



The voice of small business at COP27

Alliances for Action

Partnerships for Sustainable Food Systems

Overview

Smallholder farmers and micro, small and medium-size enterprises (MSMEs) are the foundation of sustainable global, regional, and local food production systems. The prosperity of rural communities and the natural environment depend on the ability of farmers and MSMEs to earn living incomes and grow.

Yet, these key producers of agricultural and food value are often the most vulnerable actors in global supply chains. Instead of thriving and being recognized for the value they create, they are trapped in poverty. Already compromised by barriers to finance, market disruptions, and lack of support infrastructure, their situation is now exacerbated by the adverse effects of climate change. This can in turn hamper local economies and environments, human health and education, as well as human rights, security, and peace. It can also demotivate future generations from staying in farming.

Putting the VALUE back in value chains

Alliances for Action (A4A) is an International Trade Centre (ITC) initiative to establish a network that transforms food systems and advances the Sustainable Development Goals through producer partnerships that cultivate ethical, climate-smart, sustainable agricultural value chains. We aim at achieving resilience and growth for farmers and MSMEs through more mindful and responsible trade, production and consumption systems and improved opportunities to compete on a global market. This includes building strength and competitiveness of MSMEs and enabling sustainable market linkages and value addition. In the long term,

this will serve to incentivize and engage more youth and women at all sector levels.

An A4A project typically begins by working with buyers farmers, processors, and distributors from across a value chain to identify gaps and opportunities in the healthy functioning of a food system. Then value chain stakeholders share market information, collaborate and innovate. This helps cultivate mutually beneficial commercial relationships that increase overall competitiveness. Stakeholder groups and institutions from across a value chain are included in the consultation, implementation, and governance





phases of every development project. We call this the '3 C' process: Connection, Coordination and Collaboration to enable resilience, better trade and growth.

Alliances for Action's 3 C process

Value chain transformation:



Understand and Convene

CONNECTION

A shared understanding of sustainability systems, issues and opportunities



Transform

COORDINATION

Public-private alliances from producer to consumer



Invest and Impact

COLLABORATION

Builds competitiveness and leverages investment to transform value chains

Partnerships as a catalyzer for collective action

Working in silos on single issues or isolated value chain links will not achieve comprehensive, lasting transformation. A4A engages hundreds of stakeholders across 35 countries in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Pacific. Together with our partners, we seek to build more sustainable and competitive conditions at every step across agricultural value chains.

Public-private partnerships, alliances between supply chain operators, meaningful investment and enabling policies are essential for lasting impact.

Through our unique, participatory approach, A4A cultivates the conditions for stakeholder partnerships to emerge, which collectively lead to ongoing, scalable improvement in the health of agricultural value chains, the sustainability of food systems, and thereby in the competitiveness of smallholder farmers and MSMEs. In this way, A4A works beyond the scope of individual projects. It facilitates ongoing learning and collaborative action among value chain actors to advance the achievement of more equitable global agri-value chains. It networks to promote investments and enabling policies.

A4A creates a shared understanding of market systems, issues, and opportunities by:

- Facilitating trust between value chain actors and institutions
- Aggregating and sharing data, including market opportunities
- Clarifying shared purpose and principles
- Establishing communication infrastructures

A4A establishes public-private alliances from producer to consumer by:

- Ensuring technical support and facilitating partnerships
- Managing knowledge across projects and circulating information, allowing fact-based decision making
- Adopting inclusive, collaborative decision-making
- Developing a purpose-driven roadmap with common priorities

A4A builds competitiveness and leverages investment to transform value chains by:

- Brokering relationships that stimulate investment and capacity building to facilitate system-wide value creation and resilience

Alliances for Action advances efforts to develop global agribusiness value chains that equitably distribute benefits to ALL stakeholders.



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