



Global Agri-Business Incubation
Network's

e-Newsletter

Issue 12

AAIN exclusive

Key Promoters of the GABI e-Newsletter



Dr Yemi Akinbamiyo shares his thoughts on AAIN with us in this AAIN special edition

Dr Yemi Akinbamiyo is the Executive Director, Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA). He has previously worked with the African Union Commission as the Head of Agriculture and Food Security.

With the upcoming FARA 15 Celebrations and the African Agribusiness Incubator Network (AAIN) conference, we caught up with Dr Yemi for a short chat on his plans for the future. Here are the excerpts:



What is UniBRAIN and how it is unique from other FARA initiatives? What is AAIN?

University, Business and Research in Agricultural Innovation (UniBRAIN) is an initiative for advancing agribusiness incubation and improved agribusiness education for enhancing the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Africa. It is supported by The Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DANIDA) and facilitated by a consortium of seven partner institutions. One of these is the lead institution Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), which hosts the UniBRAIN Coordination facility at its Secretariat in Accra, Ghana.

AAIN or the African Agribusiness Incubator Network formed recently by the UniBRAIN interest group aims to work together as a Pan-African community of agribusiness incubators bringing together industry leaders, incubation managers, and partnership organizations with both state and non-state actors at continental level, to have the potential of providing Africa a strong policy and advocacy platform that can engage with other incubators and organizations globally for benefitting the entrepreneurial community in Africa. The growth of the start-ups, SMEs & mid-size companies shall boost the agriculture in African and benefit the farming community in large.

What will be the future trends of agribusiness in the next 5 years in Africa?

Nearly 70% of Africa's 955 million people derive their primary livelihoods from agriculture. Agriculture, including agribusiness, is projected to be a \$1 trillion USD industry in sub-Saharan Africa by 2030 (World Bank 2013). Therefore there is tremendous potential for investment in agribusiness. In September 2009, the G20 recognized agricultural development as a central activity for African development, echoing the calls of the World Development Report (World Bank 2007 the "Our Common Interest" Report (Commission for Africa 2005) and most recently the African Heads of State at World Economic Forum in Cape Town called for increased agricultural investment (NEPAD 2013). From most of the industry perspective and developmental institutions, Africa is posed to see the next big trend in agribusiness.

The Africa Commission, proposed five concrete initiatives to do something about creating jobs and better incomes including an innovative approaches for promoting post primary education and research, which has two components:

- a. Promoting demand driven technical and vocational skills development particularly among out of school youth in rural areas.
- b. Linking university education, research and private sector development in sustainable agriculture and agribusiness.

This converges into development of programs which brings in all partners like research institutions, educational institutions and the business entities to work together to achieve it.

What is the need to form a group like AAIN in the current agricultural scenario?

Africa is gearing up to be in the next phase of its millennium development goals which primarily focus on the development of agriculture and support agribusinesses in the continent.

Primarily, Africa has been an import economy for many of the industrial and food processing sector in the past. A lot of developmental activities supported by various nations and donor agencies have contributed to the development of agriculture and agribusiness in particular.

This has resulted in inclination of many of the youth and women to start agribusiness ventures in a small scale and more so given opportunities for many others to enter into business for their livelihood opportunities.

Providing these enthusiastic entrepreneurs a support system becomes a necessity to make them successful and show them as role models to others. The incubator system provides such a platform wherein the entrepreneurs are groomed and made them succeed in their business. Thus, a new trend of establishment of agribusiness incubator off-late has been in spree. Such incubators across various agri value chains and countries need to work together with a common motive and more critically sharing experiences with each other to adopt the best model for their local entrepreneurial segment. Thus, there comes the role of AAIN.

AAIN aims to be a world class networking and advocacy platform that encourages entrepreneurship, innovations in agriculture through the establishment of incubators, leading to sustainable agricultural development in Africa. It aims to make agribusinesses global, sustainable and flourish in Africa in the future!

How does AAIN help the aspiring and the existing agripreneurs of Africa?

A lot of technologies have been developed by various governmental and developmental institutions in various parts of Africa. These technologies and products have relevance to various other countries but due to lack of partnership models we are unable to reap the benefits when it comes to cross country delivery mechanisms. AAIN poise to eliminate this gap and bring together the various successful models across the continent. Its core values of entrepreneurship, innovation, agro-technology commercialization, partnership, customer value creation, focus on youth, development, fund mobilization and venture capital assistance shall work for the overall development of agripreneurs and agribusiness environment in the region.

What role will a platform like AAIN play to serve the entrepreneurs outside Africa?

AAIN has been initiated by UniBRAIN and its six Agribusiness Innovation Incubator Consortia (AIICs) partners and gradually the Food Processing Business Incubators (FPBICs) of the Government of India have emerged with representatives of other African nations. It is an initiative to promote agri-entrepreneurship primarily in Africa, but at the same time, it also aims to open new doors of entrepreneurship for businesses across the globe to be nurtured in the African continent and vice versa.

What is the key message that you would like to deliver to our GABI audience?

AAIN aims to enhance the sustainability of agribusinesses in Africa by means of partnerships and the creation of a strong platform to engage globally with other facilitators, policy makers, incubators and incubator networks, funding agencies and other organizations. One of the existing networks on NIABI (Network of Indian Agribusiness Incubators in India) shall be priority to establish the cross continental partnership initiative of AAIN towards GABI.

The GABI e-newsletter is a global platform and I wish the readers of GABI all the support and good luck to make AAIN successful and self-sustaining.

[Register here](#) to join the Africa's largest incubator network – AAIN!

AAIN
Championing the
African
Agribusiness
Ecosystem

Agribusiness Incubation:

The Future of African Economic Transformation



Views of Mr. Ariho Alex, Facility coordinator, FARA-UniBRAIN from the paper presentation at the African Agribusiness Symposium in Cameroon organized by ANAFE, one of the UniBRAIN Partners.

“The concept of business incubation is gradually being applied in Africa in order to nurture start-ups to grow professionally and gradually transform the African business landscape. Agriculture and agribusiness are the major sources of employment and foreign exchange in Africa.” Remarked, Alex Ariho, Facility Co-ordinator, FARA-UniBRAIN, at the conference.

African agro-based enterprises face constraints that hinder them from becoming competitive. There is a consensus within Africa that agriculture needs to be transformed using the catalytic powers of science, technology and agribusiness incubation. Agribusiness incubation has emerged as a critical tool that can be used to create competitive agribusinesses in Africa and to accelerate the development of the continent's agricultural sector.

Consequently, high level African Union delegations, at different international fora, have advocated for the private sector to support agribusiness incubation in different country commodity priority value chains across Africa.

The FARA-UniBRAIN initiative was started with funding from DANIDA in 2010 and is being implemented in 5 African countries (Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Uganda and Zambia) by establishing 6 pilot Agribusiness Innovation Incubator Consortia (AIIC).

The experience from implementing the UniBRAIN program clearly shows that partnership between these three entities, i.e., Universities, Research and Business, is possible and viable to bring a great change in African agriculture.

The impact that the 11 incubators had in five pilot countries in Africa needs to be scaled-up in view of the demand for agribusiness incubation that is generated at country and at the regional levels. It is in this regard that a 5-year programme for African Agribusiness Incubation Programme AAIP has been developed to aggressively roll out the creation of 24 new incubators in Africa and many more in the years to come. This will enhance African import substitution and export Promotion and contribute to wealth creation and economic transformation, thereby supporting the development of SMEs in agribusiness in Africa through partnership programs with universities and private sector in the countries that have experienced and successfully initiated agribusiness incubation programmes. Deliberate efforts will be taken to involve the youth, women and other disadvantaged people in the country-selected commodity value chains. He also urged all implementers to consider developing efficient household enterprises and make the programme sustainable.

AgBIT linking small holder farmers to lucrative formal markets

The Agribusiness Incubation Trust (AgBIT) is Zambia's pioneer agribusiness incubator that opened its doors to the country's agribusiness community in 2013 and is already scoring impressive successes in helping entrepreneurs and smallholder farmers around the country get their businesses off the ground.

One farmer's success to provide for his family through AgBIT's Horticulture Cluster Scheme program has made others envious as his income has dramatically increased. Meet Charles Mweene, an enterprising farmer who admits that he underestimated the amount of income he could generate from horticulture production and AgBIT has contributed to his strong belief in horticulture farming. He narrates that from AgBIT's intervention, he has acquired skills ranging from greenhouse and drip irrigation technology to customer relationship management.

Charles has attributed his success to AgBIT's business incubation program. "AgBIT has made me an all-round horticulture farmer and business man at the same time," he proudly adds. He is eager to replicate the model at his own farm after seeing the success of greenhouse technology using the facilities available to smallholder farmers at AgBIT from which he says he has generated a good income while receiving training. He says AgBIT's technical support and financial linkages to set up his own complete greenhouse production will improve his farm productivity and result in improved livelihood for his family.

The AgBIT horticulture cluster program focuses on skills and technology transfer to farmers, building their capacity to manage continuous horticulture production, strengthening supply chain management, reducing post-harvest losses, ensuring quality products, increasing volumes produced and raising overall supply chain reliability among smallholder fruit and vegetable producer clusters. The program identifies and incubates other entrepreneurs along the supply chain. The horticulture cluster scheme is also designed to help agro-processing entrepreneurs have access to improved quality and increased quantity of raw agriculture materials for their processing.



Before



After



Farmers receive training at the AgBIT demonstration unit

Charles Greenhouse tunnel at AgBIT

ABI-ICRISAT creates agribusiness opportunities for Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs)

Farmer producer organizations (FPOs) from six states of India are benefiting from the agribusiness facilitation of ICRISAT that will enable them to operate as businesses and make their farm operations sustainable and profitable. At a recent Farmer Producer Organization (FPO) Summit, smallholder producers convened to explore agribusiness opportunities in the areas of technology penetration, improving productivity and access to inputs and services, and increasing incomes for a sustainable agriculture-based livelihood.

Organized by the Agri-Business Incubation (ABI) Program of ICRISAT, on 27 October the one-day summit was attended by over 100 smallholder producers who have shown interest in Seed Business Incubation and Seed Production of Cereals (sorghum, millet) and Legumes (groundnut, pigeonpea, chickpea), five for Business Incubation Support, 14 for Food Business Incubation support and six for Seed and Food Processing incubation.

At the summit, ABI-ICRISAT provided the participants with extensive knowledge and information, as well as networking support in setting-up and promoting FPOs. The participants were composed of aspiring entrepreneurs, progressive farmers, members of self-help groups, and representatives from farmers' welfare and rural livelihood development organizations. "The FPO approach is an intervention owned, managed and executed by smallholder farmers themselves. We need to scale up and increase the number of FPOs through agribusiness incubators so that we can bring in more stakeholders in making agriculture more sustainable and profitable," Dr William Dar, Director General, ICRISAT, said.

"We have made progress in promoting and organizing farmers to become FPOs, but much work is still needed to make these organizations scalable and sustainable. Today's summit aims to provide the participants with information on how to access markets and secure finance, and to identify the role of agribusiness incubators in taking the FPO initiative forward," said Mr SM Karuppanchetty, COO, ABI, ICRISAT.

At the summit, participants gained a better understanding of the gaps and opportunities for FPOs in agribusiness, initiatives by the government through various schemes, capital and funding schemes, and networking opportunities for FPO developers and funding agencies.



Dr Dar, DG, ICRISAT addresses the entrepreneurs during the FPO Summit



The panel interacts with a packed house of participants during the Summit



SM Karuppanchetty, COO, ABI-ICRISAT speaks during the FPO Summit

CURAD Agribusiness Innovation Challenge 2014 successful!

CURAD Agribusiness Innovation Challenge launched in May 2014 was open to all Ugandans involved in production and marketing of agricultural products. The Challenge was an opportunity to present business cases to support investment in commercializing or expanding businesses to promote the growth of food processing and exports.

The aim was to provide winning businesses with incubation support and start-up or expansion capital to enable entrepreneurship in the agricultural sector.

Ninety Six out of 200+ applicants were shortlisted into nine categories such as: Best Women Entrepreneur, Best Youth Entrepreneur, Best Start-up Enterprise, Best Established Enterprise, Best New Product (Coffee Industry), Best New Processing Technology (Coffee Industry), Best New Coffee Derivative, Best Coffee Farmers Group Enterprise & Best New Coffee Shop/Trade Idea.

The shortlisted applicants were also trained on how to present their business ideas to a panel of judges, graced by Victoria Sekitoleko a former minister of agriculture and a representative for the United Nations.

A dedicated panel of 11 experts evaluated the business plans of which 26 entries were finalised for the finale event.

The final event was themed as “Business unusual, winning a sustainable innovative agribusiness, for your personal wealth and that of the country”. Three candidates in each of the nine categories were awarded and recognized for their innovative and practical ideas.

All the 26 winners have now joined CURAD for incubation support to undergo full scale incubation and develop their ideas and businesses into sustainable enterprises with help from key sponsor partners like UTL, Microsoft, Fin-Africa, B space and Trias.



The winners with their awards pose with the dignitaries



Mr Deogratius Opolot, the overall winner of the challenge receiving his cheque



ABP incubatee wins the SEED initiative 2014 award

The SEED Initiative is a global partnership for action on sustainable development and the green economy. The SEED Awards are an annual awards scheme for the most promising, innovative and locally led start-up social and environmental enterprises.

ABP's incubatee company, '**KingFire**', have created a bio-energy value-chain through producing and selling briquettes and found a place for themselves among the \$5000 SEED award winners. KingFire's briquettes made from bio-waste, are low-cost, benefiting users and making the product accessible to urban and rural markets. The business profits from a wide market share and smart branding. End users benefit from a sustainable and low-cost, long burning product. KingFire also positions itself as a socially conscious business through local job creation and training, community education, and running a mentorship scheme.

Social Impacts

- Employing locals in the sourcing, producing and selling of the briquettes
- Educating the public on recycling practices and alternative, sustainable energy sources
- Reducing the number of people suffering carbon monoxide poisoning from charcoal burning

Environmental Impacts

- Enhancing waste management in urban areas through recycling
- Promoting environmental conservation through reducing the need for deforestation for firewood
- Reducing carbon emissions from landfills and from deforestation

Economic Impacts

- Producing a long-lasting, slow-burning, and heat-efficient product that is low-cost for the user
- KingFire's urban location means manufacturing and transport costs are kept to a minimum – resulting in savings for end users
- Creating a local value chain from bio-waste that is generating jobs and increasing customers' disposable income



ABP incubatee award winner addressing the participants at the symposium



ABP incubatee exhibiting at the symposium

SME incubation center launched at Namanve

Consortium for Enhancing University Responsiveness to Agribusiness Development Limited (CURAD), with funding assistance from FARA and in partnership with the Uganda Investment Authority (UIA) shall be jointly working towards developing a modern Agribusiness Incubation facility for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Kampala industrial business park at Namanve.

SMEs play a vital role in job creation, creating a skilled workforce, facilitating private ownership, rapid response to market demands and output generation. The need for business incubation in Uganda is large as many enterprises fail within 5 years of their set-up due to absence of business incubation services. Business incubators are designed to nurture the growth of start-up companies and small businesses by helping them survive and grow during their early stages.

The centre will catalyse the process of starting and growing companies, providing entrepreneurs with the expertise, networks and tools that they need to make their ventures successful. The SME business incubation centre shall work in the sectors of agro-processing of fruits for juice and wine, textile, art and craft, metal fabrication, leather and furniture. This One-Stop-Centre shall also offer free services where investors can register their businesses and get all relevant licenses related to their business under one roof.

SVDCDC hosts UniBRAIN partners' meet

Sorghum Value Chain Development Consortium (SVDCDC) hosted the UniBRAIN partners meeting between 9th-12th September 2014. The meeting was attended by UniBRAIN partners in all the five countries including Kenya, Uganda, Mali, Ghana and Zambia. The theme of the meeting was "Promoting Entrepreneurship through Agribusiness Incubation in Africa".

SVDCDC Chair lady of the board Prof Christine Onyango chaired the meet. "Evidence from around the world demonstrates that small and medium enterprises play a vital role in the economic development of industrialized nations. The UniBRAIN Model is a unique one that targets majority women entrepreneurs and youth in an effort to overcome some of the barriers to women's participation and youth in the private sector workforce. It is anticipated that in the future, these women and youth will be themselves job creators and champions of economic empowerment." She emphasised.

The key issues discussed during the meet were based around:

- Annual review report sharing and action plan
- Annual work plan and budget 2015
- Partnership review and actions for 2015
- Mapping strength and opportunities for 2016-2020
- South Africa-FARA@15 celebration preparations
- Programme focus on results and impact for 2015 annual review and business case development

The partners were taken on a field trip to SVDCDC incubatee locations and Kenya Industrial Research and Development Institute (KIRDI) to acquaint them with SVDCDC's business activities.

Block your Dates!



ALREADY REGISTERED?

FARA
Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa

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Celebrating FARA

November 26 - 28, 2014
Birchwood Hotel & OR Tambo Conference Centre
Boksburg, South Africa

Wish to be a member of the African Agribusiness Incubator Network? [Register here](#)

Other events



Powering Agriculture: An Energy Grand Challenge for Development

has launched its 2nd Global Innovation Call and is now accepting questions.

What is it? An opportunity for grant funding for innovative clean energy solutions that increase agricultural productivity and/or incomes derived from agriculture in developing countries.

Who can apply? Both U.S. and global innovators who are working at the intersection of clean energy and agriculture.

When is the deadline? The 2nd Global Innovation Call was released on November 13, 2014, and the deadline for concept notes is February 12, 2015, no later than 4:00 p.m. Washington DC (EST).

What can you do?

- Visit poweringag.org to learn more about the solicitation.
- Submit any questions in English to poweringag@usaid.gov before December 1, 2014, at 4:00 p.m. Washington DC (EST).

[Know more](#)



Cultivate. Reap. Prosper.

11th AGRO TECH 2014

India's Premier Biennial Agro Technology & Business Fair
22-25 November, 2014, Parade Ground, Chandigarh, India
Timings : 10.00 am to 6.00 pm
www.agrotech-india.com

Indian agriculture has taken a quantum leap over last two decades. Supported by enabling policies of the government, both at central and state level, and growing engagement with private sector, the Indian agri sector is expected to occupy centre stage in the global agri landscape. Thus, CII has adopted 'Building Global Competitiveness in Agriculture' as the theme for 11th edition of CII Agro Tech, CII's flagship initiative in agri & related areas. Agro Tech 2014 aims to strengthen partnerships between governments, consumers, farmers and industry.

Why be at CII Agro Tech 2014:

<p>Business Opportunities Networking platform – global & domestic stakeholders Understanding global & domestic agri trends Country specific sessions / Best practices sharing Interface with overseas farmers and farmers from across the country</p>	<p>Kisan Goshthees - Interactive sessions for farmers Sharing of best practices Knowledge & learning through films Workshop / Interactive Sessions with industry specialists, institutions, scientists & progressive farmers</p>
<p>International Conferences on: Horticulture, Dairy, Animal Husbandry, Food Processing, Innovations and World View of India as a Food Basket</p>	<p>Participating Countries Canada, Italy, Ivory Coast, Israel, Germany, Spain, France, Poland, South Africa, Netherlands and Russia</p>

Concurrent Shows: • Good Earth • Food Expo • Livestock Expo • Implementex • Farm Services • States of India • International Pavilion • Farm Tech • Water & Irrigation

[Know more](#)

News & Opportunities

ARIMNet2 for Agricultural Research in the Mediterranean Area

European Commission ARIMNet2 is a network of funding organizations and research institutions that promote the coordination of agricultural research and innovation among Mediterranean countries. ARIMNet2 announces a joint call for proposals 2014-2015 which is open to researchers in Algeria, Croatia, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Malta, Morocco, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Tunisia, and Turkey. Subject areas include agricultural productivity, animal and plant health, sustainable aquaculture and fisheries, agricultural and food policies, sustainable management of agricultural water, and other topics.

Deadline: 01 December 2014 - [Click for more details >>](#)

Grants for Socioeconomic Development 2014-2015

La Caixa Foundation (Barcelona) makes grants for projects in socioeconomic development in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Past grants include many in aspects of agriculture, energy, and environment. The program is open to Spanish nonprofit organizations and local partners for grants up to €450 thousand for up to four years.

Deadline: 18 December 2014 - [Click for more details >>](#)

The Agricultural Innovation MKTPlace

This is an international initiative supported by different partners aiming to link Brazilian, African and Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) experts and institutions to develop cooperative research projects for development.

Deadline: 04 January 2015 - [Click for more details >>](#)

Up-scaling Green Business in Africa

Impact Amplifier, Growth Africa, VC4Africa and Hivos. The Green Pioneer Accelerator Program aims to help early-stage green entrepreneurs' position themselves for national or regional scale in Africa. The program combines a rigorous curriculum with practical experience shared by entrepreneurs, mentors, and investors. Entrepreneurs across Africa can apply to either the Kenya or South Africa cohort. Upon successful graduation, 10 enterprises in each program will be showcased to a group of investors

Deadline: 01 December 2014 - [Click for more details >>](#)

Competition2015 agricultural processing entrepreneurs

The Global Social Venture Competition (GSVC) is a partnership of business schools in the Americas, Europe, Asia, and Africa to provide aspiring entrepreneurs with mentoring, exposure, and funding to support their social ventures. Past winners include plans for water supply, energy micro-credit, agricultural processing, ecological building materials, and other environmental themes. The GSVC will award cash prizes up to US\$25 thousand.

Deadline: 05 December 2014 - [Click for more details >>](#)

Global Resilience Partnership convened by Rockefeller Foundation and USAID

The Global Resilience Challenge is a three-stage competitive grant process which invites applications from teams of experts with ideas for combating acute shocks and chronic stresses in the priority regions. The teams will design projects to research and diagnose problems, and develop locally-driven, high-impact solutions that can build resilience at scale.

Deadline: 30 November 2014 - [Click for more details >>](#)

Your attention please!

Global forum for Innovations in Agriculture (GFIA), March 9-10, 2015, Abu Dhabi

GFIA is organizing a major international exhibition and conference focused on the future of sustainable agriculture. The aim of GFIA is to deliver measurable impact through a cutting-edge conference and exhibition.

GFIA side events will complement the main plenary program and include:

- Partnerships for Food Security & Climate Resilient Agriculture
- Post-harvest Loss Initiative
- NGOs' Critical Role in Agricultural Productivity
- 2nd Africa Agriculture Technology Platform
- The MENA Farmers Programme
- Africa Spotlight - The Africa Agricultural Leaders Forum
- Aquaculture Development in the Middle East & North Africa

[Click for more details >>](#)

Call for Papers: 3rd Global Science Conference on Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA), Montpellier, France, March 16-18, 2015

The conference on CSA will address key research issues facts and figures from developing and developed countries and will support a collaborative effort with broad social participation. Special attention will be given to vulnerable countries and populations. It will therefore contribute to the strengthening of a CSA scientific community and will provide a further opportunity for developing a global research agenda.

Papers due: 01 October 2014 - [Click for more details >>](#)

Reach Us

Global Agri-Business Incubation Network's e-newsletter

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