



NOTE OF RECORD FOR THE HARMONIZED SEED SECURITY POLICY PROJECT (HaSSP) POLICY DIALOGUE MEETING AT CROSSROADS HOTEL ON WEDNESDAY THE 14<sup>TH</sup> OF NOVEMBER 2012

## **THE OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP**

- To raise awareness on the status of the Seed Industry in Malawi with a particular emphasis on the Smallholder Sub-Sector.
- To appraise the efforts made under the Malawi Variety Release System and Procedures; Seed Certification Processes and; Phytosanitary and Quarantine Measures with regard to their alignment to the SADC Seed Protocols.
- To make recommendations on how the Malawi Variety Release System and Procedures; Seed Certification Processes and; Phytosanitary and Quarantine Measures can be aligned to the SADC Seed Protocols.
- To share best practices and lessons learnt in the alignment of the Malawi Seed System to the SADC Seed Regulatory System.

## **PROCEEDINGS OF THE POLICY DIALOGUE MEETING**

### **FIRST DAY**

#### **INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES**

The Director of Ceremonies, Miss Vanessa Kapeleta called the meeting to order at around 09:00 as most of the participants came late. She requested a volunteer to offer an opening prayer after which she requested all the participants present to do a round of self introductions.

She then introduced the objectives of the meeting as outlined above and further introduced the Harmonized Seed Security Policies Project (HaSSP) which is a Multi-Country Pilot Project that is being implemented in Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi respectively with funding from the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC). The project is among the four projects that the Food Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) is implementing in partnership with the Civil Society Agriculture Network (CISANET) which is its Country Node which is among the other Southern and Eastern Africa Country Nodes where FANRAPN is present.

After this, she invited the CISANET National Director to make the Official Welcoming Remarks. In his remarks, he thanked all the participants present for attending the meeting and he further iterated on the importance of the Policy Dialogue Meeting as a forum to discuss the Open Border Policy that can be facilitated and effectively be implemented in Malawi as Malawi Risks becoming a Nation prone to “import dumping” under the current legal frameworks regulating the Seed Industry.

After the Official Opening Remarks by the CISANET National Director, the Policy Dialogue Meeting was officially opened by the Guest of Honour, Mr. Wilfred Lipita, the Controller of Agriculture and Extension Technical Services (CAETS) from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MoAFS). In his Keynote Address, he recognized all the participants present and further stressed about the importance of the meeting. He also mentioned about the significance of agriculture in Malawi's economy. Improved seed therefore forms the basis for increased agricultural productivity. In his capacity as the Chairman of the Agriculture Technology Clearing Committee (ATCC), he further pointed out the importance of the process of aligning various legislations regulating the Seed Industry to the SADC Seed System as specified in the Technical Agreements Protocols. He urged all participants present to make their contributions during the discussion after which he declared the meeting officially open.

The Director of Ceremonies then asked all the participants to converge by the poolside for a group photograph with the Guest of Honour as he requested to be allowed to leave early so that he could go and Preside over another equally important High Level Meeting the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security was having.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

### **Overview of Seed Harmonization in Malawi**

After the introductory activities, the Director of Ceremonies then invited the first, presenter, Mr. Felix Jumbe, the President of the Farmers Union of Malawi (FUM) who provided an overview of Seed Harmonization in Malawi. In his presentation, he gave a brief background of the Seed Industry and its evolution in Malawi. He mentioned that Malawi initially used to get seed from Zimbabwe because of the influence of the Rhodesian Federation. The first types of Seed on the market were under the name SR 52. Later on, there was need for Malawi to establish independent Research Stations from the amalgamated Federation for strategic reasons. It then started producing its own Seed the first of which was MH12 succeeded by other types till MH16. All of these did not do well on the market due to bad poundability and its proneness to weevil infestation. MH 17 and MH 18 were then introduced and they did well on the market registering record sales until 1996.

The World Bank's Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) brought about privatization and CARGILL, an American Multi-National Company was the only major player in the Seed Market. Sales of hybrids were at an all record high of MT10, 000 out of which 90% was being sold by ADMARC and 10% by (Agro)-Dealers. The large volumes of hybrid sales were made possible by the credit facility system that was available then. During the 1993 and 1994 Growing Seasons, there were bumper yields which were mismanaged due to massive politicization. Politicians were urging farmers to not repay their loans therefore the Credit System that was supporting Hybrids collapsed. Efforts were made to redeem the situation and there was a revamping of the Seed Industry between 1996-1998 with more NGOs which were just coming in

with the advent of Multi-Party Democracy supporting the use Open Pollinated Varieties (OPVs). Government also created the National Association of Smallholder Farmers in Malawi (NASFAM) but it also later collapsed due to bad management at its Secretariat then.

STAM was established in 2004 and Lever Brothers was the only major Seed Company but it was later taken over by PANNAR Seed. STAM has grown over the years and now has sixteen Seed Producers/Companies out of which three are Multi-National Companies. Much of the growth in the Seed Sector of late is largely attributable to the Farm Input Subsidy Programme (FISP). When the FISP was starting in 2005, only three Companies were supplying Seed to it but now the number has increased to thirteen. Adoption of improved seed was as low as 12% before the FISP but with its coming, it is now at 43% which entails that the Market Availability for Seed is currently at 43%.

### **Challenges facing the Malawi Seed Industry**

In spite of the fact that adoption has increased from 12% to 43% and much of the growth in the seed sector being largely attributable to the FISP, there are still a number of challenges the Seed Industry is facing, the major ones being:

- The current legislation regulating the Seed Industry are prohibitive as they do not encourage exports
- The process of acquiring an import/export permit is too laborious with too many steps to go through which makes Malawi to not compete fairly within the Region.

### **Overview of Seed Certification Regulations in Malawi**

The second presentation was done by Mrs. Gloria Ghambi from DARS. She gave an overview of Seed Certification Regulations in Malawi. The major highlight of the presentation was that the Seed Services Unit (SSU), under the department of Agricultural Research Services (DARS) in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MoAFS) is mandated to see that high quality seed of the improved varieties are made available to the farming community. Seed of all types of crops produced in the country is certified by the Unit. The Malawi government established the Seed Certification and Quality Control Unit in 1976. The key Seed Certification and Quality Control activities include:

- A comprehensive seed crop registration
- Seed crop field inspections,
- Seed sampling,
- Laboratory seed testing
- Check (control) plots
- Seed monitoring
- Provision of advisory services to all stakeholders in the seed industry and training of farmers in seed multiplication.

### **Challenges facing the Malawi Seed Industry with regard to Seed Certification**

- Delays in payment of ISTA membership/audit fee puts the laboratory at a risk of being suspended.
- Fuels shortages limit the operations of the Unit
- Scattered fields of less than or equal to 0.2 ha especially legume fields make inspection time consuming and costly.
- Inadequate vehicles especially for the satellite labs that have no vehicles at all to assist in operations

On a brighter note however, the SSU has been well capacitated of late with the following notable milestones taking place:

- The Unit has received new equipment that was bought under COMRAP Project. This will ease the operations of the Unit.
- Seed services Unit manages to inspect all the crops that are registered despite the shortage of fuel and staff it faces
- 11 new seed officers have graduated at Bunda College after undergoing a Seed Technology Training for three years. This will strengthen up the labour force at SSU that has been a problem.
- The Unit continues to test all seed that is produced every season without any problems
- The Unit manages to implement most of the activities planned in the various projects.

### **HEALTH BREAK**

After the first two presentations, the participants went for a tea break from 10:25 to 10:50.

### **Presentation on Variety Release Procedures in Malawi**

After the Tea Break, the participants reconvened where the Session on presentations continued. The third presentation was done by Dr. Mackson Banda from DARS. He gave an overview of Variety Release Procedures in Malawi. The major highlight of the presentation was that the Variety Release Procedures have been revised with the flow diagram undergoing some changes which the ATCC approved. The major challenge however has been that there are still some people that bypass DARS and opt for short cuts to release Varieties that have been registered/Listed/Approved. It is promising to note that the prospects for Variety release in Malawi are quite high with the following progress made:

- Malawi is on course in establishing an elaborate Variety Release Committee
- The inclusion of DUS and VCU data in the new variety release system will enhance seed trade between Malawi and member states in the region

- The alignment of Malawi's legal instruments associated with seed movement and trade is a big plus in the seed industry
- With the new variety release system, Malawi should be able to register its varieties at the regional level.
- The current proliferation of seed companies and agro-dealers require appropriate legal instruments to regulate the whole process of seed business in Malawi.
- Since ATCC has no legal mandate it is imperative that it should be legislated to ensure that any legal challenges should be properly handled by the law.

### **Presentation on Phytosanitary and Quarantine Measures Legislation in Malawi**

The fourth and last presentation was done by Mr. Misheck Soko from DARS. He gave an overview of Phytosanitary and Quarantine Measures Legislation in Malawi. The major highlight of the presentation was that much headway has been done with regard to aligning phytosanitary legislations to the SADC Protocol. The major setback however has been the following inconsistencies with SADC Seed Protocol:

- Malawi has only one pest list which is also outdated.
- There is no re-export Phytosanitary Certificate in the Plant Protection Act
- Regional definitions like South Americas, East Africa etc which the Malawi Act has seem not to be reflected in the SADC protocol.
- Definitions of terms – SADC definitions are based on slightly latest version of ISPM 5 while Malawi is very old and outdated.
- Elements of Equivalence are not properly embedded in the Plant Protection Act of Malawi

### **Plenary discussion**

After all the four presentations, the following discussion ensued based on the questions and comments that were made by the participants:

#### **First Round of Questions**

1. What are the Variety Release Procedures for Vegetatively Propagated Crops (VPCs)?
2. None of the presenters mentioned anything on Vegetatively Propagated Crops except Mr. Misheck Soko. Is Seed Harmonization only looking at Grain Seed or Vegetatively Propagated Crops as well because if it does not include the latter then there would be a need to start the process from square one in order to include the VPCs?

3. Was liberalization which was brought about by the World Bank's Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) a good or bad thing in light of the fact that it led to government having less control over the Seed Industry with the proliferation of players and new entrants?

### **Second Round of Questions**

1. Why is it that there seems to be no progress on efforts to make the Seed Services Unit independent or Semi-autonomous?
2. In spite of some of the SSU's notable achievements, why is it that the charges on seed registration are too high within a range of \$14-\$16/hectare when other Countries within the Region charge around \$3/hectare?
3. With regard to the limited HR Capacity of the SSU, what measures are being taken to manage the informal importation of seed that is not within listed varieties?
4. What is the relationship between the SSU and Plant Breeders?
5. What are the future prospects of Seed trade beyond the FISP which has accounted for much of the growth of the Seed Industry?

### **Third Round of Questions**

1. How is the harmonization of recyclable seed with regard to things like traceability, integrity and yield capacity?
2. There is need for a one-stop office for one to get an export/import permit as the process is unnecessarily tedious, lengthy and laborious.
3. Is tobacco included among the thirteen crops under harmonization?
4. What attempts are being made to diversify the Seed Basket as currently Seed seems to be largely synonymous to maize as is the case with food so that more of the "orphaned crops" are included?

5. Why are there a lot of inefficiencies regarding Seed inspection?

### **Responses and Discussion**

#### **Dr. Chilima on the exclusion of trees under the harmonization process:**

The trees have to be part of the harmonization process since they play a vital role in Agriculture. The concern however is the two seasons for field testing required to get a permit which may be a lot since most trees have long life spans.

#### **Dr. Banda on whether the harmonization process is inclusive of VPC, Grain Seed as well as Trees & whether the Variety Release Procedures for VPCs and Grain Seed are the same:**

Procedures for release in Vegetatively Propagated Plants are the same as those with the grain seed but trade across borders is cumbersome because the standard to facilitate the cross-border movement of VPCs are not in place. They are usually transported in the forms of tissue culture since the seed cuttings can be bulky for instance Cassava would require a big truck since 80 bundles are required to plant at least one hectare. For maize, the requirement is 50kg breeder seed but for VPCs the only evidence is the nursery since they cannot present seedlings as evidence.

With regard to the inclusion of trees under the harmonization process, let it be known that the SADC harmonization only includes thirteen crops currently amongst the many that are there which also excludes trees since their breeding cycles can well be over hundred years. It would be highly unlikely that a single breeder can monitor them throughout their lifetime given the shorter human life expectancy in Malawi via the longer breeding cycles of trees. Considerations are being made to include more crops as well as trees in the future under the SADC Harmonization process. Even under plant protection, horticultural trees are only given between twenty to twenty five years of a breeding cycle unlike trees like pine, eucalyptus, baobab and the like which have longer breeding cycles. Some crops are excluded under the harmonization process because by their very nature, they are a bit complex to handle, more so under the technical rigour specified in the Technical agreements under the SADC harmonization process. He added that tobacco however is amongst the thirteen crops included in the SADC Harmonization Process.

**Mr. Jumbe on the impact of the liberalization process on Malawi's economy:**

In the short run, liberalization brought more damage than good but in the long-run, it finally started to bring about the good that it deserved. The main problem was the circumstances under which and motives for which it was done were not as conducive hence Malawi lose out a lot on the technical as well as the economic component of it since it was predominantly done as a political process with the advent of multi-party democracy. The legislations and regulatory frameworks that we had back then were not appropriate for a liberalized economic system since they were better suited towards a controlled economic system. Even the most liberalized economies like USA and UK have much tighter regulations so liberalization is not synonymous to less regulations or deregulation as is misconceived to be the case.

**Dr. Banda adding on the impact of liberalization citing the example of cotton:**

Further concurred with Mr. Jumbe on how the economic mismanagements of the liberalization process in Malawi negated its envisaged gains. For instance, in 1993, there was liberalization for cotton which was still under the Special Crops Act and its whole value chain was being monopolized by ADMARC since it was the only buyer, supplier and seed multiplier of cotton seed. With liberalization, this changed and things seemed to have boded well for the smallholder farmers but after some time, farmers started to cry foul since they did not have the legal muscle to protect themselves against the economic exploitation they were experiencing then with vendors swindling them on a massive scale. There was an outcry that the liberalization process could have been managed better.

**Mr. Jumbe on outdated penalties for producing fake seed in Malawi:**

Malawi is very lax when it comes to punishing producers of fake seeds as the penalties are rather too lenient. In other countries like South Africa and Kenya, they have very stringent regulations and stiff penalties. For instance, they confiscate all offenders' assets if found guilty of the malpractice. On the hand, the fine here which is only two pounds is not punitive at all such that it does not even act as a deterrent to the malpractice by would-be offenders. The Malawi

Bureau of Standard's penalty is MK50, 000 which is slightly punitive but still not high enough to deter offenders. There were four such cases last year which were handled by the Lilongwe Magistrate Court but the offenders went almost unscathed for such a serious malpractice. Seed is a very sensitive product and needs to be treated as such since one cannot discern its botanical characteristics as well as genetic purity by merely examining its physical outlook as it does not look very different from Grain.

**Mr. John Lungu's pleas to the SSU to rectify its operational inefficiencies**

The Seed Services Unit seems to have stagnated in its efforts to become independent or semi-autonomous despite this issue being continually discussed at various forums. Should a proactive stance not be taken on this, there is a high risk that it will continue to operate under the aegis of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security.

He further expressed another concern that in spite of some of the SSU's commendable achievements, the seed inspection charges are too high from the seed producers' point of view ranging from \$14-\$16 per hectare of inspection when other neighboring countries charge about \$3 per hectare of inspection. Some areas are not even very inspected in spite of the seed producers paying such hefty inspection fees. This makes the production expensive for nothing when there are sentiments that seed production should be made affordable to smallholder farmers. The SSU needs to beef up its operations as it seems to be marred with a lot of inefficiencies because their efforts currently leave a lot to be desired.

**Mrs. Gloria Ghambi on whether or not the SSU is aware and involved in approving/certifying the rampant seed multiplication initiatives by a number of NGOs:**

She referred the question on the capacity of SSU and its inefficiencies to the Deputy Director of Research, Dr Banda who was better placed to tackle it. She however responded to one on the one on high seed inspection charges saying that this

can better be sorted through a round table discussion among stakeholders in the seed industry. With regard to the relationship between the plant breeders and the SSU, she responded that it depends on the latter's honesty to come to the SSU and show what seed type as well as amounts they have. If they choose to be shrewd or dishonest by not informing the SSU then they definitely cannot be aware of their seed multiplication efforts. She however pointed out that normally, the volumes of seed required for multiplication are not bulky, for instance, a breeder cannot sell one ton of grain seed as that would be highly questionable.

She further added that with regard to informal importation, the SSU cannot really know about the specific volumes entering the country since the only mechanisms that are in place allow them to only be aware of the volumes of formal imports. Most NGOs are guilty of this malpractice of engaging in informal imports as they deal with one another in cross-border/inter-country transaction. Common cases in point are the importation of pulses like cowpeas between Zambia and Malawi in particular without the SSU's knowledge.

**Professor V. Saka adding on informal importation of seed and the capacity of the SSU to manage that:**

He added that the other compounding factor is that our borders are very porous and therefore smuggling is very easy but also corruption and bribery are very rampant across all sectors and not just specifically the seed sub-sector. He concurred with the sentiments raised by Mrs. Grace Mijiga Mhango that Malawi risks becoming an easy target for "import dumping". The question indeed is not why people choose to do it but there should be serious efforts to raise more awareness on why smuggling seed quietly into the Country is not the right thing to do as there are serious repercussions associated with the practice.

He also shared the same opinion as Mrs. Gloria Ghambi that the worst smugglers of seed in Malawi are NGOs. He cited an example where they almost single-handedly contributed towards the wide spreading of the Banana Bunchy Top disease to Thyolo District which was only originally endemic in Nkhotakota District. He added that the seeming inefficiency of the SSU have a lot to do with their inadequate capacity with regard to personnel. He stated that the SSU currently has

only thirty one plant protection inspectors throughout the country to service a population of fourteen million plus which is a toll order for them.

**Mr. Madalitso Mijiga adding on the capacity of the SSU to perform efficiently and effectively:**

He agreed with Mrs. Ghambi and Prof. Saka and added that the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security is overburdened as it cannot effectively manage to police the seed industry. There is need for an independent regulatory authority to monitor such movements in the seed industry hence the need for the establishment of a National Seed Authority as has been expressed by many stakeholders in the seed industry over the years. Another gentleman added that something seriously needs to be done to improve the current situation on the bulky import/export documentation which is the highest in the region. It was suggested that a scoping study should be conducted to determine, how many, which of the documentation and how they are a hindrance to seed exports.

**Dr. Banda adding on the capacity of the SSU to perform efficiently and effectively:**

He concurred with the concerns raised by all the contributors on the capacity of the SSU and firmly stated that the SSU cannot be fully effective when operating under the armpit of Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security. It needs to be independent and autonomous even in the financial sense like Kenya for instance has the Kenya Plant Health Inspection Services which is independent from the Ministry of Agriculture. The problem in Malawi has been that this issue has been discussed at forums where the target audience could not make decisions on this. The core business of DARS is simply to conduct research and hence it needs to be semi-autonomous as has been done in other Southern and Eastern African Countries. They cannot advocate internally as there is a lot that is at stake for them. This advocacy needs an external agent who has nothing to lose. Indeed the capacity on the ground at the SSU has been very low hence the inefficiencies with regard to seed quality control systems. There have also been high staff attrition rates in the department. He added that a Diploma Programme on seed inspection was introduced at Bunda College of Agriculture and the first intake of students have now graduated and been sent in the field to assist with seed inspection. This will therefore help lessen the

problem. The other problem is that all the revenues that the SSU collects from inspections and the like all get deposited in account number one for the government which lessens its discretion for use. It would therefore be better for the SSU to also be financially independent or semi-autonomous. It is equally difficult to establish a revolving fund because the Treasury cannot endorse this.

He added that the SSU should be solely blamed for inefficiencies because there are some people who complain that the process of acquiring an import/export permit is lengthy and laborious but they are not even aware of the requirements and the legal framework to which they must comply so they should not blame the SSU for that.

**Miss Vanessa Kapeleta adding on the capacity of the SSU to perform efficiently and effectively:**

She added that there indeed need for an entry point where external stakeholders can kick-start an advocacy process on the same without burning their fingers since they have nothing to lose otherwise this risks becoming an endless cycle where no headway is made.

**Professor Saka on the participation of local companies in seed exports:**

He wondered which local Company that exports Seed was being referred to because there seems to be none to his knowledge.

**Mr. John Lungu adding on the participation of local companies in seed exports:**

He differed with Prof. Saka stating that whether it is a Multinational or Local companies in question, the point is that the process and the legal framework must facilitate and not deter trade, more especially export of seed.

**Mr. Jumbe adding on the participation of local companies in seed exports:**

He asserted that the problem was created during the colonial times since we were exporting to Britain. This did not allow for trade with neighboring countries like Mozambique which was also exporting to its colony, Portugal. This now needs to be carefully looked into so that trade within the Region can be facilitated in line with the “Open Border Concept” as the CISANET National Director mentioned in his speech.

**Mr. Jumbe on the lack of political will to effect desirable changes in Malawi**

He opined that the major challenge in Malawi has a lot to do with leadership from the top than anything else. Most of our leaders at the echelon seem to not be very visionary in how they view Malawi as unified entity with a common vision. They therefore tend to implement fragmented policies with too diverse objectives that do not bring about much corporate gains.

**Mr. Soko on how effective change can be effected:**

Wherever changes have been effective, it has always been from stakeholders getting organized and having facts on the table to challenge the status quo because no permanent change cannot be effected from within.

**Mr. John Chipeta on the different roles of advocates:**

He added that the role of those from within is to provide and generate the evidence which stakeholders from without like CISANET can then use to talk to policy makers as they engage in evidence-based advocacy. He further added that there is no need for another forum where this issue can be resolved since procrastination leads to nowhere land. CISANET should just repackage the issues and kick start an engagement process with policy makers otherwise there will never be

another opportune time. This should be part of the way forward steps. He stressed that we need not over delay the policy engagement process with duty bearers as it is in line with the current thinking of the new administration whose desire is to promote exports and ultimately transform the Nation into a net-exporter. It is an issue which requires urgency before the policy window closes. In addition to this, he informed the participants present during the meeting that the Ministry of Trade and Industry is also in the process of drafting an Export Strategy which he firmly believes still has some gaps and hence the participants could take advantage of the opportunity to provide their valuable input into the process.

**Mr. Jumbe on the future of seed industry after FISP:**

It is an issue which is currently being debated in different forums for example ECAMA also recently organized a consultative meeting on the same. He was of the view that the SAPs are to blame for most of the economic woes plaguing this Country as they had adverse effects back then which continue to have ripple effects up to now. Malawi used to be food secure in the 70s and the 80s. We even managed to export maize to Tanzania and some neighboring countries in 1984. The beginning of our problems started with the SAPS which recommended that the Credit Financing System should be under the Malawi Rural Finance Company which is now nearing its close down, undergoing liquidation. The SAPs did not put in place a system that would ensure sustainable and recoverable access to inputs by the rural community. Hunger started creeping in the country after 95-96 where we had food security because of the surplus 10,000 metric tonnes of seed sold but from then, the seed uptake/adoption kept diminishing with sales reducing to 2000 metric tonnes then to 1000 metric tonnes then to around 300/200 metric tonnes such that big seed companies were on the verge of closing down. The situation was redeemed with the coming in of NGOs with the advent of multi-party democracy necessitating their mushrooming. Most of them were promoting the use of Open Pollinated Varieties (OPVs). Starter Pack graduated into FISP and they were/are all relief in nature and not necessary agricultural development in the strictest sense, hence they are not sustainable. There is no future in the FISP for seed but it is a devil which can live with currently to achieve food security, it is what it is, a necessary evil whose future is questionable. But to bring in credit we need strong legislations and strong farmer organizations. For example, we might need to transform Villages into cooperative which are merely settlement units rather than production units as should be the case. We should also have a system of off taking whatever is being produced by farmers because ADMARC is almost dead now though in the past it used to serve farmers very well as a grain marketing corporation.

He also agreed with most contributors that the processes that are required to get an export permit currently discourage exports. CISANET therefore needs to take this up through advocacy along with the process of facilitating the making of the SSU independent.

**Mr. Jumbe on recycling of grain and the associated dangers:**

Recycling of seed be it tobacco or any seed is done out of the law of necessity but it is not desirable. It means farmers have no means of buying proper certified seed from the shelf. This practice has been further compounded with the collapse of the credit system back in the 90s. What we need are ways to finance acquisition of certified seed by farmers and not to police the recycling of seed itself. We need means that are recoverable and sustainable. He also clarified that seed cannot be recycled because it is only grain which can be recycled. Recycling of grain is dangerous both on the part of the farmer and the Country because it is what has contributed to the highly compromised quality of our tobacco of late. He argued that certification of seed is the key because if a policy can be put in place that all farmers must use certified seed and if it can be reinforced then the malpractice of recycling seed would end.

The low productivity of tobacco of late can also be attributed to the dwindling of Extension Service Delivery which has been going down compared to the pre-liberalization era. Before liberalization, extension workers used to know which farmer was producing tobacco, where they were producing it, on what price of land and whether or not they were trained.

Mr. Jumbe also added that some of our policy documents are not supportive enough to allow for growth in the seed industry. For instance, the Agriculture Guide for Malawi has conflicting messages, there is a phrase which says that certification must be done for every crop across the board and that is what determines seed to be seed but in the same document there are also contradictory messages like “this particular type of seed can recycle.” It makes no business

sense to any Private Sector Company to produce recyclable seed when they have invested a lot of money in the production process, may be even to the extent of financing their production through loans from Commercial Banks.

Mr. Jumbe on diversifying the seed basket in Malawi:

He stated that the capacity to produce legume seed is there and much of the growth has largely been attributable to the FISP. He also mentioned that to support the same, STAM is implementing a Programme which promotes the generic production of various types of seed and not just maize. And seed is never seed until it is certified because this because disadvantages the recycling.

Another gentleman added that sometimes supply does create demand but he was not sure if there were any efforts Malawi was making to actually increase or create the demand for seed so as to reverse the undesirable trend of having the lowest adoption of 43% together with Mozambique in the Region compared with other Countries like Zambia whose adoption is at 54%, South Africa, whose adoption rate is at 98% and Zimbabwe, whose adoption rate is at 99%. In Zimbabwe the adoption rates are the highest because the colonialists imposed it given their large scale commercial farming which is different from Malawi which predominantly practices subsistence farming.

**Professor Saka on making use of certified seed mandatory:**

He differed with the argument advanced by Mr. Jumbe that there should be a regulatory policy to make the use certified seed mandatory to all farmers to curb the practice of recycling grain. According to him, it is a non-starter to effect such policies and legislations against subsistence farmers who use hoes since their efficiency and productivity is very negligible as they are hardly commercially oriented.

**Professor Saka on lack of diversity in the Seed industry:**

He argued that the lack of diversity in the seed industry is largely attributable to the thinking that has traditionally prevailed over the years that maize is equal to food. Unfortunately, he asserted that maize is the most expensive crop in the world. The demands for fertilizer are extremely high. For example, in the developed Countries like the US, a minimum of 200kg Nitrogen is applied per hectare which a small-holder farmer cannot in Malawi cannot afford by a stretch.

**Mrs. Mgomezulu on the effectiveness of extension services:**

She argues that contrary to the assertions that had been made by some of the contributors, the extension system delivery has not changed at all but most of the changes have been brought about by the lack of responsibility on the part of the farmers themselves to adhere to the recommendations/instructions as specified per the extension and advisory messages. It is mostly a mindset problem of the farmers but the opportunity is there to help effect the desired change. She affirmed that one can only take a horse to the river but cannot force it to drink. The other setback affecting the delivery of extension services is that the farmer /extension worker ratio is extremely high due to the high vacancy rates in the Department.

**Dr. Banda on the unfair pricing of hybrids:**

He argued that uniform pricing of hybrids is prohibitive as production of seed using single-cross hybrids is much more tedious compared to double-cross or triple-cross which are much easier. The pricing mechanism however is the same which is unfair for those producing double or three way cross breeds.

**Mr. Nkhono-Mvula on the advocacy role that CISANET can play in dealing with some of the issues raised:**

The role that CISANET can play is that of advocacy but it can only do so if it is reliably armed with the required evidence. It for example needs to engage with Institutions like the Grain Traders and Processing Association where we can do a

factual scanning of what the structural challenges affecting the process of acquiring and import/export permit are in order for it to be more strategic and effective on its advocacy.

### **WAY FORWARD**

The Director of Ceremony then announced the key way forward steps, most of which also came up during the plenary discussion.

### **Closing Remarks by the CISANET National Director, Mr. Nkhono Mvula**

The Director of Ceremonies then invited the CISANET National Director to make the closing remarks. In his remarks, thanked all the participants present and mentioned that some of his closing remarks had already been alluded to by the Director of Ceremonies as she was iterating the Way Forward Steps. He assured that participants that the HaSSP National Task Team members had taken note of the issues raised. He added that there would be need to have a round table meeting as soon as possible with Grain Traders and Processing Association, Seed Traders and NASFAM in order to identify the root causes of the issues and take them up through advocacy as some of them can better be tackled by the MCCI and the challenges may not really be exclusive to the seed sector.

### **Closing Remarks by a CISANET Board Member, Mrs. Grace Mijiga Mhango**

She thanked all the participants for attending the meeting. She also underscored the fact that all the issues raised during the meeting were very important, not only to CISANET but all relevant stakeholders and hence they needed to be taken up further. She lastly thanked FANPAN for funding the meeting but she also thanked all the presenters for the very good and elaborate presentations. In closing, she then invited all participants to lunch after declaring the meeting officially closed. The Director of Ceremonies then asked a Volunteer to offer a closing prayer after which the participants dispersed. The meeting was wrapped up at around 13:15 and it was a huge success.

## ANNEXES

### ANNEX 1: PROGRAMME

**HARMONIZED SEED SECURITY PROJECT (HASSP)**

**NATIONAL POLICY DIALOGUE MEETING PROGRAM**

**VENUE: Crossroads Hotel**

**DATE: Wednesday the 14<sup>th</sup> of November, 2012 (Half-day)**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Session</b>	<b>Responsible</b>
<b>Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> of November 2012</b>	<b>INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES:</b>		
	08:00-08:30	Registration of Participants	CISANET Secretariat
	08:30-08:35	Opening Prayer	Volunteer
	08:35-08:45	Introduction of the Meeting's Objectives	Moderator- Miss Vanessa Kapeleta
	08:45-08:55	Welcoming Remarks	CISANET National Director- Mr. Tamani Nkhono Mvula
	08:55-09:15	Keynote Address and Official Opening remarks	MoAFS CAETS, Dr. Wilfred Lipita
	<b>PRESENTATIONS</b>		
09:15-09:50	Overview of the Status of marketing in the Smallholder Seed Sub-Sector in Malawi	Mr. Mvaiwa from STAM	

	09:50-10:30	Overview of Variety Registration Procedures in Malawi	Dr. Mackson Banda from DARS
	10:30- 11:00	Tea (Health Break) and Group Photo	
	11:00-11:30	Overview of Seed Certification Regulations in Malawi	Mrs. Gloria Ghambi from DARS
	11:30-12:00	Overview of Phytosanitary and Quarantine Procedures in Malawi	Mr. Misheck Soko from DARS
	<b>FEEDBACK &amp; REACTIONS</b>		
	12:00-12:45	Plenary Discussion	Moderator, Miss Vanessa Kapeleta
	12:45-13:00	Way forward	Moderator, Miss Vanessa Kapeleta
	13:00-13:10	Closing Remarks	CISANET National Director- Mr. Tamani Nkhono Mvula
	13:10-13:15	Closing Prayer	Volunteer
	13:15-14:15	Lunch and Departure	

## **ANNEX 2**

### **PARTICIPANTS REGISTRATION SHEET HAASP**

**DATE: WEDNESDAY THE 14<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2012**

**VENUE: CROSS HOTEL**

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