

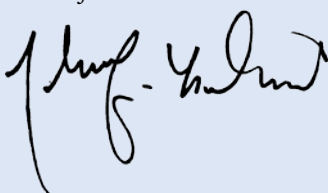
## Editorial

*Agriculture is Africa's social and economic backbone. More than a decade ago, African leaders have adopted the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program as a policy framework for the continent's agricultural transformation, food security and nutrition, economic growth and prosperity. Big strides have been achieved in some countries, but much remains to be done.*

*Some of the solutions to Africa's challenges lie in climate-smart agriculture, sustainable land and water management, integrated value chains, and gender-focused extension services. But the key factor to success is the African farmer. The vast majority of them lives and works on small family farms. Their knowledge, capacities and willingness to change are cornerstones of agriculture transformation. They have to be won over towards viable commercial operations or non-farm employment opportunities.*

*For more than 30 years, GFA has contributed to the development of African agriculture. Today, we focus on land management issues, improvements in the food value chain, and matching German agri-food producers with agriculture sector investment needs in specific countries.*

*This newsletter highlights GFA's ongoing work in Africa, be it climate-proof irrigation investments, value added in local value chains, or the setup of effective agricultural knowledge management systems. We are proud to be part of major efforts in achieving an economically vibrant, socially acceptable and ecologically sound agriculture sector in Africa.*



Christoph Schaefer-Kehnert  
Managing Director  
GFA Consulting Group

## Agricultural development in Africa – A continuous challenge for GFA

**GFA Consulting Group has its roots in the agricultural and rural development sectors and has been providing development services targeting the improvement of agricultural production ever since its foundation in 1982. To GFA, development assistance provided on the African continent has continuously been related to the challenges of food security and making the most of agricultural production potentials.**

GFA services in the agricultural sector mirror the evolution of development efforts in African countries. The company's expertise has to respond to a variety of aspects related to securing and intensifying agricultural production, and a higher degree of value creation. Technical assistance is to foster employment and enhance local economic development based on a rural, agriculture-based economy. Moreover, technological development and innovation as well as environmental and socioeconomic dynamics require a continuous adaptation process with regard to high quality and target group oriented services. All over the African continent, GFA expert teams assist project management support in irrigation management, crop intensification and on-farm management. Agricultural extension services, agricultural value chain development and the adaptation of agriculture to the impacts of climate change play an important role. Despite a high market poten-

tial and growing investment and purchase power on the continent, realizing the existing agricultural potential in many African countries is hampered by major challenges. For example, the average African farm performs at less than 50% of its potential and half of the world's uncultivated arable land is located in Africa. As a result, not even 20% of the continent's food requirements will be produced there by the year 2050. Therefore, GFA has been striving to approach its agricultural development-related assistance from a private sector perspective combined with social responsibility, which incorporates innovations and technological progress.

### **GFA at work – highlighting new approaches**

The agricultural sector is the principal economic driver of Benin, providing for the livelihood of more than 70% of the population. Particularly in the north of the country, agriculture is largely based on rain-fed production and, thus, very vulnerable to extreme weather events such as heavy rains and droughts. Since 2014, GFA on behalf of GIZ has been implementing advisory and management services in the context of the Adaptation of Agriculture to Climate Change project. The project targets sustainable water resource management and climate-proof irrigation



infrastructure investments. GFA experts take into account the lessons learned from decades of soil and water resource degradation. Achieving an effective cooperation of public services at the communal level and the private sector as a backbone of local economic development is a key to success of the project's interventions.

In the Ivory Coast, GFA started implementing the northern component of the GIZ project Promotion of Agricultural Value Chains and Biodiversity in 2013. The project interventions target the development of the local cashew, maize, onion and pork meat value chains. Based on the analysis of technical, financial and commercial framework conditions, improvements to the production process have been introduced as a first step. In close cooperation with Bayer Crop Science, Semivoire, Callivoire and Yara Côte d'Ivoire, GFA consultants developed improved cropping and input recommendations for the cultivation of onions under rain-fed and irrigated conditions. At the same time, they supported the capacities of extension services and promoted the development of suitable financing products. Based on systematic cooperation and networking, GFA experts strengthened the role of a private sector business association, Interprofession Oignon, in providing quality services to its members.

The Kenyan government launched its Agriculture Sector Development Strategy 2010 - 2020 (ASDS) in 2010 as the overarching policy for the sector across a number of sector ministries and a wide range of stakeholders. ASDS builds on the Strategy for Revitalizing Agriculture, and provides for policy reform and institutional changes,



improved participation among civil society and private sector stakeholders, and interventions that will improve transparency, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness. Based on a joint co-financing by GIZ and EU, GFA has been supporting the Agriculture Sector Coordination Unit (ASCU) in setting up an Agricultural Information Knowledge Management System (AIKMS) since 2012. AIKMS will serve as a one-stop gateway to agricultural knowledge and information, and to support capacity development of stakeholders involved in agricultural sector reforms. The objective is to collect and collate the rich but scattered and often inaccessible information on a single platform. Information is customized to stakeholders in policy development, trade, agribusiness, field management, academia, etc. This makes information and knowledge accessible to key national and international actors engaged in enhancing food production and to those seeking to communicate with farmers directly.

The Income Creation through Micro-Irrigation in Northern Mozambique project,

financed by Swiss Development Cooperation, aims at fostering rapid, sustained, and broad-based economic growth. Interventions in the Nacala Corridor's small-scale horticultural sector target a demand-driven market opportunities. The project seeks to enhance local farmers' competitiveness in comparison to foreign imports. This is to increase the income and reduce poverty among small-scale horticultural producers. Since 2012, GFA as a partner of Swisscontact has been rendering advisory services to the implementation activities that focus on four strategic crops: onions, tomato, cabbage and lettuce. Interventions relate to the introduction of new horticultural seeds and varieties from Brazil and the introduction of affordable irrigation solutions. Improved links between smallholders and medium or large buyers facilitate the know-how transfer on improved horticultural practices and strengthen Nampula as a horticultural trading hub. This process is further supported by upgrading the value chain with new standards, packaging and logistic services.

### **The way ahead**

Africa needs the continuous review and refinement of promotion and support approaches that link agricultural development to a systematic involvement of the private sector based on clear objectives to create a higher degree of local value creation. GFA incorporates this principal line of thinking in any type of new development challenge. The company's longstanding experience and the approach GFA experts take on when identifying suitable solutions is the basis for identifying innovative and locally acceptable answers to prevailing problems related to agricultural production and food security in Africa.

Contact Jan Sass  
jan.sass@gfa-group.de



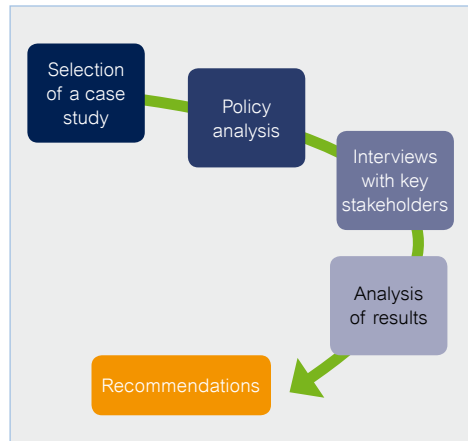
## The water, energy and food nexus – A new approach to development planning

GFA and the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) joined forces to explore the potential to integrate a nexus perspective in development projects. The latter refers to interdependencies across sectors and scales, the management and governance of which can support the transition to a green economy. In a pilot study in Zambia, the causal correlations between environment and human development were assessed in order to explore whether a nexus perspective can have an added value to the implementation of the policy framework.

The processes of agricultural production and energy generation are interlinked and often compete for the same resources, e.g. water and biomass. As agriculture is intensified at a rapid pace, this sector's demand for energy is rising as well. At the same time, there is a potential to increase energy production from the agriculture sector by using biomass originating from croplands such as biofuels or crop residues for bioenergy generation. The scope of these links across sectors depends on factors such as the development and direction of the energy sector. The water-energy-food (WEF) nexus concept addresses interrelated water, energy and food development challenges at different levels. Those who govern and manage these systems should be put in a better position to work together to meet human aspirations. Quantitative assessments of current and new policy frameworks and policy mechanisms that take interdependencies between food, energy, water and environment into account can inform decision making processes, investment planning and administrative procedures towards coherent and sustainable measures. A method for conducting a rapid appraisal of the WEF nexus was developed by GFA and SEI: a desk study of the current policy frameworks, stakeholder interviews and an indicative quantitative assessment of intersectoral dependencies.

### Case study in Zambia

Zambia was selected for a case study because GFA, through its engagement in GIZ and KfW co-financed development projects, has been involved in the country's water sector reforms since 2011, and has consequently established contacts at



*Rapid appraisal WEF nexus study method*

all levels of decision making. In addition, GFA has been supporting the organizational development of the Water Resources Management Authority (WARMA) since 2013. The development of the national water resource development strategy is a key activity in this context – and was an entry point to the integration of a nexus perspective. The case study included the assessment of water demand, energy security and food production. It was found that the current policy framework has inconsistencies, e.g. with regard to water and land use. Moreover, linkages between sectors and competition for resource use appear to be increasing over time. Issues involving water and biomass or land use within the agriculture and energy sectors are likely to become more pertinent in the future. A first estimation of future resources demand for agriculture illustrated a growing competition over water with the energy sector, higher energy needs, and a large potential for improving production on current croplands to

meet domestic food demand and sustain a growing export industry. The demand for water and land for bioenergy and hydropower production in the energy sector is far greater than the demands of the agricultural sector. But it is not possible for agriculture to substitute water and land to produce food. The energy sector, on the other hand, has the option of exploring less land and water intensive development pathways such as solar and wind power.

### Findings for future work

The main recommendation originating from the study was to strengthen cross-sector collaboration and dialogue. To this effect, quantitative assessments should be integrated to analyze the outcomes of new policy mechanisms, new policy and new technical innovations suggested by stakeholders. Such efforts will enable decision makers to move away from current reactive operational procedures to more proactive ones. In the long run, this will result in faster economic development while ensuring sustainable use of natural resources at the same time. The findings call for informed and strategic cross-sector linkages and planning. Reaching national development goals needs better integrated quantitative assessments of future development trajectories for the respective country that account for causal correlations between different sectors and competing demand for resources. In the future, GFA will integrate the pilot study findings and the resulting appraisal approach in its planning work for development projects.

Contact Lennart Woltering, Friedrich z. Heide  
[lennart.woltering@gfa-group.de](mailto:lennart.woltering@gfa-group.de),  
[friedrich.zurHeide@gfa-group.de](mailto:friedrich.zurHeide@gfa-group.de)



### Planning for dual study programs in the Palestinian territories taken up

The dual university study programs project, launched in February 2015, aims at fostering the employability of Palestinian youth through a reinforced labor market orientation of academic courses and tailor-made curricula. Participants from GFA, GIZ, Al-Quds University (AQU) and Steinbeis Foundation took up planning for the More Job Opportunities for Young People through Dual Study Programs project in the Palestinian Territories during a workshop in Ramallah in April 2015. Cooperation partners formulated implementation agreements for the four project components and reached a common understanding regarding key activities, timeframe, responsibilities and required resources. The related objectives are ambitious in striving to improve employment opportunities for Palestinian youth by three demand-driven dual study tracks in IT, electrical engineering and economics that are jointly developed with related companies. New dual study tracks are to be established for 200 youths, a quarter of which will be women. There will be employment options for at least 80 graduates out of the 200 students. To this effect, GFA together with the Baden-Wuerttemberg Cooperative State University and the Steinbeis Business Academy will introduce an innovative approach of dual higher education at the AQU that combines on-the-job training and academic studies. AQU offers labour market-oriented study programs in IT, electrical engineering and economics. The GFA team of experts will set up a new faculty under the umbrella of the university and develop tailor-made curricula, study courses and

practical guidelines. Moreover, GFA will establish cooperation networks between the university and the industrial sector, and will train multipliers for in-company training courses.

*christian.prange@gfa-group.de*

### Curricula development for sustainable spatial planning in the Horn of Africa

In November 2014, GFA started developing training materials for a series of courses on the application of geographic information system (GIS) and remote sensing (RS) for spatial planning. The 12-month project is part of GIZ capacity building efforts related to handling geo-information for spatial planning in the context of the Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative at the Inter-governmental Agency for Development (IGAD), an eight-country trade bloc comprising Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and Kenya. In its project-related work, GFA combines the company's long-standing expertise in land use planning, GIS and RS as well as adult education. The interventions have been designed to enhance the capacity of technical and senior managers of various IGAD institutions in using GIS and RS and related products for spatial planning. Within the IGAD region, land use planning is particularly challenging because of frequent cross-border movements of refugees and seasonal migration of people with their livestock. Climate change and recurrent drought conditions in the Horn of Africa add to these challenges. The GFA team have elaborated core training modules that cover five prioritized topics and target technical and senior managers. The initial training modules set a standard for additional ones and demonstrate the diversity of

aspects that can be integrated by means of GIS and RS. All training modules cover to up-to-date adult learning concepts, current spatial planning frameworks and practices, as well as novel geo-information data, tools and applications. At a later stage, IGAD will implement a full-scale training program.

*anke.schmoor@gfa-group.de*

### Certification process for vocational counselling officers in Pakistan

After an intensive training since January 2015, 31 participants from technical vocational education and training (TVET) institutions in Pakistan passed the International Certification Process of the German Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) for human resources and job placement officers. The total number of vocational counselling & job placement (VC&JP) trainers holding an international CCI certificate has been increased to 49. The objective of the TVET Reform Support Programme of GIZ is to establish a knowledge base and quality of service among people working in VC&JP. Since 2011, GFA has been responsible for the program's components 1-3, which comprises the certification process for vocational job counsellors in the context of improvement of job counselling and career guidance on operational level. Employers as main partners of VC&JP officers get a transparent and clear picture of the professional background and the provided services of each certified officer. Therefore, an internationally acknowledged CCI certificate is a great step to support the trust building process between the TVET sector and local employers.

*ricarda.lassek@gfa-group.de*

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GFA Consulting Group presently works in more than 90 countries and implementing about 250 projects and studies.

**GFA vision** – to be the partner of choice for clients in our core service areas.

**GFA mission** – to improve the livelihood of beneficiaries through our professional services.

**GFA core values** – to offer high performance in service delivery, technical excellence in our main sectors, innovative approaches and products, and credibility with our clients when putting projects into practice.