



hello tractor



CARE®



Enhancing Agricultural Efficiency for Small Holder Farmers

CARE Kenya and Hello Tractor

CARE10x: Partnerships for Accelerating Impact
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Introduction

This week, CARE and Hello Tractor flagged off a pilot project in Kenya that aims to enhance Small Holder Farmer's (SHFs) productivity in a sustainable, holistic, and gender-responsive manner.

Despite the significant role of SHFs in Kenya's national economy, their productivity has stagnated in recent years because of shrinking landholdings; declining soil fertility levels; and **continued reliance on traditional agricultural practices**. Together, these trends have reduced crop yields to subsistence levels, which are insufficient for meeting national and household food security needs.

In the pursuit of improving agricultural practices and enhancing food security for SHFs, CARE (a big INGO) and Hello Tractor (a local, best-in-class social enterprise), have partnered to address some of the challenges faced by SHFs with a special focus on women.

[Hello Tractor is a technology company specializing in agricultural solutions](#) that will help farmers gain access to tractor services at affordable prices. This technology allows farmers to optimize their operations, improve efficiency, and reduce labor-intensive tasks.

"If we address the issue of food production and not just food but good quality food, we will have a better society."

*Hon. Joseph Oyugi Magwanga
Deputy Governor, Homabay County, Kenya*

What's the innovation?

Smallholder farmers play a crucial role in global food production, yet they often face significant obstacles such as lack of access to: (1) **information** on new agricultural technologies and climate-smart practices; (2) quality **inputs** (such as fertilizers, seeds, and machinery); (3) **finance** to invest in improved inputs and practices; and (4) **restrictive social norms** that disproportionately affect women's agricultural production.

By partnering with Hello Tractor, CARE seeks to empower these farmers by providing them with the tools and knowledge necessary to improve their livelihoods and increase agricultural productivity.

Hello Tractor will help smallholder farmers (particularly women) gain access to tractor services at affordable prices through an innovative circular economy model:

- Farmers will receive a service that is on **average 40x faster and one-third the cost of manual labor**, thus increasing their total production and income, while tractor owners will make money by providing services with their equipment. The entire system works via a mobile app pairing up tractor supply with tractor demand—like an “Uber of tractors.”
- But, unlike Uber, tractor owners don't usually drive their tractors; they hire operators. So, they must be equipped with IoT sensors that can communicate data about their location, operator performance, work completed, fuel usage, and maintenance status. For farmers, Hello Tractor's IoT sensors will make it easy for community-based booking agents to locate available, nearby machinery and book on behalf of the farmers in their community. In doing so, booking agents will also bridge information- and access gaps, ensuring Hello Tractor's platform is accessible to even those who are not digitally connected. The booking agent will be paid a commission for this work and will play the invaluable role of identifying and organizing SHFs' demand into clusters, which are more cost-efficient to service.

- Furthermore, recognizing that exclusionary finance systems often prevent women from investing in agricultural machinery, **Hello Tractor offers a Pay-As-You-Go (PAYGo) financing program for booking agents, who are often young, rural women entrepreneurs.** Instead of requiring their credit history, booking agents qualify for a loan to purchase their own fleet once they manage 1,200 acres of bookings. On average, farmers pay Ksh.3500 (\$29)/acre for tractor services, while booking agents are paid a 5 percent commission for every booking.

In a similar fashion, **CARE will connect Hello Tractor with members of 60 CARE's Village Savings Loans Associations (VSLAs) and Farmer Field Business School (FFBS) in Kenya,** while providing technical assistance around gender-responsive programming that will ensure that women participating in this intervention have **equitable access to Hello Tractor's services.** By leveraging the group's collective savings, VSLA members will have access to Hello Tractor's services, which will help them mechanize their agriculture and thus increase productivity. VSLA and FFBS members will also have an opportunity to earn additional income by renting out their tractors to the rest of the community. Community Resource Persons (CRPs) who support CARE in FFBS program delivery, by providing mentorship, building trust and transparency within the communities, and sustaining programs beyond CARE funding will serve as booking agents for Hello Tractor and be trained to provide technical support to CARE VSLA members. This provides a supplementary source of income through the agents' commission (5 percent for every booking) and eventually asset ownership by the VSLAs through PAYGo.

"I am excited at the prospect of working with more social enterprises to address the issues around productivity, nutrition, and access to markets. We hope that over the next couple of years we will work with more social enterprises that can help us address these needs."

*Christabell Makokha,
Senior Director, Innovation*

"We not only want to focus on food, water and nutrition but also integrate various gender approaches and work with a local approach."

*Leah Kagwara,
Country Director, CARE Kenya*

Furthermore, the partnership seeks to foster collaboration with governments, local organizations, and private sector entities to create an enabling environment for agricultural development. By advocating for policy reforms, mobilizing investments, and leveraging technology, CARE and Hello Tractor aim to unlock the full potential of smallholder farmers and drive sustainable agricultural transformation.

By combining CARE's humanitarian expertise with Hello Tractor's technological innovations, the partnership will empower farmers, strengthen agricultural value chains, and promote climate resilience and sustainable agriculture. With a shared vision of a more equitable and successful agricultural sector, CARE and Hello Tractor are paving the way for transformative change, ensuring a brighter future for smallholder farmers, and contributing to global food security.

What's next?

This partnership is committed to expanding its reach and impact across multiple countries and regions. By leveraging on respective networks and expertise and with learnings from this pilot, this partnership aims to come up with a scalable model for other regions in Kenya and other CARE country offices.

"The project with Hello Tractor will have a positive impact especially during the dry season when we are not able to effectively till our land with our oxen which are not very strong."

*Tobias Othacha
CRP, Homabach County, Kenya*

CARE10x is bringing best-in-class innovations to our global network of smallholder producers. We are partnering with social enterprises—a growing source of innovative solutions to today's most pressing global development challenges. These social enterprises often struggle to access the networks, resources, and technical expertise necessary to scale their solutions to 'last mile' communities where their solutions are most needed. CARE is uniquely positioned to address this challenge. By leveraging CARE's last mile access in 100+ countries, technical expertise in gender-transformative humanitarian and development assistance, and global reputation for excellence, we are helping proven social enterprises tackle global problems at scale.

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