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Knowledge Centre for Organic Agriculture and Agroecology in Africa Newsletter



News from the Knowledge Centre for Organic Agriculture and Agroecology in Africa (KCOA)

A service of the project Knowledge Centre for Organic Agriculture and Agroecology in Africa (KCOA)

Dear KCOA partners,

The first months of 2024 have started with many local and international events attended by partners from all Knowledge Hubs. A special highlight in this edition is the BIOFACH and the panel session organised together with IFOAM and FiBL that brought together powerful women to share their experiences as change-makers in organic agriculture and agroecology.

After the launch of the Multiplier Network last year, partners are intensively focusing on further developing it, engaging their communities and writing blog stories. We have reached over **715 registered multipliers and almost 580 validated knowledge products**.

In this edition, you can also get to know more about the work of Access Agriculture together with KCOA, discover more stories from the field, and get a glimpse on FiBL's recent publication on the positive impacts of agroecology and organic agriculture.

Enjoy the read!

Current Activities & Achievements

Knowledge Hub Southern Africa (KHSa)

An overview from Namibia, Zambia & Malawi



PELUM holds multiplier training on soil health in Eastern Province, Zambia. Photo: PELUM Zambia

Over the past few months, three KHSa partner organisations have supported IFOAM's phase 2 work in Southern Africa.

In Namibia, the Namibian Organic Association (NOA) undertook a multiplier training in the form of a Perma Blitz in which participants learn permaculture principles and practices by working together to implement permaculture aspects on a particular site. They also hosted a refresher training in Windhoek.

In Zambia, PELUM Zambia has hosted three multiplier trainings in the Eastern, Southern and Northern provinces with training programmes designed and delivered by IFOAM master trainers and

backstopping support provided by the leaders of the Ecological Organic Agriculture Leadership Course (EOALC). It will host a refresher training for Zambian master trainers end-March in Lusaka.

Soils, Food and Healthy Communities in Malawi has also hosted a three-day multiplier training with 30 of its Farm Research Team members. Participants were exposed to practical training as well as training on how to use participatory theatre to discuss sensitive topics like gender, climate change and food security in rural settings. In May/June, the South African Organic Sector Organisation will bring together its Pollinator Programme multipliers for a two-day training on undertaking Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) farm assessments, among other topics.

What is the Ecological Organic Agriculture Leadership Course (EOALC)?

The Ecological Organic Agriculture Leadership Course (EOALC) empowers individuals across Africa to become champions for organic farming practices in their regions. This intensive program equips participants with the knowledge and skills to spearhead positive change in their communities and countries. The EOALC fosters a network of passionate leaders who share best practices, collaborate on initiatives, and work together to transform African agriculture towards a more sustainable future.

[Read more >>>](#)

Knowledge Hub North Africa (KHNA)

Tunisia

Farming for the Future: How Tunisia is Teaming Up to Boost Soil Carbon Sequestration



KHNA Tunisian delegation. Photo: Haythem El-Ouaer

On March 4th and 5th, in Hammamet, Tunisia, two training days focused on "Boosting Soil Carbon Storage" were co-organised in partnership between the ProSoil project, the CTAB (the Technical Center for Organic Agriculture), and the KHNA in Tunisia.

In addition to the crucial aspect of strengthening the partners' capacities, these days provided an opportunity for fruitful exchanges and formulated avenues for reflection between public institutions, NGOs and knowledge multipliers. The goal was to bridge the gap between the latest research on storing carbon in soil and real-world practices for sustainable agriculture in Tunisia.

The key to the event's success was the lively exchange between different organisations. This discussion wasn't just informative, it sparked excitement for the two days. By sharing ideas, everyone came together to create a more ambitious vision for how farming practices can fight

climate change. A big part of this vision is storing carbon in the soil and how to support farmers in doing so.

Egypt

Participation in the Central Upper Egypt Agricultural Exhibition in Asyut from 21 to 22 January 2024

The recent Central Upper Egypt Agricultural Exhibition featured a thought-provoking conference titled "The Impact of the Economy of Love and Carbon Credits to Support the Transition to Organic Agriculture."

The conference explored how the "Economy of Love" and discussions focused on the role of carbon credits in supporting this transition. KHNA facilitated the participation of some of the participants in the initiative of the Service Centres for Organic Agriculture, agricultural leaders and growers to learn more about good production practices and new developments in the field. This diverse group gained valuable insights into best practices for organic production and emerging advancements in the field.



Some participants of the 35th session of the Sahara International Exhibition. Photo: Buthaina Elhosien

Morocco

Training of Trainers on the theme "FIMABIO, for bio-ecological, sustainable and mutually supportive agriculture"

Three days of training were held in the South of Agadir, on the theme of "FIMABIO: For bio-ecological, sustainable and mutually supportive agriculture". The training course was a success, bringing together more than 40 participants, including many administrative managers and partners from the region.



ToT Participants in Morocco. Photo: Jamila Loukili

Over the three days, the four groups representing different regions of Morocco had the opportunity to express their enthusiasm, their problems and their commitment to changing farming practices. The sharing of knowledge was central to the course, with a variety of materials including videos and technical fact sheets, as well as practical demonstrations of feasibility. The sub-themes covered included converting to organic farming, making the most of local knowledge and combating desertification, in particular by promoting the cultivation of the Argan Tree.

Knowledge Hub Eastern Africa (KHEA)

KHEA Delegation at the BIOFACH



KCOA Project teams from Africa and Germany. Photo: KHEA

From 13 to 16 February 2024, the international organic food and natural and organic cosmetics community met in Nuremberg Germany for the BIOFACH and VIVANESS 2024. Among these, were the KHEA Project team comprising of 15 participants from all hub countries.

During this week, the KHEA delegation was inspired by the diverse range of products and services offered by the 2,550 exhibitors from 94 countries. In addition, KHEA used this opportunity to engage in dialogue with multiple stakeholders, to participate in different conference sessions as input givers, engage in dialogue with public figures present in the fair such as the ministers of agriculture from Uganda and Madagascar, and to discuss its continuity strategy and focus for the sustainability of the Knowledge Hub.

Knowledge Hub West Africa (KHWA)

Mali

3rd Organic Weekend

The 3rd edition of the Weekend Bio took place in two phases: an agroecological morning centred on exchanges with various stakeholders, followed by visits to stands and the sale of organic products. Chaired by the Secretary General of the Ministry of Agriculture, it brought together municipal representatives, the Ministry of Health, NGOs, the media and producers.



Organic Produce Photo: KHWA

Benin

Awareness-raising sessions on Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) practices in Benin



Participants of the capacity building workshop in Natitingou, Benin. Photo: Serge Gansou

Awareness-raising sessions on the practices of the Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) in Benin began on 18 March at GAKPE in the commune of Ouidah and continued until 21 March in other localities. The sessions targeted a total of 100 players in the agroecological value chain, including producers, processors and consumers. During the sessions, the dynamic exchanges and reflections shared during these first two days have strengthened their determination to support fair and responsible farming practices. One of the highlights of these two days was the active participation of rural women committed to productive and sustainable agriculture.

[Click here to watch it on the media >>>>](#)

Senegal

The traditional knowledge restitution workshop

The traditional knowledge restitution workshop in Fatick, Senegal, brought together knowledge holders and the community to share and obtain information and support. Municipal authorities and technical services attended the event, where enriching exchanges enabled 10 knowledge products to be shared.



Photo: Sonko

Knowledge Hub Central Africa (KHCA)

Cameroun

KHCA gives contribution to the Fair Promote 2024 in Cameroun



Fair Promote in Cameroon. Photo: KHCA

The KHCA participated in the Promote trade fair in Cameroon, held from February 17th to 25th, 2024. Considered the largest business event in the CEMAC sub-region, the Promote fair is a prime venue for companies to gain visibility and develop partnerships.

This year marked the 9th edition of the fair, and the KHCA made a significant impression. They continuously displayed videos showcasing their achievements, which attracted considerable interest from visitors. Nearly 150 visitors registered with the KHCA during the event.

Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative (EOA-I)

High-level presence at the Biofach & Updates on the promotion of Agroecology



The State Minister, Mr. Fred Bwino 5th from right with EOA-I and KCOA delegation Photo: Natasha OE/GIZ

The EOA Secretariat had the pleasure of hosting the Ugandan State Minister for Agriculture, Animal Husbandry & Fisheries, Hon Fredrick Bwino Kyakulaga at the BIOFACH trade fair. He was accompanied by the BvAT- EOA team of Dr David Amudavi, Ms Venancia Wambua and Alex Mutungi. Uganda is one of the leading countries in the implementation of EOA in Africa and has

developed a National Organic Policy. The Minister alongside the EOA team, attended side networking meetings, presentations, and toured organic exhibitions. Based on his experience at the BIOFACH 2024 trade fair, the state minister has promised to present a brief on the potential of organic trade in Uganda and Africa to the President of Uganda with the aim of passing the National Organic Bill that is currently in Parliament.

Sowing the seeds of change: Biovision Africa Trust leads new Agroecology Promotion Project (APP) starting this May

Biovision Africa Trust (BvAT) is glad to announce its role in the coordination of the new Agroecology Promotion Project (APP) for the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) component. The APP is funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and will be launched in May 2024. It is anticipated to potentially have significant positive impacts on food systems transformation through agroecology interventions. The overall goal of the APP is that agroecology and other like-minded approaches are broadly promoted as a pathway for food systems transformation to truly sustainable, resilient, and dynamic food and farming systems, worldwide and particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia. The APP will run for a period of 4 years from 2024-2028. Partners involved in SSA component include Biovision Africa Trust, AFRONET, Pelum Association, Pelum Kenya and Agroecology fund with a global component that will be coordinated by IFOAM Organics International.

KCOA Joint Panel Session

BIOFACH 2024: Women change-makers in Africa: insights and experiences for food system transformation



Panellists from left to right: Irene Kadzere (FiBL), Dorith von Behaim (GIZ- GV KCOA), Patricia Flores (IFOAM), Naglaa Ahmed (KHNA, Egypt), Esther Kagai (KHEA, Kenya), Olusola Sowemimo (KHOWA, Nigeria) and Busisiwe Mgangxela

During BIOFACH 2024, held in Nuremberg, Germany (February 13-16), a GIZ-KCOA congress session, co-organized by IFOAM and FiBL, featured a panel of inspiring women change-makers from Cameroon, Egypt, Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa.

The session delved into the urgent issues women face in the midst of multiple crises. Through the lens of these women change-makers deeply involved in transforming the food system, attendees explored the vast opportunities presented by organic agriculture and agroecology from grassroots farming to policymaking, “from the village to the tower.”

African women are at the forefront of transformative changes across various levels of the food system. Their diverse examples serve as a wellspring of inspiration for global action. The session emphasized the importance of knowledge exchange and the cross-pollination of ideas and inspired women to persevere even in face of adversities.

Moving forward, the focus remains on fostering knowledge exchange across all levels of the food system. From farm-level practices and innovative marketing strategies to advocacy efforts and policy influence, there's a shared commitment to co-creating solutions that promote sustainability and equity in agriculture. As panellist Naglaa Ahmed (Egypt) emphasized: we need “Good food for health and good food for the next generation all while ensuring the dignity of the farmer.”



The entire KCOA delegation for the BIOFACH 2024

Special Article - Gender

KHWA and KHEA collaborated to Celebrate Women in Organic Agriculture and Agroecology in recognition of the International Women's Month



Poster KHWA. Webinar organisation lead: Hepzibah Ebe (KHWA, Nigeria), with

March isn't just any ordinary month — it's International Women's Month, a time dedicated to honouring the remarkable contributions of women in every sphere of life. It's a time to reflect on the achievements by women, acknowledge their struggles, and amplify their voices.

This March 2024, the Knowledge Hub for Organic Agriculture and Agroecology in Western Africa (KHWA) lead in partnership with the Knowledge Hub for Organic Agriculture and Agroecology in Eastern Africa (KHEA) a series of webinars focusing on celebrating International Women's role in the Organic Agriculture sector. The 3-part webinar series celebrated women who have a track record of impact in organic agriculture. In total, 8 women from Nigeria and 3 women from East Africa (Kenya, Uganda, and

support of Pamela Magino (KHEA).

Rwanda) gathered to share their stories and experiences with the participants. The series brought together over 300 registrants from all over the world.

These webinar sessions were an opportunity to gain valuable insights into organic agriculture, learn about sustainable farming methods, and celebrate women in the field.

Did you know that?

Access Agriculture Cooperation Highlights

Strengthening Farmer-to-Farmer Learning: A Successful Collaboration between KCOA and Access Agriculture

Through a powerful collaboration, KCOA and Access Agriculture joined forces to empower rural communities in Africa. The formal partnership was wrapped up in March during a webinar, but its impact will continue.

Access Agriculture, known for its farmer-to-farmer training videos, provided crucial expertise in video translation and voicing. This collaboration resulted in a significant number of high-quality videos being translated into local languages, specifically targeting KCOA's needs.

But the collaboration didn't stop there. To ensure the videos reached their intended audience, Access Agriculture also played a key role in outreach. ERAs (Entrepreneurs for Rural Access) equipped with smart projectors and trained by Access Agriculture, screened the videos directly in rural communities, bridging the gap between knowledge and action. This ensured the videos reached their intended audience and had a direct impact. The ERAs continue their work in different countries of the KCOA network.

The partnership's benefits extend beyond KCOA. Recognizing the lasting value of these resources, Access Agriculture further leveraged their network by collaborating with media houses to broadcast the videos, maximizing their reach and potential impact.

Discover more about Access Agriculture >>> & Their initiative EcoAgtube >>>

KCOA and Access Agriculture cooperation in a nutshell



1.460 videos translated in **21** languages



60 ERA Teams equipped with solar energy-powered smart projectors



+2.380 video screenings reaching **+ 62.000** people!



+200 coaching sessions to all ERAs



+4.100 broadcasts on TV and radio

3 Questions to a Colleague

In every newsletter, we ask three questions to one colleague from every Knowledge Hub (KH). This time we asked the following questions:

1. If you had to give your KH one compliment, what would it be?
2. If your KH were an object/animal/plant, which would it be and why?
3. What personal goals do you have that KCOA helps you achieve?

Meigno Bokagne Raphaël | Platforms and Networks Manager | Inades-Formation Cameroun | KHCA | joined the project in July 2022

1. KHCA stands out for the commitment and dedication of its respective partners to developing a value chain for organic products in Cameroon and indeed Central Africa.
2. Butterfly as it symbolises transition. Our KH provides transitional solutions to the growing demand for organic and agroecological products.
3. Work to increase the availability of healthy food products in sufficient quantities for a greater number of the population, especially the most disadvantaged categories.



Photo: KHCA

**Sassi Khaled | Coordinator | CTAB | KHNA |
joined the project in June 2022**

1. Our knowledge hub is a hub of excellence. Indeed, it brings together excellent partners who work with extraordinary teams and who all share a common vision of success. The management approach of our hub is excellent given that the results achieved so far are exceptional, innovative and sustainable.

2. Our knowledge hub would be an eagle. The eagle has precise vision and only flies with eagles (equivalent partners and teams). They only eat fresh produce, so they always continue to move forward and make new achievements (sustainability). They prepare their young for flight (knowledge multipliers).

3. My goal is to expand my professional network in relation to organic agriculture and agroecology and to shine on a national and international scale.



Photo: KHNA

**Jean-Marie Irakahaho | Master Trainer
|ROAM & Naturland | KHEA | joined the
project in October 2020**

1. My one compliment on KHEA is having built capacities of 6 Master Trainers and 360 multipliers in each project's implementation country. This disseminated knowledge and practices impacted positively the organic sector in different countries. That created extension network came to contribute to filling a big gap which is existing in many countries where development funds and governmental agricultural extension are mainly focussing on conventional agriculture.

2. If my KH were an animal, it would be a spider. Because of the KH is connecting key players in knowledge dissemination within the organic agriculture sector: connecting trainers for knowledge exchange and knowledge products development, and then connecting trainers/multipliers with farmers and processors for knowledge dissemination. This networking approach is like the net build by a spider.

3. To improve my knowledge and skills about the organic agriculture development and certification; To have access on useful online resources when I am preparing my consultancy works; To connect with a pull of experts for knowledge and experience exchange; To make advocacy for mainstreaming organic agriculture in the governmental policies and programs.



Photo: KHEA

**Angela Coetzee | Project Director |
Sustainability Institute | KHSa | joined the
project in November 2019**

1. KHSa navigates complex spaces with wisdom and grace. Our partners have amazing teams, people that want to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those they work with. KHSa's imaginative KPs are a testament to people's passion and drive.

2. The oak, a beautiful life-giving tree that grows from a small unassuming acorn into a strong confident tree. KHSa started as an acorn, at a small, unassuming scale, yet now moving in influential spaces, shifting practices and decisions to effect positive change.

3. It's been a great privilege to serve a mission and team working towards food systems transformation. The outcome of leadership (and projects) is only as successful as the people that show up, committing their time and passion to serve our farmers and communities.



Photo: KHSa

**Hepzibah Ebe | Communications Manager |
NOAN | KHWA | joined the project in
December 2022**

1. I admire my KH's unwavering dedication to KCOA's mission despite language barriers, showcasing resilience and teamwork.

2. If the KH were an object, it'd be a mighty oak tree, symbolizing strength and resilience in advocating for organic agriculture.

3. KCOA/KH's support fuels my professional growth, providing ample opportunities for innovation, dynamism and skill enhancement in communication management.



Photo: KHWA

Blog Stories

Check out our selection of multiplier and success stories posted on the Multiplier Network!



KHEA multiplier journey from training to profitable bio-fertilizer innovation

Meet Alphonse Nsengiyumva and discover how he has made homemade biofertilizers available in his community

[Read the full story >>>](#)



An Ignited Passion for Organic Farming

The power of bringing youth into agroecological practices. Ms. Peskin Nahabwe went from being sceptical to becoming a trainer and changing the meaning of farming for her family and community.

[Read the full story >>>](#)



Agroecology and Participatory Development: Reinventing Agricultural Research for a Sustainable Future

Read more about the perspectives on agroecology from West Africa.

[Read the full story >>>](#)

[Click here to discover more stories »](#)

Resource Tips



ISAN Magazine is dedicated to building a strong network of informed civil society actors and organisations across the southern African region to advocate for organic agriculture and agroecology as a framework for regional food and farming systems. Freely available to all subscribers.

[Click here to subscribe >>>](#)

Promoting sustainable production and food sovereignty – evidence-based policy recommendations

The FiBL policy dossier "Cultivating change with agroecology and organic agriculture in the tropics: Bridging science and policy for sustainable production systems" summarises over 20 years of long term research in Kenya, India, and Bolivia, and scientific evidence that shows that agroecology and organic agriculture (AE/OA) present promising alternatives for the transformation of production systems in the tropics. To harness this potential, policies and political efforts must be directed, creating an environment where AE/OA can fully flourish. The publication was supported by KCOA

Policy dossier
2024 | No 2000

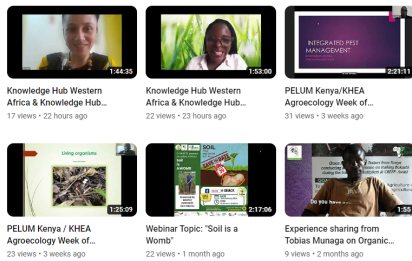
Cultivating change with agroecology and organic agriculture in the tropics

Bridging science and policy for sustainable production systems



FiBL

[Click here to read the full policy dossier >>>](#)



PELUM Kenya/ KHEA Agroecology week of webinars

[Click here to watch the recordings and get to know more about the topics >>>](#)

Upcoming events

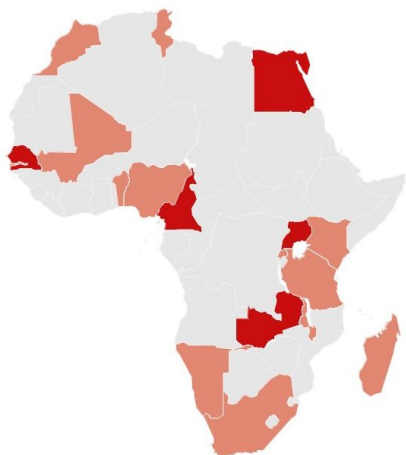


Want to know more about upcoming events?

Or are you a registered multiplier and want to share your next event?

Access the Multiplier Network and check out our event calendar! >>>>

About the project



The hub bases (dark red) and the current project countries (light red). © GIZ

Legal disclaimer: This geographical map is for informational purposes only and does not constitute recognition of international boundaries or regions.

The Knowledge Centre for Organic Agriculture and Agroecology in Africa (KCOA) aims to scale up adoption of organic/agroecological farming practices through a network of five Knowledge Hubs in Africa. The Knowledge Hubs are set up as collaborative country-led partnerships.

KCOA is commissioned by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and currently 30 non-governmental organisations in 18 countries across Africa. The project runs from 2019 to 2026.



These organisations are part of the KCOA network. The PELUM logo is listed only once. PELUM is a network with several national, independent chapters. KCOA works with PELUM Uganda, PELUM Kenya and PELUM Zambia.

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