Promoting the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture in Zimbabwe

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Presentation Layout

- Introduction
- Community Seed Bank as an Adaptation Strategy to Climate Change
- Accessing Breeding Lines from NARs and the CG by farmers
- PVS Evaluation by Farmers Through the FFS Strategy
- Seed and Food Fairs
- On-farm Seed Production by Smallholder Farmers
- Establishment of Farmer Seed Enterprise
CTDT is making efforts to promote the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA using various approaches.

(i) Promoting crop diversification at household level through introduction of crop varieties from the national and international gene banks.

(ii) Facilitating the construction of community seed banks and deposition of local seed in these seed banks.

(iii) A total of 16 seed banks are currently functional and 4 more are under construction.
Community Seed Banks are being used as one of the adaptation strategies to climate change.
Accessing breeding lines and released crop varieties from NARS and CG centres

- CTDT and partners are linking NARS and CG centre breeders with farmers by introducing advanced breeding lines and new varieties in farming communities.

- Under the FAO-Benefit Sharing Fund and the Sowing Diversity = Harvesting Security programmes, CTDT managed to establish over 380 Farmer Field Schools in 2 years.

- Farmers in these FFS groups accessed (through CTDT) stable lines of sorghum (11 lines), pearl millet (9 lines), groundnuts (5 lines), cowpeas (4), upland rice (4), bambara nuts (2), finger millets (2) and maize (33)
Smallholder farmers evaluate the performance of different crops within the Farmer Field Schools under the FAO-BSF and the SD=HS projects in Zimbabwe.
Smallholder farmers evaluate the performance of different crops within the Farmer Field Schools under the FAO-BSF and the SD=HS projects in Zimbabwe.
Seed and food fairs are used to promote seed exchange and sales
During such seed fairs CTDT find time to engage parliamentarians and lobby them for policy changes with the seed sector.
CTDT recognizes and rewards keepers of crop diversity to motivate them to continue doing so.

CTDT realised that there is need to identify, recognize and reward keepers of crop diversity in communities to promote the conservation and utilization of PGRFA. This is normally done after holding a seed and food fair.
CTDT promotes on farm seed production initiatives. Below a plot of pearl millet production in Tsholotsho.
Linkages with groundnuts, sorghum and pearl millet industries

- To promote production of some of the crops, CTDT is engaging industries to buy the grain produced by farmers.

- At the beginning of the 2016-2017 agricultural season, CTDT and farmer leaders signed a contract to deliver 1000 tonnes of sorghum.

- Currently working hard to deliver 400 tonnes of sorghum grain that farmers produced.

- Also working to finalize an MoU with a local industrial concern that uses groundnuts as some of the raw materials.
One of the smallholder farmers standing in his red sorghum crop which is almost ready to be delivered to the market
Establishment of Farmer Seed Enterprise

- Having realized the shortage of small grain cereal and legume seed (sorghum, pearl millet, cowpeas and groundnuts), CTDT established a small seed company with funding support from Sida via Oxfam under the Sowing Diversity = Harvesting Security Programme.

- The Farmer Seed Company was recently officially launched by the Executive Director of Oxfam Novib (Farah Karimi) and the Minister of Agriculture, Mechanization and Irrigation Development of Zimbabwe (Dr Joseph Made).

- The Seed Company was able to produce 140 tonnes of certified and foundation seed in its first year of operation.

- Smallholder farmers were able to meet all the requirements of seed production under Zimbabwe’s seed laws.
Objectives of establishing the Farmer Seed Enterprise (Champion Seeds)

- To make available at the farmer’s door step, high quality certified seed of high yielding, drought tolerant, and early maturing varieties of diverse crops that are well adapted to and commonly grown in low rainfall environments.
- To increase food and nutrition security for farmers in the marginal areas of Zimbabwe.
- To promote the cultivation of diverse crops and varieties in the drier regions of Zimbabwe, as a resilience building and climate change adaptation strategy.
- To empower farmers, especially women, economically as shareholders & seed producers for the FSE, and also as grain producers and marketers.
Champion Seed Production activities in pictures
Thank you