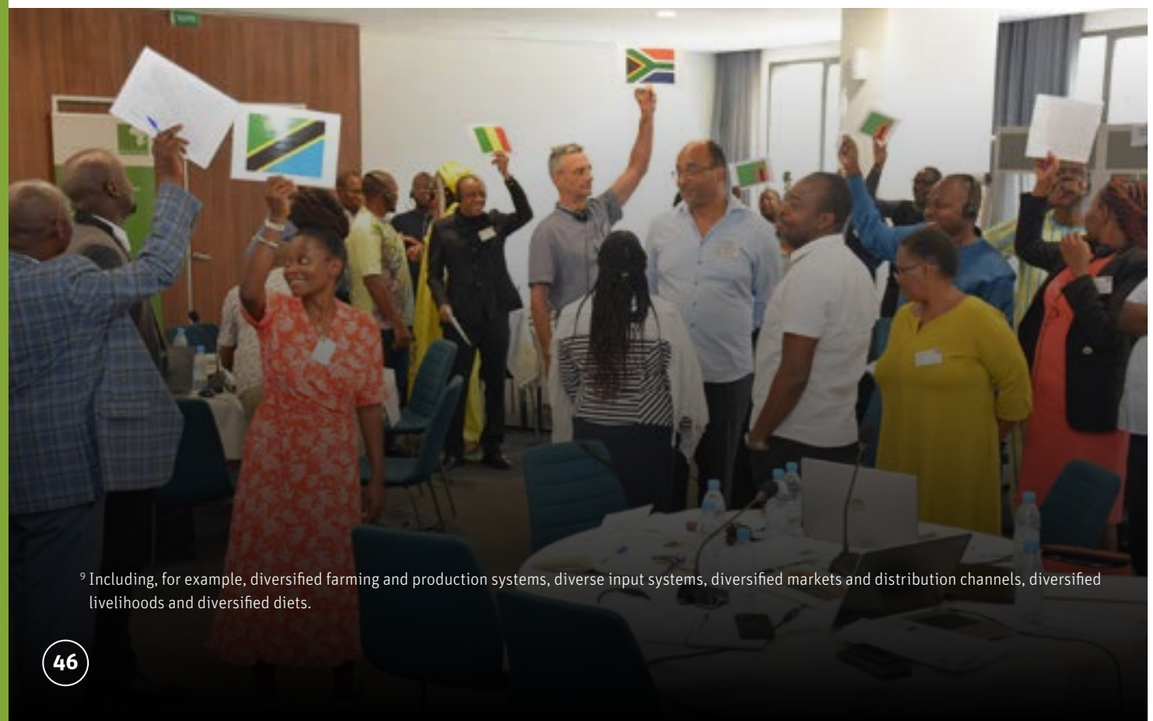
Discussions across the NAS Community of Practice (NAS CoP) increasingly pointed to financing being an integral part of implementation planning, rather than limited to questions of how much funding can be mobilised. For example, financing feasibility can already shape the identification of priorities and implementation pathways, as discussed in Chapter 3. Thus, in practice, financing challenges go beyond the overall volume of funding available. They also reflect difficulties in:

- Translating broad priorities into credible and costed investment proposals;
- Coordinating fragmented funding streams;
- Aligning investments with nationally agreed priorities;
- Sequencing investments over time;
- Ensuring that resources reach the actors responsible for implementation at national, subnational and local levels.

In many contexts, existing approaches and instruments, across both the public and private financing landscapes, remain better suited to short-term project cycles or conventional agricultural models than to the realities of agroecological systems, which often require:

- Flexible approaches adapted to local contexts and longer time horizons;
- Coordinated investments across multiple sectors to support diversified food systems[9];
- Sustained support for functions that do not generate direct financial returns, such as transdisciplinary knowledge creation and management, land and natural resource governance platforms, social organisation and participation processes, amongst others.

As a result, actors involved in NAS implementation need strong capacities to prioritise, coordinate and align investments to support long-term transformation processes, rather than to simply mobilise additional funding. Financing must therefore be considered alongside the other components of implementation planning, including prioritisation, sequencing, rollout pathways and governance (see previous chapters).



[9] Including, for example, diversified farming and production systems, diverse input systems, diversified markets and distribution channels, diversified livelihoods and diversified diets.

5.2 Combining funding sources around a resource mobilisation strategy

No single source of finance is likely to meet the full range of needs associated with an agroecological transition. NAS implementation instead requires a strategic combination of funding streams, with different sources supporting different functions and stages of implementation.

The main financing sources relevant to NAS implementation may include:

Funding source	⊕ Potential role in agroecological transitions (selected)	⚠ Limitations (selected)
Domestic public resources allocated through national and subnational budgets	Anchor long-term implementation, national ownership and enabling functions, such as agroecological extension, farmer-to-farmer learning and exchange, research and knowledge co-creation, coordination, natural-resource governance, public programmes and recurrent institutional costs.	Fiscal space may be limited, existing budgets may not be aligned with agroecological priorities, and allocations can shift with changing political priorities.
International development funding from bilateral and multilateral partners	Provide larger-scale and multi-year support where domestic public resources or private capital are insufficient, including for institutional strengthening, civil-society engagement, agroecological extension and knowledge systems, infrastructure, market development and capacity development.	Funding can remain fragmented, short-term, project-based or shaped by donor priorities unless it is aligned with nationally agreed priorities.
Philanthropic funding	Provide flexible and catalytic support for areas that are strategically important for agroecology but often difficult to finance through conventional channels, including experimentation, farmer- and civil-society-led innovation, evidence generation, coordination, participation and early-stage market or enterprise development.	Resources are limited in scale, priorities may shift over time, and philanthropic funding cannot substitute for sustained public expenditure or larger development-finance flows.
Domestic and international private capital	Finance revenue-generating parts of the transition where viable business models and sufficiently predictable returns exist, particularly agroecological enterprises and commercially viable activities in input and service provision, processing, aggregation, distribution, value addition and market development.	It is not suitable for many non-commercial or public-interest functions and may not reach actors or activities with weak or uncertain revenue streams.

A diversified financing portfolio for agroecological transitions:
different sources are complementary and suited to different needs and stages.

Table 2: *Funding sources for NAS implementation*

These funding sources may be channelled through different financial institutions and intermediaries, including multilateral and national public development banks, commercial banks, funds and other financial vehicles, which in turn may deploy a wide range of instruments, including grants, loans, equity, guarantees and subsidies.

Understanding how these instruments work (see Box 7), what they are suited to and what conditions they require can help practitioners identify appropriate financing options for different parts of NAS implementation.

Box 7: Matching financial instruments to different needs: insights from the ECOWAS region

An Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) study[10] reviewed 159 financing mechanisms that support, or could potentially support, farmers, producer organisations and enterprises engaged in agroecological transitions across West Africa. A central finding was that grants, credit and equity are complementary and are often used in combination. The appropriate instrument depends on the maturity of the activity or business model, its capacity to generate revenue and repay finance, and the period before returns can be expected.

- **Grants and subsidies** are often needed where business models remain unproven, demand is still developing, or activities generate benefits that cannot readily produce financial returns. Examples include piloting agroecological practices, supporting farmer training or partially subsidising transition-related equipment.
- **Short-term credit** is better suited to working capital and investments that can generate returns within a production cycle, such as finance for agroecological inputs, aggregation or seasonal production costs.
- **Medium- and long-term credit** may support equipment, infrastructure and other investments where repayment requires more time, such as sustainable irrigation, processing equipment or longer-term investments by producer organisations and agroecological enterprises.
- **Equity and seed funding** can support agroecological enterprises developing new products, services or markets, such as bio-input producers, processing enterprises or businesses creating market channels for agroecological products, particularly where growth potential exists but debt repayment would be premature.
- **Guarantees and other risk-sharing mechanisms** can reduce the perceived risk of lending to farmers, producer organisations or agroecological enterprises that may lack collateral or a conventional credit history.
- **Premiums and payments for environmental services** may reward agroecological production or public environmental benefits that conventional markets do not adequately value.

In practice, these instruments may need to be combined or introduced sequentially as activities, organisations and markets mature.

[10]Accessible at Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food and JUGUET, E., HAENTJENS, E., PASQUET, J., Groupement AVSF-IRAM-INADES Formation, Groupement HORUS Development Finance – SalvaTerra, FALL, T., & KAYITESI, C. (2023). Etude sur les mécanismes de financement de la transition agroécologique dans la CEDEAO | Rapport d'inventaire

Building on the prioritisation and implementation pathways discussed in Chapter 3, a resource mobilisation strategy can help countries navigate this landscape without assuming that every source and instrument must be pursued simultaneously. It should identify:

- What needs to be financed;
- Which actors require resources;
- Which sources are suited to each financing need;
- When different resources will be required;
- How funding will be channelled to implementing actors
- How resource utilisation will be monitored and reported.

This creates a basis for beginning with the most accessible opportunities while gradually developing the capacities and partnerships needed to engage more complex sources of finance. It can also help prevent financing decisions from being driven primarily by the interests or requirements of individual funders rather than by NAS priorities.

Box 8: Kenya – linking policy priorities to a national investment framework

Kenya's National Agri-Food Systems Investment Plan (NASIP) 2026–2030 illustrates how a broader national investment framework can create opportunities for financing NAS implementation. NASIP responds to a recurring challenge in Kenya's agricultural sector: despite numerous policies and strategies, implementation has remained constrained by fragmented programmes, weak coordination and limited translation of policy priorities into investable projects and investment pipelines.

NASIP seeks to address these bottlenecks through a unified investment framework intended to strengthen coordination, institutional accountability and private-sector participation. Importantly for agroecology, the plan makes explicit reference to Kenya's National Agroecology Strategy for Food System Transformation (NAS-FST) for 2024–2033. This creates an opportunity to connect NAS priorities to wider agricultural investment planning, strengthen advocacy for public resources and develop investment opportunities that can attract different sources of finance. NASIP also provides an avenue for translating national investment priorities into devolved financing through county planning instruments, including County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs) and Annual Development Plans (ADPs).

This example from Kenya suggests that resource mobilisation for a NAS does not necessarily require creating a standalone financing mechanism. Existing or emerging national investment frameworks can also provide an entry point for linking NAS priorities to national and subnational investment planning, provided that agroecology priorities are clearly reflected in investment pipelines and financing decisions.



5.3 Financing the full transition through an interlocking architecture

Understanding emerging interconnected financing options can help practitioners move beyond treating NAS implementation as a collection of separate projects or financing requests. This is where the concept of financing architecture becomes particularly valuable.

It shows how different financing instruments and investments can be combined into a coherent portfolio that supports the broader agroecological transition as a whole.

Box 9: Regenerative and Agroecological Food Systems Transitions (RAFT) initiative

Established by the Global Alliance for the Future of Food and its members in 2023, the Regenerative and Agroecological Food Systems Transitions (RAFT) initiative is a strategic collaboration among funders, investors and implementation partners seeking to align finance and action for food system transitions.

Its work includes:

- Supporting national and subnational planning partnerships;
- Identifying catalytic levers for change;
- Co-creating connected, long-term transition strategies;
- Identifying and costing catalytic investment opportunities and estimating wider transition financing needs;
- Mobilising and aligning philanthropic, public and private investment;
- Financing ecosystem, finance and market coordination;
- Moving from fragmented projects towards more systemic approaches.

RAFT has supported planning partnerships in Brazil, India, Kenya, Tanzania, the United States Midwest and Europe. In Kenya and Tanzania, this work has been connected to national and subnational agroecology policy processes and has involved government actors, civil society, farmer organisations, funders and implementing partners.



The Regenerative and Agroecological Food Systems Transitions (RAFT) initiative offers one such example (see Box 9). In Kenya and Tanzania, it developed a collaborative finance and action model that connects investments in knowledge and capacity support for actors during the transition, enterprise and market development, and coordination. The architecture (Figure 4) is an emerging prototype that can provide a useful basis for reflection in other countries.

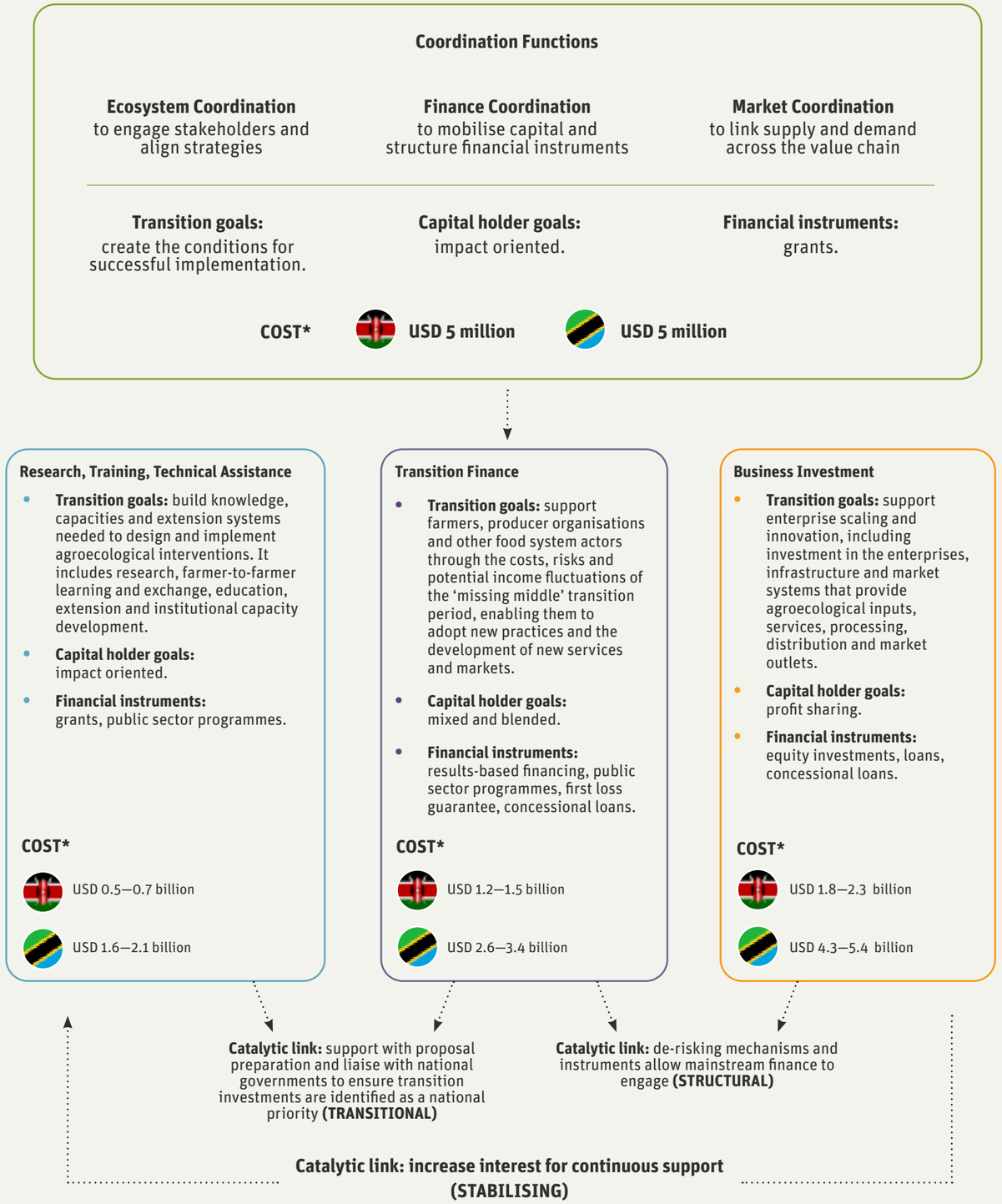


Figure 4: *The RAFT collaborative finance and action model connects three areas of investment: research, training and technical assistance; transition finance; and business investment. It also includes cross-cutting coordination functions related to the ecosystem, finance and market, which link to the three investment areas. The Kenya and Tanzania costing for transition illustrates the order of magnitude associated with these components in different countries. The estimates are context-specific and should not be interpreted as a standard allocation formula. Diagram adapted from Global Alliance for the Future of Food, 2025.*

**The costs illustrate the order of magnitude for each component. The estimates are context specific and should not be interpreted as a standard allocation formula.*

In Kenya and Tanzania, the RAFT architecture was complemented by costing exercises and investment databases that translate transition priorities into more concrete financing propositions[11]. These include indicative cost estimates for catalytic interventions as well as wider landscape and national transition needs. The investment databases provide further detail on specific priority interventions and enterprises, including the type of investment and indicative financing required.

The RAFT architecture offers four further practical reflections for NAS practitioners.

First, **the components are mutually dependent**. Investment in enterprises and markets will have limited effect without knowledge, transition support and enabling institutions. Equally, research and training will not drive change if actors lack finance, services and market opportunities.

Second, **interdependence does not imply equal financing needs**. In the Kenya estimate, business investment represents the largest share of total costs, while coordination requires comparatively little funding. Smaller enabling investments may nevertheless be essential to unlock much larger flows elsewhere in the architecture.

Third, **a financing architecture becomes actionable when it is linked to costing and a concrete investment pipeline**. Together, these elements can help turn broad transition priorities into propositions that financiers can engage with, including issues of where, how and at what scale different forms of capital could be deployed.

Fourth, **full-transition costing and catalytic investments serve different purposes**. Full costing shows the overall scale of the transition; catalytic investments identify realistic entry points for beginning implementation and preparing subsequent investments. This distinction is explored further in Section 5.4 of this report.

The main value of an interlocking architecture is not to prescribe a fixed allocation among financing categories. It is to help countries examine whether their financing portfolios cover the various action areas required for transition and whether investments in one part of the system are preparing the conditions for others. It can also reveal when resources are concentrating on the activities that are easiest to finance while essential public-interest and enabling functions remain overlooked.

5.4 Matching financing models to the transition and sequencing investments over time

NAS interventions do not necessarily fit within many existing financing models designed for conventional agricultural systems. This is because agroecological transitions often combine several financing challenges: diversified and locally adapted production systems; a broad base of small-scale producers and enterprises; benefits and returns that may take time to emerge; and outcomes that combine private gains with wider public benefits such as soil restoration, biodiversity, resilience and food security.

Different parts of the transition therefore require different financing arrangements. Matching finance to these needs requires an examination of:

- Whether and when an activity can generate revenue;
- The type and distribution of risk;
- The capacity of implementing actors to manage and repay finance;
- The balance between private returns and wider public benefits.

This assessment can help practitioners distinguish between financing needs for NAS interventions that may appear similar but require different approaches.

KNOWLEDGE OF FINANCING MODELS WILL STRENGTHEN THE POSITION OF AGROECOLOGY ACTORS. OUR PROPOSALS MUST BE MINDFUL OF THE SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF FINANCE INSTITUTIONS AND GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS. WE MUST LOOK IN THE RIGHT PLACES.
— Participant, peer-to-peer exchange



[11] The databases for both countries can be accessed through RAFT Tanzania investment dashboard (Kenya) and RAFT Tanzania investment dashboard (Tanzania).

Financing needs along the agroecological transition journey

Transition support for farmers and other implementing actors

Important characteristics

- Supports actors facing temporary costs, risks or income fluctuations while shifting practices, reorganising production or developing new market relationships
- Strong local knowledge and stewardship
- Diverse smallholders and producer groups
- Need for inputs, tools, and productive assets

Options for financing approach

- Concessional loans and grants
- Grants, targeted subsidies, concessional finance, guarantees or income-support mechanisms
- Input and asset financing
- Savings, group finance and guarantees

Emerging agroecological enterprises and business models

Important characteristics

- Early-stage, innovative and higher risk
- Agroecological enterprises may generate revenue while delivering environmental and social value, but early-stage businesses can face uncertain demand, limited collateral, high initial costs or long pathways to profitability
- Needs patient and catalytic capital
- Test, learn and scale

Options for financing approach

- Philanthropic and catalytic funding
- Grants or seed finance initially, followed where appropriate by guarantees, concessional debt, patient equity or other risk-sharing mechanisms
- Blended finance and guarantees
- Impact investment (early-stage)

Established revenue-generating agroecological activities

Important characteristics

- Proven models and cash flows
- Activities with viable business models, sufficiently predictable cash flows and the capacity to repay or provide returns – for example, established input, processing, service or distribution businesses aligned with agroecological principles
- Lower risk and scalable
- Strong market linkages

Options for financing approach

- Commercial finance and equity
- Commercial debt, equity and other repayable finance
- Debt and working capital



Public-interest and enabling functions for NAS implementation

Important characteristics

- Build capacities and knowledge
- Support adoption of practices
- Address livelihoods, resilience and inclusion
- Functions such as natural-resource governance, enforcement of agri-input regulations, public extension and knowledge systems, public procurement, consumer awareness or participation processes generate broad societal benefits but little or no direct revenue. They often require continuity over time

Options for financing approach

- Domestic public budgets, international development finance and grants
- Grants and concessional finance
- Catalytic and flexible funding
- Blended finance for advisory and services

Agroecological system and market development

Important characteristics

- Builds shared infrastructure, services, institutions and demand, such as local processing, aggregation, market infrastructure, participatory guarantee systems or territorial market development
- Returns may be indirect, delayed or distributed across multiple actors
- Invest in infrastructure and services
- Strengthen value chains and standards
- Reduce transaction costs and de-risk

Options for financing approach

- Public finance (incl. blended)
- Public and development finance, co-financing and blended arrangements
- Guarantees and risk-sharing
- Private capital (debt, equity)

Figure 5: *Financing needs along the agroecological transition*

These categories are not fixed. A single NAS intervention may combine several financing approaches, and its needs may change over time. For example, an emerging agroecological bio-input enterprise may initially require grant-funded technical assistance and market development before moving into concessional or commercial finance. Conversely, some public-interest functions, such as farmer and civil society participation in food system governance or the enforcement of regulations on harmful chemical inputs, may continue to depend on public or grant financing even as commercial activity expands elsewhere in the transition. The key principle is that the financing model should follow the characteristics of the activity. Private or repayable finance is appropriate only where there is a credible basis for generating and retaining sufficient revenue.

Chapter 3 presented reflections on how NAS interventions could be prioritised and sequenced through implementation pathways and phased approaches to rollout. From a financing perspective, the corresponding task is to ensure that the financing mix is adapted to the rollout approach and evolves with the maturity of activities, institutions and markets.

Efforts to mobilise financing may initially concentrate on prioritised catalytic interventions and enabling stepping stones that establish the capacities, institutions, evidence or market conditions required for subsequent action.

These early investments may include testing and refining delivery models, strengthening implementing actors, developing markets and preparing concrete investment opportunities. Because uncertainty may still be high and direct financial returns limited, they will often require flexible public, development or philanthropic finance.

Medium-term investments can then build on these foundations by expanding successful approaches, strengthening institutions and markets, and connecting activities that were previously fragmented. Depending on the financing characteristics of the activity, this phase may combine larger public and development-finance commitments with concessional finance and risk-sharing mechanisms.

As implementation advances through national, subnational or territorial rollout pathways, commercial finance may become appropriate for those activities that develop viable business models, predictable revenues and manageable risks. This should not be understood as a linear replacement of grants and public finance by private capital. Different forms of finance will continue to coexist throughout implementation, and public or grant financing will remain essential for public-interest functions, equitable access, coordination and other activities that do not generate direct financial returns.

Initial financing does not need to cover the full cost of the transition, but it should be deliberately connected to the longer implementation pathway. Early investments should not only deliver immediate results, but also build the capacities, institutions, evidence and market conditions needed for wider rollout and subsequent investment.

5.5 Financing coordination is a core implementation function

The diversity of financing sources, instruments, actors and time horizons makes coordination a central condition for effective resource mobilisation for NAS implementation.

Without coordination, financing may remain fragmented across short-term projects and institutions. Some parts of the transition may receive repeated support while others remain unfunded. Investments may also follow donor or market preferences rather than agreed NAS priorities, and resources may fail to reach the actors responsible for implementation.



A financing coordination function can help address these challenges by:

- Mapping existing funding flows, commitments and gaps;
- Connecting NAS priorities with relevant public, philanthropic, development and private financing opportunities;
- Supporting realistic costing and the preparation of investment proposals;
- Matching financing sources and instruments to different implementation needs;
- Sequencing investments across the financial architecture components;
- Connecting policy actors, financiers and implementing organisations;
- Monitoring whether resources are reaching different territories, actors and components of the transition.

Coordination can also help countries present financing needs strategically. Large estimates of the total cost of NAS implementation may discourage decision-makers or hide practical entry points. A coordinated approach can distinguish between long-term financing needs and a realistic sequence of initial investments, while showing how early action contributes to broader transformation.

This financing coordination function should not be treated as an activity that will automatically sustain itself or generate revenue. Financing coordination benefits the wider NAS implementation and should therefore be recognised and financed as a public or shared enabling function.

Key messages from the NAS Community of Practice (CoP)

- Financing strategy is part of implementation design.

  It should be considered alongside prioritisation, governance and rollout planning, not addressed only after implementation decisions have been made.
- No single funding source can finance an agroecological transition. NAS implementation actors need a resource mobilisation strategy that combines domestic public, international development, philanthropic and private resources according to their different functions.
- Investment sequencing should be deliberate, balancing short-term results, medium-term system building and long-term transition goals.
- Financing coordination is a core enabling function that requires a clear mandate, sufficient capacity and dedicated resources.

Recommendations

Non-government actors:

- Organise around shared financing propositions. Farmer organisations, civil society, researchers and enterprises should jointly package complementary needs and roles, rather than approaching funders with disconnected projects.
- Document credible evidence from implementation. Generate practical evidence on costs, risks, benefits and delivery models, including where commercial returns are limited but public and social benefits are high.
- Strengthen representation in financing decisions. Ensure that farmers, local organisations and smaller enterprises are involved when priorities, instruments and delivery channels are designed, not only once funding has already been secured.

Governments:

- Prepare a small number of phased financing propositions. Rather than presenting the full cost of the transition at once, develop a limited portfolio of clearly costed priorities that shows what can begin immediately, what capacities must be built next and what larger investments can follow.
- Protect underfunded public-interest functions, such as coordination, extension, research, farmer support and public campaigns, so that they are not crowded out by more commercially attractive investments.
- Enable cross-government financing dialogue for NAS implementation. Bring together agriculture, finance, planning and other relevant authorities to identify financing gaps, coordinate engagement with financiers, and embed NAS priorities in development plans, investment frameworks and budget processes.

Finance community:

- Fund the preparation stage, not only implementation. Support costing, feasibility work, coordination, proposal development and intermediary capacity so that NAS priorities can become credible financing opportunities.
- Coordinate around country-led portfolios. Align funding with agreed national priorities and sequence support with other partners, instead of creating parallel calls, projects and reporting systems.
- Use flexible finance to absorb early risk. Provide grants or risk-tolerant capital for activities that are strategically important but not yet investable, while linking this support to a realistic pathway towards longer-term public or development finance.



6.

MOBILISING DOMESTIC PUBLIC RESOURCES FOR AGROECOLOGY

This chapter discusses how National Agroecology Strategies (NASs) can translate into domestic public investment and presents a few pathways, strategies and tips for advancing domestic public resource mobilisation for NASs.

Financing from private and international sources plays an important role in supporting the implementation of NASs, but it remains insufficient on its own.

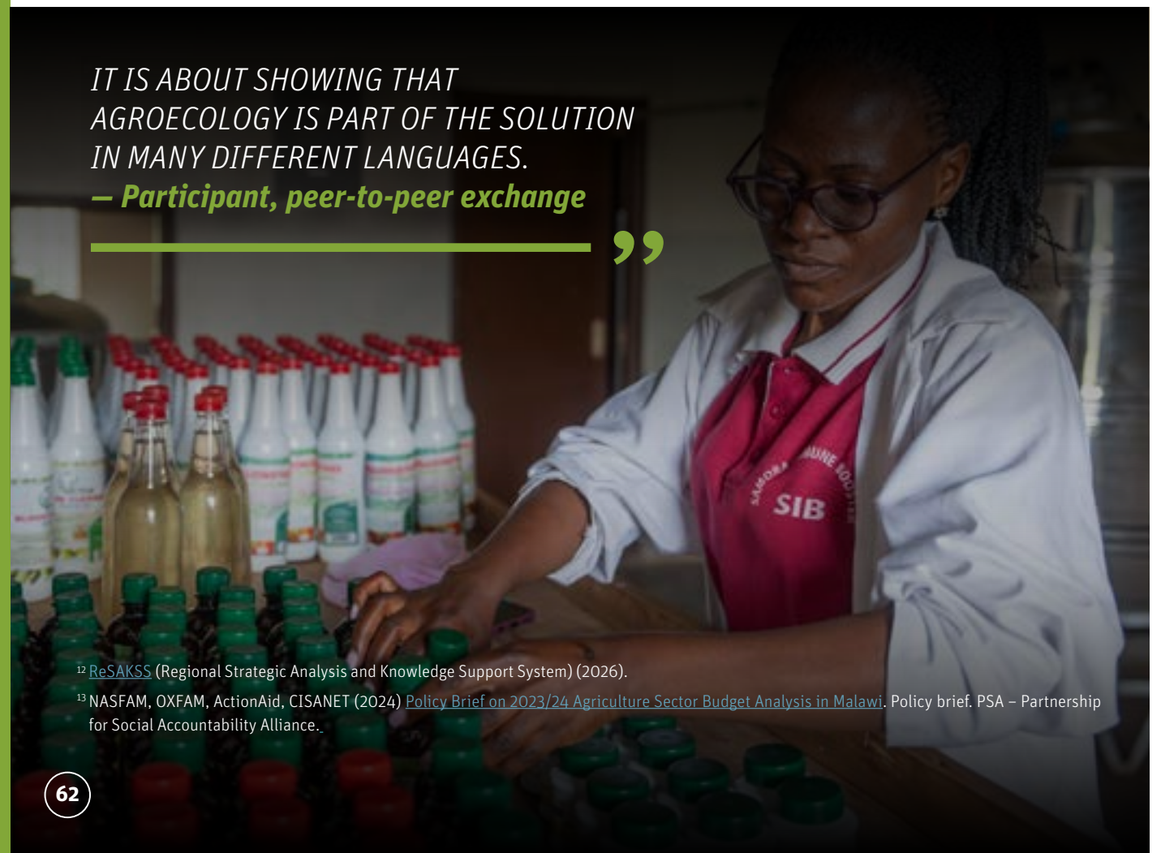
A sustainable and large-scale transition to agroecology requires strong investment from domestic public resources, which are central to many pillars of financial architecture presented in Chapter 5, and which are often necessary to unlock external and private funding, for instance in blended funding models.

6.1 Persistently low public investment in agriculture in Africa and strong competition for agroecology

On average, African countries allocated only around **2.18% of their national budgets to agriculture** between 2019 and 2024[12], well below the 10% target set under the Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in Africa. At the same time, **tight fiscal space, high debt levels, and continued reliance on external financing** constrain governments' discretionary spending and reduce their capacity to invest in agriculture and agroecology.

Public expenditure and new public-private partnerships also tend to favour conventional, input-heavy systems, drawing funding away from sustainable alternatives.

In Malawi, for instance, 60% of the agriculture budget was allocated to the Affordable Input Programme in 2023–2024[13], while sustainable approaches remain underfunded. In addition, the remaining share of public budgets is absorbed by recurrent expenditures (e.g. wages and administrative costs), leaving limited space for capital and development investments such as infrastructure, research or agroecological transition programmes. Taken together, these challenges highlight that **agroecology must compete within already constrained and contested agricultural budgets**, often against more established and politically prioritised investment models.



[12] ReSAKSS (Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System) (2026).

[13] NASFAM, OXFAM, ActionAid, CISANET (2024) Policy Brief on 2023/24 Agriculture Sector Budget Analysis in Malawi. Policy brief. PSA – Partnership for Social Accountability Alliance.

6.2 Multiple pathways for budget allocation

Multiple entry points for mobilising government budget can be considered, each of them requiring different strategies (see Figure 6).

The main strategy relies on tapping into existing budget priorities and commitments by demonstrating the contribution of NAS interventions to those priorities. Identifying those strategies early on during the development process of a NAS is advisable.

Multiple budget pathways for support to agroecology

Existing, funded government programmes and policies in the pipeline

What: Programmes for which budget is secured or priority policies in the pipeline, e.g. food security.

Strategy for NAS funding:

- Show how NAS contributes to those programme targets and priorities.
- Align the language of NAS interventions with those programmes.

Budget managed by various adjacent ministries

What: Diversify and coordinate agroecology budgeting responsibilities – for instance, with ministries of environment, forests, health, youth and employment, etc.

Strategy for NAS funding:

- Support interministerial dialogue and alignment.
- Engage in established cross-sectoral coordination mechanisms.
- Highlight NAS interventions related to those ministries' mandates and targets.

Government budget

Main strategy for NAS:

- Tap into multiple budget avenues
- Propose specific financial instruments for various interventions

External funding implemented by recipient government

What: Multilateral and bilateral funds via national programmes, often related to international commitments (e.g. GCF or IFAD country programme).

Strategy for NAS funding:

- Engage with focal points for those specific funds to influence government submission and programme design.

Funding managed by subnational governments

What: Subnational development agendas.

Strategy for NAS funding:

- Align NAS with local government priorities and policy mandates.

Funding allocated to subsidy programmes

What: Agri-subsidies (e.g. input subsidies to farmers).

Strategy for NAS funding:

- Identify harmful subsidies and define new targets for support.
- Create proof of concepts to test repurposing.
- Start by opening existing subsidies for agroecological practices, rather than large shifts.
- Harness new policy windows to discuss broader repurposing (e.g. import bill burden, fertiliser crisis).

Figure 6: *Various pathways and strategies to mobilise public domestic funding for agroecology.*

Specific examples of budget entry points for agroecology

Agroecology delivers on multiple national objectives, where national policy makers have already allocated funding or plan to do so. Some concrete examples for integrating NAS interventions into high-level frameworks that are driving budget allocation, or existing national policies and programmes with allocated budgets, include:

- National and local development plans;
- Public procurement budgets, including those for school and hospital meals programmes;
- Export certification and promotions programmes;
- National Agri-Food Systems Investment Plans (NAIPs)/ National Agriculture Investment Plans (NASIPs) under the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP)[14].
- National subsidy frameworks, such as the Policy Framework for Sustainable Financing and Subsidy Management in Agriculture in Kenya.
- The World Bank's USD 2.75 billion Food Systems Resilience Programs (FSRPs)[15], prioritising medium-term investments to support food security and food system resilience.
- International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) Country Strategic Opportunities Programmes (COSOPs)[16], where IFAD priorities are negotiated with national authorities.
- National submissions to large Green Climate Fund (GCF) initiatives or Adaptation Fund initiatives that can leverage government co-financing, such as:
- The Regenerative and Agroecological Landscapes Acceleration Facility (RALAF), a blended finance initiative aimed at scaling regenerative agricultural practices that is active in Tanzania[17].
- The Ecosystems-based Adaptation for resilient Watersheds and Communities in Malawi (EbAM) programme[18].
- National implementation plans for other multilateral environmental agreements (such as National Adaptation Programmes and Land Degradation Neutrality goals), including the Global Biodiversity Framework[19](and its National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans), or the Stockholm Convention and the Global Framework on Chemicals (supporting pesticides phase-out). Those can provide access to external funding and leverage domestic government co-financing.

Box 10: Go local in Tanzania – the potential of subnational budget

In Tanzania, district-level budget tracking shows that local agricultural departments are often more open to agroecology than national institutions reflect.

The Partnership for Social Accountability (PSA) Alliance analysed Tanzania's national budget for the 2023–2024 fiscal year. The analysis showed that 9% of the national budget was allocated to agriculture. However, significant underspending was observed, alongside several unfunded mandates. The largest share of agricultural spending (76%) was allocated to irrigation. Overall, an estimated 27% of the agricultural budget was considered compatible with agroecological approaches, which was less than what was committed in national policies.

Stronger alignment with agroecology was observed at the local government level, based on an analysis of district budgets in Kilosa, Singida, Mvomero and Songwe. Across the analysed districts, an estimated 45% of total agricultural budgets were allocated to interventions compatible with agroecological principles[20].

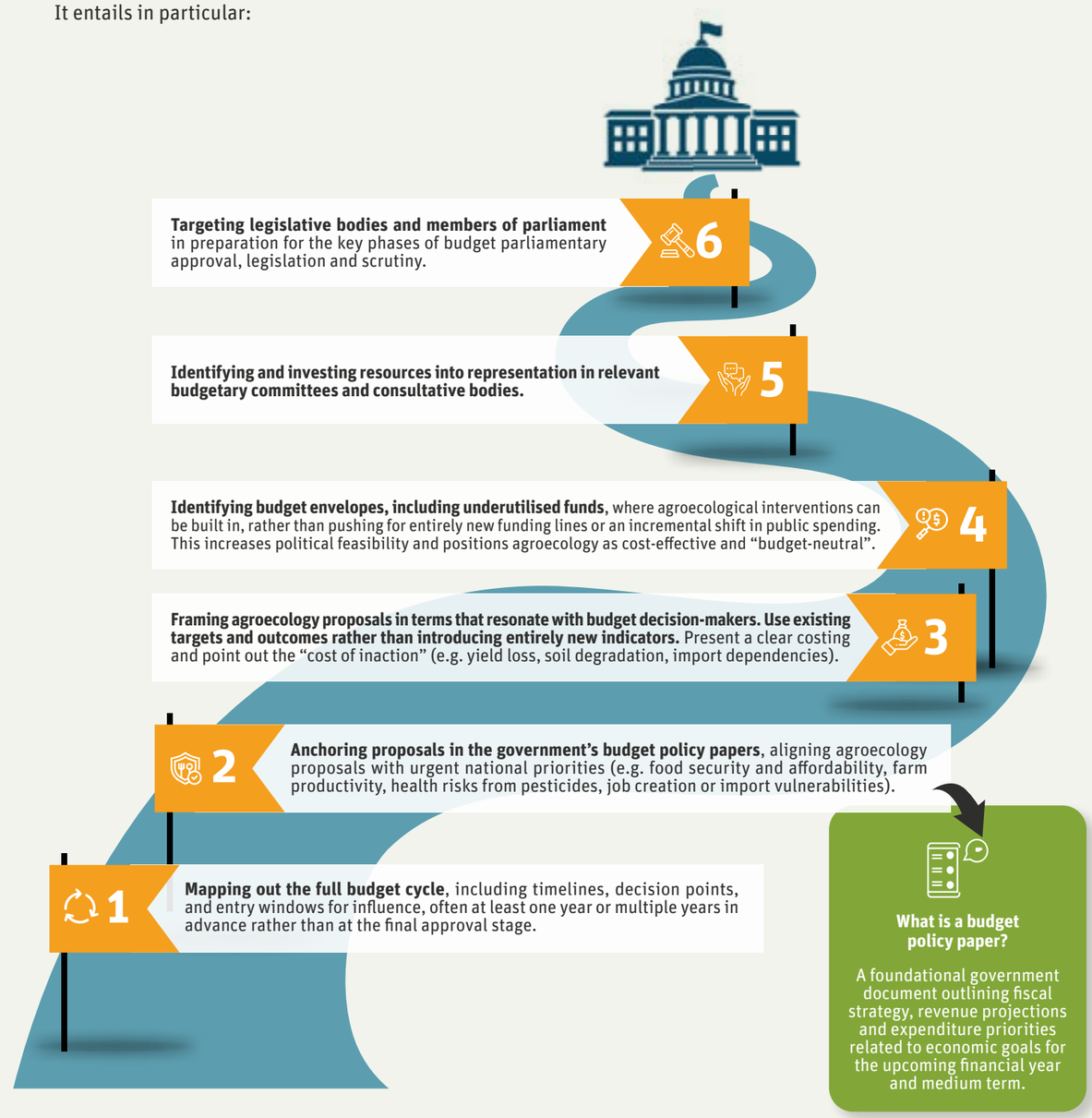
The PSA initiative also provided training to smallholder farmers on public budget processes and advocacy as a tool for greater transparency and accountability in agricultural programmes, boosting citizen influence in the more accessible local policy making.

[14] AU NAIP Toolkit for Malabo Domestication | AUDA-NEPAD.

A crucial step: engage ministries of finance, treasury and planning departments within ministries of agriculture and other relevant ministries

Mobilising government budget support requires an understanding of budgeting processes and cycles, and key budget actors to engage with (including their responsibilities and requirements).

It entails in particular:



[15] Regenerative and Agroecological Landscapes Acceleration Facility (RALAF) | Green Climate Fund. (n.d.). Green Climate Fund.

[16] List of IFAD's COSOPs per country: Regions and countries. IFAD.

[17] World Bank Approves $2.3 Billion Program to Address Escalating Food Insecurity in Eastern and Southern Africa. (2026). World Bank Group.

[18] FP238: Ecosystems-based Adaptation for resilient Watersheds and Communities in Malawi (EbAM) | Green Climate Fund. (2021, July 13). Green Climate Fund.

[19] More guidance on how to integrate agroecology in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs)

[20] PSA Alliance (2024) Agroecology in Southern Africa: Financing the Transition.

DOMESTIC RESOURCE MOBILISATION REQUIRES BUDGET ADVOCACY. ENGAGE GOVERNMENT. GATHER INTELLIGENCE ON WHERE FUNDS ARE AND HOW THEY CAN BE REPURPOSED. KNOW THE PEOPLE WHO KNOW WHERE THE MONEY IS.
— Participant, peer-to-peer exchange

Box 11: Influencing pro-poor budgets in Uganda

In Uganda, the Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG), an umbrella organisation of civil society organisations (CSOs), has worked to influence national and local budget processes with the aim to **increase government allocations to the agro-industrialisation programme**, including investments that improve smallholder farmers' access to equipment supporting sustainable agriculture.

Through structured advocacy, citizen mobilisation, and formal and informal engagement with decision-makers, CSBAG uses evidence from local research to demonstrate the benefits of agroecology for food security and rural incomes. Key elements of its budget advocacy include careful analysis of budget documents, **rigorous evidence-based budget assessments**, submission of alternative policy proposals to Parliament and local council committees, tracking of public expenditures, and **mobilisation of communities** to demand more inclusive and pro-poor allocations.

These efforts contributed to an upward trend in allocations to agro-industrialisation programmes, which represented 2.26% of the national budget in 2026–2027[22]. In particular, the introduction of the **Uganda Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfers (UgIFT) programme** has supported smallholder farmers' access to renewable-energy-based irrigation equipment, through a cost-sharing mechanism under which farmers contribute 15% of the investment while the government covers the remaining 85%.

The case illustrates how CSOs can influence public resource allocation through evidence-based advocacy, strategic engagement with political insiders and parliament committees, **legally mandated spaces** for public participation in consultation forums, **strong coalition building**, and accountable expenditure tracking. However, their ability to sustain this influence remains constrained by a shrinking civic space, limited access to complex financial information and dependence on external funding. This highlights the importance of an enabling institutional environment for civil society participation in agricultural policy implementation.

Box 12: Zambia's revamped subsidy programme encourages diversification

Zambia's Farmer Input Support Programme (FISP) is a central element of the country's agricultural policy, aimed at enhancing smallholder productivity through subsidised inputs. Following multiple reforms, the programme now uses an e-voucher system to enable farmers to buy inputs directly from registered private agro-dealers. This shift has expanded farmers' choice while revitalising local agribusiness markets[23].

The new e-voucher system created demand for more diversified farming equipment, seeds (beyond maize), fertilisers and services, with the potential inclusion of bio-fertilisers or organic inputs. Early evidence suggests that these reforms have encouraged crop diversification and improved crop rotation practices. However, outcomes remain constrained by underdeveloped markets for alternative crops, limited availability of diversified inputs and insufficient extension services and knowledge transfer on agroecological practices.

The reform process was driven by recognition of persistent inefficiencies in the previous subsidy model, including high fiscal costs, a strong bias towards maize and mineral fertilisers, and limited farmer choice. Following pilot implementation in selected districts from 2015 onwards, the system has been progressively scaled up and refined, including improvements in digital systems and governance mechanisms in the 2020s.

Although an agroecological transition, including the promotion of organic inputs, is not always the central focus of Zambia's FISP reforms, the shift to the e-voucher system has created mechanisms that can actively promote it. Key next steps to harness the full potential of the FISP reform could include: 1) **mapping of bio-input producers** to create a database on available alternatives; 2) **combination of FISP with agroecological training and services** (e.g soil testing) and rewards for ecological farming practices; and 3) **create incentives for agro-dealers to sell agroecological bundles** (e.g. legumes + bio-inputs) and support their local production of those.

MAKING THE CASE FOR AGROECOLOGY REQUIRES DEMONSTRATING HOW IT ACHIEVES CURRENT NATIONAL GOALS, AND USING THEIR LANGUAGE, TALKING THEIR TALK. YOU NEED TO BRING SOLUTIONS TO SPECIFIC PROBLEMS RELEVANT TO SPECIFIC MINISTRIES, IF POLICY MAKERS ARE TO WORK WITH YOU.
— Participant, peer-to-peer exchange

[22] Uganda Broadcasting Corporation

[23] Ndhlovu, O., & Muchapondwa, E. (2021) The Impact of Farmer Input Support Programme Reform on Crop Diversification and Rotation in Zambia (No. 21-10). Environment for Development, University of Gothenburg.

Some tips for advocacy on mobilising domestic resources

More examples of advocacy pathways, strategies and tactics can be found in the brief *Mobilising Public Domestic Resources for National Agroecology Strategies*[24].

Map and seek allies working on specific priority policy platforms (those with a clear budget allocated). Look for organisations and community leaders that bring credibility, technical and budget expertise, and influence in these policy spaces. And seek out influential political figures, particularly when they are running for office and eager to signal actions that benefit many citizens.

Join with "non-usual suspects", bringing finance or commercial interests into advocacy engagement, for instance. A surprising alliance gets attention, also in the media.

Be timely, by engaging with budget actors: Gather intelligence on standard budget cycles and relevant policy development processes in the pipeline where agroecology could be integrated as a core strategy and built into budgets. Seek advice from budget staff and policy focal points on when they would need a proposal in hand.

Bring concrete policy proposals. This could be for the financing of NAS implementation, but more likely it would be for the financing of specific priority interventions in the NAS that are relevant for the specific policy platform and budget (e.g. a national agroecology training programme in the Biodiversity Strategy or a proposal for the inclusion of a set of bio-inputs in subsidy programmes).

Come prepared with solid arguments. Be ready to clearly answer key questions. For example, how does agroecology deliver on the specific objectives in the policy/ministry where funding for NAS interventions is being sought? Is there evidence that the agroecology intervention has proven effective at scale? Are other nations funding this measure? Will funding leverage other funds?

Frame your message to match budget decision-makers' priorities and pressing national issues. Tailor your "why" to what matters to them (for instance, lowering import bills and fossil-fuel dependencies following the recent fertiliser crisis, improving their trade balance, creating jobs, supporting growth or reducing poverty).

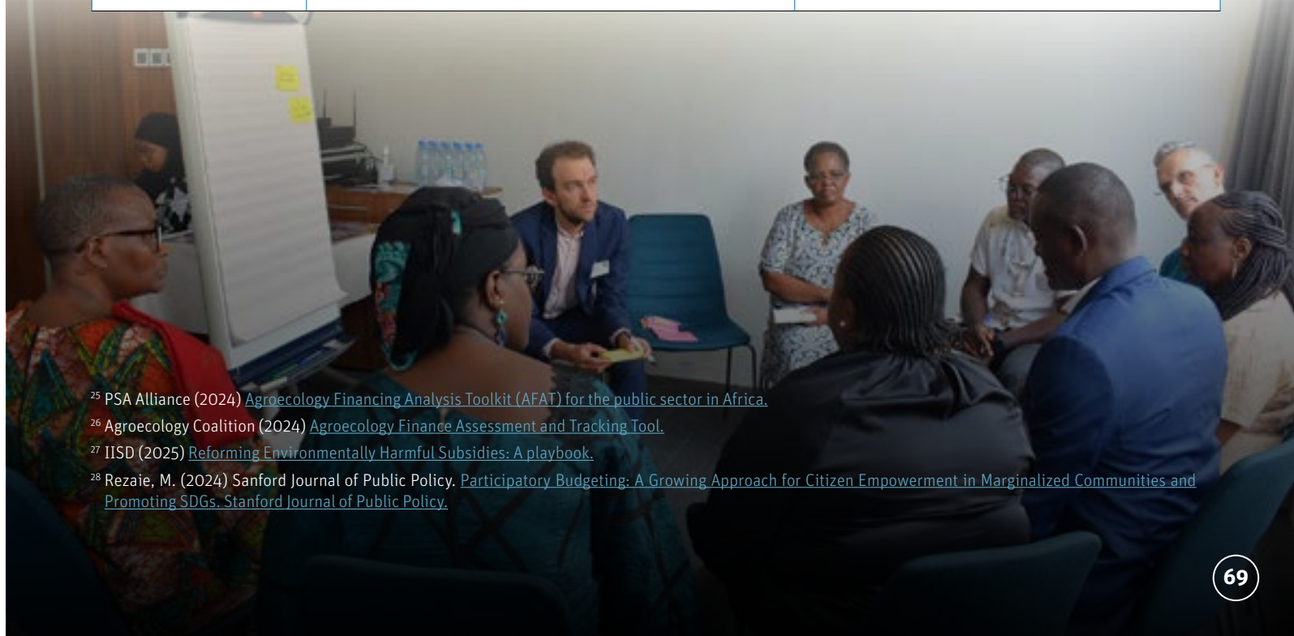
Don't make them choose sides. Policy makers do not have to abandon support for conventional farming in order to build up agroecology.



[24] Biovision. (2025). Advocacy Pathways and Strategies for Public Domestic Resource Mobilisation in Support of Agroecology: Insights from an Expert Workshop. Biovision.

Supporting tools

Tools	Details	Questions Answered
For public budget analysis		
Agroecology Financing Analysis Tool (AFAT)[25]	Used in some African countries at national level	How much public finance is supportive of agroecology?
Agroecology Finance Assessment and Tracking Tool[26]	Can be used by different governments to assess their own portfolio of interventions (currently used by different donor governments)	How much and how aligned to agroecological principles is a portfolio of interventions?
For understanding baseline and openings within subsidy budgets		
Reforming Environmentally Harmful Subsidies – a playbook[27]	List of opportunities for reforms and engagement strategies	What are the paths and opportunities to reform subsidies?
For more accountability		
Participatory and citizen monitoring to track spending[28]	Mainly adapted for local contexts	How to empower citizens to engage in decision-making to allocate public funds based on needs?



[25] PSA Alliance (2024) Agroecology Financing Analysis Toolkit (AFAT) for the public sector in Africa.

[26] Agroecology Coalition (2024) Agroecology Finance Assessment and Tracking Tool.

[27] IISD (2025) Reforming Environmentally Harmful Subsidies: A playbook.

[28] Rezaie, M. (2024) Sanford Journal of Public Policy. Participatory Budgeting: A Growing Approach for Citizen Empowerment in Marginalized Communities and Promoting SDGs. Stanford Journal of Public Policy.

Key messages from the NAS Community of Practice (CoP)

- Securing sustainable financing, including from government, remains one of the key conditions for successful NAS implementation. This entails identifying and incorporating **multiple relevant domestic financing sources** (including indicative budget envelopes) into the NAS or its implementation plan.
- Budget advocacy should extend **beyond agriculture ministries** to engage **finance ministries and other ministries** where agroecology delivers on key objectives. In parallel, efforts should focus on attracting **international resources** that condition their implementation through national institutions and ministries.
- Demonstrating how agroecology and NASs contribute to **governments' most pressing development priorities can further strengthen investment and political commitment**.



Recommendations

Non-government actors:

- Work systematically to **map national budget cycles and identify ministry policy processes in the pipeline** where agroecology can be integrated as an impactful intervention area and where NAS interventions can be built into budgets;
- Tailor argumentation and proposals **to urgent national priorities** where agroecology delivers;
- **Build alliances** with actors working in these new policy spaces and budget advocacy;
- **Utilise the more accessible subnational budget processes**, building multistakeholder platforms (MSPs) and farmer activism to advocate for budget allocations.

Governments:

- **Work closely with non-state actors**, for instance within agroecological MSPs **to identify existing policy processes and budget envelopes** where a NAS or specific NAS interventions can be financed;
- Collaborate with focal points who can **facilitate dialogues** between frontline agroecology actors and budget planners and leadership in their ministry and others, including the Ministry of Finance;
- **Prioritise NAS and agroecology interventions** in dialogues with bilateral and multilateral donors.

Finance community:

- **Invest in building capacity of frontline organisations on budget advocacy**, particularly CSOs and farmer associations, to enable sustained lobbying and agenda-setting. Strengthen budget tracking and assessment, identification of resource opportunities and budget advocacy alliances.
- **Engage national governments**, co-financing and encouraging national financing of NAS development and implementation.



Annex. Selected evidence and institutional recognition of agroecology

Scientific papers

Biodiversity & ecosystem health

Tamburini, G., Bommarco, R., Wanger, T. C., Kremen, C., van der Heijden, M. G. A., Liebman, M., & Hallin, S. (2020). Agricultural diversification promotes multiple ecosystem services without compromising yield. Science Advances, 6(45), Article eaba1715. https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.aba1715

Climate change adaptation and mitigation

Snapp, S., Kebede, Y., Wollenberg, E., Dittmer, K. M., Brickman, S., Egler, C., & Shelton, S. (2021). Agroecology and climate change rapid evidence review: Performance of agroecological approaches in low- and middle-income countries. CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS). https://hal.science/hal-03278936/

Food security and nutrition

Bezner Kerr, R., Madsen, S., Stüber, M., Liebert, J., Enloe, S., Borghino, N., Parros, P., Mutyambai, D. M., Prudhon, M., & Wezel, A. (2021). Can agroecology improve food security and nutrition? A review. Global Food Security, 29, 100540. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S221191242100050X

Socio-economic outcomes

Mouratiadou, I., Wezel, A., Kamilia, K., Marchetti, A., Paracchini, M. L., & Bàrberi, P. (2024). The socio-economic performance of agroecology. A review. Agronomy for Sustainable Development, 44, Article 19. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13593-024-00945-9

Expert panels

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. (2022). Climate change 2022: Impacts, adaptation and vulnerability: Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (H.-O. Pörtner, D. C. Roberts, M. Tignor, E. S. Poloczanska, K. Mintenbeck, A. Alegría, M. Craig, S. Langsdorf, S. Löschke, V. Möller, A. Okem, & B. Rama, Eds.). Cambridge University Press https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009325844

High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition. (2019). Agroecological and other innovative approaches for sustainable agriculture and food systems that enhance food security and nutrition (HLPE Report No. 14). Committee on World Food Security. https://www.fao.org/3/ca5602en/ca5602en.pdf

International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems. (2016). From uniformity to diversity: A paradigm shift from industrial agriculture to diversified agroecological systems. https://ipes-food.org/report/from-uniformity-to-diversity/

Public institutions

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2018). The 10 elements of agroecology: Guiding the transition to sustainable food and agricultural systems. https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/i9037en

IPBES. (2024). Thematic assessment report on the interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food and health of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (P. A. Harrison, P. D. McElwee, & T. L. van Huysen, Eds.). IPBES Secretariat. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.13850054

The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity. (2018). TEEB for agriculture & food: Scientific and economic foundations. United Nations Environment Programme. https://www.unep.org/topics/teeb/teeb-agriculture-and-food-teebagrifood/teeb-agrifood-resources/scientific-and-economic

Civil society organisations

Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa. (2016). Agroecology: The bold future of farming in Africa. Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa & Tanzania Organic Agriculture Movement. https://afsafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/agroecology-the-bold-future-of-farming-in-africa-ebook1.pdf

Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism. (2023). They will feed us! A people's route to African food sovereignty: Autonomous assessment of UNFSS national pathways and Dakar 2 Summit compacts. https://www.csm4cfs.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/CSIPMAutonomousReport_EN-fin.pdf

Farmers' movements

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, & Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development. (2011). Agroecology and advocacy: Innovations in Asia. https://www.iatp.org/documents/agroecology-and-advocacy-innovations-in-asia

La Vía Campesina. (2011). La agricultura campesina sostenible puede alimentar al mundo (Documento de Punto de Vista No. 6). https://viacampesina.org/es/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2011/03/ES-paper6-min.pdf

La Vía Campesina. (2024, October 14). Posicionamiento de La Vía Campesina sobre la Conferencia de las Partes (COP 16) del Convenio de la Diversidad Biológica (CBD) de la ONU. https://cdn.biodiversidadla.org/content/download/182373/1325093/file/ES-Posicion-de-LVC-COP16-.pdf

Réseau des Organisations Paysannes et de Producteurs de l'Afrique de l'Ouest. (2018). Document de position du ROPPA sur l'agroécologie paysanne: L'agroécologie paysanne, principale voie pour assurer la cohésion sociale, la paix et la souveraineté/sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle en Afrique de l'Ouest. https://m.uneseuleplanete.org/IMG/pdf/note-de-position-vsf-1-.pdf



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Lead authors:

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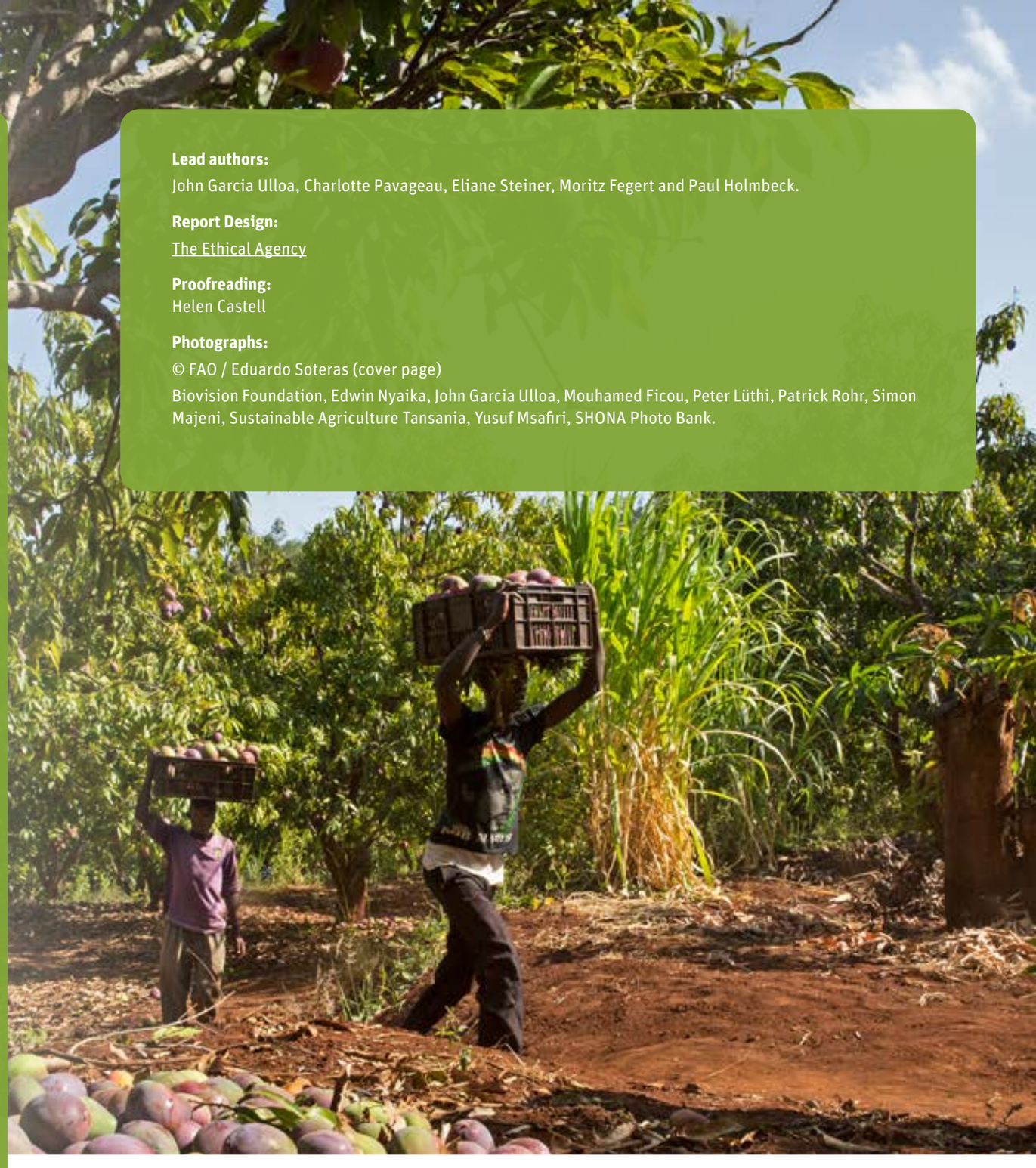
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