



# Developing sustainable seed systems to support commercialization of small-scale agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa

A program being implemented by ICRISAT with international, regional and national partners across sub-Saharan Africa

# Outline

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# Background



- Two broad categories of farmers
    - Primarily subsistence producers
    - More market-oriented
  - Benefits of improved seed and modern inputs
    - Increases value and productivity of assets
      - Land
      - Labor
      - Capital
  - Why is use of improved seed so limited?
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# Introduction

- Uncoordinated efforts related to seed
- Renewed focus on commercialization
- Increased political commitment



# Contd...

- Inappropriate modern varieties
- Many released varieties never multiplied
- High market transaction costs
  - High overheads of larger seed companies
- Markets distorted by relief seed
- National seed markets too small
- Private investments in crop breeding limited
- Public investments inconsistent and inefficient

# Objectives

1. To improve access to and adoption of the best new varieties developed by public plant breeding programs
2. To strengthen private sector capacity for seed marketing
3. To promote the development of regionalized seed markets in order to achieve scale economies in variety development and distribution

# Access and adoption (1)

- Develop regional seed catalogs
- Regional breeder and foundation seed unit
- Training in seed production



# Strengthen seed marketing (2)



- Development of action plans for developing sustainable agricultural input supply systems
- Training in seed marketing for companies, wholesalers and retailers
- Test and promote the use of more market friendly strategies for the delivery of relief seed
- Testing of innovative strategies for promoting the sale of seed of food crops

# Promoting sale of food crops



- Linking community seed production programs to private seed companies
  - Stimulating seed demand through variety demonstrations
  - Marketing small seed packs to farmers through various outlets
  - Testing models for linking seed sales with formal and informal contracting underlying investments in product market development
  - Establishment and strengthening of national seed trade associations
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# Regionalized seed markets (3)

- Review and assess the implementation of seed harmonization efforts in all three sub-regions of sub-Saharan Africa
- Protocols for new variety evaluation and release procedures developed based on science
- Develop new seed certification standards that are cost-effective and relevant to the needs of small-scale farmers

# Regionalized seed markets contd...

- Draw up lists of quarantine pests and diseases based on science
- Establish plant variety protection laws to protect public and stimulate private sector investments in crop improvement
- Develop guidelines for an accreditation system for self-seed certification
- Review and streamline export/import regulations to reduce transactions in seed trade

# Selected partners



- Iowa State University
  - International Fertilizer Development Center
  - IARCs and NARES
  - Regional Economic Communities
  - Sub-regional organizations
    - ASARECA/ECAPAPA
    - SADC Seed Security Network
    - West Africa Economic and Monetary Union
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# Link to strategic initiatives



- NEPAD/CAADP
  - Initiative to end Hunger in Africa (USAID)
  - Sub-regional research organizations
  - Regional economic communities
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