

United States Enables Zambia's Leadership Role in SADC Regional Seed Export Policy

The U.S. Government, with SADC, Zambian Government and Lake Agriculture, commissions 250 MT of improved maize seed produced in Zambia for export to Mozambique

LUSAKA, ZAMBIA, October 27, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- LUSAKA – Today, U.S. government, through its Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Southern African Development Community ([SADC](#)), in close partnership with the Government of the Republic of [Zambia](#), commissioned a pilot [seed](#) export from Zambia to Mozambique produced by emerging seed company, Lake Agriculture.

The USAID-funded Feed the Future Southern Africa Seed Trade Project awarded Lake Agriculture a K2 million (\$100,000) grant to produce and export 200 metric tons of improved, high-quality hybrid maize seed, under the SADC Harmonised Seed Regulatory System (HSRS). With a joint investment of K3.7 million (\$185,000) and strict adherence to the regional guidelines, the emerging seed company ultimately produced 250 metric tons of high-quality seed valued at K7.6 million (\$381,000), yielding a 380 percent return on the USAID investment. Of the total amount produced, 216 metric tons are being exported to neighboring, seed deficit Mozambique, while the remaining 34 metric tons of improved maize seed will be sold on the local Zambian market.

“Through our Seed Trade Project, we are supporting the SADC Secretariat to harmonize the national seed legislation across all 16 Member States with the regional guidelines. Due to its location and ability to produce quality seeds, Zambia is uniquely positioned to provide the ideal seeds for this inaugural export,” said U.S. Embassy Zambia Chargé d’Affaires, a.i. David Young.



Dr. Justify Shava of SADC, Mr. Mike Jackson of Lake Agriculture, Mrs. Mabel Simwanza of Zambia's SCCI and Mr. Adam Norkane of USAID cut ribbon to commission 250 MT of improved maize seed, produced by Lake Agriculture under the SADC HSRS, for export to Moz

“These pilots also provide an opportunity for seed companies—be they large or small—to meet guidelines and successfully produce and export improved seed. This is important, because it allows for meaningful market competition, which ultimately benefits farmers, and plays a major role in moving nations forward on their path to self-reliance.”

The Seed Trade Project has piloted the SADC HSRS with several seed companies over the past two years to identify gaps and capacity-building needs. The SADC HSRS is a set of regionally agreed upon standards, rules and procedures for seed variety release, seed certification and quality assurance, and quarantine and phytosanitary measures for seed.

To work, national governments must align their national seed legislation with the regional guidelines. Seed produced under the system bears the SADC seed label and certificate, making it available for export to any SADC Member State without additional red tape or lost time.

The SADC HSRS harmonizes national seed legislation with improved regional standards for seed production and allows for easier movement of high-quality seed consignments across national borders.

“Seed is fundamental to our survival and regional economic prosperity. I often say, ‘Without seed, there is no agriculture. Without agriculture, there is no food. And without food, there is no human life,’ and that is something we should all take to heart,” states SADC Food, Agricultural and Natural Resources (FANR) Director Domingos Gove. “I am so pleased to see the success of Lake Agriculture and several other seed producers who are taking advantage of the SADC Harmonised Seed Regulatory System, and I encourage more seed companies to engage and learn more about the process.”

Lake Agriculture received the USAID grant in December 2019, in time for the 2019/2020 agricultural season. Through its local partner, QualiBasic Seed Company, Lake Agriculture planted over 50 hectares of Lake 601 seed variety in Lilayi and Mkushi, and received regular field



Director of Zambia's SCCI Mrs. Mabel Simwanza hands over SADC Seed Certificate to Mr. Mike Jackson of Lake Agriculture, formally commissioning 250 MT of improved maize seed produced under the SADC HSRS for export to Mozambique



USAID, SADC, Government of Zambia and Lake Agriculture's logos

inspections from the Zambian National Seed Authority, the Seed Control and Certification Institute, throughout the process. To ensure full compliance with the SADC HSRS, seed inspectors regularly sampled and tested the crop and certified it met the regional standards.

“As a small seed producer, we found it difficult to break into the Zambian seed market. With the close partnership between us and USAID’s Seed Trade Project, we received valuable assistance on how to implement the guidelines and now feel like we can be a viable player in this market,” said Lake Agriculture’s Managing Director Mike Jackson. “This experience has not only shown us a path forward, but it has opened doors to many other markets and helped us produce more high-quality seed.”

To learn more about the SADC Harmonised Seed Regulatory System, visit the SADC Seed Centre.

###

About Feed the Future Southern Africa Seed Trade Project

The Feed the Future Southern Africa Seed Trade Project (Seed Trade Project) is a five-year project designed to increase the availability of high-quality seed of improved varieties to farmers in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, and contribute to increased agricultural productivity and improved food and nutrition security. The Seed Trade Project provides targeted technical assistance to facilitate implementation of the SADC Harmonized Seed Regulatory System (HSRS), which aims to boost seed trade across the region, integrating smaller and more isolated national seed markets into one larger SADC market. The Seed Trade Project is part of a regional policy effort to improve agricultural productivity, food security and nutrition in the SADC region.

Sean McIntosh

U.S. Department of State

+260 21 1357000

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/529351041>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2020 IPD Group, Inc. All Right Reserved.