

POLICY BRIEF
Kenya - August 2025



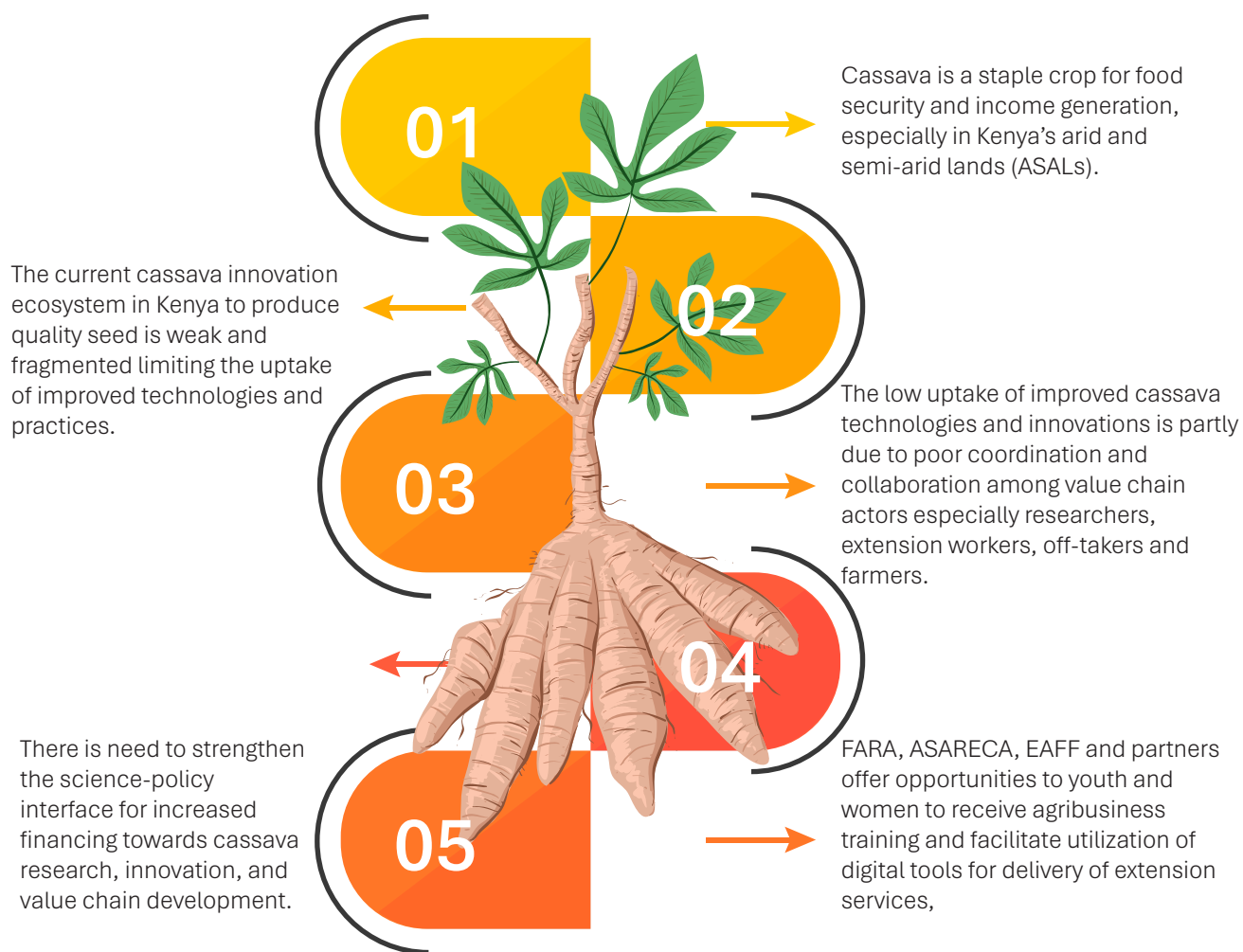
The Role of an Enabling Policy Environment in Strengthening Cassava Value Chain in Kenya

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Key Messages



Background

In 2023, Kenya produced 1.188 million tonnes of cassava on 76,012 hectares with average yield of 15.63 t/ha (FAO, 2025). While cassava has a high potential for use as animal feed, and industrial production of ethanol and high quality starch, the low investment in the cassava value chain coupled with poor coordination of value chain actors limits its role in contributing to the country's GDP, youth employment and attainment of the targets under Kenya's Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027 and Kenya's vision 2030.

The current informal seed system that involves the use of poor-quality planting materials coupled with little to no collaboration among value chain actors among other challenges weakens the innovation ecosystem. Multistakeholder platforms and cassava innovation platforms help in strengthening collaboration among value chain actors and finding solutions that affect not only the seed systems but also processing and value addition. Cassava innovation platforms are networks, partnerships or forums of diverse stakeholders in the cassava value chain who cooperate, interact and learn to develop a shared vision and identify solutions to a common problem or development challenge as a group or individual members (FARA, 2007; Nederlof et al., 2011).



Contribution of Cassava IPs to improving seed systems and value addition in Kenya

Cassava Innovation Platforms have several advantages and these include:

1. Enhanced access to markets resulting in increased household incomes, addressing one of the major limitations to economic transformation.
2. Reduced exploitation of producers of fresh cassava root by connecting them to off-takers, hence making them able to receive fair markets.
3. Provide market information, identify new market opportunities and facilitate information exchange.
4. Offer training opportunities in entrepreneurial and business skills eg negotiation, produce aggregation resulting in increased value-added cassava products.
5. Building the capacity of farmers to become certified multipliers of healthy planting material resulting in increased availability of quality declared cassava cuttings.
6. quality roots and value-added products to cassava.
7. Linking different actors stimulates meaningful relationships and creating trust among IP members.
8. Assembly of diverse resources (financial, human, social and physical) required to leverage change.
9. Increasing uptake of improved technologies, innovations, and management practices among cassava stakeholders for the benefit of large numbers of end-users.
10. A collective voice for advocating for policy incentives from governments as the Basi Mwangaza Innovation Platform.
11. Improved financial access for IP members by negotiating with credit providers.
12. Support testing of new institutional innovations (e.g. a contract-farming, digital platforms, certification of cassava seed multipliers)

Barriers to adoption of improved cassava technologies and innovations in Kenya

Despite the immense benefits of using improved cassava technologies and innovations within a cassava IP, the following challenges still do exist.

1. Low levels of awareness of the available cassava disease-resistant and high yielding cassava varieties.
2. Low market prices that act as disincentive for investment into cassava production. Coupled with fluctuating market prices and inability to predict demand.
3. Market price information asymmetry leading to exploitation of farmers by offtakers.
4. Limited financial support by county Governments to prioritize the development and investment into the cassava value chain.
5. Limited number of cassava knowledge hubs to enrich uptake of technologies, innovations, and management practices among cassava stakeholders.

Key actions to strengthen cassava value chain in Kenya

To strengthen the cassava seeds and value addition in by all stakeholders, the following actions are recommended:

- Establish and strengthen cassava innovation platforms at sub-national and national levels: This network of stakeholders within the cassava value chain can facilitate capacity strengthening through peer-to-peer learning. Such platforms include the Mikingirini Innovation Platform in Kilifi County.
- Develop and/or support the implementation of policies, standards and guidelines for cassava seed multiplication and certification. KEPHIS to consider training and sensitizing cassava seed multipliers in good agricultural practices of seed multiplication.
- Increase awareness and dissemination: To increase awareness of the available high-yielding and disease resistant cassava varieties and innovations there is need to diversify the types of knowledge products or material but also increase dissemination channels targeting different stakeholders. At community level, knowledge products should be developed in simplified formats that are easily understandable.
- Avail funding opportunities that require implementation through consortia that include research organizations, universities, farmer organizations and private companies. Such multistakeholder collaborations can accelerate the development and scaling of improved cassava varieties, processing techniques, and market access solutions.
- Increase access to agricultural financing through farmer cooperatives at reduced interest rates. This will enhance farmers capacity to buy certified seed of improved climate-smart cassava varieties hence increasing productivity especially among youth and women.
- Develop and/or support the implementation of the cassava substitution policy to increase cassava value addition including the use of cassava flour in baked products.
- Provide tax incentives to private companies investing into the development of the cassava value chain. This can include with a focus on favourable tax regimes.

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2. FARA, 2007)
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AIRTEA

Strengthening Agricultural Knowledge & Innovation Ecosystem
for Inclusive Rural Transformation & Livelihoods in Eastern Africa



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