



## Concept Note: Webinar on Strengthening Public-Private Collaboration in Plant Breeding in Africa.

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**Title:** Public-Private Synergies in African Seed Systems: Advancing Collaborative Breeding and Innovation in the Seed Sector

**Date:** 25<sup>th</sup> July 2025

**Time:** 11h00 – 14h00 (EAT Nairobi Time)

**Format:** Webinar (Zoom meeting) <https://tinyurl.com/afstacblp>

**Organizers:** African Seed Trade Association (AFSTA) & International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), CGIAR

**Moderator:** Catherine Lang'at (AFSTA) & Co-moderator: Trushar Shah (IITA, CGIAR)

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### Background and Rationale

Sub-Saharan Africa encounters significant obstacles in reforming its agriculture to guarantee food security, adapt to climate change, and foster economic growth. Seeds, as the essential input in farming, are crucial, and the seed sector significantly influences the productivity and sustainability of agricultural systems.

While significant progress has been made in both public and private sector-led crop improvement initiatives, collaboration between these two spheres remains limited in scope and scale. The CGIAR, through its Collaborative Breeding Leadership Program (CBLP), and AFSTA, as a key industry voice representing private seed companies across Africa, are working together to bridge this gap.

This webinar will serve as a platform for meaningful engagement and dialogue between national and international public breeding institutions and the private seed sector, with the aim of strengthening mutual understanding, identifying shared priorities, and building joint-action areas. It will also highlight the importance of coordinated approaches for investments, technology scaling, and knowledge-sharing in plant breeding to better serve the needs of African farmers.

## **Objectives**

1. Highlighting AFSTA's strategic direction and vision for private sector growth in Africa's seed industry.
2. Showcase the CGIAR - CBLP perspectives and its goals for enhancing collaboration with seed companies and explore shared opportunities for leadership development focused on crop improvement and seed systems
3. Share insights from private seed companies regarding their R&D contributions and identify gaps in crop development coverage.
4. Present and support successful Public and Private partnership models of collaborative breeding and technology transfer to the private sector through existing consortia (Africa Vegetable Breeding Consortium -AVBC, and African Cereals & Legumes Breeding Consortium - ACLBC).
5. Accelerate discussions on opportunities, constraints, and pathways to enhance public-private breeding partnerships, including policy dialogue in advancing the plant breeding innovation agenda in Africa.

## **Expected Outcomes**

- Improved understanding of AFSTA's strategic plan 3.0 by CGIAR-NARES/SME breeding and seed systems teams, leading to clearer areas of public-private collaboration.
- The unveiling of CGIAR's CBLP as a key frontier in leadership development for early and mid-career scientists, focusing on efficient crop improvement and delivery into seed systems, and clarifying CBLP's collaboration opportunities.
- Investment gaps for priority crops identified, and action items towards concerted breeding efforts and delivery to seed systems explored
- Consolidating programs and existing consortia to ensure concerted and inclusive efforts for sustainability and impact at scale, or forming a new crop-based consortium if necessary.
- A more focused strategy on joint resource mobilization for talent development aimed at developing tomorrow's leaders today, from development partners on plant breeding and seed systems projects on the continent.

## Target Audience

- Seed companies and private plant breeders, and scientists
- CGIAR and national public breeding programs and seed systems
- CBLP fellows, management, and advisory teams

## Webinar Agenda

### 11h00 – 11h10 EAT | Welcome & Opening Remarks

**Speaker:** AFSTA & IITA, CGIAR

### 11h10 – 11h30 | AFSTA strategic plan 3.0

**Speaker:** *Yacouba Diallo, AFSTA*

- Overview of AFSTA's mission and strategic priorities
- The state of private sector activity in Africa's seed industry
- Vision for the future: Public-private collaboration for a resilient seed system

### 11h30 – 12h00 EAT | Introduction to CGIAR's CBLP

**Speakers:** *John Derera / Trushar Shah/Zaina Sougrynoma Sore, IITA, CGIAR*

- Introduction to the CBLP and its objectives
- Focus on private sector engagement
- Highlighting collaborative potential across key value chains. Introduction to CGIAR Capacity Sharing accelerator

### 12h00 – 12h30 EAT | Private Sector Contributions to R&D

**Speaker:** Clive Mugadza, SeedCo & AFSTA Vice President

- Company case study: Innovation, investment, and impact in African seed systems
- Crops covered and gaps in R&D pipelines
- Perspectives on working with public breeding programs

### 12h30 – 13h00 EAT | Collaborative Breeding Initiatives

**Speakers:**

- *Mwasilwa Ambali – African Vegetable Breeding Consortium (AVBC)*
- *Solomon Gizaw – African Cereals and Legumes Breeding Consortium (ACLBC)*
- Lessons from consortia: Models of collaboration, shared resources, and regional breeding impact

### 13h00 – 13h45 EAT | Interactive Q&A Session

- Moderated discussion
  - Open floor for questions, feedback, and ideas from participants
  - **13h45 – 14h00 EAT | Closing Remarks**  
**Speakers:** *AFSTA and CGIAR representatives (Bish Das/ Dorcus Gemenet, CIMMYT-Kenya/Zain Sore, IITA)*, Summary of key insights and next steps
  - Call to action for sustained collaboration under the CBLP framework
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