

Advanced Leadership Programme

Virtual convening for executive leadership

CALA
Centre for African Leaders in Agriculture



Summary

TechChange worked with AGRA and implementing partner of the Centre for African Leaders in Agriculture (CALA), the African Management Institute, to provide a **multi-year virtual summit and training program** for multiple cohorts of the prestigious leadership program for executives and rising leaders from across Africa's agriculture sector.



Services Used

- Custom Platform Design
- Video and Livestream Production
- Live Virtual Trainings (Synchronous learning)
- Monitoring and Evaluation

About the Client

[AGRA](#) is an African-led institution focused on scaling agricultural innovations that help smallholder farmers towards increased incomes, better livelihoods, and improved food security.

The [Center for African Leaders in Agriculture \(CALA\)](#) is an AGRA-led initiative with the [African Management Institute \(AMI\)](#), as the lead implementing partner.



Virtual Touch Point Mid-Programme

CALA's [Advanced Leadership Programme](#) is a collaborative, 16 months hands-on, and tailored experience for senior and rising leaders in Africa's agriculture sector, designed for individuals spearheading and directly implementing specific country-level agriculture initiatives. It is implemented in **Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania** and **Uganda**.

One of the delivery modalities of the CALA curriculum is themed virtual Leadership Forums where delegates have an opportunity to learn and interact with food systems experts from around the world. AGRA and AMI partnered with TechChange to create one of such 2 two-day virtual convening in May 2024 themed "Agroecology, ESMS, and Digital Agriculture: The New Frontier for Advancing African Food Systems."



Key Stats in 2024



74 Delegates and supporting staff members logged in from 8 African countries.



4000+ Responses to posted discussion threads on key topics.



10 Hours of live content.



424 Event Chat Messages as participants networked with one another.



"Working with TechChange to put on the virtual component of the Advanced Leadership Program the last few years has been seamless. Their team is collaborative and solutions-oriented, and the platform itself makes learning and connection simple for attendees across a wide variety of locations and digital literacy skill levels."

-African Management Institute



Bringing Leaders Together

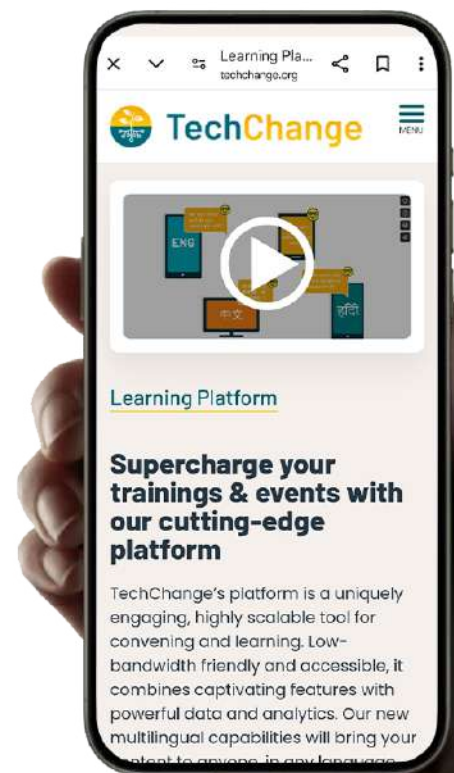
TechChange has provided virtual convening services and coordination for the Advanced Leadership Program since 2021 and is a proud member of the organizing team that includes AGRA, the African Management Institute and others. The partners for the virtual convening function as **one aligned team** in the lead up, which allows for ideal communication and realization of a variety of efficiencies for the last four virtual leadership sessions. The latest, the second Leadership Forum of May 2024, included more than 70 participants from across the continent, and provided them with access to more than ten hours of content including high-level plenary sessions and specialized in-depth workshops on agroecology and environmental and social management systems. TechChange's **TV-studio quality production** lent a professional appearance and delivery to each session, which included more than ten hours of content, synchronously delivered.

TechChange Platform Achieves Partner Goals

AGRA and AMI place a high value on **interactivity and engagement**, so TechChange activated the platform features to enable the highest levels of engagement, including **"tech points" that gamify activities** such as commenting on a discussion thread or entering a comment in the chat. **Country cohorts competed** with one another to achieve the highest number of points—leading to some of the highest totals the tech team had ever seen.

This, along with the on-call help desk, chat functionality, and **technical moderation** provided by TechChange team members ensured that the full cohort of participants was able to complete the requirements of the session, advancing one step further towards their eventual certification, Advanced Leadership Programme for Africa's Food Security & Sustainability.

AGRA wanted each participant to receive the same training opportunities, and progress along the predetermined track of the leadership session, simultaneously. So TechChange worked with AMI to bring an agenda to life that would target all participants as well as a hands-on support structure to make sure no one was left behind.



Hard-hitting Discussions on Topics that Matter

The virtual leadership forums always explore **intersectional topics** with wide relevance across countries, each of which hold a particular challenge or opportunity for African agriculture and food sustainability. For example, one recent leadership forum focused on exploring the connections between agroecology, Environmental and Social Management Systems (ESMS), and digital agriculture- all of which collectively represent a new frontier in advancing food systems. In addition to advanced level technical content, **soft skills and leadership aptitude** are explored through breakout sessions on Zoom, such as in frank discussions on working well with others in the face of conflict. Ever practicality-minded, the program includes **case studies** on multiple organizations and how they have handled recent problems within the sector.

These leadership forums don't just encourage participation- they require it. Participants must attend sessions, follow discussion threads and engage with their peers. **Participation is tracked** via the TechChange platform and displayed on a visually engaging **dashboard**. This model is particularly effective in ensuring robust discussions and laying the groundwork for a lifetime of valuable connections through the programme's extensive Alumni network. TechChange looks forward to the future of this exciting partnership, including alumni returning as speakers for future iterations, once they have put the leadership principles they learned into practice.



Results

The CALA Advanced Leadership Program has equipped nearly 300 people with the relationships and the modern, cross-cutting skills that they need to lead. Graduates have become CEO's of major companies, Ministers of Agriculture for their governments, as well as implementers at preeminent NGO organizations. The special consideration given to women and youth leaders within the cohorts will help to ensure a more equitable future for a male-dominated field, as well as a sustainable pipeline of qualified leaders for the challenges of the future.



TechChange

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