



bioRe

Foundation

Annual Report
2024/25

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We maintain a direct and critical dialogue – always as equals.

Anna Vetsch, President of the bioRe Foundation

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Cover photo: Kajal Hatela, participant in a workshop
organized by the animation schools in Ahilyapura, India
Photo: © Lara Lone, 2025

Nature near Mwamishali, Tanzania
Photo: © Juliette Chrétien, 2023

Editorial

Dear readers & donors



For nearly 28 years, the bioRe Foundation has been actively engaged in India and Tanzania. Its work is characterized by the close connection to the people and communities on the ground. With our partner organizations in India (the bioRe Association) and Tanzania (the bioRe Foundation) we maintain a direct, regular and critical dialogue with the farmers. These encounters take place as equals and we listen! We want to know what the local people's concerns are and wish to involve them in our activities and projects. Not just as recipients of our support, but rather as active co-creators who also share responsibility. This attitude supported us once again this year in development cooperation, and we want to further strengthen this sense of togetherness and close collaboration for the future.

I hope you enjoy immersing yourself in our annual report, and I look forward to you remaining or becoming part of our journey!

Anna Vetsch

President bioRe Foundation



For 20 years, the bioRe Association has been committed to the social and economic empowerment of farming communities in the Nimad region of Madhya Pradesh – a path towards holistic development. In the year under review, our focus was on building knowledge, networking and fostering expertise. We were in close and direct exchange with the farmers. Through consistent practice and dedicated cooperation, we strengthen a resilient, self-determined community. Together, we can bring about sustainable change.

Aashish Joshi

Managing Director bioRe Association India



My interest lies in understanding and appreciating social worlds and their actors, as well as exploring how individual and societal well-being emerges from them. The bioRe Foundation Tanzania invited me to take part in a baseline study. I was impressed by their commitment to strengthening farming communities through participatory approaches and initiatives for capacity building. As I'm interested in grassroots activism and systemic change, the work of the foundation grew increasingly appealing to me, so I decided to join them. Being closely involved means, for me, harnessing collective action in collaboration with local bridge-builders such as the bioRe Foundation in order to bring about change.

Dr Albert Tibaijuka

Managing Director bioRe Foundation Tanzania

Locally rooted and globally connected

For over a quarter of a century, we as a foundation have been committed to the well-being of people who cultivate organic cotton in India and Tanzania.

We work in addition to the organic cotton trade and advocate a holistic perspective on sustainability, addressing social, ecological and economic issues within the communities (centred around organic cotton cultivation). Since our establishment in 1997, our prime objective has been to stay as close as possible and not to act for but with the communities, to strengthen their livelihoods and future prospects and to create space for change.

As a foundation, we support tangible and immediate activities and projects that quickly make themselves felt in people's everyday lives while also achieving significant, long-term and sustainable impact. In doing so, we rely on a constructive dialogue at eye level with our local partner organizations and the farmers in India and Tanzania. We want to strengthen the responsibilities of everyone involved and empower them to tackle change

together with us. Via the long-term (over 25 years!) and specific local focus on the Khargone region in India and Meatu in Tanzania, we are able to make our impact concrete, tangible and effective.

At the same time, the farmers are always facing new challenges, and their habitats are in constant flux. That prompts us as a foundation to remain dynamic and self-critical. We want to help develop solutions for new challenges or changing conditions and adapt our local activities to ensure they are in tune with the times.

We are confident that the best strategies for sustainable development come from within the community itself. Instead of dictating solutions, we create spaces for dialogue and collaboration, in which members of the communities actively take responsibility.



Through our partner organizations, we are in direct and regular dialogue with the farmers. We listen, take them seriously and involve them as active co-creators — as equals, sharing responsibility.

Anna Vetsch, President bioRe Foundation



671
children who benefit from
primary school education

Kajal Hatela, participant in a workshop organized by the animation schools in Ahilyapura, India
Photo: © Lara Lone, 2025

2024/2025 – a year full of reflection & learning

Last year, we supported our partners in India and Tanzania in their local structures and individual initiatives; this year, the focus was on the community and its work in the field.

India

In-depth look at health promotion

The bioRe Association India has already been in contact with the local hospitals and the health department for three years. The aim is to improve access to health care. The newly appointed specialist Abhilasha is responsible.

Education: Personalized tutoring

At the same time, the capacity-building programme for the education team of the bioRe Association India was launched, which offers all teachers in India further training in personalized tutoring. This process is crucial for encouraging pupils to attend school regularly.

Tanzania

Successful agroforestry

It is currently estimated that around 40 percent of cotton farmers engage in agroforestry. This year, over 900 additional farmers received trees, which they actively care for. The farmers also received saplings and take responsibility for tending them themselves. Furthermore, 20 institutions are involved in agroforestry by taking responsibility for trees and ensuring their maintenance. This growing commitment illustrates the increasing establishment of agroforestry as a sustainable cultivation method in the region and the widespread interest in climate- and resource-friendly agricultural approaches.

India

Empowering women and sharing knowledge

On 8 March 2025, our farmers, trainers and team members celebrated International Women's Day together at the bioRe Association Training Centre in India. The varied programme included a panel discussion, a play on the subject of organic farming, an award ceremony, an exhibition, as well as inspiring guest speeches. The event was organized jointly with the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) and Remei India.

APR

MAY

JUN

JUL

AUG

SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC

JAN

FEB

MAR

India and Tanzania

An assessment

To bring about sustainable change, we need to understand where we stand today. After 28 years of commitment and collaboration, our partner organizations conducted a baseline study in April; a large-scale survey that includes the farmers' diverse experiences and perspectives. The aim was to gain an up-to-date and in-depth understanding of the living conditions and perspectives of organic cotton farmers and their communities, and to identify challenges and opportunities in our work together on the ground. Because only in this way can we adapt and further develop our activities and projects in line with the genuine needs of the people on the ground.

→ Read more on page 18

Tanzania

A gathering of our partners

The managers of our partner organizations in India and Tanzania met in Mwamishali, Tanzania, where they discussed the challenges in organic farming and exchanged views on development cooperation. This exchange marked a milestone in interregional cooperation. It showed how strong the willingness is to learn from each other.

Tanzania

Successful income diversification

At present, 17 farmers are actively engaged in bee-keeping with a total of 80 beehives. Five more have recently applied for beehives and have already prepared their properties accordingly. The project was given significant impetus by the ten-day bee-keeping training session in Tabora, attended by 15 farmers and one person from the bioRe Foundation Tanzania.

India

Stronger through greater exchange

At the beginning of the year, village assemblies for woman farmers were held in the Maheshwar region, attended by over 100 woman farmers. The focus was on topics such as seeds, training opportunities, organic cultivation practices, and active participation in the project. Such meetings not only promote the transfer of knowledge but also strengthen the role of women as shapers of resilient and future-proof agriculture.

India

International research success

Congratulations! The research team of our partner organization in India did pioneering work in developing new cotton hybrid seeds. For this significant contribution, the bioRe Association India was honoured with the award for the best seed breeding technique at the international conference in Tashkent in October, on the occasion of World Cotton Day.

→ Read more on page 10

Tanzania

Reinforcements for the team

The bioRe Foundation Tanzania welcomes Dr Albert Tibaijuka as its new Managing Director. As a farmer with a doctorate in philosophy and African studies from the University of Basel, Albert brings not only in-depth knowledge and practical experience, but also a profound conviction for the promotion of gender parity in agriculture. With his versatility and exceptional commitment, particularly in empowering women, he plays a significant role in building and further developing the organization in Tanzania. We look forward to continuing our excellent working relationship.

→ Read more on page 12





Success story from India

Out of the shadow, back into the light

Thanks to local access to medical care in rural areas, the healthcare team is offering people a new perspective on life.

Nanki Bai (63) and her husband Bhav Singh (65) live in a remote village in the project area in India. Both had been suffering from severely impaired eyesight for years – a circumstance that not only made their every-day lives more difficult, but also increasingly prevented them from participating in community life and farming.

In November 2024, the healthcare team of the Mobile Health Unit (MHU) – the mobile hospital of the bioRe Association India – met the couple during one of its regular deployments. Dr Shahina Ansari and her team organized a further examination and subsequent treatment at the municipal Sankara Hospital in Indore, where the necessary eye operations were performed.

Today, Nanki Bai and Bhav Singh can see again. Thanks to a simple medical procedure that had an enormous impact on both their lives. “When my eyesight began to fail, I could no longer help my husband with the daily work. I felt like a burden. Now that I can see again, we’re

able to support each other once more,” Nanki Bai says, with a radiant smile.

The healthcare bus is much more than just a mobile hospital: it is an important contact point for rural populations, particularly for women, children and the elderly who do not have access to conventional healthcare. In 2024, the MHU team carried out health checks for over 2,100 women and 1,600 schoolchildren. In addition to acute medical care, the focus in future should be even more on education and prevention, especially in the areas of women’s health, hygiene, addiction disorders and mental health.

Through mobile missions, healthcare workshops and home visits in 20 villages, the team brings not only basic medical care, but also trust and knowledge to the communities, thus creating new prospects for a healthier and self-determined life.



The ophthalmologist examines a patient who was referred by the Mobile Health Unit (MHU) to the public Sankara Hospital in Indore for further treatment.



Married couple Nanki Bai (63, right) and Bhav Singh (65), both regained their eyesight in the village of Bardevla, thanks to the support of the MHU team.

08



Health is the most important foundation for our well-being; without it, we can neither thrive nor function, let alone live.

Dr Shahina Ansari, bioRe Association India



8232
patients treated

The route of the bioRe healthcare bus:

- Mon – Kasrawad
- Tue – Mandleshwar
- Wed – Pipalgone
- Thu – Kasrawad (market)
- Fri – Location and specialists selected as needed
- Sat – Dahrapuri
- Sun – free

Dr Shahina Ansari on the road in Ashapur, India
Photo: © Lara Lone, 2025





Scientist Dharmendra Patel at the bioRe Association Research Centre, where beneficial insects and pests are studied.

Success story from India

International recognition

The bioRe Association research team wins an award at the World Cotton Research Congress (WCRC)¹ for their innovative organic cotton seed research².

In India, over 95 percent of conventional cotton is genetically modified. Access to non-GMO and suitable seed for organic cotton cultivation remains a challenge. High-quality, non-genetically modified seed, adapted to organic conditions, is crucial for organic cotton cultivation. Since 2010, the bioRe Foundation has therefore supported research into organic cotton seed in India. Long-term collaboration with a major impact.

We're incredibly proud of our partner organization in India, as for the first time, two hybrid seeds have been produced on site by our research team and prepared for the planned validation trial in 2025/26 – a significant

milestone in independent seed development. Furthermore, the researchers have bred 30 new hybrids to be tested for their potential in the coming growing seasons.

For this pioneering achievement in seed breeding the bioRe Association in India was awarded the prize for the best seed breeding technique at the World Cotton Day international conference in Tashkent, held from 3–10 October and attended by research teams from 26 countries.

In addition, two of their seeds were selected by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) for advanced trials in the context of the pan-Indian cotton project – further proof of the high quality and innovativeness of our research in India.

Congratulations, bioRe Association India!

Yogendra Shrivastava, responsible for seed testing at the bioRe Association Research Centre, standing in the seed storage area — behind him are stored the results of years of research into organic cotton seed.



¹ Information about the annual World Cotton Conference: icac-wcrc.com
² The title of our contribution is: "Exploiting broad-based heterotic groups of cotton to increase performance of cotton hybrids under organic conditions" biore-stiftung.ch/news/seed-research-international-recognition



The award is a sign for us that our work is making an impact. It gives us strength to continue pursuing our goal with dedication and responsibility – to make agriculture more sustainable and equitable.

Bhupendra Singh Sisodia, Scientific Head, bioRe Association India – SysCom India Project

404

*training courses
conducted for organic
farming supplemented
the research work.*

Bhupendra Singh Sisodia, Scientific Head, in the fields of the research centre, Kasrawad, India
 Photo: © Lara Lone, 2025

How women are transforming agriculture and also the world

In conversation with Albert Tibaijuka, the new managing director of the bioRe Foundation Tanzania (BFT) on the role of women in agriculture and the courage to embrace change.

Albert, you were already involved in conducting the baseline study before you officially took on the role of Managing Director for BFT. What were your most important insights from this direct exchange with the local communities?

The baseline study identified several strengths. For example, local resourcefulness: although these are not technologically advanced communities, efforts to improvise tools and machines were clearly visible.

What do these results mean for the bioRe Foundation Tanzania?

The findings from the baseline study will influence our future activities in many respects. Effective sensitization campaigns are required, including targeted training on social group involvement, entrepreneurship, financial education, innovation and similar topics.

How do you assess the role of women in agricultural development?

Women are the main pillars of the household. They spend most of their time in the home and in the fields and thus play a leading role in development work. They keep the families together, organize and monitor family activities, work with their children and relatives in the fields, perform domestic tasks, engage in small-scale income-generating activities, are members of women's and social groups and even act as "family treasurers".

What do you think is needed for women – especially in rural areas – to drive change in their communities?

An intervention that initially recognizes the gender-specific distribution of roles within communities. It should involve both men and women in order to develop locally grounded strategies that enable women to be part of planning, implementation, and decision-making processes regarding the well-being of their communities.

To what extent is entrepreneurship a way to secure long-term livelihoods – especially for woman farmers?

To a large extent, entrepreneurship can secure long-term livelihoods – including for woman farmers – especially in rural areas, where there are hardly any employment opportunities. What's needed is the right mindset, dedicated individuals or groups, hands-on training in entrepreneurship, start-up capital and a fair economic environment.

What personally gives you hope when you think about the future of rural communities in Tanzania?

What gives me hope is the resilience that emerges in rural communities. Despite many challenges, I see opportunities for empowering the local people. There are great opportunities for community-driven solutions, the inclusion of women and young people, vocational training and sustainable practices to contribute to a better future for rural regions.



Dr Albert Tibaijuka has been Head of the bioRe Foundation Tanzania (BFT) since February 2025.

Women are the mainstays in households and even "family treasurers". Empowering them means economic resilience and sustainable development, and last but not least: gender equality.

Dr Albert Tibaijuka, Head of the bioRe Foundation Tanzania (BFT)

613

new smoke-free ovens were built in 24/25 with the support of the foundation, 575 were rebuilt.



Organic cotton farmer in her kitchen with one of the 613 new smoke-free ovens, Mwamishali, Tanzania
Photo: © Franz Thiel, June 2022

So much more than just building a well

In many of the organic cotton farmers' villages in Tanzania, clean drinking water is still difficult to access. Fetching water is mainly women's work.

It is mostly fetched from the rivers; the paths are often arduous, and the water is polluted. The bioRe Foundation, in collaboration with the local bioRe Foundation Tanzania, is committed not only to the construction of wells, but also supports the reinforcement of sustainable water management, so that the wells function in the long term. Women in the communities play a key role in this.

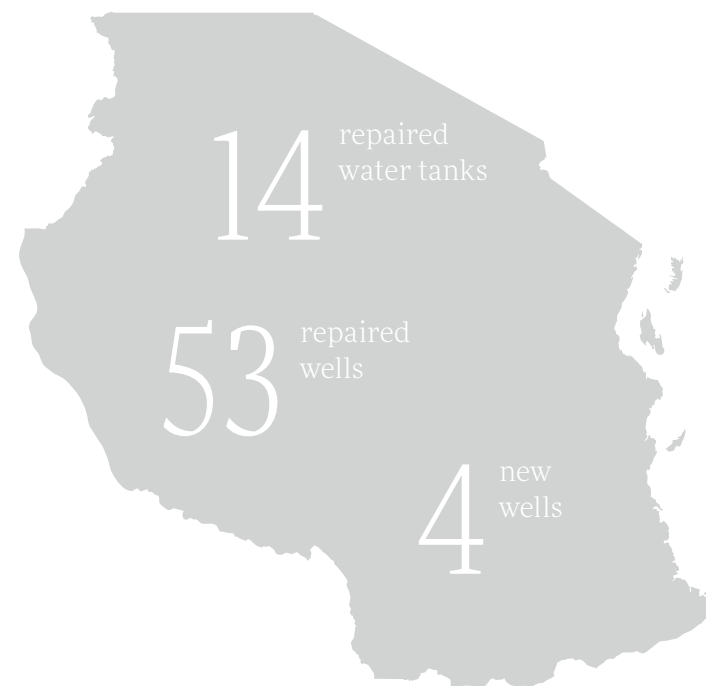
Nwimba Gazeli has been the head of a water user group in Tanzania for two years. Water is women's business. In her role, she collects the financial contributions from the 30 families who are members of the drinking water association. She approaches the women in each household directly, as they are the ones who most appreciate the value of our well – after all, the alternative would be having to carry water home from the river with their daughters! Since the bioRe Foundation realized that women are more successful at managing finances, we have been able to ensure the smooth operation of our well.

Monica Joseph also plays a key role in terms of water in Tanzania. Collaboration with the bioRe Foundation is markedly different from other NGO projects in which she is involved. This is not just about building water facilities – rather, she sees her task as providing communities with the tools they need to independently secure their water supply in the long term.

A “female water technician” is trained in each village – a woman farmer involved in the organic cotton project and a member of the local water users' group. These women carry out minor repairs themselves and thus ensure that the supply is not always dependent on external specialists each time there is a malfunction. By taking on technical tasks, the model not only strengthens the role of women, but also the self-determination of the entire community.

Since the restructuring of the nearly 30-year-old project, Monica Joseph has gained valuable experience over the past two years, which she now contributes to other projects as well.

The wells in 2024/25 supported by our foundation in Tanzania (WASH project)



I have been leading our water user group for two years. Water is the women's responsibility – I collect the contributions from the 30 affiliated families directly from the women who especially appreciate the value of our wells, because otherwise they would have to fetch the water from the river.

Nwimba Gazeli, President of a water user group

Female members of the water user groups, Mwamishali, Tanzania
Photo: © Franz Thiel, June 2022

bioRe Association India

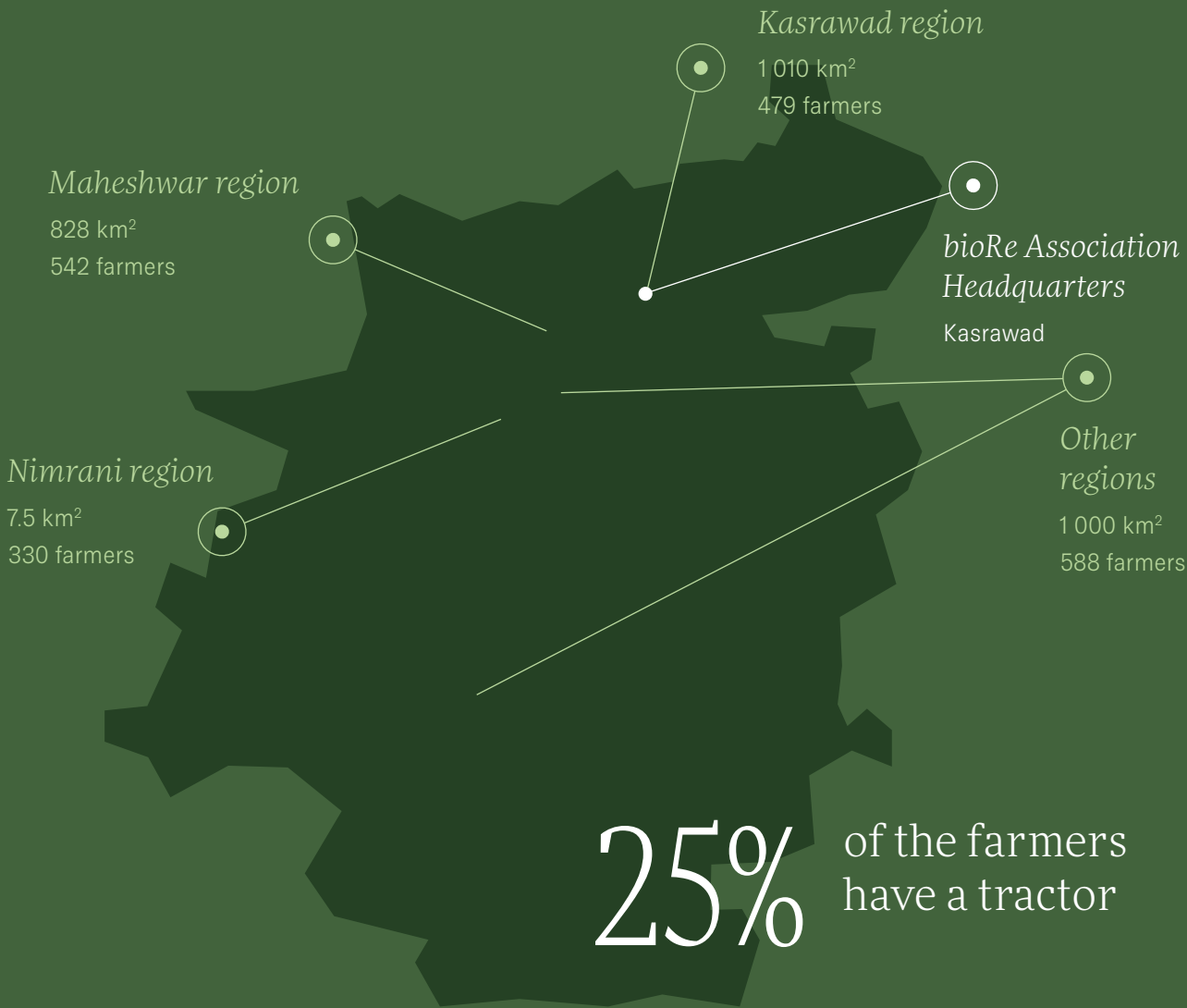
Source: Baseline study from 10 June 2024 to 30 January 2025

Khargone District, India

Total geographical area: 8,030 km² (CH 41,000 km²)

Total registered farmers (2024/25): 1 939

Total interviewed farmers: 33



Comparison with Switzerland
In 2023, there were 47,000 agricultural holdings, of which 7,896 are organic farms, on average 0.218 km² in size, i.e. 467 x 467 m

bioRe Foundation Tanzania

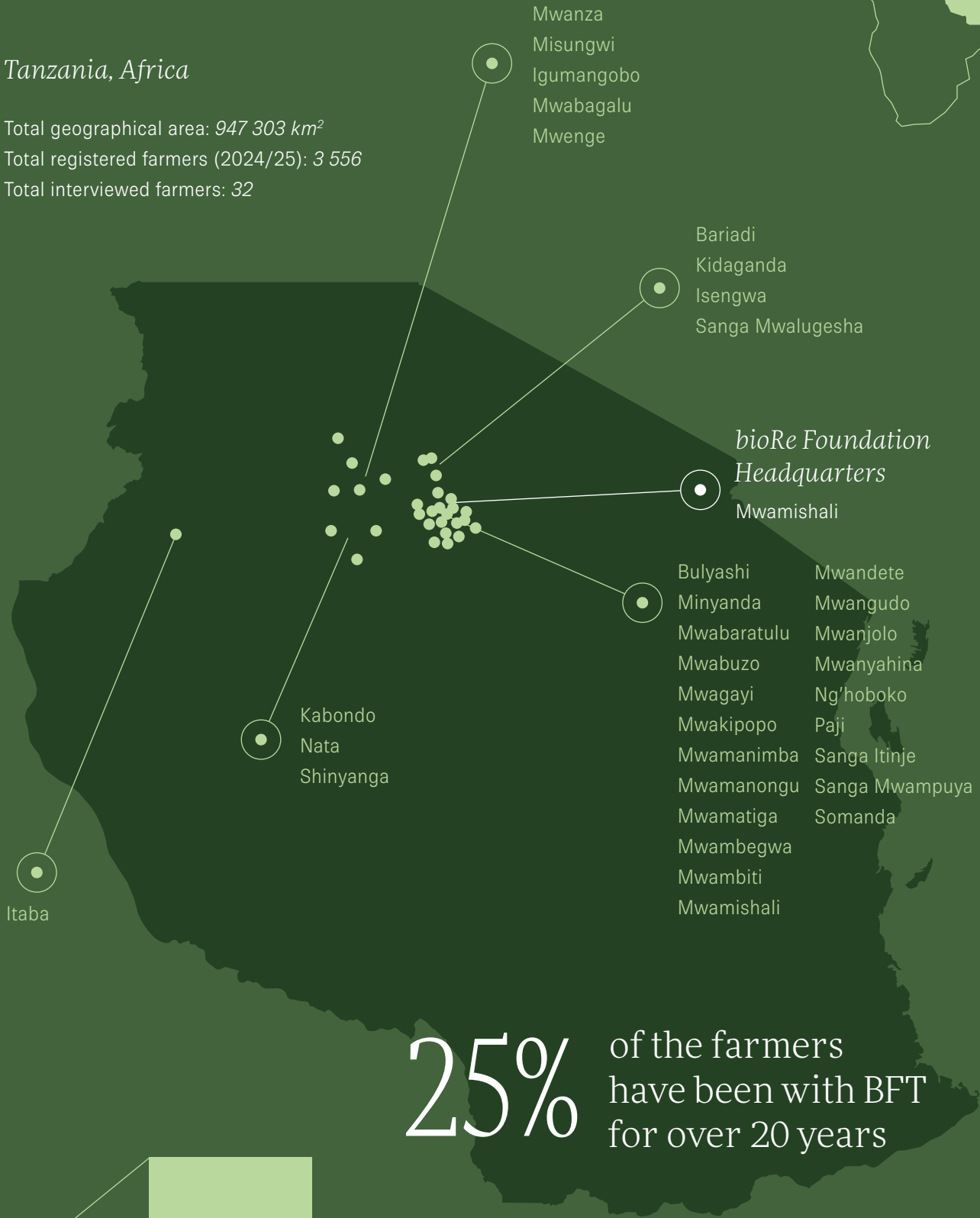
Source: Baseline study from May 2024 to August 2024

Tanzania, Africa

Total geographical area: 947 303 km²

Total registered farmers (2024/25): 3 556

Total interviewed farmers: 32



2025/26 – together we sow knowledge and harvest opportunities

India

Expansion of educational structures through facilitators

In 2025/26, the bioRe Foundation aims to intensify its commitment to education in order to further promote school attendance at the animation schools in remote areas. To this end, a structured capacity-building programme will be implemented to strengthen teacher competencies (facilitators), and the provision of remedial teaching will be expanded to enable students to transition to public schools. Cooperation between school and parents is also to be strengthened through dialogue and joint activities, cooperation with local vocational training centres (ITI) promoted, and infrastructural challenges overcome.

Access to education and information forms the foundation for a self-determined life.

bioRe Foundation on education

India & Tanzania

More entrepreneurship & income diversification

In rural regions of India, the bioRe Foundation supports a programme to promote entrepreneurial initiatives. At the heart of the programme are 1,800 farming families, with a particular focus on women, but also including young people. Working closely with experienced partner organizations, the local project team organizes participatory, hands-on workshops on starting a business, financial management and market exploration, empowering participants to develop their own business ideas and implement them independently. The plan is to establish around 25 new self-help groups in 2025/26, which will diversify their incomes with sustainable business models and thereby increase their economic independence.

People should be empowered to secure their livelihoods on their own – independently, diversely and resiliently.

bioRe Foundation on entrepreneurship

The bioRe Foundation is convinced that economic success and social benefit must go hand in hand. A *holistic sustainability perspective* goes beyond production and trade, and integrates local communities and people into the processes. We also have many exciting activities planned for the 2025/26 financial year, which we want to implement together with our partners in the countries.

India

Promoting health for mankind and the environment

To enable farming families and their communities to access basic medical care, the bioRe Foundation's mobile healthcare bus travels to remote villages. There, the team of doctors conducts medical examinations, treats illnesses and raises awareness about health. In 2025/26, the programme is to be expanded to include targeted healthcare and environmentally-friendly measures. These include the construction of sanitary facilities, with 40 already being built each year, as well as the installation of biogas units as a clean energy source in households: these not only enable resource-friendly cooking but also provide high-quality organic fertilizer for the fields.

Health is the root of all thriving life. Without healthy people, there is no strong harvest – neither in agriculture nor in society.

bioRe Foundation on health

Tanzania

Agroforestry as a driver for entrepreneurship

Since 2020, the bioRe Foundation Tanzania (BFT) has been promoting agroforestry as a forward-looking approach to linking organic farming with economic and social development. The combination of farmer managed natural regeneration (FMNR) and tree planting on farms not only supports reforestation but also creates new foundations for entrepreneurial activities – e.g. in bee-keeping, as flowering trees provide nectar, shade and protection for successful bee-keeping. Thanks to the BFT, farmers gain access to training, beehives and guidance from experienced bee-keepers. Not only are skills in handling bees imparted, but entrepreneurial thinking is also strengthened – from production to marketing the honey.

Sustainability is not enough – we focus on regeneration. Our work strengthens soils, communities and livelihoods for the long term.

bioRe Foundation on organic farming



Figures and KPIs

Results for the 2024/25 financial year

Conducted training courses for organic farming	404
Conducted focus group discussions with farmers	28
Profitable beneficiary-run small businesses	2 of 4
Animation schools operating in the villages	18
Children who benefited from health checks	3 082

Project expenses	2023/24	2024/25
Organic farming	256 627	290 881
Entrepreneurship	11 768	31 986
Health	242 194	139 136
Education	95 900	143 858
Climate protection	48 167	35 554
Innovation	17 798	25 399
Programme contributions	129 745	95 832
Total	802 199	762 644

We will send you the financial statements upon request.
info@biorestiftung.ch

Agriculture and biodiversity

7573 participants on organic farming training courses

Education

671 children who benefit from primary school education

Health

8232 patients who benefited from healthcare services

Participation

200 participants in the Farmers Challenge Assessment 2024

Thank you

Many thanks!

Without support, we would not be where we are today. We would therefore like to thank all donors and supporters who believe in our approach and support us with complete trust.

Furthermore, we would like to thank our valued partner organizations in India and Tanzania, and especially all the organic farmers and field workers, whose commitment and dedication are at the heart of our mission and facilitate a successful partnership on equal terms.

Special thanks go to Coop and Remei, who have generously supported our holistic sustainability standards from the very beginning and continually accompanied us on this journey.

We wish to thank all project managers who, through their daily commitment, help drive our objectives forward, as well as all the foundation's ambassadors who support our work. We would like to thank Nicola Roten for serving as Managing Director until March 2025 and look forward to working with the new Managing Director, Katrin Oswald, from July 2025.

Last but not least, our thanks go to our institutional donors: the Coop sustainability fund, Remei AG, the Edith Maryon Foundation and the Umwelt Arena Schweiz Foundation. It is their financial support that makes our projects possible.

Become part of our journey!

Have there been moments or sources in your life that you were later able to draw strength and opportunities from? What laid the foundations for your own growth and your future? And could you envisage your donation enabling just that?

biore-stiftung.ch/en/donations

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SWIFT: ZKBKCHZZ80A
Zürcher Kantonalbank

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Member



No Poverty

By raising and diversifying the incomes of farming families, the bioRe Foundation contributes to the economic stability of rural communities.



Zero Hunger

Promoting organic and biodynamic farming improves food security and creates sustainable sources of income.



Good Health and Well-Being

Healthcare, clean water, hygiene and the avoidance of chemical fertilizers/pesticides improve the health of farming families.



Quality Education

The bioRe Foundation supports primary and further education for farming families and their children, in order to foster knowledge and independence in the long term.



Clean Water and Sanitation

By constructing water and sanitation facilities, the bioRe Foundation improves quality of life in rural regions.



Decent Work and Economic Growth

The bioRe Foundation creates fair working conditions and supports farming families through long-term partnerships and fair prices.



Responsible Consumption and Production

Through organic and biodynamic cultivation, the bioRe Foundation promotes sustainable production methods and an environmentally friendly supply chain.



Life on Land

Organic farming, supported by the bioRe Foundation, helps to preserve and improve ecosystems by protecting soils and biodiversity.

8 is the number of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for which the bioRe Foundation works in order to sustainably improve the living conditions of farming families in India and Tanzania.



An animation school pupil on his way home, Kasrawad, India
Photo: © Lara Lone, 2025



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