



## Foundations for rebuilding seed systems post-Cyclone Idai: Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe



**PROJECT CODE**

OSRO/GLO/908/GER



**RESOURCE PARTNER**

Germany

**CONTRIBUTION**

USD 792 950



**IMPLEMENTATION**

23/09/2019–31/12/2022



**TARGET AREA**

Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe



**BENEFICIARIES**

1 000 households directly;  
628 farmers, agriculture extension  
agents, researchers and government  
and non-governmental organization  
(NGO) representatives; as well as  
wider communities indirectly.



**KEY PARTNERS**

Department of Agriculture Research  
Services, Ministry of Agriculture in  
Malawi; Agricultural Research  
Institute of Mozambique; National  
Herbarium and Botanic Garden,  
Zimbabwe; and the Alliance of  
Bioversity International and the  
International Center for Tropical  
Agriculture



## Objective

To increase the food security and nutrition of cyclone-affected communities in Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe by improving national and regional planning and coordination, assessing the loss of plant genetic resources, restoring germplasm and rebuilding and strengthening local seed systems.

## Activities implemented

- Carried out situational assessments following Cyclones Idai and Kenneth that documented the extent of the loss of plant genetic resources, plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA) needs, and climate data, among others.
- Developed and updated national strategies and action plans for PGRFA in all three countries to include aspects related to emergency response planning and supported the development of a regional strategy.
- Multiplied 2.5 tonnes of local seed as part of efforts to restore the lost germplasm in the affected areas in Malawi and distributed them in 5 kg packs to communities in four districts, benefiting 500 farming families.
- Produced 200 kg of quality seeds and distributed 195 kg of them to two district-level farmers' associations in Mozambique (most members were women), benefiting 117 households, and sent the remaining seeds to the zonal centre and the national gene bank.
- Identified crop accessions from the national gene bank in Zimbabwe and distributed seed packs comprising numerous varieties of beans, Bambara nut, cowpea and finger millet to 30 lead farmers in six wards in Chimanimani District, benefitting 300 farmers in total.
- Integrated PGRFA issues in existing Farmer Field Schools (FFSs) in Malawi, benefiting 100 farmers, and established farm multiplication trials through FFSs in Mozambique.
- Compiled and piloted community-led conservation strategies in Malawi and trained communities on conservation strategies including biodiversity registers, community seed banks and biodiversity gardens.
- Participated in two side events at the Governing Body of the International Treaty, which were attended by about 100 people and raised awareness of the impact of extreme weather events on PGRFA and local seed systems.



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- Trained 107 farmers in Zimbabwe on seed multiplication and disaster mitigation strategies, focusing particularly on how communities can leverage local resources, mainly local crop genetic diversity, when recovering from disasters such as Cyclone Idai and Kenneth.
- Conducted two virtual regional Treaty capacity building workshops with the participation of 124 people.
- Trained 38 project partners (of whom 20 women), including researchers, gene bank managers and farmers, on resilient seed systems and implementing the International Treaty on PGRFA in Malawi and 20 farmers on assessing available crop diversity in the community and on establishing community seed banks.
- Produced and disseminated communication products to raise awareness of PGRFA strategies/action plans in all three countries.
- Provided support to Mozambique to take forward ratification of the International Treaty and supported the participation of three representatives of each country to participate in the Eighth and Ninth Sessions of the Governing Body, with six people participating in total.
- Reached 143 people in Zimbabwe and 93 people in Malawi, including extension officers and other government stakeholders, lead farmers, and NGO and development partners, through various capacity development initiatives relevant to Treaty implementation.
- Recorded and disseminated a podcast on Farmers' Rights that served as a capacity development tool for Treaty implementation, which reached about 40 people.
- Organized a project inception meeting during which the capacity of 22 people from national gene banks and FAO decentralized offices was further developed.
- Conducted a regional in-person workshop on harmonization of national strategies on PGRFA in Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe with 35 participants from government, academia and civil society.



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## Results

- Supported the inclusion of seed system protection and restoration in national and regional strategies and enhanced participating countries' national strategies on PGRFA to better manage PGRFA in emergency situations.
- Rescued crop varieties that were at risk of becoming lost for conservation and met farmers' needs and preferences through the multiplication and distribution of seed varieties.
- Enabled 1 017 households in eight districts in the three countries to access an increased and sustainable supply of preferred varieties of local seed.
- Contributed to enhancing the capacities of key stakeholders in Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe to manage, conserve and use PGRFA.
- Strengthened the capacities of 638 farmers, agriculture extension agents, researchers and government and NGO representatives to benefit from and contribute to the mechanisms of the Treaty, which also led to Mozambique becoming a Contracting Party of the Treaty.

## Contact

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