

African Agribusiness Incubators Network-AAIN

Nii Noi Kwame Street, North Dzorwulu

Accra-Ghana



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

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11th November 2016, Accra Ghana – Today, the African Agribusiness Incubators Network (AAIN) has entered into a historical Memorandum of Understanding with the 4.5 million member Association of Small Scale Industries in Ghana (ASSI).

The signing which took place at the Incubator of Incubators Center of Excellence in Dzorwulu, Accra marked the introduction of over 4.5 million people in Ghana to agribusiness incubation.

According to Dr Alex Ariho the CEO of AAIN the incubation model which involves upscaling ideas and technologies into sustainable enterprises will enable the value chain players to make a bigger impact on the economy.

“When innovations and ideas are implemented in isolation, Africa cannot realise the collective efforts of her people. Incubation gives even the smallest entrepreneurs a platform to receive mentorship, access to finance and hands-on training. We believe ASSI members are prospective beneficiaries of the same,” he says.

Dr Ariho signed the MoU on behalf of AAIN with Saeed Moomen the National President of the Association of Small Scale Industries (ASSI) in Ghana.

For Moomen, this is an additional landmark for the millions of hardworking entrepreneurs many of whom called for agribusiness incubation to better their investments.

“We have a committed population in ASSI who will now be exposed to technology commercialisation that incubation offers. I believe now that we can see real economic output from these technologies which would have otherwise remained with minimal impact,” he said.

In Ghana, according to the Trade Ministry figures, the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises provide about 85% of manufacturing employment.

The SMEs are also believed to contribute about 70% to the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) accounting for about 92% of businesses in Ghana.

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Lukman Abdul Rahim Executive Director National Board for Small Scale Industries(NBSSI), said that incubation will indeed raise the livelihoods of the youth who form 60% of the unemployed people in Africa have numerous ideas that they can only start on small scale. He however noted that this would be addressed by the undertakings in the MoU between the two organisations.

“As NBSSI we see the value in this partnership between AAIN and ASSI and look forward to further collaboration,” he said.

Notes to editors

Defining incubation

According to Dr Alex Ariho, the Chief Executive Officer of the African Agribusiness Incubators Network (AAIN) that is convening the conference, incubation is a process through which innovations and business ideas are nurtured into economically viable businesses.

“In incubation, the people with the agribusiness ideas or existing businesses are enabled to achieve self-sustaining businesses on an even larger scale of production. The services that are provided to make that possible are given by institutions called incubators and those who go to get the services are called incubatees,” he says.

Some of the services include enhanced access to finance, coaching and mentoring, enhanced access to market and business development training.

Youth start-ups are also aided by incubators to develop feasible business plans and acquire processing equipment for their enterprises.

These enterprises are nurtured within the facilities of the incubator until the incubatee is able to produce an attractive final product. It is then that the incubatee is graduated from the incubator.

About AAIN

To front the agenda of agribusiness incubation is an initiative by the African Union Commission in pursuit of results from the Maputo Declaration with the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) as the guiding framework.

AAIN is the lead entity in implementation of this agenda for agribusiness incubation through the Africa Agribusiness Incubation Programme (AAIP) with an affiliation of 158 universities in Africa, 30 private sector forums 130 member incubators and regional liaison offices in Kenya, Mali, Zambia, Uganda, Senegal and Benin.

It is registered in Accra Ghana as a private sector entity and recognised globally by the Global Agribusiness Incubators Network (GABI) as an International Business Development Company.

AAIN implements the incubation model based on four core investment areas: (1) the African Agribusiness Incubation Fund (2) Technology Commercialization (3) Agribusiness Education and Entrepreneurship and (4) Youth Engagement in Investment and Trade.

The AAIN Secretariat is based in Accra, Ghana.

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About ASSI

The Association of Small Scale Industries (ASSI, www.assi.org.gh) is a national apex body of or umbrella association for several small-scale industries associations within the agricultural, manufacturing and service sectors throughout the country. Thus, different private sector industry associations constitute ASSI. ASSI exists to assist and strengthen new and existing small scale industries to achieve economic development and viability to ensure growth whilst serving as the lead advocate for trade sector associations in Ghana.

In furtherance of this, ASSI influences government to approve policies and programs for the enhancement of the development of infrastructure and other economic facilities for small scale industries. Furthermore, ASSI facilitates the development of both vertical and horizontal linkages among various micro and small scale sector industries as well as large/medium industries. ASSI national secretariat is based in Accra, Ghana (with regional secretariats across the 10 regions) and is duly registered as a private sector organization.