

Network for Enhanced Market Access by Smallholders in East and Southern Africa

The Network for Enhanced Market Access by Smallholders in East and Southern Africa (NEMAS) is a new regional learning network. It connects three groups of people who generate and share experiences, lessons and ways to improve market access for smallholder farmers. These groups are:

- Partners - who are the owners of the network
- Local learners - who are the innovators of the network
- Members of the Community of Practice - who are the knowledge managers of the network

The partners will support local peer-to-peer learning among farmers and others in the market chain. The partners will also establish the Community of Practice, through which these experiences will be analysed, shared and scaled up. The Community of Practice will ensure that lessons, experience and good practice flow continuously between the local and regional levels.



The purpose of NEMAS

NEMAS is designed to achieve the following development outcomes:

- Enable smallholders to benefit from higher market prices and a greater choice of markets
- Enable investors to scale up good practice in their programmes through effective cross learning and sharing.
- Enable investors to improve the social and economic returns on their investments.

Network members

- Partners in the network will include public donors and private social investors in market access development
- Local learners will be smallholders and others in the value chain, as well as implementers of the partners' country programmes
- Members of the Community of Practice will be market access development practitioners identified and appointed by the partners as knowledge sharing champions

Learning expectations in the NEMAS network

- Partners will learn how to increase the impact of public and private investments in inclusive market access by smallholders.
- Local learners, the smallholders and others in the value chain will learn how to operate transparent, inclusive and competitive markets.

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- Members of the Community of Practice will learn how to improve market efficiency and inclusion, scale up proven practices, and get better returns on public and private investments.

Responsibilities of the NEMAS network members

The partners are responsible for:

- identifying and financially supporting local learning opportunities and exchange in their country programmes (where possible from existing resources)
- selecting and financially supporting the members of the Community of Practice from among their 'champion' market access development practitioners (where possible from existing resources)

The local learners are responsible for:

- engaging in business-to-business (peer-to-peer) learning and exchanges for immediate development impact
- capturing and sharing their experiences and lessons learned

The Community of Practice members are responsible for:

- analysing and synthesising the experiences of the local learning groups to assist the partners in their investment decision-making
- sharing promising, proven practices that emerge from the local learning for immediate development impact

Current and prospective partners in the NEMAS network

- IFAD, Kilimo Trust and SNV are the partners establishing the network
- AGRA, USAID/COMPETE and UDET are among the organizations being approached to join the partnership

Services NEMAS will provide to its partners

The network will make available to its partners innovative, proven practices and policies, a roster of experts and trainers, and access to sites where local value chain players are learning together. More specifically, partners get access to:

- Information, training and expertise needed to build innovations into their programmes
- Opportunities to visit local learning groups and innovative local value chains, and participate in technical exchanges to enhance the performance of their country programmes
- Information and experts to support the design of new programmes

Setting up the NEMAS network

IFAD, Kilimo Trust and SNV have committed their organizations and US\$ 4 million in financial and in-kind resources over a period of three years to establish the network.

PICO East Africa will facilitate the development and functioning of the network. It will help the partners to: select local learning opportunities from their on-going country programmes; identify 'champion' practitioners to become members of the Community of Practice; and ensure that the network functions smoothly.

Operational Model of NEMAS

Linking learners at different levels

