



NATIONAL ORGANIC AGRICULTURE POLICY (NOAP) -UGANDA LAUNCH 2020

Launch and Dissemination of the National Organic Agriculture Policy (NOAP), 2019

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, ANIMAL INDUSTRIES AND FISHERIES(MAAIF)

Launch and Dissemination of the National Organic Agriculture Policy (NOAP), 2019 held on Tuesday September 29th 2020 – Entebbe, Uganda.

After a long wait of 16 years (2004 -2020), the National Organic Agriculture Policy (NOAP), 2019 was adopted by the Government of the Republic of Uganda through the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries (MAAIF). The launch being spear headed by various partners, stakeholders and civil society groups including the National Organic Agricultural Movement of Uganda (NOGAMU) and Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM)- Uganda saw various guests both local and international guests attend the launch of the policy both physically and virtually via zoom meeting conference. The Launch was officiated by Vincent Bamulangaki Ssempijja, Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries (MAAIF). The main objective of the policy implementation was to engage more stakeholders and the ministry alongside key partners. The implementation of the policy by the African Union Organic Agriculture is expected to be adopted regional, national and at international level.



The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries (MAAIF) Permanent Secretary, Pius Wakabi Kasajja stated that the mandate of the Ministry is “To Promote and Support sustainable and Market oriented agricultural production, food security and household Incomes; the Vision of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries is “a competitive, profitable and sustainable agricultural sector and lastly the Mission of the Sector is to “Transform Subsistence Farming to Commercial Agriculture”.

In his speech to invited guests and partners, MP Vincent Bamulangaki Ssempijja, Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries (MAAIF) stated that, “Uganda’s agriculture is generally described as organic by default. Majority of our farmers still rely on nature and chance to produce crops. With the lowest inorganic fertilizer application in the world currently estimated at only 2kg per hectare per year, most of the Ugandan farmers particularly the smallholder farmers are subconsciously practicing organic farming. Our grandparents practiced successful natural seed and

livestock breed selections, crop rotations, integrated farming, identification and use of peat soils and forest litter to improve crop yields. These are all elements of organic farming techniques traditionally practiced in Uganda that unfortunately lack the scientific merits and standards to qualify them as organic, according to the FAO Codex Alimentarius Commission.

The slow growth of the organic agriculture system in Uganda is largely attributed to lack of coordinated efforts and a regulatory framework to guide and control the production system. On the contrary, the traditional practices can no longer cope with the fast-emerging market demand for quality, safe food and fiber. Today, the market is looking for agricultural products that meet specific attributes including sustainability – How was it produced; traceability – Where it came from; and transparency – Who benefits from it most. The importance of combining science with tradition or indigenous knowledge helps to regenerate agriculture and increase nutrients in the soil. This gives relevance to the organic agricultural production and justifies the need to promote and support it fully in Uganda.”

The Organic Agriculture was commissioned by Biovision Africa Trust (BvAT) in collaboration with PELUM Kenya on behalf of the Continental Steering Committee (CSC) of the Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative, Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC) and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). This exploratory multi-country assessment conducted in September and October 2018 sought to identify some of the factors that could facilitate or limit policy formulation processes in ecological organic agriculture (EOA) in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda.



During the launch Prof Ssekyewa Charles, key note speaker made a presentation on Organic Agriculture Global, National and Local perspective stating that the global market demand of \$ 80 Billion for organic products reason being there is great shifts in consumer preferences for safe and hazard free food. He added that organic agriculture is increasing consumer consciousness about environment conservation and increasing concerns about health associated with indiscriminate and unsafe use of Agro-chemicals. Uganda’s global market share only 5% yet it is ranked 2nd in the world in numbers of organic farmers. Organic Agriculture contributes approximately USD 50M, this is 17% of the value of agricultural exports which stood at USD 291.2M per annum (MoFPED, 2017/2018).

Some of the shared Organic Agriculture opportunities in Uganda entail;

- The global trading environment and demand for organic produce in Europe and the United States provide a clear impetus for fostering Organic Agriculture in Uganda;

- The country has a huge potential for producing food crops (including fruits), cash crops (including coffee, cocoa, tea and cotton), as well as organic livestock to meet the increasing global demand for organic products;
- Uganda has the potential to put over 500,000 hectares of land under Organic Agriculture and certify over 500,000 farmers.

If this was to be achieved, Uganda's volume of organic produce will increase from the current 115,062Mt to 210,000Mt.

The launch disseminated the set objectives for NOAP which included: increase annual growth rate in Organic Agricultural products by more than 3.0% to be able to spur a 6% agricultural growth target as stipulated under CAADP; Increase in productivity and value of the multiple functions of Organic Agriculture by more than 50%; Reduce degradation of the ecosystems by increasing investments in Organic Agriculture; Increase the contribution of organic Agriculture sub sector to GDP to reach over 50% of the Agricultural GDP; Reduce the proportion of Organic Agriculture dependent people living below the absolute poverty line and food insecurity to more than 27% and Increase public investment in Organic Agriculture subsector and overall agriculture sector to 10% of the total annual budget.

The following Individuals, Institutions and Organizations were presented by The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries (MAAIF) Permanent Secretary, Pius Wakabi Kasajja in recognition for their outstanding contributions to the Development of the Organic Agriculture Sub-Sector in Uganda, East Africa and beyond.

A. Individuals include:

- I. Hon. Vincent Bamulangaki Ssempijja:** For successfully defending and obtaining approval of the Policy by Cabinet.
- II. Mr. Alex Lwakuba:** Commissioner Crop Production Department, was nominated as Champion of Organic Agriculture under the African Union Supported Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative (EOAI) East African Region and for coordinating efforts at MAAIF to finalize this Policy.
- III. Prof. Charles Ssekyewa:** African Continental Chairman for the Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative (EOAI). He is a Trainer and Researcher in Organic Agriculture and promoter of Agro-ecology.
- IV. Prof. Julius Mwine:** Dedicated Trainer and Researcher in Organic Agriculture/Agro-ecology at Uganda Martyrs University (UMU) Nkozi.
- V. Prof. Fred Kabi:** Outstanding Researcher in Organic Agriculture at Makerere University in Collaboration with other Universities in East Africa and Denmark.
- VI. Hon. Victoria Ssekitoleko:** Chairperson, Uganda Agri-business Alliance. Practitioner and Promoter of Organic Agriculture in Uganda.
- VII. Mr. Samuel Nyanzi:** Farmer, Processor, Exporter, Trainer and Advocate for the Organic Agriculture Policy since the inception of National Organic Agriculture Movement in Uganda -NOGAMU.

- VIII. Mr. Moses Kiggundu Muwanga:** While CEO of NOGAMU and the International Federation of the Organic Agriculture Movement (IFOAM) Board Member, he provided critical leadership for mobilization of financial resources and coordinated advocacy efforts for development of the NOAP by Government of Uganda.
- IX. Mr. Okaasai S. Opolot (Retired):** Former Director, Crop Resources-MAAIF. Was Chairperson and coordinator of the NOAP formulation task force.
- X. Mr. Charles Rusoke, (Retired):** Member and coordinator of the NOAP formulation task force since 2004.
- XI. Ms. Dinah Kasangaki (Retired):** Member of the NOAP formulation task force since 2004.
- XII. Mr. Okiror John:** Assistant Commissioner, Policy Analyst – MAAIF, for his great effort in pursuing the NOAP Approval.
- XIII. Mr. Andrew Byamugisha:** Senior Agricultural Inspector-MAAIF, was very active in the finalization of NOAP and the implementation Plan.
- XIV. Miss Jane Nalunga:** Coordinated the core NOAP launch preparator committee whose members are: - Hajji Yahya Ssentongo, Miss Betty Ligyalingi, Mrs Stella Lutalo, Miss Harriet Nakasi, Miss Marilyn Kabalere, Mr. Omuruga Godfrey, Miss Florence Nasuuna and Mr. Chariton Namuwoza.

B. Civil Society Organizations include: For relentless Advocacy for the Organic Policy and for Promoting of Organic Agriculture in Uganda: -

- I. National Organic Agriculture Movement of Uganda (NOGAMU):** Apex body for Organic actors in Uganda, which coordinated advocacy efforts and fundraising for the NOAP formulation.
- II. Participatory Ecological Land use management, PELUM-Uganda**
- III. Advocacy Coalition for Sustainable Agriculture-ACSA.**

C. Development Partners: For financial and technical support during the formulation of NOAP and preparations for this launch: -

- I. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).**
- II. Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).**
- III. Humanist Institute for Cooperation with Developing Countries- (Hivos).**
- IV. Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC).**
- V. Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC).**
- VI. Trocaire.**
- VII. Biovision Africa Trust. (BvAT).**

NOAP shared its target groups being;

- The political leadership at all levels;
- Ministries - Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries (MAAIF) & Ministry of Technology Information and Communication (MTIC);
- Uganda Export Promotional Board;
- Uganda National Bureau of Standards;
- Research institutions and Academia;
- Uganda Coffee Development Authority;
- Cotton Development Organization;
- Private institutions under the umbrella of NOGAMU including farmers associations, export companies, NGO's and CBO's.

The National Organic Agriculture Policy (NOAP) is geared towards strengthening Organic Agriculture research, appropriate technology development and utilization; promotion of production, processing and marketing of organic products; enhancing appropriate post-harvest handling practices and value addition to organic agricultural products; promote standards, certification and accreditation of organic agriculture products and to strengthen environmental conservation, indigenous biodiversity and sustainable use of natural resources.

NOAP is set on 4 key policy areas as depicted below;

POLICY AREA	POLICY DESCRIPTION	STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS
<p>POLICY AREA 1:</p> <p>Enhance Research, Technology Development and Dissemination.</p>	<p>Organic Agriculture Research, Technology Development and Dissemination shall be strengthened and supported to Advance Organic Agriculture.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invent on-going research and identify gaps relevant to Organic Agriculture sector; • Develop capacity for Organic Agriculture, conduct regulatory reforms, participatory planning and research with particular reference to stakeholders needs in plants, crops, livestock, wild animals, beneficial insects and fisheries;

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and strengthen inter and intra collaborative linkages between mainstream agricultural research and Organic Agriculture institutions at national, regional and international levels; • Identify, document and standardize local traditional knowledge and technologies in Organic Agriculture.
<p>POLICY AREA 2:</p> <p>Promote Organic Agriculture Education and Training.</p>	<p>Organic Agriculture Education and Training shall be promoted and supported to enhance the skills of the Agriculture labor force in Organic farming.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate Organic Agriculture into education curricula at all levels; • Support training institutions with organic agriculture materials, methodologies and infrastructure at all levels; • Support in-service training of agriculture extension agents to provide knowledge and skills in Organic Agriculture; • Provide appropriate and prompt agricultural advisory services and support value chain actors.
<p>POLICY AREA 3:</p>		

<p>Enhance Organic Agriculture Production and Technology Support</p>	<p>Scientifically proven Organic Agriculture production methods, technologies & systems that foster Sustainable Development shall be promoted and supported.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote awareness on Organic Agriculture and its benefits; • Develop farmer groups and cooperatives to increase Organic Agriculture production that meets local and global demand; • Ensure availability of quality seed, semen planting materials and all Agro-inputs needed for Organic Agriculture; • Generate and maintain a data base on Organic Agriculture activities.
<p>POLICY AREA 4:</p> <p>Post Harvesting Handling, Storage and Value Addition.</p>	<p>Access to Available and Affordable Scientifically proven appropriate Agricultural Technologies on PHH storage and value addition shall be promoted.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote establishment of demonstration farms and community- based learning centers; • Undertake research to develop post-harvest and processing technologies for a diversity of organic products; • Promote high quality primary, secondary and tertiary processing of Organic Agriculture products; • Provide incentives for investment in value addition for organic products; • Support investments in basic infrastructure and utilities to promote

Agro-processing, value addition and storage.

The launch was concluded on sentiments under the basis that the government shall collaborate with Private sector and civil society groups like NOGAMU to establish Organic Agricultural standards, acceptable and affordable certification systems whose key strategies are to create awareness on Organic Agricultural standards and certification systems at all levels of the value chain; Establish and implement appropriate quality standards for production, processing, transportation and marketing of organic products; Support enhancement of Organic Agriculture standards and certification; Promote cost effective certification for organic agriculture; Support the accreditation of local certification firms for purposes of securing international recognition and lastly to Support harmonization of standards and mutual recognition procedures at national, regional and international levels.

The government shall focus on farmers skills development, strengthen market research and information provision as well as awareness creation to promote Organic Agriculture market development basing on key strategies being, to provide adequate market information to all enterprises and stakeholders and support export sector development initiatives; Support building of market infrastructure including zonal pack houses (cooling facilities, refrigerated transportation, sufficient cooling capacity at the airport); Ensure airfreight capacity, access and affordability and to build capacity for trade negotiations as well as developing a comprehensive export data. The financing mechanism was set on government allocation of resources from national budget, grants from development partners, private sector investments and on CSO financing.



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