**Genebanks and Seed Systems Toolkit

FGD 1- Overview of crops and seed system

Facilitator Guide

Note: **questions to ask the focus group are indicated in bold**, while *tips for facilitators are in* *italics*.

## Crops farmers cultivate

1. **What are the most important crops cultivated by farmers in this community**?
	* *Write the name of each crop on a card (or use samples of each crop). Ask for up to 5-10 crops*
	* *Importance can be in terms of food, income, cultural use, etc. Farmers should decide based on their own criteria.*
2. **Please rank the importance of these crops from highest to lowest and explain why**
	* *Ask the participants to order the cards/samples from highest importance to lowest (i.e., place them in a column or line).*
	* *Ask participants to explain the ranking of each crop. Please note all comments about the crop’s use/significance.*

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| **Crop** **(Q1)** | **Ranking of importance\* (Q2)** | **Comments about use, significance****(Q2)** |
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\*Codes for ranking importance: Crop with highest importance = 1, next highest = 2, etc.

1. **Which are the most important crops for women in this community? Why are these important for women?**
2. **Which are the most important crops for men in this community?** **Why are these important for men?**

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|  | **Crops**  | **Reasons (Why is the crop important for men/women)?** |
| **Most important for women (Q3)** |  |  |
| **Most important for men (Q4)** |  |  |

1. **In the last 10 years, has the cultivation of any crops increased or decreased in the area? Are there any crops that are new? Are there any that have been abandoned? Why?**
* *Ask participants to list the crops in each category*
* *For each crop listed, ask WHY the cultivation of the crop has changed.*
* *If participants mention changes that happened more than 10 years ago, you can note these separately below the table.*

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| **In the last 10 years:** |  **Crops** | **Reasons for the change** |
| **INCREASED in area** |  |  |
| **DECREASED in area** |  |  |
| **NEW** |  |  |
| **ABANDONED** |  |  |

1. **In the last few years, what have been the major problems in crop production that farmers in this community have faced? Who in the community has been most affected?**

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| **Problems in crop production- last few years** | **Who has been most affected (women, men, certain kinds of farmers)?** |
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1. **Focusing on seed, are there any concerns/problems that farmers in this community have faced in the last few years? For which crop(s)?**
* *Prompt to find out if there are problems with seed production, seed storage, etc.*

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| **Crop** | **Concerns with seed production** | **Concerns with seed storage** | **Other problems with seed** |
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1. **In the last few years, has there been anything that has helped farmers improve their access to seed? Who has benefitted most from these improvements?**
	* *This can include any kind of improvement related to seed*

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| **Improvements in access to seed - last few years** | **Who has benefitted most (women, men, certain kinds of farmers)?** |
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## Actors engaged in the local seed system

We would like to know more about the different actors who are involved in or supporting seed-related activities in this community.

1. **Are there any farmers’ organizations, groups or cooperatives in this community or nearby that are working on seeds?** **For example:**
* conserving/sharing crop diversity, organizing seed fairs
* testing new varieties
* producing and/or selling seed
* providing information on seeds, helping farmers access seeds, etc.

**Please describe their activities and the geographic area they cover**:

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| **Name of organization/group**  | **Main seed-related activities & crops** | **Location/geographic area** |
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1. **Are there any grain traders (informal), agrodealers, companies or other commercial actors that farmers in this community sometimes acquire seed from? What types of seeds do these actors sell to farmers?**
	* *If relevant, you may also ask about companies that provide seed to farmers at no cost (i.e., as part of out-grower or commercialization schemes)*

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| **Name of trader, agrodealer or company**  | **Crops and types of seeds sold/provided**  | **Location of trader, agrodealer or company** |
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1. **Are there any government agencies, extension services, NGOs, or projects that are supporting agriculture/seed-related activities in this community?**
	* *Prompt participants to think about organizations that engage in:*
* *providing information or training on crop varieties, seed production & management, or related agricultural practices*
* *distributing or providing seed*
* *seed inspection/certification services, etc.…*

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| **Name of organization/agency**  | **Type (NGO, GO, etc.)** | **Main activities & crops** |
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**Do the policies, regulations, or practices of government agencies or other institutions influence farmers’ seed use?** **Please describe.**

* + *Prompt participants to think about policies, regulations, or practices that influence:*
		- *what crops, varieties or seeds farmers can cultivate*
		- *how farmers produce or store seed*
		- *what seed can be sold or who can sell seed*
	+ *Probe: are these positive or negative and for whom?*

Government policies, regulations or practices that influence farmers seed use:

**Are there any local customs, beliefs, or practices that influence farmers’ seed use?** **Please describe.**

* + *Prompt participants to think about local customs, beliefs, or practices that influence:*
		- *how farmers acquire new varieties or seeds*
		- *how farmers produce or store seed*
		- *how seeds are exchanged or sold among farmers*

*(This may involve cultural, social, or religious practices or institutions where farmers or family members exchange seed or related knowledge/information (labor exchanges, social/cultural events, religious ceremonies, etc.). There can also be taboos or customs related to seeds. Consider what might be relevant in your context and how to probe for this in your particular context.)*

* + *Probe: are these positive or negative, and for whom?*

Local customs, beliefs or practices that influence farmer’s seed use:

## Recommendations

**Do you have any suggestions or recommendations on how to improve farmers’ access to crop diversity or quality seed**?

Recommendations: