

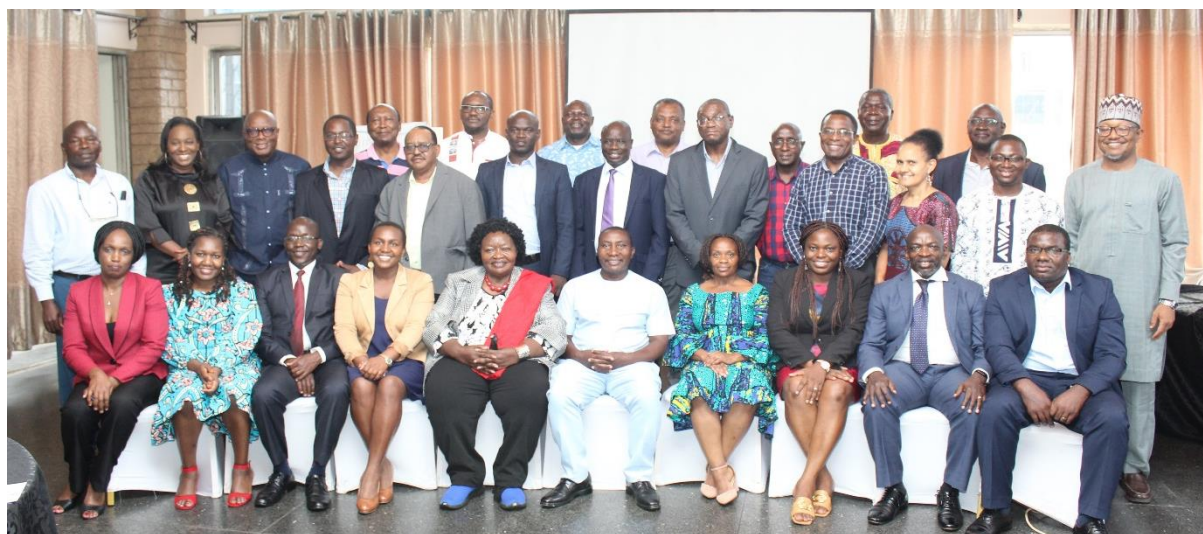
INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

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**The Seed Index to be introduced in the CAADP Biennial Review (BR) to improve tracking access to quality Seed in Africa**



A call to introduce the Seed Index into the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Biennial Review (BR) process was unanimously endorsed at the 3rd Steering Group meeting of the African Seed and Biotechnology Partnership Platform (ASB PP), held from 23-25 May 2022 in Kampala, Uganda. It is to be recalled that the 40th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council held on 2-3 February 2022 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia endorsed the African Seed and Biotechnology Partnership Platform and accompanying Operational Guidelines as the coordination mechanism for the implementation of the African Seed and Biotechnology Programme (ASBP): the strategic framework for the development of the seed sector in Africa (Assembly/AU/Dec. 135(VIII)). The ASBP is coordinated by the African Union Commission Department of Agriculture Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment (AUC-DARBE).

The deliberations were graced by Dr. Godfrey Bahigwa, Director of Agriculture and Rural Development Directorate at the African Union Commission, as the Chair of the Steering Group. In his opening remarks, Dr. Bahigwa noted that Seed sector development has been on the agenda of Heads of State and Government since 2005, who underscored access to quality seed in enhancing agricultural production and productivity. Hence, “the introduction of the Seed Index in the CAADP BR will allow us to report on progress made in seed sector development in Africa to the African Union Assembly” he added

He further urged stakeholders to expedite the implementation of the various instruments endorsed by the AU Policy Organs to advance seed sector development. He underlined the

need for timely submission of all the reports and action plans from the various Technical Working Groups (TWGs) to facilitate tracking of the implementation of the 10 years' Action Plan of the African Seed and Biotechnology Program.

The Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) was formerly announced as the host of the Secretariat of the ASB PP. Speaking at the occasion, Dr Simplicite Nouala, Head of the Division of Agriculture and Food Security at the African Union Commission, stated that FARA will legally take the responsibility to host the Secretariat after signing of the MoU with African Union, and then develop an Action Plan for the Secretariat. The Secretariat will facilitate the effective functioning of the Platform, promoting linkages among stakeholders and information sharing on seed system development initiatives in Africa. This entails providing administrative support to the Thematic Working Groups of the Platform including: a) Seed Quality Assurance and Certification Systems; b) Animal seed; c) Plant Genetic Resources Management; d) Research, Variety Development and Seed Production; e) Seed Policy and Regulations as well as two clusters on the private sector and Farmer-Managed Seed Systems.

The ten-year action plan of the ASBP is hinged on ten (10) Components namely: (i) Enhance policy and regulatory framework for an efficient seed system; (ii) Improve strategies for the collection, conservation, utilization and exchange of plant and animal genetic resources, seed and planting materials; (iii) Develop better variety/breed improvement programmes and seed production technologies; (iv) Strengthen seed production systems; (v) Enhance development of quality assurance systems with improved stakeholder contributions; (vi) Improve seed storage, marketing and distribution channels; (vii) Develop improved disaster preparedness and response to seed insecurity; (viii) M&E, Knowledge Management and communication; (ix) Enhance biotechnology uptake for an efficient seed system in Africa; (x) Cross cutting issues on environment, women and youth.

In close collaboration with AUC-DARBE and the Secretariat, the Steering Group is responsible for coordinating the activities of the Working Groups and translate outcomes of debates or recommendations of published research/studies, dialogue from high level meetings into feasible policy options to be taken forward into the AU policy processes.

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