



10 AGENZIA ITALIANA
PER LA COOPERAZIONE
ALLO SVILUPPO

AICS Nairobi Office

ANNUAL REPORT

2025



A delegation from AICS Rome visits a conservancy supported by Italian cooperation under a project implemented by Northern Rangerland Trust in northern Kenya @AICS Nairobi

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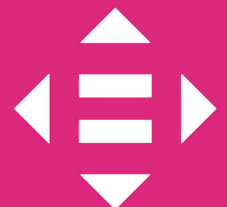
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1. A year in review

2025 has been a year of profound complexity for this region of East Africa. Across our area of engagement, countries with diverse socio-economic and political fabrics continued to face persistent structural challenges, some characterized by growing humanitarian needs and instability, others by rapid demographic and social changes compounded by urbanisation and the increasing frequency of climate-related shocks

Yet, even in this difficult context, the AICS Nairobi office maintained a strong and credible presence in the four countries within our mandate. Through a diversified and tailored approach, supported by solid technical expertise and a vast network of partners – Italian institutions, national authorities, civil society, local actors, academia and international organisations – we continued to deliver meaningful and relevant cooperation. Our portfolio has included a wide range of interventions across various sectors, from rural development to infrastructure, health and governance, encompassing both structural and long-term development programmes aimed at strengthening local capacities and promoting inclusive and sustainable growth, as well as emergency initiatives designed to address urgent humanitarian needs.

In the first part of the year, the Office was managed with great professionalism by Dr Valeria Buoninfante, now Head of Office in Bogotá, to whom I wish to express my sincere thanks for her work. I took up my post on 1 July 2025, continuing along the lines of an already solid and well-structured programme of work. During the year, initiatives worth a total of approximately €65 million were also approved, and four calls for proposals were launched for a total of approximately €12 million contributing to a significant strengthening of the portfolio to be managed by Italian civil society organisations and their local partners, in line with the five 'Ps' of the 2030 Agenda – People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership.

A significant example of this dynamism is the approval of the project to strengthen climate resilience in the Lake Baringo catchment area, funded by the EU and to be implemented over the next four years, in collaboration with GIZ. The project was identified and formulated in the spirit of Team Europe and reflects the collaboration established with the Ministry of the Environment and Baringo County. It is the result of mutual trust, a shared strategic vision and a long-standing commitment to local communities and authorities, which have made it possible to define an initiative rooted in participatory planning and a solid understanding of the environmental and socio-economic dynamics of the Baringo area.

Our dedication to advancing women's empowerment and the protection of women's rights remained central throughout 2025. Beginning with a call for artists for International Women's Day and leading to a nationwide campaign for 16 Days of Activism Against GBV, AICS Nairobi also assumed the role of Chair of the Development Partners Gender Group (DPGG)—reinforcing our engagement in the national dialogue on gender equality.

We also celebrated 60 years of partnership with Tanzania, honouring a long and meaningful cooperation, even in a national context was marked by significant political tension and we took part in the ASviS Festival, where we highlighted Somalia's strive towards stability supported by initiatives such as the Towards Peace and Stability in Somalia (TPSS), which restores healthcare facilities in areas back under government control, helping rebuild trust between institutions and communities.

Finally, 2025 was marked by my first visit to the DRC, with missions to Lubumbashi and Kinshasa—an important step in strengthening our engagement and understanding of the realities on the ground which also reflect an increasing strategic relevance of the country for Italy's development cooperation agenda in the context of Mattei Plan strategic framework.

Looking ahead, AICS Nairobi will continue to place people and local communities at the centre of its action. We will continue to deepen our support to local stakeholders, working to develop practical, inclusive, and sustainable solutions to the development challenges facing this region and build durable partnerships based on trust and mutual respect.

Fabio Minniti
Head of Office, AICS Nairobi



3. The Nairobi Office

The AICS office in Nairobi is responsible for Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This is a region of great potential, where countries undergoing strong economic growth and pursuing sustainable development coexist with others facing persistent economic, environmental, and humanitarian challenges. The diversity of contexts requires a high capacity for adaptation, with countries such as the DRC and Somalia marked by protracted conflicts and crises, while others like Kenya, and Tanzania experience rapid demographic, social, and economic transformations. Despite structural inequalities, the region remains characterized by extraordinary cultural and human richness.

Following the model of AICS headquarters in Rome, the Nairobi office is organized into thematic units that work across all four countries under its mandate, acknowledging that many of the issues addressed have a regional dimension. Teams operate in the areas of infrastructure and urban development, agriculture and environment, private sector support, gender and civil society, health, and emergency response, working in synergy with institutional relations and communications.



An activity with the children of Narok primary school for the Activate Nairobi Campaign 2025 @WeWorld

With a total of 38 staff members, including both international and local personnel, the Office ensures dialogue and coordination with government and development partners by participating in numerous sectoral and thematic working groups in each country. The main office is located in Nairobi, with a satellite office in Dar es Salaam that oversees projects in Tanzania.

This diversity of contexts over time has shaped the breadth of AICS Nairobi's interventions. Alongside traditional sectors—agricultural development, infrastructure, health, and humanitarian aid—the Office has progressively expanded its scope to include rural and urban development, environmental sustainability, culture, private sector engagement, and the strengthening of civil society and governance institutions. A cross-cutting commitment to women's empowerment and the protection of women's rights underpins all areas of work, through integrated interventions that promote prevention, economic autonomy, and access to justice.

This commitment is also reflected in the institutional role assumed by AICS Nairobi, which, since September 2025, has served as Chair of the Development Partners Gender Group (DPGG) for Kenya, a key platform for national dialogue on gender equality and combating violence against women.



4. 2025 in numbers



264,714,418.91 €

Total portfolio*

174.141.154,47 €

Grants

68.773.264 €

Loans

21.800.000 €

Emergency



16

**INITIATIVES
APPROVED IN 2025**

65m €

**PORTFOLIO APPROVED
IN 2025**



38

**PEOPLE ACROSS 2
OFFICES (NAIROBI
AND DAR ES SALAM)**

Total by "Pillar"

123.619.368.31 €

People

44.218.543,92 €

Prosperity

80.539.350,36 €

Planet



4

**COUNTRIES OF
INTERVENTION OF
WHICH 3 PRIORITY
COUNTRIES (KENYA,
TANZANIA,
SOMALIA)**

1.006.857,41 €

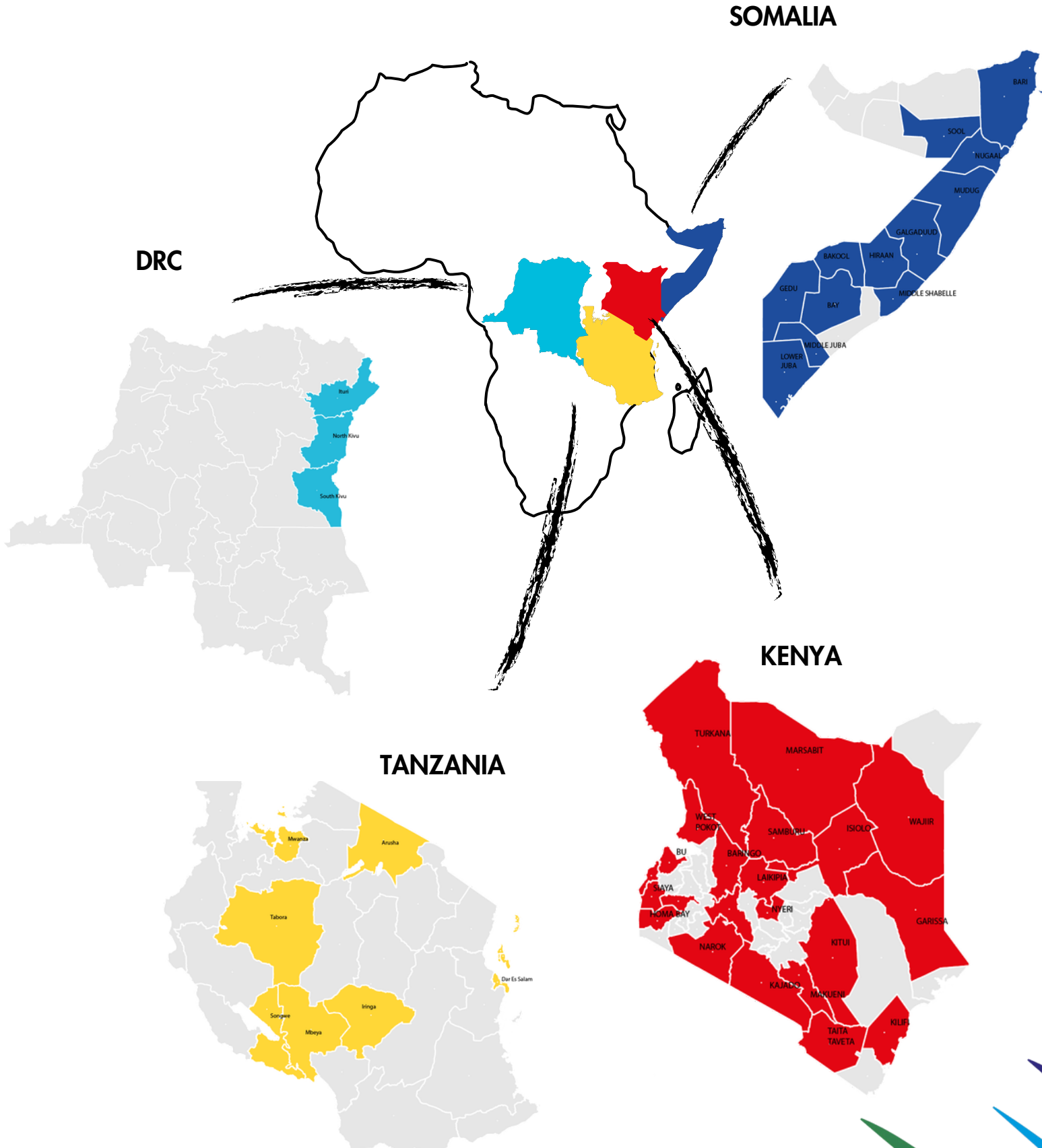
Peace

15.330.298,91 €

Partnerships

*As 31 December 2025. The data refers to Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

5. Countries of intervention



Community health promoters in Kaloleni Sub-county advise new mothers on the measures to prevent malaria and protect their newborns
@WorldFriends



5.1 Kenya

Kenya

PORTFOLIO OF APPROVED INITIATIVES



€164.461.976,93 €

MAIN AREAS OF INTERVENTION



Environment and agricultural development



Infrastructure and urban development



Job creation and private sector



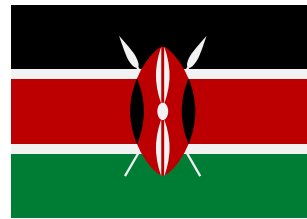
Health



Gender equality and women's empowerment

CHANNELS OF INTERVENTION

- Bilateral (Government, local authorities, CSOs, Universities, Private Sector, Local Authorities, Research Entities)
- Multilateral (UN Agencies)
- Delegated Cooperation (Funded by EU)
- Humanitarian



The Republic of Kenya remains one of Africa's most dynamic economies, with GDP growth reaching around 5.2% in the third quarter of 2025. Growth has remained resilient, but social pressures have increased, with impacts varying by gender, age and geography. The government implemented fiscal consolidation measures that sparked widespread protests in 2024, with strong participation from young people and women. Inflation continued to drive up the cost of living, intensifying the economic burden on women, particularly in low-income households. The agricultural and agro-industrial sectors remain central, with tea, horticulture and coffee as the main export items, whilst tourism has shown a significant recovery. At the same time, the country has consolidated its role as an East African hub for services, logistics and the digital sector, with Nairobi continuing to attract investment in fintech and telecommunications. However, this trend tends to favour a young, urban workforce — predominantly male — and is not representative of the socio-economic reality of the rest of the country. Significant territorial, generational and gender inequalities persist: youth unemployment and the prevalence of informal work remain high. In 2025, 73.2% of women were in precarious employment compared to 55.6% of men, and multidimensional poverty has increased in rural and peri-urban areas. On the gender equality front, the women's empowerment index rose to 40.6% from 29.3% in 2020, but high rates of domestic violence and a worrying rise in femicides persist, to which President Ruto responded by establishing a dedicated task force in January 2025. The protests in June 2025 — which left at least 60 people dead and hundreds injured — also highlighted the increased risks for women in contexts of political instability. Kenya remains a priority country for Italian Cooperation, long tied by a bilateral agreement since 1985. The Kenya-Italy Partnership for Sustainable Development (2023-2027), structured around the pillars of Planet, People, and Prosperity, guides the current engagement of AICS in Nairobi with an indicative allocation of 100 million euros allocated for the first three years.

Within the **Planet pillar**, the Italian Cooperation supports Kenya in addressing climate change through the protection and restoration of forest and agroforestry ecosystems and the sustainable management of natural resources. AICS's focus on creating a sustainability link between agriculture and the environment has led to the identification of innovative approaches, such as connecting coffee production and its value chain to agroforestry practices that contribute to a more sustainable ecosystem.

Agricultural initiatives also aim to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable communities, especially in arid and semi-arid (ASAL) regions. Finally, the Italian Cooperation promotes sustainable urban development and provides support to local governments, particularly secondary cities, within the framework of Kenya's decentralization.

For the **People pillar**, priorities include the prevention of and response to gender-based violence, combating harmful practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM) and early marriage, improving access to justice, and promoting women's economic empowerment. Since September 2025, AICS Nairobi has assumed the role of chair of the DPGG. This group plays a key role in strategic dialogue on gender and women's empowerment, bringing together various partners, including donors, international agencies, government authorities, and civil society. Through the DPGG, the Italian Cooperation has contributed to strengthening coordination among development partners, promoting the harmonization of activities and the creation of synergies, and acting as a bridge between institutions, international partners, and local stakeholders, facilitating dialogue and cooperation on shared priorities.

Finally, in the field of **Prosperity**, AICS has continued to work to improve training, skills, employment, and decent income for young people and women through the development of high social and capital impact entrepreneurship. In 2025, for example, a project implemented by the International Trade Centre strengthened the sustainable fashion ecosystem through a specialized course on leather bag production for 38 young people, in collaboration with Italian manufacturers, developing technical, entrepreneurial, and



Joy at harvest: a coffee picker displays freshly selected cherries at a Right Coffee project-supported farm in Kenya. Photo: Lucas Oyugi / Ramadhan Said Ali

5.2 Somalia



A hygiene promoter in Baidoa, Somalia explains to internally displaced persons (IDPs) how to prevent common diseases through improved hygiene practices @COOPI

Somalia

PORTFOLIO



53.480.042,00 €

MAIN AREAS OF INTERVENTION



Access to basic services



Infrastructure and urban development



Health



Governance

CHANNELS OF INTERVENTION

- Bilateral (Government, local authorities, CSOs, Universities, Private Sector, Local Authorities, Research Entities)
- Multilateral (UN Agencies)
- Humanitarian



Somalia continues to face a complex political and institutional transition marked by fragile governance structures, evolving federal dynamics and persistent security challenges. Over the past decade, the country has made gradual progress in rebuilding state institutions and strengthening its macroeconomic framework, while remaining highly vulnerable to conflict, climate shocks and regional geopolitical dynamics.

The Federal Parliament of Somalia approved the final set of amendments completing the long-standing review of the Provisional Constitution of Somalia, formally concluding a constitutional reform process that had lasted more than fourteen years. The reform aims to strengthen federal institutions and pave the way for a transition toward a universal suffrage electoral system, replacing the traditional clan-based indirect voting model. However, the process has generated significant political tensions, with several federal member states and opposition groups questioning aspects of the reform and calling for broader consensus and a future constitutional referendum.

Despite these challenges, Somalia continues to pursue a path toward institutional consolidation with the support of the international community. In 2025 the Federal Government launched the National Transformation Plan 2025–2029, a strategic framework aimed at guiding the country toward sustainable development, economic recovery and improved public service delivery. The plan emphasizes governance reform, economic resilience, climate adaptation and the strengthening of state presence in areas affected by conflict.

Italian Cooperation maintains a long-standing engagement in the country, with a particular focus on human development and institutional capacity building. In the health sector, AICS works in partnership with the Ministry of Health of Somalia and the World Health Organization to support national efforts toward universal health coverage.

Within the **People pillar**, in December 2025 was approved the project Quality and Equal Primary Health for all in Somalia QUALITY AND EQUAL PRIMARY HEALTH SERVICES FOR ALL IN SOMALIA - QEPHS a flagship intervention with the aim of supporting the De Martino Hospital, the National Blood Bank and the National Health practitioners Council which represents key healthcare reference points in Mogadishu.

Under the **Planet pillar**, Italy contributes to the rehabilitation of critical infrastructure, a sector heavily affected by decades of conflict. Current initiatives include the improvement of essential urban services and water supply infrastructures and reducing risks in flood-prone areas, including ongoing support to the water system of Bosaso, an important economic hub in northern Somalia.

Within the **Peace pillar**, support to the Federal Government continues through the programme "*Towards Peace and Stability in Somalia (TPSS)*", implemented in cooperation with the Office of the Prime Minister of Somalia. The programme focuses on stabilization and early recovery interventions in areas recently liberated from extremist groups, supporting the restoration of basic services and the re-establishment of state presence.

Finally, under the **Prosperity pillar**, in 2025 the Italian Cooperation launched the intervention "*Economic and livelihood opportunities in the fisheries sector in Somalia Together*". With the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and in close partnership with the Puntland State of Somalia administration, the initiative aims to transform Bosaso's fisheries sector into a key driver of regional prosperity. By facilitating the transfer of technology, strengthening local capacities and mobilizing strategic investments, the programme seeks to unlock the full potential of Puntland's marine resources. Ultimately, the objective is to contribute to the development of a "Puntland model" for sustainable economic transformation, one that positions the region as a leading hub for the blue economy across the Horn of Africa.

Abdisalam uses a hoe to cultivate his farm in Beledweyne, Somalia @FAO Somalia





5.3 Tanzania

Margaret dreams to become a teacher when she grows up @WeWorld

Tanzania

PORTFOLIO



39.265.542,37 €

MAIN AREAS OF INTERVENTION



Environment and Agricultural Development



Access to Basic Services



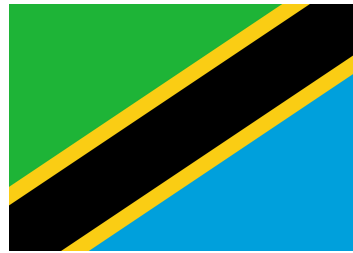
Governance



Health

CHANNELS OF INTERVENTION

- Bilateral (Government, local authorities, CSOs, Universities, Private Sector, Local Authorities, Research Entities)



Since gaining independence in 1961 and uniting with Zanzibar in 1964, Tanzania has maintained relative political stability, although in recent years there has been a narrowing of the space for the opposition and civil society. The general elections of October 2025, which confirmed the re-election of President Samia Suluhu Hassan and the CCM, were followed by protests and unrest in various parts of the country. Against this backdrop, the Dar es Salaam Office, in collaboration with the AICS Office in Nairobi, provided technical support to the diplomatic mission in mapping civil society organisations and Italian cooperation organisations operating in the country.

With a population of around 68 million and rapidly accelerating urbanisation, Tanzania has been classified as a lower-middle-income country since 2020. The macroeconomic picture in 2025 was generally stable, with growth driven by infrastructure investment, expansion in the services and energy sectors, but also by post-election tensions and growing climate risks. In the health sector, progress was made in the fight against HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, whilst structural challenges persist in the areas of maternal and child health and primary emergency care.

In terms of gender equality, Tanzania made modest progress in 2025, scoring 0.736 on the Global Gender Gap Index and launching its first National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. However, significant challenges remain, including high rates of domestic violence and additional risks to women and girls that have emerged in the post-election context.

The Italian Cooperation has played a significant role in the country's development, with 2025 marking the 60th anniversary of the First Bilateral Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation between the Italian Republic and the United Republic of Tanzania, signed in Dar es Salaam on 4 August 1965. Since 2025, Tanzania has officially acquired the status of a priority country for Italian Cooperation and a focus country under the Mattei Plan for Africa.

This recognition has facilitated the consolidation of projects and bilateral partnerships in strategic sectors with a long-standing tradition, such as the coffee sector, healthcare, and vocational training—thereby strengthening a commitment to the future, while building on the achievements of the past.

Within the **Planet** pillar, Italian Cooperation contributes to strengthening environmental sustainability and climate resilience, particularly through initiatives supporting sustainable agricultural practices, food security, and the resilience of rural communities facing increasingly severe climate-related risks.

Under the **People** pillar, the Italian Cooperation promotes improved access to quality healthcare services, with particular attention to maternal and child health, as well as the fight against communicable diseases such as Tuberculosis, Malaria, and HIV/AIDS. Italian civil society organizations are also actively engaged in promoting social inclusion, including initiatives supporting persons with disabilities, human rights, and access to essential services.

Within the **Prosperity** pillar, Italy supports skills development and economic opportunities for young people through education and vocational training programmes aimed at improving access to the labour market. In this context, cooperation is implemented in close collaboration with national institutions, primarily the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST), the National Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NACTVET), and the Vocational Education and Training Authority (VETA), which play a central role in strengthening the national technical and vocational education and training system.

Several Italian civil society organizations (CSOs) are also engaged in projects supporting youth employment and local economic development, implemented in close collaboration with local authorities and training institutions across mainland Tanzania and the Zanzibar archipelago. Throughout 2025, cooperation with these partners continued to prove particularly effective, supported by regular technical exchanges, field visits, and joint participation in events related to the various initiatives.



A doctor from CUAMM
cares for a child in
Bariadi, Simiyu.
@Doctors with Africa
CUAMM

A close-up portrait of a woman, Jacqueline, from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). She is wearing a vibrant blue and yellow patterned headscarf and a colorful, patterned shirt. She is smiling warmly at the camera. In her hands, she holds a wooden handle with a rectangular block of dark, rich soil attached to it. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting an outdoor agricultural setting.

5.4 DRC

Jacqueline, a farmer from DRC, has received technical training and equipment to adopt sustainable agricultural practices, @WFP/Michael Castofas

Democratic Republic of the Congo

PORTFOLIO



7.506.898,00 €

MAIN AREAS OF INTERVENTION



Environment and Agricultural Development



Health

CHANNELS OF INTERVENTION

- Emergency



The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is one of Africa's most resource-rich countries in terms of mineral wealth, but its economy remains highly vulnerable due to fluctuations in commodity prices and the economic performance of its key trading partners, together with institutional weakness, persistent instability especially in the Eastern provinces and poor natural resources governance.

On the social front, the Great Lakes Region is experiencing one of the continent's most severe and protracted humanitarian crises, driven by ongoing armed conflicts in the East of the country. In 2025, violence increased dramatically with the M23 taking over Goma, the provincial capital of North Kivu in late January and the city of Bukavu in South Kivu, and they have since continued to expand to the south and west. Hundreds of thousands of civilians have fled their homes due to fighting and violence, with women and families bearing the brunt of displacement. The resulting vulnerability of affected communities is compounded by increased exposure to abuse and human rights violations. A frail peace agreement was eventually signed in December 2025 under US and Qatar mediation, albeit fighting has since continued and M23 has not withdrawn from the occupied territories.

The country's security is further jeopardized by the scheduled withdrawal of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), expected to conclude its mandate in December 2026, following another one-year extension of the UN Security Council adopted last December.

Italy has been present in the DRC since 2008, implementing initiatives in sectors such as water, health, education, child protection, support for women survivors of violence, and assistance to displaced populations.

Currently, the Italian Cooperation in DRC is focusing on the **People pillar**, responding to the humanitarian crisis through emergency interventions to improve access to essential services and to protect vulnerable groups. The adopted approach integrates Humanitarian Aid, Development, and Peace, in line with the United Nations emergency plans and the European Union's strategy.

6. THE 5 "P" OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



PEOPLE

- 1** NO POVERTY
- 2** ZERO HUNGER
- 3** GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
- 4** QUALITY EDUCATION
- 5** GENDER EQUALITY
- 6** CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

PLANET

- 11** SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
- 12** RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
- 13** CLIMATE ACTION
- 14** LIFE BELOW WATER
- 15** LIFE ON LAND

PROSPERITY

- 7** AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
- 8** DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
- 9** INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
- 10** REDUCED INEQUALITIES

PEACE

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

PARTNERSHIPS

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

The structure of this report is based on the "5 Pillars of Sustainable Development": People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnerships, which encompass the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda. For each of the 5 Ps, a selection of initiatives managed by the Nairobi Office is presented as examples.

P eople

2 ZERO HUNGER



3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



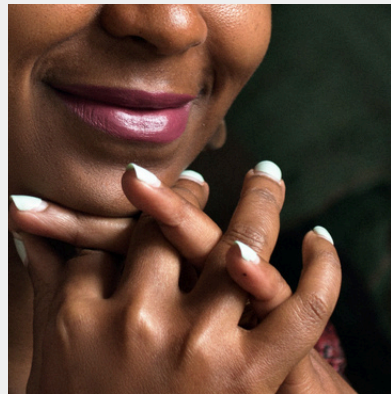
4 QUALITY EDUCATION



5 GENDER EQUALITY



6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



People

The "People" P relates to the promotion of a social dimension that guarantees a dignified life for the entire population, allowing all citizens to realize their potential in a healthy environment. In this context, the elimination of poverty is linked both to the economic and social dimensions, addressing inequalities to promote greater social cohesion, and to the environmental dimension, reducing the population's exposure to environmental and anthropogenic risk factors*.

The projects and initiatives promoted by AICS Nairobi primarily focus on the "People" dimension, touching on various areas, including access to basic services, healthcare, response to humanitarian emergencies, empowering local stakeholders, supporting grassroots supply chains. Running across all of these is a commitment to women's empowerment and gender equality — a cross-cutting priority embedded in all five "Ps" of cooperation: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnerships.

In **Kenya**, the People dimension is grounded in the constitutional right to quality health and social services. The Italian Cooperation works alongside the Ministry of Health to implement the Kenya Health Policy and Health Sector Strategic Plan, through initiatives spanning health information digitalization and medical personnel training — aimed at reducing inequalities and advancing universal health coverage. The health sector faced significant headwinds in 2025, particularly due to the contraction of funding from institutional donors such as USAID. In this challenging context, AICS maintained active coordination with local institutions and key stakeholders through the health sector donor group, while continuing to support ongoing initiatives. During the year, the Cooperation completed two projects supported through a bilateral instrument complementary to the Global Fund for the fight against AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria (Global Fund): *Born to Be Healthy* implemented by Medicus Mundi Italy with No One Out and the University of Verona focused on preventing mother-to-child HIV transmission, tackling stigma, and providing psycho-social and economic support to people living with HIV and *The Net*, implemented by World Friends which supported a community-based malaria control programme across five health centres in Kilifi County.

The Italian Cooperation humanitarian portfolio in Kenya in 2025 centred on two strategic priorities: strengthening climate resilience and responding to communities affected by recurrent drought and extreme rainfall. Compared to the previous year, the geographical scope expanded to include the counties of Tana River, Garissa, Turkana, Marsabit, and West Pokot — reflecting Italy's commitment to reaching populations in protracted crisis and high multidimensional poverty.

In **Somalia**, where communities face severe crises driven by both extreme climatic events — such as droughts and floods — and human-induced factors, Italy through AICS has supported emergency interventions in food security, nutrition, water resource management, and social protection. These were delivered through both bilateral initiatives carried out by civil society organisations and multilateral channels in partnership with international actors. On the bilateral channel, Italian Cooperation launched a new humanitarian aid initiative to strengthen the humanitarian response.

In 2025, interventions in **Tanzania** under the People pillar focused on promoting decent work, rights and dignity for domestic workers and victims of trafficking through the launch of the *emPoWeReD II* initiative. Providing support to people with disabilities was also a key area, with the successful conclusion of two projects: *SHINE*, supporting health, social inclusion, nutrition and employment in Dar es Salaam, Morogoro and Mbeya, and *We Care*, promoting rehabilitation and educational inclusion for children with disabilities in the Iringa region.

In the **Democratic Republic of Congo**, the Italian Cooperation continued to respond to severe humanitarian crises and the protection needs of civilians affected by the Great Lakes conflict. Interventions focused particularly on young mothers, newborns, and survivors of gender-based violence in Tanganyika province, improving access to sexual and reproductive healthcare, preventing gender-based violence, and supporting holistic approaches to victim assistance.



Ali is a fisherman at the seaweed farm in Kibuyuni BMU, in Kwale County.

@AICS Nairobi

Focus initiative: 

SHINE: Supporting health, social inclusion, nutrition and employment (AID 12590)

The project aimed at facilitating the social inclusion of people with disabilities in Tanzania, supporting their integration into the workforce and improving access to healthcare services. The initiative was implemented by the ONG Comunità Solidali nel Mondo Onlus as the lead organisation, in partnership with CEFA and five Tanzanian partners, including the Authority for Education and Vocational Training (VETA) Saint Francis Regional Hospital in Ifakara and Caritas of the Archdiocese of Mbeya.

Between 2022 and 2025, "Shine" has enabled 800 patients to be treated in two new specialist clinics equipped with electroencephalography technology, the training of 260 healthcare professionals across ten regions in Dar es Salam and Mbeya targeting 2,600 people and the provision of integrated training on epilepsy and nutrition for 1,000 caregivers. Another result has been the publication of the first-ever epilepsy handbook to be published in Tanzania. In addition, the interventions involved strengthening rehabilitation programmes for people with disabilities using Community-Based Inclusive Development (CBDI) methodology, ensuring their full participation, as citizens, in the community.

The Project in Brief

Funding: € 961.726,70,

Implementing partners:

Comunita Solidali Nel Mondo Onlus, CEFA, VETA, SFUCHAS, Saint Francis Regional Hospital, Associazione Shalom

Area: Dar es Salaam, Morogoro, Mbeya

Period: December 2022- July 2025



Lo screening nutrizionale facilita l'individuazione precoce della malnutrizione, orientando interventi tempestivi e sostenendo una crescita ottimale

@CSM

Focus initiative: **Let It Not Happen Again (AID 012652)**

Implemented by UN Women in collaboration with OHCHR and other local partners, aims to improve access to justice for survivors of GBV by strengthening institutions and promoting female empowerment. In 2025, this project achieved significant milestones in advancing accountability and justice for GBV survivors in Kenya. A landmark development saw four police officers charged with crimes against humanity under the International Crimes Act in the Baby Pendo case – Kenya's first effort to hold police commanders accountable for post-election violence, setting a critical precedent for protecting women and girls during electoral periods.

On justice sector strengthening, 187 justice actors received enhanced training on GBV prevention and response, while 12 Gender Justice Courts improved their functionality through targeted capacity support. Over 31,460 SGBV cases were filed nationally, with the Judiciary achieving a 101% case clearance rate, reflecting stronger institutional responsiveness. Access to services expanded significantly, with 1,767 survivors receiving legal and psychosocial support. Community outreach reached 1,746 people, supported by 93 community champions promoting prevention messaging across target counties.

The project also bolstered survivors' economic independence, providing 204 survivors with vocational and financial empowerment skills, 80 of whom received grants to start or grow income-generating activities. Survivors were also supported to participate directly in national reform processes, including contributing to the Technical Working Group on GBV and Femicide, ensuring their voices shaped national policy recommendations.



The Project in Brief

Funding: € 1.800.000

Implementing partners: UN Women, OHCHR

Areas: Nairobi, Kisumu, Kilifi, Isiolo, Bungoma, Vihiga

Period: 2023-2026

Objective: support the Government and the counties to put in place systems to prevent GBV and promote women and girls' rights.

Focus initiative

Women Empowerment and Support to Environment and Health in Kenya (AID 012835)

The main objective of the initiative is to improve prevention and response to gender-based violence and harmful traditional practices in arid and semi-arid counties, with a focus on the most vulnerable groups such as youth and women. Activities include awareness-raising in schools, strengthening local institutions, and advocacy to improve access to essential services and change social attitudes towards gender-based violence.

Another goal of the initiative is to empower women in land management and climate change adaptation in drought-prone areas, emphasizing sustainable practices and biodiversity through training programs such as permaculture. The initiative is divided into two components.

In Narok County, where young people are often excluded from discussions on health, gender equality, and harmful cultural practices, WeWorld and its partners, organised the **Power 4 Youth Days Workshop** between November and December 2025. Conducted across four sub-counties, the program trained Adolescent Council cohorts in radio, video, and photography production to create advocacy content on gender-based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM), child marriage, menstrual health, and education, empowering youth to share their stories and drive change in their communities.



Learning photography during the Power 4 Youth Days in Narok, @We World

The Project in Brief

Lot 1 - IMARA

Funding:

Implementing Partner: We World - GVC Onlus

Area: Narok County

Lot 1 focuses on preventing gender-based violence and harmful practices by raising awareness among students about their sexual and reproductive rights and training local institutions to improve access to essential services. The estimated beneficiaries are approximately 22,000 individuals, of whom about 51% are women.

Lot 2

Funding:

Implementing Agency: Istituto Pace Sviluppo Innovazione ACLI (IPSIA)

Area: Laikipia County

Lot 2 aims to strengthen the decision-making role of women by ensuring their equitable access to the agricultural market and land management. It also develops climate change adaptation plans in areas affected by drought and other adverse phenomena. The direct beneficiaries are approximately 2,900 people, nearly 60% of whom are women.

Focus initiative:   

“Establishment of a Health Network in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda” (AID 012835)

The programme “Establishment of a Health Network in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda” was implemented initially between 2023 and 2025 and has been extended until 2026. Coordinated by AICS Nairobi with technical support from the Centre for Global Health of the Tuscany Region, it contributes to SDG 3 by strengthening maternal and child health (MCH) services across the three countries.

At regional level, the initiative supported the creation of a health network to improve service quality through best-practice exchange, capacity building, knowledge sharing and improved data use. At national level, it enhanced the availability and quality of primary MCH services in the three countries. Over three years, the programme supported 34 health facilities through training, on-the-job mentoring, provision of medical equipment, and technical assistance at facility and community level, reaching approximately 6.2 million people.

A notable achievement in 2025 was the completion of a state-of-the-art Maternity Ward at the Sub-County Hospital of Malindi, with a capacity of 40 beds, labour and postpartum recovery rooms, and two operating rooms dedicated to deliveries. The maternity was built next to a newly built Intensive Care Unit, funded under the MISDHP II initiative. Mobile ultrasound services for pregnant women and the establishment of a neonatal simulation centre at Ruaraka Uhai Neema Hospital in Nairobi further extended essential services to the community level.

The Project in Brief

Funding: € 5.500.000

Lead implementing

partners: World Friends in Kenya, Centro Mondialità Sviluppo Reciproco in Tanzania, AVSI in Uganda

Areas: Nairobi, Nyandarua, Meru, and Kilifi Counties (Kenya), Dodoma Region and Zanzibar (Tanzania), Acholi and Lango Regions (Uganda)

Period: 2023-2026

Objective: contribute to accelerating progress towards achieving SDG 3 in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda



A training for health professionals in Uganda @AVSI Foundation

The voice of the protagonists

Not Just Saving, But Building Together: Elisa Vittorino's Perspective on Development Cooperation

At the age of 44, Elisa decided to change her life. With a degree in Chemistry and Pharmaceutical Technologies, a PhD and years of experience in universities and pharmacies, she left a permanent job, her own home and a 'fulfilled' life in Catania. 'When the passion fades, for me it's time for a change. That's how it was back then too: I felt I wanted to do something different, to contribute to something bigger.' Today, Elisa is COPE's representative in Tanzania, where she has been living for five years. Her first contact with aid work dates back to 2019, when she got in touch with COPE – an organisation based in Catania, her hometown – offering her services for a three-month placement. "I'd quit my job, I'd saved up a bit, I wanted to leave. When I told the organisation I was a pharmacist, they replied: 'Perfect, we have a rural health centre, we need one.' And that's how it began."

Her first encounter with life in Tanzania wasn't easy. "I landed in Dar Es Salaam, and after a 12-hour bus journey, I arrived in Nyololo. I wondered if I'd be able to cope. There was no water, no electricity, and no air conditioning; then I watched the two girls who were doing their community service. They were calm, so I thought that might become my new normal too. And so it was."

What was supposed to be a short-term experience turned into a full-fledged career. After a few months as a technical advisor at the health centre, she was offered the chance to lead an agricultural project, becoming its project manager, and was subsequently appointed the organisation's country representative.



Elisa Vittorino

"I had a completely different idea of development cooperation before I left; it was a 'romantic' vision: I thought it was mostly about volunteering. Here I learnt that cooperation today is carried out by professionals, specialised and highly trained people. I went back to studying; I learnt everything on the job."

Today Elisa is 49 and lives in Mahinya, a small rural village in southern Tanzania home to around a hundred people; here, in 2007, COPE founded an agricultural institute complete with a campus and canteen. The organisation also supports a small tailoring workshop run by women who have been victims of violence.

Among the most significant moments, Elisa recalls with emotion: "A milk collection project had been closed some time ago; the partner company had shut down. But when I went to monitor the situation, I discovered that the farmers had continued to meet and collect the milk independently. One of them had started producing yoghurt again. A month ago, he called me and sent me photos of his ice cream production. And this man receives no help to do this; he does it because he is passionate about it. And today, in a new project, he has joined as a partner. I believe this is the real impact. Something had remained, and it was being managed in a completely spontaneous and independent way, by them. The great lesson is that in cooperation projects there can also be setbacks; they are part of the journey.

I have a scientific, laboratory-based mindset, and I know that even missteps are part of progress, and indeed, they are just as important as the result itself."

Today, Elisa coordinates agricultural and social projects and leads mixed teams of expatriates, young people on civil service placements and local partners. "Life is intense, sometimes tiring, but deeply rewarding. One of the biggest challenges is planning. In Kiswahili, there is no word for 'future'; they use 'kesho', which means tomorrow. This tells you a lot about their relationship with time. We are trying to work together on this too: planning means building something that lasts."

To those dreaming of a career in development cooperation, Elisa offers a simple yet powerful piece of advice: **"Start out with the desire to build something together, not with the illusion of saving the world. It takes study, time and patience. And above all, passion. Without it, this work becomes fruitless. With it, however, it becomes the most wonderful job in the world."**



Focus initiative: 

Integrated emergency response in sexual and reproductive health, prevention and holistic management of GBV for communities affected by conflict, floods and epidemics, including MPOX, in Ituri and Tanganyika (AID 013160)

In 2025, a new maternity ward was opened in Hongwa village, Tanganyika province (DRC) — home to over 2,000 people displaced by Twa-Bantu inter-community conflicts and armed violence from North and South Kivu, bringing renewed hope to thousands of displaced women living in the area.

The facility now serves more than 2,500 women of childbearing age, many of whom previously were forced to walk over 15 km to access obstetric care and will serve as a referral centre to receive all cases of complications related to pregnancy or childbirth the surrounding areas. Equipped with an operating theatre and staffed by a doctor and two midwives assigned by the Provincial Ministry of Health, it also acts as a referral centre to ensure high-quality care for complications, including caesarean sections.

The Hongwa maternity ward is part of the Integrated Emergency Response Project for sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence (GBV) management in communities affected by conflict, floods and epidemics in Tanganyika and Ituri provinces — a project implemented by UNFPA. During the year, thanks to the project, over 11,300 sexual and reproductive health services and gender-based violence management services were provided, 7,278 prenatal consultations were carried out, and 1,989 births were assisted by qualified personnel, whilst 131 GBV survivors received integrated care covering medical, psychosocial, legal, and economic aspects.

The Project in Brief

Funding: € 1.000.000

Implementing partners: UNFPA

Area: Ituri, Tanganyika

Period: 2025-2026

Objective: Improve access to sexual and reproductive health and to services for the prevention of and response to GBV for displaced and returning populations and host communities in Ituri and Tanganyika, DRC.



Women celebrate the realisation of the Hongwa maternity in Tanganyika, DRC
@UNFPA DRC

Focus initiative: 

Supporting the Resilience of the Most Vulnerable Communities in Dhobley (AID12466)

Implemented by AVSI Foundation in partnership with the Ministry of Livestock, Forestry and Range – Jubaland, WASDA Somalia, and the Dhobley Women Association, this project strengthens resilience, improves living conditions, and empowers communities in Dhobley, Lower Juba.

Home to over 50,000 residents, Dhobley has become a long-term resettlement site for IDPs attracted by its relative stability and seasonal availability of land, pasture, and water — placing growing pressure on resources and livelihoods. The project targets both host and IDP communities across food security, WASH, income generation, and environmental sustainability.

In 2025, AVSI and partners reached hundreds of vulnerable households with direct support. Some 350 farmers received tools and seeds to cultivate maize, beans, and watermelon, while 100 farmers across 10 associations accessed tractor ploughing services, preparing over 50 acres ahead of the Gu rainy season. Another 100 families each received two goats, boosting nutrition and household income, and 300 women were trained in tailoring, henna art, beauty therapy, and hairdressing.

Farmers also received training in climate-resilient agriculture, organic input production, and financial literacy to reduce long-term aid dependence. Complementary interventions included hygiene and household supplies, construction of a water kiosk in Wadajir, community-led waste collection, and veterinary services — reflecting an integrated, multi-sectoral approach delivered through local institutions and women-led associations.

The Project in Brief

Funding: € 200.000

Implementing partners:

AVSI Foundation

Area: Afmadow district, Jubaland state, Somalia

Period: Dec 2024 - Nov 2025

Objective: Providing humanitarian assistance to communities affected by climate shock in Somalia by improving access to health, WASH, hygiene services and strengthening food security.



A training on how to use the NFI equipment distributed, @AVSI Foundation

Focus Gender: Activate Nairobi Campaign 2025

From the 25 of November to the 10 December 2025, AICS Nairobi - under the leadership of the Embassy of Italy and in partnership with the Italian Cultural Institute, CSOs, and Kenyan counterparts - launched the second edition of the **"Activate Nairobi" campaign** within the context of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. The campaign brought together institutions, civil society, artists and communities across Kenya to raise awareness of gender-based violence in both physical and digital spaces.

Through art, theatre, music and community engagement, the campaign included, among others:

- **Canvas of Change**, an art exhibition on women's and girls' rights.
- **Voices Without Borders**, a film screening amplifying refugee women's voices through co-created films on digital violence and resilience
- **theatre, music and dance performances** reaching over 500 children in Narok and Korogocho primary schools;
- **the Taa Arts dance performance in Ngara** engaging over 100 people and
- **A community run in Mosul**, North Laikipia, with over 300 participants closed the campaign on the occasion of Human Rights Day on December 10th, in a spirit of unity and determination against gender-based violence, reaching thousands of people across the country..

By engaging hundreds of people across the country, the campaign was able to spark public debate and enhance awareness on GBV, fostering lasting societal change through a human rights-based approach to violence prevention, economic empowerment, and access to justice.



A debate following the screening of powerful short films on digital violence @AICS Nairobi



Children of Comboni primary school during a powerful performance theatre of the Social Justice Travelling Theatre @AICS Nairobi

P Planet

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



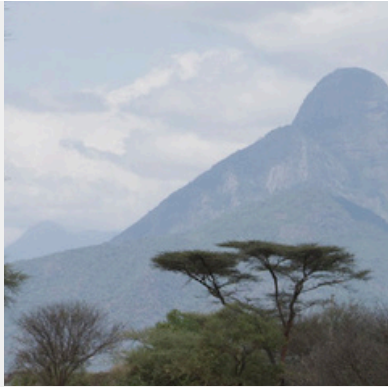
13 CLIMATE ACTION



14 LIFE BELOW WATER



15 LIFE ON LAND



Planet

The "Planet" pillar encompasses the various levels at which the consequences of climate change manifest: from biodiversity loss, resulting in changes to species and habitats, to ecosystem alteration, with the depletion of natural capital and related ecosystem services, and finally to the most significant impacts observed in human environments in terms of liveability and population health.

In 2025, the Italian Cooperation continued to support **Kenya** in strengthening the resilience of its ecosystems and communities in the face of climate change. Through its collaboration with the Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT), the Agency advanced a peace-building initiative deploying peace ambassadors to reduce conflicts between different economic groups and between people and wildlife and generate income for women through craft production. In partnership with UNEP, Italy continued developing a model farm combining geothermal energy with a drip irrigation system for horticultural production and two tilapia farming tanks, demonstrating how renewable energy and sustainable land use work hand in hand to reinforce local food systems. In the field of agriculture, AICS collaborated with the Kenya Coffee Research Institute to increase coffee production and productivity through a programme implemented by Italian CSOs; with local authorities to complete an irrigation system covering over 500 hectares; with the Ministry of the Environment, to restore natural resources at the Cherangany water tower and establish an agroforestry model supporting smallholder farmer development; and with CIHEAM in Bari to expand the mango and avocado supply chain across production, processing and marketing.

The environment and agriculture portfolio was further strengthened in 2025 with the approval of two major initiatives. The first, "Revamping Gourmet Coffee Production in Kenya", is the second phase of the ARABIKA project, building on the positive results of its predecessor in alignment with the Kenyan Government's broader effort to revitalise the coffee sector. The second initiative is a European Union Delegated Cooperation project implemented in partnership with GIZ, which aims to strengthen climate resilience and environmental sustainability in the Baringo river basin through integrated water resource management, soil conservation and agroforestry practices. Three initiatives were also completed during the year, all implemented by UN agencies – UNEP and two FAO projects in Somalia.

Urban development and infrastructure also remained a priority, with a focus on climate resilience and improved access to basic services in vulnerable areas across the countries within AICS's mandate. The approach has evolved from point interventions towards integrated models combining infrastructure, climate risk management and institutional capacity building.

This work is carried out in close collaboration with national and local government bodies in both Kenya and Somalia. Persistent challenges, particularly around local counterparts' capacity to manage complex procurement and supervision processes and the need to strengthen inter-institutional coordination, continue to require targeted capacity building efforts, especially in fragile contexts.

A growing focus on urban climate resilience — particularly around hydraulic risk and flood management — is reflected in the Italian Cooperation engagement with the Green Cities Initiative – Action for Africa, funded by Italy and implemented by FAO within the Piano Mattei framework, targeting the urban river systems of Nairobi and Kisumu alongside nine other cities across five African countries.

In Kenya, a notable achievement in 2025 was the relocation of Burangi Primary School in Kilifi County from a flood-prone site along the Sabaki River to a safer location, yielding higher attendance, improved learning quality and stronger community participation.

In **Somalia**, alongside multilateral interventions channelled through UN agencies, the Italian Cooperation has continued to support populations affected by extreme climate events such as droughts and floods through targeted emergency responses.

Finally in **Tanzania**, a country which has faced growing exposure to floods, droughts, landslides and cyclones, worsened by ecosystem degradation, unsustainable land use and limited spatial planning capacity, Italy through AICS supported initiatives that seek to address the compounding pressures of climate change and disaster risks, by combining renewable energy solutions with the restoration of degraded pastureland and sustainable land management practices.



A farmer in Maqasha village, Dollow, Somalia oversees the growth of his farm after benefiting from an initiative supported by Italian cooperation @COOP!

Focus Initiative : 

Transformation of climate action through utilization of a hybridized clean and sustainable energy as a driver to climate smart agriculture and agribusiness value chain (AID 11022)

The initiative supports the adoption of sustainable energy solutions — primarily geothermal and solar — to strengthen climate-smart agricultural production in Rongai Sub-County, Nakuru County, where agriculture is the primary source of employment. At its core is the development of geothermal wells supplying clean energy for agricultural activities including milk pasteurisation and aquaculture.

In 2025, as part of project activities, a pilot hybrid renewable energy system combining geothermal, solar and wind power was implemented in Kokwomoi Village in collaboration with UNEP and with support from Italian Cooperation. The project, concluded during the year, has laid the foundation for a cleaner and more resilient agri-food supply chain in the area.

By reducing dependence on wood fuels and promoting a transition to clean-energy-based food systems, the initiative strengthens the resilience of farmers, herders and fishermen across the fish, vegetable and dairy value chains — contributing to lower agricultural emissions while supporting local livelihoods and socio-economic development.



Renewable energy sources promote climate-smart agriculture in Kokwomoi village, Nakuru County @AICS Nairobi

The Project in Brief

Funding: € 300.000

Implementing partners: UNEP

Period: 2021-2025

Location: Nakuru County

Objective: to promote sustainable and alternative energy sources to strengthen the climate-smart agriculture sector and agribusiness value chains by promoting entrepreneurship, creating jobs and generating income for smallholder farmers, in Rongai Sub-County, Nakuru County.

Focus Initiative: 
Hirshabelle Resilient Riverine Agriculture Project (AID 01209)

In Somalia, repeated droughts and floods, worsened by climate change and prolonged conflict, have had devastating impacts. In Beledweyne, the Shabelle River overflowed, flooding entire neighbourhoods and displacing more than 180 000 people. Years of neglect of irrigation and flood-control systems have forced farmers to draw water directly from the river, increasing their exposure to floods.

To address these challenges, Italy through AICS provided USD 6.8 million to FAO to implement the Hirshabelle Resilient Riverine Agriculture Project (HRRAP) from October 2020 to October 2024. The project aimed to reduce flood risks for around 400 000 people in flood-prone areas of Beledweyne by strengthening river embankments, restoring irrigation systems, and improving institutional capacity. During the implementation period, it improved irrigation access for 34 farms along the Shabelle River, strengthened community flood monitoring and response during El Niño-related floods, and enhanced state and community capacity to manage flood and irrigation infrastructure. The project also registered 130 canals in Hirshabelle, strengthened agricultural standards and grain trade systems, and improved the quality and market competitiveness of Somali agricultural products.

Overall, the project reached 6 250 smallholder farming households, including 750 headed by women.

The Project in Brief

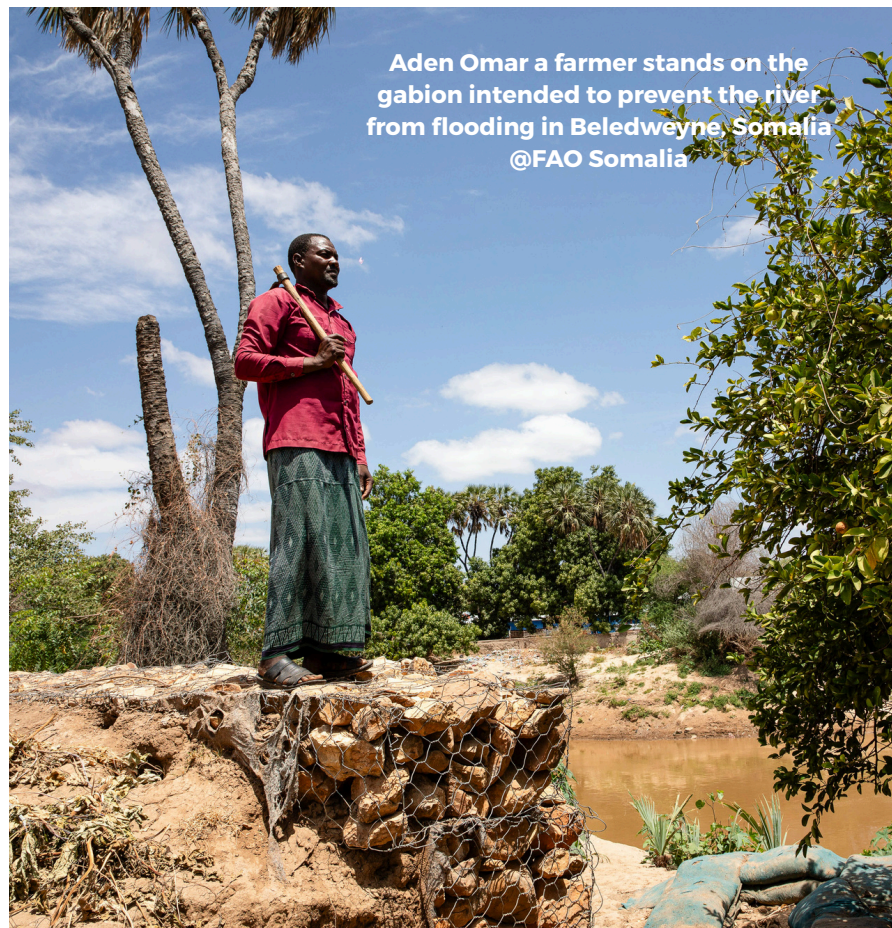
Funding: € 6.000.000

Implementing partners: Federal and Hirshabelle State Ministries of Agriculture and Irrigation

Period: 2020-2025

Location: Beledweyne and Jowhar

Objective: To increase resilience for populations in Beledweyne and riverine farmers in accessible areas of Hirshabelle State



The voice of the protagonists

Safeguarding lives and livelihoods in Beledweyne: the story of Abdisalaan

In Beledweyne, Somalia, Abdisalaan Mohamed Nur, a 53-year-old father of eight, relies on farming to sustain his family. Like many in Hiran, farming is more than just a livelihood, it is a way of life.

“In Hiran, 80 percent of the people depend on farming,” Abdisalaan shares. “But repeated floods have made it difficult. Our crops, especially mango and lemon trees, are often destroyed just as they ripen.”

When warnings of severe El Niño-related flooding came, FAO, with support from the Italian Cooperation, stepped in to prepare riverine communities. Early warnings through various media platforms urged families to act. FAO advised farmers to relocate seeds, tools and belongings to safer ground, while also constructing vital flood mitigation infrastructure.

“The warnings gave us confidence,” Abdisalaan recalls. “We evacuated in time and took measures to protect our belongings. Without the warnings and the infrastructure FAO built, the damage would have been far worse.” As a result of FAO's efforts, the impact of the floods was mitigated. Farmers like Abdisalaan saw less damage to their lands, allowing them to recover faster.



Abdisalaan Mohamed Nur uses a hoe to cultivate the soil of his farm in Beledweyne @FAO Somalia

“The infrastructure reduced the force of the water,” he says. “About 80 percent of what was built helped. But we need more support to strengthen defenses and protect the remaining areas.” Abdisalaan’s story highlights the importance of proactive measures in the face of climate challenges. With continued support, communities like his can build resilience, safeguard their livelihoods and thrive despite adverse conditions



Focus initiative: 

Kenya Informal Settlement Redevelopment Programme (KISRP) (AID 12480)

In Kenya, over 15% of the urban population lives in informal settlements, and 53% of the population is considered multidimensionally poor, meaning they do not have access to essential services such as drinking water, food, vaccinations, quality housing, and education. These settlements are also confronted with inadequate roads and drainage systems, insecure land tenure and high vulnerability to climate risks. To confront these challenges, in March 2025 the Italian Cooperation launched the Kenya Informal Settlement Redevelopment Programme (KISRP) aimed at improving connectivity, access to basic services, and security in the peri-urban and peripheral areas of the country.

The KISRP initiative, implemented by the Ministry of Lands, Public Works, Housing, and Urban Development in partnership with local authorities and communities, will intervene in the slums of Awelo (Siaya County), Kibarani Settlement Scheme (Kilifi County), and Mathare (Kajiado County), with activities that include surveying and mapping the land to facilitate the adjudication process, improving the accessibility in settlements, strengthening of security, and an improvement of the infrastructure system such as roads, rainwater collection systems, and educational and healthcare facilities. The participatory-community approach will ensure not only the social sustainability of the interventions, but will be essential to make the residents of the target settlements active protagonists in the processes of transforming places that concern them.

The Project in Brief

Funding: € 6.00.000

Implementing partners:

Ministry of Lands, Public Works, Housing, and Urban Development

Area: Siaya, Kajado and Kilifi Counties

Duration: 2025-2028

Objective: Improve connectivity and access to basic services inside and outside informal settlements, while promoting economic development and safety.




Launch ceremony of the KISRP project, Nairobi. @AICS Nairobi

P rosperity

7 AFFORDABLE AND
CLEAN ENERGY



8 DECENT WORK AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH



9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE



10 REDUCED
INEQUALITIES



Prosperity

The "Prosperity" pillar lays the foundation for a new circular economic model that ensures the full development of human potential and a more efficient and responsible use of natural resources

Rooted in the principles of the 2030 Agenda — leaving no one behind and supporting smart, sustainable and inclusive growth — it seeks to identify development pathways that minimise negative environmental impacts, promote the closing of material production and consumption cycles, and encourage the rational use of resources and the enhancement of human capital.

The Italian Cooperation supports both initiatives to support economic recovery in fragile and unstable contexts and to promote decent income opportunities through the development of entrepreneurship with high capital and social impact.

In **Kenya**, where the private sector is a key driver of development, Italy through AICS has been investing in the training, capacity-building, employability of young people and women. A growing area of strategic focus is Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), which plays a central role in addressing Kenya's significant skills gap and high youth unemployment. Italian Cooperation has responded with a coherent and expanding portfolio of initiatives targeting public vocational training institutes across multiple counties — including Nairobi, Makueni, Muranga and Mombasa — reaching vulnerable youth, women and persons with disabilities. These include the recently concluded *InJob!* initiative and four new projects launched in 2025, covering themes of inclusive innovation, skills alignment with Kenya job market, women's economic empowerment and capacity-building and employability for the most vulnerable segments of the population.

This portfolio is firmly anchored in the Kenya–Italy Sustainable Development Partnership 2023–2027, which explicitly links training, skills, employment and entrepreneurship to inclusive growth objectives. During the year, the Italian Cooperation has also continued to support the E4I Impact Entrepreneurship Centre in empowering hundreds of enterprises across different sectors such as renewable energy, manufacturing and creative industries and the Ethical Fashion Initiative, implemented by the International Trade Centre in Geneva, strengthening artisans' productive capacities and connections to international fashion supply chains.

In **Somalia**, Italy through AICS supports micro, small and medium enterprises through programmes facilitating access to credit and institutional capacity-building in collaboration with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. In 2025, a significant new initiative was launched: "Economic Opportunities and Livelihoods in the Fisheries Sector in Somalia", implemented by UNIDO and targeting the artisanal fishing sector of Bossaso, Puntland, with the aim to build a competitive and sustainable fisheries enterprise system through the strengthening of a local cooperative, the establishment of a Common Service Centre with advanced technologies, and the creation of a permanent platform for blue economy dialogue.

Finally, in **Tanzania**, the Italian Cooperation focused primarily on the agricultural sector, strengthening resilience in the agri-food system in the context of climate change across urban, peri-urban and rural areas of both the mainland and Zanzibar – including through the launch of the RES4CLIMA project, led by the University of Milan, to increase the resilience of smallholder farmers in the Arusha and Zanzibar regions.



An artisan of Gilgil cooperative supported by the Ethical Fashion Initiative at work @AICS Nairobi

Focus initiative: 

Designing the Future: a sustainable and inclusive fashion ecosystem for Kenya (AID 12864)

The project aims to enhance the experience of the Ethical Fashion Initiative (EFI), an initiative of the International Trade Centre, in managing sustainable fashion value chains in Kenya. The initiative involves 2000 artisans, micro-producers, and design entrepreneurs—mainly women and young people—from marginalized communities across the country. These participants benefit from specialized training programs in collaboration with cutting-edge fashion and leather actors that increase their opportunities to collaborate directly with major international fashion supply chains, thereby creating dignified and long-lasting employment opportunities in Kenya.

So far, one of the key achievements has been the establishment of Tujikuze Ethical Fashion Limited, a social enterprise that involves local craft cooperatives as shareholders, with a particular focus on women's inclusion. In terms of infrastructure, two production sites have been upgraded: the Don Bosco Centre in Karen, with refurbishment, new sewing machines, a metalworking workshop and a footwear production unit; and Babadogo, with the installation of 18 sewing machines.

In December 2025, 38 young Kenyans successfully completed a four-month intensive Leather Bags Production Training at Don Bosco Boys Town Technical Institute in Karen, Nairobi.



Award ceremony of
the Leather Bag
Production Training,
December 2025
@AICS Nairobi

Delivered in partnership with two leading Italian leather industry actors – Assopellettieri and the Made in Italy Tuscany Academy (MITA) – the programme equipped participants with high-quality technical and creative skills in designing and producing leather bags, as well as alternative material products, complemented by entrepreneurial and soft skills training. Three top-performing graduates were awarded apprenticeships with leading leather manufacturing companies in Italy, a testament to the exceptional standard of training achieved.



The CONAD order produced by women member of TEFI cooperative @Tujikuze

The Project in Brief

Funding: € 5.00.000

Implementing partners:

International Trade Centre – Ethical Fashion Initiative (EFI), in collaboration with Tujikuze e Artisan Fashion

Area: Nairobi

Duration: January 2024 – January 2027

Objective: To enhance the competitiveness and participation of micro and small craft enterprises and designers in Kenya within the international, regional and national sustainable value chains of the fashion and lifestyle industry.

Over the course of 2025, the artisans continued to fulfil significant orders for Italian and international companies, including a second CONAD order worth €540,000.00 for the production of Tote bags, bracelets and chockers realized with locally sourced materials and handcrafted by TEFI, one of the partner cooperatives, on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women 2025.

In September 2025, EFI also strengthened the beneficiaries' international presence by showcasing them at the Lineapelle trade fair and, for the first time, at Milan Fashion Week. The initiative also promoted social cohesion by involving traditionally rival communities, contributing to local peace and stability.

Focus initiative: **Business Incubator and Energy Innovation in Kenya (AID 012232)**

The project represents a pilot initiative in the field of partnership between academia, the private sector, and public institutions (triple helix approach) to promote entrepreneurship and job creation. The initiative supports the consolidation of the E4Impact Incubator/Accelerator, established with the support of the Italian Cooperation in 2019, enhancing its activities and improving its infrastructure. The second phase of the project builds on the original partnership between AICS, ENI, and the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, with the collaboration of UNIDO for support activities in incubation and internationalization, and focuses on the sectors of agro-industry, renewable energy, and creative and technological industries. The program has established itself as one of the main entrepreneurial development hubs in Nairobi and a reference point for economic relations between Italy and Kenya. Between 2021 and 2025, the program supported 120 SMEs – 91 through acceleration paths and 29 through incubation. The beneficiary companies recorded a 75% increase in revenue, an 80% improvement in market access, and a 75% increase in the level of tax and regulatory compliance. One of the most significant innovations of this phase was the creation of E4Invest Seed, the program's investment fund. With a total endowment of 750,000 euros, E4Invest committed 745,000 euros to 11 companies operating in sectors such as agriculture, energy efficiency, fintech, and waste technologies. Globally, the E4Impact network has mobilized over 10 million euros, supported more than 500 companies, and reached over 50,000 farmers through agribusiness programs. Collaborations with Poliarte, Ca' Colonna, Hive, ENI's Joule School of Entrepreneurship, and Heifer International's AYuTe Africa Challenge have further strengthened the program's rooting in the local ecosystem.



The Project in Brief

Funding: €
2.965.315,00

Implementing partners:

Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore di Milano (UCSC), Fondazione AVSI

Area: Nairobi, Kwale

Period: 2024 – 2027

Objective: Promote the development of enterprises with high social, economic, and environmental impact, with particular attention to also encouraging female entrepreneurship.

The voices of the protagonists: Women driving change: voices from Kenya's coffee industry

In Italy, we wake up every morning to the aroma of coffee. It is a daily, almost automatic ritual that permeates our homes, cafés and workplaces. Coffee is an integral part of our cultural identity, our lifestyle and our social life. Yet we are not always fully aware of the history, culture and, above all, the people behind this supply chain: millions of women and men in producing countries who work every day to ensure the quality, continuity and value of a product that is familiar to us, but which has distant origins. It is from this awareness that the Italian Cooperation's commitment to the coffee sector stems, symbolised by the 'Advancing Climate-Resilience and Transformation in African Coffee' (ACT), worth €15 million, signed with UNIDO in March 2025 with the aim of supporting African coffee-producing countries in the sustainable transformation of the supply chain, strengthening their climate and socio-economic resilience.

In this context, one of the primary objectives of Italian Cooperation's work in Kenya is the empowerment of women, including those active in the coffee sector. This article tells a story of coffee and its geography: a geography of cultures, flavours and traditions, offering a glimpse into Kenyan life that many readers may not yet have encountered. Through their testimonies, a glimpse emerges of the lives of those who actively participate in the coffee production chain – from bean to cup – in one of the plant's countries of origin. The women at the heart of this story, Annet, Iddha Rose and Susan, whose coffees we also had the pleasure of tasting, shared their first encounter with coffee and their perspectives on the ongoing transformation of the sector in Kenya.

In describing the world of Kenyan coffee, Annet Wawira Kariuki, manager of the Kagaari North Farmers Cooperative Society (FCS), explains that although coffee is traditionally considered a 'male-dominated crop', the sector is undergoing a profound transformation. The work of women, particularly female farmers operating at the base of the supply chain, is now increasingly recognised. Women tend the plantations, which also serve as a vital source of income for supporting their families.

The Kagaari North FCS is one of four cooperatives supported by the Caffè Corretto project, funded by the Italian Cooperation with 2.000.000 euro and implemented by a consortium of civil society organisations led by CELIM. The project aims to promote more sustainable coffee production by improving farmers' technical skills, reducing environmental impact and encouraging the active involvement of young people and women in processing and promoting local brands.

Annet began her career as an accountant and was eventually promoted to the role of manager's secretary at the cooperative. Today she oversees three processing plants and three wet mills belonging to the cooperative. Her role is central, as she acts as a bridge between the workers and the board of directors and manages all the documentation on behalf of the latter. Reflecting on her journey, she highlights the benefits brought by the Caffè Corretto project, particularly in terms of training. She has gained skills in strategic planning and in relations with farmers. She proudly cites the increase in women's participation in coffee farming as her greatest achievement.



Kagaari North FCS manager Annet Kariuki together with her assistant at the Kagaari North FCS factory, @ Lucas Oyugi / Ramadhan Said Ali

Iddha Rose Kigathi, executive secretary of the Kiama Farmers Cooperative Society (FSC) in Nyeri County, agrees on the importance of continuing such initiatives. Her cooperative is one of 21 supported by ARABIKA, another initiative of the Italian Cooperation which, from 2021 to 2025, has supported small-scale coffee producers in seven counties across Kenya, improving product quality, strengthening cooperative management and facilitating access to international markets. Thanks to ARABIKA, Kenyan coffee has gained new visibility, attracting the interest of international roasters and investors.

Having grown up in a family of coffee farmers, Iddha Rose has been surrounded by coffee since childhood. She was able to study thanks to this crop, which represents a true passion for her. Today, she oversees all the cooperative's operations, acting as a point of contact between management, staff and farmers. Elected by the members, she implements the board's decisions and provides strategic support.

Her greatest achievement, she says, is having contributed to improving farmers' living conditions, particularly in terms of income. Thanks to ARABIKA, coffee has begun to be seen not merely as a livelihood but as a business, with improvements in farming practices, management, branding and the quality of the cup. The project has also opened the doors to international markets, enabling her to make her first direct sales.

Susan, the youngest among them, embodies the gender transformation underway in the Kenyan coffee sector.

A barista recently trained at the Gititu Coffee Farmers FCS, she discovered the opportunities in the coffee world thanks to Caffè Corretto, which – as she says – 'opened her eyes'. Through her Q Grader training, she has deepened her knowledge and is now eager to continue improving her technical skills.

From an employment perspective, she notes a positive change in Kenya thanks to coffee, with greater opportunities for women in leadership roles as workers and entrepreneurs. She believes this is a favourable time to embark on a career in the sector. For her country, Susan hopes that coffee consumption – especially among young people – will continue to grow, so that coffee is not just a product for export, but also for local consumption.

The stories of Annet, Iddha Rose and Susan offer a glimpse into the dynamic world of Kenyan coffee and the experiences of the women who are shaping its future. Their voices represent just a fraction of the many women whose lives have been transformed by projects such as ARABIKA and Caffè Corretto, which create new opportunities for younger generations and strengthen every stage of the coffee supply chain. From cultivation and management to the role of baristas at the end of the supply chain, women are making an increasingly significant contribution to the future of Kenyan coffee. As Iddha Rose effectively sums up: *'A woman just needs to find her identity and be motivated in order to thrive.'*

Katarina Polojaz & Vittoria Moretti

Susan in the coffee plantation at Gititu Coffee Farm @AICS Nairobi



P eace

16 PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS



Peace

The “P” of Peace focuses on the implementation of social protection policies and poverty reduction measures, with particular attention to the most vulnerable segments of the population. It addresses the need to promote peaceful, equitable, and inclusive societies by supporting the fight against discrimination, as well as measures to combat *organized crime, corruption, and all forms of violence.

In line with SDG16 of the 2030 Agenda, the Agency works to prevent conflicts and to support peacebuilding, reconciliation, post-conflict stabilization, and the strengthening of democratic institutions. This is particularly relevant in the context of Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, countries marked by political instability and a prolonged crisis. The weakness of institutions is reflected in the limited provision of basic services and persistent insecurity, which is further exacerbated by the presence of extremist groups that hinder the country's stabilization and development.

In Somalia, partnerships with government authorities have been strengthened through the programme *Towards Peace and Stability in Somalia*, under which the Italian Government allocated €3,820,000, managed directly by the Office of the Prime Minister of Somalia and which has been extended until 2026 with a focus on institutional strengthening and fostering the resilience of vulnerable groups, particularly women and youth and supporting strategic health facilities. Other key partnerships include those with De Martino Hospital and the Somali National University, where the Italian Cooperation supports the strengthening of technical capacities and the provision of specialized training. In DRC, a “promosso” project is currently being implemented by Comunità di Sant'Egidio promoting peace education through intercultural and interfaith dialogue in North and South Kivu provinces which are affected by conflict.



Focus initiative: ★**Towards Peace and Stability in Somalia (AID 012752)**

The initiative seeks to contribute to the achievement of long-term objectives of peace and stability, security, rule of law and good governance in Somalia. It does so through targeted investments aimed at enhancing the resilience of the population and reinforcing the capacity and legitimacy of key social institutions, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected areas, adopting a nexus approach that bridges humanitarian, development, and peace objectives.

A key focus of the project is the construction of three health facilities in strategically selected districts, which are intended to expand access to essential healthcare services and to serve as tangible symbols of state presence and responsiveness.

In this sense, the intervention contributes to peace and security by reinforcing institutional capacity, rebuilding trust between communities and public authorities, and supporting the progressive restoration of basic socio-health services.

institutions. In 2025, the intervention has entered a critical phase, driven by a coordinated effort across the Office of the Prime Minister and Federal Member State Ministries of Health. This multi-level governance model is designed to strengthen ownership, coherence, and long-term sustainability across all levels of government.

The Project in Brief

Funding: € 3.820.000

Implementing partners:

Federal Office of Prime Minister of Somalia

Area: Hirshabelle, Jubaland, Galmudug

Period: 2024-2026

Objective: Supporting Somalia in a shared path that, from emergency and insecurity, through the building of resilience, leads to peace and stability.



Voice of protagonists:

Uniting peace and environmental conservation: Josephine's mission in Northern Kenya

Northern Kenya has a history marked by ethnic conflict and insecurity, which have hindered development and fuelled poverty over the years. Traditionally dependent on natural resources, communities in the country's arid and semi-arid counties (ASAL) have suffered significantly from the effects of climate change, including droughts, floods and locust swarms. The scarcity of resources has contributed to tensions, often leading to inter-ethnic conflicts.

It is against this backdrop that Josephine Ekiru grew up, witnessing first-hand violent clashes between tribes over control of grazing land and water sources. An armed ambush by suspected poachers marked a turning point in her life, strengthening her determination to build peace and demonstrating that violence is not an inevitable fate, but a challenge to be transformed into an opportunity for reconciliation.

Today, Josephine is one of the most influential figures in women's leadership within Kenya's conservation areas, promoting the participatory model developed by the Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT). This organisation operates in Kenya's ASAL with the support of Italian Cooperation to promote environmental conservation, support communities affected by climate change and foster peace, strengthening the model of community conservancies, where local communities are at the heart of resource and land management.



Josephine Ekiru during a meeting
with Conservancy members @AICS
Nairobi

As Peace Coordinator for NRT, Josephine dedicates her efforts to mediating between communities in conflict, seeking solutions to reduce tensions linked to resource scarcity. This role was traditionally held by respected elders chosen by the community; her election as a woman in a context traditionally dominated by male figures is a significant achievement. Josephine also made history by becoming the first woman to be elected chair of NRT's board of directors.

"For me, peace is when people live in harmony and share moments of joy, rather than inflicting pain on one another," she said recently.

NRT's peace programme is based on an approach that brings together conservancy managers, local elders, religious leaders, young people, women and local governments in regular meetings for conflict resolution. Josephine has organised and facilitated dozens of these meetings, receiving international recognition for her efforts: in 2021, she received the "Women Building Peace Award 2021" from the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), whilst in 2024 she was a finalist in the "Exceptional Women of Peace Awards" organised by "Pathways to Peace", and received a nomination for the "Indianapolis 2024" award.

The peace programme supported by Italian Cooperation has already had a significant impact: in recent years, it has carried out over 180 interventions to prevent conflicts in the counties of Isiolo, Samburu, Laikipia and Baringo, reducing cattle thefts from 24,082 in 2022 to 14,614 in 2023. Furthermore, with Italian support, NRT has trained and recruited ten peace ambassadors, thereby strengthening stability in these fragile areas.



Josephine Ekiru during a meeting with Conservancy members @AICS Nairobi

P Partnerships

17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



Partnerships

The Partnership pillar reflects the external dimension of Italian cooperation strategy, as outlined in Law 125/2014, and underscores that lasting results can only be achieved through effective collaboration among diverse actors – government institutions, multilateral agencies, civil society organisations and the private sector. Networking and cooperation at all levels are essential to building the integrated, sustainable interventions that neither any single actor nor any single sector can deliver alone.

Following this approach, the Nairobi Office works in synergy with a broad range of institutional, multilateral and civil society partners across Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania and the DRC.

In Kenya, the relationship with national government counterparts remains a cornerstone of the Italian Cooperation engagement. Collaboration with institutions such as the Kenya Coffee Research Institute, the Kerio Valley Development Authority (KVDA), the Coastal Development Authority, the Ministry of Environment and government specialised agencies such as NETFUND reflects a model in which Italian Cooperation reinforces national priorities and strengthens existing public systems. At the same time, AICS also engages with Kenyan and Italian civil society organisations to ensure that its initiatives are rooted in a contextual and local understanding of socio-economic, cultural and political dynamics.

These partnerships, anchored in the Kenya–Italy Sustainable Development Partnership 2023–2027 plan, form a complementary ecosystem of actors working in synergy toward shared goals of sustainable development, employment and private sector growth among others. In the field of environment and agriculture, collaboration with UNEP and the Northern Rangelands Trust (NRT) has continued to advance integrated approaches linking natural resource management, peacebuilding and income generation.

On gender equality, the Italian Cooperation maintained its strong collaboration with relevant national institutions such as the State Department for Gender and Affirmative Action, the National Government Affirmative Action Fund (NGAAF), UN Women, and OHCHR, as well as with Italian and local civil society organizations.

A notable development was AICS Nairobi assuming the chairmanship of the **Development Partners' Gender Group (DPGG)** in September 2025, a strategic forum bringing together donors, international agencies, government authorities and civil society to harmonise action and promote synergies on gender equality in Kenya.

In Somalia, AICS continues to work through multilateral channels, collaborating with UN Agencies such as FAO – including through the SWALIM project, which provides critical water and land information to government institutions, NGOs and development agencies – as well as with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank on financial inclusion and institutional capacity-building. A significant new partnership was established in 2025 with UNIDO, together with Federpesca and UNIDO ITPO Italy, for the implementation of the fisheries development initiative in Bossaso, Puntland. This initiative exemplifies the "Sistema Italia" approach, bringing together Italian technical expertise and commercial networks in support of Somalia's blue economy ambitions.

In Tanzania, the dialogue with government counterparts – including the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, the Prime Minister's Office and their respective agencies has continued to strengthen the "Sistema Italia". Italian civil society organisations, local authorities and research institutions remain key partners across health, agriculture, education and climate resilience, working in close coordination with local institutions in both mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. A notable 2025 milestone was the launch of a new partnership with the Politecnico di Torino for a technical assistance programme supporting the Eastern Africa Statistical Training Centre (EASTC) in Dar es Salaam.



DEVELOPEMENT PARTNERS GENDER GROUP (DPGG) | 18TH SEPTEMBER 2025

Focus Initiative: 
MISHDP II (Malindi Integrated Social and Health Development Programme)
(AID 11685)

In 2025, the construction of a new primary school in Burangi, Kilifi County, was completed under the MISHDP II program. The project allowed the transfer of the school from its original location, situated on a community land along the Sabaki River, which had become unsafe over time due to severe soil erosion and structural cracks in the buildings.

The new facility, currently in use, includes eight classrooms for primary and lower secondary school, a science laboratory, and three toilet blocks, benefiting approximately 622 students. However, challenges related to overcrowding remain, with an average of about 60 students per class and peaks above 100, well beyond recommended standards, highlighting the need for further expansions to ensure quality and access to education.

MISHDP II is implemented by the Coastal Development Authority (CDA), with technical support from AICS and in collaboration with local authorities and local communities. Based on the results of the first phase (2008–2012), the program aims to strengthen essential services in the areas of Malindi and Magarini through investments in healthcare, education, and civil infrastructure. Among the achievements by 2025 is the completion of the new Intensive Care Unit at the Malindi Sub-County Hospital, equipped with a High Dependency Unit for clinically unstable or high-risk patients requiring intensive monitoring.

The Project in Brief

Funding: € 6.4 million

Implementing partners: Coastal Development Authority (CDA)

Area: Kilifi County

Period: 2023-2027

Objective: to promote the socio-economic development of the sub-counties of Malindi and Magarini through initiatives in the education, health and infrastructure sectors

Children walk towards the newly built school of Burangi, Kilifi County @AICS Nairobi



Focus Initiative: **Public administration Italy-Somalia – Training of Somali State Officials (AID 013183)**

The Project in Brief

Funding: € 1.500.000

Implementing partners:

Somali National University, University of Palermo, Tor Vergata Foundation

Area: Mogadishu, Banadir

Period: 2025-2028

Objective: Improve the responsiveness and internal efficiency of the Somali Public Administration in the sectors of university education, health, and justice

In May 2025 AICS launched a three-year initiative - The “Italy–Somalia Public Administration – Training of Somali State Officials” (PAIS-FUS) programme with a contribution of €1.5 million, realized by the University of Palermo in partnership with the Somali National University and the Tor Vergata Foundation of Rome.

The project aims to strengthen the competencies of Somali civil servants through the establishment of an Executive Master’s Degree in Public Administration Governance and Management at the Somali National University, offering two curricula focused on the strategic sectors of health and justice and providing specialised, high-level training for public officials and administrative managers both within the Central State Administration and across the Federal Member States.

During the implementation period the programme will train 140 public officials and 10–15 university lecturers, ensuring the sustainability of the training process.

By focusing on these two key public sectors, the project seeks to improve access to essential public services and support the effective enjoyment of fundamental human rights, contributing to the achievement of SDG 3,16 and 17, in alignment with Somalia’s national priorities, as well as its regional and international commitments.



Kick-off ceremony of the PAIS FUS initiative, Mogadishu, Somalia, @AICS Nairobi

The voices of the protagonists:

Kadigia Mahmoud: Returning Home to Build Somalia's Legal Identity System

Dr. Kadigia Ali Mohamud is the Regional Coordinator for Eastern Africa and the Horn of Africa at the Research and Development Unit of the Italian Geographical Society (SGI).

With a background combining medicine, public health, and demography, she has spent years assessing institutional feasibility and implementing civil registers and large-scale demographic data collection in volatile, multi-clan environments across the Horn of Africa — with the aim of building sustainable legal identity systems as a foundational component of civil infrastructure.



Kadigia Mahmoud

Through the third component of the initiative "Restoring the functionality and efficiency of infrastructure in the health sector and institutional strengthening" — implemented by SGI and funded by Italian Cooperation — Kadigia provided strategic leadership, technical oversight, and management to create a sustainable legal identity system in Somalia. Her role, in her own words, was to "bridge the gap between technical implementation and political will to deliver a tested, functional model for a population register that can be scaled up to serve all of Somalia."

The project was completed in three phases over eight years, culminating in a tested model in Garowe city, capital of Puntland, between 2023 and 2025. It rests on four core components. First, a detailed digital geographic map of the test area was established, providing a modern address system and the physical infrastructure for the register. This was complemented by a legal framework adapted specifically to Somalia's context, ensuring the system operates within a recognised rule-of-law structure. Building on these foundations, software applications were deployed to collect personal, demographic, and biometric data, feeding into a centralised digital database supported by a secure paper archive.

Finally, the system assigns a unique identification code to each household and individual (Codice Fiscale), enabling the issuance of digital certificates and secure registration cards.

"This tested model is not just a database; it is a foundational governance tool. If implemented with strong political will, adequate funding, and a focus on rights and inclusion, its advantages are transformative — improving governance, service delivery, legal rights and protection, and creating the basis for a fair tax system, while facilitating oversight of immigration and displaced populations. In essence, this model serves as a blueprint for a modern, inclusive state in Somalia, turning the aspiration of accountable governance into a practical reality."

Looking back, Kadigia recalls that when the then Italian Ambassador and the Head of AICS Nairobi office asked her to return to Somalia after 21 years, she chose to focus on two critical areas: training young Somali medical professionals to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality, and exploring whether a legal identity system could be built in a country where all civil infrastructure had been destroyed due to the prolonged conflict.

Thanks to the support of the Italian Embassy and the Italian Cooperation, that journey has eventually resulted in a system which is now developed, tested, and ready for deployment across Somalia's regions and federal institutions.



I would have not achieved anything without the support of my family, the Italian Geographical Society President and colleagues, the Italian Ambassadors to Somalia, the AICS Head of Office and staff, my Somali colleagues and, of course, the Puntland Authorities and Garowe Population. As a technical expert, and as a Somali diaspora, I can proudly say we succeeded all together. It was a long and difficult road, but it was absolutely worth it.



Acknowledgments

The AICS Office in Nairobi wishes to express its deep gratitude to all the individuals and institutions that have made the work documented in this 2025 Annual Report possible. A

special thanks goes to all partner CSOs, UN Agencies, local authorities, research institutions, and private sector entities that, with dedication and professionalism, implement projects in Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in collaboration with communities and local partners, to achieve lasting and inclusive results.

We are also deeply grateful to the Governments and partner institutions of Kenya, Tanzania, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Somalia for their cooperation and for ensuring the necessary conditions for the implementation of development cooperation programs. . Heartfelt thanks also go to all the staff at the Nairobi Office — local and international colleagues — whose daily commitment, competence, and team spirit make it possible to achieve the objectives of Italian cooperation.

This Annual Report was prepared by the Communication team of the Nairobi Office, under the supervision of the Head of Office.





Thank You



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