

# Organic Production in Rwanda

by

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## Background

- Evolution of organic farming in Rwanda
  - coping mechanism rather than a choice
  - cope with reduced farm holdings & lower productivity
  - Plot sizes of 30mx30m
  - population currently at 354 persons/km
  - inorganic fertilizers was useless due to lack of organic matter to hold them

## Subsistence agriculture on highly fragile systems

- 75% of the country is arable land
- 40% of the arable land is above the 28° angle - unsustainable cultivation



Western Province



Northern Province

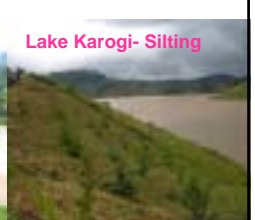
- Soil Erosion
- Flooding in valleys
- Silting of water ways



A Lake in Nyungwe Forest



Flooded Football Pitch



Lake Karogi- Silting

## The Birth of Organic Farming

- The birth of an organic opportunity resulted primarily from intensive use of organic matter
- Emerging organic markets
- Need for sustainable production and ecosystem rehabilitation
- Government interest - led to changes in government policy and legal reforms to facilitate organic production

## Market Oriented Organic Initiatives

- Organic Chilli Production - Solar Drying of Organic Chill in Huye District - Southern Province



- 250 smallholder farmers in a cooperative - Chillex
- Has an organic certificate
- Exports to EU
- Has changed the lives of members and workers - tuition, medical

## Organic Apple Bananas Production

- Farmers' cooperative membership of 583 small holders have been linked with an export company Floris
- Have been assisted to get organic certificate
- Govt assists in the supply on clean plantlets



## Organic Geranium production

- Local company –Ikirezi in association with women cooperative produce organic geranium oil for export
- Cooperative involves 450 women
- Has got an organic certificate

## Organic Silk Production

- We are working with Clinton and Hunter foundation to scale up Organic Silk Production



## Organic coffee production

- Farmers have been growing coffee applying fertilizers & pesticides-arrangments in place towards conversion
- We are facilitating farmers with the cost of certification
- We are also helping in building farmers capacities

## What is the Government doing?

- Strategic emphasis on organic inputs
  - Fertilizer strategy stresses - organic manure
  - Seed policy stresses- organic seeds
- Established Rwanda Bureau of standards that carries certification and has been equipped for the purpose
- Rwanda horticulture Development Authority is promoting organic horticulture production for niche markets
- Organic Centre Points and Zoning are being establishing
- Capacity building & farmers facilitation towards organic certification are top priorities
- Arrangements are underway with ADF &NUR to train local certifiers in an attempt to reduce cost of certification
- One cow per poor household programme
- Radical & progressive terracing vs general restocking of livestock

## Constraints

- High cost of certification
- Weak capacities - farmers and technical skills
- Protection against run-off
- Local certification needs accreditation to be acceptable
- Foreign certification bodies do not stay longer to help farmers
- Certification process is too long and farmers get certificates few months to expiry date.

## What do we have in our favor?

- Volcanic soils, high elevation and biopesticide production potential
- Strong political will--Development oriented philosophy
- Existence of effective inter agency collaboration
- Strong interest in partnerships to developing the organic farming program
- Existing efforts that can be consolidated –lessons learned etc