



# **2020 Annual Report** **By The Lead Coordinating Agency and** **Host To The EOA Continental Steering** **Committee Secretariat**

*Reporting On The EOA Initiative SDC Contribution*





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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

<b>AOPP</b>	Association des Organisations Professionnelles Paysannes du Mali
<b>ATPS</b>	African Technology Policy Studies Network
<b>BDS</b>	Business Development Services
<b>BvAT</b>	Biovision Africa Trust
<b>CLO</b>	Country Lead Organization
<b>CNCR</b>	Conseil National de Concertation et de Coopération des Ruraux
<b>CSC</b>	Continental Steering Committee
<b>DREA</b>	Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture
<b>EAC</b>	East Africa Community
<b>ECOWAS</b>	Economic Community of West African States
<b>EOA</b>	Ecological Organic Agriculture
<b>FARA</b>	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
<b>GIZ</b>	The German Society for International Cooperation (or Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit)
<b>ICIPE</b>	International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology
<b>ISD</b>	Institute for Sustainable Development
<b>NOAN</b>	The Association of Organic Agriculture Practitioners of Nigeria
<b>NOGAMU</b>	National Organic Agriculture Movement of Uganda
<b>NSC</b>	National Steering Committee
<b>OCA</b>	Organizational Capacity Assessment
<b>PIP</b>	Pillar Implementing Partner
<b>PMU</b>	Project Management Unit
<b>RSC</b>	Regional Steering Committee
<b>SDC</b>	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
<b>SSNC</b>	Swedish Society for Nature Conservation
<b>TOAM</b>	Tanzania Organic Agriculture Movement

## Executive Summary

This report relates to the second phase of the project supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) titled: Mainstreaming Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) into National Policies, Strategies and Programmes in Africa. This is a continental effort implemented under the guidance and oversight of the African Union (AU) chaired Continental Steering Committee (CSC). It's designed to establish an African organic platform, based on available best practices and to develop sustainable organic farming systems. The report covers key accomplishments, challenges, and recommendations for the reporting period 2020 in the 9 implementing countries of Kenya, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Senegal, Nigeria, Benin, and Mali under the funding support from SDC.

At the continental level, the support from AUC to the mainstreaming of EOA-I into agricultural systems was further strengthened through the development of EOA-I Indicators for coopting within the CAADP Biennial Review and Reporting framework which showcases performance against set indicators within it. This is quite a strategic level of the entry of EOA-I implementation because the CAADP framework is the main force behind the implementation of the AU Malabo commitments which outlines the transformation of Agriculture and sustainable development on the continent. The performance appraisal is done through its Biennial Review and Reporting framework which showcases performance against set indicators within it. Further to that, the AUC through the CSC formed a CSC Seed Technical Working Group that was integrated within the ASBPP to enable the EOA-I to be part of the platform working group in line with the decision on OA as the lead of the Farmer Saved Seed Systems (FSSS). The CSC Seed Technical Working Group continued discussions in 2020 that will lead into the formation of a special cluster within the ASBPP on EOA Farmed Saved Seed Systems.

The year 2020 commenced with an extension of partners' contracts for a full year from 1st January to 31st December 2020. The extension of the project under the previous grants management system was to allow for finalization of the development of the new grants management system. BvAT signed addendums with partners in the 9 countries to outline contractual terms for their workplans and budgets as approved for implementation by the CSC.

Partners in 8 out of the 9 countries implemented all the Pillars (1-4). Rwanda the exceptional country had partners implement Pillar 4 activities only. Rwanda focused on building its capacity and identifying potential partners to form a consortium to eventually take on the entire project pillars. Considerable successful implementation was realized in the 9 partner countries.

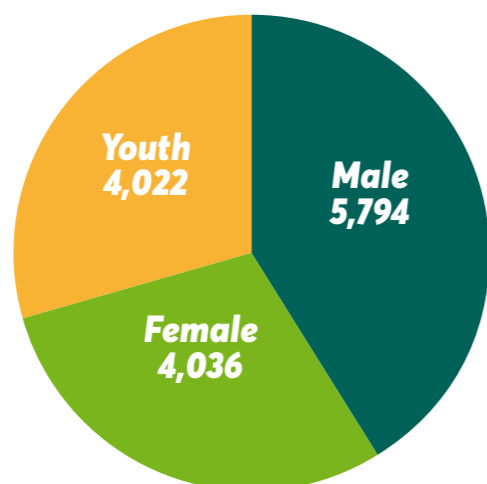
The project realized encouraging results in reaching out to small-holder farmers to ensure that information and knowledge for uptake of EOA-I practices and access to markets was enhanced. Approximately 1,720,255 farmers were reached with information and communication materials to enhance knowledge and uptake of organic farming practices. The communication pathways used included but not limited to knowledge databases, trainings, workshops, use of social media especially YouTube, twitter, Facebook, and websites.

In terms of adoption 9,830 (M&F) farmers were reported to have adopted and 4,022 youth. Some of the common EOA practices that were reported to have been adopted included mulching, use of compost manure, use of botanical pesticides, intercropping, use of ashes, mixed cropping, row planting, vermicompost, crop rotation, use of biochar and many others.



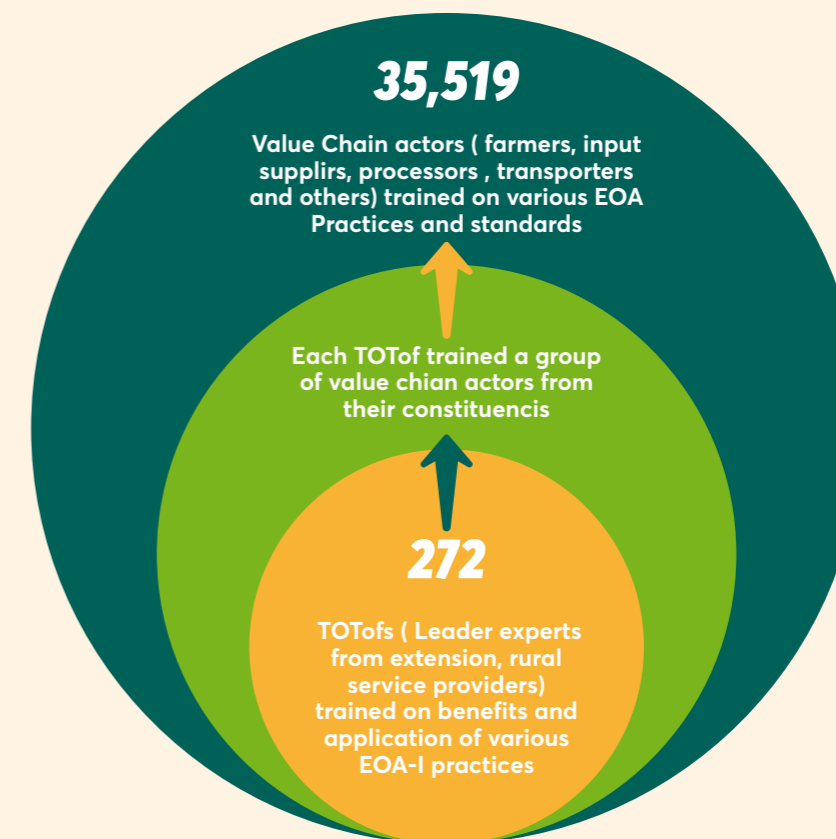
FARMERS REACH IN NUMBERS		NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES	M	F	Y
1	Farmers reached with EOA information and knowledge	1,720,255	774,132	860,112	86,011
2	Value chain actors (farmers, input suppliers, processors, and transporters) trained on various EOA practices and standards	35,519	7,104	24,863	3,552
3	EOA farmers participating in the markets at different levels (domestic and exports) disaggregated by gender and age.	12,453	4,981	6,226	1,245
4	Total number of farmers who adopted EOA practices in 2020	13,852	5,794	4,036	4,022

### Number of Farmers Who Adopted to EOA Practices in 2020



- Farmers adopted EOA technologies and Practices in 2020 Male
- Farmers adopted EOA technologies and Practices in 2020 Female
- Farmers adopted EOA technologies and Practices in 2020 Youths

The total number of stakeholders trained was approximately 35,000 with majority being farmers. The multiplier approach of training teams of facilitators (ToToF) who in turn train bigger numbers of value chain actors was used. This approach saw 272 master trainers train 35,000 value chain actors as per pie chart below.



Approximately 300 Stakeholders were engaged in platform meetings, workshops, and conferences across the different EOA-I structures to discuss successes, best practices, experiences, and challenges of the EOA-I. Lobbying and Advocacy for mainstreaming of EOA-I into national, regional, and continental frameworks were key activities undertaken during 2020, with various meetings held targeting key policy makers. During the reporting period, EOA-I partners in Uganda facilitated the launch of the National Organic Agriculture Policy for Uganda (NOAP) in an event which Uganda EOA-I partners participated.

However effective achievement of the set goals for 2020 were hampered by Covid-19 pandemic that hit the Africa continent in March 2020. The Africa governments put in measures to control the spread of the virus with key regulations heavily affecting the organic sector. Travel restrictions, movement lockdowns and social distancing were some of the restrictions that affected effective implementation of the project. This was because the EOA-I project by design requires physical interactions of various stakeholders from production to consumption level. The project heavily relies on physical markets and effective movement of farmer produce from the farm to the fork. The project as well has a focus on policy and advocacy engagement component that relies on undertaking strategic meetings with policy makers, holding workshops, trainings, trade fairs and conferences.

Going forward, the EOA-I stakeholders need to adjust to the current norm of Covid-19 pandemic and come up with activities that are in line with the Covid-19 management regulations. This necessitates critical thinking on how key activities can still be undertaken through virtual pathways. The project had successes of undertaking key virtual events like trainings and key strategic meetings. Virtual markets through social platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp were also set up and became operational. Stakeholders networked and built partnerships using very limited resources and while saving the environment by reducing carbon footprint.

Undertaking a mapping of food flows across conventional and organic farming systems would allow partners to gain a real-time understanding of the direct impacts of regulatory responses on production systems, value chains, and formal and informal markets by focusing on women and marginalized actors.



## Project Background

The Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative (EOAI) is an outcome of deliberations and support to implement the African Union Heads of State and Governments Decision on Organic Farming adopted during the Eighteenth Ordinary Session, 24-28 January 2011(EX.CL/Dec.621 (XVIII)). The initiative started in 2011 with support from the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC) and later the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

The initiative has a mission to promote ecologically sound strategies and practices among diverse stakeholders involved in production, processing, marketing, and policy making to safeguard the environment, improve livelihoods, alleviate poverty, and guarantee food security. The Initiative's implementation strategy aiming to mainstream EOA in policies and practices adopts a multi-stakeholder managed national platforms informed by scientific evidence and local experiential knowledge and supported by capacity development of the various stakeholder groups, information & communication efforts and strategic actions linked to regional and continental policy making bodies.

The overall goal of the initiative is to mainstream Ecological Organic Agriculture into national agricultural production systems by 2025 to improve agricultural productivity, food security, access to markets and sustainable development in Africa.

### Specific objectives to which the partner activities are supposed to contribute:

1. *To avail information and knowledge needed by EOA value chain actors through demand-driven, multi-disciplinary, gender sensitive, participatory research, and repositories.*
2. *To enhance adoption of EOA technologies and practices through systematic dissemination of research and experience-based information, knowledge, and training of value chain actors.*
3. *To substantially increase share of quality organic products at local, national, regional, and international markets through value chain development and market strengthening; and*
4. *To enhance structured management and governance of EOA through coordination, networking, advocacy, multi stakeholder platforms and capacity building leading to positive changes in agricultural systems in Africa.*

The initiative embraces holistic production systems that sustain the health of soils, ecosystems, and people, and relies on ecological processes, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local conditions rather than reliance on the use of external inputs with adverse effects on people's total health (human, animal, plant and environmental).

The Initiative under SDC support is anchored on four separate but interrelated pillars, namely:

1. *Pillar 1: Research and Applied Knowledge (R&AK)*
2. *Pillar 2: Information, Communication and Extension (IC&E)*
3. *Pillar 3: Value Chain and Market Development (VCMD)*
4. *Pillar 4: Supporting and Cementing: Steering, Coordination and Management*

# Policy and Strategic Engagements of the EOA-I

## Continental Secretariat

At the continental level, BuAT as host secretariat to the Continental Secretariat undertook several activities aimed at strengthening its capacity to execute its continental mandate. Several milestones were achieved:

1. **Endorsement of BuAT as Host Secretariat by AU:** The AU Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment officially endorsed BuAT to host the Secretariat to oversee the implementation and report progress of the implementation of Decision on Organic Agriculture (EX.CL/Dec.621 XVII). A concept note was developed, and extra funding allocated to implement specific activities related to general issues of the initiative.
2. **Memorandum of Understanding between the Secretariat (BuAT) and the AUC:** The political good will be emanating from the STC endorsement called for the development of an MoU between BuAT and the AUC. The MoU solidifies and deepens the collaboration and gives the Secretariat the political impetus to execute its continental mandate of coordinating the mainstreaming of EOA in Africa. The MoU outlines the roles (individually and jointly) to be performed by each party while considering their comparative advantage. Among the joint roles is resource mobilization for EOA activities, advocacy, and policy influence etc. The MoU is at the Legal Affairs Department for processing before signing by the two entities.
3. **EOA Indicators into the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) framework:** The CAADP framework is the main force behind the implementation of the AU Malabo commitments which outlines the transformation of Agriculture and sustainable development on the continent. The performance appraisal is done through its Biennial Review and Reporting framework which showcases performance against set indicators within it. With the support of the AU, the EOA-I was co-opted within the CAADP Biennial Review (BR) and Reporting Working Group in 2020. A concept note has since been developed by a Specialized Technical Group of the CSC and the AU has authorized the piloting of EOA indicators and data collection tools in selected EOA countries. If successful and viable, the indicators will be endorsed by the STC on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment in November 2021 and adopted for use by the CAADP BR and Reporting committee. **(Annex1: Concept note on piloting of EOA-I indicators in the CADDP Framework)**
4. **AU led African Seed and Biotechnology Programme Platform (ASBPP):** In 2019, the AU supported the linkage of CSC Seed Technical Working Group and the ASBPP to enable the EOA-I to be part of the platform working group in line with the decision on OA as the lead of the Farmer Saved Seed Systems (FSSS). The CSC Seed Technical Working Group continued discussions in 2020 that will lead into the formation of a special cluster within the ASBPP on EOA Farmed Saved Seed Systems. Eventually the cluster will submit its views for consideration as the AU commences the process of



1. harmonization of seed systems in Africa to be adopted by the STC on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment in 2021. **(Annex 2: Farmer saved Seed Systems concept note)**
2. **The EOA Secretariat and AU Collaboration:**
  - i. **The GIZ Knowledge Centre for Organic Agriculture (KCOA) in Africa:** The Secretariat and the AU continued to collaborate in bringing more donors and initiatives on board. Under this the GIZ participated in the CSC meetings and gave updates on the implementation of the KCOA project. GIZ has joined the coalition of international partners supporting EOA in Africa.
  - ii. **The KCOA Continental Knowledge Digital Platform:** The Secretariat facilitated discussions involving AU, BMZ and GIZ on institutional hosting of the digital knowledge platform for ownership, political good will and sustainability and upscaling the platform (Annex 3: Minutes of the meeting held for hosting of the Continental Knowledge Platform at AUC)
  - iii. **The KCOA Knowledge Hub Project for Central Africa:** In February 2020, the Secretariat and the AU jointly wrote to the German government through BMB and GIZ to consider extending the KCOA project to Central Africa. The German government has since approved the request and the project has been launched in Central Africa.
  - iv. **The Integration of Regional Economic Committees (RECs) and AU agencies into EOA:** During the 13th CSC held in 2020, the CSC underscored the need to have the East African Community (EAC) and other RECs integrated into the governance of the EOA and support the development EOA in their regions. The AU was requested to support the Secretariat in linking with RECs and other AU commissioned agencies continentally. Consequently, the AU has linked the Secretariat with the Economic Community for Central African States (ECCAS) that officially joined the CSC membership in 2020. Efforts to have the Secretariat linked to other RECs are underway.
  - v. **Organic Policy mapping in Africa:** The Secretariat and AU embarked on an organic policy mapping across Africa through a 47-country commissioned study undertaken by Prof. Raymond Auerbach of University of the Western Cape, South Africa. A report was produced with scorecard indicating where the countries lie on status of mainstreaming EOA into country agricultural frameworks. Future target would be how to get EOA considered in National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIPs) and Regional Agricultural Investment Plans (RAIPs). Policy briefs have been developed and the Secretariat is working on a dissemination strategy for all EOA products to guarantee effective reach to various target audience. **(Annex 4: Organic policy mapping across Africa)**

## Regional Secretariats in East and West Africa Clusters

At the regional level, the West Africa Secretariat continued to receive political good will and support from the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS) who continued to provide leadership to the Regional Steering Committee (RSC).

Advocacy work through key strategic forums is one of the key objectives driving development of regional EOA policies and legislations. During this reporting period, the regional secretariats undertook various awareness creation activities to lobby key policy makers to support the EOA-I. Some of the activities included facilitation of key government officials to attend BIOFACH Trade fair in Nuremberg, Germany, in line with pillar 3 of the EOA-I.

The West Africa Secretariat started preparations for the 6th West Africa Organic Conference (6th WAOC) to take place in Burkina Faso in October 2021. The conference will serve as a platform for the establishment of an Ecological Organic Agriculture National platform in Burkina Faso for mainstreaming of EOA in the country, awareness creation and policy development.

West Africa secretariat further had strengthened engagements under the leadership of Mr Ernest Aubeé of the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) Commission through a collaborative and interactive virtual meeting via Zoom with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Africa and West African sub-region team on Thursday September 24, 2020. The meeting aimed at initiating interaction between the FAO and ECOWAS led ecological agriculture projects, with a view of finding commonalities and way forward to improving collaboration between the two teams. **(Annex 5: Minutes of West Africa Steering Committee and FAO representatives)**

The Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative' (EOA-I) Regional Secretariat of West Africa under the able leadership of Mr Ernest Aubeé of the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) Commission organized the 4th Regional Steering Committee (RSC) virtual meeting to review the activities of EOA

in West Africa on Wednesday 29 and Thursday 30 April 2020. The virtual meeting was an opportunity to discuss critical issues in the region related to organic and ecological agriculture, such as; update on the West Africa EOA Regional Secretariat' activities, update on EOA project implementation in Benin, Mali, Nigeria and Senegal, opportunities for extending EOA to other countries of West Africa, update on Organic Agriculture Knowledge Hub in West Africa, review of the 5th West African Organic Conference (WAOC) in Accra, Ghana, and update on 2021 Burkina Faso 6th West African Organic Conference (WAOC), etc. (**Annex 6: Minutes of WA RSC meeting**)

### National Secretariats in 9 EOA-I Countries

The EOA-I National Secretariats continued with policy and advocacy work by undertaking various strategic meetings with key policy makers especially from the Ministries of Agriculture.

#### Launch and Dissemination of the National Organic Agriculture Policy (NOAP), Uganda

EOA-I partners in Uganda supported the mainstreaming of EOA-I through the National Organic Policy (NOAP) that was adopted by the Government of the Republic of Uganda through the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries (MAAIF). The launch that was done in September, 2020, disseminated the set objectives for NOAP which include: increase annual growth rate in Organic Agricultural products by more than 3.0% to be able to spur a 6% agricultural growth target as stipulated under CAADP; Increase in productivity and value of the multiple functions of Organic Agriculture by more than 50%; Reduce degradation of the ecosystems by increasing investments in Organic Agriculture; Increase the contribution of organic Agriculture sub sector to GDP to reach over 50% of the Agricultural GDP; Reduce the proportion of Organic Agriculture dependent people living below the absolute poverty line and food insecurity to more than 27% and Increase public investment in Organic Agriculture subsector and overall agriculture sector to 10% of the total annual budget. (**Annex 7: The National Organic Agriculture Policy (NOAP), Uganda**)

Additionally, In Uganda, 3 meetings were held: 2 implementing partner meetings were held to prepare the EOA Uganda Advocacy strategy and 1 National agroecology conference held.

In Kenya, 4 meetings were held: 2 round table meetings with Ministry of Agriculture state officers in Murang'a and Kirinyaga counties to develop a programme for lobbying and advocacy against the use of toxic pesticides in the two counties; one inter-sectorial meeting for developing the EOA strategy with other key EOA stakeholders and government state officials; a World Food Day was organized to promote organic farming, create awareness on organic produce to consumers and to recognize organic farming as an alternative way of production to feed the world; and one meeting held for stakeholders (farmers, private companies, organic movements, organic suppliers etc) to participate in Banana value chain Business to Business (B2B) forum. The objective of the forum was to increase agricultural production and productivity of targeted communities in selected counties, and in the event of an eligible crisis or emergency, to provide immediate and effective response. The stakeholders were invited as an input supplier representing the organic sector.

In Tanzania, 131 participants participated in a conference titled, 'Towards Seed Sovereignty and Agrobiodiversity Conservation in Tanzania'. A meeting with the Ministry of Agriculture, Director for Crops Development, and the Vice President's Office (Permanent Secretary and Deputy Secretary, Environment Division) sensitized government officials on the importance EOA-I.

In Benin, sensitization of stakeholders on EOA was created through 4 workshops organized on organic and ecological agriculture in Benin and involving the authorities of the Ministry of Agriculture.

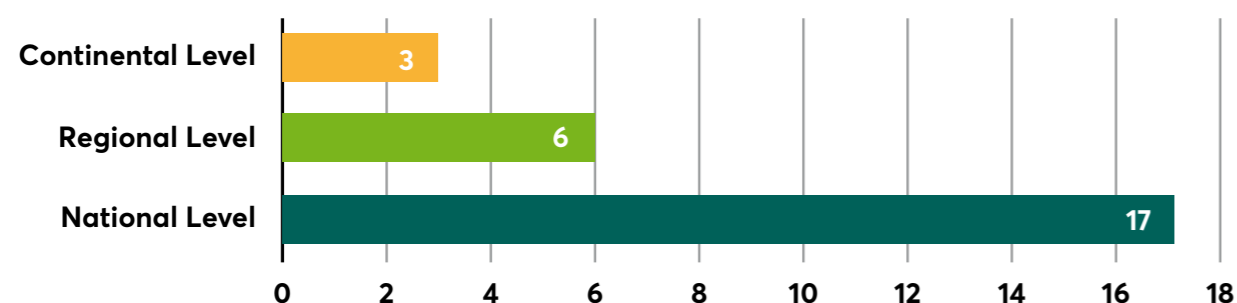
In Nigeria, the national secretariat created more awareness on the business viability of EOA through the 2020 National Organic Agriculture Business Summit that attracted various stakeholders including farmers, key government officials and media.

In Rwanda, the national secretariat created momentum for EOA through supporting the establishment of a national coalition to develop an organic strategy taking advantage of Rwanda and Mardi-Bio Exhibition and an International Fair-Trade Event at the Gikondo Expo Grounds.

The graphical presentation below shows the number of advocacy meetings held across the various EOA-I mainstreaming structures.



## Number of Meetings Held for Lobbying and Advocacy of EOA-I



## Highlights Of Biovision Africa Trust As Executing Agency

BvAT oversaw effective functioning and service delivery of EOA institutions under its coordination in the 9 implementing countries covering 25 partners. It continued to support partners especially through capacity building initiatives and one on one support through monitoring and evaluation initiatives.

### The Roll Out Of The New Grants Management System

The development a new Grants Management System anticipated the following benefits: Effectiveness and efficiency in grants management, inter alia by setting incentives for enhanced performance by the partners; Realization of value for money; Selection and contracting of consortia of partners with needed capacity in the pillars allocated; Capacity building/ strengthening of 'weak' partners; Effective risk management; Improved reporting by grantees; and Improved compliance to grant award terms and conditions.

### Key Developments Of The Grants Management System In 2020

1. The Request for Applications (RFA) was released through the system on 21st July 2020.
2. Partners applied by 30th September 2020 and applications were closed.
3. 27 applications were received with 1-4 per country. Lowest application number came from Ethiopia (1) and the highest from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda that had 3-4 applications.
4. PRC experts were selected for each country to support in the evaluation of the applications at country level.
5. PRC and NSC members undertook proposal evaluation in October and finalized in November.
6. The Executing Agency (BvAT) reviewed each of the top 2 proposals per country and submitted the selection report of best application to SDC for endorsement.

### Annex 8: Grants Management Manual

To strengthen the value chains and network of team's implementation strategies envisioned in the phase II of the initiative, BvAT organized and facilitated 2 key value chains and market development workshops training in east and west Africa regions covering 9 EOA-I partners. the trainings were undertaken by value chains and market development experts and had 60 participants in attendance.

### The Workshops Attained The Following Results:

1. Participants familiarized with the guiding principles of value chain programs/ projects which seek to improve competitiveness and offer benefits to Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) based on sustainable market-based solutions.
2. They understood the foundations of market system development, how to make markets work for the poor (M4P) and value chain promotion and their advantages and disadvantages.

3. They inculcated analytical skills on how to determine market requirements and identify competitive challenges.
4. Understood the different roles that various actors (e.g., governments, not-for-profits, the private sector) play in value chains and stimulating development.
5. Developed understanding of interventions, strategies, and the criteria for selecting in value chain development.
6. Developed understanding and skills of designing evidence-based value chain development projects.

### Annex 9a: Value chains and market development training report for eastern Africa

### Annex 9b: Value chains and market development training report for west Africa

Under the coordination of BvAT, partners utilized 63% of the funds under their disposal as shown in the following table of utilization analysis:

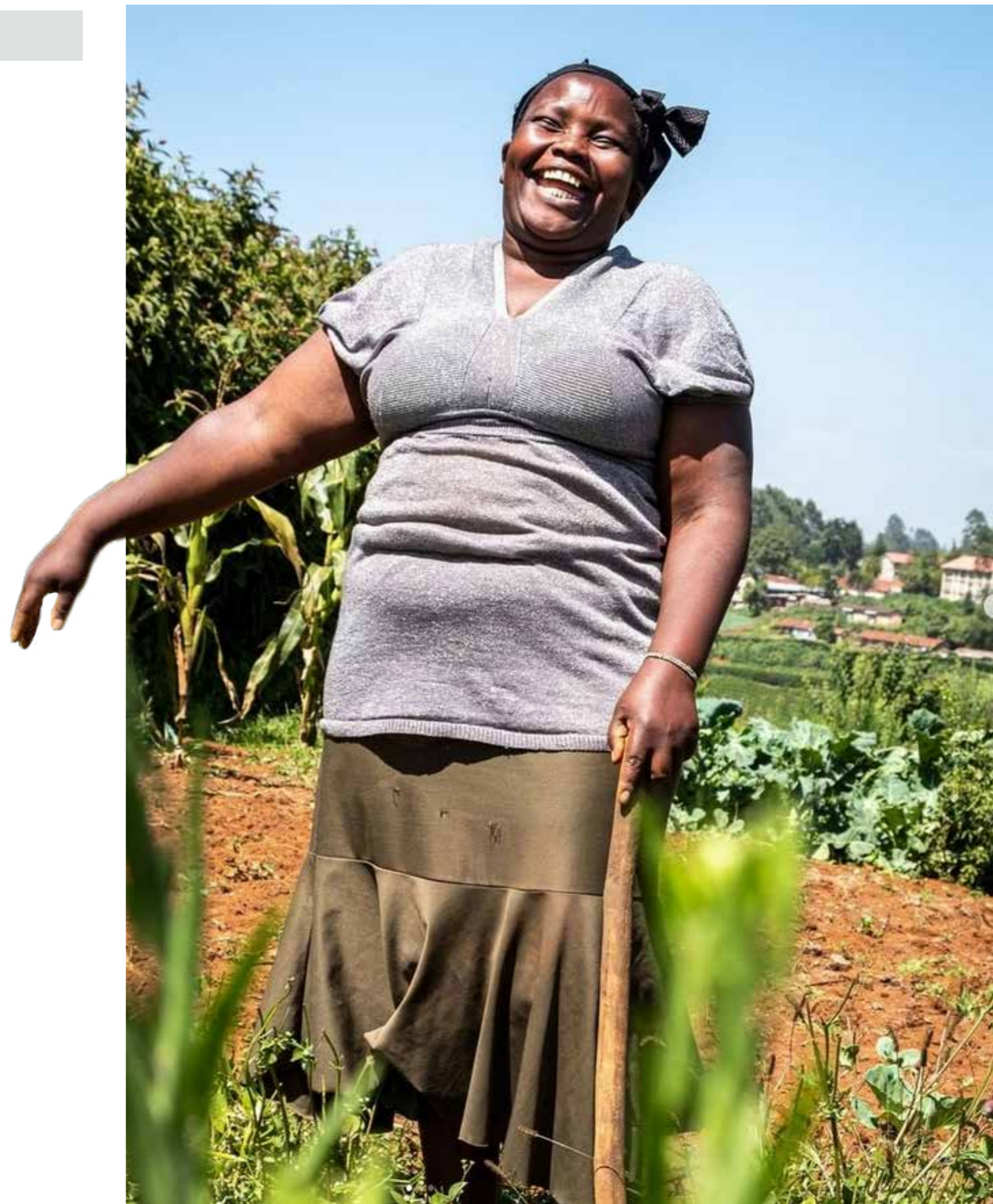
EOA PARTNERS	%Utilization Funds Disbursed	%Utilization to budget
<b>YEAR 2020</b>		
1 PELUM Uganda	63%	63%
2 TOAM	50%	36%
3 ISD	39%	17%
4 CNCR	89%	41%
5 OBEPAB	69%	69%
6 KOAN	68%	68%
7 AOPP	65%	49%
8 NOAN	84%	84%
9 ROAM	87%	56%
10 AFRONET	89%	89%
11 ATPS	71%	67%
12 PELUM Kenya-East Africa	22%	16%
13 NOAN-West Africa Cluster	29%	21%
<b>OVERALL BURN RATE</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>52%</b>

Out of the 9 partners, 5 received their scheduled instalments as planned. For partners that did not receive their last year instalment, this was caused by civil unrest in Ethiopia and late commencement of activities in Senegal. the Covid 19 pandemic also played a big role in reducing the utilization rates which in line affected the effective release of funds.

Date	Amount in USD	Organization	Disbursement details
09/04/2020	23,113.00	Afronet	2nd and 3rd instalments combined
02/12/2020	10,205.20	Afronet	4th instalment
14/05/2020	40,080.79	AOPP	2nd instalment
18/11/2020	68,704.00	AOPP	3rd instalment
01/04/2020	40,000.00	ATPS	2nd instalment as per schedule
03/07/2020	60,000.00	ATPS	3rd instalment as per schedule
06/11/2020	30,000.00	ATPS	4th instalment as per schedule
04/11/2020	40,081.00	CNCR	2nd instalment
24/09/2020	40,081.00	ISD	2nd instalment
19/03/2020	68,581.00	KOAN	2nd and 3rd instalments combined
07/12/2020	25,297.19	KOAN	4th instalment for pillars 3 & 4
19/03/2020	108,785.00	NOAN	2nd and 3rd instalments combined
02/12/2020	45,802.84	NOAN	4th instalment



Date	Amount in USD	Organization	Disbursement details
18/03/2020	108,785.00	OBEPAB	2nd and 3rd instalments combined
24/09/2020	45,803.00	OBEPAB	4th instalment
01/04/2020	47,535.78	Pelum Kenya	2nd and 3rd instalments combined
01/04/2020	40,080.79	Pelum Uganda	2nd instalment
24/09/2020	68,704.00	Pelum Uganda	3rd instalment
02/12/2020	45,802.84	Pelum Uganda	4th instalment
20/03/2020	80,206.18	ROAM	2nd and 3rd instalment combined
14/05/2020	40,080.79	TOAM	2nd instalment
04/11/2020	68,704.00	TOAM	3rd instalment
19/03/2020	47,535.78	WAC	2nd and 3rd instalments combined



# Achievements Of The Four Key Strategic Pillars

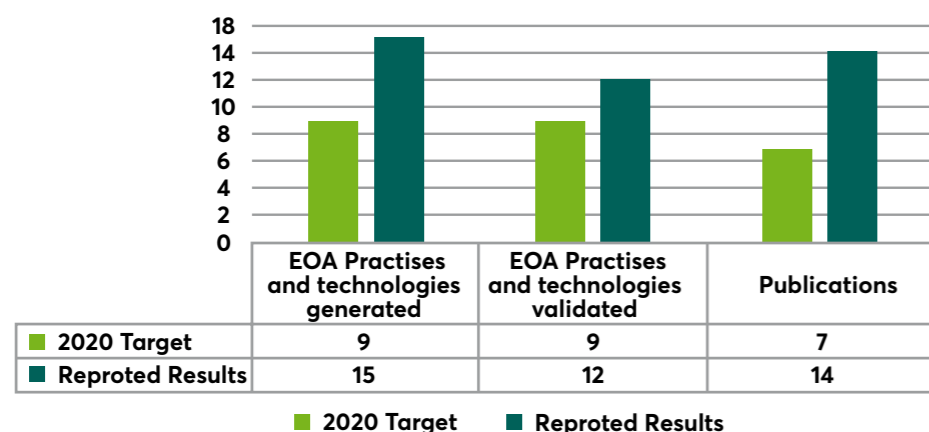
## Research and Applied Knowledge (R&A K) Results

Under this component the project seeks to generate and avail information and knowledge products on organic agriculture along the following specific objectives (SO):

1. SO, 1.1: To generate and collate information and knowledge needed by EOA actors along value chains.
2. SO, 1.2: To validate and synthesize EOA research information and knowledge.
3. SO, 1.3: To document best experiences and results on EOA research information and knowledge use by EOA actors along value chains.

The project exceeded the targets on the three SOs for the year as shown in the graph below.

**Pillar 1 2020 Reported Results VS Targeted Results**



## Generated Information, Knowledge, and Technologies

Information and knowledge were generated across the various countries targeting the production level to support farmers with skills and knowledge on organic practices. The following were some of the areas in which information and knowledge products were produced:



Practice	Areas
<b>Crop Management and Livestock management</b>	<p>Experimentation of seed multiplication by organic technic with banana farmers.</p> <p>Installation and animation of a model field school for the application of good practices in organic vegetable production.</p> <p>Installation of a model field for testing the effectiveness of organic liquid fertilizer, ABC "Vegetable Grower" on the organic production of vegetable leafy (Gboman).</p> <p>Participatory experimentation on queen bees rearing to accelerate the colonization of new hives in EOA.</p>
<b>Soil Management</b>	<p>The effect of organic animal fertilization on sorghum yield and nutritive content in Makurdi, Benue State, Nigeria.</p> <p>Effects of agricultural land use on soil cation exchange capacity, organic carbon, and total nitrogen in soil aggregate size fractions in Ile-Ife, Nigeria.</p> <p>Comparative effects of poultry manure and NPK fertiliser on growth and yield of onion (<i>Allium Cepa</i>) and some soil fertility indices.</p> <p>Characterization of weeds in B&amp;P plantations with a view to their valuation as a fertilizer and / or their allelo-pathetic property and their beneficial effects on banana&amp; Plantain and pests.</p> <p>Egerton University trained 30 farmers on how to prepare organic fertilizer using locally available materials.</p>
<b>Disease and Pest Management</b>	<p>Determinants of organic integrated farming system utilization amongst Participatory experimentation on plants that trap or repel certain insects in organic vegetable production of Smallholder farmers in Southwestern, Nigeria.</p> <p>Pest control, productivity and profitability improved by associated crops in organic banana production systems.</p> <p>Demonstration of herbal leaf meal as an alternative in-feed antibiotics in pork technological qualities and color.</p>
<b>Social</b>	<p>Relationship between ecosystem services provided by crop associations and organic banana and plantain production in Benin.</p>
<b>Post-harvest management</b>	<p>A solar dryer was constructed in Kenya to help sesame farmers in management of post-harvest losses in sesame production.</p>
<b>Consumption</b>	<p>Analysis of consumer motivation and their willingness to pay for organic banana &amp; plantain products.</p> <p>Analysis of consumers' perception and choice of the City of Porto-Novu in Benin for ecological and organic vegetables.</p> <p>Assessment of traditional livestock agricultural practices for compliance with organic standard in Nigeria and consumers' motivating factors to purchasing organic foods in Oyo State, Nigeria.</p>

## Validated Information

Validation of the knowledge products was predominantly done through expert stakeholder workshops. Other methods used were academic publications and on farm trials. The following are some of the knowledge products that were successfully validated:

1. *Information needs of spices and vegetable farmers on organic farming in Kwara State, Nigeria validated through the university academic process.*
2. *Evaluation of sodium and biochar-based fertilizers application on growth, yield and quality of sole cultivation of *Telfaria occidentalis* and *Cucurbita pepo* published through academic journal.*
3. *Effect of irrigation and biochar application on established plantain field validated through the university academic process.*
4. *Evaluating the dynamics in organic Roselle (*Hibiscus sabdariffa*) production: UNILAG organic demonstration farm Response of cucumber (*Cucumis sativus* L.) cultivars to various organic fertilizers in Southern Guinea Savannah, Nigeria validated through the university academic process.*
5. *Evaluation of pressurized hot water extraction methods for phosphorus fertilizer recommendation in tomato production validated through university academic process.*
6. *Restitution and validation of the tomato value chain study report and the results of the tomato biopesticide tests in Mail through a National workshop.*

## Publications

The thematic content areas covered in the various publications included:

1. *Agriculture, climate change, biodiversity, sustainable land management and resilience of farming systems.*
2. *Food and nutrition security with emphasis on productivity, profitability, sustainability, and the linking of unsafe food consumption to health issues e.g., Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), microbial levels and post-harvest management.*
3. *Market development, commercialization of organic farming and expansion of trade in organic products including issues of certification and standards.*
4. *Application of innovative technologies in agriculture including information communication and technology (ICT) and organic farming technologies such as improved organic seed systems, compost manure, bio-pesticides, and small-scale mechanized farm implements; and*
5. *Evidence-based advocacy backed by a strong monitoring, evaluation, reporting, and learning (MERL) system that aggregates common information on benefits/impacts of EOA across all the EOA countries.*

## Information, Communication and Extension Pillar

The objective of this pillar is to enhance adoption of EOA technologies and practices through systematic dissemination of research and experience-based information, knowledge, and training of value chain actors with the following specific objectives (SO):

1. *SO, 2.1: To disseminate information on EOA practices through various communication pathways (IEC materials, social media applications and websites) to support value chain actors.*
2. *SO, 2.2: To create better understanding of EOA practices through training and extension to support value chain actors.*

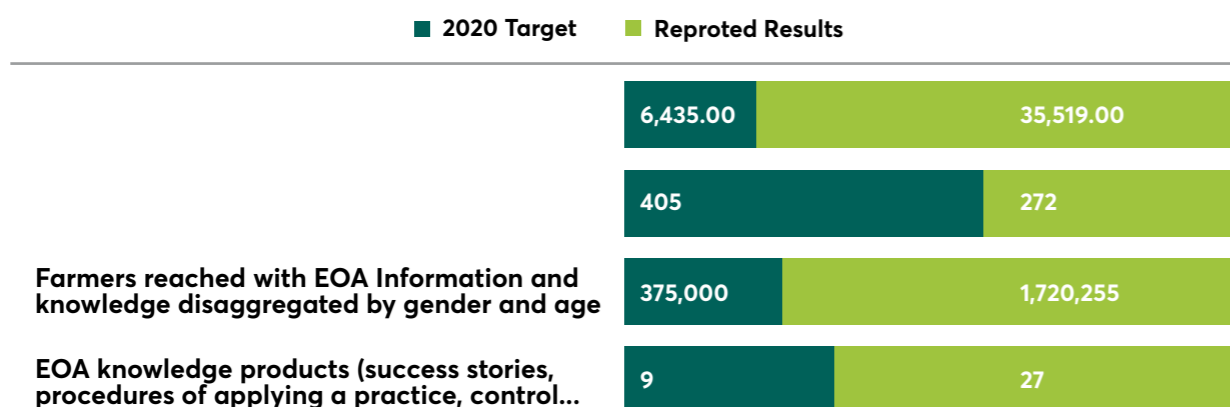
The partners focused on the development and packaging of various knowledge products including IEC materials, documentaries, videos, radio programmes and television programmes. The common pathways used to disseminate knowledge products included knowledge databases, trainings, workshops, use of social media especially YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook. The most popular pathways that partners used were social media platforms and websites.

Important thematic content disseminated included nutrition and food safety, organic technologies and practices, climate change, water management, resilience and sustainability of organic farming systems, inputs and product market development and technology transfer and learning were developed and disseminated.

In total **1,720,255** value chain actors were reached with EOA information and knowledge products beyond the set project annual target of **375,000**.

The figure below shows results attained in pillar 2 against the set targets for the period.

### Pillar 2 Reported VS Targeted Results For 2020



	EOA knowledge products (success stories, procedures of applying a practice, control method etc) disseminated through various pathways	Farmers reached with EOA Information and knowledge disaggregated by gender and age	ToToFs (extension officers/rural service providers) trained on benefits and application of various EOA practices and standards	Value chain actors (farmers, input suppliers processors and transporters) trained on various EOA practices and standards
<b>2020 Target</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>375,00</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>6,435.00</b>
<b>Reported Results</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1,720,255</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>35,519.00</b>

### Value Chain and Market Development Pillar Results

This pillar presents the greatest opportunity for making a difference in the outcomes of the EOA-Initiative under the following specific objectives:

- SO, 3.1: To develop and implement strategies for linking value chain actors to business development support services.
- SO, 3.2: To increase the number of producers participating in markets at local, domestic, regional, and international markets.
- SO, 3.3: To support access to market intelligence (products, price, place, and promotion – 4Ps) to inform decision making and improve competitiveness of the EOA actors.
- SO, 3.4: To strengthen capacity of producers to meet organic market standards.
- SO, 3.5: To support development and strengthening of organic markets to increase the share of organic products (certified/non-certified) at domestic and export levels.

A value chain approach was adopted for the pillar activities. Partners selected 1-2 value chains following a training on market system development in March 2020 for the East African partners and in August 2020 for the West African partners. The training recommended to partners with many value chains to reduce to 1-3 for optimizing focus and sustainability. The table below shows the value chains that were covered.

Countries	Value chains promoted in 2020
Nigeria	Livestock
Mali	Tomatoes
Benin	Plantain and Banana, Vegetable and Honey
Senegal	Onions and Millet
Uganda	Pineapples
Tanzania	Fruits and Vegetables
Ethiopia	Potatoes, Carrots and Fruits
Kenya	Tomatoes, Chia and Sesame
Rwanda	Not supported in 2020

The partners selected commodity value chains in common regions that showed greater pillar synergy and coherence through joint planning and implementation. The broader market systems development (MSD) approach was adopted as well to address systemic failures in the EOA sector market and ensure stronger participation by small-scale organic farmers to boost their production, incomes, food, and nutrition security. The strategy enhanced access to business support services and market intelligence including the 4Ps (products, prices, places, and promotion) to EOA value chain actors.

New market channels were developed, and existing ones strengthened through consumer awareness campaigns and other forms of facilitation, making the markets more accessible to producers and buyers. Value addition to EOA products and post-harvest management, especially storage technologies to reduce post-harvest losses formed major activities undertaken in 2020.

The partners also adopted the business development service (BDS) approach, linking farmers to relevant business development service providers.

Over 16,000 value chain actors were linked to the BDS services.

Some of the services reported as required by farmers and other value chain actors included:

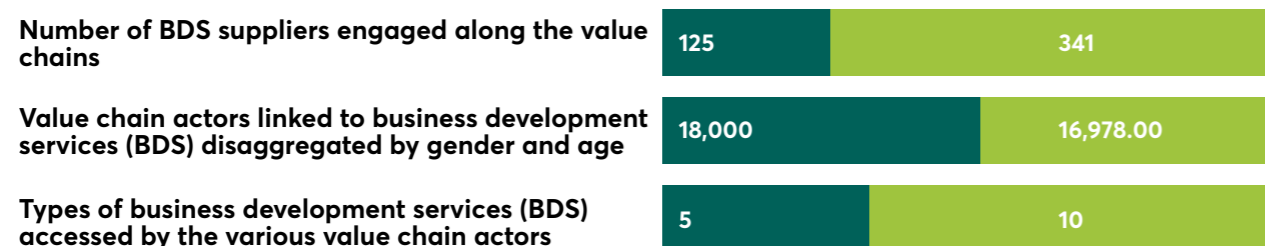
- Access to markets and to organic buyers who can offer premium prices.
- Services in post-harvest handling including tools and equipment, packaging materials and skills for processing and value addition.
- Support in transportation e.g., vehicles with cooling facilities for perishable products.
- Support in marketing from the production level including up to the marketing stages.
- Supply of organic fertilizers and biopesticides.
- Credit access
- Irrigation systems
- Business plans
- Organic certification
- Packaging

The graph below shows the different levels of business development services that the project facilitated in with 16,000 value chain actors being linked to business development services:



### Value Chain Actors Linked to Business Development Services

■ 2020 Target ■ Reported Results



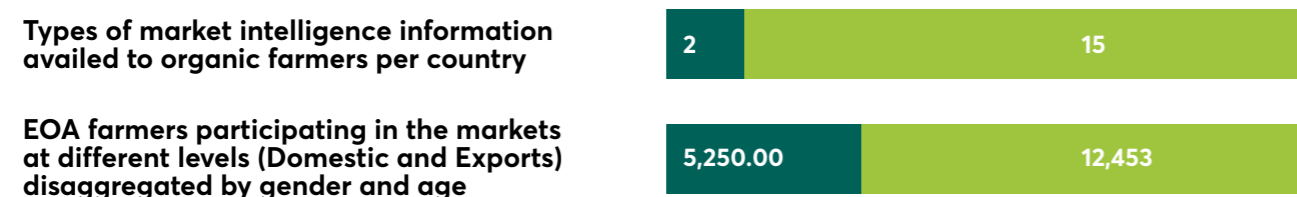
	Types of business development services (BDS) accessed by the various value chain actors	Value chain actors linked to business development services (BDS) disaggregated by gender and age	Number of BDS suppliers engaged along the value chains
■ 2020 Target	5	18,000	125
■ Reported Results	10	16,978.00	341

Various EOA small scale farmers were linked to markets. The partners identified and established strong value chains for the farmers who have been suffering from unstable markets and information. Nigeria was outstanding having linked 10,000 farmers to markets. Senegal shod modest achievement in linking 102 small scale farmers to weekly open air organic markets. However, some of the work was already ongoing for effective linkages of producers to markets to happen.

The graph below shows the results realized due to undertaking activities geared towards enhancing decision making for market competitiveness:

### Decision Making to Enhance Market Competitiveness

■ 2020 Target ■ Reported Results



	Types of business development services (BDS) accessed by the various value chain actors	Value chain actors linked to business development services (BDS) disaggregated by gender and age
■ 2020 Target	5,250.00	2
■ Reported Results	12,453	15

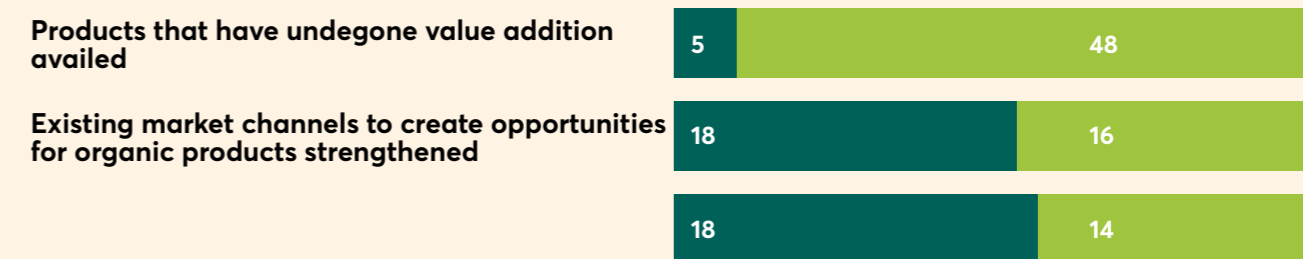
The reporting period realized an increase in number of farmers meeting organic market standards correlating with the establishment of 14 new markets and revitalization of 16 existing market channels. 48 new value-added organic products were introduced to the market compared to the annual target of 5 in 2020. In summary:

1. In Uganda: 6 market channels were identified.
2. In Nigeria: 1 market channel identified in Barth Road axis of the University of Ibadan.
3. In Kenya: 6 new channels were created; 2 for honey, 3 for tomatoes and 1 for Chia/sesame accessed by value chain actors.
4. In Senegal: 1open air market was established in Theis town.

The graph below shows the number of farmers who met organic market standards:

### Capacity of Farmers to Meet Organic Standards

■ 2020 Target ■ Reported Results



	New market channels developed and accessed by value chain actors to organic products and emerging markets	Existing market channels to create opportunities for organic products strengthened	Products that have undegone value addition availed
■ 2020 Target	18	18	5
■ Reported Results	14	16	48

Another key area that this pillar engaged was in enhancing decision making competitiveness of the value chain actors especially the small-scale farmers who in most cases suffer for lack of adequate and updated market intelligence. The market intelligence information availed to organic farmers included:

1. Market prices
2. Quality specifications
3. Variety specifications
4. Organic certification and standards
5. Export requirements
6. Market demands and requirements

## Access to Market Intelligence

■ 2020 Target ■ Reported Results

PSG group established and fully certified	4	4
Number of farmers meeting the organic market standards	20%	32%

	Number of farmers meeting the organic market standards	PSG group established and fully certified
■ 2020 Target	20%	4
■ Reported Results	32%	4

## Cementing and Steering Pillar 4

This pillar is key in supporting mainstreaming of EOA-I in policy frameworks at national, regional, and continental levels with a key objective of enhancing structured management and governance of EOA through coordination, networking, advocacy, multi stakeholder platforms and capacity building leading to positive changes in agricultural systems in Africa. It has the following specific objectives:

1. SO, 4.1: To strengthen synergies amongst governance, coordinating and implementing institutions through networks, coordination, and partnerships.
2. SO, 4.2: To lobby and advocate for mainstreaming of EOA practices into public policies and investment plans.
3. SO, 4.3: To improve the functioning and service delivery of EOA by institutions in Africa through capacity building.
4. SO, 4.4 To support and strengthen multi stakeholder platforms at regional level for advocacy, experiential sharing, networking, resource mobilization and learning.
5. SO, 4.5: To support and strengthen multi stakeholder platforms at continental level for advocacy, experiential sharing, networking, resource mobilization and learning.
6. SO, 4.6: To support and strengthen non-State actors umbrella body (AfrONet) to promote EOA through advocacy, experiential sharing, networking, resource mobilization and learning.

The pillar is coordinated by the following key organizations:

Africa Union Commission (AUC) that provides oversight on governance and coordination of EOA-I. To effectively undertake this mandate, the AUC works within the structures of a continental steering committee (CSC) that draws its membership from various institutions in the organic sector. Some of the key members that form the CSC include:

1. AUC Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture (DREA)
2. ECOWAS
3. Action Aid International, Senegal
4. Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC)
5. Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
6. German Development Agency (GIZ)
7. IFOAM Organics International
8. AfrONet



9. NOAMS (NOAN, OBEPAB) and Pelum Kenya
10. Coordinating Organizations (BuAT and Pelum Kenya) etc.
11. AFRONET is in charge of supporting, providing guidance and capacity building support to NOAMS.
12. At the regional level we have ECOWAS chairing the west Africa Platform to provided governance, leadership, and coordination
13. Regional Secretariat Coordination by Biovision Africa Trust at Continental level, Pelum Kenya and NOAN at regional level.
14. At national platform level, key actors involved were Ministry of Agriculture officials, Certification bodies, private sector, farmer movements and civil society sectors.

## Policy Mainstreaming

Efforts towards harmonization of continental policy frameworks were commendable with the development and alignment of EOA-I indicators for consideration within the CAADP framework and Biennial Review Reporting process. The continental secretariat also formally commenced its operations in collaboration with the AUC following a draft MOU with AUC.

Lobbying and advocacy work through key strategic meetings for stimulating discussions and development of regional EOA-I policies and legislations is one of the key targets for the EOA-I. During this reporting period, the secretariats undertook various awareness creation activities to lobby key policy makers to support EOA-I, for example support of key government officials to attend BIOFACH Trade fair and preparations undertaken for the 6th west Africa organic conference planned to take place in Burkina Faso in 2021.

The regional Steering Committee management team of the Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative' (EOA-I) in West Africa under the able leadership of Mr. Ernest Aubee of the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) Commission is taking lead in the preparation for the 2021 Burkina Faso 6th West African Organic Conference (WAOC). The west Africa conference is held every 3 years and is a platform used for policy and advocacy engagements, awareness creation and sharing of best practices on EOA.

In Uganda, the National Organic Agriculture Policy (NOAP) that was approved in 2019, was officially launched in October 2020. Within the reporting period, plans have been made to develop the National Agroecology scaling up strategy in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries.

In Benin, a document on advocacy and lobbying was developed for organic banana and plantain value chains and ongoing process for the acceptance at the Ministry of Agriculture.

In Kenya, 2 round table meetings with Ministry of Agriculture state officers in Muranga and Kirinyaga were undertaken to develop a programme for lobbying and advocacy against the use of toxic pesticides in the two counties. KOAN has been key in the development of the EOA national strategy and during the reporting period work towards mainstreaming the organic strategy were undertaken through participation in an inter-sectorial meeting with other key EOA stakeholders and government state officials.

KOAN organized support and participation in the World Food Day organized by one of the stakeholders-C-SHEP. Farmers and traders' participation in the event was done to promote organic Farming, create awareness on organic produce to consumers and to recognize organic farming as an alternative way of production to feed the world.

In Nigeria, the multi-stakeholders national platform of EOA widened, bringing in more stakeholders from governmental ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) such as Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Raw Material Research and Development Council, Federal Ministry of Industries Trade and Investments, Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria, Nigeria Export Promotion Council, Standard Organization of Nigeria, News Agency of Nigeria, etc. with some of the agencies mainstreaming EOA into their annual activities. The Farm Inputs Support Services Department of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development in Nigeria continued to provide good leadership for the National Steering Committee (NSC) of EOA.

Additionally, an evaluation of national investment by Nigerian government in organic agricultural related issues from 2012 – 2019 was published. The investigation revealed that Nigerian Government invested in development of organic ginger value chain, training on site/soil specific fertilizer recommendations, input support to farmers (organic fertilizer subsidy), boosting the supply of organic ginger and organic fertilizers development.

In Rwanda, ROAM facilitated undertaking of a policy sector study to identify EOA-I gaps. The aim of the overall aim of the study was to facilitate decision making and practice by farmers, extension agents, research and development organizations, academic institutions, and national and regional ecological organic networks, as well as public and private policy and decision makers in Rwanda. The study recommended that more work needs to be done to promote the realization of benefits of EOA at a broader country level in Rwanda in the fields of research, policy, and education.

In Senegal, one of the key events that they participated in the DyTASE (Dynamics for an Agroecological Transition in Senegal). DyTAES aims, in the field of agroecology, to support the State in its sovereign mission to formulate public policies. The DYTAES launched this initiative to feed the reflections, based on concrete experience of its different members, to share the lessons and formulate from these achievements some recommendations. Resulting from a broad consultation process in different regions of Senegal, the present document constitutes a first collective investment for an agroecological transition based on a consensus between the State and the other actors involved in development and sustainable management of natural resources from Senegal.

In conclusion, EOA-I mainstreaming across the various levels from country level to regional and continental levels has gathered momentum. The key achievements are evidence that EOA-I is reaching policy makers and are now convinced that organic agriculture as a practice can feed the world.



# Financial Report

## Financial Report Analysis For 2020 (Refer To Annex 10: Financial Report For 2020)

### 1. Funding Received

During the period ending on 31st December 2020 the project received USD 1,684,178 from SDC as per funding agreement

### 2. Interest Income

The project funds were temporarily kept as fixed deposit pending disbursement over the period earning the project an extra income USD 4,575 net of taxes

### 3. Surplus Funds breakdown

- i. The surplus funds of USD 1,343,249 relates to:
- ii. Funds already disbursed to partners which had not been utilized as at 31<sup>ST</sup> December 2020 amounting to
- iii. Funds held by BuAT in the project account amounting to

SDC granted the EOA-I project at no cost extension period of three months from January-March 2021 to utilize the funds already disbursed to partners because activity implementation was already ongoing by the time, we closed the year on 31st December 2020.

The funds that had not been disbursed to partners for period ending 31st December 2020 were reallocated to other activities at the secretariat and executing agency level after donor approval.

The breakdown of funds balance is provided below:

	US\$
<b>Accrued Project Expenses</b>	(28,831)
<b>Receivable Balances</b>	
Nigeria Organic Agriculture(NOAN)	60,082
Tanzania Organic Agriculture(TOAM)	64,187
INSTITUTE OF SUSTAINABLE DEV.(ISD)	19,191
PELUM Uganda	43,847
OBEPAB	1,608
PELUM Kenya	38,852
KOAN	50,540
AOPP	44,969
AFRONET	291
ATPS	11
CNCR-Senegal	50,378
ROAM	11,882
BuAT Balance	91,566
Bank-Fixed Deposit as at 31st December 2020	802,182
Bank Balance as at 31st December 2020	92,493
	<b>1,343,249</b>

## Fund Utilization

### 1. Personnel Costs

The budget for personnel under the project management unit was not fully utilized since the budgeted annual staff adjustment was done using 5% instead of the budgeted 10%. The Monitoring & Evaluation position had been vacant for some months before a new staff was recruited.

### 2. Travels

During the year 2020 International and local travels were not done due to restriction relating to Covid 19 after March 2020 declaration of the pandemic.

### 3. General Investment/Equipment's

During the period one laptop for the project was purchased for the project coordinator

### 4. Partner Utilization Of Project Funds

The partner Utilization of funds disbursed was low due to government restrictions until the last quarter of 2020. Due to low utilization the disbursements not sent out to partners were reallocated to other activities and a No Cost extension was granted for three months to enable partners utilize the funds.

### 5. Support and Cementing Activities

- i. The CSC meetings had been budgeted for physical meeting which was not possible due to the pandemic and all meetings were conducted virtually
- ii. Regional clusters for Eastern and west Africa had limited activities undertaken due to restrictions associated with Covid 19
- iii. To implement the new grants management the project implemented an online system to support applications from various consortium and engaged the experts (Project review teams) to support evaluating proposals in different countries.





# Challenges

## Covid-19 Pandemic

The greatest challenge experienced in the reporting period was the Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic started its spread in Africa in March 2020 during a time when commencement of project implementation in the partner countries had just started. The pandemic management rules from FAO were adopted by African government and greatly affected the project implementing countries. Among other rules, the restriction of movements, restriction of public gathering, partial and full country lock downs were the biggest hindrances to the full blown operationalization of the project.

The EOA-I project's major activities heavily rely on travels, movement of goods and physical interactions for optimal realization of results. This approach was greatly hindered by the Covid-19 major regulations.

Below is an analysis of the setbacks and benefits that were realized due to the Covid-19 pandemic:

### Restriction of Movement

This affected all the partners for the whole reporting year. This was particularly because EOA-I grassroots activities required communities to come together to participate in project activities. The activities required travelling to different locations for meetings, exchange visits and trainings. Farmers were not able to reach markets due to the movement restrictions and therefore suffered huge losses.

### Social Distancing

The social distancing protocol effected by the World Health Organization (WHO) and partner countries banned crowding and so, meetings were banned altogether. This meant that community meetings, social audits, and group sessions, trainings and workshops which form main components of grassroots and advocacy activities as well as marketing activities could not be undertaken.

### Partial and Total Lockdowns

Some of the partner countries especially Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya and Nigeria experienced partial to total lockdowns. This meant that partners were not able to move out of their homes to their offices nor to their target stakeholders for work.

### Drastic Shift on Model of Activity Implementation

We had shift to online and virtual platforms for activity implementation. This was well executed for activities of high level where participants could access internet connectivity and equipment's like laptops and android phones to join meetings. However, this meant the key target beneficiaries like farmers could not be reached through such means. Poor internet connectivity in some countries and low concentration levels of most participants for longer meetings made this option inefficient.

### Underutilization of Project Funds

Due to the changes in project delivery mechanisms especially use of virtual meetings, use of online market platforms, reduction in travels and reduction in the use of paperwork, the project expenses funds were greatly saved.

## Expansion of Virtual Markets and Networks

More organic farmers and partners learnt to embrace and grow organic virtual markets through WhatsApp and Facebook platforms, a move that expanded their networks and reduced the cost of establishing physical markets. Another advantage of virtual markets is that farmers saved on wastages because they could only sell what has been ordered by consumers.

## Reduction in Carbon Footprints

Due to the global travel restrictions, meeting restrictions that reduced global and regional conferences and reduced travels by air and by road, the closure of physical offices and closure of physical markets among other carbon emission reductions, all meant that the carbon footprint was drastically reduced.

## Lock-Down of Learning Institutions in Charge of Pillar 1

Due the Covid-19 pandemic, majority of learning institutions closed down for the entire project implementation period. A good case was the closure of Egerton University in Kenya and Mekelle University in Ethiopia. This meant that major activities linked to those institutions under pillar 1 of the project could not be undertaken

## Civil War

In Ethiopia, the implementation period was greatly affected by civil arrest and war especially in the Northern parts of the country where Mekelle University is located. Mekelle project staff were completely locked out of communication with the rest of the project stakeholders in Ethiopia and globally. The cut off in communication derailed updates on status of the project implementation.



## Coping Strategies

The following were the coping mechanisms put in place by implementing partners during the 2020 period of Covid 19 pandemic:

1. *Workplan and Budgetary revisions: work plans, and budgetary revisions were undertaken by partners with key changes being the adoption of virtual interactions through the various platforms like phone calls, zoom platforms, skype platform, WhatsApp, and Facebook platforms. These platforms enabled partners to continue working to some extent.*
2. *Partners adopted online meetings where the CLOs and PIPs; RSCs and BuAT continued their work, interactions, and monitoring meetings through online platforms like the zoom and MS teams which where the most popular and effective.*
  - i. *To manage the travel barriers setback that affected marketing of organic produce and transportation from farms to the markets, partners established online marketing platforms for farmers to link to consumers by implementing partners.*
  - ii. *WhatsApp platforms were established for linking farmers to consumers a strategy that replaced open air markets that has become popular in the project. This ensured that farmers' markets were not disrupted during this period.*
  - iii. *Partners worked closely with governments to issue travel permits for farmers transporting produce to urban centers from their farms.*
  - iv. *Phone call extension support to farmers was also established by partners to ensure that farmers continued to receive undisrupted extension support.*

## Conclusions and Recommendations

### Covid 19 Coping Strategies

1. *The overall results for the year 2020 were modestly commendable given the prevailing conditions of Covid 19 pandemic that disrupted operations across all the partner countries. The quick adjustments by implementing partners' mode of operations bore fruits.*
2. *The use of virtual platforms especially social media was a good strategy employed across the implementing countries. Its benefits were quite imminent especially the reach to many stakeholders through virtual meetings. Virtual meetings need to be encouraged more in the EOA-I project to reduce project operational costs and reduction of carbon footprint.*
3. *The launching of virtual organic markets with links to home deliveries was also quite impressive. The growth of the organic markets was especially experienced through mobile phone operated platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp. These markets as well saw the reduction in costs involved with physical market operations especially costs associated with paying rent, shop attendants, transport, and municipal fees. With reduction in costs being experienced, the virtual markets should continue being promoted as a cost cutting sustainable measure.*
4. *The results-based framework and targets should be subjected to adjustments to reflect the reality of implementation. This is because the project commenced in 2019 and therefore there is a need to undertake a mid-term review of the results framework and adjust it effectively based on feedback from partners and also based on the Covid-19 pandemic challenges that continue to limit the full realization of development-oriented projects across the globe.*
5. *There is also a need to undertake a rapid mid-term review to inform, track and address project gaps before we commence the remaining 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the project. This is because the project is mid-way and a rapid assessment would inform whether the project is on track in terms of achieving the objectives and overall goal.*
6. *Given the visible impact COVID pandemic it would be prudent to undertake mapping food flows across conventional and organic farming systems using various to enable the project to gain a real-time understanding of the direct impacts of regulatory responses on production systems, value chains, and formal and informal markets by focusing on women and marginalized actors. The findings can inform policy, advocacy, and adaptation programs.*

### Replacement of Mekelle University in charge of Pillar 1 in Ethiopia

1. *Pillar 1 activities by the design of the project form the basis of effective implementation of the rest of the pillar activities. Unfortunately, this pillar has not been effectively implemented in Ethiopia. This was due to civil unrest in North region of Ethiopia that continues to be experienced to date. BuAT recommends the ISD to immediately identify another institution that can pick up work under Pillar 1. This would ensure that the project does not continue to suffer great losses.*

# Annexes

**Annex 01:** Concept note on piloting of EOA-I indicators in the CADDP Framework

**Annex 02:** Farmer saved Seed Systems concept note

**Annex 03:** Minutes of the meeting held for hosting of the Continental Knowledge Platform

**Annex 04:** Organic policy mapping across Africa

**Annex 05:** Minutes of West Africa Steering Committee and FAO representatives

**Annex 06:** Minutes of West Africa RSC meeting

**Annex 07:** The National Organic Agriculture Policy (NOAP), Uganda)

**Annex 08:** Grants Management Manual

**Annex 09a:** Value chains and market development training report for eastern Africa

**Annex 09b:** Value chains and market development training report for west Africa

**Annex 010:** Financial report for 2020

**Annex 011:** EOA-I Updated Results Framework

**Annex 012:** Technical Annual Report For Uganda

**Annex 013:** Technical Annual Report For Ethiopia

**Annex 014:** Technical Annual Report For Tanzania

**Annex 015:** Technical Annual Report For Rwanda

**Annex 016:** Technical Annual Report For Kenya

**Annex 017:** Technical Annual Report For Nigeria

**Annex 018:** Technical Annual Report For Mal

**Annex 019:** Technical Annual Report For Benin

**Annex 020:** Technical Annual Report For Senegal

**Annex 021:** Technical Annual Report For Afronet

**Annex 022:** Technical Annual Report For East Africa Secretariat

**Annex 023:** Technical Annual Report For West Africa Secretariat

**Annex 024:** Audited Reports For 2020



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