

# Seeds for Impact West Africa Programme Launch to Promote Sustainable Agriculture

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EAST LEGON, ACCRA, GHANA, December 4, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The AECF recently launched the Seeds for Impact West Africa Programme on 27th November 2018, at a cocktail reception at Labadi Beach Hotel, in Accra, Ghana. The launch was attended by dignitaries, government officials, development partners and seed companies from across Africa. The initiative is a US \$60 million programme that seeks to address the funding gap faced by seed companies scaling their seed production for staple crops.



Stakeholders for Seeds For Impact Programme

“It all starts with the seed. We are here because we care about smallholder farmers and Africa. We can make a difference to agricultural productivity in Africa if we ensure that smallholder farmers have access to the best available seeds i.e. improved seeds. The African seed market has great potential for growth given that improved seed is currently available for less than 10% of total arable acreage in sub-Saharan Africa,” said Lord Paul Boateng, Board Chair, The AECF.

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Crop yields for the smallholder farmers who dominate African agriculture are the lowest in the world, due in part to limited access to quality inputs and improved seed varieties suitable for the different climatic conditions, soils and production systems across the continent. Improved

seeds underpin agricultural transformation and improvements in productivity needed to feed the continent.

“Agriculture is the backbone of Ghana’s economy and about 80% of total agricultural production is attributed to smallholder farmers. We need to look after the smallholder farmers who have put food on our tables for years,” Dr. John Manful, Advisor to Ghana’s Minister of Food and Agriculture.

Current agricultural practices are undermining many African governments goals for food security and productivity of low-cost nutritious food in both rural and urban markets. The Seeds for Impact programme is currently running a competition with initial funding from Alliance for a

Green Revolution in Africa and Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture to start addressing this problem.

“The competition seeks to transfer in-demand, high-yielding and climate-smart seed, planting material technologies and agricultural innovation to smallholder farmers. This we believe will substantially increase the incomes of thousands of smallholder farmers in Africa and West Africa in particular,” said Daniel Ohonde, CEO, The AECF.

The Seeds for Impact competition was launched on 30th October 2018 and closes on 11th December 2018, targeting seed companies in twelve countries namely Nigeria, Ghana, Mali, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, Malawi and Mozambique. Successful companies will be provided with financial and technical assistance ranging between US \$250,000 and US \$1.5 million. For more information on how to apply for the funding visit <https://aecf.submittable.com/submit>.



Some Seed Growers At the Event

#### About AECF

The AECF is a development institution which supports businesses to innovate, create jobs, leverage investments and markets in an effort to create resilience and sustainable incomes in rural and marginalized communities in Africa. Launched in 2008, the AECF has mobilized over US \$356 million to date, leveraging more than US \$658 million in matching capital and improving the lives of more than 16 million people in 2017 alone through jobs and increased household incomes. AECF has so far supported 268 companies in 26 countries in sub-Saharan Africa across 40 value chains in our focal sectors of agribusiness and renewable energy.

Ruth Nartey  
WaxPrint Media  
+233 30 254 9581  
[email us here](#)

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