



Content about the STEP- UP Project

1.0. Background

Environmental Alert in partnership with Leibniz Centre for Agricultural Landscape Research (ZALF) from Germany, Wageningen University (WUR) from Netherlands, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), Advisory board: Solidaridad-NL, IITA, Kenya Bureau of Standards and National Environment Trust Fund (NETFUND) from Kenya, National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO) and Solidaridad Network from Uganda are implementing a project called “**Sustainable Transition to Entrepreneurial Production in Agriculture through Upgrading**” (STEP-UP). This project is implemented in Rwiimi sub county of Bunyangabu district and **Birere and Ruaaga** sub-counties of Isingiro district from 2019 to 2021 and it aims at identifying and implementing strategies to upgrade production, processing and marketing of cooking banana (matooke) in two districts of Uganda. It combines research-development- and outreach-oriented activities in five **Work Packages (WPs)**, and implements sustainable intensification (SI) and market linkage (ML) strategies to enable small farm enterprises (SFEs) to step up towards food and nutrition security, sustainable development and income generation. **STEP-UP** employs a participatory multi-stakeholder approach where new technologies in cultivation, processing and packaging are implemented and assessed in mango and banana food value chains (FVC) in Kenya and Uganda respectively.

2.0. Project Objectives

The overall project objective is to contribute to food security and sustainable development in sub-Saharan Africa through equitable commercial relationships between SFEs and markets within the frame of sustainable agricultural production. It focuses on the heterogeneous groups of Smallholder farmers with an entrepreneurial ambition. **STEP-UP** supports smallholder producers to access relevant technologies, innovations and management practices for the transition to commercialized production.

3.0. Specific objectives are:

- a) Achieve sustainable intensification of SFEs and the transition of diverse farms to commercial enterprises that contribute to food and nutrition security while minimizing trade-offs in other sustainability dimensions.
- b) Provide key actor groups, local authorities and decision-makers with instruments and information for discussion and decision support based on participatory ex-ante and ex-post impact assessments.
- c) Inform policy implementation towards a supportive public-policy environment based on locally-relevant sustainability principles, criteria and indicators.

STEP-UP works with multi-stakeholder groups (including women groups) to scale up activities for farmers to meet the market demand and scale out to farmers outside their localities. The linkage to diverse and emerging “Small Farm Enterprises” (SFEs) will enable STEP-UP to achieve a major milestone in converting research outputs into commercial products and supporting SFEs to access markets.

These case studies represent different stages in the transition process of “stepping up” through ML and SI. Data collection methods will include literature review, farm surveys, key-informant interviews, focus group discussions with farmers and key stakeholders, and monitoring of selected indicators.

Box 7. About Environmental Alert

Environmental Alert (EA) was founded in **1988 and this year (2018) marks 30 years** of contribution to improved livelihoods and development in Uganda through several interventions in sustainable agriculture, environment and natural resources management. EA is officially registered with the NGO Board as a Ugandan non-governmental organization, incorporated as a company limited by guarantee. EA is governed by an independent Board that is responsible for providing strategic oversight of the organization including ensuring its integrity as a voluntary service organization.

EA is a **1st prize winner of the Energy globe award for environmental sustainability-2005 under the category, earth.**

EA is a member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and a Member of The IUCN National Committee for Uganda.

EA envisions, *'Resilient and dignified communities, managing their environment and natural resources sustainably.'*

EA's mission is to, *'Contribute to improved livelihoods of vulnerable communities by enhancing agricultural productivity and sustainable natural resources management'*

Program and institutional Components:

1. Environment and Natural resources management;
2. Food security and Nutrition;
3. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene;
4. Finance and Administration;
5. Resource mobilization and Investment.

Scale of Implementation:

EA operates in selected districts for generation of evidence to inform policy engagements on agriculture, environment and natural resources at National and International levels. Currently EA's operations are in 20 districts across the country. EA undertakes area wide targeted awareness on selected issues in agriculture, environment and natural resources engagements

EA is a Secretariat for following networks:

- a) The Network for Civil Society Organizations in Environment & Natural Resources Sector (ENR-CSO Network) - <http://enr-cso.org/>;
- b) Uganda Forestry Working Group - <http://ufwg.entalert.org/>;
- c) The Standards Development Group (for promotion of Sustainable Forest Management in Uganda); and
- d) Promoting Local Innovation in ecologically oriented agriculture and natural resources management (PROLINNOVA-Uganda Network) - <http://www.prolinnova.net/uganda>.
- e) Renewable Energy Civil Society Organizations (RECSOs) Network.

Further information about **Environmental Alert** is available at: <http://entalert.org/>