

► The OSEA project winds up after a successful three year term.

“OSEA is a flagship project and a model for organic development in a region. It started focused on standards and broadened its tools for local sector and markets developments including market studies, PGS and public communications. The national organic movements including the new ones in Rwanda and Burundi showed how their actions are crucial for a sustainable organic development. The organic world is proud and impressed to see East Africa taking a lead on its continent based on collaboration between local and global stakeholders.”

said IFOAM’s Executive Director, Markus Arbenz after the successful completion of the project “Organic Standards and Certification Capacity in East Africa – OSEA phase II” in December 2013. OSEA II was financed by the Government of Sweden.

Some of the accomplishments are:

- x The number of farmer engaged in formalized trade in the domestic and regional markets increased more than the target and most respondents reported considerable increase of sales.
- x 5,100 farmers are part of Participatory Guarantee Systems, from zero at the start of the project. Many more farm groups are showing interest.
- x Ugocert is approved by the EU for exports of organic products.
- x Awareness of organic agriculture has increase across the board, 17% of surveyed consumers recognize the East African Organic Mark.
- x An organic policy for Kenya is in advanced stage; an organic action plan is adopted in Rwanda and organic is recognized in mainstream policy; the draft national agriculture policy of Tanzania has a section on organic agriculture and an organic policy is approved by the top management awaiting cabinet approval in Uganda.
- x Organic stakeholders in Burundi and Rwanda are organized in BOAM and ROAM respectively. BOAM membership increased from 4 member organizations 2010 to 24 member organizations with 600 members in 2013. ROAM increased from approximately 250 individuals in 2007 to 62 member organizations with approximately 30,000 individuals.



The evaluation of OSEA, made by EOW Associates based in Nairobi, concluded that the project was well managed, highly relevant and well aligned to Swedish *Cooperation Strategy for Regional Cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa* as well as continental, regional and national strategies. The project has significantly increased the awareness about the benefits of organic products; it has contributed to place organic agriculture on the development

agenda and the effects of the project will lead to long term development of the organic

sector in the region. The evaluators conclude that there is need to establish and support Africa-wide platform that will facilitate exchange of information including best practices.

Jordan Gama, Head of the Tanzania Organic Agriculture Movement and President of the all African organic network AfroNet, concludes that “OSEA has given organic a boost in the whole region and it is a remarkable achievement that we now have a dozens of farmer groups organized for local marketing and certified through a regionally developed system which empowers farmers and local organizations”, referring to the PGS. He continues: “OSEA has contributed to the organic development in the whole of Africa by showing leadership and show what can be done on the ground”

► **PGS work successfully concluded and ten groups approved**



One of the focal areas of the OSEA project was the development of systems for Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) and their implementation by farmer groups, mostly in collaboration with an NGO and the National Organic Agriculture Movement. Once they reached a certain level of performance they are assessed against the regional criteria for PGS and the National Organic Agriculture Movement decide if they will be awarded the license to use the East African Organic Mark.

In the meeting for the Joint Management Committee for the Mark 16 October 2013, the following PGS groups were acknowledged as fulfilling the criteria.

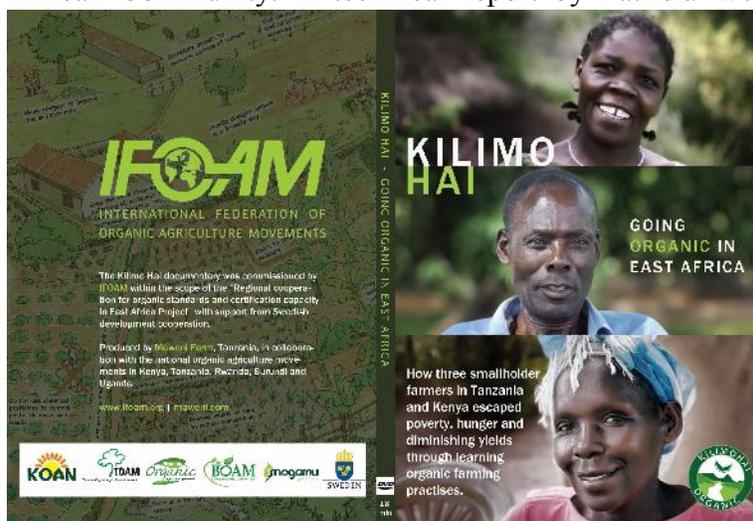
	No. of farms	Women headed	Headed by men
Uganda			
Kulika PGS	23	9	14
Pickwick Cooperative	1250	875	375
Blessed Organic Release	3000	2700	300
Namulonge PGS	20	4	16
Kenya			
Yetana Women Group	27	22	5
Ngong Organic Farmers Association	47	36	11
Tanzania			
Chigweje Kilimohai	90	47	42
Jumuia Kilimohai Miyuyu	107	54	53
Mwongozo-Ngunichile Organic Farmers	36	14	22
Mandeleo	22	14	8

Encouraged by their success there is an equal number of new groups lining up for approval. OSEA collated 5 case studies in a report, *Participatory Guarantee Systems in East Africa, Case Studies from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda*, which soon will be uploaded onto the OSEA web page. More info on PGS:

<http://www.ifoam.org/en/value-chain/participatory-guarantee-systems-pgs>

► Regional trade: promising - but also a challenge

OSEA supported contacts between buyers and suppliers in the region by information, exchange visits and participation in two fairs in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi. Overall, the initiative was successful. The realization of actual trade was limited by logistic problems. Sending in the hold of busses can't safeguard the quality and safe arrival of the goods. Separate transport by lorry is costly and also subject to delays or impoundment at the border, by customs officials who may not yet have fully understood that there is an East African Community. A technical report by Patricia Wangong'u the projects regional



coordinator says that: “The government needs to sensitize its officers on the ground especially along the borders and re-train them to avoid unnecessary delays and demands for already fulfilled conditions by the traders importing and exporting goods. This will encourage more trade and build the confidence of traders as their goods can move freely along the borders.”

► A wealth of information

The OSEA project has commissioned many studies. They are available at the [OSEA web site](#). The project has also produced a fantastic video which you can watch at Youtube: [Kilimohai – Going Organic in East Africa](#).

► No more OSEA, but perhaps OTEA!

Considering the success of OSEA, IFOAM and the National Organic Agriculture Movements are in full swing designing a follow up to OSEA. Tentatively it will have an increased emphasis on direct support to selected value chains for local and regional trade, while continue work on awareness raising; policy development and the capacity of the organic sector.

Gunnar Rundgren from GroLink AB, who was the project leader of both OSEA I and OSEA II says that he is convinced that the future looks bright “I am very happy and proud of what we accomplished so far and I expect that organic in East African will continue to reap a rich harvests in the future. The journey has just started”.

The OSEA II Project was implemented by [IFOAM](#) and the National Organic Agriculture Movements in Burundi (BOAM), Kenya ([KOAN](#)), Rwanda (ROAM), Tanzania ([TOAM](#)) and Uganda ([NOGAMU](#)) in close cooperation with the organic stakeholders and governments in the East African countries. It was financed by the [Swedish Government](#). The project started 1 November 2010 and ran up to 31 December 2013.

► [Link to IFOAM page for more information about the project](#)