Frequently Asked Questions
Agribusiness Market Ecosystem Alliance (AMEA)
June 2020

Please consult the website sections to obtain the basic information about who we are and what we offer. The questions below represent the most frequently asked as we recruit, onboard and work with members.

1. How is AMEA different from other networks?
AMEA is similar to other networks in that it promotes learning amongst its members. However, AMEA differs in that it promotes a system for accelerating the development of farmer organisations to become trusted business partners that delivers significant benefits to its members. AMEA invests considerable resources to develop Guidelines and a Toolkit that can be used to develop such a system. This is not a blueprint approach and AMEA expects the Guidelines and Toolkit to be used in different ways based on the context of each country and value chain.

2. What is the value addition of AMEA?
There are three areas where AMEA delivers value to members:

1. Accelerate the development of the farmer organisations you work with, with proven tools (which will deliver against the IWA 29) and with the ability to benchmark and generate learning across projects;
2. Increase your competitive edge, by differentiating your organisation by being part of AMEA, by focusing on delivering/learning rather than tool development, and by learning from others in an innovative network of organisations.
3. Strengthen your systems change strategies, by being part of one of the few initiatives that offers an opportunity to link your project results to a systems change approach.

AMEA members choose where they want to obtain value from AMEA and can decide which Working Groups and Local Networks to join. There are some members that want to collaborate on the thematic initiatives, such as the Global Guidelines. There are other members who just want to use the AMEA tools and learn from other field level practitioners – this includes agribusinesses such as Kenya Commercial Bank, Cargill, Olam, Heineken and Telcar. Members are also increasingly collaborating on joint proposals and AMEA provides a credible system change strategy to include in proposals.
3. **What is success for AMEA and how is it measured?**

Success is the accelerated development of Farmer Organisations. AMEA measures this by the changes in practices by its’ members and partners; and the impact and scale that these changes have on Farmer Organisation development. AMEA aims to be transformational and therefore works with Governments, Agribusinesses, Development Agencies, Research Institutes and Sector Associations.

4. **Who can be AMEA members and what is the cost?**

Any organization can become an AMEA member. AMEA has two levels of membership: Global and Local. The costs are Euro 10,000/year and Euro 2,000/year, respectively. The membership fees are set at this level to attract organisations who are passionate about changing the system and are ready to commit their resources.

5. **What does AMEA do with the membership fees?**

The Global membership fees are used to implement global-level activities such as development of Global Guidelines and the Toolkit. The Local membership fees are dedicated to activities within the Local Network based on the plan the Local Network develops. AMEA also leverages these fees with donor funding. Currently, for every Euro 2,000 members provide to AMEA an additional Euro 6,000 is raised to be invested in activities. So, as a member you get a 300% return on your investment in AMEA.

6. **Does AMEA implement projects or finance activities through grants?**

AMEA supports our members to act. AMEA is not an implementor and we actively avoid competing for funds with our members. Instead, AMEA provides sub-grants to members who lead Local Networks and commissions work for other activities, such as the development and testing of Global Guidelines and AMEA approved tools.

Please note that AMEA does not provide grants to external organisations and will not respond to any unsolicited proposals.

7. **How do you know AMEA tools are the best available?**

AMEA cannot guarantee that these are the best tools available as we have not reviewed all tools out there. However, we have a thorough process for reviewing our members tools and the Toolkit only contains tools that have a track record of achieving results across a variety of value chains and countries.

AMEA is also dedicated to ensuring that learning is generated to continually improve the Toolkit. As a result we re-evaluate tools every 2 years and continually look for other tools which will strategically add to the Toolkit.
8. Can I get access to the AMEA approved tools for free?

AMEA members are entitled to access the tools for free - they do not need to pay for a sub-license from the tool owner. However, these tools require technical assistance before using them, such as training of the assessors and trainers, and in some cases dedicated software. There are therefore costs for using the tools. These costs will be negotiated between the member and the tool owner based on the proposed work. AMEA will be striving to reduce the costs in order to enable large scale use of the tools.

9. How can I get access to AMEA recommended trainers/coaches?

AMEA maintains a LinkedIn Hub which includes the recommended trainers/coaches. AMEA members have access to this Hub and can contact the trainers/coaches directly. In addition, the Tool Owners also maintain databases of assessors, trainers and coaches. However, please note that demand for these people often far outstrips offer and it may be necessary for new assessors, trainers and coaches to be trained.

10. What is the legal status of AMEA, both at global and local level?

At global level, AMEA is a Dutch Stichting (Foundation) which are established to support a social or a not-for-profit cause.

AMEA is a network and facilitates our members to act. The AMEA Local Networks are led by our members in the respective countries. The legal presence for AMEA is therefore through our members. This ensures that AMEA remains highly cost-effective and member driven. In exceptional circumstances where there is a legal requirement AMEA will establish a separate legal identity.

11. There have been similar initiatives in the past which have failed? Why will AMEA be any different?

AMEA is learning and building from these initiatives but AMEA is approaching this differently. In 4 years AMEA has delivered significant results through member driven action. Member driven means costs are kept low. AMEA is therefore different from some other initiatives as AMEA can sustain its action as long as we continue to deliver value to members and members continue to see AMEA as a platform for transformative change.