

Editorial

The African Agribusiness Incubators Network (AAIN) is proud to introduce our first issue of the Digest for the year 2017.

In the midst of growing demand for agribusiness incubation in Africa, this edition is your spotlight on the news, events and updates in the spheres of the Incubator of Incubators Centre of Excellence.

AAIN embraces the role of effective communication as a strong pillar for the growth of the agribusiness sub sector, highlighting the innovative elements including agribusiness incubation.

Through our social media brand @AAINOnline and organisational publications, we are continue to update you on the detailed progress in agribusiness incubation at national, regional and continental level.

The AAIN Digest is our brief from the Incubator of Incubators Centre of Excellence that goes out to our subscribers as a newsletter.

We welcome you to secure your seat at the 2017 edition of the flagship event that will be held in Dakar, Senegal with youth participation taking centre stage.

The Africa Agribusiness Incubation Conference & Expo is your gateway to strategic sector partnerships as this newsletter highlights.

This edition also explores the news and more from the 2016 Edition of the annual Best Agribusiness Incubator in Africa Awards.

Together we achieve more in development , building the agribusiness sub-sector that we would like to see through meaningful partnerships.

Thank you for walking with us.

Solomon Kalema Musisi

Communications and Public Relations Manager

African Agribusiness Incubators Network.

Inside this issue

- Message from the AAIN CEO
- News briefs
- Celebration of HE Rhoda Peace Tumusiime, Honorary Award Recipient for 2016
- Best Agribusiness Incubator in Africa Award Winners for the year 2016
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- The 2017 Africa Agribusiness Incubation Conference and Expo
- How to join AAIN as a member



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Dr Alex Ariho, AAIN Chief Executive Officer

On behalf of the AAIN technical and management team, I greet you and extend our appreciation to you for your commitment to our services and various publications.

As it stands today, Africa's realisation of the need to harness the energy of the largely young population is indeed high.

From the sphere of agribusiness incubation, we continue to leverage on strategic partnerships that will continue to multiply the jobs created from tested models across Africa for the youth.

We have also increased our focus on inclusive agribusiness where women are recognised as major players across commodity value chains beyond on-farm production.

We are committed to supporting all countries that have submitted request for new agribusiness incubators to multiply the benefits and partners who have joined AAIN for the long term to build a strong agribusiness sub sector in Africa.

With major steps made so far, I wish to thank the staff and associates of AAIN in the various regions, namely East and Central, Southern, Northern and Western Africa for the input made.

In addition to that, we appreciate the advisory role of the AAIN Board of Governors with the chairmanship of Prof Henry Bwisa from the onset in **"Incubating incubators for job and wealth creation."**

I welcome you to join our members' network to access tailor-made services and also look forward to seeing you at the [2017 Africa Agribusiness Incubation Conference and Expo](#) in Dakar, Senegal this October.

Alex Ariho (PhD)

CEO

DAKAR, 2017

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2017 Chocothon highlights outstanding gaps, solutions for cocoa value chain



Ghana Chocothon 2017 facilitators and innovators of Cocoa Value Chain solutions in January.

The Ghana Chocothon, a series of events aimed at empowering and linking cocoa value chain stakeholders at the Impact Hub in Accra, Ghana highlighted major gaps that require solutions.

These were pointed out by a line-up of experts of experts brought together by the [Trade for Sustainable Development](#) (T4SD) project of the [International Trade Centre](#) (ITC), the Google Food Lab (GFL), Business School Lausanne (BSL), [Future Food Institute](#) and the [Crowdfunding](#) platform.

[Read more](#)

AYNAT completes introductory training in agribusiness incubation



Ghana Chocothon 2017 facilitators and innovators of Cocoa Value Chain solutions in January.

The joint input of AAIN and the [Africa Lead Programme](#) of USAID, a major player in empowering youth through agribusiness and agro-based entrepreneurship built the foundation for the training and put the youth leaders on track to open a value chain incubator in Accra.

With the growing demand for agribusiness incubators, this package that the [AYNAT](#) team received is structured by AAIN as a service of the Incubator of Incubators Centre of Excellence (IICE) to build effective incubators.

The incubator was designed at this stage to cater for fruits and vegetable SMEs and start-ups.

[Read more](#)

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Teams were formed to complete innovations for the Cocoa Value Chain of Ghana.

The “Knowledge sharing” segment of the 2017 Ghana Chocothon was designed to empower and connect the Ghanaian cocoa farmers through a shared value sustainable cocoa supply chain platform.

Isaac Gyamfi, the Regional Director of [Solidaridad](#) explored the classification of farming populations based on what he referred to as “realistic” classifications, a gap he had noticed in his over 10 years of active engagement with Cocoa farmers.

[Read more](#)

MBC Africa Growing Business Together Project launched at Netherlands Embassy



A section of the more than 40 entrepreneurs that participated in the launch.

In a bid to spur investment in entrepreneurship in the Netherlands and Ghana, the Dutch Embassy in Ghana has hosted a kick-off event of the [Growing Business Together \(GBT\)](#) project at a B2B event this evening that was attended by diplomats, entrepreneurs and investors who were joined by representatives of the African Agribusiness Incubators Network.

The project is funded by the Dutch Government and is aimed at addressing challenges of youth-led start-ups especially skills development, access to finance and connection to business networks.

[Read more](#)

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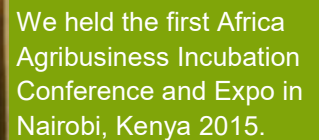
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The AgriFoSe2030, a Programme guided by the second UN Sustainability Goal to “**End Hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture**” was held in Nairobi Kenya from the 27th to the 28th of January.

Prof Henry Bwisa the AAIN Board Chairperson made his contribution to the theme, **“Translating science into policy and practice”** pointing out where Africa stands today. [Read more](#)

Co-mentoring entrepreneurs at the 2017 Kosmos Energy, MEST Africa pitch sessions



[Kosmos Energy](#) and the [Meltwater Entrepreneurial School of Technology](#) (MEST Africa) invited AAIN to a two-day pitching event for young entrepreneurs from across Africa in Accra, Ghana.

The event, which was aimed at selecting outstanding enterprises from the ideas of the youth attracted over 23 groups with an average of 3 to 5 members in each.

At the centre of the pitching is the focus on the use of ICT-based interventions to bridge the gap between the market and the rural-based farmers, especially the smallholder kind.

[Read more](#)





Her Excellency Rhoda Peace Tumusiime handed over after the January African Union Elections.

During her two fruitful terms of service as African Union Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, Her Excellency Rhoda Peace Tumusiime made notable achievements with her team at the Commission's Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture ([AUC DREA](#)).

"In working closely with the African Heads of State and Presidents, Agriculture Ministers and Investors from within Africa and beyond, HE Rhoda Peace Tumusiime led a revolution in the popularisation of the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme ([CAADP](#)). Initiatives for the creation of jobs through agribusiness in Africa, including AAIN were inspired by targets of frameworks like those under CAADP. As a key guest at the 2016 Africa Agribusiness Incubation Conference and Expo in Accra, Ghana we handed her the honorary award for the achievements made." - Dr Alex Ariho, AAIN CEO.



Her Excellency Rhoda Peace Tumusiime (3rd from left) with President Idriss Déby of Chad (to her left) and President Denis Sassou Nguesso of Congo Brazzaville (3rd from right). Such close work with the leaders made it possible to push for consolidated input to CAADP target achievement and more.

"As Commissioner, she showed leaders to come a big example that has to be emulated if African agriculture is to continue going beyond good policies on paper to even more effective implementation, the kind of results that we saw during her two terms. She was also instrumental in the launch of agribusiness incubators in Africa and the launch of the [Africa Youth in Agribusiness Day](#) which we are celebrating again in October this year."

- Prof Henry Bwisa, AAIN Board Chairperson.

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Uplifting more youth-led innovation in African agriculture through the AYA Forum

From the 25th to the 26th of April, over 200 young agripreneurs from across Africa gathered in Ibadan, Nigeria for a landmark event, tagged African Youth Agripreneurs (AYA) Forum organised by the Africa Agribusiness Incubators Network in close partnership with the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ([CTA](#)), Africa 2.0, the African Development Bank



Youth and guest speakers who attended the first African Youth Agripreneurs Forum in Ibadan, Nigeria from the 25th to the 26th of April. The Forum's main events were preceded by a partners' pre-event led by CTA that prepared the youth for the pitching competition, especially on packaging the best possible presentations for the judges to select from.

The opener of the AYA Forum was facilitated in speech, by among others, Nteranya Sanginga the Director General of IITA and Ken Lohento who is the ICT for Agriculture Programme Coordinator for the Brussels-based CTA.

AAIN was represented by Abimbola Adebakin, the Director for the African Agribusiness Incubation Fund (AAIF) joined by incubator managers and selected graduate incubatees, among them Sam Turyatunga of the Uhuru Fruit Drinks Brand who made it to the top five participants in the AgriPitch Competition.

At the same event, experiences in agribusiness incubation as a factor behind increased job creation, industrialisation and value addition were shared by Prof Charles Kwesiga, Executive Director of the Uganda Industrial Research Institute ([UIRI](#)), one of the oldest agribusiness incubation centres in Africa.

Enhancing a more attractive sector

In his remarks, CTA's Ken Lohento called on partners and sector players to make agriculture even more attractive for the youth in Africa.

"We must make agriculture more attractive for the youth. The promotion of the use of ICT and ICT-based innovations for agriculture." - Ken Lohento, CTA.

This call was supplemented by highlights from speakers' presentations including Elisabetta Demartis of the [Agritools](#) Initiative, a research journalism project that aims to understand how ICT is transforming agriculture, fishing and livestock practices in Africa.

As a major initiative in empowering the youth in agribusiness, the AfDB's Empowering Novel Agri-Business-Led Employment, [ENABLE Youth Programme](#) was presented and explored for participants by Edson Mpyisi, a Principal Agricultural Economist with the Bank.



Some of the youth and facilitators who attended the pre-event session and agri-pitch competition led by CTA.

Youth Focus

The Forum which was held at the IITA Conference Hall in Ibadan, Nigeria is the first of its kind under this partnership and comes within a year from the publishing of the [5th October Accra Declaration of the Youth on Agribusiness Incubation in Africa](#) in which the youth called for such platforms that uplift their creativity and innovation.

"The youth are at the centre of their own development in the agribusiness sub sector today. It is this kind of partnership with the AfDB, IITA, Africa 2.0 and CTA that will make it much more possible for the youth to be actively involved in job creation through agribusiness in Africa. We will go beyond this to host even more youth at the Africa Youth in Agribusiness Day on the 5th of October in Dakar, Senegal, joined by these partners and more pushing this agenda together." - **Dr Alex Ariho, CEO of AAIN.**

The top three youth from the Agri-Pitch Entrepreneurship Competition are set to travel to India for the AfDB meetings this month.

The AYA Forum was also highlighted by the launch of the [ICT for Agriculture Guide](#) for ACP countries by CTA.

As a whole, the events of the 2017 AYA Forum were guided by the theme, **"Demonstrating Success of Agribusiness in Job and Wealth Creation in Africa."**



World Bank Food and Agriculture Forum sets new horizons for agribusiness incubation in Africa

As a means of raising the potential for innovative agriculture, the World Bank held a high-impact Agriculture and Food Forum in Washington DC, attracting over 300 delegates from across the world.

Among these are agricultural experts from the World Bank, global Development Partners, Public and Private Sector, continental policy bodies and agricultural sector umbrella organisations



Global Agriculture and Agribusiness experts, who make a major impact across the world gathered in Washington DC in the United States of America for the World Bank Agriculture and Food Forum inspired by the unique notion of “Tomorrow’s Agriculture Starts today.”

Rooting for a revolution

While speaking at the opener, Dr. Juergen Voegelé Senior Director of the World Bank’s Agriculture and Food Global Practice highlighted the need for sector actors to shift from the traditional ways of doing business to and be a part of the innovative revolution if agriculture is to meet the global demand for jobs, especially for the youth.

A similar aspiration was later reflected in a paper presented by Dr Alex Ariho, CEO of the African Agribusiness Incubators Network who pointed to the potential of agribusiness incubation as an innovative venture for governments and Development Partners.

“The time is now or never to support agribusiness start-ups, incubators and SMEs globally to expand, grow and accelerate and AAIN is in position to drive this agenda in Africa today and tomorrow,” he noted.

He however added that despite the proven potential of this approach to create jobs and dependable wealth especially for the youth and women, some hurdles still require more input.



Agribusiness incubation is indeed effective. However incubators face a number of challenges despite having immense potential. These challenges include among others limited human capacity, lack of financing options for start-ups and better input and output market infrastructure with robust policy framework to start, grow and sustain their businesses,” he hinted.

AAIN in the continental and global arena for Job creation and enhancement of innovations by the youth



Left: Dr Alex Ariho, CEO of the African Agribusiness Incubators Network making his presentation at the World Bank Agriculture and Food Forum. The World Bank is committed to promoting transformation of agriculture by harnessing innovative approaches many of which were presented by participants at the Forum in Washington DC.

As testimony to the springboard effect of World Bank events, the forum has given new hope for youth and women empowerment in Africa through agribusiness incubation.

The shared objectives of the World Bank, [Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU \(CTA\)](#), African Development Bank, African Union Department for Rural Economy and Agriculture and AAIN were captured in a proposal to raise Africa's benefit from agribusiness incubation.

Leveraging on these, the proposal code-named African Agribusiness Incubation Programme (AAIP) was presented for the establishment of more agribusiness incubators for job creation in Africa.



Left to right: Dr. Vivek Prasad who is an Agriculture Practice expert at the World Bank Headquarters, Dr Alex Ariho the AAIN CEO, Mr Edson Mpyisi the Coordinator of the African Development Bank ENBALE Youth Programme and Agro poles in Africa, Dr Parmesh Shah the World Bank Agriculture Practice Team Leader for job Creation and Dr Iftikhar Mostafa, a Senior Agriculture Economist at the World Bank at the revolutionary meeting that explored the extension of agribusiness incubation across 54 African Countries through the AAIP.

"We are tasked with addressing the growing demand across the continent working closely with partners, the African Development Bank, the World Bank team of experts, CTA and other global agriculture leaders, Private sector, Development Partners and African governments to make the proven approach a success in the history of job creation through innovative revolution and business incubation," says Dr Alex Ariho.

As revealed in the [Youth and agriculture: key challenges and concrete solutions](#) report published in 2014 by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in collaboration with the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), majority youth can hardly purchase land due to financial hurdles. Africa-based agribusiness incubation with the coordination from AAIN aims at providing the much-needed facilities and opportunities for business simulation whilst attaching the youth-led SMEs and start-ups to investors with tailor-made packages for youth engagement in the high-risk yet potentially high-return sub-sector of agribusiness.

11 African countries to benefit from a new partnership between AAIN and FAO for strengthening agribusiness SMEs for job and wealth creation



In photo on the left:

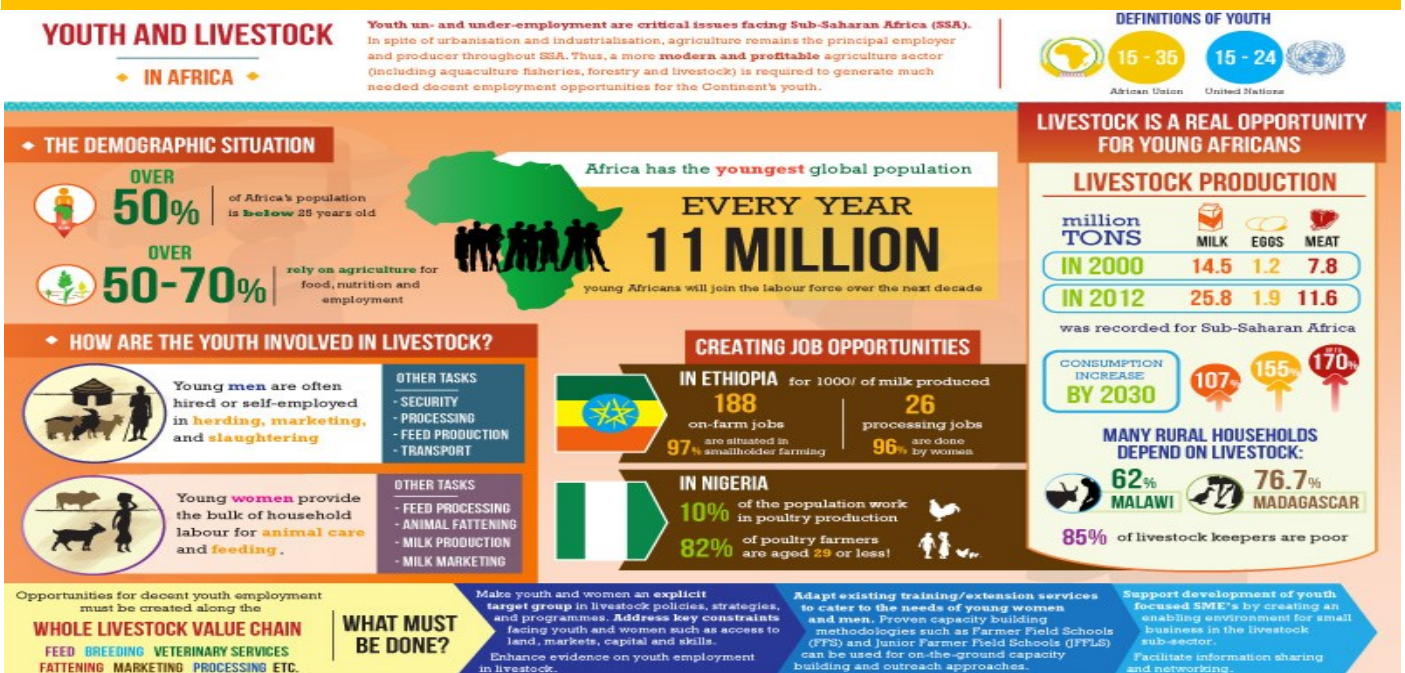
The FAO's Stephanie Gallatova (back row 3rd from left) with AAIN staff and youth leaders (in black tee-shirts) on a visit to the AAIN Secretariat in Accra, Ghana.

Under the Small and Medium Enterprise Incubation, an initiative of the [FAO](#) that will be implemented in collaboration with the African Agri-business Incubator Network (AAIN) a number of agribusinesses in processing, mechanization, logistics and trade will be identified and incubated.

The proprietors will attend a Making Markets Matter Course and receive a minimum of 3 to 6 months incubation support and guidance by AAIN experts. A total of 33 SMEs will be supported by the partnership and incubated in phase one of the which is aimed at scaling with in and outside the selected countries in partnership with national governments, development partners, private sector companies and financial institutions using the African Agribusiness Incubation Fund model and other successful FAO -supported models.

"We are glad to have this unique contribution of the FAO towards food security, the nutrition agenda as well as job creation for the youth in Africa and look forward to long term partnership and collaboration with the FAO. AAIN will use the opportunity to upscale the incubation model for small scale agribusiness incubator hubs and the mentorship Programme in 11 African countries." - Dr Alex Ariho, CEO of the African Agribusiness Incubators Network in a message during a partnership meeting at the AAIN Secretariat in Accra, Ghana.

Special feature: An FAO infographic showing analysis of the livestock value chain, one of a series that the FAO has promoted in Africa.



Africa Lead Champions open up agribusiness incubator to first cohort of young innovators



AYNAT, Africa Lead II and IAAS representatives at the opening pitch sessions.

The collaboration between the USAID Africa Lead II Programme and AAIN in support of the African Youth Network for Agricultural Transformation (AYNAT) to build a new agribusiness incubator produced the GrowShort incubator. At the first pitch session, the youth also entered an MoU with the University of Ghana Chapter of the International Association for Students of Agriculture and Related Sciences (IAAS).

This came after AYNAT's completion of the last phase of the introductory training. [Read more.](#)

USAID Africa Lead II Programme, AAIN enter MoU at inaugural incubator pitching



Peter Kuria Githinji, AAIN Partnerships and Business Development Director (**seated left**) and Carla Denizard, Africa Lead Regional Director for West and Central Africa (**seated right**) signed the MoU on behalf of AAIN and Africa Lead respectively.

Fostering youth participation in agribusiness and job creation for youth across the Africa received a new boost from the signing of an MoU between the African Agribusiness Incubators Network (AAIN) and the USAID Africa Lead Programme.

The MoU was signed at the first pitch sessions of the agribusiness incubator formed by the collaboration of the two organisations.

[Read more](#)

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Best Agribusiness Incubator Overall

Consortium for University Responsiveness to Agribusiness Development (CURAD).

Country: **Uganda**

Website: <http://www.curadincubator.org/>

Technology Commercialisation

The Creating Competitive Livestock Entrepreneurs in Agribusiness (CCLEAR ABI)

Country: **Ghana**

Website: <http://www.cclear.org/>

See press release [here](#).

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ACP actors' symposium: Highlighting options for commodity value chain development



In response to a resolution from the [7th summit of ACP Heads of State and Government in Sipopo, Equatorial Guinea](#) back in 2012, the ACP held a symposium to highlight and produce strategies for the reduction of commodity dependence through value addition, higher technological content to commodity exports and diversification of players into industrial and services sectors.

[Read more](#)

AAIN, partners to set up community based incubation and innovation centres in Uganda



From right: Dr. Peter Ndemere the UNCTST Executive Secretary, Mary Njeri Thiong'o from the African Agribusiness Incubators Network (AAIN), Hon. Elioda Tumwesigye the Minister for Science, Technology and Innovation and experts from more partner institutions spearheading the implementation process in Uganda.

Joining many other countries in Africa that have expressed demand for new agribusiness incubators and services, Uganda is set to open more avenues for the AAIN-tested models to create more jobs and commercialise technologies.

[Read more](#)

GrowS-Hort Agribusiness Incubator launched in Accra, Ghana



A host of participants from the Agriculture Ministry, Africa Lead II Programme, AAIN, AYNAT and

The average consumption of these in sub-Saharan Africa is estimated by the World Health Organisation as being between 70 to 312 g per person per day much less than the 400g per person per day or 146kg per person per year that is recommended.

AAIN and the Africa Lead II Programme supported the African Youth Network for Agricultural Transformation (AYNAT) to launch an agribusiness incubator to tackle this and more.

[Read more](#)

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Joining thousands at the 2017 Global Forum for Innovations in Agriculture in Abu Dhabi



The African Agribusiness Incubators Network (AAIN) was represented alongside over 8,000 global value chain players from more than 80 countries at the Global Forum for Innovations in Agriculture (GFIA) this year.

Running under the Patronage of H. H. Sheikh Mansour Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, the Deputy Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates, Minister of Presidential Affairs and Chairman of Abu Dhabi Food Control Authority, the forum was hosted by the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre.

Mary Njeri Thiong'o, AAIN Director for East and Central Africa (Left) represented AAIN at the 2017 edition of GFIA.

"Such a forum opens up investment in entrepreneurship in the sector. From research, we know that entrepreneurial regions of the world have better economies with over 125% higher employment growth, 58% higher wage growth, 109% higher productivity. These benefits are associated with 54% more R&D, 67% more patents per employee, 63% more hi-tech establishments and a 42% more college-educated population. Therefore sharing experiences and partnerships with investors from such parts of the world is of mutual benefit." - **Mary Njeri Thiong'o, AAIN Director for East and Central Africa.**

[Read more](#)

CTA's 2017 Experience Capitalisation Workshop for shared growth held in Ghana



Krishan Bheenick, CTA Senior Programme Coordinator Knowledge Management, walked participants through the objectives and targets of CTA in running the project.

The workshop is part of the "Capitalization of Experiences for Greater Impact in Rural Development" project that CTA is implementing in different parts of the world in partnership with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).

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Seed business incubation workshop sets new trend for EcoSIB incubatees



The opening panel was formed by Dr Alex Ariho the AAIN CEO, Dr Solomon Ansah the Director for Crop Services in the Ghanaian Ministry for Food and Agriculture ([MOFA](#)), Ben Morrison from the 2,500 member Federation of Associations of Ghanaian Exporters ([FAGE](#)), Moomen Saeed the President of the Association of Small Scale Industries in Ghana (ASSI) and Ben Kemetse the CEO of [M&B Seeds Ghana](#).

Project support came through the highly-effective Scaling Seed and Technology Partnership ([SSTP](#)) programme of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa ([AGRA](#)).

[Read more](#)

AAIN partners with AWARD to support women-led innovations and agribusinesses



Dr Wanjiru Kamau-Rutenberg (Left) signed on behalf of AWARD and Dr Alex Ariho (Right) signed on behalf of AAIN.

The African Agribusiness Incubators Network (AAIN) and the African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD) entered an MoU to further promote women-led innovations and agribusinesses in Africa. The AAIN signature was penned by Dr Alex Ariho the CEO and AWARD was represented by the Director, Dr Wanjiru Kamau-Rutenberg.

[Read more](#)

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Going forward, AAIN continues to work with our partners in fostering entrepreneurship as well as the creation of jobs and wealth in Africa through agribusiness incubation by focusing on these four core investment areas

- ◆ The African Agribusiness Incubation Fund (AAIF)
- ◆ Youth and women engagement in trade and investment
- ◆ Technology and innovation commercialisation
- ◆ Human and Institutional Capacity Development

JOIN AAIN AND ENJOY A WIDE RANGE OF EXCLUSIVE SERVICES.

Contact Us:

African Agribusiness Incubators Network-AAIN Nii Noi Kwame Street, North Dzorwulu, Accra, Ghana

P.O Box CT 2724 Cantonments Accra, Ghana Tel +233 302 774838 | 302 744888

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