
ANNUAL CONSOLIDATED OPERATIONAL REPORT FOR 2015

THE EOA INITIATIVE UNDER SDC CONTRIBUTION

 <p>Biovision Africa Trust</p>	<p>Consolidated Annual Year Report 2015</p>	<p>Name of Responsible Person: Project Coordinator Dr. David Amudavi Signature and Date: 01 July 2016</p> 
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<p>BvAT Project No.: 81019446</p>	<p>Mainstreaming Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) into National Policies, Strategies and Programmes in Africa 2014-2018</p>
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<p>Reporting Period:</p>	<p>From: January 2015 To: December 2015</p>
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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BvAT	Biovision Africa Trust
CLO	Country Lead Organization
EOA	Ecological Organic Agriculture
ICIPE	International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology
NSC	National Steering Committee
PIP	Pillar Implementing Partner
PMU	Project Management Unit
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SSNC	Swedish Society for Nature Conservation

1. GENERAL OVERVIEW

1.1. The Project and Lead Coordination

Biovision Africa Trust is the Lead Agency responsible for coordinating the implementation of EOA Initiative with contribution from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in four countries in Eastern Africa (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Ethiopia) and four in Western Africa (Benin, Mali, Nigeria and Senegal). However, implementation in 2015 was done only in 7 countries with Mali being left out because of institutional leadership wrangles between the Country Lead Organization (Mobiom) and partners.

This report presents the main achievements of the project in the year 2015 by synthesizing achievements along the various structures of the initiative as follows:

- National Platforms in the eight countries. The National Platforms are steered by National Steering Committee (NSC).
- Regional structures for Eastern Africa and West Africa clusters
- Continental Steering Committee

The implementation strategy of the EOA Initiative is based on the assumption that mainstreaming of EOA in policies and practices requires a multi-stakeholder managed endeavor, best to be promoted through national platforms informed by scientific evidence and local experiential knowledge, supported by capacity development of the various stakeholder groups, broad information & communication efforts and particular strategic actions linked to regional and continental policy making bodies.

Mainstreaming EOA includes catalyzing changes in various spheres, including public policies and investment plans, technical standards and certification procedures, research agenda and training curricula, advisory and information practices and the organization of markets and value chains. Achievement of this requires consultation and mutual agreement on coordinated and concerted action among the relevant public, private and civil society actors.

The implementation of EOA initiative in Africa is expected to lead to improved welfare and livelihoods in a healthy environment for Africa's farmers, processors and marketers that contribute to food security and poverty alleviation.

Specific outcomes to which the partner activities are supposed to contribute to are:

- I. EOA related knowledge along the value chain is increasingly documented and actors are capacitated to translate it into practices and application;
- II. Producers are systematically informed and made aware about the EOA approaches and good practices and motivated to apply them by having access to strengthened advisory and support services;
- III. A substantially increased share of organic quality products at the local, national and regional markets is achieved;

- IV. Multi-stakeholder platforms at the national level, regional and continental levels, mutually agreeing on well coordinated and concerted action, informed by scientific evidence and local knowledge lead to EOA positive changes in public policies and investment plans, in technical standards and certification procedures, in research agenda and training curricula, in advisory and information practices and in the organization of markets and value chains.

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:

- I. **Research, Training and Extension (RTE):** The overall aim of this pillar is to build the body of scientific data supporting EOA by understanding gaps and implementing activities geared towards enhancing uptake of ecological organic agriculture practices along the entire commodity value chains. The key outcome of this pillar is to have scientific, indigenous knowledge, technologies and innovations on EOA increased.
- II. **Information and communication (I&C):** This pillar is an avenue through which EOA reaches out to a vast majority of stakeholders on the continent. It focuses on information and communication on EOA approaches, good practices (production, processes, and learning systems) developed, packaged and disseminated to stakeholders.
- III. **Value Chain and Market Development (VCMD):** This is concerned with stimulating development of sustainable markets and increase trade in traditional and high value agricultural produce both at domestic and export levels within EOA. Through this pillar, EOA product value chain mapping, data collection, opportunity analysis and product/input vetting will be conducted, Business Development Strategies (BDS) for target businesses along value chains will be developed and the market share of EOA quality products at the national, regional and international markets increased.
- IV. **Steering, Coordination and Management: Steering, Coordination and Management:** This pillar is coordinated by Country Lead Organizations (CLOs). Effective implementation of the EOA Initiative would require strong institutions with effective, functional and responsive management systems. The pillar brings together components of the pillars aimed at developing capacities of implementing partners and institutions.

1.2 National Coordination

At the National level of implementation, the 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, disbursement of funds to the partners as per the proposal and signed work agreements and contracts, supervision and

monitoring of pillar implementation, supporting building of networks and enabling experience sharing across pillars, catalyzing the process of forming National Platforms and Reporting to National Platforms and Development partners.

The Pillar Implementing Partners (PIPs) are in charge of implementing the Pillar Strategic areas. The CLOs and PIPs were supposed and assumed to have been democratically selected and elected by National Stakeholders who came together during the inception workshops.

In Tanzania, TOAM is the Country Lead Organization (CLO). During the last 12 months (January 2015 to December 2015), a considerable number of activities were implemented by Pillar Implementing Partners (PIPs) and the CLO. Pillar 1 (Research, Training and Extension-RTE) implementation is under the coordination of Sustainable Agriculture Tanzania (SAT), Pillar II (Information and Communication) under the coordination of Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM-Tanzania), Pillar III (Value Chain and Market Development-VCMD) under the coordination of TOAM in its Marketing department and Pillar IV (Support and Cementing: Steering, Coordination and Management) under the management of TOAM.

In Kenya, coordination at the national level is by Kenya Organic Agriculture Movement (KOAN) which is also in charge of Pillar 3 (Value Chain and Market Development) and Pillar 4 on Supporting and Cementing. Pillar 1 is under the implementation of Egerton University, a public institution; Pillar 2 was under the implementation of ICIPE an International Non Governmental Organisation through its Farmer Communication Programme.

In Uganda, national coordination is undertaken by National Organic Movement of Uganda (NOGAMU) which also implements Pillar 3 and Pillar 4. Uganda Martyrs University which implements Pillar 1 and Makerere University implements Pillar 2.

In Ethiopia, the national coordination is under by the Institute for Sustainable Development (ISD) which is also implementing Pillar 3 and Pillar 4. Pillar 2 is implemented by PANOS Ethiopia while Pillar 1 is implemented by Mekelle University based in Mekelle. ISD and PANOS are based in Addis.

In Benin, the National coordination is by Organization Béninoise pour la Promotion de l'Agriculture Biologique (OBEPAP) which also implements Pillar 1 (RTE) and Pillar 4 for Supporting and Cementing. Pillar 2 of Information and Communication dissemination is implemented by Platform for Civil-Society Actors (PASCIB) while Pillar 3 Value Chain and Market Development (VCMD) by Crastida.

In Senegal, the National coordination is under the leadership of FENAB a Non- Governmental Organisation which is also in charge of Pillar 4. Pillar 1 (RTE) is implemented by ENDA PRONAT and Pillar 2 by ASPAB (Senegalese Association for the Promotion of Organic Agriculture). Pillar 3 (VCMD) is under AGRECOL Association for Agriculture and Ecology.

In Nigeria, the national coordination is under the Association of Organic Agriculture Practitioners of Nigeria (NOAN) doubling as implementers of Pillar 3. Pillar 1 is managed by University of Ibadan while Pillar 2 is handled by Healthy Foods for Consumers Initiative, a Non-governmental Organization.

1.3 Regional Coordination

We have two active clusters, the Eastern Africa cluster and West Africa cluster. The Southern Africa cluster is in place but not very much actively involved because of lack of financial support. The role of the regional clusters is to coordinate regional actors to implement the EOA agenda, engaging with the Regional Economic Commissions (RECs) to integrate EOA in regional and national policy and programs, mobilize resources from partners to support EOA activities in their clusters, and develop own rules of procedures and operations in the management of the clusters.

The steering committee of the Eastern Africa cluster is currently chaired by the East Africa Community (EAC) with co-chairing provided by Dr. Charles Ssekyewa of Uganda Organic Certification body (UgoCert). The Eastern Africa RSC meeting has representation from partners in Ethiopia (ISD), Uganda (NOGAMU & Ugo-Cert), Tanzania (TOAM) and Kenya (KOAN), BvAT and PELUM Kenya and IGAD Ethiopia, AfroNet, BvAT totaling to 16 participants. The West Africa Cluster is chaired by ECOWAS with co-chairing by Prof. Simplicie Vodouhe of Organisation Béninoise pour la Promotion de l'Agriculture Biologique (OBEPAB).

1.4 Continental Coordination

At the Continental level we have the Continental Steering Committee (CSC) chaired by an Officer from the African Union Commission's Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture (DREA). The CSC is the apex in the governance structure of EOA in Africa. The SC members serve to provide EOA in Africa and its membership with guidance, oversight, and decision-making regarding the operations and activities of EOA in Africa. SC members are appointed to serve on behalf of their institutions, not as individuals, and agree to represent the general interests of their sector.

2. MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2015

2.1 COLLABORATION WITH THE COUNTRY PARTNERS

Implementation of Work programme activities by CLOs and PIPs considerably went on well in the year 2015 in 7 countries with partners aligning their activities with the set objectives and budgets. This has been captured well in their mid-term and annual reports (operational and financial reports) covering period from January to June 2015 and January to December 2015. Unfortunately, Mali still lags behind due to leadership wrangles of the EOA organizations in the country.

CLOs and their PIPs submitted their country work plans for 2016 in November 2015 with reviews and inputs being done by the EOA sub-committee in December 2015 in Johannesburg, South Africa (**Annex 1**).

2.1.1 Planning and Reporting

BvAT coordinated the submission and consolidation of partner mid-term and annual reports for 2014. The reports were reviewed in close coordination with partners and submitted to SDC on 2nd July, 2015. The reports were approved and funds for 2nd part of the year thereafter released.

During this period, 2015 Work plans and budgets were further reviewed and approved by the Sub-committee to the CSC in February 2016 with further submissions to SDC.

SDC also allowed the allocation of 10% overheads to CLOs and PIPs from their overall budgets, a case that was not allowed before. This was informed by challenges faced in 2014 where public institutions were recovering a mandatory 10% from the project funds as per their institutions' rules and regulations governing projects implemented under their management. This decision was also informed by the need to support partners' administrative costs in order to ensure project implementation runs smoothly.

2.1.2 Partner Monitoring Visits

During the 2015 project year, the Project Management Unit (PMU) undertook monitoring visits to 7 (Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia, Mali, Benin, Kenya and Senegal). The following observations were made:

- i. There was positive progress in project implementation by all partners other than Mali. Coherence between work plans and budgets and activity implementation was evident. Good progress of project implementation on the ground with various best practices and success stories were observed i.e. a case of youth engaging in organic farming in Ethiopia, more farming group's recruitment in organic farming in Ethiopia. Great Farmer to Market linkages in Benin, Uganda, among others. Annual partner operational reports have been annexed with this report (**Annex 2: Benin report, Annex 3 : Ethiopia report, Annex 4: Kenya report, Annex 5: Nigeria report, Annex 6: Tanzania report, Annex 7: Uganda report, Annex 8 : Senegal report, Annex 9: AfrOnet report**)

- ii. Most of the partners have a general good understanding of the EOA work plan and budgetary allocations, hence the effort to ensure alignment and coherence.
- iii. There were some poor and inconsistent contracting between CLOs and PIPs. A case of Mali where CLO contracted PIPs for a period of one year (2014) and continued operating in 2015 with no contracts. Some PIPs not having fully signed contracts, as the case with TOAM's PIP for Information and Communication (PELUM Tanzania).
- iv. Some partners indicated wrong budgetary figures in contracts where the figures reflect budgetary allocations for 5 years while contracting period is for 1 year.
- v. Some PIPs were not aware of their organizations' disbursement schedules and amount in spite of the fact that the overall SDC budget and disbursement schedules have been shared with the CLOs and some CLOs delaying release of funds to PIPs by 3 months beyond the time the funds reached them.
- vi. Poor documentation especially with regard to financial reporting with partners not able to support their expenditures with proper documentation. This has been observed with many partners like TOAM, NOAN and Mobiom. A case of TOAM is where TOAM's institutional board meeting was supported to hold its meeting using EOA funds while a case of NOAN especially with Pillar 1 project under University of Ibadan where the main persons involved in the project used most of the funds to pay heavy allowances and honorariums for attending meetings and workshops without providing policy guidelines supporting such allowances.
- vii. Multi-stakeholder contracting and engagements where PIPs lacking capacity of some technical areas sub-contract activities that they are not able to undertake or adequately supervise themselves to other organizations / individuals thus causing a lot of delays with follow ups and reporting.
- viii. Organizational instabilities and uncertainties. This was observed in Mali where the CLO (MOBIOM) was unable to coordinate EOA activities in 2015 because of institutional leadership wrangles in the organization. Due to this situation, BvAT put on hold further release of funds to Mali, a case that has stalled the implementation of activities now for 1 and half years (**Annex 10**).
- ix. Lack of financial accountability with some partners such as Mobiom and some of its partners not undertaking organizational auditing as a mandatory yearly requirement.
- x. Delayed disbursement of funds causing delays in activity implementation. The overall observation is that activity implementation is behind by approximately 6-8 months.
- xi. Some cases of non committed organizations were also noted. Some partners are not very much committed to the project and this has caused some implementation delays.

2.1.3 Key Achievements by Partners

Country	Research, Training & Extension	Information & Communication	Value Chain & Market Development	Cementing & Support Pillar
Ethiopia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Value chain of organic produce focusing on wheat (she'han – a local breed), Gundagundo oranges (another local breed), lettuce (market breed) and apples was conducted - One MSc curriculum including EOA as a course has been setup and the first run of the course was completed successfully 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A total eight 30 minutes radio programs and six one minute spot messages have been produced and broadcasted nationwide on the Ethiopian Radio - One important achievement in the reporting period was the development of country specific EOA communication strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Market study was undertaken on value chain of organic vegetables in the two project areas of Holeta - Production of a 'Market Information System' learning manual for stakeholders was undertaken for them to be able to support EOA farmers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Draft of three-year</i> Ethiopian EOA Strategic Plan has been developed. - Through close collaboration with Mekelle University, an EOA Data Base for EOA Stakeholders in Tigray was established. (http://www.mu.edu.et/ea/), and PIP for Pillar 3, EAOA (Ethiopian Association of Organic Agriculture), has finalized a Directory of 19 active organic actors in Ethiopia (http://www.isd.org.et/). - National Steering Committee for the EOA National Platform comprising of 8 embers was formed
Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In depth assessments to document available technologies on EOA research into use was undertaken from three Training Institutions (Egerton University, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gap analysis in information and communication strategies beyond the coverage of the Pilot Phase was undertaken. Key findings showed that the average age of farmers is 44 years and that practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National database of actors (producers, processors, traders, consumer, and regulators) in the organic commodity value chains (1 Green shopping guide)) was updated with 500 copies of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KOAN undertook Policy Gap Analysis for the Macadamia Value Chain in Embu and Kirinyaga Counties. The Macadamia Value chain was chosen because many companies have recruited many farmers in those Counties and is

<p>University of Nairobi and Jomo Kenyatta University of Agricultural Technology), Threes Research Organizations (ICIPE, ILRI, KALRO) and Three Practicing Institutions (Sian roses, Finley, KIOF) and a report developed. To access the repository follow the link www.eoa.egerton.ac.ke</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A comprehensive database of EOA research is currently has been compiled. Information is being appended constantly into the database. This repository is regularly updated and can be accessed at www.eoa.egerton.ac.ke - A Proposal on EOA research entitled “Determination of Pesticide Residues on a Variety of Foods and Animal Feeds in Kenya: A Case of Nakuru County” 	<p>farming and that the populations in the areas of study are 54%. The results also showed that the most trusted sources of information are NGOs/CBO representatives, government representatives and Radio.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information and communication materials were also prepared and availed to stakeholders. 5 Posters were designed developed. 35 copies of the posters were printed for use by field staff as training aids. Topics identified for the posters included compost making, green manure, soil fertility, post harvest. - Approximately 200 farmer trainings were conducted by field staff, reaching 3250 (2000 female, 1250 male) farmers. 10 youth groups were trained, reaching 160 youth (60 female, 100 male). - The field officers trained farmers and youth groups on various EOA technologies 	<p>green shopping guide being developed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support provided to 2 Organic markets: at the US embassy and UNRC more than 200 consumers attend the market - 2 traders were supported to attend, Biofach trade fair in Germany. More than 100 trade contacts were made - Consumer awareness was conducted through production of 300flyers printed and booklets on 10 reasons to go organic printed and distributed. In total more than 3,000 consumers were reached. More information dissemination through social media is required especially for Organic Consumers alliance on www.oca.co.ke 	<p>currently leading in terms of Value chain with most certified small holder farmers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KOAN held 3meetings for bringing together various EOA stakeholders. The meetings were fruitful with Pillar Implementing Partners developing and finalizing their 2016 work plans - To strengthen capacity of CLOs and PIPs in project coordination and implementation, a 3 day training on Website Design and Management for PIPs and CLO project staff was undertaken .8 Project staff selected from PIPs and CLO organizations were trained on Website content, Design and Management
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	<p>has been developed. This proposal has been submitted to different funding organizations waiting funding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A catalogue of local knowledge with potential application in EOA was done for EOA producers as part of the producer knowledge gaps. 	<p>such as soil fertility improvement, preparation of organic fertilizer and pesticides</p>		
Tanzania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A documentary on compost making has been produced on a DVD. The DVD serves as a training resource to farmers on how to make good compost manure. This documentary has also been shared on YouTube. (Click here to view the documentary) - Training of trainers where SAT trained representatives from Zanzibar, Mtwara, Songea, Dodoma and Dare salaam and Mafia. 16 participants attended where they learnt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 6 Farmer Information resource center Managers were trained on resource center caretaking by PELUM Tanzania .The objective was to equip Farmers' Information Centre Managers with knowledge and techniques on how to operate and take care of the centre's efficiently. - PELUM Tanzania has also collected a total of 500 copies of booklets, magazines from various targeted organizations that produce materials on sustainable agriculture. These materials are with important topics on farming which are relevant to EOA stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A national database of actors (producers, processors, traders, consumers, regulators) in the EOA value chains has been developed and continuously updated. The data base is in excel format and has been updated with new information from 76 EOA Actors (operators, processors, traders, consumers and regulators) in organic products value chain. - In 2014, 2 organic farmer markets were established while during the implementation period of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacities of Country Lead Organizations (CLOs) and Pillar Implementing Partners (PIPs) to perform their functions was also strengthened through meetings held to plan for project implementation and give guidance on issues arising during the implementation period

	<p>compost making, group formation , pest and disease management</p>	<p>especially farmers. More than 300 of them have been distributed to the three information centres in Dodoma for use and access by stakeholders</p>	<p>2015, 2 Farmers' markets: Marangu and Moshi (Floresta) were visited and their needs identified and supported using visibility materials like rollup banners. Floresta, a new organic selling point was also established. This is in addition to HIMO and Marangu Selling Points</p> <p>- Stakeholders namely Tanzania Instant Coffee Africa (TANICA), CHAIBORA & FRANK Horticulture Company were supported to attend a regional trade fair in Rwanda</p>	
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Uganda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A data base of EOA research into use at national level was developed in 2014 and during this implementation phase the data base was updated. This activity was implemented in close collaboration between NOGAMU and Uganda Martyr University (UMU) who are in charge of pillar 1. - To support periodic reviews of curricula and training materials for relevant training institution with stakeholders (practitioners, institutions and policy makers), relevant institutions were identified and sensitized on the curriculum review exercise through a workshop. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Makerere University is also now part of a policy working group organized by LEO Africa Forum. This platforms will be used to show case and create visibility for the EOA work - The EOA directory on entire value chain developed by Pelum Uganda has now been put in a mobile platform for easy access. The mobile application is still under development - A comprehensive information gap analysis report produced and attached or can be found here >> (https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B-VHV0wIWQtnWTBxWm1XYklEYm8) - Documentary film shot and produced capturing current state of EOA, the good practices, and the gaps. produced and uploaded on YouTube (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BKGULMP_s) - A high level conference that attracted over 120 participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - During the implementation period, NOGAMU database updated to include all key EOA actors such as processors, traders, and consumer and development partners. Members in EOA network in Uganda are actively engaged and using developed data base for their marketing of agricultural products. - Stakeholders were trained on the use of tools for collecting market information and data. Through this training, National, Regional and international EOA actors can easily access Market information and organic from Uganda. - 6 farmer markets established in high end shopping malls in Kampala where organic farmers directly sell and bargain for their produce contributing to Increase in volumes and sales of organic products on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The National Plat form also elected the National Steering Committee which was able to convene meetings to deliberate on EOA Issues in Uganda. - A policy dialogue was held on 24th of August 2015 between EOA Stakeholders and the Ministry of Agriculture. This brought a ray of hope in fast tracking the operationalization of the National Organic Agriculture Policy (NOAP).
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		<p>(https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B-VHV0wlWQtnR3hGT21YamRxWUk). the conference was very successful with great engagement and participation of EOA stakeholders, members of civil society, government, the academia, students, young innovators and farmers</p>	<p>the local markets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stakeholders were supported to Participate in 1 international trade fair called BIOFACH and 1 local trade fair Jinja agricultural show where organic produce from Uganda was show cased leading to 3 Market contacts being secured for organic coffee, organic sesame oil and Organic dried fruit from NOGAMU members that participated in trade show. - 26 farmers in Mubende were trained on entrepreneurship and business skills development for fruits and vegetables leading to more knowledge skills in financial planning and business plans development of organic projects. 	
Benin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In-depth assessments to document available EOA research into use were conducted in the northern region. The assesment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A communication strategy was produced. This document describes the communication actions to improve knowledge of the target audiences on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A national database of actors (producers, processors, traders, consumers, regulators) in the EOA value chains has 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In order to bring together country stakeholders to share experiences, a multi stakeholders' workshop was held at Saint Anouarite Cente of Abomey-

<p>focused on cotton and soy bean production systems in Benin. Cotton and Soy bean are the two main crops on which organic farming technologies are used in northern Benin. Technologies identified are linked to soil and pest management. 4 technologies have been identified in organic and sustainable cotton farming (including food spray to attract natural enemies) and 2 in soya production system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The EOA research data base is up to date with research updates. During the reporting period, the data base was updated by hiring an expert from the faculty of science and technologies of university of Abomey to assess the ecological management of tomato's pests in South of Benin (case study of <i>Helicoverpa armigera</i>). 	<p>EOA and communications to change attitudes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication materials on EOA were availed to stakeholders in Benin through two radio broadcasts made and an article on the 3rd African conference on organic and ecological agriculture produced and published. - Contracts with the three community radio stations namely Soleil FM, Adjohoun radio, Voix de la Vallée to broadcast broadcasting of EOA and sensitize people to EOA importance was entered into while EOA recorder programs was introduced in EOA thematic notes and published in journal "Regard Citoyen" - Farmers and extension agents were trained in the use of innovative communication strategies 	<p>been established</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tools for collecting market information and data and support to stakeholders to collect analyze and disseminate market information and data were done. This targeted 2700 cotton producers, 1700 pineapple producers and 1080 soya producers with about 650 visitors per day visiting to ask for information - New functional organic and ecological farmer markets were established at Bohicon and Abomey regions thus bringing new organic and ecological selling points. - Persons were supported to attend the third African Organic Conference in Lagos at Nigeria from 05 to 09 October 2015 in which information on business contacts was obtained and shared with different business operators and others international traders 	<p>Calavi (nearby Cotonou) on 10th February 2015 with 40 participants attending. This meeting gave an opportunity to validate the report of the study on identification, prioritization and validation of knowledge needs of value chains actors of organic and ecological products in Benin.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lobbying for the inclusion of EOA into national policy making processes, strategies and investment plans continued during the implementation period. A dialogue meeting was held between the CLO coordinator and 09 members of "Conseil Economique et Social (CES)", a governmental organ where the main agenda was public investment in EOA. The meeting focused on "The inclusion of organic cotton in the textile Sector".
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<p>During this research activity, the plots of 30 tomato's farmers were investigated in southern Benin. More than 2000 species of arthropods potential natural enemies of <i>Helicoverpa</i> identified. The results of this research help to use the complexity of agro ecosystem to combat tomatoes pest by eliminating the synthetic pesticides use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge gaps needs and priorities by gender were also identified in Benin. The study identified actors, constraints and knowledge gaps along the organic cotton and soya bean value chain in Benin. These results will help in the design of training curricula towards farmers, extension agents and processors of EOA products. - EOA Local knowledge 		<p>with Benin exhibitors showcasing their EOA products in the trade fair.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 Local organic inspector was selected and sent to the training workshop of local inspectors were he was successfully trained on organic local inspection 	
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	<p>related to vegetable production, pineapple, cotton and soya beans was identified. Several local knowledge identified and their potential effect of vegetable and pineapple production assessed</p> <p>- During this implementation period, Training needs for EOA actors for vegetable, cotton, soya beans and pineapple was identified.</p>			
Nigeria	<p>A total of one hundred articles were collated to develop a repository of organic researches base on eight thematic areas.</p> <p>A monograph on the application of local knowledge to the development of EOA in Nigeria was published.</p> <p>A publication to advocate the relevance of integrating EOA into tertiary educational system was published in a national daily where stakeholders opined</p>	<p>Using the platform of the 3rd African Organic Agriculture Conference held in Nigeria, the visibility of the project has reached at least 28 countries via distribution of promotional materials.</p> <p>The capacity of farmers and extension agents in EOA practices has been improved via trainings and exposure to some print documents. In fact, some of the print materials were produced in local dialect.</p> <p>There is increased sensitization on the benefits of</p>	<p>A database of actors was produced. The sixteen page directory entails 5 farms, 5 farmers group, 3 market and sales outlets, 2 certification and quality control organizations, 6 organizations involved in training and consultancy, 11 research institutes and 7 actors / organizations for media and advocacy.</p> <p>The initiative has been able to improve the advisory capacity of officials of State and Federal ministries for PGS certification. These</p>	<p>NOAN organised the 3rd Africa Organic Conference (AOC) in Nigeria. The conference was held in October 2015 and attracted 220 participants, including 34 farmers; men, women and youths, from 28 countries. The theme of the conference was "Achieving Social and Economic Development through Ecological and Organic Agricultural Alternatives". A declaration dubbed the 'Lagos declaration' is in place stating that</p>

	<p>further integration of some component in primary and secondary curricula.</p> <p>The initiative has successfully supported two Masters Degree programme in agricultural extension while support for Ph.D is ongoing</p>	<p>EOA to producers, consumers and the environment.</p>	<p>officers double as the EOA desk officer in their respective ministries.</p> <p>Through the networking activities of actors involved in this pillar, the Lagos market is explored. This compliments the SMS platform servicing hotels and some organization in Ibadan</p>	<p><i>‘Ecological organic agriculture (EOA) has a significant role to play in addressing the pressing problems of poverty, food insecurity, land degradation, market access, food safety and climate change in Africa. The results shared prove that ecological organic farming systems increase yields, are resilient to climate change effects and are achieved cost-effectively. Further, EOA is climate smart, preserves biodiversity, provides ecosystem services, and produces lower carbon emissions’.</i></p> <p>For purposes of lobbying for inclusion of EOA into national policy making processes, strategies and investment plans, a meeting of the Association of Organic Agriculture Practitioners of Nigeria (NOAN) under the auspices of EOA initiative in Nigeria with the Permanent Secretary Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development took place at the Board Room of the Ministry on September 16, 2015. A total of</p>
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				<p>twelve (12) dignitaries were present at the meeting. These included the Acting Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMA&RD), Director and members of staff Organic Fertilizer Department, Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Executive members Organic Fertilizer Producers and Suppliers Association of Nigeria (OFPSAN), National President and Secretary of NOAN.</p>
Senegal	<p>- A database was developed which identifies the researchers who conduct research related to the AEB, describes the research and provides information on some search results. In 2015, the database on academic research AEB has been updated with the inclusion of three new researchers conducting research on organic fertilization (vermin-composting, free bacteria</p>	<p>- The President of the Republic of Senegal visited the Youth Training Centre in organic farming called "Kaydara". This center was established by Gardens Africa a member of FENAB. FENAB took the opportunity to make good communication about practices and the value of organic agricultural ecological (AEB) to the President of the Republic and to the Government of Senegal for integration of organic farming in environmentally agricultural policies, investment plans and</p>	<p>- AGRECOL organized this year's fair called "The Biological Ecological Village" of Agricultural and Animal Products (FIARA), which became a Fair sub-regional and even international. This village has seen the participation of seven member associations of FENAB and organic input suppliers. More than thirty agricultural products were exposed, and many other products from the processing.</p> <p>- A food tasting day was</p>	<p>- During the implementation period, FENAB held 2 meetings with the Ministry of Agriculture. FENAB took this opportunity to ask the government to integrate organic ecological agriculture (EOA) in agricultural policies, investments and projects and programs and also asked the government for support to farmers for organic inputs (biopesticides, biofertilizers) and agricultural equipment for better development of the EOA in Senegal.</p>

	<p>in the rhizosphere) and based bio-pesticides essential oils.</p>	<p>projects and programs implemented in Senegal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity building of 22,000 organic producers across Senegal involved in EOA was undertaken - To improve support communication infrastructure (farmer's resource centers, information hubs, websites, databases and other data/knowledge repositories, the "House of Knowledge" farmer resource centre that was established in 2014 has during this implementation period established an organic market garden in suburban Thies. This garden is a training practice in organic garden ecological agriculture for producers, University students and agricultural training schools. Regular visits are recorded daily in the garden. Journalists, radio and television reporters also visit the garden. - Farmers and extension agents were trained in the use of 	<p>organized by the Bio Village to advocate for the consumption of local products. So with just the products present on the stand, over 200 people were served. The success in this action was through the increase in customers and sales from the hours that followed. Talks, sensitization, information / communication, were organized in the village</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FENAB and AGRECOL organized a Training of Trainers in Market Information Systems (MIS). This training involved 62 trainers from FENAB and partner organizations 	
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		<p>innovative communication strategies through Training of Trainers in Organic Ecological Agriculture (AEB) in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Information and Training Systems (MIS) in which 62 members of the FENAB and partner organizations were trained. Training tools were given to the trainers. For each training module, teaching tools were given to the trainers</p>		
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2.1.4 Capacity strengthening of partners in project and financial management

BvAT organized and hosted the 1st EOA Partners Training Workshop on project and financial management (**Annex 11**)

- The training held in Machakos, Kenya was attended by 17 participants involving either project managers or finance officers in charge of day to day running of the EOA project in the 8 partner countries. Senegal and Mali did not attend due to travel logistics (visa processing setbacks). The training took place in October, 2015 and had representation of implementing partners from Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia, Benin and Nigeria.
- Dr. David Amudavi, the EOA Project Coordinator, during his monitoring visit to Senegal in November 2015 organized and trained the partners in Senegal on project management a similar training to that was held in Nairobi, Kenya.
- The training was organized in response to project management challenges and recommendations made by the CSC to hold the training for the EOA implementing partners to address the various weaknesses noted.

The objectives of the training

- i. To enhance participants' understanding of project and finance management principles and best practices for ensuring organizational and project management success.
- ii. To equip participants with project management and financial management skills in order to strengthen their capacities to coordinate and manage the Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) Initiative project activities in transparent, effective and efficient ways.
- iii. To strengthen participants' skills of effective reporting (narrative and financial) on their project performance for various key stakeholders (donors, Continental Steering Committee, national platforms, etc.).
- iv. To involve participants in planning and budgeting for 2016 and how to develop strategies of fundraising and resource mobilization for sustainability.

The training had the following outcomes and observations:

- i. Participant's confidence in project execution was boosted by their understanding of the principles of project management and activity project implementation.
- ii. Participants appreciated the importance of timely submission of reports and were given ideas on how to execute project in timely and efficient delivery way without compromising quality. However time was not enough to design a structure or methodology for proper coordination of project activities across the various levels of project implementation. (A need for future training)
- iii. Participants were equipped with skills to write timely quality reports and also appreciated the need for writing and submitting accurate reports, as basis for demonstrating their accomplishments to stakeholders including current and future donors, cultivating new partnerships, and recognize the importance of reporting.

- iv. Some of the participants could hardly comfortably write a project report, others could neither conduct nor write a project report nor disseminate project findings. The training was able to improve the learners' capacity in respect to writing effective reports which formed the basis for the report's recommendations.
- v. The participants appreciated the collective responsibility between the project and finance teams to ensure that budgets reflect the best cost estimates and that donor requirements are considered in cost, cash management, financial reporting, inventory and equipment management, and procurement schedules.
- vi. Time allocated for the training could not allow a critique of important aspects of report writing instruments such as the practical usefulness of validity and reliability of data collection instruments for quality reports.
- vii. The training was a good step towards ensuring that there will be a remarkable change from poor project implementation setbacks where some partners delay in implementing activities and reporting, towards timely project implementation, collection of data and submission of quality reports based on work plans & log frames.

Recommendations from the Training

- Training on project and finance management to be undertaken not only for the project managers that participated, but also for other stakeholders in the EOA initiative from the institutions/organizations that did not participate to help project team members link their individual performance to the broader project performance.
- Training on project management to precede trainings on evaluations and report writing so that participants can link evaluation and report writing to project performance.
- Project managers to be trained on soft skills and in particular team work in project management, confidence in project reporting, stakeholders and self-efficacy in project evaluations.

2.2 COORDINATION OF EOA CONTINENTAL AND REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

Through coordination by BvAT, EOA Continental Strategic Plan (2015-2025) and Action Plan (2015-2020) were developed in February 2015. The process involved active participation of twenty (20) stakeholders with representation from all the eight countries currently implementing ecological organic agriculture initiative in Africa, the Africa Union Commission (AUC), the East African Community (EAC), the African Organic Network (AfroNet), universities and research institutions, Non-governmental organisations, traders as well as individual farmers. The EOA strategy is aligned to continental and international policies and development frameworks and highlights achievements and lessons learnt from the pilot of the implementation of the EOA Action Plan in 2012.

In October, 2015 the AUC Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Agriculture, Water and Environment held a meeting on 7th - 9th October 2015 where the EOA strategic plan was presented and endorsed by Honorable Ministers responsible for Agriculture, Water and

Environment. The Strategic Plan was also endorsed by the 3rd Africa Organic conference that took place in October 2015 (**Annex 12a& 12b**).

The 2nd Eastern Africa Regional Steering Committee meeting was held in Nairobi in August 2015 with joint support and coordination from PELUM Kenya. The aim of the meeting was to bring together the Eastern Africa Regional Steering Committee for planning for the remaining period of 2015 and also start planning for 2016

Various partners including exhibitors were supported through this project to attend the 3rd Africa Organic Conference (AOC) in Nigeria. The conference was held in October 2015 and attracted 220 participants, including 34 farmers; men, women and youths, from 28 countries. The theme of the conference was "***Achieving Social and Economic Development through Ecological and Organic Agricultural Alternatives***". A declaration dubbed the 'Lagos declaration' is in place stating that *'Ecological organic agriculture (EOA) has a significant role to play in addressing the pressing problems of poverty, food insecurity, land degradation, market access, food safety and climate change in Africa. The results shared prove that ecological organic farming systems increase yields, are resilient to climate change effects and are achieved cost-effectively. Further, EOA is climate smart, preserves biodiversity, provides ecosystem services, and produces lower carbon emissions'*. (**Annex 13**)

BvAT also coordinated the SDC contribution of with 25,000CHF for supporting 9 farmers to attend the 3rd Africa Organic Conference and exchange experiences. The farmers visited Farmville Farm owned by a Nigerian citizen who undertakes organic farming and held a Farmers' Forum at the conference. A report on this has been prepared. (**Annex 14**)

Regional Meeting on Agro-ecology in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA): Dr. Amudavi (BvAT), Maryleen Micheni (PELUM Kenya), Sue Edwards (ISD), Eustace Kiarri (KOAN) among others attended a Regional Meeting on Agro-ecology in SSA held in Senegal 4-6November 2015 organized by FAO. Amudavi was a panelist in Round Table 4: Public Policies (including Legal and - Institutional Frameworks) to Promote Agro-ecology. He presented status of EOA-I and how it can link to FAO's supported agroecology (**Annex 15**). The Symposium was considered a great success uniting 200 scientists, food producers, policy makers and representatives from the private sector and NGOs.

EOA TOR Mid Term Review work started in November 2015 by having the TOR developed in close consultation with EOA CSC (**Annex 16**)

CSC and Sub-committee meetings were held in May and December in Tanzania, Arusha and South Africa, Johannesburg respectively. The Annual partner reports for 2014 were reviewed and approved during the 1st meeting of the sub-committee in Arusha in May. The reports were reviewed and approved with some comments to be addressed. During the 2nd sub-committee meeting held in Johannesburg South Africa, the committee reviewed and gave comments to partners' Work Plan and Budgets for 2016 and agreed that once the recommendations had been incorporated by partners they would approve the work plans and budgets virtually through emails in January 2016. (**Annex 17a, 17b, 17c, 17d**)

During the 2nd CSC meeting held in South Africa BvAT was proposed and endorsed to provide the **interim secretariat** for the CSC for an initial period of 2 years while Pelum Kenya was proposed and endorsed provide the interim secretariat for Eastern Africa RSC same period as BvAT's.

EOA stakeholders have continued to attend various events like the global BIOFACH event held yearly in Germany. It is world's leading trade fair for organic food. EOA Stakeholders attending the event have benefited from market expansion and creating linkages and partnerships with various companies for their organic products.

2.3 AFRONET

Support to AfrOnet continued during the year 2015. AfrOnet was supported to establish relevant institutional structures (e.g. Board of Governance, Secretariat and Programme Units). The structures are now in place with a full time communication officer, assistant administration officer and Programme Director. The Board of Governors has also been constituted and endorsed with the Strategic Plan for AfrOnet being in the final stages of development.

2.3.1 AfroNet's Key Achievements

- The 3rd African Organic Agriculture as a platform of EOA Actors and stakeholders was successfully held with participation of multi-stakeholders in which joint actions were taken such as the FAO support to documentation of the presentations/proceedings during 3rd AOC while UNCTAD is leading on issuing a policy brief for financing EOA in the continent.
- Funding support to the 3rd African Organic Conference from Swiss Aid, AgroEco and IFOAM/INOFO.
- Farmer's attendance to the 3rd AOC including field visit and policy forums were organized and key deliberations included in the conference deliberation.
- Ongoing engagement with Regional Economic Commissions i.e. ECOWAS, EAC, COMESA and institutions like CCARDESA and FARA.
- Directory of EOA actors profiled and circulated.

Afronet's secretariat is now fully functional with 3 support staff namely the programs director, communication officer and an administrative and programs assistant who continue to work for AfrONet with Backstopping of the Executive Board members. The staff structure is in line with the AfrONet constitution. The programs director salary is supported from the OTEA project.

The AfrONet director is not yet recruited because there are no funds to recruit for that position. However, with the current staff in place, the visibility of AfrONet has been maintained throughout the continent for instance with the good visibility showcased during the 3rd African Organic Conference (3rd AOC) and the General Assembly (GA) in Lagos Nigeria.

The process of electing Board Members was facilitated during the implementation period. Six board members (one per region) were re-elected at the General Assembly meeting held on 8th October, 2015, in Lagos, Nigeria. There is now equal representation of the Eastern Africa, Southern Africa, Central Africa and West Africa regions.

The BOG members also met in May 2015 in Arusha Tanzania where they planned and did ground work for the preparations of the 3rd Africa Organic Conference in Nigeria.

President, J. Gama did a presentation on AfrONet in a conference hosted by Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa (CCARDESA) and NOARA on mainstreaming Organic Research – Durban, SA in November 2015.

Sensitization of various actors and partners about the value of EOA in development continued during the implementation period. During the 3rd Africa Organic Conference (AOC), the AfrONet President Mr Jordan Gama did a presentation on AfrONet. AfrONet President Jordan Gama and the rest of the team contributed and sensitized stakeholders on AfrONet and EOA in an annual publication by FiBL and IFOAM titled '*The world of Organic Agriculture*' that focuses on '*statistics and emerging trends.*' Afronet's website continues to sensitize its stakeholders and the public on EOA. See link <http://www.africanorganicnetwork.org/>

A consultant (Thrillton Consult) has been engaged in developing the AfrONet Strategic Plan and the 1st Draft has been submitted. After getting some comments from AfrONet team the draft is waiting for inputs and ideas from stakeholders **(Annex 18)**

Afronet role is also to support the research network for organic agricultural research in Africa (NOARA) to steer the EOA research agenda. During the implementation period, AfrONet supported one of NOARA members, Dr Mwatima Juma to attend the 3rd AOC in Nigeria. They also supported and facilitated the NOARA side event held during the AOC period and also supported the review of the research agenda

2.4 OTHER PROJECT'S RELATED TO EOA INITIATIVE

2.4.1 EOA SSNC FUNDED PROJECT

Information and Communication Pillar 2 and Programme and Policy Development Pillar 5 and collaborative research component between BvAT, ICRAF and Pelum Kenya

The main aim of the project under SSNC support is enhancing Information and Communication Strategies among Farmers in Kenya, Strengthening Policy and Programme Development and Supporting Research Activities with a total funding for the year 2015 was SEK 728,000. The implementation started in April and ended in December

Achievements (see Annual progress report Annex 19)

During the reporting period, support for the two resource centers in Kakamega and Busia has continued through offering support to enhance and facilitate communication between the field staff and farmers. The field staff continued to train farmers on technologies and practices on sustainable agriculture such as zai pits, kitchen gardens, and indigenous poultry production as well as cross cutting issues such as soil and water conservation and nutrition.

A workshop with 10 policy makers from the agriculture sector in Machakos and Makueni counties was held to sensitize policymakers at the county level in the agriculture sector on the key aspects and benefits of Ecological Organic Agriculture. In addition there were discussions on areas of collaboration with the county governments.

A survey on awareness and value of EOA among farmers, extension agents and researchers was conducted in Western Kenya in September. The main findings of the survey were that many of the respondents (about 60%) were aware of the Initiative and those who had received trainings from EOA staff appreciated the practices and technologies trained on and said they were useful and relevant.

Follow up visits were also made to the Resource centres and farmer and youth groups that had been trained by field staff to monitor adoption and implementation. The visits revealed that farmers appreciated the trainings and at least 35% were adopting the technologies and practices trained on. In addition, a workshop for field extension agents and lead farmers to create awareness on the EOA project was held in December with major outcomes being capacity building on the EOA Initiative and its activities as well as various EOA technologies and practices.

For the research component, BvAT and ICRAF held joint planning meetings where they planned and agreed on activities for 2015 as follows;

- 1) A scoping study to document the agroforestry technologies/practices/systems and their characterization released for adoption and use by farmers. The team was however advised that this needed to be undertaken cautiously to avoid misinterpretations of project 'successes' or 'achievements'.

- 2) Assessment of farmers' preferences and technology characteristics and how programmes/projects have embraced this in their designs.
- 3) Appraisal of status of uptake/adoption and utilization of the recommended agro forestry technologies and practices.

The outcome of this meeting was that the team was able to plan on activities, responsibilities of coordination of activities and time frames of implementation and reporting

Three surveys agro forestry studies were conducted during this period and majority were completed in 2016 as follows;

- i. A scoping study to to produce a 'state of the science' review report detailing agro-forestry technologies, practices, systems and their characterization (**Annex 20**)
 - The scoping study unearthed 3 main Knowledge gaps and research priorities that fall into three domains:
 - a. Developing more productive agroforestry systems that are sustainable and resilient to change (both climate-related and others), and that retain and enhance the provision of ecosystem services including carbon sequestration.
 - b. Building resilient agroforestry communities capable of adapting to change.
 - c. Institutional and other mechanisms for promoting uptake of sustainable agroforestry production systems, and for ensuring that the links between agriculture, environment and climate change are acknowledged.

Refer to Annex 20 for more detailed report on the scoping study

- ii. Another study was conducted to ascertain Farmer Preference and Technology uptake on agro forestry

The main findings of the study were that farmers from different regions differed in their preferences for agroforestry (**Annex 21**). More timber trees (*Grevillea robusta*, *Eucalyptus spp*, and *Marakhamia lutea*) were planted by farmers in Western Kenya and Embu regions compared to the lower Eastern region of Machakos. As for legume species , all the regions showed a higher preference for this agroforestry practice *Calliandra calothyrsus*, *Gliricidia sepium*, *Leucaena trichandra*, *Grevillea robusta*, *Faidherbia albida*, *Canavalia enziformi* been the most common species. However, the Western part of Kenya (Vihiga and Siaya counties) had, in addition to the species above, *Mucuna pruriens*, *Tithonia diversifolia*, *Crotalaria ochroleuca*, *Dolichos lablab* and *Tephrosia vogelli* species planted among the farmers. In the legume species category, *Calliandra calothyrsus* was rated highly for its ability to provide poles, palatability, coppicing and compatibility with other crops. In addition, *Calliandra calothyrsus* was common among the farmers for its potential to improve soil fertility.

Refer to Annex 21 for more detailed report on the scoping study

- iii. Third study undertaken was on Technology Uptake & Utilization of agro forestry technologies (**Annex 22**)

ICRAF also took lead in this activity. During the joint meeting held on 4th September, the team selected a PhD student, Beatrice Tuei, a candidate based at ICRAF and working for the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) to undertake this study. During the same meeting, Beatrice Tuei presented a power point presentation to the team on how she plans to undertake the work and she was given inputs and more ideas on how to improve the work. The team agreed to have Beatrice

develop and submit a work plan and budget before proceeding to undertake the work which will further be reviewed and approved. This was done satisfactorily. By the close of implementation period, Beatrice Tuei was in the field interviewing farmers and collecting other relevant data.

2.4.2 PRO-ECO PROJECT

The Pro-Eco Organic Africa Project being implemented in Ghana and Kenya aims to generate comparative scientific evidence on productivity, profitability and sustainability of organic and conventional farming systems and to support policy related activities which contribute to EOA mainstreaming. The project is aligned to the continental Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative. It is led by the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) in Switzerland.

In Ghana, the project is being implemented by the University of Ghana's College of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences (UoG), Agro-Eco Louis Bolk Institute (LBI), and the Crops Directorate of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) in close consultation with the Ghana Organic Network (GOAN), for Agriculture Research in Africa (FARA), Ghana Cocobod and International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA). In Kenya the project is being implemented by the Kenya Agriculture and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO) in collaboration with the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE) in close consultation with: Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MALF), Kenya Organic Network, Kenya Institute of Organic Farming (KIOF), Organic Agriculture Centre of Kenya (OACK), Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM Kenya) and Macadamia fans Company Ltd.

The International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) is working together with the partners in Ghana and Kenya as well as FiBL on the policy related activities for the project. It is supported financially by the Dutch Humanist Institute for Cooperation (Hivos) and the Swiss Development Co-operation (SDC). At the regional level, Pro-Eco Organic Africa is implemented in close consultation with Biovision Africa Trust (BvAT), African Organic Network (AfroNet), IITA and FARA, Ghana Organic Network/ Ghana Ecological Organic Agriculture Platform (GEOPAP).

BvAT has been represented by Dr. Amudavi who is part of the Project Steering Committee in 2 meetings that took place during the implementation period where several achievements have been realized in the scientific component, networking and knowledge sharing among practitioners and in the area of policy recommendations.

3. FINANCIAL REPORT

Table 1: Country Lead Organization Financial report				
EOA Partners	Balance as at 01.01.2015	Disbursement	2015 Expenses	Balance as at 31.12.2015
	US\$	US\$	US\$	US\$
NOAN	6,225.93	197,113.77	(139,690.68)	63,649.02
TOAM	104,491.79	108,135.82	(263,157.46)	(50,529.85)
ISD	17,813.69	193,381.05	(100,506.78)	110,687.96
NOGAMU	47,493.71	100,340.55	(129,263.12)	18,571.14
FENAB	(146.50)	83,651.60	(79,831.90)	3,673.20
OBEPAB	61,118.05	118,079.07	(174,681.71)	4,515.41
MOBIOM	51,945.47	-	(49,961.05)	1,984.42
KOAN	26,781.60	137,583.41	(81,395.14)	82,969.87
TOTAL	315,723.74	938,285.27	(1,018,487.84)	235,521.17

Table 2: Project Management Unit Financial report

	Budget	Actuals	Variance
1. Personnel			
1.1 Coordinator	29,813.00	29,018.61	794.39
1.2 Project Manager	51,107.00	39,965.22	11,141.78
1.3 Project Accountant	25,554.00	19,390.71	6,163.29
Subtotal	106,474.00	88,374.54	18,099.46
2. Travels			
2.1 International Travel	26,809.71	29,496.93	(2,687.22)
2.2 Local Travel	2,000.00	461.99	1,538.01
Subtotal	28,809.71	29,958.92	(1,149.21)
3. General Investment/Equipment			
3.1 Office Equipments	2,000.00	971.13	1,028.87
Subtotal	2,000.00	971.13	1,028.87
6. Other Costs			
6.1 Auditing Cost	17,698.00	17,698.00	-
Subtotal	17,698.00	17,698.00	-
7. Overheads			
7.1 Institution Cost (BvAT)	960.00	960.00	-
Subtotal	960.00	960.00	-
Total Expenses	155,941.71	137,962.59	17,979.12

Table 2: Support and Cementing financial report

	Budget	Actuals	Variance
5.Support and Cementing			
5.1 Central Steering Committee	63,157.90	61,117.28	2,040.62
5.2 Executing Agency	83,797.93	60,515.71	23,282.22
Subtotal	146,955.83	121,632.99	25,322.84

3.1 Financial analysis

During the reporting period, partners received only one installment as shown in table 1. This was because project implementation commenced late in July 2014 with some partners especially PIPs signing their contracts as late as November and December 2014. This meant that majority started activity implementation in 2015 and thus still had

funds for 2014 not spent and unaccounted for

However majority of partners picked up quite well with majority kick starting activity implementation and thus were able to spend 2014 funds and satisfactorily report and account during mid-year reporting in 2015.

Funds (1st Installment) for 2015 were thus released upon the lead agency getting satisfactory reports and financial reporting documents for 2014 expenditures (refer to table 3 for funds disbursed to partners in July 2015)

By the close of the financial year 31st December 2015, it was evident that funds released to partners had been utilized satisfactorily with majority hitting the 70% burnt rate.

Funds released to NOAN in Nigeria was an addition to funds for the West Africa Cluster funds of USD\$ 65,199.92 that partly supported the 3rd Organic Conference in Nigeria

Project management unit budgets costs incurred during the financial period were below the set budget.

The Continental Steering Committee costs were initially budget for one meeting per year. However 2 meetings were held during this period. This strained the budget and funds had to be reallocated from the International Travel budget line a situation that further strained the international travel budget to negative (2,687.22)

In conclusion the financial report shows that spending during the financial year were within set limits and requirements

4. KEY CHALLENGES

During the implementation period of 2015, various challenges were faced with major challenges being at the national level.

4.1 Partner Specific Challenges

- i. Poor partner capacity to effectively manage and report on project implementation continued to be a major challenge in 2015. The lack of capacity was mostly observed in partner's inability to keep documentation of the progress of project implementation. This was observed mostly in finance where partners could not provide adequate supporting documents for their expenditures. It is important that when project activities are completed, the incurred expenditure should be appropriately supported with acceptable documents. This will also make it easy to follow both results and financial management.
- ii. Due to ineligible expenditure, financial corrections, the gap between the expenditures from the pillar budget and the submitted support documents as well as due to other irregularities, the disbursed funds from the project budget do not equal the payments made.
- iii. Multi-stakeholder contracting and engagements i.e. PIPs sub contracting activities that they are not able to undertake themselves to other organizations/individuals thus causing a lot of delays with follow ups and reporting.
- iv. Poor and inconsistent contracting between CLOs and PIPs. A case of Mali where CLO contracted PIPs for a period of one year (2014) and continued operating in 2015 with no contracts. Some PIPs not having fully signed contracts.
- v. Wrong budgetary figures in contracts where figures reflect budgetary allocations for one year while contracting period is for 5 years. A case of Mali too.
- vi. Some PIPs not being aware of their organizations' disbursement amount and schedules in spite of the fact that the overall SDC budget and disbursement schedules have been shared with CLOs. Hence some PIPs not aware on when to expect next disbursements and of what amounts further delaying activity implementation.
- vii. Due to poor planning and lack of proper coordination, the Eastern Africa Steering Committee was not able to implement activities in 2015. There was some stand-off between the RSC and the Interim Secretariat, which has now been resolved and a workplan and budget prepared for approval by the current meeting.
- viii. Insufficient funds for pillar implementation with national image. Most PIPs felt that the funds allocated to the pillars were not sufficient for the range of activities proposed.
- ix. Marketing and access to credit remain major challenges for farmers.

4.2 Challenges Facing the Executing Agency

- i) The stalling of project implementation in Mali was the greatest challenge. MOBIOM, the CLO, continued with institutional leadership wrangles with some of its partners. BvAT was compelled to stop release project funds to MOBIOM after it became apparent that the Pillar Implementing Partners had abandoned Mobiom in unclear circumstances and were not ready to continue implementing the project under its coordination. Consequently, the project implementation could not continue.
- ii) Some countries started on a framework of partner selection that did not allow for easy nationalization of the EOA Initiative. Most partners are still operating within the “NOAM” framework and not striving towards bringing on board other potential country partners.
- iii) Lack of insufficient manpower to ensure adequate monitoring and support to the partners. To mitigate this BvAT is recruiting three new staff – HR & Admin officer, accountant and grants and resource mobilization officer.
- iv) Insufficient funds to support the CSC’s bi-annual meetings. This situation forced BvAT to reallocate funds from its International travel budget.
- v) Late reporting by pillar implementing partners. This has been a persistent problem.

5. LESSONS TO BE LEARNT

5.1 By the Lead Coordinating Agency

- i. Partners are diverse with unique country specific challenges and thus need to be treated independently in order to unearth issues affecting each of them.
- ii. A lot of sensitivity needs to be applied while communicating to West Africa Partners. This is due to the fact that majority are not well conversant with English language.
- iii. Assumptions made in selecting partners should be following with verification of the partners based on clear criteria and come up with an action plan to support the partners having weaknesses. During the national inception workshops to kick-start the project, it was assumed that the representation of the National Platforms would have a national outlook. However over time this has been realized that some countries did not have a national representation to elect CLOs and PIPs. Due to this fact, some of the CLOs and PIPs are located within the same vicinity (area) an aspect that limits their national outreach and representation of the project. NOAN is a good example. It is thus important to ensure efforts are put in place to have and engage partners with national outreach and representation
- iv. It was also assumed that the National Platforms would elect CLOs and PIPs with strong instructional structures as outlined in the CLO and PIPs criteria shared with them. However over the implementation period it has been realized some CLOs have very weak/nonexistent institutional structures with a case of CLO FENAB in Senegal and ASPAB for Pillar 2 (Information and Communication) not having physical offices. A case of NOAN, the CLO in Nigeria engaging students to run the project (For example the current finance officer has no finance background. She is trained in horticulture). These cases are evidence that the process of selecting CLOs and PIPs was heavily compromised.

5.2 Partner lessons

- i. The use of branded materials is important to increase visibility at country level.
- ii. More farmers need to be reached to meet the increasing market demand.
- iii. Research in organic agriculture is inadequately funded and the results of what has been done so far are not well documented. Furthermore research studies related to organic farming are largely fragmented and the words organic agriculture is often omitted from the key words of the studies. Within the public domain, the value of organic agriculture is not well understood.
- iv. There is need and value for Pillars to work together, share information regularly and leverage on strengths and budgets.
- v. Most activity budget lines are very small in comparison to the weight of the activities themselves.

- vi. There is a critical need to commercialize organic inputs because on-farm resources and inputs are always not sufficient for farm needs if the wish is to turn smallholder organic farmers into medium holder organic farmers.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

6.1 At National Level

- i. Country Lead Organisations need to take lead in coordination and monitoring activity implementation by Pillar Implementing Partners especially in proper use and accountability of project funds
- ii. Country Lead Organisations need to work closely with EOA National Steering Committee and National Platforms to ensure EOA is nationalised. The current worry is that EOA has not been nationalised as it was envisaged with some CLOs not having the national image envisaged
- iii. The public and particularly the policy makers can only appreciate the value of organic agriculture if they are given evidence-based research that is conducted by credible researchers.
- iv. In order to make data storage and retrieval easier and faster, organic agriculture stakeholders should promote on-line data bases particularly of academic documents
- v. Farmers, processors, input manufacturers and students should be trained on organic agriculture in order to appreciate its value and usefulness in keeping families healthier.

6.2 By the Lead Coordinating Agency

- i. It is important for the lead agency to regularly check project documents, work-plans and monitor reality on the ground through constant communications with partners through emails, phone calls, skype calls and chats.
- ii. Frequent monitoring at both executing agency and country coordination should be beefed up to ensure that project implementation setbacks are tackled early enough.
- iii. The replication of project and financial management trainings needs to be replicated to the pillar implementing partners.
- iv. Various other kinds of capacity trainings and exposure visits for the partners need to be undertaken. The trainings could range from communication skills to leadership and team management skills
- v. Stronger linkage and synergies between CLOs and PIPs should be encouraged because some appear to be working oblivious of what the rest are doing. Synergies and collaborations need to be strengthened.
- vi. It is important for BvAT through guidance of CSC to sort out the leadership wrangles in Mali as urgently as possible so that the project can resume its implementation.

- vii. Work towards ensuring that contract agreements are signed and disbursement of funds made in time across all levels. This should allow for prompt implementation of project activities

7. PICTORIALS OF VARIOUS ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR



STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP (FEBRUARY 2015)



SUSTAINABLE FARMING PRACTICES IN KENYA UNDER EOA SUPPORT



ORGANIC PRODUCTS SALES DISPLAY IN BENIN



MONITORING VISITS IN BENIN



MONITORING MEETING IN BENIN



PARTNERS PROJECT TRAINING IN MACHAKOS KENYA

