

ENSP Newsletter

Ethiopia-Netherlands
SEEDPARTNERSHIP



Issue 09, September 2024

About this newsletter

The purpose of the ENSP newsletter is to provide relevant information on the latest developments and current issues in the Ethiopian seed sector and the partnership support activities.

In this issue we highlight the major activities that have taken place between July and September 2024.

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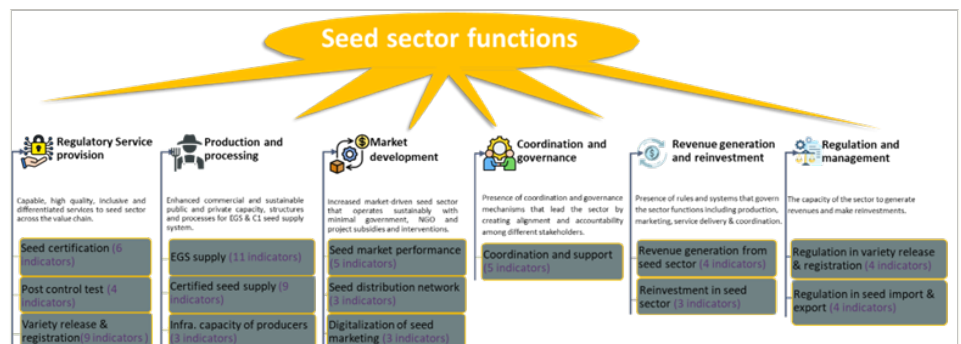
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Seed Sector Performance Indicators Monitoring (SPiM) Dashboard for Ethiopia

In Africa, including Ethiopia, there is a lack of high-quality seed production and marketing data, which hinders countries' plans for agricultural transformation and economic growth. The scarcity of information makes it challenging for the government to provide policy support and effective coordination. Currently, there is no consistent way of tracking seed sector performance in Ethiopia, including demand estimation, EGS supply, certified seed production, and seed distribution. Monitoring is conducted in a scattered manner at different scales for various reasons. This lack of comprehensive data complicates efforts to improve

seed production and use for the country's agricultural development. Experiences from other countries show that the seed sector performance should measure all key components of the seed value chain (VC) rather than one segment of the VC. The Ethiopian seed sector functions mentioned in the document "Transforming the Seed Sector" are the structure in which different indicators are proposed for the sector performance monitoring. Experiences from other countries, including TASAI, seedSAT, and the Nigerian seed monitoring tool, were also used as a reference for seed sector performance monitoring tool development.

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Ethiopian seed sector functions and sub-functions used for SPiM tool development.



Seed Sector Performance Indicators ...

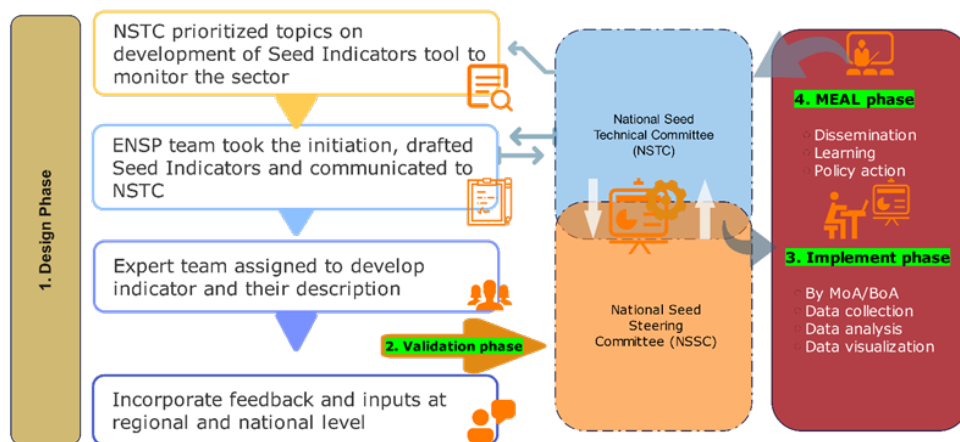
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The Ethiopian Seed Partnership (ESP) has facilitated and coordinated the SPiM tool development for the Ethiopian seed sector.

Monitoring of the Ethiopian seed sector would have many benefits as it gives an annual scorecard across the seed VC and performance; help to monitor the sector performance trends at national and regional levels; serve as input to identify key intervention areas for investments and policy makers; support the sector transformation and benefit smallholder farmers to access quality seed. The tool uses various indicators to measure the seed sector and aggregates data into an interactive dashboard that can be visualized by end users.

The overall flow of the seed sector monitoring tool development process and implementation plan is indicated in the picture. The ESP staff and senior seed experts assigned by the National Seed Technical Committee have worked together and designed the tool. Key seed stakeholders at national and regional levels were also consulted in a one-day workshop organized. Inputs and feedback from the stakeholders are amended to finalize the tool. The next step is to validate the tool and facilitate its implication at national and regional levels.

The Ethiopian seed sector transformation document published in 2019 by the MoA shows a seed sector that is more competitive, inclusive, transparent, responsive, innovative,



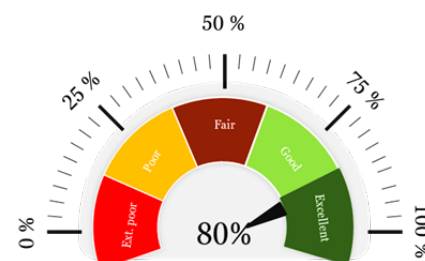
Proposed flow chart for SPiM tool development and implementation plan for Ethiopian seed sector dash-board

resilient, and sustainable. The development of the SPiM tool is based on 73 indicators structured under six building blocks of the seed sector transformation document, each with the following sub-functions.

1. Regulatory service provision => with four sub-functions and 19 indicators
2. Production and processing => with three sub-functions and 23 indicators
3. Seed market development => with two sub-functions and 11 indicators
4. Coordination and governance => with one sub-function and 5 indicators
5. Revenue generation and reinvestment => with two sub-functions and 7 indicators
6. Regulation and management => with two sub-functions and 8 indicators

Information for each indicator is filled in a data sheet that can be aggregated into a single data center. Different

departments at MoA, EAA, regional BoAs, regulatory authorities and research institutes relevant to the data source will be responsible to fill the information. For several indicators the bulk of data collected from different sources is normalized and converted to quantitative scale of 0 to 100% for easy analysis and visualization. Four scales are used to measure the seed sector performance in this case: 0-19.99% (Extremely poor), 20-39.99% (Poor), 40-59.99% (Fair), 60-79.99% (Good) and 80-100% (Excellent). The output of the data analysis



for each function or sub-function across the regions or nationally to visualize the performance of Ethiopia's seed sector each year using an interactive dashboard.



Strengthening collaborative governance and coordination in Ethiopia's Seed Sector

Ethiopia's seed sector is a vital component of the country's agricultural development. However, the sector faces a significant challenge due to weak collaboration and coordination among seed sector actors and stakeholders. Recognizing the importance of addressing this issue, proactive steps have been taken to re-establish and strengthen the collaborative governance system in various regions. In response to the declining strength of the collaborative

workshops brought together key stakeholders from various organizations relevant to the seed sector, including representatives from government bureaus, regulatory authorities, research institutes, universities, seed enterprises, cooperative promotion agencies, and international organizations.

During the workshops, there was a consensus on the importance of establishing a coordinating committee to enhance the seed sector in alignment with the

as the committee's functions and meeting frequency. This document will serve as a framework for the functioning of the core groups in their respective regions.

It was recognized that further discussions are needed to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of member organizations within the core groups. As a result, small technical teams were formed to refine the document and ensure a common understanding among all stakeholders.



Mr. Teshoma Bogale, IQQO Director General and BoA delegate, making opening speech at Addis Ababa

governance system, the Ethiopian National Seed Policy (ENSP) has initiated efforts to revitalize this structure in regions where it previously existed and establish new core groups in newly formed regions. The aim is to pave the way for enhanced coordination within the seed sector of the country. Recently, workshops were conducted in Addis Ababa, Halaba Kulito, and Mekelle towns with the objective of re-establishing the seed core group in Oromia and Tigray regions, as well as forming a seed core group for the newly established Central Ethiopia region. The

country's agriculture development strategy. The significance of achieving food and nutrition security, increasing production and productivity, and creating employment opportunities within the agriculture sector was emphasized by officials from the regional bureaus of agriculture.

The workshops also saw presentations highlighting

the potential and existing challenges in the seed sector, as well as outlining key focus areas for enhancing the seed system in different regions. It was acknowledged that collaborative efforts with stakeholders are crucial for addressing systemic challenges and driving positive change in the seed sector. One of the key outcomes of the workshops was the development of a comprehensive draft document outlining the rationale for establishing the seed coordinating committee, anticipated deliverables, proposed member organizations, their respective roles and responsibilities, as well



Dr. Eyasu Abrha, Tigray region BoANR head, making opening speech, at Mekelle workshop

The consensus among regional officials and other stakeholders who participated in the workshops is that the establishment of a strong seed coordinating committee offers significant potential for driving positive change and advancement in the region's seed sector. However, it is widely acknowledged that this endeavour demands unwavering commitment and dedication from all stakeholders in order to effectively fulfil their respective roles and responsibilities.

Stakeholders evaluated progress of independent variety testing pilot for registration

The Ethiopia Netherlands Seed Partnership (ENSP) recently convened a workshop in Addis Ababa on September 6th, 2024, to evaluate the progress of the independent variety testing pilot for registration. The primary aim of the workshop was to review the advancements made thus far and to make any necessary adjustments in the remaining period of the pilot.

Mohammed Hassena (PhD), the ENSP project manager, officially inaugurated the workshop and elucidated to the participants the reasons behind ENSP's support for the pilot. He highlighted that the new seed law has delineated various methods of variety testing for registration, with independent variety testing for registration by the Ethiopian Agricultural Authority being the primary approach. However, due to logistical and qualified human resource constraints within the newly established EAA, ENSP collaborated with EAA to pilot the new variety registration approach. Subsequently, EAA outsourced the service and engaged EIAR to conduct the NPT and DUS test under a tripartite collaboration agreement between EAA, EIAR, and ENSP/SWR, commencing in 2023 for bread wheat candidate varieties submitted by different applicants.

Abdo Woyema, the Enabling Seed Business Senior Expert at the ENSP project, provided a comprehensive overview of the progress achieved to date, highlighting key activities, valuable lessons, and encountered challenges. He underscored the potential of outsourcing as a feasible option when mandated institutions face limitations

in delivering certain services. Furthermore, he emphasized the importance for EAA to hire qualified breeders to effectively manage these responsibilities and praised the robust collaboration among research institutes within the country.

Subsequently, workshop participants engaged in discussions based on the presentations. While they appreciated ENSP's initiative to support the pilot for new variety testing for registration, they expressed reservations about the sustainability of the initiative due to the observed limited capacity and capability from EAA in terms of qualified human resource, own testing sites and others. Participants stressed the need for active involvement of EAA personnel in the implementation of this pilot and recommended that EAA should fulfil the necessary human resource requirements and testing sites to assume responsibility after the pilot phase.

The workshop also addressed some administrative challenges related to financial transfers and settlement issues. Representatives from EIAR acknowledged the gaps and pledged to rectify it. Additionally, technical issues related to data collection,

disease scoring, and other aspects were deliberated upon. It was unanimously agreed to organize capacity building training for personnel at the new research centres. The participants also recommended exposure visits to the DUS and NPT testing sites at different locations to build confidence on the trial management and witness on its output.



The workshop was attended by breeders from RARIs of Oromia, Amhara, and Central Ethiopia regions, as well as representatives from EAA, EIAR, GIZ, and ENSP.

The workshop served as a valuable platform for partners involved in the independent variety testing pilot for registration to evaluate the progress made and pinpoint areas for enhancement. There was a shared dedication among participants to tackle obstacles and guarantee the effective execution of the initiative.



Empowering Local Seed Distributors: Advancing Sustainable Agricultural Practices in Ethiopia

The Ethiopia Netherlands Seed Partnership recently organized a training session on Sustainable Agricultural Practices (SAPs) for Partnering Local Seed Distributors in Hawassa town from July 10-11, 2024. The primary aim of the event was to enhance the understanding of participants regarding the significance of SAPs, to familiarize them with promising SAP technologies, to provide support for the adoption of SAPs during project-funded demonstrations and trainings, and to establish targets for farmers' uptake of SAPs promoted during the aforementioned activities.

The workshop commenced with participant introductions, followed by an overview of the training objectives by the ENSP project manager, Mohammed Hassena (PhD). Mohammed emphasized the purpose of

the training, highlighting ENSP's efforts to raise awareness among local seed distributors about SAPs and their integration into the promotion of seed varieties. Additionally, he underscored ENSP's collaboration with local and international private seed companies to bolster Ethiopia's seed sector.

Subsequently, experts from ENSP and SNV (Horti-LIFE III project)

delivered presentations covering topics such as the current status of vegetable production in Ethiopia, the Farmers Field School (FFS) approach, and sustainability in agriculture. The participants engaged in group discussions focusing on soil fertility management and pest management options, gaining insights into the SAPs to be included in their training and demonstration sessions for



Empowering Women in Agribusiness: The success of the women-led business incubation program

The Women-Led Business Incubation Program Pitch Competition showcased the outstanding accomplishments of women entrepreneurs within Ethiopia's agribusiness sector. This program was designed to empower women in agriculture by equipping them with essential skills and knowledge in resource management, financial planning, and market access. The winners of the pitching competition, as well as other participants, have actively contributed to the innovation and expansion of Ethiopia's agribusiness industry, thereby sowing the seeds of change and economic empowerment within the sector.

Wudie Ebba, a mother of two, emerged as the first-place winner in the Women-Led Business Incubation Program Pitch Competition. Despite her background in Business Management and Accounting, Wudie attributes her passion for agriculture to her upbringing as a farmer's daughter. Her success in the competition was rooted in her focus on organic food production and plant incubation, which became the cornerstone of her achievements during the challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The seven-month-long training program provided Wudie with

essential skills in resource management and financial planning, enabling her to navigate the intricacies of entrepreneurship while balancing her family responsibilities. Her determination to inspire other women, including her teenage daughter, reflects the broader impact of women entrepreneurs in Ethiopia's agribusiness sector. Wudie's journey along with other women like Kidist Alemu, exemplifies the growing role of women in driving innovation and sustainable growth within the industry.

The Women-Led Business Incubator program not only offered training and coaching but also emphasized the pivotal role of women in the agricultural sector. By providing access to markets, finance, and technical training, the program empowered women entrepreneurs to overcome barriers and thrive in a male-dominated industry.

The recognition of women's contributions to agribusiness is a crucial step towards fostering gender equality and economic development in Ethiopia.

Following the business pitch competition, ongoing support was provided to the winners through follow-up sessions and technical backstopping, as explained by Mekdes Tamirat, a business consultant at Resilience. This strategic approach aimed to ensure that the competition winners could effectively utilize their awards for the expansion of their businesses. The facilitators of the competition recognized the importance of not only acknowledging the winners but also providing them with guidance and support to make informed business decisions.



Second-place winner Kidist Alemu, 29, holds a degree in Plant Science. In the competition, she showcased a variety of agricultural inputs for farmers, introducing technical methods aimed at improving business strategies.





Wudie Ebba, aged 43 and a mother of two, secured first place in the Women-Led Business Incubation Program Pitch Competition. Despite her academic background in Business Management and Accounting, Wudie attributes her profound passion for agriculture to her upbringing as a farmer's daughter.

"My background wasn't in agriculture, so the training was initially tough," she admitted. "But with one-on-one coaching and guidance from my trainers, I learned to identify the most fertile soil types, thanks to the help of my agronomist coach."



The follow-up sessions offered valuable insights and advice to the competition winners on how to best invest their awards for the growth and development of their ventures. Additionally, the technical backstopping provided further assistance, offering expertise and resources to navigate any challenges encountered during the expansion of their businesses. This proactive post-competition support demonstrated a commitment to the long-term success of women entrepreneurs,

beyond just the initial recognition of their achievements.

As a result of these follow-ups and technical backstopping, it was evident that the competition winners made significant strides in expanding their businesses, effectively utilizing their awards in a strategic and impactful manner. This not only validated the effectiveness of the support provided but also highlighted the potential for continued growth and success for these women-led enterprises.

The success of women entrepreneurs like Wudie Ebba and Kidist Alemu

underscores the transformative impact of empowering women in Ethiopia's agribusiness sector. Their resilience, innovation, and dedication have not only driven individual success but have also contributed to the broader economic development and sustainability of the industry. As more women continue to break barriers and excel in agribusiness, the future holds great promise for inclusive growth and empowerment within Ethiopia's agricultural landscape.



Empowering Local Seed Distributors...

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further promotion to farmers.

Following the group discussions, an agreement plan and monitoring format were presented, outlining the SAPs to be promoted by each company for the upcoming cropping season. The next day involved a field visit to soil test-based fertilizer trials at Tiqu Wuha, providing participants with practical insights into trial management and the potential application

of SAPs in their respective marketing areas.

The training and field visit sessions yielded several key outcomes, including consensus among partners on sustainable agricultural practices related to vegetable production, readiness of local seed distributors to introduce and promote selected SAPs, valuable inputs from development partners, and exploration of collaboration opportunities with Horti-LIFE III

project and Batu soil research centre.

The participants also proposed next actions, including assisting distributors in completing the agreement plan, monitoring partner progress, and promoting the soil test-based nutrient management approach based on evidence from ongoing trials.



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