



# TRANSFORMING SEAWEED FARMING

*Through Integrated Financial Solutions for  
Enhanced Food Systems in Zanzibar*

The Joint Programme “Transforming Seaweed Farming through Integrated Financial Solutions for Enhanced Food Systems in Zanzibar” is part of the UN Joint SDG Fund’s High-Impact Initiative on SDG Localization. Implemented by the United Nations in Tanzania in close collaboration with the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, it aims to transform seaweed farming from a subsistence activity into a dynamic, sustainable economic sector.

The first phase of the programme, launched in August 2025 with a budget of USD 1.965 million, is designed to catalyse additional public and private investment in production, value addition, and market systems. It complements the UN’s ongoing work to strengthen women’s cooperatives, improve post-harvest infrastructure, and promote inclusive market access, while contributing to the broader development of Zanzibar’s seaweed ecosystem as a cornerstone of its blue economy.

Focusing on Northern Unguja and Pemba (i.e. Kaskazini Unguja and Kaskazini Pemba regions), the initiative targets 15,000 farming households—most of whom are women and youth—to achieve a 40% average increase in income by 2028.



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Supported by:



# WHY SEAWEED?

- Second-largest export crop in Zanzibar after cloves, contributing 7.7% of total export value. Pemba Island leads production, accounting for 90% of output.
- Primary source of livelihood for over 150,000 people.
- Of the over 23,000 farmers 80% of them are women.
- Plays a critical role in diversifying livelihoods, reducing rural poverty, and strengthening the blue economy.
- Global market for seaweed projected to reach USD 11.8 billion by 2030 — Zanzibar currently holds only 0.4% market share.
- Investment in the sector advances multiple SDGs by reducing poverty, improving food and nutrition security, creating decent work, supporting climate change mitigation, and promoting healthy marine ecosystems.

## KEY CHALLENGES ADDRESSED



Limited access to affordable finance.



Weak market systems and post-harvest infrastructure.



High post-harvest losses (up to 40%).



Limited value addition — 99% currently exported raw.



Climate vulnerabilities affecting production

# OUR APPROACH

The programme integrates financial solutions, value addition, and market development within a gender- and youth-responsive framework, ensuring strong alignment with government priorities and coherence with other UN-supported initiatives. It builds on the Zanzibar Joint Programme (ZJP) (2025-2028), funded through the local SDG Acceleration Fund, and other joint Government-UN initiatives to maximise synergies and avoid duplication, while reinforcing national leadership in implementation and ensuring full alignment with Zanzibar's development plans and priorities.

## THREE OUTCOMES GUIDE THE JOINT PROGRAMME:

1

**Financial Access** – Affordable, de-risked financial services for at least 70% of seaweed farmers, including:



Credit guarantee schemes with local banks.



Inclusive micro-insurance.



Tailored Islamic financing & contract farming models.







2

**Stronger Cooperatives & Skills** – Enhanced institutional capacity, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy for farmer organizations, especially those led by women and youth.

3

**Competitive Markets & Infrastructure** – Structured market systems, quality assurance standards, and upgraded post-harvest facilities to reduce losses by 30% and increase quality and productivity.

# EXPECTED RESULTS BY 2028



 <b>15,000 households</b> with 40% higher income.	 <b>70% of farmers</b> accessing affordable finance.
 <b>30% reduction</b> in post-harvest losses.	 Operational <b>quality assurance and certification system</b> .
 <b>Investor forums</b> and market intelligence tools to attract sustainable investment.	 <b>150 cooperatives</b> with bankable business plans.

## PARTNERSHIPS AND FINANCING




-  **Participating UN Organisations:** FAO (lead entity), UNDP, IFAD, WFP.
-  **Government Partners:** Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries, Zanzibar Economic Empowerment Agency (ZEEA), Zanzibar Planning Commission, local authorities.
-  **Financial Institutions:** PBZ, CRDB, NMB, TADB.
-  **Private Sector:** Zanzibar Seaweed Company (ZASCO), processors, exporters.

Budget (Phase I):	Additional Resources to be Leveraged
USD 1.965 million over 18 months (Aug 2025–Feb 2027)	USD 26 million
<b>Leverage Ratio:</b> USD 1 public funds » USD 8 additional investment	

## ALIGNMENT WITH NATIONAL AND GLOBAL GOALS

-  Zanzibar Vision 2050 and Zanzibar Development Plan 2021–2026 (ZADEP).
-  Blue Economy Policy and National Food Systems Pathways.

## GENDER EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

-  Prioritizes women (80% of sector) and youth.
-  Tackles systemic barriers to finance, leadership, and market participation.
-  Ensures equitable access to training, infrastructure, and decision-making.