Genebanks and Seed Systems Toolkit

KII Checklist #8 – National agricultural extension agencies or programs

**Target group**: These are guide questions for national agencies or programs that provide agricultural extension services to farmers. This may include a department of agricultural extension within the Ministry of Agriculture, national agricultural research institutes, and national programs providing an agricultural extension to farmers. The aim is to understand their activities within the seed system, key strengths, and weaknesses, and how these are affected by governance and other factors. We also aim to understand their views on seed system development. Note that local agricultural extension agents are covered under KII Checklist #3.

The interviewer should interview one or a few experts and the leaders who know the extension agency’s roles and activities within the national seed system.

## Introduction

Explain the objective and obtain interviewee consent (fill out and attach the consent form for KIIs)

## General information about the organization

1. What is the goal of your extension agency/program in general? And specifically in relation to seed?
2. Can you explain the history, organizational structure, and current mandate of the extension agency/program related to seeds?
	* Organizational structure
	* Mandates/responsibilities
	* Date established, changes in the mandate/goals over time

## Variety development and management

* 1. Describe your extension program’s key activities reated to seed.
	2. Does your extension program work with farmers to develop, test, or introduce new varieties, including participatory variety breeding and/or selection?
		+ If not, why not?
		+ If yes, what are your strategies/goals with this work?
		+ Which regions, farming systems, or crops/varieties do you focus on?
	3. Does your extension program promote the conservation or use of local crop diversity (e.g., landraces, traditional varieties)?
		+ If not, why not?
		+ If yes, what are your strategies/goals with this work?
		+ Which regions, farming systems or crops/varieties do you focus on?

## Seed production

1. Does your extension program engage in training and capacity building of farmers or farmer groups for their seed production work?
2. What are the main problems in seed production that your extension program addresses? What are your main activities?
3. What kinds of farmers get capacity building in seed production from your extension program?
4. Are there any farmers or regions that you are not able to reach or support effectively? Why?

## Seed dissemination

1. Does your extension program engage in seed dissemination?
2. What are the main crops and types of varieties/seeds you distribute?
	* What are the sources of the seeds that you distribute (government, private seed company, farmer cooperatives, donors/aid agencies, etc.), and how are the logistics organized?
	* How do you assess the varietal traits and quality of the seeds you source for distribution? If yes, how?
3. Who are the users of the seeds you distribute?
	* What type of farmers?
	* What is the geographical scope of your seed distribution?
4. How do you distribute seeds to different users?
* What channels do you use (direct distribution, via cooperatives, agrodealers, etc.)?
* Sold, voucher, credit/loan, etc.?
* If sold, who determines the price and how?
1. Do any farmers have difficulty accessing the seeds you distribute?
* If so, which farmers are unable to access your seeds? Why?
* Do you have any strategies to help these farmers access your seeds?

## Strengths and weaknesses

1. Overall, what are the main strengths and weaknesses of your extension program’s seed-related activities?

## Coordination with other actors

1. Who are the main actors you work with for your seed-related activities? *(check off all that apply)*
* Genebanks
* Plant breeders
* Seed companies
* Agrodealers
* Farmer organizations, e.g., cooperatives and unions
* Individual farmers/households
* NGOs
* Seed regulatory agencies, e.g., plant variety protection bureau/office and seed quality control certification institute
* Others (specify):\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
1. How well do your interactions/collaborations with these actors function?
	* Are there any challenges in coordinating your activities with them?
	* How do you think these interactions can be improved?
2. Do you work with the national genebank? If so, how?
	* Do you have suggestions on how the role of the national genebank can be improved?

## Contextual factors

1. Which government policies and regulations effectively support your seed-related extension work? Which ones pose challenges? Please explain.
2. Are there local customs, beliefs, or cultural practices that affect your extension activities (especially related to seed)? How?
3. How does the market/economy affect your extension work? Give specific examples.

## Recommendations

1. Is there anything else you would like to share about your activities or how the seed system is functioning?
2. In your view, what are the key issues related to seed in this country?
3. Do you have any suggestions or recommendations on how to improve farmers’ access to sufficient, good quality seed of preferred crops and varieties?