Making markets work for women and youth: agri-business clusters as motors for high-value AIRCA input packages

A concept note for the Lake Victoria Basin

The Association of International Research and Development Centers for Agriculture (AIRCA) is addressing the most pressing needs to improve agribusiness in the Lake Victoria Basin, Uganda. The work will focus on combining the existing skill sets and experiences of its members, focusing on proven existing input technologies relevant to the Basin that can be scaled up and out to achieve real impact in agricultural production and nutrition for the farmers and their families. The project focuses on women and youth farmers, using a demand-driven approach that is responsive to local conditions and needs. Knowledge and skills dissemination and transfer through agribusiness clusters will support the utilisation of technologies, through input packages, so that real impact can be achieved by the farming families that live in the Basin.

AIRCA’s vision is to reach 250,000 women and young people who will increase their income by 25%, and 1,000,000 consumers who will have improved access to more nutritious food. The project will focus on ‘WINS’, by creating and enhancing market access for women and youth, targeting agricultural sectors yielding high income and better nutrition on a sustainable basis, and by leveraging our combined strengths in input packages through agribusiness clusters. The specific input packages will include: integrated pest management, fertilizers, water, energy, seed, knowledge management/ICT and land management. The agribusiness clusters will combine the input packages with other financial and business support services to enable sustainable business development.