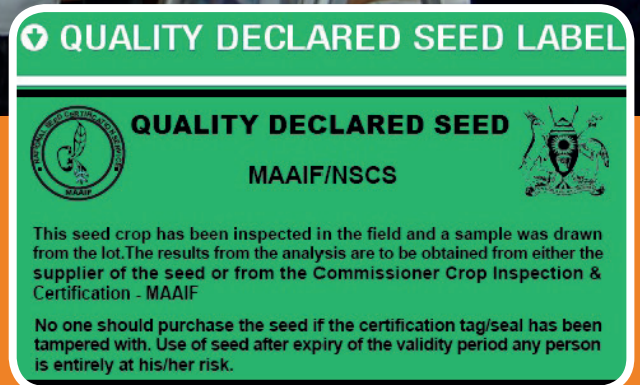


Monthly Bulletin

Issue One / February 2022



Quality seed labels launched by H.E The President of the Republic of Uganda, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni



Inside

03 | A brief history

05 | Past achievements

07 | From project to organisation



Editorial

Following the successful implementation of the ISSD projects in Uganda, the need for institutionalizing activities became apparent. Such activities, we believe, can benefit from and be better serviced through a more permanent presence. It is therefore my privilege and pleasure to announce that what we once knew for 8 years as ISSD project is now a fully registered organization in Uganda operating officially as **Integrated Seed and Sector Development Uganda (ISSD Uganda)**.

In this inaugural newsletter, we are pleased to share highlights of the transition from project to organization. Projects are timebound and designed to follow a project lifecycle. It is fairly unusual for activities of projects to become institutionalized. However, ISSD Uganda is positioned to tap into this rare opportunity and continue in its efforts to contribute to the development of the seed sub-sector as well as enhance interventions in the agricultural and rural development sector. ISSD Uganda is committed to share experiences with a view to create improvements in the agricultural sector. Therefore we invite you to partner with us.



*Patrick Oyee,
Managing Director ISSD Uganda*



Hon. Vincent Ssempijja (front row 5th Left) posing for a group photo with participants of the National Seed Policy dissemination meeting in front of Kalungu district administrative block

How It Began: A Brief History

The challenges in the seed sector

The inherent problem of the seed sector in Uganda has always been the limited level of access to and use of quality seed for preferred crop varieties by smallholder farmers, which was estimated to be less than 15%. This percentage of quality seed largely being maize, sunflower and imported vegetable seed.

There was evidently a large gap in the availability of quality seed for preferred varieties of important open/self-pollinated crops of legumes, oil seed, small cereals and roots and tubers, commonly referred to as orphaned crops

This is because of the challenges in quality seed production for these crops, as their peculiar characteristics do not always make their business cases particularly attractive to seed producers. These characteristics include:

- low profitability due to low multiplication rate, making it costly to bulk large quantities (beans vs maize)
- low seed replacement rates, which imply unpredictable seasonal demand (seed is used for more than one season without degradation)
- low seed rates (you need 2-4 kg for an acre of sesame and millet compared to 10 kg for an acre of maize)
- high perishability of root and tuber planting materials

The ISSD approach

ISSD's approach to this challenge recognised that different crop categories (hybrids, OPVs, vegetables) require different approaches for quality seed delivery. Open/self-pollinated crops in particular require a unique approach to address EGS, quality seed production and marketing challenges. Instead of focusing

exclusively on the availability of quality seed, the approach fostered a sector-wide transformation to address all related issues in the seed value chain and to strengthen sector institutions and the enabling environment.

Sector transformation involved fostering pluralism in seed delivery systems to complement the formal seed sector at the time. This involved supporting the institutionalisation of an alternative seed system (Quality Declared Seed, QDS) suitable for open/self-pollinated crops. Despite the challenges in the commercialisation of seed production for these crops, seed producing groups known as local seed businesses (LSBs) are uniquely capable of thriving in the QDS production of these crops due to their local production context, scale and proximity to the market.

The ISSD Projects: 2012-2020

Using the ISSD approach, ISSD projects were implemented to address the mentioned challenges with a view to improve the seed sector and therefore enhance agricultural productivity in Uganda. The ISSD projects, which ran from 2012-2020, were an innovation of the Wageningen University & Research Centre for Development Innovation (WCID). The projects aimed to support the development of a vibrant, pluralistic and market-oriented seed sector to enhance supply of, and access to, affordable quality seed by smallholder farmers. Concurrently, a sister project – the nutrition and income generation intervention (NIGI) – was developed to address the problem of monotonous diets, with little or no access to fresh fruit or vegetables, of the refugees in West Nile. The NIGI project, which ran from 2018-2020, aimed to contribute to healthier diets and more resilient livelihoods for fragile communities including refugees. The ISSD projects were funded by the Netherlands government through the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands in Kampala (EKN).

Seed sub-sector efforts by the ISSD projects focused on:

Increasing seed producers' access to quality early generation seed

Improving quality seed availability for smallholder farmers through the QDS system

Stimulating use of quality seed by smallholder farmer households growing field crops and vegetable crops

Research and plant breeding

Quality seed production

Quality seed uptake by farmers

Farmers' productivity increased



Enabling environment for seed value chain operations

Coordinating stakeholders in the seed sub-sector
Facilitating drafting, improvements and approval of seed sector policy instruments

ISSD project intervention along the seed value chain

What the ISSD projects achieved

In addition to introducing a new seed class (QDS) which was a game changer in Uganda's seed subsector the ISSD projects made the following achievements;

Institutionalising the seed sub-sector

- a) Established 250 active local seed business groups across 63 districts in the country with a total of 4,220 seed entrepreneurs (53% of them being female). This was in the North, South Western Highlands, West Nile, South West, East and Western Highlands regions of Uganda
- b) Supported NARO in transforming basic seed production systems into stronger business-oriented and market-oriented systems for sustainability through setting up the National basic seed enterprise model implemented by Seed for Seeds (S4S) (U) LTD; ii) ZARDI-led basic seed business model; and LSB-led basic seed business model. Under these models, 269 MT of quality basic seed for beans, groundnuts, sesame, soybeans and rice, and 358 MT of potatoes has been produced and marketed since 2018
- c) Facilitated MAAIF to institutionalise seed quality assurance processes by decentralizing seed field inspections and introducing the blue and green quality seed tamperproof labels



Buginyanya ZARDI staff and ISSD representative monitoring basic seed production field for potato in Eastern Uganda

Creating an enabling environment in the seed sub-sector

1. Facilitated MAAIF in finalising, approving, launching and disseminating the National Seed Policy (including a popular version) and the National Seed Strategy
2. Facilitated the drafting, finalising and gazetting of the 2020 Seed and Plant Quality Declared Seed Regulations and the 2020 Plant Protection and Health Regulations
3. Facilitated the drafting of the Plant Variety Protection Regulations which were awaiting gazetting by the time the ISSD projects were concluded in 2021
4. Facilitated MAAIF to develop a digital seed tracking and tracing system that can be upgraded into an integrated seed sector information management system to potentially enable the digital regulation of the entire sector
5. Facilitated MAAIF to decentralise seed field inspection to district local governments (DLGs) and training 233 district agricultural officers (DAOs) and sub-county agricultural officers (AOs) in seed field inspections across the country

Seed and Food Production, Nutrition and Income Security



4,092 MT

Volumes of QDS of legumes, small cereals and oil seed produced by farmer seed producer groups (LSBs)

7,519 MT

Volumes of QDS of roots and tubers produced by farmer seed producer groups (LSBs)



313,856

Acreage planted with QDS



UGX 22 billion

Income earned by farmer seed producer groups (LSBs) from sale of QDS

UGX 234 billion

Additional income earned within the agricultural sector as a result of additional food produced from using quality seed



35%

Proportion of farmers who had adopted QDS in the ISSD project areas by 2020

>326,719

Number of farmer households estimated to have benefited from high quality seed use



>171,600 MT

Quantity of additional food produced by farmers as a result of using quality seed from farmer seed producer groups (LSBs).



11,014 MT

Quantity of Iron-rich food produced from quality seed of iron rich bean varieties



5,498 MT

Quantity of Vitamin A-rich food that was produced from quality seed of Vitamin A rich sweet potato varieties



0.4 Points

Increase in household dietary diversity for refugees in Omugo community, West Nile



97.5%

Proportion of refugee host community households that had the appropriate food consumption score



2.19

Odds ratio (OR) that the benefit of exposure of refugees to the NIGI project led to increased consumption of vegetables

<http://issduganda.org/assets/images/resources/reports/closeoutreport.pdf>

From Projects to Organisation

Introducing ISSD Uganda Ltd

Integrated Seed and Sector Development Uganda (ISSD Uganda) is an independent local organisation incorporated in May 2021. It aims to be a leading agricultural development organization in fostering resilient seed and food systems for sustainable agricultural production. ISSD Uganda builds on the impactful outcomes and experiences of the successfully concluded seed projects that focused on; seed sector transformation; capacity building and knowledge transfer; partnerships and sector coordination, as well as supporting nutrition and income generation in fragile communities including refugees.

To continue addressing the both outstanding and emerging challenges in the agricultural sector for the medium and long term, there was the need to transition from the intermittent project status to a more stable organisational mode. This prompted the reimagining and

re-modelling of the organization to expand its scope of interventions for the short-and long-term by broadening its horizons to also contribute to resilient agricultural and food systems.

The focus areas of ISSD Uganda are not only limited to the seed sub-sector but the agricultural sector as a whole. The organization also has greater methodological flexibility through the use of a multiplicity of intervention approaches including direct value chain and/or market development systems. ISSD Uganda builds on the foundation of operational and ethical excellence that has been progressively nurtured over the last 8 years. This approach will also ensure compatibility with the contemporary requirements of development partners.



A ready to harvest eggplant garden in West Nile

Strategic focus for ISSD Uganda (2021 – 2025)

The achievements registered by the ISSD projects between 2012 and 2020 contributed to ISSD Uganda's position as a critical player and influencer within the agricultural sector. By continuously working with the sector players, ISSD Uganda recognizes that the current issues in the agricultural sector can be addressed through a multi-sectoral approach. Therefore, for the period 2021-2025, ISSD Uganda will focus on the following critical areas in the agricultural sector;

- Promote resilient seed systems for sustainable agricultural productivity and production by strengthening the operations and efficiency of the seed value chain; supporting increased production and marketing volumes of quality seed; improving the capacity of farmer institutions to absorb quality seed for higher production and productivity and Supporting existing Community Seed Banks (CSBs) and expanding to other agro-ecological zones.
- Strengthen coordination between the seed and commodity value chain by improving linkages of farmer-led seed enterprises to
- commodity markets; and Improving off-takers' linkages with large grain producers to stimulate demand for quality seed
- Promote evolution of inclusive policies for agricultural development by supporting development of an enabling environment for equitable food and agricultural systems and Promote stakeholder engagement for sector coordination at all levels.
- Promote resilient food systems by supporting climate-smart interventions to enhance food security, productivity, utilization and accessibility; promoting production of resilient indigenous farmer varieties; addressing Food safety issues and risks and Supporting Nutrition and Income Generation Initiative in fragile communities.
- Strengthen market systems for improved access by the small-holder farmers; and support farmers' organizations for collective marketing
- Generate and disseminate knowledge and evidence-based innovations in the seed and food system



Pretesting of the maize framed field experiment protocols in Gulu District under the CGIAR-NWO seed systems development research project

Acknowledgements



Kingdom of the Netherlands



Published by:

Integrated Seed and Sector Development Uganda, Plot 132 Luthuli Avenue Bugolobi, P. O. Box 20106, Kampala, Tel: +256 755 049188, Email: info@issduganda.org

Editorial Committee:

Patrick Oyee – Managing Director; Phina Kamanyire – Chief Operations Officer; Christine Kawuma Menya – Monitoring and Evaluation Manager; Geoffrey Otim – Seed Systems and Policy Manager and Dr. Paul Nampala – Consultant Business Development and Advancement

All photos are from ISSD Uganda

The newsletter is also available on www.issduganda.org