



Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations



## *“Strengthening linkages between small actors and buyers in the Roots and Tubers sector in Africa”*

### **WORK PLAN RWANDA**

#### **Introduction**

This document defines the work plan for the implementation of activities of the project “*Strengthening linkages between small actors and buyers in the Roots and Tubers sector in Africa*”. The project is funded by the EU under the intra-ACP programme and will be implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in close collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and other partners in Rwanda. The overall objective (Development goal) to which the project will contribute is increased food security and incomes of small producers. In Rwanda the project will focus on the Irish potato sector.

#### **Project Outputs**

1. Alignment of national and regional strategies with initiatives supporting the development of improved regional market integration for the potato sector
2. Improved competitiveness of potato value chains through sustainable intensification of production and value chain coordination
3. Improved access to information services and finance smallholders
4. Improved access to climatic risk management instruments for smallholders

Inputs for this work plan were sourced from a rapid desk review and bilateral stakeholder consultations to identify ongoing, recent or soon to begin initiatives in the potato commodity chain and R&T sector. This was followed by an inception workshop with representatives from government institutions, development partners, research institutes, NGOs, the private sector, financial institutions and farmers’ organizations.

Workshop participants were briefed on government policies and plans for the sector; an overview of the potato commodity value chain with key challenges and opportunities, the project framework, and a brief from each of the key stakeholder groups on their activities and how it related to the project framework. On the basis of these inputs, stakeholders discussed the proposed project activities and identified gaps the project could address, areas to be reinforced, or proposed project activities that needed to be eliminated.<sup>1</sup>

The following short analysis of the potato sector in Rwanda and the work plan are the result of this process.

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<sup>1</sup> For more details on the presentations and discussions, see the inception workshop report

# The Irish potato sector in Rwanda

## Policy and government programmes

The agricultural sector remains at the centre of Rwanda's development programmes. One of the Government of Rwanda's goals is to transform agriculture from subsistence to a modern sector as set out in the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS2) and Vision 2020.

Irish potato is one of the most important crops in Rwanda and is one of the government's six priority crops falling under the Crop Intensification Program (CIP). Rwanda is the 6<sup>th</sup> largest producer of potatoes in the region which is significant given the relative land size of the country. The country plans to increase production from the current (2013) 2,240,000 Mt per year to 6,000,000 Mt per year by 2019 by expanding the area under potato production from 130,000 in 2010 to 200,000ha and yield increases.

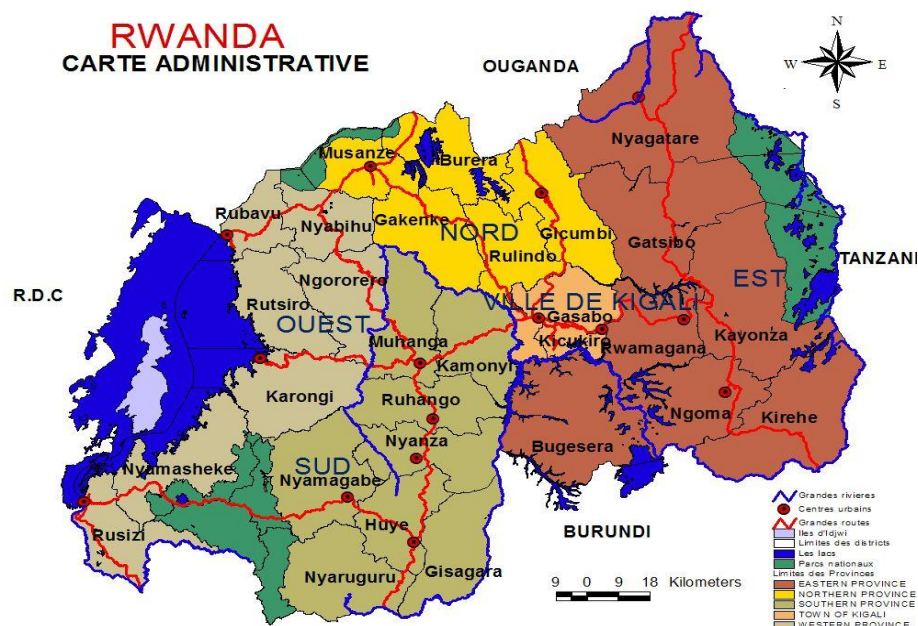
The key pillars of the governments' Irish potato strategy are:

- Strengthening the potato national research program,
- Large scale multiplication of quality potato seeds,
- Organization of the seed market, advisory services to seed producers and potato farmers,
- Development of post-harvest and value addition activities for Irish potato.

In addition to CIP the potato value chain also benefits from the government's Land Consolidation Programme, and the National Post-harvest Staple crop strategy. Policies that affect trade in Irish potatoes include the Domestic trade law; the 2008 instruction (agtrade), the cross border trade strategy of 2014; the common market within EAC and COMESA.

## Potato production

Potato is cultivated across the country, however four districts in the north-west (Rubavu, Musanze, Nyabihu and Burera) are responsible for over 60% of the production. There are two growing seasons, the main season A from the end of February to early July and season B from September to early February.



Minagri reported that the average yield in 2013 was 14.8 mt/ha but the best farmers are reported to reach 30 mt/ha with improved varieties, clean seed potatoes and improved agricultural practices.

Seeds produced in Rwanda are classified into 4 categories namely: Breeder/ Foundation seeds; Basic seeds; Certified seeds and Quality declared seeds (multiplied by farmers).

Although Irish potato is a profitable crop, farmers do not invest in high quality seeds, either due to lack of working capital or lack of access to quality seed. The use of improved varieties increases profitability but only if combined with improved agronomic practices (proper rotation, use of fertilizers and pesticides).

The production of certified quality seed of Irish potato is very limited (2% of total seed planted). The private sector is hardly involved due to low effective demand from farmers, low availability of foundation and basic seed for multiplication and restrictions on import of basic seed by the private sector. Currently the Rwanda Agriculture Board (RAB) is involved in production as well as quality control of seed potatoes. Most stakeholders agree that the new seed law should separate these two roles and aim for an active participation of the private sector in certified seed production. In addition, due to informal cross-border trade of seed potatoes, a certain degree of harmonization between national regulations is called for.

There are important national level activities (INES, RAB, IFDC) supporting the development of the national seed system. At the same time, improving the informal seed system will be necessary, through upscaling farmer training on positive selection (through FFS) and through improved local seed storage.

### **Value chain linkages, access to finance and climate risk management tools**

There is a lack of storage capacity in production zones and as a consequence, the Irish potato price is low during harvest as farmers sell all their harvest quickly to avoid damages. At the same time, some storage capacity is underutilised: member cooperatives of the federation of potato farmers (FECOPORWA) are facing challenges in managing their collection centres as farmers often prefer to sell individually.

The potato processing industry in production zones is still very new, with two new medium scale processors (Nyabihu Potato Company in Nyabihu and Hollanda FairFoods in Musanze) and the smaller Life Secret Company in Musanze. These processing projects all receive support to organize their procurement from smallholder cooperatives.

For the fresh market, potatoes arrive at night at the wholesale market in Kigali, and are sold several times from trader to trader with little value addition like bulking or sorting. The Ministry of Commerce is organizing traders to improve coordination between traders and farmer cooperatives.

Most buyers such as restaurants and small scale processors in Kigali buy potatoes on local spot markets. According to a market study by CIP (2010) Rwanda did not import any frozen chips; restaurants make their own chips from fresh potatoes. High quality hotels such as Kivu Sun in Gisenyi, Intercontinental and Milles Collines in Kigali, have special suppliers who select good quality potatoes and deliver directly to them.

There is regular cross-border trade in both ware potatoes and seed potatoes with Uganda, DR Congo, Burundi and Tanzania.

There are many ongoing investment programmes targeting farmers and small and medium sized enterprises in the sector, such as the Business Development Fund (BDF), a company mandated to implement the “Access to Finance” objective of the National SME Development Policy. Other examples are the USAID Private Sector Driven Agricultural Growth (PSD-AG) project and SME focused credit lines from the European Investment Bank to three Rwandan banks.

Support is nonetheless needed to improve linkages by building the capacity of both providers and recipients of financial products, risk management services, including commercial banks and insurance companies. For instance, financial services providers are not always equipped to access or use data collected by government statistical services (NISR) on production and trade volumes and by meteorological institutes on weather and climate.

## **Work plan activities**

### **Output 1 Alignment of national and regional strategies with the development of improved regional market integration for the potato sector**

#### **Seed system policies (in combination with sub-output 2.2, activity i and ii)**

Because of the regular cross-border trade in both ware potatoes and seed potatoes with Uganda, DR Congo, Burundi and Tanzania a regional approach to policy alignment is key for supporting Rwanda with the development of the seed system.

The following activities will address these problems:

- Output 1 will begin with a regional workshop on policies affecting the development of potato seed systems in East Africa. The workshop will bring together policy makers and stakeholders in the potato seed sector from Rwanda, Uganda, DRC, Kenya, Burundi and Tanzania. At the workshop, existing and planned policies will be presented and analysed, building on the Roadmap for Investment in the Seed Potato Value Chain in Eastern Africa (CIP 2011) and more recent analysis by the Pasic project in Uganda (IITA/IFPRI/EPRC), work by IFDC and RAB in Rwanda, and studies in other EAC countries such as by Lei (2013) for Kenya. The objective of the workshop is to formulate policy recommendations and to harmonize national strategies to develop stronger potato seed systems with increased private sector involvement.

Key partners: EAC, COMESA, ASARECA, CIP, PASIC (IITA/IFPRI/EPRC)

Recommendations and decisions made at the regional workshop will be immediately followed-up at the national level. Activities will include

- An analysis of the implications that the draft seed policy may have on the potato seed sector
- A national workshop to analyse the results of the findings from the regional workshop and their implications for Rwanda and the analysis of the draft seed policy. The project will focus its capacity building activities to support the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Trade on the development of private sector led strategies to increase the availability of good quality seed potatoes.

Key partners: RAB, CIP

### **Trade policies**

Rwanda is among the top five Irish potato producers in Africa and is thus well placed to benefit from the increased demand for potato products in the region. However, so far no analysis has been conducted on how various policies affect potato trade, both domestically and within the region, and if there are any misalignment that may hamper the growth of this trade.

There has also been a recent increase in the number of national actors and projects supporting the development of the value chain but there is no mechanism in place to coordinate these actors.

The following activities will address these issues:

- Mapping and analysis of trade policies for ware potatoes looking at the Internal Trade Law, the 2008 instructions on agricultural Product trade, the 2014 cross border trade strategy cross-border trade, sanitary and phyto-sanitary standards and certification and packaging materials.
- National workshop to present and discuss the results of the trade policy mapping, identification of required reforms and the development of an action plan.
- The aforementioned national workshop will also be held back-back with a consultation on the possible establishment of a national potato platform. This meeting will be informed by a report on findings from a survey of stakeholders on the topic and an appraisal of what has worked and not worked and good practices identified from the experiences of other commodity chains in Rwanda and the region.

Key partners: Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Agriculture, IMBARAGA, FECOPORWA, EAC

### **Outputs:**

- Regional policy appraisals and policy recommendations on potato seed systems in the region;
- Public and private sector institutions formulate and implement policy reforms that reinforce the development of private-sector led seed systems;
- Appraisal of policies that affect domestic and regional potato trade and recommendations
- Public and private sector institutions formulate and implement policy reforms that reinforce the development of potato trade;
- Report on level of interest, good practices and a draft strategy for the development of a potato platform.

### **Output 2 Improved competitiveness of potato value chains through sustainable intensification of production and value chain coordination**

In addition to the value chain bottleneck caused by the weak seed system, the competitiveness of the chain is also challenged by a lack of storage capacity in production zones and weak coordination between farmers groups and potential buyers. The coordination needs to be driven by the buyers and processors in the chain so that farmers can respond to the market's needs. However, support to these drivers also needs to be balanced with ongoing strengthening of farmer organizations' capacities to ensure inclusive and fair market systems.

The following activities will address these problems:

### **Sub-output 2.1 Inclusive business models developed for domestic and regional procurement**

- An economic feasibility study will be conducted for investment in storage capacity of ware and seed potatoes, building on ongoing pilots of different storage techniques by the International Potato Centre with IMBARAGA and RAB (for seed storage) and in Uganda (for ware potatoes). The study will result in estimated return on investment and recommendations on the required management structures and capacity needs to ensure that investments in storage are sustainable.
- The identification of buyers with potential for driving inclusive growth in the chain will result from a diagnostic mapping, including an appraisal of their business practices. Buyers may be hotels, traders, and restaurants but also small producers of potato chips in Kigali or other urban centres. The appraisal will work back from the buyers to identify those farmers groups and SMEs most capable of responding to targeted buyers' needs. Activities 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 below will subsequently target support for these farmer organizations and SMEs.
  - The appraisal will consider potential changes in business practices which would make buyers' business models more inclusive, e.g. willingness to have regular contracts with farmer organizations, more flexible and rapid payment methods, acceptance of smaller consignments, support with transport, procuring from women's or youth groups etc.
  - An analysis of the financial flows and services, both internal to the chain and external (from third parties providers) will also take place.
- With the identified buyers and farmer groups, further activities under the inclusive business model approach will be implemented. The first step will be to organize producer-buyer meetings to increase mutual understanding of business practices and needs and to identify, in a participatory approach, bottlenecks and potential solutions in the trading relationship.
- Subsequently, the development of upgraded business models and their implementation will be facilitated. These activities may include the facilitation of additional business linkages such as with entrepreneurs managing stores, transporters and seed producers.
- The work of the Rwanda Cooperative Agency on developing contract farming operations for cooperatives, financial service providers and traders for potato will be reinforced to support contractual relations between the selected value chain actors as appropriate. This activity will build on the experience and capacity building programme under FAO's resource centre on contract farming.
- Regional workshop to exchange lessons on promoting inclusive business models and on the roles of SMEs and traders in potato value chains

### **Sub-output 2.2 Sustainable market-led production intensification**

- The members of farmer groups identified in sub-output 2.1 will be enrolled in a Farmer Field School (FFS) programme to be implemented in collaboration with RAB and the government extension services, including training of trainers and subsequent farmer training. This will build on the ongoing Farmer Field School programme of the Belgian Cooperation. The FFS programme will include positive selection techniques and seed storage and test RAB & IFDC promising fertilizer recommendations.

### **Sub-output 2.3 Producer organization skills enhanced in agribusiness management practices**

- The same groups will also be trained in agribusiness management skills, with special attention to potential women farmer leaders. The agribusiness management training will be customized to the potato commodity and will build on similar training materials developed under the EU's AAACP commodities project.
- An internship programme, for managers of farmer organizations will begin at the end of year 1 and run consecutively through to year three of the project. Placements will be identified in farmer organizations that have demonstrated high calibre management structures and processes as well as in agro-food processing firms and traders firms. All interns will be expected to write a 10 page report on the findings and lessons from their experiences.

Key Partners: FECOPORWA, RCA

#### **Sub-output 2.4 Strengthened SMEs in value additional and better business practices**

- Training to SMEs, in the major potato production zones (Nyabihu, Rubavu, Musanze and Burera districts), on marketing, value addition, good business practices, hygiene standards, packaging techniques and transport and storage management.
- Based on the appraisal of business practices of SMEs under 2.1 above, guidance will be developed for SMEs that support the introduction of business practices that will facilitate procurement from smallholders – e.g. introduction of standing orders; more rapid payment systems; organized transport etc.
- In close collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce and Trade, coordination on the chain's demand side will be strengthened by reinforcing or catalysing the organization of associations of SMEs and traders. This activity will be closely coordinated with activity 1.3. on the establishment of a commodity or value chain platform. This may include training to potato SME and trader associations on relevant management topics; association management and governance; negotiation and advocacy;

Key partners: FECOPORWA etc..

#### **Outputs under output 2:**

- estimated return on investment and recommended management structures for investments in potato storage capacity
- a diagnostic mapping of buyers of fresh ware potatoes, including an appraisal of their business practices and financial flows.
- identified bottlenecks and potential solutions in the trading relationship
- upgraded business models have been designed and implemented.
- Increased farmer knowledge of appropriate agronomic practices, positive seed selection and storage
- Leaders of potato farmer organizations are better equipped to manage these organizations and the collective activities they undertake
- SMEs staff have increased management and technical skills
- SMEs and traders in the potato sector will be sensitized on the benefit of organizing at the national level so that they may be represented in policy dialogue.

### **Output 3 and 4 Improved access to climate information services and finance for smallholders**

The development of appropriate insurance products for value chain actors would benefit from increased sharing of agricultural statistics and weather related information and the capacity by financial service providers and value chain actors to use this information effectively.

The following activities will address this issue:

- Support government statistical services (NISR) to develop a strategy that improve the dissemination and availability of useful information on production and trade volumes of roots and tubers to develop financial and insurance products and services.
- Support the Rwanda Meteorological Service (RMS), Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA) to analyse the impacts of climate variability on production and price fluctuations of potato and develop related information services for farmer organizations, SME and traders' associations and financial service providers and insurance companies.
- Organize forums between financial institutions, insurance providers and SME's for a better mutual understanding of business practices, risks and needs. To select the most appropriate financial institutions, this will be preceded by a diagnostic mapping of financial institutions that already offer agricultural financial products, and possibly have already been involved in the development of specific insurance products.
- Train financial institutions and insurance companies on value chain finance approaches for potato, with a focus on risk assessment, investment strategies and development of appropriate financial and insurance products for SMEs. Explore options for the development of weather index insurance products for potato farmers.
- Train SMEs (ref activity under 2.4 above) on financial management and to address constraints that limit access to finance.
- Sub-regional workshop for knowledge sharing on trade and production related solutions to climate risks and resource availability

Key partners: NISR, RMS, REMA, IMBARAGA, FECOPORWA, CLECAM

### **Outputs under output 3 and 4**

- strategy to disseminate useful information on production and trade volumes of roots and tubers
- impact analysis of climate variability on production and price fluctuations of potato
- related information services for farmer organizations
- diagnostic map of financial institutions that already offer agricultural financial (insurance) products.
- Increased capacities of financial institutions and insurance companies to develop appropriate products for potato farmers and SMEs
- SME staff has increased financial management skills

### **Implementation arrangements**

Implementation will begin as soon as the work plan has been validated and will be updated on an annual basis and after the mid-term evaluation.



Implementation arrangements will depend on the type of activity, as indicated in the following table. All activities will be carried out in close collaboration with the key partners, namely USAID and IFDC, indicated above to avoid duplication of efforts and to reinforce synergies from partners and FAO's initiatives. Oversight will be assured by the project focal point within the Ministry of Agriculture. Project coordination will be assured by the project coordinators in Rome and Accra as well as by the FAO Representation in Rwanda. This project will also be reinforced and operated in close collaboration with two other FAO projects;

- a Government of Norway supported project focussed on the reduction of food losses in six priority food value chains (maize, potato, milk, tomato, beans and cassava). The work is being directed by the Rwanda Agriculture Board with technical guidance from FAO's global Food Loss and Waste Reduction (SAVE FOOD) Initiative and is in collaboration with IFAD.
- a multidonor trust fund providing capacity building to staff in the agricultural investment unit in MINAGRI and public private investment companies to ensure that investment funding passing through these actors contributes to inclusive agribusiness development (FMM/GLO/102/MUL)

Proposed Activity schedule. implementation modalities and budget

Act. N° prodoc	Activity	Implementation modality and partners	2015	2016	2017	2018
all	Preparatory consultation & project inception workshop					
<b>Output 1 Strategies are aligned with regional market integration</b>						
	<b>Seed system policies (with sub-output 2.2)</b>					
1.2 iii	Regional workshop on seed system policies in East Africa affecting the potato sector	Letter of Agreement with SP / consultant to prepare background documentation and organize workshop. In collaboration with EAC, ASARECA and CIP	X			
2.2 i	Study on the status of seed system and agronomic practices in Rwanda, including analysis of implications of draft seed policy for the potato sector.	LoA/consultant. In collaboration with RAB and CIP	X			
1.1 ii / 2.2 ii	Multi-stakeholder workshop to discuss lessons from regional workshop and study and develop national strategy to improve access to quality seed, including improving quality of seed from the informal sector.	LoA / Directly by FAO with help consultant  In collaboration RAB, CIP and IFDC		X		
	<b>Trade policies</b>					
1.1 i	Mapping and analysis of trade policies with attention to cross-border trade, sanitary and phyto-sanitary standards and certification and packaging materials	Consultant.		X		
1.2 ii	National multi-stakeholder workshop to present and discuss results of the trade policy mapping and analysis and follow-up policy guidance	LoA / Directly by FAO with help consultant			X	
1.2 i	Survey of stakeholders and analysis of other	Consultant		X	X	X

Act. N° prodoc	Activity	Implementation modality and partners	2015	2016	2017	2018
	commodity platforms in Rwanda in support to the establishment of a national multi-stakeholder platform on Irish potatoes	In collaboration with MinAgri, MiniCom IMBARAGA, FECOPORWA etc.				
<b>Output 2 Improved competitiveness of the potato value chain</b>						
	<b>2.1 Inclusive business models</b>					
2.1 ii / 2.4 ii	Business model appraisal of storage facilities: economic feasibility study for various storage models	Consultant Build on work already done by CIP, RAB and IMBARAGA	X			
2.1.ii	Business model appraisal of fresh potato value chains: Diagnostic mapping of the largest buyers of fresh potatoes and appraisal of their procurement practices and of business practices of intermediate traders, and financial services	Consultant	X			
2.1.iii	Based on results 2.1 ii, organization of producer – buyer forums identifying bottleneck in trading relationships	Consultant / LoA with SP	X			
2.1 iv	With interested buyers and suppliers, develop upgraded business models	Consultant / LoA		X		
2.1 v	Assist with the implementation of upgraded business models	Consultant / LoA		X	X	
3.2 iii	Support RCA to facilitate contract farming arrangements in selected value chains as appropriate	Collaborate with the Rwanda Cooperative Agency			X	

Act. N° prodoc	Activity	Implementation modality and partners	2015	2016	2017	2018
	<b>2.2 Sustainable production intensification</b>					
2.2 iv	Training of trainers for the FFS approach	In collaboration with RAB and extension services	X			
2.2 v	Implement Farmer Field Schools with farmer groups selected under 2.1 and additional FOs if funds allow	In collaboration with RAB and extension services		X	X	
	<b>2.3 PO agribusiness management skills</b>					
2.3 i	Training of the same farmer groups in agribusiness management	LoA with local service provider In collaboration with IMBARAGA and FECOPORWA		X	X	
2.3 ii	Training for potential female farmer leaders in management, literacy and numeracy	LoA with local service provider In collaboration with IMBARAGA and FECOPORWA		X	X	
2.3 iii	Organization of an internship programme between FOs	LoA with local service provider In collaboration with IMBARAGA and FECOPORWA			X	
	<b>2.4 Strengthened SMEs</b>					
2.4 i	Staff of SMEs will be trained in value addition, good business practices, hygiene standards, packaging techniques and transport and storage management.	LoA with local service provider		X	X	
2.4 ii	Appraisal of SME business practices, focussing on procurement and transport arrangements and develop guidance to improve procurement from smallholders (feeding into training programmes)	LoA with local service provider		X		
	<b>Regional lesson learning on Output 2</b>					
2.1 vii & viii and 2.4	Regional workshop to exchange lessons on promoting inclusive business models and on the roles of SMEs and traders in potato value chains					X

Act. N° prodoc	Activity	Implementation modality and partners	2015	2016	2017	2018
iv & v	and development of policy recommendations					
<b>Output 3 and 4 Financial services and climate information services and risk management tools</b>						
3.1 i	Work with government statistical services to identify ways to improve access of financial service providers to information on production and trade volumes of roots and tubers products	In collaboration with the National Institute of Statistics Rwanda (NISR)	X			
4.1 i / 4.2 i	Analysis of impacts of climate variability on production, price fluctuations and risks in the potato sector	In collaboration with Rwanda Meteorological services (RMS), Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA)	X			
4.1 ii	Develop new and/or updated climate information services to farmer organizations, financial service providers and insurance companies	With RMS, REMA and IMBARAGA and FECOPORWA		X	X	
4.2 i	Develop with stakeholders location specific risk management strategies			X	X	
3.1 ii	Mapping and analysis of financial institutions already offering agricultural and insurance products. Organization of forums between financial institutions, insurance companies and SMEs for a better mutual understanding of business practices, risks and needs.			X		
3.1 iii / 3.2 i / 4.2 i	Training of local financial institutions and insurance companies on value chain finance approaches for potato, risk assessment and investment strategies. Develop appropriate insurance products including products that address climate related risks such as weather index insurance.			X	X	

<b>Act. N° prodac</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Implementation modality and partners</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
3.1.iv	Training of SMEs on financial management and addressing constraints that limit access to financial services.			X	X	
	<b>Regional lesson learning workshop</b>					
2.2 vii & 4.2 iii	Sub-regional workshop for knowledge sharing on trade and production related solutions to climate risks and resource availability					X

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