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Secretaria de Estado para Assuntos Económicos

# Regional Programme Southern Africa RPSA

## SADC Seed Security Network (SSSN) Phase 2- Harmonised Seed Security Project (HaSSP)

**Duration:** 4 Years (1.01.2010-31.12.2013)

**Budget:** CHF 3,676,545-00

**Implementing Agency:** Food Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FARNPAN) Secretariat.

**Partners:** SADC-FANR, Seed Certification Centres, National Plant Protection Units, CIMMYT, USAID

**Project location:** Malawi, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe

### Contacts

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### Current Situation

Millions of people in Southern Africa have been affected by chronic food shortages exacerbated by the global food price crisis and climate change. Although agricultural production is central to the region's development, it has not achieved the levels of production necessary to ensure food security for the poorest that make up about 40% of the region's population. Availability and accessibility of improved quality of seeds therefore plays a dominant role to enhance productivity and livelihoods of farming households in Southern Africa. In each of the 15 SADC member countries the volumes produced and marketed vary tremendously because of multiple factors related to social and economic conditions.

Governments in the region have instituted a variety of legislation models and seed certification laws aimed at controlling the genetic and physical purity of commercial seeds. Unfortunately some of these policies or their implementation has tended to serve as impediment to the development of the seed exchanges across borders. In particular unfavourable seed policies such as taxation, import and export restrictions, lengthy variety release processes and controlled seed markets are seen as the most limiting impediments. It is therefore of key importance to facilitate the flow of seeds within the region based on needs and availability.

### Swiss Objectives

The set goal, objectives and outputs for this project contribute to improved food security of smallholders in the SADC region through increased availability of and access to quality seeds. The project aims to improve availability of and access to high quality seed by smallholder farmers. It also seeks to empower smallholder farmers especially women farmers through strengthening their capacity to produce and access high quality seed. Consequently, a major component of the project is the establishment and/or strengthening in each of the project pilot countries of community based seed production by smallholder farmers (with a bias for women farmers). The intended outcome of the four year project is to pilot the domestication and implementation of the SADC Harmonized Seed Regulatory System in Malawi, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe with important data, information and knowledge utilized in the wider SADC region for evidence-based decision-making on seed systems.

### What will change?

Domestication of the regional seed protocol is expected to stimulate the availability of more varieties, encourage more private companies to invest in the seed business and increase the choices of varieties available to farmers. It will lead to better seed quality as a result of improved facilities and skills, and save time and resources because importing countries will no longer need to re-test imported seed. It will allow more efficient movement of seed in the region through the use of a common seed certification scheme, terminology, standards, procedures, seals and labels. Harmonization will also facilitate better targeting of relief seed.