



Global Agri Business Incubation  
Network's

**e-Newsletter**

**Issue 8**

### Key Promoters of the GABI e-Newsletter



## Official launch of WAARI, A UniBRAIN incubator of Mali

The Universities, Business and Research in Agricultural Innovation (UniBRAIN) programme has officially launched the first ever full-fledged Agribusiness incubator in West Africa, the West African Agri-Business Resource Incubator (WAARI). WAARI was officially inaugurated on January 23, 2014 in Selingue in the rural commune of Baya in the Sikasso Region of southern Mali.

WAARI is one of the six agribusiness incubators being established and supported under UniBRAIN programme, an initiative owned by the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) and funded by DANIDA, in which ABI is the key handholding and mentoring partner. The incubator was inaugurated by Professor Moustapha Dicko, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research of the Government of Mali in the presence of Dr. William D. Dar, Director General of ICRISAT and many other dignitaries among which Minister of Environment and Sanitation of the Government of Mali, the Danish Ambassador in Mali, the Nigerian Ambassador in Mali, First Counselor of the South African Embassy in Mali, the FAO Representative in Mali and the Director of USAID in Mali were present.

Professor Moustapha Dicko, the Chief Guest for the event congratulated FARA-UniBRAIN, ABI and WAARI for establishing this agribusiness incubator, which is a milestone event. Dr Dar, the Special Guest at the event emphasised on the importance of agribusiness incubation in promoting entrepreneurs in sub-Saharan Africa through Public-Private Partnerships and Inclusive Market Oriented Development (IMOD) to promote entrepreneurship in the agricultural sector and ultimately benefit the small-holder farmers.

An exhibition of the products of women cooperative groups of WAARI was also organised as part of the inauguration function. Professor Monsieur and other dignitaries present at the event interacted with the entrepreneurs and urged them to utilise the services and facilities of WAARI to their optimum.

Also speaking on the occasion, Mr Alex Ariho, the UniBRAIN Facility Coordinator UniBRAIN and Dr Kiran Sharma, CEO, AIP-ICRISAT congratulated WAARI for their dedicated efforts and contributions in establishing the incubator. The team was assured of a continuous technical and business advisory support and commitment towards a solid sustainability of the incubator.

In connection with the launch of WAARI, ABI Program also organised a one-day training program on Seed Business Incubation (SBI) on January 21, 2014 for seed entrepreneurs in the Selingue with support from ICRISAT Regional office of West and Central Africa (WCA), who provided technical inputs in seed production to the seed entrepreneurs. The objective of the training was to promote and enhance the capacity of the different active actors of the seed value chain (farmers, farmer intermediaries and seed entrepreneurs on seed production business). A unique methodology involving technical awareness, scientific inputs and sessions was adopted for the workshop.



*Dignitaries and WAARI staff attend the inaugural of the incubator at Selingue Province, Mali.*



*Professor Moustapha Dicko checks on the exhibits displayed by Women entrepreneurs from WAARI.*



*Dr Dar checks on the exhibits displayed by Women entrepreneurs from WAARI.*



*Local seed entrepreneurs attend the Seed Business Incubation Program conducted by ABI in WAARI.*

## CCLEAR interviews prospective Business Start-ups

The Creating Competitive Livestock Entrepreneurs in Agribusiness (CCLEAR) is one of the UniBRAIN incubators based in Ghana supporting businesses revolving around the livestock value chain. CCLEAR has gone one step further in its business incubation programme.

During 24 - 27 September 2013, CCLEAR organised a business elevator pitch to short-list prominent and potential acumen business ideas from 43 applicants. 13 applicants were selected who shall embark into incubation programme provided by CCLEAR with the support of the UniBRAIN Facility. The selected prospects are inclined to start agribusiness in the cattle, grasscutter, pig and poultry value chains.

The selected start-ups also expressed gratitude to CCLEAR and their partners for their establishment and intended purpose to provide business support and services to livestock farmers. CCLEAR assured these start-ups of full support and explained the very purpose of an incubator, which is to assist entrepreneurs in diverse ways to bring their businesses to a more competitive standard.



*One of the business prospects of CCLEAR making a business elevator pitch*



## UniBRAIN Steering Committee Meet held in Accra, Ghana

The Steering Committee, the overall programme governance and oversight body of UniBRAIN met on November 23, 2013 in Accra, Ghana in the premises of FARA under the chairmanship of Dr. Yemi Akinbamijo, Executive Director of FARA.

Members of the Steering Committee comprise of FARA, PanAAC, ANAFE, ICRISAT, SROs (CCARDESA, CORAF and ASARECA) and two representatives of the UniBRAIN incubators. The Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the major donor of UniBRAIN attends the meetings as an observer. During this meet, which is normally held semi-annually, the major points that were discussed were on:

1. Technical and financial Progress reports June to October 2013
2. UniBRAIN incubator procurement Review report highlights and progress
3. UniBRAIN financial sustainability study report highlights and progress
4. Presentation and request for approval Annual work plan and budgets 2014
5. Presentation on best practices and lessons documentation progress

During the meet, Dr Yemi Akinbamijo supported the establishment of African Agribusiness Incubator Network (AAIN) an initiative to be spearheaded by UniBRAIN to assure the sustainability of the programme and up-scaling of best practices and lessons in implementation of UniBRAIN incubation model across Africa.



*Members of the UniBRAIN Steering Committee discuss during break-meeting (Left) and pose for a group picture (Below)*



## News & Opportunities

### Africa Exclusive

#### **Call for Proposals: Sida-Research Training Partnership Program - Uganda**

The call for proposals for Sida-funded partnerships between Makerere University (MaK) and Swedish universities is now open. The program, named "Research Training Partnership Program as an integral part of Institutional Research Capacity Strengthening", aims at supporting the strengthening of institutional research training capacity at universities in Sweden's target countries and regions, contributing to increased number of research graduates

**Deadline:** 19 February 2014 - [Click for more details >>](#)

#### **Call for Proposals: Africa Biosciences Challenge Fund (ABCF) 2014 Research Fellowships**

The purpose of the ABCF fellowship program is to develop capacity for agricultural biosciences research in Africa, to support research projects that ultimately contribute towards increasing food and nutritional security or food safety in Africa, and to facilitate access to the BecA-ILRI Hub by African researchers

ABCF seeks applications with innovative ideas for short- to medium-term research projects (up to 12 months) that can be undertaken at the BecA-ILRI Hub. Projects must be in the areas of food and nutritional security or food safety in Africa.

**Deadline:** 28 February 2014 - [Click for more details >>](#)

#### **Call for Proposals: CTA Top-20 Innovations for Smallholder farmers**

The Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) is calling for proposals on innovations in use or have potential in smallholder agricultural production systems in ACP countries and which if known and widely promoted can benefit other farming communities.

The final top 20 will be selected by an international panel of experts. Successful applicants (CTA top 20) will be given a grant of 5,000 Euros to elaborate their 'innovation' as a guidebook (for which they will receive support from the jury members); and invited to a cross-learning workshop where they will also work with an editor and an artist to finalize the guidebook which explains the innovation and the design of a brochure and a poster which can be disseminated to the public at large (for use, inter alia, by extension agents).

**Deadline:** 15 February 2014 - [Click for more details >>](#)

## Reach Us

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