



African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS)



2025

ANNUAL REPORT

Harnessing science, technology, and innovation (STI)
for Resilient, Inclusive African Futures

© ACTS 2025

Imprint

Prepared by

The Directorate of Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning & Impact, with support from the Directorate of Communications, Outreach & Partnership

Authors

Joel Onyango, Norah Ouma, Anne Maina, Winnie Wangwe, Peter Ongalo, and Pauline Soy

Publication Details

© ACTS 2025. All rights reserved.

December 2025 Edition

Address

2nd Floor, Konza Complex
855P+XPF, Konza
Nairobi-Mombasa Road
P.O. Box 45917-00100
Nairobi, Kenya

Contact

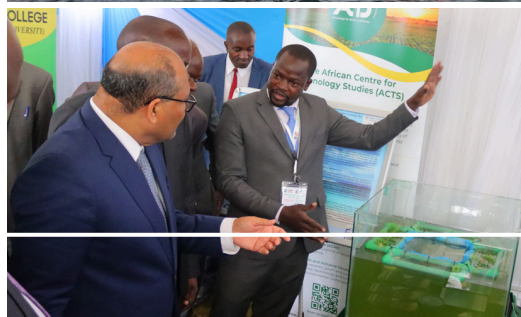
Telephone: **+254 710 607 210**

Email: **info@acts-net.org**

Website: www.acts-net.org

Instagram | X/Twitter: ACTSNET

LinkedIn | Youtube | Facebook: African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS)



1. Introduction

The African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) is a pioneering institution in promoting sustainable development and technological innovation in Africa, harnessing of science, technology and innovation for sustainable and inclusive development on the continent.

In 2025, ACTS made significant progress toward its vision of **“Knowledge for Better Livelihoods”** and continued implementing the 2022–2026 Strategic Plan through its programmes and cross-cutting initiatives. The Centre produced over 80 high-quality research outputs, including policy briefs, technical reports, and working papers, addressing critical development challenges across climate resilience, agriculture, digital transformation, innovation governance, and inclusive development. This body of work strengthened evidence-informed decision-making at national, regional, and global levels, and reinforced ACTS’ reputation as a trusted, independent source of African-led policy evidence.

Institutionally, ACTS expanded its staff capacity to 74 and celebrated a major milestone with the relocation to its new headquarters in Konza, which provides state-of-the-art facilities to support research, innovation, learning, and cross-sector collaboration. These investments enhanced operational efficiency, research excellence, and the Centre’s ability to convene stakeholders from governments, regional institutions, civil society, academia, and the private sector.

Through its integrated approach across research, policy, capacity building, and knowledge & technology brokerage, ACTS has continued to deliver measurable impact, strengthen governance, and foster inclusive development solutions across Africa. In this Annual Report, we invite you to explore and reflect on ACTS’ journey in 2025, highlighting our achievements, partnerships, and our commitment to using science, technology, and innovation to advance sustainable development across the continent.

Mission

ACTS’ mission is to strengthen the capacity and policies of African Countries and Institutions to harness science, technology and innovation for sustainable and inclusive development

Vision

The core values of ACTS include a dedication to knowledge creation and dissemination, a commitment to fostering sustainable development through science and technology, and a focus on supporting African institutions and countries in achieving their development goals.

Message from the Executive Director



I am thrilled to present the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) Annual Report for 2025, a year marked by key milestones in harnessing science, technology, and innovation (STI) to build resilient, inclusive African futures. Guided by our strategic mission, ACTS has advanced sustainable development across priority areas Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security (AFNS), Climate Resilient Economies (CRE), Gender, Youth and Inclusive Development (GYID), and the newly launched ACTS AI Institute (ACAI), aligning our policy engagement and technology brokerage with the UN SDGs and AU Agenda 2063.

In 2025, ACTS achieved significant strategic milestones across its core programmes. The AFNS programme piloted six projects, including solar cold storage and dairy precoolers, utilising a "Try Before You Buy" model to reduce post-harvest losses in Kiambu. Simultaneously, the CRE initiative generated vital evidence for sustainable livelihoods through field experiments and stakeholder mapping. Our commitment to equity was solidified by the GYID programme, which formalised a new Gender Policy and established an Intellectual Property Unit to help women and youth commercialise their innovations. Finally, the July launch of the ACTS AI Institute (ACAI) marked a new era of African-centred digital governance, with the development of ethical AI tools for crop modelling, healthcare, and climate resilience in partnership with global leaders such as IDRC and FCDO.

A pivotal highlight of the year was our relocation to the 2nd Floor of the Konza Complex at Konza Technopolis. This move shows our integration into Kenya's knowledge-driven ecosystem and places us alongside innovators to strengthen programmes like the Green and Digital Innovation Hub (gDIH) for MSME transitions. With this tech-forward hub, we are better equipped to build the collaborations needed for a modern, digitalised Africa.

I'm grateful to our dedicated staff, Governing Council, and global partners for their collaboration that made these successes possible. Looking ahead, ACTS will continue to scale STI impacts for food sovereignty, climate security, and inclusive growth. I invite you to join us in this vital mission of shaping resilient African futures through science, policy, and impact.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Tom Migun Ogada". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

**Prof. Tom Migun Ogada,
Executive Director,
African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS)
Science. Policy. Innovation. Impact.**

1.0 ACTS CORE PILLARS

1.1 Policy Influence

In 2025, the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) strengthened its role as a strategic policy actor across Africa and the Global South, translating research into actionable policy solutions that address complex development challenges. Through advisory support, evidence-based policy dialogues, technical assistance, and participation in national, regional, and continental processes, ACTS helped shape inclusive, forward-looking governance frameworks.

A flagship milestone was ACTS' contribution to the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Summit in Kampala, Uganda, which adopted the Kampala Declaration on Building Resilient and Sustainable Agrifood Systems in Africa. The Summit also launched CAADP's 10-year Strategy (2026–2035), designed to accelerate agricultural production, value addition, intra-African trade, and sustainability, while addressing climate change, food insecurity, and systemic vulnerabilities across food systems. ACTS brought evidence, systems-level perspectives, and STI-informed recommendations to these discussions, ensuring that long-term agrifood transformation strategies are both inclusive and evidence-driven.

Beyond CAADP, ACTS participated in multiple high-level policy forums and advisory platforms, providing thought leadership across sectors. These included climate negotiations, regional agricultural and innovation policy consultations, national stakeholder dialogues, and multi-stakeholder platforms for technology and sustainability policy across multiple thematic areas, including climate change, energy transitions, the blue economy, digital governance, and AI ethics and regulation. The Centre contributed evidence and technical insights to national and regional processes on renewable energy adoption, climate financing, clean energy transitions, ocean governance, sustainable fisheries management, and AI policy frameworks, ensuring that policies are informed by research, technology, and systems-level analysis.

ACTS also convened and participated in multi-stakeholder platforms, bringing together governments, regional institutions, private sector actors, civil society, and research communities to foster dialogue, collaboration, and actionable policy outcomes. Key forums included climate negotiation preparatory workshops, national energy and renewable policy consultations, blue economy strategy sessions, and AI governance advisory meetings, among others. Through these engagements, ACTS influenced policy formulation, strengthened institutional governance, and supported the integration of evidence into practical, scalable solutions.

By convening governments, regional institutions, the private sector, civil society, and research communities, ACTS ensured that policy processes remain **inclusive, context-sensitive, and responsive to emerging challenges**, including climate change, digital transformation, and sustainable development priorities. Collectively, these policy initiatives reinforced ACTS' mandate to bridge research, technology, and governance, positioning the Centre as a trusted partner in shaping Africa's development trajectory.

1.2 Research Excellence

Over the year, research unfolded across multiple sites, linking field-based evidence with policy-facing analysis and long-term knowledge building. Work conducted in coastal and inland counties such as Kwale, Kilifi, Nyandarua, Nakuru, Murang'a, Kitui, and Siaya, alongside comparative studies spanning Kenya, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Malawi, Zambia, and South Africa, reflected a research practice rooted in place while attentive to regional and continental dynamics. This grounding in lived contexts influenced both the questions pursued and the form evidence ultimately took.

Inquiries cut across science, technology, innovation, knowledge, and society; climate-resilient economies; gender; youth and inclusive development; agriculture, food, and nutrition security; and artificial intelligence. Rather than operating as parallel streams, these areas of work intersected around shared concerns with systems change, equity, resilience, and governance. Research examined how innovation systems functioned in practice, how climate and energy transitions impacted livelihoods and enterprises, the ways gender and youth shape access to opportunity, and the pressures reshaping agri-food systems in response to environmental and market dynamics. Digital and AI technologies were examined within this same landscape, bringing questions of data, ethics, and use into conversation with broader development concerns.

As the year progressed, the centre's research practice moved from generation toward interpretation and consolidation. Insights from individual studies were synthesised through bibliometric analyses, doctoral and postdoctoral research, and structured learning processes. Comparative and multi-country analyses of science granting councils, doctoral education, innovation financing, clean energy entrepreneurship, and climate and food systems enabled the identification of patterns beyond single projects or locations. This emphasis on synthesis strengthened institutional memory and allowed learning to inform future programming, policy engagement, and research agendas. Evidence generated was consistently carried into decision-making spaces. Findings informed programme design, incubation, capacity-strengthening initiatives, technology development, and policy dialogue at national and regional levels. Research outputs were translated into policy briefs, technical reports, learning materials, training curricula, blogs, and convenings, ensuring that evidence travelled across academic, policy, and practice communities.

By connecting field-level evidence with synthesis, dialogue, and application, the centre strengthened its contribution to research and policy debates. It reinforced its position as a partner for those seeking comprehensive, relevant, and engaged research across Africa.

1.3 Innovation and adaptation

The year 2025 was marked by continuous improvement in how programmes and directorates planned, delivered, and learned from their work. We introduced new tools, approaches, and partnerships to strengthen efficiency, collaboration, and impact, and we used adaptive practices to stay responsive to changing contexts and stakeholder needs.

At the institutional level, significant progress was made in modernising internal systems and workflows. The Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning, and Impact (MELI) function strengthened performance tracking through the MS Project platform and advanced the integration of MELI processes into the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. Standardised reporting templates, clearer indicators, and a strengthened Theory of Change enabled teams to monitor progress more effectively and adjust implementation in real time. These improvements enhanced coordination across programmes and supported timelier, evidence-informed decision-making.

Internal improvements were accompanied by more innovative ways of delivering capacity strengthening. Training models increasingly shifted from stand-alone workshops to structured mentorship and incubation approaches. In Homa Bay, the EVISCEE Clean Energy Innovation Hub provided targeted support to women and youth enterprises through coaching and business incubation. The ACTS Pathways Academy expanded its e-learning platform, enabling fellows from Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, and Ethiopia to access modular courses and virtual learning spaces. Under the ACTS AI Institute, Communities of Practice brought together researchers and practitioners from Kenya, the United Kingdom, Brazil, Nepal, Pakistan, Ethiopia, and Uganda to collaborate on responsible and inclusive AI applications.

Innovation was equally evident in programme delivery on the ground. Within the Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security portfolio, the Try-Before-You-Buy pilot in Nyandarua, Nakuru, and Kiambu counties tested solar cold storage units, phase change material coolers, hybrid solar dryers, and e-mobility solutions directly with farmers, cooperatives, and small enterprises. This user-centred approach generated practical evidence on technology performance in real-world operating environments and strengthened partnerships with communities and private-sector actors. In Kilifi and Kwale, aquaculture innovation pilots further demonstrated how locally grounded experimentation can inform more effective and sustainable interventions.

As these programme innovations unfolded, engagement methods also continued to evolve. Hybrid and virtual platforms became standard tools for policy dialogues, regional workshops, and stakeholder consultations, enabling broader participation and reducing logistical barriers. Multi-country dialogues involving Kenya, Rwanda, Mozambique, Namibia, and Ethiopia replaced one-off events with more iterative processes that allowed deeper collaboration and follow-up with governments, research councils, and development partners.

Knowledge brokerage practices expanded alongside these changes. Programmes diversified dissemination channels through webinars, innovation expos, digital dashboards, blogs, short videos, and storytelling formats that made research outputs more accessible to different audiences. We held field-based demonstrations and practical showcases, including clean energy enterprise events and community engagements in Kenya's western and coastal regions, to connect research evidence, innovation, and real-world application.

Underlying all these efforts was a strong commitment to learning and adaptation. Insights from mid-year evaluations, quarterly MELI reflections, and stakeholder feedback informed adjustments to workplans, partnership strategies, and resource mobilisation approaches. Internal peer learning improved proposal development, and we continually refined engagement strategies in response to emerging opportunities and lessons from implementation.

These innovations and practices strengthened our systems, improved our programmes, and deepened our partnerships. By continually refining how work is designed and delivered across diverse contexts, the organisation reinforced its ability to respond creatively and practically to Africa's evolving development challenges.

2.0 Alignment with ACTS and Global Discourses

2.1 Alignment with Global discourses

ACTS continues to position itself as a pivotal intermediary between high-level international frameworks and localised action across Africa. By systematically aligning its 2025 programming with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the institution has addressed the interconnected challenges of poverty (SDG 1), food insecurity (SDG 2), climate change (SDG 13), and inequality. Through the CRE, GYID, and AFNS programs, ACTS has translated global commitments into tangible outcomes ranging from the promotion of responsible production (SDG 12) through contribution to target 12.3 through the SPOKE project that aims to reduce post-harvest losses along the production and supply chains, affordable and clean energy (SDG 7)

through localized renewable systems to the enhancement of life below water (SDG 14) via sustainable aquatic resource management. This multi-sectoral approach ensures that research outputs are not just academic, but are essential drivers of the global 2030 Agenda.

At the continental level, ACTS remained a proactive architect of the African Union Agenda 2063, specifically championing the vision of an innovation-led and inclusive economy. By embedding gender and youth dimensions into digital transformation and green innovation hubs, the institution directly supports aspirations for a "People-Driven" development model. The focus on circularity and eco-innovation aligns with global sustainability discourses on decoupling economic growth from resource depletion, ensuring that Africa's industrialization (SDG 9) is both green and resilient. Furthermore, through strategic engagement with the Paris Agreement and the UN Food Systems Summit pathways, ACTS has strengthened the continent's capacity to build equitable livelihoods and climate-sensitive production systems.

The institution's alignment is anchored in a robust commitment to SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), fostering collaboration between academia, government, and the private sector to bridge the gap between policy and practice. By integrating national priorities like Kenya Vision 2030 with global climate action dialogues, ACTS has demonstrated how integrated research and technology brokerage can catalyse systemic change. Whether through advancing the Just Energy Transition or scaling digital literacy for MSMEs, ACTS serves as a critical node in the global development network, ensuring that African perspectives and context-responsive solutions remain at the forefront of international discourse.

2.2 Alignment with ACTS Directorates

In 2025, ACTS programmes continued to work closely with the Directorates of Communication, Outreach and Partnerships, Research, and Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Impact (MELI) to ensure coordinated and effective delivery of institutional priorities. This collaboration enabled programmes to align technical work with ACTS' broader strategic objectives, while strengthening the consistency, quality, and visibility of programme outputs across the organisation.

The Directorate of Communication, Outreach and Partnerships supported programmes through strategic communications, stakeholder engagement, and partnership development, enhancing the reach and influence of research outputs, events, and policy dialogues. At the same time, the Research Directorate provided technical guidance to ensure methodological rigour, coherence across thematic areas, and alignment with ACTS' research standards.

The MELI Directorate played a critical role in supporting results-based management by strengthening planning, monitoring, learning, and impact documentation, enabling programmes to track progress, generate evidence of outcomes, and inform adaptive management.

Through joint planning, shared implementation processes, and continuous learning, the collaboration between programmes and directorates contributed to more integrated delivery, stronger institutional coherence, and improved accountability. This cross-directorate approach reinforced ACTS' capacity to deliver high-quality research, policy engagement, and capacity-strengthening initiatives, while positioning the organisation to respond effectively to emerging development and policy priorities.



3.0 Work in Agriculture Food and Nutrition Security programme (AFNS)



Program	Agriculture Food and Nutrition Security (AFNS)
<p>Mission</p>	<p>The AFNS mission is to contribute to the efforts of the African Union (AU) partners and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to enhance food and nutrition security, improve livelihoods in Africa through harnessing science, technology and innovation for sustainable and inclusive agri-food systems</p>
<p>Goal</p>	<p>The goal of the AFNS program in 2025 was to advance its mission through the implementation of the project activities that align with enhancing food and nutrition security and enhanced Livelihoods in Africa.</p>

In 2025, the Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security (AFNS) Programme advanced its mission to enhance food security and promote sustainable and resilient agri-food systems, in alignment with ACTS’ core pillars of policy engagement, capacity strengthening, research, and technology/knowledge brokerage. The programme implemented six interlinked projects, including VALORISE (Circular Economy of the Dairy Sector), SPOKE, CLASP- PURE Demonstrator - E-Mkokoteni CoolCart project, Kenya to Minnesota advancing food sovereignty through sustainable value addition and GIZ dairy pre-cooler initiatives, alongside two consultancy engagements including i) AGRA - The Resilient and Green Agri-food Innovations (RE-GAIN) gender and youth assessment study ii) World Fish- Finding Solutions for Sustainable Adoption of Climate Smart Fish Handling Equipment. Collectively, these initiatives supported evidence-informed policy processes, innovation uptake, and inclusive agri-food system transformation.

3.1 Policy Engagement

AFNS advanced policy engagement in sustainable agrifood systems through engagements with county governments, working closely with the Offices of County Executive Committee Members, as well as national government institutions and key agencies such as the Kenya Dairy Board.

Engagements also brought together research organisations, civil society actors, universities, private-sector partners, and development stakeholders, strengthening cross-sectoral partnerships and multi-level collaboration through series such as Valorise Workshops.

Through ongoing policy dialogue and stakeholder engagement, the programme focused on priority issues, including reducing post-harvest loss, promoting the adoption of agricultural technology, supporting circular business models, strengthening agricultural product marketing, and advancing gender inclusion in agri-food systems. Policy engagement activities combined policy analysis, background papers, and policy briefs with national and regional policy dialogues, stakeholder workshops, and multi-stakeholder conferences.

AFNS policy work amplified local and regional perspectives, supported inclusive participation, and reinforced the use of evidence in shaping resilient and inclusive agri-food systems.

3.2 Capacity Strengthening

The AFNS Programme implemented capacity-strengthening initiatives. The capacity strengthening efforts included training for farmers, cooperatives, and national- and network-level capacities. Activities included structured training, refresher training, strategic planning support, and field demonstration sessions, supporting skills development in business and strategic management.

Practical and applied training was delivered in areas such as agricultural business models on the Try-Before-You-Buy (TBYB) model, training farmers using a practical learning approach (PAL) through demonstration farms and farmer field schools (FFS) on good agricultural practices (GAPs) and record keeping in collaboration with Kiambu County agriculture extension officers. We offered the Cold Chain Foundation course to strengthen selected participants' understanding of clean cooling and cold-chain systems. AFNS strengthened the capacities of farmer cooperatives and individual farmers through continuous training supported by regular refresher trainings to enhance technology adoption, sustainability, and farmer-led innovation.

They also collaborated on Capacity strengthening in value addition Strategies and Circularity Models to enhance capacity for sustainable agrifood practices. Capacity strengthening efforts also emphasised learning and reflection through continuous field visits and peer engagement sessions. These initiatives expanded learning networks, strengthened professional and institutional capacities, and supported more effective participation in Agricultural Commercialisation.

3.3 Knowledge and technology Brokerage

AFNS implemented Technology and knowledge brokerage as a bridge between innovation, practice, and decision-making, enabling stakeholders to test, adapt, and scale appropriate solutions within real-world contexts. The programme emphasised co-creation, learning-by-doing, and risk reduction to support technology uptake.

Within this approach, AFNS focused on technologies addressing post-harvest losses, cold-chain efficiency, sustainable processing, and low-carbon transport. Central to this work was the Try-Before-You-Buy (TBYB) model, which allowed users to assess technologies as socio-technical interventions rather than standalone products.

The programme worked closely with farmers, cooperatives, technology providers, private sector actors, researchers, and county governments. This collaboration enabled the launch of a cold storage facility in Kinale, Kiambu County, supported by integrated cold-chain systems and e-motorbike transportation.

Outcomes included the testing and deployment of multiple technologies such as solar cold storage with pre-cooling subsystems, phase change material (PCM) coolers, e-motorbikes, hybrid solar dryers, sensors, and optimization of the Happy Cow solar milk pre-cooler to improve raw milk safety. These interventions strengthened evidence on technology performance, informed adoption decisions, and supported pathways for scaling sustainable innovations.

3.4 Research and Publication

Research under the AFNS Programme was anchored in applied, demand-led, and policy-relevant inquiry, designed to generate evidence that informs both practice and decision-making. The programme integrated research activities within ongoing projects, ensuring continuous learning and relevance.

Thematic research areas included agronomic innovation, market systems, circular economy approaches, and food safety technologies. Research methods combined market assessments, field-based technology testing, and collaborative studies with academic and industry partners.

Key contributors included graduate students, researchers, universities such as Egerton University, private-sector partners including Arla Foods and Promaco, as well as development practitioners working across initiatives such as VALORISE, SPOKE, CLASP, and GIZ-supported projects.

This resulted in the completion and publication of theses covering:

- Demand-led agronomic research in Tanzania
- A market assessment for green cold storage in Nyandarua and Nakuru Counties
- A technology study on improving solar milk pre-coolers for raw milk safety in partnership with Happy Cow Ltd

Research outputs were synthesised into peer-reviewed publications, manuscripts under review, policy-relevant knowledge products, and learning briefs. Notably, the programme published:

Mutio et al. (2025). Circular business models for whey valorization in the Kenyan dairy sector through product life extension and resource recovery. Discover Sustainability, 6(1), 805.

Collectively, these outputs strengthened the evidence base for sustainable, inclusive, and circular agri-food systems, while reinforcing ACTS' role as a knowledge hub linking research, policy, and practice.

3.5 Resource Mobilisation

The AFNS Programme in 2025 mobilised USD 286,411.54 through three projects. This included USD 149,960 secured for the AGRA RE-GAIN Programme, supporting gender- and youth-responsive agri-food systems interventions across seven (7) African countries. An additional USD 12,500 was mobilised through the E-Mkokoteni initiative to advance last-mile, low-carbon transport solutions within smallholder horticulture value chains. An additional USD 123,951.54 was awarded under the ZEP-RE (PTA Reinsurance Company) to conduct a baseline and endline project evaluation of a Climate Risk Insurance project in Zambia.

3.6 Alignment with ACTS Objectives and Global Discourses

3.6.1 Aligned with the implementation of the ACTS strategic plan.

Strategic Objective 1: Strengthen and sustain the recognition of ACTS as a Centre of Excellence in policy-relevant research and development. During the period, the AFNS Programme strengthened ACTS' recognition as a trusted centre of excellence for policy-relevant, interdisciplinary research on agri-food systems, climate action, and inclusive development. By consistently linking research, innovation testing, and policy questions, the programme strengthened ACTS' reputation for producing credible, applied evidence that directly supports real-world decision-making, especially at the intersection of agriculture, technology, climate resilience, and gender and youth inclusion.

Strategic Objective 2: Enhance ACTS' influence in informing evidence-informed policy making through translating and disseminating its research insights in various policy forums. This included: Presentation of the research insights from the sustainable cold chain project at the Evi4DeV conference, disseminated policy insights targeted at the various policy forums in 2025

Strategic Objective 3: Build a strong funding base for ACTS through effective resource mobilization. AFNS contributed to ACTS' long-term sustainability by translating strategic priorities into fundable, high-impact programmes. Through diversified partnerships and targeted resource mobilization, the programme demonstrated ACTS' capacity to attract funding aligned with its mission.

This strengthened ACTS' funding base while reinforcing partners' confidence in ACTS' ability to deliver complex, cross-cutting work at national, regional, and continental levels.

3.6.2 Aligned with global discourses

The programme initiatives align closely with global and continental development frameworks, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the African Union Agenda 2063, the UN Food Systems Summit pathways, and global climate action commitments. By addressing food security, post-harvest loss reduction, sustainable value addition, and food safety, the programme directly **contributes to SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production)**. Its emphasis on renewable energy-powered cold-chain technologies, low-carbon transport, and circular business models **advances SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) and SDG 13 (Climate Action)**, while targeted integration of gender and youth supports SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth).

At the continental and systems level, the programme advances **Agenda 2063's vision** of inclusive growth through modernised agriculture, innovation, and value addition, while strengthening participatory and evidence-informed governance processes. Through farmer-centred business models, resilience-building technologies, and multi-stakeholder policy dialogue, the programme aligns with the UN Food Systems Summit Action Tracks, particularly on safe and nutritious food, equitable livelihoods, and resilience to climate shocks. Together, the AFNS Programme turns global commitments into practical, context-responsive action, showing how integrated policy, research, capacity building, and technology brokerage can drive sustainable, climate-resilient transformation of agri-food systems.

4.0 Work in Climate Resilient Economies (CRE)



Program	Climate Resilient Economies (CRE)
Mission	To provide policy choices that support the generation, uptake and harnessing of climate change related STI for sustainable and diversified livelihoods, socio-economic development and biodiversity conservation in Africa.
Goal	To support the development of enabling capacities, policies, organizations and institutions for harnessing applications of climate change-related sciences, technologies and innovations for energy access and security, water quality and security, biodiversity and natural resource management in Africa by: a. Mobilizing resources and funds for building climate-resilient economies; b. Strengthening the research quality and messaging within international discourses through the climate change policy laboratory; c. Strengthening knowledge and learning systems on climate change through the virtual academy; d. Leveraging strategic partnerships for influence and outreach on policy, research and training

In 2025, the CRE programme implemented a total of 11 projects, including ARA on the Global Goal on Adaptation and the New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance, the CLARE Capacity Strengthening Hub (CS Hub), the Decoloniality Book Project, Gentwork, the Just Energy Transition (JET) project focusing on localization, decent work, small, micro and medium enterprises and sustainable livelihoods, the Learning Lab Virtual Academy, RURALITIES, SDG Interactions, Trans Path, the Blue Empowerment Project (BE), and the FAR-Leaf II project, resulting in various achievements in the following action areas.

4.1. Policy Engagement

The Climate Resilient Economies (CRE) programme engaged in sustained policy dialogue and stakeholder engagement in 2025 to support evidence-informed, inclusive, and resilient policy pathways. Policy engagement activities combined policy analysis, background papers, and policy briefs with national and regional dialogues, stakeholder workshops, and multi-stakeholder conferences. These engagements addressed key policy themes, including climate finance, just energy transition, SDG governance, renewable energy, blue economy governance, skills and higher education, and women's economic empowerment.

Through these platforms, the programme contributed to policy alignment, identification of priority policy instruments, and collective reflection on progress toward shared development goals. Engagements brought together government institutions, research organisations, civil society, universities, and other stakeholders, strengthening partnerships and creating spaces for dialogue across sectors and levels. The policy engagement work supported inclusive participation, amplified local and regional perspectives, and reinforced the use of evidence in shaping climate-resilient and equitable development policies.

4.2 Capacity Strengthening

Throughout 2025, the Climate Resilient Economies (CRE) programme implemented a comprehensive capacity strengthening agenda aimed at building individual, organisational, and network-level capabilities. Activities included structured training programmes, academies, seasonal schools, fellowships, peer-to-peer learning, exchange visits, and co-creation sessions that supported skills development in research, policy engagement, communication, advocacy, leadership, and knowledge brokerage.

Practical and applied training was delivered in areas such as digital data collection, fish value addition, media engagement, intellectual property, and governance, alongside efforts to strengthen facilitation, collaboration, and local leadership. Capacity strengthening also emphasized learning and reflection through roadmap development, field excursions, and public engagement platforms. These efforts expanded learning networks, strengthened professional and institutional capacity, and supported more effective participation in research, policy, and practice related to climate-resilient and sustainable development.

4.3 Research and Publication

Evidence generation, learning, and knowledge dissemination under the CRE programme were supported through a wide range of research and publication activities. Core research work included stakeholder engagement, key informant interviews, surveys, needs assessments, situational analysis, stakeholder mapping, and desktop reviews to inform programme design and implementation. Applied research activities, including field experimentation, technology assessments, baseline and pilot-level surveys, and comparative analyses, were conducted to generate practical insights across various thematic areas.

We also focused on learning and synthesis, using structured learning agendas, internal reviews, and working group engagements to support knowledge development and reflection. We consolidated research findings into a range of knowledge products, including technical reports, background papers, synthesis papers, manuscripts, information and knowledge briefs, and calls for book chapters. Dissemination was supported through blogs, workshops, training-related materials, and curated learning outputs.

The research and publications strengthened the programme's evidence base, supported learning and decision-making, and helped generate and share knowledge relevant to climate resilience and sustainable development.

4.4 Technology and Knowledge Brokerage

Technology and knowledge brokerage were advanced within CRE by establishing and strengthening platforms, systems, and partnerships that enabled knowledge exchange, synthesis, and co-creation. Digital learning infrastructure under the ACTS Pathways Academy (APA) provided a foundation for structured learning and access to knowledge resources. Webinars, virtual cafés, and hub engagements facilitated dialogue, peer learning, and alignment across projects and stakeholders.

Knowledge brokerage was further supported through synthesis and co-creation mechanisms, including translocal conceptual work and place-based T-Labs in Yala wetlands that brought together community, county, research, and policy actors to jointly develop shared visions and management frameworks. Strategic partnerships with academic and knowledge institutions strengthened content development and reinforced linkages between learning, research, and dissemination. These efforts supported effective knowledge flow, cross-context learning, and collaborative problem-solving across the programme.

4.5 Resource Mobilisation

In resource mobilization, the programme surpassed its 2025 target of USD 1.475 million and raised approximately USD 1.57 million through proposal invitations in the CLARE – Cs hub project (USD 1.5 million), the Future Africa Research Leadership Fellowship (FAR-LeaF) II project (USD 27000), Sauti Bot (USD 14,900), and Agrispoke (USD 29,000).

4.6 Alignment with ACTS Objectives and Global Discourses

4.6.1 Alignment with the Implementation of ACTS Strategic Plan

ACTS Strategic Objective 1

Within CRE, we strengthened the institution's standing in policy-relevant research by generating and synthesising evidence across climate change, energy transitions, agriculture and aquaculture systems, digital learning, and inclusive development. Research outputs included technical reports, policy briefs, synthesis papers, manuscripts, and structured knowledge products that supported policy dialogue and practice. Applied research, experimentation, and comparative analysis reinforced the quality and relevance of the evidence produced, contributing to sustained visibility and credibility as a source of policy-oriented research.

ACTS Strategic Objective 2

Through policy engagement, capacity strengthening, and knowledge brokerage, the CRE programme contributed to increased influence and uptake of evidence in policy and practice spaces. National and regional policy dialogues, stakeholder workshops, and multi-actor platforms created opportunities for informed discussion on priority issues such as climate finance, Just Energy Transition, and inclusive livelihoods. Capacity-strengthening initiatives enhanced skills in research, communication, advocacy, and leadership, while digital learning platforms and co-creation spaces supported knowledge exchange and learning. Partnerships with government, academia, civil society, and regional networks further amplified reach and engagement.

ACTS Strategic Objective 3

Pathways for resource mobilisation were created within the CRE Programme through systematic mapping of funding calls and proposal opportunities aligned with programme priorities. Engagements with partners supported the identification of joint proposal prospects and strengthened collaboration around shared funding interests. These activities improved coordination, readiness, and strategic alignment for proposal development, supporting a more structured approach to resource mobilization linked to partnerships and programme priorities.

4.6.2 Alignment with global discourses

The CRE programme engaged with global, continental, and national development frameworks through work on climate resilience, inclusive livelihoods, Just Energy Transitions, and governance of natural resources. Across its interventions, the programme addressed *SDG 1 (No Poverty)* and *SDG 2 (Zero Hunger)* by supporting livelihood resilience and climate-sensitive food and production systems. Gender inclusion within livelihoods, value chains, and leadership spaces contributed to *SDG 5 (Gender Equality)*, while enterprise participation, employment pathways, and support to small and medium actors reflected *SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth)*.

Engagement with renewable energy systems and the localization of energy production chains advanced *SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy)* and *SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure)*, linking energy transitions to local economic participation. Climate adaptation and resilience-focused interventions contributed to *SDG 13 (Climate Action)* by addressing climate risk and vulnerability. Work within marine and coastal systems supported *SDG 14 (Life Below Water)* through sustainable use of aquatic resources and climate-resilient livelihoods. Collaboration across research, policy, and practice spaces reflected *SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals)* through multi-actor engagement and joint action.

These areas of engagement reflected the priorities of the African Union Agenda 2063 and Kenya Vision 2030, particularly around inclusive growth, resilience, and sustainable economic transformation, and were connected to the Paris Agreement through adaptation-focused, climate-resilient development pathways.

5.0 Work in Gender, Youth and Inclusive Development (GYID)



Program	Gender, Youth and Inclusive Development (GYID)
Mission	The mission of the GYID programme is to provide policy choices that exploit the potential of women, youth and other marginalized groups to harness STI for sustainable and diversified livelihoods and socio-economic development of Africa
Goal	In 2025, the goal of the GYID programme was to prioritize initiatives that support access of technology by women and youth so as to enhance entrepreneurship outcomes among these groups. This was achieved by working together with researchers, programme leads, and by employing a gender lens in multiple sectors such as Energy, Agriculture, and Digital Economy.

In 2025, the Gender, Youth and Inclusive Development (GYID) Programme advanced ACTS' work on inclusive development, with a strong focus on gender equality, youth empowerment, and equitable participation in green and digital transitions. The programme was implemented through two projects, the Green Digital Innovation Hub (gDIH) and DigiKen, which together provided integrated platforms for capacity strengthening, policy engagement, research, and technology and knowledge brokerage.

The GYID Programme supported innovators, MSMEs, youth-led initiatives, and institutions to navigate clean energy adoption, digitalisation, innovation ecosystems, and inclusive governance across Kenya, Rwanda, Ethiopia, and selected regional contexts.

5.1 Policy Engagement

Policy engagement under the GYID Programme was anchored in evidence-informed dialogue and inclusive governance, with gDIH and DigiKen serving as bridges between innovation practice and policy processes. Thematic focus areas included green and digital transitions, higher education and innovation policy, gender inclusion, and youth participation in decision-making.

The programme supported multi-country policy inquiry, including an assessment of the state of doctoral and postdoctoral training in Kenya, Ethiopia, and Rwanda, aimed at identifying structural bottlenecks, resource gaps, and opportunities to strengthen inclusive innovation pipelines. High-level engagements included dialogue with international innovation leaders, such as the President of the European Innovation Center, to inform pathways for scaling inclusive solutions.

Engagements convened government institutions, development partners, media, universities, innovation hubs, and civil society actors, including GIZ, ICIPE/RSIF, UN Women, Kenya Development Corporation, and national governments. Platforms such as media stakeholder workshops (with Baraza Media), dissemination forums, UN Women panels on digital inclusion, CEE workshops (with STIKS), Ecosystem Connect (youth civic-tech), and inter-country dialogues, including learning exchanges with Nigeria's Clean Tech Hub, supported cross-border learning and inclusive policy development.

These engagements strengthened innovation ecosystems, improved understanding of policy pathways for women and youth in clean energy and digital enterprises, and enhanced the positioning of youth voices in policymaking and inclusive governance processes.

5.2 Capacity Strengthening

The GYID Programme focused on building the skills, confidence, and agency of women, youth, and marginalised innovators to participate meaningfully in green and digital economies. Through hands-on, applied learning that linked technical skills with innovation readiness, sustainability, and market relevance. The programme strengthened capacities in clean energy adoption, green enterprise development, intellectual property (IP) awareness, and innovation management.

Key interventions included the Digital Skills Training and Awareness Programme, implemented through a strategic partnership between the Green and Digital Innovation Hub (gDIH) and Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) through JHUB Africa. GYID also engaged in capacity building on clean cookstoves and clean energy technologies in collaboration with KIRDI, as well as startup support through virtual patent training for GIZ-supported ecosystems and startups, including guidance on patent registration and IP protection. The programme advanced digital, data, and ESG competencies, delivering Training-of-Trainers (ToTs) on ESG tools, KoBo Toolbox, and digital data collection, alongside targeted support to SOMO entrepreneurs and green MSMEs.

Additional trainings covered digital entrepreneurship, AI for business, digital agriculture, and IT skills for website management, strengthening both innovation development and enterprise sustainability.

Across different platforms, the programme engaged grassroots innovators, startups, MSMEs, trainers, and ecosystem intermediaries.

As a result, GYID strengthened innovation capacity, IP literacy, digital readiness, and ESG integration, enabling women- and youth-led enterprises to adopt clean energy solutions, protect intellectual assets, and transition ideas toward market-ready and scalable ventures.

5.3 Research and Publication

Research under the GYID Programme focused on systems learning, ecosystem diagnostics, and evidence generation to inform inclusive innovation policy, higher education reform, and gender- and youth-responsive green and digital transitions. Research activities were conducted in collaboration with STIKS, ICIPE, and partners under the RSIF and SGCI initiatives.

Key research outputs included RSIF–ICIPE studies examining doctoral training, innovation pathways, and inclusion. SGCI-2 synthesis work, supporting learning across science granting councils .gDIH needs assessments, ecosystem diagnostics, and data collection exercises. Gender and inclusion papers, youth trend analyses, and the Youth Starts and Trends Bulletin

Research processes combined data collection, report preparation, doctoral research review support, and synthesis, with outputs disseminated through research papers (under review), blogs, and quarterly newsletters. Evidence generated supported both policy dialogue and programme design, strengthening the knowledge base for inclusive green and digital development.

5.4 Technology and Knowledge Brokerage

Technology and knowledge brokerage were a core pillar of the GYID Programme, with gDIH and DigiKen functioning as inclusive knowledge exchange platforms connecting innovators, institutions, policymakers, and global networks. Brokerage activities emphasised knowledge translation, coordination, and visibility.

In 2025, ACTS was formally identified as a Technology and Innovation Support Centre (TISC), reinforcing its role in IP advisory services, innovation support, and commercialisation pathways. Through gDIH and DigiKen, the programme continued TISC trainings, hosted innovation-focused webinars, and shared insights through blogs and public learning platforms.

ACTS also contributed to regional and global platforms, including the Evidence for Development Conference, sharing perspectives on inclusive innovation, green workforce development, and the future of work. These efforts strengthened technology support ecosystems, expanded access to innovation services, and reinforced ACTS' role as a regional hub for gender- and youth-responsive innovation and inclusive development.

5.5 Resource Mobilisation

The Gender, Youth and Inclusive Development (GYID) Programme mobilised USD 128,000 in 2025 to support capacity-strengthening interventions at the intersection of digital inclusion, youth innovation, and inclusive development.

5.6 Alignment with ACTS objectives and Global discourses

5.6.1 Alignment with ACTS strategic Plan

Strategic Objective 1: Strengthen and sustain the recognition of ACTS as a Centre of Excellence in policy-relevant research and development

During the period, the GYID Programme strengthened ACTS' recognition as a centre of excellence in policy-relevant work on gender, youth, digital innovation, and inclusive green transitions. Through applied research on innovation ecosystems, higher education systems, and inclusion, alongside leadership in intellectual property (IP) awareness and technology commercialisation discourse, the programme reinforced ACTS' standing as a trusted source of evidence on how emerging technologies, innovation systems, and inclusive development intersect.

Strategic Objective 2: Enhance ACTS' influence and impact through policy advocacy, communication, capacity building, knowledge and technology transfer, and partnerships

The GYID Programme enhanced ACTS' influence by operationalizing evidence through capacity strengthening, IP and innovation support, and technology and knowledge brokerage. By supporting innovators and MSMEs to navigate IP protection, digital entrepreneurship, and ESG integration, and by convening cross-sector partners across policy, academia, innovation hubs, and media, the programme positioned ACTS as a key broker connecting innovation, policy, and inclusive governance in green and digital transitions.

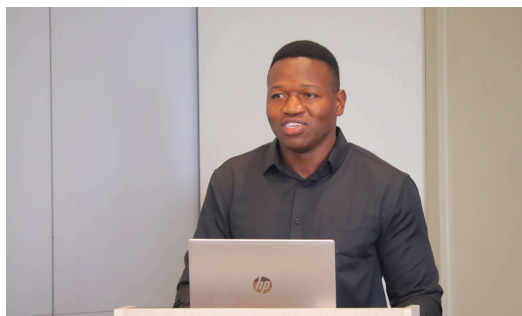
Strategic Objective 3: Build a strong funding base for ACTS through effective resource mobilization

GYID contributed to ACTS' sustainability by mobilising strategic funding for innovation- and inclusion-focused programming, particularly in digital skills development and IP-informed entrepreneurship. By translating ACTS' expertise in youth, gender, and digital innovation into fundable and scalable initiatives, the programme strengthened the organisation's funding base and demonstrated its capacity to manage partnerships and resources in complex innovation ecosystems.

5.6.2 Alignment with Global Discourses

The GYID Programme in 2025 advanced ACTS' contribution to global agendas on inclusive development, digital transformation, and green innovation. By integrating gender, youth, and innovation considerations into capacity strengthening, policy engagement, research, and technology brokerage, the programme supported **SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), and SDG 13 (Climate Action).**

Through multi-country initiatives, including DigiKen and the Green Digital Innovation Hub, GYID operationalised digital skills, intellectual property awareness, and technology adoption among youth, women, and MSMEs, directly contributing to **Agenda 2063's** aspirations for innovation-driven and inclusive economies. By focusing on inclusive innovation ecosystems, clean energy adoption, and digital and technological innovation, ACTS positioned itself as a proactive participant in global climate action dialogues and advanced the discourse on digitalisation and innovation in Africa.



6.0 ACTS AI Institute (ACAII)



Program	ACTS AI Institute (ACAII)
Mission	To serve as a knowledge-driven center of excellence in responsible Artificial Intelligence (AI) that advances Africa’s sustainable digital transformation.
Goal	Its goal is to be a trusted authority on research, innovation, commercialisation, and professional development of AI solutions that align with African values and global standards.
Context	The context for this institute is rooted in the immense potential of AI to transform key sectors such as agriculture, education systems, innovation and climate action. It originated from the vision of the Digital Economy Programme (DEP) to address the need for ethical, inclusive, and locally relevant technology in a rapidly evolving digital landscape. The ACTS AI Institute was launched officially in July 2025. This institute transitioned from the DEP into a dedicated center of excellence for responsible Artificial Intelligence in Africa.

Over the four quarters, the programme grew from a small research unit into a major institute that connects African values with global artificial intelligence standards.

6.1 Policy engagement

Throughout 2025, the programme established itself as a central authority for responsible Artificial Intelligence (AI) across Africa by engaging with both local and international governance bodies. In the first half of the year, the team focused on building foundational partnerships and legislative proposals that encouraged innovation in health and education.

For example, during the first quarter, the programme held a mini workshop at the Alan Turing Institute in the United Kingdom (UK) to align African AI goals with global standards. As the year progressed, the team prioritised data accessibility for open science policies to ensure that African researchers could access the datasets necessary for local innovation.

Following the institute's official launch in July, there was a major shift toward ethical AI training through the AI4D LEPSAI Policy Training, which targeted government stakeholders to help them understand AI governance frameworks. By year-end, it was leading high-level dialogues like the UK Kenya AI Challenge Policy Dialogue to advocate for digital rights and responsible AI ethics.

6.2 Capacity strengthening

The institute placed a heavy emphasis on building a skilled workforce capable of developing and managing AI technologies responsibly. As the year began, ACAII conducted technical workshops on specialised topics such as natural language processing and federated learning, tailored to the Kenyan context. By the second quarter, the focus expanded to inclusivity with the launch of the AI4D Scholarship aimed at enhancing doctoral and post-doctoral research in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) for women in AI and ML. The year ended with community of practice (CoP) sessions, where mentors were trained to support the next cohort of AI innovators, ensuring knowledge was shared across the ecosystem.

6.3 Research and publication

Research at ACAII in 2025 was defined by a commitment to addressing fundamental challenges such as data quality and AI safety. The year began with eleven research activities focused on applied AI research and the development of ethics and standards for the continent. The programme focused on refining its academic tools, such as updating the SRAIS mentorship toolbox to help startups navigate ethical AI development. In the third quarter, the institute produced a Generative AI Systems Development Study, which involved deep engagement with user communities to understand how new AI technologies would affect African society. As the year concluded, the team advanced technical reports on the **Antimicrobial Resistance Hub** under the Lacuna Fund and published several blogs and conference presentations to share their findings with the global scientific community.

6.4 Knowledge and Technology Brokerage

Bridging the gap between theoretical research and practical application was a core achievement for the institute. The programme acted as a bridge between research institutions in the United Kingdom and implementers in Kenya to coordinate project collaborations.

They also focused on building a community of practice for innovators by developing a dedicated website and a proposal to establish a continental network. Technological innovation peaked in the third quarter, when the team developed a logistics web application to improve transportation efficiency within ACTS. In addition, the development of an integrated fish cage telemetry system used for predictive health monitoring to support local aquaculture. The institute also created graduate story video profiles to showcase how their training empowered individuals to create real-world digital solutions.

6.5 Resource Mobilisation

The team's fund mobilisation efforts at ACAII demonstrated strong persistence and effectiveness. In the third quarter, the institute secured USD 255,000 from two successful bids involving the Lacuna Fund and Klarna AI, exceeding the annual fundraising target of USD 100,000.

6.6 Alignment with ACTS Objectives and Global Discourses

6.6.1 Alignment with the implementation of the ACTS strategic plan.

Objective 1: Strengthen and Sustain ACAII as a Centre of Excellence

This objective focuses on reinforcing ACAII's recognition as a leading authority in policy-relevant research and development in STI, climate change, energy, agriculture, and emerging technologies. The strategy emphasizes building robust institutional capacity, maintaining rigorous research standards, and fostering knowledge generation and synthesis to ensure ACAII's sustained credibility and influence across Africa and beyond.

Objective 2: Enhance Influence and Impact

This objective aims to strengthen ACAII's societal and policy impact through coordinated advocacy, communication, capacity building, and knowledge and technology transfer. By linking research with decision-making, building partnerships, and applying AI and digital technologies, ACAII can influence policies, innovation agendas, and development outcomes at national, regional, and global levels.

6.6.2 Alignment with ACTS strategic plan.

Objective 1: Strengthen and Sustain ACTS as a Centre of Excellence

In 2025, the ACTS AI Institute (ACAII) made significant progress in establishing itself as a centre of excellence in responsible Artificial Intelligence in Africa. Following its official launch in July, the Institute strengthened its institutional identity through high-quality research, ethical AI frameworks, and the development of practical tools to support responsible innovation. By advancing applied research on AI safety, data quality, and ethics, and contributing technical studies and policy-relevant outputs, ACAII reinforced ACTS' reputation for rigorous, credible, and contextually grounded research that bridges global standards with African values.

Objective 2: Enhance Influence and Impact through Advocacy, Capacity Building, and Knowledge Transfer

ACAII enhanced ACTS' influence by actively linking AI research with policy processes, skills development, and real-world application. Through targeted policy dialogues, ethical AI training for government stakeholders, and international engagements, the Institute supported evidence-informed decision-making on emerging digital technologies. Capacity-strengthening initiatives, including technical workshops, doctoral and post-doctoral scholarships, and communities of practice, expanded the pipeline of African AI talent, with a strong emphasis on inclusion and mentorship. Knowledge and technology brokerage further translated research into practice by connecting researchers, innovators, and implementers, supporting digital solutions with tangible societal and institutional impact.

Objective 3: Build a Strong Funding Base through Strategic Resource Mobilisation

The Institute contributed to ACTS' financial sustainability by adopting a focused and proactive resource mobilisation approach aligned with its emerging mandate. In 2025, ACAII successfully secured diversified funding from competitive international sources. These achievements strengthened the Institute's capacity to sustain operations, scale its research and training activities, and position itself for long-term growth within ACTS' broader funding and partnership strategy.

7.0 Science, Technology, Innovation, Knowledge and Society (STIKS)



Program	Science, Technology, Innovation, Knowledge and Society (STIKS)
Mission	To strengthen research and policy capacity regarding the complex interplay between science, technology, innovation (STI), knowledge, and African society.
Goal	The programme envisions an African continent that effectively creates and utilises research findings on the interplay between STI, knowledge and society to formulate development strategies, policies and practice.
Context	The STIKS programme builds on ACTS's achievements in STI policy research and training. Its context is defined by its role in shaping evidence-informed governance and supporting national development goals. It addresses the need for institutional capacities to implement STI strategies that are socially relevant and capable of tackling modern challenges like intellectual property management and digital rights.

The programme focused on strengthening the research and policy capacity of African countries to drive innovation and commercialisation.

7.1 Policy Engagement

In 2025, the Science, Technology, Innovation, Knowledge and Society (STIKS) programme played a leading role in strengthening **evidence-informed policymaking** across Africa by translating research outputs into actionable policy insights and sustained engagement with decision-makers. Building on ACTS' longstanding reputation in STI policy research and training, the programme positioned itself as a key link between researchers, policymakers, and innovation system actors.

Policy engagement efforts were embedded throughout the research lifecycle. Early in the year, STIKS supported national and regional institutions through bibliometric analyses, primary data collection, and impact documentation, generating evidence that informed ongoing policy processes within science granting councils, innovation agencies, and government ministries. These engagements laid the groundwork for the subsequent validation of STI strategies and institutional frameworks, particularly in innovation governance, intellectual property management, clean energy transitions, and digital rights.

As the year progressed, STIKS intensified its policy influence through targeted dialogues, validation workshops, and advisory support. The programme recorded the highest number of policy engagements across ACTS programmes, beginning with ten engagements in the first quarter and culminating in the validation of national and institutional strategies by year-end. These engagements ensured that research findings were not only disseminated but actively integrated into policy formulation and implementation processes.

A core feature of STIKS' policy engagement approach was its role as a knowledge and technology broker. Through the Convening Fund and other platforms, the programme facilitated multi-stakeholder forums that brought together policymakers, private sector actors, researchers, and civil society to deliberate on priority STI issues. These included dialogues on public-private partnerships, technology commercialization, circular economy solutions, and clean energy enterprise development. Notably, STIKS convened technology exchange workshops and commercialisation roundtables that strengthened institutional linkages and informed policy discussions at national and regional levels.

7.2 Capacity Strengthening

The efforts targeted researchers and policy actors to bridge knowledge gaps across the continent. The year began with the launch of the eleventh PhD Academy call and the onboarding of visiting fellows to support students in innovation research. These early sessions included help desk operationalisation to assist research councils in filling data gaps. Mid-year activities expanded to include business incubation for clean energy and the design of specialised STI policy training courses. One specific example was the delivery of academic writing and book development workshops to improve the quality of supervision for doctoral candidates. By the end of the year, the programme conducted international study visits and mentored fellows on research impact and STI data indicators.

7.3 Research and Publication

Research productivity remained consistently high, with comprehensive bibliometric exercises and doctoral studies involving multiple countries. In 2025, early research focused on primary data collection for the RIM Project and documenting impact stories from science granting councils (SGCs). During the second quarter, the programme accelerated its outputs by reviving thematic streams and conducting a gender-disaggregated survey on e-mobility. A notable achievement in mid-year was the extensive mapping of clean energy enterprises and the review of policy-industry alignment in the health sector. In the latter half of 2025, STIKS produced thirty distinct outputs, including five major technical reports and a comprehensive synthesis book on ten years of lessons from science granting council projects. The team also published two influential blog posts on circular economy solutions and regional bridges for climate innovation.

7.4 Knowledge and Technology Brokerage

Brokerage activities centred on translating complex research into actionable development priorities. Early in the year, STIKS utilised the convening fund to host multi-stakeholder events and produced synthesis reports on public-private partnerships. During the second quarter, the team focused on refining these partnership reports to support institutional linkages. In the third quarter, the programme hosted a technology exchange workshop in Homabay and conducted training sessions on the role of institutional support in technology commercialisation. For example, the team facilitated PhD supervision training and a research commercialisation roundtable with the Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology. The year concluded with the major hosting of the Renewable Energy Conference and Expo 2025 in Uganda, enabling knowledge exchange between researchers and private-sector actors.

7.5 Resource mobilization

Resource mobilization strengthened progressively over the year, reflecting improved coordination, strategic positioning, and effective collaboration across teams. In the first quarter, a joint effort between STIKS and AFNS secured a USD 40,000 consultancy from CGIAR WorldFish–Kenya, laying the groundwork for subsequent fundraising efforts. This momentum continued into the second quarter, with additional funding of USD 521,465 secured. By the third quarter, the AfricaLics Secretariat successfully submitted a competitive proposal to Sida, resulting in a grant of USD 3,368,521.60. Taken together, these outcomes demonstrate the programme's strong institutional capacity to mobilize and manage large-scale funding, significantly surpassing the annual target of USD 1,732,000.

7.6 Alignment with ACTS Objectives and Global Discourses.

7.6.1 Alignment with the implementation of the ACTS strategic plan.

Objective 1: Strengthen and sustain ACTS as a centre of excellence

The programme was involved in the production of high-quality, peer-reviewed research and technical syntheses throughout the year. Early efforts focused on building a strong evidence base through bibliometric analyses and primary data collection across multiple countries. By the end of 2025, it had further strengthened its reputation by publishing various research outputs including five major technical reports and a comprehensive book capturing a decade of lessons in innovation project management.

Objective 2: Enhance influence and impact through advocacy and capacity building

STIKS strengthened its policy influence by consistently translating research into action through sustained engagement, targeted training, and knowledge brokerage. The programme recorded the highest number of policy engagements during the year, starting with ten in the first quarter and ending with the validation of national strategies by year-end. Capacity-building initiatives covered the full research ecosystem, from mentoring doctoral candidates early in the year to delivering advanced workshops on research ethics and academic writing for senior researchers in the final months. In addition, international study visits and multi-stakeholder workshops facilitated effective knowledge transfer, linking academic evidence with practical government and policy needs.

Objective 3: Build a Strong Funding Base through Strategic Resource Management

This objective was pursued through the development and implementation of a deliberate, long-term resource mobilisation strategy aimed at diversifying funding sources and strengthening financial sustainability. The programme focused on engaging donors early, building a systematic pipeline, and improving proposal quality, helping ACTS move beyond short-term, project-based fundraising. This strategic approach resulted in the successful mobilisation of over **USD 3.3 million**, alongside the submission of high-value proposals exceeding **USD 1.3 million**, positioning the organisation for sustained growth and financial resilience.

7.6.2 Aligned with global discourses (e.g. SDGs, Climate action etc)

The programme directly supports multiple SDG priorities through its research, capacity building, and innovation activities. SDG 4 on Quality education, the team supports postgraduate development and training of researchers, analysts, policymakers, and innovators, aligning with the targets on equitable and quality education and lifelong learning.

SDG 5 on gender equality promotes gender equality inclusion in innovation systems, for instance, projects like EVI-SICEE and Women in E-Mobility connect to global discussions on equitable clean energy transitions while ensuring women and youth are not left behind. The projects also speak towards SDG 7 on affordable and clean energy by promoting sustainable energy access for all. The programme works with universities, research centres, and policy institutions across Africa and beyond, exemplifying SDG 17's emphasis on multi-stakeholder and cross-institutional partnerships.

Agenda 2063 (Africa's long-term development vision) highlights science, technology and innovation as key drivers of Africa's transformation, and the programme directly responds to this. Their involvement in eco-innovation and circularity reflects Agenda 2063's broader focus on sustainable development pathways that integrate economic growth with environmental stewardship. The agenda's aspirations 1 and 2 were development aims to be people-centred and to promote skilled, empowered people. The programme embeds gender dimensions in innovation ecosystems.

Moreover, the programme's orientation towards circular innovation aligns with global sustainability discourses on decoupling economic growth from resource depletion, supporting several SDGs related to responsible consumption and climate action.

8.0 Enhance Operations/ Directorates

8.1 Research and Innovation Directorate

Throughout the year, ACTS strengthened its research and innovation ecosystem through a structured series of synthesis groups, seminars, retreats, and learning engagements to deepen intellectual exchange, enhance researcher capacity, and foster cross-programme collaboration.

The year opened with the 34th Session of the ACTS Governing Council (GC) in January 2025, which featured the launch of the College of Scholars and a two-day Research Seminar. This platform enabled researchers to present progress across programmes, reflect on emerging thematic priorities, and engage directly with the GC on the strategic relevance of ongoing work. The interaction provided valuable feedback loops between governance and research teams, reinforcing alignment with ACTS' strategic plan and strengthening institutional accountability for results.

We further consolidated mid-year learning with the Researchers and All-Staff Learning Retreat in July 2025. It created a dedicated space for cross-programme reflection, peer learning, and skills exchange, allowing staff to take stock of research approaches, impact pathways, and opportunities for collaboration. Through impact-focused presentations, mentorship conversations, and thematic group discussions, participants identified strengths, gaps, and opportunities for improving research design, documentation, and knowledge uptake. The staff also started on synthesis papers focused on different themes within the organisation. This served as a key learning checkpoint, supporting adaptive thinking and shared understanding of how individual projects contribute to broader institutional outcomes.

Complementing these in-person engagements, ACTS sustained a regular programme of webinars and seminars that supported continuous learning. The Brown Bag Seminar Series, jointly led by the Research and the Communications and Outreach Directorate, provided a recurring internal learning platform focused on research communication, emerging methodologies, and skills development. Topics included organizational branding and communication guidelines, the strategic use of artificial intelligence in STI research, and practical tools for strengthening research workflows. These sessions were intentionally embedded within the organizational communication strategy to promote consistency, knowledge sharing, and institutional learning.

Emphasis was placed on science communication and storytelling as critical enablers of research impact.

This focus was reinforced through targeted webinars and a multi-day e-workshop that equipped the staff with practical skills to apply storytelling across the research lifecycle, from proposal development and implementation to publishing and engagement with policymakers and the public. These learning engagements highlighted the importance of documenting change, framing evidence effectively, and tailoring messages to diverse audiences to enhance research uptake and influence.

In addition, ACTS convened and participated in several innovation- and systems-focused dialogues, including webinars on hackathons and makerthons as pathways for moving ideas to impact, the virtual launch of the Research and Innovation Management (RIM) Network, and regional consultations on transforming the Research for Development landscape in Eastern and Southern Africa. These platforms strengthened linkages between researchers, innovators, funders, and policy actors, while reinforcing the organisation's role as a convener and knowledge broker within Africa's STI ecosystem.

Overall, the research and innovation learning activities implemented during the year contributed to a more integrated, reflective, and impact-oriented research environment at ACTS. By combining structured synthesis spaces, continuous learning platforms, and targeted capacity strengthening, the institute enhanced internal coherence, improved research quality, and reinforced its commitment to learning-driven, evidence-informed action.

8.2 Communication, Outreach, and Partnership

Communication, outreach, and partnership work during the year focused on improving institutional visibility, supporting programme delivery, and strengthening engagement with external audiences and partners, and was coordinated by the Directorate of Communication, Outreach, and Partnerships (DCOP) through strategic communication, editorial support, digital engagement, and partnership coordination.

The Directorate provided communication support across programmes, covering editorial development, design, dissemination, and documentation. This work supported the production of written and multimedia content, the visibility of programme activities, and the communication of research and learning outputs. Support was delivered across all programmes and extended to institutional initiatives, with attention given to clarity of messaging, coherence of branding, and consistency in presentation.

Moreover, digital communication formed a core component of outreach efforts. We manage the ACTS Website and its social media throughout the year to deliver regular content updates, keep organisational activities visible, and engage diverse audiences.

Continuous performance tracking of these sites informed adjustments to content and outreach approaches. Communication support enabled participation in national, regional, and global forums and learning spaces.

The partnership and engagement processes were strengthened alongside communication activities. The Directorate supported internal engagement platforms and learning spaces, facilitated communication around collaborative initiatives, and advanced internal systems for partnership management. This included contributions to organisational reviews and the development of tools and processes to support clearer engagement with programme teams and partners.

Key highlights

- Communication support delivered across all five programmes, including blogs, policy briefs, newsletters, multimedia products, event documentation, and branding and visibility materials.
- Major events supported, including:
 - The 2025 Governing Council (GC) meeting
 - Evidence for Development (Evi4Dev) Conference
 - The Kenya National Research Festival (KNRF)
 - The Adaptation Futures Conference
 - The Kenyan Circular Economy Conference
 - Policy dialogues under the Just Energy Transition (JET) and Blue Economy (BE) initiatives.
- Multimedia storytelling advanced through the production of short documentaries, recorded webinars, brownbag sessions, and video profiles, including a [BE documentary](#) for the Blue Empowerment project and the ACAII launch video.
- Digital presence expanded, with the launch and ongoing management of the redesigned [ACTS website](#) and a 72 per cent rise in LinkedIn engagement in the third quarter, reaching approximately 147,000 viewers.
- Knowledge-sharing platforms amplified through support for webinars and the Brown Bag learning series, focusing on themes such as responsible AI, climate resilience, branding, research and blue economy initiatives.
- Institutional systems were strengthened through the development of a DCOP Service Charter, which clarified service scope, standards, and engagement processes, as well as through data gathering and internal consultations to inform a structured partnership strategy.

8.3 Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning, and Impact

Monitoring, evaluation, learning, and impact functions supported organizational oversight and programme coherence throughout the year. These functions were coordinated through the MELI Directorate and applied across programmes to strengthen how progress is tracked, evidence is consolidated, and lessons are surfaced for management and programme teams. The focus was on improving the reliability, consistency, and practical use of performance information across the ACTS. A central element of this work was organization-wide reporting. The Directorate coordinated the production of quarterly (Q) reports aimed at evaluation, refining the reporting template, and drawing together inputs from the five programmes into consolidated synthesized reports. They captured programme outputs, progress updates, emerging lessons, and operational bottlenecks, and provided a clearer view of implementation trends at the organizational level.

A mid-year evaluation reviewed programme performance and progress against annual targets. Project tracking tools were applied to support routine monitoring, while MELI inputs were incorporated into the development and review of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to strengthen data consistency, accessibility, and performance oversight. In parallel, monitoring and planning tools were developed, refined, and presented to the teams during the co-creation sessions. They included an indicator matrix, risk register, standard reporting templates like the annual report template, and baseline, midline, and endline survey tools. An organisational Theory of Change (ToC) was developed through participatory engagements and applied as a reference framework for results-based planning and reflection.

The capacity to deliver MELI functions was strengthened towards the end of the year. Three additional team members were onboarded and assigned as focal persons to specific programmes, enabling more directed technical support and closer engagement with programme teams. The Directorate also coordinated the consolidation of the 2026 programme of work (PoW), aligning activities, responsibilities, timelines, and learning priorities across programmes and directorates. The learning and co-creation sessions supported programme teams in applying results-based planning and adaptive management, while an organization-wide call for Stories of Change strengthened impact documentation and internal learning.

Key highlights

- Organisation-wide monitoring, evaluation, and learning coordination, supporting structured tracking, evidence synthesis, and decision-making across programmes.
- Quarterly reports aimed at evaluation, consolidating inputs from the five programmes and presenting a consolidated view of performance, emerging lessons, and operational bottlenecks.

- A mid-year evaluation, reviewing programme performance and progress towards annual targets and informing internal reflection and planning discussions.
- The development of an organisational Theory of Change, through participatory processes for results-based planning and reflection.
- Core monitoring and planning tools were developed, including an indicator matrix, a risk register, Quarterly and Annual reporting templates, a Programme of Work template, and baseline, midline, and endline survey tools.
- Alignment of MELI reporting and monitoring processes with project tracking tools, alongside ongoing work to integrate MELI functions into the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system.
- Organisational learning and programme-level co-creation sessions, providing structured spaces for reflection, shared learning, and adjustment across teams.
- Internal MELI capacity, strengthened through the onboarding of three new team members assigned as programme focal persons to provide more directed technical support.
- Forward planning processes, supported through coordination of the 2026 programme of work and the launch of an organisation-wide Stories of Change initiative.

Stories of Change Champions 2025

In 2025, ACTS deepened its commitment to learning and impact storytelling through the Stories of Change MELI Challenge. The initiative celebrated researchers who demonstrated excellence in translating evidence into compelling narratives of transformation, innovation, and policy relevance.

We are proud to recognise three outstanding champions whose submissions reflected intellectual rigour, creativity, and real-world impact while also showcasing their growing leadership within ACTS' research ecosystem.

Faith Kemunto

Early Career Researcher (ECR), Climate Resilient Economies (CRE)

[!\[\]\(f6662514069ff48bdef07a1000762f95_img.jpg\) Read her full submission](#)

Faith is an Early Career Researcher in Climate Resilient Economies (CRE), where she focuses on locally led adaptation systems and community-centred climate governance.

Her winning story on strengthening community outcomes through FLLoCA research in Nyamira County demonstrates how climate resilience is strengthened when community voices inform planning, implementation, and evaluation. By centring lived experiences and beneficiary satisfaction, her work advances more accountable, equitable, and sustainable locally led climate action.

Through this research, Faith continues to build a strong profile in climate adaptation systems, climate governance, and participatory resilience measurement.

Samuel Oyugi Oriwo

Researcher in Gender, Youth, and Inclusive Development

[!\[\]\(170e59302cebbfee6a99b18d0365de57_img.jpg\) Read his full submission](#)

Samuel works at the intersection of gender-responsive development, youth empowerment, and inclusive green transitions.

His story on strengthening the ceramic cookstove value chain in Murang'a and Nyeri Counties highlights how inclusive value chain interventions can close skills and technology gaps while improving livelihoods. By integrating capacity building, environmental sustainability, and market access, his work supports clean energy transitions that are socially inclusive and economically empowering.

Samuel's research reflects ACTS' commitment to ensuring that sustainable development pathways actively include women, youth, and marginalized groups.

Clarisse Mideva

Researcher in Artificial Intelligence and Innovation Systems

[!\[\]\(0a0b609dcde5224e7480a4f51bb76cda_img.jpg\) Read her full submission](#)

Clarisse's work sits at the forefront of artificial intelligence, digital innovation, and technology governance.

Her Story of Change on strengthening intellectual property systems for innovators and MSMEs demonstrates how practical, structured support can transform innovation into protected economic assets. By improving IP literacy, enabling formal registrations, and linking innovators to commercialization pathways, her research strengthens Kenya's innovation ecosystem and supports responsible AI and digital transformation.

Clarisse represents ACTS' growing leadership in AI-driven development and innovation policy.

Celebrating Research Leadership

The 2025 Stories of Change Champions reflect more than compelling narratives; they showcase measurable and systemic impact generated through ACTS' research and innovation work.

Across sectors, the documented stories demonstrate how ACTS interventions moved beyond analysis to deliver tangible improvements in livelihoods, systems performance, and policy practice.

In the clean energy sector, value chain strengthening in Murang'a and Nyeri Counties improved production efficiency, reduced material breakage, enhanced compliance with national stove standards, and strengthened environmental practices. Producers gained technical and business skills that expanded market access and positioned them for long-term economic growth. This work directly contributes to accelerating clean cooking adoption while strengthening local enterprise ecosystems.

In research capacity development, targeted mentorship transformed interns from knowledge contributors into confident authors and emerging thought leaders. The Write Shop resulted in draft manuscripts, strengthened analytical communication skills, and increased institutional knowledge production capacity, demonstrating that investing in early-career researchers yields durable returns for both individuals and the organisation.

In maternal health innovation, the deployment of an AI-driven predictive model enabled earlier detection of high-risk pregnancies in rural Southern Africa. By shifting care from reactive emergency response to proactive intervention, the tool strengthens frontline health decision-making and improves maternal and neonatal survival outcomes. This shows how ACTS is expanding its footprint in responsible, African-led digital health innovation.

Within Kenya's innovation ecosystem, structured intellectual property support enabled MSMEs and startups to secure formal protections for their innovations. Eight innovators achieved trademarks, copyrights, or patent drafting support, strengthening commercialization potential and investment readiness. Beyond registrations, the initiative increased IP literacy and reduced barriers that had previously limited the scaling of innovation.

In climate resilience programming in Nyamira County, community-centred evaluation reshaped how locally led adaptation success is defined. By centering beneficiary satisfaction and lived experience alongside technical metrics, the research strengthened accountability, informed adaptive improvements, and enhanced the responsiveness of FLLoCA-supported interventions.

Collectively, these stories reveal a consistent pattern of impact:

- Technical systems strengthened
- Innovation ecosystems formalized
- Health and climate risks mitigated
- Institutional capacity deepened
- Early-career researchers empowered

This is the impact of ACTS' work in 2025 translating research into strengthened markets, improved services, empowered innovators, and more resilient communities.

Congratulations to our 2025 Champions for embodying this impact and advancing ACTS' mission through excellence in research and storytelling.

9.0 ACTS Portfolio at a Glance

	Jan 2025	Dec 2025	2026 Outlook
Projects	30	30	27

In 2025, ACTS sustained a portfolio of 30 active projects, reflecting continued programme implementation across all thematic areas.

As the institution moves into 2026, the portfolio is projected at 27 active projects, aligned with project completion timelines and strategic prioritization.

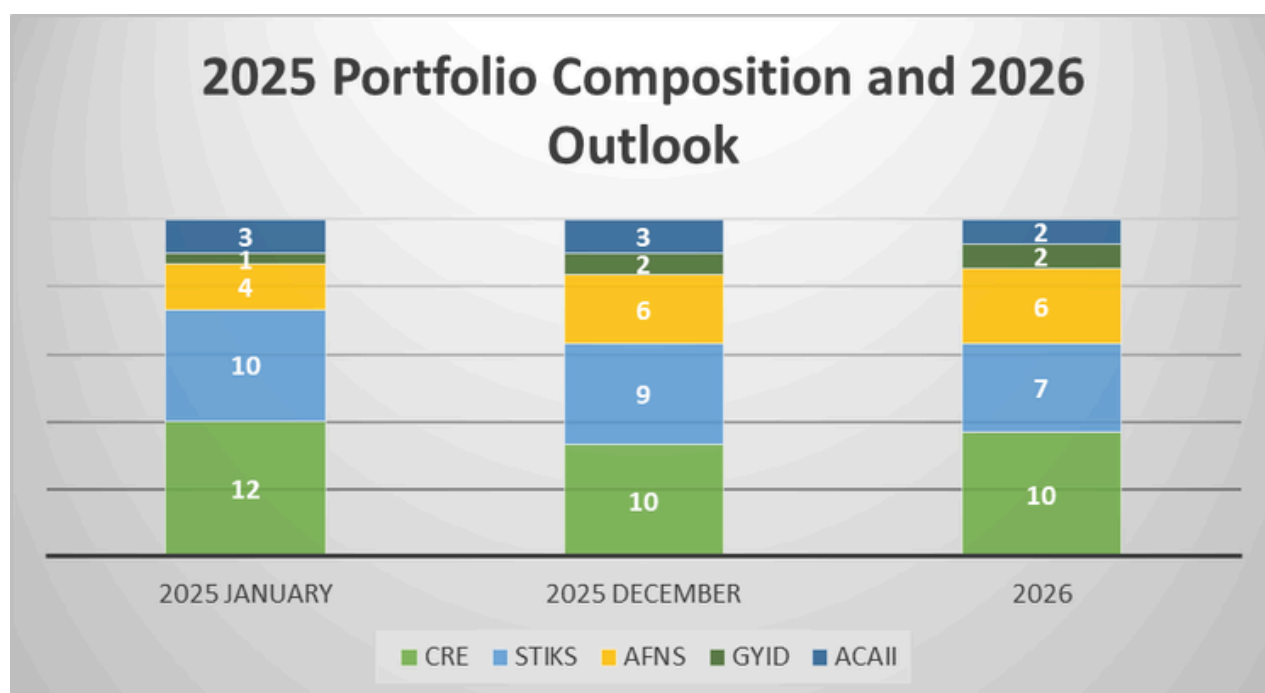


Figure 1: 2025 Distribution of active projects by programme, illustrating programme-level shifts within overall portfolio continuity.

9.1 2025: Portfolio Continuity and Programme Realignment

While the overall number of projects remained at 30 during the year, the internal composition of the portfolio evolved across programmes.

Programme	Jan 2025	Dec 2025	Movement	Interpretation
CRE	12	10	-2	Completion of time-bound initiatives
STIKS	10	9	-1	Portfolio refinement
AFNS	4	6	2	Strengthened programme presence
GYID	1	2	1	Gradual expansion
ACAII	3	3	—	Sustained engagement

What this tells us

- CRE remained the largest programme area, with 12 projects in January and 10 by December, maintaining its position as the institutional anchor despite normal project cycle transitions.
- STIKS maintained a strong portfolio, moving from 10 to 9 projects, reflecting focused refinement while sustaining core research and policy initiatives.
- AFNS expanded from 4 to 6 projects, marking the most significant programme growth during the year and strengthening ACTS' position within agriculture and food systems.
- GYID doubled its active portfolio from 1 to 2 projects, demonstrating steady growth in green and digital innovation programming.
- ACAI maintained three active projects throughout the year, continuing its work in artificial intelligence and innovation initiatives.

Overall, 2025 reflected institutional stability combined with programme-level recalibration. The portfolio remained diversified, with thematic strengthening in selected areas and structured transitions in others.

9.2 2026 Outlook

The projected 2026 portfolio reflects continued strategic positioning;

- Sustained strength in CRE (10 projects) and AFNS (6 projects)
- A focused STIKS portfolio (7 projects)
- Continued engagement within GYID (2 projects)
- Consolidated but stable presence within ACAI (2 projects)

The portfolio remains diversified across programmes, with a stable core and evolving thematic balance. The transition into 2026 reflects deliberate consolidation, ensuring alignment between institutional capacity, strategic priorities, and funding cycles.

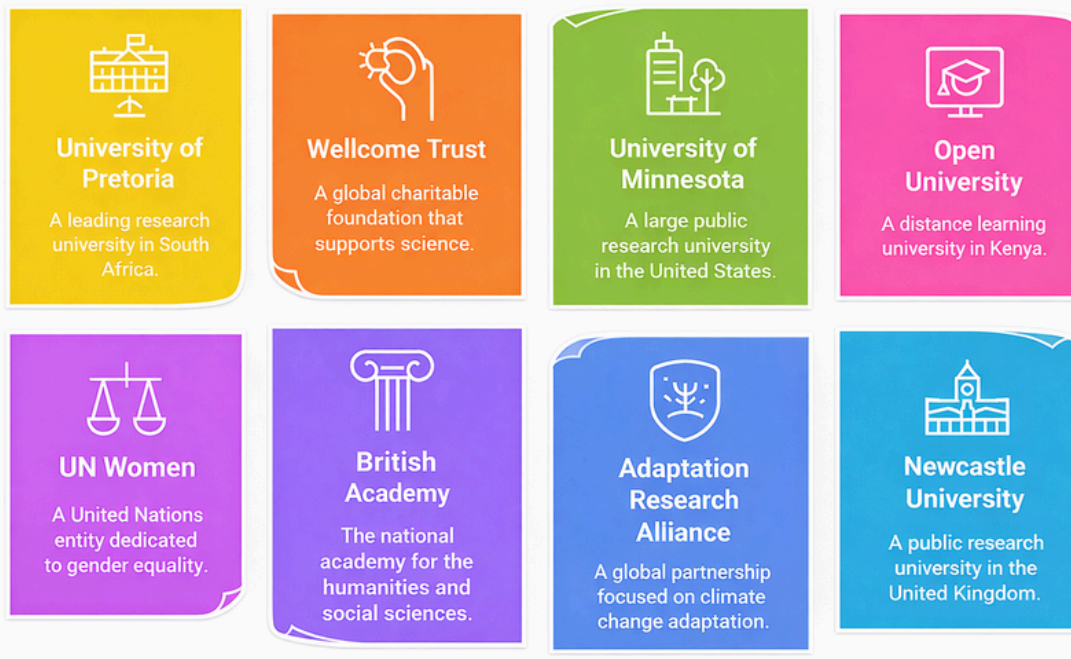
9.3 Partner Development

In 2025, ACTS established new strategic collaborations with leading academic institutions, international development partners, and research funders, enhancing both its technical depth and geographic reach.

New partnerships included the University of Pretoria and the University of Minnesota, advancing joint research, knowledge exchange, and capacity-strengthening initiatives. Collaboration with the Open University broadened ACTS' engagement in open, inclusive, and digitally enabled learning platforms.

ACTS also secured and deepened engagements with major international funders and policy actors, including the Wellcome Trust, the British Academy, and UN Women, supporting work at the intersection of climate resilience, innovation systems, gender equality, and inclusive development.

New Funders/Partners



In addition, engagement with the Adaptation Research Alliance (ARA) strengthened ACTS' positioning within global climate adaptation policy and research networks, particularly around the Global Goal on Adaptation and climate finance discussions.

9.4 ACTS Project Portfolio by Programme (January 2025 – December 2025 – 2026 Comparison)

Programme	January 2025 Projects	December 2025 Projects	2026 Projects
CRE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ARA – GGA & NCQG 2. CLARE Capacity Strengthening Hub 3. Decoloniality Book Project 4. Gentwork 5. Just Energy Transition (JET) 6. Learning Lab (Virtual Academy) 7. RURALITIES 8. SDG Interactions 9. TransPath 10. Blue Empowerment Project 11. CLASP 12. Virtual Academy 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CLARE Capacity Strengthening Hub 2. Just Energy Transition (JET) 3. ACTS Pathways Academy 4. RURALITIES 5. SDG Interactions 6. TransPath 7. Blue Empowerment Project. 8. Farleaf II 9. SautiBOT 10. AgriSPOKE 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Blue Empowerment (BE) 2. Just Energy Transition (JET) 3. CLARE CSHub 4. SDG Synergies 5. APA Academy 6. Ruralities 7. Agri SPOKE 8. FAR-Leaf II 9. Transpath 10. SautiBOT
STIKS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AfricaLics 2. Evidence for Informing Optimization and Scaling of Youth and Women led Clean Energy Enterprises (EVI-SICEE) 3. Evi-Pol 4. Research & Innovation Management 5. Trilateral Chair Project 6. ICIPE RISF Consultancy 7. SGCI 2 Synthesis Project 8. Convening Fund Project 9. 2024 SGCI Annual Forum 10. GeckoCir Project 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AfricaLics 2. Evidence for Informing Optimization and Scaling of Youth and Women led Clean Energy Enterprises (EVI-SICEE) 4. Research & Innovation Management 5. ICIPE RISF Consultancy 6. SGCI 2 Synthesis Project 7. Convening Fund Project 8. GeckoCir Project 9. Reimagining health-industry policy linkages in Africa for pandemic preparedness. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AfricaLics-RCS 2. GeckoCir (Circular Retrofitting for Sustainable Industrialization) 3. EVI-SICEE 4. Electric Mobility & Women Entrepreneurs Study 5. Convening Fund 6. SGCI Synthesis – SIDA 7. Reimagining health-industry policy linkages in Africa for pandemic preparedness
AFNS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UNEP-ACES 2. Valorise 3. EUR-WUR Consultancy 4. Agrifrontier 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SPOKE 2. CLASP 3. From Kenya to Minnesota – Advancing Food Sovereignty 4. GIZ Dairy Pre-Cooler Project 5. Baseline Study on Climate Risk Insurance 6. AGRA RE-GAIN consultancy 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SPOKE 2. CLASP 3. From Kenya to Minnesota – Advancing Food Sovereignty 4. GIZ Dairy Pre-Cooler Project 5. Baseline Study on Climate Risk Insurance 6. AGRA RE-GAIN consultancy
GYID	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Green & Digital Innovation Hub (gDIH) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Green & Digital Innovation Hub (gDIH) 2. DIGIKEN 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Green & Digital Innovation Hub (gDIH) 2. DIGIKEN
ACAI	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AI4D Africa Innovation Pillar Hub (Phase II – LEPSAI) 2. FCDO UK 2024 3. LACUNA-AMR 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AI4D Africa Innovation Pillar Hub (Phase II – LEPSAI) 2. FCDO UK 2024 3. LACUNA-AMR 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AI4D – LEPSAI 2. Lacuna AMR

10.0 Looking Ahead

10.1 Future focus and strategic priorities

The year ahead marks a period of deliberate expansion in both ambition and practice. Building on the research, partnerships, learning platforms, and delivery experience developed over the past year, the organisation will strengthen its role in translating evidence into action across Africa.

Key institutional milestones moving forward

- Completion of the review of the 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, drawing on programme-level learning, synthesis outputs, and MELI evidence to inform priorities and delivery pathways for the next strategic cycle.
- Use of review findings to sharpen strategic focus, clarify implementation choices, and support the organisation's evolution as a think-and-do institution.

Work will continue to advance across a broad and interconnected portfolio, including climate and resilience, agriculture and food systems, innovation and industrial policy, artificial intelligence and digital governance, gender and youth inclusion, and science–policy engagement. These areas will increasingly be approached through integrated programmes that combine research, implementation, and learning, reflecting the organisation's transition toward a more action-oriented model of engagement.

Strengthening systems for delivery and accountability

- Full integration of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system across finance, procurement, human resources, and programme management to support planning, accountability, and operational efficiency.
- Improved alignment between programme design, budgeting, implementation, and reporting through ERP-enabled workflows.

In artificial intelligence and digital governance, work will move beyond analysis into applied support for institutions, policy actors, and practitioners, including testing governance approaches, strengthening regulatory capacity, and generating practice-based evidence to inform decision-making.

In agriculture and food systems, research will increasingly link to field-based initiatives, market-oriented interventions, and partnerships that demonstrate climate-resilient, inclusive, and scalable solutions for food security and livelihoods.

Learning from practice and applied work

- Expanded use of pilots, demonstrations, and delivery partnerships as learning platforms across thematic areas.
- Systematic documentation of implementation experience to inform adaptive programme design and policy engagement.

- Practical use of the ACTS AI Institute as a learning and delivery platform for advancing AI governance, strengthening institutional and policy capacity, and testing applied approaches to responsible AI in real-world contexts.
- Integration and use of the ACTS logistics app to support programme coordination, operational learning, and real-time feedback from implementation, strengthening learning-by-doing across projects.

As applied work expands, synthesis will be prioritised. Cross-programme synthesis groups will be strengthened to draw lessons across projects, themes, and countries, producing synthesis reports and integrative publications that capture cumulative learning. These outputs will complement peer-reviewed articles, policy reports, briefs, and practice-oriented guidance, strengthening coherence across the portfolio and sharpening policy influence.

Strengthening evidence use and synthesis

- Consolidation of thematic and cross-cutting synthesis groups to support integrative analysis across programmes.
- Increased use of synthesis products to inform strategic decision-making, programme refinement, and external engagement.

Learning and capacity development will remain central to how the organisation operates. Internal learning seminars, brown bag sessions, and thematic discussions will continue to provide regular spaces for reflection, knowledge exchange, and methodological strengthening. Writeshops and internship writing weeks will be further embedded as core capacity-building mechanisms, supporting interns, early-career researchers, and programme teams to develop strong analytical writing, co-author outputs, and translate research and implementation experience into publishable and usable knowledge products.

Institutional learning and knowledge sharing

- Regularisation of internal learning seminars and brown bag sessions within programme cycles.
- Expansion of writeshops and internship writing weeks to strengthen writing, publication output, and learning grounded in practice.

Investment in people will underpin this growth. Human resource enrichment will focus on strengthening skills required for a think-and-do organisation, including implementation design, facilitation, partnership management, and monitoring and learning, alongside continued investment in research excellence. Recruitment, professional development, and staff wellbeing will remain priorities as ways of working continue to evolve.

Strengthening organisational frameworks and practice

- Deeper integration of MELI across programmes and projects, ensuring learning and evidence inform decision-making throughout the project cycle.
- Organisation-wide uptake of the Communications Service Charter and the Human Resource Manual and Framework to strengthen consistency, accountability, and internal coordination.

Partnerships and resource mobilisation will be strengthened to support expansion and delivery at scale. We will continue to engage with governments, research institutions, development partners, civil society, and the private sector to anchor co-design, implementation, and learning. Resource mobilisation efforts will focus on diversified and longer-term funding that supports applied programmes, synthesis work, and sustained engagement across Africa.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to advancing evidence-informed policy and practice across Africa. By combining rigorous research with practical action, strengthening learning and synthesis, and investing in people, systems, and partnerships, the organisation is positioned to deliver solutions that respond to African priorities and contribute to impact at a continental scale.

10.2 Programmatic Focus

In 2026, ACTS will consolidate and scale its impact across its five core programmes with 24 projects, advancing evidence-based solutions at the intersection of technology, sustainability, inclusion, and governance. In the year ahead, we will deepen policy influence, pilot innovative approaches, and strengthen regional and continental engagement across our priority thematic areas.

Climate Resilient Economies (CRE)

Under the Climate Resilient Economies programme, ACTS will implement 10 projects focused on climate adaptation, resilience building, green growth, and climate finance. Priority areas include strengthening climate-resilient economic pathways, supporting just transitions, and generating policy-relevant evidence to inform national and regional climate strategies. In 2026, CRE projects will emphasise applied research, policy dialogues, and capacity strengthening for policymakers and local actors.

Gender, Youth, and Inclusive Development (GYID)

The GYID programme will advance two projects that place equity, gender justice, and youth inclusion at the centre of development and policy processes. Planned initiatives will focus on inclusive governance, youth

leadership, gender-responsive policy analysis, and social inclusion in climate and innovation systems. In 2026, the programme will prioritize amplifying underrepresented voices and translating inclusion commitments into actionable policy outcomes.

Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security (AFNS)

Through the AFNS programme, ACTS will implement four projects addressing sustainable food systems, agri-policy innovation, nutrition security, and resilience in agricultural value chains. The 2026 portfolio will focus on evidence generation to support food systems transformation, climate-smart agriculture, and policy coherence across agriculture, health, and trade. Engagement with policymakers, farmers' networks, and regional institutions will remain central.

Science, Technology, Innovation, Knowledge and Systems (STIKS)

The STIKS programme will drive six projects aimed at strengthening science–policy–society interfaces, innovation governance, and the use of knowledge systems in decision-making. In 2026, projects will focus on research-to-policy linkages, responsible innovation, and strengthening institutional capacities to harness science and technology for sustainable development across Africa.

ACTS AI Institute (ACAI)

The ACTS AI Institute will advance two projects that will focus on responsible AI, digital governance, and the application of artificial intelligence for public good. Planned initiatives will advance policy-relevant research, capacity building, and multi-stakeholder engagement on ethical, inclusive, and context-responsive AI systems, with a strong emphasis on African policy priorities.

2025 Annual Report

Thank You



African Centre for Technology Studies
Email: info@acts-net.org
Website: www.acts-net.org
2nd Floor, Konza Technopolis Complex
P.O. Box 45917 - 00100
Nairobi- Mombasa Road,
Konza, Kenya.

© ACTS 2025