

Agriculture for Emergency Response Abstracts

Emergency seed aid: Overview and advances

Louise Sperling

This presentation will trace the short but fascinating history of seed aid from the 1974 Ethiopian famine to the Rwanda genocide to the current food price crisis. It also highlights lessons learned about seed systems during disaster; review advances in emergency seed aid policy, and introduce tools for improving on-the-ground practice. It is the research & recovery partnership along with progressive donors, which is driving positive change in seed aid knowledge, attitudes, practice and policy. The pace and scale of such 'better practice' now needs to be accelerated in the face of escalating disasters (partially due to climate change) and escalating seed aid delivery. *Emergency seed aid* needs to be designed to spur production recovery, support farmer incomes, and to promote resilient farming systems.

Seed systems and security assessment: Seed systems in four locations of El Salvador

José Angel Cruz

In order to evaluate and learn from smallholder seed production systems for basic grains in normal and post-emergency conditions of El Salvador, a study was carried out as part of a 4-country project entitled "Agriculture for basic Needs" (A4N). Four communities were selected, two located in the mountainous zone and two in the coastal zone. Individual interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with 150 respondents and data was collected on the following variables: crop mix lot for cultivation, use and origin of seeds, yield and quality factors with an emphasis on maize.

Customer-focused: Seed vouchers & fairs in Burkina Faso

Tom Remington

Following the disastrous 2007 rainy season in Burkina Faso, CRS was able to link an assessment and analysis with action. A rapid participatory seed system security assessment deepened CRS understanding of the farmer seed system and resulted in a determination of *moderate acute seed insecurity*. The assessment informed a proposal and a plan for a series of seed vouchers & fairs that were implemented prior to the onset of the 2008 rainy season. These seed vouchers & fairs were successful in engaging the formal seed sector and providing beneficiaries the choice of both certified and quality farmer/market seed. Data collected on farmer purchases in exchange for vouchers proved to be a powerful market intelligence tool. CRS used both the learning from both the seed system security assessment and the Seed Vouchers & Fairs to engage the commercial seed sector, the government of Burkina Faso and donors in discussions on how to best support Burkina farmers and their evolving seed needs

Seed system innovations: The Great Lakes Cassava Initiative

Stephen Walsh

This presentation will characterize the cassava seed systems in the Great Lakes Region of Central and East African where these projects have been implemented and discuss two processes used in these regional programs, quality management protocols and on farm vouchers, which are fundamental to the identification of both planting material and farmers and the linking of supply and demand. CRS's emerging experience with the use of on farm vouchers to promote the efficient allocation of cassava planting material – highlighting the effects of this new delivery technology for cassava on targeting, reducing loss, and tracing material movement – will be discussed. Because of the low multiplication rate of cassava and the relatively high loss rates of vegetatively propagated planting material, efficient allocation of planting material is a key outcome of both of these processes.