

KENYA CASHEWNUT INITIATIVE



Cashew nuts are a cash crop with significant potential to boost farmers' incomes in coastal Kenya

70,000 smallholder farmers (59% women) grow cashews along the Kenyan coast yet earn a fraction of the crop's value. Africa produces 61% of the world's raw cashews but processes only 12%. KCNI changes that by linking farmers directly to verified buyers through a hub and spoke aggregation model, digitization, and certification.

Kenya cashew value chain snapshot

~Number of Trees	~Number of cashew farmers	Average annual production (tonnes)	Average annual processing capacity (tonnes)
2 million	70,000	10,000	38,000

The Problem

Africa produces 61% of global raw cashews (~1.7M tons) yet only processes 12%.

Kenya has a 28,000-ton processing capacity gap — producing <10,000 tons vs. 38,000-ton capacity.

Global CNF prices surged 60% in 2025 to \$1,600–1,700/ton; farm gate prices lag at ~\$0.50/kg.

70,000 smallholder farmers (59% female) trapped by aging trees, barter systems, and exploitative middlemen.

Kilifi County has untapped CL4 agro-ecological land with strong expansion potential.

The solution

Aggregation Infrastructure — Village Collection Centers (VCCs) in high-density zones feed into Processor Collection Centers (PCCs) via a hub-and-spoke model, with standardized collection, grading, and storage.

Digital & Payments — A traceability tool manages farmer registration and transactions, integrated with M-PESA, targeting 80% end-to-end traceability.

Quality & Certification — "Kenya Cashew" certification standards are enforced through batch tracking and quality control processes.

Market Linkages — Off-take agreements connect farmers to processors (led by Nuts & More), coordinating supply aggregation for EU and Middle East export.

Potential impact

The initiative is projected to generate 1,920 – 3,840 jobs within the first two years of implementation

Price uplift: KSh 50 → KSh 60+/kg via traceability = ~20% more income per kg sold

VCC infrastructure creates permanent collection assets that can be used to aggregate other crops

Farmers shift from barter (cooking oil/flour) to cash building MPESA transaction history and opening bank /SACCO accounts

Pilot data unlocks both government and development funds into the value chain

Pilot investment validates a model replicable across 6 coastal counties + other Kenyan value chains

Next steps

Our immediate focus is to pilot the solution in Kilifi County

\$215,000

12-Month Pilot Ask
Kilifi County

1,200

Farmers in
48 Groups

12 VCCs

Village Collection
Centers

Join us and help us grow the cashew value chain

We are looking for anchor funders to invest in the pilot phase of this initiative

For feedback, partnerships, or further information, please feel free to contact us at kinyua.mbijjewe@globaldevincubator.org

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