



SDC A+FS Network

Thoughts for Food

A series of light & informal events on food-systems related news



WELCOME !

06.05.2026

What's on the menu ?

1. Opening
2. **The path towards an African policy for Farmer-Managed Seed Systems** Famara Diédhiou (AFSA)
3. News & events
4. **Lessons from efforts to build an HDP-Nexus for Africa's seed sectors** Abishkar Subedi and James Mulkerrins (ISSD Africa)





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The path towards an African policy for Farmer-Managed Seed Systems

Famara Diédhiou

Programme Coordinator West Africa

AFSA (Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa)



AFSA

AFSA SEED WORK

Famara Diédhiou,
AFSA Program Coordinator
West Africa



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- 05** Goal & objectives of the Seed WG
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What is in a name

Alliance

- Broad based with 50 networks of networks
- Members work in 50 of the 55 African countries
- Members include food producers, indigenous peoples, consumer association, faith-based institutions, youth and women networks and CSOs

For Food Sovereignty

- Self sufficiency
- Local ownership
- Environmental stewardship

In Africa

- Doing our own analysis
- ***Creating one and loud voice***

Strategic Working Groups

Integrating

Agroecology in Climate Action

Strengthening

Farmer-Managed Seed Systems

Empowering

Community Voices for Land Rights and
Healthy Soils

Mobilizing

Citizens Support for Sustainable Food &
Nutrition Systems

Goal & Objectives of the Seed WG (2020-2024)

Goal: Strengthen regional platforms that support Farmer-Managed Seed Systems, and influence seed policy and legislation to support FMSS

Objectives

1. To change the prevailing narrative to one that recognizes Farmer Managed Seed Systems (FMSS) as the fundamental basis of Africa's food system.
2. To influence African seed legislation to protect farmers' rights to share exchange and sell seeds, and to empower farmer managed seed systems.
3. To raise public awareness on farmers' seed sovereignty and the value of farmers' varieties for biodiversity conservation, nutrition and health.



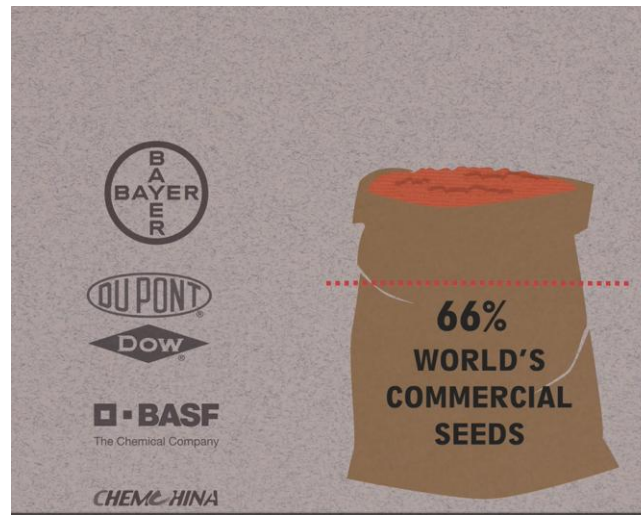
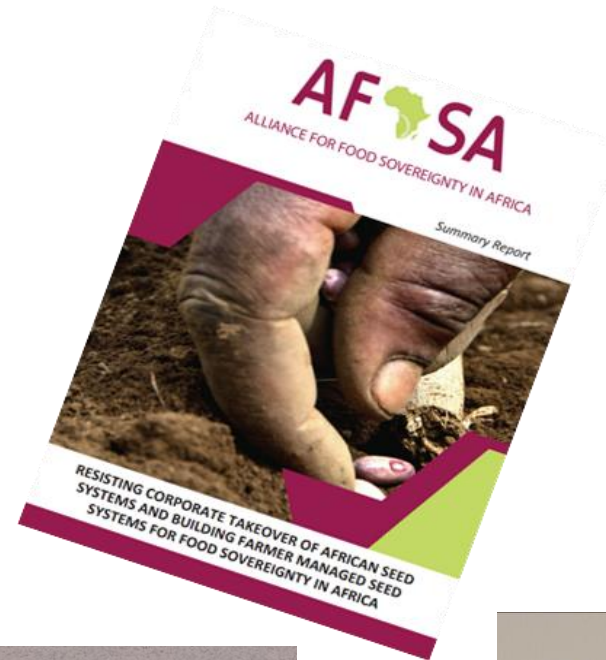
Strategy employed by AFSA to bring about this process led by the African Union

Implementation of the Theory of change

Key steps employed by AFSA to bring about a continental Policy framework for FMSS

2017: Research studies and communication

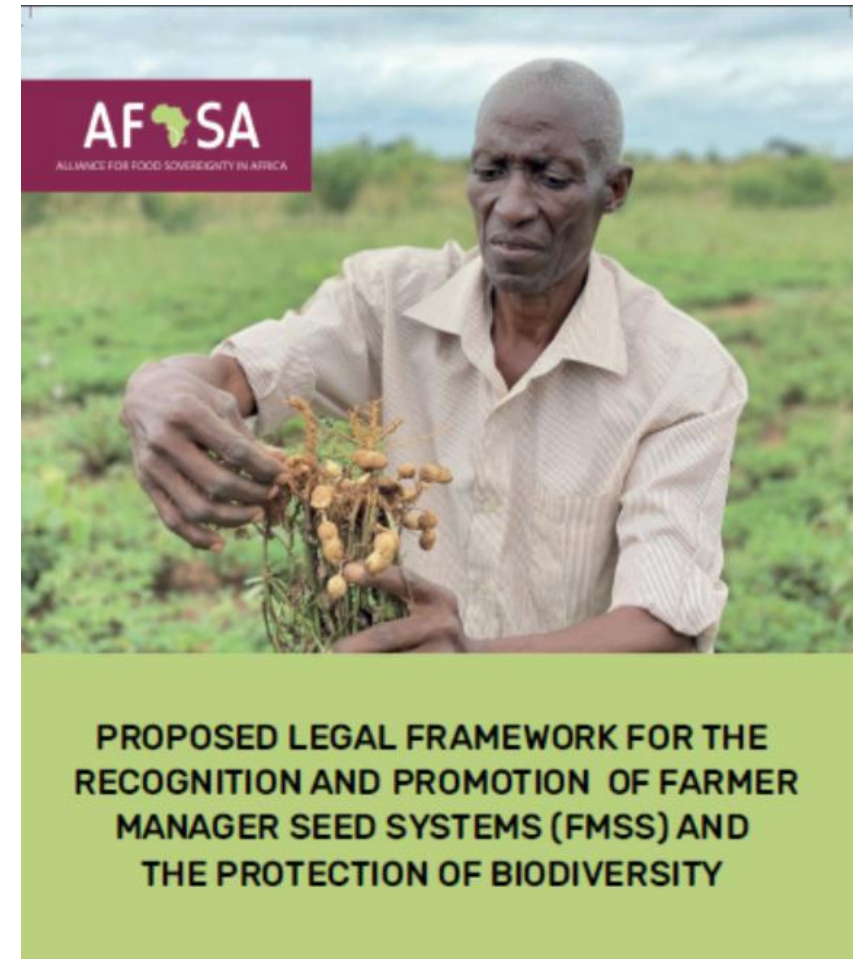
- Corporates takeover African seed systems
- *The real seed producers* with GRAIN, RLS, etc.



Key steps employed by AFSA to bring about a continental Policy framework for FMSS

2019- 2021: shaping the narrative and mobilization

- Mobilization of African FOs & CSOs to discuss farmers' rights on seeds in practices with International Plant treaty Secretariat => **Push of the FMSS concept vs Informal seeds**
- FMSS animated video, case studies -----> 40+ today
=> New seed strategy (2020-2024) from anti GMO to Pro FMSS, informed by
- Shared action framework for resilient seed systems
- Increasing number of seed and food festivals across the continent
- Proposed legal framework for FMSS (2021)
- Regional webinars on the threats posed by the AUC's harmonized regulatory frameworks for seeds



Difficulties	Lesson learnt
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unifying the movement: for instance some think « no policy/regulation » for FMSS but they want public support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Narrative is a strong driver to policy change• Policy negotiation requires diversity of skills in your team



Perspectives

- Scaling practices (Festival, CSB,)
- A vibrant grassroots movement



AF SA
ALLIANCE FOR FOOD SOVEREIGNTY IN AFRICA

**LANCLEMENT DE LA CAMPAGNE CONTINENTALE
POUR LES SYSTÈMES SEMENCIERS PAYSANS :**

**LAUNCH OF THE CONTINENTAL CAMPAIGN
FOR FARMER MANAGED SEED SYSTEMS :**

SEED IS POWER

LA SEMENCE C'EST LE POUVOIR

Logos for various organizations: agra, agn, aisa, biba, coasp, compas, c-pagen, ipacc, tabio, etc.

11 Mars



Hakim Balliraine

Seed
Is *life*

ma Semence
Ma *Vie*



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SAY HI!

Let's quickly reconnect

You'll be randomly assigned to a small group.

Take a minute to say hi, introduce yourself, share any reaction to what has been discussed up to now !



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WHAT'S NEW?

Report - Seed policy and law: An underexplored factor in emergency assistance in Africa

January 2026

→ [More information](#)



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Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

African
Union



World Food
Programme



United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

2025

AFRICA
**REGIONAL OVERVIEW
OF FOOD SECURITY
AND NUTRITION**

Report - Africa Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition 2025

April 2026

→ [More information](#)



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Global Landscapes Forum - GLF Africa 2026: Stewarding Our Rangelands

6-7 May 2026

→ [More information](#)

CO-ORGANIZED WITH:



SUPPORTED BY:



IKEA Foundation

ONLINE ACCESS: FREE



Follow the event in English, French, Swahili and Portuguese.



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4TH PAN-AFRICAN SEED GOVERNANCE CONFERENCE

FROM SEED SOVEREIGNTY TO GENETIC SOVEREIGNTY

Defending Africa's Biodiversity, Data & Livelihoods

ORGANIZED BY

Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA)

PEPAF-Tchad · SWISSAID Chad

afsafira.org

4th Pan-African Seeds conference in Chad

2-4 June 2026

→ [More information](#)



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Agriculture & Food Systems
SDC Thematic Network

SDC's How To : Seed systems

May 2026

→ [More information](#)

How to: Seed systems

An abridged version of the guide to supporting seed sectors development for food system outcomes



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Lessons from efforts to build an HDP-Nexus for Africa's seed sectors

Abishkar Subedi (Senior Advisor) and James Mulkerrins (Coordinator)
Wageningen Social and Economic Research
Integrated Seed Sector Development (ISSD-Africa)



Advancing the Humanitarian, Development and Peacebuilding Nexus in Africa's Seed Sector

Lessons from efforts to build an HDP-Nexus for
Africa's seed sectors

James Mulkerrins & Abishkar Subedi
Wageningen Social & Economic Research



ISSSD

Africa

10 Principles for Good Seed Aid



- To strengthen practice and help design interventions and larger programmes
- Endorsement, recognition and appreciation

- But... how to adopt? How to institutionalise? What does that actually mean?
- If donors don't push, why make the additional investment? Why change?



SEED POLICY AND LAW

An Underexplored Factor in Emergency Assistance in Africa

NIELS LOUWAARS AND LOUISE SPERLING
January 2026



Opportunities

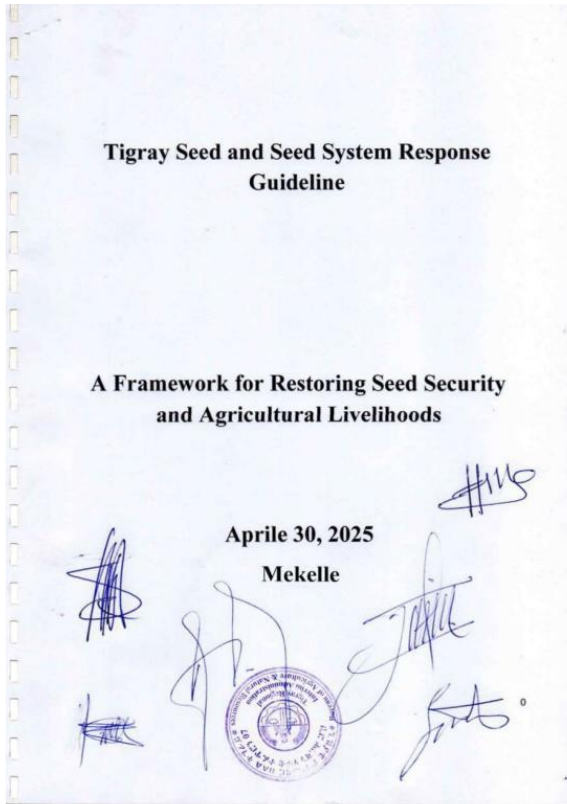
- **National preparedness:** Include seed as essential component of emergency responses, including at regulatory level. Develop an explicit policy on seed emergency responses that covers material and processes (10Ps)
- **National regulations:** Create/enforce articles in the law to effectuate these policies and rules for emergencies. Check for harmony with legislation on biodiversity, IP, biotech., etc.
- **Intergovernmental awareness and policy coherence:** Discuss policy space for emergency seed issues. In the frame of regional seed rules, share experiences and advise member governments on regulatory solutions.
- **Donor governments:** Develop clear guidelines on emergency seed aid and share with humanitarian orgs. and govts. in partner countries. Additionally share seed aid policy examples/guidance
- **All stakeholders:** Deliberately strengthen connection and alignment between HDP partners. Explore how 10Ps and similar tools/frameworks can be implemented, and what barriers mean.

The 10Ps in guidance and policy

Tigray

Afar

Nigeria



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Experiences from the Experts



The panel discussion on *Experiences and Lessons from Nigeria* featured representation from Oxfam, ZOA, NEMA, and NASC. The discussions covered experiences of interventions in emergency seed aid, focusing on what worked, what didn't, challenges and adaptation techniques. It also explored the relevance of the 10P to their unique experiences of sustainability. Here are insights:

Relevance to 10P Contextualisation

Panelists highlighted specific principles from the 10P framework that are directly applicable to the Nigerian landscape:

- **Seed System Security Assessment** (Principle 1): NEMA's needs assessments provided a clear illustration of how to identify vulnerabilities in seed systems.
- **Timeliness** (Principle 5): Discussions centred on the urgent need to address storage challenges and procurement delays, which significantly hinder farmers' access to seeds.
- **Market-Based Assistance** (Principle 6): ZOA's programs utilising cash and vouchers demonstrated how enabling farmers to make purchasing decisions can enhance overall market functionality.
- **Seed Quality** (Principle 8): Multiple panellists identified seed quality as pivotal for maintaining farmer trust; Oxfam specifically noted its importance in sustainability-focused interventions.
- **Farmers' Choice** (Principle 9): Post-distribution assessments confirmed that farmers prefer direct linkages to seed sources over repetitive aid.
- **Feedback** (Principle 10): While feedback mechanisms were discussed, concerns about their frequency and implementation quality were raised.

Overall, while participants recognised the concepts of the 10P framework, the discussions illuminated significant institutional and political barriers to actualising these principles.

HDP-Nexus within FMSS

- **CSBs & SPGs** deliver emergency seed, support livelihoods and contribute to peace (inclusive resource governance and inter-community cooperation).
- More emphasis needed to support FMSS bodies in emergency response programmes.
- Interventions should strengthen—**not replace**—farmer-managed practices through local procurement, adapted quality assurance, and inclusive governance.
- Policy recommendations include **formally recognizing** community seed organizations, requiring **SSSAs** before aid, expanding **QDS**, and leveraging seed initiatives for **peacebuilding**.



ALP-4: Seed governance & peace

Five principles that guide the ALP-4 inquiry and provide a bridge between seed sector governance and peace-relevant programming.

- 1 Shared language** Resilience, trust, governance, collective action and social cohesion link seed and peace agendas.
- 2 Power matters** Seed governance can reduce or reproduce inequality, capture, marginalization and grievance.
- 3 Local agency is critical** Farmer ownership and hybrid governance are more promising than top-down technocratic models.
- 4 Seeds can carry identity** In some contexts, seed can be linked to sovereignty, justice, resistance and historical grievances.
- 5 Context-specific ToCs** Peace-relevant seed governance requires explicit, conflict-sensitive causal assumptions.

Understanding the pathways: When seed governance reinforces conflict (Negative cases)

Poor seed governance can actively fuel conflict dynamics: Observed core patterns in Ethiopia, Mali, S. Sudan

Exclusion → Grievances → Mistrust

Poor consultation → inappropriate crops/varieties seed → crop failure → loss of trust

Inequitable Distribution → Social Tensions

“Winners vs losers” in aid targeting → community conflict

Elite Capture → Marginalisation → Violence Risk

Local powerholders control access → deepen divisions

Poor Quality Seed → Food Insecurity → Dependency

Fake/substandard seed → low yields → increased vulnerability

Delays & System Failures → Debt & Instability

Late delivery → borrowing → debt → risk of joining armed groups

Understating the pathways: When seed governance supports peace (Positive cases)

Inclusive and well-designed governance can strengthen resilience and peace: Observed pathways/core patterns in Ethiopia, Mali, S. Sudan

Community Agency → Social Cohesion

- Farmer-led systems → trust, cooperation, collective action

Transparency → Trust in Institutions

- Fair and timely distribution → stronger vertical relationships

Seed quality Assurance → Stability

- Reliable seed → better yields → reduced vulnerability to shocks

Inclusion → Resilience & Equity

- Participatory approaches → stronger systems + reduced tensions



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

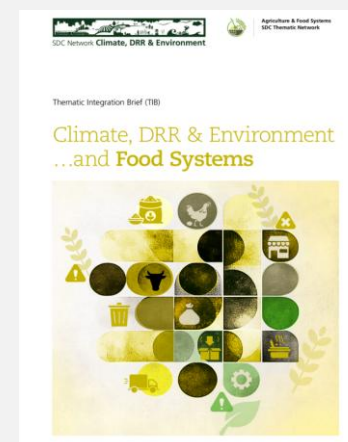
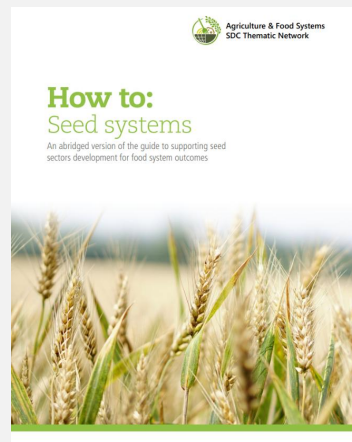
- Presentations soon available on our website : <https://www.sdc-foodsystems.ch/en/thoughts-for-food>

Upcoming event :

1 July 2026



New products :



Don't hesitate to share news, topics and ideas with us!



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Thank you!
Stay well, and stay connected!