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Maize harvest



Smallholder farmers

African smallholders in focus – a voice in EU trade policy

**A dialogue-oriented public
advocacy project by**



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Smallholder farmers in focus

Three quarters of the world's hungry people live in rural areas, and the majority of them are smallholder farmers. The situation is particularly difficult in Africa where the great majority of people live in rural areas. An important reason for this problem is their marginalisation in both national and international agricultural and trade policy making.

Already during the 1990s liberalisation policy by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had negative influences on the countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP Countries). At present the trade relations between the EU and the ACP countries are to be transfigured within Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA). These agreements follow the principles of a WTO compatible Free Trade System. EPAs might expose some of the poorest countries in the world to unfair competition with European export products. Local markets will possibly be endangered and the room for autonomous political decisions concerning economic and social policies might be limited.

Affected by such developments would be, among others smallholders and people without land tenure. The majority of people in Africa is directly depending on agriculture. European agricultural policy has big influence on terms of trade and on the food situation of African smallholders. Known examples of European cheap exports are those of beef, poultry and tomatoes to West Africa which dramatically reduce the marketing potential of local smallholders. Consequences of dumping and liberalisation are various violations of the human right to adequate food.

Impact of trade negotiations

Two current negotiation processes may have a serious impact on the agricultural trade between EU and Africa and consequently on smallholder farmers:

- ◆ Negotiations of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) between the EU and six country groups of Africa, Caribbean and Pacific, which should be finalised by the end of 2007
- ◆ Agricultural negotiations in the World Trade Organisations (WTO), where no agreement seems to be in sight at the moment

Even though these decision-making processes will have major consequences for smallholder farmers, their views are inadequately reflected in the current negotiations. There is a strong movement against EPAs and the current WTO negotiations in the ACP countries. Regional ACP networks of small farmers have been very active in developing their platforms. By our advocacy work we want to strengthen the voice of smallholder farmers in the WTO and EPA negotiations.

Germanwatch, BothENDS (NL), FIAN Germany, FIAN International (Germany) and UK Food Group (GB) along with farmers' organisations from Zambia, Uganda and Ghana initiated the project: **African smallholders in focus – a voice in EU trade policy.**

We will organise:

- ◆ Studies about the impact of EPAs, IMF, World Bank and WTO policy on smallholder farmers,
- ◆ Fact Finding Missions (FFM) with farmers, their organisations and NGOs to Zambia, Ghana and Uganda to get a better understanding of the impact of agricultural trade policy on farmers,
- ◆ Exchange conferences and meetings to develop a common strategy for our political work,
- ◆ Photo exhibitions and public events to illustrate the impact of trade policy on smallholder farmers.

Looking forward to seeing you at our public events and discussions. For further information, you are invited to contact us or visit our websites (see overleaf).



Young livestock keepers