



FARM Launch and Global Child Project Inception Meeting Report

12-15 March 2024, Nairobi, Kenya

Content

1	Executive Summary	03	4	Field Visit	24
2	FARM Programme Launch	04	5	The Way Forward	25
3	Global Child Project Inception Meeting	07	6	Annexes	25
FARM Presentations FARM Programme presentation: Sustainable agriculture and the GEF FARM Programme FARM Global child project presentation Presentations of child projects		07	Annex 1: Event agenda Annex 2: Roundtable session plan Annex 3: FARM child project presentations Annex 4: FARM cross-cutting issues presentations Annex 5: Call for proposals		
FARM Programme Thematic Roundtable Discussions Realigning finance for a healthy food system Shifting policy and enforcement parameters towards reducing agricultural chemicals and plastics Building capacity for change through engaging agricultural value chain actors		12			
FARM Global child project Cross-Cutting Issues Global child project knowledge management strategy and action plan Global child project communications and branding Beyond monitoring and reporting in FARM Mainstreaming gender in FARM Engaging multiple stakeholders in FARM		18			

Executive Summary

Initiated in 2023, the Financing Agrochemical Reduction and Management (FARM) Programme is a five-year, \$379 million programme, with \$37 million in grant funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). FARM seeks to reduce the use of harmful pesticides and plastics in agricultural production and encourage the adoption of low and non-chemical alternatives.

Led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and implemented by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the FARM programme operates in Ecuador, India, Kenya, Lao PDR, the Philippines, Uruguay and Viet Nam. The global child project is executed by the Green Growth Knowledge Partnership (GGKP) and is responsible for coordinating the overall FARM Programme. The global child project supports in-country child projects as a unifying communications, coordination and knowledge management platform, and provides a mechanism by which other FARM child projects can engage with international and regional stakeholders.

The FARM Programme Launch and Global Inception Meeting, which took place on 12-15 March 2024, was organized by GGKP in Nairobi, Kenya. The FARM Programme Launch, held on 12 March, introduced the global FARM Programme to stakeholders, both in person and online.. The event facilitated discussions among value chain actors across the agriculture sector, including farming, financial, investment, regulatory and market sectors, focusing on transitioning to less harmful agricultural production alternatives.

The FARM Global Inception Meeting was the first in-person gathering for implementing agencies (IAs), executing agencies (EAs), co-financing partners and other stakeholders. With over 70 in-person and 100 online participants - including representing project-participating countries, UN agencies (UNIDO, UNDP, FAO), civic organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and research institutes – the meeting informed stakeholders about the programme's strategy, including knowledge management, communications, gender and social safeguards, stakeholder engagement, and monitoring and evaluation.

Thematic roundtables fostered productive discussions among stakeholders, focusing on finance, policy and capacity building within the FARM Programme, identifying key knowledge gaps and programmatic needs. The sessions also provided a solid foundation for the Global child project to address these gaps and needs, and to catalyse positive change within the programme.

As part of the meeting, participants visited Real IPM – a leading biological control company – in Nairobi, gaining practical insights into alternative solutions for reducing agricultural pesticide use, particularly biopesticides. This helped set the stage for collaborative efforts to mitigate agrichemical usage in agricultural systems, fostering a network of stakeholders committed to sustainable agriculture.

FARM Launch and Global Child Project Inception Meeting Highlights

Launch registration: 520 registered

Launch participation:

- 70+ in person (39% female, 60% male), including GEF Secretariat, lead agency, representatives from implementing and executing agencies, FARM country government representatives, FARM co-finance partners and FARM-relevant stakeholders
- 103 participated online (48% female, 52% male)

Media coverage:

- New initiative aims to curb the toxic impacts of agriculture, UNEP website and GEF website
- Countries join hands to fight pollution from agriculture, The Star news
- Five governments to curb agriculture's toxic impacts, Daily Mirror news
- CABI News
- Over four social media platforms, including Facebook, LinkedIn, X and the Green Forum FARM group, showcased the event

Inception feedback: 80% of respondents rated their experience at the FARM Programme launch as “very useful”

FARM Programme Launch

The FARM Programme launch on 12 March 2024 officially introduced the global FARM Programme to stakeholders and the public. Over 70 attendees joined in person, with an additional 100+ participating online. The event facilitated discussions among value chain actors across the agriculture sector, including farming, financial, investment, regulatory and market sectors, focusing on transitioning to less harmful agricultural production alternatives.



(photo credit: UNEP)

Eloise Touni, UNEP Programme Officer and Task Manager of the FARM Programme, moderated the launch, with opening remarks by John Elungata, Secretary of Administration for Kenya's Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, who addressed local challenges associated with pesticide and plastic use in Kenya. Jacqueline Alvarez, Chief of UNEP's Chemicals and Health Branch, Industry and Economy Division, expanded on global concerns related to agricultural pollution and links to biodiversity loss. She highlighted that FARM is a timely programme that can incentivize action on phasing out hazardous chemicals in agriculture and reminded that local action is key.

Keynote speaker Mai Thin Yu Mon, Co-Chair of the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus, highlighted the critical significance of land to indigenous communities, emphasizing the loss of traditional lands to large-scale industrial agriculture. She underscored the health and environmental repercussions of pesticide pollution from upstream plantations. She also advocated for the integration of indigenous knowledge systems with modern agricultural practices.

Panel discussion

Following the launch, Anil Sookdeo, GEF Coordinator for Chemicals and Waste, kicked off a panel discussion – featuring key value chain actors including a farmer, government regulator, banker, private sector representative and a youth advocate – on the challenges and solutions regarding adopting low- and non-chemical agricultural practices.

Panellists

Sylvester Mensah, Member of the Rainforest Alliance's projects Steering Committee Board

Julieta Lansangan, Executive Director of the Department of Agriculture, Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority of the Philippines

Godfrey Mambo, Senior Executive at Rabobank

John Ogechah, Head of Bioline Academy, Bioline Agrosiences in Kenya

Panellists highlighted three main concerns:

1. Low levels of productivity and incomes among farmers
2. Limited market incentives to adopt alternatives
3. The sector's dependency on chemical pesticides, and suppliers' resistance to change

Sylvester Mensah, a farmer and Member of the Rainforest Alliance's projects Steering Committee Board, said low incomes drive farmers towards unsustainable practices such as shifting cultivation. "It's expensive," the panellists acknowledged, but this does not solely refer to finance; health and lives are at stake. This, coupled with land rights issues, exemplified by Mai Thin's struggle, hinders communities from achieving food security through traditional practices. "We're guests in our own land," she remarked, as confiscation for mass agriculture projects under the guise of transitioning to green agriculture is an increasing concern among indigenous communities.

Agriculture should play a role in poverty alleviation while creating opportunities for sustainable livelihoods, the panel agreed. However, farmers' reliance on reactive rather than preventive approaches, illustrated by the challenge of deciphering pesticide labels, underscores the need for extensive training to change behaviours. Connecting with institutions for sustainable practices training is vital, said Julieta Lansangan,

Executive Director of the Department of Agriculture, Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority of the Philippines. Widening the acceptance of indigenous knowledge systems and practices requires demonstrating their benefits while empowering youth to develop and share their work can inspire others, said Venancio, as seen in a peer-to-peer example from Brazil.

The discussion then moved to solutions, where the panel focused on three areas:

1. Building the case for alternatives
2. Organizing farmers
3. Filling knowledge gaps

Godfrey Mambo, a senior executive at Rabobank, said banks, as financial institutions, prioritize investments that offer good returns and align with sustainability criteria. The panel recognized the need for a compelling investment case to support farmers in adopting alternative practices, who are also reluctant to take risks due to limited income. This highlights the importance of demonstrating the effectiveness and viability of alternative

solutions to garner financial support. Instead of offering alternatives as direct substitutes, emphasizing efficacy comparisons is key. Bridging the gap in financing by blending commercial and sustainability KPIs is essential; however, this can be challenging amidst competing interests. The panel noted that localizing practices can benefit the local economy and financial and regulatory support should align with this effort. In addition, organizing farmers into cooperatives or unions empowers them to scale up solutions. Equipping them with adequate knowledge and support to enable discussions on transitioning from legacy practices is key, Venancio added, which could be achieved via government, NGO-guided fora and peer-to-peer learning.

The discussion finished with the following conclusion: while encouraging farmers to adopt new practices presents a significant challenge, the FARM Programme is strategically positioned to engage all relevant stakeholders to envision a future where farms prioritize minimizing harm, bringing us closer to nature.



(photo credit: UNEP)

Global Inception Meeting

FARM Presentations

The Global Inception Meeting served as a pivotal milestone within the FARM Programme, marking the first in-person gathering for IAs, EAs, co-financing partners and other stakeholders. Participants convened to exchange ideas, deepen their understanding of the FARM Programme, and identify collaboration opportunities to reduce agrichemical and agriplastics usage in agrifood systems. The presentations for each session are provided in Annex 3.

The meeting fostered a network of EAs, providing a platform for exchanges and collaboration. It also provided opportunities for co-financing partners, research institutions, multilateral development banks, industry associations, private sectors and commercial banks to engage with EAs and IAs within the FARM Programme framework.

With over 70 in-person attendees, the meeting saw representation from participating countries such as Ecuador, India, Kenya, Lao PDR, the Philippines, Uruguay and Viet Nam. Diverse stakeholders, including UN agencies (UNIDO, UNDP, FAO), civic organizations, NGOs and research institutes, actively contributed to the discussions.

Participants feedback

How useful were the child project presentations on 12 March in improving your understanding of the FARM Programme

- 85% rating “very useful”
- Significant insight enhancement
- Improved understanding of FARM Programme interventions at country, regional and global levels

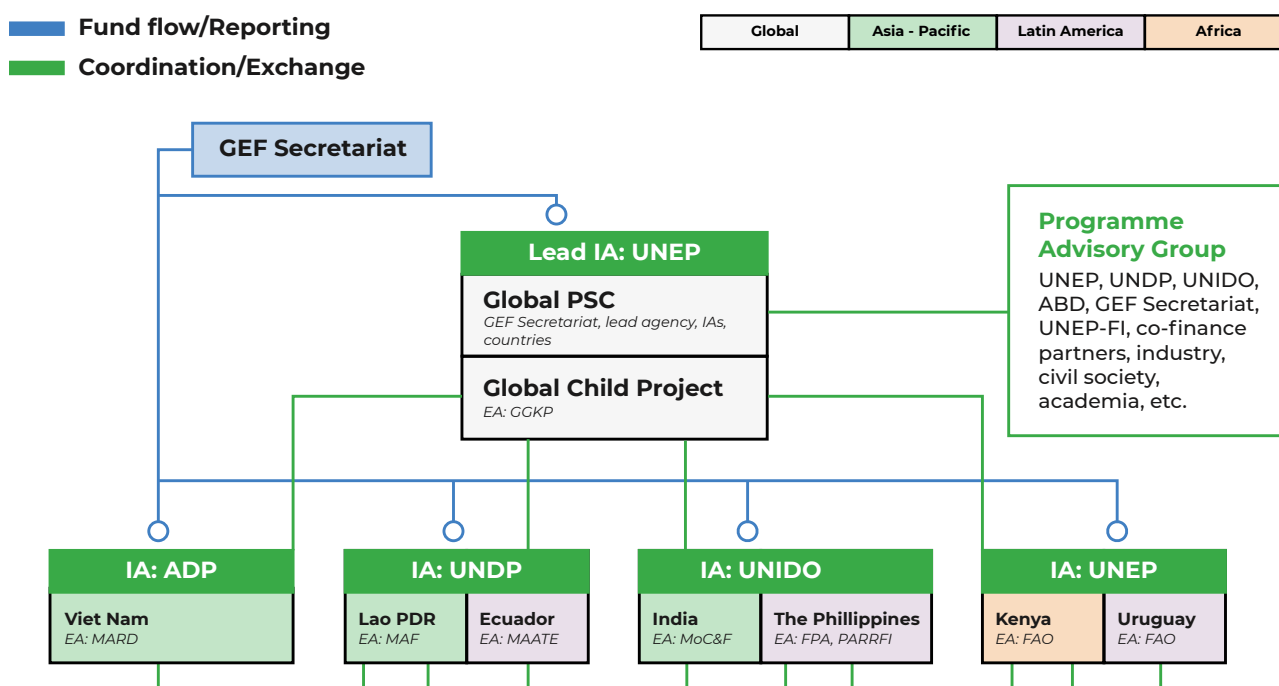
FARM Programme presentation: Sustainable agriculture and the GEF FARM Programme

On the first day of the meeting, Eloise Touni provided insights into sustainable agriculture and the GEF FARM Programme, shedding light on its links to overarching goals and strategies under the Stockholm Convention, Global Biodiversity Framework and Global Framework on Chemicals. The overall objective is to catalyse a framework for investment in the agriculture sector, which looks to detoxify the sector by eliminating the use of the most harmful inputs to food production systems. The FARM Programme contributes directly and indirectly to Global Environmental Benefits of Core Indicators 5 (area of marine habitat under improved practices), 9 (avoidance of chemicals of global concern) and 11 (number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment).

The FARM Programme consists of six child projects and operates on a global, regional and national scale. The programme is led by UNEP and implemented by the ADB, UNDP and UNIDO. Ground-level interventions will be conducted by EAs in Ecuador, India, Kenya, Lao PDR, the Philippines, Uruguay and Viet Nam.

The execution of FARM is overseen by the EAs, which are tasked with delivering the programme’s objectives. The Global child project is executed by the Green Growth Knowledge Partnership (GGKP).

Farm programme organigram



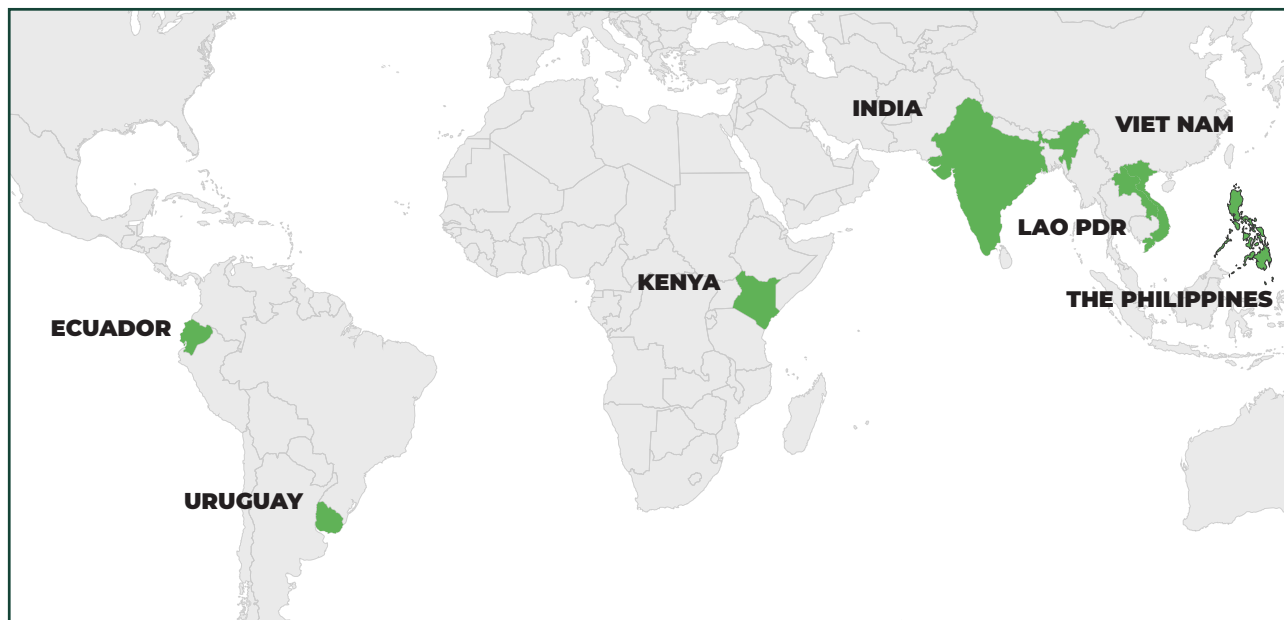
FARM Global child project presentation

Xi Cao, FARM Global child project Manager at GGKP, introduced the GEF FARM Global child project, setting the stage for an in-depth exploration of its initiatives and objectives. The global child project's Global Coordination, Knowledge Management and Common Finance Tools aims to address global and regional knowledge capacity of policy, finance and value chain actors to sustainably regulate, finance and reduce pesticides. It supports in-country child projects as a unifying communications, coordination and knowledge management platform. This includes creating online and in-person communities of practice, discussion forums, ensuring presence at global and regional events, and publishing experiences, lessons and solutions from the programme countries and beyond.

Meeting participants acknowledged that the Global child project is responsible for coordinating the overall programme, ensuring that all child projects are in alignment and operate as a singular programme rather than as individual, loosely connected projects. The discussion highlighted the significant role of the Global child project in conducting programmatic reporting on behalf of the overall FARM Programme. The action points will be covered in the monitoring and evaluation section below.

FARM Global Child Project Overview

Objective: To address the global and regional knowledge capacity of policy, finance, and value chain actors to sustainably regulate, finance, and reduce pesticides and plastics



Budget

7.45 million
in GEF grant Funding

32.7 million
in co-financing

Target Countries

Global

Duration

2023-2028

Governance

Implementing
Agency:



Executing
Agency:



Activities:



**1- Policy and
enforcement**



**3- Value chains and
public demand**



**2- Finance and
investment**

**4- Monitoring
& evaluation**

Outcome: Strengthen the sound management of agricultural chemicals and their waste, through better control, and reduction and/or elimination

Presentations of child projects

In a session moderated by Xi Cao, EAs from FARM countries presented their child projects and implementing agencies shared insights into their respective child projects within the FARM Programme. Presenters included representatives from Viet Nam (ADB), Lao PDR (UNDP), the Philippines (FPA, UNIDO) and India (HIL, UNIDO). Each presentation provided a detailed overview of the interventions, expected outcomes and strategies employed to promote sustainable agriculture and mitigate the use of harmful inputs.

All cooperating child projects in FARM will have the same three overall pathways to change:

1. Policy and regulatory capacity and surveillance enhanced to improve the management of pesticides and agricultural plastics and promote the adoption of safer alternatives.

2. Financing and investment mechanisms incorporate environmental considerations and support the promotion and adoption of new technologies for sustainable agricultural practices.

3. Best practices and knowledge inform environmentally sustainable management of pesticides and hazardous pesticide waste, agricultural plastics and the adoption of safer alternatives.

Key topics discussed included the enhancement of policy and regulatory capacities, integration of environmental considerations into financing and investment mechanisms, and the dissemination of best practices and knowledge for sustainable agricultural management. These presentations underscored the collective commitment to achieving the overarching goals of the FARM Programme, with all child projects expected to be implemented between 2023 and 2028.

Table 1. A summary of project-level child project presentations

Projects title	Presenter	Budget (US\$ million)	Institutional structure		Target beneficiaries
			EA	IA	
FARM in Viet Nam	Goal: To promote financing for improved agrochemical and agricultural plastic management in agri-food value chains				
	Dang Anh Thu, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD)	GEF grant: \$7.5	ADB	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), Viet Nam	386,379 people (196,034 female; 190,345 male)
FARM in Ecuador	Goal: To reduce the global use of harmful agrochemicals by supporting farmers to access finance, innovative and sustainable production practices, and competitively access consumer markets in Ecuador				
	Daniel Donoso, Hazardous and Non-Hazardous Chemicals Management Director, Ministry of Environmental, Water and Ecological Transition	Total: \$30.8; GEF grant: \$4	UNDP	Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition, MAATE	

FARM in Lao PDR	Goal: To reduce the use of harmful agrochemicals by incentivizing farmers to adopt sustainable crop management practices				
	Sayyans Thammkhot Department of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	GEF grant: \$4	UNDP	Department of Agriculture (DoA), Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF)	Direct project beneficiaries: 16,600
Strengthening investment for adoption of alternatives and sustainable management of agrochemicals and agriplastics in Africa and Latin America through pilots in Kenya and Uruguay	Goal: To catalyse a framework for investment in the agriculture sector that looks to detoxify the sector by eliminating the use of the most harmful inputs to food production systems				
	Ivy Saunyama, Agricultural Officer, FAO; Grace Muchemi, General Manager, Pest Control Products Board (PCPB), Kenya	Total: \$96; GEF grant: \$7.48	UNEP	FAO	
Promoting eco-friendly crop protection solutions for persistent organic pollutant and highly hazardous pesticide reduction in Asia	Goal: To establish sustainable financing, investment and incentive mechanisms in the formulations, production and application of eco-friendly crop protection solutions for the reduction of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and highly hazardous pesticides (HHPs) enhancing livelihood, food safety and protection of human health and the environment				
	Kuldeep Singh, Chairman and Managing Director Rajendra Thapar, Deputy General Manager, HIL (India) Limited; Maribel Querijero, OIC Deputy Executive Director for Pesticides, Department of Agriculture, Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority		UNIDO	India: HIL (India) Limited, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers The Philippines: Pesticides Department of Agriculture Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority	India: 1.45 million population (including 0.32 million female population) shall be protected from exposure to POPs/HHPs i.e. 1 person/ha

FARM Programme Thematic Roundtable Discussions

The thematic roundtable discussions at the global child project Inception Meeting were structured to achieve productive and practical conversations among stakeholders, aiming to foster a greater understanding and to identify knowledge gaps within the thematic topics of finance, policy and capacity building. These discussions provided an opportunity to clarify how the global child project will support the child projects within these key areas.

The key session outcomes focused on understanding the knowledge gaps and programme needs concerning policy and enforcement, finance and capacity building. Each session followed a world café-style format, allowing pre-assigned groups to address discussion questions and exchange insights.

In post-discussion feedback, the component sessions were highly rated for their usefulness, with an average rating of 4.2 out of 5 based on 18 responses. These discussions laid the groundwork for collaborative efforts to address challenges and drive positive change within the FARM Programme.

Realigning finance for a healthy food system

The session, led by Peggy Lefort, Pollution and Circular Economy Lead at UNEP-FI, aimed to foster a deeper understanding of the financing landscape in the public and private sectors, focusing on addressing concerns from child projects and exploring general challenges and opportunities. Lefort highlighted that less than 5% of financial flows are directed towards agriculture, with an even smaller portion allocated to sustainable agriculture. Additionally, less than 5% of smallholders have access to credit, emphasizing a significant investment gap of \$350 billion to be closed to potentially unlock \$5.7 trillion economic and social gains to society.

Following this, participants engaged in in-depth discussions around financial instruments, alternative financing mechanisms, and the respective roles of public and private finance actors in FARM. Three round tables covered the following key discussion points:

	Facilitator	Question(s)
Table 1	Carolyn Sigei, Senior Investment Manager, Rabobank	What are the main risks for financial institutions related to chemical and plastic pollution in their agriculture portfolio (e.g. physical risk, credit risk, reputational risk, litigation/liability risk) and how can a better assessment of risks and impacts be a driver of change for financial institutions? What information is needed to enable financial institutions to understand and assess the chemical and plastic pollution risks and impacts related to their agriculture portfolio?

Table 2	Enjiang Cheng, Program Officer/China, Ford Foundation	Which policy instruments have proven efficient to incentivize and enable the financing of solutions for sustainable management of chemicals in the agriculture sector? What are the impacts of current input subsidies on agricultural practices and the environment? How can we phase out harmful input subsidies while supporting smallholder farmers and promoting sustainable practices? What alternative financing mechanisms can incentivize the adoption of sustainable agriculture and reduce reliance on chemical inputs/HHP?
Table 3	Vandana Thottoli, Business Origination Advisor, Dutch Fund for Climate and Development (DFCD)	What is the respective role of private and public finance actors in supporting farmers in their transition to less toxic and polluting agricultural systems? How can private finance be catalysed by public finance to accelerate and scale up the financing of alternatives to pesticides and chemical inputs? Are there any successful examples of innovative financing mechanisms that have effectively supported the transition towards agrochemical reduction and management? What lessons can be learned from these experiences?

The discussions revealed that agricultural and pesticides experts often lack an understanding of finance, while financiers are not well-versed in pesticides and plastics. This highlights a significant knowledge gap between the two fields. The Global child project has an important role to play in bridging these gaps and fostering mutual understanding.

The following key knowledge gaps emerged from the discussion:

- **Enhancing public-private collaboration and de-risking mechanisms:** Participants highlighted the complementary roles of public and private finance actors and the need to enhance dialogue and partnerships struggle to enhance the public finance's role to catalyse private finance and support innovation.

- **Understanding finance-related policy instruments:** Participants lack understanding of effective policy instruments such as subsidies, incentives and regulations aimed at incentivizing financing for low/no agrochemicals, and the importance of having a package of diverse instruments.

- **Understanding finance instruments including alternative financing schemes:** Participants raised the need to better understand finance instruments, including the definitions and functions of grants, loans, credits, guarantees and their relations to agrochemicals/plastics within the context of FARM, and alternative financing mechanisms like green bonds, impact investment funds, payment for ecosystem services, etc.

- **Assessing impact of subsidies:** There is uncertainty regarding the negative impacts of current input subsidies on agricultural practices and the environment, emphasizing the need for phasing out harmful subsidies while still supporting smallholder farmers.

- **Facilitating access to finance across the value chain:** Participants highlighted to need to facilitate access to finance across the value chain, especially for SMEs, which are the "missing middle", and small-scale actors, acknowledging the facilitating role of cooperatives.

- **Improving risk assessment, monitoring and management:** The broad range of risks hindering private financing needs to be

better understood, assessed, monitored and mitigated through improved data systems, monitoring schemes and scaled-up de-risking mechanisms by public finance actors. There is a link between financial derisking and improved access to impartial technical advice for farmers, which can replace pesticide use as an 'insurance' strategy.

The Global child project proposed the following interventions to address the knowledge gaps:

- **Knowledge generation and curation:** Map existing funds and relevant sustainable agriculture projects by creating an online database, or matchmaking service. Produce case studies, best practices and expert blogs. Expertise from knowledge partners and existing resources will be leveraged in this aspect.

- **Technical assistance:** Develop technical guidance on de-risking mechanisms to reduce risks hindering private financing, and provide

impartial technical information for better risk assessment and monitoring.

- **Capacity building:** Enhance finance understanding among agricultural experts and vice versa. Encourage peer learning and sharing best practices. Improve understanding of finance tools and pollution issues across the value chain.

- **Stakeholder engagement:** Foster collaboration and dialogue between public and private sectors. Increase engagement of finance actors with FARM. Share best practices, successful finance tools and monitoring data. Improve access to finance for SMEs and small-scale actors, especially for low-value crops.

Overall, the session provided valuable insights into the financing challenges and opportunities within the agriculture sector, emphasizing the critical role of public and private finance in driving the food systems' transition to less toxic and polluting agricultural systems.

Shifting policy and enforcement parameters towards reducing agricultural chemicals and plastics

The objective of this session was for participants to understand the barriers to changing or enforcing policies and regulations that reduce chemical and plastic use, as well as the conditions needed to do so successfully. It was led by Dr. Ulrich Kuhlmann, Executive Director

of Global Operations at CABI, who provided an overview of the surging global demand for pesticides, highlighting their adverse impacts, key international instruments and mechanisms for their management, and the rise of alternatives and the barriers hindering their uptake. Participants engaged in in-depth discussions organized around four pivotal questions, yielding key insights into common challenges and potential solutions.

	Facilitator	Question(s) and key discussion Points
Table 1	Sheila Willis, Head of International Programmes, Pesticide Action Network UK (PAN UK)	<p>What does an ideal monitoring and enforcement system look like for control of these products (HHPs, banned chemicals, and/or prohibited plastic use)? What resources, human or otherwise do countries need to implement these systems?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ideal system includes capturing information, monitoring acute poisoning cases, implementing licensing and inspection systems, and dealing with non-compliance. Challenges highlighted include the lack of resources, particularly human resources, and the need for a global mechanism to address compliance issues.
Table 2	Baogen Gu, Senior Agricultural Officer, FAO	<p>How can the FARM program actively support the enforcement of international standards, resolutions and obligations such as the Rotterdam Convention, ICCM 5 resolution on Highly Hazardous Pesticides, which endorses the establishment of a Global Alliance on Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHP) and CODEX in reducing agrochemical usage and addressing plastic pollution at regional and country level?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion focused on promoting regional joint reviews for biopesticide registration, establishing national monitoring and reporting systems, and strengthening enforcement capacity. Suggestions included the establishment of a "Green lane" for biopesticides, promoting community participation in biopesticide education, and supporting intergovernmental dialogue and collaboration.
Table 3	Paul Ngaruiya, Ag General Manager, Research, Strategy and Planning, Pest Control Products Board, Kenya	<p>What enabling factors need to be present to improve plant protection product registration and harmonization, particularly for lower-risk products (i.e. biopesticides)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants emphasized streamlining the registration process for biopesticides, lowering registration fees, and adopting globally harmonized coding systems. Proposals included promoting regional joint reviews for biopesticide registration, establishing national monitoring and reporting systems, and strengthening enforcement capacity.
Table 4	Marina Venâncio, Vice-Chair of Young Professionals for Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD) Steering Committee	<p>What are low-hanging fruits for reducing the use and waste of agricultural plastics? Are there policy incentives already in place?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussions focused on raising awareness about HHPs, implementing national programs on HHPs, and strengthening capacity for data collection and monitoring. Proposals included the development of public lists of HHPs, promoting regional joint reviews, and providing capacity-building initiatives for enforcement agencies.

The following key knowledge gaps emerged from the discussion:

- **Understanding toxicity levels:** There is a lack of understanding among farmers regarding the toxicity levels of pesticides and plastics and the risks associated with highly hazardous pesticides (HHPs), particularly in different regions and contexts.
- **Awareness of alternatives:** There is limited awareness among stakeholders about alternative solutions and best practices for reducing chemical and plastic use in agriculture, and the availability of alternatives in different regions.
- **Regulatory harmonization:** Participants raised the importance of harmonization and regional collaboration on pesticide and biopesticide registration and monitoring, including global trade and the development of standardized coding systems.
- **Access to information:** Participants highlighted the demand for accessible and up-to-date lists of registered, restricted and banned products.
- **Monitoring and enforcement:** There is a need for better monitoring and enforcement mechanisms and capacity to ensure compliance with regulations; many countries face resource constraints, especially in terms of human resources to implement an M&E system.

The Global child project proposed the following interventions to address the knowledge gaps:

- **Communication and outreach:** Raise awareness on all aspects – health and environmental impacts of pesticides, availability, viability and proper use of alternatives, and the scale of plastic use and resulting impact – to the broader public and relevant decision-makers. This could be achieved through advocacy and education campaigns, strengthening knowledge databases, and the dissemination of knowledge

through networks such as farmer cooperatives and policy forums.

- **Knowledge generation and curation:** Provide an accessible and up-to-date list of registered, restricted and banned products delineated by country, region and type. Share success stories to assist with replication and scaling of methods to phase out, reduce, and better manage agrochemicals and agricultural plastics. Expertise from knowledge partners and existing resources such as the CABI BioProtection Portal will be mapped and leveraged.
- **Capacity building:** Focus on improving monitoring and enforcement mechanisms and capacity.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** Ensure harmonization and regional collaboration on pesticide and biopesticide registration and monitoring, including global trade and the development of standardized coding systems.

This can be achieved through intra- and inter-governmental workshops and forums. Intragovernmental collaboration, such as coordination, information sharing and training between agencies responsible for different or overlapping areas, including agriculture, customs, health, etc., will also be promoted by the Global child project.

Participants were well-versed in how to utilize policy and enforcement to push toward a healthier agricultural system, however, many of those interventions will need to take place at the country level rather than globally. The best support the Global child project can provide for the other child projects is knowledge collation, curation, and sharing, as well as acting as a connector between the child projects and relevant stakeholders.

Building capacity for change through engaging agricultural value chain actors

This session, led by the Natural Resources Institute (NRI), focused on strengthening participants' understanding of the different needs along the agricultural value chain, and particularly what knowledge and training would be most useful for FARM target audiences.

Richard Hopkins, professor from NRI, provided the opening presentation and summarized the discussions, while Ravinder Kumar, Hans Dobson and Adrienne Martin from NRI provided scene-setting on agricultural plastics, pesticides, and social safeguards and intersectional considerations, respectively.

	Facilitator	Question(s)
Table 1	Ravinder Kumar, Associate Professor, NRI	What are the opportunities in minimizing the use of agriplastics and managing agriplastics waste?
Table 2	John Ogechah, Head of Bioline Academy – Africa & Middle East, Bioline Agrosciences	What are the challenges in minimizing the use of pesticides and managing pesticide waste?
Table 3	Mai Thin Yu Mon, Co-Chair, Global Indigenous Youth Caucus	What innovations and solutions already exist and how can they be scaled up through capacity development or other means?

The session revealed a divergence of thought among participants on whether the aim should be to replace standard agrochemicals with less harmful versions or reduce the need for them entirely. Additionally, it was noted that there is a need to deepen understanding of agriplastics, a relatively new concern in the field. Discussions centred around addressing the knowledge gaps and interventions related to agriplastics through a value chain perspective, encompassing aspects such as usage, design, regulation, collection, and disposal.

Participants expressed interest in exploring cost-effective alternatives to agriplastics, while also acknowledging challenges in obtaining information, data and advocating for solutions in this domain.

The solutions for pesticides are generally well understood – the main barriers are information sharing and uptake of the solutions, which people tend to believe require higher human and financial capital.

The Global child project proposed the following intervention to address the knowledge gaps:

- **Communication and outreach:** Raise awareness about the health and environmental impacts of pesticides and plastics through educational and behavior change campaigns.
- **Knowledge generation and curation:** Understand the drivers of pesticide use such as crop production occurring in geographic locations that require more inputs to provide sufficient yield, accessibility of alternatives, or lack of equivalent replacements; Understand the full use of plastics along the agricultural value chain, including mulching materials, irrigation equipment, silages, greenhouses, and polymer use in seed treatments and fertilizer coatings, adjuvants, stickers, etc. Readily available alternatives are to be highlighted throughout.

- o Research the long-term effects of increased plastics use, including on soil health, human health, the flow of microplastics and overall pollution.

- o Understand and quantify the actual human and financial capital implications of adopting alternatives to HHPs and agricultural plastics, for example for different crops or agroecosystems. Identify potential benefits through linkages with climate-positive and nature-based solutions and access to markets and finance.

- o Generate national and local level commitments and actions aligned with and distilled from international and regional regulations and frameworks; for example, the Voluntary Code of Conduct (VCOC) being developed by FAO and the upcoming International Plastics Treaty.

• Impact assessment and monitoring

- o Assess the cost of no action, a full cost-benefit analysis that utilizes human, financial, social, natural and produced capital, to quantify the full cost of continued high-input agricultural practices. Assessment of costs and capacity required for effective chemical waste management through the whole value chain.

- o Comparison of the costs of high-chemicals/ input agricultural practices compared with the adoption of alternatives (see bullets above).

- o Gathering and disseminating information on the impact of plastics on soil, human health, and animals, establishing disclosure requirements for agricultural plastics data, and facilitating widespread data sharing within the industry.

• Capacity building:

- o Assessment of the value chain/ socio-economic, logistical and market-based factors that drive or are a barrier to the faster adoption of alternatives and the transition to a more regenerative, net-positive agriculture system.

- o Disseminate best practices, solutions and lessons learned, including green procurement schemes, extended producer responsibility (EPR) schemes, disposal and waste management systems, and uptake of circularity measures.

- o Knowledge exchange and transfer on 6R (refuse, reuse, redesign, recycle, reduce and recover) paradigm solutions will also be included.

FARM Global child project Cross-Cutting Issues

The Global Inception Meeting helped to inform stakeholders, including the GEF Secretariat, IAs, EAs and co-financing partners, about the FARM global child project strategy and action plans for addressing cross-cutting issues. These include the knowledge management strategy and action plan, communications and branding initiatives, gender and social safeguards, stakeholder engagement strategy, and monitoring and evaluation framework within the FARM global child project. The presentations for each session are provided in Annexes 3 and 4.

Global child project knowledge management strategy and action plan

Knowledge management is one of the key components of the FARM Global child project. The FARM Global Knowledge Management Strategy and Action Plan was presented by Brittany King, GGKP Project Specialist. This comprehensive plan outlines the objectives for knowledge management throughout the programme's five-year duration. During the inaugural year, the global child project aims to establish a functioning knowledge management system and identify key knowledge gaps relevant to the overall programme.

FARM knowledge management workplan in 2024



FARM is benefitting from GGKP's already established knowledge management systems, digital infrastructure and network of knowledge partners. The first phase of establishing FARM's digital infrastructure and knowledge management system involves developing an initiative page, which is hosted on the GGKP website and serves as an initial website for FARM, and creating the FARM virtual community space on the Green Forum.

The FARM initiative page was officially launched during inception and will be developed into a full-fledged website by early 2025.

The FARM Green Forum Group was launched prior to inception and presented in more detail during this session. It will be used to organize key documents, connect partners and stakeholders for informal exchange, and host coordination groups and thematic communities of practice.

The presentation concluded with an interactive breakout session, which asked participants to consider what knowledge or training key stakeholders need, how to get that knowledge to them, and who should be delivering it, acknowledging that, for example, a farmer and financial officer likely have different needs and trusted messengers. The breakout session demonstrated that finance is an area where many current FARM partners generally lack knowledge and experience, and will be a significant knowledge gap to fill.

FARM initiative page

Description: A web-based portal, the temporary FARM website, hosted by GGKP's Green Forum

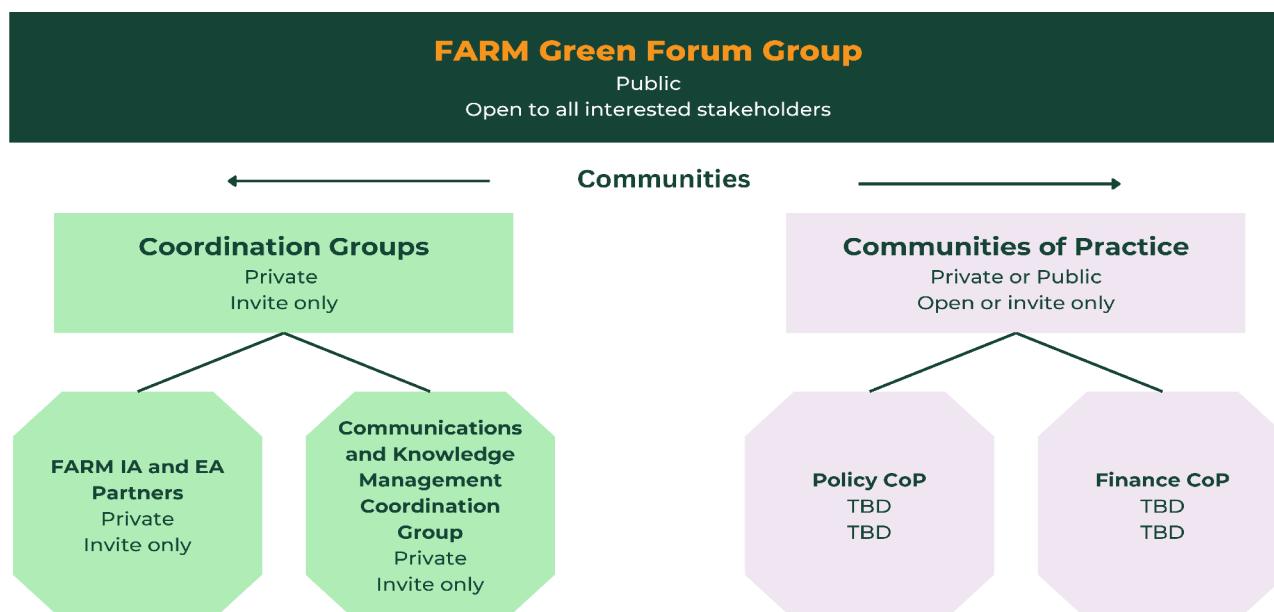
Progress: Will be developed into a full-fledged website by Q1 2025
ggkp.org/GEFFARM

FARM virtual community space

Description: A web-based portal hosted by GGKP's Green Forum

Function: To organize FARM documents, connect partners and stakeholders for informal exchange, and host coordination groups and thematic communities of practice
ggkp.org/FARMGroup

Structure of FARM's virtual community space on the Green Forum



*Private groups are not visible to FARM group members unless they are invited to be in the community; the communities of practice are not established yet, so those presented here are examples.

Global child project communications and branding

ToR of FARM Communication and Knowledge Management Coordination Group

Objective: To keep child projects connected and aligned with regards to communications and knowledge management activities, and to encourage collaboration and coherence across the global programme and avoid duplication of work. The group serves as a platform for the Global child project to address issues, identifying training needs, and offering guidance on knowledge management and communication.

Proposed members: GEF Secretariat, implementing agencies, executing agencies

Meeting requirements:

- Quarterly virtual meetings
- Ad hoc meetings as needed

The communications and branding presentation was presented by John Brittain, FARM Global child project Communications Coordinator. He introduced the newly developed FARM brand and associated assets tailored for all child projects, emphasizing support for participants to utilize the brand

effectively. Formal branding guidelines will be incorporated into a Brand Book, and guidance and training on its correct usage will be made available. The presentation also unveiled the newly formed Communications and Knowledge Management Coordination Group, comprising representatives from the

GEF Secretariat and each IA and EA, with occasional participation from co-finance partners. The terms of reference of the newly proposed group define its objectives and expectations that it will serve as a consistent venue for facilitating collaboration, brand coherence, communications, planning and exchange of information, best practices and knowledge among partners

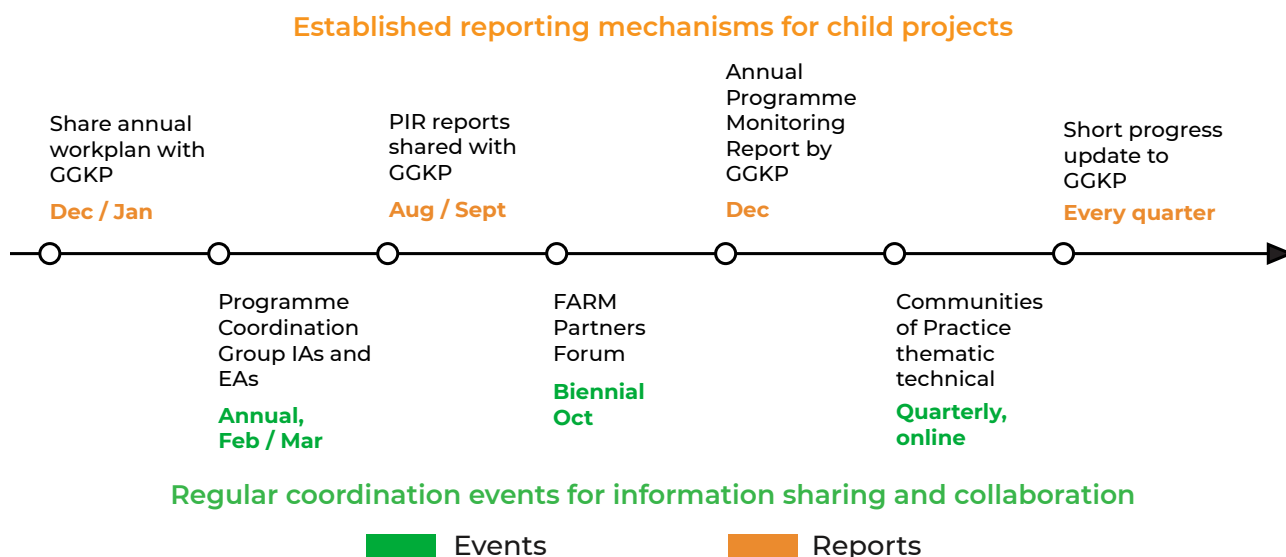
An updated version of the communications strategy, slated for finalization this year, was outlined. The development of the FARM website will begin later in 2024 with the full site up and running by 2025. An interactive exercise was conducted to get ideas and opinions on messaging and taglines that could be used to promote the work of FARM globally and in the national context and relevant to each specific child project. The possibility of language-appropriate versions of the messaging and brand taglines tailored to different countries was addressed and this will be followed up on throughout the year bi-laterally and through the Communications and Knowledge Management Group set up.

Beyond monitoring and reporting in FARM

The monitoring and evaluation session focused on accountability towards achieving FARM goals and objectives and promoting learning among FARM stakeholders. The session, led by Xi Cao, Project Manager of the FARM Global child project, underscored the importance of a robust M&E framework for the Farm Programme, emphasizing its role in facilitating communication, outreach and stakeholder engagement with financiers. She also introduced the FARM programmatic M&E methodology, which integrates four GEF Core Indicators for FARM. Additionally, a set of FARM common indicators will be developed to supplement the GEF Core Indicators, providing more detailed insights into the progress and learning of the child projects.

These common indicators, slated for development in 2024 based on the child projects' log frames, will enhance monitoring and evaluation efforts. The use of an ICT dashboard to streamline reporting activities for child projects was discussed. Participants were also introduced to FARM's reporting mechanisms, enhancing their understanding of how project progress will be documented and communicated.

FARM Reporting Mechanisms and Coordination



The discussion further delved into agricultural projects, particularly focusing on monitoring and evaluating their impact. Climate change's effect on crop yields was addressed, with a particular emphasis on data collection and alignment with GEF Core Indicators within the country child projects. The session acknowledged the variations in project interventions across countries and proposed developing a results framework applicable to all child projects. Additionally, the importance of capacity-building training for focal points in each country was highlighted to ensure effective project implementation.

Overall, the session underscored the need for a common framework for these projects, taking into account each country's priorities.

The session concluded with an announcement about upcoming consultations aimed at finalizing a programmatic framework for agriculture and crops by the end of 2024, highlighting the ongoing efforts towards enhancing monitoring and evaluation practices within the FARM Programme.

Mainstreaming gender in FARM

Xi Cao, Project Manager of the FARM Global child project, discussed the significant role of women in agriculture, especially in low-income countries. Statistics reveal that 66% of women in low-income countries are engaged in agriculture, a stark contrast to the mere 2% in high-income countries. Notably,

ToR of Programmatic Indicator Assignment

Objective: The services under this consultancy will contribute to the achievement of FARM Programme Output 4.1: Programmatic reporting including annual reports, midterm and terminal reviews are produced with child projects to monitor and evaluate the programme and practice adaptive management when necessary.		
Activities	Deliverables	Timeline
Review and assess relevant project results framework data available from existing data collection and reporting activities in FARM country projects	a) A written assessment	End of month 2
Propose common method(s) for collecting, assessing, and aggregating program results	a) A proposed calculation method(s) and sample calculations for each metric or metrics representing each results indicator b) 1 consultation with EAs, IAs to generate feedback	End of month 3
develop a harmonized programmatic monitoring framework for use across child projects; including producing annual project programmatic report template	a) A programmatic monitoring framework b) how-to-do note to provide guidance c) Annual Project Programmatic Report template d) 1 consultation with EAs, IAs to generate feedback	End of month 4,5
Recommend a strategy and action plan to disseminate and incentivize uptake of the proposed methods	a) Strategy and action plan	End of month 6
Conduct trainings to child project on reporting against the Programme monitoring framework	a) brief training materials for child projects b) conduct 2 regional trainings to Child projects	End of month 7

women constitute a significant portion of the agricultural labour force, with around 70% of workers in the horticultural sector being women. Despite their indispensable contribution, women in agriculture face multifaceted challenges, including health risks and exposure to violence within agricultural value chains and markets. These challenges encompass exposure to harmful chemicals and plastic waste, as well as instances of gender-based violence.

Cao emphasized the potential benefits of reducing gender inequalities in agriculture. Citing an FAO report, she highlighted that addressing gender disparities in access to productive resources and services could lead to a substantial increase in yields on women's farms, potentially reducing global undernourishment by 100-150 million individuals.

To address these challenges and leverage the benefits of gender equality, FARM adopts a gender-responsive approach across all Global child project elements. This approach aims to achieve sustainable development goals and environmental objectives, particularly in agrochemical reduction and management, by tackling socio-economic inequalities through a comprehensive gender-responsive strategy within the FARM project. While gender considerations have been incorporated throughout the Global child project, the session highlighted the need for further elaboration and specificity in streamlining activities.

Crucially, the project log frame will recognize the integration of gender considerations into broader project activities and standalone gender-responsive initiatives. This ensures the tracking and monitoring of the gender responsiveness of the FARM project.

Engaging multiple stakeholders in FARM

In this session, key objectives were identified, including fostering coordination among child projects, generating multi-stakeholder

value for the overarching FARM Programme, and collaborating with knowledge partners, regional institutions and global entities to replicate successful solutions. A particular emphasis was placed on cultivating partnerships with IAs, EAs and bilateral co-financing partners to ensure alignment and maximize impact.

Stakeholder mapping emerged as a critical component of the strategy, aiming to engage diverse actors across the agricultural value chain. Collaboration with policy influencers, research institutes, and both public and private finance sectors was underscored as essential for program success. Discussions also revolved around outlining stakeholder engagement plans, which involved establishing working groups and thematic communities of practice, as well as organizing cross-cutting webinars to facilitate knowledge sharing and collaboration. Additionally, the plan outlined two global events over the next five years to disseminate solutions and knowledge effectively.

The completion of the stakeholder mapping and analysis of their interest stages has been confirmed. During this process, potential partners have underscored the importance of the FARM Global child project to proceed to the next stage, which involves confirming practical and contractual arrangements for the action plan. This step entails defining the technical products and resources that need coordination by the Global child project, including knowledge, research, communications, gender, monitoring and evaluation, and other cross-cutting issues.

Subsequently, a transparent process must be established to select the most suitable partners for developing the different products. Finally, the FARM Global child project executing agency is tasked with ensuring efficient administrative and project management procedures to initiate the work. This should be done in consultation with the child project and the broader FARM network to ensure alignment and collaboration.

Field Visit

On 15 March 2024, over 60 participants had the opportunity to visit Real IPM – a leading African biological control company – in Nairobi, Kenya, as part of the FARM Global child project Inception Meeting. There, participants explored alternative solutions for reducing agricultural pesticide use. The visit offered practical insights into engaging farmers with alternative solutions, particularly biopesticides, aligning with the objectives of the FARM Programme.

Real IPM, a member of the Biobest Group, specializes in producing high-quality predatory mites and biopesticides. With global rights to several isolates of metarhizium under license from ICIPE, Real IPM offers comprehensive crop protection solutions to large and small-scale farmers. Participants gained a deeper understanding of the production, market access and dissemination of biopesticides,

witnessing firsthand the company's mission to develop low-cost biological solutions for sustainable agriculture. Practical tips were shared on engaging farmers with alternative solutions, emphasizing the importance of accessible and effective biopesticides in reducing chemical pesticide dependency.

The visit provided a valuable learning experience, focusing on practical applications and real-world solutions for sustainable agriculture. Participants left with enhanced knowledge of biopesticide production, market access strategies and practical techniques for dissemination on farmland. This first-hand experience at Real IPM underscored the importance of exploring innovative approaches to pesticide reduction within the FARM Programme.



(photo credit: UNEP)

The Way Forward

The FARM Global child project will address knowledge gaps by collaborating across national child projects and establishing a Community of Practice framework. This will involve targeted research initiatives and capacity-building programs to bridge identified gaps.

Efforts will also focus on enhancing communication and knowledge management through the establishment of a Joint Communication and Knowledge Management Coordination Group. Regular stakeholder engagement will be maintained to understand evolving needs and define specific roles within FARM. Partnerships with relevant organizations will be fostered to leverage expertise and resources.

FARM Global child project will also develop programmatic indicators for monitoring and evaluation, ensuring alignment with project objectives. Robust monitoring mechanisms will track progress, while key performance indicators will measure intervention effectiveness.

Lastly, the FARM Global child project will promote learning and sharing among child projects through workshops, webinars and documentation of best practices. This will create a culture of continuous learning and improvement, driving sustainable agricultural practices worldwide.

Annexes (Please refer to the attached file.)

Annex 1: Event agenda

Annex 2: Roundtable session plans

Annex 3: FARM child project presentations

Annex 4: FARM cross-cutting issues presentations

Annex 5: Call for proposals:

[Technical Assistance for the Implementation of Component 1: Policy and Enforcement of GEF-funded FARM Global Child Project](#)

[Technical Assistance for the Implementation of Component 2 - Finance and Investment](#)

[Development of Methods for Assessment of GEF-funded FARM Programme Outcomes](#)



Supported by



Led by



In partnership with



Executed by

