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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)

A Year of Collaboration and Shared Vision!

As the year comes to a close, we reflect on an inspiring journey of collaboration, learning, and progress across the KCOA network. From vibrant discussions at in-person meetings to tailored strategies within hubs, 2024 has been a testament to the power of unity and dedication to organic agriculture and agroecology across Africa.

Throughout the year, we witnessed the strength of cross-hub exchanges, innovative solutions rooted in local contexts, and the collective determination to build a sustainable future. Highlights included strategic brainstorming for KCOA 2.0, gender transformative initiatives, and powerful advocacy efforts to ensure organic agriculture and agroecology continues to flourish.

Together, we have laid a strong foundation for the future, and the passion within every hub gives us confidence in what lies ahead. Thank you to all our partners, multipliers, and contributors for your unwavering commitment and hard work.

As we close this chapter and look ahead to a promising 2025, we extend our heartfelt season's greetings to you and your loved ones. May the new year bring continued collaboration, success, and shared achievements as we work toward resilient, sustainable food systems for all.

Happy Holidays and a Joyful New Year!

Your KCOA team at GIZ

Happy Holidays and a Joyful New Year!



Impressions from the annual KCOA Networking Meeting 2024

The KCOA Network Meeting 2024 took place from October 23rd to 31st in a mixed format, bringing together **120 committed partners – with 80 joining virtually and 40 key partners meeting face-to-face in Cape Town**. The online sessions focused on celebrating achievements, discussing relevant topics, and fostering networking, while the in-person meeting was dedicated to co-creating a strategy for the network's future. Key discussions revolved around the main pillars of action, future opportunities for collaboration, sustainability of project achievements, and pathways to amplify impact. The event reaffirmed the commitment of the KCOA community to transforming food systems in Africa through organic agriculture and agroecology.

Below you read some impressions from the partners that attended the different parts of the event!



Partners attending the in-person workshop in Cape Town 2024

Online Insights & Take Aways



Photo: KHSA

Robyn Bowden (KHSA)

The sharing of highlights from each hub really showed the breadth of work done by all of us across Africa in the past four years. I appreciated the opportunity to go into breakout rooms to have more in-depth discussions with smaller groups. The KCOA has been a great project for networking, expanding our connections across the continent and illustrating different practices. I look forward to hearing the outcomes of the sustainability strategy, which we gave input to in the online session.

Fettouma Djerrari (KHNA)

The KCOA webinar once again confirmed the commitment of African countries to sustainable, resilient agriculture, so that it can continue to meet the food security and safety needs of local populations. Experience and expertise were exchanged on this platform to rehabilitate degraded land, enhance agricultural systems (respectful of nature and human health), capture carbon in the soil, rebuild soil fertility and ensure that productive land will withstand the impacts of climate change.



Photo: KHNA

Hepzibah Ebe (KHWA)

The online networking event was a remarkable celebration of the achievements of various hubs. A key takeaway for me was the innovative and tailored approaches each hub adopts, deeply rooted in their unique local contexts, to achieve the shared goals of the KCOA project. I was equally inspired by the unwavering commitment of all the hubs to fostering a brighter future through knowledge gathering and dissemination, and advocacy for sustainable organic agriculture practices across Africa. This collective dedication not only highlights the strength of our network but also reinforces the importance of collaboration in achieving impactful outcomes.

This event has motivated me to think more creatively about how I can integrate more local contexts into my work while maintaining alignment with our shared vision on agroecology practices.



Photo: Studio

Pamella Magino (KHEA)

During the meeting, all hubs including KHEA represented by different project team members and CIPs highlighted the major achievements of the Project since its inception in 2019. These accomplishments underscore the success of the initiative in empowering local communities, promoting agricultural development, and advancing sustainable environmental practices. The progress made so far provides a strong foundation for future efforts, and it is clear that the KCOA network will continue to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of sustainable development across Africa.



Photo: Studio

Strategic Insights from Cape Town

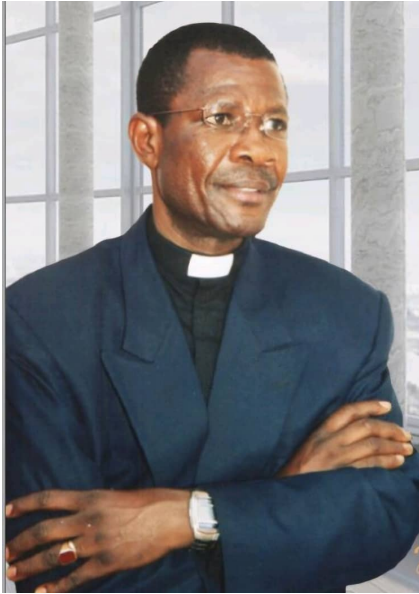


Photo: KHCA

Jean-Blaise Kenmogne (KHCA)

In addition to the field visit which enabled us to discover other facets of the Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) in Cape Town, one of the learnings at the KCOA networking workshop was related to leadership, and in particular adaptive and technical leadership. What caught our attention was the fact that we don't always apply technical leadership, since most problems require adaptive leadership. This new learning will enable us to better organize the KHCA coordination. In addition, the workshop on networking gave us a better understanding of the importance of this process with other players, not only at national level but also at regional level, to ensure the sustainability of KCOA.

Colleen Anderson (KHSA)

I was inspired by the diversity of cultures, languages and backgrounds of the participants. Some of us were meeting for the first time! Despite the challenges of building a unified strategy in such a short time, our shared commitment to expanding agroecology and organic agriculture proved to be a powerful force. Over the four days, I witnessed first-hand the power of collaboration. Despite varying levels of development and unique challenges, we engaged in rich cross-cultural exchanges, learning from each other and building a strong sense of community. KCOA provided a platform for creativity, collaboration and optimism about the future. The discussions emerged with a common broad strategy for KCOA's future direction. I'm excited to be part of this movement and contribute to the growth of agroecology and organic agriculture worldwide through the power of collaboration.



Photo: KHSA



Photo: KHSA

Najla Dhen (KHNA)

The KCOA Network Meeting was an opportunity to align efforts across different hubs, enabling the development of actionable plans to strengthen the implementation of the project's core pillars, ensure its long-term sustainability, and scale up Organic Agriculture (OA) and Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA). Central to achieving these objectives are the multipliers, the army that drives achievements and action on the ground. By fostering interconnectedness between the project's pillars: capacity development, networking, advocacy, knowledge management, and market development, multipliers play a pivotal role in ensuring effective implementation. Acting as "the glue" that holds the project together, they drive its success in

advancing sustainable and organic agricultural practices while promoting a cohesive and dynamic approach to achieving the overarching goals of the initiative.

Alpha Kane (KHWA)

The networking workshop in Cape Town was an important turning point for KCOA. It provided an opportunity to redefine the priorities of the hubs based on the current context and the strategic challenges facing organic farming and agroecology. These priorities, established in the form of pillars, will enable KCOA to do its bit to ensure that organic farming and agroecology are better taken into account in Africa. Advocacy, capacity building and market development will be central to the implementation of KCOA's activities.



Photo: KHWA



Photo: Studio

Francis Nsanga (KHEA)

The in-person meeting in Cape Town enabled cross learning from across the 5 regions and greatly inspired the effective brainstorming for the future of KCOA. The in-person meeting focused on brainstorming and drafting the strategy for KCOA 2.0. Based on the accomplishments and lessons learnt from "KCOA 1.0" from each of the Regional Hubs, ideas for KCOA 2.0 were well contextualized per Hub. The major take away was clarity on what each Hub will focus on to contribute to the overall goal of the KCOA initiative in the coming years. The brainstorming and discussions revealed that all the Regional Hubs are passionate about organic agriculture and agroecology and are deeply convinced that this is what will deliver sustainable agri-food systems.

Current Activities & Achievements

Knowledge Hub Southern Africa (KHSA)

Food Jam in Malawi: Engaging Media to Promote Agroecology



Media attending KIAE Food Jam, Freedom Gardens, Malawi, October 2024 Photo: KIAE

The Kusamala Institute of Agriculture and Ecology (KIAE) hosted a media Food Jam in Malawi in October 2024. Food Jams are used to provide media with the information that they need to report more comprehensively on organic agroecological approaches to farming, while simultaneously providing them with access to story material. The Food Jam was held at Freedom Gardens, with the farm tour focused on soil and water conservation, soil fertility and seed management. The tour was followed by a lunch, which media helped to prepare, at which KIAE and media discussed how to promote the uptake of organic agroecological farming. Agreements were made to explore the joint development of a television programme by Mibawa and Radio Islam, and the sharing of published stories on the Malawi media WhatsApp group. These Food Jams have also been hosted in Namibia and Zambia as part of KHSA's regional media programme.

Knowledge Hub North Africa (KHNA)

Strengthening Partnerships and Shaping the Future of Organic Agriculture in Morocco



Photo: Tanja Reischl

Beginning of November, members of the KHNA coordinating team travelled to Morocco and were joined by Moroccan team members for two purposes. They first attended the International Conference on Organic Agriculture and Agroecology in Rabat which brought together international stakeholders to explore scientific advancements in agricultural and food sustainability. It focused on integrating this knowledge into public policies and establishing an appropriate legal framework to transform food systems. KCOA and the platform were presented in the occasion and, afterwards, a KHNA workshop was held to work on the future of FIMABIO (Fédération Interprofessionnelle Marocaine de la filière biologique). The organization is already involved in the KHNA and will take over more responsibility in the next project phase.

Knowledge Hub Eastern Africa (KHEA)

The PELUM Uganda National Agroecology Week of Action 2024: Transforming Uganda's Food Systems



Photo: KHEA

The National Agroecology Week of Action (AWA) 2024 packed with 4 major events i.e. 6th National Agroecology Actors' Symposium (NAAS), 3rd Agroecological Market Systems Expo, 14th Annual Indigenous and Traditional Food and Seed Festival were held from October 21st to 26th at Hotel Africana, united stakeholders to advance Uganda's food systems through agroecology. Organized by PELUM Uganda and partners, including the Government of Uganda, the week featured key events like the 6th National Agroecology Actors' Symposium, the Agroecological Market Systems Expo, and the Indigenous Food and Seed Festival. These events highlighted the importance of sustainable agricultural practices, policy advocacy, and market systems.

The KHEA Hub played an integral role, with farmers and policymakers engaging in knowledge exchange to strengthen agroecological systems. "Agroecology has changed the way I farm, focusing on environmental care and sustainability," shared Echodu Julius, a trained KHEA multiplier.

Live streaming and media coverage helped extend the reach, fostering a resilient future for Uganda's food systems. [Check them on the PELUM Uganda YouTube Channel >>>>>](#)



Photo: PELUM Kenya

Knowledge is Power!

PELUM Kenya through the Knowledge Hub for Organic Agriculture and Agroecology in Eastern Africa (KHEA) Project, recently organized a one-day hands-on training Workshop on 25th November hosted by Grow Biointensive Agriculture Center of Kenya, G-BiACK a Centre of Excellence of the KCOA Project in Kenya. The training was focused on Knowledge Products Collection, Blog Story

Writing, and utilizing the KCOA Digital Knowledge Platform for Multipliers and Communications Officers from the PELUM Kenya Network. This training provided valuable insights on utilizing the platform effectively to enhance knowledge sharing and communication within the network.

Celebrating Community and Sustainability in Madagascar: World Food Day & International Rural Women's Day 2024

On October 26, 2024, GSDM and SYMABIO through KHEA, hosted a vibrant celebration at the BAREA Mahamasina Stadium in Madagascar, marking World Food Day and International Rural Women's Day. This event focused on promoting food sovereignty, organic farming, and the vital

contributions of rural women to sustainable agriculture. Key highlights included an organic caravan, offering insights into sustainable farming practices, and interactive quizzes to raise awareness about organic food and agroecology. Workshops on good agricultural practices shared practical techniques for reducing chemical use and boosting soil health. The event also celebrated the essential role of rural women in farming, emphasizing the need for more support and recognition.



Photo: KHEA

Knowledge Hub West Africa (KHWA)

Organic Weekend in Natitingou: Showcasing Sustainable Agriculture and Agroecology



Photo: Serge GANSOU

From 28 November to 1^{er} December 2024, Natitingou hosted the second edition of the Organic Weekend, an initiative supported by KCOA. The event showcased products from organic farming and agroecology through an exhibition-sale, experience sharing and professional meetings. Farmers from various localities showcased a wide range of products, while receiving training in stand management and marketing strategies for organic products.

Supported by the local authorities and a number of local partners, this event not only promoted organic products, but also raised awareness among a wider public of the benefits of sustainable agriculture. It is part of a drive to promote environmentally friendly farming practices and contribute to resilient agroecological development.

Knowledge Hub Central Africa (KHCA)

National Agroecological Fair in Yaoundé: Promoting Organic Products and Traditions



Photo: KHCA

From November 18 to 20, 2024, SAILD organized a national fair in Yaoundé, the capital of Cameroon, as part of KHCA. The fair, which showcased fresh and processed organic products, was solemnly opened by Cameroon's Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. The Minister expressed his appreciation and encouragement to producers by purchasing organic products. The aim of the fair was to promote the dissemination and consumption of organic products. Some fifty exhibitors from all regions of Cameroon were present, and around 1,000 visitors were registered at the end of the three-day fair. During the fair, a tasting session of traditional dishes made with these products was organized; the dishes were much appreciated by the visitors. At the end of the fair, the three best exhibitors received incentive prizes.

Special Article - Gender

Gender Transformative Approaches: Unlocking the Potential of Organic Agriculture and Agroecology for Women and Communities

Gender transformative approaches in organic agriculture are the game changer for farmers, especially women, who have not enjoyed equal benefits from the hard work they do. **...Can we**

integrate gender equality conversations in our families, communities, and social networks?

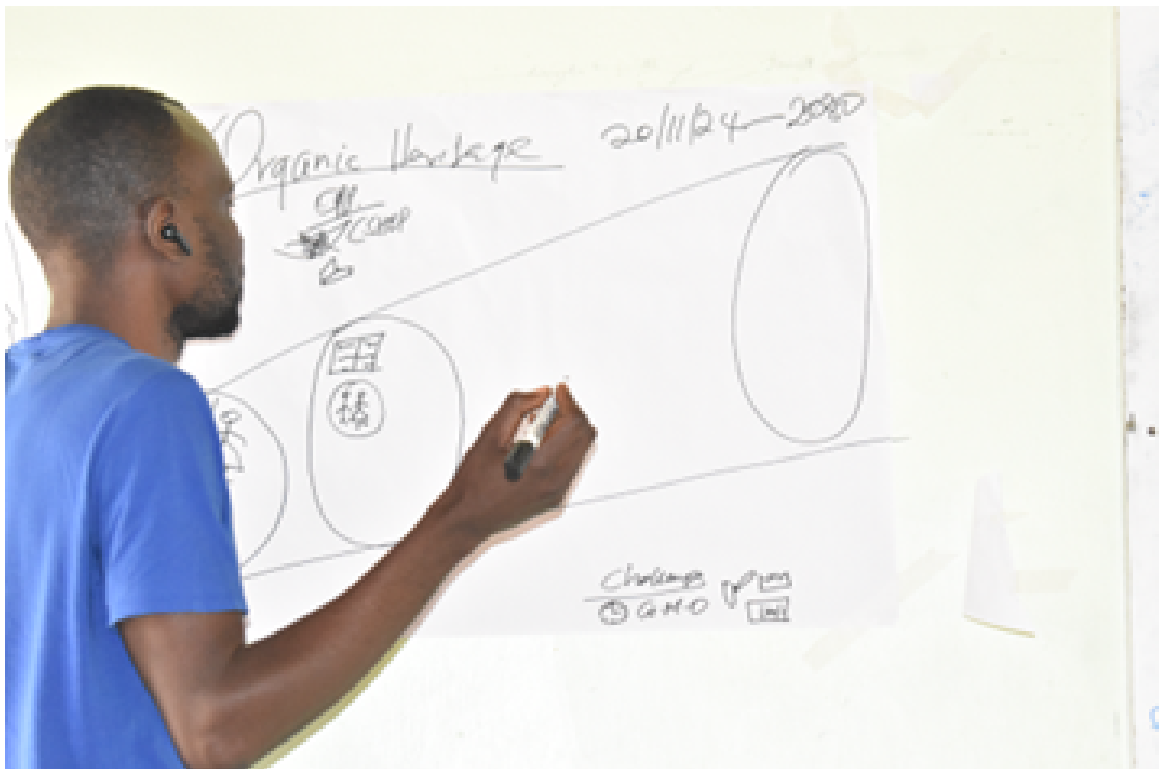
This question is answered by the Gender Action Learning System, a gender transformative approach that introduces gender conversation at all levels of the community.

The Gender Action Learning System (GALS) in a nutshell:

GALS is a community-led methodology that aims to empower women, men, boys, and girls and address gender and social injustice in the family and community. Gender Action Learning System tools can transform relations between men and women and promote gender equality. In the long run, the tools will ensure farmers produce more organic products, more knowledge products developed by multipliers and master trainers **to ensure gender conversations on gender inequalities.**

Gender Action Learning System takes a gender transformative approach that not only provides solutions to mainstreaming gender in the work we do but also addresses the root causes of gender inequalities. It digs deeper into the family and community, where gender norms play a critical role in determining power relations and the distribution of labor and resources. This is where control and access to resources, including organic agriculture products, lie.

Gender Action Learning System (GALS) tools include Vision Road Journey and Gender Balance Tree, Challenge Action Tree, Empowerment Maps, and Multilane Highway. The tools are friendly and easy to use. It is not limited by level of education, resources or other issues.



Vision Road Journey for the Organic Heritage Farmers Group during farmer level training by the KCOA Project in Kiserian affiliated to CSHEP Kenya on 19th November 2024 Photo credit @RatemoPELUM Kenya

GALS in Action:

Within the Gender Focal Point group of KCOA, Monica Nyaga and Ratemo Moora, KHEA Gender Experts, organized an open session to demonstrate the GALS methodology, focusing on the Gender Balance Tree and the Vision Road Journey. They showed KCOA partners how to use these tools effectively to promote gender equality and integrate them into their work. Watch the recording of the session [here >>>>](#)

GALS tools are simple, inclusive, and accessible to everyone—regardless of education level or resources. By empowering individuals and communities, GALS creates pathways for gender equality and stronger organic agriculture outcomes.

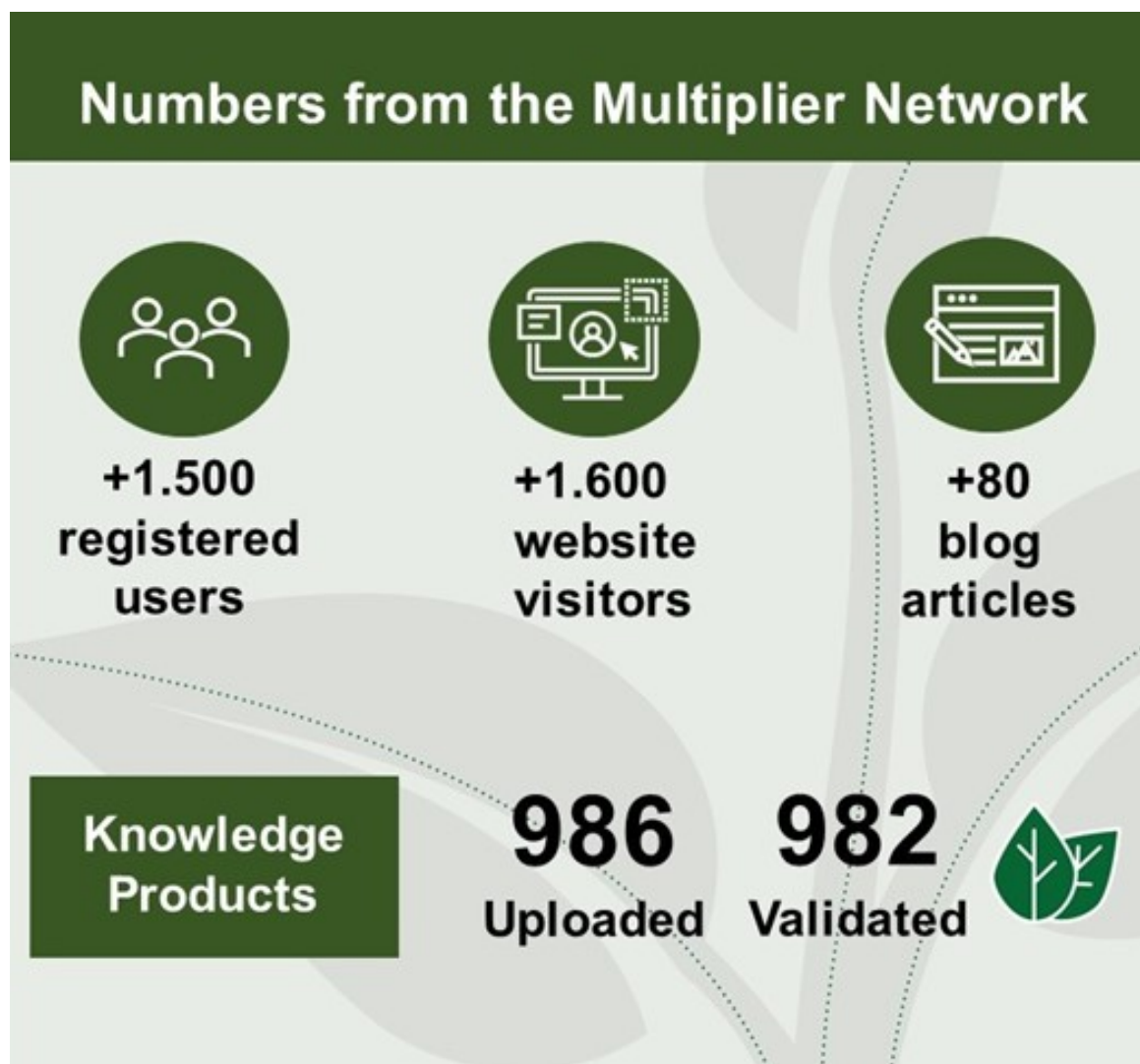
[Click here to read more about the guide and to download it >>>>](#)

Article prepared by:

Monica Nyaga- Gender & Youth Program Officer, Pelum Kenya

Ratemo Moraa- Communication (KCOA Kenya)

KCOA Platform: Year in Review



KCOA and Climate Action



Photo: KHEA/ROAM

Protecting people from the consequences of #ClimateChange: a key issue at #COP29.

In 2023 alone, three quarters of a million farmers were trained through our knowledge hubs in Africa, and are now combining environmental protection, #FoodSecurity and adaptation to climate change. After all, only if farmers follow good organic practices can they protect themselves and nature.

Ugandan farmer Asiimwe Onesmus is one of them. “The benefits to our outcomes and health are really remarkable,” he says. “It is almost like creating microclimates.”

[Read more here >>>>>](#)

Blog Stories

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



A Passion for Organic Farming: A commitment to a sustainable and inclusive future

In Tunisia, agronomist Marwa Bouaziz is leading the change for organic farming. Driven by her passion for sustainable agriculture, Marwa empowers rural women, trains youth, and promotes eco-friendly farming techniques.

Her mission is clear: to create an inclusive and sustainable agricultural future that respects both people and the planet

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



How to use biochar to improve soil fertility

Boost your farm's productivity naturally! Biochar—a carbon-rich material—enhances soil fertility, retains moisture, and reduces greenhouse gases. This practical guide explores how biochar can revolutionize sustainable farming, helping

African smallholders enrich their soil and protect the environment.

[Read more here >>>>](#)



Seeds of success: How Ms. Mainara revolutionized farming from Tanzania to Kilimanjaro

Meet Ms. Mainara Gideon Kalinga, a visionary farmer from Tanzania who turned training into triumph. After traveling over 1,200 km for organic farming education, she launched a thriving business that's revolutionizing rural agriculture. Through innovative soil techniques, sustainable practices, and community training, Mainara is transforming farms, boosting yields, and inspiring others to embrace organic solutions.

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

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

Upcoming events

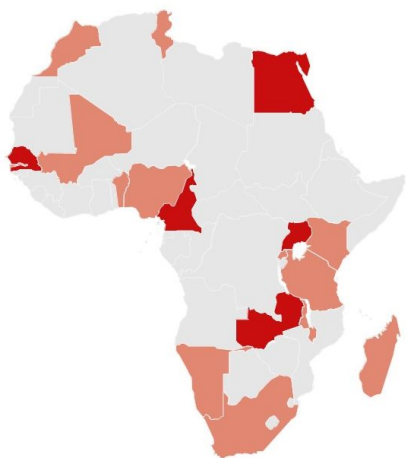


Want to know more about upcoming events?

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

The Knowledge Centre for Organic Agriculture and Agroecology in Africa (KCOA) aims to scale up adoption of organic agriculture and agroecology 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 2028.

[Learn more >>>>>](#)

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



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.

Contact

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Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Registered offices
Bonn and Eschborn, Germany

Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 32 + 36
53113 Bonn, Germany
T +49 228 44 60-0
F +49 228 44 60-17 66

Dag-Hammarskjöld-Weg 1 - 5
65760 Eschborn, Germany
T +49 61 96 79-0
F +49 61 96 79-11 15

E info@giz.de
I www.giz.de

Registered at

Local court (Amtsgericht) Bonn, Germany: HRB 18384
Local court (Amtsgericht) Frankfurt am Main, Germany: HRB 12394

VAT no. DE 113891176
Tax no. 040 250 56973

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In charge of this newsletter:

Dorith von Behaim

Editor(s):

Natasha Ortolan Ervilha

With contributions from:

Margary Martinez, Ibrahima Dieng, Pamela Magino, Tanja Reischl, Stefanie Swanepoel, Roudrigue Kouang, Monica Nyaga, Ratemo Moora

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