



# **Development of a Framework for Farmer Varieties Registration in Zambia**

## **Workshop Report**

30<sup>th</sup> November 2023

M'Kango Golf View Hotel, Lusaka Zambia

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## 1. Welcome and opening

The meeting commenced with the singing of the national anthem and a prayer.

### 1.1 Welcome remarks

*Mr Charles Nkhoma, Director CTD*

The Director welcomed all invited participants to the “*Development of a framework for registration of farmer varieties workshop*”. He stated that the meeting was also the launch of the Zambian part of Component 3 addressing farmer variety registration of the Markets and Seeds Access Project (MASAP) under implementation in Zambia and Zimbabwe funded by the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC). CTD will focus on developing a framework for farmer varieties registration and their seed production. He further stated that this work would require extended consultations and hence part of the reasons for this meeting which is a crucial platform for bringing together all stakeholders in the Zambian seed sector. He acknowledged the presence of senior officials from partner organisations, including Dr Francisco Miti, the Director of the Seed Control and Certification Institute (SCCI) and representative of the Director of the Zambia Agricultural Research Institute (ZARI). He thanked them and all stakeholders for attending the meeting and welcomed the online participants.

*Dr Lloyd Mbulwe (representing the Director of ZARI)*

Dr Mbulwe recognised the presence of all participants present, representing various stakeholders on seed. He indicated that the Director of ZARI had been unable to attend the meeting due to other pressing national duties. He emphasised that ZARI was cognisant of the fact that farmers always saved seed. That farmer varieties should be recognised and farmer seed rights duly recognised in agriculture. He stated that the meeting was therefore of significance and hoped that with the work being initiated with respect to farmer varieties registration recognition of farmer seed will become a reality.

### 1.2 Official opening

*Remarks by Dr Francisco Miti Director SCCI (representing the Permanent Secretary Ministry of Agriculture)*

Dr Miti stated that he was happy to be part of the workshop. He recognised all the participants present including those from outside of Zambia and those participating online. He noted that the meeting was important for charting the way forward on farmer seeds. He stated that seed was key to the agriculture sector and basically sets the basis for production. All other inputs are intended to support the full exploitation of the potential of seed. Consequently, Zambia must have the right seed for good performance. Farmers should be confident that the seed they plant will give them good produce. Right seed that supports production is therefore important.

Zambia has a reputation of producing good seed which should be upheld and therefore marketing seed, including farmer varieties must be well managed. He further stated that devising a framework for farmer variety registration was good but he encouraged open and frank discussion around this subject. He indicated that Government would support farmer variety registration as long as good seed would reach the farmer regardless of the methods used to produce that seed. He emphasised that seed produced thereof should benefit farmers and producers. He noted that the meeting was opportune as Zambia had initiated revisions of the seed laws whose end process is to provide good seed. This is high priority and the government would support a process that provides good seed for the benefit of the farmer.

### 1.3 Introduction of participants and workshop objectives

The workshop facilitator, Joseph Mwitumwa of CTD, requested all participants including those online to introduce themselves. Participants included the Ministry of Agriculture, including research, extension and the national gene bank. Other participants include civil society organisations, private sector (seed producers and marketers), farmer interest groups; women's groups; the SADC Genebank; individual farmers, MASAP and CTD. The list of participants is attached as Appendix I.

### 1.4 Workshop objectives

The facilitator stated that the workshop was part of the formal launch of the development of a farmer variety registration framework in Zambia leading to seed production and marketing of farmer varieties with full participation by smallholder farmers. The planned framework is intended to facilitate the formal recognition of farmer varieties and so the specific objectives of the inception workshop were to:

- i) Bring all key stakeholders on seed in the country together, to provide them with an opportunity to deliberate on the project (MASAP) at an early stage and to develop an implementation strategy for farmer variety registration;
- ii) Receive update of the current state of key seed policy, legislation and regulation frameworks in relation to the launch of the initiative;
- iii) Define roles for different stakeholders in the framework development process and in its implementation thereafter;
- iv) Consider the possibility of establishing a Seeds Working Group to help steer the development of the farmer variety registration framework.

## 2. Overview of the Markets and Seed Access Project (MASAP) in Zambia and Zimbabwe

*Presenter: Rutger Persson, MASAP (full presentation is available)*

The project is funded by the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC) and is implemented by a consortium of NIRAS, FiBL and Commuty Technology Development Organization (CTDO) of Zimbabwe. The objective is to improve resilience in food of smallholder households (especially women and youth) by increasing adoption and utilisation of improved open pollinated varieties of small grains (sorghum and pearl millet) and legumes (cowpea and groundnuts) through strengthening the seed and commodity value chains in Zambia and Zimbabwe. In Zambia the target districts Chipata, Sioma, Sesheke and Kazungula.

In the first phase, MASAP targets 94,000 direct and indirect SHF beneficiaries, 5,300 seed production direct beneficiaries through establishment of community-owned seed enterprises or associations. MASAP will also support emerging seed companies, targeting 60% women and youth participation.

Component 1 of MASAP addresses adoption and utilisation of small grains and legume seed by smallholder farmers while Component 2 addresses private sector engagement and Component 3 addresses policy engagement and action learning research. Development of the proposed farmer variety registration framework will contribute to the third component.

*Plenary-questions/comments/clarification on the presentation:*

- Are there specific varieties of sorghum targeted for registration under the project; will all the varieties be targeted?

*Responses from participants:*

The Director SCCI explained that not all varieties will be targeted or enter the seed registration system as the selection and registration of varieties will be regulated. The inclusion of a farmer variety on the market should not mean the introduction of inferior seeds. A farmer variety is a variety that has been developed by farmers over generations of cultivation and the genes are therefore fixed. This seed is in the community but probably not being accessed widely. The system should be about increasing availability of and access to this seed.

The processes of quality control will be important and necessary so that the correct seed is put out on the market. If a farmer variety is accepted based on the developed framework which is also good for society, and can be identified amongst other varieties, then it will be on the market. It also must be distinct from others before undergoing registration. So, the seed will have to undergo registration. Registration here implies that the seed variety is distinctly different from others and good, in order to secure market space. Quality control will be important as part of registration as wrong things should not end up on the market which may destroy Zambia agriculture.

The Director CTDI cautioned the meeting not to pre-empt what will happen until the entire stakeholder engagement process around registration is concluded. Many aspects need to be discussed and agreed upon. For example, definition of “inferiority” or “quality” will not be known until after the process is concluded. This is why it is extremely important that first and foremost, for the MASAP project to succeed, it requires the farmer registration framework being proposed for development. Before development however even terms such as “quality” may not be of the same understanding as is currently known for other types of varieties. It could very well be that the terms may be different. Defining a variety’s difference from one to another we will not be known until the entire process is concluded. Stakeholders should understand this link. Therefore, what can be agreed right in broad terms is that stakeholders want good seed to be available to the farmer, whether it is a farmer variety or from another type of variety. Arriving at the fine details will require that stakeholders go through a process of discussion and engagement in order to come up with a framework that recognises the peculiarities of the seed that it is addressing. Otherwise there would have been no need for the envisaged framework. Farmers would have registered under current arrangements. It is the recognition that this is difficult under current circumstances and why we are embarking on the development of the farmer variety registration framework.

### **3. Status of on-going changes in the Plant Breeders Rights Act and the Plant Variety and Seeds Act**

*Presenter: Dr Francisco Miti, Director SCCI*

The presentation highlighted the following issues:

Zambia has a liberalised seed system where participation is open to both public and private actors. Anyone is free to develop a variety and have that variety registered in Zambia. The public seed sector participation is strong in developing early (parental) generation seed and licensing, but is inefficient in marketing seed whereas the private sector is strong in production, release and marketing. The private companies use their own varieties to achieve this. Zambia has about 391 varieties of maize seed.

Approximately 200,000 tons of seed is produced in the country mainly by the private sector and for export with Central Province (Mkushi) producing 75% of the country's maize seed; The reason why Zambia is a giant in seed production is because of adherence to standards. Zambia produces seed worth approximately USD 212million. Seed quality control is critical to deter anyone putting out wrong things on the market and even seed multiplication must be of the right varieties.

The salient feature of Zambia's seed legal framework is as follows:

**Seed legislation** comprises the Plant Variety and Seeds Act (CAP 236) which regulates seed provision in the country and is enforced by the Seed Control and Certification Institute (SCCI) which is also the seed certification authority. Legislation also comprises the Plant Breeders Rights Act (No.18 of 2007) which promotes the development of new plant varieties and enforced by SCCI as well.

**Seed services** follow international practices:

- Crop variety evaluation-done according to the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV)
- Seed certification follows procedures of the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); Zambia a member of OECD as a seed certifier;
  - OECD guidelines; seed inspections; seed labelling and post control
  - Follow seed testing rules of the international Seed Testing Association (STA)-for seed sampling and testing

Therefore Seed certified in Zambia has a general acceptance.

**Processes:**

1. Motivations: issues to be resolved and rationale-gaps have been identified, changes in policies; domestication of international agreement
  - a. Conduct a regulatory impact assessment (RIA); assess impact of new law; highlight costs and benefits;
2. Secure Cabinet approval in principle-**Done for both;**
3. Development of the new legislation-make wide consultations
  - a. Produce new draft; legislation;
  - b. Develop a Layman Bill-instructions to changes to MOJ for new law

**Motivation, status and next steps:**

- Plant Variety and Seeds Act (CAP 236)
  - Domesticate fully international agreements (OECD; ISTA; SADC; COMESA);
  - Seed variety registration: recognition of SADC/OECD varieties;
  - Seed production: facilitation of global seed varieties (OECD);
  - Seed marketing-mobile seed marketing;
  - Make seed business more user friendly: reduce no of licenses;

**Status – Draft legislation developed for stakeholder consultation; Concerted consultations leading up to a revised draft targeted for February 2024**

- Plant Breeder's Rights Act No.18 of 2007)
  - Promote introduction of new plants varieties (e.g. self-pollinated crops; tree crops);
  - Promote breeding of new varieties of plants;

- Domesticate fully international agreement (UPOV); will promote international investment;

Status: Redo RIA (update); draft new legislation for stakeholder consultations (provincial/national); produce Layman Bill.

*Plenary-questions/comments/clarifications:*

- Concern was raised with respect to consultations for the legislation review; have these been inclusive? Have both drafts of both Acts been circulated widely for stakeholders' input?
- How may smallholder farmers, especially rural based farmers, be assisted in seed production?
- Why is the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) not being considered in the revision of the legislation?
- Why has the deadline been set so close? Why the rush to get the law revised?
- Why is there no farmer representation in the consultations?
- How can space be created to accommodate farmer managed systems in the current seed system? Does the proposed seed system allow for the registration of varieties that are more heterogenous, those that are not uniform and stable and those that do not fit so well into the formal criteria?

*Response from participants:*

The Director SCCI indicated that while consultations up to now have been informal, the time is opportune for formal consultations. These shall be held through to February 2024 to target for developing a revised legislation for submission to Parliament. The first drafts were developed with wide consultations and the draft from the first round of consultation has been circulated widely. This may be confirmed through minutes and attendance lists of consultation sessions held in the past. The drafts for consultations will also be circulated widely as preparations for additional consultations are made. Stakeholders should have no fear that any will be left out in the consultations. Everyone will be invited to participate. The draft revised legislation (Laymans Bill) as in the case of Plant Variety and Seeds Act (CAP 236) will be the basis for consultations. Through consultations a totally new version may be developed.

With respect to the domestication of international agreement these have not been concluded. Initial motivations for domestication was the concern for the high cost of business, raised by the business environment and emanating from the application of the current law. Domestic law therefore needs to be harmonised with international agreements signed by Zambia. Stakeholders should not be worried about fake seed if the law is applied effectively. Of concern however are the penalties. Are they punitive enough to deter putting fake seed on the market? Stakeholders are at liberty to make additional revisions to strengthen the penalties.

Mr Mwila raised concern that perhaps the initial consultations were not adequate. What generated the desire for need to change the law? Was the motivation to change the law tilting towards domesticating some of the international agreements? Was mapping undertaken amongst the stakeholders as to what needed to be addressed even before the first Laymans drafts were compiled. This should have been highlighted in the presentation. For example, was the need to strengthen the law in relation to sale of fake seed, something that stakeholders are concerned about? Additionally, will new ideas be accommodated in the upcoming consultations?

The Director CTDI intimated that issue of consultations is extremely important. The modalities for the consultations have not been clearly understood. Government institutions concerned with managing seed

are well aware of stakeholders that have a keen interest in seed e.g. CTD. He stated that stakeholders felt they were completely in the dark of the current consultations. Stakeholders are neither difficult to find nor be informed.

CTD stated that the understanding is that where lawmaking is concerned, the stakeholders are the ones making or revising the laws. SCCI is in this case providing the secretariat for the process. SCCI is not the one revising the laws. The role of SCCI is to enforce the laws once the country has decided. The country's decisions are defined by the stakeholder's participation. This issue should be taken seriously as two functions are seemingly being merged. SCCI cannot be the maker and the enforcer of the law at the same time. What is known is that the SCCI is the enforcer. If stakeholders are not informed then SCCI becomes the law maker instead of only the enforcer.

It is observed that the focus is tilted towards the "big business" of seed and yet a significant portion of the country's sector on seed is on people that are totally absent in the revision process. Even in the adherence to international agreements the focus is on a few. Many other agreements such as the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) should also inform the current revisions. How do we join UPOV91 when it goes against what the ITPGRFA says? The ITPGRFA is important because of the millions of smallholder farmers that are involved in seed and who are completely left out in the current revisions. Why therefore, is there a rush to revise the current laws? If stakeholders are only now being made aware of the targeted dates for the completion of the revision process, and in consideration of the festive season, what guarantee is there that there will be credible input to the revision process? There is something wrong with the current revision process.

Regarding smallholder participation in the seed sector the Director SCCI stated that Government position is that there should be quality seed on the market. In this regard anyone can produce seed. The seed law does not unduly protect the big seed producers. Government has now integrated subsidies for smallholder farmers in the production of seed. Smallholder farmers are supplying seed to government subsidised agricultural support programmes. Anyone who wishes to market high quality seed is supported by the law. Smallholder farmers are also being contracted to produce seed for big seed companies. Government desires to see every smallholder farmer has access to seed supplied by small holder farmers themselves. Previously, by law, seed production was restricted only to those farmers with irrigations facilities. Now the law has liberalised seed production and small-scale farmers have been integrated into seed production.

Regarding how smallholder farmers may be assisted in seed production the Director counselled that smallholder farmers should organise themselves into groups or associations. It is difficult to provide services to individuals. Depending on the type of seed selected government may be able to assist with foundation seed and other services. ZARI for example can provide smallholder farmers with foundation seed in good time. Smallholder farmers that wish to produce seed should be market oriented. However, seed is not sold like any other commodity. Smallholder farmers need to understand the whole process of seed provision. Government focus is to build the capacity of smallholder farmers so that they can produce seed effectively and efficiently. The (MASAP) project's focus on small legumes provides opportunity for smallholder farmers to enter the seed sector. The small legumes are problematic for large scale farmers. Smallholder farmers need to be aggressive in this respect and SCCI stands ready to support their efforts.

The Director SCCI reiterated that going forward the review process, would be inclusive of every stakeholder. The consultations shall be transparent and all issues, even the intellectual property issues shall be considered. It is SCCI's desire to consult widely. Stakeholders were urged to be a part of the review



process to the end even if discussions became difficult. The ultimate aim of the review process was not to buttress the big seed companies but to ensure that Zambia had adequate high-quality seed for the local market as well as for export.

Regarding use of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) in the revision of the legislation, the Director SSCI stated that the ITPGRFA constitutes one of the many ideas on the table. Whether the ITPGRFA would be considered or not depends on the stakeholders and not SSCI. SSCI was merely a conduit to move discussions forward; a Secretariat to anchor the revision process. All aspects for inclusion in the revised law would be as a result of discussions and agreement among the stakeholders.

Regarding farmer representation in the consultation the Director reiterated that SSCI would be consulting widely. Consultations would be inclusive of both the Zambia National Farmers Union (ZNFU) and the Small-Scale Farmers Association. What would be difficult to achieve would be to include individual farmers in the absence of justification and agreed criteria. It was advisable for invited organisations to consult with their representatives in order to widen the consultations. The February 2024 target was set to take advantage of Parliamentary dates for lobbying purposes.

Regarding the farmer managed system, the aim is to perfect this system. The farmer managed systems can be said to be allowed in the current setup. Amongst the seed classes in Zambia where groundnuts and other crops were grown in the QDS seed class was quite close to a farmer managed system, that is, if farmer managed means those with limitations in the management of seed. Under this classification seed production is registered, inspected and the number of inspections is lower than other classes. The standards for certification are lower than for other classes.

There are thousands of seed growers who are small scale farmers practicing under the mentioned class including seeds of legumes. So, a farmer managed system is already in place. However, the hope is that the current revisions to the law can help improve the system. How can it be improved? The issue is not so much about the heterogeneity of the seed. It is about if one purchases variety X and plants it, the expected results should be what X produces. When referring to distinctiveness of uniformity, it is not about one colour; the colours may be different but about stability. One important thing to bear in mind was the parental seed..., variety maintenance in short. A variety must be true; it must be itself, otherwise how does it get protected.

#### **4. Considerations for a Farmer Variety Registration System in Zambia**

*Presenter: Mr Charles Nkhoma, CTD (Full presentation is available)*

Highlights of the presentation included the following:

##### *Seed Sovereignty:*

- Seed forms the basis for food security;
- Seed security entails sovereignty by farmers to have the freedom to choose the types of crops to grow and the types of seed to use to grow those crops;
- For this to happen, farmers must have policy space and support
- Legislative frameworks should not inhibit them from developing varieties and producing seed from their varieties.

*Justification for farmer participation in the formal seed system:*

- Farmer saved seeds are the main sources of planting material for many smallholder farmers and guarantee availability of seeds at planting time;
- Smallholder farmers supply up to 90% of all seeds planted. These local seeds are available to farmers at low cost;
- Investment in the national seed system only address the formal system without involvement of farmers other than in some out-grower arrangements;
- Local seed can meet quality standard of moisture content, germination, purity and pest diseases;
- Local seed is well adapted to local environments.

#### *Participatory Plant Breeding:*

Farmers, CTD and breeders have engaged in variety development through selection from existing varieties, segregating populations of stable lines:

- Participatory variety enhancement (PVE): improving or restoring existing farmer varieties; farmers work to maximize potential varieties that they like in accordance with their desired characteristics; these varieties may have deteriorated over time or have become ill-adapted to change conditions; so far four (4) maize varieties have been enhanced and maintained with a total participation of 263 smallholder farmers;
- Participatory variety selection (PVS): farmers observe candidate varieties throughout the season and multiply seed of chosen ones; in PVS farmers evaluate different varieties based on breeding objectives. These can be modern farmer varieties and advanced lines from breeding institutes; Twenty-one (21) stable lines, local varieties and released varieties have been selected from PVS plots of sorghum, groundnuts, finger millet and cowpeas.
- Participatory variety development (PVD): creating new farmers varieties e.g. crossing different materials. PVD is done when individual varieties do not have all the traits desired by the farmers. The offspring from this crossing will combine traits of their parents creating a new variety to select from; Seven (7) sorghum varieties and one (1) variety have been developed but not yet released due to various requirements. Farmers have adopted them and are growing them.

#### *Farmer seed production:*

So far 75 farmers grew registered varieties; 10 farmers grew local seed in first year of production; 19 tonnes of beans, local maize and groundnut seed were produced by 85 farmers in 2022; 94 farmers produced 11 tonnes in 2023; 272 farmers were trained and registered as seed producers. Field inspection and seed sampling only done for registered producers. Farmer varieties were not inspected because they were not registered and therefore not eligible for formal seed certification; Peer to peer inspection by the farmers themselves.

#### *Community Seed banks:*

- Means of conserving the diversity on the community and surrounding areas;
- Farmers access seed of choice and return an agreed amount after harvest;
- Seed distribution and aggregation point for seed sales;
- Centre for sampling for testing;
- Maintain breeding materials.

Benefits of a farmer variety registration system:

- A system that protect farmer varieties and reward them for their effort;
- Increased availability of seed of local farmer varieties;

- Seed producers and supplier have access to registered farmer varieties for seed production and marketing;
- Benefits of the FVR system will accrue to the country through improved and inclusive national seed system in turn to benefit agriculture production and increases incomes in the value chain.

*Regional seed regulation harmonisation:*

- SADC member countries have agreed on regional harmonisation of seed regulations;
- Member countries have adopted common standards and procedure for variety registration, certification and quality control;
- While SADC regulations in principle allows farmers varieties in its variety registration system, the mechanisms for handling this has not been developed.
- This presents an opportunity for Zambia to develop a registration framework for farmer varieties that could also form the basis for the SADC farmer varieties registration.

*Desirable outcome of a revised system:* a strengthened national system leading to increased and enhanced access to seed, including seeds of farmer varieties by all farmers including smallholder farmers.

## **5. The Status of efforts made towards developing a farmer variety registration system in Zambia**

*Introduction:*

- The seed sector in Zambia is based on the formal and informal seed systems.
- The informal seed system is based on FMSS, involving farmer-saved seed, farmer-to farmer seed exchange and purchases from the local market.
- Lack of policy and legal support for informal seed system resulting in low levels of production and marketing of seed of farmer varieties
- Zambia is a Party to the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA), which among other provisions, protects the rights of farmers to save, exchange and sell their on-farm produced seeds.
- SADC has decided to include farmer varieties in its variety registration system, but does not yet have modalities for its actualisation
- Therefore, it is imperative to create a system that allows for registration of these varieties and their subsequent seed production.
- Such a system would lead to increased production and marketing of seed of local varieties, contribute to realizing Farmers' Rights and contribute to the actualization of SADC's farmer variety registration system.

*Efforts towards developing a registration framework*

- In November 2019, CTDT, ZAAB, the national gene-bank and the national focal point for ITPGRFA with support of the Seed and Knowledge Initiative (SKI) met and deliberated the main issues for addressed in a farmer variety registration system in Zambia.
- The outcomes of the deliberations at the African Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) meeting for SADC countries to discuss farmer variety registration encouraged CTDT to develop the ideas further into a national farmer variety registration system that other countries may adopt and adapt.
- SKI supported the development of a concept note on this subject which later formed the basis for developing a registration framework with support of Oxfam Novib.

- MASAP project will build up on this draft farmer variety registration and bring it to its finalization for submission to government for adoption.

*Goals of the farmer variety registration system:*

- To enhance access to a broad range of good quality seed by smallholder farmers.
- Commercialisation and protection of the collective ownership of these varieties
- Conserving and developing crop genetic diversity
- Increasing the adaptive capacity of smallholder farmers to climate change.
- Promoting agroecological farming systems.

*Stakeholder consultations:*

- In August, 2022 a stakeholder consultative workshop on farmer variety registration;
- The draft framework was presented; agreed that a registration system for farmer variety was needed;
- CTDI conducted on-farm visits and consulted over 200 smallholder farmers in Chikankata, Chirundu, Rufunsa and Shibuyunji where it implements projects; Consultations held with farmers in Chipata and Kasama in collaboration with ZARI teams on groundnuts and beans respectively; main objective for farmer consultations was to create awareness on farmer variety registration, and in particular on:
  - Ownership of farmer varieties
  - Designation of community
  - Institutional Arrangements
- Farmers welcomed the initiative to potentially lead to increased availability of seeds of local varieties.

*Some cautionary issues considered in the draft framework:*

- Consideration of the potential risks of bio-piracy;
- Potential of narrowing diversity
- Potential of diminishing social, cultural and ecological values as market values take precedence.
- Careful to avoid elite capture to the detriment of farmer wellbeing.
- Gender driven in recognition that men and women play different roles in farmer variety development and conservation.
- System should reward communities and farmers that are involved in the development and conservation of farmer varieties, regardless of whether or not they are part of the registration process.

*Structure of draft framework:* Preamble; Definitions; Authorisation; Procedural Requirement; Acceptance Conditions; Grounds for exclusion of Acceptance; Variety maintenance, production and supply of basic seed; Variety Evaluation and release procedures/guidelines; Community or region of origin; Certification and quality control; Seed production and marketing conditions.

*Farmer variety registration objectives:*

- Main objective: Promote smallholder farmer community's participation in seed production and marketing in Zambia and improve farmers access to a broad range of good quality seed.
- Specific objectives:
- Facilitate the formal recognition of farmer varieties, and enable their registration and inclusion on the national variety list;

- Promote the conservation and increased use of farmer varieties;
- Increase awareness on the value of farmer varieties;
- Contribute to the realization of Farmers’ Rights as provided for under Article 9 of the International Treaty for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA).

*Proposed Approach for Administering farmer variety registration:*

- SCCI delegates authority to ZARI to be Agency for registration of farmer varieties: *Section 2 of the regulations of the plant varieties and seeds act of 1995 states that ‘the certifying authority may, subject to the general or specific direction of the minister, delegate any of its functions under this act to any authorized officer in public service.*
- ZARI designates the National Plant Genetic Resources Centre (NPGRC) as a secretariat for the purposes of administering this authority.
- For this to be realized, relevant amendments to the principal seed law (Plant Varieties and Seeds Act, 1995) or regulations may require to be made.

*Eligibility for registration:*

- Not based on DUS
- Any variety originating from a known and designated farming community, known by a particular name with commonly known characteristics, including associated traditional knowledge relating to farming practices and utilisation is eligible to be considered for variety registration under this farmer variety registration framework.

*Outstanding Steps:*

- Further development of the draft framework
- Wider Stakeholder consultations on draft farmers varieties registration
- Preparation of policy brief on farmer variety registration
- Submission of draft framework to government

*Plenary-questions/comments/clarifications*

- i) What is the time frame for developing the farmer variety registration framework?

*Responses:*

- The Director CTDT emphasised the need to do a good job and not rush it. A framework is available for use for engaging with SCCI. The MASAP project expects the CTDT to deliver a farmer variety registration framework in the next 7-8 months.
- Mr Malanje acknowledged the CTDT’s well thought out process for delivering a farmer variety registration framework. However, government plans to conclude the review process by the end of February 2024 posed a challenge. The challenge was to ensure that the CTDT proposals or any other, were effectively integrated into the government revision process. It seemed like stakeholders were “fighting the good fight but seemed to be behind time”.
- Mr Mwila indicated that a point of departure for the proposed farmer variety registration framework was that of SCCI giving authority to ZARI for purposes of registration. It was important to get feedback from ZARI as to whether this proposal was actually feasible. Regarding how the completion of the proposed framework aligns to the SCCI time frame, it would be important to ensure that the repealed law encompassed the required amendments proposed in the CTDT farmer variety registration proposal. This should be undertaken during the process of reviewing the seed law.

- Ms Davies pointed out that it was worth recognising the long and thorough process that CTD T had taken in the thinking around the development of the farmer variety registration framework. The framework had been thought through thoroughly and there were lot of other processes that were underway around the continent. Stakeholders have been taken aback by the fact that the consultations and revision process should be concluded by February 2024. The process that underlies the proposed framework has come a long way, it was ongoing and has been supported by multiple stakeholders in the country and outside. It is therefore needed to respected and allowed the process to take its rightful course in the sense of development with the government. There were also other policy processes underway for consideration that support farmer managed seed systems and farms right in their bigger context such as agroecology strategy. These were good reasons for stakeholders to approach government to instil upon them the time frame of February was not fair and not actually following the kind of policy process that current government would want to go by. It was opportune that MASAP had come on board now and providing support how to move the framework and the kind of policy that supports farmer varieties.
- The Director CTD T stated that it was very important that the proposed delegation of authority from SCCI to ZARI was formalised. In the MASAP work plan, one of the first activities was to meet ZARI, the full team of leadership and the professionals there. The proposals being made were not yet formalised with both SCCI and ZARI. It is acknowledged that sentiments raised by the meeting suggest the urgent need to meet with both institutions. Regarding the time frame, it will be prudent to engage with SCCI while at the same time trying to fast track certain aspects of the ongoing work.

## 6. The ITPGRFA and Farmers Rights

*Presenter: Mr Grayhill Munkombwe, ZARI (full presentation is available)*

The presentation highlighted the following:

*History of ITPGRFA:*

- Commencement of negotiations initiated in 1992 under the Convention on Biological Diversity for a legally binding regime on PGRFA incorporating farmer rights;
- Six years of negotiations led to the ITPGRFA in 2001; came into force on 29 June 2004;
- According to article 9 of ITPGRFA governments are obliged to protect and promote farmer rights according to their needs and priorities – National law.

*Farmer rights:*

- In Article 9 of the ITPGRFA, includes the following:
- The protection of their traditional knowledge relevant to plant and animal genetic resources;
- Obtaining an equitable share of benefits arising from the use of plant and animal genetic resources;
- Participation in making decisions, including at the national level, on matters related to the conservation and sustainable use of plant and animal genetic resources;
- Saving, using, exchanging and selling farm-saved seed/propagating material of farmers' varieties;
- Using a new breeders' variety protected under this law to develop farmers' varieties, including material obtained from gene-banks or plant genetic resource centre; and
- Collectively saving, using, multiplying and processing farm-saved seed of protected varieties.

#### *Implementation and operationalisation of farmers' rights:*

- Farmers' rights should not be considered a form of intellectual property rights, but instead represents a much wider concept of recognition of farmers' contributions, protection of farmers' knowledge and seed systems, and involvement of farmers in decision-making, in addition to the right to benefit-sharing;
- farmers' rights are group rights in a wide sense, as they refer to the contributions of local and indigenous communities and farmers of all regions of benefit-sharing have been delinked in its multilateral system.
- Benefits shared should primarily, directly and indirectly, flow to farmers in all countries, who conserve and sustainably utilise plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

#### *Status of implementation of farmers' Rights in Zambia:*

- CBD/Nagoya protocol ratified by Zambia
- The protection of traditional knowledge, genetic resources and expressions of folklore act, 2016.

#### *Outcomes of GB10 on farmers' Rights*

- Farmers' contributions to agricultural biodiversity, providing the raw material for new breeding technologies underscored;
- Attention drawn to the interlinkages between the ITPGRFA and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

#### *Conclusions:*

- Process of formalising farmer's rights should be facilitated through a number of strategies such as:
  - National consultative process leading towards the development of national policies and legislation designed to protect farmer's rights;
  - Amendment of existing national seed laws to incorporate farmer's rights;

#### *Plenary -questions/Contributions/Clarifications:*

- What are the implications of Zambia not abiding with the ITPGRFA and other treaties? Will Zambia be sanctioned? Is Zambia not held captive (unable to move forward) because of its commitment to international treaties?

#### *Responses:*

- Mr Mwila reminded participants that Government had a responsibility for domesticating the treaty. Developing and implementing a farmer variety registration framework would actually help Zambia to domesticate the ITPGRFA. The framework would help advance the implementation of farmers rights. Zambia has an opportunity to ride on the current legal process.
- Mr Mukombwe stated that joining an international treaty is voluntary. Even joining UPOUV is voluntary. Zambia is making efforts to join voluntarily and is not being forced to join. A country can also decide to exit an agreement without sanction. For the ITPGRFA, most of the articles are binding but not at international level. The Treaty is binding only if national laws are adopted to implement of farmers rights. Zambia should therefore take advantage of the current window in the legal revision to advance farmer rights.

## **7. Farmer Varieties Legislation: Indian Experiences and Learnings**

*Presenter: Josh Tanay, FiBL (Full presentation is available)*

Key aspects of the presentation included the following:

- In-SEED STORY: The Loss of Desi (Indigenous) Cotton & the Rise of Hybrid
  - India rapidly lost its great cotton agrobiodiversity;
  - Now: Bt G. *hirsutum* hybrids with BT genes > 95% of Indian Cotton
- Indian Agriculture and Farmer Varieties: Farmer varieties are seeds preserved and bred by farmers across generation;
- Significance of Farmer Varieties: Diversity and Adaptability; Seed Saving Tradition; High Nutritional Value; Cultural and Socio-economic Significance; Genetic Reservoir; Agro-biodiversity Conservation; Community Resilience; Sustainable Agriculture; Farmers' Rights and Sovereignty;
- Recognizing the importance of farmer varieties informs the need for legislation and policies that protect and promote their conservation, fostering resilience in India's agricultural landscape.
- Recognition and protection of farmers rights in India is through the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights (PPV&FR) Act 2001;
- Key Objectives of PPV&FR Act:
  - Recognition of Farmers' Rights';
  - Protecting Plant Breeders' Right;
  - Promoting Agro-biodiversity.
- Some salient features of the PPV&FR Act:
  - Provides protection of varieties by patent;
  - Grants farmers rights by recognizing farmers as breeders; cultivators and conservators of seeds
  - It allows the farmers to save, use, sow, re-sow, exchange, share or sell their produced seed but not under any brand name;
  - Farmers can register his variety developed by him, if variety confers the Novelty, Distinctness, Uniformity and stability parameters;
  - Compulsory license granted after three years of registration
  - Maintain National register of Plant Varieties
- Implementing Authority of PPV&FRA
  - PPV&FR Authority-Executive body, maintains National Register for Plant Varieties;
  - 15- Members (8 - Central Govt.; 5 – 1 each from Farmers, Tribal, Women, Seed Industry, Agril University; 2- State govt.)
  - Plant Variety Protection Appellate Tribunal- entertains appeal against decisions of authority in case of dispute
- Farmer Varieties Legislation –The Impact
  - Revived indigenous crops, ensuring diversified diets and food security;
  - Empowered farming communities through recognition and benefit-sharing;
  - Contributed to crop breeding and improved agricultural productivity.
  - Gained international recognition for agro-biodiversity conservation.

#### *Some key learning and recommendations*

- Engage stakeholders for effective implementation and alignment with farmer needs;
- Educate farmers about the benefits of registering traditional varieties and seed-saving practices.
- Support community seed banks to preserve and distribute diverse farmer varieties.



- Improve benefit-sharing mechanisms, ensuring fair compensation for farmers' contributions;
- Integrate farmer varieties into national seed policies and climate resilience strategies.

## 8. How to develop a farmer's variety registration systems

*Bram de Jong, SD=HS Program Oxfam (full presentation is available)*

Main objective:

- increasing farmer's resilience to climate change through the improved management of agrobiodiversity and local seed systems

Main tool:

- farmer empowerment through farmer field schools (farmer field schools)
  - Participatory Plant Breeding
  - Seed Production and Marketing
  - Local Food Plants for Nutrition

*Why farmers' variety registration?*

- Many countries only allow seed of registered varieties to be legally produced and sold in the market;
- To be registered, varieties need to be uniform and stable;
- Value for Cultivation and Use (VCU) tests compare candidate varieties with best formal varieties under standardized (high input, irrigated) growing condition
- To stimulate the availability of better-quality seed of a bigger number of crop varieties available to farmers in the marketplace;
- To promote (breeding for) diversity;
- To increase seed, food and income security of smallholder farmers;
- To increase resilience of smallholder farmers;
- To promote food sovereignty & Farmers' Rights

*Definition of farmers' variety*

"A crop variety or population managed by farmers through cultivation, selection and diffusion, which is typically adapted to a local area and to traditional farming systems, has a recognizable identity and geographic origin, and is often genetically heterogeneous".

*Who can register a farmer's variety?*

- Any farmer or farmer group (e.g., cooperative, community, community seed bank) who maintained a traditional variety over years or developed a new variety (e.g., through PPB).
- A third party (e.g. NGO, parastatal) who supports the registrants in the registration process → Registrants receive the rights Some issues need to be handled:
- Naming-(Modern) variety already registered; Demarcation

*What registration criteria can be applied?*

- Deposition of the vernacular name/common name;
- Morphological traits, e.g. colour of flowers/seeds, shape of leaves, height of plants, days until maturity, days until flowering, resistance against pests and diseases, productivity and yield, etc.;
- Level of adaptation to specific agro-ecological conditions and farming systems, resilience to climate change and other adverse conditions;

- Description of the origin and history of the variety, including the area and time over which the variety has been cultivated and used (as far as known by the registrant);
- Socio-cultural and nutritional values and religious uses, and any other associated traditional knowledge that the registrant may wish to share

**Useful examples are provided by Nepal and the European Union (EU).**

*What rights does the registrant have? and what are the implications on other farmers?*

No formal arrangements with registrants needed. Other farmers retain full to operate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional use of registered farmer varieties continues as usual; Farmers retain the rights use, exchange and trade farmsaved seed informally</li> <li>• Formal seed certification doesn't occur</li> </ul>
Mandatory to buy starter seed from the registrants; Potential role of an intermediary body to assist registrant to provide the required volume of seed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial farmers or farmer seed producer groups, farmer cooperatives and unions buy starter seeds from registrants to multiply seeds of registered farmer varieties;</li> <li>• Certified seed; QDS; TL Seeds</li> </ul>
Mandatory to secure permission and buy starter seed. Registrants receive fees on basis of formal agreement (contract or standard license)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seed companies can only commercially produce seeds of registered farmers' varieties with permission acquired from the registrants.</li> <li>• Certified seed</li> </ul>
Compensation not required but an OSSI-pledge is to create protected commons and preclude misappropriation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any party (seed company, etc) can use registered farmer varieties for new varietal development but need to pledge to restrict other to use of these derivatives;</li> </ul>

*Plenary-questions/contributions/clarifications:*

- What is India's experience with regard to how the system works for different crops especially cross-pollinated crops vs self-pollinated crops; cereals compared to legumes. Is it easier to deal with certain crops than others?
- How is the maintenance breeding done for the farmer varieties?
- What is the meaning of simple notification?

*Responses:*

- Josh Tanay stated that certification standards are defined for specific crops; Maintenance breeding is required under the PPV-FR, but this responsibility lies with the organisations; for farmer variety this responsibility lies with community seed bank or producer organisations who are selected their seed for release.
- Bram de Jong indicated that because heterogeneous material evolves quickly and continuously the registration system needs to be nimble. Simple notification involves informing the regulator and the farmers as heterogeneous variety the producer intends to bring onto the market at a future date including the quantities of seed, the conditions, its parental lines and for which environment it is suitable. A new notification will be required the following season if the material has evolved strongly.

## 9. SADC Plans for Farmer Variety Registration

*Presenter: Tilabilenji Phiri, SADC Plant Genetic Resources Centre*

- SADC-PGRC is a Unit under the Directorate of Food Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR); Directorate under SADC; located in Lusaka, Zambia; Also houses the SADC Seed Centre
- Sixteen countries in the SADC-PGRC network;

*Administrative oversight of SPGRC:*

- Each Member State has a National Plant Genetic Resources Centre (NPGRC)
- SADC Plant Genetic Resources Sub-Committee comprising of Directors of Research in the SADC region.
- The sub-committee provides guidance on workplans and budgets, policy issues, international instruments related to PGR, etc.;

*Mandate:* To mobilise, conserve and make available plant genetic resources using appropriate technologies and standards, thereby contributing to sustainable development, environment and food security for the wellbeing of the people of SADC region.

*SADC Seed Centre:* created to coordinate and facilitate the implementation of the Harmonized Seed Regulatory System (HSRS) in order to attain regional seed security; *Objective:* to improve access and availability of seed that is affected by fragmented, small and difficult to access national seed markets

*Harmonized Seed Regulatory System:* anticipated result in the HSRS Implementation is improved availability of elite crop varieties and high-quality seed of targeted crops; outlines the harmonized procedures to facilitate seed trade across the region through integrating small and isolated national seed markets into one larger regional market for seeds; The HSRS has to-date registered 109 crop varieties that represent 7 crop types from privately owned seed companies.

*Implemented through:* Variety Release and Registration; Seed Certification and Quality Assurance; and Quarantine and Phytosanitary Measures for Seed.

*SADC Variety Release System:*

- Purpose-to make it easier and cheaper for new and existing varieties to gain access to SADC countries;
- stimulate availability of more varieties, encourage more companies to invest in seed business;
- aim is to establish and maintain the SADC Variety Catalogue and the SADC Variety Database
- Seed of varieties listed in the Catalogue can be sold in all SADC Member States without restrictions related to variety;
- The System is being operated in close collaboration with NSAs;
- Before a variety can be entered in the Regional Catalogue it will need to be released in at least two SADC countries;
- Only thereafter may the Variety Holder apply for regional release which is done through the NSA in one of the two countries where national release was obtained;
- A Member Country can apply for permission to prohibit the use of a given variety in its territory if the Country can document in line with procedures of the System that the variety is not suitable for its growing conditions. GMO varieties cannot be listed in the Regional Variety Catalogue until Member States have reached a common stand on GMO varieties.

*Benefits of the HSRS:*

- Lead to better seed quality as a result of improved facilities and skills;

- Allow more efficient movement of seed in the region through the use of a common seed certification scheme, terminology, standards, procedures, seals and labels; and
- Facilitate better targeting of relief seed.
- As a result, farmers' access to quality seed will be improved.

*Plenary-questions/contributions/clarifications:*

- Is SADC developing a register of farmer varieties registration framework? And at what stage is this work?
- What were some of the reasons why member states did not agree to the framework? What moderations are required to make the draft acceptable to the member states?
- How are hybrid maintained in the SADC Genebank?
- What process was followed by before a document may be brought for discussion at the member state level. Was the draft first discussed at member stated level?
- What were some of the reasons why member states did not agree to the framework? What moderations are required to make the draft acceptable to the member states?
- Can “abandoned” OPV varieties be re-registered for the market?
- The quality of seed, including nutrition should form a central part of farmer varieties discussions

*Responses:*

- In response Ms. Phiri stated that a consultant was engaged by SADC in 2021 to develop a farmer varieties framework. The framework was developed and the draft was presented at the Seed Committee meeting of 2021. However, member states didn't agree on the framework. The frame work may not be shared for public consumption until member states agree. As stated that the consultants first point of call should have been contact points in the member states for internalisation of the assignment before elevation to SADC level for validation. The SADC Genebank does not maintain hybrid. Verification is at member state level and proof of two members states' verification, review by the Seed Committee before being catalogued. This same procedure is also followed for the farmer varieties.
- The meeting intimated that a bottom up process should have been followed for the development of the SADC farmer varieties registration framework, starting with in-country processed before validation at SADC level.

## **10. Overview of the “Farmer Varieties Registration Framework” Process in Zimbabwe**

*Presenter: Regis Mafuratidze, CTDO (full presentation available)*

*Key steps in the process include:*

- Mobilization and Engagement of key relevant stakeholders is required in order to have their buy-in;
- Inception Meetings - relevant stakeholders shared their views on how they understand the project; provided opportunities for collaborations, identifying potential partnerships, identify potential threats to the whole process and find ways of managing the process.
- Establishment and Constitution of NSAWG and Thematic Subcommittees;
- Approval of Baseline Survey, Desks Reviews on Seed Laws (NSWAG);
- Drafting of issues by NSWAG and review by the ministry;
- The issues paper will be presented to the Cabinet Committee on Legislation (CCL) for; its approval; Minister of MLAWFWRD to present the issues paper before CCL;

- Attorney General receives instructions to draft the legislation and regulations; Cabinet Committee on Legislation gives the instruction to AG's Office to draft the Bill; Draft Bill to be produced;
- Cabinet Committee on Legislation will approve the final draft legislation (Bill) before its presentation to Parliament; MLAFWRD to present the Bill before Parliament;
- Parliament to approve the draft legislation following debate; The Bill will be forwarded to the President's Office for signature (Presidential assent)
- President to sign the Bill and it becomes an Act of Parliament (law).

*Plenary- questions/contributions/clarifications:*

- What is the status of the farmer variety registration process in Zimbabwe?

*Response:*

Mr Mafuratidze stated that currently the subcommittees had been established and the first inception report (baseline report) of the research team was been received. Once presented and found agreeable by the Research Committee, the report will be presented to the NWSAG. The Sub-committee on Policy was to also commence its meetings soon. The next step would be to initiate the component to review regional and international issues. Regarding the time frame, the issues paper was expected to be presented to MLAFWRD in July 2024.

## **11. AFSA Seed Working Groups programmes on farmer managed seed systems**

*Framework for the development of seed laws that strengthen farmers' seed systems (FSS) and biodiversity.*

*Presenter: Frances Davies (full presentation available)*

- Considerations for the development of frameworks for recognising & realising the benefits of FMSS
  - African countries have adopted seed laws modeled after those initiated since the 1950s in Europe and US
  - Promote a privatization-driven, market based approach, separating seed systems into their various components, based on the industrial paradigm;
  - Seed systems segmentation results as in Zambia today: selection and variety release; production and multiplication; quality control and certification; distribution and marketing;
  - Public sector seed services, PGR management and conservation, and farmers' seed systems have been side-lined and undermined;
  - underscored that Frameworks should be designed and managed by farmers as/and consumers, with support from the public authorities, NGOs, independent researchers, etc.
  - The AFSA proposed legal framework results from an in-depth, iterative and participatory process, in consultation with the key players in Senegal, Tunisia, Kenya; Burkina Faso - South Africa, eSwatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
  - Countries can adapt as suits contextual need
- *Content framework considered:*
  - Preliminary provisions-definitions, objectives and scope of application; principles to guide design and implementation;

- Management framework for the farmers seed system-national consultative framework; Regional Farmers Seed committees; Regional farmers Registers (identification); National Seed fund;
- Rules for guaranteeing seed- Farmer autonomy and agency in organising quality assurance;
- Rules for selection, production and circulation of seeds within' SSP- Promoting farmers participation in decision-making and protecting farmers innovations and knowledge- seed selection and production; seed and agricultural biodiversity conservation; seed release; protection against contamination;
- Farmer participation in decision-making and protection of farmer innovations, knowledge and practices-participation of farmers in decision-making; promoting farmers traditional knowledge, innovations and seed practices; access to public gene banks
- *Conclusions*
  - An orientation framework to inspire and guide the drafting of laws or other legal texts on seeds, based on farmers' rights;
  - Inspired by a number of international texts, but also by best practice in different countries – developed through bottom up farmer process
  - The framework does not address the issue of intellectual property on seeds. But it does aim to ensure the right of farmers to save, exchange and sell within their collectives and various networks any seed produced in their fields – and maintain that no other laws should undermine this (e.g. UPOV, commercial seed laws)
  - To be adapted to the national context and considering ongoing processes to promote agroecology, climate justice, biodiversity, and inclusive, equitable food systems.
  - Continue the dialogue at national level and agree on what is feasible and involve the authorities in the process.

Plenary-questions/contribution/clarifications:

- How is a farmer variety defined in the proposed framework? This is not defined in the framework. Farmers and the organisations that support them should propose new words and agree the definition and others.
- Director CTDI indicated that AfSA has developed documents relevant to many themes on the continent. The worry is that the documents may end up on the shelf. It would be useful if documents developed by regional institutions such as AFSA could be adopted by the African Union. This would make integration of proposed ideas and concepts easier at national level.

## 12. Closure of meeting:

*Facilitator: Mr Charles Nkhoma, CTDI.*

### 12.1 Recommendations and next steps

This session considered the modalities of how to proceed with the development of the farmer varieties registration.

The meeting agreed the following:

- The quick formation of a task team or working group to drive the process forward;

- Retain current implementation arrangements (i.e CTD T working with some of the partners as the main drafters and the engaging stakeholders over time until everyone had an input).
- Going forward interrogation of developed draft will require the allocation of time by stakeholders. This is an opportunity for the different stakeholders to provide input to the draft. This would require the identification of gaps and proposal of revisions to the draft.
- Considering the government time frame for revising the law, stakeholders saw it fit to engage with SCCI as quickly as possible to bring to their attention the work being done; agree with them what was proposed and alongside this engagement continue to work on the farmer varieties registration framework;
- The first task of the team should engage SCCI, ZARI and principals in the Ministry of Agriculture to discuss the proposed shared responsibilities under the revised seed law;
- In view of the limited time available, stakeholders need to trust a small team to the lead process. The original team that consisted of ZAAB, CTD T, National Genebank plus 3 more was endorsed to proceed with the relevant consultations. The team will review the current draft and engage with SCCI over matters pertaining. The composition of the task group would be shared with the broader group of stakeholders.

Time is of the essence. For the framework to be in place, stakeholders need to be conscious of the it. While appreciating the revision of the law this should not stall development of the framework. Getting the legislation in place will buoy the framework. The real benefit to the farmer is getting the legislation in place. The MASAP project will support development of the framework and resources are already in place.

## 12.2 Closing remarks:

*Director CTD T:*

He thanked everyone for their active participation. The workshop was an inception workshop intended to introduce a project workplan for developing a farmer varieties registration system. The outcome has been different in view of information shared for the revision of the seed law which has put the project plan in rapid mode. CTD T may therefore approach stakeholders in the coming weeks to participate in identified activities in line with agreements for the way forward. The project will not abandon the original workplan based on much broader participation of the stakeholders. The project will endeavour to keep the stakeholders updated and where needed will request for specific inputs. The framework is not a very big document; its value lies in the content and not in the size of the document. It will still be possible to circulate the framework for everyone's input.

Even though it has been a while since stakeholders started talking about farmer varieties, CTD T was of the view that ultimately the farmers needed to get what they deserve. It was actually embarrassing that sixty (60) years after independence the country's seed system was still governed using laws which were brought by the colonialists. They came with their seed and said "we've brought you seed; throw away your inferior seed and take over this". It may have been ok for the colonialists to do that because they didn't understand. But it was not okay for indigenous people to still maintain this lie and make it so difficult that many of stakeholders are fighting to legitimize something which was inherently legitimate. Why would local seed be illegitimized local seed? That seed had always been legitimate. Things should have changed at independence but they didn't. It's a shame actually that Zambians should be fighting over a straight forward matter. But that was the nature of society. CTD T would try its utmost best to move the agenda forward to its logical conclusion. He looked to everyone participating in whatever way to move the process

along. He thanked everyone for their interest and invited the MASAP representative to formally close the meeting.

*Remarks from MASAP:*

Mr Rugter Perrson the MASAP project manager stated that he was happy with the discussions and the determination to see to it that famers will have a free choice for seed that they wish to keep, to propagate and to commercialise. He stated that the freedom needed to instilled through the adoption of a farmer registration system. It was important to follow through the meetings agreed actions in support of farmer varieties. He thanked everyone for their participation and formally closed the meeting

The meeting closed with a prayer.



## Appendix 1

### Community Technology Development Trust

#### Development of a Farmer Varieties Registration Framework Workshop

Attendance 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Name	Designation	Organisation	Email	Contact	Age	
					18-35yrs	Above 35yrs
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