

KENYA QCSP recommendations

A total of 3 key recommendations to address deficiencies and/or opportunities in the QCSP area of Kenya's seed system have been developed by the assessment team and vetted with stakeholders. The recommendations are roughly, but not strictly, listed in order of importance or recommended sequencing.

Recommendation # 1: Track seed companies' and agro-dealers' adherence to the Seed Certification and Plant Variety Protection Automation system
Description
In 2021, the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS) launched the Seed Certification and Plant Variety Protection Automation system, a digital system through which different actors can access seed services online. The services include registration, application for seed inspection, and application for seed labels. Using this system, KEPHIS can track whether seed merchants, sellers and growers are complying with the requirements in the Seed Regulations. KEPHIS should track whether the key players, especially seed companies and agro-dealers are adhering to the system. Further, KEPHIS and the Seed Trade Association of Kenya (STAK) should assess the effectiveness of the system in terms of its: (i) overall level of compliance by the seed merchants and seed sellers in using the system to access the different services offered by KEPHIS, (ii) improving KEPHIS's internal operational efficiency in the provision of these seed services, and (iii) cost effectiveness for the different actors in the seed sector.
Estimated cost and/or key determinants of costs
Association costs including meeting costs for STAK, agro-dealers, seed companies and KEPHIS to discuss the performance of the new digital system.
Additional comments, if needed
This may also be captured under the Quality Assurance Thematic Area

Recommendation # 2: Sustain efforts aimed at facilitating seed companies to access public land for seed production
Description
<p>One of the challenges faced by seed companies is that lack of access to suitable land for seed production. One of the mitigation strategies to address this problem is the use of contracted seed out-growers. However, the out-growers are meant to complement and not substitute the seed companies' own production program. To this end, seed companies seek ways to access available unused public land which is under various government agricultural institutions or programs. For examples, two seed companies currently use the Perkerra Irrigation Scheme for hybrid maize seed production. To address this challenge at the policy level, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives (MALFC) is also advancing a large-scale land commercialization policy. The policy would allow any seed company to apply for a 20-year land lease for blocks of land currently owned by the Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC), Galana irrigation scheme or other institutions. To advance this recommendation, STAK would need to work with the MALFC to: (i) ensure that the policy is endorsed and implemented; (ii) ensure that the MALFC defines a clear framework with guidelines and criteria for accessing this land; (iii) seed companies are fully informed of this policy and are encouraged to benefit from it.</p>
Estimated cost and/or key determinants of costs
Associated costs including staff time for STAK and the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives to meet and discuss the detailed operational framework to implement this policy
Additional comments, if needed
This may also be captured under the Quality Assurance Thematic Area

Recommendation # 3: Promote the growing of modern varieties with better traits to replace old ones
Description
<p>KALRO in partnership with CGIAR centers and private seed companies have released several modern varieties but old varieties still dominate food crop production. If the special traits in these modern varieties are to benefit farmers, deliberate efforts should be made to promote them. A strategy to upgrade and replace old varieties is needed through well-defined product profiles that match farmer and consumer needs.</p>
Estimated cost and/or key determinants of costs
Associated costs including staff time for STAK and KALRO breeders to determine the reasons for the low uptake of newly developed varieties; and discuss strategies to address the challenge
Additional comments, if needed
This may also be captured under the Farmer Awareness and Participation thematic area