Executive Director’s Summary:

Dear Member,

Welcome to the June Members’ Update.

I take this opportunity to welcome the 3 new members who joined EAGC in the month of June; Afro Grains Limited, Kiganda High Investments and Minimex Limited. We look forward to meeting your expectations through EAGC’s value proposition.

EAGC’s core mandate is to promote structured trading systems across the Eastern and Southern Africa region. This month, through B2B forums, the Council has facilitated over 454,000 MT trade deals worth over US Dollars 185 Million. Additionally, through the grain trade business hub model, EAGC facilitated aggregation of grain commodities by small holder farmers who traded 226.26MT of grains valued at US Dollars 92,280.

EAGC has for a long time been at the forefront of representing the interests of the grain sector and non-state parties with an interest in agricultural commodity trade throughout the process of developing the Warehouse Receipt System legislation.

I am happy to report that in the month of June, after approximately 9 years of negotiations and consultations between different arms of Government and the private sector led by EAGC, His Excellency the President of Kenya Uhuru Kenyatta signed into law the Warehouse Receipt System Bill.

One of EAGC’s functions is capacity building through the Grain Business Institute, GBI, whose objective is to enhance competitiveness and advance expertise as well as support innovations in the grain sector, by imparting knowledge and technological support through trainings. In this spirit, the GBI partnered with Ken Trade in creating awareness amongst EAGC members on the requirements, costs, procedures and processes involved and terminologies used in the course of conducting cross-border and international trade which will be instrumental in reducing unnecessary costs incurred simply due to lack of knowledge.

EAGC in partnership with Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE) has supported the establishment of a maize futures contract on the commodity exchange on agricultural commodities particularly maize in Kenya which if implemented will contribute to the realization of a food secure country through enhancing market transparency and ensuring a consistent supply of staples that will be instrumental in regulating food prices.

The EAGC Secretariat is continuously and actively preparing for the upcoming 8th African Grain Trade Summit which will be held in Mombasa, on the 3rd – 5th October 2019, focusing on the theme ‘Transforming Grain Trade Value Chains for a Prosperous Africa’.

Country teams have elected new Country Program Committee members who have taken over from their predecessors and will be influential in the supporting the implementation of EAGC programs at country level in pursuant to the Council’s vision of being ‘the leading voice for the grain industry in Africa’.

More updates on EAGC interventions with various partners within the Eastern Africa Region and beyond are shared in detail in this members update edition for the month of June 2019 which we achieved for you members and this could not have been realized without your support and collaboration.

We wish you a Happy Reading!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
In an effort to facilitate efficient, structured, inclusive and profitable grain trade in the region, EAGC in partnership with the USAID East Africa Trade and Investment Hub, the USAID Southern Africa Trade and Investment Hub and the Tanzania Mercantile Exchange, hosted a Regional Trade Facilitation (B2B) Forum at the White sands Hotel in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania on 19th June 2019.

The forum aimed at bringing together traders from Eastern and Southern Africa Countries to network and forge grain trade alliances.

Over 120 grain traders, processors, producers, logistics companies and banks from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Zambia, Mozambique, Malawi and the Democratic republic of Congo were represented at the trade facilitation forum.

Grain trade contracts for the sale of 454,532MT of grain valued at USD 144,233,400 were signed for immediate and future trade. The commodities traded included maize, common beans, soya beans, groundnuts, chick peas, pigeon peas, wheat, rice and green grams.

The signed trade volumes among buyers and sellers will to a large extent increase and facilitate intra-regional trade for grain commodities in the Eastern and Southern African region, particularly at a time when countries such as Burundi, Rwanda, Kenya, DR Congo are experiencing food shortages.

On the other hand, countries such Uganda, Tanzania and Ethiopia have a surplus to export, with Tanzania expecting a maize record harvest with a surplus of approximately 794,999 MT of maize.

The Council will continue to lobby for increased Cross Border Trade in grain commodities within the Eastern and Southern Africa countries through policy advocacy against non-tariff barriers that hinder movement of agricultural commodities across the borders.

Further, the Council will continue to influence intra-regional and global trade of agricultural commodities to increase the access, availability and utilization of African-grown staple foods in regionally integrated markets.
EAGC represented by the Executive Director Mr. Gerald Masila, participated in the twenty-eighth International Grains Conference held on 11th and 12th June 2019 in London. The conference convened over 350 delegates including a balance of industry and government representatives, as well as international organizations.

The conference highlighted the key challenges facing the international grains and oilseed industry with the motivation to strengthen the dialogue between key players from across the global grains and oilseeds supply chain, as well as providing a unique platform for exchange with policymakers.

EAGC as a member of the International Grain Trade Coalition (IGTC), made a presentation on the geographical snapshot of Africa grains and oilseeds market opportunities.

The conference ran parallel to London Grains Week on the 10th to 15th June, hosted by the International Grain Trade Coalition (IGTC), which was among the IGC main sponsors. The Grains Week convened 32 global grain trade leaders who discussed the facilitation of the international grain trade.
EAGC Executive Director Gerald Masila represented the council in the NASA Harvest Conference in Washington on 24th – 28th June.

NASA Harvest is a new, multidisciplinary Consortium commissioned by NASA to enhance the use of satellite data in decision making related to food security and agriculture globally.

The one week conference included a meeting held exclusively for members of the consortium, which EAGC is a member.

More than 40 representatives of institutions, discussed and identified shared objectives to encourage interaction between the different members of the consortium.

Mr. Masila delivered a presentation alongside a panel discussion on the opportunities for partnership in the Eastern Africa region for the use of Earth Observation (EO) for food security and early warning.

EO is information gathering of biological systems via remote-sensing technologies. EOs are a crucial part of monitoring crops in the field. Satellite images come in handy in places that are hard to access for crops and food missions.

He also shared the need for value creation by addition and sharing of EO data and information by private public partnerships for business and food security in Eastern Africa.

Through such partnerships such as with ICPAD, EAGC has been able to get good estimates for harvest forecast for the Regional Food Balance Sheets which in turn inform policy decisions.

The conference has strengthened the Council’s links with other members of the consortium and reinforced the annual work agenda by incorporating new research lines developed jointly with members of NASA.
EAGC paid a charity visit to New Life Home Kilimani Trust children’s home as part the Council’s Corporate Social Responsibility.

The visit held on 7th June was identified as an opportunity to give back to the community through creation of a positive impact by reaching out to the less fortunate.

New Life Home Trust seeks to provide a compassionate Christian response to the plight of abandoned and other extremely vulnerable children and babies, with priority given to those who are infected or affected by HIV/AIDS.

The home rescues abandoned babies (newborn to 6 months old) and cares for them until they are adopted, or until they are approaching their 3rd birthday, where they are transferred to another branch. The secretariat interacted with the children and donated basic food and non-food items that will go a long way in supporting the needs of the children.

Kilimani Baby Home hopes to continue to be a center of excellence in the rescue and care of abandoned babies and to see all children either reunited with their biological families cases where possible or adopted into loving families.

EAGC joins key stakeholders in discussions for agricultural transformation in Africa

EAGC, represented by the Regional Program Co-ordinator, Janet Ngombalu, attended the 15th CAADP Partnership Platform meeting in Nairobi Kenya featuring the theme “Enhancing trade and markets for accelerated agriculture transformation”.

The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development (CAADP) Partnership Platform (PP), is an annual continental forum which brings together stakeholders in African agriculture and food security seeking to address challenges in order to consolidate and accelerate progress towards agricultural transformation in Africa.

In relation to the theme, Janet delivered a presentation on enhancing Public - Private - Producer Partnerships (4Ps) for increased investment and inclusive growth in the agricultural sector. 4Ps is a strategy to connect smallholders to the private sector as a way to secure access to inputs and outputs markets.

In her presentation she discussed key issues around supporting the private sector to work with Governments and producers for trade and markets, which is line with EAGC’s mantra on more trade and better trade.
The East Africa Community Partner States budgets for the financial year 2019/2020 came with fiscal reliefs to the agricultural sector.

**KENYA**

In Kenya, **pest control products are now exempt from VAT following introduction of 16% VAT in 2018/19 financial year.** This was deemed contrary to the country’s ambitions to stimulate agricultural output particularly in the context of the Big Four Agenda. **The government has also allocated KShs 72.3 billion (USD 72.3 million) for the agriculture and food security component of the Big Four Agenda.**

**TANZANIA**

In Tanzania, **grain drying equipment has been exempted from VAT** which is a big achievement in efforts to reduce post-harvest losses and improve quality of marketed grain produce. Additionally, **input VAT credit for exports of agricultural commodities has been reinstated.** The input VAT credit was due for abolition in July 2019 if the provisions of the Written Laws (Miscellaneous Amendments) Act 2017 which amended the VAT Act would have remained in place. Input VAT credit is seen as a vital tool to keep Tanzania’s agricultural exports competitive and will primarily benefit the country’s exports of pulses to the highly competitive international market.

Locally manufactured seeds are expected to become cheaper for farmers with the introduction of a **12-month duty remission scheme for seed packaging materials whereby a duty rate of 0% shall apply instead of 25% for local producers of seeds.**

**UGANDA**

In Uganda, the government targets an increase in agricultural exports to USD4 Billion by 2020 from the current USD1.3 Billion. This is expected to be achieved partly by **eliminating withholding tax on all gross payments of agricultural supplies in excess of UShs one million.** Additionally, VAT Exemption on agro-processing, rice mills and agricultural sprayers whilst investing in storage facilities and linking farmers to agro-processing facilities will help achieve exports increase.

**RWANDA**

In Rwanda, **the agricultural sector has been assigned RwF 123 Billion,** which is 5% of the total budget. **Tax changes relevant for the sector include extension of time frame to clear tax arrears to 24 months to ease business cash flow constraints and reduction of import duty on rice from 75% to 45% for a period of 1 year.**

The positives for the agricultural sector in the budgets for 2019/20 need to be maintained and used as a foundation for sustained reforms.
The USAID East Africa Trade and Investment Hub, commonly known as the hub, held a stakeholders meeting to validate the scoping of staple food futures contract.

The hub in partnership with the Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE) has been analyzing the feasibility of a regional staples food derivatives futures contract in the country.

Futures contracts if feasible, will contribute to the realization of a food secure country through enhancing market transparency and ensuring a consistent supply of staples which will be instrumental in regulating food prices.

Besides these, a futures contract will be sufficient in protecting financial institutions from losses brought about by price fluctuations.

The meeting offered a platform for stakeholders to dialogue on the findings of the analysis and offer feedback. EAGC was represented by Kimwaga Mhando, Nelvin Obiero, Martha Njogu, John Jaoko and Jacinta Mwau.

The analysis will determine if the setting up of a staple food derivatives contract in the country will be feasible and further explore the technical requirements necessary to facilitate trade at the NSE.

The assessment for a maize derivative revealed a good scope which includes a sufficient supply of the maize product both from local and regional supply.

In addition, sufficient market participants comprising buyers and sellers, the existence of grade standards, availability of storage infrastructure and a price volatility from supply and demand pressures were also identified as available by the assessment.

The meeting identified 15 action plans for EAGC in partnership with NSE in setting the ground for the derivatives to take off. The two institutions will identify synergies in working together to build a commodity derivatives business and seek to work closely with the government as a stakeholder to secure policy reform especially in the adoption of SRF mandate and pricing. The two organizations will also spearhead advocacy geared towards improving market information.

Additionally, the NSE and EAGC will specify contract specifications for maize derivatives and define the storage and warehouse requirements that are supported by banks and clearing members. The WRS Act will be relied upon as a base regulation for licensing of warehouses.

In order to comply with the NSE requirements, the two institutions will register delivery points and develop a holistic framework from electronic warehouse receipts.

Among other action plans, the institutions shall manage price risks within East Africa and conduct extensive information awareness with the NSE members.
EAGC trains its members on International Trade Procedures and Processes

On 28th June, EAGC hosted a one day introductory training for its members on International Trade Procedures and Processes at the Regional Office in Nairobi.

The training, which was partly facilitated by KenTrade, created awareness amongst EAGC members on the requirements, costs, procedures and processes involved in the course of conducting cross-border and international trade, as well as international commercial terms used in trade, amongst others.

The training proved to be highly useful even to experienced traders, some of whom were able to point out areas in their business operations where they incurred unnecessary costs simply due to lack of knowledge of the appropriate requirements for trade.

EAGC will host a follow-up training on the KenTrade Single Window system in the near future to further increase the knowledge of its members so that they can ultimately reduce their costs of doing international and cross-border trade.

EAGC joins forces with other industry associations to push for amendments to the draft Food Crops Regulations

The Agriculture and Food Authority (AFA) is in the process of developing Regulations under the Crops Act 2013 that will focus specifically on regulating food crops which include grain commodities.

The draft Crops (Food Crops) Regulations 2018 have been undergoing stakeholder consultations since March 2019. EAGC has joined forces with the Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM), the Cereal Millers Association (CMA), the Fresh Produce Exporters Association of Kenya (FPEAK), the Kenya Flower Council (KFC) and the Agro-Chemicals Association of Kenya to present a Joint Memorandum to AFA on the draft Regulations.

The key concerns reflected in the submission include increased taxes and levies on the agricultural sector and increased bureaucracy and regulatory overlaps.

Further, inconsistencies with functions of other government bodies, increased administrative burden on the sector; and government interference in free operation of agricultural markets.

The engagements with AFA and other government entities is ongoing and members will be updated accordingly.
Prioritizing sanitary and phyto-sanitary standards SPS investments for market access

An inception meeting convened for mainstreaming Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary Standards (SPS) priorities into national policy and investment frameworks to enhance trade capacity, brought together the public and private sectors to discuss how Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary Standards affect different sectors in relation to Trade, both domestic and international.

The Standards and Trade Development Facility STDF has developed a framework to help inform and improve Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary Standards planning and decision-making processes. The P-IMA framework offers an evidence-based approach to inform and improve SPS planning and decision-making processes as well as link SPS investments to public policy goals.

In the process, P-IMA encourages public-private dialogue, boosts transparency and accountability, and improves the economic efficiency of investment decisions.

Policy issues discussed in the meeting include policy coherence and alignment of trade, agriculture and environment to increase Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary Standards investments to improve trade and health outcomes. A structured mechanism to facilitate privatization and inter-sectoral collaboration as well as the role of government was pointed out as a key issue. Additionally, the lack of flow of mechanism and information from the national level which is the highest hierarchy to farmers who lose out on SPS updates and the introduction of capacity building at county level for counties to embrace SPS.

These issues discussed laid a foundation for the process of prioritization of SPS issues using the P-IMA tool providing a ground to learn the use of the tool in streamlining evidence based decision-making. Representatives from different organizations were selected to train on the P-IMA tool in the near future and to use the tool to prioritize SPS investment areas to enhance trade.

Warehouse Receipt System Bill signed into law

His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta assented into Law the Warehouse Receipt System Act. The WRS Act establishes a framework for developing and regulating the WRS in Kenya as a tool for establishing a well-organized and formal grain trading system that benefits farmers, traders, processors, service providers and consumers alike.

The WRS Act is a major achievement for EAGC which has been at the forefront of representing the interests of the grain sector and non-state parties with an interest in agricultural commodity trade throughout the process of developing the legislation. It is a culmination of approximately 9 years of negotiations and consultations between different arms of Government and the private sector led by EAGC.

Development of Regulations under the Act also continues apace; the State Department of Crops Development under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Irrigation, which is leading the process of developing the Regulations, conducted nationwide stakeholder consultations at county level and convened a technical workshop to review the draft Regulations in Naivasha on 24-28 June 2019 EAGC represented the grain sector.
The Ministry of Agriculture held a retreat on the 24th to 28th June at DTI Naivasha that sought to incorporate stakeholders’ comments into the WRS regulations 2019 and Commodity Market regulations, following county stakeholders’ consultations.

Both regulations have been subjected to public consultations in 33 counties in accordance to requirement of the Statutory Instruments Act No. 23 of 2013.

The ministry’s aim was to seek the stakeholders’ views for incorporation into final draft of the WRS regulations before handing it over to the AG for cleaning and legal drafting.

Ms. Emmanuella Attito, Kenya’s Country Program Manager represented EAGC in the retreat. Having been on the forefront in the policy advocacy towards the enactment of the WRS Act, EAGC shared with the stakeholders several recommendations which would be key for the effective implementation of the WRS Act.

EAGC aired concerns that the WRS Act gives similar powers/functions to both the WRS Council and the County Executive Committee Member for Agriculture (CEC). EAGC affirmed that the Regulations need to distinguish the roles and functions of these two regulators to avoid duplication of roles.

EAGC added that all regulatory work which includes issuing licenses, suspension/revocation of licenses and central registry work should be left to the WRS Council to ensure a single holistic and well-integrated system.

The Council further noted that the regulations should make the CECs act like agents of the Council where all the decisions they take are subject to Council approval but as it currently stands, the Act provides the powers of the CEC which cannot be altered since the Act is now law.

EAGC pointed out that the Regulations are silent on the use of a Warehouse Receipt as collateral and the rights/obligations of the WH Operator, depositor/borrower and financier in such a case. The Council informed the stakeholders that it would be useful to map out the relationships between different WRS actors, the regulatory points of interaction with the Council and CECs for greater clarity of the bits that are being regulated.

Moreover, EAGC noted lack of clarity in the licensing of the warehouse operations provision which fails to clearly state who appoints the inspector of the WH and at what point is the inspection done. The regulations also fail to provide the regulations of a collateral manager.

Additionally, the Surrender of receipts in splits of lots Regulation does not provide the minimum quantity for issuance of a valid Warehouse Receipt. EAGC noted that the Regulation should make a provision for this per commodity and should also give the Council powers to review the minimum lot for a WR from time to time.

Other issues that were of concern to the Council include the Revocation and suspension of a license, Features of a Central Registry, Submission of copies of Warehouse Receipts, Negotiation and transfer of WH receipt, Failure to deliver commodities and the Issuance of a License.

The proposed changes will be instrumental in creating an efficient and effective implementation of the WRS Act that will promote structured trading systems.
The Council’s membership continued to grow in June 2019, where, Afro Grains Limited, a grain trading company based in Nairobi and specializing in sourcing and distributing high quality maize (corn), wheat, rice and beans from the East African region joined EAGC as a new member. In addition, over 20 members convened at the EAGC Regional Head Quarters a day after the Treasury Cabinet Secretary unveiled the 2019/2020 budget for the financial year.

Members reviewed the 2019/2020 funding strategy, the budget while at the same time weighing on the policy wins and losses for the grain sector, agriculture and the Kenyan economy at large.

Members further noted that allocation of resources for the sector are still and called upon EAGC and other Business Membership Organizations to actively lobby the Government to ensure that the grain sector budget proposals are adopted into the national budget.

Concerns were further raised regarding the changes introduced to the finance bill upon its review. As a result, EAGC will be hosting members to brief them on the changes made to the finance bill as well as their implications to grain businesses.

Additionally, members requested to be trained on the budget making process to facilitate their understanding of the plan.

In the same sitting, members elected their Country Program Committee members who will help provide strategic direction for implementing the Kenya Country Program.

A detailed update on the progress of the Warehouse Receipt System legislation that was recently signed into law was discussed during the meeting where members were updated on the changes introduced to the bill and informed of the regulations that required amendments.

Moreover, members were updated on the upcoming 8th African Grain Trade Summit where they were commended to register for participation. The summit which will be held in Mombasa, on the 3rd – 5th October 2019, will focus on the theme ‘Transforming Grain Trade Value Chains for a Prosperous Africa’.

Enhancing grain trade through WRS and promoting inclusivity of small holder farmers

In Nakuru County, in the Central Rift, grain trade stakeholders held a consultative meeting to deliberate on Warehouse Receipt System issues affecting them.

The meeting was attended by farmers, traders, development partners and government officials from Nakuru and Nyandarua Counties who deliberated on enhancing efficiency in warehouse operations.

EAGC will facilitate the stakeholders in reviewing the acceptable minimum volume of commodity in an effort to accommodate both the small holder farmers and Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs). In addition, the stakeholders requested to have warehouses operated by both the public and private sector.

The stakeholders further voiced their concerns that certain government interventions such as the fixing of prices in grain commodities was disrupting trade in the value chain. In response to this, EAGC will play a role in facilitating the regulation of the government interventions in the grain value chain trade.
EAGC lobbies for removal of Agricultural Produce Cess in partnership with other value chain membership organizations

EAGC attended a stakeholder meeting convened by the Cereal Growers Association (CGA) to deliberate on how Agriculture Produce Cess (APC) negatively affects the agricultural value chain. The meeting comprising of different Business Member Organizations (BMOs) among them Cereal Millers Association, Kenya Tea Growers Association, Kenya Association of Manufacturers, Dairy Traders Association, Kenya Flower Council, Seed Trade Association of Kenya, National Potato Council of Kenya, sought to identify and agree on a joint way forward.

CGA with the support of Business Advocacy Fund (BAF) planned a lobbying process for the total abolition of APC which will contribute towards sustaining Kenyan agriculture.

The stakeholders in unison agreed that the policy on APC was not clear and the resulting negative effects were cutting across various value chains in the sector.

They pointed out that court cases won against cess were a strong pointer to the lack of a proper legal framework permitting the levying of APC.

The stakeholders will work together as a unit to challenge APC levying by county governments to reduce the evident APC effects on agriculture.

Stimulating grain aggregation through Grain Trade Business Hubs

In an effort to enhance the participation of small holder farmers in structured grain trading systems the Council created awareness on the benefits of adopting the Grain trade business hubs concept. 90 small holder farmer groups were reached in Taveta , Makueni ,Machakos and Laikipia Counties. The Grain trade business hubs model is expected to support the farmer groups in accessing inputs, grain aggregation, table banking and member extension services.

Additionally, bulk buyers were identified in the Coastal region where Peacock Investment expressed interest in buying grains from Kenya Cereal Enhancement Programme, Climate Resilient Agricultural Livelihoods’ farmers in Kilifi, Kwale and Taita Taveta County, with a potential to source up to 2500MT of green grams and other pulses from the farmers.

Africa PVC Ltd, dealers in PVC tarpaulins, dam liners and fumigation sheets in Upper Eastern partnered with EAGC as service provider for G-hubs in the region.

The successful mobilization and activation of Grain trade business hubs has realized grain aggregation of over 226.26MT in the month of June with a total value worth of over USD 92,280.
In an effort to promote market linkages for grain commodities in Kenya, EAGC and Mexican Embassy facilitated a trade mission for Comercializadora Columbia, a Mexican based company on 3rd and 4th of May.

The company, which sought to export non-GMO maize to Kenya is renowned for exporting maize and durum wheat to East Africa among other regions.

Comercializadora Columbia company, which was represented by Director General Mr. Jose’ Luis Sandoval Luna & Commercial Director Mr. Joaquin Peralta Luna was accompanied by the Mexico Embassy Deputy Head of Mission Mr. Francisco E. Romero Bock and Ms. Martha Njogu, the EAGC trade facilitation officer.

The delegation held a series of meetings with EAGC member organizations involved in maize trading and processing among them Export Trading Group (ETG), Leo Commodities, Capwell Industries, Unga Limited and Afro Grains Limite.

The trade mission will see these members importing maize from the company immediately the import window is opened by the government of Kenya.

This was as a result of a proposal from Comercializadora Columbia company where they offered to deliver maize between 35-38 days at a price similar to the 2017 maize importation price.

The EAGC Executive Director Mr. Gerald Masila hosted a final meeting with the delegation at the EAGC regional office which was graced by the Mexican Ambassador to Kenya Mr. Erasmo Roberto Martinez Martinez and Deputy Head of mission Mr. Fransisco E. Romero Bock.

Comercializadora Columbia will partner with the Embassy of Mexico and EAGC in creating awareness on nixtamalization, a process of removing up to 97–100% of aflatoxins from mycotoxin contaminated corn.

Similarly, the company will further explore ways of availing machinery used in the nixtamalization process which include cooking and milling machines as well as tortilla making machines.

The partnership will further look into the use of the equipment as a means to create employment in the country through training the youth on how to utilize the machinery. This in turn will build their capacity and consequently facilitate the youth in landing job opportunities or better creating self employment for themselves and others as well.

EAGC will continue to facilitate more trade missions for the organisation to Kenya and continue to facilitate their ease of doing business and investment in the country.

Comercializadora Columbia has joined EAGC as an active member for a period of 5 years and is expected to participate in the EAGC grain trade summit.
Networking through Agriculture trade show to broaden EAGC membership base

The EAGC secretariat joined other stakeholders in the 2019 South Eastern Kenya branch Machakos Agricultural Show that took place from Wednesday 26th June to Saturday 29th at Machakos showground.

The show featured the theme “Promoting Innovation and Technology in Agriculture and Trade” and was geared towards food sustenance, use of efficient technologies and increased production.

Exhibitors that were present included stakeholders in the sectors of agriculture, livestock, fisheries, horticulture, seed companies, trade sector, financial sector, manufacturing companies, university and tertiary institutions, motor vehicle companies, textile companies, ministries and parastatals, hospitality industries, research bodies and health and insurance companies among others.

During the show, EAGC created awareness on its mandate in the grain value chain.

EAGC facilitates efficiency in cluster formation and operation

EAGC conducted planning meetings with the management of Beeston, Mukungugu, Mauka, Belbur Ngondu and Kihingo CBOs in Nakuru to address issues affecting the performance of the CBOs. The member identified issues such as poor and fluctuating market prices that lead to uncertainties, lack of equipped aggregation centers, delayed access to inputs, delayed construction and renovation of aggregation centers and warehouses as well as the lack of information on the status of the centers.

To solve the issues, EAGC in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture, will facilitate a re-sensitization and planning meeting for the primary group leaders of Beeston Cluster. The partnership will also lead the sensitization activities and support clusters to register marketing cooperative Societies.

On the other hand, Sigotik CBO will be holding a member sensitization meeting on 8th July 2019, while Mauka CBO will convene an executive meeting for further deliberations on how to sensitize members with the guidance of EAGC.

In the Coastal region, cluster leaders for the proposed Kishushe Grain Growers convened a meeting in which they elected leaders. They also planned on how to mobilize members and brainstormed on ways to raise funds. The 19 primary group leaders who attended the meeting were sensitized on cluster establishment and the crucial role clusters play in grain business and structured trading. The leaders will be hosting a members meeting to officially launch the CBOs.

The EAGC field office facilitated discussions for market linkages and access to credit and agro inputs with the members of Sigotik CBO under the grain trade business hubs model.
Promoting the use of technology in enhancing market intelligence

EAGC was represented by a field officer in the Coastal Region at the e-voucher validation workshop held on 26th June in Wundanyi Taita Taveta County.

The main objective for the meeting was to review and validate the e-voucher package technology inventory for the October November December (OND) 2019 season.

EAGC’s role in the meeting was to guide the stakeholders on the availability and nature of markets as well as the market conditions necessary for sorghum and green grams.

The workshop entailed an informative session where stakeholders were sensitized on the role of Regional Agricultural Trade Intelligence Network (RATIN) in the grain value chain about in providing market information and enhancing knowledge in market requirements.

Elsewhere, Tharaka Nithi County welcomed the application of EAGC Marketing Information System (MIS) bulk Short Message Service in various farmer activities carried out in the county.

Preparations for upcoming Kitale Agri Business Forum intensify

In preparation for the upcoming Kitale agribusiness forum to be held on 15th and 16th August, the field office team held a meeting with the District County Commissioner (DCC) to deliberate on how to mobilize farmers. The office of the DCC will support farmer mobilization through chiefs and assistant chiefs.

Another meeting was held at the Kitale National Polytechnic in preparation for the ABF media launch scheduled on 3rd July 2019. The Polytechnic team will support the launch through providing a venue and refreshments in addition to protocol for both the media launch and the main expo.

The expected guests include Trans Nzoia governor Patrick Khaemba, the County Executive Committee (CEC) for Agriculture, and County Development Authority. A tentative number of 50 people will be expected to attend the event.

The polytechnic’s team pointed out that the institution is establishing a livestock unit through EAGC’s 2018 agribusiness expo interventions. The polytechnic requested for a partnership in establishing the livestock unit which will rear livestock such as dairy cows, pigs, poultry, and goats.

The field office team also held a meeting with CEC for Agriculture, Hon Mary Nzomo who noted that additional guests among them the Principal, Kitale Polytechnic and EAGC executive director would be in attendance. The CEC nominated a County Agribusiness Officer to represent the county office in the planning committee for the agribusiness expo.

In addition, another meeting was held with Trans Nzoia county communication committee, and deliberated on media mobilization which will be done in collaboration with the EAGC communication team and will target local and national media stations as well as 2 print media houses. EAGC communications team will partner with the governor’s media to facilitate inclusivity and wide media coverage during the event.
**KENYA COUNTRY PROGRAM UPDATES**

**Enhancing warehouse operations through partnerships**

EAGC participated in a KCEP CRAL program meeting in Tharaka Nithi County, held by the program’s planning committee. As a result of the meeting, EAGC will facilitate the construction of a new warehouse in Chiakariga Ward.

In addition, the committee pointed out that an earlier recommendation to have Nkondi warehouse refurbished was ongoing as the contractor was already on the ground and completion is expected to take a period of one month.

In Trans Nzoia County, EAGC also held a meeting with Hon. Mary Nzomo, CEC Agriculture. The meeting deliberated on enhancing efficiency in the operations of the warehouse. EAGC in collaboration with the sub county agricultural officers are in the process of establishing management committees for already constructed warehouses whose responsibility will be to manage warehouse activities and organize farmers in preparation for market linkages to be done after the harvesting season.

**EAGC facilitates trade among East Africa Community countries**

EAGC held a meeting with Unga Limited (UL) consultants to discuss grain trade facilitation for Unga Limited in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.

Unga Limited has already engaged Union Stores (US) in Tanzania as an aggregator using a trial run where Unga Stores bought maize from brokers. The use of brokers posed a performance risk both to Unga Limited and the financing institution.

To address this challenge, EAGC will facilitate the trade process through taking charge of collateral management and stock monitoring as per the contract. EAGC will also link Union Stores to identified farmer groups who are already equipped with quality management and Post-Harvest Handling through EAGC interventions.

In addition, the Council will create a feed for Unga Limited through G-Soko to enable them monitor the aggregation of stocks at the warehouse. Further, EAGC will facilitate the issue of export permits for Union Stores, provide market information trends (historical patterns & future trends) for Tanzania as well as facilitate quality assurance through lab analysis at EAGC’s Interfield lab in Ruiru.

Due to the unpredictable policy environment in Tanzania, Unga Limited will have a risk mitigation strategy that will source grains from Uganda, supported by EAGC through identification of large scale farmers and organizing field visits with the farmers. Unga Limited will issue a forward contract with a fixed price to the aggregator to buy during the window period when prices are low and collect the grain when needed, in both Tanzania and Uganda. Unga Limited will also explore on using their contracted logistic tracks for delivery of the grain.

In Kenya, EAGC will facilitate the trade by mapping out aggregation centres, identifying their certification statuses as well as their capacities. Additionally, EAGC will incorporate Unga Limited as an off-taker in KCEP collection centres.

EAGC will also explore more innovations with Unga Limited such as its collateral management system as some banks in Kenya are willing to fund the Unga Ecosystem which will be piloted in a few warehouses during the October to December harvesting season.
KENYA COUNTRY PROGRAM UPDATES

Grain value chain actors set to reap from EAGC market linkages

EAGC Secretariat in Kenya held a consultative meeting with Yara Fertilizer in Nakuru on the logistics of supplying fertilizer to Laikipia and Nakuru Grain trade business hubs. In an effort to facilitate market linkages, EAGC will open an account with Yara Fertilizer and consolidate orders of preferably 560 bags to initiate the supply process. On the other hand, on a condition of direct prepayment, Yara will consider supplying the hubs with a minimum of 240 bags to seal the trade deal.

Smart Farmers CBO, Laikipia Produce Cooperative, Ngarua and Sigotik CBOs aggregated a total demand for fertilizer amounting to 26,950Kgs where EAGC linked them to Baraka Fertilizer, Yara Limited, MEA Limited and OCP Africa as their preferred suppliers.

EAGC also linked Kitise cooperative society in lower eastern region to Simlaw Seeds, a EAGC partner, after holding a successful G-hub activation meeting. Simlaw Seeds moving forward will be their main seed supplier, primarily green grams. EAGC will facilitate fair price negotiations with the seed company.

EAGC partners with IFAD in implementing Warehouse Receipt System

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) consultants paid a visit to the regional office in Nairobi in a mission to gain knowledge and increase their understanding on the post-harvest management and the Warehouse Receipt System.

IFAD is a financial institution that provides loans to support small holder farmers and actors in the cereal value chain in Kenya.

EAGC engaged the team on a comprehensive and informative presentation on the Grain trade business hub model and the Warehouse Receipt System bill which has now been signed into law.

IFAD pointed out that some financial institutions had been requesting farmer owned warehouses be managed by collateral managers in order to grant financial access to farmers under the Warehouse Receipt System.

Similarly, other institutions had opted to wait for the Warehouse receipt System bill to be signed into law so as to grant farmers access to financial services.

In the meeting, it was pointed out that the Kenya Cereal Enhancement Program is in its implementation phase and will facilitate the construction of warehouses in its identified areas of implementation.

Through the constructed warehouses, the program will be in a position to implement the Warehouse Receipt System.

EAGC will be instrumental in recruiting and activating the warehouses for the Grain trade business hub model. The model will see farmers benefit through grain commodity aggregation, supply of farm input, secured financing, capacity building as well as selling collectively as aggregators which attracts large off takers among other services.
EAGC contributes to the development of a regional Joint Sector Review mechanism

The East Africa Community held a regional Joint Sector Review assessment report validation workshop in Nairobi, on the 26th and 27th June.

The meeting held at Nairobi Safari Park hotel was geared towards validating an assessment report of the existing Joint Sector Review mechanism carried out by the EAC secretariat with the help of AGRA.

The findings of the assessment will guide the development of a regional framework that will be used to develop and enhance an effective regional JSR mechanism.

EAGC executive director Gerald Masila was recognized in the meeting for steering the Council to constantly challenge the public sector to focus on achieving Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Plan (CAADP) goals.

The need for a Joint Sector Review (JSR) mechanism at a regional level is advised by the ambition to effectively implement the African Union’s CAADP and achieve the Malabo Declaration commitments that are to deliver agricultural transformation in Africa.

Promoting the application of grain standards by SMEs

EAGC held a meeting with MEDA at the regional office in Nairobi.

MEDA, an EAGC partner sought to carry out a due diligence scoping on the Council to in an effort to identify potential areas of partnership.

MEDA is implementing the Equitable Prosperity Project known as Maendeleo Sawa (M-sawa), which began in 2015 and expected to end in 2022, funded by Global Affairs, Canada.

The project targets LAPSET corridor which covers Lamu, Turkana, Busia and Bungoma Counties while targeting 25 SMEs and lead firms through impact acceleration grant.

In partnership with EAGC, MEDA identified Makueni, Kitui, Kakamega and Bungoma among other counties as areas of project implementation. MEDA will be visiting 4 SMEs in Kakamega and Bungoma County to understand specifics in the SMEs supply chain and challenges faced in pursuit of their business opportunities.

Through this partnership, EAGC targets to work with 370 SMEs in the grains value chain by offering them training and capacity building.

EAGC will also conduct a market survey on awareness and application of grain standards by SMEs, targeting at least 150 SMEs. Moreover, EAGC will Facilitate SMEs to attend the Kitale agribusiness expo scheduled on 15th-16th August targeting to have at least five SMEs participate in the expo through the M-sawa project support.
UGANDA COUNTRY PROGRAM UPDATES

Enhancing sustainable food security and farm incomes in Masindi, Uganda

The Eastern Africa Grain Council, with the support of the aBi Trust, held its 9th edition of the 2019 Agribusiness EXPO from 21st - 22nd June at the Masindi Agricultural Demonstration Centre, Kihonda. The EXPO featured the theme “Enhancing Value in Agribusiness for Food Security and Sustainable Farm Incomes”.

The Chief Guest of Honor, Titus Ariyo, Chairperson LCV Masindi District, committed to work closely with EAGC towards the implementation of the grain sector strategy where promotion of technology and innovation among small holder farmers will be key.

The event convened over 30 exhibitors who showcased best practices in farm management, pre and post-harvest handling technologies and innovations as well mature crop demonstration plots. Sponsored by the Centenary Bank, the expo attracted over 5,000 farmers from all over the country alongside agricultural input companies, equipment and machinery suppliers, research institutions, financial institutions, large grain volume buyers and agribusiness farmers seeking for contract buyers.

In line with the EAGC’s third Strategic Business Plan, the agribusiness EXPO linked buyers and sellers of agricultural produce mainly grains and agricultural inputs, equipment and machinery through a scheduled Business to Business forum that took place parallel to the expo.

In addition, the event featured live demonstration of the use of the EAGC Regional Agricultural Trade Intelligence Network (RATIN) as well as linkages to finance and farmer training along the value chain for different commodities including coffee.

The exposure received will go a long way in empowering the stakeholders beyond the grain value chain especially in post-harvest food loss which is a major leading cause of food insecurity, where an average Ugandan farmer loses about 30% of their agricultural produce due to poor post-harvest handling practices and one third of food produced for human consumption goes to waste.

Speaking at the Expo, the EAGC Country Director in Uganda, Dr.Agnes Apea Atim noted that previous 8 Expos hosted by EAGC had made a remarkable commitment in improving food quality and safety and had improved infrastructure such as connection of electricity and road repairs in Kihonda region.

Masindi region has also recorded the best quality maize produce in Uganda following the increased access to improved services given the new outlets in the area. The 9th edition of the Expo is expected to increase the adoption of latest innovations and technologies through record sales by service providers to the farmers in a drive to achieve zero hunger.
UGANDA COUNTRY PROGRAM UPDATES

Uganda welcomes a new partner on board, holds second quarter members meeting

Kiganda High Investments (u) Ltd joined EAGC membership in Uganda in the month of June.

The enterprise, located in Kassanda District formerly Mubende, deals in grain production, feed manufacturing and trade in Maize, Beans and Soya beans.

As Kiganda High Investments joined the council, they held a high anticipation of penetrating both the local and the regional market in the export of their produce particularly grain commodities due to the anticipated engagement with EAGC in promoting Structured Trading Systems.

EAGC through its programs and services will enhance trade facilitation and market linkages both at the local and regional level along other services rendered by the Council, to meet the need driven demands of the new member as well as other existing members.

The Uganda Country members held a Post Budget Synopsis meeting at the Uganda EAGC office to discuss the budget proposal and projections in the economy, particularly on the budgetary allocations to the agricultural sector which has a direct impact to members.

In the same meeting, members held the Country Program Committee elections that unveiled a new team. Mr. David Kissa of Kapchorwa Commercial Farmers Association will represent Farmers while Mr. Herbert Kyeyamwa of Agroways, will represent Processors.

Mr. David Mutazindwa of Kinoni Seeds and Mrs. Brenda Kwatampora of NAPIL Traders were also elected into the country program committee.

Members and stakeholders during the post budget synopsis meeting
Engaging EAGC members to strengthen membership

The EAGC team paid visits to members in an effort to strengthen the grain value chain membership in Tanzania through regular engagements in enhancing efficiency in service delivery.

The team visited Lindi, a small medium enterprise dealing in grains in Dodoma who had carried out a study visit to Dodoma and Singida.

Kinaigwa Flour Supply in Morogoro and Pawaga Traders in Dodoma were also visited. Likewise the EAGC team called upon Wanging’ombe MP, Gerson Lwenge, who is a potential trader in grain business to join EAGC membership.

Grain value chain stakeholders sensitized on the Grain trade business hub model in promoting structured trading

EAGC team held a stakeholders’ meeting in Iringa in an effort to sensitize stakeholders on the Grain trade business hub model.

In the meeting, stakeholder representatives from all the actors in the value chain were trained on the business hub model.

The value chain actors present were 5 input dealing companies (Yara, Syngenta (T) Limited, Zambia Seed Company. Limited, Bayer/Monsanto and Triachem (T) Limited), 3 Processor/Off-takers (Ruaha Milling, Dickens Investment & Super Seki Investment), 2 Farmer Based Organizations (Magulilwa Amcos, & Lupembe Lwasenga Amcos) and Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania(SAGCOT) as well as Tanzania Association of Professionals BDS provider (TAPBDS).

EAGC will share a draft contract with the stakeholders for review and adoption. With the purpose of increasing the stakeholders’ knowledge and understanding of the Grain trade business hub models, EAGC will engage them in visiting farmer groups and facilitate the groups to enter into clusters for g-hub activation.

Grain trade business hubs serve to enhance small holder farmers’ access to agro-related services and markets. Through the hubs, smallholder farmers can access inputs, get market information and learn about grades and standards as well as aggregate their produce as farmer groups that enable them to sell their produce collectively.
TANZANIA COUNTRY PROGRAM UPDATES

Tanzania members review the impact of the 2019/2020 national budget on business

EAGC hosted a Budget Synopsis meeting in Tanzania at the EAGC country office in Dar es Salaam.

In the meeting the members and stakeholders discussed the Tanzania Agriculture Policy and the Blueprint to create awareness amongst the stakeholders and promote a general understanding of the budget allocations and their implications.

From the meeting, the members and stakeholders will submit their opinions on issues that require the attention of the Ministry of Agriculture for review and further deliberations, which shall be subjected to stakeholder discussions for amendments.

The Country Program Manager, Terry, gave a chronological overview of past experiences from the allocations of agricultural budgets.

He also delved into the policy implications for the agricultural sector and the country at large which will help the stakeholders in planning for best outcomes

EAGC meets farmers demand for agricultural inputs

The AGRA led Kilimo PiATA Tija Project in Iringa, Njombe and Ruvuma Regions in Tanzania, in partnership with EAGC represented by Kigala, facilitated the distributing and handing over of the simple quality control tools to the identified Farmer Based Organizations.

The tools included Weighing scales, Moisture meter, Tarpaulins, Manual sieves and Pallets.

Partnership for Inclusive Agricultural Transformation (PIATA) is a five-year partnership led by AGRA among other partners to catalyze and sustain an inclusive agricultural transformation in Africa.

Kilimo Tija on the other hand describes the shift to a productive, profitable and solution-based agriculture.

The initiative is expected to enhance the capacity of small holder farmer to produce more and adopt new agricultural technologies to improve staple food production as well as enable them to commercialize their farming activities.

In addition, Super Seki Investment, an EAGC member in Iringa, on 27th June 2019, entered into a grant agreement that will facilitate the receipt of a grant fund for a warehouse construction through the PiATA Tija project.

Super Seki Investment becomes the second member to have signed the grant agreement after G2L Investment in Makambako Njombe.
EAGC held an Agribusiness Expo in Kilosa Morogoro in partnership with TARI-Ilonga, a branch of TARI that mainly focuses on pulses and rice.

The expo, held on the 21st to 22nd of June, was graced by the Deputy Minister of Agriculture Mr. Omary Mgumba, who recognized the partnership that EAGC has with the Ministry of Agriculture, in Tanzania.

Mr. Omary appreciated the work done by EAGC in the promotion of grain structured trading systems in the country and in the region at large.

The expo attracted exhibitors from various disciplines of the agricultural sector among them the Private Agriculture Sector Support (PASS), Seedco, Poly Machinery, Agricultural Seed Agency, A to Z Agro bags and Helvetas.

Over 2,000 Small Holder Farmers drawn from Ulanga, Kilombero, Turiani and Mvomero regions in Morogoro District had the rare opportunity to learn and interact with stakeholders in the first ever EAGC Agribusiness expo to have been hosted in the area.

EAGC will be keen to follow up on the farmers' uptake of new technologies and innovations as well as regularly host such expos to facilitate knowledge and technology transfer among the stakeholders.
Tanzania members convene for second quarter meeting, hold Country Program Committee elections

EAGC hosted the second quarter members’ meeting at the EAGC office in Dar es Salaam.

In the meeting the members were updated on the Council’s performance and progress in the first and second quarter of the year.

Future plans for the remaining period of the year for the Council were laid forth for members to familiarize themselves and plan ahead accordingly.

The members were also briefed on the upcoming 8th African Grain Trade Summit to be held on the 3rd - 5th October in Mombasa and called upon to register for participation in the event.

At the same meeting, the members held the Country Program Committee elections to elect members who will support in delivering the country programs.

The objective of the Tanzania Country Program Committee, just like in all other countries, will be to assist the Board in discharging its responsibilities with respect to Country Programs and Services under Structured Trading Systems, Market Information System, Trade Policy & Advocacy, and Capacity Building. The elected leaders will offer support in the strategic leadership and direction of the Country.

Abel Lyimo from Rural Urban Development Initiatives was elected to represent farmers as well as Julius Wambura from Frabho Enterprises who was elected to represent the processors.

Companies to represent traders and service providers will be held at a future meeting.
Building networks within the grain value chain through agricultural trade shows

The Rwandan Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI) hosted its 14th annual National Agriculture Show that took place from 18th – 26th June 2019 at the Mulindi Agricultural Show Grounds in Kigali.

The show featured the theme “Promoting Competitiveness in Agriculture”.

The national agricultural show provided a platform for farmers and entrepreneurs to showcase innovative and best practices in the agriculture sector which include harvest and post harvest management technologies, high yield seeds, demo of mature crops, and modern machinery among others.

The event brought together exhibitors and stakeholders in the value chain to exchange information, experiences and various opportunities as far as agribusiness is concerned.

EAGC sought to build networks with agricultural input suppliers, equipment and machinery suppliers especially those providing Post Harvest Handling equipment for drying and shelling.

Through the networking, EAGC identified a suitable grain drying machine that can dry up to 1000 MT of grain commodity per day. The secretariat established contacts with these suppliers and shall be keen to provide market linkages between them and the grain aggregation centres working with EAGC in Rwanda who are in need of this equipment.
Rwanda welcomes a new member on board

The Rwanda Country team welcomed the giant Minimex Limited as a new member in the month of June.

Minimex Ltd is the largest producer of fine maize products in Rwanda committed in playing a central role as a buyer of maize from Rwandan farmers, cooperatives and traders and in providing healthy nutritional products.

Training on AGRA’s Management Information System

AGRA held refresher training on Management Information System on the 6th of June to improve on the reporting of the Management Information System in the country. The training will enhance effective performance management, transparency and decision making among farmers and stakeholders.

EAGC attends KPMG dinner to review 2019/2020 budget

The Council honored an invitation by KPMG to a Budget dinner, where dignitaries, government officials and other stakeholders in the country’s development circle were in attendance.

The dinner facilitated the members in understanding of the 2019/2020 budget particularly proposals allocated to the Agricultural sector.

In the proposed budget, the government is expected to spend a total of Rwf127.8 billion on agriculture, which represents about 4.4 per cent of the total budget for the 2019/2020 fiscal year.

Building networks through trade shows

The EAGC team participated in the Rwandan Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI) National Agriculture Show that took place from 18th – 26th June 2019 at Mulindi Agricultural Show Grounds, Rwanda. The show featured the theme “Promoting Competitiveness of Agriculture”.

The national agrishow provided a platform for farmers & entrepreneurs to showcase innovative and best practices in the agriculture sector. The event brought exhibitors and stakeholders in the value chain to exchange information, experiences and various opportunities as far as agribusiness is concerned.

The team which was in search for a supplier of a PH equipment for drying and shelling identified a suitable grain drying company that can dry up to 1000 MT per day and built a relationship. opportunities as far as agribusiness is concerned.

The team which was in search for a supplier of a PH equipment for drying and shelling identified a suitable grain drying company that can dry up to 1000 MT per day and built a relationship.
The EAGC Rwanda team participated in a Technical Working Group meeting held by CDI who is a member of the consortium.

The technical group which is working towards the possible eradication of aflatoxin in Rwanda sought to deliberate on the modalities of developing the National Aflatoxin Control Plan and Action Plan.

In the meeting, the stakeholders presented and deliberated on the validation of the campaign and training content appropriate for the sensitization of the public on the issue of aflatoxin.

The Council also participated in a similar meeting held by MINAGRI, the Ministry of Agriculture in Rwanda, which is also a member in the Technical Working Group.

During this meeting, a comparison was made between the past and present interventions used in the eradication of aflatoxin and a consensus was made to foster effective consolidation of the best suitable interventions.

As a result, the meeting recommended having 2 clusters, one that will work on the audio and video content and a second cluster to work on written content for publications.

The meeting culminated in the development and provision of Technical guidelines on the development of the National Aflatoxin Control Plan and Action plan.

In addition the country team has been creating awareness on prevention of aflatoxin in Ngoma and Kirehe Districts where a total of 55 farmers were sensitized on aflatoxin and on the prevention measures to take as well as eradicating it in cases of contamination.

This sensitization is expected to help farmers achieve zero contamination of aflatoxin through the adoption of the East Africa Community harmonized standards. Eradication of aflatoxin is a major step in achieving food security in the region and enhancing food safety which is critical for a healthy lifestyle.

Elsewhere, the team also participated in a Beans technical working group to discuss the venue of the Beans Alliance Network to be held in Rwanda.
Membership Engagement and Strengthening in Malawi

The country office held a members meeting on 14th of June, 2019 at the country office in Lilongwe where a new Country Program Committee was elected.

The previous chair Mr. Kawalewale retained his sit in the committee as the chairperson.

Trade forums heighten market linkages in Malawi

Following trade commitments made in made Blantyre and Lilongwe trade meetings, as well as those made by traders who trained under the AIMS project, the country office has been following up with the traders to actualize their trade commitments.

Khajavo Cooperative supplied Capital Oil Refining Industries 80 MT of soya at K270 per kg and Gwiritse Cooperative sold 10MT to Agrocom at K280 per kg. In addition to other market linkages carried out by the Council, a total of 183MT of grain trade has been realized. Additionally, 9 Farmer Based Organizations in the country have aggregated a total of 273MT of grain.

EAGC is in the final stages of signing grant with GIZ that will facilitate program implementation in the country. Furthermore, GIZ has committed to train 10 Farmer Based Organizations on Post-Harvest Handling and Management which will go a long way in reducing farmer losses.

Preparation for annual data collection from agribusiness beneficiaries for AIMS Project

The country office has been preparing for annual data collection 2019 for Agribusiness beneficiaries who have been involved in EAGC activities under the AIMS project.

Training for data collection is scheduled to take place on 1st July, 2019 at the Global Communities office and data collection will commerce on 2nd July and will run up to 12th July 2019.

National Rice Development Platform engages EAGC in promoting Rice Trade

The EAGC Country office is serving as part of the thematic working group within the National Rice Development Platform (NRDP) which is advocating for an enabling environment in the promotion of structured trade for rice.

The working group held a meeting on 12th of June, 2019 geared towards creation of awareness of rice quality and standards in Malawi.

The meeting also aimed at enhancing the Management Information System in the country and served as a platform for deliberating on the coordination and management of the working group.

The meeting presented the Country office the opportunity to meet the Kulima-Miera project team, to discuss on a possible partnership with EAGC to deliver value to stakeholders in the value chain.
Members, stakeholders review EAGC 2019-2023 DRC strategic plan for validation

In an initial members and stakeholders meeting, the Regional Manager MIS & Communication Jacinta Mwau laid out a summary of the proposed 5 year strategic plan with consolidated inputs from the submissions made by members and stakeholders.

EAGC country director, Maman Marie Paul thanked the members, potential donors and members as well as the government officials for participating in the event.

During the meeting members elected DRC focal points who will be critical in coordinating and supporting service delivery in South Kivu.

Elise Mudwanga from Gap was elected to represent traders while Jilles Firemba will represent farmers in South Kivu.

EAGC seeks to enhance service delivery in DRC through a new 5 year Strategic Plan 2019-2023

EAGC in partnership with the Elan DRC project held a subsequent members and stakeholders meeting in Goma to validate the 5 year strategic plan, 2019-2023.

A meeting held on 17th Jun 2019 at Cap Kivu Hotel, called for members and stakeholders inputs in validating the DRC 5 year strategic plan.

The meeting was attended by 31 members from North Kivu and stakeholders who included private and government officials.

Kakule Thayswika, the director of the cabinet of the Provincial Ministry of Agriculture, while pledging his support to farmers, called for the development of a collaborating framework with the public service. He further committed to support EAGC in promoting grain trade in North Kivu.

A similar meeting was held in SCAK meeting room at Mbeko Shamba Offices, Lubumbashi on 20th Jun 2019.

The meeting which had an attendance of 26 participants, called for the opinion of the members and stakeholders in validating the strategic plan.

In addition, the meetings also looked into identifying key partners operating in the grain value chain sector in DRC in an effort to identify and develop potential areas of collaboration.

The Regional MIS Manager, Jacinta Mwau, reminded the participants of the significance of their opinions and proposals in strengthening the validation of the 2019-2023 strategic plan and called for their active participation.

Lucie Bahati, the Elan RDC representative encouraged EAGC interventions in the country and called upon stakeholders to partner with the Council to seize opportunities available in the value chain in an effort to strengthen the voice of the council in advocating for sound policies.
Théo Mbayi who is in charge of the private sector at PASA NK Project in North Kivu province affirmed the availing of resources by the government in support of the small holder farmers through the PASA NK project funded by IFAD.

He pointed out that the government, through the project, will build warehouses and stores to facilitate post-harvest management by the farmers.

Alfred Mutundi N’seleka, the TASAI representative in Goma DRC, called for the prioritization of intervention activities in the implementation phase. He also called upon members and stakeholder to advocate for the reduction of cost in obtaining public services such as inspection fees and clearance fees.

Cléon the manager of Agriculture department at Premidis Company proposed the prioritizing of political advocacy in a bid to exempt tax in agricultural inputs, machinery and in the importation of equipment as well as in market and information access.

It was further suggested that EAGC should incorporate the training of market grain price system into farmer associations to enhance the accessibility of trainings by the farmers.

Another proposal was the call for EAGC to facilitate members’ access to quality improved seeds through regional seed companies as such efforts will improve farm yields and increase productivity.

In addition, the stakeholders suggested that awareness on the Warehouse Receipt System should be increased and members and facilitated in accessing post-harvest trainings. Among other proposals, EAGC was also called upon to ensure the development of a system that will allow access of financial credit to farmer.

Enhancing farmer productivity and increase grain sales in DRC

EAGC also held a meeting with other partner organizations among them FOPACNK and PASANK to deliberate on EAGC’s support mechanism and expert contribution to Farmer Organizations (FO) that benefit from the PASANK project.

The role of each farmer organization was laid out and FOPACNK, represented by Mr. Jean Baptiste, identified MIS and policy advocacy as the fields to offer their support in the implementation phase of the PASANK project to achieve its intended mission.

EAGC will draft a contract detailing the role of each stakeholder while FOPACNK and PASANK will prepare for the implementation of the partnership.
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<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>EVENT</th>
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<td>11th July 2019</td>
<td>Partnership Meeting with KICO SA Mining Company</td>
<td>DRC</td>
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<tr>
<td>11th July 2019</td>
<td>MoU signing with Lubumbashi University for hosting Agribusiness Expo</td>
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<td>12th July 2019</td>
<td>Partnership Meeting with ERG Africa Mining Company</td>
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<td>12th July 2019</td>
<td>Partnership Meeting with TFM Mining Company</td>
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<td>12th—21st July 2019</td>
<td>27th National Agricultural Show</td>
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<td>22nd—26th July 2019</td>
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<td>1st—12th July 2019</td>
<td>AIMS Annual Data Collection 2019</td>
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<td>19th—20th July 2019</td>
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<td>31st July—1st August 2019</td>
<td>Abidjan Lagos Corridor Country's National Institutions Coordination Meeting to review draft methodology for Informal Cross Border Trade for the ECOWAS region</td>
<td>Abuja, Nigeria</td>
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<td>2nd August—20th August 2019</td>
<td>2nd Phase Border Profiling along the Abidjan Lagos Corridor in readiness for Informal Cross Border Trade Data Collection</td>
<td>Abuja, Nigeria</td>
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<td>17th—18th August 2019</td>
<td>Kenya Agribusiness Expo</td>
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<td>3rd—5th October 2019</td>
<td>8th African Grain Trade Summit</td>
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ABOUT EAGC

The Eastern Africa Grain Council is a regional organization with membership drawn from across the Eastern and Southern Africa. Membership is drawn from grain value chain stakeholders currently with presence in 10 countries across Africa including Burundi, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi, South Sudan, DRC Congo and Ethiopia.

EAGC’s key products and services include promotion of structured trading system (STS) through the warehouse receipting systems (WRS), and Regional Grain Trading platform (G-Soko), Market Information Systems (MIS) offered through the Regional Agricultural Trade Intelligence Network (RATIN- [www.ratin.net]) and evidence-based Policy Advocacy and Training and Capacity Building through the Eastern Africa Grain Institute (EAGI).

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