



# THE SHIRIKISHO LA VYAMA VYA WAKULIMA WADOGO TANZANIA ANNUAL REPORT 2025



**Advancing Agroecology, Food Sovereignty, and Smallholder Farmers'  
Representation in Tanzania**

**January – December 2025**

## I. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SHIWAKUTA extends its sincere gratitude to all individuals, organizations, and partners whose support supported the Federation’s achievements in 2025. Special appreciation is extended to SHIWAKUTA members for their steadfast commitment. Through your time, resources, and active participation, the Federation has remained a credible and vibrant voice for more than 230,000 smallholder farmers across Tanzania. These contributions clearly demonstrate the strength of collective action in advancing inclusive and sustainable agricultural transformation.

On behalf of the leadership of SHIWAKUTA, sincere appreciation is conveyed to the Steering Committee for its strategic leadership, guidance, and oversight. The Committee’s commitment to sound governance, accountability, and evidence-based decision-making has strengthened institutional effectiveness and enhanced SHIWAKUTA’s advocacy impact at local, national, and regional levels.

We further express heartfelt appreciation to SHIWAKUTA’s development partners, particularly IDP and TRIAS - Belgian organizations supporting strategic advocacy through MVIWAARUSHA. Their financial and technical support has enabled the Federation to strengthen smallholder farmers’ capacities, promote agroecology, and influence policy processes, while ensuring that grassroots experiences are translated into credible and policy-relevant advocacy messages.

SHIWAKUTA also acknowledges the valuable collaboration with AFSA and its partners, through whom continental programs have been successfully implemented in Tanzania, enhancing knowledge exchange, capacity building, and policy influence. Similarly, FAO’s support, particularly in Katavi Region, is highly appreciated for strengthening climate resilience interventions and promoting sustainable agricultural practices at community level.

Our sincere gratitude is extended to the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania for its cooperation and continued recognition, which have contributed to an enabling environment for SHIWAKUTA’s work. Appreciation is also conveyed to like-minded civil society organizations for their collaboration in strengthening collective advocacy and enriching policy dialogue.

Finally, the leadership of SHIWAKUTA commends the Secretariat staff for their professionalism, dedication, and resilience. Your commitment remains central to the realization of the Federation’s vision and to sustaining trust among members, partners, and stakeholders. This Annual Report reflects shared effort, collective responsibility, and committed leadership.

..... <b>Elias Kawea</b> <b>Chairperson, SHIWAKUTA</b>	..... <b>Richard Masandika</b> <b>Coordinator and Secretary, SHIWAKUTA</b>
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## II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The year 2025 marked a milestone for SHIWAKUTA, coinciding with its fifth anniversary and the consolidation of its role as a leading national voice for smallholder farmers in Tanzania. Through strategic interventions in advocacy, institutional strengthening, climate resilience, and capacity building, the Federation demonstrated that a united farmer voice is a powerful driver of policy influence, inclusive livelihoods, and agroecological transformation.

During the year, SHIWAKUTA directly reached 763 participants, including 403 women and 360 men, with youth accounting for 53 percent of all beneficiaries across trainings, workshops, policy dialogues, and community-level initiatives. This deliberate focus on women and youth ensured inclusive participation and strengthened the next generation of agroecological leaders, advocates, and entrepreneurs.

The Federation's work was guided by a clear strategy to link grassroots realities with national, regional, and international policy platforms. By strengthening member organizations, advancing women's leadership, supporting youth engagement in sustainable agripreneurs, and promoting evidence-based advocacy, SHIWAKUTA ensured that farmers' voices not only reached decision-makers but actively shaped policy debates, budget priorities, and regional strategies.

Key milestones in 2025 underscored SHIWAKUTA's growing credibility and influence. These included appointment to the National Agroforestry Advisory Committee (NAACO) with the Deputy Chairperson role; sustained engagement in national policy forums on seed systems, agroecology, and agricultural value chains; international participation in P4C and Land-Hub 2025 in Germany and the WRF meeting in Togo; and the establishment of climate-resilient community initiatives, notably tree nurseries and complementary community-based economic mechanisms in Katavi Region.

Through these achievements, SHIWAKUTA strengthened institutional capacity, expanded membership, and enhanced advocacy platforms that promote inclusive participation, innovation, and evidence-driven decision-making. Strategic partnerships with government institutions, development partners, civil society, and continental networks amplified impact across local, national, and regional levels.

Despite challenges related to policy coherence, resource constraints, and infrastructure, SHIWAKUTA effectively leveraged strategic collaboration, technical expertise, and grassroots knowledge to navigate barriers. Lessons from 2025 reaffirm the importance of inclusive engagement, gender- and youth-responsive programming, evidence-based advocacy, cross-border cooperation, and adaptive implementation in advancing smallholder farmers' interests.

This Annual Report therefore serves not only as a record of achievements, but also as a strategic advocacy instrument - demonstrating SHIWAKUTA's capacity to influence policy, empower communities, and strengthen resilient and sustainable agricultural systems. It reaffirms the Federation's commitment to inclusive, farmer-centered development and provides a strong foundation for continued growth and transformative impact across Tanzania.

## **1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 ABOUT SHIWAKUTA**

Shirikisho la Vyama vya Wakulima Wadogo Tanzania – SHIWAKUTA (The Confederation of Smallholder Farmers’ Associations in Tanzania) is a non-political, non-profit, member-driven organization established to champion the rights, livelihoods, and voices of smallholder farmers across Tanzania. Legally registered under the Society Ordinance Act (Registration No. S.A. 22435) on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021, SHIWAKUTA’s foundations were laid in February 2019, emerging from a collective recognition of the urgent need for smallholder farmers to unite, access essential services, and participate meaningfully in policy and decision-making at local, national, regional, and international levels.

Over its first five years, SHIWAKUTA has steadfastly pursued its vision of a vibrant network of farmer associations capable of delivering critical services, driving innovation in production, and influencing policy reforms that shape the agricultural sector. Its mission centers on empowering farmers, livestock keepers, and fishermen to strengthen their capacities, enhance the value of their activities, and amplify their collective voice in shaping sustainable and inclusive rural development.

Operating across diverse agro-ecological zones, SHIWAKUTA strategically focuses on institutional strengthening, advocacy, and innovation, with a strong emphasis on agroecology, climate resilience, and sustainable farming practices. In celebrating its fifth year since establishment, SHIWAKUTA proudly unites 32 member associations, representing approximately 230,000 smallholder farmers engaged in crop production, horticulture, livestock, fishing, forestry, and beekeeping. Beyond membership growth, this milestone highlights SHIWAKUTA’s commitment to promoting food sovereignty, empowering farmers to participate in decision-making processes, and ensuring that their voices shape policies and programs that affect their livelihoods and communities. Together, this dynamic, inclusive network is driving sustainable livelihoods, equitable development and meaningful transformation across Tanzania’s rural landscapes.

SHIWAKUTA’s governance framework comprises a general membership, a Steering Committee, and a Secretariat that oversees daily operations. Its work is amplified through strategic partnerships with government ministries, local and international NGOs, research institutions, and networks such as the Tanzania Alliance for Biodiversity (TABIO), the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA), and the World Rural Forum (WRF). These collaborations enable SHIWAKUTA to advocate effectively at both national and global levels, advancing policies that promote sustainable agriculture, food sovereignty, and resilient rural livelihoods.

As SHIWAKUTA marks its fifth year of operation, it continues to demonstrate that a united and well-organized farmer voice is a powerful catalyst for social, economic, and environmental transformation across Tanzania’s agricultural landscape.

### **1.2 Rationale of the Report**

This Annual Report marks SHIWAKUTA's fifth year of operation—a significant milestone that reflects the organization's journey from its founding vision to a dynamic, influential network of smallholder farmers across Tanzania. The report serves as a critical instrument of accountability, learning, and advocacy, enabling development partners, policymakers, member associations, and strategic allies to understand, appreciate, and support the tangible impact of SHIWAKUTA's work.

It documents the organization's efforts to strengthen institutional capacity, promote agroecology, advance food sovereignty, and ensure farmers' inclusion in decision-making processes, highlighting how these interventions contribute to sustainable rural livelihoods, climate-resilient farming, and equitable development. Beyond reporting achievements, the document captures challenges, lessons learned, and strategic insights, providing a foundation for adaptive programming, informed policy dialogue, and innovative collaborations.

By presenting evidence-based results and reflective analysis, this Annual Report not only celebrates SHIWAKUTA's growth and the empowerment of its 230,000 members but also demonstrates the organization's critical role as a catalyst for transformative change in Tanzania's agricultural landscape. It is both a record of accomplishment and a call to continued support and partnership, ensuring that smallholder farmers' voices remain central to national and regional agricultural development agendas.

### **1.3 Purpose and Methodology of the Report**

The purpose of this Annual Report is to provide a comprehensive, transparent, and evidence-based account of SHIWAKUTA's achievements, strategic engagements, and organizational growth during the period January to December 2025. It is designed to inform and inspire development partners, policymakers, member associations, and strategic allies, showcasing how the organization translates its mission into meaningful outcomes that advance agroecology, food sovereignty, climate-resilient farming, and farmers' inclusion in decision-making processes.

The report is grounded in a rigorous methodology, combining qualitative and quantitative data from multiple sources to ensure accuracy, coherence, and analytical depth. Key sources include Secretariat implementation reports, documentation from constitutional and advisory meetings, training and workshop records, policy dialogue reports, and outputs from strategic collaborations, particularly with the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA) and other national and regional partners.

All information was carefully validated, synthesized, and organized according to SHIWAKUTA's strategic themes, including institutional strengthening, advocacy, innovation, and sustainability. This approach ensures that the report presents a clear and holistic picture of SHIWAKUTA's work, highlighting results, identifying challenges, and drawing lessons that inform future programming, policy engagement, and partnership opportunities. Ultimately, this Annual Report serves as both a record of achievement and a tool for reflection, strategic learning, and continued advocacy for smallholder farmers across Tanzania.

## **2. IMPLEMENTED ACTIVITIES AND STATUS**

### **2.1 OVERVIEW OF IMPLEMENTED ACTIVITIES AND INSTITUTIONAL PROGRESS**

During 2025, SHIWAKUTA implemented a diverse but interlinked set of activities aimed at strengthening its institutional capacity, empowering member organizations and communities, and advancing farmer-centered policy influence. The interventions presented in this section demonstrate how internal governance consolidation, member capacity development, innovation in agroecological enterprises, and structured advocacy were deliberately pursued as mutually reinforcing pillars to support sustainable food systems transformation.

The sections that follow (2.2–2.6) document SHIWAKUTA’s practical actions and results across community resilience building, membership expansion, national and regional policy engagement, market and enterprise development, and constitutional governance processes. Together, they illustrate the Federation’s growing institutional maturity and its ability to translate grassroots experiences into credible engagement with policymakers, development partners, and regional platforms, while remaining accountable to its membership and mission.

### **2.2 STRENGTHENING MEMBER CAPACITY AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE**

#### **2.2.1 Strengthening Members**

SHIWAKUTA’s approach to strengthening members during the reporting period focused on reinforcing governance systems, building climate and economic resilience, and promoting sustainable production models. These efforts were implemented through tailored trainings, follow-up engagements, and strategic partnerships, ensuring that member organizations are better equipped to respond to both institutional and community-level challenges.

##### **2.2.1.1 Governance Strengthening for JUWAWARU – Ruvuma Region**

During 2025, SHIWAKUTA undertook targeted governance strengthening support for its member, JUWAWARU - aimed at consolidating leadership effectiveness, accountability, and strategic direction. A dedicated follow-up session with the JUWAWARU leadership in Songea provided an opportunity to assess progress, identify governance gaps, and offer practical guidance on organizational management and member representation. These engagements reinforced internal systems for decision-making and enhanced the union’s capacity to coordinate and serve its growing membership base in Ruvuma Region.

As a result of these governance consolidation efforts, JUWAWARU demonstrated notable institutional maturity and external recognition. The union successfully strengthened its engagement with key stakeholders and emerged as one of the actors entrusted with crop aggregation roles under the National Food Reserve Agency (NFRA). This achievement reflects improved governance credibility and positions JUWAWARU as a reliable intermediary between smallholder farmers and national food security mechanisms.

### 2.2.1.2 Climate Resilience and Environmental Conservation – Katavi Region

At community level in Katavi Region, SHIWAKUTA focused on enhancing climate resilience through practical training on environmental conservation and climate change adaptation. Two intensive training phases were conducted for members of the Jipe-Moyo environmental group under JUWAWAKA in Mpimbwe District, emphasizing tree planting, nursery establishment, and agroecological land management. The trainings deliberately promoted the participation of women and youth, strengthening inclusive community ownership of climate adaptation initiatives.



These efforts resulted in the establishment of a functional community-managed tree nursery producing over 6,000 seedlings of fruit, timber, and shade trees. Collaboration with Mpimbwe District Council further reinforced the initiative, with the Council committing to provide additional fruit seedlings to group members. Together, these actions strengthened local adaptive capacity while promoting long-term environmental restoration and diversified livelihood opportunities.

### 2.2.1.3 Strengthening Community Microfinance Groups (CMGs) – Katavi Region

To complement environmental interventions with economic resilience, SHIWAKUTA implemented structured training on Community Microfinance Groups (CMGs) linked to livelihood activities such as beekeeping. The trainings were delivered in two phases across three community groups - Jipe Moyo, Mkombozi Vijana, and Ushindi - located in Mpimbwe District. Participants were equipped with practical skills on savings mobilization, internal lending, record keeping, and group governance.

Following the trainings, the supported groups initiated formal registration processes with the District Social Development Office, strengthening their legal recognition and sustainability. Trained leaders also extended sensitization efforts within their communities, leading to the formation of additional CMGs in Mlele and Mpanda districts. These developments expanded access to community-based financial services and improved household income diversification among member communities.

#### **2.2.1.4 Promotion of Agroecology and Sustainable Markets**

SHIWAKUTA strengthened agroecological capacity by facilitating the participation of staff and member leaders in a regional Training of Trainers (ToT) programme organized by AFSA in Kampala, Uganda. The training brought together participants from nine African countries and focused on strengthening agroecological enterprises, social markets, and advisory systems. This exposure enabled participants to deepen their understanding of sustainable production models and market-oriented agroecological approaches.

The skills and knowledge gained through this regional engagement are expected to generate long-term benefits at national and grassroots levels. Trained participants will serve as a core pool of internal facilitators, supporting the transfer of agroecological knowledge, enterprise development skills, and market linkages to SHIWAKUTA members, thereby strengthening the Federation's overall capacity to promote sustainable food systems.

#### **2.2.2 Mobilization of New Members in Iringa, Njombe, and Ruvuma**

During the reporting period, SHIWAKUTA undertook a strategic outreach mission in the Southern Highlands corridor covering Iringa, Njombe, and Ruvuma regions. The mission responded to increasing interest from farmer groups and networks seeking affiliation with the Federation and aimed to provide clear information on SHIWAKUTA's mandate, values, and membership procedures.

Through direct engagements and sensitization meetings, farmer networks in districts such as Mufindi, Wanging'ombe, Njombe, and Mbinga Districts - expressed strong interest in joining SHIWAKUTA. These interactions enhanced farmers' understanding of the benefits of collective action and national-level representation.

By the end of the period, nine farmer organizations were at various stages of completing membership application processes. This growing interest reflects SHIWAKUTA's rising visibility and recognition as a credible national platform for organizing, representing, and amplifying the voice of smallholder farmers in Tanzania.

### **2.3 POLICY ENGAGEMENT AND ADVOCACY FOR FARMER-CENTERED FOOD SYSTEMS**

In 2025, policy engagement and advocacy remained a core strategic pillar of SHIWAKUTA's work, attached in the Federation's mandate to amplify smallholder farmers' voices in national, regional, and continental decision-making spaces. Across all engagements, SHIWAKUTA deliberately embedded advocacy within its interventions, ensuring that evidence from grassroots realities informed policy dialogue on seed systems, agroecology, family farming, youth inclusion, and market access. Through convening power, strategic partnerships, and evidence-based dialogue, SHIWAKUTA advanced farmer-centered perspectives within formal policy processes and multi-stakeholder platforms.

These engagements strengthened recognition of agroecology and farmer-managed seed systems as viable and strategic pathways for climate resilience, food security, and inclusive rural development. By working closely with government institutions, development partners,

and farmer organizations, SHIWAKUTA positioned itself as a credible national convener and policy actor capable of bridging grassroots experiences with high-level policy formulation.

### **2.3.1 Advocacy on Inclusive and Sustainable Value Chains – Forestry and Timber Sector**

SHIWAKUTA strengthened its advocacy on inclusive value chains through the successful convening of a National Consultative Workshop on the Timber Value Chain, organized in collaboration with FAO and held in Arusha on 25 March 2025. The workshop aimed to validate research findings on strengthening smallholder tree growers and improving the timber value chain in Tanzania. Approximately 60 participants attended, including smallholder farmer representatives, timber processors, traders, technical experts, and representatives from relevant institutions. SHIWAKUTA used the platform to advocate for policies that recognize smallholder tree farmers as key actors in sustainable forestry and rural livelihoods.

Complementing the national dialogue, SHIWAKUTA engaged directly with FAO technical teams based in Rome through an online policy presentation, where it articulated farmers' perspectives on challenges and opportunities within the timber sector. Advocacy messages emphasized the need for supportive regulatory frameworks, fair market access, and investment in farmer-led forestry enterprises. These engagements elevated smallholder farmers' voices in a sector often dominated by large-scale commercial interests.

As a result, SHIWAKUTA strengthened its strategic relationship with FAO and reinforced its positioning as a national farmers' federation capable of convening credible policy dialogues at both national and international levels. The engagement advanced policy discussions on inclusive timber value chains and laid groundwork for future collaboration focused on sustainable forestry, climate mitigation, and income diversification for smallholder farmers.

#### **NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS: SHIWAKUTA EMBRACES NATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN FOREST AGRICULTURE ADVISORY**

On 11 June 2025, the Government of Tanzania officially appointed SHIWAKUTA as a key member of the National Agroforestry Advisory Committee (NAACO), a high-level platform convened by five sector ministries and comprising critical private sector and stakeholder representatives. This official recognition highlighted the government's recognition in SHIWAKUTA's expertise and its continued commitment to championing smallholder and sustainable agroecological practices at the national level.

The formal launch of NAACO was officially presided over by the Minister of Natural Resources and Tourism, Hon. Dr. Pindi Chana, on 6 August 2025. The event brought together high-level government officials, development partners, civil society organizations, and private sector actors engaged in forest-agriculture landscapes. SHIWAKUTA was represented by five delegates, led by the Coordinator, who actively participated in the proceedings and technical discussions. The launch highlighted SHIWAKUTA's growing prominence in national policy processes, particularly its contribution to shaping strategic advisory frameworks that support the effective implementation of the Second National Forest Agriculture Strategy (2024–2031).

Beyond membership, SHIWAKUTA was entrusted with the Deputy Chairperson position within the committee, a recognition of its leadership, credibility, and deep engagement in agroecological advocacy. In this role, SHIWAKUTA not only contributes to policy advisory but also influences high-level decision-making on forest agriculture, ensuring that smallholder farmer perspectives remain central in national strategies.

This milestone is a testament to SHIWAKUTA's growing impact and the trust it has earned from government institutions. By securing both representation and leadership within NAACO, SHIWAKUTA has solidified its position as a national champion for sustainable, inclusive, and farmer-centered forest agriculture, reinforcing its advocacy vision and inspiring confidence among stakeholders across Tanzania.



*During inauguration of the National Agroforestry Advisory Committee (NAACO) – in Dodoma*

### **2.3.2 Youth Advocacy in Agroecology and Sustainable Agribusiness**

Recognizing youth as critical actors in the transformation of food systems, SHIWAKUTA convened the first-ever National Youth Entrepreneurs Workshop on Agroecological Value Chains on 27 May 2025 in Dodoma, in collaboration with its member organization MVIWAMORO. The one-day workshop brought together 45 participants, including 32 youth entrepreneurs from six regions and six government officials from relevant sector ministries and institutions. The dialogue was anchored in research findings presented by MVIWAMORO, providing evidence-based entry points for advocacy.

The workshop created a safe and structured space for young farmers and agripreneurs to articulate policy and structural barriers affecting their participation in agroecological value chains. Key advocacy issues raised included limited access to affordable finance, insecure access to productive land, weak extension services, and inadequate policy incentives for youth-led sustainable enterprises. SHIWAKUTA deliberately facilitated direct interaction between youth and government officials, reinforcing its role as a bridge between grassroots voices and policy actors.

As an advocacy outcome, the workshop strengthened recognition of youth as strategic partners in agroecology rather than beneficiaries alone. It also reinforced SHIWAKUTA's internal commitment to mainstream youth participation across its programmes and policy engagements. The dialogue contributed to shaping policy narratives on youth employment, sustainable agriculture, and inclusive agribusiness development at national level.

### **2.3.3 Advocacy for Family Farming and National Policy Alignment**

In its role as Secretariat of the Tanzania National Committee for Family Farming (TANCOFF), SHIWAKUTA played a central advocacy role in organizing the National Workshop to Review and Launch the National Action Plan (NAP) for Family Farming on 29 July 2025 in Dodoma. The event convened 54 participants, including representatives from farmer organizations, government ministries, research institutions, NGOs, media, and development partners.

The workshop provided a structured platform for validating the NAP and aligning it with national development priorities and the United Nations Decade of Family Farming (UNDF) commitments. SHIWAKUTA facilitated inclusive policy dialogue that enabled government officials and researchers to respond directly to concerns raised by smallholder farmers and civil society actors. Advocacy messages emphasized the central role of family farming - as articulated under the UNDF framework - in advancing food security, rural employment, climate resilience, and inclusive economic growth.



Participants in different actions during the NAP validation Workshop in Dodoma

The successful validation and launch of the NAP represented a major advocacy milestone for SHIWAKUTA, demonstrating its ability to influence the domestication of international frameworks into actionable national policy instruments. The process strengthened multi-stakeholder ownership of the NAP and further consolidated SHIWAKUTA’s standing as a legitimate national voice for smallholder and family farmers in Tanzania.

### 2.3.4 Regional and National Advocacy on Agroecology Markets and Trade

#### 2.3.4.1 Regional Advocacy on Agroecology Markets and Trade (EAC Level)

SHIWAKUTA’s regional advocacy was informed by a multi-country study conducted by AFSA across EAC member states, which examined policy, market, and trade barriers affecting agroecological value chains. Tanzania-specific findings from this research were validated and

shared during a regional multi-stakeholder workshop held on 15 August 2025 in Arusha, ensuring that national realities contributed directly to regional policy dialogue.

The workshop convened 64 participants, including policymakers, government officials, farmer leaders, NGOs, researchers, cross-border traders, and media practitioners, and was complemented by field visits to Kilombero Market in Arusha and agroecological farmers and groups in Karatu District. Key advocacy issues included misalignment between national and EAC trade policies, inadequate cross-border infrastructure, lack of HS codes for agroecological products, high certification costs, and excessive bureaucracy affecting smallholder farmers.

As a result, the engagement produced consolidated policy recommendations targeting national authorities and EAC institutions, elevating Tanzania’s priorities within regional trade discussions. SHIWAKUTA strengthened its regional advocacy profile, ensured farmers’ experiences informed EAC-level processes, and reinforced agroecology’s recognition as a viable, market-oriented approach to food systems transformation.

#### **2.3.4.2 National Advocacy on Agroecology Markets and Trade (Tanzania Level)**

At the national level, SHIWAKUTA conducted a Tanzania-focused study on agroecological markets and trade with support from AFSA, generating detailed evidence on domestic value chains, regulatory barriers, SME participation, market access, and certification challenges facing smallholder farmers. The study complemented regional findings by grounding advocacy in country-specific realities.

Findings were disseminated through two phased trainings for agroecological SMEs, followed by a national multi-stakeholder workshop organized using SHIWAKUTA’s internal resources and held on 18 December 2025 in Dodoma. The workshop brought together 125 participants, including farmers from all SHIWAKUTA member associations, government representatives, researchers, NGOs, development partners, and media.





Participants during the National Advocacy on Agroecology Markets and Trade

As a result, the National Multi-Stakeholder Workshop produced a unified set of advocacy resolutions reflecting the priorities of farmers, pastoralists, and fishers for advancing agroecological markets and trade in Tanzania. Participants resolved to strengthen systemic advocacy for policy, regulatory, and infrastructure reforms that enable smallholder producers to access domestic and regional markets. Central advocacy positions included accelerating the ban of internationally restricted pesticides, countering negative narratives on agroecology, protecting indigenous seeds, and promoting food sovereignty as a fundamental right linked to public health, environmental sustainability, and inclusive economic growth.

In practical terms, the resolutions reinforced SHIWAKUTA’s role as a national convener and policy voice by committing members and partners to sustained campaigns on consumer awareness, research, market development, and value-chain-wide advocacy, from production and value addition to certification and trade. The outcomes strengthened collaboration with government, research institutions, academia, media, and the private sector, advancing the integration of agroecology into national trade, SME development, and food systems policies while positioning smallholder producers at the center of Tanzania’s sustainable food systems agenda.

## **2.4 INNOVATION, AGROECOLOGICAL ENTERPRISES, AND TERRITORIAL MARKETS**

In 2025, SHIWAKUTA consolidated agroecological entrepreneurship and territorial markets as a strategic pillar for translating agroecology into tangible economic opportunities for smallholder farmers, women, and youth. Beyond policy influence, the Federation deliberately invested in evidence generation, enterprise support, and market engagement to demonstrate that agroecology is not only environmentally sound but also economically viable. Through research, capacity development, and national platforms, SHIWAKUTA strengthened the link between producers, SMEs, and markets while advancing advocacy for inclusive, resilient, and territorially grounded food systems.

### **2.4.1 Strengthening Agroecological SMEs and Territorial Market Actors**

A central focus of SHIWAKUTA’s 2025 interventions was strengthening agroecological small and medium enterprises (SMEs) as key drivers of territorial markets. With support from AFSA, SHIWAKUTA conducted a national study between June and August 2025 on agroecological entrepreneurship, cross-border trade, and territorial markets. The study generated critical

evidence on market functionality, participation of women and youth, product diversity, and governance arrangements, revealing both growing demand for agroecological products and persistent constraints such as infrastructure gaps, high certification costs, non-tariff barriers, and weak standards harmonization. This evidence significantly informed SHIWAKUTA's advocacy for enabling policies and public investment in agroecological SMEs.



SMEs training on agroecological entrepreneurship, cross-border trade, and territorial markets held in Arusha and Dodoma.

Building on the study findings, SHIWAKUTA organized a two-day national capacity-building workshop for Agroecological Entrepreneurs and Territorial Market actors in October 2025 in Arusha. Participants drawn from diverse value chains - including honey, moringa, spices, cereals, herbal products, and traditional foods - strengthened their capacities in enterprise management, product quality, market access, and collective advocacy. The workshop also served as a platform for peer learning and dialogue with policymakers, reinforcing SMEs' voices in shaping inclusive agroecological market systems.

These efforts were further consolidated through a one-day capacity-building training held in Dodoma in December 2025, engaging 40 agroecological SMEs, farmer organizations, and women- and youth-led enterprises. Practical sessions on standards compliance, value addition, branding, packaging, and access to EAC markets enabled participants to develop concrete enterprise improvement plans and strengthen collaborative networks. Collectively, these interventions enhanced the competitiveness of agroecological SMEs while positioning them as active advocates for territorial markets that support food sovereignty, climate resilience, and inclusive economic development.

#### 2.4.2 Agroecology Visibility through the National Agricultural Exhibition 2025

SHIWAKUTA's participation in the National Agricultural Exhibition (Nanenane) 2025, held at Nzuguni Agricultural Grounds in Dodoma, significantly enhanced the visibility of agroecology as an innovative, viable, and farmer-led development pathway. The Federation was represented by 13 participants among them 8 women and 5 men - drawn from SHIWAKUTA member organizations across diverse regions of Tanzania. Through a dedicated exhibition booth, farmers and agroecological SMEs showcased concrete innovations in agroecological production, processing, and marketing, demonstrating the diversity, quality, and market potential of farmer-led solutions.

Beyond exhibition, the SHIWAKUTA booth functioned as a strategic advocacy and learning space. Farmers and representatives engaged directly with policymakers, extension officers, consumers, and private-sector actors, sharing practical experiences and evidence on how agroecology strengthens livelihoods, protects ecosystems, and builds resilient territorial markets. These interactions reinforced the role of smallholder farmers as innovators and key actors in shaping sustainable food systems and national agricultural priorities.



As a member of the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA), SHIWAKUTA deliberately used the Nanenane 2025 platform to advance rights-based advocacy. The Federation highlighted farmers' rights, particularly in relation to restrictive Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) regimes that threaten seed sovereignty, indigenous knowledge, and farmer-managed seed systems. Advocacy messages also drew attention to potential risks of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), including market concentration, unfair competition, and marginalization of small-scale producers if safeguards are not put in place.

By linking agroecology, food sovereignty, and budget advocacy with farmers' rights and regional trade concerns, SHIWAKUTA strengthened a coherent narrative calling for people-

centered policies that protect farmers' interests while promoting inclusive and resilient agricultural transformation in Tanzania.

## **2.5 ADVOCACY INTERVENTIONS WITH POLICYMAKERS AND INTERNATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS – (Impact-Oriented and Farmer-Centered)**

Advocacy interventions enable SHIWAKUTA to ensure that the voices of smallholder farmers are heard in policymaking processes. Throughout 2025, the organization actively engaged national, regional, and international stakeholders to influence policies that enhance agroecological practices, secure farmers' rights, and support locally managed seed systems. These efforts focused on legislative oversight, budget allocation, and harmonized regional policies within the EAC, while positioning Tanzania's farming communities at the center of international discussions on sustainable agriculture and rural development.

### **2.5.1 Advocacy Meeting with the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Agriculture, Livestock, Industry, and Trade**

In April 2025, SHIWAKUTA, together with other SWG members, participated in an advocacy meeting with the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Agriculture, Livestock, Industry, and Trade in Dodoma. The meeting aimed to present evidence on gaps in seed policy and to emphasize the need for farmer-centered and agroecological seed systems. Members of Parliament were engaged on issues such as farmers' seed rights, access to diverse and quality seeds, and the importance of legislation that supports sustainable agriculture.

During the meeting, SHIWAKUTA highlighted the critical role of local seed systems in enhancing food security, climate resilience, and sustainable livelihoods for smallholder farmers. Discussions included concrete examples from the field, which helped illustrate how policy gaps negatively affect farmers' access to quality seeds.

The engagement concluded with commitments from the Committee to further consult civil society and farmer representatives. This meeting laid the foundation for integrating smallholder priorities into national policy reforms, particularly regarding agroecology and local seed systems.

### **2.5.2 National Seed Stakeholders' Meeting**

On 15 May 2025, SHIWAKUTA participated in the National Seed Stakeholders' Meeting in Dodoma, chaired by the former Minister of Agriculture, Hussein Bashe. The meeting brought together government agencies, private sector actors, civil society organizations, researchers, and farmer representatives to discuss coordination and reforms in the seed sector.

SHIWAKUTA advocated for formal recognition of farmer-managed seed systems, promotion of agroecological seeds, and policies that balance commercial interests with biodiversity conservation and food sovereignty. The organization shared evidence from its interventions to support evidence-based discussions on policy and regulatory reforms.

The meeting concluded with a consensus among stakeholders on the need for more inclusive governance of the seed sector. SHIWAKUTA’s participation helped ensure that farmers’ perspectives and needs are formally considered in ongoing and future seed policy reforms.

### **2.5.3 Advocacy during the Parliamentary Session on the Agriculture Budget (FY 2025/2026)**

Between 21–22 May 2025, SHIWAKUTA, along with SWG partners, engaged in advocacy during the Parliamentary session reviewing the Agriculture Budget for FY 2025/2026. The focus was on ensuring increased budget allocations for agroecology, farmer-led seed systems, extension services, and market access for smallholder producers.



SWG members exchange ideas with the Minister of Agriculture- Hussein Bashe, Agriculture Budget for FY 2025/2026 in Parliamentary premises in Dodoma

The organization presented data and recommendations highlighting the economic and social benefits of investing in sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture. Parliamentarians were engaged on the link between budgetary decisions and national food security, as well as the direct impact on smallholder livelihoods.

As a result, several members of Parliament expressed support for prioritizing resources for smallholder-friendly agricultural initiatives. This engagement reinforced SHIWAKUTA’s credibility as a key voice in shaping national agricultural policy.

### **2.5.4 Advocacy Meeting with EALA Committees on Agriculture, Industry, and Trade**

On 15–16 October 2025, SHIWAKUTA, in collaboration with AFSA, participated in an advocacy meeting with the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) Committees on Agriculture and on Industry and Trade, held at the EAC Headquarters in Arusha. The engagement aimed to influence regional policy on agriculture and trade, advocating for harmonized policies that support agroecology, smallholder farmers, and regional market integration.

SHIWAKUTA’s presentation highlighted key recommendations to ensure smallholder interests are integrated into EAC policy frameworks. The organization also revealed challenges faced by farmers due to inconsistencies in national regulations and standards across member states.



During the Advocacy Meeting with EALA Committees on Agriculture, Industry, and Trade

The meeting concluded with commitments from EALA Committee members to consider the recommendations presented by AFSA and its members in ongoing legislative processes. This engagement positioned SHIWAKUTA and other AFSA members as a credible actor in advancing farmer-centered policies at the regional level and promoting cross-border trade for locally produced agroecological products.

### 2.5.5 Participation in International Meetings and Forums

Between October and November 2025, SHIWAKUTA strengthened its international presence by participating in key development and family farmer stakeholder meetings. The engagements aimed to elevate smallholder farmers' voices, share Tanzania's experiences, and reinforce international collaboration on land governance and farmers' rights.

***Participation in the Partners for Change (P4C) and Land-Hub 2025 Conference, Berlin – Germany (13–16 October 2025):*** SHIWAKUTA was represented by its Coordinator at this conference, which brought together over 150 participants from international land policy programs, donors, land governance experts, leaders from the African Union, and the European Union. SHIWAKUTA contributed Tanzanian experiences on land policy and good governance practices. The main objectives were to exchange lessons from international programs, prepare joint recommendations for national and global agendas, and strengthen stakeholder collaboration at the international level. This engagement enhanced SHIWAKUTA's visibility in global discussions, involving more than 11 countries, and increased recognition of Tanzanian farmers' perspectives in international land policy debates.

**Participation in the World Rural Forum (WRF) Members’ Meeting, Lomé – Togo (24–27 November 2025):** The Advocacy Officer represented SHIWAKUTA at the WRF meeting. SHIWAKUTA has been a member of WRF and the Secretariat of the Tanzania National Committee for Family Farmers (TANCOFF) since 2022. This meeting strengthened SHIWAKUTA’s role in advocating for family farmers’ interests across Africa, drawing international stakeholder attention and highlighting key issues from Tanzania. The engagement expanded SHIWAKUTA’s network with other WRF members, creating opportunities for knowledge exchange, strategic partnerships, and collaboration on regional and international agendas.



SHIWAKUTA Advocacy Officer during WRF Meeting, Lomé – Togo (24–27 November 2025)

**Outcomes and Contributions:** Participation in these international forums reinforced SHIWAKUTA’s credibility as a representative of smallholder farmers in Tanzania within global discussions. The organization successfully promoted joint recommendations to encourage sustainable land use, secure land rights, and advance farmers’ concerns in land policy and governance agendas. The collaborations also strengthened strategic international relationships, fostered solidarity among farmers and development actors, and positioned SHIWAKUTA as a key actor in advocating for issues critical to smallholder farmers across Africa.

## 2.6 CONSTITUTIONAL MEETINGS AND STRENGTHENING ORGANIZATIONAL GOVERNANCE

In 2025, SHIWAKUTA continued to strengthen its internal governance and institutional systems through regular constitutional meetings. These meetings provided strategic guidance, enhanced accountability, and ensured that decisions were participatory and evidence-based. Through well-structured Steering Committee sessions and the Annual General Meeting (AGM), the organization reinforced operational planning, performance oversight, and transparency in leadership and membership management. These processes were central to SHIWAKUTA's credibility as a representative body for smallholder farmers.

### **2.6.1 Steering Committee Meetings**

The SHIWAKUTA Steering Committee convened four meetings in 2025, providing oversight, approving work plans, and reviewing organizational performance. The meetings were held on 10 April (online), 28 July, 20 November, and 17 December 2025, each serving as a forum for strategic guidance and decision-making.

In the April online session, the Committee reviewed the first quarter's progress, addressed operational bottlenecks, and recommended adjustments to ongoing programs to improve efficiency and impact. The July meeting focused on mid-year performance, particularly reviewing advocacy interventions, membership engagement, and financial tracking.

During the November and December meetings, the Committee consolidated lessons from the year, approved the annual report, and prepared for the AGM. Discussions also included institutional sustainability, governance compliance, and planning for leadership transition. Impact: These four meetings ensured that all strategic priorities were monitored, work plans were validated, and organizational accountability was maintained to members and partners throughout 2025.

### **2.6.2 Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

The Fifth Annual General Meeting (AGM) of SHIWAKUTA was held on 19 December 2025 at Royal Village Hotel, Dodoma, and was preceded by a National Workshop conducted on 18 December 2025. The two-day engagement brought together a total of 123 participants, comprising 95 members (52 men and 43 women), 3 members of the Board of Trustees, 7 staff members, 4 media representatives, and 14 invited guests drawn from government institutions and civil society organizations (CSOs). The AGM served as the apex decision-making forum for reviewing organizational progress, ratifying members, and planning for the coming year.



Participants of the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting (AGM) of SHIWAKUTA was held on 19 December 2025 at Royal Village Hotel, Dodoma

During the meeting, participants received reports on operational achievements, advocacy results, financial performance, and institutional milestones. The AGM provided an opportunity for members to critically engage with the Secretariat, ask questions, and offer recommendations to improve organizational effectiveness and accountability.

One of the key outcomes of the AGM was the confirmation of three new members, bringing SHIWAKUTA's total membership to 23. The meeting also included discussions on strategic priorities, upcoming programs, and operational challenges, ensuring that the Federation's planning remained aligned with member needs and national priorities for smallholder farmers.

The AGM additionally facilitated the election of new leaders to serve the organization for the 2026–2028 term, ensuring a democratic and transparent leadership transition. This strengthened governance structures, enhanced member participation, and reinforced SHIWAKUTA's legitimacy as a representative platform for smallholder farmers. Impact: The AGM solidified the Federation's governance framework, confirmed membership, and prepared SHIWAKUTA for effective strategic engagement in the next term.

## **2.7 COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA OUTREACH FOR MEMBER AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

Throughout 2025, SHIWAKUTA strategically employed communication and media outreach as a core pillar for member engagement, public awareness, and policy advocacy. Communication interventions were designed not only to disseminate information, but also to shape narratives around agroecology, food sovereignty, territorial markets, and the rights of

smallholder farmers. By combining media capacity strengthening, traditional mass media, and digital platforms, the Federation ensured consistent information flow, amplified advocacy messages, and enhanced the visibility of farmer-led food system alternatives at community, national, regional, and international levels.

### 2.7.1 Editors’ and Journalists’ Training on Agroecology and Territorial Markets

As a foundational activity under this thematic area, SHIWAKUTA prioritized strengthening the capacity of editors and journalists to accurately, ethically, and consistently report on agroecology and smallholder-centered food systems. Recognizing the media as a key agenda-setting actor, the initiative was designed to deepen journalists’ understanding of agroecological principles, territorial and cross-border markets, and the lived realities of smallholder farmers, women traders, and youth engaged in food value chains.

The training adopted a blended learning approach conducted over two consecutive days. On 15th December 2025, participants undertook a field visit along the agroecological value chain, where they engaged directly with farmers, farmer organizations, markets, and support institutions. This was followed on 16th December 2025 by an intensive capacity-building training, which focused on conceptual grounding, ethical reporting, and analytical storytelling. The combination of experiential learning and structured training enabled journalists to link theory with practice, thereby enhancing their ability to produce evidence-based, context-sensitive, and solution-oriented stories that go beyond event-based reporting.

Through facilitated discussions and expert inputs, participants were introduced to emerging research, policy debates, and regional experiences on agroecological trade and territorial markets. Particular emphasis was placed on ethical journalism, narrative framing, and the responsibility of the media in amplifying marginalized voices while challenging dominant narratives that favour input-intensive and industrial agricultural models.



Editors and Journalists during the Training on Agroecology and Territorial Markets training – at field and indoor at Corridor Spring Hotel in Arusha.

Overall, the training strengthened journalists’ analytical skills, confidence, and commitment to sustained coverage of agroecology and inclusive markets. By building informed media partnerships, SHIWAKUTA contributed to nurturing a media environment capable of supporting public awareness, accountability, and policy dialogue on sustainable and farmer-led food system transformation in Tanzania and the wider East African region.

### 2.7.2 Radio and Television Engagement

During the reporting period, SHIWAKUTA continued to utilize radio and television as strategic outreach channels for informing members and the wider public, particularly in rural and peri-urban areas. Between January and December 2025, a total of five (5) radio programmes and one (1) television programme were aired, focusing on education, mobilization, and advocacy related to agroecological food systems, cross-border trade and smallholder farmers’ priorities. Radio Safina and ITV were selected based on their extensive national coverage and their standing among the most widely followed media outlets, enabling outreach to large and diverse audiences across Tanzania.

Radio engagements, including broadcasts through Radio Safina, focused on sharing research-informed and policy-relevant messages in formats accessible to farming communities. Discussions covered agroecological production, sustainable food systems, territorial markets, and the inclusion of women and marginalized traders, using practical and localized approaches to enhance clarity and relevance.

Television engagement was conducted through participation in the nationally aired programme *Malumbano ya Hoja* on ITV. Apart from these direct media engagements, SHIWAKUTA’s major activities - such as national workshops, policy dialogues, and the Annual General Meeting - were also reported by other media outlets nationwide, contributing to broader visibility of the organization’s advocacy messages and strengthening public awareness of smallholder-centered food system issues.



Support for media engagement on agroecological cross-border trade and territorial markets is one of the outcomes from SHIWAKUTA-AFSA collaboration

### 2.7.3 Social Media and Digital Outreach

Alongside traditional media, SHIWAKUTA sustained an active digital presence through its social media platforms, including X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, and Instagram. Over the course of 2025, a total of 211 messages were disseminated across these platforms, providing

regular updates on institutional activities, advocacy initiatives, agroecology, food sovereignty, capacity-building engagements, and key events.

Social media platforms enabled SHIWAKUTA to reach a broad and diverse audience, both within and outside Tanzania, including regional and international partners. Shared content focused on agroecological farming practices, member trainings, production activities, food system sustainability, access to fair and reliable markets, and advocacy for the rights of smallholder farmers and other small-scale producers.

In addition, WhatsApp platforms remained an important tool for internal communication, facilitating timely information sharing between the Coordination Office, leadership, and members. This integrated use of digital communication strengthened coordination, enhanced member participation, and supported consistent dissemination of information across the Federation's network throughout the year.

### **3. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS**

Throughout 2025, SHIWAKUTA's strategic interventions delivered significant results across institutional strengthening, advocacy, and farmer empowerment. Collectively, these interventions directly reached 763 participants, of whom 403 were women and 360 men, while youth constituted 53 percent of all beneficiaries - demonstrating the Federation's strong commitment to gender equity and youth inclusion. The following highlights capture SHIWAKUTA's major achievements during the year:

- a. **National Recognition and Advisory Role:** SHIWAKUTA attained formal national recognition through its appointment to the National Agroforestry Advisory Committee (NAACO), including the position of Deputy Chairperson. This milestone consolidated the Federation's role as a key national actor in shaping agroforestry and forest-agriculture policy and strategy.
- b. **Membership Expansion and Institutional Growth:** Nine new member organizations were integrated within the Southern Highlands corridor, reflecting SHIWAKUTA's growing credibility, geographic reach, and relevance as a unifying platform for smallholder farmer organizations.
- c. **Climate Resilience and Environmental Restoration:** In Katavi Region, SHIWAKUTA supported the training of community groups and the establishment of community-managed tree nurseries, producing more than 6,000 seedlings. These initiatives strengthened local climate resilience, environmental restoration, and farmer-led natural resource management.
- d. **Agroecology Capacity Building:** Members participated in a Regional Training of Trainers on Agroecology held in Kampala, Uganda, enhancing technical knowledge and enabling the cascading of agroecological practices among grassroots farmers, with particular attention to women and youth participation.
- e. **Youth Engagement in Sustainable Agripreneurs:** SHIWAKUTA hosted the first National Youth Entrepreneurs Workshop on Agroecological Value Chains, creating a national

platform for youth-led innovation, advocacy, and entrepreneurship within sustainable food systems.

- f. Policy Influence on Seed Systems and Value Chains: The Federation actively engaged in parliamentary sessions, national stakeholder consultations, and East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) committee forums, contributing to dialogue and advocacy on seed systems, agricultural budgets, agroecology, and regional trade policies.
- g. International Collaboration and Advocacy: SHIWAKUTA participated in P4C and Land-Hub 2025 in Berlin and the World Rural Forum (WRF) meetings in Togo, amplifying Tanzanian smallholder farmers' voices, strengthening strategic networks, and fostering cross-border advocacy and learning.

#### **4. MAIN CHALLENGES**

While 2025 brought notable achievements, several challenges persisted including:

- 1) Limited resources to scale interventions across all member regions.
- 2) Policy gaps and inconsistencies in seed regulations at national and regional levels.
- 3) Infrastructural and logistical barriers hindering timely delivery of programs.
- 4) Low awareness of agroecological practices among some smallholder communities.
- 5) Coordination complexities with multiple stakeholders and international partners.

#### **5. KEY LESSONS LEARNED**

SHIWAKUTA's experience in 2025 provided critical insights for future planning:

- a) Direct engagement with policymakers enhances the impact and credibility of advocacy.
- b) Inclusive member participation strengthens ownership, governance, and sustainability of initiatives.
- c) Strategic partnerships amplify reach and provide access to technical and financial resources.
- d) Youth-focused programs foster innovation and ensure the continuity of agroecological practices.
- e) Evidence-based interventions resonate strongly in policy and decision-making platforms.
- f) Cross-border and international engagement elevates national experiences and strengthens advocacy impact.

#### **6. CONCLUSION**

The year 2025 marked a transformational period for SHIWAKUTA, demonstrating its growth as a unified, credible, and influential voice for smallholder farmers in Tanzania. Through strategic advocacy, institutional strengthening, and international collaboration, the Federation advanced agroecology, food sovereignty, and climate resilience across diverse rural communities.

SHIWAKUTA's formal recognition in national advisory structures, expanded membership, and effective policy engagement reflect the organization's capacity to shape agricultural discourse and decision-making processes. These milestones underscore the Federation's ability to bridge grassroots realities with high-level policy and programmatic interventions.

Despite ongoing challenges, the lessons learned in 2025 reinforce SHIWAKUTA's adaptive and resilient approach, ensuring that interventions remain relevant, inclusive, and sustainable. The Federation's commitment to youth engagement, climate-smart practices, and agroecological innovation positions it for continued leadership in transforming Tanzania's rural landscapes.

Looking forward, SHIWAKUTA remains dedicated to consolidating its achievements, deepening partnerships, and expanding its advocacy footprint, ensuring that the voices of smallholder farmers continue to guide national, regional, and international agricultural policies. This Annual Report serves not only as a testament to past accomplishments but as a roadmap for continued growth, strategic influence, and transformative impact across Tanzania's