

# Global Project Agricultural Policy and Innovation Fund

## Improvement of regional trade with seed potatoes in Eastern Africa

### The challenge

In the East African Community (EAC), potato is ranked among the top five strategic staple crops that are key to food and nutrition security, and rural agribusiness. Potato is produced by about 2.2 million farmers in the region. Its successful production is dependent on use of quality inputs, especially seed. Current production for the region is averaging 4.2MT, and 36,000ha annually. Approximately 70% of this production is done through informal seed system (recycled or farm-saved seed of poor-quality varieties), and up to 30% certified (formal) seed system. Certified seed use represents only 4% adoption of improved quality seed potato. Recorded yields are therefore low, averaging 10t/ha, compared to potential average yields of 30+t/ha.

Though intra-regional trade in seed potato is still low but significantly improving, the potato sub-sector (seed and ware) is still constrained by poor access to quality seed potatoes for production and distribution, severe disease/pest accumulation and spread (due to high proportion of informal seed use), and high post-harvest losses (bulky, perishable, and low value addition). Additionally, there is low capacity of seed breeders (limited production of early generation seed and low effective demand and incentives for private sector investment), low farmer willingness to pay for improved quality seed varieties, and variable implementation and coordination of trade facilitation mechanisms among Partner States (SPS regulations, and unharmonized seed potato standards).

### Our approach

The treaty establishing the EAC, the EAC Vision 2050, and the 6<sup>th</sup> EAC Development Strategy aim to build key pillars that sustainably contribute to regional cooperation and integration, through transformation in key economic sectors, including agriculture. Specifically the EAC Regional Agriculture Investment Plan, the EAC Food and Nutrition Security Strategy, and the EAC Industrialization Strategy (2021-2032), positions agricultural transformation to contribute to regional economic development through improving the institutional

and business environment, committing itself to multilateral trading systems in quality agricultural inputs and products within trade-related policies and regulations, focusing on technology, innovation, trade facilitation, policy advisory and market access (Common Market Protocol). In order to provide a basis for the development of trade in seed potatoes in the EAC, the German government supports the EAC Secretariat (EACS) in its project “Improvement of regional trade with seed potatoes in Eastern Africa”.

The project aligns with the above-mentioned EAC aspirations, and is implemented by GIZ as part of the global project “Agricultural Policy and Innovation Fund” under the special initiative “ONE WORLD – No Hunger” of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) in order to improve the framework conditions for agricultural trade. The global project also supports African partner countries by means of technical and political advice in developing and implementing evidence-based strategies using scientific information and participatory instruments.



<b>Project name</b>	Global project “Agricultural Policy and Innovation Fund”; EAC-component: “Improvement of regional trade with seed potatoes in Eastern Africa”
<b>Commissioned by</b>	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
<b>Project region</b>	East African Community
<b>Lead executing agency</b>	East African Community Secretariat
<b>Duration</b>	01.11.2019 – 30.04.2022 (extended to 31.12.2022)

### Results in narrative...

Commissioned in early 2021, the project has supported EACS to establish and adopt a sustainable project coordination, steering and implementation structure at regional and national level, compris-





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ing of Project Management Group (PMG) at strategic level, Regional Project Steering Committee (RPSC) at policy level, and national coordination and implementation (Ministry of EAC Affairs Focal Person, and National Focal Persons-Public and Private Sector Focal Persons), supported by a team of national GIZ Advisors in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. The stakeholders adopted the EAC protocol of intervention implementation which comprises regional inception, national synthesis, consultation and validation, and regional validation, for EAC Sectoral Council on Agriculture and Food Security (SCAFS) adoption and national policy direction.

EAC and stakeholders refined and adopted the Project Operational Plan (2021/2022), enabling the project to conduct the regional diagnostic study of the subsector (Regional Situation Analysis of the Seed and Ware Potato Subsector), which was validated and adopted in May 2021, establishing the basis for and informing project interventions based on the approved project impact matrix.

The project supported EAC to develop the ToR, consultancy and carry out the Regional Seed Potato Subsector Gender-Sensitive Analysis, to understand the dynamics of gender in the context of roles, activities, differences and inequalities, access to and control of productive resources, and decision-making opportunities. This provided the basis for the development of a Regional Seed Potato Subsector Gender-Sensitive Strategy and Action Plan (2021-2026), which was validated and adopted by EAC and stakeholders in October 2021. The gender-sensitive strategy and action plan aims to fully integrate and empower gendered outcomes in the seed potato value chain.

EACS and stakeholders were also supported to develop, validate and adopt the regional Terms of Reference (ToR) for the establishment of Regional Potato Platform in October 2021. This is a multi-stakeholder platform for potato subsector stakeholders' collaboration and steering, aimed at empowering stakeholders to access and sustainably use quality seed potato for yield improvement, regional trade, stakeholder integration, policy influence and advocacy, and long-term development of the seed potato industry. The SCAFS directed the EACS to launch and conduct the first meeting of the platform, including supporting the establishment of national potato platforms where they are not yet established.

To strengthen national quality assurance capacities of National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) for improved phytosanitary (SPS) implementation, the project awarded grant financing to International Potato Center (CIP) to conduct NPPOs capacity needs assessment, develop a capacity development plan and implement national training roadmap in collaboration with NPPOs. Inception, national consultations, regional validation and adoption by EAC and stakeholders were done in February 2022.

Concurrent with the above-mentioned activities, the project has supported the EACS to develop the Regional Seed Potato Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2032) through consultancy, inception workshop, national consultations, and regional validation. The EAC and stakeholders adopted the strategy and action plan in February 2022, recommending the integration of Regional Gender-Sensitive Strategy and Action Plan (2021-2026).

Finally, the EAC presented the key of outputs of the project to the 15<sup>th</sup> EAC Sectoral Council on Agriculture and Food Security (SCAFS) meeting of March 2021. SCAFS adopted, approved, and directed EACS and Partner States to implement the Regional Seed Potato Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2032), integrating the Regional Gender-Sensitive Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2027), the Regional Potato Platform (RPP), and capacity development of NPPOs.

## Results in numbers...

Baseline survey of 36 NPPO stakeholders conducted in February 2022, on perception of efficiency of SPS audit process, indicate average time (turnaround), and inadequate resources allocated to effort by Partner States. On progress being made by national potato platforms to strengthen harmonization of East Africa Standards (EAS) on seed potato, the stakeholders were unaware (national & regional).

The project has rolled out three regional training modules developed by CIP for NPPOs capacity strengthening, aiming to impact over 30 nationally certified seed potato multipliers, over 30 national and private seed potato inspection and certification personnel, and over 30 national seed potato pest and disease diagnosis technical staff supported with improved laboratory diagnostics equipment and accessories.

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