A 27-member trader-processor team from five African countries met in India to network with over 50 Indian based traders for supply of pulses. The events were co-organized by International Trade Centre, a joint agency of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization and India Pulses and Grain Association (IPGA) under Supporting Indian Trade and Investment for Africa (SITA), in three cities of India namely Indore, Chennai and New Delhi.

Coordinator of SITA, Govind Venuprashad said that the B2B meetings which began on Friday, 19th August 2016 brought at least 27 traders under the umbrella of Eastern Africa Grain Council, from Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Uganda to interact with the city traders over possible supply of pulses from the African countries.

Dr Bharat Kulkarni, chairman Indo-Global SME Chamber, said that through these meetings both the sides can understand the need of each other. During the two days meeting, discussions were held on setting up of Indo-African Pulses Council. The council in partnership with EAGC would work for increasing pulses trade between India and five African countries.

Eastern Africa Grain Council, Executive Director, Mr Gerald Masila who led the traders from Eastern Africa, acknowledged the SITA project as one of the major project that will see pulses farmers and traders tap into the Indian market. “Eastern Africa region is privileged to tap in the market for pulses in Indian, and this would be a great opportunity to establish a reliable market for our farmers and traders” he quipped.

During the meetings, EAGC signed MoU with Apostles Trade Comm Pvt. Ltd with the aim of developing a mechanism enable the buyers and sellers of India and Africa to transact on the platform, ecosystem for enabling trading in commodity and goods, identifying types and parameters for commodity of mutual interest as well as sharing information, knowledge and conduct research jointly on commodity markets including updates on market development of commodity.

SITA project which is in its second year of implementation, is facilitating the participation of East African pulses processors to buyer-seller meetings in India and other global trade fairs for trade and investment opportunities. Pulses processors are assisted in upgrading and strengthening their international competitiveness through marketing and quality standards trainings and receive support to obtain quality certification. The project is moreover focus on improving the competitive intelligence amongst East African pulses actors.
The EAGC regional team led by Business Development and Operations Manager, Tom Owour, Monitoring and Evaluation Manager, Peninah Gichuru, Technical Advisor, Peter Wanjohi and North Rift Field Officer, James Kuria conducted assessment of soya bean farming activity in western region. The activity was carried from 22nd to 26th August 2016.

The team met different organizations that are promoting soya bean and sorghum farming with aim of creating EAGC awareness and establishing areas of focus within the region. Among them were; Community Action for Rural Development (CARD), KOSFIP, MOALF Kakamega and Bungoma counties, ASDSP Kakamega, Dominion Farms, Development shift, and SOFDI.

During a meeting with CARD, it was noted that the group has been promoting soya bean and sorghum farming through contract with East Africa Maltings ltd. CARD has been promoting sorghum farming in Migori, Siaya, Busia and Homabay counties. Last season the production was approximately 1000MT (sorghum), 200MT (soya bean) and 50MT (greengrams). Farmers have VACs where they aggregate their grains before delivering to warehouses.

The team met with farmer groups involved in soya bean farming. These included MUDIFESOF, Nderema Cereal Bank, Bungoma Small Scale Farmers Forum and Anapolis Wanda Enterprises.

Mumias District for soya bean farmers (MUDIFESOF) is an FBO that has been doing soya bean farming. The farmers have been trained on soya bean farming. Currently, the FBO has been contracted by IITA to supply soya bean seeds, inoculant and sympal fertilizer to soya bean farmers recruited by IITA. The FBO also does processing of soya milk which is sold locally.

During the exercise, the team met several potential EAGC members such as Edom Millers, Lake Basin Rice Millers, Dominion Farms, and Development Shift. The groups expressed interest to join EAGC and a follow up meetings were agreed upon.

It was noted that there are a lot of farmer groups that operate warehouses in Western and Nyanza regions of Kenya. EAGC identified some of the warehouses for inspection. These include Lake basin rice millers warehouses, Mulewa rice farmers store, Nderema Cereal Bank.

Moving forward, EAGC will leverage on the available traders and farmers in Western and Nyanza to bring them on board so that they can benefit from warehouse certification and structure trade towards trading through GSoko.
**Regional Update**

### EAGC Participates in Inception Workshop on Post Harvest Food Losses in Africa Held in Ghana

FAO in partnership with African Union Commission organized an inception workshop to validate the regional implementation plan for post harvest loss reduction and develop national work plans in addressing post-harvest losses. The EAGC was represented by the Kenya Country Manager, Davine Minayo in the workshop which was held in Accra, Ghana on 23rd August 2016.

The AU Commission presented the work plan and the activities that are targeted to be implemented to reduce post-harvest losses in the three targeted countries; Zambia, Kenya and Zimbabwe noting that the rate of agricultural growth in Africa had grown in the past few years to 4% but it was still below the 6% as required by the CAADP.

The rationale for the intervention of 18 months by the AU commission in partnership with FAO and the partner states is that 100MT of food is lost per year in sub Saharan Africa and this could be able to feed 48 million people in a year.

The delegates committed to support the implementation process reducing post harvest losses to increase production. Kenya Country plan was developed highlighting the key areas of intervention for the project and also highlighting the role of private sector as led by EAGC in combating food losses especially in the grain sector. From the workshop, EAGC held discussions with several organizations with an aim of seeking areas of cooperation. Among them, FARA, Jamace and also FAO Sub regional Office in Addis Ababa.

### Farmers in Eastern Region Trained on RATIN Usability During RATIN Sensitization Initiative

The MIS team carried RATIN sensitization initiative in Machakos and Makueni counties. The exercise targeted farmer groups within the region.

The team met several groups which includes; Mbuvo, Kyang’a, Kyambeke, Katondoloni, Kiuuku and Kitise. The activity was aimed at creating awareness of RATIN services an ideal market information service to the farmers.

These farmer groups are already receiving services of EAGC. Among such, market linkages for their aggregated produce, post harvest handling equipment.

Moreover, the groups have been trained on post harvest management as well as grain standards. To complement these benefits, farmers need also market price information which would enable them make informed decisions on when to sell their produce to earn best returns as well as price negotiations with the buyers.

During this activity, 108 farmer group leaders (72= F, 36=M) from six (6) FBOs were trained on RATIN SMS and issued with RATIN brochures so that they can train their members. The team also met with the Minister in charge of Agriculture, Makueni County, ASDSP Officers in Makueni county and Chief Officer in charge of the Ministry of Agriculture, Machakos county. These meetings were aimed at creating awareness of EAGC activities and to seek areas of cooperation especially in EAGC’s fur thematic areas.
On Friday, 26th, August EAGC Tanzania Country Program Committee members and staff, held a meeting to discuss the export restriction that has been imposed on grains in the country. The meeting was attended by EAGC members Young Masitus, New Boogalo, Kibaigwa Floor Supplies, Unyiha Associates, G2L, TAMAGRASAI also Export Trading Group (ETG).

The meeting was informed by the current ban on grain export by the government of Tanzania which has affected cross border trade. The meeting sought to find the way forward to have the government lift the ban.

Mr. David Tuhoye. Mr Msigwa representing the views of the traders, indicated that grain traders have incurred a lot of losses as a result of the ban. The team agreed to for a 10-member group to work on a position paper on the hard time that traders are facing. This paper was to be presented to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries.

On 25th, August, the EAGC STS team conducted GSoko training for RUDI regional warehouse managers and field offices at the EAGC Tanzania Country Program offices. The training was attended by RUDI warehouse collateral managers who were from 6 districts; Kilombero, Kilolo, Iringa, Mbarazi, Songea and Namtumbu. RUDI is one of the organisations that operates several warehouses in the country.

The activity was aimed at training the Warehouse collateral managers on how to use the GSoko system in their warehouses in readiness for deployment.

The participants were taken through live demonstration to understand how GSoko works. The team learnt how Bluetooth enabled digital weigh scale that records the weight of the grain bag, the amount automatically displays on the screen and a finally how a receipt is produced. The training was mostly on the reception of goods for storage and hence there will be another training for the sales aspect of the system.

The training elicited much interest from the participants to have the system installed immediately as it would ease the manual processes that they currently use. The participants also requested that EACG considers having moisture meters that are blue tooth enabled to avoid entering the moisture content manually in the system.

RUDI agreed to embark on collecting the master data for all the farmers in the VAC’s and each will have a unique code that will represent their district, their VAC number and their individual number in the group e.g. if it’s a farmer in a VAC in Kilombero it will be KIL-01-002.

Grain stakeholders in Tanzania meeting to discuss grain export ban

Grain Stakeholders meet in Dar es Salaam to discuss grain export ban in Tanzania

GSoko training for the RUDI warehouse operators

RUDI warehouse collateral managers and EAGC team pose for a photo
The team represented by Benjamin Aijuka attended a meeting on Review of translated material for dissemination of standards for beans. The meeting organized by Uganda National Bureau of Standards with the support of USAID Feed the Future for the working group on Cereals and pulses reviewed the draft materials for dissemination of standards for beans that were tested in the different regions of the country in order find out their suitability for use. The languages in consideration included; Luganda, Runyakitara, Luo, Kiswahili, and Ateso.

EAGC represented by Pausta Clessy attended a meeting on RIA and Cost Benefit Analysis on 18th August 2016 at Golf Course Hotel Kampala. The one-day event was organized by The USAID Feed the Future Uganda Enabling Environment for Agriculture Activity (EEA) to introduce tools to help identify and quantify the costs and benefits of policy and regulatory proposals in order to strengthen the analytical and evidence-based foundation of private sector’s policy advocacy work.

The meeting came at an opportune and critical time, given that the budget process for the next financial year will begin in September. It was noted that that numbers do matter as part of policy advocacy were confirmed recently from various public sector entities including Parliament, MOFPED, Cabinet, OWC, OP and OPM.

The workshop featured presenters from the public and private sectors who shed light on the policy making and RIA processes in Uganda and how the private sector can add value. EAGC is a key private sector player in the country whose input is critical in its mandate to advocate for an enabling environment in the grain sector.

The team represented by Justine Namubiru and Benjamin held a meeting with NUTEC-MD team on 18th August at NUTEC offices in Kololo. The meeting discussed Phase one activities as per the intervention agreement and plan for the next phases.

During the meeting, it was observed that NUTEC has limited information about GSoko and as such are making assumption that they can take up some of the responsibilities that were meant for EAGC in the intervention agreement. It was recommended that there was a need to include NUTEC to the G-Soko sensitization workshop set for 1st and 2nd September 2016.
The Country Manager, Ikunda Terry held a meeting with the Director of Food Security at the ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries. The meeting was aimed at discussing issues around the on-going export restriction on grains in Tanzania.

The director informed the team that the survey was complete and that they now had the data they needed to make an informed decision. He further confirmed that the permits to export grains will start being issued in the near future. He stated that people should recognize that this was not an export ban and was a mere suspension to allow for the food security assessment exercise to be carried out and as well as to better the systems and regulations through which the permits are issued.

One of the new changes that are going to be applied is the issuing of export permits through an online platform. This means that it will no longer be a requisite for a trader to travel from up country to the ministry in Dar es salaam in order for him to get the permit.

**SMEs and Farmer Based Groups trained on Structured Trading Systems in Mbeya.**

Training targeting SMEs and FBOs EAGC Tanzania program officers conducted a two-day SMEs training in Mbeya. The training attracted SMEs and FBOs from Mbeya, Iringa, Ruvuma Songwe and Rukwa. Among the trainees, there were EAGC members, Kibaigwa Flour Supplies, Rapha Group Ltd, Unyiha, Mbomole Entreprises and Young Masitus Enterprises.

The training was aimed at addressing some of the challenges that grain stakeholders face as a result of unstructured trade. Some of the challenges identified were lack of reliable and quality inputs, inadequate storage facilities and post-harvest losses, reliable markets and lack of supportive government policies to support trade.

A total of 20 representatives from different SMEs and FBOs comprising of 3 women and 17 men participated in the training.
**TANZANIA**

**Executive Certificate in Agricultural Financing Launched**

The Eastern Grain Council, Tanzania was part of the official launch of the Executive Certificate of Agricultural Financing (ECAF), a project spearheaded by Global Communities through Agribusiness Investment for Market Stimulation (AIMS) Program.

The certificate course sponsored by AIMS in partnership with EAGC and other Financial Institutions aimed at increasing knowledge on credit accessibility for farmers. Farmers and SMES need banks and other financial institutions to access loans to invest further in value addition in agriculture value chains.

AIMS pointed out that the food demand is to rise by 7% by 2050 and thus more investment will be needed for the agricultural sector.

In order for banks and other financial institution to willingly offer credit service packages to farmers and SMEs, AIMS will carry out trainings that will equip financial institutions with the proper knowledge on aspects such as interests rates, the risks associated with agricultural lending and how to mitigate them.

There are specific trainings tailor-made by Kenya School of Monetary studies (KSMS) for the financial institutions. After the launch, a six day learning event commenced in which banks were to receive trainings that will help them to increase their lending portfolio to farmers and SMEs.

EAGC is a key partner with Global Communities under AIMS project especially in providing financing to small and medium sized agribusinesses and providing training for businesses that work along the agricultural value chains.

**Validation of Grow Africa Progress Report**

EAGC was represented by Junior Ndesanjo at the validation workshop for Grow Africa Initiative. The workshop was held at the National College of Tanzania Conference Hall, Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania. In attendance to this meeting were also USAID, French Embassy, Agricultural Council of Tanzania, AGRA and Min. Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries.

The initiative is geared to speed up the implementation process of the policies that were put in place by the government. The initiative aims to ensure that proper policies are imposed at a proper time so as to enable progress and development to take place.

The workshop received and discussed the progress report especially on key areas like Export Bans Crop Cess, VAT on Machinery and equipment, Land – mainly on enhancing ownership – CLR, Inputs: Seed and Agrochemicals, Food and Nutrition Policy. In conclusion, the workshop agreed that the revised report will be shared soon.
The EAGC team facilitated Structured Commodity Grain Trading Systems (STS) training from 22nd to 23rd August in Blantyre and 25th to 26th in Lilongwe districts, represented by Babetti Juwayeyi and Taziona Mchira.

A total number of 29 SMEs participated in the training ranging from cooperatives, processors, input suppliers, traders and banks. The training was part of the deliverables within the Agri-business Investment for Market Stimulation (AIMS) program, which is aiming among others, to improve the capacity of Grain SMEs for increased, efficient, reliable and profitable structured grain trading.

To ensure an in-depth understanding of structured grain trading, Taziona Mchira presented on specific challenges and opportunities for grain trading in Malawi, which was followed by a strategic presentation on “the role of EAGC” to address specific issues affecting the grain industry. Other modules offered during the training included Market Information Systems, G-Soko online platform and grain quality management and standards.

On 24th August 2016, the Eastern Africa Grain Council (EAGC) hosted a Stakeholders Consultative Meeting on the Rwanda Warehouse Receipt System Law 2016 at the Club House La Palisse Hotel in Kigali, Rwanda. The consultative meeting brought together a diverse group of stakeholders of the Warehouse Receipt System (WRS) to discuss matters arising from the Warehouse Receipt System Law in its current state and implications thereof on the System and the broader agricultural sector.

Mr Samwel Rutto, the Regional Manager for Structured Trading Systems at EAGC presented opening remarks on behalf of the EAGC Executive Director. In his remarks, he noted that EAGC has been implementing the WRS in Kenya since 2008 and participated in the development of the WRS Bill in Kenya, which is currently in Parliament. He further noted that the proposed WRS Law in Rwanda should provide an efficient yet robust regulatory framework that protects the rights and obligations of all key actors in the warehouse receipts system.

EAGC emphasised on the need for continued support from the government through favourable agriculture and trade policies in order to ensure the success of the WRS in Rwanda. It was also agreed that the draft Warehouse Receipts System Law 2016 is a good initiative by the Government, but it has some deficiencies which need to be resolved in order to improve the Law. Therefore, the draft Law should be re-developed to take into account feedback proposed by stakeholders.
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