



Kenya

Agriculture is central to the economy of Kenya, contributing about [20% to the country's GDP](#) and providing employment to over [40%](#) of the total population. The energy sector is undergoing rapid development, focusing on affordable and reliable renewable energy sources, and attracting private investment for off-grid or grid-connected systems. Water is a key resilience multiplier that requires cross-sectoral planning for effective resource management and distribution.

However, climate change poses many challenges. In 2022, large swaths of the country saw rainfall plunge to 30–50% below average levels. Drought-like conditions prevailed in several regions between [2020-2023](#), leaving 4.4 million people acutely food insecure. Additionally, social and economic inequalities persist, particularly affecting women, youth, and people with disabilities.

Since [1967](#), SNV has supported development progress at both national and county levels, working with government institutions, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), and communities to co-create inclusive, efficient, and effective locally led service delivery systems. Grounded in partnerships and collaboration, SNV programmes balance the regenerative capacity of natural resources and their productive use. This sustains the needs of communities while expanding access to income-generating activities and livelihoods. All such efforts are aimed at ultimately contributing to a future for Kenya where social norms and values facilitate inclusive development and opportunities for everybody.



More than 47K people
with access to nutritious food and improved diets



Nearly 13K hectares
of productive land being managed sustainably



Over 470K people
gained access to improved energy technologies



More than 12K people
with reliable access to clean, improved water sources

** 2024 achievements



Responding to the climate crisis

Kenya is currently faced with intensifying climate shocks that undermine development gains and widen inequality. The country experienced its worst drought in four decades between 2020 and 2023, affecting 23 counties and leaving 4.4 million people in acute food insecurity. In 2024, [El Niño](#)-triggered floods displaced nearly 234,000 people.

Even in the face of these vulnerabilities, Kenya has made significant strides in developing climate policies—devolution has enabled 46 counties to create plans tailored to their needs. The [National Climate Change Action Plan III](#) (2023-2027) prioritises clean energy, climate-smart agriculture, and ecosystem restoration. The country is also advancing its role in climate action through climate financing initiatives like the Africa Carbon Markets and its commitment to plant [15 billion trees](#) by 2032.

SNV works across sectors and in collaboration with partners to advance the government's climate action agenda. The initiatives focus on promoting sustainable land use and improved food, energy, and water security for people and ecosystems, aligning with local realities and encouraging meaningful civic participation. Under the [LISTEN](#) programme, SNV adopted a nexus approach to water-energy-food that improved resilience for 16,539 farmers in the Laikipia, Isiolo, and Samburu regions.

Partners: EU, DGIS, EKN, IKEA Foundation, World Vegetable Centre, KALRO, IDH, Browns Plantations, and Lipton

The Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs) of Kenya, which have seen widespread rangeland degradation, require integrated management systems to improve production and livelihoods, but also expand access to rights and support life itself. Under the ICSIAPL project, SNV has [improved forage production](#) and strengthened the institutional frameworks—enabling more than 8,000 agro-pastoralists to use resources sustainably.

In the [Southwest Mau Forest](#), SNV has worked to conserve critical ecosystems while promoting sustainable land use practices among local communities. To tackle the environmental and health challenges posed by traditional cooking methods, SNV has encouraged more than 470,000 households to adopt [clean cooking solutions](#).

These initiatives recognise [climate-smart agricultural production](#) and [regenerative agriculture](#) as frontline solutions to the climate crisis. To this end, SNV supports farmers to switch to practices that boost productivity, regenerate soil, [adopt renewable energy](#), and strengthen food systems against climate shocks.

'I now use weather information to know when the rains will start and how long they are expected to last. This has helped me avoid planting too early or too late. I prepare my land early and wait for the right time to plant.'

Benard Okapesi
CRAFT Project

Accelerating inclusive development

In Kenya, [developmental activities have historically been concentrated in high rain-fed areas](#). The favourable climates, stronger infrastructure, and active private sector investment in these regions drive higher incomes and faster growth. On the other hand, northern Kenya, coastal counties, and informal urban settlements attract little investment, which has led to weak infrastructure, limited services, and lower human development indices. However, the 2010 Constitution introduced devolution, which gave counties more autonomy and resources, creating growth opportunities for previously marginalised areas, especially across the ASALs.

Displacement and marginalisation of groups pose specific challenges, highlighting the need to accelerate inclusive development. The most vulnerable sections of the population—roughly [475,000 refugees and asylum seekers](#)—reside primarily in the Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps, and the Kalobeyei Integrated Settlement. Here, the intersection of displacement, marginalisation, and development is particularly evident.

SNV's work in these regions demonstrates the potential of integrating [market-based approaches in humanitarian contexts](#), which effectively mobilises resources and catalyses private sector engagement, especially towards enabling energy access. In the Kakuma and Kalobeyei refugee camps, the initiatives have strengthened supply, distribution, and uptake of clean cooking and solar-powered solutions by households and MSMEs.

Partners: MasterCard Foundation, WSTF, Endev, GIZ, World Bank, Ministry of Energy and Petroleum, UNICEF, and UN-FAO

SNV's [Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship](#) approach brings together the government, private sector, ecosystem support organisations, and civil society partners to broaden opportunities and make county-level development processes more inclusive. SNV also adopts a [systems-based intervention approach](#) that integrates skills, entrepreneurship, markets, finance, gender, climate resilience and enabling policies. This equips young people with market-ready skills, thereby contributing to long-term sustainable growth in the region by unlocking meaningful economic prospects.

Since the national grid does not serve every county, SNV works to promote the growth of emerging solar companies by compensating solar home systems service providers for initial, ongoing, incremental, and opportunity costs associated with expanding operations. This has improved access to modern energy services in remote, low-density, and traditionally [underserved territories of Kenya](#). Additionally, SNV uses results-based financing approaches to address market failures by establishing sustainable supply chains for higher-tier cookstoves and cooking fuels.

Rather than asking people with disabilities to adapt to development and community processes, SNV reshapes processes for their recognition, inclusion, and empowerment. Accessibility considerations are organically integrated into project design to promote disability-inclusive development, regular capacity-building exercises are conducted in local institutions to support people with disabilities, and community dialogues are encouraged to challenge stigma and discrimination.

'I have been able to raise awareness on the importance of adopting clean energy for cooking and lighting. This work has created positive change in my community and has also given me a stable job to support my family and build a decent home.'

Rhoda Idris
Community worker, Kakuma
refugee camp





Strengthening governance and institutions

Kenya continues to face complex governance challenges, largely shaped by its political history and entrenched power structures. The ongoing decentralisation efforts, which the government introduced through the 2010 Constitution, shift authority from the central government to the 47 counties. These efforts are aimed at improving service delivery, accountability, and citizen participation. While this has increased local engagement, many [counties](#) continue to struggle with limited capacity and poor resource management, undermining the intended benefits.

Alongside partners, SNV works to strengthen collaboration and institutional effectiveness by advancing accountable and transparent governance systems that are responsive to the diverse needs of people across communities. SNV analyses these systems, identifies barriers to effective decision-making, and supports locally driven solutions. This approach helps uncover how institutions, actors, and norms influence governance and how they can become more inclusive, accountable, and responsive.

SNV supports counties' [climate financing readiness](#) by leveraging county [Climate Change Acts](#) and aligning climate budgets with national priorities such as the [National Climate Change Action Plan](#). The work is aimed at bringing national policies and legislation on climate change to the county and grassroots levels, anchoring them through the [County Climate Change Acts](#). Through inclusive, participatory budgeting and technical support, SNV helps counties build strong governance systems, improve access to climate finance, and advance long-term climate-resilient development.

A stable investment climate, predictable regulation, and supportive public-private interfaces are essential for businesses to operate, grow, and innovate. To this end, [SNV works to strengthen policies](#), governance, multi-stakeholder engagement, and market-based mechanisms, enabling growth for MSMEs in the country.

Partners: UK PACT, Gamos, Expertise France, ENABEL, GIZ, Slovak Aid, SAIDC, and Clean Cooking Association of Kenya

SNV is a global development partner deeply rooted in the African and Asian countries where we operate. With 60 years of experience and a team of approximately 1,600 people, we strengthen capacities and catalyse partnerships that transform agri-food, energy and water systems. Working on the core themes of gender equality and social inclusion, climate adaptation and mitigation, and strong institutions and effective governance, we tailor our approaches to different contexts to achieve large-scale impact and create sustainable and more equitable lives for all.

Contact SNV in Kenya

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