



PACT EAC PROJECT

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

First Regional Annual Meeting

September 17-18, 2012 - Kigali

Background

On September 17-18, CUTS International, Geneva, CUTS Africa Resource Centre Nairobi, and ACORD Rwanda, in collaboration with other country partners in the region, will organise the First Regional Annual Meeting (RAM) under the PACT EAC Project in Kigali, Rwanda. Participants will include all relevant stakeholders from the region including governments, the business, farming communities, CSOs, media, think tanks, as well as the EAC Secretariat and the relevant international organisations, such as, UNEP, FAO, UNFCCC. They aim to deliberate on the potential of trade to address climate-related poverty and hunger.

With the increase in the intensity and frequency of extreme weather events due to climate change, agricultural and trade patterns in the EAC are drastically changing. This is resulting in 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.**

It is in this context that CUTS International, Geneva has undertaken the “Promoting Agriculture-Climate-Trade linkages in the East African Community” (PACT EAC) Project with funding support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). The project aims to build the human and institutional capacity of all relevant stakeholders in the EAC to address the challenges of climate-related hunger through trade. **Like all CUTS projects, PACT EAC also follows the inclusive policy research-advocacy-networking (RAN) methodology and connects the grassroots with the national, regional and international policy-making processes.**

The PACT EAC project is based on the experience gained by CUTS International Geneva since its establishment in July 2008 with the aim to assist developing countries in their better understanding of trade and related issues, and strengthen Geneva-grassroots linkages. In pursuit of this aim, CUTS International Geneva has undertaken a number of projects in the past four years, including Fostering Equity and Accountability in the Trading System (FEATS), Building an Inclusive East African Community (BIEAC) and Facilitating Equitable Agricultural Development in sub-Saharan Africa (FEAD), which have focused on building multi-stakeholder capacities in Eastern Africa on WTO issues and regional integration, inclusive trade policy making and implementation, agriculture and food security, and inter-linkages of issues. **In addition to developing partnerships with many organizations in the region CUTS International, Geneva has also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the EAC Secretariat.**

The PACT EAC Project was launched on 1 October 2011. During the past year, a number of activities related to research, training, advocacy and networking have been undertaken. There has been continuous dissemination of information to improve awareness and understanding of the issues by all relevant stakeholders. Five national multi-stakeholder networks of representatives from EAC governments, the EAC Secretariat, private sector, farmers' organizations and civil society have been established. Members of these networks will pool knowledge, experience and expertise to develop integrated policy and programme responses in the region, and will be the primary beneficiaries of a series of national and regional training workshops to be organised in 2013-2014. **Moreover, four EAC Geneva Forum meetings have taken place bringing together EAC WTO delegates to discuss trade-related issues of interest to them based on notes prepared by CUTS International Geneva staff as well as country partners in the five countries to better link Geneva with grassroots.**

The project is now ready to present its first year's outputs at the First Regional Annual Meeting on 17-18 September 2012. These include: five collaborative and evidence-based country research studies; draft training programme on trade-climate-food security linkages; several advocacy documents; outputs and outcomes of five National Reference Groups (NRGs), and notes for and reports on EAC Geneva Forum meetings. **The meeting will provide opportunities for the EAC partner states' stakeholders to gain an insight into the climate-food-trade linkages in the region, network and connect with their counterparts of the other partners states, strengthen national-regional-multilateral links, and create momentum for holistic national and regional policies in the three areas.**

Keeping in view the above, specific objectives of the Regional Annual Meeting (RAM) include:



Planning and Monitoring

To review the activities undertaken in the first year and to plan activities for the next project year, based on drafts to be presented by PACT EAC Project Implementation Team



Research

To review the current state of play in the EAC on climate change, food security and trade linkages based on five country research studies to be presented by country research teams



Advocacy

To identify and feed emerging findings into the national and regional policy making processes for holistic policy and strategy making processes



Training

To review and give feedback on the draft training program, which will be implemented in 2013-2014



Networking

To contribute to the emergence of the core of a vibrant regional network of stakeholders, by encouraging dialogue

A project by



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