



Digital Earth
AFRICA

June 2026

2026-27 Annual Workplan



About This Plan

This report sets out the narrative for the Digital Earth Africa Annual Workplan (the Plan) for the period April 2026 to March 2027. It provides a summary of Program outcomes and high-level activities for 2026-27 highlighting strategic context, key challenges and risks, and a proposed activity schedule.

Last Version Date	Revision Number	Drafted By
17 December 2025	Draft V2	DE Africa Program Leads
21 January 2026	Draft V3	GA review - inputs incorporated
24 March 2026	Draft V4	Following IAB Inputs
18 June 2026	Draft V5	Updated with Sustainment targets following transition to icipe

Table of Contents

About Digital Earth Africa	3
Introduction to Phase III	4
DE Africa Investment Logic	4
DE Africa Theory of Change	5
Program Delivery Framework	6
2026 Annual Workplan	8
Context	8
Strategic Priorities	10
Challenges and Risks for 2026	12
2026 Outcomes and Targets	15
Program Outcome 1 - Sustainment	16
Strengthening Governance and Program Delivery	16
Enabling partnerships	18
Sustainment and business model development	20
Strengthening Technologies and Science	22
Program Outcome 2 - Uptake and impact	25
Enhanced country engagement and understanding of user needs	25
Capacity Development	27
Increased user engagement and uptake	28
Demonstrating Impact	30
Acknowledgements	33

About Digital Earth Africa

Digital Earth Africa (DE Africa) aims to improve lives across Africa by providing planners and policy makers with crucial Earth observation information to support better decision making, and through enhanced access to satellite data to progress sustainable development outcomes.

DE Africa Vision: To provide a routine, reliable and operational service, using Earth observations to deliver decision-ready products enabling policy makers, scientists, the private sector and civil society to address social, environmental and economic changes on the continent and develop an ecosystem for innovation across sectors.

DE Africa Mission: To process openly accessible and freely available data to produce decision-ready products.

Working closely with the AfriGEO community, DE Africa will be responsive to the information needs, challenges, and priorities of the African continent. DE Africa will leverage and build on existing capacity to enable the use of Earth Observations to address key challenges across the continent.

The long-term DE Africa Goal is: DE Africa improves the lives of Africans through access to tailored information for decision-making. This encompasses:

- **Livelihood strengthening** – EO data will support more informed decision making at government, sectoral and other levels, contributing to direct and indirect benefits for individuals and communities
- **Development effectiveness** – DE Africa will support enhanced understanding of development challenges and solutions, and in so doing, strengthen collective impact and ability to assess progress towards national priorities, African Union's Agenda2063 and the UN SDGs
- **Digital transformation** – through industry uptake and innovations, DE Africa will help to fuel the ongoing **evolution** of the digital economy in Africa
- **Economic development and job creation** – through access to data for commercial products and services development, DE Africa will support business development and employment opportunities.



Introduction to Phase III

In 2023, DE Africa concluded the Establishment Phase (Phase II), and the transition of the Program to Africa. An [Independent Evaluation](#) found that by March 2023 DE Africa had largely delivered against all its expected

intermediate outcomes and exceeded delivery expectations in many areas, making strong progress towards achieving the three End-of-Program Outcomes (EOPO)¹. The evaluation also provided useful insights to inform the way forward.

In 2023 DE Africa secured investment for the delivery of Phase III from the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust and the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), with continued commitments from Amazon Web Services (AWS) and Esri to provide in-kind support that is crucial to the operational success of the Program, and to reaching a wider user base. Phase III of DE Africa will create additional value from the science, technology, and institutional arrangements established in Phase II (2019-2023), by driving uptake of the DE Africa Program and delivering impact.

Aligned with the long-term Program goal, the Phase III outcomes are:

- **Sustainment:** DE Africa is on-track to be sustained in Africa, with key African stakeholders invested to achieve this end-point
- **Uptake and Impact:** DE Africa information is consistently used by key stakeholders - governments, academia, researchers, communities, private sector and individuals, to drive environmental, social and economic impacts.

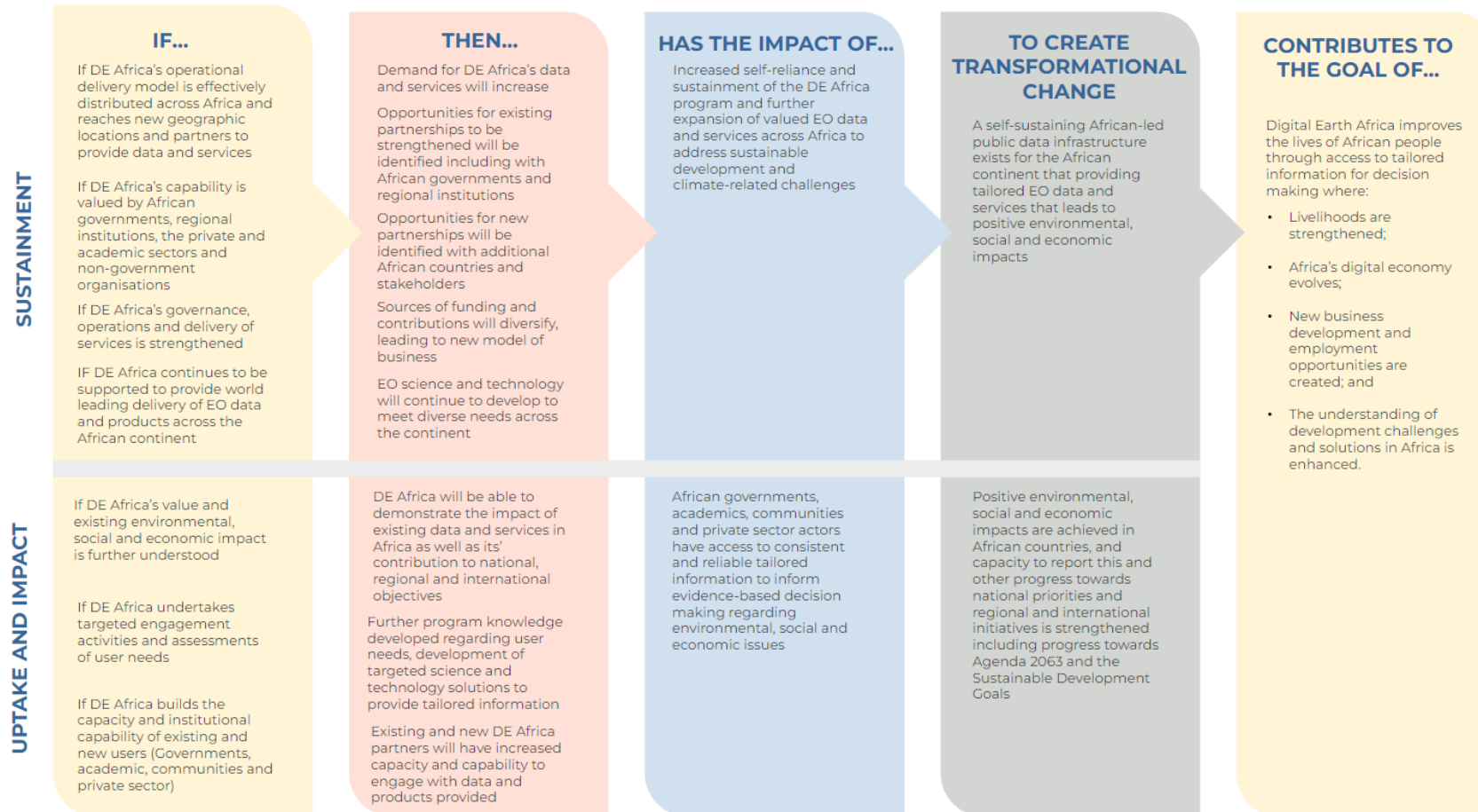
In 2025, the Helmsley Charitable Trust provided additional funding to extend the Program's support for a further two years, through to March 2028. This extension allows sufficient time for the Program to transition to a permanent long-term owner, strengthen future sustainability through the development of a five-year sustainment strategy, and to further embed the Program throughout Africa ensuring long-term sustainment.

DE Africa Investment Logic

The Phase III Investment Logic presents the Theory of Change and describes how DE Africa's Program outcomes contribute to a chain of results flowing from immediate outcomes expected during the first 2 years of implementation, and the intermediate outcomes which are expected to be achieved within the following 5 years.

¹ EOPO 1: DE Africa is an operationally, technically, and financially sustainable, and inclusive entity in Africa; EOPO 2: DE Africa is demonstrating environmental and development impact; EOPO 3: DE Africa is a flagship initiative that promotes the benefits of open and free earth observation data

DE Africa Theory of Change



Program Delivery Framework

The Governance Framework, developed in 2019 and endorsed by the Governing Board, has guided the Program through its first two phases. During 2026, a Governance Review Process will be undertaken to reassess the Program's governance structure.

The [DE Africa Governance Framework](#) sets out terms of reference, roles and responsibilities of DE Africa's governing groups. The Governing Principles of DE Africa are a fundamental part of the governance framework, informing strategy, planning and delivery.

DE Africa will continue to be implemented through a distributed operational model²; the components of the operational model are laid out below.

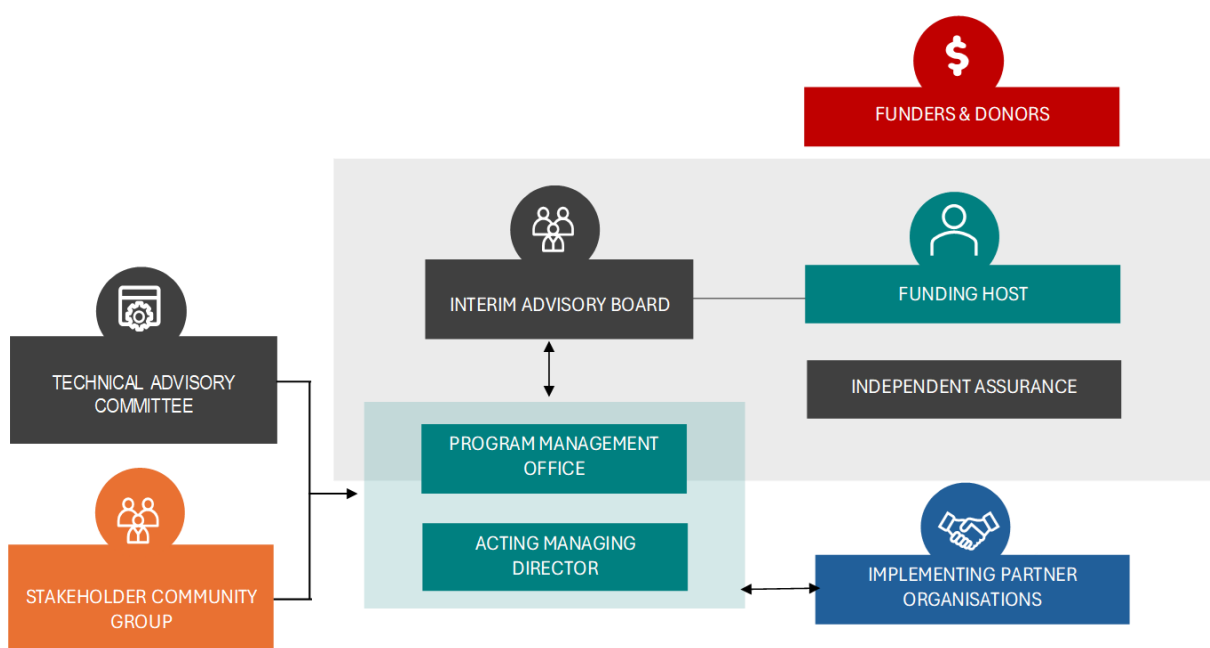


Figure 3 - DE Africa Distributed Operational Model

The distributed operational delivery model places emphasis on working with and through existing organisations and partners with Earth observation capabilities, and facilitating new networks to allow flow of information and end users (e.g. policy and Program decision makers) to be connected to the technical platform and the data and decision support tools that it offers. The elements of the model are described in more detail below, along with the areas of focus for 2026.

Funders

Financial support through our current funding partner, The Helmsley Charitable Trust, is tied to Phase III of the Program. Working with the Interim Advisory Board, the DE Africa team will develop and implement its long-term sustainment strategy.

² An outcome of the fourth Technical Advisory Committee meeting (TAC-4) in Pretoria, South Africa in March 2020

DE Africa's platform which underpins the Program is made possible through technical partnerships, including those established with Amazon Web Services and ESRI. These key partners have provided in-kind and technical support that is vital to keeping the platform operational, and expanding use of DE Africa data and services to a wider audience. Both Partners have renewed their commitment for Phase III of the Program. In 2026, the DE Africa team looks forward to continuing to collaborate with these partners and identify further opportunities for collaboration.

Governing Groups

Interim Advisory Board (IAB): an interim structure created in 2025 for the express purpose of providing leadership, strategic guidance, oversight and accountability during the Program 's transition to long term Program owner on the continent. The Interim Advisory Board ensures the achievement of the mission and vision of DE Africa including policy guidance, alignment and prioritisation.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC): diverse representation from across the continent and provides expert advice and guidance related to: technical and scientific directions; stakeholder engagement at the international, regional, country levels; cross sectoral engagement; capacity building and; the latest trends, issues and research relevant to the Program.

Implementing Partners

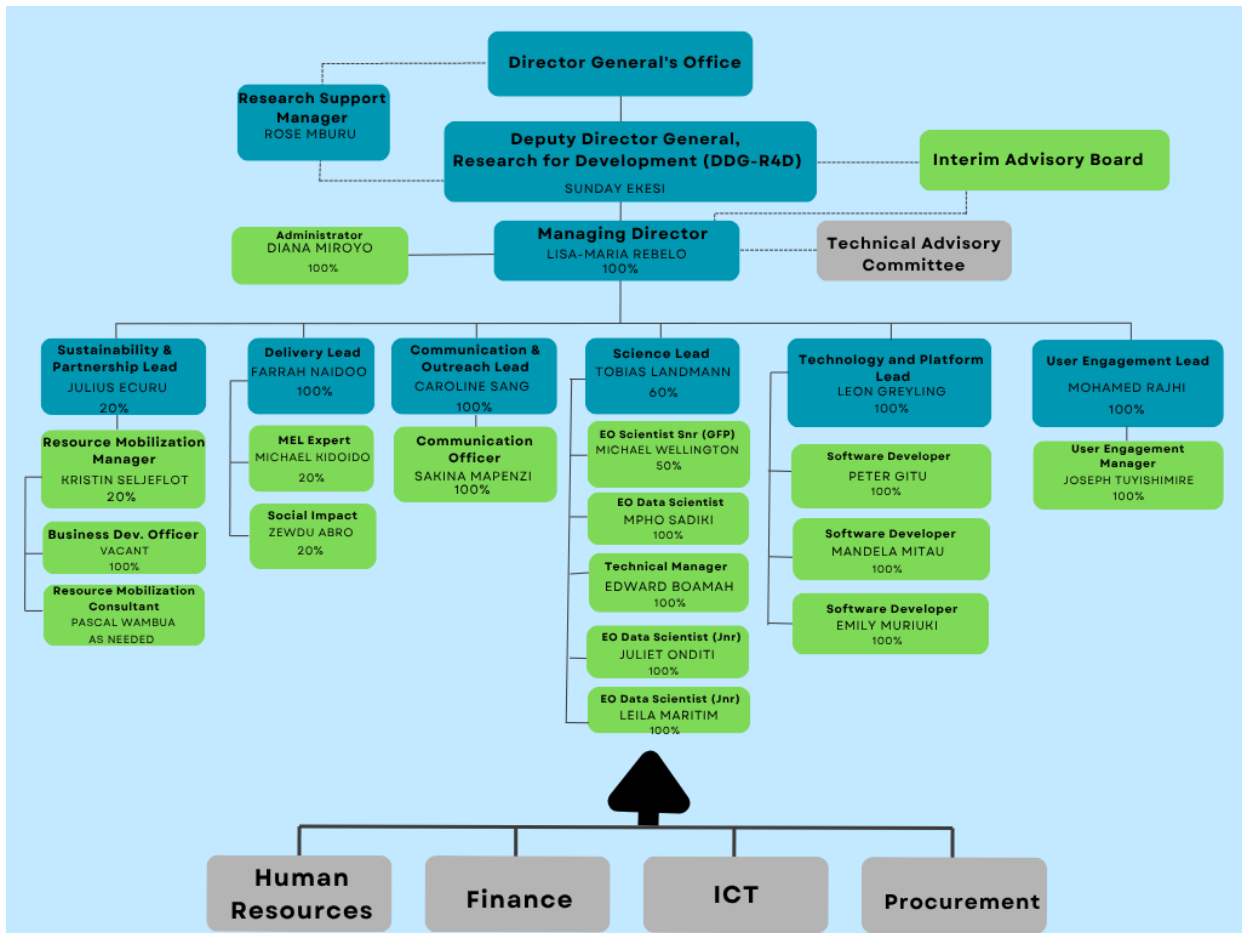
DE Africa continues to engage directly with five national and regional 'Implementing Partners' (IPs), who together represent the interests of 43 African countries:

- African Regional Institute for Geospatial Information Science and Technology (AFRIGIST, Nigeria),
- AGRHYMET (Niger),
- Centre de Suivi Ecologique (CSE, Sénégal),
- Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD, Kenya),
- Sahara Sahel Observatory (OSS, Tunisia).

Each of the IPs has been selected based on their existing role in supporting the uptake of Earth observation (EO) in decision making and based on their existing strengths in providing technical support to affiliated countries.

Program Management Office

The Program Management Office (PMO) is owned by *icipe* from 1 April 2026 and is staffed by a core team, complemented by additional personnel and technical capacities provided by *icipe* to support the effective implementation of the DE Africa Annual Workplan. As the Program Owner, *icipe* is responsible for ensuring performance against workplan delivery, including oversight, coordination, and reporting across all outcome areas.



2026 Annual Workplan

Context

The 2026 Workplan marks a pivotal year for Digital Earth Africa as on the 1st April 2026 the Program will transition from an interim hosting arrangement with RIIS, to its long-term institutional home. Building on the strong foundations established in 2024 and the further consolidation and growth achieved throughout 2025, the Program enters 2026 stable, strategically positioned, and operating with strong governance, partnerships, infrastructure, and user engagement.

In 2024, the Program focused on establishing foundational structures to support long-term sustainability. A comprehensive strategy review was undertaken, resulting in the development of a Strategy Overview to guide the formulation of the five-year strategy. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) systems were renewed, including a revised MEL Framework and a detailed MEL Plan to track progress against outcomes. Governance capability was enhanced through the establishment of the Interim Advisory Board (IAB) and rotation of Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) membership, while in-country engagement deepened across priority partners in Kenya, South Africa and Ghana. These initiatives positioned the Program to progress with clear direction, measurable results, and a structured path toward transition.

Building on this base, 2025 was characterised by operational stability, strategic leadership continuity,

technical delivery, and rapidly expanding program reach. The appointment of Dr Lisa-Maria Rebelo in January 2025 as Acting Managing Director ensured continuity and effective oversight, while the first in-person Interim Advisory Board meeting during the first quarter set the foundation for strong governance and approval of the 2025 Workplan and MEL Framework. Throughout the year, governance matured further through subsequent IAB and TAC meetings, endorsement of the Risk Appetite Statement, and development of the Business Continuity Plan in preparation for transition.

A major milestone was the technical review of, and subsequent updates made to the DE Africa Sandbox, initiated in April 2025, addressing performance efficiencies and security needs. During the six-month review period the Sandbox was temporarily closed to new and existing users. The Sandbox was successfully reopened for registration and access in September 2025 with strengthened security, improved authentication, a new data collection process, and updated policies for data storage. A phased roll-out was implemented, supported by targeted communications, guidance materials and helpdesk support. This exercise significantly improved platform reliability, user management, and long-term operational resilience.

Partnerships were strengthened significantly, with new agreements formalised across Ghana, Niger, Uganda, Algeria, and South Africa. In-country engagement expanded through technical activities and training events across more than fifteen countries, reinforcing the relevance of DE Africa services within government workflows, research communities, and sectoral initiatives.

Scientifically, the Program delivered major advances in data pipelines, products and documentation. New workflows were validated across 4 countries for wetland monitoring and management, new operational data pipelines were released including a monthly Sentinel 1 mosaic as well as Sentinel-3 OLCI L2 Land and Sentinel-3 OLCI L2 Water, and various external thematic datasets were made available to users including the ESA WorldCereal and the Copernicus Lake Water Quality products. In parallel, infrastructure improvements - including the EKS and Sandbox upgrades - ensured platform stability and reliability. Open-source analytical tools and new user documentation were released, broadening access to decision-ready EO data.

Capacity development continued to be a driver of impact, with the capacity of thousands of users built through weekly live sessions, online courses, hackathons and university Programs. Awareness and adoption increased steadily, evidenced by high growth in Sandbox registrations, online enrolments, website traffic, media reach and storytelling outputs. This uplift reflects not only user demand but the strengthening of DE Africa's continental presence, value and community.

Looking forward to 2026

With a stable technical environment, mature operational system, stable governance oversight and an expanding network of partnerships and users, the 2026 Workplan prioritises continuity, responsible transition, and sustained delivery. The key objective for 2026 is to ensure seamless hand-over to the new long-term owner while maintaining service reliability, protecting critical program knowledge, and continuing to provide data, tools and capacity that enable African institutions to respond to climate, national development priorities, and resource management challenges.

The foundation laid in 2024, consolidated through growth and stability in 2025, positions Digital Earth Africa

for a successful transition and for continued impact as a long-term continental asset.

Strategic Priorities

Phase III will continue to March 2028, with sustainability becoming the primary focus under the long-term owner, ensuring the Program can operate confidently and without concern for future continuity. This stability will allow DE Africa to fully leverage the systems, partnerships, and governance structures already established to accelerate user adoption, expand in-country impact, and continue delivering decision-ready EO services across the continent.

- **Enhancing country engagement:** Digital Earth Africa will continue to work directly with countries across the continent to apply the continental infrastructure to support national priorities. This will be achieved by undertaking country-specific activities, including capacity development, co-design and development of workflows, services and data products, that responsively address priorities specific to both national and cross-sectoral user needs. Activities undertaken in support of these priorities will focus on thematic areas based on DE Africa continental services, and defined through donor funding agreements.

In 2026, DE Africa will continue to strengthen engagement in seven opportunity countries — Kenya, Ghana, South Africa, Rwanda, Senegal, Tunisia and Nigeria; while also responding to specific requests for support from others.

These countries have been prioritised based on established in-country presence, demonstrated demand for DE Africa services, alignment with national development priorities, and the maturity of existing institutional partnerships. Countries not included in the 2026/27 focus were deprioritised due to contextual constraints, including instances of political instability that limited the ability to sustain effective engagement, as well as a strategic decision to consolidate resources and deepen impact in countries where a higher level of engagement maturity has already been achieved. Engagement with additional countries will continue on a demand-driven basis, as capacity and conditions allow.

Staff presence in Kenya, Ghana, South Africa, and Rwanda will continue to support an active and engaged ecosystem of partners; while an established network of users has emerged in Senegal, Tunisia and Nigeria through Implementing Partner presence and activities. In parallel, we will continue to explore opportunities for expansion into additional countries, guided through the DE Africa Country Engagement Framework.

Active collaborations with governments, industry, and academic institutions will continue to be established in order to embed DE Africa products into decision-making and curricula, while strategic partnerships with pan-African organisations will amplify impact. These efforts will build national capability, foster sustainable adoption, and position the program for long-term continental impact through the end of Phase III and beyond 2028.

- **Ensuring our sustainability:** From April 2026, the long-term owner will assume primary responsibility for ensuring the Program's sustainability, and for maintaining operational continuity and stability while upholding strong governance and efficient systems. This will include finalising key governance priorities, such as completing the Governance Review and developing the five-year Program Strategy, alongside strengthening systems, processes, and reporting mechanisms to align with good corporate governance practices and to support transparent performance monitoring.

Under the long-term owner, the sustainability agenda will also advance through the development and implementation of a long-term business model and investment strategy, securing continued funding, diversifying revenue streams, ensuring continued Program delivery, growth, and impact.

- **Enabling climate action:** Africa is on the frontline of the climate crisis and populations across the continent continue to be severely and increasingly affected by extreme weather events which are resulting in extended droughts, floods, and coastal erosion. Given the unique role DE Africa has to play in supporting country-led action on risk mitigation and adaptation, we will continue with our overarching focus on climate action throughout 2026. Continental services will remain scientifically robust while increasingly tailored to national-level use cases, supported by new tools, datasets, and analysis capabilities to inform climate impact assessments and adaptation planning. In-country engagement will ensure relevance and uptake, while ongoing platform maintenance, updates, and technical documentation will sustain reliability and accessibility. These efforts will strengthen evidence-based decision-making, enhance national climate action, and provide a stable foundation for scaling DE Africa's services through the remainder of Phase III.
- **Engaging the community:** DE Africa will continue to drive impact by expanding the uptake of its platform and services, aligning continental products with country-level use cases, and responding to specific national and sectoral priorities. Engagement will focus on deepening relationships with governments, academic institutions, and industry partners, while tailoring support and capacity-building activities to strengthen institutional capabilities and promote sustained adoption of both existing and new DE Africa products.

In 2026, the Program will continue to strengthen understanding of user needs through the in-country engagement approach, systematically capturing insights and feedback to guide service development, training, and technical support. Impact storytelling will remain a core mechanism, showcasing user experiences, use cases, articles, and profiles to demonstrate the value of DE Africa services, grow awareness, and encourage uptake across diverse audiences. DE Africa will maintain an inclusive approach to engagement, ensuring participation reflects diversity in geography, language, gender, and sector, while positioning the Program for sustained impact under the guidance of the long-term owner and supporting continental-scale decision-making through to 2028.

Challenges and Risks for 2026

The Challenges and Risks that continue to remain on the Strategic Risk Register into 2026 are;

Risk ID#1 : Long Term Financial Sustainability

- **Risk Description:** Changes in the global economic environment or donor funding priorities could affect the Program's long-term financial sustainability.
- **Mitigation Strategy:** Geoscience Australia (GA) had submitted a Sustainment Paper to the IAB in Q3 which was endorsed for the procurement of an organisation to support the Sustainment Model Development
- In January 2026 icipe assumed responsibility for undertaking a sustainment review followed by the development and implementation of a program sustainability strategy. This will also include deciding on the operational model, funding strategy, and prioritisation of resources to ensure financial resilience and continued delivery of DE Africa services

• **Risk ID#2 : Achieving Uptake Across Diverse User Groups**

- **Risk Description:** DE Africa fails to achieve sufficient uptake and in-country support due to limited engagement with diverse user groups and inadequate establishment of key national and institutional contacts. This could undermine programme effectiveness, hinder the embedding of the platform within African countries, and ultimately compromise DE Africa's mission and mandate.
- **Mitigation Strategy:** The DE Africa team has implemented an in-country engagement approach to enable more direct interaction with users, strengthening uptake and impact. In addition, the team continues to leverage, where possible, the support of TAC and IAB members who maintain relationships at both institutional and individual levels across Africa. Tailored in-country strategies and programmes are being developed to increase awareness and sustained engagement. Communications will also forward the DE Africa Communications Toolkit to Governance Structures on a bi-annual basis to support consistent and coordinated outreach.

Risk ID#3 : Risk of Losing Support from African Organisations and Governments

- **Risk Description:** Explicit and implicit support for the DE Africa Program from African organisations and governments could be lost if the benefits of the Program's products, services, and partnerships are not realised. This could reduce engagement, impact, and program credibility.
- **Mitigation Strategy:** The Program will continue using its in-country engagement approach to ensure activities and collaborations align with the priorities of African organisations and governments. Governance structures, including the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Interim Advisory Board (IAB), will guide strategic direction and maintain oversight. DE Africa activities and communications will be aligned with governance priorities, focused on SDGs, and designed to maintain continent-wide, country-agnostic outcomes while strengthening partnerships and operational reach across Africa.

Risk ID#4 : Risk of Unethical Behavior, Discrimination, or Corruption

- **Risk Description:** Risks related to unethical behavior, discrimination, or corruption within the Program could undermine staff trust, stakeholder confidence, and overall operational effectiveness.
- **Mitigation Strategy:** From April 2026, the long-term owner will assume responsibility for managing these risks, including implementing their institutional policies, conducting staff training, and ensuring compliance measures are in place to maintain a safe, ethical, and accountable working environment.

Risk ID#5 : Impact of Interim Structures on Program Stability

- **Risk Description:** Extended reliance on interim structures may reduce stakeholder confidence in DE Africa and create perceptions of instability within the community.
- **Mitigation Strategy:** From April 2026, the Program will be owned and led by a long-term institutional owner, which will significantly reduce or eliminate the risk associated with interim structures. The long-term owner will establish clear governance arrangements, formalise roles and responsibilities, implement transition plans, and ensure transparent communication to maintain stability, stakeholder confidence, and continuity of operations throughout Phase III.

Risk ID#6 : Risk of the Ineffectiveness of the Interim Advisory Board (IAB)

- **Risk Description:** The IAB could become ineffective, resulting in a loss of high-level strategic guidance and support for DE Africa, which may impact Program direction and decision-making.
- **Mitigation Strategy:** From April 2026, the IAB will continue to provide strategic oversight and guidance. The Interim Advisory Board (IAB) has actively provided high-level strategic guidance and support, with all meetings held since their appointment with quorum reached and strong engagement in both in-session and out-of-session activities, including closed sessions during the long-term host appointment process. Members have demonstrated commitment to understanding and supporting the future sustainability and stability of the program, reducing the likelihood and impact of this risk.

Risk ID#7 : Risk of Evolving Geo-Political Landscape

- **Risk Description:** The evolving geopolitical landscape across the continent may influence national priorities, creating challenges for DE Africa in maintaining relevance and operational alignment across countries.
- **Mitigation Strategy:** DE Africa will prioritise building both explicit and implicit support from a diverse range of African organisations and governments, while demonstrating the Program's impact. Efforts will focus on establishing strong project buy-in and ownership within countries, ensuring that DE Africa remains aligned with national priorities and continues to achieve long-term success.

Risk ID#8 : Risk of Misuse or Mismanagement of Program Funds

- **Risk Description:** DE Africa funds may not be used for their intended purposes, may not be properly accounted for, or may fail to achieve value for money. Overspending or mismanagement of budget versus actuals could compromise Program delivery.
- **Mitigation Strategy:** From April 2026, the long-term owner will assume responsibility for financial management, including the design and implementation of appropriate structures and processes to ensure funds are properly accounted for and provide value for money. Decisions on controls, procurement processes, and reporting mechanisms will be determined in consultation with the long-term owner and Geoscience Australia as fiduciary host.

Risk ID#9 : Alignment with AI and Digital Transformation Trends

- **Risk Description:** DE Africa's platform and strategic direction may not adequately align with rapidly evolving trends in artificial intelligence (AI) and broader digital transformation. Uncertainty around platform evolution, architecture adaptability, and timely adoption of AI technologies could limit the Program's relevance and impact.
- **Mitigation Strategy:** In Q4 of the 2025 Workplan, the ToR for a Technology Review was undertaken to assess the way forward. This implementation has begun in the 2025 workplan and will continue to be implemented into 2026.

2026 Outcomes and Targets

This next section outlines the annual targets. Four sub-outcomes are addressed under each of the two main Program outcomes.

OUTCOME 1: Sustainment

- Outcome 1.1 Strengthening Governance & Program Delivery
- Outcome 1.2 Enabling Partnerships
- Outcome 1.3 Sustainment and Business Model Development
- Outcome 1.4 Science and Technology

OUTCOME 2: Uptake and Impact

- Outcome 2.1 Engagement and User Needs
- Outcome 2.2 Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening
- Outcome 2.3 User Uptake and Engagement
- Outcome 2.4 Demonstrating Impact

The DE Africa Workplan is intentionally designed to ensure a logical and reinforcing progression between **user engagement**, **capacity building**, and **partnership formalisation**, recognising that sustainable uptake and impact are underpinned by strong institutional relationships and embedding of the Program in-country across institutional sectors.

- ❖ Activities under **Outcome 2.1 (Engagement and User Needs)** focus on identifying priority users, institutional contexts, and demand through consultations, awareness activities, and needs assessments.
- ❖ These insights directly inform **Outcome 2.2 (Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening)**, where engagement progresses through targeted capacity-building pathways, ranging from awareness and introductory sessions to in-person training and embedded support.
- ❖ As engagement matures and institutional capability is established, relationships transition into **Outcome 1.2 (Enabling Partnerships)**, where collaboration is formalised through MoUs, MoAs, or Letters of Collaboration to support sustained uptake and long-term embedding of DE Africa.

Program Outcome 1 - Sustainment

Program Outcome 1 is for DE Africa to be on-track to be sustained in Africa (technically, operationally and financially), with key African stakeholders invested to achieve this end-point.

Strengthening Governance and Program Delivery

Through implementation of this Workplan, the Program Governance and Program Delivery efforts will continue to focus on key priorities to ensure robust governance, operational efficiency, and sustained impact. The Program will continue to uphold good governance through a comprehensive Governance Review Process and the development of a 5-year Program Strategy.

The Interim Advisory Board (IAB) will continue to provide strategic guidance, support program governance, and facilitate effective decision-making until a review is complete and transition of governance arrangements to their long term form under *icipe* is finalised. Governance activities under this Workplan include four quarterly governance meetings, three to four Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings per quarter, and ongoing governance review activities aligned with the Program's strategic direction.

Operational efficiencies will be strengthened by benchmarking systems and processes against international standards, ensuring alignment with ISO 37000 "Good Corporate Governance" standards for donor-funded programs. The Caspio tool will continue to be implemented and updated to strengthen reporting capabilities. The Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan will ensure systematic tracking of outputs, outcomes, and impact. MEL reporting will include four quarterly reports and an Annual Report, providing a comprehensive record of the Program's achievements and supporting continuous improvement.

Risk management will be reinforced through four quarterly risk meetings, ongoing updates to risk registers, and an annual review of the Risk Appetite Statement and Business Continuity Plan. Operational frameworks and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) will be updated as required, with an annual review of all SOPs.

1.1 Governance and Program delivery

Continued stakeholder confidence in DE Africa's governance (Board and Advisory groups), operations and transparency, building the reputation of DE Africa as a trusted and reliable, pan-African capability with a widely recognised mandate to operate

Indicators	Phase III Outcomes (5-Year Target)	2026 Annual Target
Governance Board and Technical Advisory Committee Meetings are occurring according to Terms of References	Governance Board and Technical Advisory Committee Meetings are held regularly and follow best practices and guidelines for ethical and sustainable governance, whereby the board can promote the program's values and goals, for effective decision-making and long-term success and increased donor-funding through our good governance and reputation	• Support to governance - TBC • x4 Quarterly Meetings • x3-4 Quarterly TAC Meetings held as per the ToR per quarter • Program Governance Review - provisional set of activities and timeline - dependent on the development of the Business Model
PMO operations fully embedded and leading the effective delivery of the DE Africa Program	A five-ten year DE Africa strategy to be developed, endorsed, implemented and reviewed annually to include Partnerships, Communications, Diversity and Inclusion, Monitoring, Learning and Evaluation	• Development of a 5 year Program strategy
	Program Operations are being maintained against International/Global standards and frameworks and that the Program follows best practices and guidelines for ethical and sustainable governance	• Continue to align all operational frameworks to the ISO 37000 'Good Corporate Governance' standards for Donor-funded Programs • Ongoing tracking of outputs, outcomes, and impact against the MEL Results Framework • MEL reporting • Continuous updating of Caspio Tool • Further development of Caspio to assist with automating a number of spreadsheets • x4 Quarterly Risk Meetings held with Risk Registers updated

		• Annual review and update of the Risk Appetite Statement and Business Continuity Plan • D&I Collaborative Working Group (CWG) to scheduled per quarter • Updating of SOP's where required • Annual review of all SOP's
Workplanning and reporting frameworks effectively implemented	Quarterly and annual planning and reporting delivered on time to a high standard, and accepted/ approved by governing groups and funding partners	• 2027-28 Annual Workplan development • x4 Quarterly reports produced • Annual report developed

Enabling partnerships

Partnerships are vital to deliver, amplify, and sustain DE Africa's work, and a robust ecosystem of partners is essential to achieving Phase III outcomes. During 2026, DE Africa will continue embedding the Program across seven focus countries — Kenya, Ghana, South Africa, Rwanda, Senegal, Tunisia, and Nigeria — strengthening national capability in the use of EO and advancing the uptake of DE Africa products and services. Partnership development remains a central focus with efforts directed towards expanding an effective network of government, academic, industry, and pan-African collaborators to sustain and amplify program impact. As an Enabling Mechanism under the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), DE Africa will continue to integrate across activities within the GEO Workplan, leveraging the AfriGEO community and engaging with initiatives such as GEO LDN, GEO Blue Planet, and GEOGLAM to expand use of DE Africa products across thematic domains.

During this Workplan, DE Africa will establish active collaborations within the focus countries to support uptake by government agencies and industry partners, while formal academic partnerships will be expanded through agreements with six learning institutions to support curriculum integration and research using DE Africa data and services. Strengthening pathways for collaboration will include identifying pan-African organisations for strategic cooperation, reviewing and redesigning Implementing Partner engagement modalities, and embedding partnership models that foster long-term in-country ownership and sustainability.

Collectively, these partnerships will reinforce DE Africa’s presence across the continent, grow ecosystem capacity, and position the program for sustained impact beyond 2028.

1.2 Enabling partnerships

African governments and regional institutions are actively supportive of DE Africa pursuing financial sustainment and moving beyond aid funding, based on their appreciation of the value and mode of operations of DE Africa

Indicators	Phase III Outcomes (5-Year Target)	2026 Annual Target
Efficient and effective ecosystem of partners established	Active collaborations established across +25 countries	Active collaborations established with government, academia and industry, within broader set of countries
	Active collaborations established with industry or other institutions (NGO's etc) in the <u>10 opportunity countries</u>	8 active collaborations established with industry or other institutions (NGO's etc), within opportunity countries
	Number of partnerships with 10 African governments in the <u>10 opportunity countries</u> identified, using DE Africa data and services	3 active collaborations established with government agencies, within 3 opportunity countries identified through the DE Africa country engagement approach
	Number of partnerships with 10 learning institutions in the <u>10 opportunity countries</u> to facilitate embedding and uptake of DE Africa	'Formal' partnerships (MOU/Letter of Collaboration/Concept note) established with 6 learning institutions in Opportunity countries to facilitate use of DE Africa to support academic curriculums, following the approach implemented with UENR in 2024
Partnerships with key Pan African	Expanding and strengthening relationships with pan-African organisations that further build stakeholder buy-	Pan-African organisations identified and engaged for strategic collaboration to strengthen DE Africa’s continental reach and impact.

organisations are strengthened	in and support for DE Africa's sustainment	DE Africa's modalities of engagement with Implementing Partners (IPs) reviewed and redesigned to strengthen program embedding across regions in Africa
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Sustainment and business model development

With a long-term owner assuming responsibility for the Program from April 2026, the primary focus of sustainment efforts will shift towards building a viable business model and securing funding pathways that ensure continuity through to the end of Phase III in 2028 and beyond. The Sustainment Strategy and business model development will be advanced together with the incoming owner, who will lead this work moving forward, ensuring the approach reflects the operational realities and market positioning of DE Africa under the new structure.

During 2026, engagement with existing and prospective funders will continue to maintain support for core activities and unlock opportunities for extended co-investment. Relationships with partners contributing in-kind resources will also be strengthened, with at least four engagements planned over the year to expand non-financial support. These activities will support the refinement of the business model, development of investment pathways, and shaping of longer-term sustainability.

Sustainability targets and investment objectives will be reviewed and finalised with the long-term owner as part of business model refinement and will be iteratively updated through the implementation of Phase III. This work will feed directly into the development of the 5-year Program Strategy, ensuring financial resilience, diversified revenue streams, and structured growth pathways to support continental impact well beyond 2028.

1.3 Sustainment and business model development

Development and implementation of a cross-sector business model that supports diversifying revenue sources, sustained operations, and contributions with funding secured beyond the end of Phase III;

Indicators	Phase III Outcomes (5-Year Target)	2026 Annual Target
Cross sector business model implemented	Evidence of sustainable business model in place by 2028	Develop and Implement a Sustainment Strategy
Partnerships formed to fund further DE Africa activities	Number of funding partnerships formed	- Engagements with existing funding partners - Engagements with new/potential funding partners 4 engagements with in-kind contributing partners
Supplementary Phase III funding and in-kind support received (2023-2026)	\$ amount of in-kind contribution supplementing Phase III delivery (2023-2026)	Targets updated once sustainment review completed
	\$ amount of additional funding secured supplementing Phase III delivery (2023-2026)	Targets updated once sustainment review completed
Funding received for future Program delivery (2027-2029)	\$ amount of in-kind contribution secured for future Program delivery (2027-2029)	Targets to be set for 2027/28 AWP in line with DE Africa strategy in icipe and sustainment strategy
	\$ amount of funding secured for future Program delivery (2027-2029)	Targets to be set for 2027/28 AWP in line with DE Africa strategy in icipe and sustainment strategy

Strengthening Technologies and Science

DE Africa will continue to maintain a responsive, scalable and world-leading science and technical platform that supports Africa's sustainable development priorities and delivers sustainable value to users. During Phase III, this will be achieved by ensuring the science effectively meets African countries' sustainable development needs, and the technical platform performs efficiently and effectively meeting both Program and user requirements.

DE Africa's existing continental services are unique and are an essential starting point for technically sustainable information services that directly support user needs in specific thematic areas (such as improved food and water security and coastal zone management). In order to maximise relevance to key stakeholders who are vital to the sustainability of DE Africa, and to support embedding the Program in countries, future services will continue to be continental but with a focus on national-level use-cases and workflows.

As enhancing national decision making through the use of DE Africa services and tools is key to driving wider impact and uptake, in 2026, while continuing to deliver demand driven and co-designed continental services, we will place increased emphasis on producing and providing information and workflows that target and are accessible to national decision makers.

In 2026, work will be guided by the Products and Services Roadmap, enabling the development of a new continental-scale service, the release of additional continental datasets aligned to user needs, and the delivery of new analysis tools and notebooks that support real-world application of DE Africa services. Technical documentation and user guides will continue to be maintained in all DE Africa standard languages, ensuring that new datasets, workflows and services are accessible to a broad user base. The addition of external datasets will be supported as required, alongside continued development of data pipelines and platform upgrades to ensure reliability, performance and efficient use of cloud computing resources.

Operational excellence will remain a priority, with monthly upgrades, ongoing pipeline maintenance, and annual continental service updates implemented to sustain the quality and reliability of core services such as Water Observations from Space, Coastlines Monitoring, Waterbodies Monitoring, Fractional Cover and Vegetation Monitoring. Regular technical working sessions will be convened to ensure roadmap alignment and performance oversight, including reviews of platform costs, uptime monitoring processes, and the continued optimisation of AWS compute for service generation and user analytics.

These activities will strengthen the scientific and technical foundations of DE Africa, enhance usability for government and partners, and provide the long-term owner with a stable and efficient platform from which to scale innovation and service delivery across the continent through to the end of Phase III in 2028.

1.4 Technologies and science

The DE Africa science and technical platform continues as a living, robust, operational and world leading capability that is responsive to Africa's requirements.

Indicators	Phase III Outcomes (5-Year Target)	2026 Annual Target
DE Africa's science is effectively and efficiently meeting African countries' sustainable development needs	2 DE Africa continental scale services Additional 2x continental scale data and products	- One continental service designed and released - Additional 1x continental scale data and products released
	x4 interfaces addressing: tailoring of DE Africa continental services to address specific in-country needs, especially in areas such as food security, and connecting these to end-users both directly and through partners, governments, the private sector, and communities	One new interface and/or notebooks interpreting DE Africa continental services for national/in country scale decision making addressing user demand scoped, developed and released
	Analysis tools tailored to DE Africa operational services addressing country needs; Notebooks/ analysis tools developed with end users, and streamlined to have greater user impact / accessibility (operational, non-specialist users, at-scale) Additional 10 analysis tools tailored to DE Africa data and operational services local to national needs contributing to >160 open source notebooks	- Annual updating of the Data and Services Roadmap 1 new dataset made available to users supporting climate action 5 additional analysis tools tailoring DE Africa data and operational services to local and national needs (new/update/scaled notebooks developed supporting new data offerings, continental services and real world use cases; existing notebooks regularly updated as required)
	Technical documentation up-to-date	Technical documentation is up-to-date and available in all DE Africa standard languages
	6 operational data pipelines	Identification of new (ARD) pipelines
	PDTT meeting regularly and effective	- New modality defined for the PDTT 4 meetings held and documented

DE Africa's technical platform is performing efficiently and meeting Program and user needs	>6PB of data hosted and maintained on AWS	- Platform cost assessment and review - Support provided for external datasets - Monthly Platform upgrades completed - Data pipelines are operational
	By end of 2026 99% Platform operations efficient and effective, with no major service outages	Review SLA and Uptime monitoring process
	Annual Continental Services are operational and up-to-date	Annual continental service updates implemented for 2024 (WoFS, coastlines, fractional cover, annual and semi-annual GM etc)
	Monthly Continental Services are operational and up-to-date	Monthly Continental Services are operational and up-to-date
	AWS compute is used optimally and efficiently for computation of continental services and provision of user compute	AWS compute is used optimally and efficiently for computation of continental services and provision of user compute

Program Outcome 2 - Uptake and impact

Program outcome 2 is for DE Africa information to be consistently used by key stakeholders, including governments, private sector and individuals, to drive environmental, social and economic impacts.

Enhanced country engagement and understanding of user needs

This outcome focuses on strengthening DE Africa's connection with users across the continent and ensuring that continental services remain responsive to national priorities and sector-specific needs. DE Africa will work directly with governments, institutions, and end-users to support practical application of products and

services, build capacity, and enable integration into national systems, decision-making processes, and innovation agendas across government, academia, and industry.

In 2026, engagement efforts will be guided by the in-country engagement approach, focusing on deepening relationships and identifying opportunities in Kenya, Ghana, South Africa, Rwanda, Senegal, Tunisia, Nigeria, and Zambia — strengthening national adoption and demonstrating impact across diverse contexts. During the year, key outcomes will include an expanded network of learning institutions actively leveraging DE Africa, increased numbers of governments integrating services into decision workflows, and growth in industry within opportunity countries. Needs assessments with organisations interested in adopting DE Africa will inform product improvements and roadmap development, while at least ten new use cases will be identified and documented to demonstrate impact. Together, these activities will deepen knowledge of user demand, strengthen country embedding, and contribute to long-term sustainability and ownership through to 2028.

From 2026 onward, with a long-term owner in place, engagement priorities and delivery methods will be refined collaboratively and oriented toward deepened sustainability. Over the next two workplan cycles to 2028, the Program will increasingly prioritise government uptake, institutional partnerships, and continued integration of DE Africa services into national workflows, positioning the Program for long-term operational continuity and continental scale.

2.1 User needs/in-country engagement

Tailoring of DE Africa continental services to address specific in-country needs, especially in areas such as food security, and connecting these to end-users both directly and through partners, governments, the private sector, and communities.

Indicators	Phase III Outcomes (5-Year Target)	2026 Annual Target
Diverse network of potential future users identified and engaged, by sector,	Additional 10 organisations across 10 focus countries identified with interests in DE Africa products and services. - including government, academia and industry	10 Industry Partners or other institutions in 2026 opportunity countries leveraging DE Africa 3 Additional African governments (bringing total to 9) actively leveraging DE Africa focusing on 2026 opportunity countries

thematic areas and geographic region		10 learning institutions identified (at least 4 of which are in opportunity countries) and engaged through targeted collaboration 6 learning institutions are actively leveraging DE Africa through defined pathways to use and integrated DE Africa across 6 countries
Decision making regarding environmental, social and economic issues by key stakeholders is informed by DE Africa's data and services	40+ organisations across 25 countries identified with interests in DE Africa products and services. - including government, academia and industry	- Bi-Annual update of the Country Briefing Tool - Needs Assessment undertaken with 15 organisations interested in leveraging DE Africa products and services
	120 Diverse potential locally led use cases identified	10+ use cases identified supporting African led decisions leveraging DE Africa products and services, with leads consistently captured through the Use Case Request form

Capacity Development

During Phase III, DE Africa will strengthen and diversify its capacity development portfolio so that users across government, academia, civil society and industry are equipped to meaningfully apply DE Africa products and services.

During 2026, capacity development efforts will focus on integration into university learning curriculum in terms of informing curriculum design and complimenting learning through supporting projects (bachelor, masters and/or PhD). Further, DE Africa will incorporate additional multilingual content, including translation of training materials into an additional language such as Portuguese or Arabic, and a stronger focus on in-country delivery. This will involve increased training engagements across opportunity countries, including targeted sessions for government, academia and industry, alongside ongoing virtual awareness-raising for non-focus countries. Regular quarterly reporting on course completion, user demographics and thematic participation will guide development of future learning pathways. As the program transitions to long-term ownership from April 2026, these targets and delivery approaches will be reviewed and refined jointly with the new owner, ensuring that training becomes a major lever for sustained program use, locally led capability, and long-term growth across the continent.

2.2 Capacity development

Further development of training and capacity building materials and methods to support, and are being used by a diverse range of users, from decision-makers through to in-country specialists, supporting specific products from DE Africa;

Indicators	Phase III Outcomes (5-Year Target)	2026 Annual Target
Development of new online training courses on using DE Africa to support climate action (English and French)	Development and uplift of training materials empowering climate action - (English, French and two additional languages) on using DE Africa data and services	- Promotion and awareness raising of the newly translated Portuguese and Arabic courses, followed by collection of user feedback on the translated materials. - Strengthen learner feedback processes and analyse course data to inform the design and improvement of Digital Earth Africa courses.
Capacity building for diverse trainee base conducted	Climate action training sessions delivered to diverse sectoral audiences in 10 focus countries identified with interests in DE Africa products and services. - including government, academia and industry	- Delivery of x4 in-country face-to-face/virtual training in year 2026 opportunity countries targeting industry - Delivery of x3 in-country face-to-face/virtual training in year 2026 opportunity countries targeting government - Delivery of x6 in-country face-to-face/virtual training in year 2026 opportunity countries targeting academia - Report updated per quarter describing training statistics including user, country, institution, thematic focus etc, post training survey from Training sessions
	DE Africa training delivered to diverse sectoral audiences in 40+ organisations across 25 countries with interests in DE Africa products and services. - including government, academia and industry	- Delivery of virtual training/awareness raising to sectors including government, academia and industry in other non-focus countries - Report updated per quarter describing training statistics - post training survey from Learning Platform and broader training events

Increased user engagement and uptake

DE Africa will continue to expand and deepen user engagement, driving uptake of key services such as Maps and the Sandbox while ensuring that products remain accessible and relevant across diverse user groups. In 2026, the Program will further enhance learning and platform interfaces, expand multilingual content, and provide targeted technical engagement to understand and respond to user needs. Tracking and analysis of user interactions will be strengthened, with Maps and Sandbox user statistics monitored to assess growth, geographic reach, institutional uptake, and thematic usage, while reporting mechanisms will ensure insights inform ongoing platform improvements and program delivery.

Support and responsiveness will remain central to user experience, with the Helpdesk process monitored regularly to ensure timely resolution of queries and the use case request system actively capturing and responding to new applications. Live sessions will continue, delivered in multiple languages, to broaden awareness and ensure users can effectively leverage DE Africa products and services. By the end of 2026, the Program aims to reach 8,000 new Maps users, 1,000 new Sandbox users, and to provide over 40 live sessions across two languages per quarter. These activities will collectively strengthen adoption, inform product development, and support African-led decision making, while establishing robust monitoring practices to guide sustainable growth and uptake through Phase III and beyond.

2.3 User engagement/ uptake

Rapid growth in uptake of DE Africa services including the Map and the Sandbox, and direct use of DE Africa continental services

Indicators	Phase III Outcomes (5-Year Target)	2026 Annual Target
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Increased range of diverse users across all DE Africa products and services	>50,000 Maps users (diverse active users from 25+ countries)	Tracking Maps users in Google Analytics and extracting statistics related to total numbers, new users, returning users, user location, datasets accessed. Target 8000 new Maps users per year
	>10,000 Sandbox users (diverse active users from 25+ countries)	Define and implement an improved approach to analyse and assess Sandbox user statistics including e.g. new users, user locations, institution type etc addressing MEL and quarterly reporting requirements, added to relevant SOP. Target >1000 new Sandbox users
	Support provided to end users of DE Africa Maps and Sandbox Use case requests being submitted in O 2.1 .1	- Help desk is monitored regularly and requests reported quarterly - Use case requests are documented and responded to with support provided as relevant
	24+ live sessions (over 2 yrs) held promoting climate action products and services, reaching 10+ diverse, cross-sector users from 25+ countries	- Live session attendance and participant statistics analysed 40+ weekly live sessions with 2 languages per quarter

Demonstrating Impact

DE Africa will continue to demonstrate its impact by showcasing diverse use cases where its services are empowering decision-making in support of sustainable development, climate action, and national priorities. In 2026, the Program will expand efforts to generate and disseminate impact-focused content, including written articles, user profiles, and case studies highlighting tangible benefits to governments, academic institutions, NGOs, private sector partners, and independent users. In addition, DE Africa will develop video content including user stories and case study videos to amplify impact narratives. This content will be published on the DE Africa website, shared through enabling and implementing partner networks, and distributed via targeted media engagement to increase visibility, uptake, and engagement across key audiences.

Throughout the year, DE Africa will maintain a consistent social media presence with frequent posts across multiple platforms, aiming to grow the follower base by at least 25% and improve audience engagement. High-impact communications will be complemented by quarterly newsletters, videos showcasing key services and program milestones, and strategic press releases tied to product launches and partnership developments. Use cases and engagement metrics will be systematically tracked and updated in the Use Case Catalogue to inform reporting, communications planning, and future program delivery.

All impact demonstration activities, communications outputs, and outreach targets will be reviewed and refined collaboratively, ensuring alignment with sustainability objectives and long-term growth. By the end of the year, DE Africa aims to reach a broader and more diverse audience, strengthen awareness and credibility of its services, and provide clear evidence of its value in enabling African-led decision-making and continental-scale impact.

2.4 Demonstrating impact

A growing number of diverse use-cases where DE Africa services are providing information that is empowering community decision making and improving lives. Successful engagement with decision-makers and African governments, and institutional strengthening to the point where African governments are utilising DE Africa services and systems to inform policy, plans and actions.

Indicators	Phase III Outcomes (5-Year Target)	2026 Annual Target
Content showcasing benefit to users arising from the information provided	25 African countries using DE Africa data and services report benefits; 120 published use cases across +25 countries	- Develop impact storytelling across the year, for website publication (and media distribution - see Outcome 2), focusing on the following potential user target markets: government entities either using or potentially using DE Africa (ties back to Outcome 1.2 Output 2) Target: 1 to 3 per annum - Regional and global NGOs facilitating, partnering and promoting DEA uptake (as delivered under Outcome 1.2) Target: 1 to 2 per annum - Universities and academic institutions including individual researchers and academics (ties back to Outcome 1.2 but not dependent) Target: 1 to 4 per annum

		• Private sector users, including start-ups (ties back to Outcome 2.3 and 2.1) Target: 1 to 3 per annum • Independent users articles emanating from capacity building, sponsorships and training (ties back to Outcome 2.2 Output 4) Target: 1 to 4 per annum • Enabling partners collaboratively developed articles and cross-shared on each other's platforms. Media distribution to be discussed on case by case basis. Target: 2 per annum • Quarterly Updating of the Use Case Catalogue\Database
Activities supporting and enabling awareness-raising, traction and target market engagement	30+ high profile use cases/ impact stories fully documented and promoted, including 2 government organisations across >15 countries.	• High-impact articles, developed under Output 1, to be distributed to media.
	Evidence of regular media engagements/mentions Approx 50+ social media posts over 2 yrs promoting the applications, benefits and impacts of DE Africa products and services, with strong social media stats including repromotion by partner organisations. > 3000 registrants for the newsletter.	• Funding partner press release/s • Product Launch PR and marketing campaign • Video Development - Documentary focusing on an impact story • Social media 8 posts per month posted on x2 platforms, ○ 24 per quarter on LinkedIn, ○ 24 per quarter on X ○ = 48 posts per quarter ○ = 96 posts per platform per annum with a total 192 postings against both platforms ○ Aim for 25% increase in X and LI followers ○ Aim for 6 to 7% average engagement by year end (stretch goal)" • x4 Quarterly Newsletters Published • Website publishing of all Output 1 content

		● Media Monitoring to assess traction of Program promotional activities ● "Website Content Upload ○ 4 x Quarterly Reports - translated and uploaded (x8 reports in total) ○ 2024 Annual Report Design ○ 3 x Translation of Material: R15k x3 ○ 1 x Annual Report ○ 1 x Annual Workplan " ● 2 Comms Toolkit updates
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Acknowledgements

