



**Communique on Industry Self-Regulation (ISR)
workshop for grain value chain players for improved
compliance to food safety in Kenya**

Held on 25th of January in Machakos



Group photo of value chain stakeholders during the Industry Self-Regulation (ISR) workshop at Semara Hotel in Machakos, Kenya

Introduction

1. [Eastern Africa Grain Council](#) in partnership with the [Confederation of Danish Industry \(DI\)](#) hosted a one-day workshop on the 25th January at Semara Hotel in Machakos for the grain value chain players in Kenya on **Industry Self-Regulation, a framework aimed at improving compliance to food safety in Kenya**.
2. The forum convened 32 participants representing key actors in the grain value chain sector in Kenya among them representatives of farmers (Grain Trade business Hubs), traders, aggregators, processors, bulk off taker institutions, development partners and government departments.

Key remarks

3. In his opening remarks, **Mr. Gerald Masila, the Executive Director of EAGC**, thanked the participants present in the grain value chain sector who contributed insights into the technical facets of Industry Self-Regulation. He further acknowledged their feedback on the proposed ISR framework and implementation roadmap, highlighting the identification of opportunities for learning, collaboration, and coordinated efforts.
4. **Mr. Alex Njeru, the Regional Project Manager for the Confederation of Danish Industries (DI)** lauded the ongoing EAGC-DI partnership towards a sustainable food future, highlighting its impact in empowering farmers through skills training, equipping millers with the industry requirements including food safety compliance, and shaping industry policy through dialogues.
5. **Dr. Andrew Edewa, Director of Standards and SPS, Trade Mark Africa (TMA)** stated that the private sector is the engine that drives the economy. He informed stakeholders that Trade Mark Africa has partnered with EAGC to implement interventions to support the sector and that TMA is in support of the industry self-regulation.
6. **Dr. Peter Kahenya from Nutrition International** highlighted the collaborative efforts between NI and EAGC, emphasizing the significance of fortification in the ISR domain. He noted that NI has provided support to small millers, furnishing them with equipment such as dozers and aflatoxin testing kits, along with conducting capacity-building initiatives for SMEs. Furthermore, NI has undertaken the training of more than 1,000 public health officers to enhance their comprehension of aflatoxin. Dr. Kahenya underscored the importance of establishing a coordinated mechanism for ensuring food safety.

Highlights of the workshop

7. Setting the scene Mr. Kimwaga Mhando, the Country Manager for Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi presented on the structure of an Industry Self-Regulation (ISR) framework in the context of grain trade in Kenya and the East African region. The presentation covered areas such as the objectives of ISR, its application to sector players, and its expected impact. The background highlighted challenges in the grain trade, including limited aggregation, lack of market transparency, and inefficient linkages in the value chain. The presentation further highlighted the risks of contamination, citing examples from surveys in Meru and Busia counties. The responsibility for safe food production and trade was emphasized to lie with the private sector, necessitating the establishment of rules complementing government regulations.
8. The presentation discussed upgrading ISR coordination at the regional level, involving mutual recognition of country-specific ISR frameworks, harmonized standards, capacity

building, a regional dispute resolution mechanism, and establishing a periodic regional food safety dialogue forum.

9. Ms. Pil Maagaard, Royal Danish Embassy presented on **Multi-Annual National Control Plan (MANCP)** stating the Embassy's collaboration with the Government of Kenya to foster a conducive business environment. Their active support in the development of a new food and feed control coordination Bill, underlining the importance of a coordinated approach to food safety. The responsibility for ensuring food safety was emphasized to rest with business owners, not the government, aligning with the EAGC roadmap guiding industry players in assuming this responsibility.
10. The practical limitations of governments in consistently overseeing businesses and the associated high costs were highlighted. The government's role, as mentioned, is to regulate without stifling business growth, with new regulations requiring dialogue, data-driven decision-making, and trial runs.
11. For the new legislation, the way forward involves reviewing the Multi-Annual National Coordination to address gaps, evaluating individual Competent Authority legislations, prioritizing risk-based inspections, shifting responsibilities for food safety, completing guidelines for inspections from firms to markets, and developing a system for detecting and reporting non-compliance.
12. The breakout sessions enabled the stakeholders to present their day-to-day operations in production and aggregation and processing of safe, high quality and nutritious food grains. It also presented an opportunity to access the risks and suggest ways that to mitigate as a way of positioning ISR for success.

Conclusion

13. The stakeholders endorsed the ISR framework, seeing it as the key to ensuring compliance with food safety and regulatory standards. The supply chain actors actively adopted the ISR roadmap, navigating its clear actions, roles, partnerships, tools, and implementation timelines with a shared commitment. Recognizing the challenges faced in meeting food safety and regulatory requirements, the industry leaders see the ISR framework as a tailored solution designed to address their unique needs.

Next steps

Circulation of ISR tools for reference, these includes;

- [Code of Practice: Good Practices for Production, Storage and Marketing of Grain Commodities](#)
- [Code of Practice: Standards Compliance and Structured Grain Trade in East Africa](#)
- [Code of Practice: Management of Structured Grain Trading within the Eastern and Southern African Region Grain Industry](#)
- [Code of Practice for Warehouse operators and Warehouse certification criteria/checklist](#)
- [Good Practice Guide for Maize Production and Trade in East Africa](#)
- Curriculums for trainings relevant to ISR/IOC such as Aflatoxin Detection & Control, Warehouse Operations and the Grain Graders Training and Certification programme.

Developing audit schemes for different ISR members (WH operators, millers, traders, farmer groups).

Development of a governance structure:

- Joint Committee with government for SRO oversight, with defined roles and responsibilities.

- Technical committee within SRO with representatives from all stakeholders, with clear terms of reference and subcommittees as needed.

Development of training programs for inspectors and auditors.

Developing enforcement mechanisms.

Development of a surveillance scheme for the ISR.

EAGC in partnership with DI to leverage on 7th June World Food Safety Day to present the first Food Grains ISR certificates

Annexes (Links)

- ❖ Workshop presentations
 - [-EAGC](#)
 - [-Danish Industry](#)
- ❖ [Breakout session responses](#)
- ❖ [List of attendees](#)