

November 2019

**REPORT OF THE RWANDA EOA NATIONAL PLATFORM MEETING
& ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE
(NSC)**



Elected EOA National Steering Committee



After the official launch of the National Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) Platform on 9th August 2019, The Rwanda Organic Agriculture Movement (ROAM) in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI) organized the first meeting of the EOA National Platform on 7th November 2019 at Grand Legacy Hotel. The meeting gathered 36 stakeholders from various institutions in Rwanda;

- **Ministries and Policy Institutions:** Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI), the Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA), National Agricultural Export Development Board (NAEB). Rwanda Agricultural Board (RAB)
- **Research, Trainings and Educational Institutes.** University of Technology and Arts of Byumba (UTAB), College of Agriculture and veterinary medicine (CAVM), Regional Research Center for Integrated Development (RCID)
- **Private Sector:** Horizon-AGROPY (Organic Input Suppliers), Agasaro Organic Ltd (Organic Processors and marketers).Promoting Organic and Sustainable Agriculture Development in Africa (POSADA)
- **Civil Society Organizations :**
 - **Local NGO:** Humura Training Center, Haguruka, Huguka, Rwandan Youth for Agriculture Forum, INADES Formation
 - **International NGO:** TROCAIRE, ACORD, Action Aid, Vi-Agroforestry, Gardens for Health.
- **Farmer Organizations:** APPE/ESAFF RWANDA, TUZAMURANE Cooperative, Hillside Organic Tea Cooperative,
- **Development partners :**French Embassy

This meeting was organized as an opportunity of exchanging and establishing the EOA National Steering Committee (NSC)



Innocent BISANGWA the representative from MINAGRI

Opening remarks were done by Mr. Innocent BISANGWA the representative from the Rwanda Ministry of Agriculture (MINAGRI). In his presentation he highlighted the alignment of the Ecological organic agriculture to the National Agriculture Policy (NAP) and PSTA 4 (Strategic Plan for Agricultural Transformation 2018-2024); some of the priority Areas in PSTA 4 are;

Priority area 1: Innovation and Extension: in which the Government is supporting research on Bio-fertilizers Technologies, Vermi-composting, Organic fertilizer, and enriched compost. MINAGRI is willing to support the development of an Organic Agriculture in Rwanda.

Priority Area 2 Productivity and Resilience: that supports the increase in organic fertilizer production and utilization as part of integrated soil fertility management practices in conjunction with gradual liberalization of fertilizer supply.

Priority Area 3 inclusive market and value addition: that supports quality assurance and regulation in upgrading the capacities of personnel on private standards (**Organic Certification**).

He recommended the organic sector actors to take advantages of the opportunities offered by the Government of Rwanda to support the organic sector in production, processing and export and organizing aggressive awareness campaigns on the benefits of organic products in Rwanda.



Ms Lise Chantal DUSABE
CEO/ROAM

Ms. Lise Chantal Dusabe the CEO of ROAM presented on the EOA-I project phase II under SDC support (Mainstreaming Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) into agriculture systems in Africa for the period of 2019-2023). She emphasized on the role of the National Steering Committee (NSC) with the main purpose of providing Leadership and Overall supervision of EOA activities at the country Level.

Stakeholders were also reminded that EOA National Steering Committee will support the implementing partners at various levels including approval of work plans, Budget and project reports (Progress and Financial reports).

The NSC will also monitor the uptake of technologies and how these improve the welfare of farmers/producers, processors, marketers and consumers.

The institutions as prospected by the EOA structure were presented in the meeting, which made it possible to establish the National Steering Committee. The Committee was democratically elected by the EOA National Stakeholders platform and its composition was based on institutions rather than individuals.

The Representatives in the committee included:

| No | NAMES | INSTITUTIONS | ROLE |
|----|--|--|---------------|
| 1 | Innocent BISANGWA | Ministry of Agriculture and Animal resources (MINAGRI) | Chairman |
| 2 | Fr. Prof.Faustin NYOMBAYIRE/ <i>Vice Chancellor (UTAB)</i> | University of Technology and arts of Byumba(UTAB) | Vice Chairman |
| | Ms. Lise Chantal DUSABE | Rwanda Organic Agriculture Movement (ROAM) | Secretary |
| 3 | Mr. Dr Simon RUKERATABARO | College of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine | Member |
| 4 | Mr. Eric RUGANINTWARI | National Agriculture Export Development Board (NAEB) | Member |
| 5 | Ms. Rachael TUSHABE | Rwanda Environment Management Authority(REMA) | Member |
| 6 | Mr. Albert NKUNDABAGENZI | HUMURA | Member |
| 7 | Mr. Jean Marie Vianney RUKUNDO | Vi-Agroforestry | Member |
| 8 | Ms. Cadeau Grace MUKUNDIYABO | Horizon AgroPy Ltd | Member |

NB. 3 Institutions that are supposed to be part of the National Steering Committee were not represented (Certification and regulatory agency, Development Partners working on EOA related matters and Financing Institution) and it was suggested by the platform members that Rwanda Standards Board (RSB) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) may join the NSC. The farmers associations who were present decided to be represented by the Rwanda farmers Chamber/Private Sector Federation (PSF) and Rwanda Development Board (BRD) to represent the Financing Institution.

ORGANIC QUOTE

“With wrong farming methods, we turn fertile land into desert. Unless we go back to organic farming and save the soil, there is no future.”

By Jaggi Vasudev

Way forward to strengthen the Organic sector in Rwanda based on the recommendations from the EOA national platform:

- Gathering enough data on organic products and Organic agricultural land
- Developing and strengthening organic market to take advantage of the stable price of organic products at the international market.
- Creating a strong network and synergy among stakeholders in organic sector.
- Establishment of the Organic selling points and availing organic products on shelves of different supermarkets.
- Avail information and evidences on the benefits of organic agriculture to the ecosystem (Soil, plants and human) through innovative researches and break gaps between researchers and farmers in the organic agriculture industry
- Building a strong partnership with Rwanda Agriculture Board (RAB) for extension activities
- Organizing aggressive awareness campaigns through TV Talks and Dialogues and Strategically Lobby and advocate for the organic policy in Rwanda.
- Involving youth and women in organic agriculture.

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SUCCESS STORY

TUZAMURANE COOPERATIVE (Eastern Province) is a Rwandan Organic Farmers' Cooperative that grows Pineapples and processes them to be ready for the international market. The idea to start drying these pineapples and expand their market to both, regional and international market, was a sustainable solution to the challenge of too much pineapple harvest for the local market.

It is so amazing to see what they have archived from the past few years. Below are the summarized explanations on how they go through this process and how much they earn from their work.

- ✓ When they dry one tone of fresh pineapples, they generate 50kgs of dried pineapples
- ✓ This means 20kgs of fresh pineapples is equivalent to 1 kg of dried pineapples.
- ✓ The cost price for fresh pineapples is at 130 frw per kg
- ✓ However the selling price of the final processed pineapples is at 15,000 frw per kg
- ✓ The Guarantee for the processed pineapples is 2 years.
- ✓ They have an international Organic certification for the EU Market

This has not only changed their lives but also the lives of the farmers who have secured the market of their production



Mr. Joseph Narrating the process it takes to dry Pineapples



From the success story mentioned above, it is well noted that the market for organic products is on high demand and the price does not fluctuate like any other product on the market. The National Steering Committee in consultation with the stakeholders is expected to provide an outstanding leadership to boost organic sector as a sustainable alternative method that will spearhead the existing agricultural practices.