

## **ASARECA and AAIN Partner to Support the Commercialisation of Results from Scientific Research and Technologies through Incubation for Jobs and Wealth Creation and Improved Food and Nutritional Security**

23 August 2017, Accra, Ghana. The African Agribusiness Incubators Network (AAIN) and Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA) have signed an MoU to cement the long standing partnership to support and accelerate the commercialisation of technologies emanating from scientific research. The partnership will see AAIN and ASARECA develop a commercialisation strategy of the profiled technologies by ASARECA. By using incubation and startups, SMEs will have access to the technologies and the support needed to move the technologies to the market to impact on jobs, wealth creation and on food and nutritional security. The partnership is a critical contribution towards the realization of the Science Agenda for Africa (S3A) Food and Nutritional security and creating attractive jobs for the youth in the food value chains.

The partnership and collaboration will focus on developing innovations for agribusiness incubation, start-up and commercialization for inclusive growth through the development and implementation of programs that enhance knowledge, information, and best practice in Africa. It will also leverage and enhance the options for international as well as intra-continental cooperation and resource mobilization to support research and agricultural knowledge management, contribute towards policy advocacy in harnessing current and emerging food and nutrition security challenges into opportunities for pro-poor investments for inclusive growth in Africa.



Back row from Left to Right - Esther Aba Eshun, (CClear Incubator), Ralph Von Kaufmann (AAIN Associate Consultant), Dr. Cyprian Ebong, (Interim Executive Secretary ASARECA), Dr. Alex Ariho (AAIN Chief Executive

Officer), Haidar Malhas (Interplast) Mr. Mark Etsibah (Director, Finance), Mr. Peter Kuria Githinji (Director of Business Development and Partnerships) and Ingrid Epezagne (AAIN Youth Rep Ivory Coast/Founder CAYF).  
Front row Mr. Joshua Nii Moi Thompson (Data and Communications), Mawuko Fumey (AAIN Associate), Kofi Adin (Accounts Manager) and Mable Quarshie (Aquatic World Industries, Director)

Photo Credit: Mr. Frederick Acquah

At a technical level, the AAIN and ASARECA partnership aims to enhance cooperation between both institutions on key thematic areas of common concerns and interest; focusing on packaging innovations for incubation and incubation processes. This will also focus on the human and institutional capacity building and development of both organizations through partnership, cooperation and exchange of information.

The partnership will also focus on the brokerage of knowledge and dialogue on regional platforms for science, technology and innovation (STI), economic policies as well as market development in Africa in a manner that complements the S3A under the auspices of FARA and sub-regional organizations. This will be supported through the collaboration in joint preparation and implementation of agricultural research for development (AR4D) programs of mutual interests for the overall development of Africa focused technology testing, and incubation for commercialization.

Along with the core mandates, this partnership will contribute to the institutional strengthening of African regional organizations on incubation, in the context of regional integration, trade and policy frameworks and processes. It will also leverage the knowledge and information management on a range of activities and especially on agribusiness and agribusiness incubation, policy backstopping, insights and foresights with regards to the targeted value chain of crops and livestock.

Importantly, the partnership will train and build capacity in entrepreneurship, intellectual property rights, and foresight studies, among others. This will form part of the joint action in the areas of common interest and with potential to transform the agricultural landscape, leveraging resources from both the public and private sources.



Dr Alex Ariho, CEO (AAIN) and Dr Cyprian Ebong (Interim Executive Secretary ASARECA) exchanging the MoU at the AAIN Secretariat, Accra Ghana

Dr Cyprian Ebong “The partnership is an important ingredient for ASARECA to fulfill its mission of catalyzing the National Agricultural Research and Innovations Systems (NAIRS) in the Eastern and Central African sub-region to innovate for agricultural transformation and inclusive growth”.

Dr Alex Ariho “This is as testament and commitment to the change the world and Africa wants to see. We are breaking the barriers of scientific research allowing the high quality innovations and technologies to contribute in transforming society, creating jobs and feeding the masses sustainably”.

**ASARECA** is not-for profit organization started by ten National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARIs) in 1994. The organization has since expanded into eleven members including Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Rwanda, Sudan, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda; with a Secretariat in Entebbe Uganda. Its mission is to “contribute to increased productivity, commercialization and competitiveness of the ECA agricultural sector through strengthened and coordinated regional agricultural research, extension and education systems in the ECA sub-region”. This involves catalysing innovations for increased total factor productivity, competitive enterprise development for increased market access and job creation. The core business of ASARECA is coordination of regional efforts for agricultural transformation, through convening, facilitation and technical support to priority program and project implementation, monitoring, evaluation, reporting, assessments of outcomes and impacts and learning.

**AAIN:** AAIN is an apex body of incubators and associates registered as an international business development company operating in 55 African Union Member countries. The headquarters is in Ghana. It aims “To be the hub of innovation for African agribusiness incubation,” and with a mandate of “Incubating Incubators for Jobs and Wealth Creation in Africa”. AAIN has Regional and Contact Offices: Kenya, Rwanda, Mali, Uganda, South Africa, Senegal, Zambia, Malawi, Botswana, Cameroon, Ethiopia, DRC Congo, Tanzania, Sierra Leone and Benin. AAIN has a continent wide network of paid up members who are agribusiness individuals, incubators, firms, SMEs, organizations, associations and institutions.

AAIN works through incubators, leveraging partnerships to provide support to its clients and associate partners. AAIN 4 investment areas are on technology commercialization and innovations, human and institutional capacity development, innovative incubation fund management on structured financing model and youth engagement in agribusiness trade and investment in Africa. AAIN support to incubators focuses on developing enterprises along commodity value chains to improve the market share and productivity.

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