

First Access to Seeds Index for Western and Central Africa

Press release by the Access to Seeds Foundation

The Access to Seeds Index, an initiative funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the government of the Netherlands, aims to encourage seed companies to step up their efforts to support smallholder farmer productivity.

“By benchmarking seed companies, the index gives credit to companies that show leadership and encourages others to follow their example,” says Ido Verhagen, executive director of the Access to Seeds Index. “It also provides valuable information for governments, research institutes and donors interested in building partnerships with seed companies.”

Western and Central Africa

The regional seed sector in Western and Central Africa clearly has potential. Of the 22 selected companies, 17 originate from the region itself. An interesting finding is the countries with multiple companies represented in the benchmark, including Nigeria with five and Mali with three.

In early 2019, the first Access to Seeds Index for Western and Central Africa will be published. It will show which seed company can be named ‘leading in supporting smallholders in Western and Central Africa’. The selection of the 22 nominated seed companies was based on company business models, track record and regional presence. The selection process was overseen by a committee of seven experts from the region.

“Smallholder farmers need to not only produce more food, but at the same time adapt their agricultural practices to changing weather conditions caused by climate change. By improving access to quality seeds, seed companies can make a vital contribution in supporting smallholder farmers with overcoming this challenge,” says Verhagen.

Improving the productivity of smallholder farmers is one of the main targets on the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda. By measuring the seed industry’s performance, the Access to Seeds Index aims to contribute to achieving these goals.

In addition to seed companies, seed cooperatives play a crucial role in this region. In July 2018, the Access to Seeds Index launched an additional study on 54 seed-producing cooperatives.

Eastern and Southern Africa

The second Access to Seeds Index for Eastern and Southern Africa will expand its scope further into Southern Africa. Seven more countries are involved and, as a result, five more companies are included in the ranking; 16 of the 22 selected companies originate from the region itself. Another interesting finding is the countries with multiple companies represented in the benchmark, including South Africa and Uganda, with four each, and Kenya with three. In 2016, the first Access to Seeds Index for Eastern Africa showed small differences between companies, with the exception of East-West Seed, whose performance

significantly exceeded its peers because of its smallholder-centric business model. In early 2019, the second Access to Seeds Index for Eastern and Southern Africa will show which seed company is now taking the lead ‘in supporting smallholders in Eastern and Southern Africa’. 🌱

Company	Country	Seed portfolio	Ownership	
1	AGRIPUS	MLI	Field crops & vegetables	Private
2	ANOMA	NER	Field crops & vegetables	Private
3	BLOH	COV	Field crops & vegetables	Private
4	Da-Algreen Seeds	NGA	Field crops & vegetables	Private
5	DowDuPont	USA	Field crops	Listed
6	East West Seeds	THA	Vegetables	Private
7	Faso Kaba	MLI	Field crops & vegetables	Private
8	GAWAL	CHN	Field crops & vegetables	Private
9	Heritage Seeds	USA	Field crops	Private
10	Masaka Seeds	NGA	Field crops	Private
11	Monsanto	USA	Field crops & vegetables	Private
12	NARASO	BFA	Field crops	Private
13	Pop Vineed Seeds	NLD	Vegetables	Private
14	Premier Seed	NGA	Field crops & vegetables	Private
15	Seed Co	ZWE	Field crops & vegetables	Listed
16	SEAB	SEN	Field crops	Private
17	SEMAGRI	CMR	Vegetables	Private
18	Soprisa	MLI	Field crops & vegetables	Private
19	Syngenta (ChemChina)	CHN	Field crops & vegetables	Private
20	Techrisem	FRA	Vegetables	Private
21	Tropicarem	SEN	Field crops & vegetables	Private
22	Valco Seed	NGA	Field crops & vegetables	Private

Regional index for Western and Central Africa.

Company	Country	Seed portfolio	Ownership	
1	Capstone Seeds	ZAF	Field crops	Private
2	Coroualem Seed Co	SDM	Field crops	Private
3	Dormer Seed	MWI	Field crops	Private
4	DowDuPont	USA	Field crops	Listed
5	East African Seed	KEH	Field crops & vegetables	Private
6	East West Seed	THA	Vegetables	Private
7	Ethiopian Seed Enterprise	ETH	Field crops	State owned
8	Equator Seed Co	UGA	Field crops	Private
9	FICA Seeds	UGA	Field crops & vegetables	Private
10	Hygrotech	ZAF	Vegetables	Private
11	Kenya Seed Company	KEH	Field crops & vegetables	State owned
12	Kenya Highland Seed	KEH	Vegetables	Private
13	Flora Karoo Seed Marketing	ZAF	Field crops & vegetables	Private
14	Monsanto	USA	Field crops & vegetables	Listed
15	NASECO	UGA	Field crops	Private
16	Pop Vineed Seeds	NLD	Vegetables	Private
17	Seed Co	ZWE	Field crops & vegetables	Listed
18	Starkes Apres	ZAF	Vegetables	Private
19	Syngenta (ChemChina)	CHN	Field crops & vegetables	Private
20	Techrisem	FRA	Vegetables	Private
21	Victoria Seeds	UGA	Field crops & vegetables	Private
22	Zamseed	ZAF	Field crops & vegetables	Private

Regional index for Eastern and Southern Africa.