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# FEED THE FUTURE SOUTHERN AFRICA SEED TRADE PROJECT



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## BACKGROUND

The Feed the Future Southern Africa Seed Trade Project (Seed Trade Project) is a six-year project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Southern Africa Regional Mission and implemented by DAI Global, LLC (DAI) with the primary goal of improving the availability of and access to high-quality seed in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries.

The project is designed to support the SADC Secretariat by providing the necessary technical assistance to harmonize policies and regulations governing seed trade in the SADC Member States. The work facilitates seed trade across the region, integrating small and isolated national markets into one larger SADC-wide market for seeds. This, in turn, increases agricultural productivity and profitability and subsequent food and nutrition security.

The *Feed the Future Enabling Environment for Food Security (2016) Report* found that small national variations among regulations related to variety release, seed certification, and quality control, and quarantine and phytosanitary regulations lead to increased transaction costs and duplicative procedures, which together not only raise the cost but also increase the time required to get seeds to farmers.

In response to this significant and interconnected set of issues, the Seed Trade Project supports the SADC Secretariat and the Member States to harmonize seed laws across the region. The Seed Trade Project's focus countries are Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. However, its work in these targeted project countries has spill-over effects in the remaining 12 SADC Member States.

Tapping into leading public and private sectors, universities, and other institutions, the Seed Trade Project shares technologies, innovations, and management practices with target countries to improve seed value chains and promote a more efficient seed system and subsequent farming systems.

## SELECTED PROJECT ACTIVITIES

- Operationalization of the SADC Seed Centre.
- Engagement with Seed Companies to apply for and register seed varieties on the SADC Variety Catalogue so they can be eligible for regional export and trade.
- Domesticating and harmonizing seed policies within the SADC region.
- Institutional and human capacity building for seed delivery including management practices and proper crop inspections.
- Technology transfer, including installation of Online Seed Certification Systems, updates to and training on diagnostic and testing equipment; and

- Awarding grants to:
  - Produce and trade high-quality seed and pressure test the SADC Harmonized Seed Regulatory Systems for scale-up.
  - Infrastructure and capacity building; and
  - Raise awareness of the HSRS across the SADC region.

## SELECTED PROJECT RESULTS

- Facilitated review of the SADC Seed Centre Sustainability Business Model and its Implementation Plan along with the approval of both. The plan focused on activities with the potential to trigger multiple streams of revenue for the SADC Seed Centre, laying the groundwork for **self-reliance and long-term sustainability**.
- Supported the review, drafting, consulting on, analysis, and/or received approval of **31 elements of seed and phytosanitary legislation** comprising seed policies, seed and plant health laws, regulations, statutory instruments as well as technical guidelines.
- **Trained more than 1,500 individuals** on SADC HSRS' Seed Variety Release, Seed Certification and Quality Assurance, Quarantine and Phytosanitary Measures for Seed, and improved business management practices.
- Engaged with 13 seed companies and now have **83 seed varieties registered** on the SADC Variety Catalogue – Maize, Irish Potato, Sorghum, Soybean, Beans, Wheat, Ground Nuts, and Cotton — and they are all eligible for regional trade.
- **Partnered with Seed Co. Zambia** through a grant to pilot and pressure-test the SADC HSRS. Seed Co. Zambia produced 226 MT of hybrid maize seed, of which 200MT was exported to the Democratic Republic of Congo. Three more seed companies are engaged to produce seed in Zambia, Malawi, and Zimbabwe for exports to Mozambique and Botswana.
- **Transferred a total of six (6) technologies** to the SADC Member States including three Online Seed Certification Systems, New Management Practice/Laboratory Technology, and new seed varieties.