

Partner Event Report – Agribusiness Market Ecosystem Alliance

Partner Event Number, Date and Time:
7 September 2020, 13:00-14:00
Partner Event Title and Organizers:
Transforming Agri-SMEs and Farmer Organizations in Africa; AMEA (Agribusiness Market Ecosystem Alliance)
Key speakers/presenters:
<p>Led by Mark Blackett (AMEA) with Fanja Ravoavy (IFC), Richard Midikira (Aceli Africa), Peter Nduati (Africa Turnaround Ltd.), and Nicholas Ambanya (Twiga Foods Ltd.) as panellists.</p> <p>The session included four videos with inputs from ACDI/VOCA, NCBA-CLUSA, SCOPEinsight, IFC, IDH, Aceli Africa, Africa Turnaround Ltd, Kenya Commercial Bank (MobiGrow programme), Twiga Foods Ltd. and farmer organisations in Uganda and Tanzania.</p>
Main themes/issues discussed
<p>AMEA addressed the following key issues through a series of videos (click on the highlighted links to view the videos):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The delivery of Technical Assistance (TA) must be targeted to the most essential business needs and should aim to enable Farmer Organisations (FOs) to meet market and bankability requirements. 2. Technical Assistance must innovate to include virtual delivery. This can enable trainees to have greater choice to learn and when to learn. It should also lead to a reduction in the cost of Technical Assistance which allows the approach to be scaled and sustained during crises such as COVID-19. 3. An ecosystem of services must be in place to enable upgrading of skills and technology across the value chain. This will allow additional value to be created which is essential to incentivise Farmer Organisations and Agri-enterprises to invest. 4. Technical Assistance must be coordinated, and quality assurance improved to incentivise performance of both service providers and recipients.



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Summary of key points

None of the issues above have easy solutions. To meet the needs of FOs and market stakeholders, we need to work together. This means providing an ecosystem of effective services, integrating financial institutions into project design and offering blended, tiered technical assistance as well as working with local government representatives. For scalable and systematic change, we need a standardized approach to delivering technical assistance and building FO capacity. When we have common understanding and goals, collaboration and success are more likely.

COVID-19 has presented us with an opportunity to assess our past and present interventions and innovate. Virtual delivery of training combined with remote one to one coaching has significant potential to lower the cost of technical assistance and enable it to become more targeted and scaled. There are still challenges to overcome (such as internet connectivity and access to devices) however there is clear demand from farmer organizations for this new approach, and we hope that Governments will continue to enable investment in infrastructure to enable millions of farmers to benefit from these new opportunities.

Call to Action Key Points

The Agribusiness Market Ecosystem Alliance (AMEA) is committed to enabling members and partners to find better ways to accelerate the development of Farmer Organizations.

AMEA endorses the call from most presenters at AGRF 2020 for an ecosystem approach to be adopted and that this approach must be applied across the value chain, from end to end. The development of Farmer Organizations cannot be forgotten and a system has to be built in many countries. This system must also serve all Farmer Organizations and not just the 10% that currently have potential to be business partners and credit-worthy. This is the intention of the IWA29 Guidelines for Professional Farmer Organizations (<https://www.iso.org/standard/75808.html>).

AMEA therefore calls on all public and private sector stakeholders to find new ways to collaborate to build a system that enables coordination, collaboration, accountability and impact at scale. AMEA stands ready to work with both public and private sector stakeholders and we encourage them to become AMEA members or partners.

To learn more go to <https://www.ameaglobal.org/> and the full videos are available at <https://www.ameaglobal.org/resources>