



# Organic mangoes from Burkina Faso

gebana and sequa support smallholder cooperatives



## The challenge

Burkina Faso has few educational opportunities and almost no vocational training schemes. More than 80 per cent of the population live and work in rural areas and farm primarily for their own needs. However, some agricultural products are sold on international markets. These include mangoes from the city of Bobo-Dioulasso. But competition from other producing countries is tough.

Many producer cooperatives therefore focus on higher-quality organic farming in order to boost their sales in highly priced market segments. Organic farming is challenging, as is the certification of products. As it is difficult to store and transport fresh fruits, the mangoes are mostly dried locally. This can result in microbiological contamination. In addition, the fruit often lose moisture, colour or taste. The quality of local mango products can only be improved if the agricultural producers are trained accordingly and acquire specialised technical knowledge. At the same time it is important to use modern equipment for processing, packaging and quality control in order to fulfil the necessary criteria for certification.

*‘The solid quality assurance system, which we are also able to set up thanks to the develoPPP.de project with sequa, is key in the growing turnover generated by selling certified mangoes.’*

Stefan Lanz, Director of Systems and Projects at gebana AG

## The solution

The Swiss firm gebana AG, which has been operating in the fair trade sector for 40 years, recognised this opportunity and launched a develoPPP.de development partnership together with sequa GmbH. With the develoPPP.de programme, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) promotes sustainable engagement by companies in developing countries and emerging economies. Through the project, the partners have been working with cooperatives based around the city of Bobo-Dioulasso on improving the harvest yields and quality of organic mangoes. This is being achieved with a coordinated mix of further training measures, supportive research projects and targeted investments, for example in a facility for CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral drying. Through these measures, gebana secures a reliable source of dried organic mangoes that are sold on the European market. This provides rising and sustainable incomes for some 600 farmers and – particularly female – employees of the local drying facilities.

## Our services

The project partners helped set up a training room with an adjacent quality laboratory in Bobo-Dioulasso. Here the farmers and employees of processing companies learn how to produce mangoes in accordance with quality, organic and fair trade standards. The training plan includes organic farming, organic pest control, organic certification, processing, quality assurance and marketing.



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Another important step was the training of six employees of the partner cooperatives to become extension workers and of 24 employees of the mango processing companies to become food safety and hygiene inspectors in accordance with European guidelines.

To supplement the newly acquired knowledge, the technical conditions must be improved so that the farmers can produce internationally competitive products. That is why gebana also supports research projects and investments along the mango value chain. In cooperation with Ökozentrum Langenbruck in Switzerland, the company has for instance developed a model CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral drying plant for the environmentally friendly production of dried mangoes. Ways in which mango waste can be used to create energy will also be tested in a pilot plant.

## Impacts and results

- The quality standards and productivity of seven mango-producing cooperatives with some 600 predominantly female employees have been raised.
- Six employees of the cooperatives instruct independent producers on site; 24 employees from mango processing businesses have been trained as health and hygiene inspectors.
- 254 mango farmers have been trained in organic farming and 243 employees of mango processing businesses have been trained in logistic and hygiene measures.

- 72 mango farmers and 19 businesses have achieved organic certification so far.
- Mango sales at gebana have risen by 80 per cent; turnover has increased by 100 per cent.
- A CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral dryer for mangoes has been developed together with Ökozentrum Langenbruck and a pilot plant for the conversion of mango waste has been tested.

### At a glance

<b>Duration</b>	10 March 2013 – 9 March 2015
<b>Country</b>	Burkina Faso
<b>Objective</b>	Increased production and improved quality of dried organic mangoes through knowledge transfer and investments in innovative technologies for smallholder cooperatives.
<b>Partners</b>	gebana and sequa
<b>Results</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Higher productivity and quality standards in seven mango producing and processing cooperatives with some 600 employees.</li><li>• 80 per cent increase in export quantities, accompanied by higher sales prices and income for the producers.</li><li>• Organic certification of 72 additional farmers and 19 small processing businesses.</li><li>• New carbon-neutral drying plant.</li></ul>

Published by

Deutsche Gesellschaft für  
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH  
Registered Offices: Bonn and Eschborn, Germany  
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A project of

develoPPP.de



Implemented by



On behalf of

Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation  
and Development (BMZ)

Division

Cooperation with the Private Sector

As at

August 2015

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.