

## SEMI's Phase I Year 2012 Report

### Executive Summary

The Seed Enterprise management Institute (SEMI's) project was started in February 2010. This collaborative project brings together private and public institutions involved in the seed value chain, is based at the College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences (CAVS), University of Nairobi (UON) is funded by Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA). It was started as a way of providing much needed capacity, especially with regard to training, to the seed industry in sub-Saharan Africa. Collaborators include University of Nairobi, Iowa State University, International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT), Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI), Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Institute (KEPHIS), Private and Public Seed companies and international Consultants.

The main objective of SEMI's is to help seed companies in Africa produce more seed through provision of training on crucial aspects of seed in the seed value chain. Throughout much of Africa, seed companies face major challenges on basics of seed production, processing, quality assurance and general seed enterprise management. SEMI's provides training on all these major issues through provision of short courses at the University of Nairobi on Seed production, Seed Drying Processing and Storage, Seed Business management and seed quality assurance and Seed Enterprise Quality Management. These courses are delivered by experts in the different fields with the intention that the acquired knowledge will be utilized in not only upscaling production but also quality of the seed produced for farmers.

In the third year of the project, over 140 seed company personnel from over 40 different seed companies and 17 countries received training at SEMI's. The seed production course, where all the basics of field seed production are taught had 30 participants and was held between 21<sup>st</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> May, 2012. The main facilitators in were Dr. John MacRobert from CIMMYT and Dr. Kiarie Njoroge from CAVS. Other facilitators were from KARI, KEPHIS and CAVS. The seed drying processing and storage course was held back to back with the seed production between 28<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> May 2012. The main facilitator, as in the previous year was Dr. Yuan Shyy from Iowa state. He was helped by Dr. Ayub Gitau from CAVS. Other facilitators included Dr. Ragwa from KARI Katumani and lecturers from the Department of Environmental and Biosystems engineering of the University of Nairobi.

The course on seed business management had 29 participants from 26 seed companies and 18 African countries. The participants in this course are mainly Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) who make the hard decisions in the seed company ensuring seed company sustainability and profitability. Aline O'Connor Funk, a consultant with AGRA and the Gates foundation and Professor Evans Aosa from the School of business were the coordinators of the course. Other facilitators were mainly drawn from the School of business. Dr Julius Kipng'etich, the director of the Kenya wildlife Service was invited as a guest speaker as in previous courses in the last two years. . The Seed marketing had a total of 30 seed company personnel from 24 seed companies and three universities, Haramaya,

West Africa Centre for Crop improvement (WACCI) and African Centre for Crop Improvement (ACCI). Seventeen African countries were represented.. Aline O'Connor Funk and Dr. Justus Munyoki from the school of business, with help from other staff at the school of Business and CAVS, were the coordinators of the course.

Seed quality assurance and seed enterprise quality management course was held between 16 and 30<sup>th</sup> of September, 2012. a total of 29 participants from 25 seed companies and 15 African countries. Two participants from the AGRA West African office in Accra also attended the course in order to familiarize themselves with the training that the seed companies, for which they are in charge, go through. They paid tribute to the exemplary training that the seed company personnel were going through. The main facilitators, with help from UoN and KEPHIS staff, and other stakeholders were Dr. Joe Cortes from ISU, KEPHA Ogada from KEPHIS and Dr. James Muthomi from CAVS. Dr. Mike Stahr, from ISU, who is normally in charge of the seed quality aspects of this course, did not attend due to sickness.

Apart from training, SEMIs is involved in production of breeders' seed for beans. Currently, the project is engaged in production of six bean varieties including, Kenya wonder, Super Rosecocco, Kabete super, Miezi mbili, Kenya sugar bean and Kenya Red Kidney bean varieties. These varieties, developed by UON breeders have been licenced to seed companies and specifically Kenya seed company. SEMIs is providing foundation seed for these varieties to the seed companies for further multiplication to certified seed. One of the major hurdles in upscaling seed production for seed companies is the lack of foundation seed and this project is therefore helping increase food production and security in the country.

Although, this was initially meant to be the project, all indications are that AGRA will provide further funding for the continuation of the project for another three years. A decision based on the positive feedback from seed companies on the benefits of the training. We at SEMIs look forward to continuing providing this crucial capacity for the seed companies with the goal of having a vibrant and competitive seed sector in Africa that is responsive to the needs of African farmers.