



PACT EAC PROJECT

Promoting Agriculture, Climate and Trade linkages
in the East African Community

First Meeting of the PACT EAC Kenya National Reference Group

May 22, 2012 - Nairobi

Backgrounder

On May 22, CUTS International Geneva and CUTS Africa Resource Centre Nairobi will gather together members of the newly constituted Kenya National Reference Group under the PACT EAC Project at a half-day meeting hosted in Nairobi. This national network, which represents all relevant stakeholders from the government, the business, farming communities, CSOs, media and think tanks, is committed to making East African policy-making processes more inclusive in leveraging the potential of trade to address poverty and hunger in the context of climate change.

With the increase in the intensity and frequency of extreme weather events due to climate change, agricultural and trade patterns in the EAC have drastically changed. This is causing additional large-scale hunger in the region. Harnessing the potential of trade by putting in place appropriate policies to ensure affordable food for millions of people is the need of the hour. Therefore, it is urgent to develop an understanding of how climate change, food security, and trade interact and build the capacity of all relevant stakeholders to develop and implement holistic responses.

The three-year project “Promoting Agriculture-Climate-Trade linkages in the East African Community” (PACT EAC) was officially launched in February 2012 in Arusha, Tanzania, by Hon. Musa Sirma, Minister for EAC, Kenya, in attendance of the regional trade and development community. Through an integrated set of **research, training, advocacy** and **networking** activities the project’s ambition is to build the necessary human and institutional capacity in the EAC to address the critical challenges of climate change, food security.

In Kenya, the project is being coordinated by CUTS Africa Resource Centre Nairobi and will lean on a multi-stakeholder network referred to as the “National Reference Group” (NRG). During the next three years, NRG members will interact online and during several events to provide inputs into and benefit from all project activities. The First NRG meeting will welcome NRG members, introduce them to the project and, seek NRG members’ contributions to several project activities. More specifically, the meeting will have the following objectives:



Introducing the Project

To present the objectives and activities of the project.



Research

To present and get comments on the draft desktop research.

Country research team of experts has started working together on a country research study that will develop policy recommendations for relevant short and long-term policies in Kenya and by the EAC Secretariat. They will identify how food security, climate change and trade are linked and will also study interactions of related policies currently in place in Kenya and at the regional level. Draft desktop research has now been completed will be presented by the research team to get NRG comments and feedback.



Advocacy

To raise awareness and persuade about the need to develop holistic policies and strategies to cope with the challenge of climate-induced food insecurity through trade.

Media contributions and short, targeted “Action alerts” have already been released for early awareness-raising and will be distributed at the event. More advocacy materials, including policy briefs, will be regularly produced under the project. NRG members will play a critical role in disseminating and promoting these materials



Networking

To contribute to the emergence of the core of a vibrant national network of stakeholders, by encouraging dialogue and launching an online network.

An E-network is functioning on the project website (www.cuts-geneva.org/pacteac) for exchange of views and ideas. NRG meeting will further strengthen this network and provide opportunity for face-to-face interaction.