MEETING REPORT

MOMENTUM FOR A PRO-DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABLE AGRO-INDUSTRY IN EAST AFRICA

PACT EAC2 PROJECT REGIONAL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 17-18, 2018
KAMPALA, UGANDA

PROMOTING AGRICULTURE, CLIMATE AND TRADE LINKAGES IN THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY – PHASE 2
The PACT EAC2 project builds capacities of East African stakeholders for climate-aware, trade-driven and food security enhancing agro-processing development in the region. Web: www.cuts-geneva.org/pacteac2
Introduction

This regional meeting reviewed ongoing and upcoming national and regional policy efforts geared towards making agro-processing more climate-aware, trade-driven and food security enhancing in East Africa. Three years into the PACT EAC2 project, stakeholders in all the five countries are engaging policy makers through advocacy campaigns, at both national and regional levels. Besides sharing some efforts and early success in terms of holistic policy revision and implementation, regional stakeholders were briefed on the status of current multilateral trade and climate negotiations, and undertook a brainstorming exercise to discuss ins and outs of a 2030 sustainable agro-industry for the region.

The still infant agro-processing industry in East Africa has been earmarked as having huge potential for poverty reduction, growth and regional integration. The region’s success in realising this potential will partly depend on its ability to factor in the ever-increasing challenges posed by climate change, and work in synergy with its own trade agenda.

In an ideal scenario, trade policies should ensure the availability of inputs despite climate change, markets for the processed products and access to cleaner technologies; while climate change policies support this effort through targeted adaptation and mitigation initiatives. The role of international trade and climate negotiations in framing the policy space for such policies should not be overlooked.

In this context, the project "Promoting Agriculture, Climate and Trade linkages in the EAC - phase 2" (PACT EAC2) builds capacities of East Africans for climate-aware, trade-driven and food security-enhancing agro-processing in their region. Until 2019, the project will bring together, inform, train and move to advocacy action hundreds of stakeholders from the government, businesses, civil society, media, academia and farming communities. More details are available at http://www.cuts-geneva.org/pacteac2.

The objectives of the meeting included:

- Learning about ongoing policy efforts geared towards making agro-processing more climate-aware, trade-driven and food security enhancing in East Africa.
- Knowing about the next EAC Private Sector Development Strategy review.
- Understanding the state of play and opportunities concerning agriculture at the WTO and UNFCCC.
- Sharing good practices with other experts from EAC, regional and international organisations, as well as trade and climate change negotiators.
- Reflecting on the next steps for the PACT EAC 2 project.
OPENING

OPENING SESSION
DAY 1 OPENING

SPEAKER

MS. JANE NALUNGA, COUNTRY DIRECTOR, SEATINI UGANDA

Representing the local host organisation, Jane Nalunga of SEATINI warmly welcomed participants to the 3rd Regional Annual Meeting (RAM3) of the project “Promoting Agriculture, Climate and Trade linkages in the East African Community – Phase 2” (PACT EAC2). Reflecting on the theme of the event being “Momentum for a Pro-Development and Sustainable Agro-industry in East Africa”, she reminded participants of the importance of agro-processing for poverty reduction in the region. In order to fully harness the potential of the sector through policy interventions, it is critical that policy-makers adopt a holistic approach to take into account relevant aspects of climate change, food security and trade. Finally, she emphasised the important role of international fora on these issues, and hence the need for policy makers and stakeholders at large to effectively communicate with their negotiators at the WTO, UNFCCC and other fora.

SPEAKER

MS. REBECCA YGBERG AMAYRA, SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY (SIDA)

In her remarks, Rebecca Ygberg Amayra expressed her pleasure to participate in the PACT EAC2 Third Regional Annual Meeting on behalf of Sida. She thanked the Ugandan hosts and the organisers for the arrangements. She also congratulated CUTS International for its leadership in the project, as well as partnership with Sida.

Rebecca recalled to recent challenges of the trading system, including the current US policy and the outcomes of last year’s WTO Ministerial Conference. However, she acknowledged that positive results have been witnessed, mentioning the African Continental Free Trade Area which shows that Africa is ready to leverage trade as a tool for development.

She also mentioned that Sida and CUTS had undertaken an external Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the project, which evaluated the current state of implementation. Results showed that the project is relevant for EAC countries, including the need to focus on issues of agro-processing and climate change. The PACT EAC2 project is also closely aligned with the EAC Industrialization Strategy, and rightly addresses policy reform at all three levels: national, regional and international. She finally encouraged and further underscored the need for advocacy, which is more important than ever as the project enters its last year.

SPEAKER

MR. RASHID KAUKAB, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CUTS INTERNATIONAL GENEVA

Rashid S. Kaukab in his remarks stated that the Ugandan capital city is a special place for the PACT EAC2 project. Indeed, this is where the then Deputy Secretary General of the EAC Secretariat, during the 2nd
Regional Annual Meeting (RAM) of the initial PACT EAC project, first suggested that the follow-up project should focus on agro-processing development. It is also in Kampala that the current PACT EAC2 project held its first RAM, planting the seeds of work undertaken in recent years.

Rashid expounded on the project objectives, which aim to link important issues of climate change, food security and trade into East African policy efforts towards agro-processing development. Three years into the project, and with one year left, the two-day regional meeting was an opportunity to review the project and plan for the next steps.

He encouraged active participation and engagement of all participants, especially in the following day’s focus group discussions, which would provide useful leads for the near future. He also underscored the importance of advocacy and networking at this point, and wished participants a successful event.

THEMATIC ADDRESS
CHRISTINE LEWATACHUM, MEMBER OF A BEEKEEPING WOMEN GROUP, KENYA

Sharing about her experience as a woman beekeeper in Kenya, Christine Lewatachum explained that she belongs to a group of women who decided to venture into beekeeping despite the fact that women are traditionally not allowed to practice this activity. Since the group originally did not have protective bee suits, their honey first used to be harvested by men who would sometimes return lower amount of honey than due. This led women from the group to decide harvesting honey themselves, which required making their own bee suits. While this proved a success, the group nevertheless had to address numerous other challenges. For instance, the group called on the government to stop charcoal burning and the cutting down of trees as they affected the population of bees. Actively engaged into local agro-processing, the beekeeping group now produces body creams, candles, medication etc.

THEMATIC ADDRESS
REGINA NAKAYENYA, UGANDA

As a woman agro-processor from Uganda, Regina Nakayenya’s activities entail processing hibiscus extracts into wine and tea, as well as processing its seeds into snacks, coffee etc. In her remarks, she explained the many benefits of hibiscus, such as its resistance to drought, and called on the government to promote it more actively. Indeed, she noted that most farmers are reluctant to grow hibiscus due to unpredictable weather. She also explained the challenges faced in her processing activity, including lack of appropriate technology, lack of seed-sorting machines, lack of drying facilities etc. In order to address these challenges, she called on the government to provide support to agro-processors through grants, and possibly attaching staff members to organisations involved in the hibiscus sector. She finally encouraged women to practice intercropping, which consists in growing several different crops in proximity.
In her opening remarks, Jennifer Gache recalled that Hon Bazivamo's predecessor as Deputy Secretary General of the EAC Secretariat, Hon. Jesca Eriyo was instrumental in the implementation of the first part of the PACT EAC project, and assured stakeholders of the EAC Secretariat's high-level commitment and support towards the implementation of the PACT EAC2 project.

She stated that the EAC Secretariat has continued to place great emphasis and priority in the areas of focus of the project, namely agro-processing, climate change, agriculture, food security and trade. Indeed, the agriculture sector remains key to employment and job creation, with 70-90% of the region's population relying on the sector. The sector is also the main driver of East Africa's industrial development, with agro-processing representing 80% of total manufacturing, and agro-based products making the bulk of East African trade both regionally and globally.

She then expressed appreciation for the project, which complements regional and national efforts in pursuing sustainable development, through increasing knowledge, generating awareness and promoting the necessary policies and capacity. After thanking Sida for being a committed and reliable development partner throughout the project, and hoping for its continued support for the last year and beyond,

Eng. Gache officially released five national studies recently completed under the project.

The five research studies propose ways forward towards ensuring agro-processing development is more climate-aware, trade-driven and food security-enhancing, focusing on the following policies: (i) Buy Kenya, Build Kenya Strategy (https://goo.gl/JRcXE); (ii) Implementation strategy for agro-industry in Burundi (https://goo.gl/c12sG2); (iii) Launch of a National Agro-processing Forum in Rwanda (https://goo.gl/6sAVv8); (iv) Revision of the Tanzanian Sustainable Industries Development Plan (https://goo.gl/ynvBcC); and (v) National Industrial Development Policy in Uganda (https://goo.gl/CFuhZa).

Hon. Michael Werikhe Kafabusa, Uganda’s Minister of State for Trade, highlighted key features of Uganda’s Trade Policy that draw linkages between trade and the environment in order to leverage their complementarities towards sustainable development. In addition, he recalled that Uganda signed and ratified both the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol; which commits the Country to adopt and implement policies and measures to mitigate climate change and adapt to its impacts. Further, the country’s National Development Plan (2015/16-2019/20) and the Uganda Vision 2040 both guide all climate change activities and interventions at the national level. Therefore, ensuring Uganda’s resilience to the adverse impacts of climate change requires concerted efforts in implementing such strategic interventions.
In this context, Uganda is actively promoting a number of key issues within the regional agenda, including:

(i) Removal of Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs);
(ii) Harmonisation of trade rules and regulations;
(iii) Adoption of flexible and favourable rules of origin;
(iv) Adoption of regional standards especially for strategic products of export interest to Uganda;
(v) Ensuring regional protections on products for which Uganda has strategic interests, e.g. rice, sugar, iron and steel which have been listed as sensitive;
(vi) Ensuring the protection of infant industries with potential for growth; and
(vii) Ensuring good governance in regional organisations.

At the national level, strategies have also been put in place to support these efforts, such as:

(i) The National Export Development Strategy (NEDS);
(ii) Establishment of Border Export Zones;
(iii) Non-Tariff Barriers Monitoring Mechanism; and
(iv) Buy Uganda, Build Uganda (BUBU) Policy.

He conveyed the gratefulness of the Government of Uganda for the PACT EAC2 project’s efforts in promoting agriculture, climate and trade linkages in East Africa’s agro-processing development, made possible by CUTS’ collaboration with SEATINI and other partners across the region. He concluded by calling on all African countries to intensify efforts in addressing climate change towards sustainable development, through appropriate policy and regulatory measures.

SHORT TRAINING ON THE USE OF ONLINE TOOLS

JULIEN GROLLIER, CUTS INTERNATIONAL, GENEVA

Julien Grollier, Programme Officer at CUTS International Geneva provided a short training to participants on the use of online tools under the project.
SESSION 1
SUCCESS AND REMAINING BARRIERS TOWARDS MORE HOLISTIC AGRO-INDUSTRIAL POLICIES IN THE EAC REGION
HIGHLIGHTS

Over the past year, advocacy in the five EAC countries have engaged policy makers towards making specific agro-industrial policies more climate-aware, trade-driven and food security-enhancing. In this session chaired by Hon. Flavia Nabugere Munaaba, policy-makers at the forefront of the policy revision in their countries shared updates, reflecting on the successes and the challenges, and what remains to be done.

“BRINGING ABOUT BETTER POLICIES: PROJECT APPROACH TO ADVOCACY”
FAITH LUMONYA, SEATINI

In her introductory presentation, Faith Lumonya started by explaining the role of advocacy and how CSOs like SEATINI use it to help governments improve policies. Advocacy is a process through which stakeholders can convince people that hold authority to support a campaign or a policy reform, with the ultimate goal to generate action either by the decision-makers themselves or by their constituents.

Under the PACT EAC2 project, development of advocacy campaigns followed a consultative process to define and identify: (i) policy change objectives; (ii) target groups, influencers and allies; (iii) tools and channels to use; (iv) partners and networks; and (v) entry points for integrating the campaign into the broader agenda. Typically, campaigns under the project take a three-step approach of convincing and raising Awareness, triggering and supporting policy-makers’ action, and follow-up on actions taken.

She also recalled the focus of each of the five national advocacy campaigns under the project, namely: (i) Burundi’s new Industrial Policy, through devising its implementation strategy; (ii) Buy Kenya, Build Kenya Policy; (iii) Implementation of Rwanda’s Industrial Policy, through launching a National Agro-processors’ Forum (NAPF); (iv) Revision of Tanzania’s Sustainable Industries Development Policy (SIDP); and (v) Uganda’s National Industrial Policy (NIDP). Besides this, Ms. Lumonya also informed that the project contributed to other campaigns in Uganda, including related to: (i) Campaign to ban Kavera (Polythene bags); (ii) Amendment of the Uganda Environment Bill under NEMA; (iii) Development of the Uganda Climate Change Bill, 2017; and (iv) Development of the Uganda Biotechnology and Biosafety Bill.

RICHARD OKOT OKELLO
ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER, REGIONAL AND BILATERAL TRADE DIVISION,
MINISTRY OF TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES, UGANDA

Before discussing Uganda’s National Industrial Development Policy (NIDP), Richard Okot Okello provided an overview of the process of developing a policy in Uganda. This entails a policy review study to learn lessons from the last policy, as well as a Regulatory Impact Assessment to assess the cost/benefit of policy implementation. During the NIDP development process, various stakeholders were consulted which helped the policy take into account other relevant frameworks like UNFCCC, as well as ensure NIDP works in tandem with other policies on climate change, environment, trade, gender etc. He also recalled that industry so far contributes to only 25% of Uganda’s GDP, and target 50% by 2050. On this journey, agro-industrialisation is going to be the key pillar for Uganda to become a middle-income economy, with regional market playing an important role.
Peter Nyang’ombe provided an update on the upcoming revision of Tanzania’s Sustainable Industrial Development Policy (SIDP), which was the focus of an ESRF advocacy campaign under the project. Mr. Nyang’ombe recalled that the current SIDP was developed in 1996 before the effects of climate change became at the forefront of the development agenda. Today, there is broad recognition of the need for an integrated approach to environment and food security, and this is why the new policy will take agriculture into account as one of the sectors affected by climate change. He also explained the possible positive contribution of agricultural value addition to food security, including through leveraging recent technological developments. Based on ToRs developed by ESRF, the policy review process started this month with a tender for selecting a lead consultant by October.

John Bosco Kanyangoga, author of a recent study making the case for a National Agro-Processors’ Forum (NAPF) in Rwanda, explained how the proposed NAPF could lead to greater consideration of climate, trade and food security issues in the implementation of Rwanda’s industrial policy. He first recalled that the implementation of Rwanda’s industrial policy is steered by the Industrial Development and Export Council (IDEC), whose mandate includes drawing on relevant Public-Private Dialogues while designing new interventions towards industrial development. Yet, agro-processors have so far lacked a platform to bring their common voice to IDEC, which is hence not aware of some key climate, trade and food security challenges faced by agro-processors on the ground. This is a gap that the proposed NAPF could fill, since it would be hosted by a standing member of IDEC; namely the Private Sector Federation (PSF). The forum’s structure will comprise three thematic committees on climate change, trade and food security respectively. However, involving development partners to secure funding will be necessary for its sustainable functioning.

Speaking about the Buy Kenya, Build Kenya Strategy (BKBK), Lucas Mwago explained to what extent attention is given to cross-cutting aspects of regional integration and climate change in its implementation. As an introduction, he recalled that manufacturing so far contributes 9% of Kenya’s GDP, and will need to grow by 20% annually to achieve the government’s target of contributing 15% of GDP by 2022. The strategy aims to contribute to this effort, by requiring each government entity to set aside 40% of procurement for local products. However, he acknowledged that one of the challenges lies in the definition of “local”, i.e. whether eligible products could include those produced in the region or else be limited to Kenyan products only. In this regard, he informed that the ongoing development of a Local Content Policy will help clarify the definition, and is in fact likely to consider products originating from the EAC region as local.
Discussing the upcoming National Industrialisation Policy (NIP) of Burundi, Serge Birizanye informed that the adoption of the draft policy had been temporarily suspended during the development of the new National Development Plan, which has now been adopted and provides for finalising the NIP. The current draft Policy benefitted from ADIR’s advice and expertise on the linkages of agro-industrial development with trade, climate change and food security. These aspects have been taken into account in the document, including:

(i) synergies with existing climate policies on industry-oriented adaptation measures, e.g. for road infrastructure, water management etc.; and (ii) leveraging trade capacity-building opportunities for agro-processing development.

PLENARY DISCUSSION

During the ensuing floor discussions, participants expressed concerns over recent strategies such as Buy Kenya, Build Kenya and “Made in Rwanda”, which were perceived as adding a hurdle for agro-processors from neighbouring countries to export. In order to safeguard regional integration, some advocated in favour of a regional “Buy EAC, Build EAC” approach. Regarding the content of industrial policies, participants encouraged governments to focus on a couple of agro-processing priority sub-sectors. According to a policy-maker, this is indeed the approach adopted by most policies, e.g. Kenya identified eight priority sub-sectors. Stakeholders also emphasised the needs for: (i) industrialisation policies to take into account opportunities from regional markets; (ii) building policy synergies across related areas; and (iii) conducting broad-based consultations with all stakeholders. Finally, agro-processors advocated for being directly supported in a number of key areas, including: (i) quality management of raw and processed food; (ii) access to machinery, storage and packaging; and (iii) certification.
SESSION 2

CONTRIBUTING TO EAC PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (2018-22) DEVELOPMENT
HIGHLIGHTS

This session focused on discussing the upcoming development of the EAC Private Sector Development Strategy (PSDS) 2018-2022, which aims to create a conducive business environment that facilitates private sector competitiveness for increased investment, productivity and trade. The session aimed at providing inputs to ensure the new PSDS contributes to climate-aware, trade-driven and food security-enhancing agro-processing.

The session was chaired by Mr. Moses Ogwal, of East African Business Council (EABC), Uganda Chapter. The panellists for the session were Ms. Stella Apolot, Principal Standards Officer, EAC Secretariat; and Ms. Jackline Wanja, Assistant Programme Officer, CUTS Nairobi.

PRESENTATION: "PSDS 2018-2022: MANDATE, PROCESS AND EXPECTATIONS"
STELLA APOLOT, EAC SECRETARIAT

The mandate of the EAC Private Sector Development Strategy (PSDS) is drawn from Articles 127 and 128 of the Treaty and provides for Partner States: “To undertake measures to improve the business environment through the promotion of conducive investment codes…” (Article 127); and “endeavour to adopt programmes that would strengthen and promote the role of the private sector as an effective force for the development of their respective economies” (Article 128).

The process of developing PSDS 2018-2022 is already underway with a consultant expected to be contracted by the end of October, 2018. The actual development will involve a consultative process entailing national stakeholder consultation workshops to gather their inputs as well as ensure ownership of the upcoming PSDS. Participants in the national workshops will be drawn from the private sector, public sector, academia and other stakeholders including from the PACT EAC2 project such as CUTS. The process will also include a regional validation workshop to validate the consultant's report, and ensure that it captures the interest and inputs of all relevant stakeholders. The final report containing the PSDS and M&E framework for implementation of the strategy will then proceed through the EAC decision making system for adoption, where institutions involved will include the EAC Sectoral Council on Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment (SCTIFI), as well as the EAC Council of Ministers.

Once adopted, the implementation of the PSDS will make a major contribution to the regional development goals of accelerating economic growth for poverty reduction, wealth and job creation, strengthening markets and enhancing the region's international competitiveness. Also the PSDS to be formulated is in the context of a changing public sector role designed to give more space and opportunities to private sector initiatives.

PRESENTATION: "PSDS 2018-2022 DEVELOPMENT- PROCESS AND PERSPECTIVES"
JACKLINE WANJA, CUTS AFRICA RESOURCE CENTRE, NAIROBI

Agribusiness has been earmarked as a priority sector for development by the EAC PSDS 2006 due to its contribution towards food security, job creation, poverty reduction as well as integration of women and youth as it contributes more than 80 per cent of the region’s manufacturing sector. Despite this significant contribution, agro-processing inputs are highly reliant on rain-fed agriculture, thus making it vulnerable to climate change through delayed planting seasons, pests and diseases and low crop and animal yield among others. These pose great concern to the private sector which is exposed to climate change effects through reduced production capabilities, increased operational costs and reduced demand for their commodities.

In the post-COP15 period, the private sector has taken action towards financing climate action and supporting innovation of new technologies. It is also engaged in sustainable resource management. Additionally, it has provided a greater share of climate finance initiatives. Within the EAC region, the agricultural sector has been
identified as a priority area for climate adaptation and several initiatives such as crop insurance, climate smart agriculture and sustainable land use are now being introduced.

The upcoming PSDS 2018-2022 should therefore identify climate change as a priority intervention area and highlight the benefits of addressing it. It should promote mitigation and adaptation efforts including R&D, capacity building, agro-processing value chain development and encourage PPPs that integrate low carbon development in their activities.

PLENARY DISCUSSIONS

Before starting plenary discussions, project country partners presented five national declarations recently adopted by stakeholders at each of the 6th National Reference Group (NRG6) meetings. These included: (i) Godefroid Manirankunda, President, ADIR, Burundi; (ii) Francois Munyentwari, Country Director, ACORD, Rwanda; (iii) Jackline Wanja Wanjiru, Assistant Programme Officer, CUTS Africa Resource Centre, Nairobi, Kenya; (iv) John Schilinde, Research Fellow, ESRF, Tanzania; and (v) Immaculate Ndagire, Programme Support, SEATINI, Uganda. The declarations call upon governments to consider synergies between climate change, trade, food security and agro-processing during the development of the EAC PSDS (2018-2022), towards ensuring the private sector contributes to climate-aware, trade-driven and food security-enhancing agro-processing.

There were varied opinions on the way forward with the declarations, with a section of the participants proposing adoption of a regional declaration. According to them, the EAC Treaty has provisions for the private sector and CSOs to contribute. On the other hand, some participants said that the country level NRG6 declarations were sufficient as individual Partner States’ NRGs had already handed declarations to their respective governments. After further deliberations on the matter, it was decided that no regional declaration would be adopted for the moment.

Besides this, a participant, while giving comments on the presentations queried the rationale of categorising smallholder farmers under the private sector. However, the explanation offered was that they too produce for commercial purposes and therefore are part of the private sector. This is why the private sector is further sub-divided into micro, small, medium and large enterprises.
SESSION 3

PROMOTING A SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE: STATE OF PLAY & OPPORTUNITIES AT THE WTO & UNFCCC?
HIGHLIGHTS

International trade and climate change negotiations play an important role in framing the policy space available to governments in developing their agriculture and agro-processing sectors despite climate change. In this session, East African trade and climate change negotiators discussed key issues at the interplay of the two negotiating fora, as well as explored ways to achieve more coordinated positions across trade and climate change negotiations which are increasingly interlinked.

For instance, while agriculture is now formally on the agenda of UNFCCC negotiations, it has been a key issue for the WTO. In fact, agriculture discussions and negotiations in the UNFCCC and WTO have many overlaps and synergies. For example, agricultural subsidies, one of the most sensitive issues in the WTO, can be relevant for the UNFCCC both on mitigation and adaptation. Similarly, UNFCCC discussions related to food security have links with the WTO.

On the panel were Bonose Nionzyma, Burundi Geographical Institute (IGEBU); Prof. John Baptist Kaddu Professor at Makerere University; Tabitha Namulinda, Second Secretary at the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Uganda in Geneva; Elia Mtweve, Minister Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of the United Republic of Tanzania in Geneva. The session was moderated by Ms Jane Nalunga, Country Director, SEATINI Uganda.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Participants were briefed about the status of agriculture negotiations at UNFCCC, with a brief history and overview of recently adopted agenda under the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture (KJWA). Since the last Conference of Parties (COP) held in November 2017, agriculture is on the agenda of both the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) of the UNFCCC. Agriculture has become a negotiating issue, with a clear mandate for both bodies to discuss on the following six topics: (i) Modalities for implementation of the outcomes of the five in-session workshops on issues related to agriculture and other future topics that may arise from this work); (ii) Methods and approaches for assessing adaptation, adaptation co-benefits and resilience); (iii) Improved soil carbon, soil health and soil fertility under grassland and cropland as well as integrated systems, including water management; (iv) Improved nutrient use and manure management towards sustainable and resilient agricultural systems; (v) Improved livestock management systems, including agropastoral production systems and others; and (vi) Socioeconomic and food security dimensions of climate change in the agricultural sector. It is requested that the SBs report to the COP on the progress made until 2020.

Last May in Bonn, in a preparatory meeting, the KJWA work was initiated and a clear workplan was agreed. It is noteworthy that the submission by the EAC was adopted by all other parties as a basis for the agreed KJWA agenda and roadmap. The timeline envisions workshops, submissions and putting together of submissions. All parties and observers are now welcome to submit their views on the above-mentioned six elements. The Subsidiary Bodies took note of the importance of issues including gender, youth and indigenous people among others that should be considered when making KJWA submissions. Budgetary implications to undertake these activities, including organising submissions’ workshops, were recognized by members.

Some of the challenges being faced by EAC climate negotiators include: (i) the need for technology development and transfer, including technology needs assessment; and (ii) the need for more financial resources, so that they can submit relevant projects to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and REDD+ in order
to address the vulnerability of their agriculture. It was also noted that developed countries should be expected to lead the way to emissions reduction, as well as assisting LDCs in meeting their objectives.

With regard to agriculture negotiations at the WTO and the main interests of EAC countries therein, it was made clear by presenters that they are defending the interests of their stakeholders from the region in Geneva. At the moment however, WTO negotiations are at a stalemate including on agriculture and little progress has been done since the last WTO Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires in late 2017, where no concrete way forward could be agreed. However, there are currently some opportunities to discuss agriculture at the WTO, including dedicated discussions on Cotton in June, and on Special Safeguard Mechanism (SSM) in the last session of the WTO Committee on Agriculture.

Going forward, panellists mentioned the importance of monitoring the implementation of past decisions as part of regular sessions of relevant committees of the WTO. Moreover, in the regular sessions, there should be an opportunity for stakeholders to contribute to the discussions and monitoring exercise. It was highlighted that, when in touch with their political leaders, participants should clearly and precisely lay out the situations they face, emphasising they want the multilateral setup to continue.

The opportunity to draw convergence around common goals (especially SDGs), to help WTO negotiators to address the different issues on agriculture was mentioned. Parties should make the most of this time to make concrete proposals, including the EAC. However, it should not harm the work around the agreement on agriculture or the Doha round. It could be done through incremental steps, starting with discussions on domestic support for instance, but some Parties want to have everything on the table at the same time. Another challenge is the process, and a lack of flexibility that does not allow more discussions on substance, with political environment making things difficult.

Several negotiators mentioned the need to better link trade and climate negotiations, as they are negotiating on behalf of the same country. Under UNFCCC, there is no consideration of “trade” per se, though it could be included into responsive measures. At the WTO, it was mentioned that negotiators’ awareness is raising. At the moment, WTO negotiations on fisheries link agriculture and the environment, looking at how members should stop providing support that is harmful to the environment, through better monitoring of fishing activities.

There is a need for more information exchange and interaction among agriculture negotiators at the WTO and UNFCCC, through mobilization of resources to support delegations to relevantly participate in the negotiations, workshops, and allow better information exchange.

PLENARY DISCUSSION

The challenging time faced by multilateralism was discussed. Its death could threaten peace all over the world, however a negotiator stated that it is just a challenging moment and things will get back to the normal. As it depends on the leaders and politics, the system will survive but it will change. It is an opportunity to discuss what kind of changes they want to operate, how to reform the WTO, make concrete proposals on what the new rules should be.

Many people were concerned about food sustainability and food security. UNFCCC & WTO discussions should be able to converge. Outcomes of the different strategies and policies should be going towards more regional integration and enabling of the CFTA implementation, as this is where more gains could be expected (economic, social, etc.). Moreover, food reserves should be considered at the WTO, and be given greater attention at UNFCCC as well. The challenge of seeds and fertilizers have also been pointed out (i.e. competition of standardization, market access, etc), which often don’t allow agro processors to use their local raw materials.
E-commerce and technologies must be leveraged to allow agricultural transformation of the region. There is no rule yet at the WTO on that specific issue, only discussions at the moment, and a programme dated from 1998. Pressure is very high at the WTO to incorporate the issues of e-commerce on the negotiating agenda, but the Africa Group wants to make sure rules will promote their domestic industries. Stakeholders should also discuss what should the rules look like. At the UNFCCC, technology is negotiated to respond to the UNFCCC objective of emission reduction. Members are invited to undertake a technology needs assessment (TNA). Uganda is currently developing its own TNA, what technologies they need are to be identified (both in terms of emission reduction/mitigation, as well adaptation to climate change). Such TNA is also needed at regional level, to allow for better technology transfer and innovation, and support the countries’ proposals in identifying the type of support/demand required.
SESSION 4

TOWARDS A PRO-DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABLE EAST AFRICAN AGRO-INDUSTRY BY 2030?
HIGHLIGHTS

This session entailed discussions on the different thematic areas of employment, technology, women and youth, food security, trade and climate change. Organised into six focussed groups, participants assessed corresponding opportunities, challenges and needs in relation to the future of agro-processing within East Africa. The discussions were based in the context of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), regional and national policies, relevant international negotiations and agreements, on the one hand, and ongoing and expected trends related to economic, social and political aspects on the other. Each group’s composition was balanced in terms of sex, organization and profession and was moderated by a participant chosen by the group members. The following is an outline of the key issues arising from the thematic groups.

EMPLOYMENT

The group on employment looked into how sustainable agro-processing can create the right employment opportunities. Specifically, would greater access to agribusiness enterprise, skills, and improved credit suffice to unleash the job creation potential of agro-industrialisation? What other internal and external factors should be considered? Highlights from group discussions are summarised in the table below.

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<td>Large, educated but unemployed and subsequently idle young population in East Africa.</td>
<td><strong>Reduced insecurity:</strong> Providing employment for the huge number of youths in East Africa has vast social benefits, including reduction of insecurity.</td>
<td>Establish and strengthen East African professional training institutions to provide requisite skills for those willing to engage in agro-processing MSMEs, including information on formalization and standards;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is currently no EAC employment policy. Even where policies exist, there is inadequate implementation. An example relates to the Manpower survey, which identifies the skills pertinent to each country. The policy environment is also not protective of labour rights.</td>
<td>Agro-processing provides a solution to tap into both skilled and semi-skilled labour force.</td>
<td>Establish an EAC Employment Policy and institution which addresses issues of youth and women employment;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informality and casualisation of labour: This refers to lack of contracts, traceability mechanisms and effective standardisation procedures, which slow down integration into value chains.</td>
<td>Agro-processing also provides employment opportunities in rural areas thus easing the ever-increasing rural to urban migration.</td>
<td>Create or strengthen an umbrella EAC regional labour union;</td>
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<td>Limited access to appropriate technology such as irrigation facilities needed to reduce dependence on rain-fed agriculture.</td>
<td>Economically, agro-processing can facilitate division of labour and specialisation by the EAC countries. Given the fact that the EAC is a predominantly agriculture-based region, agro-processing enables the creation of complementary value chains with diversification of sectors, skills and professions.</td>
<td>Formulate dedicated measures to boost MSMEs development, especially regarding access to finance;</td>
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<td>Agro-processing also provides an environmental opportunity to fully but sustainably utilize existing natural resources.</td>
<td>Include employment as one of the main objectives in national and regional policies and;</td>
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<td>Harmonise planning and development processes of agro-processing at the regional level on matters such as technology transfer.</td>
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The agro-processing sector, if well developed and complimented with strategic trade policies, has the potential to become the engine for inclusive economic growth/poverty reduction and integrating the agricultural sector in lucrative international value chains. The key issue discussed was how trade can contribute to a sustainable agro-processing. Highlights from group discussions are summarised in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHALLENGES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• There is a <strong>mismatch</strong> between existing skills and the industrial market’s requirement.</td>
<td>• Socially, the population growth and <strong>increased awareness</strong> of the population provides a chance to tap into the trade opportunities brought about by agro-processing. The prevailing health issues and subsequent changes in lifestyle have also led to increased demand for more agro-processed products.</td>
<td>• One important gap that requires to be filled is the <strong>market information-asymmetry gap</strong>, particularly the regional/international synergy gap.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• In terms of policy, there are existing unfavourable integration measures, inadequate harmonisation of standards and an increasing tendency of <strong>protectionism</strong> within the EAC member states.</td>
<td>• Similarly, <strong>enhanced integration</strong> as envisaged in economic communities such as EAC, COMESA, SADC and AfCFTA has led to increase in demand for agro-products.</td>
<td>• There is also need for <strong>improved infrastructural linkages</strong> such as roads, railways, logistics and warehouses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There is also the lingering <strong>environment</strong>-related challenges of extreme weather events, namely floods and drought, as well as increased pressure on land, deforestation and the resulting low productivity.</td>
<td>• The ongoing <strong>infrastructural investments</strong> in the region including roads, railway and energy will also help boost the agro-processing industry.</td>
<td>• Need for entrenchment of appropriate <strong>technology</strong> such as e-commerce.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The region <strong>enjoys natural resources</strong> that are not fully utilized such as arable land, water for production and minerals.</td>
<td>• The region <strong>enjoys natural resources</strong> that are not fully utilized such as arable land, water for production and minerals.</td>
<td>• Region should look into <strong>south-south cooperation for technology transfer</strong> as the technologies are low cost compared to advanced technology from the west.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Technology</strong> is another vital opportunity for the agro-processing industry.</td>
<td>• <strong>Technology</strong> is another vital opportunity for the agro-processing industry.</td>
<td>• EAC should <strong>harmonize its standards</strong>.</td>
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**CLIMATE CHANGE**

Despite the potential of climate change to negatively impact on EAC’s agro-processing sectors, its effects are not adequately considered in policy revision and implementation. Moreover, some of the interlinkages remain poorly explored (lack of research, lack of data gathering), and might be a game changer for many public and private stakeholders in developing countries. Consequently, the group’s discussions focused on how agro-processing within the EAC can be climate-resilient. Highlights from group discussions are summarised in the table below.
Climate change is cross-cutting issue that affects the entire value chain from the farmers to the retail shops. There is a lack of knowledge and resources to educate farmers and agro-processors in East Africa. Weather prediction and meteorological information fail to reach the relevant stakeholders in time. Broadly, there is a lack of information and research on vulnerabilities which is compounded by existing poverty, political instability and health issues. There are also economic challenges such as availability and quality of raw materials as well as post-harvest losses, insufficient technology and inadequate strategic planning. Environmental constraints such as climate change include water scarcity, energy supply, increase in pests and diseases and destruction of infrastructure by floods. There are also challenges emerging from the industrial model of agricultural production such as the use of fertilizers.

The main challenge to agro-processing is the lack of access to processors. The 4th Industrial Revolution, and digitalisation in particular, offer tremendous opportunities to those who are in a position to take advantage. On the other hand, it can also greatly exacerbate existing inequalities as well as create new ones between countries, regions and communities. Building deeper understanding among all relevant stakeholders is needed to develop and implement the right mix of policies, regulations and actions to harness the potential of technological developments for a pro-development and sustainable agro-processing in the EAC.

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<tr>
<td>• Climate change is cross-cutting issue that affects the entire value chain from the farmers to the retail shops.</td>
<td>• Need for governments to create enabling policy space and own the implementation of nationally determined contributions (NDCs). They need to conduct climate vulnerabilities assessment to have a clear baseline to review relevant policies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• There is inadequate skills, knowledge and funds to aid farmers and agro-processors in East Africa.</td>
<td>• Building the capacity of governments for research and technology, encourage the promotion of weather-based insurance and improvement in the dissemination of climate change information.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Weather prediction and meteorological information fails to reach the relevant stakeholders in due time. Broadly, there is a lack of information and research on vulnerabilities which is compounded by existing poverty, political instability and health issues.</td>
<td>• It is necessary to revise the EAC climate strategy so that it is informed by member states’ NDCs. There is need to ensure effective implementation of joint resource mobilization ventures.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• There are also economic challenges such as availability and quality of raw materials as well as post-harvest losses, insufficient technology and inadequate strategic planning.</td>
<td>• Stakeholders should consider setting up rural resilience related funds and conducting a needs assessment on required climate technology.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Environmental constraints brought about by climate change include water scarcity, effects to energy supply, increase in pests and diseases and destruction of supply chains like through sweeping away of transport infrastructure by floods. There are also challenges emerging from the industrial model of agricultural production such as the use of fertilizers.</td>
<td>• The private sector should: (i) create strategic arrangements along the value chain; (ii) provide insurance and raise awareness on how to invest for climate related purposes; (iii) ensure product safety through certification and standardization. An example of best practice is the community processing centres established in Rwanda for these purposes.</td>
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<td>• While there is typically a mismatch between the existing policy framework and resources allocated to implementation, an example of good practice in leveraging and providing access to climate funds is the National Fund of Rwanda (FONERWA).</td>
<td>• Smallholder farmers and women groups need: (i) capacities on organizational management, production standards, finance skills etc.; (ii) Community-based resilience mechanisms; (iii) CSOs’ support on sustainable agro-processing through research, awareness-raising, climate information, changing mindsets on agro-processing as an export-only business.</td>
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**TECHNOLOGY**

Technological breakthroughs across diverse fields are happening. Digitalisation of goods, services, tasks, enterprises, sectors, economies and even societies is taking place though the magnitude can vary greatly among countries and regions. These have important implications for agro-processing. The 4th Industrial Revolution, and digitalisation in particular, offer tremendous opportunities to those who are in a position to take advantage. On the other hand, it can also greatly exacerbate existing inequalities as well as create new ones between countries, regions and communities. Building deeper understanding among all relevant stakeholders is needed to develop and implement the right mix of policies, regulations and actions to harness the potential of technological developments for a pro-development and sustainable agro-processing in the EAC.

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<tr>
<td>• The main challenge to agro-processors is the lack of access</td>
<td>• There are opportunities for stakeholders in setting up education,</td>
<td>• Human resources development including skills, access and capacity</td>
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</table>
Agro-processing contributes to food security in various ways such as prevent post-harvest losses and improving the quality of food. The discussions in this thematic group focused on how sustainable growth of agro-industries can be achieved in order to provide food security solutions for the EAC region. Highlights from group discussions are summarised in the table below.

<table>
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<tr>
<td>- Pressure on land and high population which affects household food security and also results in vices such as deforestation.</td>
<td>- The high population in East Africa is a source of labour which is needed to enhance food security.</td>
<td>- Easier access to Technology: (i) Private sector to invest in food graded technologies; (ii) government can impose zero-rated taxes on these technologies; (iii) Stakeholders to customize technologies to local needs; (iv) Governments to promote clean energy, with awareness-raising by CSOs; (v) Funding for research in collaboration with agro-processors to respond to their needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Farmers are giving more priority to cash crops at the expense of food security and similarly, they sell all their produce which leads to malnutrition.</td>
<td>- High population also provides market for agro-processed goods. In particular, the growing middle class is a market waiting to be fully exploited.</td>
<td>- Farm-level Needs: (i) developing insurance for farmers against climatic effects; (ii) Skill-building in line with needs of the labour market, as well as on responsible consumption; (iii) Need for strict government policies on post-harvest management and losses.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- High costs of: (i) finance attributed to high interest rates and complex credit facility procedures; (ii) energy; (iii) water due to high demand, resulting in higher agro-processing costs.</td>
<td>- There is also a chance to have increased exports through agro-processing which is good for the EAC economy.</td>
<td>- Investment needed in developing water resources as well as research and development of appropriate technologies. CSOs can help sensitize on water resource management.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Poor transport infrastructure</td>
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<td>- Investment needed for improving transport infrastructure to enable free and easy movement of raw materials and agro-processed goods.</td>
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<td>- Lack of adequate technology, for example for packaging</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Use of chemicals on farms to increase productivity is a challenge to the environment. This is in addition to poor post-harvest management that magnifies chemical effects as well as pollution.</td>
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<td>- Lack of government support for extension services to ensure</td>
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production of quality raw materials. This has led to losses to farmers through rejected crops.

- Governments to synergise and harmonize requirements e.g. effecting a ban on plastic bags across the region.
- Preserving genetic bank to reduce reliance on foreign technologies and promote food sovereignty.

## WOMEN AND YOUTH

A sizeable portion of farmers, especially women and youth, have low incomes and are embedded in poverty. Agro-processing is a pragmatic solution to alleviating these challenges by enhancing income as well as providing other benefits such as skills development, diversification of expertise and inclusion of women and youth into economic processes. Despite these benefits, the uptake of agro-processing activities remains low among women and youth. This group sought to determine how sustainable agro-processing can integrate and enhance the involvement of youth and women. Highlights from group discussions are summarised in the table below.

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Women and youth typically lack proprietary and land ownership rights. This affects their access to credit which normally requires collateral.</td>
<td>- The greatest opportunity for women and youth is to leverage on the interests and skills. For instance, the youth would play a key role in branding and packaging in light of their digital skills.</td>
<td>- In terms of policy, a trade remedies law will go a long way in boosting local agro-processing in addition to policies that protect infant industries within the EAC. Removal of tariffs in the EAC common market for agricultural products is also another policy recommendation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- There is also a lax attitude towards agriculture which is deemed as less lucrative or attractive than professions in other sectors.</td>
<td>- There is room for stakeholders to develop strategies and technologies on land utilization to enhance productivity. More attention ought to be paid to maximization of sustainable traditional technologies.</td>
<td>- Need for government to initiate land reforms that are inclusive of women and youth interests as well as ease mechanisms of credit access.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The lack of knowledge and capacity to fulfil the, at times, complex quality and standardization procedures for agro-products greatly affects women and youth. The same applies to branding and packaging, particularly as high import costs on packaging materials such as aluminium magnify the costs of agro-processing.</td>
<td>- Space for civil society to create awareness on benefits of agro-processing with the aim of changing perceptions towards agriculture. Governments can complement this by setting up a register of agro-processors to facilitate information sharing.</td>
<td>- Women and youth need to associate and run a welfare health insurance system to look after their health needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Inadequate provision of extension services as well as limited availability of technology is another difficulty. This is compounded by extreme weather events and lack of agricultural insurance. Further, rural women and youth have limited business knowledge.</td>
<td>- Cottage industries in EAC should be formalized and measures put in place to mobilize women into associations. CSOs and governments can step in to provide advisory services on development of business plans as well as encouraging organic farming.</td>
<td>- Women and youth need capacity building on issues such as technology, financial management and entrepreneurship. Research institutions can aid by outlining best techniques and practices when it comes to agro-processing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Other challenges include poor infrastructure and systems to manage health issues like HIV/AIDS and Malaria that cause low productivity.</td>
<td>- Need for government to initiate land reforms that are inclusive of women and youth interests as well as ease mechanisms of credit access.</td>
<td>- Women and youth should be included in decision making processes including in negotiations of trade agreements.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>- Building consumer awareness on existing agro-products in order to expand markets for women and youth agro-processors.</td>
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SESSION 5

WHAT’S NEXT FOR PACT EAC2 AND BEYOND?
HIGHLIGHTS

The session that was chaired by Victor Ogalo, Head of Policy Research Analysis, Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), sought to highlight the progress made by the PACT EAC2 project three (3) years down the road, present main findings of the project mid-term review, activities to be undertaken in the coming year and possible way forward beyond the project. These were presented by Collins Owegi, Julian Mukiibi and Leslie Deborne of CUTS International.

TAKING STOCK OF PROGRESS
COLLINS OWEGI, CUTS AFRICA RESOURCE CENTRE, NAIROBI

With regard to the project progress to date, Collins Owegi provided an overview on each of the five core outputs of the project as follows: (i) Better understanding climate-aware, trade-driven and food security enhancing agro-processing – where it is found that the project has improved understanding of how agro-processing can be made more climate-aware, trade driven and food security enhancing in EAC. Of the 693 responding stakeholders, 97 percent indicated their better understanding in this regard. (ii) Better capacity to contribute to policy dialogue and policy change – here the project has led to improved capacity to engage in policy dialogue with about 52 percent of stakeholders indicating plans to undertake parallel joint policy advocacy work in this regard. (iii) EAC Delegates better able to promote their interests in trade and climate change negotiations – feedback from delegates in trade and climate change negotiations indicates that about 88 percent are better able to identify and represent their country’s interests in negotiations. (iv) Stakeholders interact more regularly – the project has made remarkable progress in facilitating interaction. It is reported that about 465 direct stakeholders’ regular interactions have so far been made across the sectors of agro-processing, climate change, trade and food security, including regarding their inter-linkages. (v) Stakeholders seek to collaborate – throughout the implementation period, the project has encouraged and facilitated opportunities for stakeholder collaboration. Feedback indicates that about 414 stakeholders have initiated concrete plans to undertake joint work with professionals across the critical project issues.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM MID-TERM EVALUATION
JULIAN MUKIIBI, CUTS INTERNATIONAL, GENEVA

Julian Mukiibi presented highlights from the project mid-term review which included the following: (i) PACT EAC2 is highly relevant given the importance of trade, agriculture and agro-processing to the EAC; (ii) The project coverage is also aligned to priorities of beneficiaries and stakeholders; (iii) PACT EAC2 is the only project in the region that supports policy development at national, regional and international levels with regard to promoting linkages in climate change, trade and food security; (iv) Internal and external stakeholders consulted, regarded the project to be very highly effective and well on its way to achieving its targets; (v) It was found that should a further phase be contemplated, then more training, more frequent NRG meetings and more face to face climate change negotiators meetings should be facilitated.

Activities in the remaining year of the project were also presented, including: (i) publication of short papers; (ii) Geneva visits arranged around important events so as to promote better awareness of issues as well as networking; (iii) leveraging media; (iv) finalising the national advocacy campaigns and undertaking a regional advocacy campaign; (v) WTO and Climate Change forums will continue to be held periodically; and (vi) online forum as well as National Regional Meetings and the final Regional Annual Meeting will be organised.
BEYOND PACT EAC2
LESLIE DEBORNES, CUTS INTERNATIONAL, GENEVA

Drawing from the mid-term review recommendation that a PACT EAC2 follow-up project be considered given the relevance, importance and prioritisation of the issues in the EAC region; as well as deliberations by participants during the third Regional Annual Meeting, Leslie Debornes presented elements of a possible way forward. The overall objective could revolve around building capacity of relevant stakeholders (individuals, networks and institutions) to identify and promote appropriate and holistic policies on the nexus of agro-processing value chains, climate change and trade.

Specifically, the follow-up project could consider various opportunities, challenges and needs for pro-development and sustainable agro-processing, which are related to: (i) Trade – regional integration, market information dissemination, harmonisation of standards, and clean renewable energy towards sustainable trade; (ii) Climate change - capacity building for agro-processors on how to become more climate-resilient, ensuring strong and sustainable EAC agro-industrial strategy and its implementation; (iii) Women and Youth - issues of land ownership, quality and standards, capacity building, and raising gender awareness; (iv) Employment - regional employment policy and regional labour union development among other policy interventions; (v) Technology - research and development to promote innovation and technological transfer in agro-processing, public-private partnerships promotion; and Food Security - post-harvest losses mitigation and improved management of stocks and inter-government cooperation/synergies to harmonise requirements.

Reactions from participants emphasised that a next phase of the project would be critical, if the EAC regional integration efforts are to harness the existing and future potential of agro-processing. Indeed, developing the sector could spur development, and help alleviating extreme poverty in the region through better and synergetic national, regional and international policies, agreements and negotiations.
CLOSING

CLOSING SESSION

National Industrial Development Policy
Mainstreaming Agro-Processing, Trade, Climate Change, Food Security and Gender

Jane Nalunga, Joseph Bukeinya, Faith Lusamya
Clement Onyango thanked all the participants and panellists for their active and constructive participation. He also thanked the local partner, SEATINI for warm hospitality and arrangements.

In her concluding remarks, Hon. Flavia Nabugere Munaaba expressed pride to have been associated with the PACT EAC2 project since its first phase, and congratulated all participants for their active and constructive participation in the two-day regional meeting. She also thanked the Swedish International Cooperation Agency (Sida) for its sustained support to the project. With only one year left, she noted that the project was at an important point and stressed the need to gear all efforts towards its successful completion. Indeed, the task was not over yet, even if stakeholders can already be proud of the achievements registered so far.

Reflecting on the takeaways from and follow-up to the meeting, she encouraged participants to: (i) take a message of hope and commitment to continue working without getting complacent; (ii) use the research, training and networking under the project to pursue the national and regional advocacy campaigns efficiently and effectively; and (iii) maintain and strengthen their partnerships for positive policy and practice change. She was confident that doing so will help ensure the project achieves its objectives for a climate-aware, trade-driven, food security enhancing agro-processing in the EAC.

Nevertheless, she warned that East Africa’s development challenges, and its needs regarding climate-aware, trade-driven and food security-enhancing agro-processing, are not going to be over by next year. This is a long-term process, with many challenges to be faced in the years to come such as: (i) more acute effects of climate change; (ii) evolving global trade landscape in response to economic and political changes; (iii) transformative impacts of technology on production and exchange; (iv) fully harnessing the potential of women and youth etc.

Acknowledging that a pro-development and sustainable agro-processing can play a key role in responding to these challenges, Hon. Nabugere Munaaba urged all participants to think beyond PACT EAC2 to build on its outcomes. She was confident that Sida will continue to play its important role as a true development partner and support the follow up project as well.

Finally, she declared the third regional annual meeting of PACT EAC2 closed and wished safe travels and good continuation to all participants.