

Title of meeting	Tech-MODE for agricultural education and improved livelihoods in Sub-Saharan Africa
Responding to Theme 7	Africa's capacity to build human and institutional capacity for agricultural industry
Organizers	COL, FARA
Date and Time	10 June, 08:30-17:30
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The objectives of this side-event is to contribute to FARA's BASIC and RAILS programmes. The approach is by analysing:

1. an inventory of national educational and training institutions, facilities, capabilities and potential for Tech-MODE on diverse levels in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) through a few country case studies (linking with BASIC); and
2. the experiences on Tech-MODE, life-long learning (L3) for farmers, and forward linkages (linking with RAILS).

Analysis of Tech-MODE potential. The recent Commonwealth of Learning (COL) initiatives on Tech-MODE for agricultural education for improved livelihood look promising and COL is committed to share its experiences for the benefit of SSA. To enhance collaboration and synergy, COL wishes to identify opportunities for a complementary and catalytic role with strategic partners such as the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) on the following levels:

- formal degree and post-graduate education
- continuing professional education
- life-long learning for farming communities
- agricultural education at primary and secondary schools

The need to use modern information and communication technologies (ICT) and Tech-MODE for promoting education and training for agriculture at all levels including academic, research, policy, development and grassroots communities is becoming increasingly urgent in developing countries. COL is undertaking a few country case studies with the objective of documenting an inventory of local institutions, facilities and capabilities for Tech-MODE, as well as describing the learning needs for improving livelihoods that can be addressed through Tech-MODE. The country studies will be presented and discussed for further action on 9 June.

Forward linkages. More often the discussions about the agricultural education and extension are confined to universities, research institutions and NGOs that often relate to backward linkages stressing on the "supply side" of knowledge. Issues relating to "demand driven" forward linkages receive minimal attention in defining the agricultural education and extension. There is considerable pressure and interest in enabling the subsistence farmers to move towards semi-commercial or commercial farming in the context of globalization. Such a process requires strong forward linkages with various stakeholders representing industries, trade, banks, insurance sector, NGO and CBO etc.

Tech-MODE and L3 would sustain only when all the stakeholders are able to relate to the process. The objectives of the present meeting are to understand and identify:

1. the role of various stakeholders in forward linkages in Tech-MODE and L3 in Africa.
2. expectations of the stakeholders and assess their role in knowledge flow and networking
3. the framework for a win-win situation in Tech-MODE and L3

The workshop with various stakeholders in forward linkages is an attempt to evolve a perspective for self-sustaining, self-replicable, self-generative L3 process in Africa.