

## Evaluation Report for the project

### Mainstreaming Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) into Agricultural Systems in Africa for the Period 2019-2023<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Project title as used in the ProDoc not as in the TOR

## Table of Content

<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>1. Background and Methodology</b> .....	<b>3</b>
1.1 Introduction, context .....	3
1.2 Objective & scope of this evaluation .....	3
1.3 Evaluation methodology .....	4
<b>2. Evaluation Findings</b> .....	<b>5</b>
2.1 The EOA-I and the SDC support in a nutshell.....	5
2.1.1 <i>The AU`s EOA-I</i> .....	5
2.1.2 <i>The SDC project</i> .....	6
2.2 Assessment according to DAC/OECD Criteria .....	8
2.2.1 <i>Relevance</i> .....	8
2.2.2 <i>Coherence</i> .....	9
2.2.3 <i>Effectiveness</i> .....	10
2.2.4 <i>Efficiency</i> .....	11
2.2.5 <i>Impact</i> .....	13
2.2.6 <i>Sustainability</i> .....	13
2.3 Lessons learned and transversal issues assessment .....	14
2.3.1 <i>Lessons with regard to Smallholders</i> .....	15
2.3.2 <i>Lessons with regard to Gender</i> .....	15
2.3.3 <i>Lessons with regard to Youth</i> .....	15
2.3.4 <i>Ecological Organic Agriculture and Agroecology</i> .....	15
2.3.5 <i>Project triggers and levers</i> .....	16
<b>3. Assessing options for future developments</b> .....	<b>17</b>
3.1 10 options as potential scenarios.....	17
3.2 Geographic scope .....	18
3.3 Project content.....	18
3.4 Intervention levels.....	18
3.5 The project scope regarding EOA and AE.....	19
<b>4. Evaluators` conclusions</b> .....	<b>19</b>
4.1 Overall conclusions .....	19
4.2 Critical conclusions with regard to the project`s phase 2 .....	19
4.3 Additional conclusions that are relevant for future support .....	20
<b>5. Recommendations on further EOA and Agroecology support</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>6. Appendices</b> .....	<b>24</b>
6.1 SDC DAC evaluation grid .....	24
6.2 Burn rates.....	28
6.3 Answers to the evaluation questions.....	29
6.4 Discussion of the further strategy options.....	29
6.5 Literature.....	34
6.6 Reference to other deliverables.....	36
6.7 List of participants in the evaluation (internal only).....	37
6.8 Terms of References (TOR) .....	41

# Glossary

## List of Abbreviations

AE	Agroecology
AfrONet	African Organic Network
AFSA	Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
BDS	Business Development Services
BMZ	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
BvAT	Biovision Africa Trust
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Framework
CLO	Country Lead Organization
CNCR	Conseil national de Concertation et de Cooperation des Ruraux
CSC	Continental Steering Committee
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EAC	East African Community
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EOA	Ecological Organic Agriculture
EOA-I	Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FENABE	National Federation for Organic Agriculture
FiBL	Research Institute for Organic Agriculture
GiZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism
GPFS	Global Program Food Security
IFOAM	International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (old name)
IFOAM OI	IFOAM Organics International (new name)
ISD	Institute for Sustainable Development
KCOA	Knowledge Centre for Organic Agriculture
KOAN	Kenya Organic Agriculture Network
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NOAM	National Organic Agriculture Movement
MSD	Market Systems Development (formerly M4P, Marketing for the poor)
NOAN	Association of Organic Agriculture Practitioners of Nigeria
OBEPAB	Organisation Béninoise pour la Promotion de l'Agriculture Biologique
OECD	The organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OSEA	Organic Standards East Africa (SIDA project)
OTEA	Organic Trade East Africa (SIDA project following OSEA)
PGS	Participatory Guarantee System
PIP	Pillar Implementing Partners
PU	Pelum Uganda
RAIP	Regional Agricultural Investment Plan
REC	Regional Economic Community
ROAM	Rwanda Organic Agriculture Movement
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
TOAM	Tanzania Organic Agriculture Movement
TOR	Terms of Reference
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNFSS	United Nations Food Systems Summit
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

## Definitions and explanations/use of terms

**Agroecology** – According to FAO, Agroecology is an integrated approach that simultaneously applies ecological and social concepts and principles to the design and management of food and agricultural systems. It seeks to optimize the interactions between plants, animals, humans and the environment while taking into consideration the social aspects that need to be addressed for a sustainable and fair food system.

**Ecological Organic Agriculture** is a production system that sustains the health of soils, ecosystems, and people. It relies on ecological processes, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local conditions, rather than the use of inputs with adverse effects. Organic Agriculture combines tradition, innovation, and science to benefit the shared environment and promote fair relationships and good quality of life for all involved. (definition of IFOAM Organics International)

**Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative of the African Union** is an initiative that promotes Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA), started in response to the African Union Heads of State and Government’s call for the promotion of organic farming in Africa.

**Like minded agriculture systems:** We call like minds agriculture systems those that have similar values and principles like EOA and that are generally recognized as advocating for a similar goal of truly sustainable agriculture. Examples with relevance in Africa: are Biodynamic Agriculture, Permaculture, Regenerative Agriculture, Low External Input Agriculture (LEISA), Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM) etc.

**The SDC project “Mainstreaming Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) into Agricultural Systems in Africa for the Period 2019-2023”:** The project supporting the African Union Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative, EOA-I. Called “the project” in this document.

## List of figures

- Figure 1: Overview of the different steps involved in the evaluation process
- Figure 2: Overview of the 3 strategic directions and the 3 operational dimensions considered in the evaluation
- Figure 3: EOA-I Structure
- Figure 4: EOA-I summary
- Figure 5: Africa Union’s main highlights and challenges relating to EOA-I
- Figure 6: Project design
- Figure 7: Project countries (Map)
- Figure 8: Project Budget
- Figure 9: Country Lead Organisations (CLO)
- Figure 10: Pillar Implementing Partners (PIP)
- Figure 11: Conceptual relationship between EOA and AE based on survey findings
- Figure 12: 10 strategic options to further provide support and workshop participants’ preferences
- Figure 13: Stakeholder preferences with regard to future geographic scope
- Figure 14: Votes regarding pillars
- Figure 15: Votes regarding future intervention levels
- Figure 16: Votes regarding inclusivity
- Figure 17: Example of an organic sector for the “MSD Donut”

## Acknowledgements

As FiBL team evaluators, we would express our sincere gratitude to all individuals and organizations who participated with us in the different steps of the evaluation process for the second phase of the project *“Mainstreaming Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) into Agricultural Systems in Africa”*. In particular, we thank SDC, GPFS, AU, BvAT and all EOA stakeholders including the representatives of CLOs, PIPs, and Steering Committees in all levels for the fruitful exchange with us, their inputs and their commitments to run the project evaluation in appropriate conditions. Special thanks go again to BvAT and also to the Kenyan Organic Agriculture Network (KOAN) for giving us the opportunity to prospect in the field their activities in Kenya and feeding us with the required information. We are also grateful to the Beninese Organization for the Promotion of Organic Agriculture (OBEPAB) and to its partners that are implementing the pillars in Benin for their great cooperation and facilitation support to conduct the interviews. To our consulted peers from FIBL we thank for sharing their appreciated experience and expertise.

The Continental Steering Committee (CSC) for the EOA-I of the African Union has discussed this report on 5 December and we are grateful for their reflections.

## Executive Summary

In 2011, the Executive Council of the African Union (AU) took a decision<sup>2</sup> to build an Africa wide organic agriculture platform. The African Union Commission (AUC) accepted the mandate, built the so-called Continental Steering Committee for Ecological Organic Agriculture (CSC) and launched the Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative (EOA-I). It got support among others from SDC in the framework of the Global Program Food Security (GPFS).

Organic agriculture and agroecology are worldwide concepts that are well-defined, researched and promoted by the United Nations (e.g. the FAO Agroecology elements), governments (e.g. regulation of Organic Agriculture in over 90 countries), civil society (e.g. the global organic umbrella, IFOAM Organics International) and science (e.g. FiBL research).

SDC has been providing support to EOA-I under the project name *“Mainstreaming Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) into Agricultural Systems in Africa”*<sup>3</sup>. A second phase is now being implemented, from 2019 – 2023. SDC contracted FiBL in April 2022 to implement the evaluation of the second phase of the project, based on 44 evaluation questions along the DAC/OECD evaluation criteria.

Information for this evaluation originates from various SDC/BVAT discussions, 2 hybrid stakeholder workshops in English (70 participants) and French (20 participants), 35 project documents, from 101 respondents in a stakeholder survey, 55 respondents in face-to-face (individual and group) interviews and 17 respondents in online interviews.

The evaluation found the following ratings (from 1 highly satisfactory to 4 highly unsatisfactory according to the SDC evaluation grid):

1. **Relevance 1-2:** We rate relevance very high with the score of 1 for mainstreaming EOA, 1 for the overall holistic approach at the time of design and continental scope, 3 for detail project concepts at the time of evaluation since project successes have changed the situation.
2. **Coherence 1:** We rate Coherence with GPFS, AU and many upcoming AE/EOA projects very high with the score of 1. However, there is little coherence with the widespread conventional agriculture government policies that favor industrial agriculture and in the particular those that allow the use of genetically modified organisms. Coherence with governmental policies is growing with every policy success of EOA-I
3. **Effectiveness 3:** We rate effectiveness as fairly satisfactory. Targets are in some cases achieved, in others on track and again others are uncertain. While the SCs are of high relevance for the AU and in ECOWAS, the national sectors and the East Africa region do not use them effectively.
4. **Efficiency 2:** We rate that efficiency was good even though there are many shortcomings and delays in daily operations. We critically assess the over attention to efficiency over other aims such as effectiveness, impact or sustainability.
5. **Impact, 2:** We rate the project’s impact as satisfactory, with the potential that it will grow further in the future since ‘developments’ are there, just much slower than anticipated.
6. **Sustainability 3-4:** It is certain that many partners continue their actions for EOA/AE. However, they don’t have alternative business plan than to apply to new donor projects, with uncertain sector service priorities. Progress in terms of policy is uncertain, since not only developing and approving, but also implementing policies requires effective advocacy.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/30236-doc-decision\\_on\\_organic\\_farming\\_english.pdf](https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/30236-doc-decision_on_organic_farming_english.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> In documents and in discussions, SDC’s project contribution oftentimes incorrectly refers to the “EOA-Initiative” per se, but which is bigger than what SDC supports.

Overall, we conclude that the project responds to an expressed need of the African Union and of the EOA sector. A strong commitment goes hand in hand with high project ownership.

Considering the situation when the project started in 2014, the very broad project set up is retrospectively understandable. In the meantime, however, the situation has changed—thanks also to the project’s positive impact. Now, a strategy process to focus project efforts and to improve effectiveness is needed.

**While we highly appreciate the project and conclude overall that it was more than worthwhile**, we highlight critical points to consider for the planning of future support.

- Project complexity and operational workload have been very high;
- Project resources have been too widely spread;
- Too high sector dependency on the project;
- Too optimistic planning hampering project performance;
- Effectiveness and sustainability are insufficiently addressed;
- Capacity building for sustainable institutional development is lacking attention;
- Mainstreaming EOA hasn’t sufficient strategic focus.

The evaluation team has the eight following recommendations:

# 1: Accelerate the demand and supply of healthy AEO/AE food with an MSD approach emphasizing capacity building of sector stakeholders;

#2: Secure impacts and sustainability of project phase 1 and 2 achievements;

#3: Prioritize sustainability in new support;

#4: Maintain AU and sector ownership and benefit from African legitimacy;

#5: Functionally consolidate the present pillar work and focus in the future on market development and policy facilitation;

#6: Focus on continental level with 5 regional clusters and one focus country each to showcase EOA/AE development;

#7: Act inclusive to AE, EOA and others, prioritizing SDG contributions;

#8: Continue using the competence and commitment of BVAT.

# I. Background and Methodology

## I.1 Introduction, context

In 2011, the Executive Council of the African Union (AU) took a decision<sup>4</sup> to build an Africa wide organic agriculture platform and thereby expressed interest to further organic agriculture in its CAADP (Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Framework) lead by NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa's Development). The African Union Commission (AUC) took up the mandate, built the so-called Continental Steering Committee for Ecological Organic Agriculture (CSC) and got support among others from SDC in the framework of the Global Program Food Security (GPFS). The intentions of the AU and the then strategic priorities of SDC/GPFS fitted well. In the meantime, with the recently adopted GPFS Program Framework 2021 – 2024, the fit has become even bigger. The promotion of agroecology is now among the GPFS' core objectives, not at least due to agroecology's contributions and benefits to progress towards the SDG targets in terms of sustainable and resilient food systems. Benefits are expected, among others, in addressing climate change, loss of biodiversity, as well as declining land and water resources. Organic agriculture and agroecology are worldwide concepts that are well-defined, researched and promoted by the United Nations (e.g. the FAO Agroecology elements), governments (e.g. regulation of Organic Agriculture in over 90 countries), civil society (e.g. the global organic umbrella, IFOAM Organics International) and science (e.g. FiBL research).

SDC has been providing support to the African Union for its Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative (EOA-I) under the project name *“Mainstreaming Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) into Agricultural Systems in Africa”*<sup>5</sup>. In this report we refer to it as “the project”. A first phase from 2014 – 2018 is finished and evaluated<sup>6</sup> and the second phase is now being implemented, from 2019 – 2023. SDC contracted FiBL in April 2022 to implement the evaluation of the second phase of the project, based on SDC's Terms of References (TOR) and FiBL's proposal. This final report summarizes the evaluation results and conclusions as well as the recommendations from the evaluation team.

## I.2 Objective & scope of this evaluation

The purpose of this external evaluation is to provide to SDC an objective assessment of the second phase of the project, and contribute prospectively to the learning-accountability-steering triangle. The objectives were to: (a) evaluate the project phase 2 according to the DAC/OECD criteria against the planning; (b) assess the systemic changes and impacts that were triggered by the project; and (c) recommend to SDC on how to further support agroecology in Africa and beyond.<sup>7</sup>

The scope of the evaluation is limited to the SDC project phase 2 (2019 – 2023), which is supporting the EOA-I of the African Union, being implemented by Biovision Africa Trust (BVAT). Yet, findings, learnings, and recommendations reflect to some extent also to the previous phase of the project (2014 – 2018).

All in all, the evaluation has a focus on the overall project looking at the management, the continental, regional and country levels. It takes Kenya and Benin as cases for looking into the countries and pillars, respectively the project's mechanisms to coordinate and implement interventions. Other countries participated in the general discussions and were subject to the overall assessment.

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<sup>4</sup> [https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/30236-doc-decision\\_on\\_organic\\_farming\\_english.pdf](https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/30236-doc-decision_on_organic_farming_english.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> In documents and in discussions, SDC's project contribution oftentimes incorrectly refers to the “EOA-Initiative” per se, but which is bigger than what SDC supports.

<sup>6</sup> See Document # 11: EOA Mid Term Review 2016.

<sup>7</sup> More details see TOR, proposal and inception report

### 1.3 Evaluation methodology

The evaluation process is visualized in Figure 1 and includes 7 steps of inception, data collection, verification, and synthesis. The steps were conceptualized such to ensure a good independent evaluation (i.e. external assessment) while involving stakeholders to optimize participation and reflection (i.e. stakeholder learning).

As a means to obtain a broad project understanding, also experiences and opinions of the different project-related players, including partners from other donors and others involved in the EOA-Initiative, were considered. Nevertheless, the core of the evaluation relates to the revision of existing documents, the feedback from AUC, BvAT and its 27 partners in 9 countries and any other involved or expert sources. Thereby, a stakeholder survey (with 101 project-related respondents out of 193 invitees), online interviews (17 interviewees with interviews between one and six hours), face to face interviews (15 interviewees in Kenya and 40 in Benin), and 2 online stakeholder workshops (with 70 participants in English from Kenya and 20 in French from Benin) were crucial sources of information.

The detail methodology is presented in the inception report.

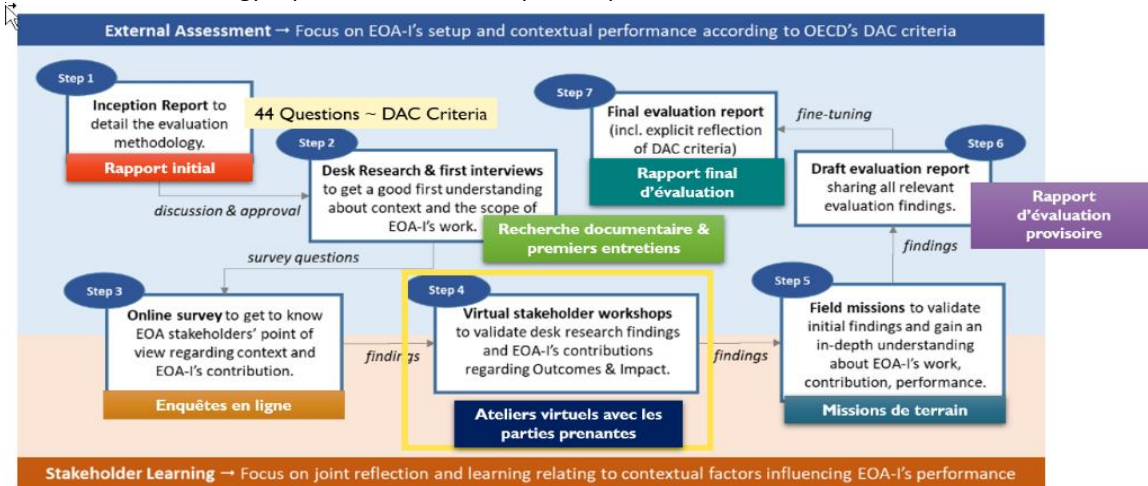


Figure 1: Overview of the different steps involved in the evaluation process

The diversity of the involved methodological steps allowed a broad but still well-focused participation of various stakeholders. By doing so, we took attention to take a learning centered approach gaining trust of interviewees and assuring that they are empowered to find answers to the evaluation questions. We took efforts to be as far as possible sensitive to stakeholders' roles, responsibilities, interests, and the balance among stakeholder groups (i.e. women/men, youth). We oriented data collection on the DAC criteria and SDC's evaluation questions (see Annex). To derive and assess different scenarios, our evaluation concept is based on the lens of 3 strategic directions which are paired with 3 operational dimensions (see Figure 2).

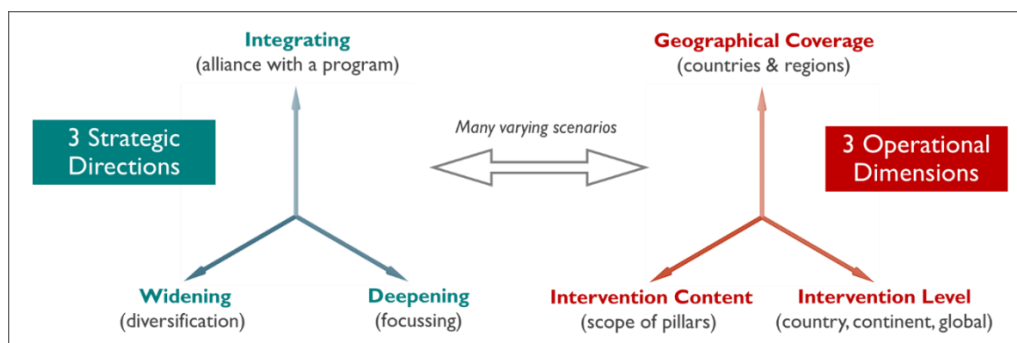


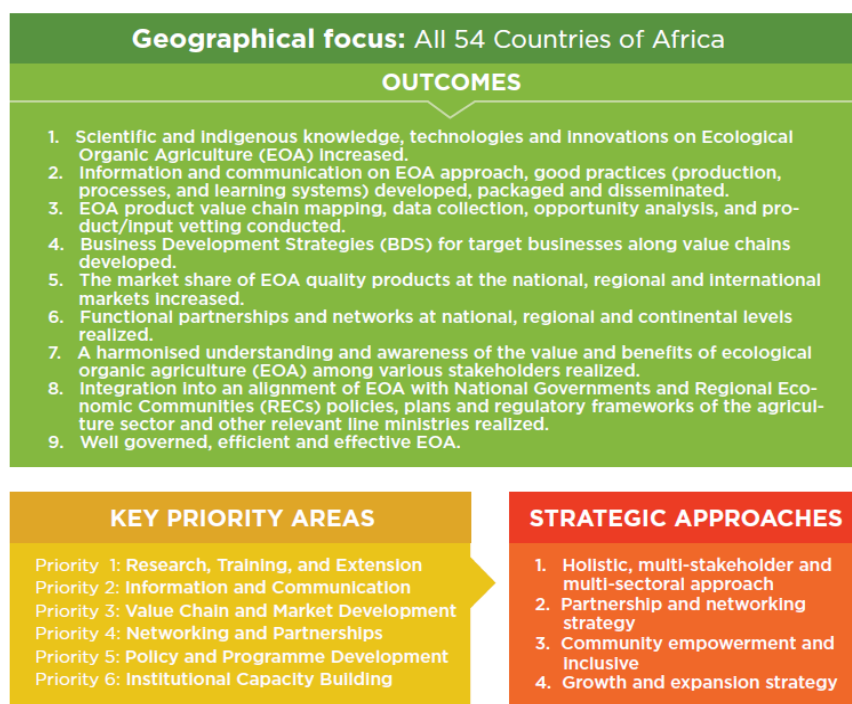
Figure 2: Overview of the 3 strategic directions and the 3 operational dimensions considered in the evaluation

## 2. Evaluation Findings

### 2.1 The EOA-I and the SDC support in a nutshell

#### 2.1.1 The AU's EOA-I

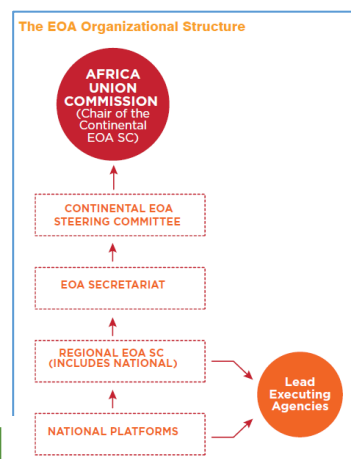
The EOA Initiative is a continental undertaking implemented under the guidance and oversight of the African Union (AU) and chaired by its Continental Steering Committee. It acts as an African organic platform, promoting available best practices and sustainable organic farming systems. The initiative embraces a holistic approach towards production systems that sustain the health of soils, ecosystems and people. It relies on ecological processes, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local conditions rather than on the use of external inputs with adverse effects on health (human, animal, plant and environment). The overall goal of the initiative is to contribute within Africa **to the mainstreaming of Ecological Organic Agriculture into national agricultural production systems and to improve agricultural productivity, food security, and access to markets.**



**Figure 4:** EOA-I summary: The AU seeks outside support for its initiative. So far, Switzerland and Sweden contributed to the EOA-I. Many others have aligned objectives, but are not officially integrated. AU has minimal own resources in EOA-I, such that implementation relies on donor projects and stakeholder contributions. That means AU's overall assumption is that partners invest in their strategic plan.

Main Highlights:	Main Challenges:
- Governance at the regional level	- Convince AE/EOAI donor projects to participate in EOA-I
- Mainstreaming in CAADP	- Inclusivity in nature-based farming concepts

**Figure 5:** African Union's main highlights and challenges relating to EOA-I



**Figure 3:** EOA-I Structure

The EOA-I objectives are:

1. To increase documentation of information and knowledge on organic agricultural products along the complete value chain and support relevant actors to translate it into practices and wide application;
2. To systematically inform producers about the EOA approaches and good practices and motivate their uptake through strengthening access to advisory and support services;
3. To substantially increase the share of quality organic products at the local, national and regional markets;
4. To strengthen inclusive stakeholder engagement in organic commodities value chain development by establishing national, regional and continental multi-stakeholder platform
5. To advocate for changes in public policy, plans, programs, and practice.

## 2.1.2 The SDC project

The project “**Mainstreaming Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) into Agricultural Systems in Africa for the Period 2019-2023**” is subject to this evaluation. It is a SDC’s contribution to the EOA-I of the African Union, but it has own objectives and an own ‘implementation logic (see below).

<b>Goal:</b>	To improve the quality of life for farm households resulting from mainstreaming ecological organic agriculture (EOA) practices and technologies into agricultural systems.
<b>Objective 1:</b>	To avail information and knowledge needed by Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) value chain actors through demand-driven, multi-disciplinary, gender-sensitive, and participatory research and repositories.
<b>Objective 2:</b>	To enhance the adoption of EOA technologies and practices through systematic dissemination of research and experience-based information, knowledge, and training of value chain actors.
<b>Objective 3:</b>	To substantially increase the share of quality organic products at local, national, regional, and international markets through value chain development and market strengthening.
<b>Objective 4:</b>	To enhance structured management and governance of EOA through coordination networking, advocacy, multi-stakeholder platforms, and capacity building leading to positive changes in agricultural systems in Africa.

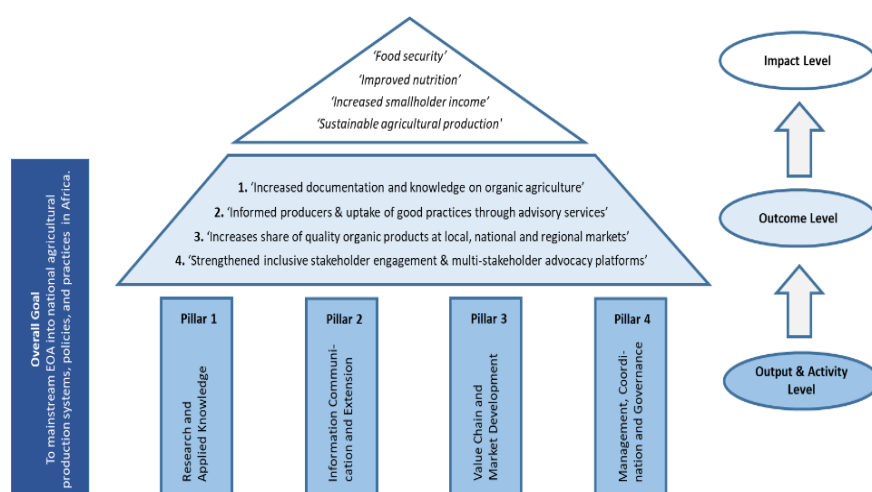


Figure 6: Project design (evaluators interpretation)



Figure 7: Project countries (BVAT)

Project budget in k USD 2019 -2023		
1. Research/knowledge	14%	874
2. Information/Communication	14%	878
3. Value Chain & Market	15%	924
4. Support/Cementing	43%	2734
Project Management	14%	905
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>6313</b>
1-4 are equally distributed to the countries		

Figure 8: Project budget

#### **Country Lead Organisations (CLO): (Figure 9)**

1. **Kenya** – Kenya Organic Agriculture Network (KOAN)
2. **Uganda** – Pelum Uganda (PU)
3. **Rwanda** – Rwanda Organic Agriculture Movement (ROAM)
4. **Ethiopia** – Institute for Sustainable Development (ISD)
5. **Tanzania** – Tanzania Organic Agriculture Movement (TOAM)
6. **Mali** - National Federation for Organic Agriculture (FENABE)
7. **Senegal** – Conseil national de Concertation et de Cooperation des Ruraux (CNCR)
8. **Benin** – Organisation Béninoise pour la Promotion de l'Agriculture Biologique (OBEPAB)
9. **Nigeria** – Association of Organic Agriculture Practitioners of Nigeria (NOAN)

Total 32 partners with Project Implementation Partners (PIP) and regional (ECOWAS, Pelum Kenya) and continental

The project is officially supporting the EOA-I and it is to a certain extent integrating into its governance structure. At the same time, it keeps its own line of oversight and decision making with BVAT being contracted by SDC to implement the project. Wording of objectives, pillars etc. are similar and coherent to EOA-I, but not equal, and sometimes deviating in important points (e.g. the project pillar 4 is the summary of pillars 4-6 in EOA-I)—which challenges outsiders in the understanding of the nature of EOA-I and the project. The project is the biggest expression of the EOA-I. It has the biggest impact and the biggest visibility. For a long time, it was the biggest EOA/AE project in Africa.

The project has no explicit own 'theory of change' to visualise the main chain of its impacts. It rather contributes as part of a holistic strategy to mainstream EOA in the African continent along various lines in the project concept and logical framework. Thereby, the pillars represent the interventions, which are supposed to lead (a) to grassroots livelihood impacts particularly for smallholder, women and youth, (b) to growth of value chains and markets, (c) to improved policy frameworks, and (d) to a more capacitated and functional institutional EOA landscape.

There is not one common or overarching project approach, but rather various approaches on the same level are in place: e.g. research and knowledge management, livelihood improvements through extension services, business development services (BDS), market systems development (MSD), capacity building of implementation partners for project management, advocacy and lobbying to policy decision makers, conducting sector studies, fundraising to upscale own actions etc. The project has a special focus on smallholder farmers, on women and youth. Management integrity, transparency and participation are important principles in all project areas.

Project implementors (BVAT and indirectly its partners) are contracted by SDC/GPFS. They are compliant with SDC's implementation requirements and are reporting on everything they are accountable for.

#### **Pillar Implementing Partners (PIP): (Figure 10)**

1. **Kenya** : Egerton University (Pillar 1), Farm Kenya, (Pillar 2), Kenya Organic Agriculture Network (KOAN) (Pillar 3 & 4)
2. **Uganda**: Uganda Martyrs University (UMU) (Pillar 1, Eastern and Southern Africa Small Scale Farmers' Forum (ESAFF) Uganda (Pillar 2), Kulika Trust (Pillar3), Pelum Uganda (Pillar 4)
3. **Rwanda**: Regional Research Centre for Integrated Development (RCID) (Pillar 1), Radio HUGUKA (Pillar 2), Rwanda Organic Agriculture Movement (ROAM) (Pillar 3 & 4)
4. **Ethiopia**: Wollo University (Pillar 1), PAN Ethiopia (Pillar 2), Institute for Sustainable Development (ISD) (Pillar 3 & 4)
5. **Tanzania**: Sustainable Agriculture Tanzania (Pillar 1), Pelum Tanzania (Pillar 2), Tanzania Organic Agriculture Movement (TOAM) (Pillar 3 & 4)
6. **Mali**: Institute of Rural Economy (IER) Mali (Pillar 1), Association Malienne pour la Solidarité et le Développement (AMSD) (Pillar 2), Union des Producteurs de Sésame de Banamba (UPSB) (Pillar 3), Fédération Nationale des Producteurs de l'Agriculture Biologique et Equitable du Mali (Pillar 4)
7. **Senegal** : Environnement Développement Action pour la Protection Naturelle des Terroirs (EndaPronat) (Pillar 1), Environnement et Développement en Afrique (IED) (Pillar 2), Agrecole Afrique (Pillar 3), National Council for Concertation and Cooperation of Rural People (CNCR)
8. **Benin**: Research Laboratory on Innovation for Agricultural Development of the Faculty of Agronomy of the University of Parakou (LRIDA/FA/UP) (Pillar 1), Platform of Civil Society Actors of Benin (PASCiB) (Pillar 2), Research and Technical Assistance Center for the Environment and Agricultural Development (CRATEDA ONG) (Pillar 3), Beninese Organization for the Promotion of Organic Agriculture (OBEPAB)
9. **Nigeria** : Kwara State University (Pillar 1), Farmers Development Union (Pillar 2), Ibadan Go Organic Multipurpose Cooperative Society (Pillar 3), Association of Organic Agriculture Practitioners of Nigeria (NOAN) (Pillar 4)

Additionally, the project also reports to the AU EOA-I continental steering committee, which has consultative rights for project matters. In the culture of the project, the CSC project has a very high authority and has big influence. SDC has the oversight, provides strategic guidance and is regularly involved in operational decisions (e.g. partner selection decisions, approval of procedures).

## 2.2 Assessment according to DAC/OECD Criteria

The TOR provided 45 evaluation questions, which are answered one by one in the Appendix 6.3 based on the collection of data and information. Here, we summarize for each of the six DAC criteria our observations and the assessments of the evaluation team. Conclusions and recommendations are not subject of this chapter and are discussed in Chapters 5 and 6.

### 2.2.1 Relevance

**Is the intervention doing the right thing?** The extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries' global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change.

The relevance of the project and of using agroecology and EOA to address environmental and social challenges (e.g. climate change, soil/water depletion, poverty, gender imbalances, youth opportunities etc.) for SDG achievements are well stated in the planning documents and the GPFS strategy documents. Stakeholders strongly agree with this, themselves being passionate and committed to address with project interventions markets and policies on the continental, regional and country levels.

We observed the following that is relevant for our overall assessment of the project's **relevance**:

- Many and an increasing number of scientific and political studies (e.g. UNDP, FiBL), strategies (e.g. FAO, UNEP), conference outcomes (e.g. UNFSS), movements (IFOAM OI, AfrONet, AFSA), and the international and domestic dynamic organic market demand underline the relevance of EOA/AE as opportunity for sustainable development;
- There is consensus among stakeholders about the high project relevance in contributing to the mainstreaming of EOA/AE in Africa. Project progress is equal to progress in their own institutions. They see all activities relevant and advocate for diversification of the project interventions;
- The needs of beneficiaries are addressed to a certain extent. The project has many beneficiaries, from farmer to AU level, and a huge geographic scope with very ambitious and sometimes unrealistic objectives. It is too small to be able to achieve all objectives satisfactorily;
- The project not only has a big diversity of objectives but also involves varying development approaches. Implementation is overloaded. And, due to its complexity, the project is difficult to understand from the outside;
- The choice of countries is not clear. Historical criteria dominated by political circumstances overruled stakeholder needs and development opportunities in this decision-making process;
- The project strategy continuous the strategy of phase 1, with certain adjustments by including the learnings from evaluation and from the EOA-I strategy. It is coherent with the EOA-I, but also deviates in important points (e.g. different pillar definition), which creates confusion inside and outside the project. Because of that, even insiders make frequently ill-oriented statements (e.g. "EOA-I phase 2 ProDoc").
- We believe that a more focused and more capacity development-oriented project design (i.e. aiming to empower key stakeholders along the project duration) would have increased the relevance of the project (see recommendations).

- The relevance of the project and its overarching goals tend to be questioned by promoters of industrial agriculture (i.e. in input-based green revolution) believing in concepts like “Climate Smart Agriculture” or the “Sustainable Intensification of Agriculture” (involving also GMO).

1-2 <sup>8</sup>	Overall, we rate Relevance very high with the score of 1 for mainstreaming EOA. 1 for the overall holistic approach at the time of design and for the continental scope, 3 for detail project concepts at the time of evaluation since project successes have changed the situation.
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## 2.2.2 Coherence

**How well does the intervention fit?** The compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or institution.

The hooking of the project on the AUC owned and AU head of states legitimized EOA-I provides an excellent coherence. This is an outstanding feature and an extraordinary strength of the project. At the start of the EOA-I and the project, there was little donor support for EOA/AE, but which has increased in the meantime. Unfortunately, EOA/AE support to Africa rarely integrates into the EOA-I. We observe a very high coherence with the partners and their missions. Thus, project ownership and identification are very high among them.

Despite the fact that the notion of sustainability is mainstreamed in the meantime, national and international agriculture together with food and nutrition policies are in general far from agroecological or organic principles (e.g. the recent allowance of GMO in Kenya). In the AU – who owns the EOA-Initiative – EOA is still a small niche, and thus gets little attention. No own funds are allocated. Also, the donor or research community still invests little into agroecology and EOA, often preferring conventional agriculture support. Nevertheless, there is a sharp positive trend that EOA-I and the project are spearheading. Based on FAO recommendations and on good examples with the German, French, and Dutch governments coming in, donors’ interest to support EOA/OA has increased in the last few years. Even more so as EOA is taken up more and more in agriculture practice, research, markets, and government policies. In other words, the project’s coherence is growing with its impacts.

We observed the following that is relevant for our overall assessment of the project’s **coherence**:

- The fit to AU and EOA-I is very high. However, the fact that **AUC doesn’t invest in its own plan and that there are no donors to follow the SDC example** is irritating. AU has verbal coherence but little mainstreaming within its own institution even after 6 years of project implementation.
- Donors and development agencies are investing more and more into EOA and AE. While in the past, focus was given in value chain developments through compliance support (organic certification for export) and income generation, more and more, **the concept of agroecology is used to address environmental and social challenges contributing to the SDGs**. However, support is not coordinated and involved players don’t make (meaningful) attempts to increase coherence.
- Within the sector, on the national and regional levels, EOA-I has contributed to coherence and to **peaceful parallel use of similar concepts predominantly through common learning**. (e.g. promoting PGS for local markets or the promotion of inclusive work between EOA, AE and other directions, or through publications of coherent sector overview).
- There have been attempts to improve coherence on the level of the sector stakeholders, particularly with **private sector actors**. However, the project has not managed to sufficiently address the real needs of the private sector, i.e. not having a convincing way to facilitate and support private sector development. It lacked the capacity and capability to facilitate well such involvement, including the

<sup>8</sup> 1 0 = not assessed, 1 = highly satisfactory, 2 = satisfactory, 3 = unsatisfactory, 4 = highly unsatisfactory

use of the right language and discussion style required to develop joint action and/or offer attractive services for private sector companies.

- Within the project implementation structure, we noted that CLO and PIP are at the same time **provider of project implementation services and target for capacity development**. We consider this lack of differentiation critical: while an income opportunity for partners is welcome — especially as CLOs mostly lack a sustainable business plan — such project implementation services tend to deviate their mission, create conflicts of interest and unhealthy competition with members, and dilute the institutional profile.

1<sup>9</sup>

Overall, we rate Coherence with GPFS, AU and many upcoming AE/EOA projects very high with the score of 1. However, there is little coherence with the widespread conventional agriculture government policies that favor industrial agriculture and in the particular those that allow the use of genetically modified organisms. Coherence with governmental policies is growing with every policy success of EOA-I.

### 2.2.3 Effectiveness

**Is the intervention achieving its objectives?** The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups.

The project has a very detailed and understandable result framework to serve as a monitoring tool, which is nurtured by the various countries to a varied level of quality. It tracks numerous indicators in vast tables for every country of implementation. Training has been provided on how to fill the result framework, and regular meetings take place to track achievements and reflect them on the result framework indicators.

The monitoring framework is extensive, detailed and challenging to implement. The demanded segregation of gender and youth is sometimes difficult or impossible to establish. Data collection is also challenged due to the lack of reliable statistics (e.g. on organic trade or consumption).

All in all, we feel that the principle of ‘optimal ignorance’ is not followed, respectively that a result framework with fewer and simpler indicators may be more effective for project steering. The “drivers for change” in the targeted countries, sectors, and pillars would be more in the center of attention when monitoring results refer to them directly.

Overall, we observed that the more performance-oriented indicators are overachieved in an early stage, while the rather scale (I1) or impacted-oriented (I4 and I5) indicators were difficult to achieve and also to measure. This indicates that the outcome targets need more time than expected.

We observed the following that is relevant for our overall assessment of the project’s **effectiveness**:

- The extent to which the **overall goal is achieved** is impossible to assess. Monitoring of the planned indicators, such as the HHDD, are delayed and subject to unfinished work. On top, we did not find the baseline values, which are necessary to assess the desired progress.
- **Objective 1** related to the research and information pillar is well achieved. The project has been creative in availing knowledge and overperformed in that aspect.
- The targets for the pilot adoptions of EOA practices (**pillar 2**) are reached 1.5 years before the project phase ends. It doesn’t yet achieve the high dissemination targets of 200’000 farmers (slightly below 50% by end 2020). This was the indicator most hit by the pandemic. Other factors are presently researched by BVAT. The project implementors are however committed to catch up and are optimistic to reach the target by spring 2023. There is no gender target, but with 45% women there is a

<sup>9</sup> Coherence is 4 if we look at compatibility with the dominating conventional agriculture strategies of the African states.

satisfactory level reached. The level of 22% young people is, however, somehow low. The more impact-oriented indicators for objective 2 are not measured.

- A similar picture provides **pillar 3**, where the project input-oriented indicator targets (e.g. PGS group building) are already reached, while outcome targets (e.g. farmers participating in the markets) are behind. For impact indicators (increase of consumers) no data are available.
- **Pillar 4** target achievements are on track given the remaining time of implementation.
- We have observed **big differences between countries**, which have very different conditions in terms of size, natural conditions, EOA developments and partners implantation capacities, but same budgets. Senegal, Rwanda and Ethiopia are rather weak, while Benin, Uganda and Kenya contribute much more to the targeted outcomes.
- The **effectiveness of the Steering Committees** varies. While continental and West Africa regional steering committees work well, other e.g. NSC do not seem to be strong teams that resume governance duties. SCs are used to get connected to government or private sectors.
- The **selection of implementation partners** was done very carefully, in compliance with transparent and fair processes—but with late, time-consuming, and costly processes. The tender approach prioritizes the suitability of partners regarding project implementation capacity over the sector functions and the sector’s needs for services. This approach has cemented a strict project implementation logic with high targets on a long list of indicators over a capacity-building approach.

<b>3</b>	<b>Overall, we rate effectiveness as fairly satisfactory. Targets are in some cases achieved, in others on track and again others are uncertain. While the SCs are of high relevance for the AU and in ECOWAS, the national sectors and the East Africa region do not use them effectively.</b>
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## 2.2.4 Efficiency

**How well are resources used?** The extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.

Comparing input and output, the project efficiency and project performance can be assessed as good. Project results (achievement of target indicators) and inputs (low burn rate) are behind expectations; yet, we consider them ambitious, and argue that project interventions have been mostly implemented. Considering the COVID-19 pandemic, we stated delays, but eventually adaptation even helped increase efficiency through time and cost savings relating to virtual meetings.

In view of the complexity of the project<sup>10</sup>, BVAT was challenged to a very high degree, but in our view did an excellent and herculean job to balance all the aspects with the ambition for extraordinary working results regardless of limited resources (human, financial, institutional landscape, the capacity of partners and (private and government) stakeholders, availability of data etc.). Activities were implemented to a very good extent despite high challenges in some countries (e.g. with weak partners, delays in activities, heavy formal requirements or conceptional overload in the planning). Nevertheless, we see a need for a simpler and more realistic output planning in most aspects of the work, to also positively impact the project’s efficiency in guiding and adjusting its interventions to the varying contexts.

We observed the following that is relevant for our overall assessment of the project’s **efficiency**:

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<sup>10</sup> Due to its design with many layers in all aspects (e.g. geographic, level of intervention, languages, nature of pillars, agroecology/EOA as a holistic approach of interventions, and the numerous partners that are not only project service providers but also the target of capacity-building efforts.)

- All CLOs confirmed that the **coordination mechanism and leadership** for the project provided by BvAT has been good and adequate. However, the extensive structure, which involves high administrative costs, has not been adequately funded.
- BvAT as the main project coordinator **supported CLOs** well, i.e. strengthening their governance structures, project management (e.g. procurement guidelines) and reporting capacities (financial and narrative). Yet, these capacity building efforts strongly focused on project implementation services, rather than on services that would prepare the CLOs better to cope with their permanent missions, being mostly membership and civil society organizations that should depend less on external donors.
- The **project document is very prescriptive**, the targets are high, the workload is high, and the implementation systems are complex and bureaucratic. So are the project assumptions e.g. of the CLOs making their own contributions. With the focus on achieving the target indicators, project leadership has been constrained to be flexible and creative, e.g. to adapt to changing situations (pandemic, drought, conflict, etc.) and or upcoming new opportunities (private sector interests, synergies with new projects, etc.).
- In view of the achievements of the results with considerably lower means than budgeted, we do rate the **project efficiency quite good**. Ironically, the pandemic seems to have contributed to a higher efficiency by lowering travel costs and time investments thanks to a higher level of virtuality. Unfortunately, that does not mean that the effectiveness and impact were not suffering from the pandemic, as virtual meetings did not compensate the value of physical gatherings in many cases (i.e. especially the involvement of farmers and private sector in meetings was strongly constrained during the pandemic, and the interventions targeting them).
- The project has well started to develop **partnership opportunities** relating to national consortia, bidding for project implementation. This newly introduced “network of teams” approach on country and intercountry levels increased virtual exchanges, which have become more common, fostering capacity building and having a positive impact on project efficiency.
- The project has improved **project operations** addressing earlier non-performances by putting emphasis on e.g. competitive grants and by excluding weak-performing partners. On the one hand, this has come at the price of high input micro-management; on the other hand, this new approach has fostered the intrinsic motivation and self-reliance of involved partners, thus contributing towards the sustainability of their own actions. Consequently, many partners see the project as one of their own, showing good commitment as project implementing partners. In this regard, the project has gained efficiency in building up local partners.
- The burn rates until end of 2020 (latest available figures) vary significantly between the countries, but little within the pillars of a country (exception is pillar 2 in Tanzania). There is a direct correlation between good CLO management and burn rate if measured against the budget. The burn rate against instalment is rather an indicator for good BVAT management, which is minimum 88% and very high in all the cases. Countries with high burn rates against budget are Nigeria, Benin and Uganda with all above 90%. We found very low burn rates in Senegal (26%) and Ethiopia (45%). The regional clusters (34 and 39%) and AfrONet are also very low (45%). Detail see Appendix 6.2.
- With regard to **risk management**, we state that risks identified in planning were not systematically reflected in the annual reports. The project focused on the management of operational risks (e.g. on dysfunctional partnership). And external risks<sup>11</sup>—with an equal or event greater impact potential—

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<sup>11</sup> e.g. climate change, big international business endangering the wellbeing of smallholders, governance and conflict risks, GMO co-existence, pandemics (human and livestock) and pests (plants).

were not coherently assessed to adequately mitigate or respond to these with strategic project measures.

<b>2</b>	<b>Overall, we rate that efficiency was good even though there are many shortcomings and delays in daily operations. We critically assess the over attention to efficiency over other aims such as effectiveness, impact or sustainability.</b>
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## 2.2.5 Impact

**What difference is the intervention making?** The extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.

The project's impact is not quantifiable at this stage, since impact studies are not done yet and the baseline study does not provide the bases for the planned impact indicators. Despite this deficiency, undoubtedly, the project has had a meaningful impact on the policy landscape and on smallholder-related value chains with a focus on women, and youth, predominantly in the context of accessing local markets. Thereby, many of the project-contributed impacts (in policy, value chain, and grassroots livelihood) are the result of long-term activities and/or result of collective efforts (coordinated or not coordinated), linked to interventions and partnerships involving also other funding.

We observed the following that is relevant for our overall assessment of the project's **impact**:

- The project can demonstrate a number of **policy-related successes** for different levels: national (e.g. national strategies), regional (ECOWAS AE policies) and continental (e.g. CAADP's EAO indicator introduction). EOA- I participants were actively involved in policy development and influence. However, even in the most advanced case (Uganda Organic policy), the trickle-down effects of the developed and introduced policy can be observed yet.
- The Annual Report 2020 describes the creation of 14 **new markets** and the revitalization of 16 existing market channels. 48 new value-added organic products were introduced to the market. As such, these figures are impressive; however, many of these initiatives are still very weak and not (yet) sufficiently developed for substantial income generation for the target groups.
- We can't deny nor confirm a broad **impact on people's livelihood**. There are positive cases (e.g. in Benin), but there are no impact studies (yet) to proof meaningful scaling/mainstreaming beyond the project's own boundaries. The same is true for the promoted EOA technologies that were promoted and replicated, but the level of impact remains to assessed.
- The project has strengthened the **institutional landscape** in the target countries (NOAMs) and at the continent (AfrONet), to a certain extent. It has also inspired EOA development in other countries (e.g. Togo, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Madagascar, DRC). However, the institutions remain fragile and their sustainability is not assured.
- **Inclusiveness of EOA and AE** is higher in Africa than in other continents. The project has definitely contributed to that. The project has also contributed that other donors entered with programs to support EOA/AE in the African context (e.g. BMZ/GIZ).

<b>2</b>	<b>Overall, we rate the project's impact as satisfactory, with the potential that it will grow further in the future since 'developments' are there, just much slower than anticipated.</b>
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## 2.2.6 Sustainability

**Will the benefits last?** The extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue, or are likely to continue.

The project has elements that will sustain, and others likely won't. Project stakeholders are clear that they continue their commitment towards the EOA-I and its objectives beyond the project.

In any case, the 'sustainability concept' in the ProDoc is vague and does not provide full clarity of what is supposed to sustain and what not. It also does neither define "smart" objectives nor a concrete and time-bound plan how to achieve sustainability ambitions. Stakeholders assume that there will be a third project phase, which then will help prepare for the situation after the project.

We observed the following that is relevant for our overall assessment of the project's **sustainability**:

- While a wish for sustainability is unchallenged and big, the project failed to define at an earlier stage a succinct sustainability strategy. Stakeholders were not prepared that phase 2 may be the last phase of the project. The sustainability risks are not reflected in the risk assessment and in risk mitigation strategies.
- On the continental level, sustainable impact is likely; however, with a risk that EOA-I efforts lose momentum, especially with decreasing donor support. Continuous capacity development on the AU level will be necessary to sustain the EOA Initiative.
- On the regional level, ECOWAS will have the willingness and the means to sustain and expand the EOA-I achievements. In East Africa, coordination between the countries has been strong for a long time, however, was always project dependent (before SDC support it was OSEA/OTEA project of SIDA from 1990ies- 2018). The regional East Africa secretariat/SC is likely to discontinue its work without donor funding—unless the KH EA steps in in here.
- On the national level, the NOAMs/PIP continue to work mostly based on donor project implementation for the lack of own business plans and weak income streams from their members and governments. KOAN, through FIBL/Bachmann foundation support, is spearheading an activity for NOAM capacity building to establish a sustainable NOAM business through value-adding services to members and the sector.
- Assets to contribute to sustainability were absent in project planning and implementation, such as: networks (e.g. for campaign synergy building), databases (e.g. reaching out power with information), creating of marketable services/products (e.g. use of exclusive tools for counselling, BDS or market access facilitation). Also, relatively little attention was given to new and innovative opportunities of digitalization (e.g. online tools) that could importantly contribute to enhanced sustainability.

<b>3-4</b>	<b>It is certain that many partners continue their actions for EOA/AE. However, they don't have alternative business plan than to apply to new donor projects, with uncertain sector service priorities. Progress in terms of policy is uncertain, since not only developing and approving, but also implementing policies requires effective advocacy.</b>
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## 2.3 Lessons learned and transversal issues assessment

Phase 1 concluded in its evaluation findings with the positive statement of the project showing valuable impact but with various implementation challenges (governance, processes, capacity of partners, limited synergies between pillars). Those findings also concluded that there are needs of fundraising for achieving the ambitions of the various stakeholders and they asked for new incentivizing funding models and improved monitoring management. We see most of these challenges fairly well addressed and also progress in phase 2 to a certain extent. Particularly, the management aspects (e.g. monitoring) within BVAT improved and so did the relationship between partners. For instance, the transparent grant management scheme or the so-called networks of team approach increased clarity about what partners expect from each other. Through that management and performance of partners mostly improved despite the fact that some organizations performance is still not satisfactory (e.g. in Senegal or Ethiopia).

Unfortunately, we see little success in building sustainable Country Lead (e.g. NOAMs) and Specialist Organizations. They still miss a satisfactory funding model.

Phase 2 itself was marked with its own unexpected challenges, including: Covid-19, violent conflicts in Ethiopia, Mali and Nigeria, and climate crises. Lately, also the Ukraine war has had important and negative impacts on the food systems in the scope of the project. In that, the project kept its setup, objectives, strategies and implementation targets. It worked with big management efforts to a varied level of success on the mainstreaming of EOA among target countries and beyond—creating impacts for knowledge management, the private sector, civil society, and policy setting.

### **2.3.1 Lessons with regard to Smallholders**

The project orients itself to smallholders and their most important needs relating to EOA/OA: i.e. pest management, input supply, certification and market access. Big farms are not in the project's focus concerning knowledge, dissemination and market development—even though they would be sometimes more interesting partners for successful value chain development (pillar 3). If the project really wanted to address the priorities of smallholder needs with relevant and broad impact, it needed to work more in-depth in research and extension. Yet, we understand that the project was not designed for such an approach. Other specialized initiatives may better address issues such as mechanisms to lowering certification costs, development and supply of organic inputs, or effective farmer group management for improved market access (PGS and ICS).

### **2.3.2 Lessons with regard to Gender**

The project addresses some of the priority needs of women identified, i.e. limited access of women to education, knowledge and credits, lack of freedom of women to make decisions or social barriers for women to receive business opportunities. Performance indicators are monitored gender segregated and the access of women to project services is between 40 and 50%. We see a team that is gender sensitive and selects topics that are attractive to women (e.g. home scale processing to add farm value). At the same time, we see an underrepresentation of female decision makers in the project (e.g. in the Steering Committees). This translated also into a strong underrepresentation of women in the survey, with only 15 percent. All in all, gender is a topic with strong advocates in the teams, but there are still opportunities to further mainstreaming it.

### **2.3.3 Lessons with regard to Youth**

The most important challenges of young people have been identified in the survey as insufficient possibilities of young people to take entrepreneurial risks (they don't get credits), insufficient coaching support, and limited economic opportunities due to limited education. The project stakeholders are aware of youth preference, but we could not see a particular strategic orientation to orient project activities towards youth. While youth is welcome, innovations and start-ups are pushed, young people's entrepreneurial opportunities are limited. The participation of young people of about 20% in project services is not very high in view of the high share of young people in the African population. The project may have taken more advantages of using modern communication tools—i.e. social media—to better reach out to young people.

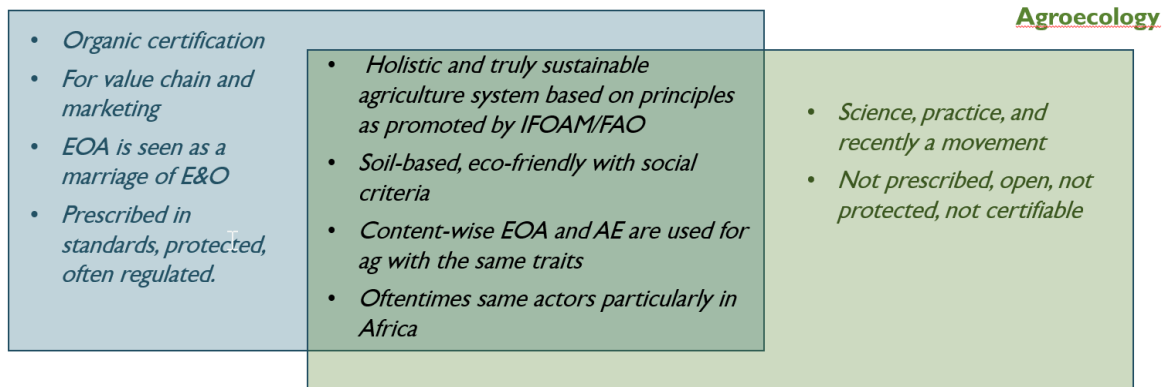
### **2.3.4 Ecological Organic Agriculture and Agroecology**

The project focuses primarily on EOA, and secondly on AE, representing an open and inclusive approach to whether operations are certified or not. Based on the survey and interviews conducted, we estimate that

about 75% of the stakeholders have their philosophical home in EOA and 25% in agroecology, while the big majority of more than 90% is open to the other concept as well. Almost half of the stakeholders would like an inclusive project approach for EOA and agroecology, while about 20% would like to be even more inclusive considering concepts like regenerative agriculture, biodynamic agriculture or permaculture. The remaining people would like to concentrate either on agroecology or EOA (more to the latter).

We found that the project uses globally well accepted definitions and principles as identified by the UN (Codex Alimentarius or FAO), Governments (Organic/ ecological regulations) or civil society (e.g. IFOAM Organics International). In terms of the technical understanding of the farming systems, there are no big differences between EOA and agroecology (see Figure 11, and more details appendix 6.3, Question 2).

### Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA)



**Figure 11** Conceptual relationship between EOA and AE, based on survey findings.

While we feel the project’s approach to include and target both AOE and AE is useful and important in view of mainstreaming more sustainable agricultural practices, we argue that the lack of differentiation in strategic project discussions involve deficiencies regarding the development of institutional structures and business opportunities that enhance the project’s effectiveness, impact, and sustainability. While

AE is a sound approach to target smallholders and their production system and it is useful to find scientific evidences and sound concept frameworks as a base for all farming approaches mimicking nature rather than industrial processes. EOA provides in addition organic standards, certification and labeling and it is the only choice for value chain development and private sector engagement, including awareness creation among consumers. While AE gets a lot of support in international debates, on national levels, policies, investments and regulations more often relate to EOA.

### 2.3.5 Project triggers and levers

The project hypotheses suggest the following triggers and levers:

- If information is available, it can be extended.
- Good and well-presented information improves food security nutrition and incomes
- With good market infrastructure, smallholders’ incomes increase
- If there is good advocacy, government plans improve and public investments improve

In other words, it is assumed that accessible knowledge, markets and policies improve the livelihoods. Unfortunately, we have not seen those triggers and levers materializing to the anticipated and wished

extent. Nor did we see a project built in mechanism to scout for these triggers and levers and to use the project infrastructure/governance to strategize on them systematically. Scaling efforts and to bring the EOA/AE successes to public awareness are there with e.g. social or classic media publications. Broad desirable impact (in terms of SDG achievement) eventually materializes through pillar 3 (markets) since the other pillars (policies and knowledge) are only a step to improved life circumstances.

### 3. Assessing options for future developments

As described in section 1.3 and outlined below in 3.1, we used three strategic directions and three operational dimensions to build options for the future (i.e. scenarios) and to discuss them with stakeholders together with two status quo options and two options relating to project’s future institutional integration. These options as such do not link to interests of SDC/GPFS, to positions of project stakeholders or to our recommendations. We created these options so they lay out a field of potential strategies without judgments. The options are not exclusive and may be functionally combined. More details about the options are explained in appendix 6.4. As part of the two online workshops held, the options were discussed without specifying the financial resources, assuming that rather less than more funds are available particularly in the long run.

#### 3.1 10 options as potential scenarios

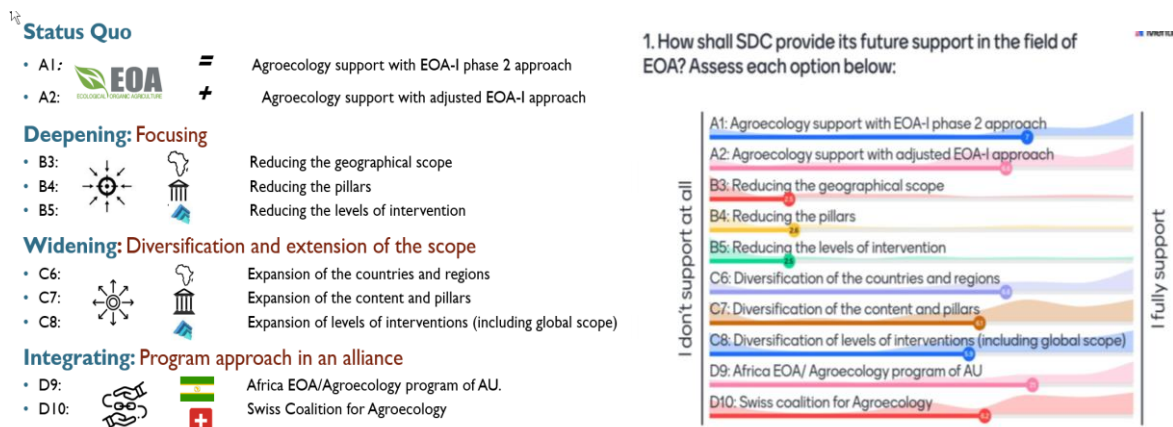


Figure 12: 10 strategic options (relating to the 3 strategic directions plus status quo) to further provide support and how workshop participants voted (participants rated their support of each option without constraints). More details in appendix 6.4.

As rating results show, workshop participants appreciated the present strategy (A1) and would like to continue the project operations as they are right now. They even prefer the current situation over the scenario including adjustments (A2). They further opted for holistic strategies: diversifying even more, being critical to reduce the project’s scope in terms of geographical coverage, content and levels of interventions. They also showed openness to alliance building either with AU, or, to a smaller extent, to a Swiss coalition of development agencies.

### 3.2 Geographic scope

Regarding the geographic scope, workshop stakeholders had to choose among three options: either keep the supported countries and regions or change them. Most stakeholders preferred the same geographic targets, with, however, more than 50% supporting the choice of new countries either in the same or other regions.

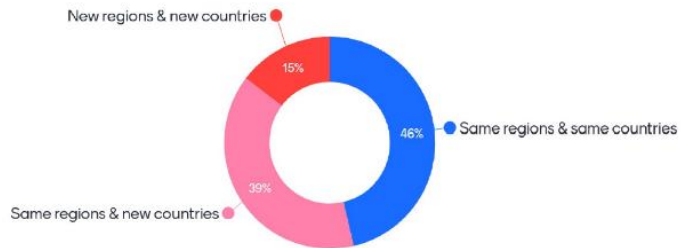


Figure 13: Stakeholder preferences with regard to future geographic scope

### 3.3 Project content

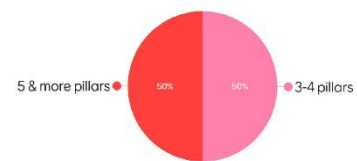
Stakeholders agreed that their highest priorities are addressed, by also rating the option “other pillars” rather low (see below). The highest need is seen in the field of market development and advocacy. However, the support to other pillars is only little behind and the knowledge and extension for grassroots activities are highly appreciated. This result is coherent with the voting of options (see 3.1) and with the fact that 50% of respondents want to increase the number of pillars rather than to focus on reduced thematic areas.

3. On which pillars should "EOA work" focus in the future? Rate the importance of all the pillars



Figure 14: Votes regarding pillars

4. On how many pillars should the future SDC support focus?



### 3.4 Intervention levels

Workshop participants gave equal importance to all intervention levels: country, regional, continental. They feel that the levels are interdependent and that one or two levels alone can't provide the desired impact. They trust that AU and REC are impacting their countries through the CADDP. In contrary, they see little benefit or advantage in expanding to the global level.

5. On which levels of intervention should the future support of SDC focus?

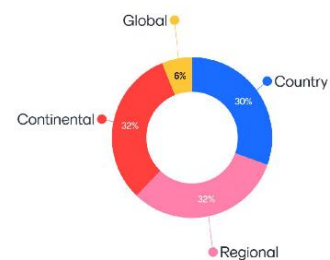


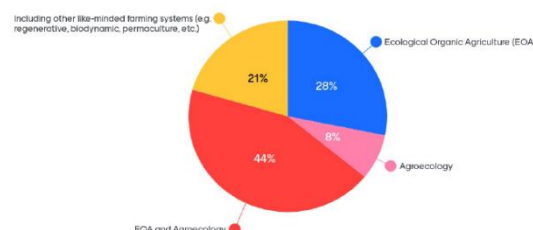
Figure 15: Votes regarding future intervention levels

### 3.5 The project scope regarding EOA and AE

44 % of the workshop participants agree with continuing the present pragmatic concept to both include EOA and agroecology, and use them depending on the context (e.g. EOA in markets, when it comes to labelling and AE for a scientific base and non-certified farming). A minority opts to concentrate on EOA or on AE and another minority wants to be more inclusive and integrate also other concepts such as regenerative agriculture or permaculture etc.

Figure 16: Votes regarding inclusivity

## 6. To what shall the overall support be oriented?



## 4. Evaluators` conclusions

### 4.1 Overall conclusions

Overall, we conclude that the project responds to an expressed need of the African Union and of the EOA sector. AU and the sector took gratefully the opportunity to integrate the project into their own (EOA) initiative and find catalyst support of own efforts. Those own efforts are done with a lot of commitment; however, they are very scattered, heavily underfunded, and with little capacity on individual, institutional and national levels. This strong commitment goes hand in hand with high strong project ownership.

Considering the situation when the project started in 2014, i.e. a small sector and the widespread needs, the very broad project set up is retrospectively understandable. In the meantime, however, the situation has changed—thanks also to the project’s positive impact. We conclude that a strategy process to focus project efforts and to improve effectiveness is needed.

We conclude that the project is highly relevant and coherent with AU, GPFS, and the EOA/AE sector. We rate efficiency and impact positively, although we see improvement potentials particularly for the future in regards to effectiveness and sustainability. **While we highly appreciate the project and conclude overall that it was more than worthwhile**, we highlight below various critical points relating to the evaluation objectives to consider for the planning of future support.

### 4.2 Critical conclusions with regard to the project’s phase 2

- **Project complexity and operational workload have been very high**

The project would have benefitted from a simpler conceptual project setup to guide project strategies to better identify the main levers, prioritize and use them to trigger developments on its own. As such, the project lacks a convincing ‘theory of change’, which would have helped to better plan, prioritize and shape the various project actions so that they translate more efficiently and effectively into desired outputs, outcomes and impact in regards to mainstreaming of EOA. Also, in phase 2, the project’s approach has remained very output target oriented for the contracted organizations, creating much workload on all sides. The project capacity building for sector organizations (e.g. CLOs) focused mainly on project management aspects (e.g. filling the monitoring tables), and rarely for building capacity to mainstream EOA.

- **Project resources have been too widely spread**

The project’s ambition during phase 2 was to **continue targeting all areas**: 4 pillars, 3 levels, and 9 countries. To do so, it has spread resources almost equally to all the resulting 40 ‘targets’ (called

project elements in the TOR)—ending up with (very) little resources for each of these elements of implementation. This holistic approach has been appreciated by the stakeholders, although they also mention that resource allocation to each element was too small. We consider this approach suboptimal, for constraining targeted and sufficiently profound contributions to those areas that are most relevant to trigger sector development based on opportunities.

- **Too high sector dependency on the project**

The project, due to its importance for the sector, has taken an **invaluable big power position in the sector**, from a financial and institutional point of view. Most important, BVAT has taken up various umbrella functions and representations, which would be the tasks and services of permanent structures. This has led to the very unfortunate consequence that the project is often mistakenly identified as the EOA-I itself, which is an initiative that is owned by the African Union. This dependence of the sector from the project challenges the future phasing out of the project.

- **Too optimistic planning hampering project performance**

The working system described in the ProDoc oftentimes **assumed easier implementation than it is in reality**. For instance, for monitoring, certain indicators were defined for which public data is not accessible (e.g. organic market and consumption data) and laborious surveys are the consequence. This has led to a situation, in which daily performance is running behind deadlines and urgencies receive too much priority over the assurance of effectiveness and sustainability.

## 4.3 Additional conclusions that are relevant for future support

- **Effectiveness and sustainability are insufficiently addressed**

Up towards the end of phase 2, the project focuses mainly on operations according to the initial project concept, having **Efficiency** in the center of attention and relying on very high **Relevance** and very good **Coherence**. **Effectiveness and Sustainability** have been insufficiently addressed. A good ‘Sustainability concept’ should be the starting point to define a sound theory of change for the future support (project).

- **Capacity building for sustainable institutional development is lacking attention**

Institutional development needs time and functional technical support and sound stakeholder-focused approaches. This is true for sector organizations (i.e. NOAMs) but also for business partnerships along value chains, as both need to develop ‘organically’ to sustain while providing valuable services to its members and other sector stakeholders. Therefore, whatever the strategic conclusion will be (e.g. to move to new countries and regions), a stronger ‘facilitation approach’ (i.e. aiming to help develop and empower sector relevant institutions) will be key. Thereby, ideally, the **present project partners** (including BVAT and AUC’s EOA-I) **need to be guided into a sustainable future** if impacts of the phase 2 investments don’t want to be risked.

- **Mainstreaming EOA has not sufficient strategic focus.**

The discussed strategic options, (a) to focus, (b) to diversify or (c) to integrate need to be considered for all three operational dimensions individually (9 countries, 4 pillars, 3 levels). Our conclusion—in contrast to those of the sector stakeholders—is that more focus in the operational dimensions improved effectiveness at this stage of EOA development in Africa. SDC could consolidate activities that are taken up by other initiatives (e.g. knowledge management or research). Through that, the SDC support can keep its leading function and champion its strategic focus.

We conclude that a succinct theory of change, which is focusing on the EOA market, supporting and regulating the value chains, could mainstream EOA/AE and other like-minded systems very well. The income generating markets of EOA products are the best expression of value creation and resilience for the people in Africa

## 5. Recommendations on further EOA and Agroecology support

Out of the analyses and conclusions we make seven recommendations to SDC for the future support on agroecology on the African continent, but also on a more global level.

### # 1: Accelerate the demand and supply of healthy AEO/AE food with an MSD approach emphasizing capacity building of sector stakeholders

We recommend for a further new support to focus on and to set center stage the overall objective of mainstreaming EOA/AE in sectors, markets, and policies in Africa. We expect from there important impacts towards SDG improvements at the country level and contributions to African continental policy objectives as e.g. in the Malabo declaration or in the Africa 2063 vision. Mainstreaming EOA/AE means a continuous growth strategy for EOA/AE in a gradually maturing economic sector by increasing value creation for the varying target populations. A future SDC support shall observe a holistic approach nurturing different functional institutions within the sector, by balancing well the demand and supply side (as visualized in the MSD approach and ‘Donut’, see Figure 17).

Project progress would be measured mainly with indicators relating to official statistics (from countries in collaboration with the FiBL statistics), regular public data and own sector analyses (e.g. PEA studies) that relate to services that can be sustained. Such approach would put emphasis on (1) value chain and market development, including the provision of services in this domain (by civil society, private and public sectors) and (2) on the regulatory services (again civil society, private sector and government). Such a future SDC/GPFS support would imply a stronger ‘process facilitation approach’ for the main implementing partners, linked to interesting capacity building on individual, institutional and sector levels.

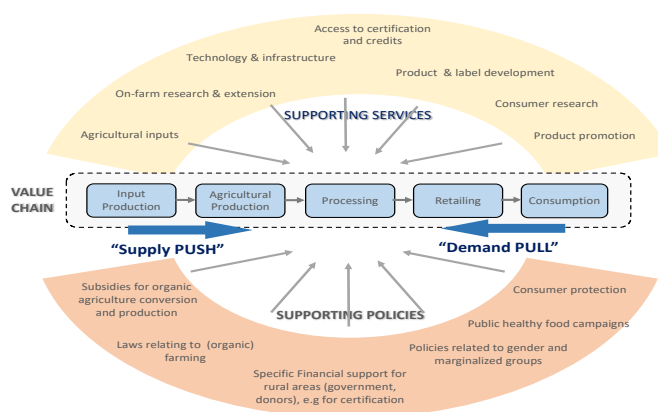


Figure 17: Example of an organic sector (source FiBL)

Future interventions shall be regularly strategized based on the priority needs of the markets (e.g. consumer information) and the existing opportunities (e.g. unsatisfied demand or access of smallholder women groups to special products such a devil claw or shea). The interventions may be push (e.g. innovation promotion for better packaging to access a higher value market or strategizing with retailers) or pull (campaigns to consumer or to policy makers or using influencers) measures to facilitate the market as a whole versus supporting single market actors.

### #2: Secure impacts and sustainability of project phase 1 and 2 achievements (good consolidation of project)

Many achievements of the first and second phase are not assured, since consolidation has not started yet and the remaining time to the end of this phase is very short. This clearly calls for the need for consolidation support.

The present 12 steering committees need to be analyzed one by one if they have the potential to be sustainable. Only those SC with sector relevance (not project steering) that get the support and investment of their stakeholder and have a realistic sustainability plan shall be further supported. The

presently ongoing impact studies of BVAT shall be analyzed regarding the information, which impacts need to be secured and which ones are stable.

### **#3: Prioritize sustainability in new support (new investment)**

A new support should start with the envisaged situation after the support. New sector objectives shall be designed starting from the sustainability vision in the target areas. In line with recommendation 1, sector actors are capacitated by project service providers (not sector stakeholders) who facilitate investments and are using a strong 'facilitation approach', which puts capacity building targets in the center.

It is desirable to lever resources to substantially support the AU with its EOA-I not least in view of the SDC policy to contribute up to 50% of the budget. Experience shows that donor coordination is challenging and requires flexibility. Therefore, partner choice is crucial. Also, we recommend that AU is capacitated to develop a framework to attract donors to support its EAO-I Initiative.

### **#4: Maintain AU and sector ownership and benefit from African legitimacy**

A new future EOA/AE support project shall continue to commit to the EOA-I umbrella. That new support generates impacts for EOA-I (capacitated and growing EOA/AE sectors), it provides services (e.g. financial support to CSC secretariat and continental publications) and it takes guidance from the CSC. The then new support must not identify with the title EOA-I (but take on a project title that is supporting EOA-I, e.g. *"African EOA Value Chain Development Project, proudly being part of AU EOA-I"*). SDC and AU shall conclude a formal agreement defining the collaboration details.

We recommend that AUC capacity building for a sustainable EOA-I is included in the new support, since we see a risk that EOA-I closes after an SDC commitment.

### **#5: Functionally consolidate the present pillar work and focus in the future on market development and policy facilitation**

As a means to focus and concentrate on those areas/pillars that have a stronger handle on capacity and sector development, we propose to consolidate and out-phase knowledge management and to hand it over to KCOA and to Biovision/Infonet for further developments in their structures. The future SDC support shall strategize (in the above described MSD logic) its pillar-related interventions such to promote and build sector-related structures and capacities that go hand in hand with growth in value chain and market development benefitting mainly smallholders, while giving special attention to women and youth. In this setup, market and sector growth will be used to leverage policy dialog and advocacy action (driven by market evidence and successes). That means that, for instance, the CAADP target of continental EOA/AE advocacy (e.g. AfrONet, AFSA) or the national lobby for organic national strategies (e.g. in Benin and other countries) shall remain. The CSC shall be further supported. After consolidation, the regional SC shall ideally be handed over to the REC or AUC and the national SC form part of the national EOA/AE landscape sustainability planning and may or may not be part of national investments.

### **#6: Focus on continental level with 5 regional clusters and one focus country each to showcase EOA/AE development**

The future support shall be hosted on the continental level, involving 5 clusters (regions) having their own regional extension network. Thereby, each cluster would have one focus country, which would essentially serve as a reference country to stimulate cross-country learning at the regional level.

The selection of countries will need to be based on the best situation in view of organic value chain and sector development opportunities.

The experiences may nicely feed into the GPFS for their global advocacy work in particular for showcasing the SDG relevance of mainstreaming EOA/EA.

#### **#7: Act inclusive to AE, EOA and others prioritizing SDG contributions.**

Compared to other continents, Africa did very well in bringing proponents of various similar agriculture approaches peacefully together and EOA-I relevantly contributed to that. Therefore, the successful efforts to inclusivity and avoidance of conflicts between likeminded movements in Africa must not be endangered. In a future support, not only certified organic products for international markets but overall facilitation of the in value setting of truly sustainable products based on truly sustainable farming for balanced nutrition of a broad population shall be in the focus. Successful EOA/AE specific development concepts such as PGS/IC or the use of introduced brands such as Kilimohai in East Africa shall be used.

#### **#8: Continue using the competence and commitment of BVAT**

Evaluation findings clearly show that BVAT is well accepted and appreciated in its role: it has proven to be an efficient project implementor and manager and it has a unique position in the African market for project management services in agroecology and EOA. The trust built in the sector and to the (inter) governmental institutions (e.g. the AUC and the AU-mandate to run the EAO-I secretariat and CSC) is an asset. Having a well-run African based development agency with that capacity and positioning should be used also for the implementation of a further support. The proposed project approach is likely to add value to BVAT's skill set in regard to project management and steering, especially in the area of private sector and market development.

## 6. Appendices

### 6.1 SDC DAC evaluation grid

#### Tool 7: Assessment Grid for the DAC Criteria

#### **Mainstreaming Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) into Agricultural Systems in Africa for the Period 2019-2023<sup>12</sup>**

SDC funded Phase 2

Project Number: 7F-08482.02

Contribution agreement: 81059722

#### **Assessment Grid for project/programme evaluations of the SDC interventions**

Version: 30.06.2020

**Note:** this assessment grid is used for evaluations of SDC financed projects and programmes (hereinafter jointly referred to as an 'intervention'). It is based on the OECD Development Assistance Committee evaluation criteria.<sup>13</sup> In mid-term evaluations, the assessment requires analysing the likelihood of achieving impact and sustainability. All applicable sub-criteria should be scored and a short explanation should be provided.

Please add the corresponding number (0-4) representing your rating of the sub-criteria in the column 'score':  
0 = not assessed, 1 = highly satisfactory, 2 = satisfactory, 3 = unsatisfactory, 4 = highly unsatisfactory

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<sup>12</sup> Project name as used in the ProDoc title

<sup>13</sup> For information on the 2019 revisions of the evaluation framework see: Better Criteria for Better Evaluations. Revised Evaluation Criteria. Definitions and Principles for Use, OECD/DAC Network on Development Evaluation, 2019.

Key aspects based on DAC Criteria	Score (put only integers: 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4)	Justification  (please provide a short explanation for your score or why a criterion was not assessed)
<p><b>Relevance</b></p> <p><b>Note:</b> the assessment here captures the relevance of objectives and design <i>at the time of evaluation</i>. In the evaluation report, both relevance at the design stage as well as relevance at the time of evaluation should be discussed.</p>		
1. The extent to which the objectives of the intervention respond to the needs and priorities of the target group.	1	Mainstreaming EOA and its contributions to sustainability, resilience, and food security is an unchallenged need and a high priority for the target group.
2. The extent to which the objectives of the intervention respond to the needs and priorities of indirectly affected stakeholders (not included in target group, e.g. government, civil society, etc.) in the country of the intervention.	1	EOA/AE and sustainability are a need not only for the directly targeted groups but for instance also for other countries and content pillars of actions. Relevance is well explained in planning and reporting documents and in AU's EOA-I strategy that is going to be renewed.
3. The extent to which core design elements of the intervention (such as the theory of change, structure of the project components, choice of services and intervention partners) adequately reflect the needs and priorities of the target group.	3	While relevance of the project approach was very high at the design stage before phase 1, in the meantime the project successes lead to a different landscape and the project elements and approaches need adjustments. We have outlined strategic options to improve and recommend focusing while at the same time giving time to consolidation and assurance of the sustainability of achievements, which are at risk.
<p><b>Coherence</b></p>		
4. Internal coherence: the extent to which the intervention is compatible with other interventions of Swiss development cooperation in the same country and thematic field (consistency, complementarity and synergies).	1	Coherence with GPFS is now even bigger than at the time of the project design. Target countries are not the same as the SDC overall target countries, but are coherent with the AU and organic movement priorities.
5. External coherence: the extent to which the intervention is compatible with interventions of other actors in the country and thematic field (complementarity and synergies).	1 (within small sector)	Coherence is very big with the global and African organic movement and with the national (e.g. regulating countries like US, EU, Switzerland) and international (e.g. FAO, UNEP, Codex Alimentarius) organic/AE institutions, policies, and with development objectives such as nutrition, resilience, and sustainable local food systems (SDG). However they are not coherent with the dominating conventional/industrial/corporate agriculture

		strategies and their concepts e.g. Climate Smart Agriculture, Green Revolution, or patented high input/high yield GMO varieties.
<b>Effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>	
6. The extent to which approaches/strategies during implementation are adequate to achieve the intended results.	3	The approach/strategy was adequate at the time of the design, (being a pioneer/innovation project with holistic approach), but now we realize that there is an overload of too many activities and interventions spreading too thin in view of a growing sector and development needs. Levers need to be used to get outcomes and impacts.
7. The extent to which the intervention achieved or is expected to achieve its intended objectives (outputs and outcomes).	Outputs 1 Outcomes 3	Targets set are achieved or are expected to achieve by the end of the project, despite the fact that many targets are not measured or measurable. Outputs tend to be overachieved while outcomes rather lag behind.
8. The extent to which the intervention achieved or is expected to achieve its intended results related to transversal themes.	1	The transversal themes are well embedded in the orientation and approach (e.g. preference given to smallholders, integration of working topics for women or non-certified agroecology inclusion)
<b>Efficiency</b>	<b>2</b>	
9. The extent to which the intervention delivers the results (outputs, outcomes) cost-effectively.	1	While the overall cost-benefit is ok, the project has laborious processes and often delays in delivery and progress is slow. Burn rates are low, but outputs are either achieved ahead of time or expected to be achieved in time. Various indicators will be overachieved
10. The extent to which the intervention delivers the results (outputs, outcome) in a timely manner (within the intended timeframe or reasonably adjusted timeframe).	2	While outputs are achieved ahead of time, outcomes delay (either due to quality issues or unrealistic assumptions). Also delays in setting up project processes (e.g. partner identification, grant management or financial management procedures).
11. The extent to which management, monitoring and steering mechanisms support efficient implementation.	2	There are tools and structures in place and the SC meet. However, the structure is very big and needs a lot of efforts to maintain for not so big benefit. SC that should be sustainable can only be long term justified with sector services and not only with project services.
<b>Impact</b>	<b>2</b>	
12. The extent to which the intervention generated or is expected to generate 'higher-level effects' as defined in the design document of the intervention.	2	The project has contributed significantly to a changing institutional EOA landscape on national, regional and continental levels to a varied degree but with remarkable success (e.g. EOA indicator in CAADP reporting

<p><b>Note:</b> when assessing this criterion, the primary focus is the intended 'higher-level effects'. In the event that <i>significant</i> unintended negative or positive effects can be discerned, they must be specified in the justification column, especially if they influence the score.</p>		<p>framework or national EOA-sector strategies). However, livelihood impacts are not seen yet.</p>
<p><b>Sustainability</b></p>	<p><b>3</b></p>	
<p>13. The extent to which partners are capable and motivated (technical capacity, ownership) to continue activities contributing to achieving the outcomes.</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Partners are very motivated, have high ownership but are weak for their business plans and in value setting of their services in the market. Project service delivery prevailed over sustainability strategy development and implementation</p>
<p>14. The extent to which partners have the financial resources to continue activities contributing to achieving the outcomes.</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>As a consequence of 13, partners are very weak in this and depend on donors.</p>
<p>15. The extent to which contextual factors (e.g. legislation, politics, economic situation, social demands) is conducive to continuing activities leading to outcomes.</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>The overall policies e.g. in CAADP or in national agriculture strategies or in investment plans are not conducive, but the EOA position has improved and is expected to further improve. The need for sustainable agriculture and the resilience of vulnerable people in the food system increases (increasing poor, CC etc.)</p>

## 6.2 Burn rates

in USD CLO	Pillar	Budget	burned until 2020	Burned versus budget	Burned versus installment
Nigeria	1	49'605	40'311	81%	79%
	2	49'770	50'406	101%	100%
	3	51'952	47'871	92%	100%
	4	66'975	65'202	97%	100%
		218'303	203'790	93%	95%
Senegal	1	49'605	14'901	30%	98%
	2	49'770	13'279	27%	89%
	3	51'952	11'657	22%	92%
	4	66'975	17'273	26%	100%
		218'303	57'110	26%	95%
Benin	1	49'605	51'324	103%	100%
	2	49'770	49'460	99%	98%
	3	51'952	47'353	91%	99%
	4	66'975	64'964	97%	100%
		218'303	213'101	98%	99%
Mali	1	49'605	37'914	76%	93%
	2	49'770	42'126	85%	105%
	3	51'952	37'195	72%	100%
	4	66'975	51'762	77%	102%
		218'303	168'997	77%	100%
Tanzania	1	49'605	37'499	76%	92%
	2	49'770	22'378	45%	56%
	3	51'952	37'810	73%	102%
	4	66'975	50'141	75%	99%
		218'303	147'828	68%	88%
Ethiopia	1	49'605	25'470	51%	100%
	2	49'770	24'900	50%	100%
	3	51'952	21'020	40%	100%
	4	66'975	27'137	41%	94%
		218'303	98'527	45%	98%
Uganda	1	49'605	51'230	103%	100%
	2	49'770	50'412	101%	100%
	3	51'952	47'870	92%	100%
	4	66'975	64'355	96%	99%
		218'303	213'867	98%	100%
Kenya	1	49'605	30'900	62%	76%
	2	49'770	15'963	32%	107%
	3	51'952	40'846	79%	92%
	4	66'975	56'235	84%	105%
		218'303	143'945	66%	93%
ROAM		n/a	97'302	n/a	100%
ATPS		200'000	189'990	95%	100%
AFRONET		100'387	44'936	45%	100%
PELUM Kenya-East Africa Cluster		187'624	63'836	34%	88%
WAC		187'624	73'026	39%	101%

## 6.3 Answers to the evaluation questions

See separate file

## 6.4 Discussion of the further strategy options

The 4 strategic directions and the 10 strategic approaches

### Status Quo

A1: Agroecology support with EOA-I phase 2 approach

A2: Agroecology support with adjusted EOA-I approach

### Deepening: Focusing

B3: Reducing the geographical scope

B4: Reducing the pillars

B5: Reducing the levels of intervention

### Widening: Diversification and extension of the scope

C6: Expansion of the countries and regions

C7: Expansion of the content and pillars

C8: Expansion of levels of interventions

### Integrating: Program approach in an alliance

D9: Africa EOA/Agroecology program of AU.

D10: Swiss Coalition for Agroecology

## A1: EOA-I support with phase 2 approach

### Approach

The project is prolonged with a consolidation phase of 3-4 years in more or less the same approach, which means the same pillars (4), regions (2)/countries (9), and the same levels (3). It emphasizes the consolidation of activities and the sustainability of achievements and institutions.

### Implications

- Continued 100% support through SDC
- Prolongation of partnership
- Exit and sustainability strategy to be developed

### Strengths

- Time for partners and stakeholders to consolidate
- Likelihood for sustainability increases
- Institutional capacity of partners can further improve

### Weaknesses

- EOA-I approach weaknesses not addressed
- Not in line with SDC/GPFS strategy
- Missed opportunity to improve

## A2: EOA-I with operational optimizations

### Approach

EOA-I is prolonged for consolidation and exit based on the phase 2 approach with important adjustments in a) geographical scope, b) pillars, c) level of intervention, and on d) specific strategic issues (e.g. grant awarding/partnership, agroecology inclusion, gender and youth)

#### **Implications**

- Continued 100% support through SDC in an EOA-I project
- Identification of adjustments
- Exit and sustainability strategy to be developed

#### **Strengths**

- Time for partners and stakeholders to improve and consolidate
- Likelihood for sustainability increases
- Adjustments based on evaluation

#### **Weaknesses**

- Some activities quickly discontinued
- Not fully in line with SDC/GPFS strategy
- Missed opportunity to scale, diversify or integrate

### **B3: Reducing the geographical scope**

#### **Scenario**

The project services are not provided to the 9 countries anymore but are focused on a smaller geographical area so that there are more possibilities to invest into a country and to get a higher impact in the focus countries. The non-selected countries and all other African countries benefit only indirectly from learning from the example of the focus countries.

#### **Implications**

- Development of the level of focus (how many countries?) and the criteria to focus (in order to select the countries)
- Quick consolidation in the remaining countries
- Needs of non-selected countries unaddressed

#### **Strengths**

- Less management and more sector investment
- Faster development in focus countries
- More relevant investments

#### **Weaknesses**

- Giving up countries/geographical areas that need time
- Coverage in the continent is even reduced
- Weight in regional and continental level discussions reduced.

### **B4: Reducing the pillars**

#### **Scenario**

EOA-I consolidates its broad activities in the 4 pillars and further SDC support is focused on a limited number of pillars and on successful elements that are worth scaling and are part of the SDC strategy. This could include the CSC/RSC and the secretariats, a CAADP policy dialogue, or some value chain developments.

### **Implications**

- Revamping the architecture of EOA-I. Changing partnerships
- Quick consolidation of many activities
- Identification of elements worth scaling and redefining strategy

### **Strengths**

- Simplification of project management
- Focus on EOA-I successes
- Strategy based on evaluation

### **Weaknesses**

- Giving up activities that need time (e.g. capacity building of CLO, PIPs)
- Supported activities may not be fully in line with AU's priorities
- Weaknesses in the EOA-I sector and urgent needs may be unaddressed.

## **B5: Reducing the levels of intervention**

### **Scenario**

Instead of working on country, regional and continental levels, the future support concentrates on 1-2 levels for which various sub-options exist. For instance, one could focus on continental and regional levels, on the country and regional levels, or on continental only.

### **Implications**

- Simplification of project management
- Definition of which levels to focus on and development of a clear theory of change
- Quick consolidation of non-selected level activities

### **Strengths**

- Stronger involvement in the selected levels
- More visibility and relevance in the selected levels
- Reducing complexity

### **Weaknesses**

- Giving up activities that need time
- Losing depths: Selected levels may not get what they need from other levels (e.g. country or private sector developments)

## **C6: Expansion of the countries and regions**

### **Scenario**

Instead of the present 9 countries and 2 regions, more are included in the EOAI in order to get closer to the AU vision of having all 5 regions and all 55 countries being part of the initiative.

### **Implications**

- The bigger the diversification the lower the investment per country/region
- Complexity increases (e.g. more partners)
- Can be combined with a focus strategy e.g. on content/pillar level

### **Strengths**

- Support AU/CSC strategy to ideally reach all African countries
- Sharpens the profile of a continental initiative
- New exchange opportunities

### **Weaknesses**

- Management gets even heavier
- Little support to one region/country
- New countries/regions at the start and need time for processes

## **C7: Expansion of the content and pillars**

### **Scenario**

The 4 pillars can be diversified and the number of pillars increased, namely building of a policy dialog/advocacy pillar, the integration of agroecology/other like-minded movements, or consumer communication are ideas that were brought in.

### **Implications**

- The bigger the diversification the lower the investment per pillar
- Complexity increases (e.g. more partners)
- Can be combined with a focus strategy e.g. on geographical reduction strategy

### **Strengths**

- Reflects the complexity of the ecological organic sector
- Synergies between the pillars
- New content exchange opportunities

### **Weaknesses**

- Management complexity increases
- Only little investments into the various pillars
- New pillars need new competencies and new partners/staff etc.

## **C8: Expansion of levels of interventions**

### **Scenario**

On top of the 3 supported levels (country, region, continent) the global level is added.

### **Implications**

- Strengthening the policy dialog and bringing African experience to a global level
- Additional means or reduction of activities in Africa
- Requires a global advocacy strategy and new partners

### **Strengths**

- South/south exchange and stressing the message of agroecology/ecological organic farming contributions to global challenges.
- Creates goodwill worldwide
- Documentation

## Weaknesses

- Global demand for this specific experience may not be very big
- Needs a long-term commitment
- Effectiveness, impact and sustainability difficult to assess

## D9: Africa EOA/Agroecology program of AU

### Scenario

While the project so far is supporting and coordinating with the AU EOA Initiative, the SDC EOA-I is still an independently managed SDC/BVAT project that takes its own decisions. In this option D9, SDC would contribute to the wider AU EOA-I initiative and does not have an own identity and implementation unit any more.

### Implications

- More decisions and implementation at AU level (that could contract BVAT for that)
- Need to build a donor alliance to level SDC-supported activities.
- Strong emphasis on the continental and policy level. Technical and local level activities and impact on the ground may be difficult to observe. Theory of change to be identified.

### Strengths

- African-owned, governed, and implemented initiative
- High legitimation and integration into permanent structures
- Continental activities (e.g. CAADP dialog) are prominent

### Weaknesses

- So far other donors are not ready to engage in AU EOAI
- Support to NOAM and farmer services are weakened. Shift from civil society to (inter)governmental lead of sector development.
- Private sector/market development may lose focus.

## D10: Swiss Coalition for Agroecology

### Scenario

The SDC-led EOA-I is replaced with an initiative of Swiss NGOs together with SDC that invest commonly into ecological organic/agroecology farming to which SDC contributes e.g. 50%. The alliance may take EOA-I as a starting point and strategize from there depending on the commitments and the resources the alliance is able to mobilize.

### Implications

- Decisions and implementation in a new alliance with new actors
- Need to build a donor alliance to level SDC-supported activities. The Swiss NGOs are oftentimes also implementing agencies.
- Strong emphasis on the continental and policy level. Technical and local level activities and impact on the ground may be difficult to observe. Theory of change to be identified.

### Strengths

- Potential alliance partners may have interesting assets that could provide synergies (experience, offices around Africa, networks, other projects etc.)
- New and increased means for investments in the sector

- The alliance brings EOA/agroecology experience and momentum to alliance members

#### Weaknesses

- It needs time to build an alliance and to get commitment to invest
- Strategy of new donors may be different from EOA-I stakeholders. Risk of loss of ownership of permanent African institutions.
- Complexity of the project increases

## 6.5 Literature

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## **6.6 Reference to other deliverables**

The evaluation produced the following products that are available:

1. Letter of interest and FiBL-Technical and financial offers in English (technical also in French) in .docx and .pdf versions (financial.xlsx)
2. Inception report (.docx and .pdf)
3. Literature and contacts database (.xlsx)
4. Minutes of the 2 kick off meetings
5. Slides and minutes of first interviews (.pptx, 10 files)
6. Google Forms survey in English and French
7. Survey raw data (.xlsx) for English and French responses
8. Scenario for future options (.docx)
9. 19 August (.pptx) with survey results visualized in English
10. 19 August Mentimeter votes results (pdf)
11. Country visit report and minutes Kenya
12. 21 September .pptx with survey results visualised in French
13. 21 September Mentimeter votes results (French) (pdf)
14. Country visit report and minutes Benin
15. Responses to the 45 Evaluation questions
16. Final report
17. Presentation to SDC/GPFS (.pptx)
18. Summary final report (pptx)