Communique on the EAGC-CDKN Project close out workshop virtually held on 20th April, 2021

PREAMBLE
The Eastern Africa Grain Council (EAGC) with support from the Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN), and in partnership with the IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Centre (ICPAC), Kenya National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), Uganda has been implementing a project aimed at creating a climate resilient community of grain stakeholders that use climate information to increase grain production, reduce post-harvest losses and improve market access for food security and improved livelihoods.

The project was premised on the fact that post-harvest losses in grain is exacerbated by lack of user-friendly information and predictions on climate and weather-based information leading to inability to make appropriate decisions, limited information on climate change mitigation and adaptation practices to assist in post-harvest management, and lack of knowledge on climate financing to assist in acquisition of climate smart technologies by actors within the grain value chain.

The project has since come to an end, and EAGC in partnership with CDKN hosted a virtual project closeout workshop on 20th April 2021, to disseminate the results realized during the project implementation period.

HIGHLIGHTS OF PROCEEDINGS

OFFICIAL REMARKS

Welcome Remarks by EAGC
EAGC Executive Director, Mr. Gerald Masila, in his welcoming remarks:

WELCOMED the partners and stakeholders to the meeting and THANKED them for participating in the project close out workshop to mark the milestones achieved in the implementation of the project.

RECAPPED that EAGC, currently in its 15th year of existence, is a Membership organization representing grain sector stakeholders in 10 countries in the Eastern Africa region, mandated to structure grain trade through Membership.
provision of four key services: Market Information Services; Structured Trading Systems; Training and capacity building; and Policy Advocacy.

REITERATED that EAGC in partnership with CDKN co-created a project envisioned to mainstream climate change information and knowledge in the grain value chain. Mr. Masila INFORMED that the project focused on providing solutions at all levels in the value chain, among them the climate smart inputs to increase yield at the production level; climate smart applications at the post-harvest level to reduce losses and improve quality; climate smart financing solutions for trade; and developed the Climate Information for Grains (CI4G) tool to provide climate information and advisories to farmer groups.

EMPHASIZED that the close out of the project, only marks the new beginning of scaling out and promoting climate solutions in the value chain, with continued engagement with Partners and with the application of the knowledge and lessons learnt.

**Remarks by the Ministry of Agriculture, Kenya**

The Chief Guest, Mr. Josphat Muhunyu, the Agriculture Secretary Ministry of Agriculture Livestock and Fisheries:

COMMENDED the collaboration efforts by EAGC to formulate and implement a notable project aimed at addressing climate change challenges in the agricultural sector, and AFFIRMED the government’s provision of an enabling environment to allow the participation of stakeholders in the development and the transformation of the agricultural sector.

INFORMED that the Ministry of Agriculture had four state departments; Crop Development and Agricultural Research; Livestock; Fisheries; and Co-operatives, all working together towards increasing agricultural productivity and enhancing resilience to climate change risks.

NOTED that the Ministry works through various strategies and policy documents to achieve its objectives, ACKNOWLEDGING the existing challenges in the agricultural sector among them the inadequate policy investment, the unsustainable food production, high cost of inputs and high dependency on rain, among others.

APPRECIATED the role of technology in the ministry through digital innovations among them the development of the agricultural observatory platform to provide information on climate which has been done in close collaboration with EAGC, the National Food Balance Sheet; the e-locust platform that captures food security issues caused by locust infestation; and the call center for food supply chain for real time basis of food stocks.
APPRECIATED EAGC for the relentless effort in steering the implementation of the program to ensure that information and learning on climate change is not only accessible to the relevant stakeholders but also easy to consume and put into practice for development.

INFORMED that CDKN exists to enhance the quality of life and resilience for the poorest and those most vulnerable to climate change, achieved through being gender responsive, striving towards social equity, building climate resilience and creating low carbon growth and development.

NOTED that EAGC, through the project implementation, had been a major contributor to CDKN’s vision in the following ways:

❖ Maintaining focus on low-income farmers who are the most susceptible to the impact of climate change, manifested in the prevalent locust’s infestation, and the unpredictable floods and droughts rampant in the country
❖ Working with women in the implementation of the project, who are the majority of the farmers relying on the farms for their livelihoods
❖ Connecting the key program actors to their fellow peers for knowledge sharing through testimonials and linking them to climate service producers such as the producers of climate information
❖ Building capacity of key stakeholders by facilitating and promoting climate resilience through demonstrations

POINTED OUT that EAGC had established itself as a competent knowledge broker, sharing knowledge to promoting climate resilience and championing for provision of finance as an enabler in climate change practice, ADVISING that such brokerage will in future, be indispensable in communication to the key project implementors at the grassroot level, in addition to government institutions in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.
In her remarks, the **CDKN Knowledge Management lead, Ms. Lisa McNamara:**

ACKNOWLEDGED a great partnership between EAGC and CDKN in the implementation of the project, CITING numerous experiences and mutual learning that took place.

HIGHLIGHTED in particular that CDKN learnt the following from their collaboration with EAGC:

➢ **The role of the private sector in knowledge uptake and learning.**

A partnership with the private sector had proved valuable in the development of knowledge products and in the translation of knowledge into action, into practice and into policy. The partnership had further demonstrated the role of knowledge in decision making and in the implementation of climate action.

She added that in future CDKN would increase engagement with the private sector in the design of research and policy implementation and consider the private sector as key investors through:

➢ **The need and the role of understanding assessing the climate needs within the grain value chain.** EAGC carried a user needs assessment at the onset of the project that became the driving factor in the implementation of the project

➢ **The need and the role for documenting the best practices**

➢ **The role of building a network of activities that are highly responsive and build on one another**

➢ **The importance of focusing on collaboration and partnerships**

➢ **Defining climate change, describing and framing it in a language that is best understood by the key actors in the value chain**

➢ **The essential role of linking and brokering roles by connecting different actors together** that has presented EAGC as great knowledge broker, particularly in the use of the CI4G database to link farmers with service providers

➢ **Gender inclusion through the power of demonstration,** that has led to knowledge sharing among peers such as the demonstration of technology application. This has strongly brought out women as effective knowledge effectors and multipliers
Prof. Charles Mukama, Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) Uganda:

**APPRECIATED** the role of CDKN in complementing the government’s work in provision of food by improving agricultural productivity and production which is characterized by high risk, majorly impacted by climate- drought, floods, diseases and pests.

**NOTED** the increased production of grain in Uganda as an impact of the project, achieved through capacity building to develop resilient methods of production through research and production of seeds resilient to drought, knowledge production, capital and research which has a long-term implication not only in grains but in other crops.

**APPLAUDED** the gender-based approach that is key in agricultural production where in most households, food is produced by women.

### PRESENTATION ON THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PROJECT

Ms. Peninah Gichuru, the Monitoring and Evaluation Manager, at EAGC made a presentation on the achievements of the project in Mitigating the Effects of Climate Change on Grain Quality and Losses. In her presentation, Ms. Peninah:

**POUNDED OUT** the objectives of the project as to:

1) Generate and repackage climate information
2) Develop interactive ICT climate information communication platform
3) Partnership engagements with stakeholders

**ENVISIONED** the expected project outcomes as:

1) Application of timely, accurate and relevant user-friendly climate information to increase grain quantity and quality by grain sector players, both women and men
2) Improving Grain sector player’s knowledge, skills and institutional linkages in relation to climate change practices
3) Improving the ability of women in the grain value chain to manage climate-related risks

**HIGHLIGHTED** the achievements as follows:

- Identification of user needs assessment that informed the information needs and preferred dissemination channels.
- The information needs identified were the provision of accurate weather, information and capacity building on aflatoxins mitigation technologies and practices, capacity on climate
resilient crop and crop water management practices and the provision of market outlook information for traders and processors to aid market decisions.

✓ Development of Climate Change Risks and opportunities Infographics as below:

✓ Capacity building of stakeholders where 238 farmers were trained on climate adaptation practices, a manual for 10 best practices developed and the documentation of successful case studies in climate adaptation from women leaders

✓ Development of interactive communication platforms:
  - Developed the interactive climate information for Grain (CI4G) communication platform; www.ci4g.net
  - Developed a Users’ training manual
  - Established a partnership with ICPAC to access climate information for the CI4G
  - Developed climate advisories that were disseminated to the farmers through CI4G and directly by Technical officers
  - Disseminated climate related information via EAGC RATIN daily News.

✓ Partnership engagement with stakeholders
  - Engaged stakeholders during a user needs assessment workshop resulting in the development of the Infographics
  - Allocated a session on climate change during the EAGC Grain Trade Summit 2019 in Mombasa
  - Interacted with climate change service providers and established a database of climate change technologies and practices in Kenya
  - Developed a policy brief on Hermetic Storage Technology to be used to engage policy makers

LISTED the benefits of the project to farmers as follows:
  - Improved decision making by farmers from an informed point of view, on the actions to prevent crop losses from weather fluctuations aided by weather information and advisories
• Increased adoption of post-harvest handling technologies; where various farmer groups adopted over 650 hermetic bags and 30 tarpaulins,
• Increased uptake of conservation farming practices such as the zero tillage
• Increased availability of technologies for Conservation Agriculture Chisels

NOTED the lessons learnt as follows:
• A lot of climate smart technologies already exist with different institutions. Engaging the stakeholders in workshops and other forums can easily make this knowledge available to the farmers.
• Continuous engagement with the stakeholders is highly effective in knowledge brokerage and learning. This continuous engagement has been instrumental in motivating farmers to adopt climate adaptation practices.
• Women came out strongly as the real champions in climate change, where they carry out much of the work on climate change.

REMARKS BY PROJECT PARTNERS
Mr. Kenneth Mwangi, the Thematic Assistant, Agriculture & Environment (GMES & AFRICA PROJECT) IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Centre (ICPAC) in his remarks:

INFORMED that ICPAC is mandated to provide climate information, forecast information, and designing tools through generation of climate data and converting it to value that adds to food security and feeds into and improves other systems among them the grain value chain system

NOTED that ICPAC collaborated with EAGC in designing the tool and has since been implementing the project in partnership with EAGC

EMPHASIZED that there exist several value addition opportunities of climate information through which the value can utilize to enhance food security and climate resilience.

Mr. John Mwangi, the Drought Information Manager at the Kenya National Drought Management Authority (NDMA):

INFORMED that NDMA participated in the project component on dissemination of climate information for Grains where NDMA had an input into the development of the portal for dissemination of climate information for grains

NOTED that NDMA is mandated to provide drought early warning information and advisories to facilitate drought preparedness, resilience building, drought mitigation and response. Mr. Mwangi also NOTED that NDMA operates in 23 counties classified as Arid and Semi-Arid (ASAL), which
makes 80% of the country, and which experiences the biggest impact of climate change with frequent droughts of 2-3 years on average.

**COMMITTED** to, through the lessons learnt, furthering the understanding of climate change across the arid and semi-arid region, working towards the promotion of climate change practices that provide better mitigations and adaptations while building community resilience to drought.

**EMBRACED** the opportunity to continue promoting the use of weather and climate information for improved food security and enhancing practices around drought risk management for the development of ASALS **CITING** investment in climate smart technology, irrigation, promotion of drought tolerant grains and cereals and grains that can be grown in the arid areas.

**PROJECT BENEFICIARIES AND TESTIMONIALS**

Dr. Rose Omaria, the Director, Soroti Grain Millers Uganda, and a Stakeholder:

**APPRECIATED** the role of the project in her farm having experienced the challenges of climate change and utilized the climate smart technologies to solve the said challenges. Dr. Rose **POINTED OUT** the existence of these solutions among stakeholders who remain ignorant of their existence

**NOTED** that while the project has been appropriate in solving issues at hand, and access to the available technologies, appreciating the Post-Harvest Management, there exists a gap in the use of aflasafe in the country.

Mr. Bhubhinder Singh, Sales & Marketing Manager at A-to-Z Textile Mills:

**INFORMED** that Aflasafe is a safe natural solution that tackles aflatoxin using harmless types of *Aspergillus flavus*, cutting aflatoxin to safe levels by 90%. Aflasafe is applied 3 weeks prior to maize flowering through broadcasting in the field. The friendly fungi occupy the growing food before aflatoxin gets a hold on the crops. Mr. Singh **NOTED** that the price of a 4kg packet of aflasafe is USD 7.

**FURTHER NOTED** that aflasafe is a value chain intervention developed by IITA, available in the three EAC countries where in Tanzania, A to Z Textile Mills manufactures the product and distributes to farmers across the region, while in Kenya, it is manufactured by KALRO. Mr. Singh **POINTED OUT** that commercial trials are going on in Uganda.
OFFERED to help stakeholders in accessing the product in any of the EAC countries.

Mr. Kipyegon Kipkemei, EAGC Field Officer:

SHARED Climate Change Adaptation Technologies Testimonials and Case Studies from women leaders within the grain-sector, as shared with EAGC in the month of December 2020. He shared the following as the key testimonials:

➢ Benefits of using the Hermetic Storage Bags against the conventional storage bags, that have led to consumption of clean and non-infested maize for a longer period of time, extending over one year
➢ Adoption of early maturing maize variety, that grows faster and matures within a short period of time, guaranteeing food security
➢ Practicing Conservation Agriculture that have included water holding trenches, water pans, small scale irrigation, zero-tillage and terracing among others

LAUNCH OF THE CLIMATE INFORMATION FOR GRAINS (C4G) KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS

Mr. Masila launched three project publications:

1) 10 best practices in climate change mitigation and adaptation in the grain value chain
2) Climate information for Grains Training Manual
3) Digital animations on the 10 best practices in both English and Swahili languages, that is still work in progress

NOTED that the publications are a product of knowledge that has been harnessed and utilized during the program implementation, having been created from data, converted to information...
and finally to knowledge. Mr. Masila **highlighted** that the products are critical in guiding the project in future from an informed point of view.

### THE WAY FORWARD

The Project proposed the following next steps:

1) Mainstreaming climate change frameworks into new programs and leverage ongoing projects expound initiatives started under the project.
2) Strengthening partnerships and broadening the conversation around climate change
3) Conduct new research in climate adaptation practices such as climate resilience
4) Strengthen the Ci4G platform under ongoing and future partnerships with ICPAC and other stakeholders.
5) Leverage on events to amplify climate change issues and demonstrate technologies for adaptation to climate change such as Grain Trade Summit and Agribusiness Fairs/Shows provide opportunities.

### PICTORIAL - CLIMATE INFORMATION FOR GAINS (CI4G) KNOWLEDGE

**Climate Information for Grains (CI4G) Training Manual – Cover page and the Table of contents**
Best practices in climate change mitigation and adaptation in the grain value chain – Cover page and the Table of contents
ABOUT THE EASTERN AFRICA GRAIN COUNCIL

The Eastern Africa Grain Council (EAGC) is a membership-based organization representing the grain sector in Eastern and Southern Africa. The Council exists to facilitate efficient, structured, profitable and inclusive grain trade in its 10 mandate countries, namely Kenya (Regional Headquarters), Uganda, Tanzania, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Burundi, Rwanda, Zambia, Malawi and the Democratic Republic of Congo. EAGC draws its membership from grain sector value chain actors in its Member States, which include farmers, traders and processors. Support service providers and complimentary sectors such as agro-input suppliers, financial services and animal feed manufacturers also form part of the Membership.

In facilitating structured grain trade in the Eastern Africa region, EAGC provides trade facilitation services through the EAGC G-Soko Grain Trading System; market and cross-border trade information through the Regional Agricultural Trade Intelligence Network (RATIN - www.ratin.net); pursuing appropriate policy reforms to support growth of structured grain trade through the Agricultural Trade Policy Advisory Forum for Eastern and Southern Africa (ATPAF-ESA); and capacity building of grain industry stakeholders through the Grain Business Institute (GBI). For more information, please feel free to contact the EAGC Secretariat through the addresses below:

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This work was carried out with the aid of a grant from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada, as part of the Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN) Programme. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, or of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) or its Board of Governors, or of the entities managing CDKN.

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