



amea

AMEA'S ANNUAL LEARNING EVENT 2023

On 16 and 17 May 2023, AMEA held its third annual learning event (ALE). Our aim was to:

- Communicate findings from the Tool Improvement Facility (TIF) projects and case studies
- Generate debate about the findings
- Inform the next round of case studies and research
- Connect the debates to the Business Development Services (BDS) Roadmap processes started in several AMEA Local Networks (LN)
- Find ways for members and partners to be further involved

Over two days we had 68 participants from 53 organizations. An excellent turnout!

LEARNING AND DEBATE

We started by recapping the [AMEA's Strategy to 2030 and BDS Call To Action](#). This framed the debate which was stimulated by the following presentations over the two days:

1. EFFECTIVENESS & EFFICIENCY OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES FOR AGRI-SMES

[DOWNLOAD PRESENTATION](#)

This cutting edge research on the cost-effectiveness of 15 BDS providers in West and East Africa, included AMEA members such as Kilimo Trust and Agribusiness Development Centre.

2. HOW CAN WE COLLECT AND USE DATA TO IMPROVE AGRI-BDS DELIVERY?

[DOWNLOAD PRESENTATION](#)

Agriterra and SCOPE*insight* provided insights into database development for the Ethiopian Dairy Sector and the potential for creating a sector BDS plan. The analysis showing 78% of Cooperatives at the earliest stage of development was surprising – what had been the effect of previous projects?

3. RISK-SHARING INPUT FINANCE / TRIPARTITE FINANCING: EMERGING OBSERVATIONS AND GUIDELINES

[DOWNLOAD PRESENTATION](#)

International Finance Advisors and IDH presented their experiences from West and East Africa on input financing approaches. The [summary](#) and [detailed case studies](#) are now available.

4. WOMEN'S INCLUSION, EMPOWERMENT AND LEADERSHIP IN COOPERATIVES (WIELCOOP)

[DOWNLOAD PRESENTATION](#)

NCBA CLUSA and Grameen presented their approaches for empowering women in Africa and India. This included the launch of the WIELCOOP Training of Trainers Guide. The WIELCOOP videos are [available here](#).

5. ENABLING AGRI-SMES TO MEET ENVIRONMENTAL/FOOD STANDARDS AND GROW

[DOWNLOAD PRESENTATION](#)

Rikolto and Corus presented their experiences. This included 4 models for using the Sustainable Rice Platform Standard and the launch of the Food Safety First [Costing Tool](#).

6. FUTURE DESIGNS: HOW TO REACH AGRI-MSMES AT SCALE

[DOWNLOAD PRESENTATION](#)

IFAD presented their new Kenyan program targeting 1,500 agri-MSMEs. AGRA and Cordaid reflected on the [potential for this program](#), including the blended delivery of BDS. This was contrasted with Farm Africa's Cultivate Program which works with Africa Management Institute.

DISCUSSION

Break-out groups which followed each set of presentations enabled vibrant discussion and debate. We then asked for feedback which is shown in the charts below. It was clear that most participants saw potential in the approaches/models to be successful and would be interested in using the approaches in their programs. However, there was hesitation when asked if the approaches/models have potential to have impact at scale, which confirms AMEA's perception that reaching meaningful scale (moving from project to systems change) is still one of the key challenges for BDS ecosystems.

YOUR THOUGHTS ON THESE APPROACHES



FUTURE LEARNING AGENDA

We also asked our members for their inputs on AMEA's learning agenda for 2023-25 to inform the next round of case studies and research.

WHAT DO MEMBERS WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT?

STANDARDS, DATA ALIGNMENT, AND BDS QUALITY Participants were very clear about their interest to understand how BDS data can be aligned by the use of standards, as well as how aligned data can help improve BDS quality and effectiveness. Participants also want to understand how to address how to bring Donors into this process.

FARMER ORGANIZATIONS SEGMENTS AND GRADUATION Understanding how approaches enable graduation of nascent, immature, and intermediate FOs to higher levels of professionalism, including to levels that it can enable impact investment.

SCALABILITY OF APPROACHES Achieving impact at scale continues to be a key interest. In addition participants wanted different financing models to be explored within the context of sustainability e.g. smart subsidies or market-based approaches.

LOCALIZATION OF APPROACHES How to enable uptake of approaches by local BDS providers, which are key and often more cost-effective partners in the BDS ecosystem.

BDS ECOSYSTEMS How to enable collaboration between stakeholders and to influence donors to invest in ecosystem approaches (not projects).

AMEA LOCAL NETWORKS Finally, participants were also keen in understanding how to develop AMEA Local Networks.

We then asked for your ideas for future case studies. If you have specific cases to propose, please read our [Call for Case Studies](#) (EN, FR, SP) and contact our [Program Officer](#).

The [BDS Roadmap process](#) was also highlighted during the event. AMEA aims for these Local Roadmap processes to be a way to use this learning to create system change in BDS markets. We encourage you to find ways for your Country Teams to engage in these processes.

FEEDBACK

At the close of the event you awarded us 4.6/5 for creating an interesting event. Thank you! If you could not attend or would like to provide additional feedback please contact our [Network Director](#) and [Program Officer](#).