Equitable Prosperity/Maendeleo Sawa (M-SAWA) Kenya – Lead Firm Profile

Company: Equator Kenya Limited

**Quick Facts**

**Sector:** Agriculture/Agribusiness

**Core Business/Subsector:** African Bird-Eye (ABE) Chilies

**Initiative Duration:** July 2016 to July 2019

**Number of SEs targeted:** 10,000 (6,300 Female)

**Target Counties:** Kwale, Kilifi, Lamu, and Tana River

**Leadership:** Woman owned

**Management:** Regularly audited financials, tax compliant, valid operating licenses, >USD 300,000 in revenues and >USD 100,000 in sales in 2016

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**Meeting with Faraja Bahati Farmer Group in Kilifi**

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**Business Profile**

Equator Kenya Ltd. is a privately-owned company incorporated in 2010 that exports premium quality ABE Chilies in the coastal region of Kenya. The company is involved in the production, collection, central drying and export of produce working with smallholder farmers as out-growers. The company purchases fresh chillies from a network of over 7,000 smallholder farmers; processes and packages them at their plant in Malindi, Kilifi and exports a fully traceable product to Europe, Japan and the USA.

Through its collaboration with MEDA as part of the M-SAWA project, Equator aims to increase production and export of chillies to meet growing market demand. This will be accomplished through improving farmer production and profitability, as well as, increasing the number of active farmers in its out-grower network to 10,000.

**Key Commitments**

**Business:**
- 1) Reduce rain fed dependency;
- 2) Increase farmers’ income;
- 3) Increase productivity through good quality farm inputs;
- 4) Increase production through increased number of farmers.

**Gender:**
- 1) Mentoring and training of gender champions/focal persons, and sensitization on gender equality (GE) at workplace;
- 2) Training on GE and mainstreaming;
- 3) Incorporating GE in Global Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) training package.

**Environment:**
- 1) Promotion of conservation agriculture to farmers through train the trainer (TOT) model;
- 2) Facilitate improved access of safe and green inputs and technologies to farmers.

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**Highlights of Progress to Date (As of March 31, 2017)**

1. **Business** – 6 demo farms established to be used for training of farmers during field days; 9 Field days undertaken benefiting 679 farmers (157M/522F); training sessions underway for farmers focused on 6 topics: Nursery Management (437M/1218F), Field preparation and transplanting (126M/318F), Irrigation Systems (140M/495F), Nutrients (242M/838 F), Scouting and Safe use of Pesticides (210M/692F), Harvest and Post-harvest Management (137M/399F).

2. **Gender** – 2 staff (1F) nominated as gender champions, gender-focused TOT session conducted for 26 Equator staff members (7F), action plans developed to extend knowledge to SEs through GAP package.

3. **Environment** – 26 staff members (7F) trained on environmental sustainability; Environmental Action Plans (EAP) developed, TOT sessions incorporated environmental principles particularly training on Nutrients and Scouting/Safe use of Pesticides; mapping conducted of farmers eligible to receive irrigation technology.

*NOTE: Progress figures are based on information provided by the Lead Firm as of May 31, 2017, but not yet fully validated. Final verification will be completed shortly.

M = Male; F = Female; SEs = Small Entrepreneurs.