2022

Planting Report
Farming is an act of hope. No matter the external circumstances, whether they be violent conflict, extreme weather, or a global pandemic, a farmer who plants a seed in the ground demonstrates their belief in a fruitful future. After the toil of breaking ground and the investment in seeds, tools, and fertilizer, planting becomes laden with anticipation and desire that the harvest will be worth the effort.

Though farming is inherently risky, today's farmers are facing shocks of greater variety, frequency, and intensity than ever before. This season, global supply chain issues, combined with rising inflation originally triggered by a global pandemic, have been intensified by regional conflict. Still, we are planting the seeds of sustainable organizations, planning and hoping that what we're planting today will cultivate lasting meaningful choices in the world's most vulnerable and marginalized communities this year and beyond.

159,000

Projected # of individuals impacted by Nuru in 2022
While most of us are experiencing sticker shock at the gas pump, drastic fuel shortages in Kenya are deeply disrupting the nation’s economy. This shock, along with historic drought and rising inflation, has made farming unprofitable across the country.

Nuru Kenya is helping farmers adapt by diversifying their livelihoods into dairy production. Dairy lessens farmers' dependence on both the limited rainfall and expensive inputs like fertilizer, providing a stable, daily income. This year, Nuru Kenya's dairy cooperatives are boosting productivity via improved animal husbandry practices and a focus on fodder crops that can feed the cows year-round, regardless of inflation. Cooperatives also serve as a vehicle to bring more farmers into the formal milk market and increase economic opportunity through above-market sales of milk.

"The training on dairy management practices and the artificial insemination program has really helped us improve our milk production."

- Mary Joel,
  Nuru Dairy Farmer
Ethiopian farmers and communities are facing the longest drought the region has experienced in four decades (National Geographic). This extreme weather event, coupled with conflict in much of the country, has contributed to some of the highest rates of food inflation in the world – 42.9% over the same month in the previous year (Statista).

In the face of drought and division, Nuru Ethiopia is bringing people together to create solutions. At the union cooperative level, we are seeing tremendous organic growth, some literally doubling in size. Through this self-replication, Nuru Ethiopia is scaling more effectively and cooperatives are building collective power to benefit their members. As many farmers and their families are watching economic prospects wither and food supplies dwindle, cooperatives are buying grain in bulk and making it locally available to the remote rural areas where members live.

"In the face of drought and division, Nuru Ethiopia is bringing people together to create solutions."
Nuru Nigeria

Global fertilizer prices have risen nearly 110% over the last 18 months, severely reducing profits for farmers (World Bank). In sub-Saharan Africa, where fertilizer is already most underutilized, these soaring costs could drastically curb the output of critical staple foods, affecting food security for 100 million people (Bloomberg).

To respond to this challenge, Nuru Nigeria has partnered with GIZ, a development agency of the German government, to provide on-farm soil testing services to farmers in 2022. Analysis revealed a limited need for fertilizer application and the suitability of northeast Nigerian soil for soybean production. This information is equipping Nuru Nigeria to rightsize farm input packages and farmers to make decisions for greater productivity and profitability.

"...information is... equipping farmers to make decisions for greater productivity and profitability."
Even as violent extremism continues its largely unchecked spread in the Sahel region, climate change presents an equally dire threat in Burkina Faso, causing severe variations in rainfall, water shortage, and low agricultural yield (UNDP).

As we work to reach 1,000 farmer households this year, Nuru Burkina Faso will partner with ignitia, a weather forecasting company, to deliver “hyper-local, highly accurate weather forecasts for the tropics” to farmers via SMS messaging. For many small-holder farmers, every decision is costly and can mean the difference between feeding your family or going hungry. Through this partnership, something most of us take for granted – timely and actionable information about our surroundings – becomes a tool to help farmers make informed decisions, improve their farming practices, and adapt to the disastrous effects of climate change.

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A Note from the Editor: Nuru’s new reporting cadence in 2022 reflects an intentional shift from a corporate, quarterly schedule to the more natural rhythms of agriculture – planting in spring & harvest in fall. When I first envisioned what the planting report might look like, I thought about my father – a life-long farmer – sitting at his desk before cold weather broke, consulting his Farmer’s Almanac. As a daughter of the digital age, I couldn’t fathom how a printed book could be a reliable source of weather information, but he referred to it often. While I can’t remember the exact decisions for which he consulted the Almanac, I do remember the confidence it inspired in the face of uncertainty. When Dad came away from it, he knew what to do next. I think, in a way, it showed him what to hope for.

In the same way, we want this report to give you something to hope for this year, no matter the outlook.

-Kellyn Lovell, Nuru Marketing & Communications Manager