



A photo session after the launch of THE CALL TO ACTION during the 1st Eastern Africa Agroecology Conference held on 21st – 24th March 2023 at Safari Park Hotel

2023

ANNUAL TECHNICAL PROGRESS REPORT

Submitted to the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
By Biovision Africa Trust
On behalf of Partners and the AU-led Continental Steering Committee (CSC) October 2024

REPORT APPROVED AND SIGNED BY:

Mainstreaming Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) into Agricultural Systems in Africa for the Period 2019- 2023

PHASE II

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1. ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Abbreviation	Full Name
AFD	French Development Agency
AOPP	Association des Organisations Professionnelles Paysannes du Mali
ATPS	African Technology Policy Studies Network
BDS	Business Development Services
BvAT	Biovision Africa Trust
CLO	Country Lead Organisation
CNCR	Conseil National de Concertation et de Coopération des Ruraux
CSC	Continental Steering Committee
DREA	Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture
EAC	East Africa Community
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EOA	Ecological Organic Agriculture
FARA	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
FMSS	Farmer Managed Seed Systems
GIZ	The German Society for International Cooperation (or Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit)
ICIPE	International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology
IIABA	Institutional Innovations of Organic Agriculture in Africa
ISD	Institute for Sustainable Development
MINAGRI	Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources
NOAN	The Association of Organic Agriculture Practitioners of Nigeria
NOGAMU	National Organic Agriculture Movement of Uganda
NSC	National Steering Committee
OCA	Organizational Capacity Assessment
PGS	Participatory Guarantee System
PIP	Pillar Implementing Partner
PMU	Project Management Unit
RSC	Regional Steering Committee
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

SSNC	Swedish Society for Nature Conservation
TOAM	Tanzania Organic Agriculture Movement

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2023 annual report relates to the second phase of the project supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) contributing to the initiative entitled: **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) through the committee it chairs, the Continental Steering Committee (CSC). The initiative aims to establish an African organic platform, based on available best practices and to develop sustainable organic farming systems. The report provides key accomplishments, challenges, and recommendations following project implementation in 9 countries namely, Kenya, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Senegal, Nigeria, Benin, and Mali.

Seven out of nine countries implementing the project continued to perform exemplary well in activity implementation and achieving the project set result targets. All the 7 countries surpassed the 80% mark in achieving the targets set in 2023 of Phase II that commenced in 2019. The project closed in Kenya and Senegal due to lack of sufficient commitment from implementing partners in Kenya and Senegal.

The project continued with its pillar-based implementation strategy with a focus on key objectives, including mainstreaming EOA into national agricultural systems, boosting agricultural productivity, addressing food security challenges, enhancing market access, and fostering sustainable development across Africa. This approach led to significant accomplishments in each area.

During the reporting period (FY23), the project concentrated on increasing the number of smallholder farmers adopting EOA practices through the Pillar 2 focused on information, communication, and extension. In 2023, a reported 7,378 additional smallholder farmers adopted EOA practices, bringing the total to 11,694 (88.9%) of farmers reached by EOA training across all nine countries (*See table 1*).

Table 1: Smallholder farmers Adopting EOA/AE Practices Year (2023)

Disaggregates	2019 figures and percentages	2020 figures and percentages	2021 figures and percentages	2022 figures and percentages	2023 figures and percentages	Cumulative and percentages (End of 2023)
Male	2,736 (53%)	3,223 (48%)	4,727 (45%)	5,259 (45%)	4269 (57.8%)	5,259 (45%)
Female	2,418 (47%)	3,446 (52%)	5,784 (55%)	6,435 (55%)	3109 (42%)	6,435 (55%)
Youths	1,178 (21%)	1,396 (21%)	2,271 (22%)	2,526 (22%)	1950 (26%)	2,526 (22%)
Totals	5,154 (88%)	6,669 (76%)	10,511 (87%)	11,694 (87%)	7378	11,694 (88.9%)

Through Pillar 1, the project addresses the gap in knowledge availability and accessibility for EOA/AE practices. By focusing on generating knowledge and transforming it into accessible formats for dissemination, this pillar aims to ensure that smallholder farmers and stakeholders have the information they need to adopt and implement effective EOA/AE practices. In 2023, 11 types of information on types of EOA technologies and practices were generated and validated along various value chains across the nine (9) countries, resulting in a total of 88 (244%) of the targeted number by the end of the reporting period. These practices include soil nutrient

improvement, pesticide and disease control practices, crop quality control practices, and post-harvest handling.

Table 2: Information and knowledge of EOA technologies, practices and others generated along the various value chains.

Pillar 1: Research and Applied Knowledge						
Information and knowledge on at least 36 types (new or existing) of EOA technologies, practices and others generated along the various value chains.						
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Cumulative
Kenya	1	2	1	0	0	4
Uganda	0	6	2	0	3	11
Tanzania	0	0	0	3	3	6
Rwanda	0	0	0	2	0	2
Nigeria	4	2	2	13	0	21
Mali	0	2	2	5	3	12
Benin	1	2	3	5	1	12
Senegal	0	1	0	15	0	16
Ethiopia	0	0	0	3	1	4
Yearly Totals	6	15	10	46	11	88

The project also focuses on enhancing farmers' income levels by increasing market access and establishing connections to organic markets at national, regional, and international levels. During the reporting period, an additional 781 smallholder farmers engaged in organic markets at both export and import levels, bringing the total to 22,229 farmers (105%) of the targeted 21,000 farmers. Additionally, the EOA initiative provided Business Development Services (BDS), offering a range of support to businesses aimed at enhancing their growth, competitiveness, and sustainability. The providers engaged were input suppliers, financial, and certification experts. In 2023, a total of 142 BDS providers were engaged, bringing the cumulative number to 556 providers—111% of the target set at the onset of Phase II.

By the end of 2023, a total of 32 PGS groups have been established and certified through the Participatory Guarantee System (PGS), achieving local certification to trade in organic markets within their communities. Additionally, 59 market channels have been developed and 60 existing market channels strengthened, including open-air markets, hotel outlets, retail stores, supermarket shelves, basket markets, online platforms (e.g., WhatsApp and Facebook), and permanent city council markets.

The EOA initiative also achieved significant progress in management, coordination, and governance, strengthening efforts in coordination, advocacy, networking, and institutional capacity building. While focusing on stakeholder engagement as a significant impetus for mainstreaming EOA into national agricultural systems, at least 539 different stakeholders drawn from government ministries, private sector, civil society, and farmer organizations participated in the national platforms organized by the national secretariat by the end of 2023. Additionally, 16 formal partnerships were established to support national platforms, defining their operational structures, commitments, and expectations. Consequently, 19 EOA-related elements, including

by-laws, ordinances, policies, strategies, and plans—were integrated into national policy, leading to the implementation of 18 EOA-related national programs.

3. 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 African Union, the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). The overall goal of the initiative is to mainstream Ecological Organic Agriculture into national agricultural production systems by 2025 in order to improve agricultural productivity, food security, access to markets and sustainable development in Africa.

The Initiative has a mission to promote ecologically sound strategies and practices among diverse stakeholders involved in production, processing, marketing, and policy making to improve livelihoods, alleviate poverty, guarantee food security, and safeguard the environment. Its 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.

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 supports holistic production systems that sustain the health of soils, ecosystems, and people by drawing on ecological processes, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local conditions and not systems that largely depend on external inputs and create adverse effects on people's total health (human, animal, plant and environmental).

4. COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT OF EOA- I

Overall Oversight

The initiative is implemented under the oversight of the Continental Steering Committee (CSC) chaired by African Union, Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy, and Sustainable Environment (DARBE). Dr. Janet Edeme, acting Head of Division Agriculture and Food Security at Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture African Union Commission is the current Chair.

The main purpose of the CSC is to provide guidance, oversight, and decision-making regarding the operations and activities of EOA in Africa. The CSC is supported by a Secretariat hosted by Biovision Africa Trust (BvAT) as mandated by AUC through an MOU that outlines the roles of both institutions.

Overall Project Coordination

BvAT is the Lead Agency responsible for coordinating the implementation of the EOA Initiative with SDC’s contribution in five countries in Eastern Africa (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, and Ethiopia) and four in Western Africa (Benin, Mali, Nigeria, and Senegal). The EOA Initiative is also supported by the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC). PELUM Kenya, a member-based organization based in Kenya, is responsible for supporting SSNC in coordinating the implementation of the initiative among partners in three countries in Eastern Africa (Uganda, Kenya, and Ethiopia).

The Africa EOA Continental Platform

The EOA continental platform provides the opportunity for networking and sharing among the stakeholders of the EOA-I. It’s supported by the Continental Steering Committee (CSC) and AfrONet. The CSC is the apex in the governance structure of EOA in Africa. The CSC members are appointed to serve on behalf of their institutions and not as individuals and agree to represent the general interests of their sector. The Continental Secretariat with guidance of the Chair successfully held two meetings this year.

Regional Platforms

The project is coordinated by Regional Platforms steered by Regional Steering Committees (RSC) and their secretariats to facilitate sharing of country experiences and integrating EOA in regional policies and plans. The initiative currently has two active clusters, the Eastern Africa cluster, and West Africa cluster. The Southern Africa cluster is in place, but it's not very much actively involved due to lack of financial support. The role of the regional clusters is to coordinate regional actors to implement the EOA agenda, engage with the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to integrate EOA in regional and national policy and programs, mobilize resources to support EOA activities and develop rules of procedures and operations in the cluster management.

The steering committee of the Eastern Africa cluster is currently chaired by the East Africa Community (EAC) with co-chairing provided by Mr. Innocent Bisangwa of MINAGRI, Rwanda. The Eastern Africa RSC meeting has representation by 20 members from partners in Ethiopia (ISD), Uganda (Pelum Uganda), Tanzania (TOAM) and Kenya (KOAN), BvAT and PELUM Kenya and IGAD Ethiopia and AfrONet. The West Africa Cluster is chaired by Mr. Ernest Aube of ECOWAS with co-chairing by Prof. Simplicie Vodouhe of Organization Béninoise pour la Promotion de l'Agriculture Biologique (OBEPAB) while The Association of Organic Agriculture Practitioners of Nigeria (NOAN) is the 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 and their National Platforms.

National Platforms

At the National level, the EOA initiative is coordinated by the Country Lead Organisations (CLOs) and supported by Pillar Implementing Partners (PIPs). The CLOs are responsible for coordination of pillar activity 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 pillar implementation, supporting building of networks and enabling experience sharing across pillars, catalysing the process of forming and strengthening National Platforms and reporting to National Platforms, Regional Steering Committee and Development partners.

The project currently has 9 consortia led by Country Lead Organisations (CLOs). The CLOs can be any organization supporting agroecology-based interventions and currently majority are national stakeholder movements and networks in the organic sector. The CLOs coordinate between 3 and 4 PIPs in each country bringing the total number of PIPs across the two Africa regions to 35-36.

5. EOA-I 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

4.1 1st Eastern Africa Agroecology Conference held at Safari Park Hotel (March 21-24, 2023)



Number of Participants	600
Honourable delegates	Hon. Fred Bwino Kyakulaga, the State Minister of Agriculture in Uganda
Participating countries	20
Name of countries	<i>Belgium, Colombia, Ethiopia, France, Switzerland, Germany, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Tanzania, United States, Rwanda, United Kingdom, Italy, Malawi, Netherlands, Sweden, Ghana, United Kingdom, and Liechtenstein.</i>

Main Donors: SDC, Biovision Foundation, NCBA, GIZ, GIZ Western Kenya SSNC,



Main Partners: SwissAid, SNV, ENVIU, Agroecology Coalition, Pelum Kenya, KOAN, BIBA, ISFAA, ROAM, TOAM, Pelum Uganda, Seed Savers, Slow Food Kenya, Slow Food Uganda



With funding support from SDC as seed funds, BvAT and its strategic partners (Pelum Kenya, KOAN, BIBA, MOA, ICRAF) held the 1st eastern Africa agroecology conference.

The conference was attended by participants from over 20 countries around the globe. Participants hailed from parts of Africa, Europe, North and South America and Asia, to be part of this timely event themed **'Strengthening resilience and sustainability in food systems for environmental and social economic development'**. Speaking during the event, Dr David Amudavi, the Executive Director of Biovision Africa Trust, expressed gratitude over the

overwhelming attendance of delegates from all parts of the world, which turned the regional conference into an international conference.

The conference had the following sub-themes:

1. Production, productivity, scaling up and sustainability of farming systems based on environmentally based technologies and methodologies.
2. Best practices towards food security, nutrition, consumption, and health: Soil health, farmer managed seed systems.
3. Ecological organic trade, markets, and economy.
4. Institutional and policy drivers for agroecology transformations.
5. Women and youth in agroecology

In his speech, read by Mr. Leonard Kubok Director, Capacity Building and Knowledge Management in the State Department for Crop Development in Kenya, the Chief Guest Hon Mithika Linturi, Minister of Agriculture in Kenya underscored the pivotal role played by the women and youth in promotion and adoption of agroecology. “Women and youth among other marginalized groups play a key role in agroecology and therefore I commend the support given to these groups by players in the sector,” he stated.

Passionate participants among them actors in the development sector, farmers, representatives from various national governments, the donor fraternity and researchers engaged in candid discussions on the opportunities that lie in agroecology, as a solution to the overbearing effects of climate change. The conference featured eye opening presentations by researchers, exhibitors of agroecological technologies, and practices as well as farmers’ whose efforts in adopting agroecology have borne evident results in improving livelihoods.

Hon. Fred Bwino Kyakulaga, the State Minister of Agriculture in Uganda applauded the attendees’ for demonstrating their conviction in the potential of agroecology in transforming food systems in Africa. He remarked that the lively participation is proof of belief in what they advocate for.

Among key presentations made was by Dr. Hans Herren, the president, at Biovision Foundation who gave a compelling analysis of the milestones achieved in adoption of agroecology in various countries and the opportunities of further advancement.

While launching the call to **action (Annex 1: 1st Eastern Africa Agroecology Conference Call to Action)** following the deliberations, Ms. Venancia Wambua, the Ecological Organic Agriculture – Initiative (EOA-I) project manager at Biovision Africa Trust said, “The Eastern Africa Agroecology conference has been a great success and shall be held every two years going forward.” She reiterated that Biovision Africa Trust, the convener of the conference, will work with its partners, most of whom were key participants in the conference, to bring to life the ideas born from the deliberations as presented in the call to action.

Among the countries represented in the conference include Belgium, Colombia, Ethiopia, France, Switzerland, Germany, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Tanzania, United States, Rwanda, United Kingdom, Italy, Malawi, Netherlands, Sweden, Ghana, United Kingdom, and Liechtenstein.

The conference culminated with visits to organic farms in Machakos and Nairobi counties.

The conference report with deliberations to take forward to the next conference was produced (**Annex 2: 1st Eastern Africa Agroecology Conference report**)

4.2 Building Capacity of EOA Project Implementing Partners in Fundraising and Resource Mobilization



During the implementation period, we brought together EOA implementing partners for two regional workshops in eastern Africa and west Africa with 60 participants (30 from each region) in attendance. The first workshop targeted East Africa and was held from 14th to 17th November 2023 at the Pride Inn Azure Hotel in Nairobi. The second workshop targeted West Africa and was held at the Hotel- MHB, Grand POPO in Benin from 29th to 2nd December 2023. They were designed to be practical with participants developing resource mobilization strategies for their respective countries as well as acquiring skills on proposal writing donor mapping and consortium building.

The training focussed on imparting practical skills related to contemporary fundraising and development of Fundraising Plans for the EOA Continental Secretariat and for the 9 EOA Implementing Partners. The process enhanced the participants knowledge and skills in resource mobilization, ultimately ensuring the long-term sustainability of the EOA-I and their organizations. A training workshop report was produced (**Annex 3: Fundraising and Resource Mobilisation training workshop report**)

The Key objectives of the training were:

1. Equipping partners with the skills to develop a Resource Mobilization Strategy for their organizations.
2. Providing partners with donor mapping skills
3. Enhancing partners' grant proposal writing skills
4. Enabling partners to develop effective organization capacity statements
5. Empowering partners to establish or join effective consortia, thereby augmenting their funding prospects.

By the end of the training workshops, clear fundraising and resource plans for the 9 implementing partners were produced and a continental EOA fundraising strategy for the EOA Secretariat was also developed. Partners were urged to prioritize implementation of the fundraising strategies for their countries.

Nine country teams as well as EOA-I Continental and Regional secretariats submitted their resource mobilization strategies for feedback. These were:

- 1) Ethiopia
- 2) Uganda
- 3) Tanzania
- 4) Rwanda
- 5) Kenya
- 6) Senegal
- 7) Nigeria
- 8) Mali
- 9) Benin
- 10) Pelum Kenya- Eastern Africa Regional Secretariat
- 11) BvAT- Continental Strategy

Annex 4 : EOA-I Continental Fundraising strategy; Annex 5 : EOA-I Kenya Fundraising strategy, Annex 6 : EOA-I Tanzania Fundraising strategy; Annex 7: EOA-I Rwanda Fundraising strategy; Annex 8 : EOA-I Uganda Fundraising strategy; Annex 9 : EOA-I Ethiopia Fundraising strategy, Annex 10: EOA-I Benin Fundraising strategy; Annex 11 : EOA-I Nigeria Fundraising strategy; Annex 12 : EOA-I Senegal Fundraising strategy; Annex 13: EOA-I Mali Fundraising strategy.

4.3 Documentation of EOA Success stories for EOA-I Phase I & II



During the reporting period, BvAT, with its EOA implementing partners in the 9 countries successfully documented success stories and lessons learnt using the Pillar based approach. This involved both physical and online workshops undertaking to steer the process. The following topics of success stories were finally published and available online on the EOA-I website : <https://eoai-africa.org/eoa-i-success-stories-for-phases-i-ii-phase-ii/>

- ✓ **Rwanda EOA success stories:** <https://eoai-africa.org/eoa-initiative-success-stories-rwanda/>
- ✓ **Kenya EOA success stories:** <https://eoai-africa.org/eoa-initiative-success-stories-kenya/>
- ✓ **Ethiopia EOA success stories:** <https://eoai-africa.org/eoa-initiative-success-stories-ethiopia/>
- ✓ **Benin EOA success stories:** <https://eoai-africa.org/eoa-initiative-success-stories-benin/>
- ✓ **Uganda EOA success stories:** <https://eoai-africa.org/eoa-initiative-success-stories-uganda/>
- ✓ **Tanzania EOA Success stories:** <https://eoai-africa.org/eoa-initiative-success-stories-tanzania/>

The stories were documented alongside the Pillar-based approach focusing on the expected results of the project as follows:

Pillar 1: Research and Applied Knowledge

- a. Ethiopia: I Want Vermicomposting to Expand – Reaching More Farmers
- b. Rwanda: Scaling Up of Organic Technologies for Pineapple and Strawberry
- c. Tanzania: Mechanization of Biopesticide Extraction for Rural Farmers in Tanzania
- d. Uganda: Borrowing From Indigenous Knowledge for Practical Solutions: Sustainable Household Ash-Based Storage of Fresh Tomatoes

Pillar 2: Information, Communication and Extension

- a. Ethiopia: Evidence-Based Farmer-Led Knowledge and Practices Dissemination
- b. Benin: Training And Promotion of Organic Plantain Farming Changing Lives of Local Farmers in Benin
- c. Rwanda: Heap Composting for Increased Pineapple Production and Decreased Costs in Rwanda
- d. Uganda: Adoption Of the Ecological Organic Agriculture Curriculum by Tertiary Institutions of Learning in Uganda

Pillar 3: Value chain and Market systems development

- a. Kenya: Building Organic Chia into Busia Oil Crops Cooperative
- b. Rwanda: Rwandan Farmers Enhance Their Skills in Value Addition to Access Better Markets
- c. Tanzania: Influencing Change for an EOA-Friendly Environment

- d. Uganda: From Laborer to Farm Owner: Organic Tomato Farming Changes the Fortunes of a Ugandan Man

Pillar 4: Management, Coordination and Governance

- a. Ethiopia: Improved Inter Pillar Synergies to Deliver Project Results
- b. Rwanda: The Voice of Organic Stakeholders in Rwanda
- c. Benin: EOA-I Partners Catalyze Mainstreaming of Organic Agriculture in Benin’s National Agriculture Strategy

Annex 14: EOA-I success stories for Phases I & Phase II

4.4 The BvAT EOA team attended the 14th Africa Day for Food and Nutrition Security (ADFNS) Commemoration and the 19th Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Partnership Platform



Biovision Africa Trust Executive Director, Dr David Amudavi Presents at the 14th Africa Day For Food And Nutrition Security (ADFNS) Commemoration

Biovision Africa Trust (BvAT) team consisting of Dr. David Amudavi, Ms. Venancia Wambua, and Mr. Alex Mutungi participated in the 14th Africa Day for Food and Nutrition Security (ADFNS) Commemoration and the 19th Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Partnership Platform held at the Mulungushi International Conference Centre in Lusaka Zambia from 30th October to the 2nd of November 2023. BvAT participated in the event to strengthen its role in the development of the Ecological Organic Agriculture within the CAADP Framework. Dr. Amudavi participated as a speaker and a panelist on sub-theme 2: - Harnessing science, innovation, and research to enhance food nutrition security where he presented on the ‘Role of Agroecology in nutrition and food security informed by study conducted in Eastern Africa’. In his presentation, Dr. Amudavi emphasized the crucial role agroecology plays in enhancing

nutrition and food security by promoting sustainable agricultural practices thereby ensuring the production of nutritious and diverse crops and safeguarding the environment.

BvAT's presentation was informed by a study commissioned under the US Mission to the African Union (USAU) funded project titled Agroecology for Increased Nutrition and Food Security in Eastern Africa (ANFEA Project) under the auspices of EOA-I SDC funded project. The project is aligned to the African Union's declaration of 2022 as the Year of Nutrition under the theme: ***Strengthening resilience in nutrition and food security on the African continent: Strengthening Agro-food systems, health, and social protection systems for the acceleration of human, social and economic capital development.*** The study was co-implemented by BvAT, and the Washington based Millenium Institute across several Eastern African countries, including Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda. The study employed the systems thinking approach that focuses on Causal Loop Diagrams (CLDs) that shows interrelationships between systems.

The study focused on three areas that emphasize; knowledge generation and dissemination (south-south learning through food security research; advocacy for increased commitment and nutrition investment) and partnerships and mutual accountability platforms for harmonized action and transparency. The focus areas are consistent with the goal of the project, which is to create awareness and better understanding among policymakers (and practitioners, technocrats, and development partners) on how Agroecology is contributing to nutrition and food security and hence, stimulate discussion and debate among them about the benefits and promotion of Agroecology.

Dr. Amudavi underscored how the CLD approach had helped to identify critical data needs for the assessment, including production cost comparisons, labor requirements, yield comparisons, projections for yield improvement over time, and the potential for agroecological products to command premium prices. Collecting and analyzing these types of data will provide essential insights into the economic and agricultural implications of agroecology, aiding informed decision-making and policy development.

Further, the CLD approach was noted to have guided the identification of critical research needs for a comprehensive assessment of agroecology. These needs include quantifying the effects of agrochemicals on soil, biodiversity, and natural capital over time, exploring innovative policies to support farmers during the transition to agroecology, investigating policies to subsidize agroecology, potentially through taxation on agrochemical inputs, understanding the time lags associated with realizing agroecological benefits, and identifying the factors that influence farmers' adoption of agroecology. Addressing these research needs is vital for a more thorough evaluation of agroecology's potential and for informing policies and practices that promote its successful implementation.

Therefore, the resurgence of interest in agroecology underscores its vital role in enhancing food nutrition and security. Dr. Amudavi emphasized that Agroecology provides a route towards genuine sustainability and resilience within our agricultural systems. However, the transition to agroecology necessitates the development of supportive policies, programs, and investments that support nutrition-sensitive food systems.

Furthermore, comprehensive data is essential to assess and compare agroecology with conventional systems, enabling evidence-based decision-making for investments. Research efforts should be directed towards informing decisions regarding the value of agroecology, its contributions, and the factors influencing its adoption by farmers. Thus, action is required to establish certification and standards for agroecological products and markets to further promote its adoption and marketability.

The presentation by BvAT comes at the backdrop of loss of productivity in agriculture across African countries despite huge public investments in the sector. It also comes ahead of the continental discourse on soil health that will culminate in an Africa Fertilizer Soil Health Summit (AFSHS) planned for early 2024. The participants while commenting BvAT for her work, acknowledged Agroecological and Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) practices and technologies as alternative practices to restore soil health.

Dr Amudavi urged African countries to embrace agroecological and EOA practices as they are the only truly sustainable ways to ensure nutrition and food security. He also called on more public investments into agroecology and EOA, more research and development and underscored the need for data to inform policy development.

Annex 15: Presentation on the role of agroecology in nutrition and food security

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1JfD_ZFoy88dqQEvF3WI-G5fgw9WAD2nE/edit#slide=id.p1

4.5 The 5th African Organic Conference in Kigali

Rwanda Organic Agriculture Movement (ROAM) the Country Lead Organisation for EOA-I under funding support by SDC, hosted the 5th AOC in Kigali Rwanda from 12-15th December 2024. The theme of the 5th AOC was **“Strengthening Resilient and Sustainable Food Systems in Africa through Organic Agriculture”**. The event attracted 200 participants from farmers, farmer associations, National Organic Movements (NOAMs), Organic private companies, certification bodies, government, universities, amongst other strategic partners.

During the event, BVAT EOA staff presented the following continental studies that have been funded by SDC as follows:

- i. Position and Role of Youth in Agroecology
- ii. Assessment of the landscape of Agroecology and the Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative in Africa

The EOA staff also moderated a policy parallel section that hosted AUC, Government and other stakeholders.

The conference culminated with the following recommendations:

- ✓ Appropriate national, regional, and continental policies should encourage the growth of organic agriculture in Africa, including boosting availability, access and promotion of the use of organic inputs (seeds, organic fertilizers, soil amendments, and bio-pesticides).

- ✓ At all governmental levels in Africa, appropriate measures should be implemented to prevent Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) from contaminating the production of organic agriculture and contributing to the loss of indigenous seeds.
- ✓ In order to promote the availability of organic products for local and regional markets in Africa, there should be a greater focus on building capacity for different value chain actors (farmers, processors, traders/retailers and experts about organic farming and
- ✓ implementing/strengthening the Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) to ensure that organic agricultural products are of high quality and comply with the certification requirements.
- ✓ Appropriate networking of African researchers engaged in ecological organic agriculture/agroecology for synergy, as well as greater emphasis on participatory action research in organic and agroecological agriculture as opposed to traditional disciplinary research.
- ✓ Establishment of a database for scientific publications and mapping of institutions working on ecological organic agriculture/agroecology in Africa and incentives/awards for high quality presentations during the future African Organic Conferences.
- ✓ Developing organic agriculture at the national level through Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) will ensure the sustainable development of the organic sector in Africa.
- ✓ Conducting farmer-led research in order to provide informative guidance to smallholder farmers, as well as a close collaboration involving Farmers' based organizations, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Governmental Institutions, and service providers is necessary.
- ✓ To allocate more funds (grants, affordable loans, subsidies):
 - to develop adequate infrastructure and technology that enable the development of the value chains of organic produces.
 - to boost production and last-mile distribution of organic agricultural inputs and extension services, in order to avail affordable organic inputs to producers in Africa.
 - to promote an enabling environment for facilitating regional and continental market integration.
- ✓ Realizing that customers make up the final component of the organic equation, coordinated efforts are required to raise consumer knowledge of organic products and increase the market opportunities available to organic producers throughout the continent by taking advantage of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement.
- ✓ Offering options that would make it easier for financial institutions to get involved in enhancing the availability of financing for businesses engaged in organic agriculture.
- ✓ The inclusion of organic agriculture into the national investment programmes in Africa.
- ✓ The AU Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative should review its current Strategic Plan (2015–2025) and develop its next Strategic Plan (2025–2035) based on the insights and recommendations from the Declaration of the 5th AOC. Additionally, it should be aligned with the Post Malabo recommendations and actions.
- ✓ Governments allocate research funds for promoting organic research, data collection and management procedure, information, and knowledge sharing including data pertinent to the African Heads of State and Government on Organic Farming.
- ✓ Develop creative and inclusive strategies to attract and keep young people and women in organic and agroecological farming operations.

(Annex 16: 5th Africa Organic Conference (5th AOC) Call to Action)

4.6 CAADP Backstopping process

During the reporting period, BVAT provided backstopping the data collection and review processes both at national, regional and continental levels. The backstopping process ensured that EOA/Agroecology data was well understood and accepted by all stakeholders and especially

stakeholders from the conventional sector. We successfully provided data backstopping at ECOWAS, EAC, SADC and AUC Continental levels. The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), under the African Union is Africa's policy framework for agricultural transformation, wealth creation, food security and nutrition security and economic growth. BvAT- EOA-I Secretariat is committed to the June 2014, African Heads of State Malabo Declaration on Agriculture Growth and Transformation in Africa.

The goals of Malabo include reducing levels of poverty, ending hunger on the continent, and tripling intra-African trade in agricultural goods, among others by 2025. The EOA Initiative engagement in the CAADP process has been supported with funding from Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and by African Union Commission. One of the CAADP Data processes that BvAT as the EOA-I Secretariat was involved in was providing backstopping services to countries in data collection and in validation at the regional and continental levels. The EOA Secretariat team of Dr. David Amudavi, Mr. Alex Mutungi and Ms. Venancia Wambua participated in the final CAADP Biennial Review Write-shop, in Lagos, Nigeria, 18-22 September 2023. BvAT led in drafting the segment on Commitment 6.

Overall, 49 countries provided data on the seven commitments and several indicators towards the 4th BR. It was impressive to note that 65% of these reported on the 3 EOA indicators under Commitment 3 Ending Hunger by 2025 – Organic fertilizer use as part of total fertilizer consumption; and Status of Farmer Managed Seed Systems (FMSS) in national seed policy instruments and institutional arrangements and Commitment 6 (Enhancing Resilience to Climate Variability) – Agriculture area under EOA practices in ha. **(Annex 17: 4th CAADP BR Report)**

4.7 AUC led EOA Continental Steering Committee Meetings

The nineteenth and twentieth Continental Steering Committee (CSC) of the AU Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative (EOAI) was held on July 24, 2023, at the AUC headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The meeting was chaired on behalf of the Chair by Ms Wezi Chunga-Sambo, Program Officer, at the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture-African Union Commission. Following presentations and discussions by the various institutions and structures of the EOAI, several decisions and resolutions were made to support oversight and guidance on the implementation of the initiative. Among the key issues discussed was the presentation of the new Agroecology program to be funded by SDC from 2024-2032. The CSC members provided their input and recommendations on the design of the new project.

Other key discussions revolved around the upcoming Africa Fertilizer and Soil Health Summit (AFSHS) and specifically its outcomes on the Soil Initiative for Africa Framework, a 10-year plan for soil health and fertilizer. The CSC noted that AFSHS was a very relevant platform for the EOAI policy and advocacy activities. On the agenda was the 6th Africa Organic Conference (AOC) to be held in Kigali-Rwanda in December and the CSC directed its Secretariat to work closely with AfrONet to ensure that the conference is successful.

The Continental Steering Committee (CSC) also held its twentieth meeting in Kigali, Rwanda on the margins of the 6th AOC on 11th and 12th December 2023. During the meeting, the CSC reviewed and endorsed the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Review of the EOAI Strategic Plan (2015-2025) supported by the EU through its Desira-Lift Initiative. The CSC also revised the review process roadmap to align with the Post Malabo Agenda discussions.

The committee members also took part in the 6th AOC that was held successfully in Kigali.

Annex 18: CSC 11th Meeting Minutes

Annex 19: CSC 12th Meeting Minutes

4.8 Successful Reporting on EOA and Agroecology Indicators in the CAADP 4th BR

The 4th cycle of the AU Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) made the EOAI Secretariat busy throughout 2023 due to its tight road map. Major activities involved backstopping Member States (MS) in data collection, cleaning, validation and analysis. After submission of the data into the Electronic Biennial Review platform (EBR), the secretariat supported the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in another similar process of review, validation and analysis before submitting the final data to the AUC. Overall, 42 out of a possible 55 countries collected data on the three EOA and Agroecology indicators.

Parameter 3.1i d: Organic fertilizer use

Organic fertilizers are captured under the indicator 3.1i, under Total fertilizers use (N+P₂O₅, N+P₂O₅+K₂O and organic fertilizers) in Kg. The provided data are in “kg” of organic fertilizer used, and not disaggregated into microelements (N, P and K). Therefore, the provided organic fertilizer figures cannot be added to the inorganic fertilizer data in terms of nutrients but weight. It is relatively simple to track inorganic fertilizers, which are industry-made and clearly traded with known codes.

Overall, 47 Member States submitted data into the e-BR system. 21 countries submitted complete datasets and on total fertilizer use parameter for the first time. Compared to arable lands, six countries submitted various quantities of organic fertilizer used in 2022 and these included Rwanda (5,684 kg/ha), Togo (623 kg/ha) and Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (194 kg/ha), Egypt (98 kg/ha), Burundi (55 kg/ha), and Ethiopia (38 kg/ha). The remaining 15 countries reported lower volumes, ranging between 1 and 3 kg of organic fertilizer per ha. The other 26 countries either had no data on organic fertilizers, or reported zero kg of fertilizers, between 2015 and 2022.

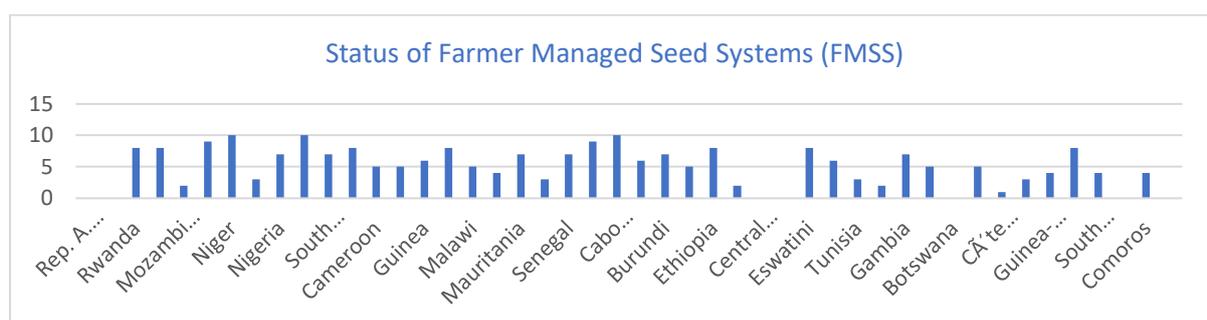
The figures suggest that there could be different ways of capturing or estimating quantities of “organic fertilizer”. Some countries probably reported the estimates of composts produced and used at the farm level (e.g., Rwanda, Burundi), while others reported the commercialized, well packaged, and standardized organic fertilizers. Increasing focus on enhancing soil health through interventions that improve crop yield, crop quality, and environmental sustainability by mainstreaming use of organic fertilizers into the agriculture sector is paramount.

Developing and standardizing procedures of measuring nutrients in organic fertilizers and soil amendments and training farmers on how to use them will significantly contribute to improved and sustained soil health. Such procedures can be used to authenticate organic fertilizer products and bring transparency to the organic fertilizer industry.

Parameter 3.1viii: Seed Performance Index and Status of Farmer Managed Seed Systems in national seed policy instruments and institutional arrangements

A total of 43 countries reported that in some way there is national discussion around Farmer Managed Seed Systems (FMSS). A total of 18 countries recorded progress above 70% meaning they have presence of enabling conditions such as policy, strategy, proclamation, ordinance and investments or programs in place. Partial recognition of FMSS by governments in the rest of the countries was reported.

Figure 1 CAADP 4th BR Status of Farmer Managed Seed Systems



Parameter 6.1ii: Agriculture area under Ecological Organic and Agroecological (EOA) practices in Ha

A total of 33 countries, representing 60% of the total of 55, reported on share of agriculture land under EOA/ Agroecology. Overall, 17 countries are on track on having a targeted share of agricultural land under Sustainable Land and Water Management (SLWM). The country with the highest land under EOA was Botswana (25.6million hectares) and the smallest was Liberia reporting only 2 hectares. While this could be a data related issue, large discrepancies were recorded in the way countries reported on this indicator.

In the current EOA project countries (under SDC support), Mali emerged as the country with the highest land under EOA reporting 3.2 million hectares, followed by Benin (1.0 million hectares), Ethiopia (1.0 million hectares), Morocco (1.0 million hectares), Uganda (505,000 hectares), Tanzania (286,000 hectares), Kenya (123,000) and Nigeria (58,000 hectares). Other countries that had considerable land under EOA are Tunisia (325,000 hectares), Egypt (116,000 hectares) and South Africa (97,000 hectares). Countries with considerably smaller land on EOA include Equatorial Guinea (510 hectares), Mozambique (1404 hectares) and Cameroon (1969 hectares). The 60% reporting success rate for this indicator is clear indication that EOA data is available, and countries could aim at reporting at 100% in subsequent cycles.

These new developments are informative of the progress towards mainstreaming EOA into National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIPs) and Regional Agricultural Investments Plans (RAIPs) by 2025 as stipulated in the EOA Initiative Strategic Plan (2015-2025). The EOA Initiative

has already commenced the plan to review the current SP in preparation of developing strategy for the period 2025-2035.

It's worth noting that the EOA Initiative Strategic Plan coincides with the ongoing discussion on post Malabo and the future of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Biennial Review Report (BRR) planning which will also be for a period of ten years (2025-2035). This is an opportunity to align the EOAI with post Malabo outcomes as will be projected in the next period of CAADP BRR.

Recommendations:

There is evidence that EOA/AE data is available and can be collected by countries. Therefore,

- i. Disaggregate the parameters that differentiate between conventional and EOA/AE practices to inform countries more on how the different agricultural sub sectors are performing and to further inform policy and investment decisions. e.g. Access to Advisory services parameter, Investments in agriculture etc.
- ii. Strengthen national data collection and reporting on EOA indicators: Sensitization and training of countries on EOA practices and technologies, data collection for disaggregated parameters.
- iii. The African Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) framework should closely collaborate with the EOAI and the African Organization for Standardization (ARSO) to develop certification, standards, tariffs, and general trade protocols that offer opportunities for organic farmers and make organic products more attractive and competitive.
- iv. Develop and standardize protocols of measuring nutrients in organic fertilizers and soil amendments to document well quality and quantity of organic fertilizers.
- v. The recently developed AU framework for harmonizing seed systems in Africa should be adapted along with the FMSS road map developed by the EOAI and endorsed by the ASBPP in Kampala in May 2022.

5. HIGH-LEVEL OUTCOME RESULTS AT COUNTRY LEVEL

In the 2023 the EOA implementing partners performed exemplary well in achieving high level outcome results that can be deeply understood through their 2023 Annual reports (**Annex 20: Tanzania 2023 Annual progress report; (Annex 21: Uganda 2023 Annual progress report; (Annex 22: Rwanda 2023 Annual progress report; (Annex 23: Ethiopia 23 Annual progress report; (Annex 24: Benin 2023 Annual progress report; (Annex 25: Mali 2023 Annual progress report; (Annex 26: Nigeria 2023 Annual progress report;**

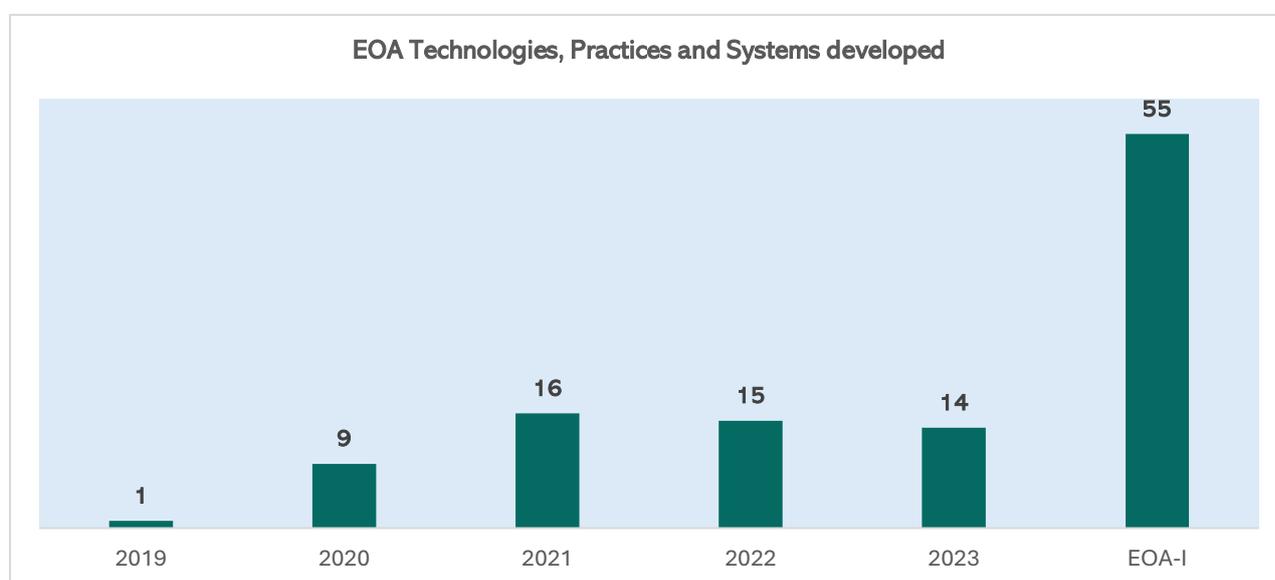
The high-level outcome results were presented as follows:

5.1 EOA Technologies, Practices and Systems developed.

During the reporting period, types of information and knowledge on EOA practices and technologies were validated through various methods, including field experiments, demonstrations, workshops, and expert consultations. These developed practices and

technologies were applied within Project Pillar 2 to implement targeted extension activities, providing knowledge and skills to EOA value chain actors while scaling up the use of relevant information, practices, and technologies.

In this project phase (2019-2023), the objective was to develop at least 25 EOA technologies and practices across the entire value chain. This target was exceeded, with 55 (153%) different technologies and practices successfully validated by the end of the reporting period, 2023. Figure 5 below illustrated the types of information and technologies developed over a period.



The table summarizes the contribution by each of the Implementing countries during the five (5) year period.

Table 2: Type of Information and knowledge on types of EOA technologies and practices

Information and knowledge on at least 36 types (new or existing) of EOA technologies, practices and others validated along the various value chains.							
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023		
Kenya		0	2	1	0	3	
Uganda		0	1	1	3	8	
Tanzania		0	0	0	0	3	
Rwanda		0	0	0	0	2	
Nigeria		1	3	2	2	8	
Mali		0	2	2	3	8	
Benin		0	1	3	5	12	
Senegal		0	0	7	0	9	
Ethiopia		0	0	0	2	2	
Year Totals		1	9	16	15	14	55

5.2 Land under Organic Farming

During the reporting period, EOA-I, in collaboration with its country implementing partners, achieved significant progress in expanding the land area dedicated to organic farming. This increase signifies growth in land managed according to organic principles, excluding synthetic chemicals and genetically modified organisms, while emphasizing sustainable practices such as

crop rotation, composting, and biodiversity preservation. By the end of the reporting period, 86% of agricultural land managed by smallholder farmers had been converted to organic farming—a 37% increase that significantly exceeded the project target of a 10% increase for the entire phase (refer to Table 5). The project relies on this metric to gauge the extent of organic agriculture within EOA-I implementing countries to assess growth in sustainable farming practices over time.

Table 3: Area of land under organic farming

Country	Proportion of agricultural land under EOA production in 2019	Proportion of agricultural land under EOA production in 2020	Proportion of agricultural land under EOA production in 2021	Proportion of agricultural land under EOA production in 2022	Proportion of agricultural land under EOA production in 2023	%Increase in 2020	%Increase in 2021	%Increase in 2022	%Increase in 2023
Benin	51%	71%	92%	92%	93%	20%	40%	41%	41%
Ethiopia	20%	23%	24%	25%	60%	3%	4%	5%	40%
Kenya	31%	31%	34%	35%	36%	0%	3%	4%	5%
Mali	32%	34%	34%	34%	37%	1%	2%	2%	4%
Nigeria	67%	67%	68%	74%	74%	0%	1%	7%	7%
Rwanda		72%	94%	94%	96%		22%	22%	24%
Senegal	65%	75%	70%			11%	5%	5%	5%
Tanzania	62%	64%	64%	65%	65%	1%	1%	2%	3%
Uganda	79%	80%	81%	81%	81%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Totals	50%	56%	61%	86%	87%	6%	11%	36%	37%

5.3 Number of smallholder farmers Adopting EOA farming practices

The adoption rate of EOA practices among smallholder farmers has been a key indicator for the project’s success, as it reflects both the willingness of farmers to transition to organic methods and the effectiveness of outreach, training, and support efforts. Household survey data reveals that an additional 7,378 farmers adopted EOA practices, bringing the total to 11,694 farmers (88.9%) since the beginning of Phase II. By adopting EOA practices, smallholder farmers are better equipped to improve crop yields, maintain soil fertility, and build resilience against climate change while reducing adverse environmental impacts.

Table 4: Number of farmers adopting EOA practices

Disaggregates	2019 figures and percentages	2020 figures and percentages	2021 figures and percentages	2022 figures and percentages	2023 figures and percentages	Cumulative and percentages (End of 2023)
Male	2,736 (53%)	3,223 (48%)	4,727 (45%)	5,259 (45%)	4269 (57.8%)	5,259 (45%)
Female	2,418 (47%)	3,446 (52%)	5,784 (55%)	6,435 (55%)	3109 (42%)	6,435 (55%)
Youths	1,178 (21%)	1,396 (21%)	2,271 (22%)	2,526 (22%)	1950 (26%)	2,526 (22%)
Totals	5,154 (88%)	6,669 (76%)	10,511 (87%)	11,694 (87%)	7378	11,694 (88.9%)

5.4 Volumes of EOA Crop and Livestock Production

Tracking the production volumes is essential for understanding the impact of EOA on food security, income generation, and environmental sustainability among smallholder farmers. By adopting EOA practices, farmers focus on practices that enhance soil health and biodiversity, ultimately aiming to increase yields sustainably. In 2023, the project achieved an average production volume of 1,627.2 kg, representing a 39% increase over previous periods.

Table 5: Volumes of crop and livestock production

Country	Average of 2019 Total volumes/quantities (in kgs) for EOA value chain product	Average of 2020 Total volumes/quantities (in kgs) for EOA value chain product	Average of 2021 Total volumes/quantities (in kgs) for EOA value chain product	Average of 2022 Total volumes/quantities (in kgs) for EOA value chain product	Average of 2023 Total volumes/quantities (in kgs) for EOA value chain product	% Increase in 2020	% Increase in 2021	% Increase in 2022	% Increase in 2023
Benin	2487.58	2487.23	2610.13	2636.30	2701.44	0%	5%	6%	9%
Ethiopia	251.67	396.53	396.76	414.03	439.35	58%	58%	65%	75%
Kenya	182.33	190.64	209.28	233.74	269.71	5%	15%	28%	48%
Mali	1123.62	1231.79	1358.43	1401.32	1452.69	10%	21%	25%	29%
Nigeria	2503.89	3038.97	3466.93	3544.08	3559.48	21%	38%	42%	42%
Rwanda		2638.33	2620.37	2797.80	2812.49		-1%	6%	7%
Senegal	862.50	884.51	904.23	904.23	904.23	3%	5%	5%	5%
Tanzania	692.15	702.40	728.21	762.98	763.01	1%	5%	10%	10%
Uganda	272.60	305.13	392.15	280.00	288.68	12%	44%	3%	6%
Grand Total	1173.89	1688.57	1770.80	1598.64	1627.32	44%	51%	36%	39%

5.5 Consumption of Organic Products among EOA Households

During the implementation period, the consumption of organic products increased significantly, reaching 42% compared to the target of 20%. This analysis was based on household expenditure on essential items during the reporting period. EOA products originate from farming systems that strictly avoid synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, growth regulators, irradiation, and genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

Table 6: Increase in consumption of organic products among EOA households

Country	Average Expenditure on the EOA products (food) in USD in 2019	Average Expenditure on the EOA products (food) in USD in 2020	Average Expenditure on EOA products (food) in USD in 2021	Average Expenditure on the EOA products (food) in USD in 2022	Average Expenditure on the EOA products (food) in USD in 2023	% Increase in 2020	% Increase in 2021	% Increase in 2022	% Increase in 2023
Benin	136.63	140.62	155.65	199.58	206.76	3%	14%	46%	51%
Ethiopia	141.16	144.34	163.16	197.94	246.92	2%	16%	40%	75%
Kenya	129.43	138.90	189.36	192.84	196.71	7%	46%	49%	52%
Mali	30.51	33.94	45.56	47.75	53.00	11%	49%	57%	74%
Nigeria	465.73	525.97	604.51	620.34	631.26	13%	30%	33%	36%
Rwanda		239.58	269.01	270.48	275.44		12%	13%	15%
Senegal	254.24	274.52	296.70	296.70	296.70	8%	17%	17%	17%
Tanzania	52.05	60.97	72.89	72.20	73.77	17%	40%	39%	42%
Uganda	213.86	234.30	249.96	250.42	258.98	10%	17%	17%	21%
Average expenditure	178.94	200.59	222.89	227.15	237.60	12%	25%	27%	33%

5.6 Number of PGS Formed

The project also made significant advancements in establishing organic markets and enhancing market access by establishing PGS groups. These formations play a vital role in the organic sector by supporting the development of certified organic products within EOA countries at the local level. The PGS framework offers a cost-effective alternative for organic quality assurance through a participatory approach, avoiding the expenses associated with third-party certification. Operating through farmer groups, the PGS system uses collaborative processes such as learning exchanges, self-assessment, and peer evaluations to ensure credibility.

As of the reporting period, 998 farmers had joined PGS groups, with 32 groups established across EOA countries—177% above the target of 18 groups. Through these groups, countries are promoting a range of organic products, including vegetables, fruits, spices, tomatoes, soybeans, bananas, and pineapples (*Annex the list of PGS groups*).

Table 7: PGS Groups formed and certified per Country_2023

18 PGS groups established and fully certified						
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Kenya	0	1	0	0	0	1
Ethiopia	0	0	0	1	0	1
Rwanda	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tanzania	0	0	0	0	2	2
Mali	1	1	1	1	0	4
Senegal	0	0	0	2	0	2
Uganda	0	0	1	1	0	2
Nigeria	4	2	1	2	3	12
Benin	0	2	1	2	3	8
EOA-I	5	6	4	9	8	32

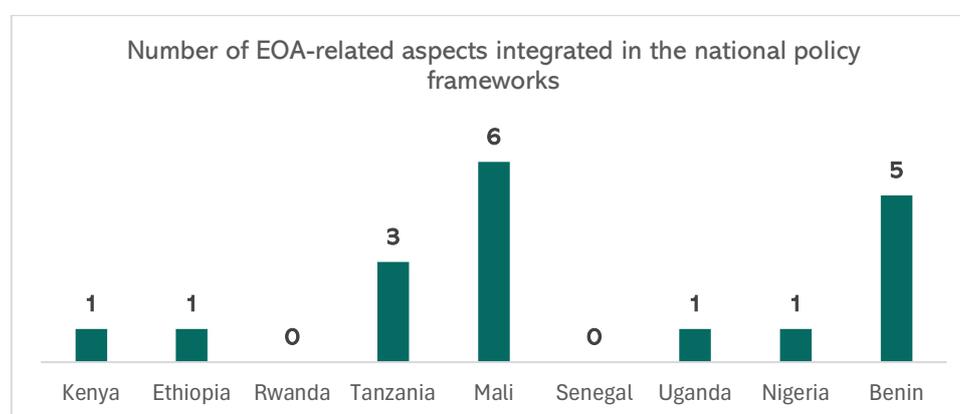
Table 8: List of the PGS Groups established and supported by EOA-I

Country	Number of PGS Groups	Name of the PGS Group	Value Chain
Nigeria	12	✓ Ire Akari Organic farmers Group	✓ Vegetable, fruit, and spices
		✓ Amaeti Imama Group	
		✓ Ikot Ekpene Women Group	
		✓ Ajibode organic PGS group	
		✓ Elekuru organic PGS group	
		✓ Sakoro organic PGS group	
		✓ Ajoro organic PGS group	
		✓ Eko-farm group	
		✓ Ifelodun Temidire Alafe	
Benin	8	✓ CP Soja Bio de Kandi	✓ Soja ✓ Soybean ✓ Tomatoes ✓ Banana
		✓ CP Soja Bio de Aklampa	
		✓ CP Soja Bio de Djidja	
		✓ CP Soja Bio de Aklampa	

		✓ Organic plantain control group LINGBAHOUN of GAKPE	
Mali	4	✓ N'Djimbougou ✓ Déni ✓ Woro ✓ Bougounina	✓ Sesame
Senegal	2	✓ NAT BI SESSENE ✓ NAT BI THIES	✓ ML ✓ NIEBE
Tanzania	2	✓ Uwamabo ✓ Jumbo	✓ Fruits and Vegetables
Uganda	5	✓ Masaka Organic Farmers Association Bukunda PGS ✓ Suluma Food LTD	✓ Pineapples ✓ Tomatoes
Ethiopia	3	✓ Tehuldere Organic Production & Marketing primary Cooperative Society ✓ Abdi Boru Organic Production & Marketing primary Cooperative Society	✓ Potatoes
Kenya	1 PGS Group	✓ Kabare Organic Farmers	✓ Tomatoes
Rwanda	No PGS group reported	✓	✓

5.7 EOA Practices or Elements Implemented in the National Policy Framework

Aligned with efforts to integrate EOA into National Policies, Strategies, and Programs across Africa, the Country Lead Organizations (CLOs) overseeing Pillar 4 have made significant progress in advancing EOA policy and advocacy within their respective countries. As illustrated in the graph below, 19 (237%) out of the targeted 8 EOA related aspects, including policies, ordinances, legislations, plans, and strategies have been integrated into national policy across the nine (9) EOA-I implementing countries. Further, 18 EOA-related programs have been implemented.



An outstanding policy document to report is the National Ecological Organic Agriculture Strategy (NEOAS) launched in Tanzania in 2023 (**Annex 27 NEOAS**). https://eoai-africa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Tanzania_THIRD-Draft-NEOAS-DEC-2022-Mar-for-Review-041123-2.pdf

6. HIGH-LEVEL PILLAR RESULTS AT COUNTRY LEVEL

The implementation of the EOA initiative is grounded on a pillar-based strategy, with each pillar strategically interconnected and synergized to drive the achievement of the overarching project goals.

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

The nine (9) countries implementing EOA-initiative realized an exemplary performance, exceeding the set project targets-based on percentage averaging of all pillar scores. Benin partners were the leading, achieving an average of 628% across all the for pillars, while Kenya partners were the lowly ranked at 329%. Overall, the EOA initiative achieved an average target success rate of 498% across the four pillars for all nine countries.

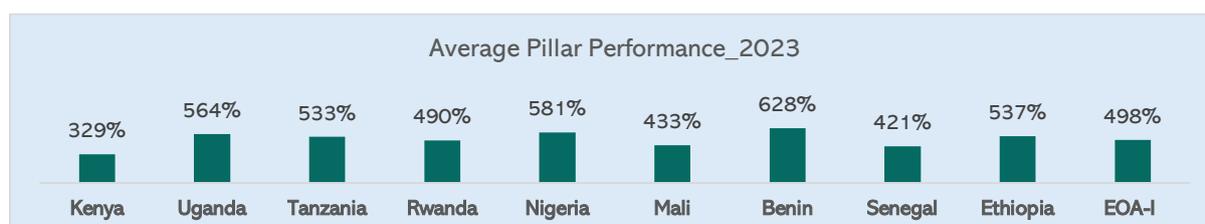
During the current reporting period, the achieved results surpassed the set targets as summarized below.

Table 3: Level of Performance per Pillar

Pillars of EOA-I	Level of Performance
Pillar 1: Research and applied knowledge	199%
Pillar 2: Information and communication	318%
Pillar 3: Value chain and market development	353%
Pillar 4: Management, coordination and governance	1122%

As summarized in Table 3, partners continued to implement the pillar strategy, closely following established guidelines and targets. Overall, each pillar exceeded its set targets, reflecting excellent performance. Pillar 3 led with 353%, followed by Pillar 2 at 318%, while Pillar 4 had the lowest achievement at 119%. The results are further broken down by country to highlight each country’s contribution to the overall performance in each pillar.

Figure 2: Overall Performance of Pillars by the end of 2023.

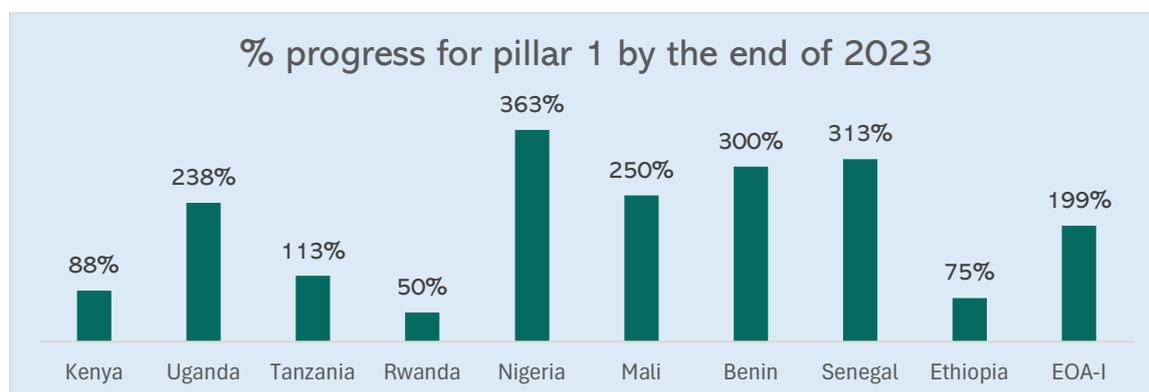


6.1 Pillar 1 Country Performance

The average performance for pillar 1 across the EOA-I implementing countries surpassed the set target, at 199%. Similarly, six (6) countries out of the 9 countries had exceeded the set target.

However, Rwanda, Ethiopia, and Kenya trailed at 50%, 75%, and 88%, respectively. See the graph below for the overall performance.

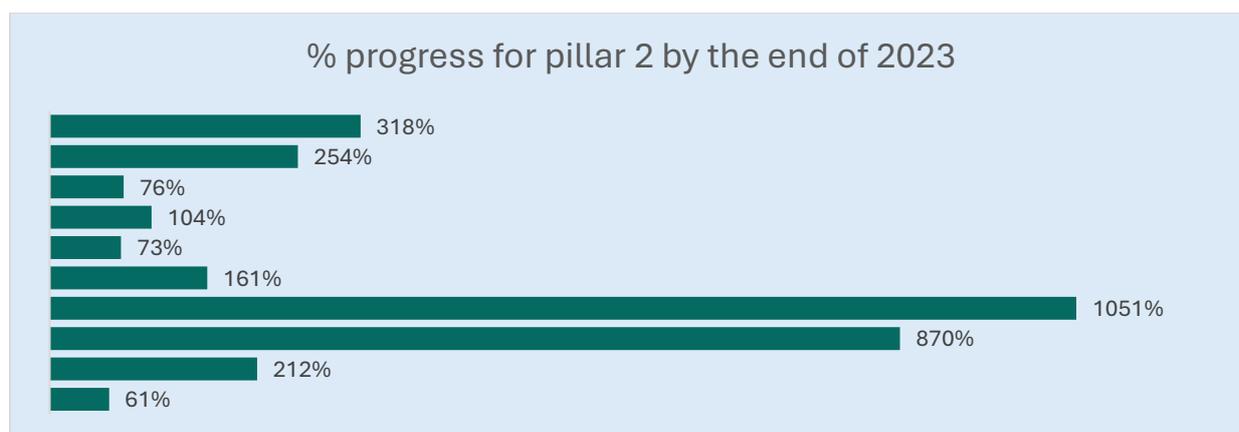
Figure 3: % Progress for pillar 1 by the end of 2023.



6.2 Pillar 2 Country Performance

Like Pillar 1, pillar also recorded an exemplary performance, surpassing the set targets across six (6) EOA-I implementing countries. During the reporting period, EOA-I exceeded the set targets for pillar 2, recording an average of 318% achievement. Rwanda, Senegal, and Nigeria trail against the six (6) countries achieving 66%, 73%, and 76% respectively (See the graph below).

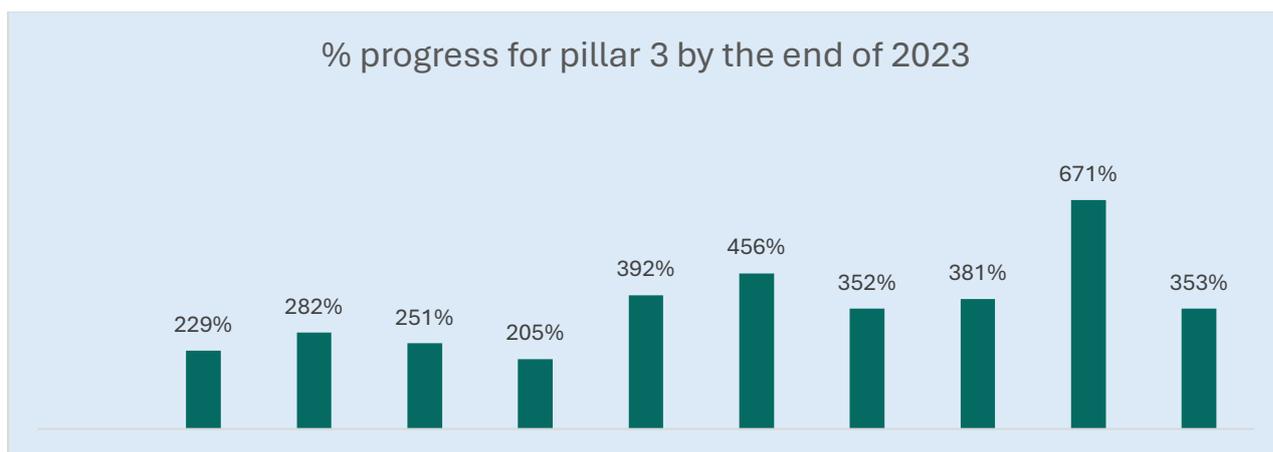
Figure 4: % progress for pillar 2 by the end of 2023.



6.3 Pillar 3 Country Performance

Figure 4 below shows the overall performance of pillar 3 across the EOA-I implementing countries. According to the data for the period ending 2023, all the implementing partners had overwhelmingly exceeded the set targets, with the overall performance of 353%.

Figure 5: % progress for pillar 3 by the end of 2023.



6.4 Pillar 4 Country Performance

By the end of 2023, EOA-I also surpassed targets for Pillar 4. All the countries exceeded their targets, achieving an overall of 1122% (as shown in figure 5 below).

Figure 6: % progress for pillar 4 by the end of 2023.

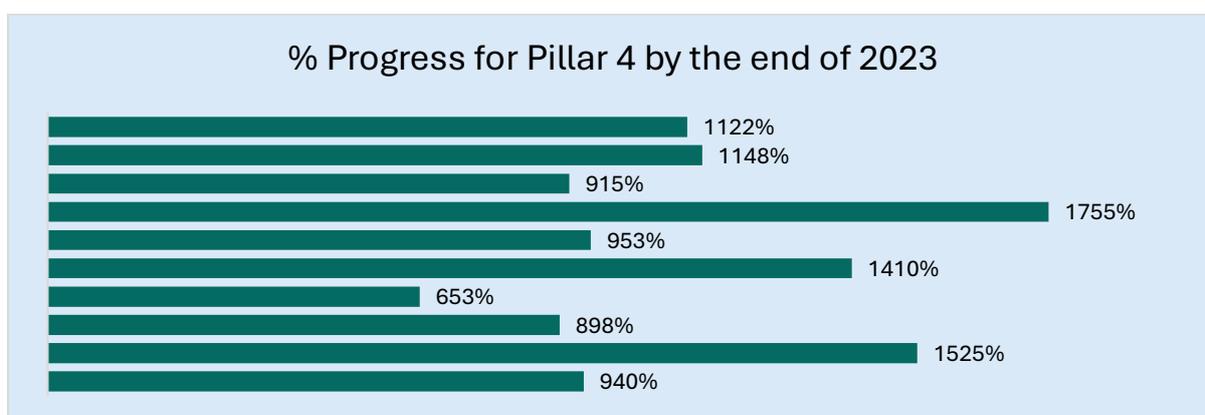


Table 9: EOA-related aspect (by-laws, ordinances, policies, legislations, or strategies) integrated in national policy frameworks

Country	Plan/Strategy/Policy
Benin	Law N0 2022 – 14 of July 19, 2022, on Agricultural Orientation, Food and Nutritional Security in the Republic of Benin in its articles 26 & 27, grants a place for the promotion of ecological and organic agriculture (Loi N0 2022 – 14 du 19 Juillet 2022 portant orientation agricole, sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle en République du Bénin en ses Articles 26 & 27, accorde une place pour la promotion de EOA)
Benin	Stratégie Nationale de Production Ecologique et Biologique du Bénin (National Strategy for Ecological and Organic Production of Benin)
Benin	Strategic Plan for the Development of the Agricultural Sector Orientation 2025 and National Agricultural Investment Plan 2017 – 2025 (Plan Stratégique pour le Développement du secteur Agricole Orientation 2025 et plan National d'Investissement)

	Agricole 2017 – 2025)
Kenya	Muranga County Organic policy and Legislation
Mali	Plaidoyer lobbying pour la prise de l'arrêté d'application du décret N° 09-314 PRM du 19 juin 2009 ion des produits agricoles AE et AEB
Mali	Harmonsation des cahiers de charges SPG
Mali	Subvention des Intrants organiques
Nigeria	National Organic Agriculture Policy
Senegal	BOS_PS_Structuration PSE VERT_Support AOS_VF1
Tanzania	Climate smart agriculture
Tanzania	THIRD Draft NEOAS DEC 2022 (Mar) for Review 041123 2
Uganda	National-Organic-Agriculture-Policy
Benin	Stratégie Nationale de Production Ecologique et Biologique du Bénin (National Strategy for Ecological and Organic Production of Benin)
Benin	Strategic Plan for the Development of the Agricultural Sector Orientation 2025 and National Agricultural Investment Plan 2017 – 2025 (Plan Stratégique pour le Développement du secteur Agricole Orientation 2025 et plan National d'Investissement Agricole 2017 – 2025)
Kenya	Muranga County Organic policy and Legislation
Mali	Plaidoyer lobbying pour la prise de l'arrêté d'application du décret N° 09-314 PRM du 19 juin 2009 ion des produits agricoles AE et AEB
Mali	Harmonsation des cahiers de charges SPG
Mali	Subvention des Intrants organiques
Mali	Portant Creation Du Comite Pilotage De L' Agroecology
Nigeria	National Organic Agriculture Policy
Senegal	BOS_PS_Structuration PSE VERT_Support AOS_VF1
Tanzania	Climate smart agriculture
Tanzania	NEOAS DEC 2023
Uganda	National-Organic-Agriculture-Policy

7. FINANCIAL REPORT

8. CHALLENGES

INSTITUTIONAL

Limited human resource financial support at the implementation level. The design of the SDC funding was aligned to support ongoing EOA activities in organizations especially the National Organic Agriculture Movements (NOAMs). However, once the project was rolled out, the need for human resource support was realized. In the Phase II, human resources support was extended to only one staff at the CLO level with limited funds for PIPs. Lack of human resource support has slowed down implementation of the project because CSOs run on donor funded projects that dedicate project staff to implement projects.

Due to lack of human resource support, majority of staff implementing the project do not meet basic qualifications criteria to manage project and finances. This further slows down the rate of implementation and reporting on project progress due limited knowledge and skills on how to run projects.

Low staff retention and poor handover mechanisms at the partner level has also affected the project both at executing agency level and CLO level. Due to poor handover/transition policies, most new staff are faced with project documentation and reporting challenges.

Additionally, we experienced less interested partners in the implementation of the project. This was common in Senegal where the project was not implemented in 2023 because partners took it as one of their small projects with limited financial allocation to support staff.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION.

Some partners had challenges in undertaking effective data management activities to ensure authentic data is collected. We experienced collection of data that was not clean and took a while to clean it.

Limited resources were also allocated at the country level thus limiting the capacity of partners to collect data frequently.

Delays in reporting continued to be experienced, especially from partners whose coordination capacity was low. Major delays in start off of the year and in implementation of project activities were experienced in Senegal, Ethiopia, and Rwanda.

LIMITED CAPACITY OF SOME PARTNERS

There was limited capacity of some of the PIPs brought on board to implement some technical areas. Some of the PIPs with limited capacity was as follows:

FarmKenya the organization in charge of Pillar 2 (information and communication). FarmKenya being a media driven company could not effectively start off the development of ‘EOA Curriculum’ in Kenya because this is not their area of specialty.

We experienced the same challenge in Rwanda where a company implementing Pillar 3 could not successfully form farmer groups and they had to be replaced.

The capacity of CNCR the CLO in Senegal continues to drag the project behind. Pillar Implementing partners could not implement until later in the year due to delays in renewing their contracts a process that was supposed to be initiated and coordinated by the CLO. This situation has adversely affected delivery of the project in Senegal.

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As we commence another SDC programme in 2024, the Agroecology Promotion Programme (APP) in Africa, we recommend the following:

- i. Bring on board partners with strong technical capacity to the technical areas of the new SDC programme so that we can enhance delivery of set project targets. Due diligence assessment to be made of the potential partners.
- ii. Allocate enough financial resources to ensure that the project has dedicated staff to run the programme.
- iii. Design a programme that puts M&E at the centre of its implementation in terms of resources both human and financial resources as well as in data collection and reporting.
- iv. Work with partners committed to the EOA and Agroecology agenda.

10. ANNEXES

Annex 1: 1st Eastern Africa Agroecology Conference Call to Action

Annex 2: 1st Eastern Africa Agroecology Conference report

Annex 3: Fundraising and Resource Mobilisation training workshop report)

Annex 4: EOA-I Continental Fundraising strategy

Annex 5: EOA-I Kenya Fundraising strategy

Annex 6: EOA-I Tanzania Fundraising strategy

Annex 7: EOA-I Rwanda Fundraising strategy

Annex 8: EOA-I Uganda Fundraising strategy

Annex 9: EOA-I Ethiopia Fundraising strategy

Annex 10: EOA-I Benin Fundraising strategy

Annex 11: EOA-I Nigeria Fundraising strategy

Annex 12: EOA-I Senegal Fundraising strategy

Annex 13: EOA-I Mali Fundraising strategy.

Annex 14: EOA-I success stories for Phases I & Phase II

Annex 15: Presentation on the role of agroecology in nutrition and food security

Annex 16: 5th Africa Organic Conference (5th AOC) Call to Action)

Annex 17: 4th CAADP BR Report

Annex 18: CSC 11th Meeting Minutes

Annex 19: CSC 12th Meeting Minutes

Annex 20: Tanzania 2023 Annual progress report

Annex 21: Uganda 2023 Annual progress report

Annex 22: Rwanda 2023 Annual progress report

Annex 23: Ethiopia 23 Annual progress report

Annex 24: Benin 2023 Annual progress report

Annex 25: Mali 2023 Annual progress report

Annex 26: Nigeria 2023 Annual progress report

Annex 27 NEOAS



- 1 & 2: Delegates participate in a field visit at the 1st Eastern Africa Agroecology Conference.
- 3 & 4: Exhibition stands showcased during the 1st Eastern Africa Agroecology Conference.
- 5 & 6: Breakout sessions in progress at the 1st Eastern Africa Agroecology Conference.



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