EAGC ACHIEVEMENTS 2019

FACILITATING EFFICIENT, STRUCTURED, INCLUSIVE AND PROFITABLE GRAIN TRADE IN EASTERN AFRICA AND BEYOND.

SERVICE PILLARS
Dear Member,

I gladly take this opportunity to welcome all our new members who joined EAGC in the year 2019.

EAGC has maintained focus in delivering its core mandate and made notable progress pursuant to its vision of being “the leading voice for the grain industry in Africa” through its four key functions: Structuring grain Trade Systems, provision of market information, trade policy and advocacy work as well as capacity building through the Grain Business Institute with the aim of delivering trade, more trade and better grain trade.

One of EAGC’s core mandates is the promotion of structured trade systems across the region for more trade and better trade where the Council has recorded positive growth in formal trade following the introduction of these initiatives. Through the Business to Business forums, EAGC facilitated 628,482 MT of grains trade deals worth USD 284,464,400. Additionally, through the EAGC supported structured trading systems farmers and members traded 423,153 MT of grains.

In the quest for advocating for favourable environment for grain trade, EAGC’s efforts in the push for a Warehouse Receipts System have seen the Bill assented into law in Kenya which will be instrumental in promoting structured grain trade particularly financial access to the farmers. The Council has also started off the implementation of the WRS in Rwanda in partnership with USAID.

Similarly, the Council’s efforts in the push for Hermetic Storage Technology Standards were successful as the Standards were gazetted into law in Kenya. EAGC being the pioneer institution in advocating for and implementing these standards in the world, has based the Kenya Standards in their formulation at the East Africa Community level and looking into developing the standards at IGAD level to facilitate trade between EAC and its neighbouring countries.

This year the Council hosted the bi-annual African Grade Trade Summit in Mombasa, Kenya that brought on board stakeholders in the value chain for constructive dialogues that set the road map or transforming grain trade in the region and beyond. Through the Policy and Advocacy department, EAGC facilitated evidence based policy reviews and advocacy which have resulted to significant results in creating an enabling business environment.

Over 50,000 grain value chain stakeholders have embraced the EAGC Market Information System platform - RATIN in shaping their decisions from an informed point of view even as the Council continued to provide members and stakeholders with Real time Market Intelligence, gathered from 45 key grain markets and 20 borders.

EAGC through its capacity-building and training arm - the Grain Business Institute offered tailored trainings and mentorship program based on stakeholders’ assessed needs to enhance the performance of SME members’ businesses.

As the year draws close to an end, EAGC would like to reaffirm its commitment towards promoting grain trade in the region by advocating for the removal of bottlenecks to grain trade in alignment with its mission: “to advocate for an enabling environment and promote structured grain trade for optimum stakeholder benefits”.

This newsletter therefore shares 2019 achievements which were realised with the support of EAGC members as well as their unified voice. We thank you for your active participation in the Council’s activities and we look forward to working with you more closely to achieve the plans ahead of us in the new year 2020.
EAGC celebrates its 13th Anniversary with a focus on more trade and better trade

The Eastern Africa Grain Council (EAGC) commemorated its 13th Annual General Meeting on 16th April 2019 which was attended by members of EAGC from Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Malawi, Zambia, DRC and Burundi.

The AGM which was superseded by the Annual Members’ and Stakeholders’ Luncheon, presented the newly elected Board of Directors who took over the leadership mantle from the previous Board which successfully commissioned the EAGC’s 3rd Strategic Plan 2018-2022 on the Mantra is “Trade, More Trade and Better Trade”.

The AGM linked farmers to financial institutions, equipment suppliers, seed companies and large scale grain off-takers through the first ever Grain Trade Business hubs (G-Hubs) B2B meeting that was hosted by the AGM.

Facilitating 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 brought together grain traders, processors, producers, logistic companies and banks from Eastern and Southern Africa Countries who networked and forged grain trade contracts for the sale of 454,532MT of grain valued at USD 144,233,400 for immediate and future trade.

The signed trade volumes to a large extent increased and facilitated intra-regional trade for grain commodities such as maize, common beans, soya beans, groundnuts, chick peas, pigeon peas, wheat, rice and green grams in the Eastern and Southern African region, particularly at a time when countries such as Burundi, Rwanda, Kenya, DR Congo were experiencing food shortages.

EAGC facilitates a grain industry experiential trade mission to South Africa

Members of the National Assembly Departmental Committee for Agriculture and Livestock in Kenya and their counterparts from Uganda’s Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture participated in an EAGC facilitated grain industry experiential trade mission to South Africa. The mission exposed the Honorable Members to best international practices in structured grain trading systems especially on technology and innovations and favorable agricultural policies key for food security.

The trade mission’s exposure through interactions with the Johannesburg Stock Exchange and GrainSA contributed to the development of draft regulations for implementation of the Warehouse Receipt System Bill which was enacted in Kenya.

The mission also supported the Uganda Parliamentary Committee of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries in the exploration of competitive agricultural sector policies for investment opportunities in value addition for the grain sector in Uganda which has been for the longest time exporting raw materials to neighbouring countries.
Kenya-Ethiopia grain trade mission nets over USD 100,000,000 in trade deals

EAGC in collaboration with Agricultural Transformation Agency-Ethiopia, with support of Ethio Agri-CEFT PLC, Halkayan Industry and Trading P.L.C, Belayneh Kindie Export & Import Ltd hosted a Grain Trade Mission of Kenya Grain Traders and Processors to Ethiopia to explore business opportunities for grain trade and processing between Ethiopia and Kenya.

The trade mission included a visit to Ethiopian Commodity Exchange (ECX) and a business-to-business forum in which trade agreements of maize, beans, lentils, oil seed, sorghum, millet and other assorted grains amounting to 173,950 MT worth over US$ 99.3 million were signed.

Formalizing cross border trade between Kenya and Uganda

Grain processors in Kenya and grain producers in Uganda held grain trade facilitation meetings in an effort to improve trade quality between the two countries, supported by their governments.

EAGC hosted a meeting between EAGC grain processor members in Kenya and grain producers in Uganda at the regional office attended by the Marketing Task Force of the Operations Wealth Creation of Uganda (OWC), a Presidential Initiative supporting quality grain production. On the other hand, Uganda Grain Council, Uganda’s Ministry of Agriculture and OWC team hosted EAGC Kenyan grain processor members at Kapeeka, Uganda. The meetings identified challenges facing grain traders between the two countries and their possible solutions.

Conducting grain sampling & grading training in partnership with Iowa State University

EAGC in partnership with Iowa State University held a grain sampling and grading training that entailed practicums for maize and wheat millers at the EAGC Head Office in Nairobi.

The training tackled topics in grain sampling in bulk and bagged carriage, grain sampling in conveyor belts and grain grading parameters for maize and wheat.

The course, designed for sampling, testing and grading grain according to the EAC regional standards, geared towards creation and increase of awareness in understanding of what constitutes representative grain sampling and quality testing based on standardized parameters and consistent grading of samples. The course aimed at improving compliance with the grain quality standards, and instilling best practices in grain quality management.

Grain stakeholders deliberate on an action plan to transform grain trade in Africa

The 8th African Grain Trade Summit was convened in Mombasa, Kenya. This key event brought together over 250 high level grain value chain actors to brainstorm and deliberate on strategic directions that the grain sector should take towards the much-needed transformation of grain trade value chains in Africa.

It provided a forum to mobilize the stakeholders and engage with the policy makers and organizational leaders on topics geared towards commitments and policies to achieve transformed grain trade value chains across the continent. The summit resolved that the solutions towards sustainable value chains in the grain sector are available among stakeholders in the region who need to work in partnerships to increase investment and complement each other’s contribution towards food security and a prosperous Africa.
High level delegates in the Expert Working Group Meeting in Abidjan, Cote d’ivoire where EAGC presented the results of the Abidjan Lagos Corridor Border profiling.

EAGC Executive Director Mr. Gerald Masila presents the Council’s Interventions on Market Information during a members and stakeholders meeting.

A group photo of Kenya’s Members of Parliament retreat to Mombasa to review the Warehouse Receipt System bill.

Hajji Bashir Ssempa receiving a membership certificate from EAGC secretariat in Uganda.

Country Program Committee meeting held at the EAGC office in Rwanda.

EAGC Executive Director participating in a media interview in Uganda on the new Aflatoxin Scrub Technology.
Membership Development in Kenya

The Kenya Country Program has been glad to welcome on board 23 new members in the year bringing the total membership in Kenya to 185.

Facilitating more trade and better grain trade

In an effort to facilitate more and better grain trade within the country, the Council facilitated Business to Business forums where trade deals amounting to 628,482 MT valued at USD284,464,400 were signed.

EAGC has also supported farmers in grain aggregation through the Village Aggregation Centers where 20,000 MT of grains have been mobilized and sold through structured trading systems. Additionally, the Council has supported good grain storage practices through the inspection of 15 farmer warehouses.

The Council, in further support of the structured trading systems, registered over 31,000 farmers in the Grain Trade Business Hubs (G-hubs) who are benefitting from the ease of access to agricultural inputs, financial support, market information and access to grain markets that offer favorable prices.

Building and strengthening the capacity of grain value chain stakeholders

Through the capacity building of the Grain Business Institute, EAGC has enhanced the access to grain related industry knowledge for increased profitability and enhanced operational efficiency for its members and stakeholders. The trainings’ focus has been on warehouse operations and management including silo operations, grain sampling and grading, detection and control of aflatoxin and international trade processes and procedures.

Further, the Institute has promoted tailor made financial products and services for members in the grain sector by building the capacity of financial institutions through the International Structured Commodity Trade Finance (SCTF) training.

EAGC also hosted the Kitale Agribusiness Expo which showcased the best agricultural practices and innovative products and provided the opportunity for the industry stakeholders to interact, learn and exchange ideas.

Over 25,000 small holder farmers are benefitting from post harvest management, organizational development and marketing practices acquired through the Kenya Cereals Enhancement Project (KCEP), implemented by EAGC-Ministry of Agriculture partnership. The farmers are further reaping from structured markets linkages provided by the project. In addition, farmers are reaping from improved threshing and shelling practices acquired through trainings provided by 105 deployed service providers.

Youth in the grain business value chain are economically gaining through the Vijana na Biashara(VIJABIZ) project, implemented by EAGC-USTADI partnership through training and exposure to the best farming, post-harvest management and business management practices.

The Institute further built the capacity of grain value chain stakeholders through participation in Agricultural Shows, exhibitions and field days held in the year among them the South Eastern Kenya branch Machakos Agricultural Show, the World Food day held in Makueni County and KCEP exhibitions and field days.

2019 ACHIEVEMENTS IN KENYA

Kenya Country Program Manager Emmanuella Attito with a representative from one of the new member organizations at the EAGC regional office as he signed up for membership

Grain Traders and Processors Association of Malawi display their range of grain products in an attractive presentation at the regional B2B meeting held

Mr. Kimwaga Mhando, an international trade expert facilitating the International Trade and Procedures Processes at the Grain Business Institute in Nairobi.

A group of youth follow keenly during a practical session of a grading training carried out by EAGC through the VIJABIZ project
Advocating for favorable grain trade policy in Kenya

The Warehouse Receipt System Act was assented into Law in June, a major achievement for EAGC, which further made submissions for the review of the draft WRS Regulations. Farmers will be guaranteed of the security and quality of their produce and will have improved access to credit. They will also be enabled to practice good post-harvest and proper storage of grains.

The Hermetic Storage Technology (HSTs) Standards were gazetted to be Kenya Standards, effective 9th August 2019. The standards, will protect manufacturers and farmers from inferior and counterfeit products in the market and enhance the management of post-harvest losses. The Standards were launched during the 8th AGTS and have formed the basis of the East Africa Community Standards whose review is in process.

The cost of trade of Kenyan traders importing grains beyond the East Africa Community has reduced following the Council’s advocacy on conformity assessment that required the traders to obtain unique conformity certificates per vehicle load as opposed to a single certificate of conformity (CoC) per consignment. Traders are now issued with one CoC per consignment rather than per vehicle.

EAGC joined industry associations to present a Joint Memorandum to Agriculture and Food Authority (AFA) to regulate food crops, among them grain commodities. The memorandum proposes to ease the focus on increased taxes and levies on the agricultural sector and increased bureaucracy and regulatory overlaps.

EAGC partnered with the Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM) to conduct an assessment of the maize value chain in Kenya and its implications on maize milling costs with the objective of identifying the key challenges and cost drivers in the maize value chain and their impact on maize millers.

Following the assessment, EAGC and KAM held a validation workshop in Nairobi to present the study findings of the study where stakeholders validated the findings and came up with recommendations that informed EAGC and KAM policy advocacy and other interventions to reduce the cost of doing business for maize millers. The assessment will ultimately deliver more affordable food to consumers.

Enhancing grain market intelligence in Kenya

Kenyan EAGC members have been receiving real time Market Intelligence from 8 grain markets and 4 trade corridors between Kenya and neighboring countries, shaping trade decisions from an informed point of view.

6500 new value chain stakeholders have embraced the role of the Regional Agricultural Trade Intelligence Network (RATIN) in the provision of market information and enhancing knowledge in market requirements and have since been receiving market information which is positively shaping their market decisions following sensitization and registration carried out by the country program.

Members and stakeholders are receiving additional information on graded grain price received from 20 warehouses in the country enabled by the use of technology in enhancing market intelligence.

Marketing EAGC through Media Coverage

The Council has gained exposure and visibility either as print, broadcast or talk shows facilitated by various media houses; NMG, The Star, KTN, KBC, Citizen, Coast week, Media max and KNA.
Membership development in Tanzania

The Tanzania country program has increased its membership base by 16 new members in the year. The current total membership in the country stands at 96 members.

Building the expertise of Tanzania grain value chain actors for structured trade

Members and stakeholders in the value chain have widened their knowledge base and enhanced their expertise from the capacity building programs conducted by the Grain Business Institute, based on specific grain industry needs. The trainings carried out include International Trade and Export Procedures, Warehouse Operations and Management, Graders Certification training and Milling Operations and Fortification.

EAGC has been pleased to undertake an apprenticeship partnership with Sokoine University of Agriculture where the country program has received 11 MBA students from the university and placed them to various EAGC members for the grain value chain industrial experience. Additionally, through a mentorship program, EAGC has empowered SMEs in the value chain particularly in grain production, warehousing, trading and milling to develop and implement business plans.

30 warehouse operators representing 15 FBOs are efficiently operating the G-Soko system following their capacitation after their warehouses were installed with the EAGC G-soko system. The training focused on feeding data into the system and utilizing the platform when receiving cereals in the warehouse, weighing, grading, managing inventory and assets, storage and routine management.

Increasing volume and value of quality grain traded

Stakeholders and members of EAGC participated in structured trading systems through their community aggregation centers and farmer operated warehouses where 20,864.8MT of grain was aggregated and traded within and outside Tanzania. A grain trade partnership between Tantrade and EAGC established earlier in the year has promoted cross border trade in the region between Tanzania and Rwanda.

EAGC Members with buying and selling needs participated in three Business to Business forums where trade deals for the sale of 4,941,067MT of grain worth USD 11.8 million were signed. The members and stakeholders were also sensitized on grain trade business hubs for adoption.

To promote and enhance structured trading systems through grain aggregation, EAGC in partnership with AGRA equipped FBO storage facilities with storage equipment -Weigh scales, Moisture meters, Pallets, Sieves and Tarpaulins to aid in the management of post harvest losses and consequently increase trade volumes.

EAGC has inspected a total of 9 warehouses as well as re-inspected and re-certified 6 warehouses in the country and further refurbished one warehouse in Ruvuma region. In addition members benefitted from the warehouse construction grant that was launched by EAGC in partnership with AGRA.

Provision of market information

Members in Tanzania continued to receive relevant real time Grain Market Information from 6 key grain markets and 1 trade corridor between Tanzania and its neighbors.
EAGC ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2019 IN PICTORIAL

EAGC Staff training farmers from World Vision on East Africa Grain Standards during the National agricultural Show held at the source of Nile in Ninja, Uganda

Group photo of participants at workshop to review draft standards for hermetic storage technologies in Kenya at the EAGC Regional offices

Mr. Sam Rutto, EAGC Regional Manager, Structured Trading Systems, facilitates an International Trade Procedures and Processes training in Lilongwe, Malawi

Cross Section of grain stakeholders engaged in a discussion on the challenges in cross border grain trade between Kenya and Ethiopia, held at the EAGC Regional Office in Kenya

A group photo of EAGC members and secretariat with the Team from Uganda conducting a warehouse field visit held during the Kenya-Uganda trade facilitation visit to formalize trade between the two countries

Dr. Andrew Tuimur, Chief Administrative Secretary Ministry of Agriculture officially launches the opening of the 8th African Grain Trade Summit on behalf of the Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Agriculture, Hon. Mwangi Kiunjuri

A cross section of matchmaking Business 2 Business session for the Kenya buyers and Ethiopian sellers during the grain trade mission held in Addis Ababa Ethiopia
Creating an enabling environment for grain trade

The Council advocated for fiscal reforms on behalf of the grain sector through the revision of VAT imposed on hermatic bags, crop insurance and non-input VAT refund to Agricultural exporters.

EAGC has further supported policy reforms through the Policy Analysis Group (PAG) which reviewed the effectiveness of policy advocacy in an attempt to weigh the value of the Agricultural policy in the country and make necessary reforms.

In partnership with the Agricultural Non-State Actors Forum (ANSAF), EAGC jointly submitted a position paper to the Parliamentary Budget Committee. The Written laws (Miscellaneous Amendments) Act 2017 amended the VAT Act of 2014 by removing input VAT credit for exports of agricultural commodities. This means that exporters of commodities such as pulses will no longer be able to recoup input VAT costs incurred in their export operations, thus potentially increasing their costs of doing business and making Tanzania’s exports less competitive, especially in international markets.

The Council convened a pulses exporters meeting to discuss recent emerging issues on pulses, more so the new Act on Non VAT Returns to the pulses exporters. Tanzania Pulses network, with EAGC’s involvement, reviewed the Tax Law of Tanzania, where the government accepted to withdraw the proposed changes of the law for VAT refunds in all agricultural raw exports.

Additionally, EAGC participated in the 5th Annual Agricultural Policy Conference advocating for Staple Value chain and stimulating market access in the region.

Media Coverage and engagements in 2019

The country program has marketed the Council through extensive interaction with the media. The country team featured on several radio programs and increased visibility through TV stations to sensitize the public on the mandate of the Council in the facilitation of structured grain trade. The radio stations involved are Kiss Fm, Radio One, Times Fm and Bomba Fm while TV stations are TBC, ITV and StarTV as well as the Citizen newspaper and the Guardian Newspaper where EAGC 2019 achievements were shared.
2019 ACHIEVEMENTS IN UGANDA

Membership Development in Uganda

The country program welcomed on board 18 new members in the year enlarging the total membership to 70 members.

Increasing volume and value of quality grain traded

Market linkages in the country realized national and regional grain trade volume of 18,703MT with 200MT exported to Kenya through formal contracts.

In an effort to integrate smallholder farmers into the grain value chain, 71 FBOs were profiled and aggregated a total of 382,016MT of grain through the Collective Aggregation Centers. Additionally, 30 warehouses were mapped in various parts of the country and inspection services carried out to 18 of the warehouses. The Grain Business Institute certified 3 warehouses and deployed the G-Soko software on 6 warehouses.

Daily submissions of prices and volumes on the RATIN platform was done for 28 commodities from 12 borders and in land markets with 1,617 new registrations in the year. Daily submissions were done for informal cross-border trade at 3 border markets; Mutukula, Mpondwe and Busia.

Improving Uganda’s Grain specific industry knowledge for increased profitability

EAGC built the capacity of the value chain stakeholders resulting to positive change in the perspective and business practice among the grain SMEs. The country program focused on warehouse operations training with specific concentration on Silo Operations and Management where 23 Warehouse Operators were trained. Additionally, 16 Warehouse Managers were trained on Export Procedures and a further 8 graders trained on grain grading. In addition, to promote the implementation of Harmonized EA Standards and improve grain quality, 2,039 SHFs were trained on value chain EA standards.

Further, EAGC with the support of the aBi Trust, held an Agribusiness EXPO that served as a learning and knowledge sharing platform for stakeholders.

Driving evidence based grain sector policy making

Grain processors in Kenya and grain producers in Uganda held grain trade facilitation meetings in an effort to improve trade quality between the two countries, supported by two governments through Government to Government talks to facilitate grain trade and formalize cross-border trade between Kenya and Uganda.

EAGC participated in the review of the National cooperative policy to support the development of the implementation strategy for the National Grain trade policy in Uganda.

The Council further engaged experts on border closure policy implications and thereafter published and circulated a policy brief on the temporary closure of the Rwanda-Uganda border.

EAGC facilitated a stakeholder engagement on the 2019/2020 budget synopsis and further held 3 consultative Policy working group meetings.

Media Coverage and engagements in 2019

EAGC worked with 12 radio stations and 10 TV stations in Uganda to create awareness on structured trading systems as well as cover the launch of the Toxi Scrub, the Agribusiness Expo and the Kenya Uganda EAGC-facilitated trade mission.
Membership Development in Rwanda

The country program welcomed on board 1 member in the year.

Exploring affordable access to finance to EAGC members

EAGC members in Rwanda have scouted for favorable grain value chain financing through farmer cooperatives and SMEs following the rising demand for investment in post harvest equipment. A growing concern for members in the country has been the high interest rates charged by the banks prompting a response for the search for rates favorable to stakeholders in the value chain.

Driving evidence based grain sector policy making

The Council has supported the investment in Sanitary and Phyto Sanitary (SPS) standards to enhance market access through the mainstreaming of Sanitary and Phyto Sanitary priorities into national policy and investment frameworks. The move is enhancing the capacity building of stakeholders on the standards to facilitate more and improved adoption.

EAGC has been on the forefront in advocating for the implementation of the Warehouse Receipt System and in partnership with Feed the Future Rwanda, through the Hinga Weze project, the Council has set out to begin the implementation of the system in the country.

The government of Rwanda appointed EAGC as a key extension service provider in Rwanda. Through this appointment, EAGC has been instrumental in supporting the achievement of the Fourth Transformation of Agriculture Sector Program (PSTA4) through the implementation of the updated National Agriculture Policy. The Council has worked towards achieving the key vision of attaining a productive, green and market-led agricultural sector.

The Council through the Private Sector Federation (PSF) has been actively involved in the policy advocacy of a favorable environment for the improved production of grain commodities in the country, particularly maize.

EAGC contributes to the Mitigation and the National Strategy plans on Aflatoxin

In an effort to mitigate the effects of aflatoxins, EAGC identified the modalities of developing the National Aflatoxin Control Plan and Action Plan which was contributory to the Terms of Reference for consultancy on the Aflatoxin Mitigation Plan and the National Strategy on Aflatoxin in Rwanda.

MIS Training on AGRA’s Management Information System

Capacity building conducted on Management Information System among stakeholders has led to the effective performance, management, transparency and decision making particularly by farmers in the value chain.
EAGC ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2019 IN PICTORIAL

A group photo of EAGC Secretariat and the Operations Wealth Creation team from Uganda during a trade facilitation meeting held at the EAGC Regional office in Nairobi

EAGC field officer Sales Wario in a group photo with members of Maendeleo B Chicken Group aggregation center during an aggregation sensitization meeting

An exhibitor explaining a seed variety to a farmer during an Agribusiness expo held in Kilosa, Morogoro

EAGC secretariat led by the Executive Director Mr. Gerald Masila and Tharaka Nithi County officials during a partnership meeting held at the EAGC Regional office in Nairobi

Millers visit the Salim Bakhresa Processing Plant in Buguruni for their practical session of the Milling and fortification training
Membership Development and Growth in Malawi

2 new members joined the country program, growing membership in Malawi to 22.

Facilitating Grain Trade for grain value chain actors in Malawi

In an effort to link grain buyers and sellers for trade facilitation, EAGC held a trade meeting between three farmer groups representing 200 small holder farmers and four off takers who were beneficiaries of the EAGC Technical Advisory Services (E-TAS). 580MT of grain was signed in contracts.

9 Farmer Based Organizations in the country have aggregated a total of 273MT of grain where 183MT of grain trade has been realized through market linkages.

In partnership with the AIMS program, the country program has developed a Loan performance tool and financially supported 45 FBOs groups through E-TAS. Additionally, to facilitate trade and market linkages, a regional Business to Business forum was held in the country where 12 E-TAS beneficiary FBOs were linked to buyers.

Improving Malawi Grain specific industry knowledge for increased profitability

In support of structured trading of soybeans and groundnuts in Malawi, EAGC in partnership with GIZ Malawi and Agro-Inputs Supplies Ltd (AISL), under the Green Innovation Centre for Agriculture and Food Sector (GIAE) project, trained Farmer Based Organizations to aggregate and supply quality grains for local and export markets. The key focal areas of the training were structured trading systems, Post-Harvest Management, warehouse management and operations, grain storage and quality management. In addition, GBI conducted an inhouse Warehouse Operations training for AISL, an EAGC member.

Further, 9 FBOs have been sensitized on grain structured trading and further equipped with the capacity to implement Structured Commodity Trading System and conduct basic assessment of available warehouses.

Traders have eased their trade operations following the International Trade Procedures and Processes, training conducted in the country.

Driving evidence based grain sector policy making

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, increasing farmer income and investment.

The Council has also been part of a policy dialogue meeting supported by Afrinut that has been jointly working towards the eradication of mycotoxin contamination in the country to promote food safety.

In an effort to safeguard and coordinate National strategies, EAGC has supported the National Planning Commission in enabling stakeholders to own and effectively implementing national strategies.
Membership Development and Growth

EAGC welcomed two new members in DRC in the year.

Exploring partnership with mining companies in DRC

The DRC country program has pursued partnerships with various Mining Companies in the country among them Kico SA, MMG, TFM and ERG to collaborate in implementing the companies’ Corporate Social Responsibility.

EAGC partnered with RCA to maximize the company’s grain production outcome in Southern DRC. Additionally, the partnership through EAGC support is set to facilitate Provision of Technical Advisory Services to SHF and the grain value chain actors at large, grain storage and aggregation, grain off taking and value addition.

Enhancing service delivery in DRC through a new 5 year Strategic Plan, 2019-2023

EAGC in partnership with the Elan DRC project validated the 2019-2023 5 year strategic plan, following members and stakeholders inputs in the plan. Members and stakeholders proposed new measures to create a positive impact in grain sector calling for the prioritization of intervention activities in the implementation phase and advocating for the reduction of cost in obtaining public services such as inspection fees and clearance fees.

Additionally, the strategic plan proposed the prioritizing of political advocacy in a bid to exempt tax in agricultural inputs, machinery and in the importation of equipment and in the access to market information. There was a further call for the incorporation of the training of market grain price system into farmer associations to enhance the accessibility of trainings by the farmers. The plan is set to enhance service delivery to increase member and stakeholder returns.

Enhancing farmer productivity and increase in grain sales in DRC

EAGC and the University of Lubumbashi entered into a partnership to host Annual EAGC Agribusiness Expos in Lubumbashi DRC. The expos, which are expected to take place in the institution’s premises facilitated by the agricultural department, will increase interaction, dialogue and rapport between the farming community and the manufacturers of agricultural inputs, implements as well as service providers.

Leveraging on partnerships to enhance delivery in the grain value chain

EAGC explored partnerships with partner organizations to strengthen the Council’s support mechanism and expert contribution to Farmer Organizations (FO) that are beneficiaries of projects implemented by the partner organizations.

Through the partnerships, the Council will enhance its impact in the promotion of structured trading systems.
Membership Development and Growth

The South Sudan Country team has welcomed two new members in the year.

Facilitating Grain Trade for grain value chain actors in Malawi

The Council successfully linked a grain trader in Uganda, who is an EAGC member to Sesame farmers in South Sudan. The trader, through the Council's negotiations settled on a single buyer and proceeded to sign a trade deal where the Council providing trade facilitation services to the buyer and seller who closed on the sale.

In an effort towards initiating peace building, development and community empowerment to foster increased resilience and food self-reliance, the country team with the support of the WFP mobilized three delegates from the Ministry of Agriculture in the country to the 8th AGTS to boost the transformation of grain trade value chains for a food secure South Sudan and Africa at large. The delegates were drawn from the ministry’s Food Reserve and the Plant Breeder Directorate of Research.
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<td>Presentation of ECO-RATIN findings on Informal Cross Border Trade along the Abidjan Lagos Corridor</td>
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<td>Meru, Kenya</td>
<td>Pulses Conclave</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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), evidence-based Policy Advocacy and Training and Capacity Building through the Grain Business Institute (GBI).