Evaluation of the Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative in Africa

(2014-2018)

EOA
ECOLOGICAL ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

FINAL **REPORT**

Submitted to: Biovision Africa Trust

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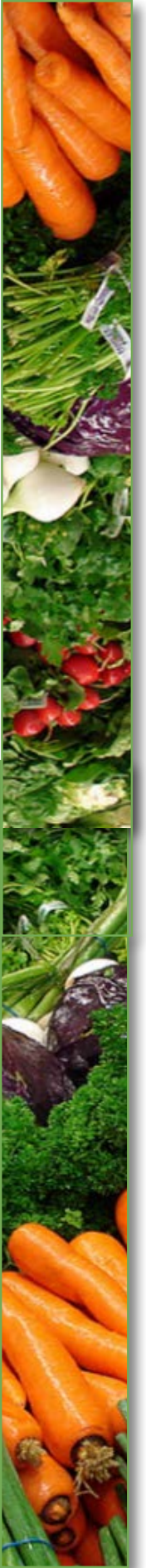

ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

ABN	African Biodiversity Network
AfrONet	Africa Organic Network
ASDP	Agricultural Sector Development Programme
AU	African Union
BvAT	Biovision Africa Trust
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CLO	Country Lead Organization
COMESA	Common Market for East and Southern Africa
CSU	Civil Society in Development
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DREA	Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture
EAC	East African Community
EAOPS	East African Organic Products Standard
ECOWAS	Economic Commission for West African States
EOA	Ecological Organic Agriculture
ET	Evaluation Team
EU	European Union
GGF	Global Grant Fund
GoE	Government of Ethiopia
ICS	Internal Control Systems
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NMA	Nutrition in Mountain Agro-ecosystem
NOAB	National Organic Agriculture Board
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PGS	Participatory Guarantee System
PIPS	Pillar Implementing Partners
QDS	Quality Declared Seeds
REC	Regional Economic Communities
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SSNC	Swedish Society for Nature Conservation
TOAM	Tanzania Organic Agriculture Movement
UMU	Uganda Martyrs University
URT	United Republic of Tanzania

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Agile Consulting was contracted by Biovision Africa Trust (BvAT) on behalf of the Continental Steering Committee of the Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative in Africa, to carry out the external evaluation of the Initiative's 8-country project for the period 2014-2018.

The main purpose of the assignment was to assess the achievements and impacts of the initiative resulting from interventions by the partners (CLOs and PIPs) and institutional structures (Continental Steering Committee, AfrONet, Regional Steering Committees, National Steering Committees, and Executing Agencies) in order to strengthen accountability to stakeholders.

The evaluation focused on project activities undertaken since 2014 in Benin, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda (current EOA Initiative participating countries) as well as the institutional structures established to drive the agenda of mainstreaming EOA at country, regional and continental levels in policies, plans, strategies, and programmes.

Specifically, the objectives of the evaluation were:

1) To assess the extent to which the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of mainstreaming EOA into national policies, plans, strategies, and programmes have contributed to expected outcomes and sustainability of the project.

2) To evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the EOA-I structural set up of implementing partners (CLOs and PIPs) and institutional support structures (the AU- Chaired Continental Steering Committee, AfrONet, Regional Steering Committees, National Steering Committees, Executing Agencies and overall M&E systems) in delivering concrete results based on their mandates.

3) To determine the number (or percent) of households who have been reached by the EOA project and in what ways.

4) To assess effectiveness and efficiency of EOA pillar interventions in influencing farmers' knowledge, attitudes and uptake of EOA practices and/or technologies, and the mechanisms by which this occurred.

5) To assess the extent to which pillar interventions have contributed to key project outcomes including increased agricultural production, productivity, food security, income and farmer welfare.

6) To assess the extent to which gender equality and access by the youth and other vulnerable groups were considered in the project budget and implementation.

7) To draw key lessons learnt from Phase 1 of the EOA-I to inform recommendations and actions for addressing the weaknesses and challenges experienced, most appropriate and motivating funding support arrangements, future programming, implementation, monitoring & evaluation and reporting on a sustained basis at all key levels (country, regional, continental platform and AU).

The evaluation exercise employed a mixed methods approach- combining both quantitative and qualitative methods in data collection, analysis and interpretation; and incorporated a range of questions, discussions and other techniques with stakeholders. The data collection procedures and analysis were based on the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, Development Assistance Committee OECD DAC 5 evaluation criteria framework covering dimensions of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact; but carefully aligned to the SDC Assessment Grid.

The evaluation findings were presented according to the evaluation objectives as shown below:

1. Assessment of the Relevance, Effectiveness and Efficiency of Mainstreaming EOA into National Policies, Plans, Strategies & Programmes

The assessment established that the EOA-I participating countries had registered varying degrees of success in mainstreaming EOA practices into national policies, strategies, plans and programs; at the national, regional and continental levels.

Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda and Ethiopia have made substantive strides towards developing EOA policies. Specifically Uganda has the policy finalized and is awaiting budget allocations from treasury while Kenya and Nigeria have policy drafts. Ethiopia has a proclamation to establish organic agriculture system (proclamation no. 488/2006) since 2006. A preliminary assessment of the 'State of Ethiopia's Ecological Organic Agriculture Sector' has been carried out, and a roadmap for the full and effective implementation of the Ecological Organic Agriculture policy instruments issued by the GoE. The EOA implementation tools such as the PGS Guide for organic certification are currently undergoing review before ratification by Parliament. While Benin and Tanzania have realizable government backed plans, Senegal and Mali have only been able to make progress in developing EOA-related university programs.Mainstreaming EOA into higher education system holds significant long-term impact on the ultimate success of EOA, as this would mean that EOA knowledge and the overall general population capacity alongside EOA will be generated and built in perpetuity. Six out of the eight countries - 75% – (excluding Mali and Senegal), have implemented organic

certification standards, processes and procedures, and in all cases, there were producers who had been certified either in groups or as individuals.

All the policies, plans and programs were found to be relevant to the needs of the value chain actors; and particularly so because they sought to disseminate EOA knowledge across the EOA value chain and create support systems.

The EOAimplementing partners were effective in mainstreaming these elements programs and policies: conservation farming practices; maintenance and enhancement of soil fertility; use of bio pesticides; use of organic manure and water conservation at varying degrees in different countries i.e. either at the policy level, through policy statements or even recognition in country Agriculture Sector Development Programme.

Most of the EOA implementing agencies have established synergies with other EOA players and partners (including funders) outside the EOA initiative funded by SDC and or SSNC. Some of these synergies are informal while others are contractual. In some cases, these have provided new avenues for resource mobilization but also guarded against abrupt withdraws by organizations involved in the joint initiative and likely to jeopardize the joint efforts.

2. Assessment of the Effectiveness and Efficiency of the EOA Structural Set Up & Institutional Support Structures

The EOA-I structure is made up of implementing organizations (CLOs and PIPs) and support structures that include the AU- Chaired Continental Steering Committee, AfrONet, Regional Steering Committees, National Steering Committees and Executing Agencies.

All the structures that the project design set up are largely effective in providing either governance or implementation and management accountability. The CSC through BvAT was successful in supporting establishment of National Platforms and the selection of CLOs, PIPs and has executed its responsibility of management, accountability and general oversight of all partner activities. The CSC Secretariat provided effective oversight and accountability, while the national platforms promoted the development of national agricultural policy frameworks.

Although there were logical frameworks for each pillar at country levels, the evaluation team found that there was no existing data management or data driven reporting system, apart from the physical reports submitted semi-annually and annually to the overall coordinating agency; hence concluding that the EOA did not invest satisfactorily in a monitoring, evaluation and learning system.

3. Assessment of the EOA Reach to Households & Other Target Groups

The EOA initiative reached different stakeholders – producers, extension officers, marketers, policy makers, students among others - using various methods – like training, forums (exchange visits etc) , electronic and print media, social media, curriculum, etc. However, due to lack of sensitive and effective monitoring and evaluation system, implementing agencies were having a challenge in putting down the numbers; and this could have compromised the accuracy of the data contained in reports.

4. Assessment of the EOA Effectiveness & Efficiency in Influencing Farmers' Knowledge, Attitudes and Uptake of EOA Practices & Technologies

There has been improvement along change in knowledge of EOA and its practices, uptake of EOA practices and technologies, as well as positive attitude towards EOA. Compared to 2013, farmers' knowledge has changed considerably, four years after (2017). Overall those who had no knowledge about EOA decreased from 28% in 2013 to 1% in 2017. Those who had basic knowledge or were very knowledgeable increased by 41% and 25% respectively. Those who are very knowledgeable now (2017) stand at 35%.

Eighteen (18) possible organic practices were identified and explored to establish which among them the EOA organic producers were aware of, which ones they were practicing before EOA and which onesare currently being practised. The finding is that all the 18 plus EOA practiceswere practised the across EOA-I participating countries. The proportion of producers practising either of 18 promoted EOA practices and technologies had increased by 4% in 2017 compared to 2013.

Through 6 statements that were used to measure change in attitude; (and responded through affirmation or negation) majority of the farmers indicated having a positive attitude towards EOA. However, there is a feeling among them that EOA is more expensive (inputs, technologies etc.) compared to conventional agriculture.

5. Assessment of the EOA Pillars' Contributions to Project Outcomes

The ultimate goal of EOA initiative was to increase production, income, food security and ultimately organic producers' welfare. It was established that there has been improvement along all the four impact areas between 2013 and 2017. Production was reported to have increased by 83%, and percentage unit productivity per area increased by on average 37%.

About 58% of the organic producers reported to have registered more than 10% increase in their incomes while 73% reported that their quality of life had improved. The evaluation established these changes through

self-reported recall producer data – comparing situation in 2013 and 2017. This infers that the results are subject to producer biases including ability to recall, context, and inherent personal biases – like a respondent giving responses that would make them look good or appear to be making progress.

However, while all these changes appear positive and even as probable consequences of the EOA, there is hardly any causal effect relationship between participation in EOA activities such as training, forums and conferences and change in outcomes such as income, quality of life and improved food security.

5) Assessment of the extent to which gender equality and access by the youth and other vulnerable groups were considered in the project budget and implementation.

Evidence was generated onengagement of women, youth and vulnerable groups in project design and implementation. The finding is that there is no evidence of deliberate or planned efforts that the initiative put in place to specifically target women, the youth and the vulnerable.

6) Drawing key lessons learnt from Phase 1 of the EOA-I to inform recommendations and actions for addressing the weaknesses and challenges experienced, most appropriate and motivating funding support arrangements, future programming, implementation, monitoring & evaluation and reporting on a sustained basis at all key levels (country, regional, continental platform and AU).

Challenges and lessons learnt were distilled at 3 levels- governance (at CSC, RSC and NSC levels); coordination (by BvAT, PELUM, AfrONet and CLOs) and; implementation (PIPs and pillar-implementing CLOs).Under governance, the support from the RSC level- ECOWAS and EAC has not been forthcoming as expected and this has created a void between the CSC and the NSC. Additionally, in the 7 out of the 8 countries where the NSCs existed, owing to their multi-stakeholder institutional set up or otherwise, their role has not been taken seriously. There are noted institutional challenges that have posed imponderables for the governance responsibilities.

Lessons learnt in this sphere include but are not limited to the importance of top-down and bottom-up communication channels within between implementation and governance structures; building strong governance systems that can credibly oversee the implementation actors.

EOA coordination has been fraught by a number of challenges ranging from, poor organizational systems, policies and procedures to withdrawal of donor support (by SSNC) of key EOA partners in some countries, for example like EOA Tanzania partners and

recently NOGAMU in Uganda have lost support by SSNC. In the recent organizational capacity assessment exercise, the finding that 26% of partners were significant and high risk requires close attention to address the conditions of risk management.

Lessons under the aegis of coordination point to the fact that CLOs should not only be institutionally strong,credible, with a national outlook but must bring on board core competencies in the areas of governance and legal compliance, financial management and internal controls, administrative systems, human resource systems, project management capabilities and M&E systems.

Another key lesson is that AfrONet should be seen to play a larger role than is currently the case, through an enhanced presence and more vibrancy in the advocacy agenda continental level.

At implementation level; a number of challenges were experienced. Some of these include inadequacy of financial resources to support key activities to undertake monitoring visits; less engagement/ commitment to cross-pillar learning or even crowding in activities at farmer level for higher impact. In some countries, various PIPs pursued different value chains, obviously conspiring against the intervention logic of the initiative.

Lessons learned at this level range from the importance of harmonized streams of funding and overall programming activities; to coordination, monitoring and evaluation, impact creation and scaling up, to the need to face the competition challenge from proponents of chemical inputs. Further, it is quite important to exercise thorough due diligence when selecting PIPs.

Recommendations for the next phase have been distilled as per each evaluation objective as follows:

I. Relevance, Effectiveness & Efficiency of Mainstreaming EOA into national policies, plans, programs and strategies.

The evaluation recommends building the capacity of the CLOs to engage and manage multi-stakeholder processes so as to accelerate the pace of mainstreaming policies, plans, strategies and programmes at various levels; and head-hunting for recognized EOA champions at high level political echelons. It will also be important to heighten the role and vibrancy of AfrONet.

II. EOA Effectiveness & Efficiency of EOA Institutional Set Up & Institutional Support Structures

The next phase requires a funding mechanism that creates an incentive to acquire higher burn rates without compromising quality. This could be achieved through employing a combination of basic grant and performance-based bonus and making the entire funding process competitive. In the selection of PIPs

a thorough due diligence process is recommended.

The various structures of EOA and supporting institutions would function better with generation and use of strategic direction, learning and accountability. To this a comprehensive baseline, annual reviews and mid-term and end-term evaluation processes are required. The mechanism of achieving all these will rely diametrically on a robust M&E framework.

III. EOA reach to Households & Other Target Groups

Information on the numbers reached per site and country should be periodically tracked against baseline and annual targets. To accommodate the participation of the youth in EOA, youth-friendly models should be instructed into the initiative's design.

IV. Effectiveness and efficiency of EOA pillar interventions in influencing farmers' knowledge, attitudes and uptake of EOA practices and/or technologies, and the mechanisms by which this occurred.

The pillar-implementing partners' approach used to reach primary beneficiaries should take into consideration their level of education so to ensure the effectiveness of the training materials. With the low literacy, imagery and audio-visual materials and translation to local languages, would be useful.

A value chain development approach is recommended so as to address systemic challenges that farmers and other value chain actors face. This approach would accelerate the mobilization and attraction of different actors along the value chains through multi-stakeholder processes.

V. Pillar interventions contribution to key project outcomes including increased agricultural production, productivity, food security, income and farmer welfare.

The next phase should consider introducing market systems development approach. The approach is also known Making Markets Work for the Poor, aims at reducing poverty by enhancing the ways that the poor interact with markets. The ultimate goal is to remove the constraints that impede the poor from participating in markets, and thereby turn the challenges of poverty into economic opportunities.

VI. Gender equality and access by the youth and other vulnerable groups by the EOA Initiative.

There will be need for outreach design in the next phase, to introduce practices and technologies that are geared and friendly towards the different categories of youth, women and other vulnerable groups, at the point of value chain selection. Coupled with this, will be clear or specific strategies to reach out to youth and women.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Agile Consulting was contracted by Biovision Africa Trust (BvAT) on behalf of the Continental Steering Committee of the Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative in Africa and the donors (SDC and SSNC), to carry out the external evaluationof the Initiative's Project for the period 2014-2018.

1.2 The Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative (EOA-I)

The Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) Initiative is an African Union-led continental undertaking started in 2011 and implemented under the guidance and oversight of the AU-chaired Continental Steering Committee (CSC).

The current phase is a result of a concluded pilot phase (implemented in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia, Ethiopia and Nigeria) that was first funded by the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC) and later Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). During the pilot, the initiative was coordinated by PELUM-Kenya on an interim basis owing to its East African experience. With majority of the EOA countries being few and all Anglophone, there was need to explore the potential of expanding to Francophone West Africa, where some farmers were already producing organically and organized as organic agriculture movements and associations.

Currently, the initiative is co-financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC) with funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida); and additional support from the European Union.The EOA-I is implemented in eight (8) countries - Benin, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda (see Figure 1 above); by Country Lead Organizations (CLOs) and their Pillar Implementing Partners (PIs). The CLOs are selected by their country national platforms, under the coordination and management of Biovision Africa Trust (BvAT) and PELUM Kenya.

EOA aims at instituting an African organic farming platform based on available best practices; and developing sustainable organic farming systems and improved seed quality. The mission of the initiative is to promote ecologically sound strategies and practices among diverse stakeholders involved in the production, processing, marketing, and policy-making to safeguard the environment, improve livelihoods, alleviate poverty and guarantee food security among farmers in Africa. The goal is to contribute to

Figure 1: EOA-I Countries

mainstreaming of Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) into national agricultural production systems by 2025 in order to improve agricultural productivity, food security, access to markets and sustainable development in Africa. In addition, these efforts are hoped to reduce exploitation of the organic farmers in Africa.

The structural set up is multi-layered, vertically and horizontally hierarchic. At the top-most echelon, it is

oversighted and guided by the overall governance entity – the Continental Steering Committee (CSC) chaired by African Union's Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture (DREA). The CSC members are supported by a Secretariat, housed in BvAT offices in Nairobi. With regard to overall coordination of the project in the participating countries BvAT performs this role with contribution from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). PELUM Kenya is the lead agency for coordinating the implementation of the initiative with contribution from Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC)but only in 3 countries- Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda.

In the 2 active project regions/ clusters- East Africa (chaired by the East African Community (EAC) and West Africa chaired by the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS), the project is coordinated by regional platforms steered by Regional Steering Committees (RSC) and their secretariats with a role of facilitating in-country experiences and coordinating actors to implement the EOA agenda and integrate EOA into regional policies and plans. Other roles include mobilization of resources to support EOA programs and develop rules of procedures and operations in the cluster management.

At national level, the CLOs are responsible for coordination of activity (pillar) implementation by the PIPs and partners, disbursement of funds to the partners as per the proposal and signed work agreements, budgets and contracts, supervision and monitoring of implementation, supporting building of networks and enabling experience sharing across pillars, catalyzing the process of forming and strengthening National Platforms and reporting to National Platforms, Regional Steering Committee and development partners. PIPs carry out direct implementation of activities as per the 4 EOA pillars.In some cases, CLOs have performed the dual role of coordination and direct implementation of pillar activities. Figure 2 below illustrates the project implementation structure.

Horizontal to the vertical implementation hierarchy is AfrONet, an African-wide organization membered by national, regional and continental organic agriculture organizations, associations, networks and companies in Africa. AfrONet is charged with varied advocacy roles including uniting and networking organic agriculture actors and stakeholders across the continent; pitching the advocacy agenda at the highest point possible, mobilizing resources and supporting

The Eastern Africa RSC meeting has representation by 16 members from partners in Ethiopia (ISD), Uganda (NOGAMU & Ugo-Cert), Tanzania (TOAM) and Kenya (KOAN), BvAT and PELUM Kenya and IGAD Ethiopia and AfroNet. The West Africa Cluster is chaired by ECOWAS with co-chairing by Organisation Béninoise pour la Promotion de l'AgricultureBiologique (OBEPAB) while NOAN is the acting regional secretariat for West Africa. Members of West Africa cluster include but are not limited to Senegal, Benin, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Togo, Ghana and Mali.

the capacity building of key organic agriculture actors. Figure 2 provides the structure of EOA in-country.

The EOA objectives are;

A) To increase documentation of information and knowledge on organic agricultural products along the complete value chain and support relevant actors to translate it into practice and wide application.

This objective is delivered by activities in Pillar 1: Research, Training and Extension (RTE:The overall aim of this pillar is to build the bodyof scientific data supporting EOA by understanding gaps and implementing activities geared towards enhancing uptake of ecological organic agriculture practices along the entire commodity value chains. The key outcome of this pillar is to have scientific, indigenous knowledge, technologies and innovations on EOA application increased.

B) To systematically inform producers about the EOA approaches and good practices and motivate their uptake through strengthening access to advisory and support services.

This objective is delivered by activities in Pillar 2: Information and Communication (I&C).This pillar is an avenue through which EOA reaches out to a vast majority of stakeholders on the continent. It focuses on information and communication on EOA approaches, good practices (production, processes, and learning systems) developed, packaged and disseminated to stakeholders. Aims at awareness creation and deepened knowledge about EOA.

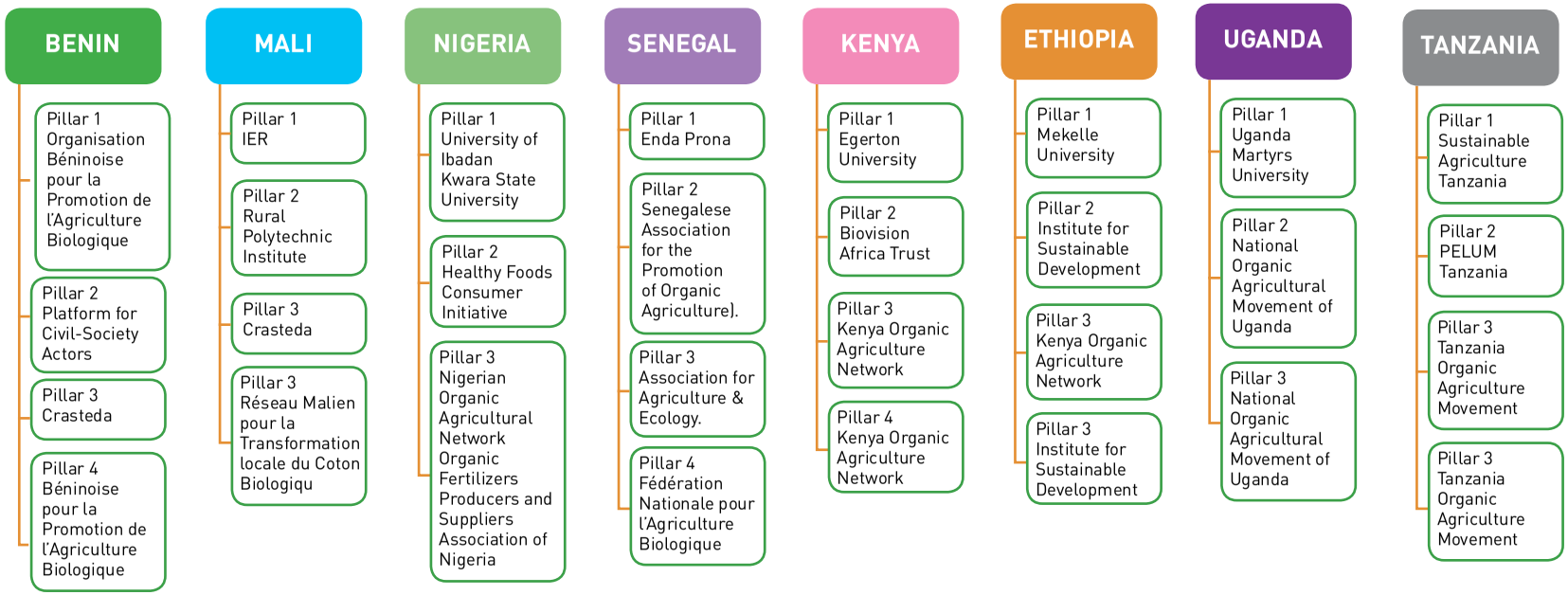
C) To substantially increase the share of quality organic products at the local, national, regional and global markets.

This objective is delivered by activities in Pillar 3: Value Chain and Market Development (VCMD): This pillar is concerned with stimulating development of sustainable markets and increase trade in traditional and high value agricultural produce both at domestic and export levels within EOA. Through this pillar, EOA product value chain mapping, data collection, opportunity analysis and product/input vetting were conducted, Business Development Strategies (BDS) for target businesses along value chains were developed and the market share of EOA quality products at the national, regional and international markets increased.

A) To strengthen inclusive stakeholder engagement in organic commodities value chain development by developing national, regional and continental multi-stakeholder platforms to advocate for changes in public policy, plans and practices.

This objective is delivered by activities in Pillar 4: Support and Cementing- Steering, Coordination and Management:This pillar is

Figure 2: Project Implementation Structure



premised on the fact that effective implementation of the EOA Initiative requires strong institutions with effective, functional and responsive management systems. The pillar brings together components of the pillars aimed at developing capacities of implementing partners and institutions and is coordinated by Country Lead Organizations (CLOs).

1.3 External Evaluation Objectives

The evaluation focused on project activities undertaken since 2014 in Benin, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda (EOA countries) as well as the institutional structures established to drive the agenda of mainstreaming EOA policies, plans, strategies, and programmes at country, regional and continental levels.

The purpose of this evaluation was to:

A) Assess the achievements and impacts of the initiative resulting from interventions by the partners (CLOs and PIPs) and institutional structures (Continental Steering Committee, AfrOnet, Regional Steering Committees, National Steering Committees, and Executing Agencies) in order to strengthen accountability to stakeholders.

B) Foster learning across partners and institutional structures to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the EOA initiative interventions, and;

C) Provide recommendations on actions required to increase EOA effectiveness, impact and promotion to countries not covered by the current EOA and its funding, with a particular view towards designing the next EOA phase under SDC support.

The specific objectives of the evaluation were:

1) To assess the extent to which the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of mainstreaming EOA into national policies, plans, strategies, and programmes have contributed to expected outcomes and sustainability of the project.

2) To evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the EOA structural set up of EOA implementing partners (CLOs and PIPs) and institutional support structures (the AU- Chaired Continental Steering Committee, AfrONet, Regional Steering Committees, National Steering Committees, Executing Agencies and overall M&E systems) in delivering concrete results based on their mandates.

3) To determine the number (or percent) of households who have been reached by the EOA project and in what ways.

4) To assess effectiveness and efficiency of EOA pillar interventions in influencing farmers' knowledge, attitudes and uptake of EOA

practices and/or technologies, and the mechanisms by which this occurred.

5) To assess the extent to which pillar interventions have contributed to key project outcomes including increased agricultural production, productivity, food security, income and farmer welfare.

6) To assess the extent to which gender equality and access by the youth and other vulnerable groups were considered in the project budget and implementation.

7) To draw key lessons learnt from Phase 1 of the EOA to inform recommendations and actions for addressing the weaknesses and challenges experienced, most appropriate and motivating funding support arrangements, future programming, implementation, monitoring & evaluation and reporting on a sustained basis at all key levels (country, regional, continental platform and AU).

1.4 Organization of the Final Evaluation Report

Preceded by an executive summary, this report comprises of 4 chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the project and the objectives of the final evaluation. Chapter 2 deals with the approach and methodology of the evaluation. Chapter 3 outlines the findings of the evaluation while chapters 4 deals with recommendations; aligned to evaluation objectives.

CHAPTER 2 EVALUATION APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

2.1 Approach

The evaluation exercise employed a mixed methods approach- combining both quantitative and qualitative methods; and incorporated a range of questions, discussions and other techniques with stakeholders. The Evaluation Team (ET) assessed the performance of the project interventions in terms of their contribution to intended outcomes. The process connected reporting, feedback, and learning to assess performance and created an opportunity to engage all actors.

The approach considered audience to whom the evaluation report is intended. This audience includes but is not limited to theDREA of the African Union, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida); European Union; National Implementing Partners (CLOs and PIPs) and coordinating and executing organizations (Biovision Africa Trust (BvAT) and PELUM Kenya). To start off after signing the contract, the ET members deepened their understanding of EOA and its context, by reviewing a range of project documents and reports (see Annex 1).Throughout the process, the ET consulted with relevant people in BvAT in Nairobi, CSC, RSC, NSC, and the CLOs and PIPs in the field, and other stakeholders that were directly related to the project.

The assessment utilized theOrganization for Economic Co-operation and Development, Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC) 5 framework evaluation criteria involving relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact; which were aligned with the SDC Assessment Grid. (See Annex 2).

In addition to the OECD DAC 5 approach, the ET interrogated key project aspectsthat includedmulti-level beneficiary representativenessand extent of alignment to the NEPAD's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). Further examined was evidence of improved performance, with respect to:

- Programme coordination and management aspects by the Continental Steering Committee, Regional Steering Committees, National Steering Committees, Executing Agencies, and Country Lead Organizations: and
- Activity implementation by Pillar Implementing Partners; as well as important lessons learnt and conclusions that should be considered in designing phase 2 of the initiative.

The evaluation objectives were interpreted and transformed into learning questions and investigated by tools across inter-connected levels. As mentioned earlier, the first step was the

alignment of the SDC Assessment Grid to the 7 evaluation objectives from which the various qualitative and quantitative data collection tools were developed.

Below is a summary of the areas of emphasis per objective, source of data, instruments for data collection and types that were used to process the data.

1) To assess the extent to which the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of mainstreaming EOA into national policies, plans, strategies, and programmes have contributed to expected outcomes and sustainability of the project.

For this objective the ET examined how relevant the interventions were in mainstreaming of EOA into national policies, plans, strategies and programmes to achieve the expected outcomes and meet the demands and needs of the producers, marketers, processors, consumers, etc. Using desk review, various country level policy and strategy documents were reviewed to determine the presence and focus of national policies, plans, strategies and programmes.

Literature review and interviews across CLOs, PIPs, and ministries of agriculture were used to establish the extent to which the four pillars strategies have addressed the needs of various stakeholders and provided for an enabling policy environment. The analysis was specific to establishing the relevance of the strategies employed by each pillar in the project for strengthening information and knowledge management, creating awareness and stimulating adoption of EOA good practices, increasing the share of quality organic products in the market, and strengthening inclusive stakeholder engagement in organic commodities value chain development, coordination of the project actors.

To measure effectiveness, the ET investigated how effective the initiative has been in mainstreaming EOA into national, regional and continental policies, plans, strategies, and programmes. The ET interviewed representatives from CSC, RSC, NSC, CLOs, PIPs, BvAT, and ministries of agriculture to determine the effectiveness and scale of mainstreaming EOA elementsinto national, regional and continental policies, plans, strategies, and programmes as well as the instruments of implementation.

Through interviews across the structure and support institutions, the ET examined how efficient has mainstreaming EOA into national, regional and continental policies, plans, strategies, and programmes been. Specific data were obtained to determine what elements were mainstreamed and through what efficiency. Resource out was compared with output/ time; so as to explain how the mainstreaming of policies, plans, strategies, and programmes has been efficient in achieving desired positive results. The sustainability question was

examined by identifying (through interviews) the preliminary indications of the degree to which the project results are likely to be sustainable beyond the project's lifetime at various levels.

2) **To evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the EOA-I structural set up of EOA implementing partners (CLOs and PIPs) and institutional support structures (the AU- Chaired Continental Steering Committee, AfrONet, Regional Steering Committees, National Steering Committees, Executing Agencies and overall M&E systems) in delivering concrete results based on their mandates**

For this objective, the ET reviewed project documents, interviewed representatives from CSC, RSC, NSC, CLOs, PIPs, BvAT, civil society and ministries of agriculture to determine relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the structural set up and support institutions. For relevance, the ET determined the extent to which the design of projects is adequate to achieve the goals and objectives as well as consistency with SDC policies and experiences. Perceptions of various stakeholders on the relevance of various players in the structure were collected and analyzed.

Effectiveness examined the extent to which the outcomes achieved contributed to improved governance from a system perspective. Other areas for examination included the existence or lack of a robust M&E framework that can be used to provide strategic information and provide necessary feedback for decision making.Facilitating and inhibiting factors in implementation were also examined.

Efficiency measured the extent to which the relationship between resources (mainly financial and human resources) and time (e.g. delays compared to planning) required and results achieved was appropriate. To explain this, data were collected from both coordinating, implementing and supporting institutions.

3) **To determine the number (or percent) of households and other target groups who have been reached by the EOA project and in what ways.**

Through review of project reports at Executing Agency, CLOs and PIPs level, the ET established the number (or percent) of type of people reached -processors, transporters, students, extension officers, marketers, farmers by the EOA project pillars and in what ways (including training, market linkages, trade fairs and exhibitions and information materials and other interventions). The analyzed data were disaggregated by gender and age to established extent to which the project reached marginalized and vulnerable groups: youth and women.

4) **To assess effectiveness and efficiency of EOA pillar interventions in influencing farmers' knowledge, attitudes and uptake of EOA practices and/or technologies, and the mechanisms by which this occurred.**

The ET reviewed project documents- including farmer assessment reports, interviewed representatives from CSC, RSC, NSC, CLOs, PIPs, BvAT, civil society and ministries of agriculture to answer the questions on relevance, effectiveness and efficiency.

For relevance, the ET established the extent to which the objectives of the SDC projects are consistent with the demands and needs of the target groups (inclusive of gender). Key areas of investigation through mainly the farmer questionnaire were farmers' needs and knowledge gaps compared to what the project emphasized.

The element of effectiveness investigated how effective the pillars of RTE, I&C and VCMD were in influencingfarmers' knowledge, attitudes and uptake of EOA practices and/or technologies, and the mechanisms by which this occurred; while efficiency narrowed down on how the pillars were efficient from a resource use verses level of achievement angle.

5) **To assess the extent to which pillar interventions have contributed to key project outcomes including increased agricultural production, productivity, food security, income and farmer welfare.**

The key data collection instrument here was the survey questionnaire, whose data was analyzed by descriptive and inferential statistics. The ET concentrated on collecting and analyzing primary data to establish the change realized through the outcome indicators of production, productivity, food security, nutrition and welfare.

6) **To assess the extent to which gender equality and access by the youth and other vulnerable groups were considered in the project budget and implementation.**

For this objective, the ET generated evidence of theengagement of women youth and other vulnerable groups. Through review of documents and interviews the ET sought information related to inclusion of women and youths in budget implementation at pillar level.

7) **To draw key lessons learnt from Phase 1 of the EOA-I to inform recommendations and actions for addressing the weaknesses and challenges experienced, most appropriate and motivating funding support arrangements, future programming, implementation, monitoring & evaluation and reporting on a sustained basis at all key levels (country, regional, continental platform and AU).**

The ET summarized the study findings by drawing lessons and challenges across governance, coordination and implementation levels. These were used to inform recommendations for programming for the next phase.

2.2 Overview of Data Collection Methods

The cardinal rules for all the methods chosen – were those that encouraged consultation and participation of key stakeholders; and incorporated feedback from project beneficiaries; as well as created a coherence between data collection methods chosen and findings found. The overall methodology employed a qualitative and quantitative triangulation. While the quantitative methods and processes provided the figures in graphs etc. the qualitative ones pieced the story behind these figures. All these answered the specific learning questions that had been generated from the 7 evaluation objectives and aligned to the SDC Evaluation Grid.

2.2.1 Qualitative Data Collective Methods& Processes

1. Assignment Briefing and Kick off Meetings: The ET held meetings with BvAT's project management team for initial briefing and setting the stage. This included contract signing and issue of documents for review.

2. Review of Systems and Procedures:The ET started off the evaluation exercise by reviewing the key program documents- see Annex 2: and several other literatures drawn from research and relevant journals in the ecological organic agriculture space.The review provided a theoretical underpinning of the project; and as well provided an important opportunity to revisit the evolution of the project architecture.

3. Key Informant Interviews: Key Informant Interviews (KII) were undertaken at various levels:

   a. Executing & Coordination Agency level (BvAT): Upon review of documents the ET held interviews with BvAT to agree on evaluation design and refine data collection tools. Further interviews were held with BvAT in its capacities as EOA executing and coordinating agencies respectively.

   b. Continental Steering Committee (CSC) level: The ET held face-to-face individual meetings/ consultations- with the CSC Chair, BvAT, PELUM Kenya, AfrONet, SSNC and SDC.

c) Regional S teering Committee level:

a. Eastern Africa: The ET held individual meetings/ consultations- through face-to-face, phone and Skype with representatives of the COMESA, EAC and at least 1 Ministry of Agriculture official in each of the 4 countries.

b. West Africa: The ET held individual meetings/ consultations- through face-to-face, phone and Skype with the and at least 1 Ministry of Agriculture (NSC or RSC) official in each of the 4 countries.

d) National Steering Committee (NSC) level: The ET held discussions with in-country chairpersons of the NSC responsible to national platforms.

e) Coordinating and Implementation Organizational level: The ET held discussions with in-country implementation teams to seek inputs from them in their role as implementation stakeholders. The respondents here included CLOs and PIPs.

4. Exit Workshops: At the expiry of the in-country missions, the consultants held ½ day meetings with the in-country teams – comprised of CLOs, PIPs, and other members of the NSC, including the Ministry of Agriculture and representatives from farmer organizations. The exit meetings/ workshops generated further insights into some of the findings and issues observed during the desk reviews, KIIs and field data collection process; highlighted cross learning amongst the partners and explored features for the next phase –in regards to institutional set-up and programmatic focus.

2.2.1 Quantitative Data Collective Methods & Processes

The primary quantitative technique included the use of face-to-face questionnaire. Using locally trained enumerators, data were collected from ecological organic farmers in various locations in the 8 countries. The sampling technique was first stratified to reflect the farmers that have been reached through the key project interventions namely training, linkages, facilitated to trade fairs, exchange visits etc. and through information materials.

The ET estimated a sample size that would provide a basis for making inferences at 95% confidence interval with 5% margin of error using the following formula.

$$n = \frac{p(1-p)z^2}{ME^2}$$

Where:

- n is the minimum sample size required
- p is the proportion belonging to the specified category
- z is the z value corresponding to the level of confidence required
- e is the margin of error required
- With margin error (ME) =0.05,

p=0.5 and z=1.96

$$n = \frac{0.5 \times 0.5 \times 1.96 \times 1.96}{0.05 \times 0.05} = 384$$

This is then divided proportionately per country using the formula:

$$n_1 = \frac{\text{Total number of farmers reached in country 1}}{\text{Total farmers reached}} = \text{Total sample}$$

After proportional allocation some countries ended up with samples of less than 30. Since having a sample of less than 30 makes it difficult to conduct inferential statistics, the ET increased the sample to 30, where proportional allocation was less than 30. Those that had more than 30 remained the same. This essentially

Table 1: Adjusted Sample Size

FARMERS REACHED	Mali	Senegal	Benin	Nigeria	Uganda	Ethiopia	Tanzania	Kenya	Total
Number of farmers trained	14,504	1,025	6,480	2,929	20,620	3711	1,176	17,600	64,433
Number of farmers linked to markets	1,750	200	2,398	427	11,040	593	5,168	7,383	28,427
Number of farmers facilitated to trade fairs, exchange visits, workshops, conferences etc.	177	170	557	425	214	811	142	154	1,866
Number of farmers reached through information materials	19,854	1,500	12,100	4,100	70,000	4200	5,059	1,070	114,213
TOTAL	36,285	2,895	21,535	7,881	101,874	9315	11,545	26,207	208,939
Actual sample	67	5	40	14	187	17	21	48	384
Adjusted Final sample	67	30	40	30	187	30	30	48	462

increased the total sample and thereby reduced margin of error. Table 1 presents the general and adjusted sample.

The estimated sample size per country was further distributed proportionately per pillar in each country i.e. pillar 1, 2, and 3. In order to identify the final list of the sampling units, ET had proposed to employ simple random sampling technique. However this was not possible because the database of the EOA primary beneficiaries was not available.

To overcome this challenge, the ET determined that pillar implementing agencies that were working directly with primary beneficiaries could at least be able to identify them. Consequently each pillar implementing agency was requested to provide a list of respondents that were to be interviewed. Further, since visiting the respondents in their homes would have been a logistical nightmare with serious cost and time implications, pillar implementing agencies were requested to facilitate respondents under their pillar to a central location for the interviews. Each respondent was however interviewed alone.

2.2.2 Data Analysis & Presentation

This phase involved data analysis and presentation. The qualitative data were analyzed through thematic analysis, objective judgements and synthesis.

All the quantitative data collected were reviewed for completeness and coded before analyzing to ensure quality control. STATA and Excel were used to compute descriptive and inferential statistics. Inferential statistics was used to establish cause effect relationship between explanatory variables (training, land size, age, gender, level of education etc.) and outcome variables (knowledge, production level). Other forms of preliminary analysis included test statistics and correlation.

The missing data were categorized and coded as follows;

- 99- Not Applicable
- 98- None
- 97 – Do Not Know

The analyzed data were represented in the report in various diagrammatic forms including tables and charts as well as in narratives summarizing the key aspects / themes emerging from the 7 learning questions.

The ET presented an update of the exercise, preliminary findings and headline recommendations- to the CSC in a meeting in Kigali, Rwanda, the Eastern region partners in Machakos town, Kenya and the Western Africa partners in Cotonou, Benin. These provided notes, comments and other inputs all of which have been instructed into this Final Report

CHAPTER 3 EVALUATION FINDINGS

3.1 Introduction

The presentation of the evaluation findings has been made with reference to the 7 evaluation/ learning questions as aligned to the SDC grid. The ET has attempted to generate and report evidence to demonstrate achievement or lack (and explanations/ observations therein) of the project outcomes. Specifically, the answers have been sought for the following questions;

1. To what extent did the initiative increase the documentation of information and knowledge on organic agricultural products along the complete value chain and support relevant actors to translate it into practice and wide application?
2. To what extent did the initiative systematically inform producers about the EOA approaches and good practices and motivate their uptake through strengthening access to advisory and support services?
3. To what extent did the initiative substantially increase the share of quality organic products at the local, national, regional and global markets?
4. To what extent did the initiative strengthen inclusive stakeholder engagement in organic commodities value chain development by developing national, regional and continental multi-stakeholder platforms to advocate for changes in public policy, plans and practices?

3.2 Assessment of the Relevance, Effectiveness and Efficiency of Mainstreaming EOA into National Policies, Plans, Strategies & Programmes

The ET assessed the extent to which the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of mainstreaming EOA into national policies, plans, strategies, and programmes have contributed to expected outcomes and sustainability of the project.

3.2.1 Relevance

Relevance in this context was defined as the appropriateness of the initiative to the priorities and policies of the target groups, recipients, governments and donors. Therefore the relevance question was answered through the examination of how the presence and focus of EOA-mainstreamed in national policies, plans, strategies and programmes have met the demands and needs of the producers, marketers, processors, consumers, etc.; the extent to which the 4 pillars have addressed the needs of various stakeholders and provided

for an enabling policy environment; and how the strategies employed by each pillar for strengthening information and knowledge management, creating awareness and stimulating adoption of EOA good practices, increasing the share of quality organic products, and strengthening inclusive stakeholder engagement in organic commodities' value chain development and coordination of the project actors.

In this regard, the ET established that there were efforts at country level to mainstream national policies, plans, strategies and programmes as tabulated below, and that the mainstreamed initiatives were at different levels in the policy mainstreaming continuum.

Table 2: Existence of Policies, Plans and Programmes

	POLICIES	PLANS	UNIVERSITY PROGRAMMES	STANDARDS / CERTIFICATION	NATIONAL PROGRAMMES
Benin		√√			
Ethiopia	√√	√√	√√√		
Kenya	√√		√√		
Mali			√√		
Nigeria	√		√√		
Senegal	√		√√		
Tanzania		√	√√		
Uganda	√√		√√√		

KEY	Level of Progress
√	This denotes that the process of developing the respective document (Policies plans. university programmes Standards / Certifications) is still at the early planning stages. No draft is available document is available
√√	This denotes that the process of developing the respective document (Policies plans. university programmes Standards / Certifications) is an advanced stage awaiting necessary approvals
√√√	This denotes that the process of developing the respective document (Policies plans. university programmes Standards / Certifications has been accomplished and implementation is ongoing / being used.

3.2.1.1 Focus of National Policies

Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda have made strides in development of EOA policies. Kenya has the 5th draft (2017), while Nigeria is on its third draft. The focus of the Kenyan policy is to promote a well-coordinated organic agriculture sub-sector that contributes to socio-economic empowerment for improved livelihoods, health and environmental conservation for stakeholders. The specific objectives of the policy are to; mainstream organic agriculture research into the national agricultural research agenda, harmonize and integrate the training curriculum in organic agriculture

at all levels of the education system; mainstream organic agriculture within the public extension programs, develop and promote an effective system for production and standardization of quality organic inputs. Raise awareness on the benefits and opportunities arising from organic agriculture, develop market infrastructure for the promotion of certified organic agricultural products and services and develop a legal and institutional framework to support the growth of organic agriculture.

In Nigeria, the Organic Agriculture Act of 2017 is focused on promoting, propagating, developing further and implementing the practice of organic agriculture. This will cumulatively condition and enrich the fertility of the soil, increase farm productivity. The policy seeks to prevent contamination of underground water and destruction of the environment, depletion of natural resources; protect the health of farmers, consumers, and the public, and save on imported farm inputs. It provides room to setup institutional systems and structures that support an organic movement across Nigeria. These include but are not limited to National Organic Agricultural Programme, National Organic Agriculture Board (NOAB), Accreditation of Organic Certifying Body, and The National Centre for Organic Agriculture Quality Control.

In Tanzania, organic agriculture is highlighted in the National Agriculture Policy of 2013. The document provides a few policy statements reiterating governments' commitment in enhancing organic agriculture. For example, it highlights the government's interest to register and avail organic inputs to farmers as well as facilitate accreditation of organic products in order to reduce certification costs.

In Uganda, the government released a Draft Uganda Organic Agriculture Policy in 2009. However, this is still lying on the shelves. It has never been finalized as it awaits Ministry of Finance to provide a certificate of financial implication. The certificate would enable the government allocate resources for the implementation of the policy. Unfortunately, organic agriculture is not mentioned anywhere in the National Agriculture Sector Strategic Plan 2015/16-2019/20. Nevertheless, the National Agriculture Policy 2013 Objective 5 covers elements of EOA that include ensuring sustainable use and management of agricultural resource. The Uganda Fertilizer Policy (2016) advocates for EOA principles in areas of organic and bioorganic fertilizers. It describes organic fertilizer as that fertilizer derived from non-synthetic organic material, including sew-age sludge, animal manures, and plant residues produced through the process of drying, cooking, composting, chopping, grinding, fermenting or other methods and makes a declaration of nutrient value on the label. The policy mentions that bio-fertilizer is that substance that contains living microorganisms that colonize the interior of the plant and promote growth by increasing the supply or availability of primary nutrients.

In 2006, Ethiopia made a Proclamation to Establish Organic Agriculture System (Proclamation No. 488/2006). Since the launch of the EOA-I initiative, ISD has facilitated preparation of various policy related documents which include the

following; A preliminary assessment of the State of Ethiopia's Ecological Organic Agriculture Sector. The EOA Roadmap for the full and effective implementation of the Organic Agriculture Policy Instruments issued by the Government of Ethiopia; as well as the EOA - Implementation Tools and The PGS Guide for organic certification.

These documents are currently undergoing review stage after which they are to be presented to the EOA-I National Steering Committee and eventually to Ministry of Agriculture and the Agriculture Standing Committee in the Ethiopian Parliament for acceptance and ratification.

Table 3: Summary of National Policies per Country

	Policies
Benin	
Ethiopia	Proclamation to Establish Organic Agriculture System (Proclamation No. 488/2006) since 2006
Kenya	Organic Agriculture Policy 2017 (5th Draft)
Mali	
Nigeria	Organic Agriculture Act of 2017
Senegal	National Agricultural Investment Program for Food Security and Nutrition (PNIASAN),- awaiting validation
Tanzania	
Uganda	Draft Uganda Organic Agriculture Policy. Awaits Ministry of Finance to provide a certificate of financial implication.
	National Fertilizer Policy (NFP) 2016

3.2.1.2 Focus of National Plans

Benin and Tanzania have documented actionable plans aimed at promoting EOA. In Benin, the Innovation for Sustainable Agricultural Growth (2017) plan promotes use of organic herbicides and fertilizers in the rice and soya value chains. The EOA initiative in Benin was also engaged in the development of the strategic plan 2017-2025 to support the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) component. In Tanzania, the Greening Island Initiative plan aims at intensifying production of organic spices in Zanzibar.

The initiative has affirmed the opportunity for organic markets to various stakeholders. Tanzania Organic Agriculture Movement (TOAM) is heading the task force of the initiative. In addition, the Tanzania Agricultural Sector Development Programme (ASDP II) embraces organic agriculture elements. Specifically, it refers to mulching, nitrogen fixing crops and use of manure; and further articulates other organic practices that can be adopted, particularly mixed organic and inorganics practices.

In Senegal, the National Agricultural Investment Program for Food Security and Nutrition (PNIASAN), is about to be validated. It highlights and justifies the recommended investment required to support ecological agriculture.

Table 4: Summary of National Plans

COUNTRY	Policies
Benin	Innovation for Sustainable Agricultural Growth (2017)
Ethiopia	Roadmap for the Full and Effective Implementation of the Ecological Organic Agriculture Policy Instruments Issued by the GoE
Kenya	
Mali	
Nigeria	National Organic Agricultural Programme, National Organic Agriculture Board (NOAB), Accreditation of Organic Certifying Body, and The National Centre for Organic Agriculture Quality Control
Senegal	National Agricultural Investment Program for Food Security and Nutrition (awaiting validation)
Tanzania	Greening Island Initiative plan
	Tanzania Agricultural Sector Development Programme (ASDP II)
	Organic Sector Development Program (OSDP)
	Organic Policy Action Paper (OPAP)
Uganda	National Agriculture Sector Strategic Plan 2015/16-2019/20.

3.2.1.3 Focus of University Programmes

There has been investment in developing university programmes across all the countries. While some universities such as the Uganda Martyrs University (UMU) have come up with fully fledged university courses in organic agriculture, majority have exposed Ph.D., Masters research and undergraduate students to organic agriculture through course units; and encouraged the students to carry out research in organic agriculture. An overview of the programmes in the respective institutions are illustrated in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Focus of University Programmes

COUNTRY & NO OF UNIVERSITIES	Programme
Benin (1)	• University of Calabi: doing research on Organic Fertilizers and selling to farmers; they are currently doing research on organic livestock. • The University also has integrated production pest management (IPPM) courses.
Ethiopia (1)	• Mekele University. There are Organic Agriculture course units within the Degree programmes, and Masters students carrying out research on Organic agriculture related studies.
Kenya (1)	• Egerton University: Organic Agriculture course units within the undergraduate degree programmes, and Masters students carrying out research on Organic agriculture related studies.
Mali	• Organic Agriculture course units within the undergraduate degree programmes
Nigeria	• Tertiary education organizations like NUC, NBTE, and NRCN have been lobbied to review Curriculum to include organic agriculture. • A PhD student has been facilitated to carry out research on Indigenous knowledge and Organic Agriculture characterization amongst farmers in Nigeria.
Uganda (2)	• At Makerere University: - PhD. and Masters students are carrying out research on organic Agriculture while the undergraduates are exposed to organic Agriculture through course units. • At Uganda Martyrs University Nkozi – there is a fully-fledged undergraduate course on organic Agriculture, a Masters course in Agro Ecology, and a PhD programme in agro ecology and livelihood systems.
Senegal (1)	• At University of Dakar, the conceptualization of Organic Agriculture degree started in 2014. To date, 6 students across Bachelors, Masters & PhD programmes have graduated. Currently 5 students are on attachment.
Tanzania (1)	• At Sokoine Universitythere are ongoing Organic Agriculture Research programmes at PhD. and Masters levels. The first 2 PhD students expected to graduate in 2018. Dar es Salaam University is conducting research around EOA and is also playing a front role in EOA curriculum review.

3.2.1.5 Focus of Standards & Certification

The East African Organic Products Standard (EAOPS) whose mark is Kilimohai has been in existence since 2007. Its main purpose is to maintain a single organic standard for organic agriculture production under East African conditions. Due to the unaffordable cost for investments required by the farmers to get third party certification, several countries have embraced Group certification through Internal Control Systems (ICS) and Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) to support collective marketing of organic products. PGS are locally focused organic verification systems. They certify producers based on active participation of stakeholders and are built on a foundation of trust, integrity and transparency among organic farmers. They offer a complementary, low-cost, locally-based system of quality assurance, with a heavy emphasis on social control and knowledge building. Table 6 below summaries the certification efforts made by the various EOA countries over the period 2016-2017.

Table 6: EOA Standards & Certification

COUNTRY	PGS & ICS Processes
Benin	• 3 organic producers associations trained in ICS & PGS (VIVA Matekpo, AgribioAfrique and organic pineapple producer's group) trained on Internal Control System (ICS) and Participatory Guarantee System (PGS).
Ethiopia	• 78 producers sensitized on PGS and 50 vegetable farmers undergoing PGS process.
Kenya	• Building capacity of 19,000 smallholder farmers in third party certification and 15 farmers on PGS enabling increased compliance in organic standards.
Mali	
Nigeria	• Fifty-six (56) inspectors trained in Participatory Guarantee System procedure of certification. • Nigeria 47 local inspectors
Uganda	• 11 Local Inspectors trained in PGS • 226 farmers trained in ICS
Senegal	
Tanzania	• 42 PGS have been developed; 12 bear active licenses under the East African Organic Products Standard. • 6 ICS groups have been formed.

However, it was noted that there are already 3rd party certifications in Ethiopia in the value chains of coffee, honey, sesame, herbs and vegetables, and about 19,000 farmers in Kenya have already received 3rd party certification. Third party certification is very relevant for accessing regulated organic export markets that offer premiums for the produce.

3.2.1.2 Relevance to the Demand & Needs of Stakeholders / Value Chain Actors

The ET's review of the focus of various national policies, plans, strategies, and programmes confirm that they are relevant to the needs of the value chain actors. Specifically, these documents emphasize the need to disseminate organic agriculture knowledge to actors and articulate intentions to create support systems such as improving access to organic inputs (seeds, bio-pesticides and fertilizers) to farmers.

The introduction of organic agriculture units and courses at institutions of learning is aimed at establishing a critical mass of knowledgeable persons who can generate evidence and inform the EOA practice in the long run. In addition, plans and strategies such as the Greening Island Initiative that aims at intensifying production of organic spices in Zanzibar is a market driven initiative addressing the market access aspect.

Farmers, traders/ processors and consumers form part of the key value chain actors in the organic agriculture production, market and consumer systems. The needs for farmers revolve around knowledge, skills and practices on EOA; access to organic inputs and markets.

The processors are keen to having a consistent supply of quality organic products, accessing reliable markets of organic products and financial services, including insurance. They would like to have access to healthy foods free from chemicals; and thus, would consistently require information on sources and availability of information on a range of organic products / differentiation of products.

3.2.1.3 Extent to Which the Four Pillar Strategies Have Addressed the Needs of Various Stakeholders and Provided for an Enabling Policy Environment

Using the data generated from review of various documents and interactions with the project partners in each country, the ET team matched the key actors' needs and the aims of each of the pillars to explore their relevance. The findings are presented in Table 7.

The tabulated information depicts that by design the 4 pillars were relevant and complement roles in delivering the EOA initiative.

Table 7: Addressing the Needs of Various Stakeholders through the EOA Pillars

Pillars / Needs	Matching aims of the pillars and needs of the key Value chain actors			
	Research Extension and Training	**Information and communication**	**Value and market development**	**Support and Cementing**
• Knowledge, skills and practices on EOA • Access to Organic inputs. • Access to markets. • Enabling environment	Enhancing uptake of ecological organic agriculture practices	Producers are systematically informed and made aware about the Ecological Organic Agriculture approaches and good practices	Promoting on the (PGS)/ (ICS) that builds the social and entrepreneurial capacity of producers and processors to work together on agreed Organic standards.	Efficient cooperation and communication among relevant stakeholders at all levels including governments, farmers, civil society, private sector, and the international community
Traders / Processors • Consistent supply of quality organic products. • Access to reliable markets of organic products. • Access to finance	Identify and test packages of relevant information, that can be put into use by a wider section of the population	Creation of increased awareness and knowledge of value and practices of EOA and strengthening extension support systems.	Collaborating with the EU, other global trade partners and international organizations to facilitate the participation of Africa in global organic markets	
Consumers • Healthy foods • Information on availability of organic products / differentiation of products	Regular exploratory studies to collect information from operators, certification bodies or from organic movements/ networks,	Share insights and lessons from experiences by farmers, processors, marketers, extension agents as well as researchers in order to sensitize the consumers	To substantially increase share of organic quality products at the local, national and regional markets	
Policy Makers		Directly and indirectly targeted for lobbying and sensitization on EOA	Expose government staff to growing market opportunities for EOA	Directly and indirectly targeted for lobbying and sensitization on EOA

3.2.1.4 Relevance of Strategies Employed by the Pillars

The pillars implementing partners applied a combination of strategies during the implementation process. Relevance in this context was defined as the suitability of the strategies in addressing the desired and prioritized needs of the target groups, recipients, governments and donors. The ET engaged key informants to establish the relevance of strategies employed by each pillar in the project for strengthening information and knowledge management, creating awareness and stimulating adoption of EOA good practices, increasing the share of quality organic products, and strengthening inclusive stakeholder engagement in organic commodities value chain development, coordination of the project actors. It is evident that conceptually the strategies applied by the pillars were relevant based on the context and reinforced each other to address the needs of the mentioned stakeholders. This has been discussed as per the respective pillars.

Table 8: Relevance of RTE Pillar Strategies

This pillar was responsible for understanding gaps and implementing activities geared towards enhancing uptake of ecological organic agriculture practices along the entire commodity value chains.	
Strategies Applied	**Relevance Of The Strategies**
Conduct in-depth assessments to identify gaps and carry out training inorganic practices	• Discussions with key stakeholders including the farmers affirmed the relevance of the strategies under RTE, because they addressed a pertinent elements of access to knowledge on EOA practices, which continues to be limited amongst various key stakeholders. These include farmers, Government officials (Policy makers & Extension staff), private sector, and even the consumers. • Thus, the development of EOA curricula under this pillar ascertains consistency in content and delivery of EOA programmes beyond project period; and the graduates from these courses will ultimately be part of the critical mass giving EOA a voice in the continent, which is important for lobbying. • Training farmers on organic practices support through extension services, distribution of organic training manuals and setting up of demonstration sites were all considered relevant as they contributed to access of EOA knowledge and skills. • Farmer ToTs were equally important and relevant because they enabled the project to reach larger number of beneficiaries through cascading the training, and besides farmers learn better from other farmers. • Cartoons book, is relevant as it starts imparting EOA knowledge to the youngsters at an early age. • The online repository provides easy access to a collection of EOA documents of relevance to both scholars and the public as they give insights on existing knowledge, current research and existing gaps.
Incorporation of EOA into curricula of learning institutions and introduction of Degree courses in university and funding research projects. Some institutions offered PhD courses, others MSc while most included EOA units in their undergraduate courses.	
Farmer Training on organic practices.	
Supported EOA Extension services to farmers	
Supported development of EOA training programmes.	
Supported short course trainings for targeted	
Disseminated and updated EOA related knowledge and practices through online repository	
Establishment of EOA research demonstration sites for dissemination and update of EOA related knowledge and practices	
Development and distribution of Organic training manuals for colleges and universities was developed	
Farmer Training of Trainers on EOA practices.	
EOA practices Cartoon book	
Establishment of functional systems to dissemination and update of EOA related knowledge and practices i.e. online repository www.eoai.org/research	

Table 9: Relevance of IC Pillar Strategies

This pillar is complementary to the RTE through creation of increased awareness and knowledge of value and practices of EOA and strengthening extension support systems.	
Strategies Applied	**Relevance Of The Strategies**
Distribution of leaflets, brochures and booklets on EOA practices such as on compost preparations, application, mulches use, benefits, cover crops uses, and benefits, push and pull technology in controlling Striga and stalk borer amongst others.	• Use of leaflets, brochures and booklets with different organic agriculture messages and some in local languages was relevant in enhancing communication on EOA to the stakeholders and were also used by farmers' as reference material. The Organic Farmer (TOF) magazine produced in Kenya by BvAT which is availed to farmers, providing practical farming advice is an example of some of the materials shared with the stakeholders. • These EOA materials have also been relevant in increasing awareness and knowledge amongst journalist who then communicate to the wider public through news articles. • Use of school gardens is also an appropriate strategy to reach out to the young with EOA information and practices. Especially because they engage practically and acquire relevant skills and knowledge while setting up the school gardens. • The website serves as a source of up to date information on EOA as well as dissemination tool both for information on EOA technologies as well as events taking place thus relevant in keeping the wider public on the current affairs of EOA. • Farmer field days often give an opportunity to farmers, extension agents and input suppliersto showcase their achievements, such as field experiments, market innovations, practices for EOA to fellow farmers and other stakeholders. In the process, there is a lot of learning that takes place amongst the participants making them relevant events for the practitioners. • The informationcentres have been ideal for dissemination and training of farmers through airing videos and programs on organic farming practices. During such sessions, farmers meet and share experiences enhancing adoption. • Being part of creative events such as Gulu Go Green Marathon, Media Breakfast meeting, marking the Green Action Week and Hackathons all in Uganda was able to attract interest of different sets of stakeholders who may not have been reached before through mass media.
Establishment of school gardens	
EOA website continuously updated www.eoa-africa.org, www.pascib.org.	
Farmer field days	
Videos and radio programs featuring documentary on EOA best practices.	
Information centers	
Participation / facilitating events such as Gulu Go Green Marathon, Media Breakfast meeting marking the Green Action Week and Hackathonsthat bring together technology and agriculture Students to collaborate and find ideas and solutions for the Ecological Sub Sector.	

Table 10: Relevance of VCMD Pillar Strategies

This pillar aimed at promoting interventions based on a holistic approach along the organic value chains to stimulate development of sustainable markets and to increase trade in traditional and high value agricultural produce and products at domestic and export levels	
Strategies Applied	**Relevance of the Strategies**
Sub-sector value chain studies. Facilitation of Farmers' market days, setting up of organic shops, and group sales outlets, and participation in international exhibitions i.e. china international organic and natural products trade fair in Beijing. Use of print materials such as Brochures, and electronic media such as interviews with TVs and local radio Exchange visit Training on PGS & ICS, including ToTs of local inspectors (extension agents, lead farmers and input supplier). Setting up an updated database of organizations supporting EOA initiatives.	• The subsector studies enabled the identification of key players in the value chains and potential leverage points where interventions can lead to meaningful impact on EOA. • The Farmers' market days, the setting up of organic shops, and group sales outlets, and participation in international exhibitions in Kenya, Tanzania Nigeria and Ethiopia were relevant in providing the opportunity of producers and markets actors in the EOA arena to interact and engage with the markets /buyers.Government officials were also facilitated to attend the international exhibitions in order to appreciate the relevance and opportunity in promoting EOA. • Ease of access and wider reach to the public by print and electronic media makes use of the TVs and Brochures relevant in dissemination of EOA information. • Exchange visits undertaken to processors, and marketing organizations enabling the producers appreciate the requirements of the market; i.e. preferred varieties, quality and quantities. • Training PGS & ICS are affordable mechanisms when compared to 3rd party certification in enabling farmers to access local and regional competitive markets. • The Data base of organizations supporting EOA initiatives is instrumental for value chain actors keen to engage with producer and capacity building organizations working on EOA.

Table 11: Relevance of Supporting and Cementing Pillar Strategies

This pillar aimed at contributing to efficient and effective coordination and management of the EOA Initiative at the National level and is coordinated by the Country Lead Organizations (CLOs) and supported by Pillar Implementing Partners (PIPs).	
Strategies Applied	**Relevance of the Strategies**
Establishment and coordination National Platforms with Steering Committees. Facilitated consultative and planning meeting amongst the PIPs	• The National platforms which by design comprised of key strategic partners in EOA acted as the apex that could be used for sharing progress and success stories on EOA at country level and cascade learnings to the other stakeholders. • The consultative and planning meeting amongst the PIPs provided an opportunity for the implementing partners to learn from each other and design interventions that build synergies during the implementation processes.

3.2.2 Effectiveness

Effectiveness was measured by the evidence of the existence and scale of EOA elements and instruments being mainstreamed into national, regional and continental policies, plans, strategies, and programmes. It was key to demonstrate how these elements have led to positive results now and how these will be continued beyond the end of the current project phase. This has been discussed in the subtopics below.

3.2.2.1 EOA Elements Mainstreamed

Elements of EOA include but are not limited to; conservation farming practices, maintenance and enhancement of soil fertility, use of bio pesticides, use of organic manure and water conservation practices. These have been found captured in the various national policies, plans, strategies, and programmes developed over the period of the programme.In Tanzania, the National Agriculture Policy 2013 has a whole section dedicated to organic agriculture; it highlights objects of organic farming and outlines policy statements on access to inputs, accreditations, regulations for certification and collaboration with the private sector. The Tanzanian ASDP II programme recognizes EOA organic practices i.e. organic mulching, nitrogen-fixing crops, and manure and articulates the organic practices that can be adopted (mixes organic & Inorganics practices).

In Benin, the agriculture policy has informed the implementation of different elements of EOA through Municipality Development Plans, National Fund for the Municipality projects, and while in Senegal, the elements of sustainable soil management are beginning to emerge in the country's agriculture plan.

In all the countries except Mali and Benin, all the learning and research institutions under pillar 1 have been able to introduce organic agriculture course units in the undergraduate and Master's degree courses, and have had PhD students carry out research on organic Agriculture related topics. The table 12 below provides a synopsis across the countries.

[2] Include but not limited to; conservation farming practices, maintenance and enhancement of soil fertility use of bio pesticides, use of organic manure and bio-pesticide, water conservation practices etc.

Table 12: EOA Elements Mainstreamed at Learning Institutions across Countries

Country	Institutions	Outputs
Ethiopia	Mekele University	• Msc in Agroecology partnership between Mekelle University and Swedish University supporting research on EOA at the Masters level. 5 MSc. students carrying out research on OA related topics. • An approved EOA unit course in a Masters programme
Kenya	Egerton University	• Reviewed Curricula to accommodate 2 OA units and pursuing for more. • Designed a 2-year certificate course that is yet to be approved by the Council of University Education.
Mali		Supporting PhD students' research in OA.
Nigeria		Enrolled 30 students in 2017
Senegal	University of Dakar (UCAD)	Developed EOA curriculum and enrolled 4 and 2 students at Master and PhD level respectively
Tanzania	Sokoine University of Agriculture	
Uganda	Makerere University	About 45 students undertaking MSc in Agroecology and 10 PhD students in Agroecology,
	Uganda Martyrs University	

3.2.2.1 Results from Mainstreaming of EOA into Policies, Plans, Strategies, & Programmes

At this level, the ET summarized the views / perceptions of key informants on how mainstreaming of EOA into policies, plans, strategies, and programmes have influenced desired positive change across the countries. The informants comprised of members and officials of National platforms and PIPs staff. The summary of these perceptions is presented in Table 13.

The results tabulated are derived from the objectively verifiable indicators of the project outcomes. The first outcome revolves around ecological organic products related knowledge along the value chain is increasingly documented and actors capacitated to translate it into practices and application. The second is about producers are systematically informed and made aware about the EOA approaches and good practices and motivated to apply them by having access to strengthened advisory and support services. The third is a substantially increased share of organic quality products at the local, national and regional markets is achieved. The forth outcome is a fully functional multi-stakeholder platforms at the national level, regional and continental levels, mutually agreeing on well-coordinated and concerted action, informed by scientific evidence and local knowledge lead to EOA positive changes in public policies and investment plans, in technical standards and certification procedures, in research agenda and training curricula, in advisory and information practices and in the organization of markets and value chains.

Table 13: Results from Mainstreaming of EOA Policies, Plans, Strategies, & Programmes

Results/-	Very much (20-30%)	Increased (10-20%)	Slightly increased (5-10%)	Hardly increased (0-5%)	No change
Demand for EOA products	75%	25%			
New or expanded EOA market	38%	63%			
EOA practices adoption	75%	27%			
Adoption of technologies	75%	25%			
Income	25%	75%			
Welfare	25%	75%			
Food security	25%	75%			

There was a general feeling amongst 75% of the KII that there has been an increase of between 20-30% in the adoption of EOA practices and adoption of technologies as well as demand of EOA products. A similar proportions of KII also reported that income, welfare, and food security had also increased but by approximately 10-20%. 63% of the KII reported that new or expanded EOA market had increased by a margin of 10-20%.

3.2.3 Efficiency

Efficiency at this level was determined through analyzing the EOA elements that were mainstreamed against time, leveraging resources with partners and other similar initiatives, and the quality dimension. This explained the levels of achievement, and where possible made comparisons with similar initiatives undertaken in respective countries as an indication of efficiency as well as highlighted preliminary indications of the degree to which the project results are likely to be sustained beyond the project's lifetime (at various levels – country, regional and continental). The analysis also dived into the synergies question and alluded how these at various levels complemented the EOA agenda.

3.2.3.1 Time

Mainstreaming EOA in policies, plans, strategies, and programmes is multifaceted and thus requires a multi-stakeholder approach beyond the EOA Initiative approach by the Initiative partners. The process can only therefore move as fast as the different parts in the system can drive the agenda. For example, even though the EOA-I partners prepared the Education and Training in curricula for institutionalization to fast track the developments of EOA in institutions, this did not enhance the process across all the countries. In Kenya, while Pillar 1 PIP (Egerton University) was able to develop

the content for certificate courses in EOA, it was up to the University systems to provide the final approval. At the moment, the Uganda Martyrs University has completed organic agriculture undergraduate courses. The national organic policies for Uganda and Kenya are in their 4th and 5th drafts respectively; these are from processes that began around 2010, and this means that the EOA initiative did not have full control of delivery times especially when third party government institutions were involved.

Nevertheless, the time element in mainstreaming EOA into national policies, plans, strategies, and programmes should be viewed on a continuum, while taking into consideration the local context. Thus, the various EOA-I implementing countries should give clear indication in their plans the anticipated annual progress they can be scored against.

3.2.3.2 Synergies and Sustainability

The importance of collaborating with other institutions with similar objectives and target beneficiary cannot be overemphasized. Synergies amongst similar projects are able to leverage on resource, make use of compatible skills and abilities, enhance coordination, and expand value propositions to beneficiaries. In the process, the projects would be able to achieve scale and if well managed brings in efficiency. It's therefore of interest for projects to explore collaboration opportunities with others that have aligned visions.

In Ethiopia, ISD is leveraging on the SNV Biogas Project to introduce bio-slurry as an organic input in their farmers. ISD's previous work with ICIPE on push and pull technology has attracted the French embassy in Ethiopia to scale out push and pull technology and bio slurry. ISD has also been able to secure funding from Global Grant Fund (GGF) to support a new value chain intervention in cereals (semi-hulled barley). In addition, ISD has mobilized funds from Finland Embassy to launch new Pillar III intervention on highland fruits between 2015 and 2017, which opened an opportunity to engage in new regions and value chains. The African Biodiversity Network (ABN) is also supporting in coming up with community seed knowledge. Ethiopia's pillar 3 works in partnership with Holeta Agriculture Research Center on potatoes, carrots, indigenous kales, onion, leek and lettuce, and pillar 1 partners with 2 agricultural training centers;Maichew Agricultural College, Wukro Agricultural College to conduct research and Wukro Saint Mary College to disseminate extension on organic agriculture. These arrangements involve exchange of knowledge and expertise around EOA and the research and training centres can carry on beyond the project intervention period.There is also an emerging partnership with Wollo University and Addis Ababa University (AAU) School of Commerce in terms of knowledge management, research and resource mobilization in EOA.

Similar arrangements are found in Uganda, where the Uganda Martyrs University has established research and farmers' extension links with University of St. Joseph Ngethe Campus and Mbuye Farm Institute. Makerere University has also created synergy with Accelerate Agro Food Initiative –a multi-stakeholder partnership of youth and

students' initiative to co-create and build sustainable agro businesses and is also working with Open University and PELUM Uganda to develop the SMS platform.

In Benin, OBEPAB has collaborated with agricultural research institutions to inform decisions and value chain development, federation of farmers' organizations taking advantage of their structures to empower and enhance capacity of farmers, as well as worked closely with the mayors to reinforce the work done locally concerning EOA. In Mali, EOA activities are carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, NGOs, churches, and SOS Faim. SOS Faim supports smallholder farmers to improve farming practices and access to organic seeds. In Tanzania, TOAM is working with eco village adoption to climate change project in central Tanzania (ECO ACT) an EU and United Republic of Tanzania (URT) project, and have a partnership with Civil Society in Development CISU to implement a project titled Farmers Family Learning Groups.TOAM is also working with the Swiss Aid Tanzania to conduct research and advocacy for agroecology, and SAT (Pillar 1) in Tanzania is supporting compost making using industrial waste in partnership with Guavay Company Limited that manufactures organic fertilizer in Tanzania PELUM Tanzania has two additional projects running; one, in partnership with USAID is implementing land rights projects targeting smallholder farmers; and the second one "Our seeds our right" has been implemented in partnership with the Bread for the World.

Synergies are also observed in Senegal. ENDA PRONAT has been working with the University of Dakar since 2014, and this has heightened the EOA research agenda within the university programmes. Similarly, synergies have also been created with the Senegalese Institute of Agricultural Research since 2014 leading to conception of a degree program and development of training modules. There has also been close collaboration with the Centre for International Corporation for Agronomic Research and Development on the areas of research on farming techniques, land tenure amongst others.

As articulated in the previous paragraph, there was evidence of synergies across the EOA-I implementing countries. However, it was notable most of these arrangements were not formally / officially documented i.e. no signed agreement in place, and at times appeared more of adhoc arrangements taking opportunity of existing circumstances; thus, the level of commitment and subsequently the shape of engagement into the future was hazy. This limits the sustainability elements of the initiative into the future. Well-documented partnerships have the potential of attracting resources, as they often introduce innovative approaches as demonstrated by the ISD and SNV upscaling of Biogas / Bio slurry programme in Ethiopia supported by the French.

3.2.3.3 Resource Mobilization

Mobilization of resources is required to drive and upscale the EOA agenda, though beginning from the country level. Even though there are indications of individual pillar implementing institutions carrying out resource mobilization, there was no evidence of collective resource mobilization at the national level. The ET team never came across any document in

that regard. This can be partly attributed to the limited synergy amongst the pillar implementing partners within the country. This disconnect arises from the fact that the different pillars focus on different products for research, communication and value chain development and marketing. The pillars even went for different geographical/ locational focus. This definitely limits demonstration of impact that could have had the potential to attract more resources. Therefore, there is need for better joint planning of activities amongst pillars, as well as an NSC that is in control of steering coherence across the pillars.

However, at pillar level there were very few indications of resource mobilization taking albeit in varying degrees across the countries. In Tanzania, TOAM has a leading role in the ROSALUX Foundation funded project aimed at increasing the government recognition and support for farmer managed seed systems and production of Quality Declared Seeds (QDS) as an approach towards widespread use of improved seeds in Tanzania. SAT (Pillar 1 implementing agency) in Tanzania has developed a market system that is self-sustaining – in that they have set up an organic shop where organic farmers supply all their produce and access farm inputs. SAT then supplies these products to an already existing organic consumer market. Through this model the organic shop is able to pay farmers competitive prices for their produce and still generating surplus income. In Ethiopia, ISDs experience in the Organic agriculture space was able to attract funding from the French Embassy is to scale out of the push and pull technology and use of bio slurry and the African Biodiversity Network (ABN) is supporting community seed knowledge project.Finland Embassy, GGF andIFOAM,are also supportingISD to implement Nutrition in Mountain Agro-ecosystem (NMA) project that has EOA practices at its core (2014-2021), are also some of the funding organizations.

3.2.4 Conclusions

EOA-I main agenda is to mainstream EOA practices into national policies, strategies, plans and programs; at the national, regional and continental levels. ET established that different countries had registered success along these lines in varied degrees. While Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda have made substantive strides towards EOA policies and countries like Benin and Tanzania have realizable government backed plans, Senegal, Mali and Ethiopia have only been able to realize university programs which is also a common achievement across all countries. The ET also established that all the countries apart from Mali and Senegal, had organic certification standards, processes and procedures in place and in all cases, there were producers who had been certified either in groups or as individuals.

Relevance:

ET observed that the mainstreaming of EOA I practices and technologies into the national policies, plans and programmes were relevant to the needs of the value chain actors. This was particularly so because the mainstreamed practices and technologies in national policies, plans and programmes such as EOA courses in tertiary learning institutions, internal

control systems (ICS) and participatory guarantee system (PGS) amongst others seek to disseminate EOA knowledge across the value chain actors, provide intentions to create support systems, and taking into consideration generation of future demand for expertise around EOA.

Effectiveness:

This study established that the following elements have been mainstreamed: conservation farming practices; use of bio pesticides; use of organic manure and water conservation all contributing to maintenance and enhancement of soil fertility.

One of the key achievements where EOA-I has played very significant role is the introduction of EOA curriculum at the tertiary level of education. Apart from Benin and Mali all the other countries reported to have active students in EOA either at master's level or PhD level or both.

Efficiency:

With respect to time, ET established the period it takes from the first initiation of the discussion around EOA practices with policy makers to the time they are actually adopted and fully mainstreamed. This takes time mainly because of the intricacies involved in moving policy agendas at the country and the bureaucracy challenges. Additionally, in the three countries; Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda, that have made strides in mainstreaming EOA, the processes started before EOA –I came into the fore. For example, in Uganda where the policy development process started in 2009, it has not yet been effected to date; 9 years later.

The bringing together of EOA players at the national level was nonetheless noted to have created more interest and heightened awareness around lobbying for policy change and more deliberate involvement of policy makers in EOA activities and agendas. In Tanzania for example, the NSC was able to lobby for the inclusion of EOA elements during the review of the ASDP II precisely because of the heightened awareness and interest to push changes at the policy level.

Synergies and Sustainability

ET established that most of the EOA implementing agencies have established synergies with other EOA players and funders outside the EOA initiative funded by SDC and or SSNC. Some of these synergies are informal while others are formal with contracts. It is recommended that whenever possible EOA implementing partners should endeavor to formalize the informal synergies. This may not only have provided new avenues for resource mobilization but also guard against abrupt withdraws by donors which could halt joint initiative.

It was also established that the specific role played by most of the PIPs and CLOs in the EOA-I falls within the core functions of these implementing agencies. This suggests that even if the funders of EOA-I were to withdraw most of the agencies would be able to continue implementing most of EOA-I supported elements by leveraging on the existing partnerships and synergies with other OA players.

Resource Mobilization

Resources, as in any other initiative, play an important role in up scaling the EOA agenda. The EOA-I had consequently from the start assigned responsibility to certain support structures like the NSC, RSC and CSC to mobilize resources for the EOA agenda. From discussions with representatives of these structures, there was a common understanding and agreement that these committees would not have been most appropriate bodies to be assigned the responsibility of resource mobilization. This was mainly because these committees meet on very few days in a year and only to discuss progress and other issues around EOA. However, the structures could provide advice, network, reference and recommendation to the actual EOA-I implementing agencies seeking more funding.

At the pillar level, this assessment established that not so much had been done in resource mobilization. ET was of the opinion that one of the reasons contributing to this was that majority of the PIPs carried out most of the implementation activities in silos. That is, each PIP was targeting different group of producers and in different geographical locations within the respective countries; and this may have limited joint resource mobilization effort because the results were scattered across the countries thus not providing critical mass to attract attention of other potential donors. There were nonetheless some success stories like that of SAT in Tanzania (Pillar 2) which is 90% self-sustaining[3].

3.3 Assessment of the Effectiveness and Efficiency of the EOA Structural Set Up &Institutional Support Structures

The ET examined the institutional design and EOA working arrangements using the effectiveness and efficiency lens. The evaluation narrowed down to the structure of the EOA initiative. The structure is made up of CLOs and PIPs and support structures that include the AU-Chaired Continental Steering Committee, AfrONet, Regional Steering Committees, National Steering Committees and Executing Agencies. Included in this assessment is the examination of how the overall M&E systems have been effective and efficient (or otherwise) in delivering concrete results based on their multi-level and varied mandates.

3.3.1 Relevance

Firstly, the ET beefed up this objective by introducing the relevance question so as to create the right premise for the rest of the inquiry. The relevance question was answered by examining the extent to which the design of the project was adequate in achieving the goals and objectives and as to whether this maintained consistency with SDC policies and experiences and other global instruments.

Overall, the relevance of the project can be explained in the sense that it was a response to the African Heads of States and Government Decision EX.CL/Dec. 621 (XVII) on organic farming; and has congruence to the various AU economic,

[3] SAT is running two programs that are incoming generating: one is the SAT organic shop which buys and sells organic products; and second, SAT runs a training program which is paid for by participants. Both of these programs generate surplus income which SAT uses to partly run its operations.

social and environmental policies and strategies of enhancing sustainable development and indigenous knowledge and finds alignment with Africa Union Agenda 2063's aspiration on a prosperous Africa, based on inclusive growth and sustainable development.

The EOA structure is multi-layered. Structures range from (governance) to regional (coordination) and national (coordination and implementation). To build a national EOA voice and elevate it to a continental landscape is not only relevant and in tandem with efforts to address the needs of local organic farmers, apply EOA approaches widely, increase the share of organic products at local, national, regional and global markets and strengthen organic value chains – but also builds a solid case for mainstreaming EOA polices, plans and programs at different levels. These elements enable the structure to feed into, regional and continental frameworks including the African Union.

To build a movement of EOA in Africa, requires pitching the EOA agenda at the highest political organ. The choice of the AU'sDREA to chair the Continental Steering Committee is found not only relevant but strategic to mainstreaming the EOA agenda within the AU system. The regional clusters are supposed to be chaired by representatives ofRegional Economic Communities (RECs) - EAC and ECOWAS for Eastern Africa and West Africa respectively. These through the RSCs hold a collective voice and platform for the EOA agenda at regional level. ET notes that only the west Africa RSC is chaired by the regional block- ECOWAS. Representative. An EAC representative is still to chair the east African one. At national level, the platforms are not only found relevant, but having a national outlook and being hosted and chaired byin-country ministries of agriculture.

EOA advocacy requires organization of actors across to build a continental voice. It was therefore very relevant for the structure to include the role that was played by AfrONet of rallying in non-state actors including associations, private sector players and others beyond the executing, coordinating and implementing agencies, and too, beyond the 8 EOA participating countries. This meant that the effect of the project would be felt across Africa.

The CLOs were selected by the national platforms to coordinate the work of the PIPs. This approach is found relevant as CLOs enjoyed a national outlook, and in fact, in some countries some of them were the recognized national organic agriculture networks. To the extent, that they also implemented Pillar 4 and that they coordinated the work of PIPs, then their inclusion into the structure is found very relevant. The PIPs are considered centers of excellence responsible for implementing pillars 1-3. In the areas where they worked in collaboration to scale up impact, the ET finds them very relevant.

The ET also collected perceptions of various stakeholders (at continental, regional and national, civil society, private sector etc.) on the importance/ indispensability of the EOA structural set-up.At least 4 organizations per country ticked the level of importance for all the different entities. The ticks could as well be replaced by 100% apart from the case of AfrONet. Using a magnitude scale various PIPs and CLOs representatives

Table 14: Aggregated Perceptions of the Indispensability of the Structure

Entity	Indispensable	Important	Indifferent	Not important	Unnecessary
CSC	√				
RSC	√				
NSC	√				
AFRONET		√			
CLO	√				
P1	√				
P2	√				
P3	√				
P4	√				

scored against the importance of various structures. Table 14 presents these perceptions.

Except AfrONet (which has been ranked important) all other structures were found indispensable. Interviews across partners found a consensus that the current configuration of the EOA structure and the pillars should be kept as it allows focus and helps in monitoring.However, the ET noted that apart from CLOs, most PIPsdid not demonstrate thorough understanding of the specific roles that are played by the CSC, RSC, NSC, and AfrONet and particularly how these connected with their mandates.

3.3.2 Effectiveness

Using the SDC Grid, the ET examined the extent to which the outcomes achieved contributed to improved governance from a system perspective.All the structures that the project design set up are by their various mandates largely effective in providing either governance or management accountability. Firstly, as the executing agency, BvAT was successful in supporting establishment of National Platforms and the selection of CLOs, PIPs and has executed its responsibility of management, accountability and general oversight of all partner activities.

The CSC Secretariat provided a supporting role that effectively cascaded to the PIPs through the RSC, NSC and the CLOs. On account of this there has been policy gains. For example, Benin, Nigeria, Kenya and Uganda have through the drafting of national EOA polies and plans paved a way for ultimate domestication of EOA at national level. AfrONet's Strategic Plan (2017-2022) makes provision for the organization to enter into partnerships with other actors in ecological agriculture. While there had been steady progress in the CLO coordination role in most countries, the assumption that all the CLOs and PIPs were appropriately and democratically selected by their national stakeholders to undertake their mandate,

has not held true in all cases; as there are cases where PIPs were larger in scope and vibrancy than the CLOs.

The ET finds the EOA initiative's structure realistic and one that can be sustained beyond the current phase. This is on account of its effective inbuilt support attributes- benefitting from already existing institutional systems, resources and structures. However, for the EOAstructure to function well, both resources and top-down and bottom-up feedback mechanisms are critically important.However, while, the CLOs are aware of the role AfrONet, NSC, RCS and CSC play and how this feeds into the overall EOA mandate, the PIPs do not share the same awareness and this undermines the veracity of the structure. The PIPs however find the EOA structure realistic in that it is hinged on their organizational core competencies and experience. Apparently, the ET noted some disconnect between PIPs (in the same country) in sequencing of the activities under pillar, 1, 2 and 3 and crowding in to generate a critical mass of impact.

At PIPs level, the ET received feedback that the EOA resources were inadequate in meeting the demands of programming EOA to scale. In some cases, the fund allocations were described as "a drop in the ocean". It israther difficult for the ET to accept this feedback prima faciesince most PIPs recorded low to average burn rates throughout the project period. It is possible though, that the case of low funds manifested into disincentive to implement project activities.

For policy and practice changes to happen the starting point is at country level, where national platforms convene, facilitate, advise and monitor progress of EOA mainstreaming. National platforms strategically chaired by representatives from Ministries of Agriculture have not been very effective in influencing national agricultural policy framework (including the CAADP Compact and Investment Plan). They have rather advanced all kinds of reasons ranging from lack of resources to low or lack of incentives to members and lack of leadership at the government level. The ET found that in Senegal, the NSC is operational and all policy and stakeholder coordination was carried out through the CLO. While the NSCs should be led by organic agriculture "champions" and "gate keepers", this was not the case in most of the countries; and this has slowed down the pace of developing and integrating of EOA policies and plans.

Finally, overall implementation effectiveness was hindered by a range of factors that ranged from discontinuation/ suspension of certain PIPs (OFPSANin Nigeria and PANOS in Ethiopia), student strikes and government bureaucratic systems in universities and slow release of funds due to non-adherence to strict burn-rate thresholds.

3.3.3 Performance of the M&E Framework

Quite close to effectiveness, the ET turned their lens on how the EOA initiate made use of the various M&E and reporting tools to generate evidence that supported the achievement of outcomes. This analysis was carried out at various levels of the structure. Firstly, there is evidence of partner monitoring visits by the executing agencies and CLOs whose findings and recommended actions are contained in

the Consolidated Annual Reports for the period 2015 through 2017. Certain actions have also been informed by these visits; with a good example being the decision to suspend OFPSAN in Nigeria in May 2017. PIPs also collect data that feed into the activity indicators.

However, a key finding of the ET is the setting of project targets and implementation was not informed by a baseline survey. A baseline survey would have established a project benchmark from which all indicators would have been measured against. Effectively, this makes it rather difficult (even with the re-call question in the farmer questionnaire) to authoritatively communicate the change between 2014 and 2018.

Secondly, the amount of funds that have been set aside for project follow up (monitoring) in country are considered meagre to undertake a robust monitoring, evaluation and reporting process. In most cases the allocation has been less than 8% of the project budget.

At in-country levels, there is no evidence of strategic information. Strategic information focusses on data generation, analysis and reporting as a means through which the use of the information can ensure that the intended results articulated under the project design are achieved. Even, with technical and financial reports being submitted to CLOs from PIPs, onward to BvAT and beyond an integrated M&E system to provide strategic information using data derived from routine programme monitoring, research and evaluation, to guide policy, planning, coordination and programmatic decisions and actions to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and accountability is found lacking, right from design, planning to implementation.

As observed by the Mid Term Review (MTR), the inability of the partners to submit financial and operational reports that adhere to the project's requirements as communicated by the Executing Agency could be associated with lack of proper M&E system as evidenced by the ET visits in-country. The ET further asserts that a robust M&E system would not only aid in accurate monitoring and reporting, but also enhance accountability to all stakeholders.

3.3.4 Efficiency

At this level, the efficiency aspect was focused on the implementing agencies and support structures and narrowed down to determining the extent to which the relation between resources (mainly financial and human resources) and time (e.g. delays compared to planning) required were commensurate to the results. At this point, the agencies; burn rates have been used to compute the efficiency ratios. Firstly, the project through CLOs and national forums has not been efficient in bringing in significant amount of development (financial) resources outside the 2 main donors SDC and SSNC and thus there is a big gap of financial resources for implementation; with approximately, 43,900 million Euros is needed to implement the EOA Strategic plan successfully; according to EOA Annual Report 2017.

Second, in terms of resource allocation, while almost all the countries receive equal amount of funding there is an important difference in the proportional

allocation across pillars.As the table below indicates, the lion share (37%) of the budget went to pillar 4 responsible for coordinating and cementing. This is not surprising particularly because in addition to coordinating EOA at the country level, CLOs (who mainly are Pillar 4 implementers, also provide secretariat to the National Platform and are mainly the ones mandated to champion policy advocacy with the backing of the National Platform and National Steering Committee. Pillar 1 (Research, Training and Extension), Pillar 2 (Information and Communication), and Pillar 3 (Value chain and Market Development) received proportionately 25%, 19% and 20% of the total budget respectively. Table 15 presents this info.

Table 15: % Pillar Fund Allocations as at December 2017

Pillar	Allocation
Pillar 1	25%
Pillar 2	19%
Pillar 3	20%
Pillar 4	37%

Interestingly, despite Pillar 2, having received the smallest share of the budget, its burn rate was also the lowest at 70% of what has been allocated and disbursed as at December 2017. This is followed closely by Pillar 1 at 75%. Table 16 contains this finding.

Table 16: Burn Rate as at Dec 2017 by Pillar

Country	Allocation	Actual Spent	Burn Rate
Pillar 1	1,010,621	757,499	75%
Pillar 2	758,884	532,396	70%
Pillar 3	803,217	742,518	92%
Pillar 4	1,481,427	1,295,053	87%
TOTAL	4,054,149	3,327,465	82%

Overall, the EOA in-country implementation has not been very efficient in the application of project funds. The cumulative burn rate for the period 2015 through the first half of 2018 was 68.5%. This suggests that they will close out with about 30% carry over into 2019; and thus, most PIPs through the CLOs will be applying for no-cost extensions; if BvAT does not relocate the funds to the next phase.

Table 17 presents the average burn rate per each country, over the period. Annex 3 presents a detailed burn rate for each organization per country.

Table 17: Cumulative Burn Rate (2015-mid 2018)

Country	Total allocated	Total Actual spent	Cumulative Burn Rate (%)
Kenya	614,164.95	418,651.99	68.16
Tanzania	614,164.95	452,095.97	73.61
Uganda	614,164.95	471,679.22	76.80
Ethiopia	614,164.95	367,205.10	59.78
Nigeria	599,991.05	464,378.12	77.39
Senegal	599,991.05	440,966.38	73.49
Mali	599,991.05	228,646.62	38.10
Benin	599,991.05	483,841.82	80.64
Overall Total	**4,856,624.01**	**3,327,465.23**	**68.51**

The burn rate levels across the EOA participating countries dilute the view held by the CLOs and PIPs that the funds allocated are inadequate to carry out the implementation work successfully. Even with the average burn rate the project has made numerous achievements and recorded steady progress as per the EOA 2015-2022 Strategic Plan and 2015-2020 Action Plan. The only country where progress has not been steady is Mali where legal battles regarding the governance of the CLO slowed down project implementation.

ET also examined the level of efficiency with funds disbursement comparing the projected set date for disbursement and the actual date when these disbursements were actually made for each country. As the graph below indicates, while in 2014 disbursement of funds occurred 3 months and 21 days ahead of the projected dates, from Jan 2016 funds disbursements were delayed by an average of 3 months and 10 days.

The most severely affected period was disbursement for July-December 2017 where disbursement was delayed on average by 4 months and 15 days. The longest delay was the disbursement to ISD Ethiopia for January – April 2017 which had been delayed for 9 months and 21 days.

The delay in disbursement by extension would eventually affect the implementation of EOA related project activities by the PIP implementers.

A delay in disbursement of 3 months or more means that the implementing agency received funds to implement project half way into the implementation period.

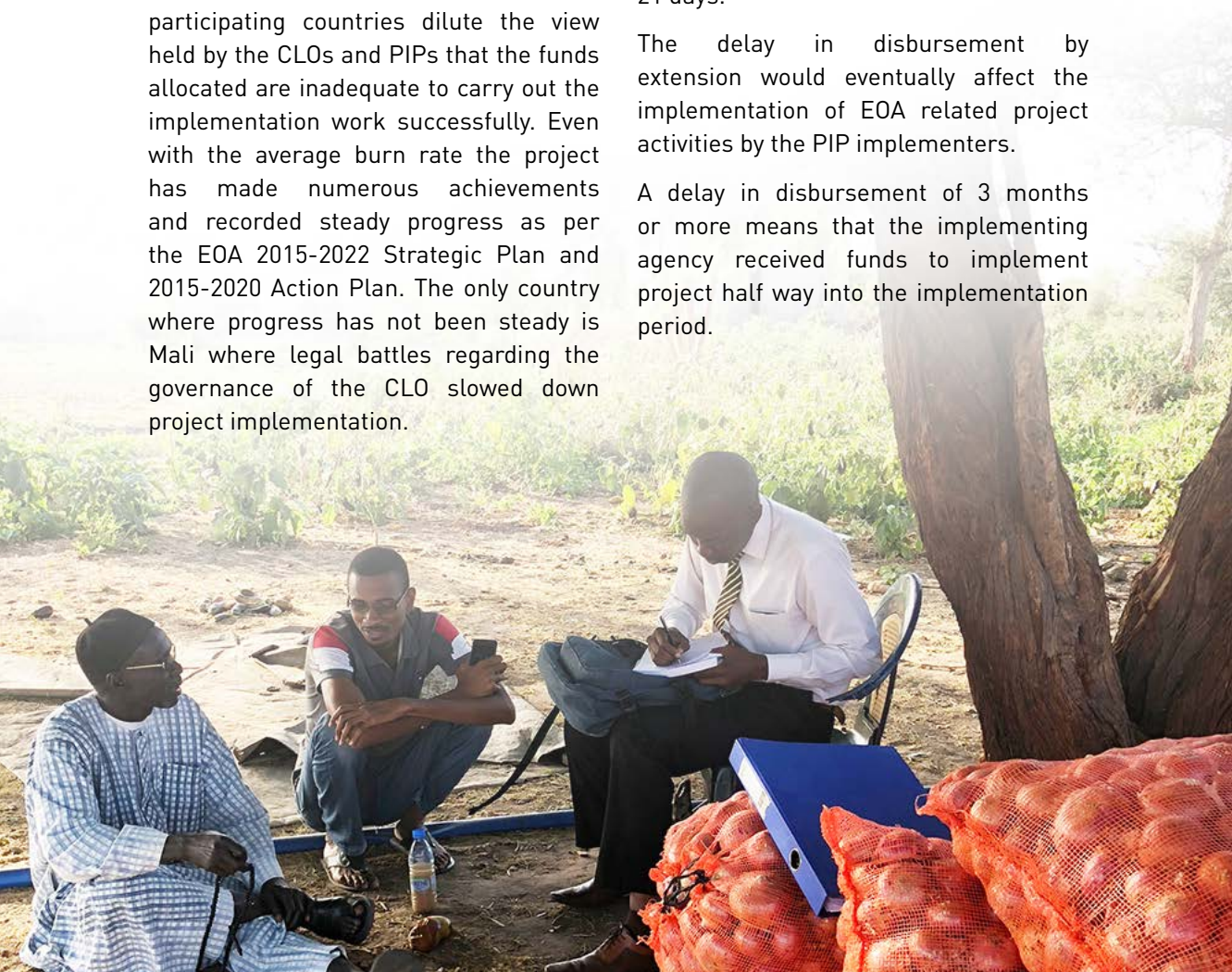
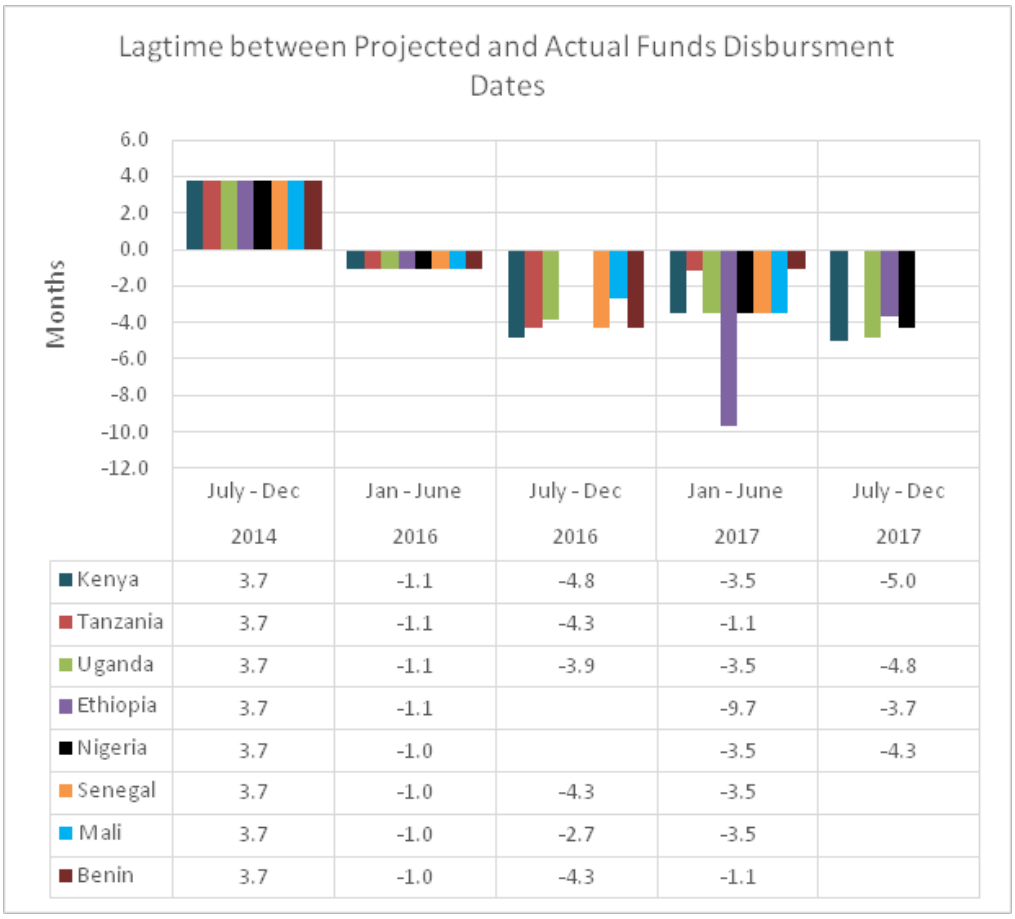


Figure 3: Lag Time between Projected and Actual Disbursement Dates



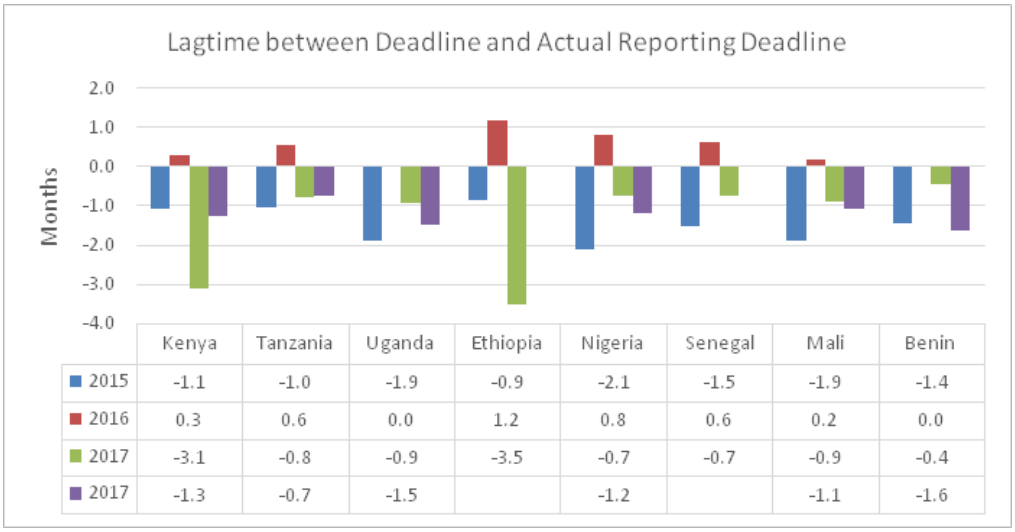
	July - Dec 2014	Jan - June 2016	July - Dec 2016	Jan - June 2017	July - Dec 2017
Kenya	3.7	-1.1	-4.8	-3.5	-5.0
Tanzania	3.7	-1.1	-4.3	-1.1	
Uganda	3.7	-1.1	-3.9	-3.5	-4.8
Ethiopia	3.7	-1.1		-9.7	-3.7
Nigeria	3.7	-1.0		-3.5	-4.3
Senegal	3.7	-1.0	-4.3	-3.5	
Mali	3.7	-1.0	-2.7	-3.5	
Benin	3.7	-1.0	-4.3	-1.1	

Further discussions with BvAT, CLOs and PIPs pointed out that disbarment only took place after CLOs submitted reports for the previous period spending. Delays in reporting meant delay in disbursement, period.

As the graph below indicates, since July-December 2015 reporting period, implementing partners delayed submission of reports by approximately 27 days. The graph indicates that in the July-December 2016 reporting period, all countries were able to report on time. The disbursement for this period, however had been delayed by approximately 4 months and 3 days.

In the subsequent reporting periods, the reports were delayed by approximately 1 month and 9 days; this also saw the disbursement timelines lagged by 3 months and 27 days. From the charts on reporting timeline and the one on disbursement, it is evident that both reporting and disbursements timelines get progressively late.

Figure 4: Lag Time between Actual Deadlines Actual Reporting Dates



	Kenya	Tanzania	Uganda	Ethiopia	Nigeria	Senegal	Mali	Benin
2015	-1.1	-1.0	-1.9	-0.9	-2.1	-1.5	-1.9	-1.4
2016	0.3	0.6	0.0	1.2	0.8	0.6	0.2	0.0
2017	-3.1	-0.8	-0.9	-3.5	-0.7	-0.7	-0.9	-0.4
2017	-1.3	-0.7	-1.5		-1.2		-1.1	-1.6

It would be highly recommended that disbursement be disjoined or at least that the current disbursement should be detached from reporting of the immediate previous implementing period. Talking to the PIPs and CLOs, there was a general feeling that alternative funds could be allocated to support full time staff who would be responsible of preparing reports for the EOA. It was also indicated that most reporting to the donors occurs around the same time and the available staff would be overwhelmed during this period, hence the delay. This therefore indicates that the problem may deteriorate in the future and different approaches need to be developed to address this issue, otherwise the current approach, accountability notwithstanding, is counterproductive.

It is the observation of the ET that although the project has been efficient in bringing in a wide stakeholder engagement and putting structures in place for the mainstreaming of EOA- hence reaching out to various stakeholders, two hurdles stand up. The capacity of implementing organizations is low and requires strengthening and efforts to reach out to influential policy makers also require strengthening.

One of the project objectives was to strengthen the governance, management and operations of EOA institutions in Africa to deliver on EOA better by 2025. Towards this BvAT has in the past organized partner training programs in both project management and financial management in both clusters. However, a recent capacity assessment exercise confirmed that while a number of EOA staff possessed sound technical skills in EOA pillar programming, they were not altogether project management savvy, as they struggled with planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting. Indeed, with relation to capacity, 25% (which too included CLOs) of the partners

were rated as significant and high risk; with a sizeable number falling within the medium and low risk categories. The high-risk category means among other things, that the organization was susceptible to lacking financial accountability and is no wonder, that OFPSAN (Nigeria) has been suspended.

3.3.5 Conclusions

The EOAorganizational structure is made up of CLOs and PIPs and support structures that include the AU- Chaired Continental Steering Committee, AfrONet, Regional Steering Committees, National Steering Committees and Executing Agencies. Included in this assessment is the examination of how the overall M&E systems have been effective and efficient (or otherwise) in delivering concrete results based on their multi-level and varied mandates.

Relevance:

Overall, the relevance of the project can be explained by the fact that it was a response to the African Heads of States and Government Decision EX.CL/Dec. 621 (XVII); AU's Agenda 2063, and finds alignment with the SDC and SSNC mandates.

Effectiveness:

All the structures that the project design set up are by their various mandates largely effective in providing either governance or management accountability. BvAT was successful in establishing of National Platforms and the selection of CLOs, PIPS and has executed its responsibility of management, accountability and general oversight of all partner activities. The CSC is found effective in providing an oversight role; and this has led to policy gains. National platforms strategically chaired by representatives from ministries of Agriculture have not been very effective in developing national agricultural policy framework (including the CAADP Compact and Investment Plan). Overall implementation effectiveness was hindered by a range of factors that ranged from discontinuation/suspension of certain PIPs, student strikes and government bureaucratic systems in universities and slow release of funds due to non-adherence to strict burn-rate thresholds.

Performance of the M&E Framework:

At in-country levels, the EOA did not invest satisfactorily to guide and monitor project implementation. ET however notes that the initiative did develop logical frameworks for each pillar but no data management and data driven reporting system was found to be existing apart from the physical reports submitted semi-annually and annually to the overall coordinating agency.

Efficiency:

Through the CLOs and national forums through National Steering Committees, the project has not been efficient in bringing in significant amount of financial resources outside the 2 main donors (SDC and SSNC) and thus there is a big gap of financial resources for implementation; with approximately, 43,900 million Euros needed to implement the EOA Strategic

plan (2015-2025) successfully. Allocation of funds per country was equal for Eastern Africa at 614,164USD and Western Africa at 599,991USD. The total average burn rate for the whole EOA is 69% meaning there is still a lot that has not been spent given that the 5-year initiative is ending this year (December 2018).

On disbursement, ET established that overall disbursements were delayed by an average of 3 months and 10 days. This delay had implication on the timeliness of EOA activity implementation and in some cases led to some agencies failing to implement some of the activities entirely. This contributed to the low burn rate registered in the project.

ET also established that CLOs were late in submitting their reports to the overall coordinating agency (BvAT) by approximately 1 month and 9 days. As had been established from interviews with BvAT, CLOs and PIPs, disbursement was hinged on submission of reports from the preceding implementation period and that these reports should meet set standards. The PIPs and CLOs indicated however that they were seriously understaffed to meet these timelines because EOA does not provide funding for fulltime staff and those that they have are usually busy around the same time preparing reports for other donors.

3.4 Assessment of the EOA Reach to Households & Other Target Groups

Using the quantitative survey questionnaire, the ET determined the number of households (disaggregated by gender) and other target groups who have been reached by the EOA project and in different ways as per the project interventions of training, and market linkages, and information materials; per pillar.

3.4.1 Characterization of Farmers Interviewed

3.4.1.1 Gender

In this study, the majority of farmers reached for the data collection were men at 54% and women at 46%. Across the eight countries where EOA-I is being implemented, it is only in Mali and Nigeria where majority of the respondents were female. In Ethiopia 80% of the respondents were male. Figure 5 and Table 18 contain this finding.

Figure 5: Percentage Gender Distribution

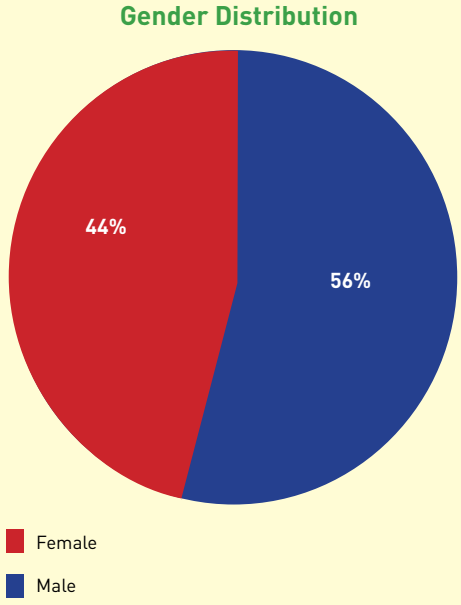


Table 18: Age Distribution across Countries

Country	Youth	Non-Youth
Benin	66	34
Ethiopia	80	20
Kenya	54	46
Mali	31	69
Nigeria	33	67
Senegal	67	33
Tanzania	55	45
Uganda	61	39
Grand Total	56	44

3.4.1.2 Age

One of the aims of the EOA-I was to specially reach women and youth. Youth is defined by ILO as any person below the age of 35 years. Going by this definition, only 23% of the respondents in this study were youth and in Kenya this was the lowest at 2%. In Benin and Ethiopia, the proportion of youth was relatively higher than in all the other countries. Table 19 contains this finding.

Table 19: Age Distribution across Countries

Country	Youth	Non-Youth
Benin	44%	56%
Ethiopia	37%	63%
Kenya	2%	98%
Mali	15%	85%
Nigeria	13%	87%
Senegal	19%	81%
Tanzania	13%	87%
Uganda	29%	71%
Overall	23%	77%

Given that this sample was drawn from the farmers reached by the EOA-I, the finding can be extrapolated to mean that the youth have been marginally reached, especially given that youth make up 77% of the population in Sub-Sahara Africa. This finding however is not surprising since, as other researches have established that 40% of young people from the rural areas migrate to urban areas in search of jobs and other opportunities[4]. Those who remain are either still in school and only a small percentage is engaged in agriculture. These findings call for deliberate efforts by EOA –I to come up with models and interventions that are attractive to the youth in the next phase; this may include but not limited to service provision of organic related services along the value chain, ICT applications in agriculture and market led agriculture.

3.4.1.3 Level of Education

The majority (70%) of the farmers reached by the EOA-I have only attained basic level of education or none at all. Only 9% of the farmers registered to have tertiary level of education. In Benin and Mali, 67% percent of the farmers have not completed even the basic level of education, followed by Senegal at 40%. In Tanzania, 90% of the farmers have only completed basic level of education. In Nigeria, on the other hand 31% of the farmers have completed tertiary level of education with 24% being university education. Figure 5 and Table 14 contain this information.

This finding would imply that face-to-face training, local forums and use of local vernacular stations could be effective means of communication to a majority of EOA producers. In the case of using EOA materials they should be highly simplified and more imagery.

In addition, the challenge for EOA-moving forward is how to position itself so that it brings on board an equal number of farmers who have completed college education and beyond. This may call for further research. Nevertheless, elements of small-scale mechanization and appropriate technology could reduce the drudgery, and at times "backwardness" that is occasionally associated with EOA practices.

[4] *Charlotte Min-Harris (2009)*,Youth Migration and Poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa: Empowering the Rural Youth Africa Agriculture Status Report 2015, YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA, AGRA

Table 20: Level of Education across Countries

Country	None	Completed primary	Completed secondary	Completed college	Completed university
Benin	67%	21%	10%	3%	0%
Ethiopia	14%	52%	31%	3%	0%
Kenya	11%	52%	27%	9%	2%
Mali	67%	25%	2%	0%	7%
Nigeria	21%	38%	10%	7%	24%
Senegal	40%	15%	40%	0%	5%
Tanzania	3%	90%	0%	7%	0%
Uganda	4%	57%	30%	4%	5%
Grand Total	22%	48%	22%	4%	5%

3.4.1.4 # of Stakeholders Reached/ Means Used

Further to the survey, this study endeavored to establish the number of stakeholders reached by the EOA-I and the means through which they were reached. This was done by requesting EOA-I implementing agencies the number of stakeholders they had reached through the different approaches they had employed. Most of the implementing agencies had a serious challenge in estimating total number of stakeholders reached. This was partly because of lack of a monitoring system and project/ activity monitoring data. As such the figures represented here might differ significantly with the actual number of stakeholders reached.

As the table below indicates different agencies employed different methods of reaching stakeholders. Training appeared as the most common way of engaging with various stakeholders across all the eight countries. As had been highlighted earlier, majority (70%) of EOA producers have either basic or no formal education at all, as such face to face training becomes one of the most gainful approaches to reach them. In addition, EOA-I design did put emphasis on training and hence the outcome. Table 21 contains this finding.

Table 21: # of Stakeholders Reached/ Means Used

How they were reached	Mali	Benin	Uganda	Nigeria	Senegal	Tanzania	Ethiopia	Kenya	TOTAL
Training	741	16,535	3,500	1,119	7,510	2,678	3,566	17,794	53,443
Materials		41		12,000	218	294	22,750	23,570	58,873
Extensions	150	3,125		212		460	100		4,047
Media							10M		
Social media				5,000	2,251	6,018	6,039	124,000	143,308
Conference/ forums				321		1,200	186	5,312	6,833
Research papers/ books				5		2,868	3		2,873
Curriculums		41		3		2,000	1		2,044
Public gathering (Barazas)			2,500		899		2,400		3,399
Exchange visits				5			2	6,234	6,239
Farm institute and demo farm							2		0
TOT				3	298		285		301
More than 1 medium			3,150			1,259			4,409
Other (Email subscribers)						2,868			2,868
TOTAL REACHED	**891**	**19,742**	**9,150**	**18,668**	**11,176**	**19,645**	**32,455**	**176,910**	**288,637**

Other methods used to reach producers included but were not limited to printed materials, extension staff, electronic and print media, social media and other internet-based platforms, conferences/ forums/workshops, research publications and book, formal training institutions curriculum, public gathering, exchange visits and demonstration farms among others. While almost all the implementing agencies registered to have applied these approaches, majority of them had difficulty providing the actual number of stakeholders reached. The information disaggregated by gender was available in only a few instances where pillar implementers had good M&E systems.

Table 22 below indicates different types of EOA value chain players and stakeholders reached in each country. As the findings indicate in all the countries similar categories of stakeholders were reached. Nevertheless, very few organizations were able to provide the actual number of stakeholders reached under each category.

Table 22: Different Value Chain Actors Reached

Type of value chain players reached	Mali	Benin	Uganda	Nigeria	Senegal	Tanzania	Ethiopia	Kenya
Farmers	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Processors	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Marketers	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Extensions service men/ women	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Policy makers	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Students	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Researchers	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

3.4.2 Conclusions

EOA-I has endeavored to reach different categories of EOA stakeholders using various methods. However, it was established that implementing agencies were having a challenge to put down the numbers. One of the evaluation objectives was also to establish the proportion of youth and women reached by the initiative. From the survey, it is evident that these groups were reached albeit marginally for the youth. From the KII discussions and review of documents in-country, it was clear that there were no specific strategies to reach out to the youth or the vulnerable. While indeed vulnerable groups have lots against them like lack of ownership of agricultural production assets they are the worse hit by poverty and lack of opportunity, ET therefore still finds it imperative EOA-I to intentionally engage these groups but in more innovative ways as helping identify opportunities within the value chain that they can take advantage of.

3.5 Assessment of the EOA Effectiveness & Efficiency in Influencing Farmers' Knowledge, Attitudes and Uptake of EOA Practices & Technologies

The ET assessed how the project has been effective and efficient in influencing farmers' knowledge, attitudes and uptake of EOA practices and/or technologies, and the means through which the influence was achieved. This is aligned to the SDC Grid, that is keen to establish the extent to which the SDC objectives are found relevant/ consistent with the demands and needs of the target groups.

3.5.1 Relevance

Relevance in this regard has been discussed with reference to previously existingfarmer's knowledge gaps, what they would have liked to have (demand) compared to what the project emphasized during the implementation period.

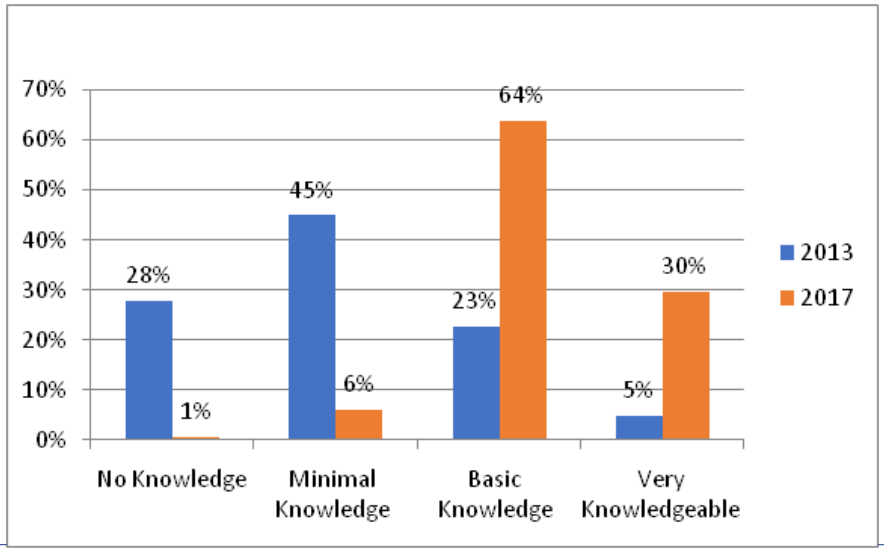
3.5.1.1 Knowledge

Mainstreaming EOA into national policies, strategies, plans and programs necessitates driving change in knowledge, attitude and practices of the players at the core of the EOA practices and essentially the main beneficiaries – producers. Training, forums and materials provided through the EOA-I sought to increase more knowledge and change producers' attitude towards EOA practices which would by extension increase producers' adoption and use of EOA practices in their production.

This study therefore sought to establish whether producers' knowledge and attitude towards ecological organic farming had changed as a consequence of the EOA-I. This was made possible by using recall data because the initiative had not conducted a baseline survey. Producers were requested to rate their level of knowledge of EOA practices in 2013 and 2017[5]. As the results in Figure 7 and Table 23 below show, producers' knowledge of EOA has changed considerably comparing before the start of the EOA-I (2013) and four years later (2017). Overall those who had no knowledge about EOA decreased from 28% in 2013 to 1% in 2017. Those who had basic knowledge or were very knowledgeable increased by 41% and 25% respectively. Those who are very knowledgeable now stands at 35% in 2017 compared to 5% in 2013.

Nigeria, Tanzania and Kenya recorded the highest proportion of farmers who reported to be very knowledgeable about EOA practices at 35%, 27%, and 20% respectively.

Figure 6: Change in Knowledge about EOA Practices



[5] 1-**No Knowledge**- refers to the farmer not having been exposed to any area of organic farming.

2-**Minimal Knowledge** - refers to farmer being exposed to the subject matter through non-formal learning set-up i.e. learning from peers. The farmer may be practising but not sure of the rationale behind the practices.

3-**Basic Knowledge** – refers to the farmer having gone through some formal training i.e. through NGOs, CBOs, understands the rationale behind the organic practices and could be practising some organic farming.

4-**Very Knowledgeable**: the farmer is professional in the subject - has Certificate, Diploma or Degree accreditation in the subject matter.

Table 23: Change in Knowledge about EOA Practices across Countries

Country	No Knowledge Minimal Knowledge		Minimal Knowledge		Basic Knowledge		Very Knowled-geable	
	2013	2017	2013	2017	2013	2017	2013	2017
Benin	54%	0%	43%	0%	3%	40%	0%	60%
Ethiopia	43%	0%	52%	1%	5%	91%	0%	9%
Kenya	36%	1%	28%	18%	23%	61%	13%	20%
Mali	20%	0%	23%	6%	46%	17%	12%	77%
Nigeria	18%	0%	23%	0%	57%	65%	3%	35%
Senegal	28%	1%	56%	20%	16%	74%	0%	4%
Tanzania	13%	0%	36%	0%	48%	73%	3%	27%
Uganda	26%	1%	70%	4%	4%	83%	0%	12%
Overall	28%	1%	45%	6%	23%	64%	5%	30%

3.5.1.2 Attitude

To measure change in attitude, this study developed six statements which producers were requested to register the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with them. Their responses to the statements were used to indicate their attitude towards EOA practices. The results indicated 80% of the producers do not agree with the negative stereotype within the African context that "Organic farming is for those who cannot afford chemicals and or non-organic seeds" – this statement connotes the idea that organic farming is for the poor, an attitude which could make it less attractive to adopt – this finding therefore can be read to mean a positive attitude towards EOA practices. In terms of production, comparing organic and non-organic, 57% of the farmers do not agree that non-organic practices yield more compared to organic practices. A large majority of 82% of the farmers are also positive about producing organically for the market. This is opposed to the notion that producers are only concerned with producing organically for household consumption and not market.

In terms of relative costs for producing organically and non-organically, most of the producers 51% indicated that organic production is not cheaper than conventional farming. This should be a concern because increase in production cost would imply higher market prices which would limit the competitiveness of the produce.

Table 24: Attitude towards EOA Practices

Attitudes towards EOA Practices					
Statement	**Strongly agree**	**Agree**	**Indifferent**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**
1. Organic farming is for those who cannot afford chemicals and or non-organic seeds	3%	13%	4%	33%	47%
2. Non-organic farming gives more yields than organic farming	13%	15%	14%	26%	31%
3. Organic farming is only for household use not market	1%	6%	10%	44%	38%
4. Organic farming is cheaper than non-organic farming	23%	16%	11%	27%	24%
5. Demand for organic products is lower than that of non-organic products	3%	10%	22%	31%	34%
6. There is no market for organic products	5%	15%	12%	35%	34%

Majority (65%) of the producers are also positive about demand of organic products and 69% are confident about the availability of market for organic products.

3.5.1.3 EOA Practices Promoted

In this study, 18 possible organic practices were identified and explored to establish which among them the EOA organic producers were aware of, which ones were they practising before EOA-I, which practices they were trained on, and finally which organic practices are they currently practising. EOA-I in one way or another and in different countries promoted all the 18 plus EOA practices. Overall, majority of the producers 67%, 66%, 63%, and 59% were already aware of intercropping practice, crop rotation, use of mulching and use of farm residue to improve soil fertility respectively. However only a few producers were aware of push pull, use of Mexican flower, use of Bio-slurry, and liming. Interestingly, producers were aware of more organic and ecological agricultural practices than they were practising before EOA-I started. Across all the 18 practices, the proportion of producers practising either of them had increased or remained the same in 2017 compared to the proportion of producers who were practising in 2013. See the Table 25 below.

Table 25: Awareness & Practices of EOA Practices- 2013 and 2017 Compared

Promoted practices	Awareness 2013	Practices 2013	Trained	Practices 2017
1. Use farm residue	59%	49%	57%	53%
2. Mulching	63%	52%	63%	62%
3. Cover crops	40%	28%	41%	28%
4. Farm yard and animal manure	52%	37%	53%	36%
5. Crop rotation	66%	54%	65%	56%
6. Intercropping	67%	57%	63%	58%
7. Green manure	30%	22%	32%	28%
8. Compost to improve soil fertility	49%	40%	46%	48%
9. Green fallow period	27%	21%	26%	23%
10. Compositing farmyard manure	47%	36%	42%	40%
11. Soil and water conservation	43%	40%	59%	49%
12. Mexican sunflower	4%	1%	6%	4%
13. Ploughing in leguminous plants	24%	15%	35%	17%
14. Push pull	4%	4%	15%	8%
15. Zero tillage	21%	13%	15%	13%
16. Liming	7%	6%	10%	7%
17. Soil testing	14%	8%	18%	14%
18. Bio-slurry	4%	4%	10%	4%

3.5.1.4 Training on EOA Practices & Technologies

This study also sought to establish the level of awareness the farmers had around the practices EOA-I was promoting and other ecological and organic agricultural practices in general. A total of 24 practices were explored. Findings from this research indicate that on average 34% of the farmers were already aware of these practices in 2013. This did not differ significantly with the practices that the farmers had reported to have received training on, because 35% of the farmers reported to have received training on at least one of the practices promoted by EOA-I. Table 26 contains this finding.

Table 26: Practices Promoted by EOA-I: Farmers' Awareness of the EOA Practices Prior and Eventual Adoption

Country	Aware -ness	Practices 2013	Trained	Practices 2017
Benin	69%	58%	57%	55%
Ethiopia	11%	18%	34%	29%
Kenya	29%	26%	33%	31%
Mali	46%			
Nigeria	43%	33%	26%	35%
Senegal	31%	26%	33%	31%
Tanzania	40%	37%	63%	50%
Uganda	26%	26%	40%	29%

Table 27: Average # of Training Attended Across Countries

Country	Average number of training attended
Benin	3
Ethiopia	7
Kenya	3
Mali	2
Nigeria	3
Senegal	4
Tanzania	8
Uganda	5
Overall	4

Majority (95%) of the producers interviewed across the countries indicated that they had attended training on EOA practices. Most of those training programs were conducted by EOA pillar implementers. Overall, producers indicated that they had attended on average 4 trainings on EOA practices. However, there were incidences in variations with Tanzania and Ethiopia recording the highest number of training programs attended onwith an average of 8 and 7 trainings respectively. Benin, Kenya and Mali recorded the lowest number of trainings attended that is 3, 3, and 2 respectively. See Table 27 below.

In addition to training, producers also received information on EOA through electronic and print media, printed materials and EOA related forums. Overall 57% and 51% reported to have received printed materials on EOA practices and had attended EOA related forums respectively. In Kenya and Mali majority (55% and 78% respectively) of the producers interviewed reported not to have received materials on EOA. On the other hand, in Ethiopia, Senegal and Tanzania majority of the producers (93%, 90% and 81% respectively) had received EOA materials. In Benin only 5% of the producers reported to have attended a forum on EOA; this is way below an overall average of 51% by producers for all the countries. Mali and Kenya also recorded low number of producers who had attended EOA related forums with only 36% and 43% respectively.

Table 28: Means of Receiving Training & Adverts on Organic Farming & Products

Training and advert on Organic farming and products			
Country	**Radio**	**Newspaper**	**Magazine**
Benin	2%	0%	0%
Ethiopia	97%	73%	7%
Kenya	89%	29%	18%
Mali	48%	13%	9%
Nigeria	93%	33%	33%
Senegal	100%	45%	29%
Tanzania	77%	55%	71%
Uganda	84%	28%	34%
Total	75%	30%	26%

Much of the training focused on practices that farmers were already familiar with. There are however some practices like soil and water conservation practices, intercropping with leguminous plants, push pull technology, soil testing, bio-slurry among others which were largely new to the farmers. Interestingly, many farmers were not practising what they were already aware of until after the training. This implies that training plays a critical role in moving farmers from just knowing about a practice to actual practice. This may have been necessitated by re-emphasis on the importance of those practices during training or even peer learning in the training where farmers share their experiences using any of the practice.

This is evidenced by increased use of organic farming practices and even reduction in use of non-organic farming practices in some instances. This implies that reinforcing knowledge on EOA practices is still important even in cases where farmers already are aware of the practices.

3.5.2 Effectiveness

Under this section, the ET investigated how effective the EOA pillars have influenced farmers' knowledge, attitudes and uptake of EOA practices and/or technologies, and the mechanisms by which this occurred.

3.5.2.1 Adoption of Organic Farming Practices

The intention of EOA-I in providing training and training materials as well holding forums, conferences and EOA practices and product marketing through print and electronic media was to promote greater adoption of EOA practices by producers.

This study therefore established whether proportion of EOA practices practiced among agricultural producers had actually changed before and after EOA-I. Table 29 contains this finding.

Table 29: Practices Promoted by EOA-I: Farmers' Awareness Prior and Eventual Adoption

Practices promoted by EOA-I: farmers awareness of those practices prior and eventual adoption				
Country	**Aware-ness**	**Practices 2013**	**Trained**	**Practices 2017**
Benin	69%	58%	57%	55%
Ethiopia	11%	18%	34%	29%
Kenya	29%	26%	33%	31%
Mali	46%			
Nigeria	43%	33%	26%	35%
Senegal	31%	26%	33%	31%
Tanzania	40%	37%	63%	50%
Uganda	26%	26%	40%	29%
Overall	34%	30%	40%	34%

EOA practices adopted by producers before and after the EOA-I also appear to have an overall increase of 4%. Tanzania and Ethiopia recorded a higher percentage of practices that had been adopted post EOA-I of 14% and 10% respectively. Other countries like Kenya, Senegal, Uganda and Nigeria also recorded slight positive change of 5%, 5%, 3% and 2% respectively.

Benin on the other hand recorded decreased number of practices. This implies that while producers may be aware of EOA practices that does not necessarily imply they are using those practices. A possible explanation is that they may not be having the full knowledge or even the necessary skills to put what they are aware of into use. This is supported by the fact that after training producers started practising EOA practices that they were aware of before EOA but were not practising. Further to that, EOA adopters – and to a larger extent – maintained those that they were already aware of and practising some of the EOA practices that they were trained on.

3.5.2.2 Certified Organic Producers

In addition to establishing adoption of organic practices, the study examined the proportion of farmers certified per country through 3rd party or PGS certification processes. However, it should be noted at this point that the findings from this investigation do not necessarily represent the actual national percentage of certified organic producers per country but rather producers reached by EOA. As findings in Table 30 below indicate, overall 48% of the producers or their producer groups have been certified as organic producers. Nigeria and Benin recorded the highest percentage of 100% and 97% respectively. Mali, Tanzania and Senegal recorded low percentages of certified organic producers of 17%, 23%, and 38% respectively.

Table 30: Organic Certified Farmers

Are you or your farmer group certified?		
Country	**Yes**	**No**
Benin	97%	3%
Ethiopia	44% (Undergoing certification process)	56%
Kenya	65%	35%
Mali	17%	83%
Nigeria	100%	0%
Senegal	38%	62%
Tanzania	23%	77%
Uganda	43%	57%
Overall	48%	52%

3.5.2.3 Market Linkages

Sustainability of EOA practices is pegged not only on increased adoption of EOA practices and increased production but the value proportion of these practices in comparison to other alternative options available to the producers. Here availability and access to organic markets play a significant role. The study established whether organic producers were aware of organic markets comparing status in 2013 and 2017.

As results in Table 31 below show only 30% of the organic certified producers indicated that they were aware of organic markets in 2013. Benin had the highest percentage of 84% while Ethiopia, had no one with such knowledge. In 2017, overall 91% of certified producers indicated they were aware of organic markets. Kenya, and Senegal however still recorded a high proportion of certified producers who still are not aware of organic markets at 67%, and 80% respectively.

Table 30: Organic Certified Farmers

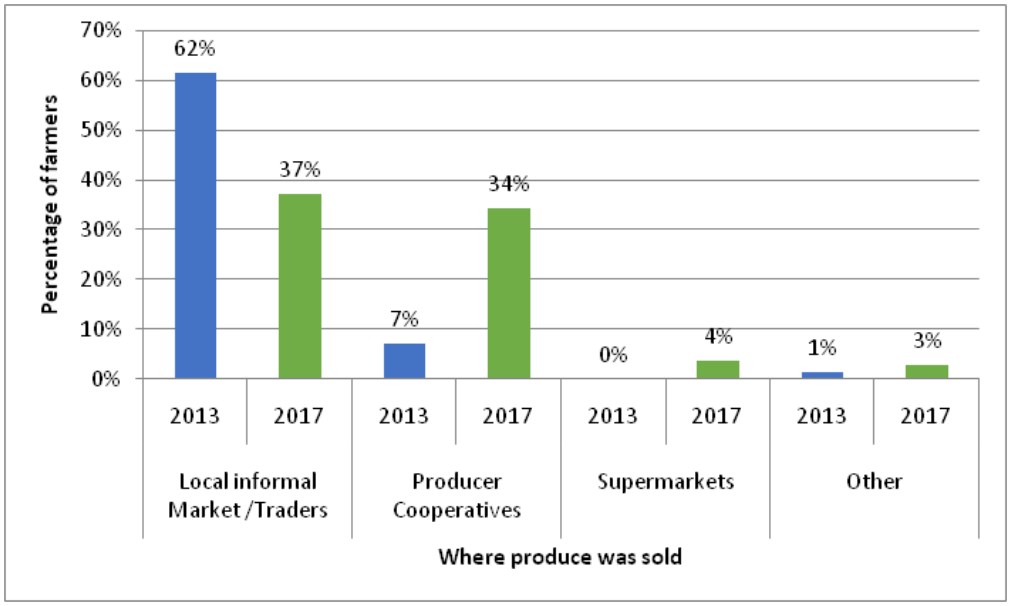
	Awareness of any organic markets	Aware of premium markets	
Country	**2013**	**2017**	
Benin	84%	97%	4%
Ethiopia	0%	100%	27%
Kenya	14%	67%	53%
Mali			
Nigeria	13%	96%	4%
Senegal	30%	80%	0%
Tanzania	57%	100%	14%
Uganda	21%	96%	58%
Overall	30%	91%	38%

3.5.2.4 Organic Produce Markets

The study further established where certified organic producers sold their organic produce in 2013 and 2017. As the table below shows majority of the producers interviewed (62%) sold their organic products at the local markets or through local traders. In 2017 this proportion had fallen by almost a half to 37%.

On the other hand, proportion of producers selling their organic produce through producer cooperatives increased from 7% in 2013 to 34% in 2017. Further, while in 2013 hardly any producer was selling their produce through the supermarkets in 2017, 4% of the producers indicated that they sold their produce through the supermarket.

Figure 7: Where Farmers Sold their Produce in 2013 and 2017



Uganda, Nigeria and Kenya recorded the highest proportion of organic producers who sell their produce through producer cooperatives at 56%, 46% and 44% respectively. Ethiopia recorded that the proportion of producers within the EOA initiative selling through the local market had increased by 16% while another 25% still in Ethiopia indicated that they sell their produce through supermarkets. In Tanzania majority of producers were selling their produce through other means, that other markets included majorly selling through pillar 1 implementing agency (SAT) organic shop. Those who sell to other markets not previously mentioned sell to export market, restaurants and hotels etc. See Table 32 below.

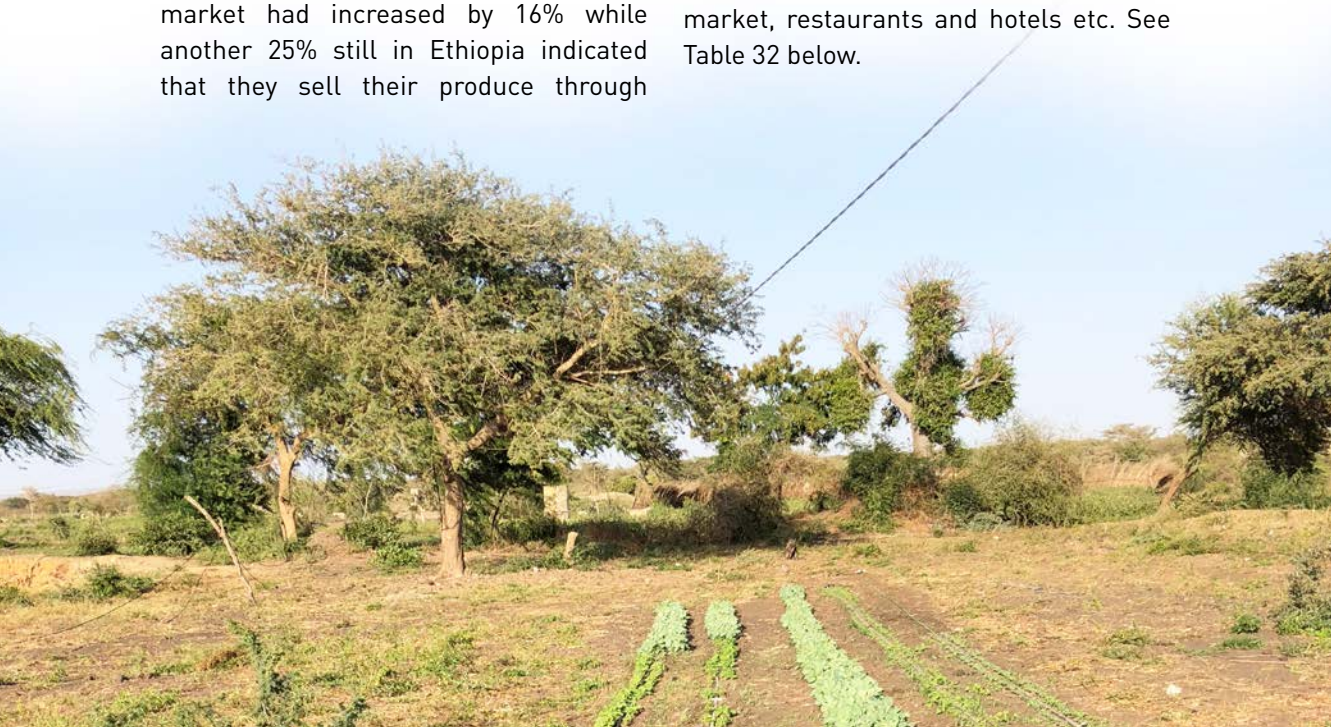


Table 32: Markets Where Organic Produce was Sold in 2013 & 2017

Where farmers sold their agricultural produce in 2013 and 2017								
Country	Local informal Market /Traders		Producer Cooperatives		Supermarkets		Other	
	2013	2017	2013	2017	2013	2017	2013	2017
Benin								
Ethiopia	42%	58%	0%	8%	0%	25%	0%	0%
Kenya	86%	56%	14%	44%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Mali								
Nigeria	77%	69%	4%	46%	0%	4%	0%	4%
Senegal	18%	18%	9%	9%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Tanzania	71%	14%	14%	29%	0%	0%	14%	43%
Uganda	88%	41%	8%	53%	0%	5%	2%	2%
Overall	62%	37%	7%	34%	0%	4%	1%	3%

Figure 8: How Organic Farmers Sell their Produce

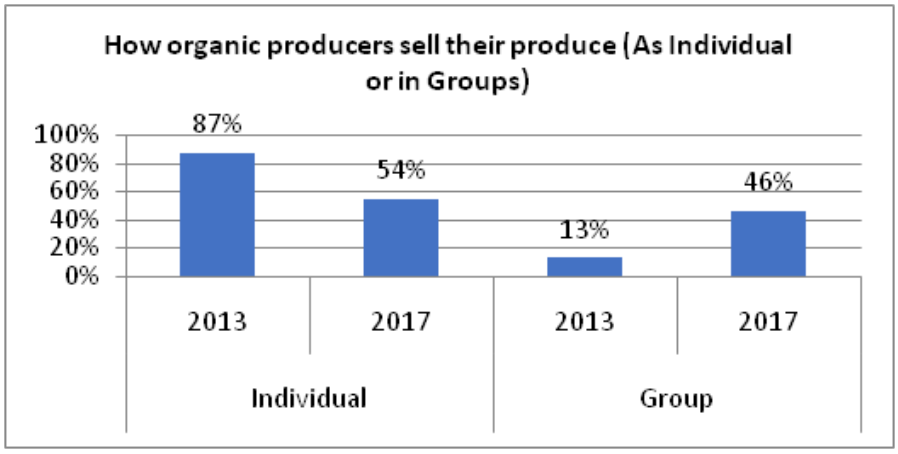


Table 33: How Organic Farmers Sell their Produce Across Countries

Mode of selling organic goods (Individual or as a group)				
Country	Individual		Group	
	2013	2017	2013	2017
Benin	100%	18%	0%	82%
Ethiopia	98%	88%	2%	12%
Kenya				
Mali	57%	43%	43%	57%
Nigeria	71%	67%	29%	33%
Senegal	94%	67%	6%	33%
Tanzania	88%	47%	12%	53%
Uganda	87%	54%	13%	46%
Overall				

Conventionally, organic products should fetch higher prices compared to inorganic products. The study established whether producers were getting premium prices for their products and whether this was a function of the mode of selling they had adopted, that is either selling as an individual or a group. The organic certified producers indicated that they indeed get a higher price for their products compared to inorganic products. Producers selling through groups reported a higher price difference of 15% compared to those selling as individuals who reported 13% more in selling price of the organic products compared to the selling price of inorganic product. In Kenya and Ethiopia producers selling through groups recorded lower price difference with inorganic products compared to those who sold as individuals. However, in Ethiopia this might be as the result of few producers (2) who reported to be selling their produce as individuals. Table 34 presents these findings.

Table 34: Price Difference

Price Difference				
Country	n	Individual	n	Group
Benin	15	14%	15	14%
Ethiopia	2	20%	11	18%
Kenya	33	13%	7	10%
Mali			3	20%
Nigeria	11	18%	20	18%
Senegal	5	10%	5	14%
Tanzania	3	8%	5	12%
Uganda	34	11%	48	14%
Overall	103	13%	114	15%

While some producers may find a lot of flexibility and freedom while marketing their product alone, this presents serious challenges to them particularly in the organic product market. This is because in the local market, majority of the local consumers may not be able to distinguish between organic and inorganic products, which would mean they will not offer higher price as would be expected for organic produce, a situation which could discourage organic producers. Secondly, selling as a group offers producers bargaining power, more stable markets because of the economies of scale and other benefits such as social capital, peer learning, and group support. That notwithstanding selling as a group or forming cooperatives offers the most probable profitable sustainable marketing system.

3.5.3 Efficiency

Using the SDC grid as reference, the ET examined the efficiency question from the angle of determining how efficient (or

otherwise) the EOA pillars have been in influencing farmers' knowledge, attitudes and uptake of EOA practices and/or technologies, changing production and the mechanisms by which this occurred. To measure efficiency the ET looked at key outcome change areas on the producers against the total resources used so far per country. These areas are: knowledge and adoption of EOA practices and eventual change in production. To establish the level of efficiency on change in knowledge[6] total amount of resources used in the country was divided by the average change in EOA knowledge level in the country. The same was done for the average number of practices adopted[7] and percentage change in production.

Table 35: Effectiveness, Resource Use, Change in Unit Cost & Efficiency

		Level of Producers EOA knowledge (1 to 4, with 4 as the highest)	Number of EOA practices adopted	Change in Production (%)	Average total efficiency
Benin	Effectiveness	1.99	-0.87	44	
	Resource use	483,842	483,842	483,842	
	Change unit cost	243,137	(556,140)	10,996	
	Efficiency	1.00	(0.25)	0.35	0.37
Ethiopia	Effectiveness	1.43	2.50	95	
	Resource use	367,205	367,205	367,205	
	Change unit cost	256,787	146,882	3,865	
	Efficiency	0.95	0.94	1.00	0.96
Kenya	Effectiveness	0.87	1.21	102	
	Resource use	418,652	418,652	418,652	
	Change unit cost	481,209	345,993	4,104	
	Efficiency	0.51	0.40	0.94	0.61
Mali	Effectiveness		-		
	Resource use	228,647	228,647	228,647	
	Efficiency				
Nigeria	Effectiveness	0.95	0.47	105	
	Resource use	464,378	464,378	464,378	
	Change unit cost	488,819	988,039	4,423	
	Efficiency	0.50	0.14	0.87	0.50
Senegal	Effectiveness	1.00	1.19	57	
	Resource use	440,966	440,966	440,966	
	Change unit cost	440,966	370,560	7,736	
	Efficiency	0.55	0.37	0.50	0.47
Tanzania	Effectiveness	0.84	3.29	17	
	Resource use	452,096	452,096	452,096	
	Change unit cost	538,209	137,415	26,594	
	Efficiency	0.45	1.00	0.15	0.53
Uganda	Effectiveness	1.29	0.72	94	
	Resource use	471,679	471,679	471,679	
	Change unit cost	365,643	659,691	5,018	
	Efficiency	0.66	0.21	0.77	0.55

[6] Knowledge in EOA practices was measured on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 representing no knowledge and 4 representing expert knowledge. To get change in knowledge average knowledge for producers in each country was determined for the two periods, 2013 and 2017. The difference between these two averages was used as the measure of change in knowledge before and after EOA initiative was introduced.

[7] One of the main weakness of the method used to measure efficiency for the number of EOA practices adopted is that it assumes that producers are supposed to adopt all EOA practices – this may not be the case in some instances - and does not put weight or any recognition on quality of the practices.This methodalso does not establish the optimal number of practices that a producer can adopt. It is however possible that producers would be required to adopt more than one practices.

The resultant unit cost per change was then divided by the unit cost of the country that recorded lowest resource use per unit outcome change: this was done because the country with the lowest amount of resource use per unit was judged to be more efficient, hence had a score of one. Average total efficiency would range between 0 and 1 with 1 been most efficient. Table 35 above presents this finding.

Overall the efficiency level of the EOA-I was 0.57 (average of the average total efficiency per country). This means 57% of the resources were efficiently used. It also means that the project has 43% chance or room for improving efficiency just by taking on some interventions such as encouraging cross country and cross pillar learning. The country with the highest level of efficiency rate was Ethiopia at 0.96. It was then followed by Kenya and Uganda at 0.61 and 0.55 respectively. Benin and Senegal recorded the lowest efficiency rates at 0.37 and 0.47 respectively.

Benin was however the most efficient in terms of resource use and change in knowledge. Tanzania was the most efficient in driving adoption for more EOA practices, while Ethiopia was most efficient in realizing increased production per unit cost. In Benin the average number of EOA practices in 2013 were more than in 2017 hence a negative efficiency rate score and the overall low efficiency rate.

The efficiency rate is interpreted as follows: if we compare highest average total efficiency rate (0.96) from Ethiopia and the lowest (0.34) from Benin, it means that Ethiopia uses 62% less resources/ funds to achieve the same outcome as Benin.

3.5.4 Conclusions

3.5.4.1 Relevance

ET remarks that the focus of the EOA-I to increase knowledge and improve attitude towards EOA practices was relevant and required by the target groups. Conventionally it is presumed that majority of smallholder Africa farmers practice de facto organic albeit for subsistence use[8], and as such their transition to full organic farming would not be significantly disruptive. Contra wise this provides an avenue not only to produce health foods for consumption at the household level but also for market and at a higher price. Research has also debunked myths that organic farming yields lower produce than conventional agriculture which means a farmer would hardly register production opportunity cost. Transitioning to full organic farming creates economic opportunity for the smallholder farmers within the resources that they already own. However, most smallholder farmers are not necessarily aware of the economic opportunity for organic farming despite their possible seamless transition and cost saving opportunity.

This study indeed established that farmers' knowledge of organic farming practices was low before the EOA-I was initiated and this has changed significantly. Additionally, while some

[8] Parrott et al (2003), Organic Farming in Africa, IFOAM

farmers had registered awareness of some of the EOA promoted practices far less were practising them. The proportion of those familiar with EOA practices and actually adopting those practices has increased after EOA-I.

Also, farmers' attitude towards EOA largely appear positive. However, while EOA promoted practices focused on cost reduction strategy majority of farmers still perceive EOA as equally expensive in terms of input costs as conventional agriculture. It is possible that farmers could be referring to certification costs. That notwithstanding it's imperative for the initiative to identify more innovative and cost saving with optimal production strategies that farmers can adopt and it is important to also make them aware of the opportunity cost of adopting organic farming practices.

3.5.4.2 Effectiveness

EOA-I implementing partners used various approaches to reach various EOA stakeholders, and these included trainings, forums and conferences, electronic and print media, internet among others. These mediums were used to influence stakeholders' attitudes and increase their knowledge towards EOA practices. With more positive attitude and increased knowledge this had been hoped would lead to more adoption of EOA practices which would be revealed by the increase in number of organic certified producers. This study established that the project was not only effective in increasing knowledge around EOA but also had promoted increased adoption of EOA practices. Also noted was the fact that despite producers having been aware of some EOA practices prior to start of EOA many of them were not using those practices; however, there was an increase in adoption after the training.

3.5.4.3 Efficiency

Efficiency was measured on the basis of achievement against resource use. The ET determined that the best approach to determine efficiency is to use the most efficient EOA-I country in terms of aggregate achievement and aggregate spending as the basis of judging the efficiency of other EOA implementing countries. This was done by establishing unit cost per unit change in the outcome on change in knowledge, change in adoption of EOA practices and change in production. The results indicate that the efficiency level of EOA was 0.57; this implies that the initiative could improve its efficiency on 43% of the resources by adopting strategies such as inter country and intra-pillar learning.

3.6 Assessment of the EOA Pillars' Contributions to Project Outcomes

For this learning question, the ET concentrated on how the varied pillar interventions have contributed to key project outcomes. The outcomes that were selected for analysis in this regard included; increase in agricultural production, productivity, food security, income, and producer welfare. Results in Table 36 below summarizes the opinion of producers interviewed across the 8 countries and overall standing against EOA-I outcome areas.

Table 36: Increase/ Change in Production, Productivity, Food Security, Income & Producer Welfare

	Percentage increased production	Percentage change Productivity yield per unit area	Food security	Balanced diet	Incomes (from organic farming) increased by 10%+	Welfare improvement (quality of life)
Benin	44%	-12%	100%	100.0%	44.7%	90%
Ethiopia	95%	50%	100%	96.4%	100.0%	74%
Kenya	102%	78%	96%	96.4%	76.8%	44%
Mali	98%	76%	98%	96.8%	75.0%	96%
Nigeria	105%	-5%	96%	96.4%	64.3%	64%
Senegal	57%	7%	96%	92.9%	78.6%	79%
Tanzania	17%	-16%	87%	83.9%	77.4%	75%
Uganda	94%	48%	96%	95.9%	37.2%	72%
TOTAL	83%	37%	97%	96.1%	58.4%	73%

3.6.1 Production

While all pillars in one way or the other contributed to the production element, pillars 1 and 2 were more instrumental in that regard. Pillar 1 was to carry out research and churn out ecological organic products related knowledge along the value chain that would enhance the capacity of actors including farmers' production practices; pillar 2 reinforced production by systematically informing and making farmers aware about the EOA approaches and good practices and motivating them to apply by enhancing access to strengthened advisory and support services.

Therefore, one of the major key outcomes of adopting EOA practices was increased production by the adopters. This change in production forms a solid base on which the push for EOA mainstreaming can be evidenced. This study has so far established there has been change in knowledge, attitude and adoption of EOA practices among the target producers. The assumption for the EOA initiative was that if knowledge on EOA is increased and with improved positive attitude, this would lead to increased adoption of EOA practices and therefore increased production. Consequently, this study endeavored to establish whether producers had recorded change in production comparing their production in 2013 and 2017. Since producers are engaged in different farm produce, this study used percentage change in production per individual producer; which was then used to calculate average percentage change per country to get country estimates.

Results from this analysis were also disaggregated by organic certified producers and those who are not. As results in Table 23 show, most of the countries recorded significant change

in production. Ethiopia, Nigeria and Mali recorded largest percentage production change of 118%, 97% and 93% respectively.

3.6.1.1 Change in Production by Certified Organic Producers

It was noted that the project embraced 3 forms of certification; 3rd Party, PGS, and ICS. Majority of those interviewed had applied the PGS certification process because it is more affordable than the desirable 3rd party certification. Just to mention a few partners facilitating certification, TOAM has developed over 42 PGS since 2014, in Uganda 3 PGS have been assessed for Organic Agriculture production, and 3 organic producers associations (VIVA Matekpo, AgribioAfrique and organic pineapple producer's group) in Benin were trained in PGS.

Figure 9 below gives an indication of increase in production by certified farmers through either of the two processes.

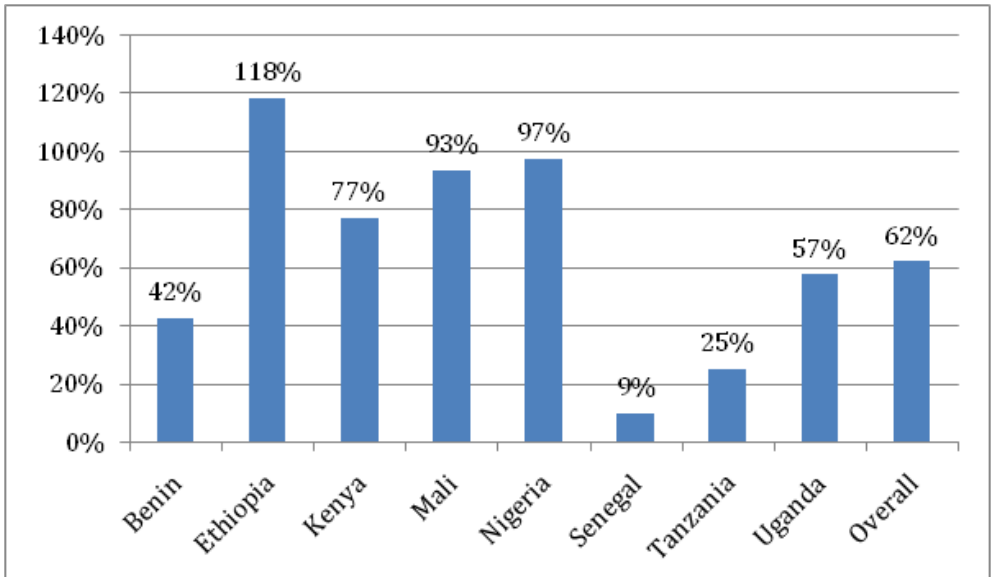


Figure 9: Change in Production by Certified Organic Producers

Countries like Senegal, Tanzania, Benin and Uganda recorded lower percentage change than the overall average percentage of 62%. Interestingly results in Table 37 show that non-certified producers reported an overall increased production of 111% compared to the certified producers who reported 62% change. This finding could have two sides to it, either the non-certified organic producers actually use inorganic production inputs which yield significantly more than the organic producers, or the

non-certified producers over estimated their production levels. The issue of over reporting in recall data is well established in research particularly if the respondents do not keep records. Various studies have established that smallholder producers do not normally keep records. On the other hand, given the intensity of certification process, it could be assumed that organic certified producers gave more reliable production levels than their non-certified counterparts. Table 37 provides this finding.

Table 37: Average of Change in Increased Production in % for Organic Certified and Non-Certified Producers

Average of Change in increased production in % for organic certified and non-certified producers		
Country	**Certified producers**	**Non-certified producers**
Benin	42%	
Ethiopia	118%	60%
Kenya	77%	145%
Mali	93%	92%
Nigeria	97%	
Senegal	9%	102%
Tanzania	25%	14%
Uganda	57%	138%
Overall	62%	111%

3.6.2 Income

Overall 94% of the organic certified producers indicated that their income in 2017 compared to their income in 2013 had increased: As many as 20% of the producers indicated that their income had increased by 30% or more. Another 35% and 39% indicated that their income had increased by 10-20% and 1-10% respectively.

In Uganda and Benin most of the organic producers (65% and 50% respectively) indicated that their income had only increased marginally, while in Nigeria 42%indicated that their income had either not changed or even decreased. On the other hand, majority of the farmers in Ethiopia, Mali and Tanzania [that is 83% (n=12), 71% (n=7), and 71% (n=7) respectively] indicated that their income had increased by more than 30%. These findings are provided in Table 38.

Table 38: Changes in Income across Countries

	Has your income changed					n
	Increased 30%+	Increased by 10-20%	Increased by 1-10%	No change	Decreased	
Benin	21%	29%	50%	0%	0%	34
Ethiopia	83%	17%	0%	0%	0%	12
Kenya	14%	50%	33%	0%	3%	36
Mali	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	7
Nigeria	13%	46%	0%	25%	17%	24
Senegal	45%	36%	9%	0%	9%	11
Tanzania	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	7
Uganda	4%	30%	65%	0%	1%	83
Overall	20%	35%	39%	3%	3%	214

3.6.3 Food Security & Nutrition

Before the EOA-I roll out started (in 2014), 25% of the certified organic producers indicated that they were not having three meals consistently as per in 2013. In 2017, certified organic producers who were not having three meals consistently per day decreased by 20%: that is asof 2017 producers having three meals per day stood at 95% compared to 75% in 2013. Countries that recorded significant change included Ethiopia whose percentage change increased by 92%, Nigeria with 42%, Tanzania at 29%, and Uganda at 26%. Mali, Senegal, Kenya and Benin recorded minimal or no change; this was mainly because all the producers were having three meals per day consistently before EOA started. Table 39 provides this finding.

Table 39: Those Taking 3 Meals/ Day across Countries

Takes three meals in a day consistently			n
Country	**2013**	**2017**	
Benin	97%	100%	34
Ethiopia	8%	100%	12
Kenya	94%	94%	36
Mali	100%	100%	10
Nigeria	54%	96%	24
Senegal	100%	100%	10
Tanzania	57%	86%	7
Uganda	67%	93%	82
Overall	75%	95%	215

In addition to having three meals a day, this study also sought to establish whether producers were having balanced diets in their meals. This was compared between 2013 and 2017. Overall 75% of the producers were already having balanced diets consistently even before the EOA-I started. In countries like Ethiopia and Nigeria hardly any

producer was having balanced diet meals consistently with Ethiopia recording none and Nigeria only 13%. In Tanzania less than half (43%) of the producers were having balanced diet meals consistently in 2013. In 2017 however, overall, nearly all producers (97%) were having balanced diets consistently in their meals. Table 40 provides this finding.

Table 40: Those Taking Balanced Diet for Every Meal across Countries

Takes three meals in a day consistently			n
Country	2013	2017	
Benin	97%	100%	34
Ethiopia	0%	100%	12
Kenya	97%	100%	36
Mali	100%	90%	10
Nigeria	13%	100%	24
Senegal	91%	100%	10
Tanzania	43%	86%	7
Uganda	84%	95%	82
Overall	75%	97%	215

3.6.4 Farmers' Welfare

Ninety-six (96%) of the certified organic producers indicated that their lives had changed for the better. When asked how satisfied they were with their lives on a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being not satisfied at all and 10 being very satisfied) 72% rated their level of satisfaction with their lives in the range of 7-10. The other remaining 28% rated their level of satisfaction with their lives in the range of 4-6, with only 1.32% rating themselves at 4 which were the lowest.

3.6.5 Relationship between the Outcomes and EOA

In addition to establishing the level of different outcome and impact level indicators like increased income, improved welfare, increased production, and improved satisfaction with life, ET endeavored to establish possible link between these outcomes and training in EOA. The assumption here being that the more EOA training and or forums producers attend or received materials on EOA the more their knowledge and skills on EOA. With increased knowledge this would presumably lead to more production which would lead to more income and therefore higher quality of life.

To establish the relationship between EOA-I interventions and eventual outcomes on primary beneficiaries, ET first established the relationship between EOA activity – training, attending EOA forums and or material distribution. As Table 41 below indicates the number of trainings attended by farmers has positive effect on the level of knowledge, however this effect is not significant. On the other hand receiving EOA material and or attending EOA forums does not appear to have a positive effect on producers' level of EOA knowledge.

Table 41: Correlation/ Relationship between Outcomes and EOA

```
. ologit  Knowledge_EOA Numbertrainings Received_materials Attend_EOA_forums

Iteration 0:   log likelihood = -264.68516
Iteration 1:   log likelihood = -261.81089
Iteration 2:   log likelihood = -261.79843
Iteration 3:   log likelihood = -261.79843

Ordered logistic regression                     Number of obs   =        398
                                                LR chi2(3)      =       5.77
                                                Prob > chi2     =     0.1232
Log likelihood = -261.79843                     Pseudo R2       =     0.0109
```

Knowledge_EOA	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>|z|	[95% Conf.	Interval]
Numbertrainings	.0267659	.0247506	1.08	0.280	-.0217444	.0752761
Received_materi~s	-.1387969	.239391	-0.58	0.562	-.6079947	.3304009
Attend_EOA_forums	-.4833776	.2409061	-2.01	0.045	-.955545	-.0112102
/cut1	-4.277227	.4231723			-5.106629	-3.447824
/cut2	.795244	.1965103			.4100908	1.180397

As discussed in the introductory part of this section, the change of the outcome variable like improved welfare, wellbeing, improved diet, and increased income are tied to increased production which is tied to increased knowledge and skills.

The study established whether primary beneficiaries' knowledge of EOA has led to increased production. As Table 42 below indicates, having received training on EOA had a positive change on production, albeit it is insignificant. On the other hand attending more training is not positively related to more production.

Table 42: Effect on Training on Change in Production

```
. regress Changeproduction  Young_Farmers  Male_Farmers Education  Sizeland Changein
> practices  Average_Knowledge Receivedtraining Numbertrainings

      Source |       SS       df       MS              Number of obs =     275
-------------+------------------------------           F(  8,   266) =    2.53
       Model |  13.5918546     8  1.69898183            Prob > F      =  0.0114
    Residual |  178.674334   266  .671708021           R-squared     =  0.0707
-------------+------------------------------           Adj R-squared =  0.0427
       Total |  192.266188   274  .701701417           Root MSE      =  .81958
```

Changeproduction	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P>|t|	[95% Conf.	Interval]
Young_Farmers	.1153937	.1171453	0.99	0.325	-.1152564	.3460437
Male_Farmers	-.0125273	.1059239	-0.12	0.906	-.2210832	.1960286
Education	.199767	.0642105	3.11	0.002	.0733415	.3261926
Sizeland	-.0214882	.0095037	-2.26	0.025	-.0402002	-.0027763
Changeinpractices	-.0223097	.0168875	-1.32	0.188	-.0555598	.0109405
Average_Knowledge	-.077956	.1333783	-0.58	0.559	-.3405675	.1846556
Receivedtraining	.0675069	.8273195	0.08	0.935	-1.561421	1.696435
Numbertrainings	-.0031052	.0109649	-0.28	0.777	-.0246942	.0184839
_cons	.5221645	.9199542	0.57	0.571	-1.289154	2.333483

3.6.6 Conclusions

The ultimate goal of EOA initiative was to achieve increased production, income, food security and ultimately organic producers' welfare. This study established that there has been improvement along all the four impact areas between 2013 and 2017. Production was reported to have increased by 83%, percentage unit productivity per area increased by on average 37%. About 58.4% Organic producers reported to have registered more than 10% increase in their incomes while 73% reported that their quality of life had improved. The ET notes that while all these changes appear positive and even probable outcomes of the EOA-I, the relationship between these outcomes and EOA-I is not significant. This study notes that while receiving training has a positive relationship with production receiving more training does not appear to increase production. Possible reasons here could be that either additional training does not necessarily focus on increasing production or is more of an emphasis on the previously taught skills.

Distribution of EOA materials was also found not to be positively related to knowledge. Possible reasons here could be that the materials are not written in a way that target beneficiaries to easily understand and use. This argument is supported by the fact that majority of the producers interviewed had upto primary level of education, which implies that the most effective reach out approach would be use of vernacular language either face to face or through audio visual technology. Printed materials could still be used but using simplified language and dominated by imagery demonstration.

3.7 Assessment of the EOA Consideration of Gender & Access by the Youth & Other Vulnerable Groups

3.7.1 Gender Equality, Youth & Vulnerable Groups

This study only picked a sample of the farmers, and better inferences would have been made had there been a better tracking system that would have recorded the numbers reached in terms of gender and youth. Nevertheless, in this study, the majority of farmers interviewed were men at 54% and women at 46%. Across the eight countries where EOA-I is being implemented, only in Mali and Nigeria had majority of the respondents being female. In Ethiopia 80% of the respondents were male. Tables 43 and Figure 12 present this information.

Figure 10: Percentage Gender Distribution

Gender Distribution

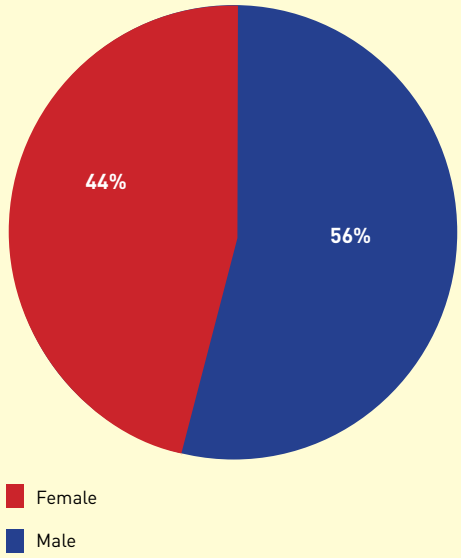


Table 43: Age Distribution across Countries

Country	Youth	Non-Youth
Benin	66	34
Ethiopia	80	20
Kenya	54	46
Mali	31	69
Nigeria	33	67
Senegal	67	33
Tanzania	55	45
Uganda	61	39
Grand Total	56	44

Youth as well as vulnerable groups were highlighted as some of the targeted beneficiaries, unfortunately the progress towards that end is not captured anywhere in the annual reports.

Youth is defined by ILO as any person below the age of 35 years.

Going by this definition, overall only 22% of the respondents in this study were youth and in Kenya this was even lower at 2%. In Benin and Ethiopia, the proportion of youth was relatively higher than in all the other countries. Given that this sample was drawn from the farmers reached by the EOA Initiative, the finding can be extrapolated to mean that youths have been marginally reached, especially given that youth make up 77% of the population in Sub-Sahara Africa. See the Table 44 below.

Table 44: Youth Representation across Countries

Country	Youth	Non-youth
Benin	44%	56%
Ethiopia	37%	63%
Kenya	2%	98%
Mali	15%	85%
Nigeria	13%	87%
Senegal	19%	81%
Tanzania	13%	87%
Uganda	29%	71%
Overall	23%	77%

This finding however is not surprising since as other researches have established that 40% of young people from the rural areas migrate to urban areas in search of jobs and other opportunities. Those who remain are either still in school and only a small percentage is engaged in agriculture[9]. Since many youths are still not employed, EOA can still be promoted as an alternative business venture that youth can try their hands on or on any other point within the entire EOA value chain.

3.7.2 Conclusion

The next phase of the EOA should develop deliberate strategies that consider reaching out to women, youth and other vulnerable groups and appropriate data collected about their engagement with the initiative.

3.8 Drawing Lessons

The ET drew key lessons learnt in this phase so as to inform recommendations and actions for addressing the weaknesses and challenges experienced. Very key in these lessons were those that will motivate funding support arrangements, future programming, implementation, monitoring & evaluation and reporting at all levels.

The challenges that EOA has faced in the last 4 years, should be seen as key lessons to explain the current level of outcomes across objectives and pillars, and more importantly, to "do things differently" in the next phase. Document review and interviews across stakeholders have enumerated a number of challenges that EOA faced. The ET categorized the challenges into governance, coordination and implementation; from which important lessons are drawn.

3.8.1 Governance

The structural set up is multi-layered, vertically and horizontally hierarchic. The top most governance entity is the Continental Steering Committee (CSC) chaired by African Union's Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture. Below the CSC are the RCS and the NSCs – and all supported by secretariats. At face value this is a robust governance structure.

However, the ET has observed that the support expected from the RSC level- ECOWAS and EAC has not been forthcoming as expected and this has created a void between the CSC and the

[9] Agriculture as a Sector of Opportunity for Young People in Africa, World Bank (2013)

NSC. Additionally, in the 7 out of the 8 countries where the NSCs existed, owing to their multi-stakeholder institutional set up or otherwise, their role has not been taken seriously and this has exposed both the CLOs and PIPs into an operating sector environment that does not speak with one voice.

Other challenges are associated with institutional weaknesses and weakness as a result lack of accountability and break up governance systems (strikes in universities); high staff turnover at the ministries of Agriculture, and lack of a robust M&E system.

Out of the challenges experienced the EOA Initiative has learnt the following lessons:

1. Effective, efficient and strong governance and management systems, are critical requirements for successful scale up of EOA and sustainability.
2. A robust governance system will thrive better in a highly-communicative environment. EOA will require functional top-down and bottom-up feedback mechanisms across various levels to ensure an informed and collective strategy in mainstreaming EOA across various governance and decision-making levels.
3. While the EOA policies, plans and programs may be similar in nature, the level and capacity of NSC is varied. That, different countries are at different levels of partner collaboration, needs and capabilities. Therefore country-specific contexts shouldbe considered in pursuing the partnership agenda.

3.8.2 Coordination

With regard to coordination, the CSC members are supported by a Secretariat, housed in BvAT offices in Nairobi. With regard to overall coordination of the project BvAT performs this role with contribution from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in the EOA countries. PELUM Kenya coordinates the implementation of the initiative with contribution from Swedish Society for Nature and Conservation (SSNC) but only in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda.

At national level, the CLOs are responsible for coordination of activity (pillar) implementation by the PIPs and partners. In some cases, CLOs have performed the dual role of coordination and direct implementation of pillar activities. AfrONet is responsible for uniting and networking organic agriculture actors and stakeholders across the continent; pitching the advocacy agenda at the highest point possible, mobilizing resources and supporting the capacity building of key organic agriculture actors.

The coordination role has been hampered by a number of challenges ranging from, poor organizational systems, policies and procedures to withdrawal of donor support (SSNC) of key EOA partners like EOA Tanzania partners and recently NOGAMU in Uganda. In the recent organizational capacity assessment exercise, the finding that 26% of partners were significant and high risk requires close attention to address the conditions of risk. The ET has also noted that some of the organizations do not undertake organizational annual audits, obfuscating their ability to determine their financial management believability.

Out of these challenges the following key lessons can be drawn:

1. At any rate the "game changer" for EOA success and stability at country level is a functional CLO. The functionality of the CLO will be measured against its agility and ability to mid-wife a constituency of multiple stakeholders and a regiment of implementing partners with clarity of purpose, objective and accountability.
2. CLOs must demonstrate not only institutional credibility, national outlook but bring on board core competencies in the areas of governance and legal compliance, financial management and internal controls, administrative systems, human resource systems, project management capabilities and M&E systems.
3. At a pan-African level, AfrONet should be seen to play a larger role than is currently the case. An enhanced presence, especially in non-EOA countries will be instrumental in creating a stronger EOA advocacy agenda and voice at the continental level. In all cases, AfrONet must demonstrate boldly that it continues to influence policies, strategies and actions towards sustainable ecological agriculture programmes contributing to food security, incomes and improved welfare of communities in Africa; even beyond the EOA initiative' area of jurisdiction and time frame.

3.8.3 Implementation

PIPs carry out direct implementation of activities as per the 4 EOA pillars. In some cases, CLOs have performed the dual role of coordination and direct implementation of pillar activities. A number of challenges have been realized ranging from low capacity to low burn-rates to low capacities in project management and reporting.

Fundamentally, the "game changer" for changes in production, income, welfare, adoption of EOA practices and food security at famer level is the PIP. However, PIPs have lacked funds to support key activities to undertake monitoring visits and key capacity building trainings. They too have not adequately engaged in cross-pillar learning or even crowding in activities at farmer level for higher impact.

While the staff supporting EOA at pillar level are well qualified in their technical fortes, they have not wholly demonstrated project management, M&E and reporting savviness, going by this evaluation and the recent capacity assessment. These sentiments were also echoed by the MTR.

Even within same country, PIPs have followed different value chains. For example, in Kenya, Egerton University (pillar 1) is carrying out research on coco yams in Njoro, while KOAN (pillar 3) is looking for markets for macadamia nuts in Thika. This is really ironical as the pillars are supposed to be sequentially linked.

Out of the challenges the ET draws the following lessons:

1. Sourcing and harmonization of streams of funding, coordination, monitoring and evaluation is still key for impact creation and scale-up. At all times resources are needed for developing and scaling up the initiative at country level and to majority of small-scale farmers at country level.
2. Beyond the resources, the sustainability of the uptake of EOA practices and technologies and changes at farmer level, will only be sustained by a well thought-out market system approach. This approach is explained in detail in the recommendations chapter.
3. Impact will be faster realized if implementing organizations in-country crowd in, in one project site or region and focus on similar value chains.
4. Executing organizations and CLOs must embrace due diligence in the selection of PIPs so as to ensure that EOA is implemented by PIPs with project management expertise and track-record, particularly in the areas of governance and legal compliance, financial management and internal controls, administrative systems, human resource systems, project management capabilities and M&E systems. While the sector may not have all strong partners, weak areas require identifying in good time and corrective measures taken.
5. It is true that organic famers face serious competition from conventional farmers and also proponents of chemical inputs. They need techniques to beat this competition and key to this will be accessing agricultural information, market intelligence and price information.

CHAPTER 4 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Introduction

Chapters 3 has provided a presentation and discussion of the ET findings and lessons drawn respectively across the 7 evaluation objectives – providing learning questions. The ET has used these to inform recommendations and actions for addressing the systemic weaknesses and challenges in EOA mainstreaming and increasing share of organic products in the market; deploying the most appropriate and motivating funding support arrangements and applying robust monitoring & evaluation and reporting systems for future programming and on a sustained basis.

4.2 Recommendations per Evaluation Objectives

VII. Relevance, Effectiveness & Efficiency of Mainstreaming EOA into national policies, plans, programs and strategies.

- **Build capacity of the CLOs to manage multi-stakeholder processes.**

  It is evident that the process of mainstreaming EOA is a multi-stakeholder process (MSPs). MSPs range from simple processes, such as one-off consultations, to more complex ones such as multi-stakeholder networks and partnerships and thus require competent technical people with a knowhow of MSP facilitation to ensure the process remain relevant, has ownership amongst the members and ultimately its able to sustain partnerships and alliances. Therefore the capacity of CLOs should be strengthened for them to handle high-level multi-stakeholder engagements at national level.

- **Rally in Champions beyond government representations.**

  Government (ministry of Agriculture representation) at the NSC is strategic, but not enough. There is need to include champions "opinion shapers" in the NSCs. This means people with international and national stature and recognized authorities in matters ecological organic agriculture. This will build more credibility on the advocacy agenda and move the EOA from a development agenda corner more and embraced more as a key agenda at the national level.

- **Make AfrONET more vibrant**

  EOA Initiative with current level of financial support cannot be in all countries. Including the non-EOA countries, AfrONET should drive the agenda through initiating partnerships, resource mobilization and involving continental champions (persons of influence) at pitch of EOA advocacy agenda, and too at the helm of the organization. The influence of persons such as the late Koffi Annan on AGRA's growth and impact is a good demonstration what such champions can achieve.

VIII. EOA Effectiveness & Efficiency of EOA Institutional Set Up & Institutional Support Structures

- **Motivating Funding Support Arrangements**

  While the element of all collective responsibility is being emphasized by the CLOs compiling reports for the entire country before the next tranche is released, it doesn't seem to have often been effective as it often leads to delays. The time lag in releasing funds, had a knock-on effect to delays in delivery and quality of some of the programme outputs as the implementing partners rush to beat deadlines. For example, the Jan 2016 funds disbursements were delayed by an average of 4 months and 3 days, and had a knock effect of subsequent delay in submission of the report of approximately 1 month and 9 days.

  Therefore CLOs should take up more responsibility to ensure quality and timeliness of reports to reduce the back and forth between the CLO's and the Secretariats. This can be affected by allowing the CLOs to submit the reports that are ready on time, but also only get an equivalent proportion of the administration fees, with the balance coming after the remaining reports come through.

  The current funds requisition system is that countries put in request for resources annually, based on a pre-structured EOA implementation plan. The operating environment can change significantly over 3 to 5 years; thus, the current approach gives little room for implementing partners to bring in innovativeness and drive agility of the initiative. As such, ET recommends that EOA should only provide general direction on the key areas to focus and clear targets based on the continental EOA strategy- the EOA Strategic Plan; and then allow the countries to put in a proposal / plan addressing the same.

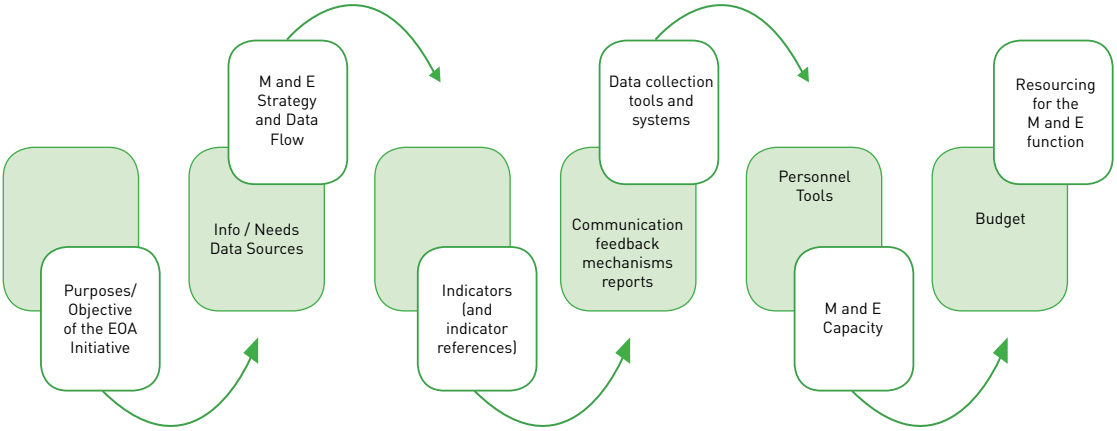
  This approach would take care of specific country contexts, and prioritize initiatives accordingly. In addition to the proposed process, EOA should consider introducing a combination of basic grant and performance-based bonus to make the entire process competitive, ambition for countries to go for targets and as such promote innovation

- **Develop and Employ a Robust Monitoring & Evaluation Framework**

  The starting point is to agree on a broad set of indicators from which CLOs and PIPs will develop their country specific indicators. A key survey to be contacted as part of the new phase design is a baseline survey. A baseline study/ survey as an analysis describing the situation in a project area – including data on individual primary stakeholders – prior to a development intervention. Progress (results and accomplishments) can be assessed and comparisons made against it. It also serves as an important reference for the MTR and final evaluation.

  The ET has noted previously that this initiative did not have a robust M&E framework and this may have affected the reliability or validity of some of the numbers that have been reported from the PIPs upstream. Figure 11 presents the headlines of what would go to an M&E Framework.

Figure 11: Anatomy of an M&E Framework



- **Employing Due Diligence & Continuous Capacity Improvement**

  As highlighted earlier, strong institutions are needed to create success and stability in EOA programming and outcomes. The MTR recommended capacity assessment of partners to gauge their ability to implement activities with available resources and help refocus the EOA initiative and assign activities to capable partners based on their comparative advantage, technical capacity, soundness of systems and where they can make maximum impact with available resources. The EOA Initiative has already implemented this recommendation and certain implementation challenges have been enumerated.

  From the implementation challenges discussed earlier and lessons drawn for them it will be imperative for the next phase to not only employ due diligence and pre-qualified criteria in selecting CLOs and PIPs, but also drop those that do not meet the selection requirements. For those onboarding, it will be necessary to monitor their performance so as to minimize and mitigate the risks of underperformance. The ET then recommends 2 strategies.

  The first strategy is to develop and apply a capacity improvement tool that would more or less work like an Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool, (OCA) but one that is periodically scored to gauge capacity. The tool should gauge capacity at the beginning to create a baseline and targets for both CLOs and PIPs across the domains of governance and legal compliance, financial management and internal controls, administrative systems, human resource systems, project management capabilities and M&E systems. It will then be the role of the executing agencies to take appropriate action on the gaps through tailored training, mentoring and coaching programs.

  The second strategy is to develop and maintain an electronic dashboard, based an annual business cycle to which each implementing partner is a signatory to. Every month/ quarter the dashboard is updated by ticking against key criteria. Table 45, illustrates how this would function.

Table 45: Business Cycle Dashboard

Colour	Compliance to statutory requirements (Monthly data; internal and annual audits etc.)	Adherence to work plan and reporting (submission of technical and financial reports etc.)	Budget Utilization (Funds reconciliation, burn-rate, efficiency ratio etc.)	Resource Mobilization (Funding pipeline; synergies and partnerships etc.)	Organizational Capacity Assessment as per the OCA (governance, finance, HR, admin, program mgt. & M&E)	Score	Recomm-ended action
Green						70 %-100%	
Amber						50%-69%	
Red						49% and below	

IX. EOA reach to Households & Other Target Groups

- **Conduct a Baseline &Use M&E framework to collect data and other strategic information**

  The ET recommends that the EOA attribution question in the next phase must be well answered and determined. Therefore starting with a baseline that provides the EOA benchmarks on various parameters/ indicators and sets targets, numbers reached across pillars should be periodically tracked and reported real time, where possible.

  Electronic and standardized estimation approaches could be developed and applied. Annual reviews, mid-term and end-term evaluation exercises are recommended too.

- **Develop models and interventions that are attractive to the youth as a target group.**

  To increase the involvement of the youth as a target group will require innovative approaches that include them being service providers of organic related services along the value chain, as well as consider interventions around aspects of ICT applications in EOA.

- **Appropriate reference materials**

  The PIPs should be considerate on the materials they use for outreach. They should be cognizant of the education level so that they are easily understood by the beneficiaries. This recommendation is made against the finding on low to average literacy levels of the farmers who participated in this study.

X. Effectiveness and efficiency of EOA pillar interventions in influencing farmers' knowledge, attitudes and uptake of EOA practices and/or technologies, and the mechanisms by which this occurred.

- **Link interventions to Levels of education of beneficiaries**

  The pillar-implementing partners approach used to reach primary beneficiaries should take into consideration their level of education attainment. Materials used should be more imagery and audio visuals should be in vernacular.

- **Impact of training on farmer production levels**

  The study findings concluded that more training sessions did not necessarily lead to increased production levels. This calls for the need for better understanding of this finding. Some of plausible reasons could be poor selection of TOTs, needs assessment amongst others that can be only identified with a robust M&E process.

- **Focusing on a Value Chain Development Approach**

  The ET noticed that thePIPs were focusing on different products, and by extension different value chains. For example in Kenya, Pillar 1 focusing research on coco-yam and the value chain pillar focusing on macadamia. This definitely limits the opportunity for building synergies and effective joint planning amongst pillar implementing partners. Addressing systemic challenges through a value chain focus within the respective countries would fast track learning, as well as ease mobilization and attraction of different actors along the value chains through Multi-stakeholder Processes (MSPs) i.e. bringing in private sector such as input suppliers, market outlets etc., on account of their innovations that would spur market development and push EOA to scale. In addition, the value chain approach would mean working with the same farmers across the pillars and thus focusing interventions in the same physical location; and subsequently easily demonstrate impact. This is known as crowding in.

XI. Pillar interventions contribution to key project outcomes including increased agricultural production, productivity, food security, income and farmer welfare.

- **Creating Opportunities for Scaling Up through Production Market Systems**

  During the study, the ET team came across farmers who had adopted a wide range of EOA practices and were making good profits. However, they were unable to increase scale of operation and increase returns because of drudgery involved in some of the practices i.e. making enough composite and organic pesticides amongst others that could be used at scale.

Thus, future programme should consider introducing market systems development approach. The approach aims at reducing poverty by enhancing the ways that the poor interact with markets. The ultimate goal is to remove the constraints that impede the poor from participating in markets, and thereby turn the challenges of poverty into economic opportunities. This approach is founded on two key elements: i) completing methodical market assessments to identify key leverage points where the greatest change is possible, and ii) developing mutually beneficial partnerships with a diverse range of public and private-sector partner; with the ultimate aim of creating systemic sustainable change within the value chain.

An example would be to build capacity of local youth as service providers (Business Development Services- providers) to address some of the challenges limiting farmers practicing OA to operate at scale. In this case, the youth could engage in preparation and distribution of affordable composite manure, or the even SMEs can be supported to get into small-scale production of organic pesticides, herbicides or organic fertilizers through smart subsidies. These would lead to ease of access of affordable inputs that can be applied at scale and subsequently contribute to enhancing efficiency in the value chains which would make the final organic products competitive in the market. The approach calls for innovative partnerships with public and private sector partners as it requires an enabling environment, a set of supportive functions including market infrastructure, information and complementary markets. It is more effective when using the value chain development approach.

XII. Gender equality and access by the youth and other vulnerable groups by the EOA Initiative.

Women, youth & vulnerable persons often have limited access and control over resources that could enhance their livelihoods. Hence, there is need for outreach design to introduce practices and technologies that are geared and friendly towards the different categories of youth, women and other vulnerable groups. This decision should be considered at the point of value chain selection. This will ensure proper targeting of the desired groups, introducing initiatives that are relevant and can produce the desirable results.

ANNEXURE

Annex 1: Project Documents Reviewed

- AU Decision on Organic Farming
- EOA Strategic Plan (2015-2025)
- EOA Action Plan (2015-2020)
- SDC and SSNC Project Documents (for the period 2013-2018)
- Project Log frames (Consolidated country log frames)
- Baseline Survey Reports 2014 (Benin, Mali and Senegal)
- Project Country Consolidated Annual Reports (2014 and 2015)
- Minutes of the Continental Steering Committee meetings (2013-2016)
- End term Evaluation Report of the Assessment of SSNC contribution to EOA in Eastern Africa
- African Organic Conference Declarations (2012 and 2015)
- EOA Mid-term Review Report 2016
- Report of the Organizational and Capacity Assessment of Partners involved in EOA Initiative in Africa (2018)
- Working document on Brainstorming Matrix
- SDC End of Phase Report requirements
- SDC Evaluation Grid

Annex 2. Aligning the SDC Assessment Grid to the Evaluation Objectives

Objective	SDC Assessment Grid
1. To assess the extent to which the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of mainstreaming EOA into national policies, plans, strategies, and programmes have contributed to expected outcomes and sustainability of the project.	Relevance (2) The extent to which the objectives of the SDC projects are consistent with the demands and needs of partners country (institutions respectively society) as well as the sector policies and strategies of the partners country. Effectiveness (4) The extent to which the planned objectives at outcome level have been achieved considering their relative importance. If possible distinguish the quality and quantity of results achieved. Efficiency (8) the extent to which the relation between resources (mainly financial and human resources) and time (e.g. delays compared to planning) required and results achieved is appropriate (cost – benefit ratio CBR) Efficiency (9) the extent to which the approaches and strategies (in this case pillar approaches and interventions) used by the SDC projects are considered efficient (Cost efficiency)

2. To evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the EOA structural set up of EOA implementing partners (CLOs and PIPs) and institutional support structures (the AU-Chaired Continental Steering Committee, AfroNet, Regional Steering Committees, National Steering Committees, Executing Agencies and overall M&E systems) in delivering concrete results based on their mandates.	Effectiveness (4) The extent to which the planned objectives at outcome level have been achieved considering their relative importance. If possible distinguish the quality and quantity of results achieved. Efficiency (8) the extent to which the relation between resources (mainly financial and human resources) and time (e.g. delays compared to planning) required and results achieved is appropriate (cost – benefit ratio CBR) Efficiency (9) the extent to which the approaches and strategies (in this case pillar approaches and interventions) used by the SDC projects are considered efficient (Cost efficiency)
3. To determine the number (or percent) of households who have been reached by the EOA project and in what ways.	Effectiveness (7) The extent to which the outcomes achieved contributed to gender specific results.
4. To assess effectiveness and efficiency of EOA pillar interventions in influencing farmers' knowledge, attitudes and uptake of EOA practices and/or technologies, and the mechanisms by which this occurred.	Effectiveness (4) The extent to which the planned objectives at outcome level have been achieved considering their relative importance. If possible distinguish the quality and quantity of results achieved. Efficiency (8) the extent to which the relation between resources (mainly financial and human resources) and time (e.g. delays compared to planning) required and results achieved is appropriate (cost – benefit ratio CBR)
5. To assess the extent to which pillar interventions have contributed to key project outcomes including increased agricultural production, productivity, food security, income and farmer welfare.	Effectiveness (4) The extent to which the planned objectives at outcome level have been achieved considering their relative importance. If possible distinguish the quality and quantity of results achieved. Efficiency (9) the extent to which the approaches and strategies (in this case pillar approaches and interventions) used by the SDC projects are considered efficient (Cost efficiency)
6. To assess the extent to which gender equality and access by the youth and other vulnerable groups were considered in the project budget and implementation.	Effectiveness (7) The extent to which the outcomes achieved contribute to gender specific results. Relevance (1) The extent to which the objectives of the SDC projects are consistent with the demands and needs of the target groups (inclusive gender – specific Requirements)
7. To draw key lessons learnt from Phase 1 of the EOA to inform recommendations and actions for addressing the weaknesses and challenges experienced, most appropriate and motivating funding support arrangements, future programming, implementation, monitoring & evaluation and reporting on a sustained basis at all key levels (country, regional, continental platform and AU).	Sustainability (10) The extent to which the positive results (outputs and outcomes) will be continued beyond the end of the external support. Considering also potential risks in the context.

Annex 3: Project Burn Rate

Country	Pillar	Organization	Total allocated	Total Actual spent	Cumulative Burn Rate
Kenya	1	Egerton University	150,575.27	88,882.35	59.02852
	2	BvAT	112,798.80	86,050.70	76.28689
	3	KOAN	120,755.65	94,251.86	78.05172
	4	KOAN	230,035.23	149,467.09	64.97574
TOTAL			**614,164.95**	**418,651.99**	**68.16605**
Tanzania	1	SAT	150,575.27	109,904.17	72.98952
	2	PELUM Tanzania	112,798.80	59,954.80	53.15198
	3	TOAM	120,755.65	108,073.43	89.49762
	4	TOAM	230,035.23	174,163.56	75.71169
TOTAL			**614,164.95**	**452,095.97**	**73.61149**
Uganda	1	UMU	150,575.27	96,718.97	64.23297
	2	MAK	112,798.80	56,749.41	50.31029
	3	NOGAMU	120,755.65	132,691.45	109.8843
	4	NOGAMU	230,035.23	185,519.39	80.64825
TOTAL			**614,164.95**	**471,679.22**	**76.80009**
Ethiopia	1	Mekelle University	150,575.27	77,532.84	51.49109
	2	PANOS Ethiopia	112,798.80	48,357.99	42.87102
	3	ISD	120,755.65	81,907.22	67.82889
	4	ISD	230,035.23	159,407.05	69.2968

TOTAL			**614,164.95**	**367,205.10**	**59.78933**
Nigeria	1	University Ibadan	150,575.27	102,724.96	68.22167
		Kware State University	-	-	#DIV/0!
	2	HeFCi	112,798.80	88,391.09	78.36173
		FACAN	-	-	#DIV/0!
	3	NOAN	120,755.65	90,963.19	75.32831
		OFPSAN	-	-	#DIV/0!
	4	NOAN	215,861.34	182,298.88	84.45184
TOTAL			**599,991.05**	**464,378.12**	**77.39751**
Senegal	1	ENDAPRONAT	150,575.27	109,125.90	72.47266
	2	ASPAB	112,798.80	84,890.34	75.25819
	3	AGRECOL	120,755.65	72,837.38	60.31799
	4	FENAB	215,861.34	174,112.76	80.65954
TOTAL			**599,991.05**	**440,966.38**	**73.49549**
Mali	1	IRE –RGRCS	150,575.27	49,771.01	33.05391
	2	AOPP	112,798.80	29,807.27	26.42517
	3	REMATRAC-BIO	120,755.65	67,972.32	56.28914
	4	MoBioM/AOPP	215,861.34	81,096.02	37.56857
TOTAL			**599,991.05**	**228,646.62**	**38.10834**
Benin	1	OBEPAB	150,575.27	122,838.80	81.57967
	2	PASCiB	112,798.80	78,194.15	69.32179
	3	CRASTEDA	120,755.65	93,820.93	77.69486
	4	OBEPAB	215,861.34	188,987.94	87.55062
TOTAL			**599,991.05**	**483,841.82**	**80.64151**
OVERALL TOTAL			**4,856,624.01**	**3,327,465.23**	**68.51396**

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