Objective
To contribute to food security and sustainable development in sub-Saharan Africa through equitable commercial relationships between small farm enterprises and markets. Within the frame of sustainable agricultural production, we focus on the heterogeneous groups of smallholder farmers with an entrepreneurial ambition. STEP-UP will support smallholder producers to access relevant technologies, innovations and management practices for the transition to commercialized production.

STEP-UP combines 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. Through a participatory multi-stakeholder approach promising technologies will be identified, implemented and assessed in mango and banana value chains (FVC) in Kenya and Uganda.

Workshop series: Participatory visioning and the selection of interventions.
“What will agriculture in XX (look like in a sustainable future)?”

Focus on four topics:
- Economic (which crops, yields and income, farm sizes, etc.)
- Food security (where will food come from, diversity of foods, ensure resources to buy food, etc.)
- Environmental (natural resource conservation, diversity, pollution, use of inputs, waste management, etc.)
- Social (working conditions in agriculture, social relations, access to knowledge, political support, etc.)

The training units for training of trainer (ToT) concepts were carefully developed together with the stakeholders. Participatory scenario development and impact assessment are powerful tools to guide discussion and convergence of views on the necessary interventions enabling agricultural transformation pathways towards a desired future.

Handing over the mango harvest

James Songole (Kitale county agriculture CEO) displaying the recommended grafting tools at the practical field work.

Participants (Farmers, VC actors and county staff) during practical ToT units for mango value addition at JKUAT Food Science Workshops.

Scenario discussions are based on results from STEP-UP surveys.

Fig. 1: STEP-UP Conceptional Research Framework
1: System analysis of food value chains to identify entry points for SFEs to STEP-UP chain of mechanisms linking push to pull strategies.
2: Participative identification and cross country exchange of sustainable intensification (SI) and market linkage (ML) strategies.
3: Food system strategy development, implementation and testing in two countries (push and pull approach).
4: Assessing uptake of strategies, due to added value and efficiency gain.

Fig. 2: STEP-UP Model for Upgrading - Standardized participatory approach for identification and development of sustainable intensification (SI) and market linkage (ML) strategies for SFEs under consideration of local value chains and sustainability.

Participatory visioning and backcasting

Stakeholder mapping in Rwimi

Mr Karan displaying the recommended grafting tools at the practical field work.

Scenario discussions are based on results from STEP-UP surveys.