

AFRICA LEAD II PROGRAM REVIEW

EAST AFRICA – KEY FINDINGS

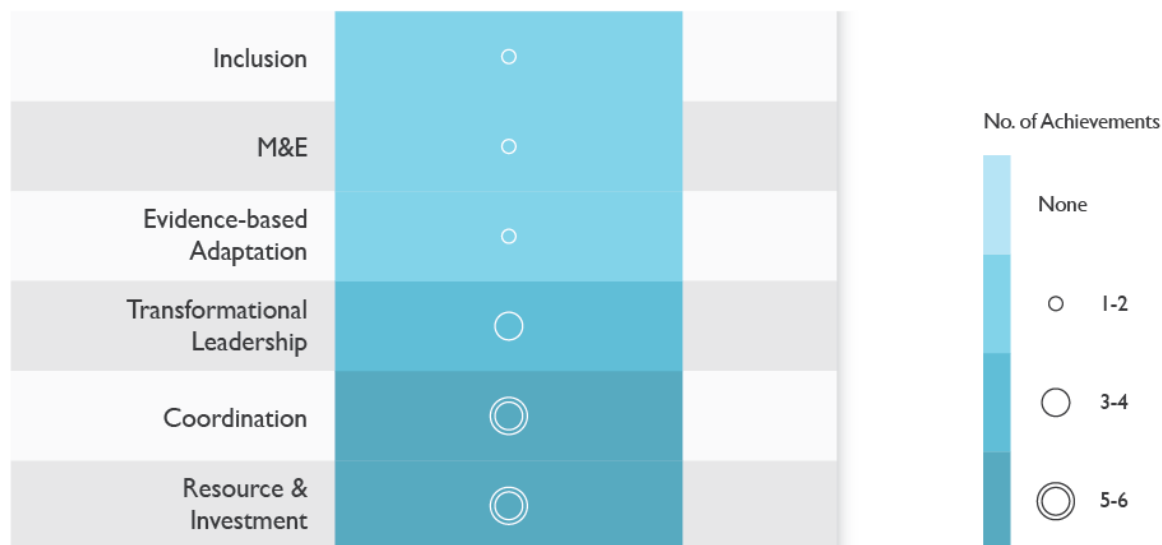
Introduction and Methodology

Africa Lead's program review presents important findings and recommendations from the East Africa Regional program and partners in the region. Fieldwork for the program review was carried out in Nairobi and Arusha from March 30 – April 5, 2017. Both the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the East African Community (EAC) were extensively consulted. The team also conducted interviews by phone with the Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA), the African Seed Trade Association (AFSTA), and the African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership (AFAP).

Examples of Significant Achievements Influenced by Africa Lead

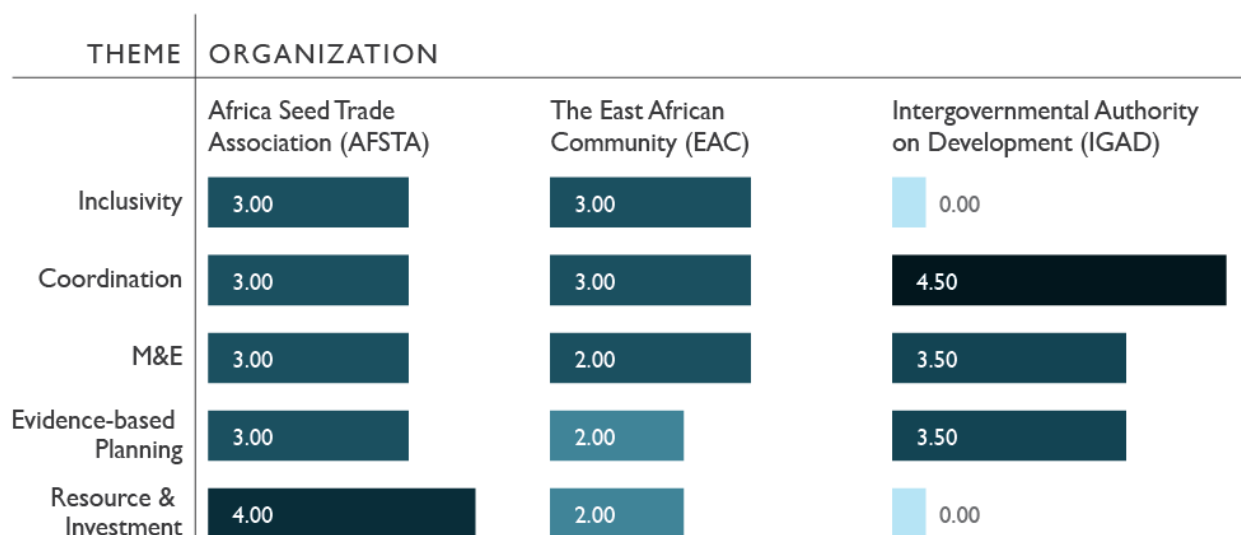
The East Africa Regional program beneficiaries detailed 10 significant achievements influenced by Africa Lead. The graphic below characterizes these achievements into thematic areas of focus, counting the frequency with which each of the six themes of agricultural transformation are cited within the achievement examples. Detailed definitions, findings, and recommendations for each of the six themes can be found in the accompanying summary booklet.

EAST AFRICA



Benchmarking Performance for Agricultural Transformation (BPAT)

Africa Lead’s key partners in the East Africa Regional program carried out a self-assessment, and mapped their performance against five of the six agricultural transformation themes in the BPAT tool. The BPAT tool allows organizations to rate themselves a score out of 5. A score of “1” is given to an organization that is performing insufficiently in a selected area. In contrast, a score of “5” is given to organizations whose performance is in accordance with best practices at the top international level. The BPAT also asks partners to provide evidence and examples of change to substantiate their scores. The following sections present a summary of the most significant changes presented by each partner.



Most Significant Changes

The Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA)

The Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA) is a semi-autonomous agency within the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). COMESA is the largest regional economic organization in Africa, with 19 member states including Burundi, Comoros, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sudan, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. COMESA's goal is to establish a free trade area and common market for its member countries. As a specialized agency within COMESA, ACTESA functions as a regional alliance focused on:

- Development of regional agricultural policies;
- Promotion of investments in agriculture;
- Promotion of trade in agro-commodity products and development of production and marketing structures;
- Development of the agricultural, livestock, pastoral, and fisheries sectors; and

- Enhancing consultation with the private sector and civil society organizations (CSOs) on agricultural development issues.

To help ACTESA identify capacity gaps, improve organizational systems and operations, and inform strategic planning, Africa Lead designed and facilitated an Organization Capacity Assessment (OCA) in 2016. To generate findings and recommendations, Africa Lead developed the methodology of the assessment, organized and facilitated an inception workshop, carried out data collection, and analysed input from staff and other stakeholders. In September and October of 2016, Africa Lead held feedback meetings with COMESA and ACTESA staff, the advisory committee, and the board to discuss and finalize the report and action plan.

Africa Lead is collaborating with COMESA and ACTESA to improve regional seed policy harmonization and seed movement between member countries. As part of this support, Africa Lead collaborated with COMESA to develop the Seed Harmonization Implementation Plan (COMSHIP), and facilitated COMSHIP annual review meetings.

Participants of the most recent annual review meeting identified several priorities to enhance accountability for COMSHIP, such as standard monitoring procedures and guidelines for annual reporting. As a result, Africa Lead facilitated a discussion with key stakeholders to define the COMSHIP Mutual Accountability Framework (COMMAF). The proposed framework includes clearly defined roles and responsibilities for organizations and individuals, a schedule for conducting follow-up, and an M&E structure for implementing seed policy harmonization.

Most Significant Changes

- ACTESA is now revising and customizing financial, human resource, and procurement manuals.
- ACTESA is planning to review the Governance Charter to ensure it aligns with ACTESA's mandate.
- ACTESA is taking concrete steps to improve their trade facilitation function, which was also highlighted by the OCA process.
- Africa Lead's support is helping to ensure that member states align to the COMESA system, which will lead to improved regulatory harmonization for seed trade.
- Africa Lead helped to establish critical linkages for seed trade in Africa by supporting learning exchanges and study tours to the American Seed and Trade Association congress for ACTESA and AFSTA staff.
- Africa Lead helped ACTESA to establish important linkages for fertilizer trade in the region, which improved coordination for implementation and advocacy on policy issues.

East African Community (EAC)

The East African Community (EAC) is a regional intergovernmental organization of six member states, including Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. Starting in 2013, Africa Lead

conducted an Institutional Architecture Assessment (IAA) within the EAC Secretariat to identify critical changes needed to improve the policy-making process in the region.

Based on the validation meeting of the draft report, the EAC participants developed an action plan to help promote and operationalize the types of transformative changes called for by the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP).

Most Significant Changes

- The IAA provided useful findings that led to immediate action on several key recommendations.
- A new Regional CAADP Compact was developed as a result of the IAA, which has led to enhanced coordination and mobilization of resources. The compact also helped to address trans-border issues such as trade, disease, and climate change.
- The EAC developed a revised Food Security Action Plan and Results Framework that all member countries have approved.
- The recommendations from the IAA helped the EAC to develop a revised Regional Agricultural Investment Plan (RAIP) to prioritize resources and investments, and improve food security at the regional level.
- The regional investment plan, along with the revised CAADP Compact, will both lead to increased resources in the agricultural sector, and improved productivity and food security.
- Through a meeting bringing together government and NSAs working on aflatoxin, Africa Lead spearheaded an international collaborative learning and brainstorming initiative that motivated EAC to develop an Aflatoxin Strategy and action plan for the region.

The African Seed Trade Association (AFSTA)

The African Seed Trade Association (AFSTA) is membership association working to champion the interests of private seed companies throughout Africa. Currently, the association is consisted of 100 members including seed companies, National Seed Trade Associations, and other NSAs.

Since 2015, Africa Lead collaborated with AFSTA to implement a customized approach to institutional strengthening. In addition, Africa Lead has supported the association to define its strategic objectives, and strengthen its management capacity.

To identify capacity gaps, Africa Lead conducted two rapid capacity assessments and facilitated a workshop with AFSTA members to define their needs, and reflect on the association's mission and vision. Africa Lead also collaborated with AFSTA to develop a three-year strategic plan, and facilitated a visit to the US in June 2017 for AFSTA staff to learn about best practices and exchange information.

Most Significant Changes

- According to key informants, the three-year strategic plan was the first action plan to respond to strategic issues and gaps.

- As a result of the U.S. learning visit, AFSTA identified eight key actions to improve the performance of the association, including strengthening governance, service delivery, policy, and stakeholder participation. For example, AFSTA engaged a consultant to conduct a job analysis and invited USAID and World Bank to participate in board meetings held in 2017 to improve opportunities for policy dialogue and strengthen partnerships.

African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership (AFAP)

The African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership (AFAP) works across Africa to connect 200 medium-sized enterprises as hub distributors to large fertilizer orders. In addition, the partnership builds linkages with wholesale distributors, leasing companies, and industrial fertilizer blenders. AFAP's membership also includes 5,000 retail outlets that supply finished and blended products, as well as equipment. In addition, AFAP brings together large-scale wholesale dealers that supply input for further blending. This partnership helps to facilitate networks between 200 hubs and 5,000 suppliers.

Starting in 2015, Africa Lead conducted an OCA with AFAP and provided key recommendations to help strengthen the organization. Through a grant that was awarded in 2015, Africa Lead supported AFAP to establish an East and Southern African Fertilizer Platform (ESAFF) to enable stakeholders to share ideas, and build business linkages. In addition to linking fertilizer buyers and suppliers, the ESAFF provides a platform for stakeholders to advocate for policy reforms.

Most Significant Changes

- The OCA process identified the need for enhanced governance structures, and suggested that AFAP develop a clear business model with an appropriate and sustainable funding structure.
- Key informants from AFAP report that after a successful launch of ESAFF in 2015, the platform is now demonstrating clear value to members and potential for sustainability.
- 18 of the 21 COMESA member states were represented at ESAFF's first annual meeting. During the meeting, AFAP presented key policy constraints to high quality fertilizer distribution, as well as opportunities for increasing private sector investment. According to one key informant, "This was the first-time ministry-level representatives were finding out about critical information on fertilizers and inputs . . . so trade and policy were affected."
- AFAP cited that Africa Lead's OCA process helped to break down internal barriers, and unlock new ways of thinking about organizational structures and communication strategies for partnerships. As a result of Africa Lead support, AFAP is now taking active steps to improve their human resource capacity, organizational management, and communication systems.

Key Findings on Implementing Capacity Assessments

Africa Lead's work in this region offers important lessons about implementing capacity assessments:

1. **Ownership and openness to change at the leadership level is a critical success factor in enabling constructive engagement.**

The CEO of ACTESA embraced the OCA process. As a result, the CEO was eager to build on the recommendations provided, and make changes at the end of the process. In other organizations, senior management was hesitant about the implications of the assessment, and created barriers to implementation.

- 2. Stakeholders with a high level of organizational influence that function as key decision makers need to be identified early and engaged in the OCA process.**

The case of ACTESA demonstrates that it was necessary to go beyond the prism of the top organizational leadership, and intentionally target the COMESA Secretary General and board members. As a critical decision maker for both ACTESA and the broader institution, the sustainability of changes made by ACTESA is now under question due to the Secretary General's lack of buy-in to the process.

- 3. When faced with a lack of buy-in at leadership level, rapid assessments can be a useful, less invasive alternative to a full OCA.**

It is critical to build ownership and trust in the outcomes of an organizational assessment. If leaders in the organization do not fully trust the process, a different method for identifying capacity gaps other than a formal OCA may be used, such as a rapid assessment. A rapid assessment allows for a consultative process that identifies gaps without creating a feeling that the organization is being audited.

- 4. Leaders will not be incentivized to participate in an open, constructive dialogue if there is a perception that results are tied to funding decisions or changes in organizational leadership and management.**

Key Findings on Leveraging the Value of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) within the CAADP System

The East Africa regional portfolio led to several conclusions about how to better understand and leverage the value of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) within the CAADP system:

- 1. Regional associations have an important role to play to highlight “win-wins” between the government and private sector.**

Partners such as AFAP and AFSTA are effective platforms to elevate the voice of the private sector and provide key inputs to help increase food security. In addition, their power to harness the private sector in a unified voice is a strong incentive for governments to reform. In both cases, there was an opportunity for international companies to provide inputs that are critical to

improving productivity, and food security. However, small-scale farmers are not in a position to identify this market opportunity, and do not have strong lobbying power to advocate for change within the government. Equally stronger connection and coordination with national level non-state actors (NSA) is required for effective response and action by national governments.

2. While regional associations provide a strong platform to lobby governments, they are only as effective as their linkages to country level and local level issues.

To identify and advocate for smallholder farmers and business issues, regional associations must have strong representation and effective communication to smallholder farmers as well as national associations.

3. Regional organizations can make significant impact as conveners, providing forums for learning and evidence-based dialogue between the government and private sector.

The East Africa Regional Program demonstrated that regional organizations achieved significant results and highlighted important cross-border issues, such as aflatoxin and constraints to accessing high quality inputs. In addition, regional organizations enabled stakeholders to deliberate, seek solutions, and ultimately advocate for change within the government.

4. Facilitative leadership using adaptive learning and iteration can kick-start mutual accountability at the REC level, where there is a delicate balance between the role of the REC as service providers and member states as clients, which can be politically sensitive and challenging to navigate.

Africa Lead's experience demonstrates that using a collaborating, learning, and adapting (CLA) approach can be useful for motivating REC members to comply with policies, strategies, and commitments. CLA can serve to promote shared ownership, and encourage action among member states in a politically neutral manner. For example, Africa Lead is seeing success using a CLA approach to build understanding of COMSHIP commitments and steps to domesticate the harmonized seed policy regulations. By continually learning and adjusting to obstacles, Africa Lead is increasing the odds of success and speeding up policy harmonization. On the side of the RECs, this approach is also beneficial in engaging member states to actively respond to recommendations, while shining light on non-compliance to ensure a continuous improvement process. However, it should be noted that RECs and other regional platforms face an immense challenge with ensuring follow-up action. While CLA approaches are demonstrating small victories, this is still an area of weakness to address.