

Report of launch meeting on “Seed Aid and Germplasm Restoration in Disaster Situations: Synthesis of lessons learned and promotion of more effective practices”

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By

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Championed by CIAT, the meeting was to launch discussions on seed aid and gerplasm restoration issues following disasters. Participants included researchers (CIAT, IPGRI, WARDA), development specialists from NGOs (CRS, WV), local Government (Secretariat of Agriculture and Animal Resources-South Sudan), and regional network staff (SADC PGR and SADC SSN - SADC Seed Security Network). World Vision was represented by Claude Nankam and Patrick Kapukha.

Seed Aid

The following presentations were made to serve as platform for discussion:

- “World Vision’s approaches to emergency seed assistance in post-disaster context by Claude Nankam
- “Evolving seed practice: Increasing competence and effectiveness by Tom Remington of CRS
- “Seed systems in South Sudan before and during the war time” by Cirino Oketayot Oyiki
- “Reflections on changes and directions on approaches to seed relief / Seed system assistance” by Edward Zulu, SADC SSN

The following points were highlighted from the discussions:

Seed Aid Objectives

1. To restore system as it was ((seed/germplasm, strengthen skills (seed production), strengthening knowledge (seed production))
2. To restore food security as fast as possible
3. To eventually give the farmers the choice to strengthen/restore their seed system
 - a. To give farmers choice during emergency
 - b. To give farmers choice during recovery
4. Window of opportunity to introduce new varieties in emergency situations with commercial seeds to strengthen systems

Secondary goals of Seed Aid include:

1. Getting money into the community
2. Strengthening role of seed sellers/seed markets
3. Strengthen Knowledge

Seed aid responses

Emergency phase (rapid)

1. Conventional seed aid – seeds and tools – direct seed distribution
 - a. commercial and regional movement of seed
 - b. Certified and emergency grade seed
 - c. Local seed purchases
2. Seed Vouchers and Fairs
3. Starter packs (relatively conventional)
4. Winter seed production
5. Food for seeds

Recovery phase

1. Farmers choosing varieties (local and improved)
2. Seed enterprise development
3. Seed banks
4. Community seed enterprises
5. Seed Swap/Loan (Angola)
6. Voucher for chronically vulnerable
7. Winter seed production
8. Contract growing
9. Whole sale injection of new varieties number of varieties high, quantity of seed high.

Concerns: The following concerns were raised:

1. Implementation donor driven → no time for assessment
2. Often no evaluation line in budget
3. Often little information on local system to build on it
4. Failure of government to assume financial burden related to seed relief operations after the relief agency leaves
5. Lack of systematic information sharing in seed aid field of successes/failures strengths weaknesses different approaches
6. Issue of seed variety with commercial seed. Some seeds are labeled wrongly. Sometimes there is no proper control.
7. How to build capacity to do alternative approaches
8. How to broaden basket of relief/recovery seed system options
9. How to match intervention to type of disaster and phase/duration of disaster
10. What quality is acceptable and should we strengthen farmer seed quality? Can we rely on commercial quality
11. Inability in getting information on formal/certified seed stocks – information sharing tending to overestimate (so they can sell)
12. Inability in getting information on informal seed stocks – lack of information tends to underestimate capacity of informal seed system
13. Lack of seed security early warning system
14. Relevant guiding principles developed but not followed
15. Inadequate links between NGO and research organizations

16. Inadequate understanding of role of grain trader in seed system (informal seed system in general)

Germplasm Restoration

The presentation on germplasm restoration were:

- “The SADC Plant Genetic Resources Network Program; An overview of activities and reflections on germplasm restoration” by G.P. Mwila of SADC PGR
- “Germplasm restoration, Reflections and cases” by L. Sperling of CIAT

Germplasm restoration objectives

1. To restore the system as it was (pre-stress)
2. Restore and strengthen it to better counter stress

What is it that we try to restore

1. Germplasm
2. Knowledge
3. Skills to maintain germplasm

Germplasm restoration responses

There is only a recovery phase - not perceived urgent: Multiplied varieties (local + modern) and give back to farmers; Development of better seed storage facilities

Concerns: A number of concerns were apparent from the discussions:

- Distinguish between erosion en evolution and whose perception
- No clear boundary restoration-introduction
- Donor driven and PGR specialists driven
- Access methodology for plant genetic resources state are still very young
- Can seed diversity fairs be more cost effective than repatriating germplasm
- Can farmer field school be more cost effective than repatriating germplasm

A number of interventions were identified and the lead institutions (*) given the task of writing them up for synthesis and analysis, in order to draw lessons that will constitute the basis for recommendations of the most effective practices:

For Seed Aid:

Intervention	Research leaders	Stakeholders
1. Angola Seeds of Freedom	WVI*	ICRISAT, CIAT / IARC's
2. Senegal groundnut study	CRS* ISRA	
3. Burundi	CRS*	FAO, CIAT
4. Sudan	SAAR* / CRS	FAO, ICRISAT, WVI
5. Mozambique 2001 Flood Noragric, SSSN	SCF / US*	WVI, ICRISAT, FAO,
6. Malawi evolution	Action Aid	CIAT, SSSN
7. Zambia Seed aid /pgr	SPGRC*	PAM / FAO, SSSN
8. Kenya retrospective	CIAT, CRS	KARI

9. Rwanda Seeds & Tools	CIAT	FAO
10. Sierra Leone	WVI*	CARE, WARDA, ODI
11. Ethiopia	(CIAT*) / WVI	CRS, FAO WVI, CARE
12. Zimbabwe	SSSN* / CRS	SCF-UK, FAO, etc
13. Uganda Cassava mosaic	CIAT*	
14. Mozambique	SC F*	

For Germplasm Restoration

Intervention	Research leaders	Stakeholders
1. Somalia	IPGRI*	CINS, ICRISAT
2. Rwanda Seeds of Hope	CIAT*	CG-Centres
3. Philippines rice	CIAT*	IRRI,
4. Liberia, Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, guinea Bissau, rice based	WARDA (?)	
5. Native Tubers in the Andes	CIAT*	CIP
6. Eritrea millet	ICRISAT*	
7. India finger millet	ICRISAT*	
8. Afghanistan	ICRISAT*	
9. Mozambique Flood	Noragric*	
10. Ethiopia	IPGRI Biodiversity institute	

Next Step

Time Table

Variables finalized	March
Case studies collected + first draft	April/June
Presentation of case info First synthesis	28 June-2 July
Case Revision draft 2 and give to synthesis	1 st of September
Synthesis draft produced	September/October
Synthesis circulated for comments	October November
Synthesis finalized	November/December
Meeting	November 8-12
High profile article planned	
Awareness raising campaign	February 2005