KEY RESULT AREAS OF THE ECOLOGICAL ORGANIC AGRICULTURE INITIATIVE

- EOA-related knowledge along the agricultural value chain increasingly documented and various actors capacitated to translate into practices and application.
- Decentralized advisory systems within the countries are put in place, and good practices and motivated to apply them by strengthened access to efficient advisory and support services.
- A substantially increased share of organic quality products at the local, national and regional markets is achieved.
- Multi-stakeholder platforms formed at the national regional and continental levels to influence public policies and investment plans supporting EOA.
THE CONTEXT

The agricultural sector is critical to many African economies and is one of the regions to be development driven. However, calculable farming practices created with natural challenges such as climate change, soaring human population, land degradation as well as pest and disease pandemics have hampered the sector’s return to contribute to sustainable development and provide livelihoods for the African farmers. The sector faces challenges of low productivity, inadequate infrastructure, uncoordinated development, inadequate financial resources, inaccessible markets, and lack of access to adequate information on valuable technologies and practices.

In light of these challenges and pursuant to the African Union’s (AU) 2063 Agenda and RomeFAO 2030 Agenda for Food and Agriculture (FAA), in 2011, the AU and the African Union Commission (AUC) and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) proposed the establishment of the African Organic Agriculture Initiative (AOAI). The decision required the African Union Commission (AUC) and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) to develop the AOAI and its strategic pillars.

The AOAI initiative was developed to support the development of a common and coordinated approach to the development of organic agriculture in Africa, providing a platform for African countries to share best practices and learn from each other. The initiative is aimed at promoting the growth of sustainable organic farming systems.

VISION

The AOAI vision is to create a continent that relies on sustainable organic agriculture for enhanced food security, sustainable development, and poverty reduction.

GROWTH OF THE INITIATIVE IN AFRICA

The AOAI initiative is currently supported by two main development partners – the Africa Development Corporation (ADC) and Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC).

During the pilot phase in 2012, SSNC supported the initiative in six African countries: Benin, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Zambia, and Madagascar.

Following the successful pilot phase, SSNC continues to support the initiative in four African countries: Benin, Uganda, Tanzania, and Ethiopia for the period 2013-2015, while the ADC support is concentrated in eight countries: the four member states in East Africa and four West African countries (Bénin, Senegal, Mali, and Nigeria) for the period 2014-2016.

The AOAI Initiative seeks to address the challenges faced by the agricultural sector in Africa by promoting sustainable organic agriculture, which can help increase food security and reduce poverty.

Contribution and support is provided by the African Union (AU) and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), among other organizations.

THE AOAI STRATEGIC AREAS

Research, Training and Extension (RETS): This pillar is responsible for understanding the potential of organic agriculture within the context of national agriculture value chains. It focuses on sustainable agricultural research, training, extension, and capacity building.

Information and Communication (IC): This pillar is responsible for raising awareness and strengthening the initiative’s communication efforts. It aims to provide access to information on organic agriculture and its benefits.

Valuation Chain and Market Development (VCMD): This pillar is responsible for developing value chains for organic products and linking farmers to markets.

Networking and Partnership: This pillar promotes partnerships to leverage resources and support the initiative’s objectives.

Policy and Programme Development: This pillar supports the development and implementation of enabling policies and programmes for organic agriculture in Africa.

Institutional Capacity Development: This pillar focuses on the development of institutional capacity and networking for the initiative.

Under the AOAI initiative, the three pillars will be consolidated into one pillar and will be collectively referred to as the AOAI Commission and Management.