



ADVANCING BIOECONOMY DEVELOPMENT IN KENYA

END OF PROJECT REPORT

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Advancing Bioeconomy Development in Kenya (ABDK)

Advancing Bioeconomy Development in Kenya (ABDK), funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), is designed to unlock Kenya's emerging bioeconomy and promote partnerships between Kenyan and Swedish private sectors. The project supports technology exchange, investment, and innovation across four priority clusters: 1) Value addition to primary produce and circular food systems, 2) Bio-based agricultural inputs, 3) Bio-based industrial development, and 4) Sustainable bioenergy.

Project overview

ABDK has three main interventions:

1. Support the development of bioeconomy pathways for different bio-based sectors through collaboration between Kenyan and Swedish bioeconomy actors.
2. Generate evidence of business opportunities in bio-based sectors targeting Micro-Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)
3. Promote national and international policy engagement on bioeconomy.

Objectives

ABDK contributes towards the achievement of three objectives of the Kenya Vision 2030 fourth Medium Term Plan (MTP IV) 2023-2027, namely:

Creating on average 1.2 million new jobs annually.

Eradicating hunger (zero hunger).

Achieving inclusive growth (leaving no one behind). In doing so, the project focuses on two BETA pillars of Agriculture and Micro-Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Economy.

Additionally, the project also contributes directly towards the realization of some of the sustainability policy priorities of the Kenya government on climate change, biodiversity and pollution and waste management.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|----------------|--|
| ABDK | Advancing Bioeconomy Development in Kenya |
| B2B | Business-to-Business |
| BETA | Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda |
| CBD | Convention on Biological Diversity |
| COP | Conference of the Parties |
| EAC | East African Community |
| GBS | Global Bioeconomy Summit |
| GHG | Greenhouse Gas |
| KEPSA | Kenya Private Sector Alliance |
| KENIA | Kenya National Innovation Agency |
| KNCCI | Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry |
| MSEA | Micro and Small Enterprises Authority |
| MITI | Ministry of Investments, Trade and Industry |
| MSMEs | Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises |
| MTP IV | Fourth Medium Term Plan (2023–2027) |
| NACOSTI | National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation |
| RIT | Research, Innovation and Technology |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SEI | Stockholm Environment Institute |
| Sida | Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency |
| STI | Science, Technology and Innovation |
| SWEACC | Swedish–East Africa Chamber of Commerce |
| UK | United Kingdom |



The overall purpose of ABDK was to **promote partnerships between Kenyan and Swedish private sector actors** while strengthening the enabling environment for bioeconomy development in Kenya.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Advancing Bioeconomy Development in Kenya (ABDK) project was implemented by the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), in partnership with Business Sweden and the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) and a range of national and international stakeholders, with financial support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). The project was implemented during 2024–2025 as a catalytic initiative to strengthen Kenya’s emerging bioeconomy and position it as a driver of inclusive economic growth, food security, youth employment, and environmental sustainability.

The overall purpose of ABDK was to promote partnerships between Kenyan and Swedish private sector actors while strengthening the enabling environment for bioeconomy development in Kenya. Specifically, the project focused on three mutually reinforcing intervention areas: (i) supporting the development of bioeconomy pathways through collaboration between Kenyan and Swedish bioeconomy actors; (ii) generating credible evidence on business opportunities in bio-based sectors, with a particular focus on Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs); and (iii) promoting

national and international policy engagement to support the integration of bioeconomy approaches into Kenya’s development and policy frameworks. The project aligns directly with Kenya Vision 2030, the Fourth Medium Term Plan (MTP IV), and the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), particularly the Agriculture and MSME pillars.

Key achievements and highlights: ABDK delivered a coherent set of outputs that aimed at strengthening Kenya’s bioeconomy ecosystem across enterprise, evidence, policy, and international engagement dimensions. A flagship achievement was the comprehensive mapping and profiling of bioeconomy enterprises in Kenya, resulting in a verified database of MSMEs operating across strategic clusters such as agri-processing and circular food systems, bio-based agricultural inputs, sustainable bioenergy, biodegradable packaging, and biobased industrial development. This mapping was complemented by the identification of relevant Swedish bioeconomy enterprises, creating the foundation for structured bilateral collaboration.

Building on this work, ABDK developed a roadmap for Kenyan Swedish bioeconomy collaboration and B2B matchmaking, which guided targeted engagement between enterprises and informed the design of subsequent convening platforms. The project culminated in the successful organization of the Kenya–Sweden Bioeconomy Business and Innovation Conference and B2B Trade Fair, held at the Sarit Expo Centre in Nairobi. The event engaged 75 bioeconomy enterprises (60 Kenyan, 7 Swedish, and 8 from the UK and other countries) and attracted a total of 226 registered participants, in addition to walk-in attendees, providing a practical platform for showcasing innovation, facilitating business engagement, and strengthening policy dialogue.

ABDK also made a significant contribution to evidence generation and knowledge leadership. The project led the development of the Status of Bioeconomy in Kenya report and contributed to the East African Community Bioeconomy Status Report 2024, strengthening the analytical foundation for policy dialogue, investment decisions, and regional learning. These reports addressed critical data gaps and positioned Kenya as an active contributor to regional and global bioeconomy discourse.

At the policy level, ABDK supported bioeconomy policy analysis and the development of a roadmap toward a Kenyan bioeconomy strategy, working closely with relevant government institutions. The project also supported Kenya's participation in international platforms, including the Global Bioeconomy Summit (GBS) 2024 held in Nairobi and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) COP16 held in Cali Colombia, enhancing Kenya's visibility and reinforcing linkages between bioeconomy, biodiversity conservation, and climate action.

Outcomes and impact: While bioeconomy transformation is inherently a medium- to long-term process, ABDK has generated important early outcomes and laid strong foundations for future impact. The project significantly improved the visibility, organization, and readiness of Kenya's bioeconomy MSMEs, enabling them to engage more effectively with policymakers, investors, and international partners. Through structured

mapping and engagement, MSMEs were repositioned as central economic actors and innovation partners within Kenya's development agenda. ABDK strengthened Kenya–Sweden private sector engagement by moving from ad hoc networking to strategic, demand-driven collaboration pathways. This approach enhanced the quality of enterprise interactions and increased the potential for technology transfer, joint ventures, and investment partnerships. At the ecosystem level, the project strengthened institutional linkages among government agencies, private sector associations, research institutions, and development partners. The project also contributed to advancing policy coherence and strategic thinking around bioeconomy in Kenya. ABDK elevated bioeconomy as a recognized development pathway within national policy discourse in Kenya and at the regional level by initiating dialogue, generating evidence, and developing bioeconomy strategy roadmaps. International engagement further reinforced domestic momentum by exposing Kenyan stakeholders to global best practices and positioning Kenya as an emerging bioeconomy leader in Africa.

Way forward and recommendations: Building on the foundations laid by ABDK, several forward-looking priorities emerge. First, there is a clear opportunity to advance toward the formal development and adoption of a national bioeconomy strategy, building on the roadmap and policy analysis developed under the project. Second, future programming should focus on scaling enterprise and investment impact, including targeted MSME acceleration, access to finance, and support for technology upgrading and certification. Third, sustained Kenya–Sweden and broader international collaboration will be critical for unlocking technology transfer, market access, and green investment in bio-based sectors. Finally, future bioeconomy initiatives should deepen their focus on gender, youth, and inclusion, ensuring that women- and youth-led enterprises are not only visible but actively supported to participate in and benefit from bioeconomy growth. With continued strategic investment, institutional coordination, and international partnership, Kenya's bioeconomy has the potential to become a cornerstone of inclusive, resilient, and sustainable development.



In Kenya,
Nature-derived
products collectively
underpin livelihoods for
70%+
of the population and
contribute an estimated
30-40%
of national GDP.



In Sweden,
the bioeconomy
accounts for
8%+
of total value added,
12%+
national turnover
20%+
export value



1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background information

Kenya stands at a critical juncture in its development trajectory, where the need to accelerate inclusive economic growth, address persistent food insecurity, create employment for a rapidly growing youth population, and respond to climate change and environmental degradation has become increasingly urgent. At the centre of these intersecting challenges and opportunities lies the country's bioeconomy. Kenya's economy is fundamentally bio-based: agriculture, livestock, fisheries, forestry, waste-based value chains, and nature-derived products collectively underpin livelihoods for more than 70 percent of the population and contribute an estimated 30–40 percent of national GDP. Yet despite this centrality, the economic potential of Kenya's biological resources remains significantly under-realised.

Historically, Kenya's bio-based sectors have been characterised by low levels of processing, limited value addition, and fragmented integration into domestic, regional, and global markets. Most biological resources are exported or consumed in raw or minimally processed form, while large volumes of agricultural residues, organic waste, and by-products remain underutilised or pose environmental challenges. This structural pattern constrains productivity, limits enterprise growth, and reduces the capacity of the bioeconomy to act as a driver of industrialisation, job creation, and climate-resilient development. At the same time, it exposes the economy to commodity price volatility and climate shocks, undermining long-term economic resilience.

In parallel, Kenya has witnessed the emergence of a vibrant ecosystem of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), startups, cooperatives, and community-based enterprises operating across bio-based value chains. These actors are innovating in areas such as circular food systems, bio-based agricultural inputs, sustainable bioenergy, biodegradable materials,

and waste-to-value solutions. Many of these enterprises demonstrate strong alignment with circular economy principles, climate resilience, and inclusive development outcomes. However, they continue to face systemic barriers, including weak policy coherence, limited access to finance, inadequate bioprocessing infrastructure, fragmented regulatory pathways, and limited exposure to international markets and technology partnerships.

Globally, bioeconomy development has emerged as a cornerstone of sustainable growth strategies. Countries such as Sweden have demonstrated how coordinated bioeconomy frameworks can drive industrial competitiveness, export growth, innovation, and employment while reducing environmental footprints. In Sweden, the bioeconomy accounts for more than eight percent of total value added, approximately 12 percent of national turnover, and over 20 percent of export value, underpinned by strong policy alignment, innovation systems, and public-private collaboration. This international experience highlights the transformative potential of bioeconomy-led development when supported by coherent strategies, strong institutions, and active private-sector engagement.

Against this backdrop, the Advancing Bioeconomy Development in Kenya (ABDK) project was conceived to respond to a clear and pressing need: to move Kenya's bioeconomy from a collection of fragmented initiatives toward a more coordinated, innovation-driven, and investment-ready ecosystem. The project recognised that unlocking this transition requires not only technical innovation, but also strengthened partnerships, evidence-based planning, and deliberate alignment between enterprise development, policy frameworks, and international collaboration. ABDK therefore positioned itself at the intersection of enterprise support, policy engagement, and bilateral cooperation, with a particular focus on strengthening linkages between Kenyan and Swedish bioeconomy actors.

1.2 Alignment with Kenya Vision 2030, MTP IV, BETA Pillars, and Policy Priorities

The ABDK project is firmly anchored within Kenya's national development architecture. Kenya Vision 2030 articulates the country's long-term aspiration to become "a newly industrializing, middle-income country providing a high quality of life to all its citizens in a clean and secure environment." The Fourth Medium-Term Plan (MTP IV, 2023–2027), implemented through the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), translates this vision into actionable priorities centred on inclusive growth, job creation, food security, and environmental sustainability.

ABDK directly contributes to three core objectives of MTP IV: eradicating hunger, creating an average of 1.2 million jobs annually, and achieving inclusive growth that leaves no one behind. In doing so, the project aligns most strongly with two BETA pillars, Agriculture and the MSME Economy, recognising that value addition, enterprise development, and innovation within bio-based sectors are essential levers for achieving these goals. By focusing on bio-based MSMEs, ABDK supports the shift from subsistence and informal activity toward more productive, market-oriented, and resilient enterprises capable of generating employment and income at scale.

Beyond economic transformation, ABDK aligns with Kenya's broader sustainability and environmental policy priorities. The project reinforces the objectives of the Green Economy Strategy and Implementation Plan (2016–2030), the National Climate Change Action Plan (2023–2027), the National Sustainable Waste Management Policy, and the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2019–2030). Across these frameworks, there is a consistent emphasis on low-carbon development, circular resource use, biodiversity conservation, and climate-resilient livelihoods. ABDK operationalises these ambitions by promoting bio-based solutions that reduce waste, substitute fossil-based inputs, enhance ecosystem services, and strengthen climate adaptation across food, energy, and industrial systems.

At the regional and international level, the project also aligns with the East African Community (EAC) Regional Bioeconomy Strategy, the African Union Agenda 2063, and global commitments under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through its engagement in regional bioeconomy status reporting, global bioeconomy summits, and international policy processes such as CBD COP16, ABDK has positioned Kenya as an active contributor to shaping the bioeconomy agenda beyond its borders. This alignment ensures that national bioeconomy development is not pursued in isolation, but as part of a wider regional and global transition toward sustainable, bio-based economies.



ABDK directly contributes to three core objectives of MTP IV: eradicating hunger, creating an average of

1.2 million jobs

annually, and achieving inclusive growth that leaves no one behind.

1.3 Objectives the ABDK Project

The primary objective of the Advancing Bioeconomy Development in Kenya (ABDK) project was to **strengthen Kenya's bioeconomy as a driver of inclusive economic growth, food security, and youth employment**, facilitated through knowledge exchange, technology transfer, and collaboration between Kenyan and Swedish bioeconomy actors.

To achieve this, the project was structured around three interlinked intervention areas.

First, ABDK sought to support the development of bioeconomy pathways across strategic bio-based sectors. This involved identifying priority clusters, mapping actors along value chains, and facilitating dialogue between enterprises, researchers, policymakers, and investors. The aim was to move beyond isolated projects toward clearer pathways for scaling innovation, improving market access, and strengthening industrial competitiveness.

Second, the project focused on generating robust evidence on business opportunities within Kenya's bioeconomy, particularly targeting micro, small, and medium enterprises. Through enterprise mapping, sector analysis, and status reporting, ABDK produced data-driven insights into the structure, performance, and constraints of bio-based enterprises. This evidence base has been critical for informing policy discussions, guiding investment priorities, and supporting business-to-business (B2B) engagement.

Third, ABDK promoted national and international policy engagement on bioeconomy development. This included supporting Kenyan participation in global platforms such as the Global Bioeconomy Summit 2024 and CBD COP16, contributing to regional bioeconomy status reports, and initiating dialogue toward the development of a national bioeconomy strategy for Kenya. Through these efforts, the project helped elevate bioeconomy from a technical concept to a strategic policy and development priority.

Collectively, these interventions were expected to deliver outcomes at multiple levels. At the enterprise level, ABDK aimed to strengthen MSME visibility, innovation capacity, and readiness for collaboration and investment. At the ecosystem level, the project sought to improve coordination among actors, identify bottlenecks in value chains, and catalyse partnerships across sectors and borders. At the policy level, ABDK aimed to lay the groundwork for more coherent bioeconomy governance, contributing to the development of strategic frameworks that can guide long-term investment and implementation.

1.4 Project structure and implementing partners

The ABDK project was implemented by the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), with financial support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). SEI brings a unique combination of research excellence, policy engagement, and convening power, enabling the project to bridge evidence generation with practical implementation and stakeholder dialogue. Through its Africa Centre in Nairobi, SEI has worked closely with national and regional partners to ensure that ABDK activities are grounded in Kenya's development context while drawing on international experience.

A central implementation partner for ABDK was the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), which represents a broad spectrum of Kenyan businesses and provides a critical link to the private sector. KEPSA's involvement ensured that the project remained responsive to enterprise realities, investment considerations, and market dynamics. Through KEPSA, ABDK has engaged MSMEs, industry associations, and entrepreneurs across diverse bio-based sectors.

Business Sweden played a key role in facilitating engagement with Swedish bioeconomy actors, supporting enterprise mapping, matchmaking, and technology exchange. This partnership was instrumental in operationalising the project's bilateral dimension, translating policy dialogue into concrete B2B opportunities and collaborative pathways. Additional partners, included National Commission For Science, Technology (NACOSTI), Kenya National Innovation Agency (KeNIA), sector ministries led by Ministry of Investments, Trade and Industry (MITI), research institutions, development partners, and regional bodies such as East Africa Science and Technology Commission (EASTECO), who contributed to specific activities ranging from status reporting and policy analysis to international engagement. Together, this partnership structure enabled ABDK to operate across scales from enterprise-level innovation to national policy dialogue and international cooperation. The project's design reflects an understanding that advancing the bioeconomy is not a linear process, but a systemic transformation that requires aligned action across institutions, markets, and knowledge systems.

2.

Project Approach and Implementation



2.1 Overall approach and Theory of Change

The Advancing Bioeconomy Development in Kenya (ABDK) project adopted a systems-based and partnership-driven approach to bioeconomy development. Rather than focusing on isolated enterprise support or single-sector interventions, the project was designed to strengthen the bioeconomy ecosystem, linking enterprises, innovation systems, markets, and policy processes. This approach reflects the understanding that bioeconomy development is inherently cross-sectoral, requiring coordination across agriculture, industry, energy, environment, and trade.

At the core of ABDK's theory of change was the premise that Kenya's bioeconomy potential can only be unlocked when three conditions are addressed simultaneously:

1. Bioeconomy enterprises, especially MSMEs, are visible, connected, and supported to grow and innovate.
2. There is credible evidence on bio-based value chains, business opportunities, and investment potential to inform decision-making; and
3. Bioeconomy is integrated into national and sub-national policy frameworks in a coherent and strategic manner.

ABDK therefore combined enterprise mapping and engagement, evidence generation, and policy dialogue and international positioning into a mutually reinforcing set of interventions. This ensured that enterprise-level insights informed policy discussions, while policy engagement created an enabling environment for private sector investment and innovation.

PROJECT THEORY OF CHANGE

Activities

Support the development of Bioeconomy pathways for different biobased sectors through collaboration between Kenyan and Swedish Bioeconomy actors

- Map bioeconomy private sector actors and agripreneurs in Kenya
- Promote collaboration and technology exchange between Sweden and Kenya bioeconomy practitioners within the context of East African Bioeconomy Strategy

Generate evidence of business opportunities in Biobased sectors targeting Small, Micro and Medium Enterprises (SMMEs)

- Lead the preparation and publication of the Second edition of the state of Bioeconomy in East Africa Report in 2024 presenting evidence on Biobased business opportunities in Kenya
- Apply the Swedish model (methodology by Fossilfritt Sverige) for actor driven Bioeconomy pathway development

Promote national and international policy engagement on Bioeconomy

- Promote the integration of bioeconomy approaches in relevant national and sub-national policy actions
- Support Kenyan actors (government entrepreneurs) engagement in the Global Bioeconomy Summit (GBS) 2024 and the CBD COP 16

Expected Outputs

1. Database of bioeconomy private sector actors and agripreneurs in Kenya
2. Report on collaboration and technology exchange between Sweden and Kenya bioeconomy practitioners

1. Publication of the 2nd Edition of the State of Bioeconomy in East Africa Report
2. Bioeconomy pathways for different biobased sectors

1. Report of activities to support the integration of bioeconomy approaches in relevant national and sub-national policy actions
2. Report on activities and outcomes from the Global Bioeconomy Summit (GBS) 2024 and the CBD COP 16

Expected Outcomes

Strengthened Bioeconomy in Kenya achieved through increased investment in Kenya biobased sector supporting food security and youth employment in small medium and micro-enterprises (SMMEs) facilitated by knowledge and technology exchange between Kenyan and Swedish bioeconomy actors cooperation at local, national and global levels.

Medium Term Impact

By 2025, Governments, (National and Counties), investors, and value chain actors in the bioeconomy, including SMMEs, entrepreneurs, investors, standard agency, smallholders, women, and youth have identified investment and business opportunities in selected biobased sectors and developed pathways and roadmaps for scale up while ensuring positive impacts on nutrition and food security, environment and climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Long Term Impact

Inclusive economic growth achieved through Bioeconomy investments to reduce hunger and increase youth employment (contributing to the objectives of the Kenya Vision fourth 2030 Medium Term Plan (MTP IV))

Private sector actors in Kenya and Sweden are supportive to enable project to be effectively implemented by all the partners so that all the proposed activities are realised

Data is available, research, training and knowledge/technology exchange activities are successfully facilitated by government authorities (regulators) and co operation with private sector is achieved

Decision makers have understood the contribution of bioeconomy to national development objectives, including nutrition and food security , and employment, and also towards biodiversity management and supported investments and business decisions

Supporting policy policies and legal frameworks exists at the national and international level to facilitate effective bioeconomy implementation in both private and public sectors

Sphere of control of project

Sphere of influence

Sphere of concern

Increase influence of context

2.2

INTERVENTION AREA 1:

Supporting the development of bioeconomy pathways through collaboration



The first intervention area focused on supporting the development of bioeconomy pathways across strategic bio-based sectors by fostering collaboration between Kenyan and Swedish bioeconomy actors. Rather than promoting generic enterprise support, ABDK prioritised pathway development, defined as identifying how bio-based sectors can move from fragmented, small-scale activity toward structured value chains capable of scaling, attracting investment, and delivering development impact.

This work began with a systematic mapping of bioeconomy enterprises and actors in Kenya, covering MSMEs, startups, cooperatives, and private sector firms operating across priority clusters such as agri-processing, circular food systems, bio-based agricultural inputs, sustainable bioenergy, biodegradable materials, and biobased industrial products. The mapping went beyond desk-based listings to include ground-truthing, ensuring that enterprises were active, operational, and accurately profiled in terms of location, scale, and value chain role.

In parallel, ABDK worked with Business Sweden and Swedish partners to identify and profile Swedish bioeconomy enterprises with relevant technologies, business models, and investment interests. This dual mapping approach enabled ABDK to move from broad landscape analysis toward targeted matchmaking, based on sectoral fit, technological complementarity, and enterprise readiness.

Building on the mapping, the project developed a roadmap for Kenyan Swedish B2B collaboration, outlining priority sectors, criteria for enterprise engagement, and mechanisms for technology exchange and partnership development. This roadmap guided subsequent engagement activities, including bilateral meetings, technical discussions, and participation in the Kenya-Sweden Bioeconomy Business and Innovation Trade Fair. By sequencing mapping, analysis, and engagement, ABDK ensured that collaboration efforts were strategic rather than opportunistic.

2.3

INTERVENTION AREA 2:

Generating Evidence on Bioeconomy Business Opportunities



The second intervention area focused on strengthening the evidence base for bioeconomy development in Kenya and the wider East African region. A key constraint identified at the outset of the project was the lack of consolidated, credible data on the size, structure, and performance of bio-based sectors, particularly those dominated by MSMEs. This data gap limited the ability of policymakers, investors, and development partners to design targeted interventions or mobilise finance.

To address this, ABDK led the preparation of bioeconomy status reports, including the Status of Bioeconomy in Kenya and contributions to the East African Community (EAC) Bioeconomy Status Report 2024. These reports brought together enterprise-level data, sector analysis, and policy insights to provide a comprehensive picture of bioeconomy development, opportunities, and constraints. The reports were developed collaboratively with institutions such as NACOSTI, KENIA, KEPISA, and regional partners, ensuring national ownership and policy relevance.

In addition to formal reporting, ABDK generated evidence through:

- Enterprise surveys and profiling exercises.
- Value chain analysis within strategic bioeconomy clusters.
- Documentation of innovation trends, business models, and scalability constraints.
- Identification of high-potential MSMEs for investment and collaboration.

This evidence was used not only for reporting purposes, but also to inform B2B engagement, policy dialogue, and strategic planning. By grounding discussions in concrete data and enterprise realities, ABDK helped shift bioeconomy conversations from abstract concepts toward actionable development pathways.

2.4

INTERVENTION AREA 3:

Promoting policy engagement and strategic integration

The third intervention area focused on mainstreaming bioeconomy approaches into national and sub-national policy processes. Recognising that Kenya did not yet have a dedicated national bioeconomy strategy, ABDK positioned itself as a catalyst for initiating dialogue, building consensus, and identifying entry points for policy integration.

Working closely with the **Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment (MITI)** as well as the State Department responsible for Research, Innovation and Technology (RIT) and other relevant departments and agencies, the project supported the development of a framework and roadmap for a Kenyan bioeconomy strategy. This process was informed by a comprehensive bioeconomy policy analysis, which reviewed existing sectoral policies, including agriculture, climate change, waste management, industry, and innovation, to assess coherence, overlaps, and gaps. Policy engagement under ABDK was deliberately multi-level and inclusive. It involved national government actors, county representatives, private sector associations, research institutions, and development partners. Stakeholder workshops, consultation meetings, and validation forums were used to gather input, test ideas, and build shared understanding of what a Kenyan bioeconomy strategy should prioritise.

At the international level, ABDK supported Kenya's engagement in key global platforms, notably the **Global Bioeconomy Summit (GBS) 2024** and **CBD COP16**. Through these platforms, Kenyan policymakers and entrepreneurs were able to share experiences, learn from other countries, and position Kenya as an emerging leader in bioeconomy development in Africa. This international engagement reinforced domestic policy processes by exposing decision-makers to global best practices and strengthening political commitment to bioeconomy integration.



2.5 Stakeholder engagement and implementation

ABDK was implemented through a highly collaborative and adaptive modality, recognising the dynamic nature of bioeconomy development. SEI played a convening and coordinating role, leveraging its technical expertise, research capacity, and policy networks, while KEPSA ensured strong private sector engagement and relevance. Business Sweden and other Swedish partners facilitated bilateral collaboration, while government institutions anchored the work within national development priorities. Stakeholder engagement was continuous rather than episodic, with feedback loops between mapping, analysis, dialogue, and implementation. This adaptive approach allowed the project to respond to emerging opportunities, refine priorities, and deepen impact over time. Importantly, it ensured that ABDK outputs, such as reports, roadmaps, and events, were not standalone products, but part of an evolving process aimed at long-term bioeconomy transformation.

This integrated approach laid the foundation for tangible outputs and early impacts across Kenya's bioeconomy ecosystem. The following section presents the key deliverables and achievements of the ABDK project, organised by intervention area, and highlights how these outputs contributed to strengthening bioeconomy pathways, enterprise readiness, and policy integration.





3.

Key Deliverables and Achievements

This section presents the key deliverables and achievements of the Advancing Bioeconomy Development in Kenya (ABDK) project, organized according to the project's three core intervention areas. Collectively, these deliverables strengthened the evidence base for bioeconomy development, enhanced private sector engagement and international collaboration, and laid the foundation for integrating bioeconomy approaches into Kenya's policy and development frameworks.



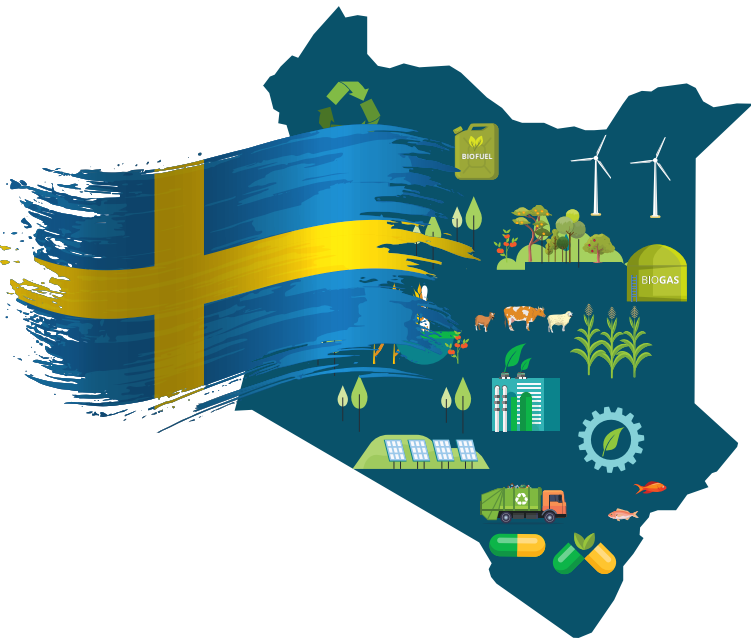
3.1 Mapping and strengthening bioeconomy private sector actors

One of the flagship deliverables of the ABDK project was the comprehensive mapping of bioeconomy private sector actors and agripreneurs in Kenya, with a parallel mapping of relevant Swedish bioeconomy enterprises. This exercise resulted in a verified and structured database of 60 Kenyan bioeconomy enterprises operating across strategic clusters, including agri-processing and circular food systems, bio-based agricultural inputs, sustainable bioenergy, biodegradable packaging, and biobased industrial products.

Unlike conventional enterprise listings, the ABDK mapping went beyond desk-based identification. Enterprises were ground-truthed to confirm their operational status, geographic location, value chain role, and level of activity. Each enterprise profile captured information on business models, degree of value addition, innovation intensity, market orientation, and readiness for collaboration or investment. This approach ensured that the resulting database reflected the realities of Kenya's bioeconomy landscape rather than aspirational or inactive entities.

In parallel, ABDK worked with Business Sweden to identify and profile seven Swedish bioeconomy enterprises with potential relevance to Kenyan MSMEs. This dual-country mapping created the foundation for structured Kenyan Swedish engagement by enabling targeted matchmaking based on sectoral alignment, technological complementarity, and business readiness. The resulting database now serves as a practical tool for B2B engagement, policy planning, and future investment facilitation.



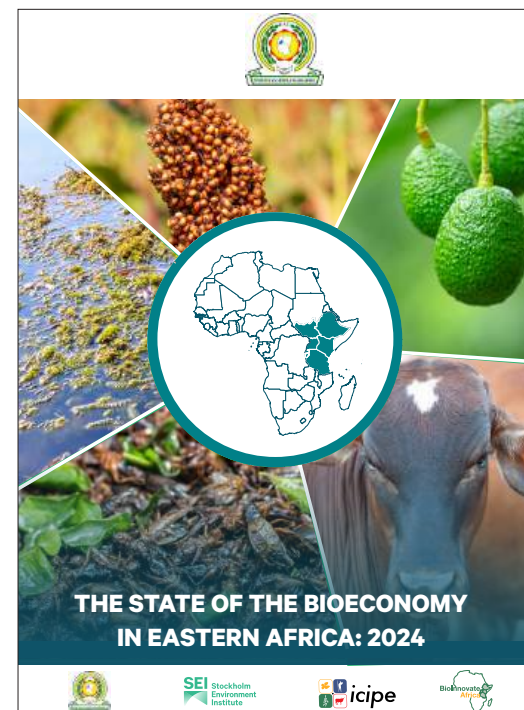
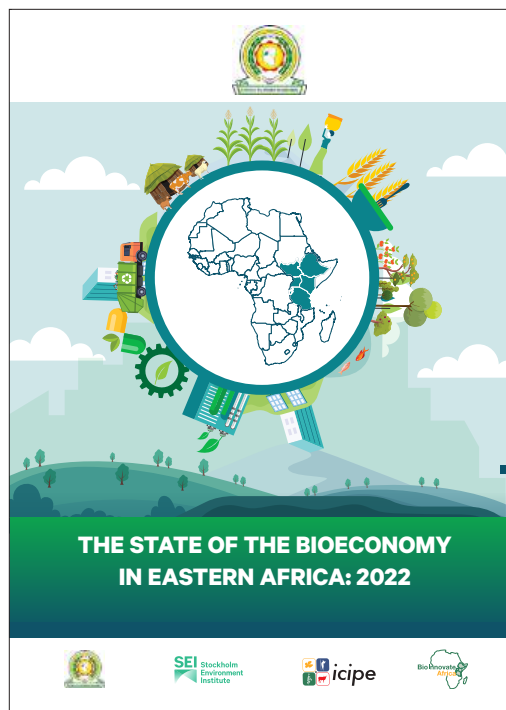
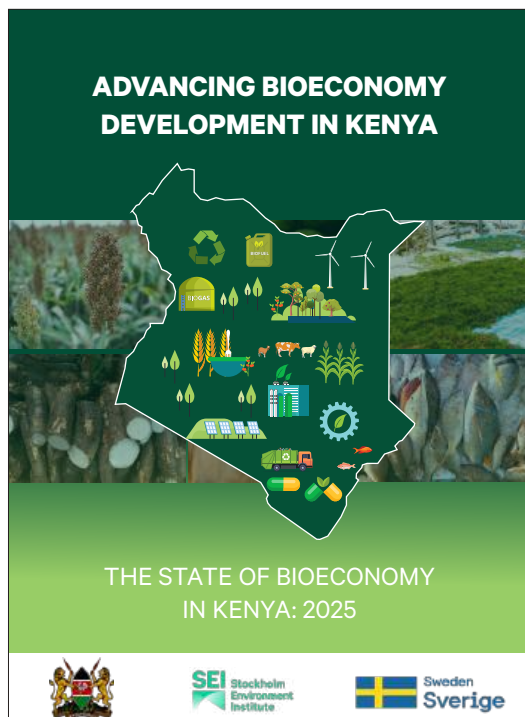


3.2 Roadmap for Kenyan Swedish bioeconomy collaboration and matchmaking

Building on the enterprise mapping, ABDK delivered a roadmap for Kenyan Swedish bioeconomy collaboration, designed to guide business-to-business engagement and technology exchange. The roadmap identified priority bioeconomy clusters for collaboration, outlined criteria for selecting enterprises for matchmaking, and proposed engagement modalities ranging from technology demonstrations to joint ventures and supply-chain partnerships.

This roadmap represented a shift from ad hoc networking toward strategic, demand-driven matchmaking, ensuring that collaboration efforts were aligned with Kenya's development priorities and Swedish private sector strengths. It provided clarity on where collaboration could generate the greatest value, particularly in areas such as forest-based biorefineries, food and feed processing technologies, circular bio-based solutions, and green industrial inputs.

The roadmap directly informed the design and implementation of ABDK's flagship convening events, including the Kenya-Sweden Bioeconomy Business and Innovation Conference and B2B Trade Fair, and will continue to guide future engagement under subsequent phases of bioeconomy programming.



3.3 Bioeconomy status reports and evidence generation

A central achievement of ABDK was the preparation and publication of bioeconomy status reports, which significantly strengthened the evidence base for bioeconomy development in Kenya and Eastern Africa. At the national level, ABDK led the development of the Status of Bioeconomy in Kenya 2025 report in collaboration with NACOSTI, KEPSA, and the state department of Industry and other national stakeholders. The report provides a comprehensive overview of Kenya’s bioeconomy sectors, enterprise landscape, policy environment, and growth opportunities.

At the regional level, ABDK contributed to the East African Community Bioeconomy Status Report 2024, which documented bioeconomy development across EAC partner states and highlighted regional

opportunities for value chain integration, trade, and innovation. The successful completion of the 2024 report has laid the groundwork for the forthcoming 2026 edition, ensuring continuity in regional bioeconomy tracking and learning.

These reports serve multiple purposes: they inform national and regional policy dialogue, support investment decision-making, provide reference material for development partners, and position Kenya as a knowledge leader in Africa’s emerging bioeconomy discourse. Importantly, they also create a baseline against which future bioeconomy progress can be measured.



3.4 International engagement and global positioning

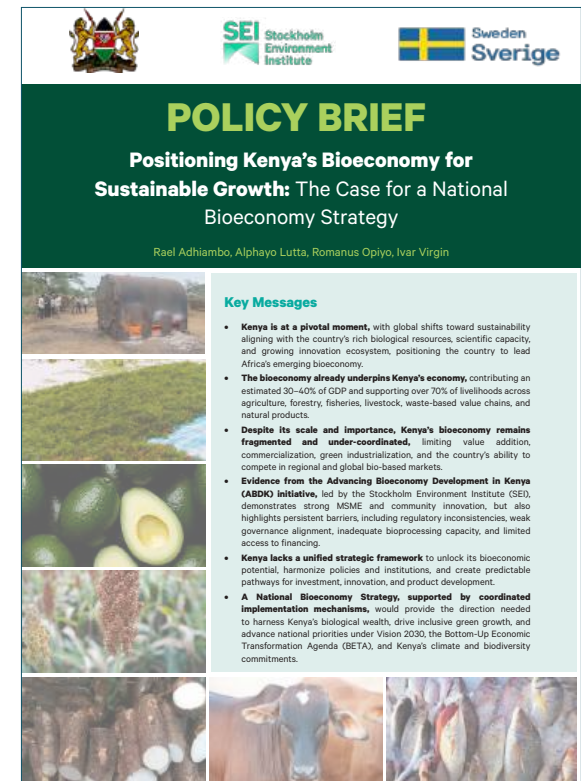
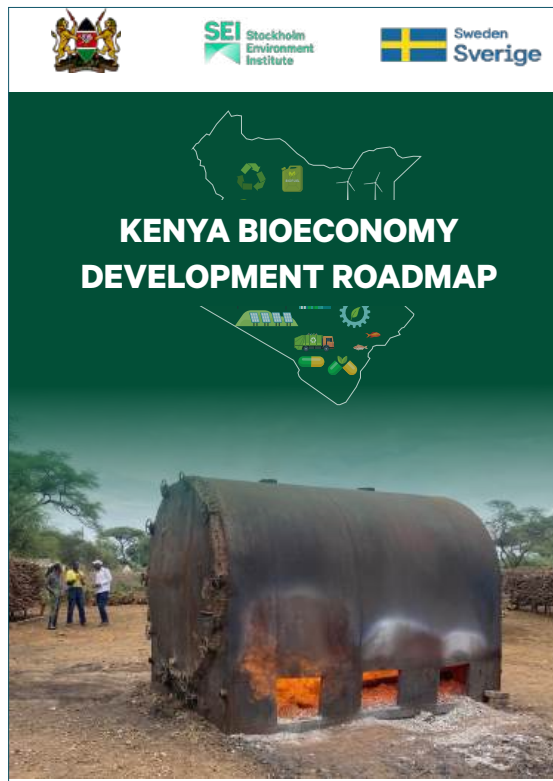
ABDK made significant contributions to **positioning Kenya within global bioeconomy and sustainability platforms**. The project supported Kenyan government actors, private sector representatives, and entrepreneurs to actively participate in the **Global Bioeconomy Summit (GBS) 2024**, where Kenya's bioeconomy experiences and priorities were showcased. This engagement culminated in the successful publication of a report by the Global Bioeconomy Secretariat, highlighting Kenya's role in global bioeconomy discussions.

In addition, ABDK provided technical and coordination support to the Government of Kenya during the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) COP16**. Through this engagement, the project helped ensure that bioeconomy considerations were integrated into biodiversity and sustainability discussions, reinforcing the link between biodiversity conservation, sustainable resource use, and economic development.

These international engagements enhanced Kenya's visibility, strengthened diplomatic and technical networks, and reinforced domestic policy processes by exposing Kenyan stakeholders to global best practices and emerging trends in bioeconomy governance.



3.5 Policy analysis and bioeconomy strategy roadmap for Kenya



A major policy-oriented deliverable of ABDK was the bioeconomy policy analysis and development of a roadmap toward a Kenyan bioeconomy strategy. Working closely with the State Department responsible for Research, Innovation and Technology (RIT), the project reviewed existing sectoral policies, including agriculture, climate change, waste management, industry, and innovation, to assess coherence, gaps, and opportunities for mainstreaming bioeconomy approaches.

The resulting roadmap provides a structured framework for integrating

bioeconomy into national and sub-national policy processes. It outlines strategic objectives, priority sectors, institutional roles, and implementation pathways, while highlighting the need for cross-sectoral coordination and private sector engagement. Although not a full national strategy, the roadmap represents a critical first step toward a coherent Kenyan bioeconomy strategy and has initiated sustained dialogue among policymakers, researchers, and industry actors.



3.6 Kenya–Sweden Bioeconomy Business and Innovation Conference and B2B Trade Fair

The Advancing Bioeconomy Development in Kenya (ABDK) project culminated in the successful organization of the Kenya–Sweden Bioeconomy Business and Innovation Conference and B2B Trade Fair, held at the Sarit Expo Centre in Nairobi. The event served as a flagship platform for translating the project’s analytical, mapping, and matchmaking work into tangible engagement between enterprises, policymakers, investors, and development partners.

The trade fair attracted a total of 75 bioeconomy enterprises, representing a diverse mix of Kenyan, Swedish, and international actors. Of these, 60 were Kenyan bioeconomy enterprises, reflecting the project’s strong focus on strengthening domestic MSMEs and showcasing locally driven innovation. Seven Swedish bioeconomy companies participated, bringing expertise in areas such as bio-based processing technologies, circular solutions, and green industrial applications. An additional eight enterprises from the United Kingdom and other countries participated, underscoring the growing international interest in Kenya’s emerging bioeconomy ecosystem.

In total, the event registered 226 participants, including enterprise representatives, policymakers, researchers, development partners, and financial institutions. In addition to registered attendees, the trade fair also attracted a significant number of walk-in participants, facilitated by its strategic location at the Sarit Expo Centre and the open exhibition format. This broadened the event’s reach beyond the core ABDK network and enhanced visibility of bioeconomy innovations among the wider business and policy community.



The trade fair showcased bio-based solutions across multiple strategic clusters, including agri-processing and circular food systems, bio-based agricultural inputs, sustainable bioenergy, biodegradable packaging, and biobased industrial products. Exhibiting enterprises demonstrated a range of innovations, from value-added food products and biofertilizers to clean cooking technologies and bio-based materials, highlighting the breadth and maturity of Kenya's bioeconomy MSME landscape.

Beyond exhibition, the event facilitated structured B2B interactions, informal networking, and policy dialogue, enabling enterprises to explore collaboration opportunities, technology transfer, and potential investment partnerships. The presence of Swedish companies, supported through collaboration with Business Sweden, allowed for targeted engagement aligned with the Kenyan Swedish bioeconomy matchmaking roadmap developed under the project.

Overall, the Kenya-Sweden Bioeconomy Business and Innovation Conference and Trade Fair represented a concrete outcome of ABDK's integrated approach. It demonstrated how enterprise mapping, evidence generation, and policy engagement can converge into a practical platform that strengthens visibility, builds partnerships, and accelerates momentum toward a more inclusive and investment-ready bioeconomy in Kenya.

Together, these deliverables represent a coherent set of outputs that have strengthened Kenya's bioeconomy ecosystem across enterprise, policy, and international engagement dimensions. The following section examines the outcomes and emerging impacts of these achievements, highlighting how ABDK has contributed to systemic change, enterprise readiness, and the foundations for inclusive and sustainable bioeconomy growth in Kenya.

The trade fair attracted **a total of 75 bioeconomy enterprises**, representing a diverse mix of Kenyan, Swedish, and international actors. Of these, **60 were Kenyan bioeconomy enterprises**



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4.

Outcomes and Impact

The Advancing Bioeconomy Development in Kenya (ABDK) project was designed as a catalytic initiative, one that would not only deliver tangible outputs but also generate systemic outcomes and lay the foundations for longer-term impact. While bioeconomy transformation is inherently a medium- to long-term process, ABDK has already contributed to measurable and emerging changes across enterprise ecosystems, policy dialogue, international positioning, and institutional coordination.

4.1 Strengthened visibility, organization, and readiness of bioeconomy MSMEs



One of the most immediate outcomes of ABDK has been the increased visibility and organization of Kenya's bioeconomy MSME landscape. Prior to the project, bioeconomy enterprises were largely fragmented, operating in isolation across sectors and geographies, with limited recognition in policy or investment discussions. Through systematic mapping, profiling, and validation, ABDK brought these actors into a single, structured landscape.

The resulting enterprise database and cluster analysis improved understanding of:

- Who is operating in Kenya's bioeconomy,
- Where enterprises are located,
- What value chain roles they play, and
- Their level of innovation, scalability, and collaboration readiness.

This enhanced visibility has already translated into improved enterprise readiness. MSMEs that participated in mapping, B2B engagement, and the trade fair reported clearer articulation of their value propositions, stronger exposure to potential partners, and greater awareness of regulatory, certification, and market requirements. Importantly, the project helped reposition MSMEs not merely as beneficiaries of development support, but as economic actors and innovation partners central to Kenya's industrial and sustainability agenda.

4.2 Enhanced Kenya-Sweden private sector engagement and technology exchange



ABDK delivered a significant outcome in the form of structured and demand-driven engagement between Kenyan and Swedish bioeconomy actors. Unlike previous engagement models that relied on generic networking, ABDK's approach was grounded in detailed enterprise mapping and a matchmaking roadmap that aligned Kenyan MSME needs with Swedish technological strengths.

The Kenya-Sweden Bioeconomy Business and Innovation Conference and B2B Trade Fair served as a tangible manifestation of this outcome. With 75 exhibiting enterprises and over 226 registered participants, the event demonstrated both the scale of interest and the feasibility of bilateral bioeconomy collaboration. The presence of Swedish enterprises alongside Kenyan MSMEs enabled direct discussions around technology transfer, joint ventures, supply chain integration, and market access.

Beyond individual interactions, ABDK strengthened institutional linkages between Kenyan private sector organizations, Swedish trade and innovation institutions, and development partners. These linkages are expected to endure beyond the life of the project, providing a platform for continued engagement, investment facilitation, and collaboration under future bioeconomy initiatives.

4.3 Strengthened evidence base for bioeconomy policy and investment decisions



Another major outcome of ABDK is the strengthening of the evidence base for bioeconomy development at both national and regional levels. Through the Status of Bioeconomy in Kenya report and contributions to the EAC Bioeconomy Status Report 2024, the project addressed a critical gap in data and analysis that had previously constrained informed decision-making.

These reports consolidated information on bioeconomy sectors, enterprise dynamics, policy frameworks, and growth opportunities, providing a credible reference for:

- National and county governments,
- Development partners and donors,
- Private investors and financial institutions,
- Research and innovation actors.

By grounding bioeconomy discussions in concrete data and enterprise realities, ABDK helped shift dialogue from abstract aspirations toward actionable priorities. The evidence generated under the project is already being used to inform policy consultations, investment conversations, and the development of future bioeconomy programming in Kenya and the region.

4.4 Progress toward policy coherence and strategic integration of bioeconomy



ABDK has made an important contribution to advancing policy coherence and strategic thinking around bioeconomy in Kenya. While Kenya does not yet have a standalone national bioeconomy strategy, the project initiated a structured process toward that goal through policy analysis, stakeholder consultation, and the development of a bioeconomy strategy roadmap.

Working closely with the State Department responsible for Research, Innovation and Technology (RIT) and other stakeholders, ABDK helped identify:

- Policy overlaps and gaps across agriculture, climate change, waste management, industry, and innovation.
- Entry points for integrating bioeconomy approaches into existing sectoral policies.
- Institutional coordination needs for effective bioeconomy governance.

This process has elevated bioeconomy from a technical concept to a recognized strategic development pathway within government discourse. The roadmap developed under ABDK now provides a concrete starting point for future policy development, offering guidance on priorities, sequencing, and stakeholder roles. While full policy adoption lies beyond the project's timeframe, ABDK has laid critical groundwork for sustained policy engagement and institutional ownership.

4.5 Increased international visibility and positioning of Kenya's Bioeconomy



Through targeted support to international engagement, ABDK contributed to strengthening Kenya's visibility and voice in global bioeconomy and sustainability forums. Participation in the Global Bioeconomy Summit (GBS) 2024 and support to the Government of Kenya during CBD COP16 enabled Kenyan actors to share experiences, learn from international best practices, and position Kenya as an emerging bioeconomy leader in Africa.

These engagements had a dual impact. Internationally, they enhanced Kenya's profile as a country actively pursuing bioeconomy-driven development aligned with biodiversity conservation and climate action. Domestically, they reinforced political and institutional commitment by demonstrating that bioeconomy is not only a national priority, but also a globally recognized pathway for sustainable growth.

4.6 Gender, Youth, and Inclusion



Gender equality, youth empowerment, and inclusive economic participation were cross-cutting considerations throughout the Advancing Bioeconomy Development in Kenya (ABDK) project. While ABDK was not designed as a stand-alone gender or youth project, its focus on MSMEs, value addition, and innovation in bio-based sectors inherently aligns with groups that are often structurally excluded from formal economic opportunities—particularly women, youth, and community-based enterprises.

Women play a central role in Kenya's bioeconomy, particularly in agriculture, food processing, natural resource management, and waste-based value chains. However, women-led enterprises often face disproportionate barriers, including limited access to finance, technology, markets, and decision-making platforms. ABDK contributed to addressing these gaps by deliberately engaging women-led MSMEs and cooperatives through its enterprise mapping, stakeholder consultations, and trade fair activities. The mapping exercise documented women-led and women-owned enterprises across bioeconomy clusters such as agri-processing, circular food systems, bio-inputs, and clean energy. Making these enterprises visible within national databases and international engagement platforms, supported greater recognition of women as bioeconomy innovators and economic actors rather than informal or subsistence producers. Participation in the Kenya-Sweden Bioeconomy Business and Innovation Trade Fair further enabled

women-led enterprises to showcase their products, engage directly with potential partners, and strengthen their market presence.

Youth unemployment remains one of Kenya's most pressing development challenges, even as young entrepreneurs and innovators increasingly drive activity in bio-based sectors. ABDK contributed to expanding youth engagement in the bioeconomy by highlighting youth-led startups and innovation-driven MSMEs operating in areas such as bioprocessing, bioenergy, circular economy solutions, and nature-based enterprises. Through exposure to regional markets, technology discussions, and policy dialogue, ABDK helped position the bioeconomy as a viable and forward-looking employment pathway for young people. The project's emphasis on innovation, technology transfer, and entrepreneurship aligns strongly with youth aspirations and supports the creation of decent, green jobs beyond traditional agricultural roles.

By design, ABDK prioritized **Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises**, recognizing their central role in inclusive growth and local economic development. Many of the enterprises engaged under the project are rooted in rural areas, informal settlements, and resource-dependent communities, where bioeconomy innovations can have outsized impacts on livelihoods and resilience. The project's focus on value addition, circularity, and local resource use supports inclusion by enabling enterprises to capture more value domestically and reduce

dependency on external inputs. ABDK contributed to reducing structural barriers that often exclude smaller actors from policy processes and market opportunities by strengthening MSME visibility and integration into national and international platforms.

ABDK also adopted a participatory approach to stakeholder engagement, ensuring that policy dialogue and roadmap development involved a broad range of actors, including private sector associations, research institutions, government agencies, and development partners. This inclusive approach helped bridge gaps between enterprise realities and policy formulation, creating space for MSME perspectives, including those of women and youth entrepreneurs, to inform strategic discussions on bioeconomy development.

ABDK's gender, youth, and inclusion outcomes therefore lie in its contribution to **opening pathways** rather than delivering immediate distributive outcomes. The project has laid the groundwork for more equitable participation in future bioeconomy investments and policy frameworks by strengthening enterprise ecosystems, enhancing access to collaboration platforms, and embedding inclusivity within bioeconomy discourse. As Kenya advances toward a national bioeconomy strategy, the foundations established by ABDK provide a strong basis for more targeted gender-responsive and youth-focused interventions in subsequent phases, ensuring that bioeconomy growth contributes meaningfully to social inclusion and shared prosperity.



While ABDK was implemented as a time-bound project, its outcomes point toward longer-term impact pathways. By strengthening enterprise ecosystems, generating credible evidence, initiating policy dialogue, and building international partnerships, the project has laid the foundations for:

- Increased bioeconomy investment in Kenya,
- Scaling of MSME-led bio-based innovations,
- Integration of bioeconomy into national and sub-national development planning,
- Continued Kenya–Sweden collaboration in bio-based sectors.

In this sense, ABDK's impact lies not only in what was achieved during the project period, but in the systems, relationships, and strategic direction it has helped put in place, positioning Kenya to harness its bioeconomy as a driver of inclusive, resilient, and sustainable development. Building on these outcomes and emerging impacts, the next section reflects on key lessons learned, challenges encountered, and insights for scaling bioeconomy initiatives in Kenya and beyond.



5.

Reflections and Lessons Learned

The implementation of the Advancing Bioeconomy Development in Kenya (ABDK) project generated a range of practical lessons on how bioeconomy initiatives can be designed, delivered, and scaled in Kenya and similar contexts. These reflections draw on project experience across enterprise engagement, policy dialogue, international collaboration, and institutional coordination.



5.1 Bioeconomy development requires a systems approach

One of the most important lessons from ABDK is that bioeconomy development cannot be effectively advanced through isolated or sector-specific interventions. Enterprises, innovation systems, markets, and policies are deeply interconnected, and progress in one area depends on alignment across the others. ABDK's integrated approach, combining enterprise mapping, evidence generation, and policy engagement, proved effective in addressing this complexity. The project demonstrated that supporting MSMEs alone is insufficient if regulatory barriers, policy incoherence, and weak market linkages remain unaddressed. Conversely, policy dialogue without grounding in enterprise realities risks remaining abstract and disconnected from implementation. The ABDK experience underscores the value of designing bioeconomy programmes as ecosystem interventions, rather than as discrete activities.



5.2 Enterprise mapping is foundational for strategic engagement

The mapping of bioeconomy enterprises emerged as a critical foundational activity. Prior to ABDK, information on who was operating in Kenya's bioeconomy, where they were located, and what value chain roles they played was fragmented and often outdated. The project showed that credible, ground-truthed enterprise mapping is essential for informed decision-making, targeted matchmaking, and policy relevance. A key lesson was the importance of moving beyond simple directories toward analytical profiling that captures innovation levels, scalability, and collaboration readiness. This enabled ABDK to distinguish between early-stage innovators, growth-oriented MSMEs, and more established firms, each requiring different types of support. Future bioeconomy initiatives would benefit from investing early in high-quality enterprise data systems that can be updated and reused over time.



5.3 Demand-Driven B2B Engagement is more effective than generic networking

ABDK's experience with Kenyan-Swedish collaboration highlighted the importance of demand-driven and well-prepared B2B engagement. Rather than relying on open-ended networking events, the project's use of a matchmaking roadmap and sector prioritization improved the quality and relevance of interactions between enterprises. This approach helped manage expectations on both sides, ensured better alignment between enterprise needs and technological offerings, and increased the likelihood of meaningful follow-up. The Kenya-Sweden Bioeconomy Business and Innovation Trade Fair demonstrated that structured engagement platforms can translate analytical work into tangible collaboration opportunities when they are built on prior mapping and preparation.



5.4 Evidence is a powerful catalyst for policy dialogue

The preparation of national and regional bioeconomy status reports confirmed the value of evidence-based engagement in advancing policy dialogue. Policymakers and stakeholders responded positively to consolidated data, sector analysis, and enterprise insights that framed bioeconomy not as a theoretical concept, but as a measurable and investable development pathway. A key lesson was that evidence generation should be closely linked to policy processes and stakeholder engagement. Reports that are co-developed with national institutions and discussed through consultative forums are more likely to inform decision-making and build ownership. ABDK's collaborative approach to reporting strengthened the credibility and uptake of its analytical outputs.



5.5 Policy Coherence takes time but can be initiated through practical entry points

ABDK confirmed that achieving policy coherence across sectors such as agriculture, climate change, waste management, industry, and innovation is a complex and long-term process. However, the project demonstrated that practical entry points, such as policy reviews, strategy roadmaps, and targeted stakeholder workshops, can initiate meaningful progress even within a limited project timeframe. Rather than attempting to produce a fully developed national bioeconomy strategy, ABDK focused on creating a roadmap and facilitating dialogue. This incremental approach proved effective in building consensus, clarifying priorities, and avoiding resistance that can arise from overly ambitious reform efforts. Future phases can build on this foundation to support formal strategy development and implementation.



5.6 International engagement reinforces domestic momentum

Participation in global platforms such as the Global Bioeconomy Summit and CBD COP16 provided valuable learning and visibility benefits. A key lesson was that international engagement can reinforce domestic momentum by exposing policymakers and enterprises to global best practices, strengthening political commitment, and positioning national initiatives within broader global transitions. However, the project also highlighted the importance of ensuring that international engagement is linked back to national processes. ABDK's experience suggests that global participation delivers the greatest value when it is connected to domestic policy dialogue, enterprise support, and strategic planning rather than treated as a standalone activity.



5.7 Inclusion needs to be designed, not assumed

While MSME-focused bioeconomy initiatives inherently engage women and youth, ABDK's experience showed that inclusion does not happen automatically. Deliberate effort is required to ensure that women-led and youth-led enterprises are visible, supported, and able to participate meaningfully in collaboration and policy platforms. The project demonstrated the importance of inclusive outreach, accessible engagement formats, and recognition of structural barriers faced by different groups. These insights point to the need for more explicit gender- and youth-responsive design elements in future bioeconomy programmes, including tailored support mechanisms and targeted indicators.

The lessons emerging from ABDK provide valuable guidance for the future of bioeconomy programming in Kenya and the region. Building on these insights, the next section outlines the sustainability of ABDK outcomes and the way forward, including opportunities for scaling, institutionalization, and future investment.



6.

Sustainability and Way Forward

The Advancing Bioeconomy Development in Kenya (ABDK) project was designed as a catalytic initiative, with sustainability embedded not through stand-alone exit activities, but through the strengthening of systems, institutions, partnerships, and evidence that can endure beyond the project period. This section outlines how ABDK outcomes are expected to be sustained and scaled and identifies priority pathways for advancing Kenya's bioeconomy agenda in the coming years.

6.1 Sustainability of ABDK Outcomes

A key sustainability feature of ABDK lies in its focus on institutional anchoring rather than parallel project structures. Core project outputs, such as the bioeconomy enterprise database, status reports, policy analysis, and strategy roadmap, were developed in collaboration with national institutions including KEPSA, NACOSTI, and relevant government departments. This collaborative approach has enhanced ownership, credibility, and the likelihood that these outputs will continue to inform policy dialogue, investment planning, and private sector engagement beyond the project's lifecycle.

The enterprise mapping and clustering work provides a reusable and updatable foundation for ongoing bioeconomy engagement. Rather than a one-off exercise, the database can be refreshed and expanded to track enterprise growth, support matchmaking, and inform future programming. Similarly, the bioeconomy status reports establish a baseline for monitoring progress over time, enabling Kenya and the wider East African region to assess trends, identify gaps, and adjust strategies as the bioeconomy evolves. The relationships and partnerships forged under ABDK, particularly between Kenyan MSMEs, Swedish private sector actors, trade institutions, and policymakers, represent another critical dimension of sustainability. These networks extend beyond formal project activities and create channels for continued collaboration, technology exchange, and investment discussions.

6.2 Policy and institutional pathways for scaling

One of ABDK's most important contributions to sustainability is the initiation of a structured pathway toward a Kenyan bioeconomy strategy. While the project did not aim to produce a fully adopted national strategy, it successfully laid the groundwork through policy analysis, stakeholder consultation, and the development of a bioeconomy roadmap. This roadmap provides a clear reference point for government-led processes to advance policy coherence and integration across sectors.

Moving forward, the roadmap can support:

- Formal development and adoption of a national bioeconomy strategy;
- Integration of bioeconomy priorities into sectoral policies at national and county levels;
- Alignment of bioeconomy objectives with Kenya Vision 2030, MTP V, and future development plans.

Institutional sustainability will depend on continued coordination across ministries responsible for agriculture, industry, environment, innovation, energy, and trade. ABDK's experience highlights the importance of maintaining multi-stakeholder platforms where public institutions, private sector actors, and research organizations can jointly shape bioeconomy priorities and implementation pathways.



6.3 Scaling enterprise and investment impact

ABDK has demonstrated that Kenya's bioeconomy MSMEs possess significant innovation potential but require sustained support to scale. The next phase of bioeconomy development should therefore move from mapping and engagement toward targeted enterprise acceleration and investment facilitation. Priority areas include access to finance, technology upgrading, certification and standards, and market access, particularly for enterprises operating in circular food systems, bio-based inputs, sustainable bioenergy, and biobased industrial products. The Kenya-Sweden collaboration model piloted under ABDK offers a scalable template for future engagement with other international partners. By aligning enterprise needs with external technological and investment strengths, Kenya can position its bioeconomy as an attractive destination for green investment and industrial partnerships. Continued collaboration with institutions such as Business Sweden, KEPSA, and development finance actors will be essential in translating early engagement into sustained investment flows.

6.4 Strengthening regional and international engagement

ABDK has positioned Kenya as an active participant in regional and global bioeconomy discourse. Sustaining this momentum will require continued engagement in platforms such as the Global Bioeconomy Summit, regional EAC bioeconomy processes, and multilateral environmental forums. These platforms not only enhance Kenya's visibility but also provide opportunities to learn from international best practices, attract partnerships, and shape emerging global standards and markets for bio-based products. At the regional level, continued participation in EAC bioeconomy status reporting and strategy implementation can strengthen cross-border value chains, promote regional trade, and support harmonization of standards and policies. This regional dimension will be increasingly important as bioeconomy markets expand and diversify.



6.5 Future programming priorities

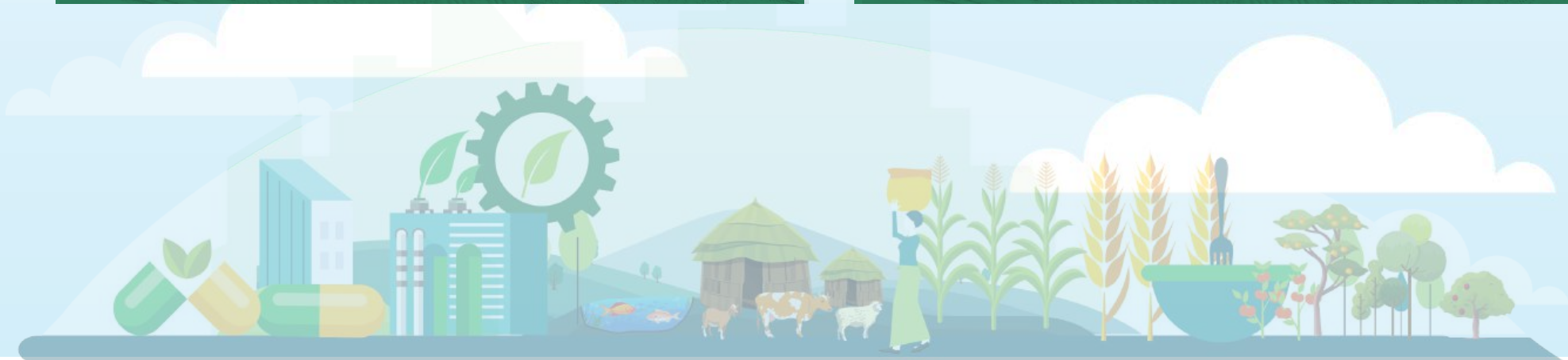
Building on ABDK's achievements and lessons learned, future bioeconomy programming in Kenya should prioritize:

- Development and formal adoption of a national bioeconomy strategy.
- Establishment of dedicated bioeconomy financing and investment mechanisms.
- Targeted support for women- and youth-led bioeconomy enterprises.
- Strengthening of bioeconomy innovation ecosystems, including research-industry linkages.
- Integration of bioeconomy approaches into county-level development planning.

SEI, together with its national and international partners, is well positioned to continue supporting this agenda through follow-on programmes that deepen enterprise support, strengthen policy implementation, and mobilize investment for scalable bioeconomy solutions.

6.6 Concluding reflection

The Advancing Bioeconomy Development in Kenya project has demonstrated that bioeconomy is not a niche or emerging concept, but a practical and strategic pathway for Kenya's inclusive, sustainable, and resilient development. By connecting enterprises, evidence, policy, and international collaboration, ABDK has laid a strong foundation upon which Kenya can build a robust bioeconomy that delivers economic opportunity while safeguarding natural resources. The project's legacy lies in the systems it has helped strengthen, the partnerships it has enabled, and the strategic direction it has helped set, positioning Kenya to harness its bioeconomy as a cornerstone of its development future.



7.0

ABDK Results Framework and Impact Matrix

| IMPACT LEVEL | | |
|---|---|--|
| Impact Statement | Contribution Pathway | Evidence / Verification |
| Inclusive economic growth achieved through bioeconomy investments that reduce hunger and increase youth employment in Kenya | Strengthened bioeconomy MSMEs, improved value addition, enhanced policy coherence, and international collaboration lay foundations for job creation, food system transformation, and green growth | Kenya Vision 2030 (MTP IV) alignment; BETA pillars (Agriculture, MSMEs); ABDK reports and policy roadmap |
| Outcome Level | | |
| Outcome | Description of Change | Key Evidence |
| Outcome 1: Strengthened bioeconomy MSME ecosystem in Kenya | Bioeconomy enterprises are more visible, organized, and connected across value chains and markets | Bioeconomy enterprise database; cluster mapping; trade fair participation |
| Outcome 2: Enhanced Kenya-Sweden private sector collaboration | Structured B2B engagement and technology exchange pathways established | Kenya-Sweden Bioeconomy Conference and Trade Fair; matchmaking roadmap |
| Outcome 3: Improved evidence base for bioeconomy decision-making | Policymakers, investors, and partners have access to credible data and analysis | Status of Bioeconomy in Kenya report; EAC Bioeconomy Status Report 2024 |
| Outcome 4: Progress toward policy coherence and strategic bioeconomy integration | Bioeconomy elevated within national policy discourse; roadmap developed | Bioeconomy policy analysis; Kenya Bioeconomy Strategy Roadmap |
| Outcome 5: Increased international visibility of Kenya's bioeconomy | Kenya positioned as an emerging bioeconomy actor in Africa | GBS 2024 report; CBD COP16 Bioeconomy Report |

| Output Level | |
|---|---|
| Intervention Area 1: Bioeconomy Pathways and Collaboration | |
| Outputs | Key Achievements |
| Mapping of Kenyan bioeconomy MSMEs | Verified database of bioeconomy enterprises across strategic clusters |
| Mapping of Swedish bioeconomy actors | Priority Swedish enterprises identified with Business Sweden |
| B2B matchmaking roadmap | Sector-specific collaboration pathways defined |
| Kenya–Sweden Bioeconomy Trade Fair | 75 enterprises; 226 registered participants; Sarit Expo Centre |
| Intervention Area 2: Evidence Generation | |
| Outputs | Key Achievements |
| Status of Bioeconomy in Kenya report 2025 | National evidence base on sectors, enterprises, and policy context |
| EAC Bioeconomy Status Report 2024 | Regional bioeconomy benchmarking and learning |
| Enterprise and value chain analysis | Identification of high-potential MSMEs and growth constraints |
| Intervention Area 3: Policy Engagement | |
| Outputs | Key Achievements |
| Bioeconomy policy analysis | Review of coherence across agriculture, climate, waste, innovation |
| Kenya Bioeconomy Strategy Roadmap | Framework and entry points for national strategy development |
| International policy engagement | Kenya participation at GBS 2024 and CBD COP16 |

Cross-Cutting Themes

| Theme | Results |
|-------------------------|--|
| Gender and Inclusion | Women-led and community-based MSMEs mapped, engaged, and showcased |
| Youth Employment | Youth-led bioeconomy startups highlighted as innovation drivers |
| Climate and Circularity | Emphasis on circular food systems, bioenergy, waste-to-value |
| Institutional Ownership | Close collaboration with KEPISA, NACOSTI, KENIA, and government ministry |

Sustainability and Scale-Up Pathways

| Dimension | Forward Pathway |
|--------------|---|
| Policy | Adoption of national bioeconomy strategy |
| Enterprise | MSME acceleration and investment facilitation |
| Partnerships | Continued Kenya-Sweden B2B collaboration |
| Evidence | Periodic bioeconomy status reporting |

