

Productivity and Growth in Organic Value-chains (ProGrOV)

MARKET-ORIENTED AGRO-ECOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

Improving productivity and growth in existing organic value-chains in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. This is what the research project ProGrOV is about, by way of developing agro-ecological methods, governance and management of chains, and by capacity development regarding research focussed on organic and interdisciplinary approaches.

The project is a collaboration between Universities in Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and Denmark. It is funded by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and coordinated by the International Centre for Research in Organic Food Systems (ICROFS).

Value chains for sustainable development

Agriculture and agribusiness is important in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The development of the sector is, however, facing the challenge that most crops and livestock are produced on small-sized farms with poor market access and limited capacity for quality

assurance and grading for high value markets. At the same time the current pressure on natural resources such as soil and water is not sustainable.

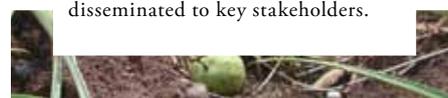
Therefore, there is a need to strengthen the development of sustainable approaches that also focus on the integration of market oriented smallholder farmers in the value chains. Such approaches must create



Project implementation

Capacity building is a strong element in the project. The project is based on 9 PhD studies and 6 MSc studies at the three universities in Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya.

The project is organizing special training courses in value chain, participatory and multidisciplinary approaches. The students will implement the studies in close collaboration with the national organic organizations in the three countries (TOAM, NOGAMU and KOAN) and with the support of a team of supervisors from their own university and from Aarhus or Copenhagen University. The knowledge developed in the studies will be synthesized toward the end of the project and disseminated to key stakeholders.



collaboration and responsiveness between the primary producers, the intermediaries and the market, as well as have focus on implementing and improving agro-ecological farming practices for developing and strengthening robust and resilient farming systems that maintain soil fertility and are adaptive to climate change.

Research in sustainable agricultural development must address 'the multiple functions of agriculture that include the improvement of livelihoods, the enhancement of environmental services, the conservation of natural resources and biodiversity, and the contribution of agriculture to the maintenance of social and cultural traditions' (IAASTD, 2009).

Organic value chains and sustainable agricultural intensification

The organic principles of farming based of health, ecology, fairness and care includes these multiple functions

Project approach

1. Agro-ecology and agricultural productivity

2. Value-chain and agribusiness development

3. Research training and capacity building

4. Synthesis, dissemination and project management

Specific Objective 1: New agro-ecological methods developed and tested for improved agricultural productivity and growth in a value-chain perspective, based on challenges related to integrated organic production including soil and livestock components and to quality and pest management in a value-chain perspective.

Specific Objective 2: Strategies for improved OA agribusiness development and understanding of modern food chains developed and the potentials; and strategies to overcome challenges suggested for sustainable growth and development in existing and new OA value-chains involving smallholder farmers in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania.

Specific Objective 3: Young researchers scientifically trained in discipline oriented research methods and their relevance for OA chain development; and the research capacities of the participating universities as well as the regional research collaboration between universities, public and private sector strengthened bridging different incentive structures for the benefit of chain actors.

Specific Objective 4: Sub-projects coordinated; results from discipline oriented studies synthesised and disseminated together with recommendations for improved framework for support and development of organic value-chains involving market oriented smallholder farmers; and results of the project reported to the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



ICROFS

International Centre for Research in Organic Food Systems

Expected Project impact

- Young researchers trained in organic interdisciplinary research approaches,
- » New knowledge experience enabling the partner universities to expand and tailor future research activities supporting the development of organic and other high value chains,
 - » Collaboration between researchers and stakeholders in the organic value chains facilitating the initiation of future joint projects between universities and the private sector,
 - » A broader insight in the development potentials and challenges of supporting and strengthening the organic sector,
 - » Improved capacity of the organic organizations for supporting and training in organic value chains development
 - » Improved knowledge on governance of organic and other value chains to better include innovations in products and agro-ecological practices tailored specific quality demands from markets and with consideration for environmental sustainability and farmers' livelihood.

Overall objective

Increased agricultural productivity and development of agribusiness for economic growth, improved livelihoods and sustainable development in Africa.

Immediate Objective

Research based knowledge for supporting increased productivity and sustainable growth in organic production and value chains strengthened, and capacity built for future development of the OA based value chain in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania.

highlighted in the IAASTD.

Furthermore, organic food and fibre is one of the fastest growing high-value market chains with potential for benefiting a huge number of smallholder farmers and processing companies in East Africa. Besides the global market there is an increasing demand in the region partly via up-market supermarkets and the tourist industry. However, it is not clear to which extent market oriented smallholder farmers will be competitive in such markets.

Previous projects have demonstrated positive results from development of organic value-chains in terms of improved agricultural production, however, also concluding that chain actors face a number of challenges, such as limited capacity of local farming communities to respond to requirements of complex market chains and requirements as well as capacity needs to be strengthened among the farmers regarding organic agricultural system development and agro-ecological practices.

While some research has focused on improving productivity and Natural

Development perspective

The development perspective of the project is to strengthen the capacity in supporting the development and organization of organic value chains based on agro-ecological agricultural production responding to the dynamics of the value chain for sustainable economic rural development.

Resource Management of smallholder farmers in Eastern Africa, this has in most cases not been associated with studies of how to link improved production to market access and quality demands.

ProGrOV Project Approach

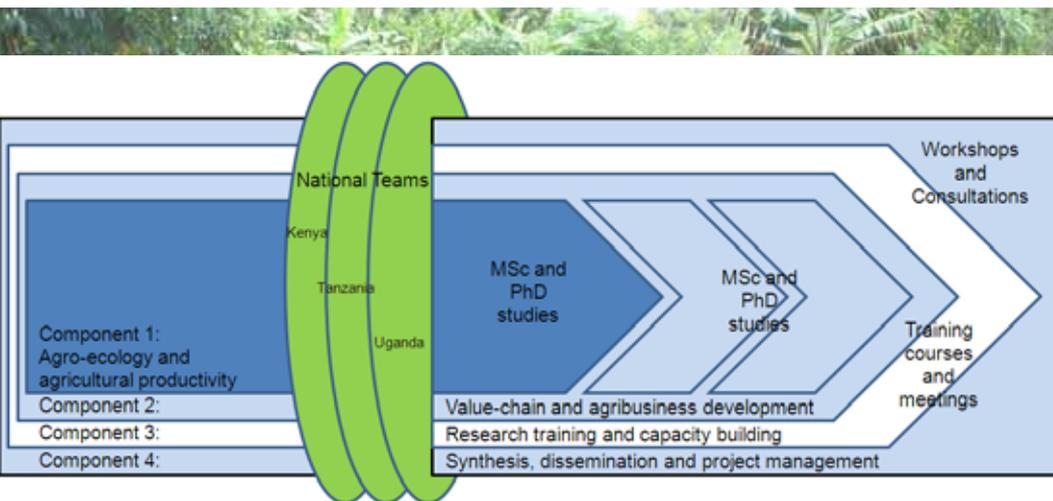
In the ProGrOV project production elements of organic value chains will be studied with respect to how farmers best can respond to and collaborate with the demands of the intermediaries and markets.

There will be focus on the integration of livestock, product quality-soil, and product quality-pest management relationship in organic value chains for the export market, high end domestic market and the tourism sector.

As collaboration with the chain



actors, such as farmers and processors, is essential in the studies, the value-chains approach of the project is combined with participatory approaches in each of the studies, in order to ensure that the knowledge generated through the studies will be useful and applicable to real life situations.



Project partners

- Makerere University, Uganda
- University of Nairobi, Kenya
- Sokoine University of Agriculture, Tanzania
- Aarhus University, Denmark
- University of Copenhagen, Denmark
- International Centre for Research in Organic Food Systems (ICROFS)

Associated Partners

- National Organic Movement of Uganda (NO-GAMU)
- Kenya Organic Agriculture Network (KOAN)
- Tanzania Organic Agriculture Movement (TOAM)

Project duration: January 2011-March 2015