

# ISSD TIGRAY



## Brief

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## Building Strategic Partnership in the Seed Value Chain: the case of Tigray region



## **Vision Statement of ISSD Ethiopia**

Through a vibrant and pluralistic seed sector, quality seed of superior varieties are available and affordable to a large number of farmers; thereby contributing to agriculture for food security and economic development in Ethiopia.

## **Objective of ISSD Ethiopia**

To strengthen the development of a vibrant, commercial and pluralistic seed sector in Ethiopia.

## Background

Tigray is characterized as an agrarian economy with diverse agro ecological zones which are suitable to grow different types of field crops and vegetables. In addition, the agricultural sector is largely characterized by small scale subsistence farming and low production and productivity. This is partly due to limited and delays in timely availability of adequate quantities and quality of improved seed.

As result, the informal seed supply system (or informal seed system) plays an important role in supplying more than 80% of the seed supply (BoARD : 2008 E.C).

In the region there are three seed systems namely: formal, intermediary and informal systems. Currently, the share of the formal system in supplying quality seed is estimated less than 20%. Moreover, it is active to a limited extent by dealing with very limited crops and varieties. Until recently, the public sector was the main sources of improved varieties, though now Seed Producer Cooperatives and development actors are involved to a lesser extent.

In addition, the seed sector of the region is constrained with different bottlenecks. To mention some of them are limited availability of Early Generation Seed (EGS); Insufficient availability of improved varieties of different cultivar; Absence of private seed companies; Poor infrastructure and facilities (storage, processing, quality control, etc);

Absence of strong coordinating body of the seed system; Absence of an independent regulatory body; Inefficient public seed delivery system; Inflexible seed pricing mechanisms; Nonexistence of regional public seed enterprise; and . . .etc. Therefore, if seed is perceived as crucial input for boosting agricultural sector, its sectorial development depends on workable partnership among the regional multistakeholders across the seed value chain in solving these constraints in order to enhance food security and economic development in the region.

## What is a Partnership?

A partnership is a development relationship based on mutual trust, openness, shared risk and shared rewards that results in development endeavor performance greater than that would be achieved by individual development actors in the absence of partnership.

## Features of Partnership

The following are some features of partnership

Voluntary: explicit commitment or agree-

- Voluntary: explicit commitment or agreement on the part of the participants.
- Common interest or shared objective
- Mutual dependency: arises from sharing risks, responsibilities, resources, competencies and benefits.
- Working together to create synergy – the partners work together at all levels and stages, from the design and governance of the initiative to implementation and

evaluation to add value on the belief that the total being greater than the sum of its individual parts.

- Complementary support.
- Good communication.
- Respect among partners
- Mutual trust.

The partnership agreement aims to combine resources and expertise of all partners to carry out a specific set of activities around a common purpose and for mutual benefit under certain constraints. The potential benefits that partnering can bring includes:

- Legitimate duty bearers develop their specific role and capacity;
- Shared advocacy has more authority;
- More sustainable solutions and innovations;
- Better access to local information and networks
- Organizational learning between partners (approaches, structures, systems);
- Accesses to a wide range of resources and skill;

## ISSD partnership features

The ISSD programme envisaged 'a vibrant and pluralistic seed sector, quality seed of superior varieties are available and affordable to a larger number of farmers, thereby contributing to agriculture for food security and economic development in Ethiopia'. In line with this the partnership and innovation program component is entrusted to 'Identify key issues for commercial seed sector development and addressed by innovations; are embedded in larger policy and a vibrant seed system is established'.

In the partnership activities the following are considered to be fundamental objectives:

- Enhance implementation capacity of seed value chain actors
- Clarify roles and responsibilities among stakeholders
- Establish networks and core groups to solve seed value chain bottlenecks

## ISSD program Partnerships and innovation

The following are envisaged partnerships and innovation areas

Issues that are key for the commercial development of the seed sectors (private seed companies, private seed producers, and local seed businesses) are identified, addressed through innovations and embedded in a larger policy and institutional framework and a vibrant seed system is established;

Strong coordination and network mechanisms are established to on the one hand to facilitate innovation and learning in seed production sectors and among the actors (breeders, basic and certified/quality declared seed) in the chain, and on the other hand have strong support networks in place that assist in the enabling environment and technical assistance for new and existing entrants in the chain. To this end the coordination of policy and implementation partnerships, innovation and learning processes are institutionalized in regional seed bodies and networks;

Seed policies and accompanying guidelines and regulations at federal and regional levels respond adequately to specific demands as

expressed in society in order to foster the development of a vibrant and pluralistic seed sector.

## The Seed Sector Partnership Process in Tigray Region

The partnership project was added to the ISSD program as a second component to the LSB project in 2010 at national level. Consequently, the Tigray ISSD has established multi-stakeholder core groups to oversee and coordinate regional partnership development in the region. A modality for a regional consultative process has been developed for the identification of key topics, i.e. systemic bottlenecks hampering the development of the sector and how to be addressed through partnership projects. Currently the major stakeholders in the seed system are:

- ▶ Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Development (BoARD)
- ▶ Tigray Agricultural Research Institute (TARI),



- ▶ Ethiopian Seed Enterprise (ESE)- Tigray branch,
- ▶ Tigray Agricultural Marketing and Promotion Agency (TAMPA)
- ▶ Mekelle University

- ▶ Regional, Zonal, Wereda and Tabia Administrations
- ▶ Tigray Land Use and Environmental Protection Agency,
- ▶ NGOs. (REST, AGP - AMaDE, CIP, ADCS)
- ▶ Seed Producing Cooperatives (SPCs) formerly called LSBs.
- ▶ Private seed Producers

Basically the regional seed partnership process evolved with the collaboration of relevant stakeholders to create a network between major stakeholders at local and regional level for the development of the seed sector. The partnership process implementation is done also based on two partnership modalities:

1. Regional seed core group and
2. Regional seed sector platform.

The key partners to be included and responsibilities of each modality is as follows:

### 1. Regional core group

- Key partners of the seed sector
- Regularly Meets quarterly and annually

Tasks:

- ▶ Identify policy, legal, operational bottlenecks of the regional seed sector
- ▶ Coordination and facilitate innovation and learning within the seed sectors
- ▶ Prioritize seed sector issues/projects to be implemented
- ▶ Assign tasks among partners for project activities
- ▶ Consult and advise seed related issue to the regional government

- ▶ Conduct PME
- ▶ Participate in plate forum and draw lessons

Limited awareness on adoption and seed replacement

| No. | Organization                    | Core team position            |
|-----|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1   | BoARD- Extension service        | Chairman                      |
| 2   | MU                              | MU-ISSD Institutional Advisor |
| 3   | BoARD- Input core process       | Member                        |
| 4   | TARI                            | Member                        |
| 5   | Tigray LUA EP                   | Member                        |
| 6   | Tigray CPM DA                   | Member                        |
| 7   | MU                              | Member                        |
| 8   | TAMPA                           | Member                        |
| 9   | REST                            | Member                        |
| 10  | ESE                             | Member                        |
| 11  | Irrigation Producer Association | Member                        |
| 12  | Regional Admin.                 | Member                        |
| 13  | Representative of SPCs          | Member                        |
| 14  | MU- ISSD                        | Secretary                     |

Seed producers are not yet technically equipped

Basic seed for seed production is not yet sufficiently available

No responsible body that oversee the seed system

inflexible seed pricing mechanisms

Inefficient seed delivery system (late delivery and not desired crop/variety)

Inefficient seed distribution, sales, promotion and marketing

## 2. Regional platform

All direct/indirect seed sector actors

Meets twice a year

Tasks:

Share issues for the attention of the core group

Identify issues/project ideas to be addressed in the seed sector

Share seed related endeavors in the region by different seed actors

The core group and plat forum conduct different consultative meetings, workshops, discussion, multi-stakeholders analysis, situation analysis of the seed sector for possible intervention through innovation projects and to support the SPCs and private seed producers.

Generally, through the continuous partnership process the following bottlenecks are identified in the seed sector of the region:

Week seed quality control system and quarantine system

No independent Seed quality regulatory body

Limited private sector involvement or Absence of private seed companies

Poor infrastructure and facilities (storage, processing, and etc)

Delay of appropriate legal instruments (new seed law regulation and regional certification procedures)

Shortage of finance/credit for seed production;

Lack of Insurance for seed production

Most partners lack important inputs; Physical capacity, Human resource, and budget

In line with ISSD program's objective and regional situations various projects were identified, prioritized and approved for implementation. Thus, different project in different project years that deals in the following areas were implemented:

- Seed marketing innovations,
- Seed quarantine guideline development ,
- Development of Quality Declared Seed
- Technical Guidelines for Standards and Procedures,
- Source Seed Multiplication and Maintenance on Major Crops,
- Financial Services for Commercial Seed Production,
- Curriculum Development BSc and PhD Programs in Seed Science and Technology,
- Entrepreneurial Capacity and Critical Constraints of Smallholder Seed Enterprises,
- Forage Seed Development., Finance Fair ,
- Direct Seed Marketing,
- Strengthen intuitional linkage through capacity building activities and etc.

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