

BlueBiz Program

October - December 2024 Issue

January 2025

BlueBiz Wave *Newsletter*

Welcome aboard. The BlueBiz Wave, your go-to newsletter for the latest trends, opportunities, and success stories in the vibrant world of the Blue Economy. Whether you're a budding entrepreneur, an industry enthusiast, or a community advocate, this is your gateway to the exciting future of coastal innovation and sustainable business.

The Blue Economy represents a wave of opportunity for youth, offering innovative ways to create sustainable livelihoods while preserving our precious marine ecosystems. From oyster farming to seaweed cultivation, and from eco-tourism ventures to cutting-edge mariculture projects, coastal youth are redefining entrepreneurship and unlocking potential like never before.

What's in This Issue?

Inspiring Stories: Dive into real-life success stories of young entrepreneurs who've made waves in the Blue Economy.
Exclusive Invites: Be the first to know about workshops, networking events, and funding opportunities tailored for coastal youth.

Tips & Resources: Access expert advice and tools to kickstart or grow your Blue Economy



A BlueBiz Program participant showcasing her honey products to H.E. Abdullswamad Sherrif Nassir, Governor of Mombasa County during the Pwani Innovation week

venture. Stay Ahead of the Curve. This is more than a newsletter—it's a movement. Don't just watch the tide rise; ride the wave of change! Stay informed, get inspired, and be a part of the Blue Economy revolution shaping the future of our coastal communities.

Ready to Dive In? Share and join us as we celebrate the creativity and resilience of youth entrepreneurship in the Blue Economy. Together, we can build sustainable solutions for a thriving marine future

Cohort II Co-Design Workshop (16th - 18th September)

The Co-Design Workshop kicked off with vibrant collaboration among key local stakeholders, including community-based organizations, to create a proposal, work plan, and budget that directly reflect the needs of coastal communities. Participants explored how local organizations can drive change by building essential skills, providing financial access, and facilitating market linkages for young entrepreneurs - especially women.

The workshop focused on overcoming barriers such as limited mobility, access to finance, and fewer opportunities for youth in



TechnoServe team and BlueBiz Cohort II Local partners at the Co-Design Workshop

high-value Blue Economy sectors. It was an invaluable opportunity to craft strategies for empowering youth in this crucial economic sector!

Mombasa Youth Dialogue (28th September)



ABOVE: Wangari Theuri, Senior Program Manager BlueBiz Program, speaking at the Mombasa Youth Dialogue at the Bandarini Maritime Academy.
LEFT: BlueBiz Program participants, local partners attending the Mombasa Youth Dialogue

The Mombasa Youth Dialogue, hosted at Bandari Maritime Academy, was buzzing with energy as BlueBiz took center stage in media coverage. This event highlighted the strides BlueBiz is making in empowering coastal youth, particularly through entrepreneurship in the Blue Economy.

Our Senior Program Manager, Wangari Theuri, shared exciting insights on how BlueBiz is equipping

youth with essential business skills, opening doors to finance, and preparing them to make an impact across Kenya's coastal counties. The event sparked increased awareness about the program's efforts, with a special focus on engaging 15,000 young people across the region.

Blue Economy Summit (2nd - 4th October)



BlueBiz Program participant (in yellow) selling his products to the attendees of the Blue Economy Innovation and Investment Summit at the TechnoServe Booth.

BlueBiz made waves at the Blue Economy Summit in Mombasa! The summit brought together a stellar lineup of government officials, private sector leaders, and youth entrepreneurs. Kris Ansin, TechnoServe Country Director, set the tone with a keynote address, introducing TechnoServe's initiatives in the Blue Economy and inspiring participants to dive into meaningful discussions.

The BlueBiz's Blue Economy Specialist, shared his expertise in a panel discussion on "Destination Marketing and Branding: Strategies for Promoting Coastal Tourism." He highlighted how strategic branding is a game-changer for youth-led businesses in the Blue Economy, particularly in tourism.

A standout moment of the summit was the workshop titled "Building Sustainable Youth Businesses in the Blue Economy: Access to Markets". Our panel featured Caroline Odera from WISE, Ceciliah Kahindi from Kwetu Training Centre, and Mariam Kupi from Okoa CBO. These leaders shared their knowledge on empowering youth and creating market access for Blue Economy businesses. Wangari also took the stage to announce the Bahari Boost Challenge Fund and the Youth Advisory Council - two initiatives designed to supercharge youth businesses and amplify their voices in the Blue Economy sector.

The TechnoServe exhibition booth at the summit attracted a lot of attention, with youth entrepreneurs showcasing innovative products in ecotourism, marine conservation, and value-added seafood products. The booth wasn't just a place for showcasing but a dynamic hub for networking and creating vital market linkages that will help young entrepreneurs scale their businesses.



Kris Ansin, TechnoServe Country Director, giving a keynote address at the 2nd Blue Economy Innovation and Investment Summit

Pwani Innovation Week (14th - 17th October)



Wangari Theuri, Senior Program Manager BlueBiz Program, (third from left) in a panel discussion at the Pwani Innovation Week

The BlueBiz exhibition booth once again took center stage, showcasing youth-led innovations such as seaweed farming, apiculture, and eco-tourism ventures. The booth attracted government officials, ambassadors, and investors, providing valuable opportunities for BlueBiz participants to network and present their solutions to key stakeholders.

Our Senior Program Manager, Wangari Theuri was back on the stage during Pwani Innovation Week to speak on "Innovating for Sustainability: Blue Economy Solutions for Pwani's Future." Her talk focused on how sectors like fisheries, mangrove conservation, and sustainable tourism can offer lasting economic benefits while nurturing the environment. Wangari highlighted how BlueBiz is empowering youth in these sectors, unlocking their potential to drive sustainable change.



Kelvin Muturi, Enterprise Development Advisor BlueBiz Program, speaking during the Deals Den at the Pwani Innovation Week

The Deals Den session was like a "Shark Tank" for young entrepreneurs and innovators! Kelvin Muturi, Enterprise Development Advisor for BlueBiz, joined a panel of investors to give feedback on the business ventures pitched by the youth. Investors expressed interest in providing funding, mentorship, and strategic partnerships to these promising youth-led businesses. It was an exhilarating session where entrepreneurs learned from seasoned investors, gaining insights into market trends and strategies for scaling their businesses.

Impact Stories: Amplifying Voices, Inspiring Change (29th - 31st October)

BlueBiz Program documented compelling impact stories from our participants, showcasing their journeys, challenges, and successes in the Blue Economy. These stories highlight the transformative power of entrepreneurship and sustainable practices in creating livelihoods and driving community development.

Through these narratives, we celebrate the resilience and innovation of our participants, demonstrating the tangible impact of the BlueBiz Program in empowering young entrepreneurs along Kenya's coast.



BlueBiz Program

Sarah Chea-Fishmonger & Entrepreneur

"The BlueBiz Program introduced me to the world of financial literacy and online marketing. Today, I use social media to reach more customers and differentiate my fish products through unique flavors. My journey showcases the power of blending tradition with modern business strategies."

In partnership with
TechnoServe
Business Solutions to Poverty™



BlueBiz participants' board profiles with direct quotes from participants

Changamka Festival (31st Oct to 4th Nov)



BlueBiz Program participant showcasing her products during the Changamka Festival in Nairobi

TechnoServe, as a proud member of the Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM), participated in the vibrant Changamka Festival. This event provided BlueBiz participants with an incredible platform to showcase their businesses, make meaningful connections, and generate impressive sales.

Through this opportunity, our entrepreneurs not only expanded their networks but also gained valuable exposure to key players in the manufacturing and business ecosystem. We celebrate their hard work and success as they continue to make strides in the Blue Economy.

Pre-Launch of the Kilifi County International Investment Conference (15th October)



Nicholas Koigu (Far right), Enterprise Finance Advisor BlueBiz program, participating in a panel discussion Pre-Launch of the Kilifi County International Investment Conference

At the pre-launch, BlueBiz was invited by the Kilifi County government to explore the investment opportunities they are creating for young people. This summit was crucial in understanding how the local government plans to support youth entrepreneurs and align with the

objectives of the BlueBiz Program.

It was a valuable opportunity to align strategies and discuss investment pathways for the youth. Nicholas Koigu, BlueBiz Enterprise Finance Advisor, participated in a panel discussion during the event.

Mastercard Foundation Gender Training (25th November)

The gender and safeguarding training session provided by the Mastercard Foundation equipped the BlueBiz team and local partners with vital knowledge and strategies to engage more effectively with young entrepreneurs - especially women. It was a timely and necessary training that ensures BlueBiz's outreach is inclusive and empowering, fostering a safe and supportive environment for all participants.



Mastercard foundation team, TechnoServe team and BlueBiz local partners during the gender training facilitated by the Mastercard Foundation

Cohort II Kickoff Event (29th November)



Panelists on stage during the Cohort II Kickoff launch

We kicked off Cohort II of the BlueBiz Program with a bang in Mombasa County! The event brought together passionate young entrepreneurs, stakeholders, and local leaders to celebrate new beginnings and explore innovative approaches to building sustainable youth businesses in the Blue Economy.

With the theme "Empowering Coastal Entrepreneurs: Building Sustainable Pathways in the Blue Economy," the event was a celebration of youth entrepreneurship and the exciting road ahead for the BlueBiz Program.

The energy was palpable as BlueBiz participants shared their vision for the future, highlighting the impact of skills development, financial access, and market linkages provided by the program. The launch marked the start of an exciting journey for youth entrepreneurs across Kenya's coastal region - Lamu, Kwale, Kilifi, Mombasa and Tana River - empowering them to turn their ideas into scalable businesses that contribute to both economic growth and environmental conservation.



Benson Macharia, Assistant Director Fisheries and Blue Economy department (second from the left) getting a tour of the BlueBiz participants' exhibition stands during the Cohort II Kickoff Launch

End of year BlueBiz Team Building



Technoserve-BlueBiz team during end of year team building

As we wrapped up another successful year at BlueBiz, our end-of-year team-building event offers an invaluable opportunity to reflect on our achievements and strengthen the bonds that have made us such a dynamic and resilient team. This gathering allows us to celebrate the progress we've made in empowering youth entrepreneurs in the Blue Economy and fostering sustainable practices across the not only recharge and build stronger connections but also reinforce our shared commitment to creating lasting impact in the communities we serve.

These events are just a few of the ways BlueBiz is helping young entrepreneurs in Kenya's coastal regions unlock opportunities, build sustainable businesses, and make an impact in the Blue Economy. From workshops to

exhibitions, networking events to investor sessions, BlueBiz is creating the momentum needed for youth to thrive, coastal region. Through fun, collaborative activities, we'll innovate, and lead the way in the Blue Economy. Stay tuned for more updates on how we're changing the game for coastal youth!

Moving into the new year we are excited about the upcoming activities like working with cohort III partners and participants and mobilization of other cohorts. Together, we'll set the stage for an even more impactful year ahead, motivated by our collective vision and the incredible work we've accomplished as a team.



Technoserve-BlueBiz team during end of year team building