ISAAA AfriCenter

Above and Beyond:

ISAAA AfriCenter Annual Report, 2025

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VISION

The leading biosciences' communication enabler for a food-secure and healthier Africa.

MISSION

To provide an inclusive platform that informs Africa's policies and markets on ethical and appropriate bio-innovations.

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ABOUT ISAAA AFRICENTER:

ISAAA AfriCenter is made up of a robust group of scientists and science communicators who work daily towards promoting sustainable agri-food systems and planetary health through knowledge sharing and strategic communications. With a goal to harness the power of agri-innovations for sustainable food security across the continent, we work with like-minded individuals and organizations to enable access to cutting-edge technologies that promote food security and good health for a rapidly growing population.

Over time, we have evolved into a provider of a variety of services that support life sciences and planetary health. Principally mandated with sharing knowledge on biosciences through strategic communications and outreach for informed policy and choice, we have made progress towards closing the gap between science and society. This gap has, over time, stifled the speed with which research outputs are transitioned into useful products for the people. In the African context, misinformation, aggressive activism, unfavourable policies and regulations, have seen the continent lag behind in adopting bioscience innovations.

AfriCenter fashions its activities towards achievement of African Union's Agenda 2063. It promotes inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development in the continent through ensuring Africa enjoys food security, improved health and wellbeing, environment sustainability, and climate resilient economies and communities.

It, therefore, focuses on three key thematic areas of Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA), namely eradication of hunger, prevention/control of diseases, and communication. AfriCenter, therefore, puts effort in its constant pursuit of Africa's adoption of modern biotechnology tools to optimize the continent's agricultural production.

Chiefly, AfriCenter aims to contribute to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically, SDG 2 (zero hunger and enhanced food security), SDG 3 (health and wellbeing), SDG 8 (sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all), SDG 13 (climate action) and SDG 17 (global partnerships).

Some of the products and services we offer to this end, and which we have ramped up in the last one year, are:

Science Communication Training	The changing dynamics of research and ever-increasing societal demands for understanding research implications has ignited a strong need for scientists to acquire effective communication skills for engaging a wide spectrum of actors.
Stakeholder Netmapping	This helps researchers and project managers understand, visualize and improve situations in which many different actors influence a desired outcome.
The Africa Short Course on Agro-biosciences (AfSCA)	This is a regional training program hosted by ISAAA AfriCenter, focusing on emerging bioscience technologies with potential application in agricultural transformation.

Misinformation-Sensing Training	This is a structured capacity-building program designed to equip policymakers, regulators, researchers, industry leaders, media practitioners and civil society actors with practical tools to detect, analyze and respond to misinformation surrounding agricultural and health innovations.
The DrumBeat	The monthly e-newsletter brings absorbing stories on Africa's latest bioscience development and cutting-edge scientific innovations, as well as expert views and recommendations on optimizing science and technology to steer the continent forward. The newsletter has gained popularity in the region and across the globe, with over 5,000 subscribers comprising policy makers, media, development partners, scientists and academia.
The Africa Biennial Biosciences Communication (ABBC) Symposia	This is a platform for biosciences stakeholders to constructively exchange experiences and best practices towards improving biosciences communications. The ABBC symposium aims at providing an Africa-based and African-led platform to interrogate best communication practices that will facilitate informed decision-making on bioscience innovations in the region.
Theory of Change Training	This is an ongoing process of reflection to explore change and how it happens. By using a theory of change approach, we can articulate how we expect outcomes to be achieved.
Media Engagement and Liaison	Through media cafes, media awards, study tours, alongside other engagements, we have brought on board a network of journalists and editors, whose appreciation for science has improved, and who are willing to query information in the public domain to ensure accurate, factual reporting. We also hold the Annual OFAB Kenya Media Awards, to recognize the critical role played by the media in promoting constructive dialogue on modern biotechnology through responsible, professional, ethical and effective reporting.
Digital Project Documentation	We develop high-impact short videos, photography and simplified communication materials, as documenting projects helps in unpacking technical science jargon into simple language that ensures end-users (the public) make meaning out of research. In the raging global infodemic, use of digital platforms for uploading of products such as short, relevant videos helps in raising project visibility and driving views. These videos, which are easily accessible and quick to play and interrogate, are essential in proactive public information and countering of misinformation.

Dr. Robert Karanja,
Board Chair, ISAAA AfriCenter

ISAAA AfriCenter continues to set the standard in the efforts towards bridging the gap between science and society, and the year 2025 highlighted our desire to do everything possible to achieve this.

From the Africa Biennial Biosciences Communication (ABBC) symposium, which convened in Lusaka, Zambia, and which brought together 150 delegates from 21 countries, to a dozen webinars, tens of podcasts and services that supported advancement of One Health across the continent, we made a statement of intent, making it clear that we are not backing down from our mandate, despite the protracted challenges of misinformation and disinformation we have had to contend with.

Above all, in the year, we were central to provision of key information for stakeholders in biotech and in One Health, with knowledge products developed and disseminated, and with key meetings convened at local, national, regional and continental levels to facilitate deliberations on topics that advance science's integration into society.

Amid the turmoil of legal challenges surrounding biotechnology, ISAAA AfriCenter continued to spread awareness, convinced that the continent's failure to adopt innovations is akin to shooting selves in the foot.

The challenges are not over. In fact, they could intensify in the future, as deliberate wars are waged on science, mainly through social media. With this in mind, we are not laying down our armament. We shall remain supportive of processes that contribute to the elimination of doubts that have made society skeptical to new, helpful scientific innovations. We shall also keep providing timely, relevant and comprehensive information that support the integration of science in society.

ISAAA remains committed to the values that will bring Africa at par with the rest of the developed world, especially in the life sciences, and remains actively involved in discussions that promote planetary health. We look forward to your continued partnership and support going forward, and to the benefit of Africa from the work we are doing together to promote sustainable agri-food systems and planetary health.

Dr. Margaret Karembu, MBS
Director, ISAAA AfriCenter

In 2025, we trained our guns on misinformation and disinformation in a special way, even theming our premier convening platform, the Africa Biennia Biosciences Communication symposium (ABBC 2025), around this.

We did so with full realization of the challenges brought forward by the rapid advancement of social media, including platforming voices that are opposed, for various reasons, to the progress of science and its contribution to society.

Granted, as we champion the cause for biotechnology in Africa, greatly convinced that it provides one of the surest shields against food insecurity in the continent, a majority of hurdles we keep experiencing come from deliberate misinformation and disinformation seeping into society, and becoming almost impossible to dislodge.

In 2025, we witnessed court battles that sought to challenge regulatory processes, further slowing down the rate of adoption of biotech products. But we did not stop. We significantly strengthened science communication on agri-biotechnology through targeted county-level misinformation-sensing training workshops and national media science cafes. We took regulators from across the continent to international fora to showcase Africa's rapidly maturing, science-based biosafety and genome editing policy frameworks. In addition, we developed resource materials, such as the BiotechAfrica portal, an open-access continental resource that systematically curates biosafety policies, regulatory status and biotech product pipelines across African countries.

Beyond this, we ramped up efforts in One Health, organizing stakeholder net-mapping workshops, regional peer learning and leadership training. We also developed theory-of-change road maps, organized science decolonization dialogues and conducted media engagements across Africa.

We capped off our year with a leading role in the development of Kenya's Research Financing and Capacity Strengthening Masterplan (2026-2036), drafted in partnership with the National Research Fund. Developed through a nationwide consultative process involving over 1,000 stakeholders, the policy-aligned Masterplan lays the foundation for sustainable and coordinated research financing in Kenya.

We appreciate your partnership throughout the year, and are hopeful for even stronger collaborations in yet another promising one. As new challenges emerge, so does our resolve to beat them strengthen, and we hope our hands hold even tighter as we charge forward in a united front, guided by our theme: Above and Beyond.

2025 at a Glance:

8+

country teams supported to develop One Health Theory of Change frameworks, strengthening accountability, project logic, and sustainability planning while advancing cross-country collaboration and strategic alignment.

120

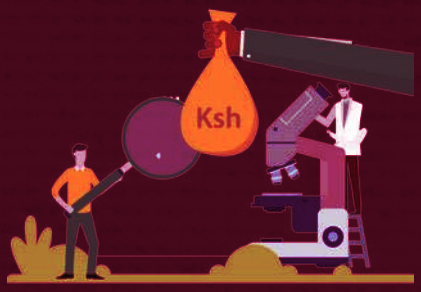
Number of postgraduate students equipped with bioentrepreneurship skills through a specialized training course.

100,000+

stakeholders in agriculture, health and environment reached through webinars series organized through the Africa Science Dialogue.

170

Smallholder Farmers Empowered in Mastitis Control and Milk Quality Management



Kenya's Research Financing and Capacity Strengthening Masterplan developed and validated following stakeholder consultations.

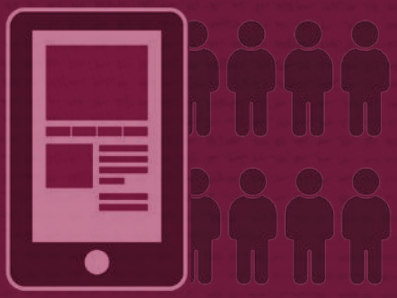
It rolls out an inclusive roadmap for investing

2%

of Kenya's GDP to Research and Development

250,000+

Total social media impressions on KingaKUU cassava, a newly developed disease-resistant biotech cassava awaiting commercial release in Kenya



200,000+

impressions garnered from readership and viewership of stories in the DrumBeat, our monthly e-newsletter.

211%

Growth in followership on LinkedIn over the year

21

The number of countries represented in the ABBC 2025, a global bioscience communication event held in Lusaka, Zambia in August 2025

What you learn from a life in science is the vastness of our ignorance."

Our Route **to Success**

1. Enhancing Bio-Innovations Ecosystem:

Problem:

Bio-entrepreneurs face limited capacity to navigate the complex biotech business landscape, secure adequate funding, and comply with varying regulatory requirements in different regions. As a result, many would-be bio-innovations never reach the market.

Failure of successful commercialization of products of research and development is a huge drawback to countries, and a continent, perennially training scientists only to end up purchasing products (which could have been locally developed) from elsewhere.

Intervention:

ISAAA AfriCenter has been keen on providing bio-entrepreneurs with the necessary skills to grow their ventures, including through offering mentorship to guide and support them transition their innovations from the lab to market. Identifying needs in the market, we took bioentrepreneurs through training sessions that equip them with the understanding of relevant ventures to ensure they work towards satisfying market needs. We have also been keen on linking bio-entrepreneurs with investors and industry leaders to upscale bio-innovations.

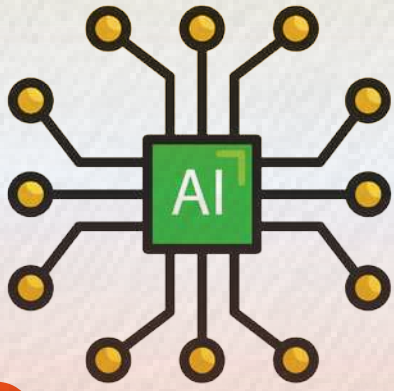
Activities, Timelines and Impact:

ISAAA AfriCenter engaged universities based in different regions across Kenya owing to their diverse interests in bioentrepreneurship, targeting undergraduate and postgraduate students.

To promote bio-entrepreneurship among early career professionals, AfriCenter assembled a powerhouse of AI experts, data scientists, and agricultural specialists for a ground-breaking competition to harness the power of artificial intelligence in detecting and dismantling misinformation. Coming together, they would come up with products which would have real social impact for the benefit of African farmers.

The top three teams were recognized and given the opportunity to participate in a hackathon competition at the second edition of the Financing Agri-Food Systems Sustainably (FINAS) Summit 2025, held in Nairobi from May 20-22, 2025.

"Wisdom is like a baobab tree; no one individual can embrace it"



2. Knowledge Translation

Problem:

Africa faces a lingering problem of limited access to bioscience information and fragmented resources. This hinders progress and delays decision-making. The digital revolution, which has seen the proliferation of social media platforms, has led to intense amplification of misinformation, making it harder for society to distinguish facts from fiction.

Emboldened, proponents of anti-science have intensified their campaigns, and pseudoscience has found a footing. This has created serious mistrust and limited Africa's ability to fully leverage bio-innovations.

Intervention:

ISAAA AfriCenter steered processes to develop and repackage simplified knowledge products, which have since been disseminated through our various platforms such as the Africa Science Dialogue portal, ISAAA Africenter Website, social media platforms, and the Drumbeat newsletter.

Activities, Timelines and Impact:

In June 20, 2025, AfriCenter supported the national launch of One Health Reporting Guidelines in Rwanda, equipping journalists with tools for accurate, ethical and responsible One Health (OH) reporting. By year's end, OH in Africa was visibly shifting from aspiration toward institutionalized practice.

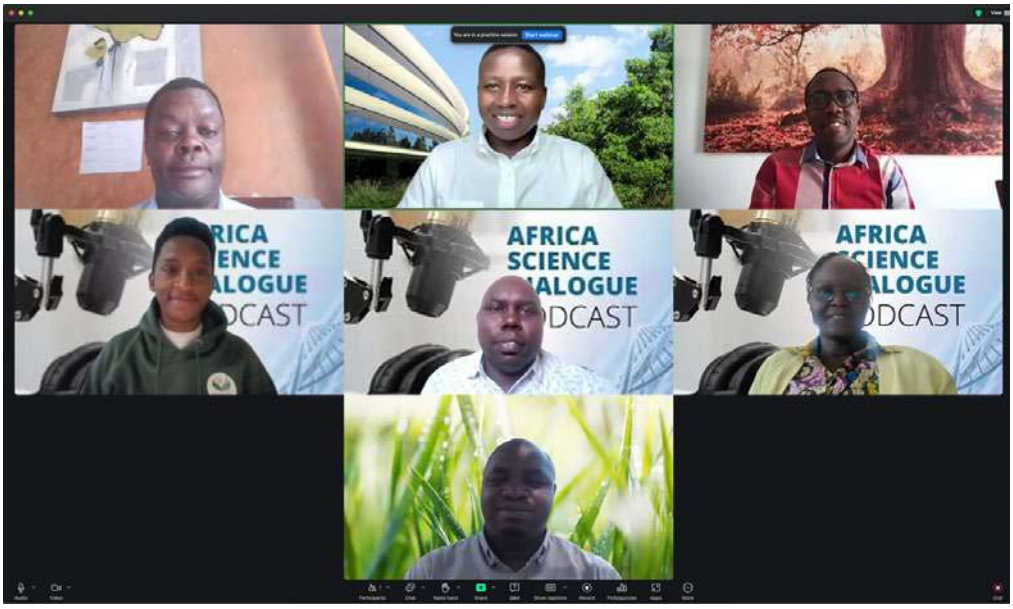
One Health Communication Guidelines in Rwanda

In the second half of the year, in central Kenya, ISAAA AfriCenter translated digital innovation into tangible farmer impact through the Goats Offering AMR/AMU Teaching (GOAT) mobile application. Farmers who have been struggling with mastitis were finally presented with an easy, digital way to monitor and get help for their animals.

"Science makes people reach selflessly for truth and objectivity."

Every month this year through the Drumbeat, ISAAA AfriCenter reached over 5,000 global subscribers, translating research and policy developments into accessible, evidence-based insights.

We surpassed 100,000 listeners and viewers through the Africa Science Dialogue podcast and webinar series. In the podcasts, we covered relevant, topical issues, such as the silent players in One Health in Uganda, and the importance of institutionalization of One Health across the continent. In our webinars, we held similar discussions, including topics that celebrated youth and women in science. Social media engagement also surged, with more than 190,000 impressions recorded across platforms – demonstrating a rapidly expanding public appetite for credible African science narratives.



Webinar panellists (Courtesy of the Africa Science Dialogue)

"Science is a way of life.
Science is a perspective."

ABBC 2025 Pitching Session: Role of AI in Addressing Misinformation

ABBC 2025 symposium featured an exciting pitching competition that highlighted creativity and ingenuity of young African tech students in leveraging artificial intelligence to address misinformation. The competition brought together three outstanding teams who had earlier emerged as top innovators at a hackathon organized by ISAAA AfriCenter in May 2025, and who later gained recognition at the Financing Agri-Food Systems (FINAS) Summit held in Nairobi in June 2025. At ABBC 2025, the teams showcased innovative AI-driven solutions designed to counter misinformation and disinformation that continue to hinder uptake of agricultural innovations, offering fresh perspectives on how technology can strengthen public trust in science. These AI innovations are AgriGuard, AgriTrue and AgriVerify.

Agriguard is an AI tool that operates through three arms: ViralFarm, which scans social media to detect myths in real time; AgriFactCheck, an AI-powered SMS/ WhatsApp bot that debunks fake claims in local languages; and MythBuster Ag, which delivers AI generated videos that "prebunk" misinformation before it spreads. Additional features include a crop-help diagnosis center where farmers can upload images of affected plants for professional input, and a crop advisory and planning service offering expert recommendations tailored to soil, climate, and farmer objectives.

AgriTrue is a smart AI-powered platform that combats misinformation and empowers farmers with verified, accessible knowledge. Its tools include Community Notes for collaborative fact-checking by farmers and experts, an ML Analyzer for agricultural image and document verification, Farm Truth for generating detailed agricultural reports and metrics, an AI Chatbot for instant responses, and a Voice Agent tailored to rural farmers with limited literacy or connectivity

AgriVerify integrates AI chatbots, interactive quizzes, product verification tools and multi-platform accessibility (via web and USSD codes) to deliver accurate, easy-to-understand information even in rural areas with limited internet access. It features virtual reality tools that allow crops to be viewed through a 3D lens, creating a unique educational experience.

3.

Science Communication and Diplomacy

Problem:

For years, scientific work has failed to make an impact in society because of the inability of actors in the scientific community to engage non-technical audiences effectively, making advocacy for an enabling environment and uptake of bio- innovations difficult.

At work, many of them are actively trying to make things happen but operating in siloed approached, especially in One Health where systems thinking and transdisciplinary collaboration are key to successful execution.

Intervention:

ISAAA AfriCenter has organized a number of training workshops to equip Africa's experts with critical skills to effectively engage non-technical audiences and participate in global negotiations. We continue to offer communication and policy advocacy support services.

Activities, Timelines and Impact:

Throughout the year, across Africa, AfriCenter strengthened One Health leadership and governance through stakeholder net-mapping, regional peer learning, leadership training, theory-of-change design, decolonization dialogues, and media engagement. Monthly cross-country webinars provided a platform for comparing national governance pathways and institutionalization models.

Theory of Change workshops strengthened accountability frameworks for seven country teams, ensuring that One Health initiatives are driven by measurable outcomes, systems thinking, and sustainability logic.

In August, during the Africa Biennial Biosciences Communication (ABBC 2025), decolonization leadership training challenged structural barriers while amplifying indigenous knowledge systems within health governance.

"Science knows no country, because knowledge belongs to humanity, and is the torch which illuminates the world."

4.

Policy and Regulatory Clarity

Problem:

African sciences, and especially the biosciences market, suffer from the lack of clarity on policy and regulatory requirements. Potential innovators and investors often struggle with the complexities of navigating the stage-gate processes throughout the product development cycle. The absence of clear, easily accessible information creates a barrier to entry, deterring investment and slowing innovation.

As modern biotechnology products are increasingly commercialized and bio-manufacturing advances, intellectual property and stewardship emerge as significant concerns.

These challenges can contribute to growing mistrust in bio-innovations, especially among early-career professionals who are keen to pursue bio-entrepreneurship.

Intervention:

ISAAA AfriCenter set out to provide intelligence on policy and regulatory frameworks governing bioscience R&D and commercialization across Africa, and to provide market intelligence to facilitate successful translation of bioscience products into market-ready solutions. In 2025, AfriCenter supported experts to participate in fora where policy and regulatory frameworks were interrogated, with an aim of benchmarking to catch up with the developed world.

Activities, Timelines and Impact:

- In partnership with COMESA-ACTESA, ISAAA AfriCenter co-facilitated the formation of a panel of experts to initiate the implementation of the COMESA Biotechnology and Biosafety Programme (COMBIP)

In partnership with the National Research Fund, ISAAA AfriCenter co-facilitated the development of Kenya's Research Financing and Capacity Strengthening Master Plan (2026-2036).

Strategic Objectives:

- The Masterplan: Develop a comprehensive 10-year roadmap with sustainable financing mechanisms
- Capacity & Equity: Enhance R&D capacity and ensure equitable access to funding opportunities
- Inclusivity: Promote active participation of marginalized groups (youth, women, PWDs)

Thematic Focus Areas:

- Sustainable financing- Long-term funding models
- Infrastructure- Modern labs & equipment
- Digital systems- Interoperable data platforms
- Human capital- Skills & researcher training
- Industry linkages- Commercialization pathways
- Policy harmonization- Alignment of regulations

Photo: *Masterplan validation meeting in Kisumu, Kenya*

"Somewhere, something incredible is waiting to be known."

MASTERPLAN STRATEGY

Objectives & Thematic Focus

10-Year Roadmap

Strategic Objectives

01 National R&D Masterplan
Develop a comprehensive 10-year roadmap with sustainable financing mechanisms.

02 Capacity & Equity
Enhance R&D capacity and ensure equitable access to funding opportunities.

03 Inclusivity
Promote active participation of marginalized groups (youth, women, PWDs).

04 Linkages & Collaboration
Improve stakeholder linkages and facilitate multi-stakeholder collaboration.

Thematic Focus Areas

Key Pillars

- **Sustainable Financing** — Long-term funding models
- **Infrastructure** — Modern labs & equipment
- **Digital Systems** — Interoperable data platforms
- **Human Capital** — Skills & researcher training
- **Industry Linkages** — Commercialization pathways
- **Policy Harmonization** — Aligned regulations

APPROACHES: Stakeholder Mapping · Inclusive Engagement · Evidence-Led

PROJECT II TIMELINE

Research Financing Masterplan (2024–2025)

13 Months
Duration: Nov 2024 - Dec 2025

Phase 1: Foundation
Nov 2024 – Mar 2025

Key Activities
- Conceptualization & proposal (Nov–Dec 2024)
- FCDO grant approval (Dec 2024)
- Desk review of funding (Jan 2025)
- Core partners' meeting (Feb 2025)
- TAC onboarding & Project Initiation (Mar 2025)

Phase 2: Consultation
Mar – Jun 2025

Key Activities
- Stakeholder netmapping & validation (Mar 2025)
- Countrywide consultations (Apr–Jun 2025)
- Quarterly "Pause & Reflect" with TAC (Q2–Q4)

Scope
47 Counties & Marginalized Groups

Phase 3: Development
Jul – Aug 2025

Key Activities
- TAC retreat to draft Masterplan (Jul 2025)
- Stakeholder inputs by policymakers (Aug 2025)
- Integration of financial modeling data

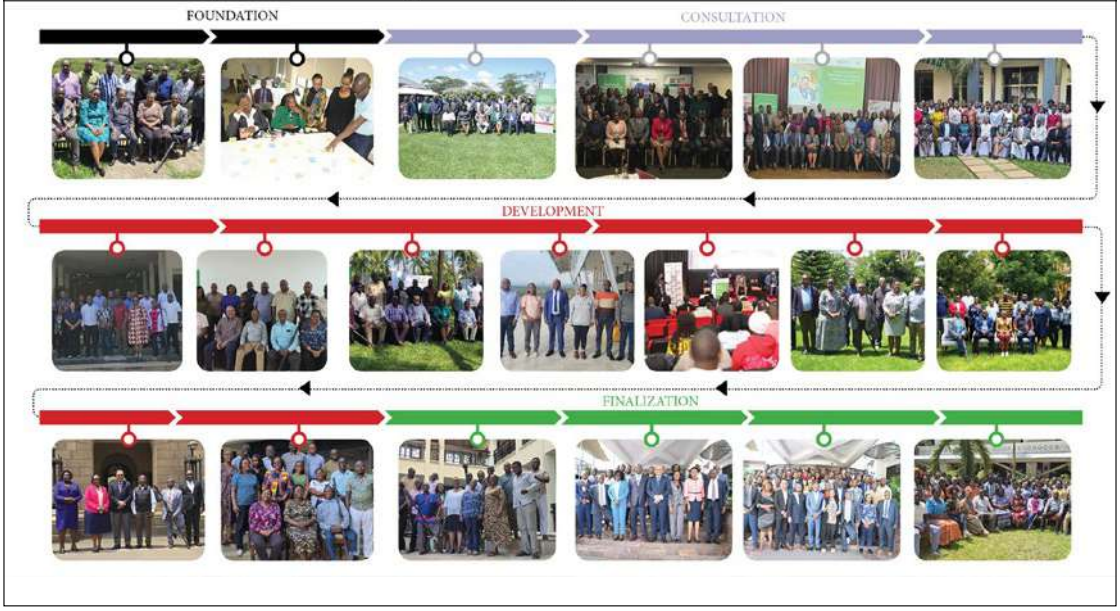
Phase 4: Finalization
Oct – Nov 2025

Key Activities
- Validation by MDAs & Principal Secretary (Oct 2025)
- Policymakers & National Public Validation (Nov 2025)
- Policy briefs drafting (Oct 2025)

Outcome
Validated Research Financing and Capacity Strengthening Masterplan

Builds upon the regulatory framework established by the 2024 R&D Policy.

Process Map of the Masterplan Development



Under the leadership of AfriCenter and partners, Africa's regulatory leadership took center stage at the 17th International Society for Biosafety Research (17-ISBR) and the 6th International Workshop on Regulatory Approaches for Agricultural Applications of Animal Biotechnologies (6-IWRAAAAB) in Ghent, Belgium.

Photo: *Delegates at the 17-ISBR meeting in Belgium*

5.

Convening Multi-Stakeholder Platforms

Problem:

Stakeholders have often failed to collaborate enough, having not found sufficient opportunities to do so. This has led to fragmented and disjointed efforts in advancing bio-innovations across Africa. It leads to weakening of collective ability to address shared challenges and fully leverage synergies for greater impact.

Intervention:

Throughout the year, ISAAA AfriCenter provided platforms for enhancing multi-stakeholder participation and collaborations, through which we sought to break silos and co-create solutions.

Activities, Timelines and Impact:

Regular targeted county-level misinformation-sensing training workshops and media science cafés ensured that county leaders, academicians, early-career professionals, journalists and editors were equipped to promote accurate, evidence-based conversations.

On June 3, during the commemoration of the World Environment Day at the Kenya National Theater, a National Dialogue on GM Foods and Planetary Health was held to discuss the potential benefits of quick uptake of GM crops and the benefits of the same to preservation of our biodiversity, and to address any issues raised by stakeholders. The Government of Kenya reaffirmed its commitment to advancing biotech crops as part of the national food security strategy.

“

Kenyan scientists have demonstrated that biotech crops – such as biotech maize and cassava – are climate-resilient and highly productive. These innovations offer promising solutions for enhancing food security and strengthening the resilience of our agricultural systems.

Prof. Shaukat Abdulrazak, EBS

Principal Secretary, State Department for Science, Research and Innovation, Kenya

“Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.”

The Africa Biennial Biosciences Communication (ABB 2025) symposium was held in Lusaka, Zambia from August 26-28, 2025, emerging as one of AfriCenter's most consequential convenings. It brought together a diverse range of key participants from agriculture, human and animal health and environment, with 150 participants from 21 countries – including researchers, regulators, policymakers, farmers, communicators, private sector actors and early-career scientists.

ABBC 2025, which marked a decade since the first of such symposia in 2015, included important breakout events, and sessions such as fireside chats and a Decolonizing One Health Leadership training.

ABBC 2025 also resulted in a continental declaration committing stakeholders to institutionalize science communication as a core function of governance. The symposium positioned misinformation and disinformation not as a peripheral challenge, but as a development risk requiring coordinated continental response.

Photo: *Delegates pose during the first day of the ABBC 2025 symposium in Lusaka, Zambia.*

In December, regulators, feed millers, traders and partners convened to address constraints in GM food and feed trade, strengthening regulatory clarity and catalyzing co-created, industry-led solutions.

"There is a single light of science, and to brighten it anywhere is to brighten it everywhere."

Charting the Future of Biosciences Communication

Key achievements and lessons from the African Biennial Biosciences Communication (ABBC) symposia

ABBC 2015

- Communication strategies must be tailor-made for diverse audiences' needs.
- Formulation of a strong biosafety communication framework.

ABBC 2017

- Increased public awareness about regulatory frameworks and fostering of collaborations.
- Facilitated the expansion of multi-stakeholder networks, fostering stronger partnerships.

ABBC 2019

- Prioritization of stakeholder engagement on genome editing for the technology's seamless adoption and regulation.
- Publication of regulatory guidelines for genome editing in several African countries.

ABBC 2021

- Launch of the African Coalition for Communicating about Genome Editing.
- Enhancing communication champions' roles.

ABBC 2023

- Conceived effective ways of communicating NBTs.
- Promotion of systems-thinking approach, transparency, and inclusive engagement strategies.

ABBC 2025

- African-led engagement initiatives and dialogue platforms such as the Africa Science Dialogue strengthened.
- Advanced fact-checking systems are being developed by AfriCenter.

Links to Important Publications

2025 Annual Letter

ABBC 2025 Report

ABBC 2025 Declaration

ABBC 2025

ABBC 2025 LUSAKA DECLARATION AND CALL TO ACTION

Africa Biennial Biosciences Communication Symposium (ABBC 2025) - 6th Edition

August 26 - 28, 2025

Lusaka, Zambia

The War on Science: How Can We Overcome the Burden of Misinformation and Disinformation?

Page 1 of 4

One Health Communication Guidelines for Rwanda

The Spirit of Asilomar: lessons for the next era of biotechnology governance

ARTICLE IN PRESS

Trends in Biotechnology

CellPress

TrendsTalk

The Spirit of Asilomar: lessons for the next era of biotechnology governance

Kutubuddin Molla

AfriCenter Annual Report, 2024

Quotes from the ABBC 2025 Symposium

It is a collective responsibility of governments, academia, industry, media and civil society to confront this challenge of misinformation and disinformation. They undermine innovations, fueling vaccine hesitancy, and delaying climate action, with significant costs to Africa's growth and well-being.

Dr. Robert Karanja, Board Chairperson, ISAAA AfriCenter

In an era where misinformation and disinformation can undermine public confidence, the COMESA Panel of Experts on Biotechnology and Biosafety, will anchor decisions in facts rather than fear.

By delivering credible, peer-reviewed, regionally harmonized opinions, it will counter misinformation and help policymakers, media, and the public engage with biotechnology.

Dr. John Mukuka, CEO, COMESA/ACTESAAfriCenter

Misinformation often thrives in the absence of credible voices that communities recognize and trust. We need to conduct demos that show people what new scientific innovations are about. People need to touch the science in the language they understand.

Dr. Canisius Kanangire, Executive Director, African Agricultural Technology Foundation

Farmers believed in the performance of PBR cowpea after visiting trial and demo sites; we therefore disregarded any false claims from anti-technology voices.

Khalid Umar Salihu, Bt Cowpea Farmer, Nigeria

Success in dispelling the false claim that vaccination against Lumpy Skin Disease in India caused livestock deaths did not come from scientists, but from journalists who investigated and corrected the misinformation.

Prof. Mizeck Chagunda, Director, Centre for Tropical Livestock Genetics and Health

To fight misinformation and disinformation, the conference underscored the need for actively engaging in communication, including journalists in the process, designing thoughtful messages, humanizing, science, involving youth and embracing social media.

Dr Diana Horvath, President & Co-founder, 2Blades

One major challenge Nashulai faced was misinformation – exaggerated promises about conservancy benefits, narrow narratives dominated by Western conservation models, and the undervaluing of African indigenous knowledge. The conservancy addressed these issues through transparency, regular community outreach, and inclusive annual general meetings that built trust and shared understanding.

Nelson Ole Reiyia, CEO and Co-Founder of Nashulai Maasai Conservancy

The labeling of Omicron as an "African variant" reinforced long-standing stereotypes that African science is less trustworthy or that Africa itself is a site of disease rather than innovation.

Dr. Sikhulile Moyo, Botswana Harvard AIDS Institute Partnership

The Omicron episode teaches us that communicating science is never without risk. When science intersects with politics, media and public fear, even accurate and timely findings can be misrepresented.

Kim Waddilove, Communications Officer, Sub-Saharan African Network for TB/HIV Research Excellence

Building resilient plant health systems in Africa means reclaiming trust, negotiating collaborations on equal terms, and ensuring governments lead by valuing their own scientists.

Dr. Valter Nuaila, Deputy Director, National Biotechnology Centre, Mozambique

Miscommunication on the efficacy of malaria vaccine highlighted the need for scientists to present findings more clearly and accessibly, ensuring the public can grasp the real-world significance of research outcomes. We need to move science from being a queen to being a princess, a Cinderella.

Dr. Moses Alobo, Head of Programs, Science for Africa Foundation

ACKNOWLEDGMENT NOTE:

We extend our appreciation to our partners who have walked this journey with us, and we look forward to continued collaboration.

"If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of Giants."

ISAAA AfriCenter

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