Africa’s agriculture is largely sustained by smallholder farmers, half of whom are women. However, poor access to markets and information on supply and demand is preventing them from achieving reasonable profit margins. The expectation of low profits is discouraging young people from taking up agricultural activities and slowing down agricultural and rural development.

The capacity of youth and women in multi-stakeholder innovation platforms (IPs) will be strengthened, allowing them to take advantage of technological solutions within national, regional and global food systems, with an emphasis on technology design, transfer and uptake. Coupled with the establishment of Agricultural Business Learning Alliances (ABLAs), with business development and mentorship services, these collaboration mechanisms will lead to improved profitability and employment opportunities along agricultural commodity value chains in Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda.

While on the production side small farmers lack information on innovation, and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) lack the capacity and information to develop their businesses, on the support side universities and research centres lack the capacity to transfer knowledge to end-users, and policy-makers lack the information from the field that they need to make informed decisions.

Building capacities in ICT and other emerging digital technologies that promote production efficiencies along commodity value chains will help make the agricultural sector more attractive to youth and women and resolve the systemic weaknesses faced by service providers.
AIRTEA provides technical support to multi-stakeholder partnerships by:

- mentoring their engagement of women, youth and individual smallholder farmers in the IPs;
- strengthening their capacities in the dissemination and use of innovations;
- co-designing training materials and technology delivery methods; and facilitating dialogues with smallholder farmers, the research community, agricultural extension services and policy-makers.

**EXPECTED RESULTS**

**Impacts**

Sustainable agrarian livelihood and rural transformation in Eastern Africa applying inclusive R&I.

**Outcomes**

- Increased involvement of women and youth in linking multi-stakeholder IPs to practical solutions within national, regional and global food systems.
- Technologies, knowledge and innovations taken up by the stakeholders involved in ABLAs.
- Improved profitability and employment opportunities along agricultural commodity value chains.

**Outputs**

- Multi-stakeholder IPs established and supported along commodity value chains.
- Strengthened entrepreneurial capacity of youth and women involved in multi-stakeholder IPs.
- ABLAs established and operational.
- Practical solutions (technologies, innovations, management practices) and related knowledge products developed and availed of by ABLAs along commodity value chains.
- Strengthened capacity of commodity value chain actors to scale up practical solutions.
- Collaborative partnerships established and strengthened between women, youth and other actors along the value chain within ABLAs.
- New services offered by business service providers along commodity value chains.