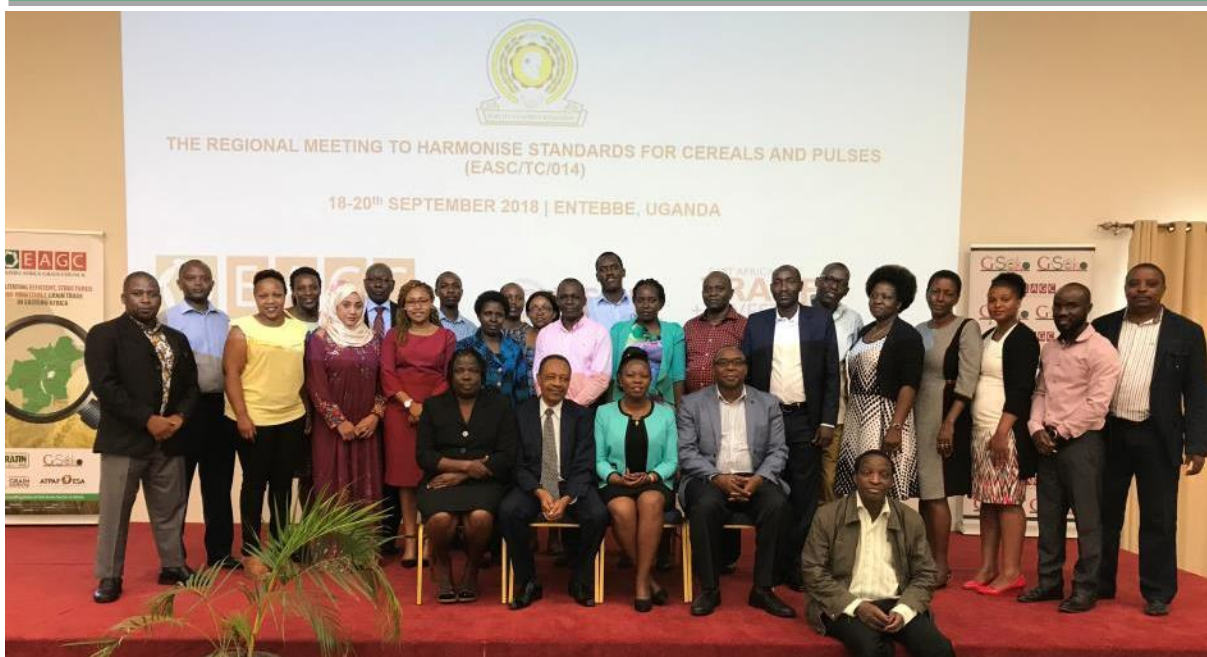




*Communiqué on the Joint East Africa Community/Eastern Africa Grain Council Regional Meeting to Harmonise Standards for Cereals and Pulses*

*18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018, Best Western Premier Hotel, Entebbe, Uganda*



Participants of the Joint EAC/EAGC Regional Meeting to Harmonise Standards for Cereals and Pulses that was held from 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018 in Entebbe, Uganda

The East African Community (EAC) in partnership with the Eastern Africa Grain Council (EAGC) hosted the *Regional Meeting to Harmonise Standards for Cereals and Pulses* from 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018 at the Best Western Premier – Garden Hotel in Entebbe, Uganda. The meeting was hosted with the support of the USAID East Africa Trade and Investment Hub (EATIH), and was convened under the EAC Technical Committee number EASC/TC/014 responsible for standards for cereals and pulses. The meeting convened approximately 30 grain standards experts drawn from the public and private sectors in from the EAC Partner States. The full list of participants is availed under Annex I of this Communiqué.

The purpose of the Meeting was to consider the National Positions on the review of the Standards for Finger Millet, Green Grams and Sorghum as developed by Partner States during their respective national consultations, and eventually achieve a consensus on the Draft Standards for these commodities.

## BACKGROUND

Standards for staple food play an important role in regulating food quality and food safety. Considering that intra-regional trade between East African Community (EAC) Partner States is significant, a synchronised form of regulating food quality and safety is essential to ensure that quality and safety considerations do not disrupt trade. Recognising this, the East African Community harmonised standards for twenty-two (22) staple food grain commodities and derived products in December 2013. This was an important step towards facilitating intra-EAC grain trade whilst laying the foundation for improving grain quality and safety.

Trade statistics show that intra-EAC grain trade increased significantly post-harmonisation of the staple foods standards. Trade statistics indicate that Kenya's imports of maize increased by almost 40% after harmonisation of the standards, while total value of trade in cereals between Uganda and Rwanda, Tanzania and Kenya increased by 195% between 2013 and 2015.

Despite these gains, the implementation of standards has faced some challenges. A Gap Analysis Survey was conducted by EAGC in 2015 recommended, among others, that the EAC Secretariat should initiate the review of the EAS 2013. The recommendations from the Regional Meeting were endorsed for implementation by the EAC; the review process commenced in early 2016 and concluded in 2017, covering nine (9) standards. These nine revised standards, which were gazetted by the EAC in December 2017, resolved technical deficiencies identified in their respective 2013 editions, and are expected to further reduce technical barriers to trade associated with standards.

An additional five (5) harmonised grain standards have been earmarked for review, these being standards for Finger Millet, Sorghum, Green Grams, Soy Flour and Composite Flour. The standards for Finger Millet, Sorghum and Green Grams were the subject of this Regional Meeting.

### A. Remarks by Key Dignitaries



The Regional Meeting was officially opened by the host county, Uganda. In his opening remarks on behalf of the Deputy Executive Director of the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS), **Mr. Joel Oryang**:

**PRAISED** EAC Partner States for their commitment to the process of harmonisation of standards for cereals and pulses, highlighting the important role these commodities play in livelihoods and food security of East Africans.

**APPRECIATED** the support of EAGC towards harmonisation of standards in the cereals and pulses sector as part of EAC's regional integration efforts.

**URGED** Partner States’ delegations to carefully address concerns with the standards in order to minimise gaps and thus simplify the review process.

Speaking on behalf of the Director General Customs and Trade at the EAC Secretariat, **Ms. Stella Apolot**, Principal Standards Officer at EAC:



- **POINTED OUT** that the Regional Meeting was a continuation of the review process for East African Standards for cereals and pulses.
- **URGED** Partner States to fast-track adoption and implementation of the East African Standards for cereals and pulses that were gazetted in 2017 in order to realise the intended objectives of the Standards.

**Ms. Janet Ngombalu**, Regional Programmes Coordinator at EAGC:



- **HIGHLIGHTED** the importance of the harmonised East African Standards in supporting intra-regional grain trade, noting that trade in cereals and pulses between EAC countries has increased since harmonisation of the standards.
- **REITERATED** EAGC’s commitment to working with bureaus of standards in the Partner States to implement the East African Standards for cereals and pulses as part of EAGC’s objectives of facilitating structured grain trade in the region.
- **APPRECIATED** the commitment of Partner States to the process of developing and reviewing East African Standards for cereals and pulses.



**Mr. Andrew Luzze**, Country Representative in Uganda for USAID EATIH:

- **ELABORATED** on the role being played by EATIH in improving the business environment in the agricultural sector in the EAC
- **REITERATED** the commitment of USAID EATIH to support intra-EAC trade.

## B. Key Observations and Agreements from the Meeting



Uganda delegates at the regional meeting. From left to right: Pamela Akwap, UNBS; Arthur Tabula, UNBS; Rose Nakimuli, Chemiphar (U) Ltd; and Prof. Archileo Kaaya, Makerere University

The meeting deliberated the National Positions of EAC Partner States with respect to three (3) Draft East African Standards, these being: Sorghum grains (DEAS 757:2013), Finger Millet grains (DEAS 758:2013) and Green Grams (DEAS 331:2013).

The meeting **NOTED** and **AGREED** to the following general changes to the draft Standards:

- i. **DELETION** of the introduction section of all 3 draft Standards for the purpose of consistency with the other current cereal and pulses standards
- ii. **REPLACEMENT** of all the sampling and test methods for cereal and pulses standards under the normative reference clause with the Cereal and Pulses - Sampling (EAS 900:2017) and Cereal and Pulses - Test Methods (EAS 901:2017) respectively.



- iii. **INTRODUCTION** of the terms and definitions of “foreign matter, inorganic matter, organic matter, filth, pest damaged grain, harmful/noxious seeds, defective/damaged grain, food grade packaging material as new terms and definitions under clause 3 in coherence with the other standards under EASC/TC/014.
- iv. **INTRODUCTION** of “filth and inorganic matter” as new parameters in the Specific Requirements and replaced the referenced standard on test methods to be EAS 901.
- v. **INTRODUCTION** of a heavy metal sub-clause under contaminants.
- vi. **DELETION** of sub-clause 6.2 under Hygiene and its table of microbiological limits inclusively for these are raw materials that require further processing.
- vii. **INTRODUCTION** of a new clause on Weight and Measures to align with the International Labour Organisation’s requirement of maximum package weight of 50kg where human loading and offloading is involved, noting that all EAC Partner States are signatories to this requirement.
- viii. **REPLACEMENT** of Reference Standard on sampling to be EAS 900.

The full range of changes made to the three draft East African Standards will be available to stakeholders during the 60-day Public Review period commencing in October 2018.

### KEY RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAY FORWARD

The meeting recommended that Partner States should fast track the domestication of the 2017 harmonized East African Standards for cereals and pulses.



EAGC Executive Director, Gerald Masila (centre) made a courtesy call to greet the delegates at the regional meeting

The meeting agreed on the following next steps:

- a) **Convening of a Regional Meeting** to review East African Standards for **Soy Flour and Composite Flour** in Zanzibar, Tanzania from 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> October 2018.
- b) **Finalisation of the Public Review** of the revised draft standards for Sorghum, Finger Millet, Green Grams, Composite Flour and Soy Flour by mid-December 2018.
- c) **Convening of an Editorial meeting** after the public review period for consideration of public review feedback, legal scrubbing and preparing the standards for endorsement and gazettelement.

For more information, please contact the EAGC Secretariat through the addresses below:

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## Pictorial



The Rwanda delegation at the regional meeting



The delegation from Kenya



The Burundi delegation



The delegation from the host country, Uganda



The delegation from Tanzania



From left to right: Andrew Luzze (USAID EATI), Janet Ngombalu (EAGC) and Stella Apolot (EAC Secretariat)

## **Annex 1: List of Participants**

### **United Republic of Tanzania**

1. Prof. Henry S. Laswai (Sokoine University of Agriculture, TC Chairperson)
2. Stephanie Silas Kaaya (Tanzania Bureau of Standards, TC Secretary)
3. Salama Ghuio Shekilango (Tanzania Bureau of Standards)
4. Hafsa Ali Slim (Zanzibar Bureau of Standards)
5. Linus Chenya Gedi (THC Association)
6. Analice Anatol Kamala (Tanzania Food and Drug Authority)
7. Iddi Hatibu Mvungi (S.S. Bakhresa & Co. Ltd)

### **Republic of Burundi**

1. Dieudonne Manirakiza (Burundi Bureau of Standards)
2. Simeon Misigaro (Burundi Bureau of Standards)
3. Jackson Quincy Nahayo (CFCB – AGRO BUSINESS)
4. Nsenga Ruyaga Gilbert (Ministry to the Office of the President, Responsible for EAC Affairs)

### **Republic of Kenya**

1. Peter Mutua (Kenya Bureau of Standards)
2. Agnes Mdzomba (Kenya Bureau of Standards)
3. Agripina Ngui (National Cereals and Produce Board)
4. Fredrick K. Gitahi (Ministry of EAC)
5. Brendah Nakhumicha Obura (Ministry of Health)
6. Samuel Kalama (Parliament of Kenya)
7. Christine Emily Agumba Odhiambo (Parliament of Kenya)

### **Republic of Rwanda**

1. Moses Ndayisenga (Minimex Ltd)
2. Ngezahayo Diogene (Sosoma Industries)
3. Peter Mugisha (Africa Improved Foods Ltd)

### **Republic of Uganda**

1. Prof. Archileo Kaaya (Makerere University, Head of Delegation)
2. Arthur Tabula (Uganda National Bureau of Standards)
3. Pamela Akwap (Uganda National Bureau of Standards)
4. Rose Nakimuli (Chemiphar (U) Ltd)

### **Regional Organisations and Development Partners**

1. Andrew Luzze (USAID East Africa Trade and Investment Hub)
2. Joel Ayikobua (World Food Programme Uganda)

### **East African Community Secretariat**

1. Stella Apolot
2. Jacqueline Ikara

### **Eastern Africa Grain Council Secretariat**

1. Janet Ngombalu
2. Kim Mhando