



# QUALITATIVE RESEARCH ON GREEN BUSINESSES:

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*Creating opportunities for young people and women in  
Rural Kenya Project*

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*by Zizi Afrique Founadation  
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## List of Acronyms

ADS	:	Anglican Development Services
FGDs	:	Focused Group Discussions
KIIs	:	Key Informant Interviews
NGO	:	Non-Governmental Organisation
TVET	:	Technical and Vocational Education Training
ZAF	:	Zizi Afrique Foundation

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## Executive Summary

This is a report from a qualitative study whose aim was to document the nature and status of implementation of the Green Businesses Skills Project implemented by Welthungerhilfe, Zizi Afrique Foundation and Anglican Development Services. The opportunities and challenges emerging from the study were to support ongoing programming. The project partnered with six TVET institutions to reach 1,500 youth (aged between 18 and 35 years) and women of productive age (aged between 18 to 50 years) working in organised groups.

### Study Objectives

The qualitative study was guided by three objectives

- To establish the pre-training conditions and barriers for green skills development among young people and women in Kajiado and Kakamega counties
- To document the progress made towards the implementation of WHH project activities and related trainee experiences, and
- To determine the impact of the WHH training on green business skill development and the lives of youth and women groups members



**6**

Number of TVET institutions the project partnered with.



**1500**

The number of youths reached with the project



**18-35**

Age bracket of youth reached with the project



**18-50**

Age bracket of women of productive age targeted by the project

The key findings were as summarised below:

## Findings of the Assessment

### a) Pre-training conditions and barriers to green skills development

The communities' negative attitude towards agriculture as an occupation and preference for white collar jobs remained barriers for development of green skills among youth and women. Other barriers were; limited knowledge of green business skills, land inaccessibility by youth and women due to socio-cultural norms and lack of patience among the youth in cultivating green business skills and maturing their businesses.

Women and youth had varying reasons to participate in the green skills project. Women identified improving their knowledge and skills to increase farming outputs through modern methods, value addition and marketing as the main motivators. In the pastoralist region of Kajiado, diversifying sources of income beyond livestock to include land resources through activities such as poultry and fodder crop farming was mentioned. However, a few were misguidedly motivated by the likelihood of getting handouts or free green business inputs like chicks, dairy cows or goats from the project.

### b) Progress made toward the implementation of WHH project activities and the related trainee experiences

**Curriculum review and implementation:** The trainers conducted curriculum reviews of their courses to identify those with green business skill content. Through the review, there was the addition of new relevant courses to the pool of courses on offer. These courses have been approved for offer in colleges as short programmes. Training was ongoing for institution-based trainees and women group training at the community level. The teaching approaches were aligned to the needs of mature learners. There was use of learner-centered, more practical sessions rather than theory; using demonstrations, pictures and brochures to pass on information. Specifically, group work featured as the preferred method of facilitation of women group trainees. However, the implementation of the courses faced some challenges, including lack of funds for life skills development, repetitive content across some courses, lack of inclusiveness in the recruitment processes, unclear role of mentors in the curriculum delivery and challenges with the group teaching model. Furthermore, trainees were experiencing delays in the disbursement of startup funds and due to the high expectations of the WHH programme by the trainees, the trainers had to deal with requests relating to provision of funds or start-up inputs like dairy cows.

**Scholarships for youth in-service, post-service and women group training:** The WHH Project was supporting youth and women groups to pay tuition to receive WHH green skills at Bukura and Latia Colleges in Kakamega and Kajiado counties respectively. Both groups were also entitled to a start-up fund of up to a maximum of Sh30,000 to cater for equipment and materials. The youth were receiving a monthly stipend of Sh1,500 to cater for accommodation and meals. The post service group of trainees and the women groups were waiting to get a start-up kit from the programme.

**Support of mentors:** There were mentors supporting mainly women groups' trainees. For the women groups, the mentors supported them in implementing practical work during training and identifying the startup projects at the end of the training. For the women groups, mentors also worked as the link connecting the community, trainers as well as the training institutions. However, the role of the mentors to the college-based youth trainees was not clearly defined as evidenced by the limited interactions reported by

in-service and post-service trainees.

### c) The value of WHH training in green skills development and changing lives

#### Acquisition of green business technical and soft skills:

The youth and women trainees had acquired varying skills that ranged from running poultry and fish farm projects, rearing quality dairy goats and dairy cows, growing and preserving fodder for the animals, to growing quality tissue culture bananas. Additional technical skills were acquired in horticulture farming, including raising soil beds, growing flowers, vegetables and fruits on small pieces of land for economic purposes. They had also learned how to earn money through value addition by investing in small-scale processing of byproducts like yoghurt, cooking fat and eggs, out of the green business activities.

There were also soft skills which complemented the technical skills acquired by creating self-awareness, learning occupational safety that is required even in the green business sector. These include communication and digital literacy skills, as well as life skills. Women group members reported that their confidence levels had increased, enabling them to join SACCOs, open bank accounts, participate in family decision-making and problem-solving and hold leadership positions in the community.

#### WHH Green Business Project is transforming gender norms:

The WHH Green Business Project had contributed to the change in entrenched gender norms. In Kajiado and among the Maasai community, men were allowing women to participate in activities outside the home and giving them rights to cultivate land for horticultural and subsistence purposes. These activities generate an extra income for families.

**Conclusion:** In conclusion, WHH Green Business Project promoted acquisition of green skills among the youth and women groups that took part in the training. It had also facilitated the acquisition of soft skills like communication and digital skills, as well as life skills, including self-awareness and overall improvement of the quality of life of the participants. Based on these findings, the study makes the following recommendations:



# 30,000

Amount in Kenya Shillings both groups were entitled to as start-up fund to cater for equipment and material.



# 1,500

Amount in Kenya Shillings the youth received monthly stipend to cater for accommodation and meals

## Recommendations

There is a need for a clear communication of the project model to manage expectations of the trainees. Realistic expectations among trainees will help in reducing dropout rates and increasing retention of participants on the training project.

Recommendations	<p>There were no clear criteria for the selection of the mentors and trainees for the project. This caused some tension between the two groups in some instances. There is need for a clear definition of the selection criteria, roles of all the players and how they align with each other (eg those of trainers and mentors, training institution etc.</p>
	<p>The overall findings showed mentors had a lasting positive impact on the women group trainees especially in the implementation of group projects. There is, therefore, need to enhance the role of mentors for in-service and post-service trainees for improved results. This could involve allocating mentors a substantive part of the curriculum to cover with the trainees.</p>
	<p>The assessment noted utilisation of various forms of teaching methodology, ultimately with varying results. There is the need to conduct a study to document the impact of the teaching and mentoring approaches under use on WHH projects. The can then inform training and development guidelines/manuals.</p>
	<p>To address gaps in the green skill curriculum in use for training that include repetitive units, outdated facilities, and knowledge gaps among trainers, there is a need for carrying out a comprehensive review of the WHH training programme with the view of addressing existing gaps.</p>



## 1.0 Background to the Project

The growing youth unemployment rate that stands at 14 per cent in Kenya is a policy and societal concern that needs to be addressed given that youth form over half of the population. While the Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) sector has the opportunity to absorb unemployed youth and women who make up 64 per cent of jobless people in Kenya, they have been marginalised from the sector due to poor attitudes towards TVET, lack of technical skills, mentors and low awareness of the existing opportunities in TVET among other factors (Statista, 2022).

The youth unemployment rate refers to the share of the workforce aged 15 to 24 that is currently not working but is actively searching for work. The youth in the green business project fall within this bracket. It is against this backdrop that three partners: Zizi Afrique Foundation, Welthungerhilfe and Anglican Development Services initiated the Green Businesses: Creating opportunities for young people and women in rural Kenyan project to address this gap in Kenya.

Welthungerhilfe, Zizi Afrique Foundation and Anglican Development Services collaborated to implement the Green Business project in Kenya with the goal of increasing employment opportunities for women and youth in rural areas, through supporting the sustainable growth of green enterprises/TVET institutions. This initiative was informed by the results of a feasibility study which revealed that youth lack skills to prepare them for the world of work (Welthungerhilfe, 2019). The programme rationalises that agriculture, a fast-growing sector of Kenya's economy, has attracted few youths, with the greatest impediment cited as a lack of social networks, entrepreneurship skills and mentorship opportunities to venture into agriculture as a business. The low-quality training in the majority of TVET institutions results in a mismatch between the supply and demand of skills provided (Welthungerhilfe, 2019).

Informed by this study, six TVET institutions were identified for partnership, based on their willingness to align relevant curriculum and training to meet market needs. The project targeted 1,500 youth (18-35years) and women of productive age (18-50), some of whom were youth working in organised groups. The overarching objective was that the green skills of women and youth are promoted, and poverty and hunger are reduced in rural areas of Kakamega, Makueni and Kajiado counties in Kenya. The four result areas conceptualised under this project were:



# 14%

Rate of unemployed youth in Kenya



# 64%

Rate of jobless youth and women in Kenya



# 15-24

Age bracket of the youth who are jobless but actively looking for work.

**The four result areas conceptualised under this project were:**

1. The role of TVET institutions in green skills development is enhanced.
2. Youth and women receive a green education and find green (self) employment after completion.
3. The vocational training in green competencies is known and appreciated by a broad public.
4. The capabilities and capacities of partner organisations (Zizi and ADS) are enhanced and professionalised.

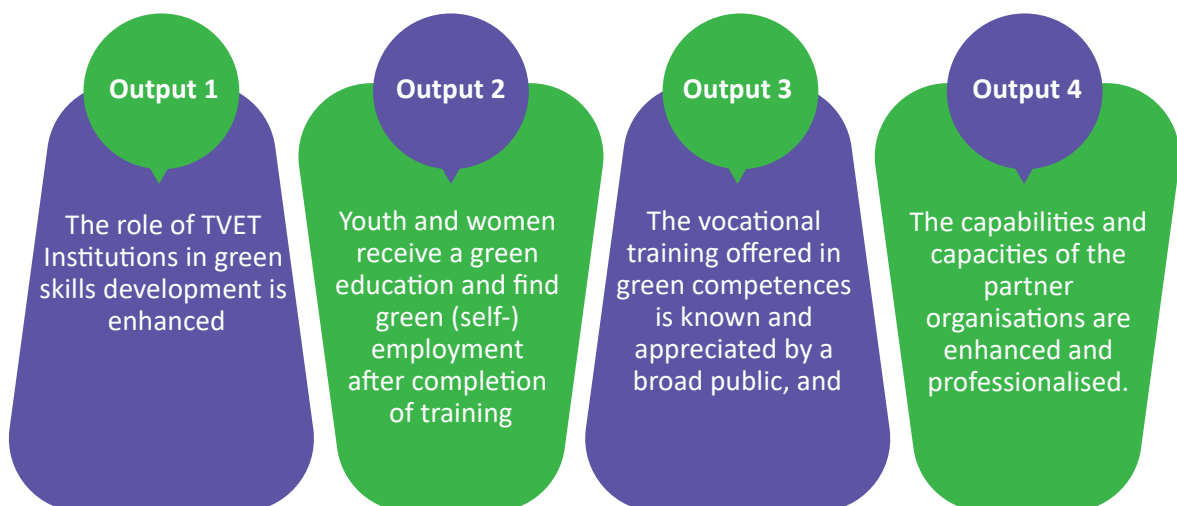
To achieve these, the project applied the following strategic approaches:

1. Supporting the strengthening of curricula for selected private training facilities for Green Skills, especially in courses such as post-harvest loss reduction, nutrition and food security and value addition. The training also includes financial literacy, social life skills and group dynamics intending to reduce skills mismatch and ensure graduates are employable in marketable trades;
2. Enhancing training to cover financial literacy and business management for the employees of the identified training facilities to be able to pass on the corresponding competences to the young people and women during their education
3. Mapping all successful local agripreneurs/practitioners as mentors to support the training and establishment of youth- and women-led green businesses
4. Connecting with the experienced local agripreneurs/practitioners to engage them to train apprentices in their green businesses. The project’s strategy was outlined by one outcome area and four complementary outputs, which combined both quick and lasting results with positive spillover effects. These strategies were as discussed below.

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**Outcome:**

That 1,500 women and young people (altogether at least 60 percent women) in Kajiado, Kakamega and Makueni counties acquire technical, economic and life skills in identified training. The four related outputs were;



The qualitative study was conducted as part of the routine monitoring of the green business skills project to report progress on the implementation of the four project output areas. The study aimed to document the nature and status of implementation of the key project interventions, challenges faced by project stakeholders, conclusions drawn from the results, thematic areas and recommendations for ongoing programmes.

The study also aimed to collect and document human interest/success stories (Stories of Change) of the project and capture emerging best practices that showcase the 'Green Business: Creating opportunities for young people and women in rural Kenya' project as a success story. Specifically, the qualitative study sought to explore the status before, the change that has occurred in terms of skills development and livelihoods, analysis of the change and its implications on reducing poverty in the respective counties and lessons learned in order to draw appropriate recommendations.





## 2.0 Research Methodology

1. This section outlines the procedures used and participants who took part in the study.

### 2.1 Research Approach

The qualitative study employed a participatory, inclusive and interactive approach to data collection. This ensured collection of in-depth data that captured the voices of the trainees, mentors, trainers and implementers of the youth green business project. The study took into consideration the diversity in participants' gender, age and socio-economic background during the sampling and interviewing processes. Further, the research process allowed participants to express their views in a friendly environment while observing consent and the rights of participation throughout. The data collection methods included Focused Group Discussions for the trainees, group interviews for the trainers and Key Informant Interviews for the mentors. In-depth interviews were used with a selected number of trainees for documenting the Stories of Change (SOC).

To get SOC from the trainees, the life history approach to data collection and analysis was used to construct the lives of beneficiary youth and women in the context of their participation in one of the value chain skilling. The reconstruction of life histories involved the beneficiary youth and women sharing their life journeys while listening and recording key milestones. This was then used to identify the success and unique stories worth sharing. The life histories answered the following specific questions:

- How was the life of the sampled youth and women before the green business skills intervention?
- What is the life of the youth and women after the intervention?
- How is their future looking like?

### 2.2 Research Participants

The study targeted groups involved in the project implementation; the green business skills trainees, implementers, trainers, and mentors. The trainees included those currently undergoing the training and those who had completed the training.

### 2.3 Sampling

Qualitative study informants were purposively selected based on their participation in the green business skills programme. The number of participants apportioned for each college and category of informants aligned with acceptable standards for qualitative research studies and met saturation parameters for the information to be collected. The sample selected allowed the unfolding of a new and richly textured understanding of the green business programme in Kajiado, Kakamega and Makueni counties and Latia and Bukura technical colleges specifically, where the project was situated.





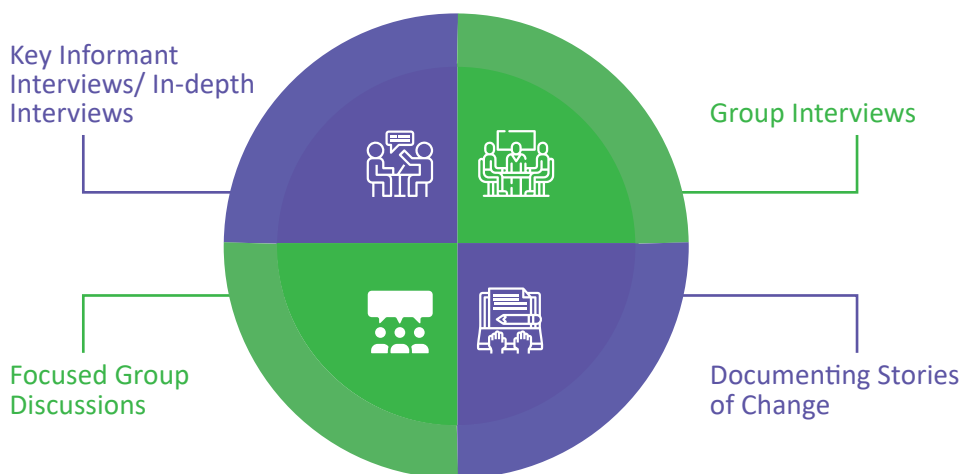
Project Site	Participant Group / Gender	Research Instrument	Totals
Kakamega	Trainers 2 Male 2 Female	Group Interviews	4
	4 Women Group Trainees Males-7 Women-27	Focused Group Discussions	34
	Mentors Male-2 Female-0	Key Informant Interview	2
Kajiado	Trainers 1 Female	Key Informant Interviews	1
	2 Women Group Trainees Female -16	Focused Group Discussions	16
	In-service Trainees Males-4 Female-4	Focused Group Discussions	8
	Post-service Trainees Males-4 Female -4	Focused Group Discussions	8
	Mentors Female-2 Male – 0	Key Informant Interviews	2
TOTALS			75 (19 Male, 56 Female)

## 2.4 Data Collection Methods

- i. **Key Informant Interviews/ In-depth Interviews:** The study carried out in-depth interviews with trainees who were in the programme or had completed institutional training and were waiting to go for attachment. They provided information on the short and long-term impacts of the programme on their lives. This information was used to develop four Stories of Change accounts to illustrate the impact the project had made on the lives of the participants. Key Informant Interviews were carried out with mentors and trainers to elicit data on training and mentoring approaches as well as the kind of skills that the project inculcated in the trainees.
- ii. **Group Interviews:** In cases where more than one person was available for an interview but the number was not large enough to form an FGD, group interviews were used. This occurred in the case of trainers and mentors.



- i. **Focused Group Discussions:** FGDs were conducted with trainees to determine the impact of the project on the skills development and on their lives in general. The project was catering for two groups of trainees; younger ones who were undertaking institution-based training in Latia and Bukura and women group members who were undergoing training at the community level. The trainers visited the women groups in the villages where they lived and carried out training. Open-ended questions were used in helping create consensus on this issue. The discussions were free flowing to allow the participants to freely contribute to the conversations and where possible reach consensus. Dissenting views were also established on each topic.
- ii. **Documenting Stories of Change:** Through in-depth interviews, the most significant change in skill development and life changes of the trainees were established to form a basis for documenting stories of change. The trainees who participated in in-depth interviews were selected based on evidence that they were applying the skills they had acquired on the WHH training. The identification of a pool of the potential candidates for interviews was done by the project coordinators and mentors but the final decision on who was to provide SOC was reached after brief interviews with the identified candidates by the researchers. In-depth interviews were conducted to profile cases of trainees who demonstrated the most significant change identified. The questions asked captured the status before, the change that occurred in terms of skills development and livelihoods, analysis of the change and its implications on reducing poverty in the respective counties and lessons and recommendations.





## 2.5 Qualitative Data Collection

The qualitative data collection took place in the two project sites at Latia Agribusiness Training Center in Kajiado and Bukura Agricultural College in Kakamega. The women groups were met in their project sites located in their respective communities. The researchers spent six days in the field in November/December, 2022. The interviews were conducted in both English and Kiswahili for the institutional based trainees, mentors and trainers and in Kiswahili and local languages (Luhya and Maasai) for the women group trainees. A translator was engaged to translate the questions and answers in the cases where some of the women had a challenge in understanding Kiswahili. Where a translator was not available, one of the members of the FGD did the translations into local languages. Data was audio recorded for an accurate capture of the information and field notes made from each interview by the research assistant who was not conducting the interview. The transcriptions were done immediately after the interviews and these were completed to capitalise on the information that was still fresh in the mind of the researchers. Further, in cases of inaudible sections of the recordings, the researchers would remember the missing words when asked to clarify.

## 2.6 Data Processing and Analysis

Recorded interviews were transcribed and translated verbatim to accurately capture the sentiments and voices of the participants. The quality of the transcriptions and translations was ensured by hiring two experienced transcribers, one from each of the two communities (Luhya and Masaai) where the study was being conducted. The two transcribers had good computer skills and typing speed, attention to detail and understood the culture of the communities in question, thus ensuring a speedy and accurate transcription.

A deductive process of developing codes was used to generate codes for analysis. This began with reading through the transcripts to get a general understanding of the data based on the main research objectives. This was followed by generating sub-themes for each of the main objective-based themes arising from the interaction with the transcripts. These are the codes that were fed into Atlas-ti for analysis of the transcripts. In the course of reading the transcripts, the themes and sub-themes were refined and concretised to form the sub headings of the report. Qualitative findings were then consolidated in a report write up providing a holistic picture of the evaluation and context of the two study locations. The report writing process involved triangulating information from the different project stakeholders on given themes to present an accurate picture of the project implementation level and impact. Specific quotes were selected to represent the different voices of study participants that were engaged in the project.

## 2.7 Quality Assurance Systems

The following strategies were used to ensure the quality of data collected and analysed:

**Rigorous selection and training of data collectors:** The qualitative research team was recruited based on education level, experience and skills levels in conducting qualitative research and research experience in the education sector. Four research assistants, with university level training and a background in interview data collection, were recruited and trained. Similarly, the research team underwent rigorous training, for two days, under the lead researcher on the research green skills development for youth and women, data collection using specific research tools, how to ensure ethical and logical standards and safeguarding of study participants.



Supervision during fieldwork: During field work, random rechecks were conducted to confirm and verify the data collected by the researchers. Each research assistant was paired with a senior researcher to ensure quality. Further, daily team debriefing meetings were used to address emerging issues and plan for the next day activities.

Data quality: The qualitative data and interview notes were submitted on a daily basis to the lead researcher for quality checks and subsequent rectification of anomalies noted.

## 2.8 Ethical Considerations

The qualitative study was conducted in strict accordance with the laid down procedures for research involving human beings. The relationship between researchers and participants, and their conduct throughout the project period was guided by research ethics, participant protection policies and codes of ethics and professional conduct as outlined by WHH Project.

The research team also sought informed consent from all the participants before commencement of the interviews. At the community level, the research team sought consent from mentors and women themselves before interviewing them. A participant's unwillingness to participate or continue to participate in research was respected.

The research team informed the participants of their freedom to withdraw their consent at any stage of the interview process without having to give any explanation. Furthermore, participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality of the information shared and a commitment made that the information was to support the WHH Project programming. The research was approved by the National Council of Science, Technology and Innovation.





## 3.0 Study Findings

The study set out to address the following research questions upon which the study findings are organized;

1. What were the pre-training conditions and barriers for green skills development among young and people and women in Kajiado and Kakamega?
2. What progress had been made towards the implementation of WHH project activities and what are the related trainee experiences?
3. What was the impact of the WHH training on green business skill development and lives of youth and women groups members?

### 3.1 Pre-training Conditions and Barriers

The youth trainees and women group members documented the following as the barriers for both women and youths' entry into the green business space.

The study set out to establish from the project beneficiaries the barriers and conditions that deter youth and women from participating in the sector and its related value chains. The study participants identified the following barriers to youth and women access to green skills development in Kajiado and Kakamega counties.

- Negative perceptions towards agriculture by youth given that it does not provide opportunities for white collar jobs and is thus seen as a dirty profession
- The perception that agricultural activities have low returns
- The unfavourable climate for sustainable agriculture especially in the study counties this is particularly due to over-reliance on rains, which are often unpredictable or low
- Limited awareness of value chains as a source of economic activity – and attribution to low incomes
- Prevailing cultural practices such as pastoralism and related livestock keeping among the Maasai that affects investment in other green business value chains
- The high cost of investing in value chains relating to availability of capital like land and financial resources for youth and women that have limited access to these resources
- The time required to realize results or income from green skills investment discourages prospective entrepreneurs especially youth who are naturally impatient.

To contextualise the above discussion, the specific voices of youth trainees and women group members are provided in the ensuing discussion. It emerged from all the project participants, youth, women group members, mentors and trainers, that the main barrier for both women and youths' entry into the green business space was the negative attitudes the community, and by extension youth and women, have towards agriculture as an occupation. Agricultural related livelihoods were associated with failed schooling outcomes and consequent lack of access to white collar training and jobs. Youth, therefore, avoided building their careers in agriculture not to be seen as failures in their communities. There was also a poor perception among the youth where agricultural processes, such as tilling, planting, harvesting of produce among others, were associated with dirt. In worse case scenarios, some youths did not see it as a source of income but rather as a punishment. The two excerpts below from a post-service trainee in Kajiado and mentor from Kakamega captures this perception.

*“People prefer courses such as nursing and teaching. Just like xxx started by saying that people don’t like things that tire them. This is a course that is not easily embraced by many. With all these practical work in making seedling beds, you will definitely get blisters on your hands. In other courses, all they do is attend classes maintaining their nails. Definitely, they will pity you with the perception that you are suffering. I don’t think there is any of us who came due to the funding of this course, I think above all it is interest that brought us here” (Post–Trainee, FGD, Kajiado, November, 2022).*

*“In this green business, attitude is very important. The youth are fresh from school and have high expectations. Therefore, the attitude here is that this agribusiness, they tend to think is a dirty employment and they want something that is decent, yearning for the office. So when they're given this agribusiness they tend to not to appreciate it. They want to be in a clean office with less work and hustle. So if you pick the fresh ones from college these are the issues you will face. They want to travel to Mombasa as the only destination, not here. So those are some of the factors that make them not to participate” (Mentor, KII,9 Kakamega, November, 2022).*

Further, the poor climatic conditions characterised by low rainfall levels that cannot sustain green business activities, witnessed in Kajiado and Makueni project locations also discouraged residents from venturing into green businesses. Residents depend on rain-fed agriculture to practice green businesses. High poverty levels cannot allow them to incur costs related to setting up irrigation infrastructure. This perception was articulated by WHH trainees, trainers and mentors at Latia project site. This is illustrated below.

**R1:** *Most of the pastoralists have not learned about agriculture. Then also the area is semi-arid; there is insufficient water so most people would rather keep livestock (Post–Trainee, Kajiado, FGD, November, 2022).*

Low knowledge about the value of green business skills as an economic activity in the three communities where the project is being implemented also emerged as a barrier to its uptake among youth and women. This perception was pronounced among the youth as exemplified by these quotes:

*“In my community, they still don’t value it; in fact, if they were to see me doing it they would say I am wasting time.” (Post – Trainee, Kajiado, FGD, November, 2022).*

*Okay, I can add on that. Yes we are acquiring those skills now but it is just recently when this opportunity came to us. In the past, people didn’t consider agriculture to .be that important but now they “are learning more about the benefits. This makes it a problem for those who were not enlightened before.” (In – Trainee, Kajiado, FGD, November, 2022).*

The lack of awareness of other value chains beyond dairy farming among the project participants also emerged as a barrier to green skills development. It limited the ability of youth and women to engage in horticulture, bee keeping and poultry farming as alternative green skills. While this perception was common among WHH participants in Kakamega and Kajiado, the predominant practice of pastoralism among the Maasai, where livestock keeping is the predominant cultural and economic preoccupation, further alienated youth and women from entering the green business space. For example, at Latia, according to the accounts of many participants, women and youth are expected to take care of the animals and, therefore, investment in green business value chains among the youth and women has to compete with an already established tradition of wealth creation. As expounded by the quote below, the day-to-day activities of women and youth in the Maasai community revolve around cattle rearing.



*“Most Maasais do not have that knowledge; some do not have to cultivate. Youth do not always engage in agriculture. They are involved in pastoralist activities with their fathers. Due to our traditions, women are not to be farmers. Instead, we take care of the animals in the community. Until recently, women could not even attend school but as we see now, women are engaging in these practices and things are changing” (Mentor, KII, Kajiado, November, 2022).*

Entrenched social norms on the role of youth and women in society also emerged as a barrier to youth and women engagement in green skills development. The youth and women trainees, mentors and trainers reported that limited access to land for green business activities, by youth and women was based on socio-cultural norms that accord all family land ownership rights to men in the project communities. In communities where agriculture is traditionally practiced like those found in Kakamega, other factors came into play to alienate youth and women from involving in green business value chains. The high cost of implementing green business activities, including acquiring pieces of land for dairy farming and related fodder crop growing, the cost of buying good quality dairy breeds and irrigating the farms for horticulture among others. One member of a women group participating in the WHH project in Kakamega outlined some of these issues in the excerpt below.

*“The first problem is income. We do not have enough money to buy quality cows. In this whole area, I haven’t seen a good quality cow like the ones in Bukura institute; they have a big udder and quite healthy. The reason is that we have so many needs and not enough money to buy quality breeds”.*  
**(Women Group Member, FGD, Kakamega, November, 2022)**

A specific barrier for youth involvement in the green business arena was their lack of patience in cultivating green business skills and maturing related businesses to a level where they can enjoy the returns on their investment. Horning green skills and related

value chains is a process that is sometimes characterised by failure and needs patience, yet youth joined the programme with a mindset of making a living almost immediately. Therefore, frustrations associated with building the skills keep youth away. Furthermore, green skills and related value chains competed with other sources of income. Youth reported attraction to quick return sources of income, such as sand harvesting found in one project site.

*“The youth want to make quick money from the sand business. There are these trucks that transport sand to Nairobi, and the business is very attractive to the youth. They make a lot of money out of that business as compared to the usual farming. They make Sh2,000/- per day. Women are left to look after the livestock. Men just walk around doing nothing”.* **(Mentor, KII, Kajiado, November, 2022).**

*“Most women and youth are poor and have no money and feel like they are wasting time during the training instead of looking for ways of making money. But in future, we hope they will see the outcome and will soon join us especially in fish farming”.* **(Women Group Member, FGD, Kakamega, November, 2022).**





## 3.2. Project Motivations and Expectations of Trainees and Mentors

The study endeavoured to understand the motivations for joining the green business skills programme and trainee expectations. This was important in providing perspectives in relation to realising the project outcomes, including completion, participation and self-employment. The cited motivation was not uniform within groups of youth and women. For instance, the youth who chose to join green business skills did so because of the inspiration coming from the entrepreneurs who practiced local green skill, the availability of a scholarship to advance their skills, and prior related training. For the women, the motivation was the need to grow their green skills, knowledge and related product outputs in order to increase their production.

### 3.2.1 WHH project motivations for Youth

The main motivation among the youth for joining green business training was the inspiration from witnessing relatives, mentors, employers and other community members making a living from green business activities. For one post-service trainee, the person who inspired them is a WHH green business project graduate. This is illustrated further by the two quotes below;

*“Okay, someone like myself, I was influenced by my cousin who was also here at Latia and did a six months course. When my cousin came home, she was supported by the father who gave her a piece of land. Fortunately, they also had a borehole, which made her start farming and she could sell farm produce and get money. One day she advised me concerning crop farming and the benefits involved. Their family could not go without a meal; she could also sell vegetables and buy personal items. In our community, most people rely on livestock but the most challenging thing is that women don’t own any but if you have for an instance a kitchen garden you can sell the farm produce at your own will. That will be a direct source of income and it will create some financial independence. That automatically motivated me.” (Post service trainee, FGD, Kajiado, November, 2022).*

*“As for me, I did work at a certain farm. I used to be a casual labourer there. As I was working and helping out I could see people buy a lot of farm produce and it was generating a lot of income to the owners. Then I thought this was the easiest way to make money, so my motivation was the monetary income that can be generated out of it.” (Postservice trainee, FGD, Kajiado, November, 2022).*

In addition, prior training, coupled with interest in agribusiness and the presence of scholarships were cited as other reasons that motivated trainees to join the greening skills training.

*“As for me, from way back I have always had a passion for agriculture. So when I heard about the opportunity to do with crops, because I have already pursued livestock farming, I thanked God for such an opportunity. This was an opportunity for me to combine. Then still if I get another scholarship to pursue this up to degree (undergraduate) level or even masters’ level, I am ready because I believe skills are unlimited concerning matters agriculture.” (Post-service Trainee, Kajiado, November, 2022).*

### 3.2.2 WHH project motivations for Women Groups

Women group trainees motivations for joining the WHH green business training programme differed depending on the project location. In Kakamega, women who were already practicing farm and livestock farming, joined to improve their knowledge and skills on how to grow in scale and improve farming outputs





through modern methods, value addition and marketing. The women noted that they were not making progress as individuals, not succeeding using old skills and had knowledge and skill gaps, including in marketing products.

**R3:** *All of us had something we were already doing in terms of farming so we came here to add knowledge and skills.*

**R4:** *The county came up with a project called Marali, putting everyone in farming of dairy, poultry, tissue culture bananas and ADS joined to support us and took us to Bukura for training on value chain. We have been taught about the benefits of dairy i.e. biogas, milk, manure, meat etc. The benefits of dairy are way more, that's why we joined, just by owning one cow, you tend to have the four benefits and value addition is more than the other things. Now women can make yoghurt, mala (fermented milk) and how to sell and have more cash to eradicate poverty in our community.*

**R5:** *When ADS first came, they said this area has potential because there were no cows and if we start on dairy, we can benefit ourselves and others around us from selling the value addition products in this local market.*

**R1:** *I have been in fish farming for long and at some point I stopped because I was not making much profit. When I heard there was this project that can help the farmers with skills and knowledge to improve the farming in general like poultry etc., the requirement for the project was that we do it as a group. Therefore, we went to look for others who wished to learn and gain skills in the fish farming to join the group and join the project. That's how we came together.*

**R2:** *All of us had hope that we will gain some knowledge and improve on where we were doing it wrong. For example, personally I was in poultry farming, but the chicks would get to a certain stage and die. I wanted to gain help and skills on self-employment (Women Group members, Kakamega, FGD, November, 2022).*

In Kajiado, the motivations was also to build their skills and knowledge gap around livestock farming and diversification of income through better utilisation of existing land resources through poultry and fodder crop farming. Thus, the participation in green skilling was perceived as an essential tool to help them in addressing the diminishing benefits accrued from livestock keeping that was hugely affected by unpredictable and adverse weather conditions such as droughts.

**R8:** *We have experience with goat farming, we just needed to learn more on the subject. We needed something to help us sell the milk; that's why we chose goat farming.*

**R6:** *It's the women, they are passionate about it, they know that with this business they will be able to do business and not go hungry with their children. Women here are always willing to learn something that will benefit them and make them to have food security. (Women Group members, Kajiado, FGD, November, 2022).*

### 3.2.3 Misconceptions about the project model – Expectations of cash incentive

The motivation of participating in the green business skills project was also misconstrued. For instance, some of the trainees who joined were motivated by the perception that they would get monetary gains and not necessarily skills. That is, they perceived that by participating they would benefit from cash handouts or free green business inputs like chicks, dairy cows or goats. When they realised this was not forthcoming, some of them dropped out of the training as noted in the following excerpt;

*R: “The problem was that initially we registered because the county wanted us to grow in groups and see how they could help. A lot of people joined this group because of the dairy aspect. They thought we were going to be given free cows and such things. Then when that did not happen, from 18 members we are only eight remaining; the twelve could not hang on. But the thing is, we are here to learn and improve the little we have in our farms.” (Women Group member, Kakamega, FGD, November, 2022).*

*“I wanted to gain knowledge and skills so that I improve farming and even my quality of life, after which I would encourage others to do the same. I wanted also to be given money to improve the farming, but once I got in, it was not the case but here I am to gain knowledge and improve my life”. (Women Group member, Kakamega, FGD, November, 2022).*

*R2: “Most of them assume they will be given some money as handout during the training but when they realise there is no money being given, they drop off”. (Women Group member, Kakamega, FGD, November, 2022).*

### 3.2.4 Motivations for mentors on the green business training programme

It was important to solicit the motivation of mentors joining the WHH project because this was directly linked to their productivity and passion in guiding the trainees in the course of their learning journey. In this respect, the study revealed that mentors' motivation factors were aligned with their mentorship roles and included a passion for working with community members in general and on agribusiness matters specifically. This discussion is evidenced by the quotes below from mentors.

*“One, I like working with the community and that’s why I did agriculture. I like working with people and to help. I understand that these women, apart from being taught about the value chain, they don’t know how to run their businesses. Like in the dairy production where we have the Maasai, they just release the goats and that’s all. They don’t know that the goats need more so that they can give you maximum production. Then I look at the dairy production, if you don’t look at it then you might end up getting the same goats you have that are running up and down. As a mentor, I can teach them how to take care of the dairy goats and make the maximum out of it.” (Mentor, KII, Kajiado, November, 2022).*

## 3.3. Project Activities, Trainee Experiences and Value of the green business skills training

### 3.3.1 Implementation of Project Activities - Curriculum Review

One of the key activities of the WHH project was the development of a green skills curriculum to be used by the participating institutions. This study sought to report on the progress made towards this goal. In summa



ry, the study revealed that the following actions were undertaken during the curriculum review on the WHH green business skills project:

- 1. The introduction of new courses and units in existing courses:** The review revealed that some courses of interest for the WHH project were not being offered. This was the case for the tissue culture banana production course at Bukura. In some cases, green skills units which were missing in some key courses were added. For example, theory of dairy farming, dairy value chains and poultry biology were added to the existing animal production course at Bukura. Latia added a course on doing a business plan.
- 2. Downscaling of existing certificate courses to below certificate level:** Downscaling was done to align the content taught at certificate level to accommodate trainees with lower levels of education, including women who had not been to school.
- 3. Adaptation of learning materials for relevance:** At Latia, the curriculum content learning materials were translated to Kiswahili and vernacular, brochures and pictures were developed to cater for the older and semi-literate women group member trainees.
- 4. Approval of new courses:** Once they were developed, the new courses underwent a process of institutional approval before implementation. This process entailed the institution curriculum board conducting needs assessments, developing of course competency profiles and the curriculum, conducting a stakeholder endorsement, and seeking institutional academic board and board of directors' approval. The end product was an approved course ready for implementation.

Some of the specific processes undertaken under the curriculum review are highlighted in the excerpts below from Bukura and Latia trainers.

**R4:** *"We developed the theory on dairy farming. We have dairy value chain farming. We have the poultry biology and farming and then we have tissue culture. In this particular value chain, we are saying also we have done groundnuts. Groundnut production is very popular in this region. That was what was added."* (WHH project Trainers, Group Interview, Kakamega, November, 2022).

*"We didn't have this tissue culture curriculum and even at the national level it is not there. So, we had to set out to develop a curriculum for tissue culture banana production. We have a diploma in animal production so when we drop down to Level 3 then we have to develop the laboratory curriculum. So actually, for this Level 3 we did develop the curriculum. Normally, we develop based on need, that is, if a client comes and has the trainees in this particular area then we take on that process. We conduct and develop our own competency profiles and the advantage that we have is that our curriculum can be approved very fast because once it is ready then the principal calls the academic board. I am able to appear before the board which seats every three months, so anything that requires a full board of directors to look through and approve within three months then we are good to go."* (WHH project Trainers, Group Interview, Kakamega, November, 2022)

Further, in terms of curriculum review, a needs assessment was conducted by the trainers to align the trainees' green business knowledge and skill needs. The study confirmed that the trainers at Bukura and Latia had conducted a curriculum review of existing courses in their respective colleges. For example in Latia, the needs assessment with the women group members showed that women were interested in poultry farming as illustrated in the quote below from a trainer at Latia;

*"We went to the community to try and understand the structures in the community and how ADS can come in. It was in support of the community needs, and not to come up with something new. The*



*needs were diverse; some groups said poultry rearing, they complained that the chicks die because of diseases, and that they are not able to feed them properly to maturity. So, the curriculum put into account how to raise the chicks from a day old to maturity and how they protect them from diseases and even how to take care of the local breeds. That's how the curriculum is developed as a short course. The other needs were more on savings, like soap making, which ADS took care of but for us it was specifically on value chain and more so poultry and dairy production.” (WHH project Trainer, KII, Kajiado, November, 2022).*

The review revealed that some important courses, particularly those focused on building a holistic trainee, were already being offered at one of the colleges. For instance, a soft and life skills course was being offered in both colleges as indicated below by a trainer from Bukura.

*“All our curriculum has that component of life skills because we believe this person is not complete, just with technical competence, we expect that the worker/trainee has the right attitude, has the right work time management, stress and problem solving ability. So, all these components must be infused in our curriculum. All our curriculum has that special unit of Life Skills and I don't know whether that is what is also sent out to all the trainees out there, because if you go to any agricultural institution or office, you must find a graduate whose supervisors are happy with them, then they must be good time managers and have skills for self-drive.” (WHH project Trainer, Group Interview, Kakamega, November, 2022).*





### 3.3.2. Gaps and challenges in the curriculum implementation

The trainers and trainees noted some gaps in the curriculum that require addressing to maximise acquisition of green business skills and knowledge for the trainees. These included lack of funds for life skill mentoring, as indicated in the following excerpts:

- a) Lack of funds to conduct life skill mentoring sessions for institutional based trainees. This finding came from the project coordinator and trainers at Latia who reported gaps in the implementation of the soft skills course at Latia resulting from insufficient funds in the budget to pay guest speakers to give talks on selected topics. Further explanations are provided in the quote below;

*“There is also the issue of budget for the current courses of soft skills for horticulture. We teach them digital, communication, employability but other issues on gender and soft skills will require a guest speaker of which the budget cannot allow. The previous cohort was lucky because they were grouped with the regular course and were taught on the life and soft skills. But not the current cohort. ADS only caters for tuition.” (WHH project Trainers, KII, Kajiado, November, 2022).*

- b) Opportunity to develop green business skills being lost from Bukura students taking on attachments with entities that are not aligned with their areas of specialisation. The college is in the process of developing a database for prospective attachment firms for the different value chains as seen in the quote below.

*“If you are a horticulturalist then you are doing the practical training in horticulture centre so that a horticulture trainee doesn’t go to a dairy farm. And what we have realised is that they are being assigned duties related to dairy farm, so actually they lose out. The data base helps during such periods for placing our students, although with the thousands of students that we have, this is still a challenge. But we hope we’ll be able to achieve that. Once we achieve that then that training will be complete. This is how we envision the training should look like. We should be able to put it in the curriculum, but it’s not complete without that industry linkage and that practice is very important.” (WHH project Trainer, Group Interview, Kakamega, November, 2022)*

Repetitive content being offered in different units in the curriculum: Some units in the WHH curriculum were seen to be repeated across different courses. For example, in Latia, that on horticultural crops was repetitive and needed to be merged as illustrated below.

*“Some units are repetitive and should on producing horticultural crops, it was developed so that a student may learn a single value chain, but instead that operation caters on all the units. I think it should be compressed into one. They are repetitive, that is the short course for the ADS, and for the regular students.” (WHH project Trainers, KII, Kajiado, November, 2022).*

- c) Lack of clarity in the role of mentors as they relate to that of trainers: The role of the mentors as they align with that of trainers was unclear given that some mentors were not assisting the trainers or advising the women trainee teams in the course of the training. This brought into sharp focus the existing confusion around the definition and expected roles of mentors on the WHH project. This is evidenced below:

*“When you look at our mentors, then there are certain things you expect them to do, so maybe we needed either ideas or double check to share the role of the mentor so that as their trainers go to*



*the field, how do we engage them? What is their role so that there are certain things that they are struggling with which a mentor should be helping. Clearly, our expectation was that because this person is a mentor and has been selected, maybe based on the infrastructure then we should not be struggling with where do we conduct our trainings, because then we need to have the basic infrastructure for that training. We had a very good time with one group. The cohort mentor had the basic infrastructure in her home, so we did not struggle a lot because sometimes when you're stuck, you're wondering where do I get power, whom do you ask? We don't know whether we should ask the group leader or the mentor because we saw in Cohort 1 mentors came in strongly and they would help address such challenges. But some cohorts had this big silence.” (WHH project Trainer, Group Interview, Kakamega, November, 2022).*

- d) Lack of field experience among trainers: The trainers lacked modern technology facilities and skills in their field and this was affecting the teaching of up-to-date green business skills and knowledge to the trainees.

*“It becomes easy to implement and the flipside of that is also the trainer, they have been trained on these, they know, but sometimes the latest technologies they are not conversant with. Is there an opportunity that they can get attachments also as trainers in the industry? Like now we are talking about feed formulation actually through another project. J.Z. has donated a feeder mixer. But then, who has the hands-on skills? Our trainers are being trained yes, they have a lot of theory but then they have not been able to do that practically so they can be in a position to competently apply the knowledge and skills.” (WHH project Trainer, Group Interview, Kakamega, November, 2022).*

- e) Lack of recruitment procedures that allow for inclusion across social community groups: In one of the project sites, the trainers reported that the selection process of students for the WHH project was not objective and inclusive as it favoured certain members of the community based on their social affiliations as evidences below.

*“The selection process is not very good it is done by ADS team. The first cohort was selecting mostly relatives and when there is a funeral, all of them go. It should be more diverse to pick many people. In terms of the level of education its ok, because most students have gone up to high school and completed Fourth Form, so the criterial of level 3, never went to high school is good. The group is affiliated to church because I think ADS is a church organisation or an affiliate to the church, so a lot of views come from the bishop, the pastor and the likes. Somehow the selection might look biased because it looks like it was selected from a church group.” (WHH project Trainers, KII, Kajiado, November, 2022).*

- f) Misconceptions on expected project interventions: Due to the unclear information on what trainees would get out of the project, the trainers had to deal with requests relating to provision of funds or start-up inputs like cows that were outside the project intervention parameters. This is illustrated below:

*“Maybe one thing that I could say that I didn't like much was that the farmers had too much expectation of the programme and this expectation now would be expressed to the college to the trainers being told that are you not doing for us this; are you not bringing for us that? and so on. So, there was a lot of expectation from the farmers of what they expect us to do. Somehow, they've not been able to own the projects so that they participate”. (WHH project Trainer, Group Interview, Kakamega, November, 2022).*



g) Challenges on how to assess individual competences in the context of the group training model. The group training model was presenting challenges for trainers on how to assess individual skill competencies of the learners engaged in group assignments. It was difficult to determine individual contributions of individuals in the group and award them marks. Further, the group teaching model denied some learners opportunities for practicing the green business skills at the individual level. This is illustrated by the quote below;

*“If the farmers are able to do more hours, that means we need more practical facilities so that each one can do their own, then be able to assess the competency properly when assessing the group. If they were based here as the resident trainees are, then if it is poultry, their trainers would have allocated them chicks and made sure they ask for value addition. So you go through the whole process, but the challenge with the farmers again is the issue of commitment. You have left them with the chicks and have taken them through how to manage them, but you come next week they tell you two to three chicks died, now the issue is who will take care of these chicks if the trainee farmer cannot. So eventually you find that because it's a group, the level of commitment is estimated to be low; it's hard to progress swiftly in a group. They prefer individuals so that they're able to do those practicals as individuals. Then they can understand that for me to be declared competent, I must show competence as an individual, not as a group participant”.* (WHH project Trainer, Group Interview, Kakamega, November, 2022).

The study revealed some curriculum gaps that were specific to trainees and these are discussed below.

**i) More time for additional content coverage and skill acquisition:**

The institution-based trainees wanted more time to cover practical work through visiting facilities outside their colleges and go deeper into the technical content. The excerpts below illustrate this further.

**R2:** *“In my opinion, the time should have been extended to give us an opportunity to gain more practical skills. Sometimes the trainers could come and ask if any of us had visited a greenhouse or any other agricultural centre but most of us would give an excuse that there was no enough time. So I think there was no enough time for practical work.”*

**I:** *“Okay. So you mean time in terms of the daily lessons or the general three months of coursework.”*

**R2:** *“I think the units are so many to be covered in just three months. Some of the units were not covered properly. Even the practical work in the field was quite restricted to how much we can do within the limited time. In that case, if someone wanted to learn something extra, they would not get the chance to do so.”* (Post service trainees, FGD, Kajiado, November, 2022)

**d) Untimely access to startup funds due to late applications and lack of capacity:**

Some of the trainees had not applied for the start-up fund because they missed the deadline for submission and in some cases due to lack of capacity to do so. This is illustrated below:

**R2:** *“I would recommend further follow-up and monitoring even after providing start-up capital. That should also include those who did not apply for the start-up kit like myself.”*



**R3:** *"I would recommend they be guiding people on start-up application process because some of us were cut short of time and at times did not get any communication on the same."* (Post-service trainee, FGD, Kajiado, November, 2022).

**e) Facing financial challenges in attending attachment:**

Since the attachment funds were being disbursed after proof of completion, the trainees reported having challenges meeting their daily needs as illustrated below.

*"That should be rectified because it was very difficult to sustain ourselves. We came from here having been provide with accommodation only to end up helpless out there and most of us are not financially stable. The money that was given to us after attachment should be given during attachment."* (Post-service trainee, FGD, Kajiado, November, 2022).

**f) Doing courses they had not originally selected:**

To consolidate all the training activities of a given WHH cohort, students were lumped together in one popular course. This, according to the trainees, denied them the chance to do a course of their choice. This is expounded by the quotes below;

They should improve on value chains because some of us came to do dairy farming but since were few of us, or the minority, we were told it was not possible to have a class of four students out of 23. In reality, we should have had enough time to even be taught because back at home we do both dairy farming and horticulture. (Post-service trainee, FGD, Kajiado, November, 2022).

**g) Limited interaction with mentors by in-service trainees**

While the mentor's role was well defined in the case of the women group trainees, this was not the case for college-based youth trainees. When asked whether they had met the mentors, the trainees were uncertain who those were. After probing, college-based youth trainees indicated that their encounter with mentors was limited. For example, while the in-service group had met the mentors once a month the post-service trainees were yet to meet any mentors and yet they were about to begin their attachment. Mentors were supposed to play a critical role in the attachment process of the trainees as indicated by the interview excerpts below.

**R1:** *"We had one educate us on the importance of being admitted into this programme"*

**I:** *"How many times a week or a month? How often do you meet?"*

**R4:** *"It always depends on their own arrangements. For instance, if they decide to meet on a Saturday then we carry out activities together."*

**I:** *"As a group of trainees, how many times have you met the mentors?"*

**R1:** *"It is not systematic, they have been here like thrice or so in three months."*

The trainees indicated that they would have liked to meet the mentors more often to provide them with





guidance on various aspects of training including attachment. This is illustrated below.

**I2:** *“Three months, so you are finalising? And would you have wished they come more times or that was okay?”*

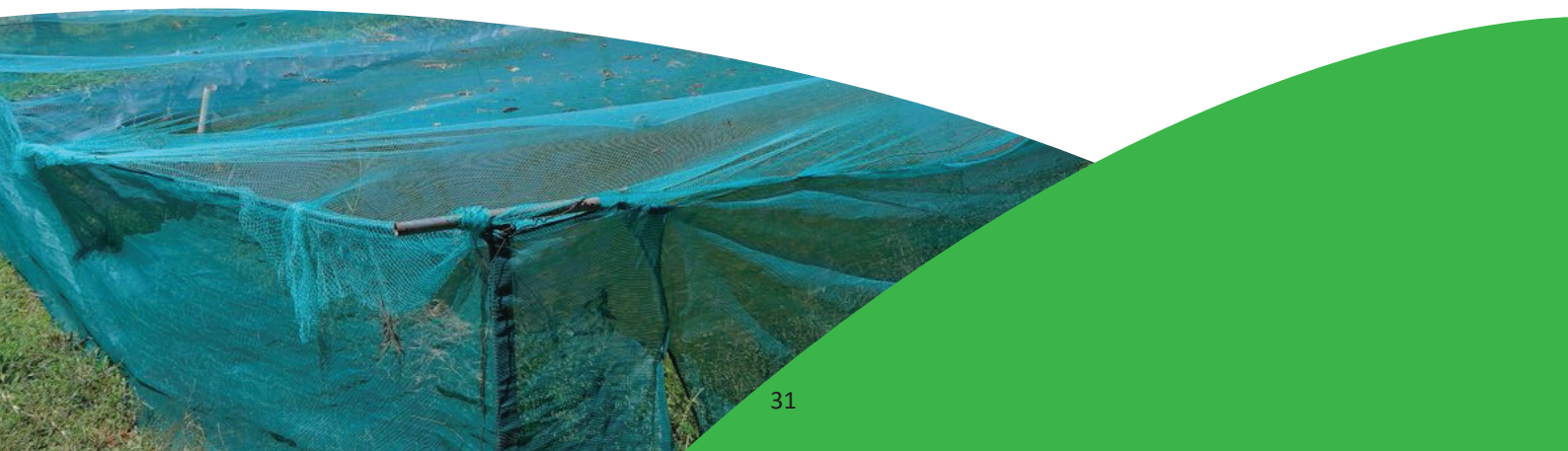
**R2:** *“Even if we wished they come now we are heading for our attachment so it will not be possible.”*  
**(In-service trainees, FGD, Kajiado, November, 2022).**

**I:** *“Any other support? What about mentors? Do you know mentors? Did you encounter them?”*

**R1:** *“What is the role of mentor?”*

**I:** *“Their role is not very much different from those of trainers but for them is just to make sure you are at par with everything. Did you encounter any? Or maybe they came but you could not identify them?”*

**R2:** *“So far, I haven’t met any, because I consider mentors to be people who engage you and offer advice.”* **(post-service trainees, FGD, Kajiado, November, 2022).**



### 3.3.2. Implementation of Project Activities - Training of Youth and Women Groups

#### a) Scholarships Support for Youth In-service and Post-service training and women groups

The scholarship and related support to the trainees was essential to participating in the green business skills training project. This is because it would benefit needy students and those who had lower levels of education in terms of giving them an opportunity to learn and make a living after completion of the studies on this project.

There was evidence of training of youth from Kajiado and Makueni Counties in green business skills at Latia Agri-business Centre in Isinya, Kajiado County. During the field study visit, the group of youth from Makueni County was in session attending a three months training in horticultural studies. We also managed to hold Focused Group Discussions with a group of youth who had completed three months institutional training and three month sponsored attachment and were waiting to get their start-up funds. For the women groups, we visited two women groups in Kajiado involved in poultry farming, dairy goat keeping and fodder crop farming and four in Kakamega learning how to grow tissue culture bananas, fish and poultry farming and dairy farming. According to the trainees and knowledge derived from the interviews, the WHH Project was supporting the youth to pay tuition, a monthly stipend of Sh1,500. Both groups of trainees were expected to receive a start-up fund of up to a maximum of Sh30,000 to cater for equipment and materials. All the women groups had completed their three months of training and were waiting to be given their start-up fund. The excerpts below confirm that the in-service and post-service trainees as well as women groups had received scholarships to train on the WHH Project and the postservice group was waiting to get a start-up kit from the programme.

**R4:** *“When the opportunity came, we were being told it was meant for Form Four leavers only, so my mother used to wonder what would happen to a Form Two dropout like myself.”*

*“She used to worry about me so much because she wanted me to continue with my education, so she talked to one of the ladies who was connecting us to the opportunity, then we were told even Form Two dropouts could join the programme. Then another thing other youths were ignoring. We were such a large group; other people thought that the scholarship would require money just because we were to cater for transport. This programme has really helped us, more so those of us from Makueni.”*

**R5:** *“I have never seen such an organisation. I have never heard of any other scholarship. In most cases, the sales and marketing people are the ones who dupe people and when you get there you find things are totally different. In this scholarship they provide everything, which include accommodation, food, and attachment and then be issued with a certificate for free. We used to even doubt this deal. So all we did was to give it a try and fortunately by now it has worked.” (In-Service Trainees, FGD, Kajiado, November, 2022).*

*“I could not afford to go to college or campus after high school but with this scholarship, it is a great support to me. I would still be at home without any skills. We did apply for some at this institute; we did apply for a start-up capital of Sh30,000. It was just last week when we submitted those business plans and the application. We haven't been briefed on that yet, we are still clueless.” (Post Service Trainee, Kajiado, November, 2022).*



*“They supported us with school fees, they brought chicks, feeds and medication for the group. The teachers were very good and patient. We were given the topics early so that we could discuss when the time came.” (Women Group Member, FGD, Kajiado, 2022).*

*“The county came up with a project called Marali, putting everyone in farming of dairy, poultry, tissue culture bananas and ADS joined to support us and took us to Bukura for training on value chain. We have been taught about the benefits of dairy i.e. biogas, milk, manure, meat etc. The benefits of dairy are way more, that’s why we joined. Just by owning one cow, you tend to have the four benefits and value addition is more than the other things. Now women can make yoghurt, mala and learn how to sell and have more cash to eradicate poverty in our community.” (Women Group Member, FGD, Kakamega, 2022).*

### **b) The presence and Support of Mentors**

There was evidence of mentorship support for both college trainees and women groups. For the women-groups, the mentors played the role of supporting the groups to implement practical work during training, identifying the start-up projects at the end of the training and encouragement to continue on the programme. Because they were meeting the women groups every week and attending training sessions together with the women, mentors provided a link between the community and the trainers as well as the training institution especially in the case of women groups. The role of the mentors on the WHH projects is illustrated by women group members in the quotes below.

*“The mentor is a community member and through her we met the ADS project people. She linked us. She was in attendance and was part of the group and was also a student just like us.” (Women Group Member, FGD, Kakamega, 2022).*

**R1:** *“Mentors were helping us together with the teacher; you can ask them questions if the teacher is not available.”*

**R2:** *“The mentors used to come in early and introduce the trainers so that we are all relaxed. About the exam, there was a time we were given a written exam, so the mentor was helping us with the translation of the English so that we respond to the questions appropriately in the language we understand. The exam was asking us, did we enjoy the venue, was the training good? The exam was both oral and written.” (Women Group Member, FGD, Kajiado, 2022).*

### **c) Trainer facilitation approaches**

The WHH project was being implemented by trainers attached to Bukura and Latia colleges. Given that trainers were implementing some of the green Business skills courses, handling learners with varying levels of education, it was important to document the approaches they were using.

The study findings indicate the adoption of teaching approaches that were aligned to the needs of the older learners, involving learner-centered, more practical sessions than theory and using demonstrations, pictures and brochures to pass on information. This approach is echoed and summed up below by one of the women and youth trainees.

*“They were using a good approach. They considered our old age, and that we are women, and some*



are illiterate and so they were taking us step by step. It was very effective and carried us all through. They provided charts, books and pens to write, they had even pictures and they had this circle and we learned from it. They were very patient. They always recapped from the previous lesson. We also had a translator to translate in case some things were not understood. We were also using theory in class.” (Women Group Member, FGD, Kajiado, 2022).

“They were very keen and took time for us to understand putting in mind our age. They were patient and did practicals a lot, which helped us, although the time allocated was brief; two hours per week is no enough time. They also used Kiswahili and mother tongue to ensure we understood.” (Women Group Member, FGD, Kakamega, 2022).

**R1:** “Yeah. We could also learn through videos where we could identify diseases and measures to control them. Anything that we could not get in the practical we were shown through videos.”

**R2:** “At time we were given handouts.”

**R4:** “Revision materials were also sent to the social media groups for everyone to access.” (In-service trainees, FGD, Kajiado, November, 2022)

Other practical and participatory teaching approaches included question and answer sessions and the use of field trips.

“We usually go for trips to Bukura and Gambogi to learn and see what they have there. For such trips, others are envious and want to join. We have learnt about the processing of bananas into flour and even how to dry it. How to use the flour for cakes and mandazi,<sup>23</sup> crisps, chips, solar to dry the bananas, vegetables from the leaves, making baskets, making ash for cooking at 100 per small bottle, one big banana is Sh10 etc, one packet of banana flour was Sh250. That exposure was good.” (Women Group Member, FGD, Kakamega, 2022).

“As a group, we wrote a proposal. There are things we proposed and were approved and others were not, we proposed fingerlings, we proposed for storage equipment, coolers for the fish from the lake to here and we proposed equipment to prepare fresh fish.” (Women Group Member, FGD, Kakamega, 2022).

“After the teacher teaches, we would ask questions and could use the ones who have understood to explain to the others who are slow. But most of the time, he could recap to ensure we remember what was taught the previous week.” (Women Group Member, FGD, Kajiado, 2022)

“We have members who can mentor others in the group. We ask a question and whoever is conversant with it can answer. We also give them our experiences and then share with them that which we have learned.” (Women Group Member, FGD, Kajiado, 2022)

The teaching process was also inclusive in terms of encouraging class and practical participation regardless of trainees’ gender or age as proved below;

**R6:** “No, we used to share. You can find that my desk mate is a man and I am a woman. There was no discrimination.”



**R4:** *“All of us participated equally, whether young or old.”* (In-service Trainees, FGD, Kajiado, November, 2022).

Specifically, group work, a long running model of training among NGOs, featured as the preferred method of facilitation among trainers. In fact, it was a requirement that women join groups in order to benefit from the scholarships. The women groups selected a group project as a learning vessel for the training. The suitability of grouping trainees as a facilitation model received mixed feelings from the trainers. On one side, group facilitation was applauded for encouraging peer-to-peer learning. On the flipside, it was difficult for some groups to agree on a project leave alone elicit the participation of all members. Given that this sentiment came out of FGDs with women in the two project sites, it needs to be addressed. Also, WHH training was faulted for excluding those who had no funds to join women groups in the first place. This points at gaps in the inclusivity of the recruitment process given that some women are left out because they lack the joining fee that is a requirement for joining such groups. Similarly, as a training model, it to some extent limited the practicing of skills at the individual level.

The quotes below demonstrate the mixed feelings the women trainees had on the subject.

**R1:** *“When the project came that’s when we got the motivation to work in the group because it was a requirement by the project and after that they gave us ideas on what kinds of businesses we can do, like how to save money through table banking, and the other ideas about soap making and poultry.”* (Women Group Member, FGD, Kakamega, 2022).

**R7:** *“When the ADS project came, it was advised that we form a group, but when we realised that we had so many challenges and needed the project to help us on the training, that’s when it made sense for us to form and remain in the group for knowledge and we have realised the groups are much better than an individual; you grow way faster in a group than an individual.”* (Women Group Member, FGD, Kakamega, 2022).

**R8:** *“Yes, this training is not for the entire public, its done in groups. Most of the youth and women are not part of the groups because they have no capital to join. I recommend these projects to be announced at the barazas so that we can have a one-person demonstration show where the individuals who are willing to learn can learn from this same person and benefit. As seen not all the ward members have been trained.”*

**R5:** *“Some have a bad attitude, they don’t like working in groups. They lack awareness and don’t like group activities.”* (Women Group Members, FGD, Kakamega, 2022).





### 3.3.3 Implementation of Project Activities - Value of WHH Training

In order to harvest data on the value of the skills the trainees had received on the WHH project, they were asked to discuss the most valuable skills and knowledge they learned from the project.

#### a) Self-employment and income generation skills

Self-employment was the most cited value derived from the project by both youth and women trainees. They perceived their involvement in the project as an eye opener on the possibility and advantages of self-employment compared to formal employment. They outlined the daily access to funds and related uses, economic empowerment that comes with it, ability to save and join savings groups in the case of women as some of the benefits of self-employment. The interview quotes provide further insights on this.

*"It helped us to gain knowledge and skills, which will help us to be self-employed and have money. We no longer participate in village gossip. We do not have to borrow from the neighbours like we did before. We have work and it has good money." (Women Group Member, FGD, Kakamega, November, 2022).*

*"My income has increased, I have joined a Sacco called Solution Sacco and my income has increased because we do weekly and monthly savings." (Women Group Member, FGD, Kakamega, November, 2022).*

*"We will not depend on cows and goats like before. We therefore have extra income from poultry. It has helped us to gain knowledge and skills, which will help us to be selfemployed and have money." (Women Group Member, FGD, Kajiado, November, 2022).*

*"I am now self-employed and can supply eggs in the community. I realised I do not have to work in an office setting, you can make a living as a self-employed individual. I supply eggs to the employed, so I am better off on that front." (Women Group Member, FGD, Kajiado, November, 2022).*

*"I am applying those skills in my business to be successful. I am also training others in the community to help them grow. I am teaching them how to take care of chicks to maturity, how to use manure from the poultry in the shamba to grow organic vegetables. I am selfemployed, the green business contributed so much to that. For example, we were taught production, marketing and value addition." (Women Group Member, FGD, Kajiado, November, 2022).*

*"I am self-employed, growing cabbages and sukuma wikie (kales). The market is not far, 30 minutes on the motorbike and its quite good." (Male Post service trainee, FGD, Kajiado, November, 2022).*

**R1:** *"This opportunity has been an eye opener in a way. We have received training that has made us open to business opportunities back at home. We have had opportunities but we couldn't identify them, which we can now go to utilise. For example I could see this flower back in the village but I realised I can make a business out of it. Most of the people have engaged themselves in the seedling business but in my village there is no place to get such type of seedling and most people transport it from Nairobi to be planted there. Already, that is an opportunity for me and I can actually establish*

*a business out of that. That would even make it easier not transporting it from Nairobi to our area and even those from Nairobi would get it from me. I can also advertise my business. This a very big business opportunity. Another one is this business opportunity of a plant we see in the bushes but it is actually a business opportunity. It can be planted and sold to make spices and food additives."*

**R5:** *"I have learned that you don't necessarily need a large piece of land to practice agriculture. All you need is just a small piece of land and it can even make you rich. We have been taught about crop rotation; you don't plant crops of the same family in succession. For instance, if you were to plant kales for a certain period of time then you also plant other types of crop on the same land. If you consider that, even on a small piece of land, yields would be high."* (In-service trainees, FGD, Kajjido, November, 2022).

## **b) Green Business Technical Skills**

The youth and women trainees outlined the technical skills they had acquired on the project that ranged from how to run poultry and fish farms, rear quality and quantity dairy goats and cows, grow and preserve fodder for the animals and grow more yield producing tissue culture bananas. Additional technical skills were acquired in horticulture, including raising soil beds, growing flowers, vegetables and fruits on small pieces of land for economic purposes. They had also learned how to earn money through value addition by making byproducts like yoghurt and cooking fat out of the green business activities. Below are examples of responses given by women and youth on this subject.

*"In my home area, we were used to planting maize during the rainy season but here we have learned how to raise beds and how to install drip lines and spacing. Back home, we didn't consider spacing, you just dug holes as you planted maize. Now we know how we should be spacing the crops and we are no longer ignorant on diseases and pests affecting crops, at least we are aware of some. It has been much beneficial to learn horticulture, even though when we came, we did not have that passion of pursuing it but now even if we were to be told to go and come back to continue with the course, we would come back."* (In-service trainee, FGD, Kajjido, November, 2022).

*"As for me, I was farming fruits back at home but did not have the skills I have now. I could plant crops just because I had some water for farming. I did not know which pesticides to use but I have been taught how to plant crops the better way. I remember when learning about growing fruits, I told the trainer that the knowledge would be useful to me as compared the way I used to it. So definitely. I have gained much skills here."* (Post service trainee, FGD, Kajjido, November, 2022)

**R:** *"For now, I use the skills to grow tissue culture bananas and local vegetables, which I sell. I am actually building a three bedroomed house from these activities because I am not employed elsewhere, so I use the savings from the farm. My house is 90 percent complete and I am sure it will be complete in six months. I have also taught my brothers who are now practicing farming and are actually doing well. My parents and sisters are also in it."* (Women Group Member, FGD, Kakamega, November, 2022).

*It helped in expanding my knowledge of poultry farming. I know the medicines involved and do not have to look for a vet to treat them.* (Women Group Member, FGD, Kakamega, November, 2022).



*“The training is okay. We go to class and get knowledge about crops, diseases affecting crops, pests, how to install drip lines. At home we were just doing things normally but now we have knowledge and skills which we can use.” (Women Group Member, FGD, Kajiado, November, 2022).*

*“I learned about making the poultry house, taking care of chicks and the feeding process. These are issues that were taught in the training. I was taught that sukuma wiki and spinach can be given to the poultry. Also learned about value addition and how to make money out of it. We were also trained on how to spray chemicals around the poultry house as well as the animal shed so that the animals do not get infected by any diseases.” (Women Group Member, FGD, Kajiado, November, 2022).*

### c) Soft Skills

The trainees also reported having received soft skills on the WHH training programme, explaining that these skills complemented the technical skills acquired by creating self-awareness, learning occupational safety that is required even in the green business sector, communication and digital literacy skills. However, the expression of having received this kind of training was more evident among in-service trainees and less among post-service and women group trainees. The quotes below illustrate the soft skills that were taught on the WHH programme and benefits for the trainees.

**R1:** *“It was all about understanding who you are because most of the people don’t know who they are. They don’t know their purpose in the world. You should be able to understand why you are the way you are. What are your goals in life? The unit has been beneficial because most of us have been able to know who we are. We know our potential and our differences in terms of experience, thoughts and abilities. In analysis, you should identify your uniqueness. In my opinion, self-awareness should be taught from the secondary level to enable students to be self-aware early enough. Most of us graduated from Form Four clueless on who we really are and our potential.”*

**R2:** *“Yes. Digital literacy.”*

**R4:** *“Communication skills”.*

**R1:** *“Computer skills.”*

**R6:** *“Occupational safety and self-awareness.”*

**R4:** *“I think all of them are beneficial because without any of them, it would not be complete. For instance, during practical work in the field, someone might apply safety measures. Then after harvesting the produce you can do marketing. In the process you apply communication skills with your customers.” (Post service trainees, FGD, Kajiado, November, 2022)*

### d) Life skills

The trainees also reported to have acquired life skills in the course of the training. Women group members reported that their confidence levels had increased, enabling them to join women groups and Saccos, open bank accounts, participate in family decision making and problem solving and hold leadership positions in the community. All this is crucial to the enhancement of women’s living standards and is related to increasing



their income or influencing involvement in decision making at family level to the benefit of their families. Below are some related excerpts.

*"I have confidence in myself. I have a bank account which I am making my savings in from my farm earnings. I can also practice my leadership skills within groups because we had a topic on how to handle it, so I have confidence I can do it."* (Women group member, Kajiado, FGD, November, 2022).

*"I have seen women do well in their families; they have been able to feed their families and even this time that there is drought, I could see them buy napier for their cows, which means they are doing something with what they have been taught."* (Female Mentor, KII, Kajiado, November, 2022).

The youth trainees narrated how they had undergone a self-discovery process that led them to planning their lives after completing one of the units. The green business project helped youth identify their purpose in life through self-reflection and, therefore, refocus on their goals. This experience is described below by one of the in-service students.

*"The unit has been beneficial because most of us have been able to know who we are. We know our potential and our differences in terms of experience, thoughts and abilities. In analysis you should identify your uniqueness. In my opinion self-awareness should be taught from the secondary level to enable students to be self-aware early enough. Most of us graduated from Form Four clueless on who we really are and our potential."* (Preservice trainees, FGD, Kajiado, November, 2022).

#### e) Application of WHH green business skills

The youth post-trainees were applying the WHH green business skills directly or indirectly in the green business arena. For example, while one was already growing vegetables for sale as they wait for the startup fund to be disbursed, another one was applying the skills to help women groups in the community to incubate vegetable seedlings for planting. The excerpts below attest to the value of the WHH project training to post-service trainees.

*"As for me, I did not wait for the start-up kit. I started farming some vegetables which include cabbages. In fact, I have already started sourcing for the market for my produce. Very soon, I will be selling them."* (Post service trainee, Kajiado, November, 2022).

*"I work with women groups. I coordinate them on farming activities. Currently, we have seedlings for planting ready. I also plant kales in my own farm. Immediately after attachment, I had someone connect me to the opportunity then I got to train those women. Currently, I don't earn a salary from it but I volunteer to teach them."* (Female Post service trainee, Kajiado, FGD, November, 2022).

Others were not directly using the green business skills they had acquired but applying the entrepreneurial skills to do other businesses as they wait to get the start-up funds. Some women were in fields like construction, or not applying the green business skills at all.

**R1:** *"It did not even take me two days, I had started looking for money."*

**R2:** *"As for me, I don't necessarily use the skills I got from here but I engage in other income generating activities."*



**R5:** *“The few of us who have acquired the skills, we are yet to start applying them.”* (Postservice trainees, FGD, Kajiado, November, 2022).

The women group member trainees also reported having acquired financial literacy skills that they were using to save, participate in table banking and run their green businesses as indicated below.

*“Through modern ways of doing business like table banking with other women, we save alot. In terms of employment, I am now self-employed through the startup kits and the the rest I used for food and meet personal needs and table banking.”*(group member, Kajiado, FGD, November, 2022).

#### **g) Transferring green business skills to the community**

The study revealed that the WHH project trainees had not only benefited from the project as individuals but were also transferring the acquired skills to other members of their community. The quotes below are illustrative of many others from youth and women group trainees that we interviewed.

**R1:** *“Initially, that was a problem but now as they see what we are doing and the benefits, they have accepted and are willing to be trained. They have seen the bananas grow and so they are willing to participate. Now people know the different types of bananas and their benefits. You show them the way it is planted and how it benefits them.”* (Women group member, Kakamega, FGD, November, 2022).

**R:** *“We teach others in the village especially on soap making. I have trained quite a few but sometimes the reagents are not available. We want the community to prosper, and so we strive to educate more. I go as far as Shamakhokho. And my customers will always look for me. They make comments that although we are old but we have the skills and knowledge.”* (Women group member, Kakamega, FGD, November, 2022)

#### **f) WHH Green Business project is transforming gender norms**

The study findings indicate that the WHH Green Business project is contributing to the change in entrenched gender social norms relating to men allowing women to participate in activities outside the home and rights to cultivate land for horticultural and subsistence purposes. The men now allow women to freely participate in income generating activities as well as attend women group meetings. The quotes below are illustrative of this.

*“We have seen that there are some times that the spouses attend the meeting. There used to be something interesting with Maasai some times back. They would send some men to see what we were doing with their women and now it has improved; they will even join us and listen to what we are saying. They would say that is a good thought, keep on teaching them. At least they have the support from the family... Yes, when it comes to farming, the spouses have no problem with that. The only thing you cannot touch are the cows.”* (Mentor, KII, Kajiado, November, 2022).

#### **h) Green skills for transformed quality of life**

Overall, the training acquired in the green business project and related income generating activities



was improving the quality of life of the trainees. It was contributing to poverty reduction by providing food and basic needs like clothing for their families, thus overcoming food insecurity and leading to overall improved utilisation of land. The quotes below expound on this.

*“My lifestyle has change a lot. Most of the people call me a rich guy, I am not sure why so but it could be because the farm is earning me money on a daily basis. Even if the money is little, I have confidence in myself.” (Women Group Member, FGD, Kakamega, November, 2022).*

*“We have food, we have a balanced diet, omena (small fish) and pumpkin leaves. We are doing inter-cropping, we used to grow only maize and beans. We can now make compost and even sell at Sh600 per bag.” (Women Group member, FGD, Kakamega, November, 2022)*

*“Since I joined the programme, I don’t lack anything unlike before where if you don’t have work then you have nowhere to earn a living. I can buy clothes and shoes for my children. I can budget and now have the knowledge to grow my business. Even though there are the usual challenges like lack of market, I am confident in the poultry farming business.” (Women Group member, FGD, Kajiado, November, 2022).*



## 4.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

### 4.1 Conclusions

The green business skills training was facilitating the acquisition of soft skills like communication and digital skills, life skills including self-awareness and overall improvement of the quality of life of the participants.

Gender social norms like confining women to roles and activities in the home among the Maasai community were beginning to shift.

Whereas the conceptualisation of Green Skill project activities worked to support the acquisition of key skills among the trainees, the interactions of the various players, such as mentors, trainers and training institutions were not well aligned with the goals. For instance, the role of mentors on the project was not clearly defined in general and in specific as it aligned with that of trainers. The findings showed that mentors' understanding of their roles, preparation to play their roles and selection was varying, leading to differences in terms of the outputs of the mentors and their overall influences on the mentees' productivity.

The Green Business Skills project employed various learner-centered teaching strategies relevant to women group learners in delivering the curriculum. This was received positively by learners. However, some of the methodology, such as demonstrations, pictures and brochures were reported to be effective while others, such as grouping learners, received mixed reactions in relation to its effectiveness for enhanced learning for the trainees. However, these outcomes were uneven across the three types of WHH project trainees due to how they were administered. The findings from the interviews and FGDs indicated that mentorship was more pronounced and benefiting to the women group trainees when compared to the in-service and post-service youth trainees.

The recommendations based on the study findings are summarised in the table below:

## 4.2 Recommendations

S/NO	FINDINGS	RECOMMENDATION
1	The motivations for joining green business skills project among the youth and women were not uniform. In some cases, it was attached to the high expectations of the support that they expected to draw.	There is a need for a clear communication of the project model at the beginning of the project to manage expectations of the trainees. In the long run, this will reduce dropout rates and absenteeism once the learners enroll.
2	The roles of various players in some cases were not clear and in others it was not clear how the roles complement each other, a case in point being mentors and trainers.	There is a need for a clear definition of the selection criteria, the roles of all the players and how they align with each other (eg those of trainers and mentors, training institution etc).
3	Mentors were noted to have more benefits to women groups than institution-based trainees.	Enhance the role of mentors for in-service and post-service trainees for improved results.
4	The study findings indicate delayed expectation to receive a start-up kit immediately after training was related to delays in business plans preparation for trainees.	There is need to ensure adequate training of all trainees on business plan preparation and do a follow-up to ensure timely acquisition of start-up kits right after completion of the training .
5	There were various methods employed for delivery of the green business skills curriculum.	Conduct a study to document the teaching and mentoring approaches under use on the WHH project that can feed into training and implementation guidelines/ manuals for each group for future use.
6	The needs assessment that established the county-specific green skills helped in the ownership of the project activities	Needs assessment should be integrated in future projects
7	The study found gaps in the green skill curriculum in use for training. Gaps included repetitive units, outdated facilities and need for upscaling of knowledge of the trainers and mentors.	There is need for carrying out a comprehensive review of the WHH training programme with the view of addressing existing gaps.

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