



# ANNUAL REPORT

Financing Agrochemical Reduction and Management  
(FARM) Programme

2024

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# List of Abbreviations

<b>ABIM</b>	Annual Biocontrol Industry Meeting
<b>ADB</b>	Asian Development Bank
<b>AfDB</b>	African Development Bank
<b>AU</b>	African Union
<b>APRACA</b>	Asia-Pacific Rural and Agricultural Credit Association
<b>ASEAN</b>	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
<b>CABI</b>	Centre for Agriculture and Biosciences International
<b>C&amp;KM</b>	Communications and Knowledge Management Coordination Group
<b>ECOPs</b>	Environment Codes of Practice
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
<b>FARM</b>	Financing Agrochemical Reduction and Management
<b>GBS</b>	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
<b>GEF</b>	Global Environment Facility
<b>GFC</b>	Global Framework on Chemicals
<b>GGKP</b>	Green Growth Knowledge Partnership
<b>HHPs</b>	Highly Hazardous Pesticides
<b>IBMA</b>	Industry of Biocontrol Manufacturers Association
<b>MAATE</b>	Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition, Ecuador
<b>MERCOSUR</b>	Common Southern Market
<b>NRI</b>	Natural Resources Institute
<b>PAN UK</b>	Pesticide Action Network UK
<b>POPs</b>	Persistent Organic Pollutants
<b>PRB</b>	Principles for Responsible Banking
<b>PSC</b>	Project Steering Committee
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNEP</b>	United Nations Environment Programme
<b>UNEP FI</b>	UNEP Finance Initiative
<b>UNIDO</b>	United Nations Industrial Development Organization





# Message from GEF

As the pressures of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution intensify, the need for sustainable agricultural practices is more urgent than ever. Farmers worldwide face the dual challenge of feeding a growing population while protecting the ecosystems that support life.

The FARM Programme is a bold and ambitious response that reimagines agriculture through sustainability and innovation. For too long, productivity has come at the cost of heavy reliance on synthetic chemicals, many of which are hazardous. Persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and highly hazardous pesticides (HHPs) pose long-term risks to human health and the environment. Once released into the environment, these toxins can persist for generations.

Global efforts to eliminate hazardous chemicals and plastics require holistic, sector-specific solutions that FARM provides, which places sustainable alternatives at the core of agricultural systems. FARM empowers stakeholders across food value chains with the tools and knowledge to adopt safer practices without compromising yields or profitability. Rooted in nature, backed by science and shaped by the experiences of farmers, it offers a transformative model for the future of farming.

At the Global Environment Facility, we believe finance is key to enabling this shift and maintaining durable results and impact.

FARM partners with the Asian Development Bank, UNEP Finance Initiative, banks and public funds to create guidance for banks and financial institutions investing and providing credit in agriculture. This collaboration underscores our commitment to phasing out HHPs, reducing agricultural plastics and scaling climate-resilient practices.

This report reflects the second year of our journey, and the first full year of project activities on the ground. It highlights what is possible when farmers, experts, governments and financiers unite behind a shared vision.

We thank all those who have joined us, and invite others to help grow a healthier, more resilient agrifood systems for future generations.



**Anil Sookdeo**  
Coordinator, Chemicals and Waste  
Global Environment Facility

# Message from UNEP

The FARM Programme was created with a clear and urgent mission: to help detoxify agriculture by phasing out the most harmful inputs – especially hazardous pesticides and plastics.

Our goal is to support the shift toward safer, low- and non-chemical alternatives that promote a more sustainable and environmentally friendly approach to farming.

This Annual Report captures the progress made during our first full year of implementation, from January to December 2024. It highlights the approval and launch of the Child Projects in most participating countries, as well as the development of knowledge-sharing and communication tools that are helping to build momentum across the programme.

Since our launch in Nairobi in March 2024, most Child Projects have kicked off with national inception workshops and steering committee meetings. Some countries are already seeing meaningful progress – Lao PDR stands out for its early consultation process on a new Law on Crop Protection and the start of sustainable agriculture pilot projects.

I would like to express my gratitude to all our partners, programme staff and national teams whose hard work and dedication made 2024 a success. Together, we are building the

foundations for long-term change, making agriculture healthier, cleaner and more resilient for the future.

I look forward to continuing this journey with you and seeing the positive impact we can achieve together. I hope you find this report both informative and inspiring.



**Kevin Helps**  
Portfolio Manager, GEF Chemicals and Waste  
United Nations Environment Programme



# Executive Summary and 2024 Highlights

The \$378 million Financing Agrochemical Reduction and Management (FARM) Programme aims to reduce persistent organic pollutants (POPs), highly hazardous pesticides (HHPs) and agricultural plastics, supported by \$37 million from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and \$341 million in co-financing. Led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the programme commenced implementation in 2023 with a projected closure in 2028, covering Ecuador, India, Kenya, Lao PDR, the Philippines, Uruguay and Viet Nam, along with a global project that gathers and shares best practices across borders.

As food and agricultural commodities demand grows and financial systems still favour chemical inputs, FARM aims to realign incentives and reshape policies to promote access to finance, new markets and nature-positive solutions that help remove HHPs and agricultural plastics from the food value chains. Its work contributes to UNEP's net-positive agriculture efforts, tackling pollution, biodiversity loss and climate change – the triple planetary crisis.

## Key programme features include:

- Advocacy for stronger regulations and innovative finance mechanisms and instruments.
- Technical assistance to key stakeholders to support the shift towards safer, low- and non-chemical alternatives that promote a more sustainable and environmentally friendly approach to farming.
- Partnerships across the plastics, pesticide and biocontrol industries, agribusiness, regional development banks, governments, academia, civil society and United Nations agencies.
- A global knowledge-sharing platform, including a Green Forum to foster collaboration.

## Key global environmental benefits



Prevent over  
**51,000**  
tons of hazardous  
pesticides from  
being released



Prevent over  
**20,000** tons  
of plastic waste from  
being released



Improve the lives of **3.8 million people**



Avoid **35,000**  
tons of carbon  
dioxide emissions



Protect over  
**3 million**  
hectares of land from  
degradation



FARM 2024 highlights



Over **25** stakeholder meetings, workshops and trainings held



Over **2,500** people participated (at least 800 women)



**2024** marked the successful inception of several Child Projects under the global **FARM** Programme



March  
Kenya,  
Global Child Project



June  
Lao PDR



July  
India



September  
Uruguay



November  
Ecuador



December  
Viet Nam



2025  
The Philippines  
(planned)





The **FARM** Programme was officially launched in Nairobi, Kenya, on 12 March 2024, with over 70 in-person participants and 100+ virtual attendees from across sectors. The launch set the stage for dialogue on urgent challenges and practical solutions to reduce agrochemical pollution in agriculture.

Despite the complexity of shifting farming practices, the FARM Programme is uniquely positioned to build the business case for policymakers and banks to redirect financial resources towards farmers to eliminate the perceived risk of transitioning to low- and non-chemical alternatives to toxic agrochemicals as detailed below.

CHALLENGES	SOLUTIONS
Low farmer productivity and income	Incentivize alternative solutions across the value chain
Limited market incentives for safer pesticides	Organize and empower farmer cooperatives to adopt alternatives
Dependency on chemical inputs and supplier resistance	Fill critical knowledge gaps across the sector



More information on FARM can be found [here](#)  
Watch the launch video [here](#)

photo credit: UNEP

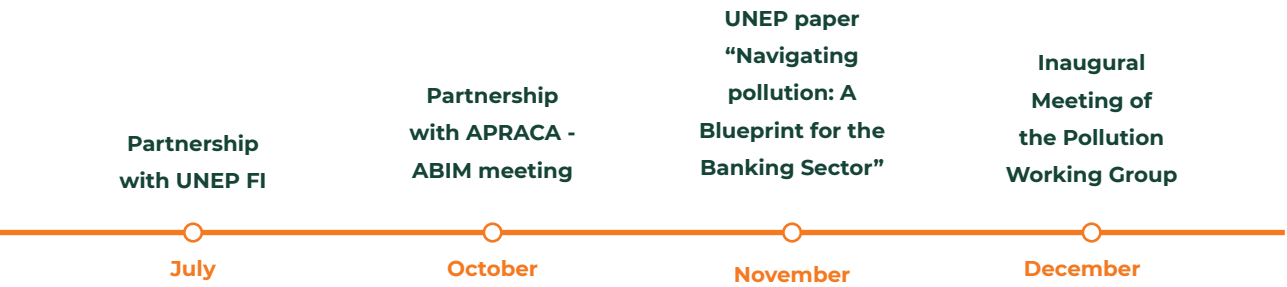
# Finance and investment

**FARM** supports private finance actors in aligning their portfolios with global, regional and national goals to prevent and reduce chemical and plastic pollution. This aligns with key global agreements, including the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC) and Global Plastics Treaty (under negotiation).

To comply with the guidance and approaches emerging through the Global Framework on Chemicals, Global Biodiversity Framework,

Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive and other initiatives, banks and financial institutions need to strengthen their risk management practices and set tangible pollution reduction targets. In response, the United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP FI) Pollution and Circular Economy team, through FARM, is developing guidance and tools to assist private finance institutions in identifying and evaluating impacts, risks and opportunities associated with agrochemicals and plastics use across their agrifood portfolios.

## 2024 key interventions



**July - FARM** partnered with the UNEP FI Pollution and Circular Economy team to develop guidance for member banks and private financial institutions investing in the agricultural sector.

**October - FARM** partnered with the Asia-Pacific Rural and Agricultural Credit Association (APRACA) to launch a scoping study on financing options to support the transition to safer alternatives to hazardous pesticides.

**October - UNEP** showcased FARM at the Annual Biocontrol Industry Meeting in Basel, Switzerland, engaging industry leaders on reducing agrochemical use. The Industry of Biocontrol Manufacturers Association (IBMA) 2024 market survey showed that the European Union (EU) biocontrol market has doubled since 2016 and grown by 20% between 2019 and 2022. The meeting emphasized addressing the root causes of pollution through agroecological systems design, regenerative agriculture and integrated pest management to reduce reliance on (bio)controls.

**November - UNEP** published the white paper *Navigating Pollution: A Blueprint for the Banking Sector*, laying the foundation for sector-wide efforts to address pollution through finance. Developed with input from 30+ experts, the paper supports FARM's engagement with banks on reducing pollution from agriculture, pesticides and plastics. Its release led to the formation of the Working Groups on Pollution and the Circular Economy, with strong interest from member banks to focus on the agri-sector, paving the way for deeper public-private dialogue.

**December - UNEP** conducted the Inaugural Meeting of the Pollution Working Group, bringing together PRB (Principles for Responsible Banking) member banks to discuss how to address pollution across their portfolios.



# Stakeholder engagement and partnerships

FARM’s success in 2024 was underpinned by deep stakeholder engagement at global, regional and national levels. National partnerships are described in the country updates, and were complemented by several strategic partnerships with global and regional partners to achieve transformational scaling of the national work.

**The Global Child Project executed by GGKP:**

Organized the first meeting of the Project Steering Committee (PSC), composed of government focal points, the GEF Secretariat and implementing agency representatives. The PSC met in person at the March launch, approving 2024 workplans and refining knowledge priorities on pesticides, plastics and finance. The PSC also endorsed the terms of reference for the Programme Advisory Group, to be operational in 2025.

Strengthened ties with IBMA to promote safer alternatives within the agrochemical supply chain.

Engaged with leading private sectors actors such as Nestlé and Syngenta to foster collaboration along the agrifood value chain.

Established partnerships with regional and global institutions and networks – including the Asia-Pacific Rural and Agricultural Credit Association (APRACA), African Union (AU), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Centre for Agriculture and Biosciences International (CABI), Natural Resources Institute (NRI), Pesticide Action Network UK (PAN UK), Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC) and UN Food System Coordination Hub – to advance green finance, harmonize pesticide regulations and support multilateral environmental agreements.

Showcased FARM at the Annual Biocontrol Industry Meeting (ABIM) in Basel, Switzerland, engaging over 2,000 stakeholders, including biocontrol industry leaders, NGOs, policymakers and research networks.



photo credit: 2024 ABIM event

# Programme coordination and knowledge management

New coordination groups were launched to align and streamline activities, including the following:

**Communications and Knowledge Management (C&KM) Coordination Group:**

Facilitated internal knowledge-sharing and communications across projects.

**Project Managers’ Calls:**

Quarterly meetings for updates, troubleshooting and aligning technical assistance.

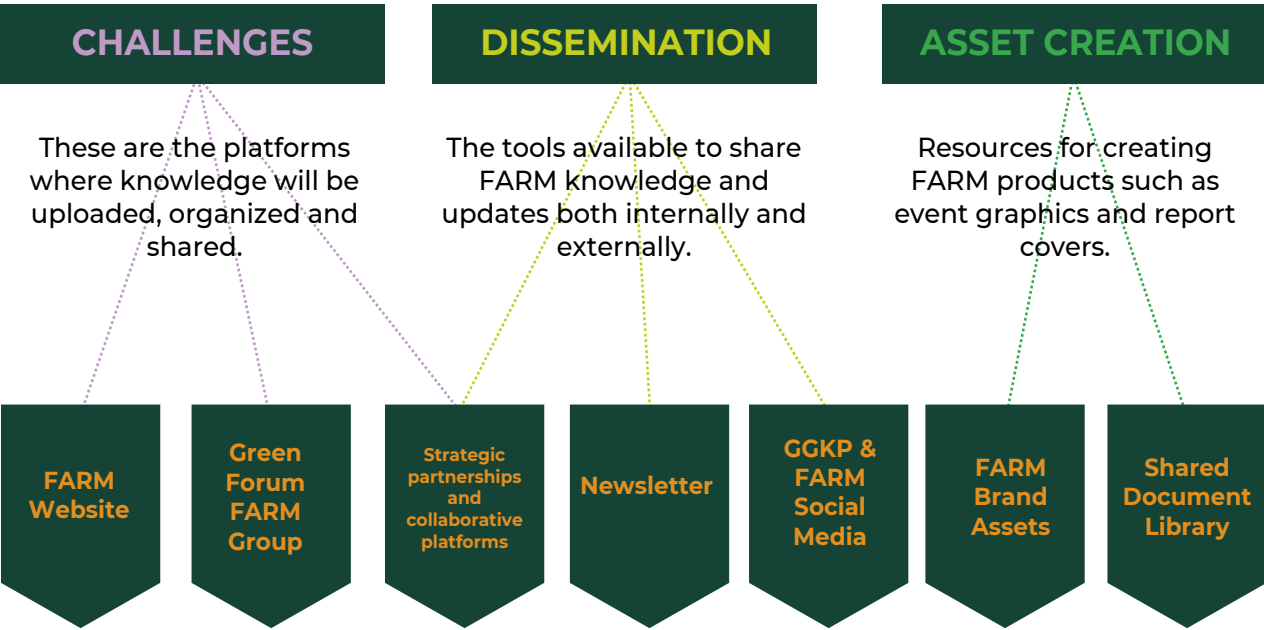
**PRB Pollution Working Group:**

Launched in November to engage the private sector in addressing agricultural pollution.

**M&E and Finance Focal Point Groups:**

In development to support project reporting and financial resource mobilization.

The Global Child Project provided the foundational structure for country projects, facilitating technical support, communications platforms like the FARM Green Forum, and knowledge sharing across thematic areas.





# Programme monitoring and evaluation framework

FARM made major strides in establishing a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework, led by CABI and a GEF expert. Achievements in 2024 include drafting M&E indicators through a participatory process with internal stakeholders for feedback and review of the methodologies being applied across the child projects. The finalized framework will ensure consistent tracking and communication of results across the programme and will be utilized for the 2025 Annual Report to provide consolidated progress across the whole FARM Programme.





# FARM Child Projects: 2024 Updates and 2025 Milestones

## Global Child Project

The Global Child Project played a central role in developing global platforms, tools and a programmatic monitoring framework to support knowledge-generation sharing and learning across FARM countries and beyond. Its inception followed the FARM Programme launch in March 2024 in Nairobi, Kenya.

Throughout the year, technical assistance partners were engaged to develop the monitoring and evaluation framework, and

conduct scoping studies in core areas – finance, pesticides and agricultural plastics. Foundational communications tools were also launched, including the FARM brand, an interim website and the FARM Group on the Green Forum, a virtual community space. The C&KM Coordination Group and Project Manager Group were established and began convening in the second half of the year.



### Policy and enforcement

- Technical discussions during the FARM Global Child Project inception meeting identified key knowledge gaps and strategic priorities in agrochemical and agricultural plastics policy and enforcement, laying the groundwork for upcoming scoping studies.
- The project participated in country-level inception meetings in Kenya, India, Lao PDR, Ecuador and Viet Nam.
- Collaboration began with partners such as CABI, PAN UK and NRI to develop scoping studies on existing policy solutions, best practices and knowledge gaps for transitioning to sustainable, toxic-free agriculture.



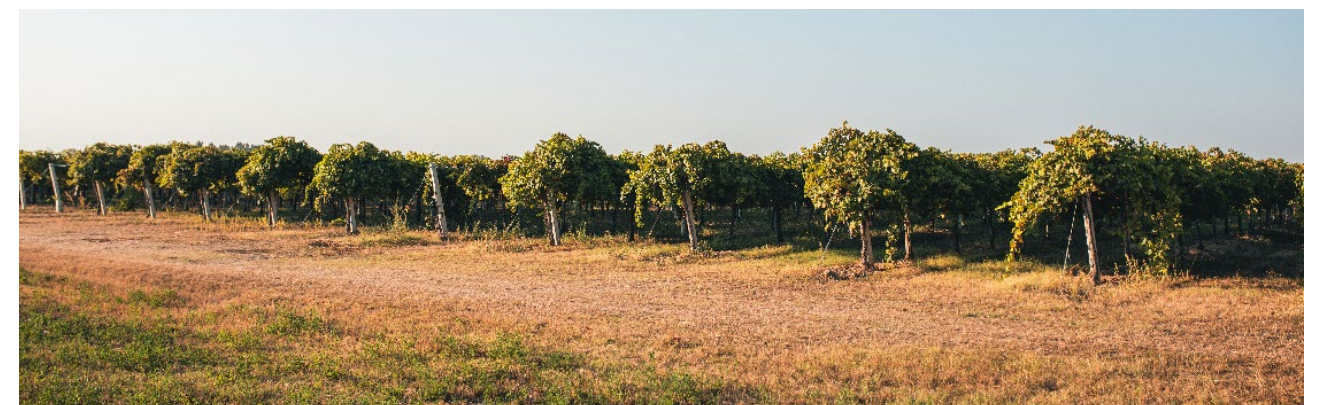
### Finance and investment

- UNEP-FI, a core partner, contributed to the white paper *Navigating Pollution: A Blueprint for the Banking Sector*, featuring a section on agriculture-related impacts, risks and opportunities.
- The paper supports engagement with Principles for Responsible Banking (PRB) members and the formation of a Working Group on Pollution. Initial responses show strong but limited interest among member banks in addressing pollution in the agrifood sector.
- A finance roundtable at the project inception meeting highlighted knowledge gaps and spurred the development of a scoping study on financing agrochemical reductions.
- APRACA was engaged to draft the study and provide technical assistance on key financing instruments and blended finance case studies.



### Capacity development and knowledge dissemination

- The global launch of the FARM Programme and Global Child Project inception meeting featured sessions on identifying knowledge gaps and needs across the programme.
- The C&KM Coordination Group was established to align communication efforts, foster collaboration and ensure coherence across the programme.
- C&KM meetings included training on the FARM brand and guidance on the programme's knowledge management system and digital tools.







## Stakeholder engagement

- In 2024, the FARM Programme saw strong engagement with regional and global stakeholders. The launch event gathered over 170 participants from governments, the private sector and international organizations for technical discussions on agrochemical and agricultural plastic reduction and related strategies.
- The project facilitated partnerships for country-level inceptions in India, Viet Nam, Lao PDR and Kenya, and engaged in regional and global institutions such as the APRACA, AU, ASEAN, CABI, GFC and UN Food System Coordination Hub on joint efforts in green finance, M&E, pesticide registration harmonization and multilateral environmental agreements. Partnerships were also deepened with industry groups like IBMA, to promote safer alternatives in the agrochemical supply chain.



## Communications highlights

- Communications in 2024 focused on Child Project launches and inceptions across the programme countries.
- The FARM Programme global launch and global Child Project inception in March were covered by UNEP, GGKP social media and the Green Forum, and Kenyan media.
- An introductory [FARM film](#), produced with the UNEP HQ multi-media team, was shared on YouTube and the Green Forum.
- The FARM brand book was developed, with country-tailored assets and usage guidance shared with the Child Project during their inception.
- [Green Forum FARM Group](#) was launched to host a virtual community for stakeholders and thematic conversations.
- An [interim FARM website](#) went live during the March launch; the full version is set to launch in 2025.
- FARM participated in the Annual Biocontrol Industry Meeting, presenting its approach to promoting safer alternatives to toxic chemicals.



## Expectations for 2025

- In 2025, FARM Global will focus on strengthening key programmatic mechanisms and technical assistance to country projects. Key activities will include completing the M&E framework, releasing scoping study reports and finance guidelines, engaging key stakeholders and their value chains, and launching thematic knowledge sharing and learning series.
- Policy dialogues and technical assistance on pesticide regulation will be expanded at the regional and global level. The full FARM website will be launched in 2025, enhancing resource dissemination. The FARM knowledge library will be populated with inputs from country projects. Engagement with the Pollution Working Group will continue, focusing on innovative financing models for sustainable agriculture.
- The collection of gender-disaggregated data and gender-based analysis will enable the drafting of data-driven knowledge products that mainstream gender equality, increase female representation in decision-making bodies, support project activities implementation and promote female participation in project countries.

“The FARM Programme remains vital in addressing agrochemical pollution. In 2025, it will focus on science-based action and building the capacity of countries, financial institutions and stakeholders to counter harmful pesticide practices shaped by global trade, geopolitics and weak regulation.”

– **Helena Rey De Assis**, GEF-FARM Global Child Programme Manager



# India and the Philippines

The Child Project for India and the Philippines addresses existing barriers preventing the reduction of the use of the use of POPs and HHPs while supporting the development and scaling of alternatives. Key to this will be cross-country collaboration that facilitates the transfer of technology and the exchange of knowledge and experience. Activities will range from harmonizing legislative and policy frameworks on biopesticides, registration, or import/export rules between the two countries to establishing demonstration sites and providing on-field training.

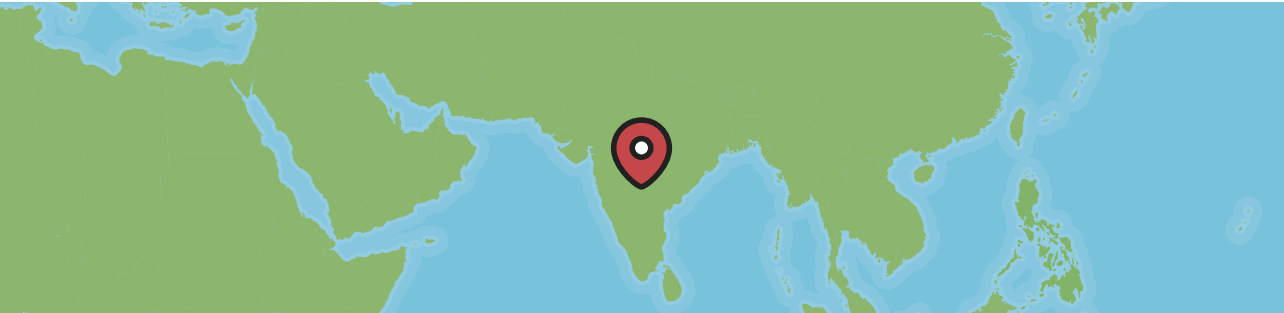
The Regional FARM India Project was launched on 24 July 2024 in New Delhi, India, with participation from officials from the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, and Ministry of Commerce and Industry, along with United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and key stakeholders from the agribusiness industry and research institutions. As part of project activities, HIL (India) Limited organized 13 farmer training programmes

in 2024 to promote the safe and judicious use of pesticides through integrated pest management practices, including biopesticide application. The training programmes benefited around 150,000 farmers.

Although India has a relatively advanced biopesticide manufacturing industry, its impact has largely remained at the national level. This project aims to facilitate the transfer of these technological advancements in pesticide alternatives to the Philippines.

By the end of 2024, FARM Philippines was awaiting national government approval to begin implementation. In preparation, the team conducted a review of key pesticide-related regulations, a market price analysis of biopesticides, and identified relevant programmes to support effective project rollout.

## India



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## Finance and investment

- **Btk:** The ICAR-National Bureau of Agriculture Insect Resources (NBAIR) was identified as the technology partner for the transfer of Btk formulation technology. A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed for the transfer of lab-scale technology to HIL (India) Limited for upscaling.
- **Trichoderma:** A suitable technology partner is being identified for the transfer of Trichoderma-based biopesticides technology.
- **Neem:** Three different formulations have been identified.
- Two finance modules are being prepared – one on existing financial schemes for farmers, and another on various agri-insurance schemes run by the government and private actors – for dissemination to farmers and other relevant stakeholders.



photo credit: FARM India





### Capacity development and knowledge dissemination

- Some 2,000 farmers participated in 13 training programmes on the safe and judicious use of pesticides, held in various parts of the country. Trainers have imparted further training to around 150,000 farmers in their neighbouring villages and fields. These programmes have observed a participation of around 35% of women farmers.
- During the trainings, HIL (India) Limited distributed free safety kits, information handouts on pesticide application best practices and details on proposed biopesticides under the FARM India project.



### Stakeholder engagement

At the FARM India project launch on 24 July 2024, HIL (India) Limited signed MoUs with key stakeholders:

- National Horticultural Research and Development Foundation (NHRDF): To develop sustainable pest management strategies for high-value horticultural produce.
- Coffee Board of India: To promote safe pesticide use practices among coffee growers.
- Chandra Shekhar Azad University of Agriculture & Technology (CSAUA&T): To advance research and training, supporting farmers across 29 districts in Uttar Pradesh.
- Rani Lakshmi Bai Central Agricultural University: To support capacity-building initiatives in agricultural education and research.
- Vivekananda Institute of Biotechnology: To promote biopesticide use and sustainable farming through technology transfer, training and community outreach.
- Dr Yashwant Singh Parmar University of Horticulture & Forestry: To promote sustainable and natural farming through technology transfer, training and community outreach.



### Communications highlights

- Since its launch, FARM India has received extensive national coverage by the press and social media. The 13 farmer training programmes on safe pesticide use were also widely featured, with local Hindi and other regional languages, including Tamil, Odiya, Bangla and Malayalam, helping to amplify outreach and engagement.



photo credit: FARM India

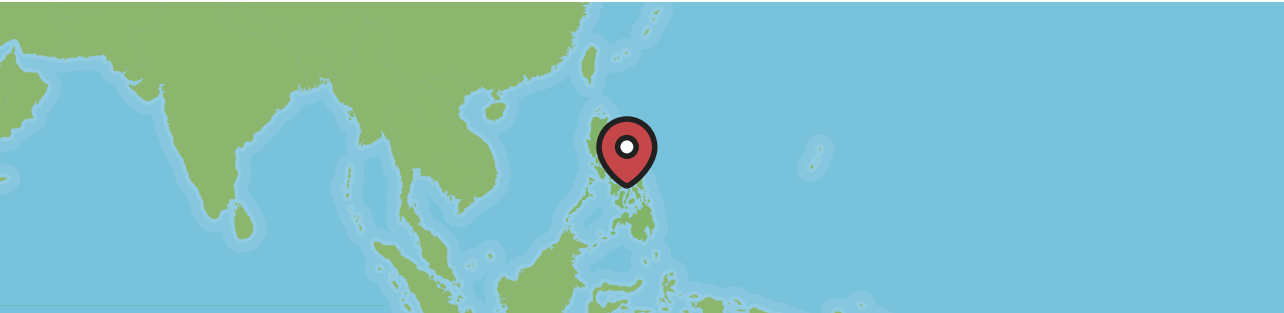


### Expectations for 2025

- A consultative workshop will be held with relevant stakeholders (decision-makers, technical officers, scientific community, academia, etc.) on policies and procedures on biopesticides.
- The proposed biopesticides are expected to be registered with the statutory body CIB&RC for commercialization.
- A Basic Engineering Package (BEP) will be developed, including detailed project reports (DPR) and detailed engineering, for the setting up of a manufacturing facility.
- HIL (India) Limited will work with ICAR institutions to file for biopesticide registration with the statutory body CIB&RC.
- Farmer “Training of Trainers” programmes will be scaled nationwide in 2025, with a focus on increased women farmer participation.
- Five Environment Codes of Practice (ECOPs) will be prepared on transportation of pesticides, storage and management of pesticides, use and maintenance of the PPE, disposal of the pesticides, and community handling of the pesticides.



The Philippines



Policy and enforcement

- An inventory was developed covering agrochemical policies, regulatory agencies and restricted/banned substances.
- An initial analysis of registration standards and procedures was conducted, including a comparison with other Asian countries and a review of import/export regulations.



Finance and investment

- An inventory of the financing programmes available for farmers has been developed.



Capacity development and knowledge dissemination

- An inventory of relevant trainings related to promoting eco-friendly crop protection solutions was developed.



Stakeholder engagement

- Stakeholder meetings on the project implementation were held on 26 September 2023 and 3 April 2024. Participants included UNIDO Philippines and key government agencies such as the Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority (Department of Agriculture), Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development, and the Philippine Agriculture and Resources Research Foundation.



Expectations for 2025

- The FARM Philippines project will work with relevant government offices to expedite the process of approval and begin implementation as soon as that process is complete.

“The FARM India project ensures a legacy of environmental and human health and sustainability for future generations.”

– **Kuldeep Singh**, Chairman and Managing Director, HIL (India) Limited





# Kenya and Uruguay

The agriculture sector contributes 39.5% of Kenya’s GDP. It employs over 40% of Kenya’s total population and over 70% of the rural population. Almost half of Kenya’s land is under agricultural production and provides produce for over 80% of the Kenyan population.

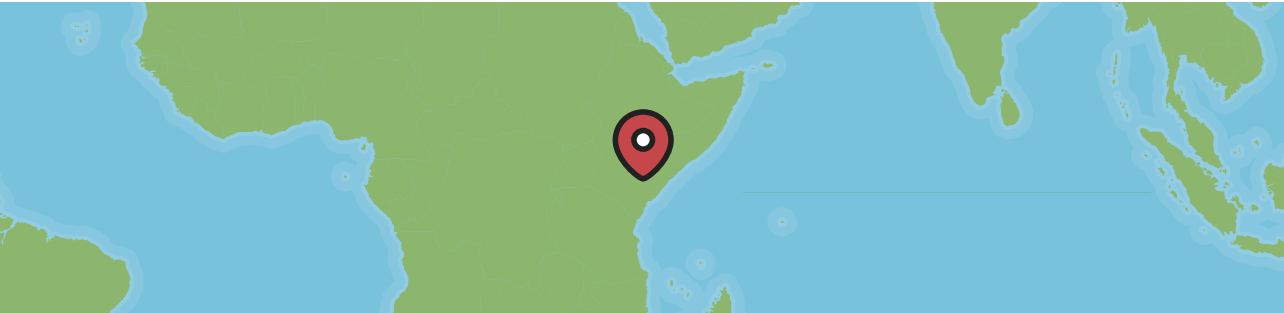
The FARM Kenya national inception meeting took place immediately after the global launch in March 2024. The National Project Steering Committee was inaugurated in September, approving the 2024 work plans and budget. The project team is in place and fully functional despite some delays caused by the political unrest in Kenya in 2024.

In Uruguay, agriculture represents 6-7% of national GDP, while 90% of Uruguay’s land is under agricultural production and provides produce for over 30 million people globally.

The policies and strategies developed through the FARM project in Uruguay will assist national government and regional economic communities, such as the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), to move towards the safe management and disposal of pesticides and agricultural plastics. In 2024, the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture began consultations to strengthen bioinputs and pesticide regulations. The project team initiated the analysis of plastic use in agriculture and its alternatives.

In December 2024, the Project Steering Committee met, bringing together decision-making members from the governments of Kenya and Uruguay, along with representatives from UNEP and FAO, marking a significant step in the project’s progress.

## Kenya



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Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



### Policy and enforcement

- An International Policy Adviser has been recruited to support Kenya, including work on agricultural plastics.



### Finance and investment

- Kenya has initiated partnerships with financial institutions such as the Equity Bank and Cooperative Bank to address agricultural plastics and pesticides management.
- The project has started discussions on developing financial tools to support producers.
- Multi-stakeholder finance coalitions involving public and private sectors, including international financial institutions and commercial banks, have been initiated to address agricultural plastics and pesticide management.
- Bilateral meetings are being held to raise awareness and develop partnerships with financial institutions.
- Recruitment for experts and consultants is in progress.



### Stakeholder engagement

- The FARM Kenya inception meeting in March 2024 sparked new opportunities for collaboration, involving key stakeholders from the public and private sectors. The formation of the National Project Steering Committee in September 2024 and the establishment of technical working groups marked significant steps.

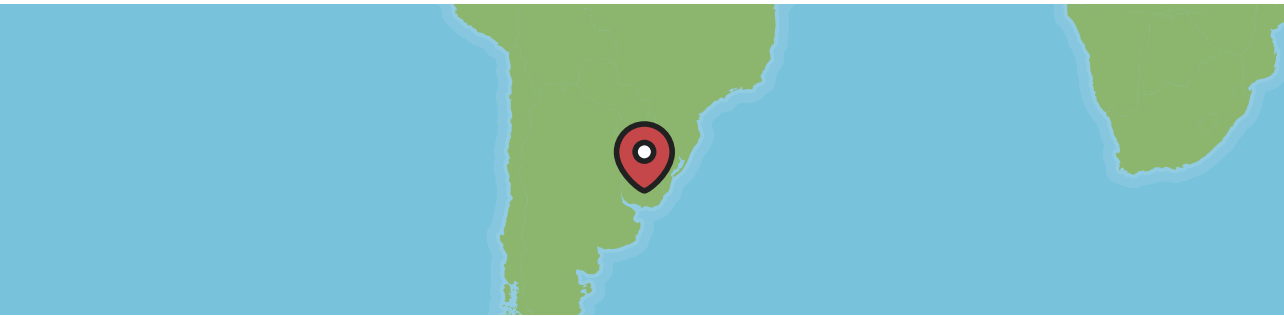




### Expectations for 2025

- Focus is on finalizing terms of reference (TORs) for technical working groups and recruiting experts, establishing project teams and supporting FAO country offices with procurement and implementation. Participation in the FARM project Stakeholder Consultation in Kenya by the executing agency will further support these initiatives.

## Uruguay



### Policy and enforcement

- The Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture started discussions to strengthen bioinput and pesticide registration, with a focus on environmental risk assessment.
- The team is analysing plastic use in agriculture and exploring alternatives, with work plans under review for approval.
- The project is developing financial tools to support agricultural producers, improving budgeting and decision-making.
- A study on bio-supplies is underway, and a national committee is coordinating efforts.
- Specialized working groups for financing and knowledge managework on agricultural plastics.



### Stakeholder engagement

- Discussions between the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture are advancing to strengthen bioinputs and pesticide management, while a national project team and Steering Committee are being established to drive initiatives.
- Both Uruguay and Kenya are actively engaging stakeholders to ensure the success of their agricultural sustainability efforts.



### Expectations for 2025

- The Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture of Uruguay will formalize their collaboration on bioinputs and pesticide management, and agricultural plastics analysis will be completed. Efforts will also include the creation of specialized working groups to promote sustainable practices and financial tools for farmers.
- Both countries will work on policy development, enhancing institutional capacities, and drafting recommendations for the lifecycle management of agricultural plastics and alternative products.

“In 2025, we will focus on accelerating implementation, strengthening partnerships and enhancing collaboration across sectors. With the support of financial institutions and key stakeholders, we aim to create sustainable solutions for managing agricultural plastics and pesticides, ensuring long-term environmental and economic benefits. Through this project, we will empower farmers with the tools and finance they need to adopt sustainable practices.”

– **Baogen Gu**, Pesticide Management Team Leader, UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)



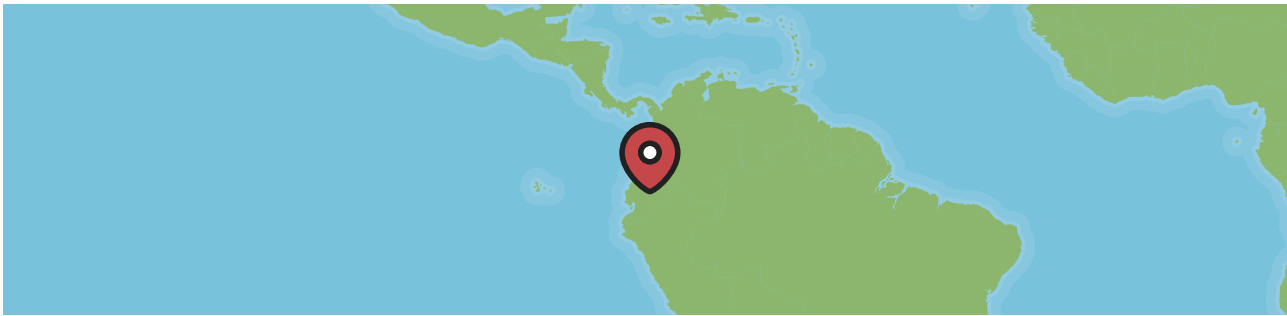
# Ecuador

The Project Document for FARM Ecuador was signed on 29 December 2023 by the Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition (MAATE) of Ecuador and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The Letter of Agreement was formalized on 3 January 2024.

In August 2024, the technical team was established, comprising the Project Coordinator, Pesticides Associate, M&E and Gender Associate, Financial Administrative

Assistant, Communications Officer and Finance Associate.

The first Steering Committee meeting was held on 8 November 2024 to approve the 2024 and 2025 work plans. On 21 November 2024, the project was officially launched with an inception workshop aimed at fostering broad stakeholder engagement from the public and private sectors, as well as civil society, to reduce global reliance on harmful agrochemicals.



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## Capacity development and knowledge dissemination

- The inception workshop, held on 21 November 2024, served as a key platform for knowledge sharing and stakeholder engagement.
- The workshop explored stakeholder interests, encouraged strategic partnerships and promoted commitment to project goals.
- Project information materials were distributed to approximately 100 participants from government agencies, agrochemical companies, farmer associations and other key stakeholder groups.



## Stakeholder engagement

- The project signed a MoU with Manabí Technical University to coordinate efforts to improve environmentally sound management and promote awareness of pesticide management and waste disposal. These actions aim to reduce contamination and the negative impact on the environment and human health in Manabí Province, one of the project's key intervention areas, where corn is the main crop.
- The project has initiated a stakeholder engagement, including establishing partnerships with three key agribusiness institutions at the national level (MAATE, MAG and AGROCALIDAD) and with seven private sector actors (Núcleo de Floricultores de Cayambe, APCSA and agrochemical companies Agripac, Ecuquímica, Interoc, Crystal Chemical and Afecor) to discuss their initiatives and potential synergies with FARM.



## Communications highlights

- Three articles on the project launch were published in the [digital press](#) and on the [MAATE website](#).
- The [Ecuador Child Project](#) launch video was published on YouTube and The Green Forum.







**Expectations for 2025**

*Policy and enforcement*

- Updated baseline of pesticide use in project intervention areas.
- Development of a plan to strengthen the National System for Waste Management (SNGD).
- At least one national and/or local policy prioritized, reviewed and proposed.
- Updated inventory of POPs and PAPs.
- Economic valuation study on th'e public costs of agrochemical use, and evaluation of current and potential tax incentives.

*Capacity development and knowledge dissemination*

- Implementation of an updated stakeholder engagement plan, gender action plan and awareness campaign strategy.

*Monitoring and evaluation*

- Continue implementation of project monitoring and evaluation activities, including the design of a dashboard with key indicator information.



Inception FARM workshop in Ecuador

“Through the FARM project, we are making a bold commitment to a more sustainable and responsible future for agriculture in Ecuador. The reduction and proper management of agrochemicals is not merely a challenge, it is an opportunity to safeguard our land, water and the very essence of life.”

– **Santiago Rosero**, FARM Ecuador Project Coordinator

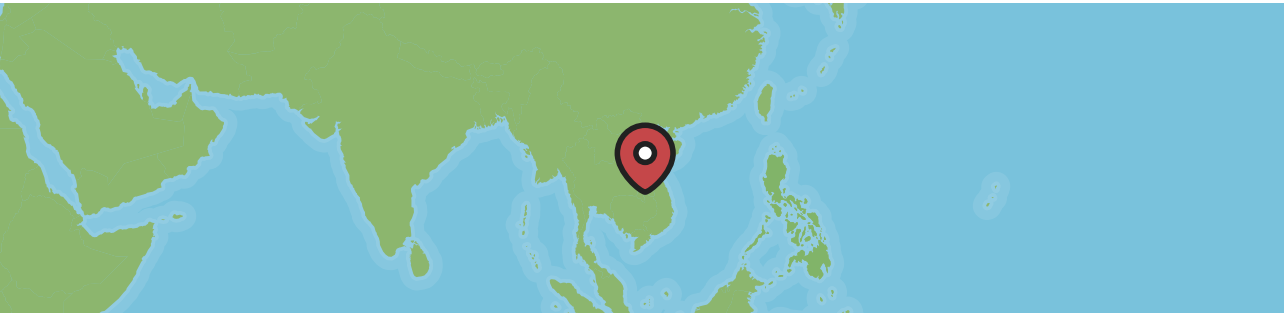




# Lao PDR

In 2024, the FARM Project in the Lao PDR laid the groundwork for promoting sustainable agricultural practices and reducing hazardous pesticide use. Following an inception meeting in May and a formal launch in August, the project engaged key stakeholders from government agencies and local authorities to define roles and decision-making processes.

Major milestones included establishing the project office at the Department of Agriculture, completing staff recruitment and conducting capacity-building workshops in Xiengkhouang and Oudomxay provinces. In Xiengkhouang, 47 technical staff (22 women and 25 men) were trained in agrochemical regulation, advancing efforts towards safe, more sustainable agricultural practices.



## Policy and enforcement

- Significant progress was made on drafting a clean agriculture law and a decree on fertilizers.
- Three regional consultations were held to ensure drafts are aligned with the national priorities. The Decree on Fertilizers will establish a regulatory framework for fertilizer production, import, distribution and use.
- On 6 November 2024, the Decree on Clean Agriculture draft was validated through a stakeholder engagement workshop attended by 33 participants (5 female). The consultation ensured that the draft decree is aligned with the existing national legislation, and provided an opportunity to collect feedback from stakeholders.
- Strategic partnerships were initiated with key organizations, such as FAO, leveraging their expertise to enhance regulatory frameworks and optimize project outcomes.



## Finance and investment

- The project office was operationalized, ensuring operational effectiveness and the ability to interact with national partners, particularly financial institutions.
- Initial engagement and collaboration started by exploring the existing financial products and assistance for agricultural finance access.



## Capacity development and knowledge dissemination

- 231 participants, including 66 women, participated in five workshops and trainings focused on regulating hazardous agrochemical trade and harmonizing approaches to avert illegal imports.
- The trainings aimed to enhance participants' capacity in monitoring and regulating agrochemical trade, ensuring safety standards to protect public health and the environment. The sessions strengthened local authorities' capacity to manage agrochemical trade and promote sustainable agricultural practices nationwide.



## Stakeholder engagement

- The project engaged a wide range of stakeholders, including the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, as well as the EU, FAO, Helvetas, UNEP, SAEDA, ADB, and Provincial and District Agriculture and Forestry Offices in target provinces.
- A UN-to-UN agreement between UNDP and FAO was in the final approval stages by the end of 2024, aimed at supporting project implementation, particularly on regulatory and policy frameworks. The partnership will leverage the strengths of both agencies to enhance project outcomes.





### Communications highlights

- The FARM Project in Lao PDR gained visibility through diverse communication platforms, including a featured article in *The Vientiane Times*, highlighting efforts to reduce hazardous pesticide use and promote safer, sustainable agriculture.
- Project updates and achievements were shared on social media, including two engaging Facebook posts in [September](#) and [November](#) 2024, featuring visuals and activities.
- These communication efforts broadened outreach and underscored the project's positive impact on environmental health and local livelihoods.



### Expectations for 2025

- Advance sustainable agricultural practices through strategic interventions that align with the needs and national priorities, including scaling up pilot programmes and supporting enhanced capacity of provincial authorities to handle the challenge of illegal trade of banned agrochemicals.
- Build local capacity and promote stakeholder engagement to achieve the project objectives, including targeted training, workshops and collaboration programmes, particularly in regulation development and enforcement.
- Continue strengthening legal frameworks to reduce hazardous chemical use. Public awareness campaigns will be expanded to promote safe, sustainable agrochemical practices and drive behavioural change among farmers and stakeholders.
- Support innovative financial models to improve access to financial resources for smallholder farmers and local agricultural actors. By partnering with financial institutions and leveraging public-private partnerships, the project aims to mobilize resources and promote sustainable agricultural practices and alternative pesticides.

“The FARM project marks a transformative step towards sustainable agriculture in Laos. By prioritizing the reduction of hazardous pesticides and championing eco-friendly pest management practices, we are not only safeguarding human health and the environment, but also empowering farmers to embrace innovative, sustainable solutions that enhance productivity and resilience.”

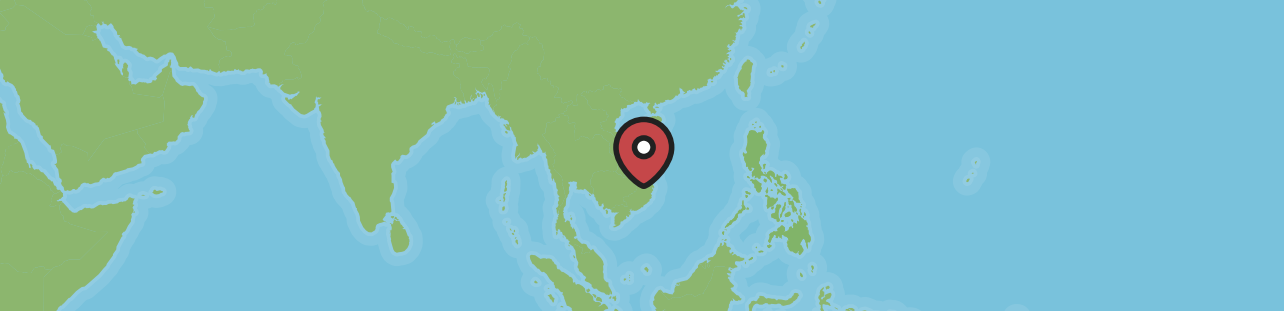
– **Bounthanh Kombounyasith**, Director-General, Ministry of Agriculture, LAO PDR





# Viet Nam

The FARM Viet Nam project was officially approved in July 2024, followed by the establishment of the Project Management Unit and operational standards. The inception workshop was held in Hanoi on 16 December 2024, where the project was formally introduced to stakeholders and partners, and the 2025 work plan was endorsed.



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## Expectations for 2025

- The project will prioritize hiring and onboarding consultants and experts, with full implementation set to begin by late 2025.





# Looking Ahead

In 2025, the FARM Programme will focus on scaling successful country-level initiatives, strengthening partnerships and building sustainable systems. The year will emphasize measuring and communicating impact to drive lasting change beyond the programme's duration. Key outcomes – such as new policies, financial tools, and shifts in farmer and value chain practices – are expected to emerge from 2025 onward, supporting the transition away from agrochemicals and agricultural plastics.

Globally, FARM will intensify capacity building in 2025, offering in-person and virtual trainings on pesticide and agricultural plastics reduction, informed by scoping study insights. These workshops will engage regional partners and private sector actors, supporting implementation across child projects. The Global Child Project will launch the programme website, roll out the M&E framework and reporting, and expand stakeholder engagement, including the launch of the Programme Advisory Group.

In addition, the GEF-funded FARM+ Programme, led by UNDP, marks the second phase of the original FARM Programme. This expanded effort aims to unlock financing to assist countries in transitioning from unsustainable agricultural practices to sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture. FARM+ will be implemented across eight countries – Benin, Costa Rica, Egypt, The Gambia, Ghana, Mexico, Nepal and Nigeria – focusing on reducing the use of hazardous pesticides and plastic waste, thereby promoting healthier ecosystems and communities.

The programme is a joint effort by multiple agencies, including UNDP, UNEP, UNIDO, FAO and AfDB, and forms part of GEF's broader strategy to transform the way agrochemicals and agricultural plastics are used in global agrifood systems.

Working together, the FARM and FARM+ programmes will drive a significant change in the financial landscape towards supporting sustainable agriculture and climate-resilient practices.







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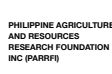
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