

AfricaSeeds Strategy 2016-2025



Intergovernmental Seed Organization
and Implementing Agency
for the African Union Seed Program



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for the African Union Seed Program*

AfricaSeeds Strategy

2016-2025

December 2015

Appreciation

The Governing Board of AfricaSeeds thanks the wide range of AfricaSeeds advisors and consultants as well as diverse partners who contributed during the formulation of this Strategy.

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FOREWORD BY THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION

Quality seeds play a critical role in building food and nutrition security. Therefore the serious inequities and challenges which have, for long, plagued Africa's seed sector constitute huge barriers to the continental goals in agricultural development. In view of that, The Heads of State, during the Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union (AU) in Sirte, Libya, on 5 July 2005, requested that African experts should lead in the development of an effective and sustainable seed sector that would form a pathway for the achievement of continental food and nutrition security. A continental effort, involving a wide range of stakeholders, fully responded to this request and in 2007 the Heads of State and Government adopted the African Seed and Biotechnology Program (ASBP) as the continental framework for seed sector development in the continent.

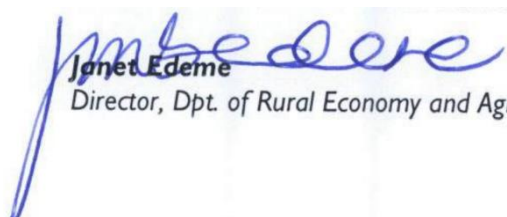
In the implementation arrangement approved for the ASBP, AfricaSeeds has been designated as lead implementer and coordinator of AU's seed program. The choice of AfricaSeeds to serve in that capacity is based on the following important principles:

1. AfricaSeeds, more than any other seed-related institution, meets the requirements to act as coordinator and lead implementer of ASBP;
2. The move lies within AU's mandate to strengthen a strategic African institution.

The 23rd Ordinary Summit of the African Union Heads of State and Government held in Malabo in June 2014 reaffirmed AU's commitment "to enhance the cost-effective production and utilization of quality agricultural inputs that are affordable, accessible and profitable (to all stakeholders) to achieve sustainable food and nutrition security by 2025" and AfricaSeeds will serve as the prime institution by which efforts towards the achievements of the seed components of that goal will be mobilized. However, AfricaSeeds is not meant to act alone: more importantly, AfricaSeeds will collaborate with all other relevant institutions, initiatives and stakeholders involved in seed development and coordinate or cooperate in all seed interventions which may be conducted by them, whether within ASBP as a program or when they adopt ASBP as a framework.

AUC wishes to pay tribute to the Government of Côte d'Ivoire for hosting the Headquarters of AfricaSeeds in Abidjan since its formation and for its enviable record of stewardship and support which have sustained the organization throughout its formative years until it is now required to shoulder a huge responsibility for Africa. It is our hope that that record will propel all other member states of AU to equally play their roles to ensure a strong AfricaSeeds, able to perform the important seed sector development role that has been entrusted to it.

On the occasion of the launching of AfricaSeeds' strategy for implementing the ASBP, AUC wishes the organization well and pays tribute to all partners who have contributed to making it ready for its tasks, while calling on all of Africa's friends and well-wishers to contribute to make the work of AfricaSeeds a success.



Janet Edeme
Director, Dpt. of Rural Economy and Agriculture

MESSAGE BY CHAIRMAN, GOVERNING BOARD

There is wide acceptance that a strong and effective seed sector contributes to the achievement of agricultural advancement. Consequently AfricaSeeds has been involved in enhancing seed sector development as a network from 1998 until 2014 when it was reorganized to widen its mandate and objectives to serve as an implementing agency for the AU seed program, the African Seed and Biotechnology Program (ASBP). During the inaugural meeting of the reconstituted Governing Board of the AfricaSeeds, a new mandate and corresponding vision and mission for the organization were approved. In so doing, AfricaSeeds had been re-launched to embark on the final lap of the race which all of Africa's seed sector stakeholders started many years ago, to finally build a seed sector that would support the critical agricultural goals of the continent. The Board commends the African Union for its foresight in initiating ASBP and for its continuing backing of AfricaSeeds that is crucial to ensure success.

The Board is aware of the onerous task ahead, but is convinced that the preparations do match the task. Firstly, in ASBP, a good program and framework have been developed which meet the development needs of all the components and elements of the seed sector and mobilize the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders to address those needs. Secondly, the strategy of AfricaSeeds is based on the overall requirements of ASBP, designed in a manner which allows collaboration with any partner in seed development, irrespective of the mode of operation employed.

Much in the same manner that ASBP has been developed, collaboration and expert consultation will be major tools employed in the overall strategy of AfricaSeeds. The Governing Board is convinced that through the wide range of development activities identified in AfricaSeeds' medium term implementation plan and associated with the implementation mechanisms described in the strategy document, AfricaSeeds is poised to contribute its quota to the collective effort. It is the hope of the Governing Board that the excellent contribution made by seed experts in Africa, which has made the formulation of ASBP a reality, will equally be forthcoming during the program's implementation.

During the Governing Board's inaugural meeting in Abidjan in 2014, the Board members pledged to build and preserve a reputation for AfricaSeeds as an efficient and effective African seed sector development institution. In the same vein, but on a broader and higher level, we now urge all seed development stakeholders across Africa to make their own commitment and pledge to act concertedly to fulfill Africa's cherished dream of seed security for food and nutrition security.

Patrick Ngwediagi

Chairman, Governing Board



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ABBREVIATIONS

ABCIC	African Biodiversity Conservation and Innovation Centre
AFSTA	African Seed Trade Association
AMU	Arab Maghreb Union
ASARECA	Association for strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa
ASBP	African Seed and Biotechnology Program
ASN	African Seed Network
ASTA	African Seed Trade Association
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program
CAADP PP	CAADP Partnership Platform
CEN-SAD	Community of Sahel-Saharan States
CGIAR	Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CORAF/WE CARD	West and Central Africa Council for Agricultural Research and Development
EAC	East African Community
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAP	ECOWAS Agricultural Policy
ECOWAS	Economic Commission of West African States
FAO	UN Food and Agriculture Organization
FARA	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
FAST	Forum for African Seed Testing
FO	Farmers' Organization
IARC	International Agricultural Research Centers
IGAD	Inter-governmental Authority on Development
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
ISSD	Integrated Seed Sector Development
ISTA	International Seed Testing Association
IS&R	Implementation Strategy and Roadmap
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NARI	National Agricultural Research Institute
NARS	National Agricultural Research System
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NFP	National Focal Point
NSB	National Seed Board
NSL	National Seed Laboratory
NSP	National Seed Program
PSE	Private Seed Enterprise
RFP	Regional Focal Point
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAA	Specific Action Area
SADC-FANR	Southern African Development Community / Food, Agriculture and Natural Resource Department
SRO	Sub Regional Organization
UEMOA	Union Economique et Monétaire de l'Afrique de l'Ouest
UPOV	Union pour la Protection des Objéctions Végétales
WAAPP	West Africa Agricultural Productivity Program
WASP	West Africa Seed Program

ABOUT US

VISION STATEMENT

A seed-secure Africa enabled for building efficient and sustainable seed systems that will contribute towards the achievement of agriculture transformation, food and nutrition security as well as wealth creation in Africa.

MISSION STATEMENT

To address the needs for seed sector development in cooperation with all seed stakeholders and developmental partners, through integrated seed sector development actions, public private partnerships and networking to achieve sustainable national, regional and continental seed programs and industries, in line with the African Seed and Biotechnology Program (ASBP) and the goal of continental agriculture transformation, food and nutrition security, as well as poverty alleviation.

MANDATE STATEMENT

To coordinate and lead in the implementation of the African Seeds and Biotechnology Program (ASBP), undertake an advocacy role to promote the importance of seed and provide greater visibility for seed systems development thereby assisting in the development of comprehensive national, sub-regional and continental seed program development initiatives.

ROLE STATEMENT

To contribute to the overall development effort of the seed sector, through partnerships and a holistic, integrated and coordinated approach for building efficient and sustainable seed systems that will lead to the achievement of agriculture transformation, food and nutrition security, poverty alleviation and creation of wealth on the continent.



AfricaSeeds receiving Mandate from African Union Commission

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Quality seeds are critical for increasing overall crop production (up to 30-40% yield increase), and therefore form the basis for food and nutrition security in Africa. However, in spite of the overwhelming benefits of quality seeds, the record of seed sector contribution to Africa's agricultural development has been unsatisfactory. Some of the challenges which have constrained the contribution of the seed sector include: inadequate seed policies; inadequacies in variety development and deployment; slow development of the private seed sector; inadequate support for small-scale seed entrepreneurs; poorly developed infrastructure and capacity; inadequate seed marketing; inadequate extension services; inadequate exploitation of informal seed systems; and neglect of such emerging issues as climate change, breeders' and farmer's rights and biodiversity loss. As the Implementing Agency for the African Union (AU) seed program, AfricaSeeds will coordinate and implement the African Seeds and Biotechnology Program (ASBP) and serve as policy and resource mobilization initiator with a view to assisting in the development of comprehensive national, regional and continental seed programs, to contribute more effectively to achieving agricultural transformation, as well as food security in Africa.

The overall concentration of AfricaSeeds will be on three broad developmental areas, in which AfricaSeeds will specialize. These areas are (1) development of a seed database and statistics for the seed sector of Africa; (2) capacity building, especially training, to build up capabilities for the effective implementation of planned interventions; and (3) coordination of all seed sector interventions in Africa to ensure proper recording and follow-up of actions in order to keep track of progress made towards established goals.

AfricaSeeds will address the needs for seed sector development in cooperation with all seed stakeholders and developmental partners, through integrated seed sector development actions, public private partnerships and networking to achieve sustainable national, regional and continental seed programs and industries, in line with the ASBP and the goal of continental agricultural transformation and food security.

In its interventions, AfricaSeeds will advocate for support and prioritization of seeds for agricultural development and food and nutrition security, ensure availability and access of quality seeds to farmers for increased crop production and productivity, enhance and support private seed entrepreneurship, promote seed trade and market development, promote resilience of national seed systems vulnerable to threats and crises and promote seed-related data, information and knowledge systems.

AfricaSeeds will contribute to the achievement of the goal of CAADP, recognizing that quality seeds constitute a basic conduit by which the key objectives of the CAADP can be most effectively achieved. Therefore, implementation of the actions that AfricaSeeds will undertake towards the fulfillment of its objectives will feed into the CAADP results framework.

Fostering effective partnership and collaboration with all key stakeholders, including AU Member States, Regional Economic Communities, the AU Commission as well as technical and development Partners will be essential to the implementation of AfricaSeeds' strategy.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Strategy document represents the *modus operandi* of AfricaSeeds, implementing agency of the African Union seed¹ program. The Strategy will guide the agency in all its operations, particularly in the implementation and coordination of the African Seed and Biotechnology Program (ASBP); in its relationship and support to other seed initiatives; and in its approaches towards addressing the many issues of the seed sector in Africa. The Strategy has been formulated by a process instituted by the Governing Board of AfricaSeeds and has benefitted from contributions of several key experts, and was eventually approved in December 2015 by the Governing Board.

2.0 BACKGROUND

Africa's population is growing at 3% annually and now stands at 1 billion, 60-70% of which depends on agriculture for its livelihood. Despite the rich agricultural base of the continent, the majority of the population live below the poverty line and are food insecure. This is largely attributed to the low productivity in the agricultural sector. Nevertheless, an enormous gap, estimated at 70-80%, exists between potential and current yields. For example, in maize, while grain yields of improved non-hybrid varieties under good crop management practices are estimated between 5 and 8 t/ha, farmers' grain yields stand at an average of 1.5 t/ha. In the case of rice, current farmers' yields range between 1 to 3 t/ha and only up to 6 t/ha under irrigation, less than 40% of the optimum potential in the field.



¹ Seed refers to true seed and all the types of vegetative planting material.



Adequate seed usage of improved varieties and quality seeds, as well as good management practices, play a key role in determining agricultural productivity. Seeds, together with good production environment, determine the upper limit of crop yields and the productivity of all other agricultural inputs in the farming system. Quality seeds are therefore critical in agriculture.

Since they constitute a key ingredient for enhancing farm productivity and overall crop production, quality seeds form the basis for food security. The management of the seed sector is therefore of paramount importance. The basic requirement in a seed system is that good quality seeds should be made available in locations where they are required and as well, farmers should have access to them and be able to utilize them in the proper manner for the required output.

For seeds to play the desired role in Africa, an essential prerequisite is an effective seed sector at the national, regional and continental levels. However, the seed sector in Africa is plagued with serious inequities which render it ineffective to cater for the overall needs of agriculture. As food security is heavily dependent on seed security, the goal of food security will remain elusive unless the seed security of farming communities is achieved first.

Given the critical role that improved varieties play in increasing agricultural production, a key question is how to facilitate the development of a seed system that is capable of generating, producing and distributing seeds of new varieties that meet the needs of all farmers, in a cost-effective way.

A seed system encompasses the entire complex of organizations, individuals and institutions associated with the development, multiplication, processing, storage,

distribution and marketing of seeds in any given country. In Africa, it includes formal and informal systems. While a formal system is a deliberately constructed and bounded system, which involves a chain of activities leading to certified seeds of clearly identified varieties, an informal system is locally organized and based on the ways farmers produce, disseminate and procure seeds through on-farm saving, exchange with other farmers or purchase from local grain markets. The guiding principles of the formal seed system are i) to maintain variety identity and purity, and ii) to produce seeds of optimal physical, physiological and sanitary quality. Varieties in the informal system may be landraces, modern varieties or mixed races. Distinction between seed and grain (for grain crops) in the informal is usually unclear, although the same functions of multiplication, selection, storage and marketing take place in both systems. A major characteristic of the informal system is its diversity.

Both formal and informal seed systems are important channels for delivering seeds to African farmers, but currently, more than 80% of the seed planted by African farmers is produced through the informal seed system.

The need to accelerate efforts to improve the supply of quality seeds to bridge the yield gap is urgent if the contribution of seed sector development in the implementation the CAADP agenda is to be effective and significant. Quality seeds act with fertilizer, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), soil water management, climate information and market access, to raise agricultural productivity and production and respond to the objectives of CAADP.

3.0 CHALLENGES OF THE SEED SECTOR IN AFRICA

In spite of the overwhelming benefits of quality seed, the record of seed sector contribution to Africa's agriculture development has been unsatisfactory, overall. Some of the challenges which have constrained the contribution of the seed sector are as follows.

i. *Inadequate Seed Policies*

While a few countries have seed policies which are encouraging investments, particularly in seed distribution, in many other countries, either there are inadequate seed policies or the policies are acting as disincentives to further seed industry development.

ii. *Poor Exploitation of Plant Genetic Resources*

Several obstacles limit the effective use of plant genetic resources. These include: the lack of organized germplasm collection, conservation and management initiatives, characterization and evaluation data; poor coordination of national policies; and poor linkages between national genebanks and the users of the germplasm.

iii. *Inadequacies in Variety Development and Deployment*

Although most NARS have a good record of variety development of the key crops in the country, serious gaps remain, relating to food security crops such as rice, cassava, yam, cowpeas, open pollinated maize, millet and sorghum, vegetable crops,

etc... Further, newly developed varieties often do not reach farmers timely because of lengthy testing requirements which have to be repeated even in countries with similar agro-ecological conditions. Further, there is lack of national capacity to maintain the released varieties and provide breeder and foundation seeds in a timely manner.

iv. Slow Development of the Private Seed Sector

It is well accepted that a vibrant private seed sector will give a major boost to the seed sector development objective of the continent. Because well-meaning policies and interventions are available only in a few countries as indicated in 2.1, the goal of private seed industry as the dominant actor in seed production and trade has remained elusive. Lack of access to credit; difficulties in quantifying demand for seeds; poor organizational capacity; and harsh investment environments, among others, hinder private sector growth.

v. Inadequate Support for Smallholder Seed Entrepreneurs

Often, government support for small scale seed entrepreneurs is not adequate. Smallholder seed sector operators often have no access to rural credit and marketing opportunities for their seed is limited. Additionally, business management skills are lacking. The result is that ordinary smallholder farmers cannot access high quality seed as it is either not available in their area, or the seed is too expensive for most farmers to purchase.

vi. Unavailability of Other Agricultural Inputs

Seed has a synergistic relationship with other inputs such as fertilizer in the sense that on one side the availability of quality seed can influence the adoption of other agricultural inputs, and on the other side, seed may require other inputs to realize its full genetic potential. There are serious challenges in the prices and availability of other agricultural inputs such as fertilizers and chemicals that militate against the availability and use of those inputs, and consequently affect the usefulness of quality seeds.

vii. Lack of Effective, Comprehensive and Reliable Seed Information Systems

Lack of information (including sound seed databases and statistics) and knowledge poses a serious constraint in planning in almost all areas of the seed sector. Understanding farmers' needs and practices, market information, seed regulations, demand forecast, seed and variety availability are a few of the areas where seed sector data and knowledge are generally not adequate.

viii. Poorly Developed Infrastructure and Capacity

Capacities are generally poor across the industry: from variety development, production, processing, marketing etc. The need for capacity is seriously felt but long unsatisfied. Long distances between farmers and seed outlets and poor roads result in high transportation costs while poor storage arrangements impact negatively on seed quality.



ix. *Inadequate Seed Marketing*

National seed marketing networks are inadequate to ensure equitable distribution of seeds especially in remote and rural locations. At the regional and continental levels, there is lack of collaboration, consultation and harmonization regarding the development, movement and use of quality seeds and vegetatively propagated materials. This leads to unduly restrictive seed certification and variety release requirements, which differ from country to country, and which, together with excessive phytosanitary and foreign currency regulations, function as non-tariff barriers that hamper seed trade among African countries.

x. *Inadequate Seed Extension Services*

Extension services, including demonstration activities, need to be enhanced to promote production and use of quality seeds as means to improve adoption of new varieties by farmers.

xi. *Inadequate Exploitation of Informal Seed Systems*

Currently, more than 80% of the seed planted by African farmers is produced by the informal seed sector. While the informal seed sector is currently the primary source of seed in Africa, and will remain so for the foreseeable future, improved access to seed from the formal sector and improving the informal system such as seed quality aspects could contribute to agricultural transformation. Unfortunately, there is limited collaboration between participants in the formal and informal seed sectors for the enhancement of the informal seed systems for producing and distributing quality seeds.



xii. *Ineffective Seed Security Measures*

Disasters (droughts, floods and conflicts) are frequent in Africa where acute disasters are developing into chronic disasters which lead to food and seed insecurity. Moreover, climate change challenges are fast emerging with serious implications for the seed industry and agriculture. However, there is little forward planning or consultation at national or regional levels, and African countries currently do not have the necessary capacity to respond to disasters in an effective and sustainable manner. The supply of seeds, as part of relief programs, has had only minimal impact on the overall food situation. Moreover, the frequent introduction of unsuitable varieties during disasters erodes biodiversity and leads to loss of valuable local genetic resources.

xiii. *Inadequate Number and/or Unavailability of Seed Experts and Professionals*

There is a depletion of competent and experienced graduate level seed experts as well as well-trained seed technicians and technical professionals in several African countries. Even when they are available, they are poorly paid and there is a high risk of them quitting their jobs. In any case, the valuable human resource in the seed sector that takes a long time to create is generally lacking in many developing countries.

xiv. *Inadequate Seed Quality Assurance Systems*

Seed quality assurance system is the process which confers credibility on formal seed. For AfricaSeeds, seed quality control is required to be operational along the entire value chain, e.g. from variety development to marketing, although it is often more referred to specifically at the seed production and marketing levels of the chain. It is basically a public function and continues to be so even where the private sector is advanced, although under some scenarios, the private sector may be allowed to participate under licensing arrangements. Unfortunately, in many African countries, this function does not exist or is poorly implemented. Effective seed quality assurance systems are essential in harmonization of seed laws and regulations of regional

communities, as well as promoting seed marketing at national, regional and continental levels.

xv. *Lack of Capacity to Implement Harmonized Seed Policies and Legislations*

Although it has been generally accepted that harmonizing seed policies and legislations can contribute to enhanced collaboration of national seed industries, in practical terms implementation of harmonized agreements has been slow. This is largely because the capacities and the resources required have not been adequately developed. Weaknesses are found in the areas of infrastructure, trained manpower, governance, funding, etc.

xvi. *Challenges Relating to Biotechnology Tools*

Inadequate training and lack of attention to opportunities have denied seed programs the chance to utilize various simple biotechnology tools. For example, the use of mass propagation techniques for vegetative planting materials, in vitro techniques, and biotechnology strategies in breeding and quality assurance practices could significantly enhance the role of biotechnology in the seed industry.

xvii. *Emerging Issues*

Seed sector development has recently been confronted with various emerging issues among which are effect of climate change, biosafety, loss of biodiversity and issues of breeders' and farmers' rights. The advent of these important issues directly influences how the seed sector would develop in the future. Such issues need to be taken account of in the planning and implementation of seed activities since they contribute to the Agenda 2030 on sustainable development. Seed interventions will be required to ensure that the expected outputs are not diluted by negative effects of these emerging issues.

4.0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 Formation of the African Seed Network

Responding to requests from a large number of its Sub-Saharan member states for assistance in addressing the inequities of their seed sectors, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) provided assistance which led to the formation of the African Seed Network (ASN) in 1998. ASN was formed at the Seed Policy and Programs Meeting for Sub-Saharan Africa organized by FAO in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire in November 1998. All the country representatives participating in the international meeting endorsed the establishment of the continental network whose mission was to "Coordinate policies and programs aiming at strengthening and improving seed production systems and trade on the continent".

4.2 Development of the African Seed and Biotechnology Program

The Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union (AU) held in Libya, in July 2005, recommended the development and implementation of an Africa-wide seed and biotechnology program. By this decision, the Heads of State of Africa sent an urgent message which recognized that Africa lags far behind the rest of the world in

attaining a good level of seed security that would support the continental dream of food security for all. A thorough process of stakeholder and expert consultations led to the development of the African Seed and Biotechnology Program (ASBP) which was approved by the AU Assembly, during its eighth ordinary session in Addis Ababa, in January, 2007. The ASBP is aimed at providing a comprehensive and strategic approach to overcome current barriers and obstacles to seed industry development in Africa and to further enhance the development of the seed sector which is considered as a critical element in achieving food security on the continent.

4.3 ASN as African Union's Surrogate Institution

In subsequent expert consultations at the AU Headquarters, involving experts from FAO, other technical agencies and AU member states, a proposal on ASBP implementation strategy and institutional arrangements in which the ASN was identified as the most suitable existing African seed institution to serve as AU's surrogate institution for the implementation of ASBP, was validated and adopted by AU Commission (AUC) in May 2008.

Under the surrogate arrangement, the AUC assigned ASN under specific terms and conditions, to host, generally supervise and lead in the implementation of ASBP. Thus, after nearly a decade of operations as Africa's continental seed development institution, ASN was called upon by the AU to play additional roles in African seed development.

4.4 Change of Mandate and Name

During its meeting held in Abidjan in August, 2014, the Coordinating Board of ASN took several decisions, including the approval of a new vision, mission and mandate, and a change of name from ASN to AfricaSeeds to reflect the new mandate and structure of the continental seed organization. The Coordinating Board approved the immediate use of the new name **AfricaSeeds** for all official purposes and requested that it should be widely popularized. During the same meeting, in line with the change of its mandate, the name of Coordinating Board was also changed to Governing Board of AfricaSeeds.

5.0 SEED SECTOR DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

In confronting the seed sector challenges in Africa, a number of priority seed development issues needing to be addressed have been identified as follows:

i. **Conservation, effective management and sustainable utilization of Plant Genetic Resources**

Key elements involved are as follows:

- Awareness on international conventions and treaties for germplasm conservation and sustainable use;
- Management, characterization and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

ii. Recognition and protection of breeders Enhanced production and use of quality seeds of improved varieties

Key concerns relate to:

- Variety development/improvement programs;
- Seed production systems;
- Seed quality control and assurance systems;
- Enhancing the positive contributions of the informal seed systems;
- Elaboration and implementation of national seed policies and legislations;
- Development and deployment of human and physical resources;
- Able and effective extension services.

iii. Seed trade, marketing and market development

Key issues include the following:

- Strategies for improved seed marketing and distribution;
- Sound and comprehensive seed databases and statistics.

iv. Developing private seed entrepreneurship through the promotion of smallholder seed enterprises (Annex I)

Key ingredients in this issue include the following:

- National policies that promote and support smallholder seed enterprises;
- Credit opportunities;
- Market opportunities;
- Capacity building;
- Awareness of the importance and role of seed policies and regulations.

v. Sound and relevant human capacity building initiatives to enhance seed expertise and professionalism

Key considerations relate to:

- Assessment of the status and needs of human resources (level, profile, relevance, etc.);
- Development of seed sector degree, technical and artisanal programs in selected universities, vocational and other training institutions;
- Promoting interest in seed industry related disciplines among graduate students;
- Promoting and enhancing the role of women and youth in seed sector development.

vi. Development of resilience and long term adaptive capacity to threats and crises (e.g. droughts, floods, conflicts, epidemics, climate change) through sustainable national seed systems development as well as relevant and effective seed security programs

This will comprise the following:

- Development of local capacity for long term adaptation beyond immediate coping mechanisms;
- Development of new strategies for emergency seed interventions;
- Elaboration of a code of conduct in seed relief operations;
- Promotion of development of early warning systems.
- Assessing impacts of emergency seed and food aid programs on national seed sector development;
- Promoting the establishment of seed security stocks.



6.0 OVERALL AGENDA FOR AFRICA'S SEED SECTOR DEVELOPMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE GROWTH AND TRANSFORMATION

Understanding that the assignment of building a credible and effective seed sector for Africa will be a shared responsibility of all actors and partners acting together, based on the AU Malabo Declaration on Accelerated African Agricultural Growth and Transformation as it relates to the seed sector, AfricaSeeds recognizes the following agenda which summarizes the key areas of required intervention, to be addressed by all partners, which will enhance the critical role of seeds in African agriculture growth and transformation:

1. A rapid development and growth in seed enterprises in which small and medium scale seed entities are prioritized with demand-driven marketing arrangements which efficiently and profitably assure farmers of continuous access to quality seeds adapted to their farming areas;
2. Development of a facilitatory regime of policy and regulatory processes at national, regional and continental levels which will ensure the right technical, operational and investment climate and provide the required basis for actions by governments, farmers, the private sector enterprises, civil society organizations and other stakeholders in the short, medium and long term;
3. Adoption of a corrective program of expanding the benefits of modern crop improvement to the large number of traditional and minor crops which have hitherto been sidelined by research and the seed companies; in line with this, interventions are required to widen the seed industry portfolio and incorporate several key seed types of vegetatively propagated crops, indigenous and traditional vegetable crops, tree crops and minor cereals; and further enhance the contributions of the informal seed sector through the introduction of variety improvement and quality assurance into the sector;

4. Ensuring a holistic coordination and monitoring of all seed sector efforts with a view to enhancing collaboration by all stakeholders, deploying Public Private Partnership strategies, eliminating duplications, assessing possible gaps and facilitating the actions required to address the gaps as well as taking advantage of emerging opportunities. Establishment of credible targets and benchmarks as well as progress measurement indicators linked to the CAADP Results Framework will be important aspects of coordination.

The above agenda will need to be implemented through a strategic sharing of roles among seed sector development partners, under a purpose-built coordination system, and supported by a continental seed sector development financing mechanism.

7.0 SELECTED AREAS FOR AFRICASEEDS INTERVENTIONS _____

The overall concentration of AfricaSeeds will be on three broad developmental areas, in which AfricaSeeds will specialize. These areas are: (1) development of a seed database and statistics for the seed sector of Africa for AfricaSeeds own use and as a service to all partners; (2) capacity building, especially training, to build up capabilities for the effective implementation of planned interventions; and (3) coordination of all seed sector interventions in Africa to ensure proper recording and follow-up of actions in order to keep track of progress made towards established goals.

AfricaSeeds will aim at directly implementing ten selected activities as per its strength and mandate, leaving other actions to other seed industry partners according to their strengths, opportunities and mandates.

In line with its leading and coordinating role, AfricaSeeds' direct interventions will especially concentrate on the following activities:

- i. Implementation of portions of ASBP;
- ii. Coordination and monitoring of ASBP;
- iii. Advocating for the importance of seeds for agriculture transformation, food and nutrition security, as well as business opportunities;
- iv. Developing sound and comprehensive seed databases and reliable seed statistics to support seed industry in Africa;
- v. Promoting private seed entrepreneurship through the smallholder seed production system;
- vi. Promoting formulation and implementation of national seed policies and legislations;
- vii. Promoting utilization of quality seeds by farmers;
- viii. Promoting resilience of countries to threats and crisis in agriculture, through effective seed security measures;
- ix. Fostering effective collaboration and partnerships, including public-private partnerships, for seed sector development;
- x. Promoting capacity development activities including the implementation of seed related educational programs.



8.0 CONTRIBUTION OF AFRICASEEDS TO CAADP IMPLEMENTATION

The next 10 years of CAADP recognizes the relevance of the original CAADP vision, “Agriculture as a driver for poverty alleviation, food security and elimination of hunger”. Specifically, recognizing quality seed as a major conduit for increasing crop productivity, the CAADP framework aims at ensuring a high degree of seed security as a pathway towards the attainment of food security in Africa. This is a key goal reaffirmed by the African Union as part of the goals of the agricultural sector in the next ten years under CAADP. In summary, the overall CAADP seed sector goal is reflected in the resolution on agricultural inputs adopted in the Malabo Declaration of the 23rd AU Heads of State and Government Summit held in June 2014, as follows: “To enhance the cost-effective production and utilization of quality agricultural inputs that are affordable, accessible and profitable (to all stakeholders) to achieve sustainable food and nutrition security by 2025”. The actions that are recommended to be taken in order to achieve this goal include the following:

- i. within AU’s ASBP and related activities, conduct initiatives for the development of competitive and sustainable seed production and utilization;
- ii. promote support to national and sub-regional efforts to foster Public Private Partnerships in the seed sector;
- iii. develop appropriate organizational and financing mechanisms, including the strengthening of smallholder and integrated seed systems, to facilitate access to quality seed and planting materials.

According to the CAADP implementation strategy and roadmap (*Implementation Strategy and Roadmap (IS&R) to achieve the 2025 Vision on CAADP*), two objectives are to be achieved to deliver on the 2025 vision for Africa’s agriculture:

Objective 1 – *Transformed agriculture and sustained inclusive growth, which focuses on the technical (biophysical, economic and social) measures and practices which need to be taken on the ground;*

Objective 2 – Strengthened systemic capacity to implement and deliver results, which cover the systemic changes in the operational environment (policies, and policies and institutional changes) needed to support the implementation.

The priority interventions areas for AfricaSeeds as mentioned in Chapter 6 are in conformity with Strategic Action Areas (SAA) of the two CAADP IS&R objectives, as follows:

Objective 1 SAAs

- Adopt measures to increase sustainable agricultural production and productivity;
- Develop markets infrastructure, regional trade and integration, and value chains;
- Increase resilience of livelihoods and production systems to climate variability and change and other shocks.

Objective 2 SAAs

- Strengthen capacity for evidence-based planning, review and dialogue;
- Review and implement policy institutional reforms;
- Strengthen leadership, coordination and partnerships;
- Enhance skills, knowledge and agricultural education;
- Strengthen data and statistics for evidence-based planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation, as well as review processes;
- Identify and enhance innovative models for increased public and private financing for agriculture investment.

AfricaSeeds therefore aims at contributing to the achievement of CAADP goals through the alignment of its priority intervention areas with the identified SAAs in the CAADP implementation strategy and roadmap.

9.0 MECHANISMS FOR STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

A number of key mechanisms will be adopted in order to provide greater efficiency in the implementation process and to achieve significant and relevant impacts:

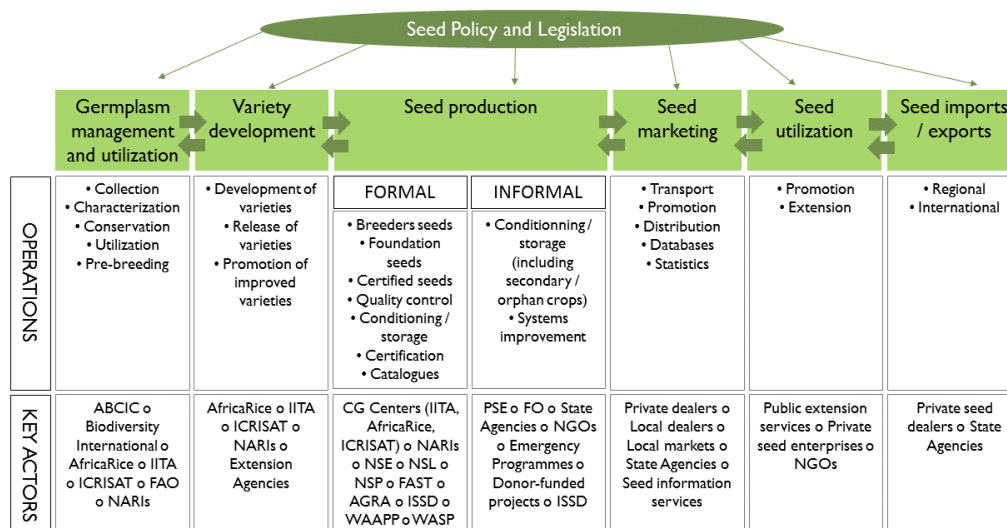
- i. seed value chain approach;
- ii. mainstreaming the informal seed sector;
- iii. policy advocacy;
- iv. subsidiarity;
- v. partnerships;
- vi. Public Private Partnerships;
- vii. networking;
- viii. Thematic Groups;
- ix. expert consultations;
- x. review and dialogue platforms.

9.1 Seed Value Chain Approach

The strategy of AfricaSeeds is based on the recognition of the specificity and complexity of the African seed sector and therefore the need for addressing, in an integrated manner, the entire seed value chain. In that vein, AfricaSeeds will seek to identify key bottlenecks inherent in all the stages of the seed value chain and acting with relevant partners, assist in addressing all inequities which hinder the seed sector. The value chain approach offers significant opportunities for ensuring the sustainability of

seed sector development interventions on the continent. AfricaSeeds will engage actors based on comparative advantage to jointly identify opportunities and challenges along the chain and work together to address these challenges and exploit opportunities, including relevant partnerships, for enhancing performance. The approach guarantees buy-in and ownership by all actors, thereby ensuring the sustainability of interventions and results. The following broad steps along the seed value chain represent the main topics for interventions, as well as key operations and actors involved.

Figure 1: Optimization of the Seed Value Chain



Notes: PSE: Private Seed Enterprises - NSL: National Seed Laboratories - NARIs: National Agricultural Research Institutes - FO: Farmers Organizations - WAAPP: West Africa Agricultural Productivity Program - WASP: West Africa Seed Program - ISSD: Integrated Seed Sector Development

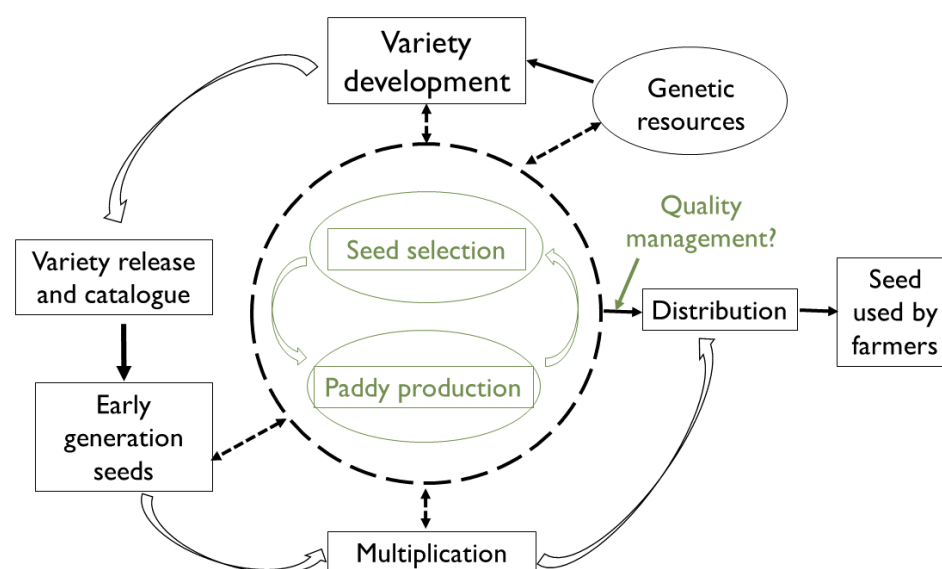
9.2 Mainstreaming the Informal Seed Sector

The informal seed sector is an important component of the seed value chain in view of the overwhelming role it currently plays as the predominant source of seeds in Africa. At production, marketing and utilization levels in the seed chain, the informal seed sector carries roles which have important implications on both seed and crop production which need to be addressed. AfricaSeeds also recognizes that interventions in the informal sector have good prospects of evolving well performing informal seed actors into the ranks of the formal sector, thus narrowing the huge numerical and output gaps that presently exist between the formal and the informal seed sectors to the advantage of the latter.

This strategy also enables the scaling up the advantages that the informal seed sector possesses which can be of benefit to the formal sector. For example, the formal seed sector can take a cue from the informal sector regarding indigenous knowledge particularly in genetic resources manipulations, rural seed marketing skills and coverage of food security and minor crops. Consequently, AfricaSeeds will pay attention to informal seed sector issues, including farmers' rights, smallholder seed systems and how both formal and informal sectors could eventually contribute to the strengthening of the seed value chain in its entirety.

AfricaSeeds considers that for farmers, a good seed delivery system is the one that uses the appropriate combination of formal, informal, market and non-market channels to efficiently meet farmers' demand for quality seeds. To that effect, AfricaSeeds will join with other stakeholders to assist in initiatives aiming at integrating the formal and informal seed sectors through improvement of the performance of the latter with effective quality assurance mechanisms, and the incorporation of its positive practices and benefits into the overall seed sector development and seed industry. (See following figure for types of interactions between formal and informal seed systems in rice.)

Figure 2: Interactions between Formal and Informal Seed Systems: Example of Rice



AfricaSeeds will also assist in conducting activities relating to advocacy and awareness creation, policy dialogue, education and upgrading.

9.3 Policy Advocacy

Within the context of the CAADP Results Framework, AfricaSeeds will identify and coordinate a process whereby applicable recommendations and outcomes will be fed into national and regional policy formulation processes.

9.4 Subsidiarity

The strategy of subsidiarity enables the hierarchical and complementary roles of different partners to address seed sector issues in a more holistic manner. AfricaSeeds will adopt the strategy of subsidiarity to ensure that the major partners take responsibility for actions based on their strengths and comparative advantages at the continental, regional, national levels. Roles and responsibilities will be agreed with partners operating at different levels.

9.5 Partnerships

In implementing its strategy, the success of AfricaSeeds will be dependent on the close collaboration with key partners and stakeholders. A key initiative that is likely to enhance such partnerships is the development of a strong continental data and knowledge platform which will be freely and easily available to all seed sector actors. International organizations and experts will be encouraged to assist in the development of the platform in terms of human as well as technical resources required.

Overall, the foreseen partners are identified as follows:

9.5.1 Regional Economic Communities (RECs)

In line with the principle of subsidiarity, RECs could be called upon to manage or co-manage projects at the Regional level and also coordinate implementations of national level activities. They could also be responsible for regional level coordination, collaborating very closely in the AfricaSeeds coordination function.

9.5.2 Sub-Regional Organizations (SROs)

Sub-regional organizations (e.g. CORAF/WECARD and ASARECA) are made up of seed related, research based institutions operating specific programs and projects within the regional contexts. By their adoption of specific mandate areas, they are positioned to serve as relevant and effective partners in the implementation of ASBP at the regional and national levels. All three SROs, i.e. CORAF/WECARD, ASARECA and SADC-FANR/CCARDESA will be involved.

9.5.3 International Agricultural Research Centers (IARCs)

IARCs have mandates to assist in Africa's agricultural development and will definitely have an important contribution to make in the implementation of seed sector development programs in Africa. Recognizing and formalizing their role as important continental and strategic partners will enable their own on-going and planned interventions in the area of seed to be viewed in that context. Particularly, there will thereby be an opportunity to present to IARCs, specific issues and agenda to which they will be required to develop answers, to move the continental seed sector development agenda forward.

9.5.4 Regional and Continental Seed Sector Development Initiatives

Some seed initiatives operating independently of AfricaSeeds may adopt ASBP as a framework to guide in their seed interventions. In such cases, in order to capture the seed sector contribution by these initiatives into the ASBP records, all that might be required is that these initiatives should formally notify AfricaSeeds that they have adopted the ASBP framework and collaborate with AfricaSeeds in the coordination and monitoring arrangements.

9.5.5 National Seed Programs

National Seed Programs are the sum total of seed related activities at the national level. Often, National Seed Programs are under the coordination of a National Seed Service or a National Seed Committee or the Ministry of Agriculture. AfricaSeeds will

partner with National Seed Programs for the effective implementation of seed-related projects in the Member States.

AfricaSeeds will consult closely with national authorities to develop and implement a program of “Young Seed Professionals” as part of the overall effort to develop the seed intervention capacity of National Seed Programs. The program will enable fresh graduates in seed related disciplines to be attached to AfricaSeeds activities and locations where they will have opportunity to make good contributions to the projects to which they are attached, while enhancing their practical and theoretical expertise to be able to play increasingly more responsible roles upon their return to their own national programs. The program will also enable relevant staff in advanced national programs to be seconded to assist sister national programs which are less endowed.

Member States will be expected to offer assistance and support in various forms to AfricaSeeds, to build up its capacity and enhance its effective operations. But AfricaSeeds will remain, at all times, an international organization with strong and streamlined internationalized institutional arrangements which will support the conduct of its continental mandate in which assistance to national seed programs is a logical part.

9.5.6 Regional and National Seed Associations

Regional and national seed associations represent and protect the interests and rights of their members. Depending upon their level of expertise, they can be effective partners to policy makers at the regional and national levels, to discuss possible bottlenecks and provide solutions to emerging issues leading to the creation of an effective national seed system and a healthy seed industry.

9.5.7 Private Sector

Although the development of private seed enterprises in Africa is still low and mainly limited to hybrids (e.g. maize) and high-value horticultural crops, the private sector has a crucial role to play as a driving force, in the promotion and development of efficient seed systems in Africa. Of particular interest are smallholder seed enterprises which can enhance market access to affordable seeds of improved varieties by smallholder farmers for increased productivity and improved food security. A viable private sector-led seed system is critical if not determinate in bringing the much awaited agriculture transformation to Africa.

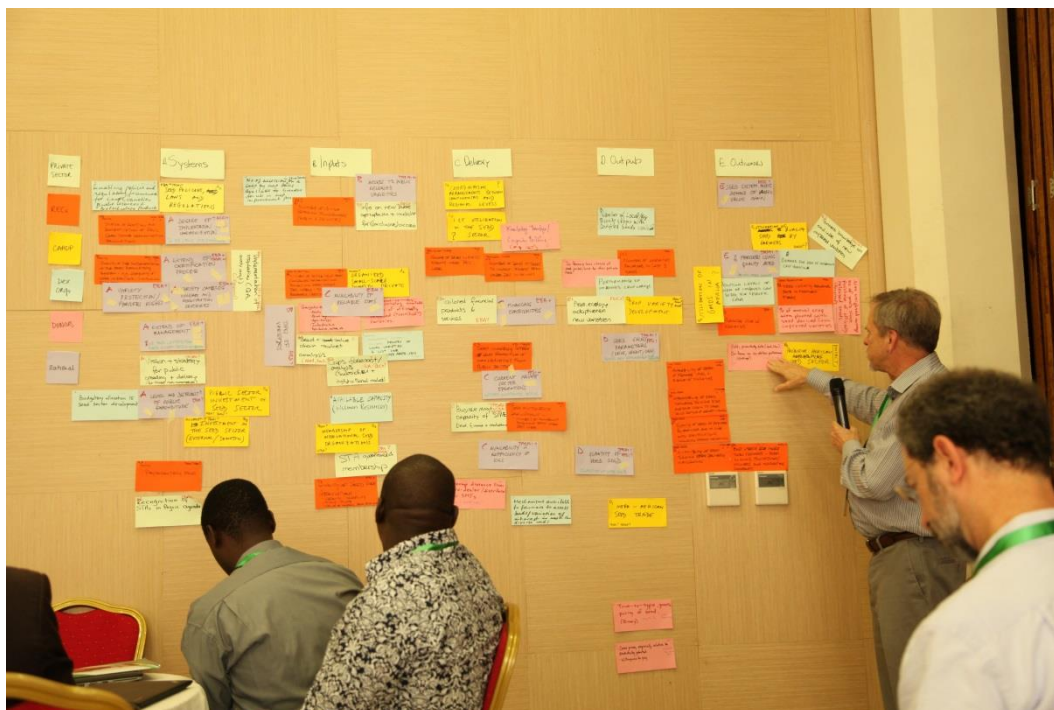
9.5.8 Farmers

Farmers are major actors in the seed system development on the continent as:

- i. active participants in seed research and release processes;
- ii. vital links in seed production and distribution through farmer-to-farmer seed exchange networks;
- iii. independent seed entrepreneurs producing seed for the local market;
- iv. contract seed producers and informed agents/seed traders linked with other private and public seed companies;
- v. as end users of seeds emanating from the various seed systems.

9.5.9 Universities

African universities can contribute significantly to addressing major seed issues in seed sector development in Africa, through training and graduate studies, in collaboration with other research and development institutions working in the sector.



9.5.10 International Development Partners

International development partners comprise of donors and funding agencies, as well as knowledge institutions who will be engaged to assist in the provision of the skill and resource needs of AfricaSeeds. UN agencies such as FAO, WFP, UNDP, IFAD, etc. will play decisive roles in technical back-up and resource mobilization.

9.6 Public Private Partnerships

AfricaSeeds will build up expertise in and make good use of the strategy of Public Private Partnership (PPP) which has the potential of bringing together the advantages and contributions of the public and private sectors to effectively address problems which in the past have not been satisfactorily addressed by either sector acting alone (see Annex 2).

9.7 Networking

AfricaSeeds recognizes that networking is important to seed sector development. The networking function will enable AfricaSeeds to enhance the sharing of knowledge and experiences among member states as an aid towards addressing emerging issues and scaling up successful initiatives. The publication of a periodic AfricaSeeds network newsletter will be one of the more visible manifestations of the network function but other activities such as conferences, training sessions and visits will also be carried out.

9.8 Thematic Groups

Thematic Groups will be established to debate and exchange on identified thematic issues in order to provide consensus or expert opinion on these issues to be presented to the Scientific and Technical Committee for final resolution and recommendations to AfricaSeeds. The Thematic Groups will be led by lead technical experts selected from the wide range of African and development partner institutions. Members of the Thematic Groups will be senior experts who will be willing to engage in discourse on key seed sector topics and issues, mainly on voluntary basis, as far as possible via internet-based exchanges. Membership of the Thematic Groups will be kept at a manageable level, say 6 to 8 experts per group. A minimum number of AfricaSeeds-sponsored assembled group meetings may be organised where specific circumstances so require. The thematic areas will be chosen based on emerging issues in the African seed sector.



9.9 Expert Consultation

AfricaSeeds will utilize the strategy of expert consultations to subject key seed sector issues to debate, in collaboration with all partners in the seed sector. Resultant consensus emanating from the discussions will shape the content and direction of AfricaSeeds interventions as well as serve to assist partner organizations in their own actions. In this process, African seed institutions and/or initiatives will be considered as very important allies in building up knowledge and in outsourcing development expertise. All concerned national and international research institutions, seed trade organizations and regional and international seed testing and quality assurance institutions will therefore become very important partners of AfricaSeeds.

10.0 COORDINATION

Coordination of seed sector activities is ranked very high under ASBP, since it constitutes the means by which to keep track of and facilitate the many seed sector activities that may be on going at all levels. Installation of a coordination system is therefore planned to be among the earliest activities under ASBP and AfricaSeeds intends to implement this plan as soon as the necessary capacitation is achieved.

Coordination by AfricaSeeds of ASBP implementation will be aimed at ensuring opportunities for the full and effective participation of all relevant stakeholders in the planning and implementation of seed development activities within the framework of ASBP. In this process, AfricaSeeds will take full responsibility for developing and promoting access to a sound and comprehensive seed database and reliable seed statistics to support the seed industry of Africa. This will require a serious commitment of all concerned. Particularly, AfricaSeeds will work towards securing the collaboration of AUC, FAO and other specialized technical agencies in order to ensure provision of required technical assistance. Further, AfricaSeeds will seek partnerships with all initiatives that are relevant to the development of the African seed sector, as summarized below.

10.1 International Seed Initiatives

Coordination of activities which are conducted by international initiatives within the framework of ASBP will be conducted by AfricaSeeds as per the following activities:

- i. inventory of major International Seed Programs in Africa along with their respective agenda and areas of interventions and targeted beneficiaries;
- ii. recording and assessment of respective geographic coverage of the different programs;
- iii. identification and characterization of remaining gaps in the specific domains of the interventions;
- iv. promoting partnership initiatives to enhance efficiency;
- v. periodic meetings.

10.2 Regional and National Seed Programs

While the overall oversight and direction of AfricaSeeds' activities will fall under the responsibility of AfricaSeeds management in the Headquarters, Heads of Regional and National Seed Programs will serve as AfricaSeeds Focal Points to promote relevant, effective and direct interactions with Regional and National Seed Programs. The arrangement of having Regional Focal Points and National Focal Points, who are already leaders of their programs, will ensure a more effective implementation of AfricaSeeds' programs at regional and national levels. Furthermore, the arrangement will lead to better communication, adequate monitoring and timely reporting of activities. Additionally, having the focal points within regional and national programs minimizes the cost of AfricaSeeds' institutional arrangement, enhances ownership, capacity building in the national seed programs and efficiency.

10.2.1 Coordination with Regional Seed Programs

The concept of Focal Point will also be useful in the interactions between AfricaSeeds and the RECs. The role of RECs as management institutions, as foreseen in ASBP, calls for synchronization of AfricaSeeds' processes with those of the RECs' seed initiatives. RECs will therefore be requested to appoint Heads of their seed programs or equivalents, to serve as Regional Focal Points.

The responsibilities expected of the Regional Focal Point include the following:

- i. serve as the main technical link between AfricaSeeds and the relevant REC;
- ii. facilitate the transmission of information between AfricaSeeds and the REC;
- iii. supervise and conduct operations that might be on-going at the Regional level as may be directed by AfricaSeeds;
- iv. assist in the coordination of national seed programs in the Region.

10.2.2 Coordination with National Seed Programs

i. Mode of Coordination

Coordination of seed activities at National level will be conducted by AfricaSeeds through the work of the National Focal Point. National authorities will be requested to identify the most appropriate seed expert, most likely the Head of the National Seed Service or at least a Senior Officer very knowledgeable of the national seed program with decision-making powers in seed-related operations in the country, to serve as National Focal Point to promote efficiency and generate concrete and positive impact of AfricaSeeds/National Seed Program collaboration on the national seed sector. The National Focal Point will facilitate and be actively involved in the following areas of collaboration between AfricaSeeds and National Seed Programs as well as activities aimed at strengthening National Seed Programs which will include:

- i. periodic audit of the National Seed Program as basis of seed development interventions at the national level;
- ii. training;
- iii. elaboration of national seed development action plans;
- iv. development of project proposals and fund raising;
- v. implementation of funded projects.

The mechanisms of AfricaSeeds' interventions to support National Seed Programs shall include:

- i. advocacy;
- ii. consultancy;
- iii. technical assistance;
- iv. expert reviews;
- v. workshops;
- vi. organized field visits;
- vii. study travels.



As hinted in 10.2 above, there will be no AfricaSeeds Coordination Offices at the national level, since this will be counterproductive to the aim of enhancing the effectiveness of the national seed programs and the latter's ownership of ASBP activities, a key component of the exit strategy which ASBP proposes. Rather, by entrenching the activities of AfricaSeeds in the national seed programs through the heads of those programs, AfricaSeeds becomes welded to the national interests and becomes a continuous partner in the planning and implementation processes in a cost effective and sustainable manner.

ii. AfricaSeeds Intervention Model

At the national level, AfricaSeeds actions will be undertaken on the basis of an intervention model. The model will contain steps by which to systematically undertake activities that will transform and upgrade the national seed sector. AfricaSeeds will adopt a flexible approach in addressing requests for interventions in National Seed Programs in recognition that each country situation comes with its own peculiarities. However, AfricaSeeds has adopted a generalized approach which will allow adaptation of the intervention model to suit a wide range of country seed sector development contexts.

The model will be composed of the following steps which will be jointly planned and agreed with National Authorities from the start of the cleared intervention:

- i. identification of the challenges, opportunities and gaps of the national seed sector, in concert with national experts;
- ii. national workshops for validation of results of the national seed audit;
- iii. formulation or updates of National Seed Policies and National Seed Plans based on results of the seed audit;
- iv. formulation of projects based on major gaps and constraints identified by the audit;
- v. joint resource mobilization initiatives for the cleared projects;

- vi. joint implementation of funded projects exploiting comparative advantages of the partners, i.e. National Seed Program and AfricaSeeds.

11.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Programs and projects will be designed to have strong Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) components to ensure that, on a case by case basis, objective and timely monitoring and evaluation of all AfricaSeeds activities are conducted. Additionally, AfricaSeeds expertise in this area will be developed to be able to offer M&E services to partners, where required. As far as possible, the M&E process established for ASBP will be adopted by AfricaSeeds. The results of the evaluation processes will contribute to situation reports which will eventually feed into the Stakeholders Forum previously explained. Subject to availability of funds, a small but well-resourced unit with responsibility for M&E will be incorporated into the AfricaSeeds Headquarters. Maximum use will be made of external expertise in order to remove chances of bias.



12.0 SUSTAINABILITY

The overall implementation strategy is aimed at empowering partner organizations to follow the approved ASBP project documents or their own internal modalities, depending upon the type of relationship with AfricaSeeds and respect the coordination, monitoring, reporting and evaluation processes adopted by AfricaSeeds.

The capacity building objective will be high on the agenda and practical and effective exit strategies will be important dimensions in each activity in order to achieve sustainability. Coordination will be considered the main check against duplication, gaps and misdirection.

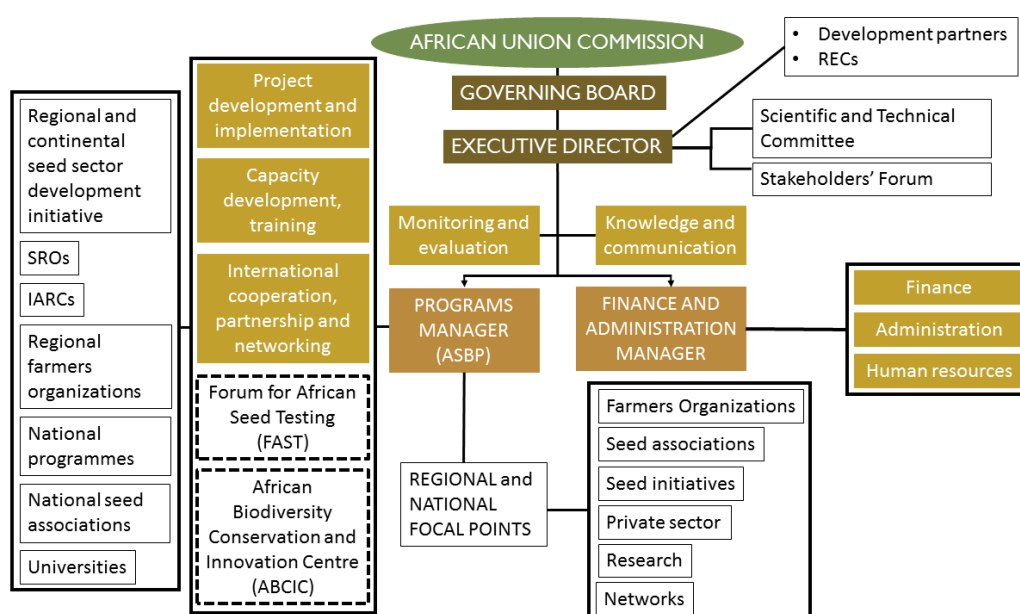
AfricaSeeds will seek to complement initiatives of other stakeholders in line with its objectives, along the seed value chain. Considerable effort will be made to capitalize on work already done so as to avoid duplication of efforts. This will enhance buy-in and ownership by all actors, thereby ensuring the sustainability of interventions and results.

13.0 STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONING MECHANISM

13.1 Institutional Structure

The structure of AfricaSeeds as dictated by its mandate as seed sector development organization and implementer of ASBP. The structure is illustrated in the following diagram:

Figure 3: The Structure of AfricaSeeds



13.1.1 Roles and Functions

Stakeholders Forum

Ahead of the Biennial Agricultural Sector Review Meeting, as adopted by the Heads of State and Government in the Malabo Declaration, a Stakeholders Forum will be convened in collaboration with the AUC, to conduct a review of the state of Africa's seed activities. The Stakeholders Forum which will also serve as the General Meeting of AfricaSeeds will be open to all member states and partners. The meeting will enable member states and partners to take stock of the work and output of AfricaSeeds and all its partners and the performance of the seed sector in general and chart a way forward that appropriately addresses the emerged seed sector situation in order to further shape the vision, mission and mandate of AfricaSeeds and partners.

The Governing Board

The Governing Board is the overall oversight body of AfricaSeeds. It is made up of a minimum of 7 and a maximum of 15 members selected on the basis of their

outstanding knowledge and contributions in the various components of the seed sector, organizational developmental and administrative. FAO and the AUC are represented on the Governing Board to ensure harmonisation and guidance on technical and policy issues and to conform to current norms in seed development.

The duties and functions of the AfricaSeeds Governing Board are as follows:

- i. establish the overall course and thrust of AfricaSeeds' activities in consonance with its mandate, vision and mission;
- ii. guide and assist the Executive Director in promoting the activities of the AfricaSeeds in fulfilment of the AfricaSeeds' vision and mission;
- iii. develop and implement procedures for proper governance, administrative and operational processes and practices of AfricaSeeds;
- iv. be responsible for the approval or otherwise of all major actions by AfricaSeeds including budgeting and accounting, projects and work plans, senior level recruitment and major agreements with development partners;
- v. ensure adequate working arrangements within AfricaSeeds to meet the needs of Member States and to ensure efficiency of operations;
- vi. facilitate funding assistance from donors and financing organizations for AfricaSeeds activities.

The Scientific and Technical Committee

The Scientific and Technical Committee comprises of 6 to 8 members selected on the basis of their proven technical expertise in the seed sector. The role and functions of the Scientific and Technical Committee are defined as follows:

- i. provide relevant technical inputs as may be required for the guidance of the Governing Board's oversight activities;
- ii. provide technical clearance as required to guide the Executive Director and the Governing Board in the approval of development proposals and relevant reports;
- iii. promote specific meetings on technical subjects within areas of activity in the key seed sector components.

The Executive Director

Act as Chief Executive of AfricaSeeds with responsibility, under the overall authority of the Governing Board, of providing leadership in all activities and functions of the organization.

Specifically, the Executive Director's primary responsibilities are as follows:

- i. ensure that AfricaSeeds' organizational structure, operational policies and other business processes are sound and able to effectively deliver on the strategic objectives defined by AfricaSeeds' Board;
- ii. exercise authority over personnel and human-resource matters and further strengthen performance management by tracking key performance indicators across the organization;
- iii. maintain a positive work environment that facilitates collaboration and information sharing and is conducive to attracting, retaining, and motivating diverse talent;
- iv. effectively manage operational or financial matters to deliver on the mandate of AfricaSeeds;

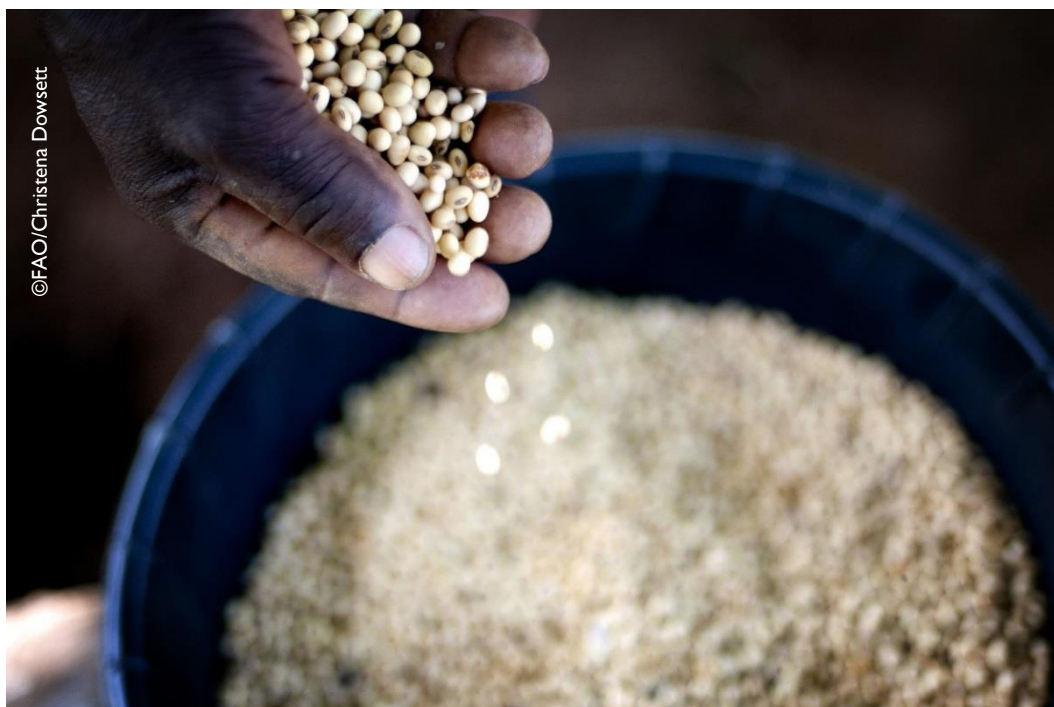
- v. operationalize, lead and monitor the implementation of AfricaSeeds' strategy, and ensure the effective implementation of new business models and instruments to deliver on the strategic objectives;
- vi. represent AfricaSeeds at the highest level, ensuring its role within the African agriculture community is well understood, through direct engagement with policy-makers and the execution of an effective media strategy;
- vii. build and maintain effective alliances and operational collaboration with public and private partners, such as governments of African countries, United Nations agencies, bilateral donors, nongovernmental organizations, the business sector and civil society actors;
- viii. interact with governments at the highest political level to advocate for the importance of seeds for agriculture transformation, food and nutrition security, poverty alleviation and creation of wealth in Africa;
- ix. maintain effective communications with all stakeholders;
- x. ensure the development and dissemination of information among members and partners and promote meetings and discussions on technical subjects in collaboration with the Scientific and Technical Committee;
- xi. promote efforts to obtain funding assistance from donors and financing organizations for strengthening AfricaSeeds activities;
- xii. oversee and advance the development of new and effective funding streams for AfricaSeeds, broadening the donor base and encouraging increased investment in seed sector development programs from African countries themselves;
- xiii. participate in Governing Board Meetings, and ensure effective and timely preparation and distribution of all materials in accordance with Board-mandated policies and procedures;
- xiv. communicate Board decisions to AfricaSeeds' staff, and other relevant stakeholders.

13.2 AfricaSeeds Headquarters and Field Staff

AfricaSeeds Headquarters shall be in Côte d'Ivoire. AfricaSeeds will maintain a lean and efficient Headquarters staff initially made up of the Executive Director, one Programs Manager with a minimum number of professional staff, one Administration and Finance Manager and support staff. The staff position, both at headquarters and in the field, will be improved on the basis of increments in the work load and availability of matching resources. The staffing schedules and staff profiles and conditions will be contained in the AfricaSeeds governance manual.

13.3 Experts

The staff position of AfricaSeeds will initially be strengthened through the use of a pool of experts who will be available to meet the human resource needs of emerging projects and other assignments. This option drastically minimizes the cost of staff while enabling AfricaSeeds to tap on a large pool of experts to rapidly and effectively meet its implementation and coordination needs. In preparing this list, an elaborate format will be designed to guide in the recruitment of qualified and willing seed industry experts of all types. This list, which will be updated from time to time, will be of additional help in the composition and operation of Thematic Groups.



14.0 FUNDING

Fully conducting the institutional mandate will call for considerable resources. At the beginning, the limited resources available will dictate the extent of the activities to be carried out and prioritization of the activities will be important in deciding which specific interventions are to be conducted. But considering the critical linkages between the seed sector components, an aggressive resource mobilization will be pursued to be able to attain the minimum operating budget as soon as possible in order to be able to implement a comprehensive and balanced seed development agenda which only will lead to the desired impact being made.

The actions of partners will be important in achieving a holistic coverage of the seed sector development needs. Therefore AfricaSeeds will join all efforts to advocate for a high level of support for seed development in Africa. Particularly, AfricaSeeds will support all efforts to launch a global fund raising event or Donors' Conference in support of ASBP and all the partners involved in it.

The following resource mobilization activities will be embarked upon:

14.1 Host Country Support

AfricaSeeds expects support from the Government of Côte d'Ivoire at two levels: a) host country contribution and b) contributions from a Member State.

14.2 Contributions from Member States

Member States should form a complementary source of funding through their contribution of counterpart or matching funds which will become part of project budgets. In addition, specific private and public sector institutions may enter into MoU arrangements with AfricaSeeds for the delivery of specific services and the revenue accruing from such services can also be an important source of funding from Member

States. In that context, AfricaSeeds will continue to count on the continued support of the Ivorian Government, seeing in it an exemplary demonstration of good faith and confidence that should serve as encouragement to other African governments.

I4.3 Support from Development Partners

AfricaSeeds will count on support from development partners for the implementation of national, regional and continental seed sector development initiatives. AfricaSeeds will engage key donors and international funding institutions to be included in their lists of regular beneficiaries. The request for regular and continuous international institutional support is based upon the considerable developmental responsibilities that AfricaSeeds will be carrying out. Further, successes in several areas of seed development that AfricaSeeds will be conducting, particularly towards seed security and food security, should eventually lead to huge savings in donor funds that would otherwise be spent in addressing consequences when challenges are not confronted.

15.0 CONCLUSION

There is a recognition that a wide range of contributions and effort by governments, development partners and other stakeholders have currently converged to make this period an era for seed development in Africa. These efforts, if properly directed and coordinated, should contribute towards the achievement of agriculture transformation, food and nutrition security, poverty alleviation, and massive employment of the youth, as well as enhance business opportunities and creation of wealth among participants and users, leading to a greater socio-economic development of the continent. What AfricaSeeds brings to contribute to these efforts are the important features of holistic and integrated approach, complementarity, collaboration and consultation, as well as advocacy and commitment. This contribution is aimed at eliminating some of the hindrances which have, in the past, impeded progress. The role of AfricaSeeds as lead implementer and coordinator of ASBP will be based on relevant and effective partnerships with all, and within the framework of the CAADP process. Therefore, at the start of the application of the strategy of AfricaSeeds, a clarion call goes out to all of Africa's seed development practitioners, development allies, farmers and all other related institutions to join forces with AfricaSeeds to achieve the seed sector goals that Africa has set.



ANNEX I. PROMOTING SMALL-SCALE SEED ENTERPRISES

In spite of recent advances in corporate seed enterprise development in Africa, the smallholder seed production system still continues as the overwhelming source of seeds to farmers. The smallholder seed production system comprises of small scale seed producers (including women and youth), community seed initiatives, smallholder seed initiatives and on-farm seed production activities. Further, the smallholder seed production system is not readily connected to the official sources of new varieties which are an important requirement to ensure that the officially recommended varieties are multiplied and made available to farmers. Therefore, it often rely on varieties of unclear origins and pedigree, on-farm seed multiplication and low cost processing and storage methodologies. The result of these lapses is that the smallholder seed system is unable to scale up to achieve efficiency in production, and the quality of seeds produced are often unsatisfactory and fall below official minimum seed standards.

Small-scale seed enterprises generally operate with limited capital. In general, they do not undertake research and development, nor do they have very efficient production and processing facilities. Therefore, they are unable to exert a marketing pull effect but must depend on trading opportunities. These companies import seeds or procure them from local producers. Since specialty products often involve royalty payments, such companies deal primarily with self-pollinated and minor crops. The small companies stand to benefit from partnerships with government research institutes or large private companies which provide improved varieties and technical support.

But small-scale seed enterprises have a marketing advantage by virtue of operating in viable market catchment environments and thus are able to supply substantial needs of rural farmer seed needs. Moreover, small-scale seed producers' variety bouquet is often more elaborate than the corporate seed industry and covers all the crops which are required by a wide range of rural farmers.

While the major shortfall in the smallholder seed production system is the inadequacies in technology, particularly in variety sourcing, seed quality assurance and production/storage technology, an equally important hindrance is that in most African countries, a policy framework does not exist to offer the smallholder seed production system adequate support to develop. Promoting development of small-scale seed enterprises will reinforce the private sector and will allow AfricaSeeds to address the barriers that are impeding farmer access to high quality seeds. The main goal is the consolidation of the emerging small and medium scale seed enterprise model which, more than the large-scale corporate model seed companies, seems to be the one most suited to many areas of Africa. Moreover, the smallholder seed enterprise model is more likely to address the seed interest of the large number of traditional and minor crops which are not covered by seed companies.

AfricaSeeds' actions will thereby contribute towards developing the private seed sector in Africa. AfricaSeeds recognizes that the seed sector is made up of a continuum of actors, from informal to highly formalized corporate operators, in an integrated system whereby each component of the system contributes to the final output of the whole. Distinctly, the private sector role is critical in assuring the development of a continuous provision of high quality materials of the key seeds. For that reason, AfricaSeeds will champion the emergence of a strong private seed sector in all locations where it is feasible.

AfricaSeeds is convinced that improved performance of small-scale seed enterprises will result in improved market access by smallholder farmers to affordable seeds and in turn, further result in increased productivity, improved food security and ultimately reduced rural poverty.

ANNEX 2. PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS IN SEED SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

Promoting the development of a strong seed sector on the continent requires a collaborative effort between the public and private sectors through relevant and productive Public Private Partnerships (PPP). Roles differ along the seed value chain (seed development, production, and marketing), across crops, and across countries and require varying capacities to address.

The PPP has the potential of bringing together the advantages and contributions of the public and private sectors to effectively address problems which in the past have not been satisfactorily addressed by either sector, acting alone. The PPP concept has gained acceptance because it recognizes that in the various national investment actions, enhanced contributions can emanate from the public and/or from the private when the two act in partnership to ensure success and ultimate good of the public and the nation. In that wise, it is clear that the seed sector presents an almost perfect scenario for PPP with opportunities for its application being evident in the entire seed value chain, from variety development, seed production and seed conditioning to quality assurance, seed marketing, seed security and seed utilization.

AfricaSeeds is convinced that the strategy of PPP holds immense prospect of aiding in the achievement of desired outputs in the interventions that are mounted in several components of the seed value chain. Therefore AfricaSeeds will bend all efforts to acquire the required specialized expertise and knowledge to be able to lead in the widespread adoption and application of the PPP concept among member countries.

Based upon the overall principles, national authorities will be expected to articulate their own national laws and protocols to guide their national PPP applications in the seed sector development. Audits of seed sector development initiatives at different levels (national, regional and continental) will expose gaps and identify the areas which can benefit from PPP applications on a higher level than currently pertains.

AfricaSeeds will initiate consultations by which the role and dimensions of Public Private Partnership will be well defined. At the same time, through expert consultations, the principles and guidelines by which PPP will be applied in the seed sector of Africa will be more precisely defined. Particularly, it should be clear that in the proposed contacts between the public and private sectors, issues relating to transparency, fairness, accountability and due diligence will need to be adequately addressed and sound and internationally acceptable principles applied to ensure the most effective use of resources, from both the public and private sectors. Likewise, specific strategies and processes to enhance PPP applications in key components of the seed value chain and their related issues of gender, youth, smallholder seed production and the environment will need to be defined and addressed in national seed policies in which women have been given equal chance to articulate their own views towards the formulation of the national consensus.

AfricaSeeds will progressively build up expertise in seed sector PPP application to be able to provide Governments and institutions the support needed in the several types of PPP that are foreseen.



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