CTA:
EXPANDING HORIZONS
CTA has identified three key areas in which it believes it can make a significant, and unique, contribution and will seek additional funding under the 11th EDF:

1. Support to development of agribusiness in the ACP
2. Promoting development and uptake of climate-smart agriculture
3. Strengthening the linkages between nutrition and agriculture
CTA is increasingly focusing its attention on links with the private sector, especially agriculture-related small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and their associations, in developing countries, and sees this as a major growth area in the future.

**Areas of focus:**
- strengthening the capacity of regional commodity associations and their national bases as a means of boosting intra-regional trade
- linking value chains with sources of financing
- assisting governments and central banks in improving legal and regulatory frameworks

Climate-smart agriculture has been a cornerstone of CTA’s programme for the past several years, and the Centre has played a significant role in putting agriculture firmly on the climate-change agenda.

**Areas of focus:**
- promoting uptake and scale-up of climate-smart agricultural practices and creating the policy environment necessary to support this
- aligning efforts with the Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture, of which CTA is a founding member

The Centre works with a wide range of stakeholders, particularly farmers’ organisations, youth and women’s groups and research and education institutions in the development of policies, strategies and inclusive value chains that advance food security and nutrition.

**Areas of focus:**
- identifying, documenting and promoting successful agricultural interventions that improve food security and nutrition, including development of markets, associated value chains and supporting policies
- strengthening the human and institutional capacity of key public-sector stakeholders and the private sector to provide effective extension, training and information services at the field level
- advocating for increased production, marketing and consumption of diverse, nutrient-dense foods

“You cannot have a happy, healthy and peaceful continent without food.”

John Muhaise-Bikalemesa
Support to development of agribusiness in the ACP

The private sector has an increasingly prominent role in all areas in which CTA works. Extension is now often bundled with input and seed supply by private enterprises. Companies are contributing to building the capacities of farmers and farmers’ organisations and to linking farmers to markets. They see new technologies to boost agriculture’s resilience to climate change as a business opportunity and lobby governments for better agricultural policies. Private financiers rather than government development banks are expected to largely fund agricultural growth.

In consequence, CTA is increasingly focusing its attention on links with the private sector, especially agriculture-related small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and their associations, in developing countries, and sees this as a major growth area in the future.

There are a number of particular areas where CTA plans to develop links with the private sector. Building on our work on developing inclusive value chains that link smallholder farmers to lucrative markets, CTA will work on strengthening the capacity of regional commodity associations and their national bases as a means of boosting intra-regional trade. We will also seek to link value chains with sources of financing, including through the development of the evidence base needed to support investment decision-making. More broadly in the area of agricultural finance, CTA sees great potential in assisting governments and central banks improve legal and regulatory frameworks, and financiers develop appropriate mechanism for financing value chains, including for purposes such as building greater climate change resilience.

Another core focus will be on building public-private partnerships around high-potential opportunities for agricultural development. For example, CTA and its partners in West Africa could identify a high potential return on improving infrastructure for intra-regional trade (for example, cold chains, weighbridges, quality testing laboratories, electronic warehouse receipt systems). We could then invite expressions for interest in participating in and co-financing feasibility studies that would gather the information needed to make the business case for further investments. One aspect of trade infrastructure on which CTA has already started work is that of regional commodity exchange development – a commodity exchange can be a backbone for regional trade, a vehicle for commodity finance, and a source of real-time market data.

Another innovative approach would be to set up a system of ‘innovation credits’: Farmers’ organisations, NGOs, SMEs and the likes in ACP countries would be invited to submit proposals for activities aligned with CTA’s strategic objectives. CTA would help match these proposals with appropriate service providers from an approved list, and the ‘grantees’ would then use their ‘innovation credits’ to ‘buy’ the services they need. This mechanism would offer donors a way to invest in vetted development actions with high potential for widespread impact and scaling up of proven interventions.

To give some further examples, value-chain approaches are poorly covered in many academic and training programmes, and the work that CTA is doing in this area could readily be rolled out to a much larger number of beneficiaries (for example, as case study materials for business schools so they can better train students for careers in agriculture, or curricula for extension workers that teach them how to link their advice to market opportunities). In value chain finance, funding mechanisms that permit farmers to invest in building the climate resilience of their farms are still largely lacking, farmers are rarely able to leverage the strength of their buyers to obtain access to short- and medium-term credits, even though workable models have already been developed. With an input of knowledge and a little funding, systems such as warehouse receipt systems could be quickly rolled out. In trade-related infrastructure, lack of trust or lack of coordination communication between agricultural-sector stakeholders leads to a lack of investment in certain critical aspects of the value chain (e.g. lack of grading systems prevent traders from trusting the quality indications given by traders in neighbouring countries), and CTA can help build the value-chain partnerships that will overcome these coordination problems.
2. Promoting practices and policies to scale up uptake of climate-smart agriculture

Climate-smart agriculture has been a cornerstone of CTA’s programme for the past several years, and the Centre has played a significant role in putting agriculture firmly on the climate-change agenda. We have supported efforts to give farmers a voice in climate-change negotiations, working through producers’ organisations such as the Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions, the Pan-African Farmers’ Organisation, the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism and the Melanesian Spearhead Group. Over the last few years, CTA, together with the CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS), has co-organised side events at the UNFCCC COP in Durban, Qatar and Warsaw to raise awareness of successful examples of climate-smart agriculture. Our publication, *Climate-smart agriculture: Success stories from farming communities around the world*, showcases numerous examples of successful approaches that are already making a difference to people’s lives around the world. Under a new project, ‘Promoting policies and practices for increasing productivity and resilience of agriculture to climate change’ launched this year, we have recently called for proposals to document proven practices, tools or policies that promote resilience and help farmers to address the challenges posed by climate change. CTA and its partners have also developed a database of sources of finance for climate-change adaptation measures in ACP countries.

Building on these foundations, CTA now plans to increase its efforts to promote uptake and scale-up of climate-smart agricultural practices and create the policy environment necessary to support this. Key areas of activity will include: studies of the impact of climate change on all actors in key value chains in the ACP and identification of adaptive or mitigation measures; promoting farmers’ and fisherfolk’s innovations in climate-change adaptation and sustainable production across the ACP; synthesis and dissemination of information on climate adaptation and agricultural resilience to better target investments to scale up proven practices; identifying and addressing policy constraints to scaling up proven climate-smart agricultural and fisheries practices; and supporting efforts to engage farmers’ and fisherfolk’s representatives in the crucial policy debates that will ultimately determine the environment in which producers and other value-chain participants operate. The Centre will align its efforts with the Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture, of which CTA is a founding member.

“Climate-smart agriculture has been a cornerstone of CTA’s programme for the past several years.”
"One aspect of trade infrastructure which CTA has already started work on is that of regional commodity exchange development."
Although the number of chronically undernourished people has declined by more than 100 million in the last 10 years, undernourishment is still rampant: one in four people in sub-Saharan Africa, one in five in the Caribbean and one in seven in the Pacific are still undernourished. Globally, 2 billion people suffer from deficiencies of micronutrients, such as iron, zinc and vitamin A, that can lead to mental impairment, poor health and productivity or even death.

Historically, the focus of agricultural development has been on increasing production and too little attention was paid to ensuring that people had access to affordable, diverse and nutritious diets. Achieving this calls for efforts to improve the nexus between agriculture, nutrition and income.

Improving food security and nutrition requires a multisectoral response that cuts across health, water, sanitation and hygiene, education, social protection, food security and agriculture, trade and the environment and is underpinned by multidisciplinary and multistakeholder collaboration and investment from both the public and the private sector.

CTA is well placed to facilitate such efforts. The Centre works with a wide range of stakeholders, particularly farmers’ organisations, youth and women’s groups and research and education institutions in the development of policies, strategies and inclusive value chains that advance food security and nutrition. It already supports capacity building, awareness raising and knowledge sharing to promote nutrition-sensitive agriculture through its extensive networks.

At the International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) held in November 2014 in Rome, CTA, together with the European Commission, FAO and the World Bank Group, launched a framework for joint action to promote agriculture for improving nutrition outcomes.

Building these foundations, CTA will identify, document and promote successful agricultural interventions that improve food security and nutrition, including development of markets, associated value chains and supporting policies. It will strengthen the human and institutional capacity of farmers’ organisations, government agencies and associated organisations and the private sector to provide effective extension, training and information services at the field level, and will work with farmers’ organisations, value-chain actors, agribusiness, women and youth groups to advocate for increased production, marketing and consumption of diverse, nutrient-dense foods.

Together, these efforts will contribute to raising both the quality of life and the potential of people in the ACP.
Adopting a regional focus

From 2015, CTA is orienting its programmes around six regional business plans: West Africa, Central Africa, Eastern Africa, Southern Africa, Caribbean and Pacific. Adopting this approach helps ensure that our work is closely tied to the needs of our partners, smallholder farmers and others in rural areas in African, Caribbean and Pacific countries. It also enhances our accountability to the ultimate beneficiaries of our work and strengthens our focus on achieving impact.

The regional business plans will contribute to:
• better developed agribusiness and effective public-private partnerships;
• policies and practices that promote the development and uptake of climate-resilient agriculture for strategic crops; and
• improvements to all critical phases of the agriculture–nutrition pathway.

The plans:
• focus on key priority intervention areas aligned with regional priorities in which CTA can demonstrate concrete comparative advantage and value addition and can make a difference;
• recognise that regional integration and partnership among all key stakeholders, including the private sector, are key for harmonising policies and sharing best practices;
• serve as a common framework that maximises synergies and facilitates economies of scale between different CTA programmes of work and between all implementing partners;
• provide sufficient flexibility to respond to emerging agricultural transformation issues and trends pertinent to each region and its priorities;
• recognise that cross-cutting issues such as gender and youth are critical to effectively addressing the challenges of agricultural transformation and ensuring successful implementation of projects related to the regional plans;
• and systematically include actions that harness the ‘data revolution’ in support of agricultural development and ensuring successful implementation of projects related to the regional plans;
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The regional business plans have been developed in close consultation with our partners on the ground, including regional economic and policy bodies, regional farmers’ and producers’ organisations and the private sector.

West Africa

In its work in this region, CTA will focus on coarse grains (maize, millet and sorghum), rice, cassava and livestock.

Facilitating development of inclusive value chains and boosting intra-regional trade in strategic food commodities

Value chains of food commodities in West Africa are mostly under-developed and poorly structured around informal institutions and mechanisms rather than effective contractual linkages and financing arrangements. This results in smallholders being poorly connected to both input markets and the fast-growing urban food markets of the region.

Work under this area brings together activities focused on the value chains themselves, as well as those that address the related processes of policy development and implementation.

Strengthening adaptation to climate change in strategic food commodity subsectors.

Work related to climate change will promote knowledge and information on good climate-smart practices and support development of policies that facilitate their uptake. This will provide useful input into the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States in developing appropriate climate-related policies for the region.
Central Africa

CTA's work in Central Africa has a single focus: contributing to food and nutrition security by promoting selected strategic agricultural value chains and intra-regional trade. The Centre's work will address coarse grains (millet and sorghum), cassava, livestock (meat) and cotton.

This programme will support the implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy developed in 2014 by the Economic Community of Central African States, which aims at enhancing food security, improving natural resources management and promoting regional markets. CTA's work will include support for knowledge generation, capacity- and institution-building, for extension and advisory services and for inclusive policy processes. Cross-cutting issues such as youth and gender are incorporated in the priority setting for action programmes.

Eastern Africa

In its work in the Eastern Africa region, CTA will focus on coarse grains (maize, millet and sorghum), rice and livestock.

Supporting agricultural and rural development policies and institutional capacity development for policy analysis and advocacy

CTA will help its regional partners to build and document the evidence base for critical agricultural and rural development policies and to develop strategies and programming efforts. It will also enhance the analytical and outreach/advocacy capacities of African institutions in the region to identify policy bottlenecks affecting agricultural and rural development, articulate evidence-based policy positions and monitor their implementation.

Market development and agribusiness promotion

The private sector in Eastern Africa is increasingly engaged in development of agricultural value chains to improve supply and quality of agricultural commodities. CTA will support this process by supporting capacity-building for the development of effective agribusiness platforms and the functioning of national and regional agricultural markets as levers for enhanced rural livelihoods, export promotion, value-chain expansion and increased regional integration.

Southern Africa

CTA's work in Southern Africa will focus on maize, cassava, rice, fruits and vegetables, groundnuts and sweet potato, and on cattle, goats and poultry.

Promoting climate-resilient agriculture for strategic crops and livestock, to the benefit of a broad spectrum of farm households

The Southern African region is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, and CTA's work in the region will complement the regional activities of the Global Alliance on Climate-Smart Agriculture aimed at promoting knowledge of climate-smart practices and creating an enabling environment and the finance needed to encourage their uptake. CTA will equip farmers’ organisations with advocacy skills on climate change, and provide them with opportunities to share their experiences on innovation for coping with climatic variation and to co-create knowledge on approaches to address climate change.

Development of market-led and profitable agricultural value chains for food, nutrition and income

The approach to this area of work will be based on market-led and inclusive development of profitable priority agricultural value chains through linking producers, traders and processors and responding to the demands of the consumer. CTA will help develop the evidence base on a number of critical issues related to the leveraging of agriculture to improve the region’s nutritional status.

Caribbean

CTA’s work in the Caribbean has a single focus: building sustainable agricultural value chains and supporting access to markets. Specific attention will be given to selected strategic food commodities, i.e., foods grown by a significant number of smallholders, whether for their own consumption or for trade (national, intra-regional or inter-regional), and to fish farming and small-scale coastal fisheries.

CTA will bring an integrated, value-chain-oriented approach to addressing key issues identified by the Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community in their Liliendaal Declaration of 2009. The work will encompass both activities focused on the value chains themselves and activities that address the related processes of policy development and implementation. Through this process, CTA will contribute to sustainable livelihoods of small-scale farmers and agri-processors and to food and nutrition security in the Caribbean, with particular attention to women and youth.
Pacific

CTA’s work in the Pacific will focus on selected strategic food commodities, i.e., foods grown by a significant number of smallholders, whether for their own consumption or for trade (national, intra-regional or inter-regional), and on fish farming and small-scale coastal fisheries.

Building high-potential and climate-change-resilient agricultural value chains

The Pacific is highly dependent on food imports, and with strong population growth and ongoing urbanisation this dependency will only increase unless the region’s farmers become better connected to the region’s consumption centres. The region is also highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. CTA will apply an integrated value-chains approach to tackle these challenges, linking private and public sectors, farmers and traders, and agricultural and financial sectors, including ministries of agriculture, trade, finance and others.

Improving the agriculture–nutrition pathway

Nutrition and lifestyle diseases are a clear and present threat to the Pacific. More than half the population is obese in some island states. Non-communicable diseases linked to diet, notably cardiovascular disease, diabetes and hypertension, accounted for three-quarters of all deaths across the Pacific archipelago and treating obesity-induced diabetes alone accounts for 40–60% of health-care expenditure in some island states. CTA aims to support the region’s efforts to improve nutrition by unleashing the potential of local production. It will focus on making improvements along the agriculture–nutrition pathway from farm to fork, from helping policy-makers develop appropriate messages to help change mindsets among the region’s consumers to enabling farmers to grow the crops that local consumers demand as a result.

Regions


Southern Africa: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Caribbean: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Pacific: Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu (the Polynesian countries); Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau (the Micronesian countries); Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu (the Melanesian countries); and Timor Leste.
The Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) is a joint international institution of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States and the European Union (EU). Its mission is to advance food and nutritional security, increase prosperity and encourage sound natural resource management in ACP countries. It provides access to information and knowledge, facilitates policy dialogue and strengthens the capacity of agricultural and rural development institutions and communities.

CTA operates under the framework of the Cotonou Agreement and is funded by the EU.

For more information on CTA visit, [www.cta.int](http://www.cta.int)

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