Dear Members and Stakeholders,

Greetings from the EAGC Secretariat. Happy New Year 2017.

Welcome to the EAGC Monthly Members’ Update, January 2017.

Foremost, we wish to thank all of you for your continued support to the Council especially in the previous years. The year 2016 was a great success, and we acknowledge your contribution and participation towards that success.

The year 2017, starts on high note, with lots of activities lined up which we are optimistic they will be of great impact towards realization of the Council’s mandate in the grain trade.

Among the key activities for the year 2017 will be, Annual General Meeting (AGM) in April, Trade Facilitation/Business to Business Linkages across all member countries, Development of EAGC Strategic Plan 2018-2022 which will be the third strategic plan since EAGC’s inception, EAGC@10 Celebrations will continue in 2017 and culminate during the 7th African Grain Trade Summit which will be hosted in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania on 7th October 2017.

EAGC will also focus on trainings through training Institute, EAGI and expansion of GSoko grain trade platform.

Notably, EAGC will facilitate the visits to the 2nd largest International Agribusiness Show in the world—the NAMPO Show on 16th - 19th May in Bothaville South Africa. EAGC will also be privileged to host the Business to Business Trade Linkages event on 24th to 29th August in Indo, India.

We look forward to your continued support and welcome you all to participate in these activities.

Enjoy the reading.
The Eastern Africa Grain Council, participated in the Media Launch for the 1st All Africa Post-Harvest Congress breakfast meeting on 17th January, 2017 held at The Norfolk Hotel, Nairobi. The launch was aimed at creating awareness to build discussions around post harvest losses of commodities which amounts to about 1.3 million tonnes in Africa yearly.

The launch, graced by the Cabinet Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Hon. Willy Bett, called on all stakeholders in the Agricultural sector to take active role in addressing post harvest loses.

Mr Gerald Masila was among the panelists discussing the role of private sector in addressing issues of post harvest losses and grain markets and prices. In his remarks, he succinctly said that the private sector through EAGC, is committed to support post harvest technologies which would be adopted to offer lasting solutions to post harvest loses.

The congress themed ‘Reducing Food Losses and Waste: Sustainable Solutions for Africa’ under the various sub themes, is organized by the University of Nairobi in partnership with several organizations among them Eastern Africa Grain Council and supported by The Rock Feller Foundation as the main sponsor and other sponsors. The congress will be held from 28th to 31st March, 2017 at Safari Park Hotels, Nairobi Kenya.

During the congress, entries from innovators in the postharvest arena from across Africa will participate in the competitions under the Postharvest Technologies Challenge (PTC) which seeks to attract innovators from all over Africa to share new technologies and innovative ideas to address food loss and waste in the African context. The entries will be screened by experts through a process which will identify the top 10 innovations. The finalists will pitch for their innovations to investors, donors and other relevant stakeholders during a special sessions of the congress.

A great diversity of delegates have already registered for the congress including researchers, academics, entrepreneurs, farmers, farmer organization leaders, innovators, development agencies, civil society and policy makers from all over the world.

Among partners will be, Rockefeller Foundation as the strategic partner for the congress, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Horticulture Innovation Lab (USAID), East Africa Trade and Investment Hub (USAID), Netherlands Development Organization (SNV), Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Postharvest Education Foundation, Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), Eastern African Grain Council (EAGC) among others.

EAGC within its mandate addresses issues of post harvest losses and therefore the partnership with the University of Nairobi to host the inaugural All Africa Post Harvest Congress is a great milestone which will go far in realizing adoption of sustainable technologies to address the post harvest loss menace.
The Eastern Africa Grain Council, EAGC participated in the stakeholder breakfast roundtable discussion on marketing of root and staple drought tolerant crops across Kenya represented the Executive Director, Gerald Masila and Policy Analyst, Kim Mhando. The roundtable hosted under the auspices of The Accelerated Value Chain Development (AVCD) Program, was held on 25th January 2017 at Villa Rosa Kempinski Hotel, Nairobi.

The main purpose of the project is to stimulate the development of the value chains of these crops through increased productivity and stronger market linkages. With respect to staple drought-tolerant crops, the project seeks to develop the value chains of sorghum, millet, cowpeas, green grams and groundnuts from seed systems to consumption.

The meeting received progress updates on root crops (Irish potatoes and orange flesh sweet potatoes) and staple drought tolerant crops (grains – particularly sorghum). With respect to the drought tolerant crops, the meeting noted that:

The project’s main interventions in the promotion of staple drought-tolerant crops are: improving seed accessibility for high quality seeds; promotion of good agricultural practices; improving post-harvest handling and storage; stimulating utilisation/consumption of these crops through product development and value addition; and strengthening market linkages. The project’s locations for this component are Elgeyo-Marakwet, Siaya, Busia, Tharaka-Nithi, Kitui and Makueni Counties.

The project is taking efforts to promote sorghum consumption through blending in flours. The project has experienced a few challenges so far like; Crop insurance (weather-indexed insurance) has not worked well so far. Despite adverse weather conditions, farmers were not compensated by insurers since satellite data used for the weather index insurance indicated “sufficient moisture levels” in the project areas.

The project linked farmers and off-takers through a contractual agreement, whereby the contract price for sorghum is Kshs 70/kg. However, there is a significant risk of side-selling given that prevailing prices are between Kshs 80-110/kg in Lower Eastern areas.

The project is also faced with challenges relating to trade finance, in the sense that available financial products and not friendly to agricultural trade. There are current attempts to use invoice discounting.

During panel discussions, panelists noted that, the project needs to take substantial efforts to understand the markets for staple drought-tolerant crops. Therefore, a thorough market study should be done for these crops in Kenya and beyond, so as to adequately guide the interventions in these value chains.

The project should focus on creating and sustaining untapped markets such as schools, prison services and the military barracks to name a few. In addition, it was noted that there’s need for a guiding policy framework for development of agricultural markets.

The meeting agreed that stakeholders and partners should contribute towards finding solutions to some of the pertinent issues facing the project and market linkages within it towards realization of the project success.
Developing Policy Agenda for Tanzania

The Eastern Africa Grain Council, through Policy and Advocacy division, has embarked on identifying and addressing issues of export and import restrictions which have affected grain trade in the region. This comes at a time when, export of grains mainly maize and rice are restricted.

The government argues export bans ensure an adequate domestic food supply and help stabilize consumer prices. While low domestic prices benefit urban consumers, the bans negatively affect farmers’ and traders’ incomes by hindering their access to lucrative prices in international markets. Because the bans are often ad hoc and impromptu, the policy causes market uncertainty which may have long-run implications for future food security and trading opportunities.

The team visited members and grain sector stakeholders in Dar es Salaam, Moshi, Arusha, Babati and Dodoma and had successful discussions on key policy-related constraints that they encounter in their operations in the grain sector in Tanzania, that they need EAGC to focus on in its policy advocacy efforts in Tanzania. EAGC Tanzania Country Office will continue receiving contentious issues from stakeholders in order to ensure comprehensive policy advocacy in the Country.

MALAWI

EAGC Malawi Office hosts the CPC meeting to draw 2017 agenda

The EAGC Malawi country program conducted its inaugural Country Programme Committee (CPC) meeting on Friday the 20th January 2017 at their offices in Lilongwe, Malawi.

The meeting brought together the EAGC members including, Mr Fredrick Kawalewale from Agriculture Input Supplies Limited (AISL), Mrs Makoko Chirwa from Zekoko farms, Esther Kawale from Agricultural Commodity Exchange (ACE) and Mr. Calvin Kamchacha from Tradeline Corporation.

Recently, EAGC members in Malawi conducted elections for the Country Program Committee (CPC) members. The CPC members supports implementation of the Council’s in the country. The meeting received an update on the Board of Directors meeting held in December 2016 as well as reviewed the Malawi Office activities strategy for 2017.

The CPC set membership drive as a key priority in the year 2017 as other activities on policy, trainings and trade linkages followed.

Malawi country program was established last year, 2016 and has so far attracted high rate of membership and desire for improved grain trade is very high.
EAGC nominated in the Post-Harvest Task Force

EAGC Rwanda was nominated in the task force in charge of Post Harvest Handling for season 2017A. In a meeting held on 25th January 2017 with Hon. François Kanimba Minister of Trade and Industry, Republic of Rwanda, the taskforce discussed at length priorities in post harvest handling especially during harvest season. The other issues discussed were the harvest season progress and the Aggregation Centers Implementation plan in the Country.

The task force will start its activities immediately, by first mapping the available Aggregation Centres (AC) and perform the need assessment to be submitted in the next meeting.

The nomination of EAGC Rwanda to the task force will double efforts in supporting the government in the efforts of addressing post harvest losses. Over the years, EAGC has positioned itself as a key player in providing solutions to grain trade in the country.

Tanzania

Graders training hosted in Mbeya, Tanzania

The EAGC Tanzania Office, conducted a Grader’s training in Mbeya on 24th Jan 2017. The training attracted 24 graders from different organizations.

The graders were drawn from RUDI, Kibaigwa Flour Supplies, Raphael Group Ltd, Ruaha Milling Company and Mviwata organizations.

The aim of the training was to introduce to the trainees the sampling, testing and grading procedures as well as the East Africa grain standards.

EAGC has scheduled several trainings in the region through its specialized training division, the Eastern Africa Grain Institute, EAGI. Some of these trainings include, Post-Harvest Handling and Management, Warehouse Operations Management, Fumigation, Grading, Milling Operations, Warehouse Receipting Financing, Introduction to Structured Trading Systems, Structured Commodity Trade Financing, Agribusiness Financing Opportunities and Risk Management, and Web 2.0 and Social Media for Development.

EAGC promotes structured trade in the region and in order to establish the system, traders should be able to introduce good quality grains into the regional market and make sure that their grains are of suitable standards and safe for consumptions.

The kits will help the warehouse operators to test and grade their grains and take all measures to make sure they are of acceptable grades and standards.

Handing Over Warehouse Equipment to traders

EAGC Tanzania handed over Grain Sampling and Testing Kit to the certified warehouses in Tanzania on 25th January 2017.

The kit contained moisture meter, aflatoxin kit and sampling scale. Some of the certified warehouses that received the kits were; Ruaha Milling, Rapha Group Limited and G2L.

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Eastern Africa Grain Council organized a successful inaugural Pulses Trade Fair and Exhibition 2017 on 19th January at Machakos Training Centre (ATC). The Trade fair themed, ‘Advancing the Pulses Production and Markets’ was aimed at creating awareness on the production and marketing of pulses from the Eastern region and facilitate a networking platform for value chain actors in service delivery to small holder farmers within the region. The event brought together over 900 farmers from Machakos, Makueni and Kitui Counties and Fifteen, 15, organizations exhibited who exhibited at the Pulses Trade Fair.

The Kenya Pulses Project is implemented by EAGC in partnership with the International Trade Centre (ITC). The project “Supporting Indian Trade and Investment for Africa” (SITA) Project, which is regional project that is funding several initiatives across several export sectors in East Africa over the next 5 years in order to enhance trade and investment between Kenya and India.

The event was officiated by the County government, Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, Fishers and Urban Development represented by the Chief Officer, Ms Damaris Mativo, Country Coordinator –ITC-SITA Mr Nzioka Waita, Food Trade ESA- Markets Specialist, Isaac Tallam, Minister of Agriculture, Makueni County and Chief Officer, Ministry of Trade, Machakos County Ms Sheila Mukinya were among the guests who graced the Pulses Trade Fair.

In conjunction with staff from the Ministry through the ATC and the County Director of Agriculture’s office groups were trained on the pulses agronomic pulses.

The participants got an opportunity to learn best practices of cultivation at the crop demonstrations like; Conservation agriculture and Conventional agriculture. The farmers and participants got opportunity to learn best practices of producing drought tolerant pulses, post-harvest handling practices and marketing through;

- **The Crop demonstration** – Seed companies and input suppliers had an opportunity to showcase different varieties of seeds and production techniques and methods of farming like conventional and conservation farming practices.

- **The Exhibition Arena** where different companies showcased different technologies in pulses production, processing and value addition.

- **Business to Business (B2B)** meeting where buyers and sellers of pulses held fruitful networking on available markets for pulses.

- **Farmers Training**: Farmers were trained on Pulses standards, post harvest handling, market information access etc.

The next Pulses Trade Fair will be hosted in Meru on June 2017 which is expected to attract over 5,000 participants.
Alongside Pulses trade fair, EAGC facilitated a success business to business meeting for the pulses, sorghum and maize traders. The Trade Linkages B2B at Machakos hosted during the Pulses Trade Fair on 19th January, 2017 was officiated by the EAGC Executive Director, Chief Officer, Ministry of Trade County Government of Machakos and ITC-SITA Country Coordinator. The meeting which aimed at facilitating trading between producer groups and buyers attracted 10 buyers, 30 farmer groups, one bank and one business advisor.

Some of the buyers included, Smart Logistics, Bunda Cake, AgroSave, Classifieds Promotions, Select Fresh Produce, Phinergy Trading, Unga Limited among others.

Trade agreements for maize, beans, green grams, pigeon peas, sorghum, millet totaling to 1,298 MT valued at $ USD714,790 were signed.

The session provided a baseline for determination of volumes available from production efforts vis a vis the demand levels from external markets. This year, there will be several B2B meeting for both national and international as scheduled in the calendar of events in this update. The next national B2B will be held in Eldoret, Kenya on 2nd February 2017.
Early in 2016, Eastern Africa Grain Council was nominated to represent the grain stakeholders in the Kenya Commodity Exchange Task Force committee.

The Government of Kenya through the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Cooperatives, State Department of Trade is in the process of establishing a National Commodities Exchange. The commodities exchange will materially impact on the livelihoods of millions of Kenya’s smallholder producers and other actors in both agricultural and non-agricultural commodity value chains.

The committee which involves representation from the Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Agriculture, Financial Institutions, Private Sector, is tasked with responsibility of formulating establishment of the National Commodity Exchanges. The Exchange is envisioned to provide an appropriate tool for providing farmers and traders with much needed credit opportunities; reducing farmer vulnerability by allowing farmers to sell produce at a time when prices are attractive; reducing post-harvest losses attributed to poor commodity storage practices; and provide employment opportunities along the exchange ecosystem.

The committee participated in a study tour to Delhi and Mumbai in India to learn and understand the best practices on regulation, operation, financing as well as market information systems for the functioning of the National Commodity Exchanges.

The team which involved the department of Trade and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), visited several organizations like, The Warehouse Development Regulatory Authority which is the commodity exchange regulator, NCDEX, Sohan Lal Commodities, Bank-RBL, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and MIS Provider for the platforms like Level A commodities.

EAGC is currently supporting the task force with ideas on the establishment of WRS and Commodity Exchanges in Kenya and this will continue up to the end of June 2017.

From the tour, the experience gained will be essential to support establishment of the Commodity Exchange in Kenya. The Government of Kenya sought partnership opportunities with the Government of India on establishment of a robust Warehouse Receipting System and Commodity Exchange in Kenya. The private sector will take the lead opportunity by investing in Warehouse Receipting System infrastructure.

EAGC identified opportunity to partner with NABARD in the establishment of a training center in Malawi as well as partnership with Level A Commodities for sharing of data especially on pulses and from the international market.
VECO Grain Sector Intervention Framework Meeting, Discuss Partnership in Grain Trade

Eastern Africa Grain Council, Uganda Office has forged partnership with VECO Uganda to promote structured grain trade in Uganda.

On 16th January 2017, EAGC attended a meeting with VECO and other partners to discuss the VECO Grain Sector intervention Framework. The meeting was organized by VECO East Africa at Uganda Cooperative Alliance (UCA) offices in Kampala.

VECO East Africa’s Grain intervention Framework is a five year project in which EAGC is expected to work with VECO East Africa to further promote Structured trade in Uganda and Regional Cross border Trade.

VECO East Africa works to enable and support smallholder farmers to take up their role in rural poverty alleviation and to contribute to feeding a growing world population in an sustainable way.

Over the years, EAGC has created a formidable presence in Uganda, facilitating structured grain trade in the country. As such, several organisations like VECO East Africa have come in hand to forge partnerships which are critical to the grain stakeholders.

Yield Uganda Investment Fund Launched

On 24th January, 2017 Pearl Capital Partners (CPC) an independent investment fund management, launched Yield Uganda Investment Fund at the Kampala Serena Hotel. The Launch was graced by the Hon. Matia Kasaija; the Minister Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

The single-country 12 million Euros Fund will be used to invest in Small and Growing Agribusinesses (SGAs) positioned in Agricultural supply chains in Uganda.

The Fund was formed by the European Union Delegation to Uganda, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) Uganda as an impact investment fund for small and medium agribusiness development in Uganda. The fund is a five year which starts on February 2017.

EAGC is a key stakeholder in the grain sector in Uganda hence its involvement is very critical. Most of the grain stakeholders will benefit from the Fund towards realization of a sustainable Agricultural supply chain.

Celebrating a Decade of Success as the Voice of the Grain Sector in the Region.
KEY OUTLOOK OF 2017

**Annual General Meeting:** The Regional AGM will be held on 20th April 2017.

**Trade Facilitation / Business to Business Linkage:** EAGC will host various trade focuses business to business meetings in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Malawi and Burundi. For the first time, we will also include stakeholders from DRC Congo. A schedule of the B2Bs will be shared and can also be accessed from the EAGC Website www.eagc.org.

**EAGC Strategic Plan 2018 -2022:** EAGC will embark on reviewing its previous strategic plan and developing a new, focused strategic direction for EAGC through the EAGC Strategic Plan 2018 to 2022. All the members will be involved in this exercise. We look forward to your continued support.

**EAGC@10 Celebrations:** The EAGC@10 – A Decade Stronger, celebrations will continue in 2017 which will culminate to the final celebrations during the 7th AGTS.

**7th Africa Grain Trade Summit:** EAGC will host the 7th African Grain Trade Summit from 5th -7th October in Dar es Salaam Tanzania. Please plan to participate.

**EAGC Scholarships and Agrihack Programme:** EAGC in partnership with the Technical Centre for Rural Corporation (CTA) and the Universities in the region will launch a scholarship programme to support students at post graduate level who are focusing on structured trade related studies. The partners will also work with IT students at the universities to support Apps or IT products that will assist in the improvement of the functionalities of RATIN. We shall keep you updated on this.

**EAGC Training – Eastern Africa Grain Institute:** EAGI will continue to offer competency based courses for the grain industry in 2017. Some of the courses will include: Warehouse operations; Warehouse Receipt Finance, Web 2.0, Structured Commodity Financing, Agribusiness Financing Opportunities and Risk Management, SME training International Trade Meetings:

**EAGC International trade events.** The first one will be the NAMPO Expo on 16th – 19th May in Bothaville South Africa and Business to Business Linkages meeting on 24th to 29th August in INDO India. If you are interested in participating in this event, kindly get in touch with the secretariat on grains@eagc.org, or +254 733 444035.

**Expansion of GSoko:** EAGC will expand GSoko to reach as many beneficiaries as possible. This will focus on getting more farmers to participate in GSoko. Opening avenues for more traders to transact through GSoko and getting many processors to procure through the platform. This will expand the GSoko certified warehouses and GSoko aggregation centres.

**Media Coverage.**

Within the month of January, EAGC received wide media coverage in Radio, Broadcast as well as print.

The 1st Pulses Trade Fair, Kenya received wide media coverage in 4 radio stations, 4 TV news, and 3 print newspapers.

EAGC was also hosted for 2 Live Radio Shows and EAGC Executive Director also featured in the Live coverage on KTN TV during the 1st All Africa Post Harvest Congress media launch.

The areas of focus were on the EAGC interventions on post harvest handling, trade linkages and market information

http://www.newtimes.co.rw/section/article/2017-01-09/206916/
http://allafrica.com/stories/201701310013.html
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<td>23rd and 24th June 2017</td>
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<td>(Dar es salaam (Sabasaba) International Trade Fairs</td>
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<td>Regional progress review and planning meeting (All program teams)</td>
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<td>7th African Grain Trade Summit</td>
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<td>7th – October</td>
<td>Launch of EAGC Strategic Plan 2018-2022</td>
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<td>1-3rd November</td>
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**EAGC G-SOKO BUSINESS TRADE DIRECTORY, 2ND EDITION COMING SOON!**

The G-Soko Business Trade Directory offers advertising opportunity for the members and stakeholders to advertise and create visibility for their products.

Last year we published the 1st Edition and circulated to members and stakeholders. From the feedback, many stakeholders have found the Directory to be very useful in their business and others have created wide awareness of their organizations.

The 2nd Edition is here! To take up the opportunity to advertise on the this Edition,

**kindly contact us via:**
Eastern Africa Grain Council, Mbaazi Avenue, Off Kingara Road
P.O. Box 218 - 00606 Nairobi, Kenya
G-Soko Hotline +254 790 950 000
Tel: +254 733 444 035
Email: gsoko@eagc.org, grains@eagc.org, Website: www.eagc.org
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