

UGANDA PLR recommendations

A total of 3 key recommendations (one is a multi-part recommendation) to address deficiencies and/or opportunities in the PLR area of Uganda'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. Prioritize Approval of Plant Variety Protection Regulations
Description
While the PVP Act is in place, the PVP regulations were drafted and are currently awaiting ministerial assent and publishing in the gazette. A complete and comprehensive legal and regulatory framework on PVP is an important aspect of an enabling environment for innovation and investment in varietal research and breeding, as well as a foundation for licensing, which helps get quality varieties to farmers faster.
Key determinants of costs
The cost of this recommendation is not estimated, as it will depend upon the minister and timing for signature of the draft regulations.
Recommendation 2. Support NSCS Capacity to Implement Seed Rules
Description
Implementation of seed rules is the backbone of an effective legal and regulatory framework and builds trust in the seed system among industry stakeholders. NSCS's capacity will need to be improved to efficiently monitor quality assurance and enforce anti-counterfeiting measures. This would include the following activities: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Receive ISTA accreditation for national laboratory. 2. Build NSCS capacity to receive individual complaints from seed sector actors, conduct proper investigations, and apply the relevant measure of deterrence, which include fines, penalties, and prosecution. 3. Build NSCS capacity to conduct variety evaluation tests. 4. Implement and Support Private Seed Inspection. As a good regulatory practice, authorization of private seed certification can help alleviate the financial and capacity stresses on regulators and leverage private sector specialized skills. 5. Prioritize development of the NSCS Digital Platform in order to track seed production and make projections for EGS demand.
Recommendation 3. Revise Tax Policies
Description
Tax policies in Uganda were reported to be a challenge to cross-border trade. Stakeholders noted, for instance, that there have been reports of taxes charged on seed exports/imports to/from EAC countries, even though a tax-free regime should have prevailed, with bureaucratic tax refund procedures. Stakeholders also noted during the validation meeting that the government takes an ad hoc approach to taxation policies. They noted, for instance, that while VAT was removed on seed, there was no assurance that it would not be reinstated.