

National Integrated Assessment of Organic Agriculture - Kenya

PROGRESS TO-DATE

Presented by Mr. Eric Oyare, Bridge Africa, at the Regional Launch of the Programme, "Promoting Production and Trading Opportunities for OA in East Africa."

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Introduction

- The National IA_OA in Kenya rolled out in May 30, 2005, with the first meeting between UNEP/UNCTAD, NEMA (Government Lead Agency) and Bridge Africa (National Designated Institution).
- The meeting was held to discuss the MOU, the budget and the role that NEMA and Bridge Africa will play in the programme implementation.
- This was followed by a meeting between UNEP/UNCTAD and project stakeholders (representatives from organisations working on OA, FAO, Universities, and government ministries e.g. trade and agriculture).

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Introduction, cont'd.

- The UNEP/UNCTAD team briefed participants on the project update and integrated assessment methodologies that could be adopted for the National I.A. Study
- Since then, the NIT has had several meetings to plan the implementation of the IA study.
- Members of the NIT and other OA National Network organisations were also invited by UNCTAD Geneva for a sharing forum, where other countries that have conducted the national IA presented their findings. This was in September, 2005

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Introduction, cont'd.

- As at now, Kenya has held the first NSC meeting, on 6th Oct, 2005.
- Representatives from project stakeholders were selected to form the NSC. They include KEBS, MoA, KIOF, Tegemeo Institute (a policy research institution affiliated to Egerton University, Green Systems, GSI, HBF, and UoN. There are a total of 12 members in the NSC.
- During the meeting, members were introduced to the project's scope and objectives and the national IA process (tentative work-plan)

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Introduction, cont'd.

- Most importantly, they were introduced to and briefed on their roles and responsibilities in running the project, which include:—
 - to identify the main issues and concerns to be addressed,
 - to define methodologies to be followed, and
 - to provide guidance on responding to the outcome of the integrated assessment initiatives.

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Introduction, cont'd.

- According to the IA work plan, a BD is supposed to be developed through the facilitation of the NIT, to:
 - Review of past studies on organic agriculture and methodologies
 - Describe of the current state of Kenyan OA sector based on areas/issues to be identified by the NSC
- During the NSC meeting, an outline of the Initial Background Document was developed
- In addition to the outline, sources of information to feed into the I.B.D were identified

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Outline of Initial Background Document

1. Background

- Working Definition of OA, Principles and Objectives
- Evolution of OA in Kenya
- Methods of OA in Kenya
- Benefits/Advantages of OA
- Contributions of OA in terms of
 - Environmental conservation
 - Social Issues e.g. TK protection,
 - Gender Issues
 - Food security and Poverty reduction
 - HIV/AIDs
 - Achievement of MDGs

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Outline of Initial Background Document, cont'd.

2. Institutional Framework in the OA sector in Kenya

- Regulatory and Policy Frameworks
- Players in the sector and stakeholder identification

3. Commodity Chain in Production and Trade in OA products

- Primary Production-types of crops, quantities, number of farmers involved
- Processing and value addition
- Local distribution and marketing
- Consumption
- Exports – what quantities, markets, any specific demands

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Outline of Initial Background Document, cont'd.

4. Quality Issues in Production and Trade

- Standards
- Audits and Certification

5. Emerging Issues

- Threats and Challenges
- Opportunities
- Technology – e.g. Genetic Engineering
- IA methodologies and research gaps

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Introduction, cont'd.

- This outline is now being used by the NIT, led by B.A. to guide the compilation of the I.B.D. for Kenya.
- The development of the I.B.D is being conducted through review of existing literature on OA. Significant documents accessed so far specific to Kenya include; the Draft Kenya Standard, National Food and Nutrition Policy, Common Code for the Coffee Community among others
- Information has also been accessed and gathered from Universities, KOAN, KIOF, ICIPE, NEMA, UNEP, FAO, MoA and Internet.
- So far, the document is at the draft stage undergoing review based on comments from members of the NIT. The document will be presented at the N.S.W. planned for mid November, where comments of stakeholders will be considered for a final document.

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Highlights of the Initial Background Document

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Chapter One:

Background

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Introduction

- Agriculture is important to humankind as it produces the food on which human life depends and has been fundamental to civilization in providing the foundation from which economic activity has developed.
- Majority of the world population are greatly concerned about the deterioration of the world's land resources and our capacity to produce food for the ever-increasing world population.
- It is in this context that the term sustainable (organic) agriculture has developed as a solution.
- It is a product of economically-advanced countries which have, rather belatedly, recognized the serious degradation of soils and pollution of the environment caused by chemically-based farming which was widely promoted in the Green Revolution in the 1960s.

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Introduction, cont'd.

- Largely for this reason sustainable agriculture has sought to distance itself from the earlier imperative of achieving maximum possible production.
- Modern farming systems involves high inputs of synthetic fertilizers and pesticide to support high-yielding, hybrid varieties of crops have contributed to soil erosion, environmental pollution, loss of indigenous crop diversity and poorer health among rural people.
- Chemicals certainly provide a quick fix but are ultimately self-defeating, and whereas in temperate countries it has taken many years to see their ill-effects, in tropical countries with poorer soils the effects have been short-lived and the effects more damaging.

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Introduction, cont'd.

- Access to food continues to be insecure in Africa in particular, and the reasons are well known to be more often of social, economic, environmental and political in nature rather than a matter of not sufficient food being produced internally and at the global level.
- Genetically modified crops are being pushed to Africa as a solution to hunger, while this risky, proprietary and expensive technology is very likely to deepen the Green Revolution failure.
- Organic agriculture, both certified and non-certified, offers considerable potentials in developing countries.

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What is Organic Agriculture

- Organic agriculture is well defined in a number of documents, most notably by the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements, IFOAM.
- Organic agriculture includes all agricultural systems that promote the environmentally, socially and economically sound production of food and fibres. These systems take local soil fertility as a key to successful production.
- Organic agriculture dramatically reduces external inputs by refraining from the use of chemosynthetic fertilizers, pesticides, and pharmaceuticals. This controls changes in soil conditions

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What is Organic Agriculture, cont'd.

- Organic agriculture adheres to globally accepted principles, which are implemented within local social-economic, climatic and cultural settings.
- Organic farming is a system that relies largely on locally available resources and is dependent up on maintaining ecological balances and developing biological processes to their optimum.
- By relying on the natural capacity of plants, animals and the landscape, organic systems aim to optimize quality of all aspects of agriculture and the environment.

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Principle Aims of Organic Production and Processing

- Organic Production and Processing is based on a number of principles and ideas. They include:-
- To produce food and other agricultural products like textiles of high quality and long lasting in sufficient quantity.
- To interact in a constructive and life-enhancing way with natural systems and cycles.

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Aims of OA, cont'd.

- To encourage and enhance biological cycles within the farming system, involving microorganisms, soil flora and fauna, plants and animals.
- To allow everyone involved in organic production and processing a quality of life, which meets their basic needs and allows an adequate return and satisfaction from their work, including a safe working environment.
- To progress toward an entire production, processing and distribution chain which is both socially just and ecologically responsible.

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Evolution of Organic Agriculture in Kenya

- OA has grown in the rest of the world from strength to strength. Currently, there are organic farming activities in 120 countries from all over the world.
- Highlights have been made by several studies on the issues of Organic and Sustainable Agriculture including what is called Low External Input Sustainable Agriculture (LEISA)
- In Kenya, a wide range of agro- ecological and organic initiatives exist exploring the potential of OA.

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Evolution of Organic Agriculture in Kenya, cont'd.

- OA is acquiring a critical mass as a development tool at the grassroots level
- National and local NGOs have played a significant role in organic agriculture promotion, training, research, and outreach since the 1980s.
- Organic agriculture NGOs emerged because of widespread discontent with the research orientation, technology dissemination practices, and social/environmental externalities associated with the Green Revolution regime.

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Evolution of Organic Agriculture in Kenya, cont'd.

- Linkages between NGOs and techno scientific agricultural institutions (ICIPE, ICRAF, e.t.c) have also promoted the growth of the sector through exchange of ideas
- Linkages between organic agriculture NGOs and donors, research institutes, universities, and public extension providers have been essential to the enduring success of Kenya's organic agriculture NGO sector.

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Methods of OA in Kenya

- Organic farming in Africa (Kenya) can be grouped in two categories: Formal and Informal
- While formal organic farming is the recognized and certified organic farming that produces tradable agricultural produce largely for export;
- Informal systems are evidenced by lack of certification and production does not measure up to standards developed national and international bodies promoting organic agriculture like IFOAM.

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Benefits of Organic Agriculture

- Protection of traditional Knowledge
- Food security and poverty reduction
- Cheap food production
- Produces healthy food for the population
- Ensures environmental conservation by limited/ non-use of agro-chemicals
- Well suited to small scale farming and can increase the yields and incomes of subsistence farmers in developing countries like Kenya – Majority of whom (close to 70% are women)

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Chapter Two:

Institutional Framework

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Regulatory Framework

- The Kenyan Agriculture sector where organic agriculture falls is regulated by policies developed by the government led by the MoA.
- Since independence, Kenya has seen evolution of agriculture policies which basically looked at the periods when there was a lot of government controls in agriculture to the phase where liberalization has reduced government intervention.

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Regulatory Framework, cont'd.

- Currently, the agriculture sector in Kenya is governed by about 130 pieces of legislation.
- Policy reforms in Kenya has revolved around:
 - Institutional frameworks
 - Agricultural taxation
 - Production and infrastructure
 - Value addition
 - Marketing

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Regulatory Framework, cont'd.

- There has not been any deliberate attempt to analyze and present Kenyans with policy options around agricultural farming practices such as, conventional agriculture, genetic engineering and organic agriculture
- The government has for instance come up with the SRA and a draft of National Food and Nutrition Policy.
- In their objectives and scope, these tools do not give any mention to the direction the government wants to take on OA and its integration in the agriculture sector reforms

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Regulatory Framework, cont'd.

- Operation in the OA is still left ungoverned with a lot of intervention coming from the CSOs which conduct research, training, certification promotion, marketing and lobbying and advocacy
- In Kenya, there are no specific legislation covering OA, the sub-sector is guided by general 'agriculture policy'.
- However, the government is putting in some efforts on policy options around growing of cotton organically and hosting of forums aimed at ideals and practices for OA markets.

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Players

- **Farmers**
- **CSOs (NGOs)** such as, KIOF, KOAN, SACDEP, B.A, among others
- **Agro – ecological initiatives**, based at the grassroots with such activities as demonstration farms, trainings, developing of organic food farming systems and soil fertility conservation
- **Agro – ecological research organisations** such as ICIPE, World Agro-forestry Centre
- **The Government** (Ministry of Agriculture and other parastatals like KEPHIS, KEBS)

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Chapter Three:

Commodity Chain

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Primary Production

- Records show that Kenya has just 494 hectares of organic land (Walaga, 2003 in Nicolas, P. and Elzakker, B 2003) although it is believed that the figure is much higher.
- According to Rundgren and Lustig (2002), there are about 12 organic operators (individual farmers or farmers' association) in Kenya.
- Some are already licensed and others are in various stages of conversion.
- Among the organic produce in Kenya are French beans, cotton, runner beans, mange tout, salads, tea, hibiscus tea, jam, and macadamia nuts and oils

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Local Distribution and Processing

- Local distribution of organic produce in Kenya goes through the normal market chain. Farmers sell their produce in local markets where other conventionally produced agricultural products are sold
- There are also a few retail shops in Nairobi and other major towns in the country selling OA products
- Agro-ecological organisations (e.g.) ICIPE have also started manufacturing herbal medicines and beauty products from such plants like neem. These products are sold in supermarket chains and pharmacies.

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Exports

- Many of the exporters are large-scale farmers, already engaged in the export agriculture and horticulture that are diversifying into organic production to meet demand from their established customers.
- Certified organic produce exported from Kenya includes French beans, runner beans, mango tout, salads and tea (for the UK), hibiscus tea and jam (for Japan and Austria) and macadamia nuts and oils (for Germany and Japan) (Walaga, 2003).
- There is a potential for producing organic coffee, which has not yet been realized because of the state control of coffee exports and marketing.

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Exports, cont'd.

- By 2003 Kenya was not part of EPOPA programme – but considerations were being made to extend the programme to the country and several producer groups expressed an interest in participating in this programme.

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Chapter Four:

Quality Issues

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Standards

- In terms of standards, Kenya has developed a draft of Guidelines for the Production, Processing and Packaging of organically produced foods
- The work is spearheaded by the KEBS with other institutions like MoA, KEPHIS e.t.c in the Technical Committee.
- Internationally, Kenya is a member of IFOAM and complies to the Basic Standards. Kenyan certifiers are accredited by the International Organic Accreditation Service (IOAS)-contracted by IFOAM, to these voluntary standards

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Certification and Audits

- For many farmers and traders in Kenya, certification is costly and does not make much economic sense
- Inspection and certification are mostly carried out by foreign organisations, which entail inspectors traveling from far off countries to Kenya
- The most active certification organisations in Kenya are The Soil Association and Ecocert, (this is what we have found out so far from literature review but there may be others)

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Certification and Audits, cont'd.

- Soil Association has local inspectors while the Ecocert use inspectors from overseas.
- Kenya is also a member of IFOAM and is compliant with its set of Basic Standards
- Other certification bodies include Africert, formerly working in conjunction with ICIPE

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Chapter Five:

Emerging Issues

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Threats and Challenges

- How to integrate traditional practices in policy formulation processes.
- How to harmonize curriculum or training modules in organic agriculture
- The fact that the concept of organic agriculture has not been well understood by farmers
- Many farmers practice agriculture because of need for quick results

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Threats and Challenges, cont'd.

- Organic products are not recognized at local level hence farmers are discouraged
- Competition from conventional farming
- The high cost of certification
- The problem of marketing
- Lack of comprehensive policy on organic agriculture
- Unfavorable international policy environment for the growth of local organic agriculture

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Threats and Challenges, cont'd.

- Inadequate training on the importance of organic agriculture
- People attitude in believing that indigenous farming is outdated. Hence, the challenge is to change people's attitude of wait and see.
- Lack of capacity in local organic agriculture to satisfy the market at the international level
- Getting the government to appreciate the value of OA as a sector on its own.

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Opportunities

- The potential for organic production and export in Kenya is high, with a liberalized economy
- The major opportunity lies in the fact that most production in Kenya is traditional and complies more or less to the principles of organic agriculture as laid down in the IFOAM Basic Standards.
- Certification costs are reducing as local expertise in inspection is built by foreign certification bodies e.g. ECOCERT and AFRICERT

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Opportunities, cont'd.

- Expertise in organic production and organisation of exports is building up as the organic market develops.
- National organic standards and certification systems are being developed.
- The opportunity presented by the coming together of the EAC and creation of the Common Market presents better trading opportunities for OA products bilaterally and multilaterally
- Technological advancement to foster extension and market information exchange

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Technology

- The issue of technology is basically involved with the implications of genetic engineering in the lives of plants due to cross pollination
- As you may be aware the Kenyan government is, through KARI test labs, testing the possibility of going GMO with an aim of combating food insecurity.
- Some initiatives have come up in Kenya to advocate against G.E. in plants e.g. KEGCO among others
- The other issue which will be explored is tissue culture in the production of such crops like bananas

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I.A. Methodologies

- So far in the literature we have reviewed, we have come across the following methodologies which could be applicable in the IA study:
- a) Modeling Methods
 - Policy optimization models emphasizing on policy variables
 - Policy evaluation models focusing on environmental, social and economic consequences of specific policy strategies

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I.A. Methodologies, cont'd.

- Baseline survey methodologies for scoping reviews
- Rapid assessments e.g. Case studies, literature reviews
- Participatory methods
 - FGDs
 - Consensus conferences
 - Gaming approaches
 - Dialogue methods e.t.c.

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Some Studies on OA in Kenya

1. Organic Agriculture and Sustainable Livelihoods in Developing Countries A study Natural Resources and Ethical Trade Programme (NRI) in June 1998
2. Farming on the Boundary: Organic Agriculture in Semi- Arid Kenya by Jessica Rule
3. Organic/ Traditional Vs Conventional Agriculture – Identifying and developing alternatives for non-sustainable practices in agriculture, trade and processing. Case Study of the IFOAM's programme, "OA till 1999" Data have been from April 1998 to date.

These are just a few we have sampled, there are many others done especially by organisations like KIOF, ICIPE, KARI, ICRAF e.t.c.