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Knowledge Centre for Organic Agriculture in Africa Newsletter



News from the Knowledge Centre for Organic Agriculture in Africa

A service of the project Knowledge Centre for Organic Agriculture in Africa

Dear KCOA partners,

We hope you have had the opportunity to get some rest in December after an eventful last year.

The new year has started full of energy. Important events of the sector are shortly taking place, for example the **4th Agroecology Days in Senegal** and the **1st Eastern Africa Agroecology Conference in Kenya**. Partners from the Knowledge Hubs are significantly involved in the organisation of these events showing once again their pioneer spirit.

Even though most of the five Knowledge Hubs had a little break between the years, activities never really stopped. In the past three months, the Knowledge Hubs have been continuously working on the topics of entrepreneurship in agroecology, organic seed production, conservation agriculture and harmonisation of Participatory Guarantee Systems. Learn more details about the activities in the update sections below.

Meanwhile, the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) worked on a new Africa strategy and published it in January. A social and ecological transformation of agriculture and food systems is one of the priorities for the BMZ. The strategy explicitly mentions

agroecology as one approach for achieving resilient agricultural and food systems. You can access the document [here](#).

We look forward to further advancing the agroecological transition together with you.

To a healthy and organic 2023!

Your KCOA team at GIZ

Current activities & achievements

Knowledge Hub Southern Africa (KHSa)

Namibia: Awareness raising and information sharing in villages



Multipliers training farmers in Zambezi region, Namibia, November 2022. Photo: Tanaka Muradzikwa

KHSA's multiplier support programme is underway in the Zambezi region in Namibia working with 20 farmer trainer multipliers. In November, 17 multipliers hosted village information sharing events in 11 locations reaching 106 farmers. They were accompanied by three local language mentors who observed the training, made follow-up visits, and conducted interviews with the farmers. The participants learned about soil fertility, conservation agriculture (by planting out a demonstration site), forest farming, and holistic management (setting life goals and financial recordkeeping). The aim is to provide multipliers with practical experience in training and sharing knowledge.

Knowledge Hub North Africa (KHNA)

Tunisia: How to produce organic seeds and seedlings



On the second day, the participants visited a demo plot. Photo: Salaheddine Souguir

On the 8th and 9th of November 2022, 34 Tunisian multipliers learned a lot about producing organic seeds and seedlings. The trainers Bouthaina Dridi and Mohamed Ben Khedher explained the quality criteria for seeds and how seeds and seedlings are correctly produced respecting the organic regulations.

On the second day, the group visited a demo plot of the Interprofessional Vegetable Grouping in the Manouba region in the north of Tunisia. The participants saw first-hand how organic seedlings are produced. They also discussed the production of local seeds in Tunisia and the role of the Ministry of Agriculture and the National Gene Bank.

Knowledge Hub Eastern Africa (KHEA)

Uganda: Agroecology Week of Action 2022



Booths at the 12th Annual Indigenous and Traditional Food and Seed Fair. Photo: PELUM Uganda

From 25th to 29th October 2022, PELUM Uganda and partners organised the Agroecology Week of Action in Kampala to amplify the voices of all agroecology actors.

The weeklong events started off on 25th October with the 1st YALTA Regional Summit. With the awareness that youth engagement is important for the future of agroecology, the event empowered youth and facilitated interactions with agroecology stakeholders, policymakers, service providers, and investors.

On 26th October, the 1st Agroecological Market Systems Expo took place providing a platform for agroecology entrepreneurs and market actors to explore opportunities for strengthening agroecological entrepreneurship.

The 4th National Agroecology Actors' Symposium on 27th October allowed to catalyse actions for scaling up agroecology in Uganda at policy and practice levels. It is the largest annual convening of agroecology stakeholders in Uganda.

The weeklong events wound up with the 12th Annual Indigenous and Traditional Food and Seed Fair on 28th October 2022. This year's event showcased the contribution to nutrition resilience of traditional foods and seeds. Numerous exhibitors showed indigenous and traditional foods and seeds from all regions of the country.

Almost 900 people from all over the country visited these events. The social media campaign and activities reached more than 3 million people. Both numbers demonstrate the high relevance of agroecology for the populations.



Some of the participants from Nigeria, Mali, Benin, Gambia and Senegal. Photo: Elhadji Diallo

On 4 and 5 January 2023, the sub-regional workshop for the harmonisation of existing Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) in Nigeria, Mali, Benin, the Gambia and Senegal took place in Dakar.

The 30 participants had enriching discussions based on the field experiences of each country. Even though the discussions showed that harmonisation cannot be immediate and systematic, they affirmed that the network of actors involved in organic agriculture and agroecology is on the right track. At the Ouagadougou conference in November 2021, WAfrONet also stated that all countries agreed to harmonise standards.

Moreover, the giant step taken by the East African countries is enough to make us commit all our forces to take up this challenge of harmonisation within a reasonable timeframe and in a resolute manner. PGS harmonisation plays an important role for the food and nutritional security of our populations.

Knowledge Hub Central Africa (KHCA)

Cameroon: Exchange on the benefits and challenges of organic farming



During the event, numerous presentations were held. Photo: Clarisse Fombana

In November 2022, an **information day on the challenges of organic agriculture in Cameroon** was organised in the KHCA. It brought together about sixty farmers and entrepreneurs and helped to identify the advantages and opportunities of organic agriculture. Through presentations, sharing of experiences and product exhibitions, the participants contributed to removing stereotypes about organic farming. The main challenges faced are access to and availability of seeds, production of bio-fertilisers, disease control using natural products, development of organic therapeutic products, structuring of markets for organic products and control of production costs.

Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative (EOA-I)

18th Continental Steering Committee meeting / 1st Eastern Africa Agroecology Conference



Some of the participants of the Continental Steering Committee meeting held in December 2022 in Mombasa, Kenya
Photo: BvAT

The 18th Continental Steering Committee* meeting was held in December 2022 in Mombasa, Kenya. Usually, the participants discuss the implementation of projects and the status of policy initiatives. This time, amongst others, they decided that the upcoming 5th African Organic Conference will be jointly organised by the African Union, the EOA-I Continental Secretariat and AfrONet.

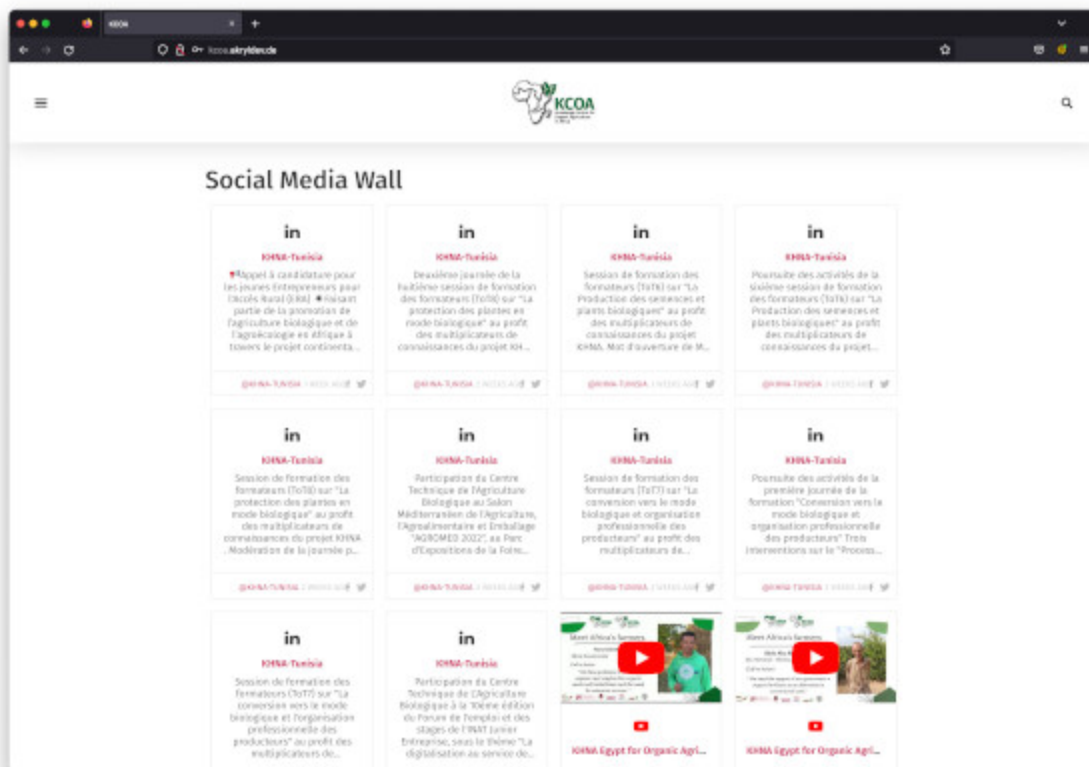
At this meeting, the participants also endorsed the presented concept for the development of the Multi Stakeholder Platform (MSP) of the EOA Initiative. The MSP will bring together stakeholders from the Regional Economic Communities, the private sector, the civil society and non-governmental organisations, and farmer associations in the following clusters: Enabling policy environment, Knowledge development & management, Markets and trade, Supply chains of EOA/AE inputs, and Organisational development. The goal of the MSP is to advance agendas for the sector.

Furthermore, the EOA-I Secretariat, Biovision Africa Trust and other partners are organising the 1st Eastern Africa Agroecology Conference taking place in Nairobi from 21st to 24th March 2023. The conference focuses on food systems transformation and aims to invoke consciousness and motivate national, regional and continental institutions to invest in transformative interventions. You can register [here](#).

** The **Continental Steering Committee** is chaired by the African Union and currently consists of 23 members from political, economic, academic, and civil society institutions and organisations. It provides guidance, oversight, and decision-making regarding the operations and activities of EOA in Africa.*

GIZ

Developing the KCOA Multiplier Network website



The KCOA Multiplier Network website will feature a social media wall that will be fed automatically by the different social media channels of the Knowledge Hubs. Photo: GIZ

In the last quarter of 2022, GIZ had to tender the further technical implementation of the Digital Knowledge Platform since the contract with the agency FLMH ran out. FLMH created the KCOA database to which all Knowledge Hubs have been uploading knowledge products for several months already.

The tender was won by the German agency **AKRYL**, which is now developing the KCOA Multiplier Network website according to the needs of the multipliers and Knowledge Hubs. Remember that the defined needs are the result of extensive discussions and analysis over the last three years.

The Multiplier Network website will feature the social media pages of the organisations of the Knowledge Hubs, list important events, publish inspiring blog stories, allow multipliers to create personal profiles, and integrate the KCOA database for knowledge products.

Together with the platform representatives of all Knowledge Hubs, AKRYL is working on the prototype of the website. This prototype will be finalised in March and then tested by the KCOA partners in order to find and eliminate bugs. If everything works out, the KCOA Multiplier Network website will go public in May.

Did you know that?

Number of member organisations

...that are part of the Knowledge Hubs. They are active in the organic agriculture / agroecology sector and disseminate knowledge.



The Knowledge Hubs currently count 482 member organisations in total. Photo: GIZ/Caro Kadatz

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?

Dénis Diane Nangop Pountcheu | Technical Expert,
KCOA Focal Point | CPF | Bandjoun, Cameroon |
joined the project in August 2022

1. The KHCA is full of dynamism.
2. It would be a chick, as it is still fragile, but it brings hope for the popularisation of organic farming.
3. I would like to get in touch with the agroecology stakeholders.



Dénis Diane Nangop Pountcheu from KHCA. Photo: Joseph Pountcheu

Pamella Magino | KHEA Communications Officer | Kampala, Uganda | Biovision Africa Trust & Pelum Uganda | joined the project in October 2021

1. It's amazing to see that the KHEA is bridging the gap of organic agriculture knowledge amongst different stakeholders.

Additionally, the KHEA has enhanced learning and networking across the Eastern Africa region, international partners as well as other hubs and donors which has greatly boosted positive change in society.

2. It would be a bee and the beehive. Beehives symbolise cooperative work. The KHEA and its different partners have come together for a common good: to address hunger and promote sustainable livelihoods through the promotion of good organic farming practices.

3. The KHEA is providing a solution to the continuous knowledge and capacity-building needs that our network members continue to seek. Personally, I am glad to contribute to a healthy ecosystem, healthy people and a healthy planet.



Pamella Magino from KHEA. Photo: Pamela Magino

Alpha Kane | Endogenous Knowledge Manager | ENDA Pronat | Dakar, Senegal | joined the project in August 2022

1. Originality, because it is a knowledge hub that gives particular importance to endogenous knowledge implemented by rural populations for several years.

2. Alstroemeria or Peruvian lily, which is a genus of flowering plants and symbolises friendship. Each petal is associated with a value of friendship, such as compassion, respect, understanding.

3. The KHWA and KCOA give me the opportunity to work at a sub-regional level with several partners from different countries.



Alpha Kane from KHWA. Photo: Abdoulaye Dieng Diagne

Kondwani Khonje | Project Coordinator | Soils, Food and Healthy Communities | Ekwendeni, Malawi | joined the project in May 2022

1. There is active engagement with partners on programme design and implementation.

2. Our knowledge hub would be a colony of ants: there is high level of collaboration, networking and coordination to achieve project goals and objectives.

3. I want to be a qualified inspector linked to an international organic certification body. My aspiration is also to contribute



to the establishment of a national organic movement in Malawi.

Kondwani Khonje from KHSA. Photo: SFHC

Bouthaina Al Mohandes Dridi | Trainer and external expert | High Institute of Agronomy of Chott-Mariem | Sousse, Tunisia | joined the project in April 2021

1. I thank my KH for giving me the opportunity to be part of further developing the organic agriculture sector in Tunisia by training the multipliers and accompanying them in their activities.
2. It would be an olive tree, which lives for a long time. The more you maintain and take care of it, the more fruit it gives you.
3. Capacity building. It is fulfilling to be part of this noble mission to spread knowledge to protect nature, the environment and human health.



Bouthaina Al Mohandes Dridi from KHNA.
Photo: Haithem El Ouaer

Success story

The Power of Bokashi

Tanzanian Salama Hussein Makame produces her own Bokashi and has increased her income sixfold.



Salama Hussein Makame sells her produce at Zanzibar Organic Open Market twice a month. Photo: Anatory Gabriel

Salama Hussein Makame is a farmer in Zanzibar, Tanzania, and has been cultivating fruits and vegetables for more than 30 years. She used to farm conventionally using chemical fertilisers and pesticides. However, at some point, she started to feel the negative effects of conventional farming. She had to spend more and more money on inputs, while at the same time the health of her soil was declining. Her former clients didn't buy her produce anymore due to increased contamination. "I lost income and my family's livelihood deteriorated", she says. She then started to try organic farming practices.

In 2020, Salama Hussein Makame was identified as one of 360 multipliers in Tanzania by KCOA's implementing partner organisation **Tanzania Organic Agriculture Movement (TOAM)**. As a result, she participated in organic farming trainings organised by TOAM under the KCOA project and learned about plant and soil health, seeds, Participatory Guarantee Systems and marketing. Salama Hussein Makame is happy that she now has easy access to affordable inputs. In fact, she prepares Bokashi bio-fertiliser herself and uses it on her 0.5-acre vegetable plot. "I decided to use Bokashi because it is more effective than other bio-fertilisers and can be used after only 13 days", she explains. Bokashi is a composting process where organic matter and food waste are fermented with the help of special bacteria before they can be applied directly to the field.

Thanks to using Bokashi and other organic practices, Salama Hussein Makame has increased her vegetable production by 650 kilograms. She sells her products to the village community and twice a month at Zanzibar Organic Open Market. Switching to organic does not only mean healthy and safe food, but has also paid off economically for Salama Hussein Makame, as she has been able to increase her monthly income from 86 to 515 US dollars. Her family and community members greatly appreciate the quality of the produce and have requested to learn how to make Bokashi.

Salama Hussein Makame believes that organic farming knowledge has the potential to transform and improve the livelihood of rural women in Zanzibar. As a multiplier, she is committed to contributing to this positive change by sharing her acquired knowledge with the other women in her community. She currently trains and accompanies 30 farmers in organic farming.

Resource tips

Video: Information day on the challenges of organic agriculture in Cameroon

Country: Cameroon | Publication date: January 2023 | Language: French

Organic producers and entrepreneurs met to discuss the challenges of organic agriculture in Cameroon. [Link to video»](#)

Facebook Post: Call for applications for Young Entrepreneurs

Country: Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco | Publication date: January 2023 | Language: Arabic

Access Agriculture calls for applications for Entrepreneurs for Rural Access in North Africa in collaboration with the KHNA. The selected entrepreneurs receive smart projectors that they will use to run screenings of farmer-to-farmer videos for rural populations. [Link to post»](#)

Video: Mise en défense

Country: Senegal | Publication date: January 2023 | Language: French

A knowledge product on the “Mise en défense”, which is the practice of protecting an area from humans or domestic animals for a specific period of time to allow the restoration of the ecosystem.

[Link to video»](#)

Report: SEKEM COP27 Report

Country: Egypt | Publication date: December 2022 | Language: English

During COP27 in Egypt, SEKEM and Heliopolis University organised and participated in many different activities. This document is a summary of those activities. [Link to report»](#)

Facilitator's Guide: Establishing and operating Participatory Guarantee Systems for farmer groups

Country: Uganda | Publication date: October 2022 | Language: English

This guide provides a step-by-step process of how a farmer group can establish, operationalise, and implement the system. It further highlights the elements of a PGS, the challenges it addresses and

benefits for farmer groups that wish to establish and implement PGS. The guide has been simplified for farmer groups, facilitators, government or NGO extension workers and any other development agents that support smallholder farmer groups. [Link to guide»](#)

Video: [Economy of Love: Climate Heroes](#)

Country: Egypt | Publication date: October 2022 | Language: Arabic with English subtitles
Short video to know more about the story narrated by SEKEM farmers, the climate heroes. Our heroes help to improve the climate! [Link to video»](#)

Guideline: [Basic Production Principles](#)

Country: South Africa | Publication date: October 2022 | Language: English
The document deals with the main production principles: Ecosystem management, soil management, pollution and contaminant control, water management, crop production, pest and disease management, animal husbandry, harvesting and packaging, cleaning, disinfecting and sanitation, social equity and justice, documentation & records. [Link to document»](#)

Poster: [Soil - The foundation of nutrition](#)

Country: n/a | Publication date: 2022 | Language: English
Poster/infographic showing nutrients that are important for plants and the human body (FAO). [Link to poster»](#)

Poster: [Soil Biodiversity: the hidden world below our feet](#)

Country: n/a | Publication date: 2020 | Language: English
Poster/infographic of the biodiversity in healthy soil (FAO). [Link to poster»](#)

Poster: [Impact of soil contaminants on human health](#)

Country: n/a | Publication date: 2020 | Language: English
Poster/infographic showing the impact of contaminants in soil on organs and systems of the human body (FAO). [Link to poster»](#)

Training guide: [Agroecology as a substitute for pesticides](#)

Country: West Africa, but applicable beyond | Publication date: 2020 | Language: English
Training guide sharing information about ways to reduce the use and risks of pesticides and veterinary products by using viable alternative practices. This is an effort to support agroecological transitions among smallholder farmers. [Link to training guide»](#)

Manual: [How to make biofertilisers - Bokashi](#)

Country: n/a | Publication date: 2019 | Language: English
Introduction to biofertilisers, how to make them as well as bokashi. [Link to manual»](#)

Poster: [Soils store and filter water](#)

Country: n/a | **Publication date:** 2015 | **Language:** English

Infographic showing the importance of healthy soil for holding and filtering water (FAO).

[Link to poster»](#)

Guide: [Biological Pest Control and Soil Management for Superior Vegetables in Southern Africa](#)

Country: Southern Africa | **Publication date:** 1976 | **Language:** English

A basic guide to growing the most popular vegetables the organic way without digging and without poisons. [Link to guide»](#)

Upcoming events

**Event title & content****Where & when?****Organised by**

Organic agriculture training for representatives from authorities The workshop aims to create a better practical understanding to support organic agriculture at the policy level in Cameroon.	Yaoundé, Cameroon 7-8 February 2023	CPF, Daniel Martin Ngwanou
6th Harvest Money Expo 2023 The Harvest Money Expo usually attracts more than 20,000 visitors annually bringing together organisations from the international agricultural sector.	Kampala, Uganda 10 – 12 February 2023	Vision Group
BIOFACH 2023 BIOFACH is the world's largest fair for organic consumer products.	Nuremberg, Germany 14 – 17 February 2023	Messe Nürnberg
Media training on dissemination of knowledge products The objective is to strengthen multipliers from media outlets in the forest zone and media outlets in Yaoundé that have a national reach to communicate on KHCA knowledge products and activities.	Yaoundé, Cameroun 15 February 2023	SAILD, Pauline Voufo
National networking fair for organic market development The fair mobilises the organic stakeholders in Cameroon to agree within the KHCA on the ideal strategy for the development of organic markets in Cameroon.	Bafoussam, Cameroon Mid-February 2023	GADD, Hervé Bouagnimbeck
Media Food Jam Organic-food focused workshop where journalists harvest and cook food. The workshop also serves to conduct an informal needs assessment to design an intervention for this target group.	Windhoek, Namibia February/March 2023	NNF, Disney Andreas
Farmers' Breakfast A networking and information sharing event for commercial beef farmers focused on raising awareness of the need to transition to regenerative farming practices and the benefits.	Windhoek, Namibia March 2023	NNF, Vera Corry
Benin National Steering Committee Meeting Biannual meeting of the members of the national steering committee. It will take stock of the	Porto-Novo, Benin March 2023	Centre Songhai

steering committee. It will take stock of the activities already carried out as well as plan and readjust future activities.		
KHNA Workshop Carbon Credit Workshop and ToToT refresher	SEKEM Farm, Egypt 11 – 16 March 2023	SEKEM, Tanja Reischl
Bio-Expo 2023 International Organic Food & Agriculture Exhibition	Tunis, Tunisia 16 – 18 March 2023	IFE Tunisia
1st Eastern Africa Agroecology Conference This hybrid conference with different sessions and field excursions aims to invoke consciousness and motivate regional and continental communities to invest in interventions that help move towards truly sustainable food systems.	Nairobi, Kenya 21 – 24 March 2023	EOA-I, Venancia Wambua / KHEA, Francis Nsanga
Sustainable Living Expo A collaborative expo organised by the Namibian Organic Association and the Fast Forward Foundation to showcase healthy, sustainable living. The target group are farmers and the general public.	Windhoek, Namibia 29 April 2023	NOA
Media capacity building: Malawi Two training sessions with editors and journalists focusing on deepening media's understanding of linkages between agriculture and climate change, food and nutrition security, biodiversity loss to enable better quality reporting.	Lilongwe, Malawi April / May 2023	Kusamala, Dorothy Limbanga

About the project



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

The Knowledge Centre for Organic Agriculture 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 29 non-governmental organisations in 17 countries across Africa. The project runs from 2019 to 2026.

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



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