

CSAWE-TILTH · FIELD LEARNING SERIES

Phase 1

February – April 2026

Location

Homa Bay County, Kenya

Report series

CSAWE-TILTH Field Report



Field learning rooted in community, practical action, and climate resilience.

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Short Introduction

After the preparation phase, CSAWE-TILTH moved into its first round of field meetings with farmer and women’s groups across Homa Bay County.

This phase focused on introducing CSAWE directly to the groups, explaining urban agriculture and cone gardening, presenting cone gardens, and carrying out the first practical demonstrations in farmers’ fields.

The meetings also helped CSAWE listen to farmers more closely. Across the visits, groups shared their interest in cone gardens, asked practical questions, and raised challenges such as water shortages, limited land, lack of fencing, farm input needs, and pest and disease management.

Phase 1 showed that farmers were not only interested in attending meetings. They were beginning to imagine how cone gardens could become part of their own homes, groups, and communities.

At a glance

PERIOD

February – April 2026

LOCATION

Homa Bay County, Kenya

FOCUS

First field meetings and cone garden demonstrations

VISITED

Lambwe,

ACTIVITIES

CSAWE

LEARNING

Farmers

NEXT STEP

Continued field visits, wider farmer engagement, and stronger support

5 February 2026 - Meeting at Madam Lorinda’s Home in Lambwe

FIELD NOTE

CSAWE held a meeting at Madam Lorinda’s home in Lambwe, near Bedie Primary School. The meeting began with prayers and introductions, followed by an introduction to CSAWE.

During the meeting, an ICIPE team also arrived to present information on Black Soldier Fly production. This opened a useful discussion on the use of BSF manure in cone gardens. The group discussed how BSF manure could be used as an alternative to farmyard manure, especially because of its moisture-retaining properties and potential to reduce compaction in the cones.

Because much of the meeting was spent on digital training, the cone gardens were presented to the host farmer but not installed on that day. The group focused on learning communication tools such as Teams, Zoom, Google Meet, and WhatsApp presentations. The session became highly interactive, and members suggested another online training before the next physical meeting.

WHY THIS MATTERED

This meeting showed that communication is part of the project, not separate from it. Farmers needed support not only with agriculture, but also with the digital tools that would allow them to stay connected to training and coordination.

It also opened an important link between cone gardening and Black Soldier Fly manure, which may support soil structure, moisture retention, and future circular farming practices.



CSAWE-TILTH field learning in Homa Bay County, Kenya.

26 February 2026 - Meeting at Mr. Albert's Farm in Gembe Ward

FIELD NOTE

CSAWE met with members of Nyanya Self Help Group at Mr. Albert Odundo's farm in Gembe Ward. The meeting started slightly late because of rain and because farmers were busy preparing their farms for the long rainy season.

After introductions, Dr. Emily Okello introduced CSAWE and explained what the project intended to do in Homa Bay County. Members were then trained on urban agriculture, the benefits of cone gardening, and the practical steps involved in installing cone gardens.

Two cone gardens were presented to the group. One cone garden was installed and planted with kale and spinach.

After the practical session, the host farmers prepared a meal for the group. Later, the lead farmer shared feedback that members were impressed by the innovation and had started discussing how they could collect money weekly and join a farmers' SACCO so that each member could eventually buy a cone garden.

WHY THIS MATTERED

This was one of the first clear hands-on demonstrations of Phase 1. Farmers could see the cone garden being installed and planted directly in the field.



CSAWE-TILTH field learning in Homa Bay County, Kenya.

5 March 2026 - Meeting at Mama Mary's Home with Kaugege Development Women Group

FIELD NOTE

CSAWE met with the Kaugege Development Women Group at Mama Mary's home. The meeting began with prayer, followed by introductions led by Mr. Denis.

The group received an introduction to CSAWE, urban agriculture, and cone gardening. Two cone gardens were presented to the group, and one cone garden was installed and planted with kale and black nightshade.

Members responded positively to the project and expressed the wish that each group member could eventually have a cone garden on her own farm. The main challenge raised by the group was the need for fencing to protect gardens from animals.

The meeting ended with prayer and a meal prepared by the host.

WHY THIS MATTERED

This meeting showed strong interest from a women's group and confirmed that cone gardens were easy for members to understand and connect to their own household needs.



CSAWE-TILTH field learning in Homa Bay County, Kenya.

2 April 2026 - Meeting on Mfangano Island with Pecicom Women Group

FIELD NOTE

CSAWE visited Pecicom Women Group at Evalyn Awuor Oguta's home on Mfangano Island. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Denis, who invited members to share the challenges they face in farming.

Farmers spoke about lack of water during dry periods, shrinking land on Mfangano Island, reduced food production, limited access to farm inputs, and lack of knowledge on how to maximize production on small plots.

Dr. Emily introduced CSAWE and explained the purpose of the visit. Two area chiefs also joined the meeting and expressed appreciation for CSAWE's efforts to support food security and economic empowerment, especially for women and youth. One chief was impressed by the project and ordered four cone gardens for personal use.

CSAWE presented two cone gardens to the group and conducted training on installation and planting. Because the team needed to catch the water bus back to Mbita mainland, they had to leave early.

WHY THIS MATTERED

This meeting clearly showed why TILTH is needed.

The challenges farmers described — water shortages, limited land, low production, and lack of practical knowledge — are directly connected to the kind of support CSAWE wants to offer through cone gardening and climate-smart agriculture.



CSAWE-TILTH field learning in Homa Bay County, Kenya.

9 April 2026 - Meeting on Rusinga Island with Powerpoint Women Group

FIELD NOTE

CSAWE met with Powerpoint Women Group at Florence Samo's home on Rusinga Island. The meeting began with prayer, followed by introductions led by Mr. Denis and a brief overview of CSAWE by Dr. Emily.

Members were trained on urban agriculture, with a focus on cone garden production. Two cone gardens were presented, installed, and planted together with the group.

After the planting exercise, participants who already had cone gardens asked questions about pest and disease management. The group discussed organic options, including neem, ginger, garlic, pepper, liquid from soaked ash, and vermi juice.

Members expressed excitement about the project, and many hoped that every household would eventually have its own cone garden.

WHY THIS MATTERED

This meeting showed that farmers were moving beyond first interest into practical management questions.

They were not only asking how to receive cone gardens. They were asking how to care for them, protect crops, and manage pests and diseases using locally available organic options.



CSAWE-TILTH field learning in Homa Bay County, Kenya.

What this phase showed us

Phase 1 showed that TILTH had moved from preparation into real field engagement.

Across the meetings, farmers and women's groups responded with strong interest. Many groups expressed the wish that each household or group member could eventually have a cone garden. Some groups began discussing how they could raise money or organize themselves to acquire cone gardens more widely.

The meetings also showed that practical training is essential. Farmers wanted to see, touch, ask questions, and learn by doing. They also raised important needs: more cone gardens, seedlings, fencing, farm inputs, water solutions, transport support, and follow-up training.

This phase confirmed that CSAWE's work must stay close to the field. The project grows through listening, demonstrating, adapting, and returning.

What came next

After Phase 1, CSAWE continued building on the momentum from the first field meetings.

The next phase focused on deepening farmer engagement, continuing cone garden demonstrations, strengthening local follow-up, and learning more about what each group needs in order to adopt and maintain cone gardens successfully.

Phase 1 showed that the interest is real. The next step is to support that interest with structure, materials, training, and consistent follow-up.