Seed Emergency Response Tool
Guidance for Practitioners

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Participation

- Only panellist microphones and cameras enabled
- Introduce yourself in the chat!
- All questions (tech & content) in the chat
- Webinar is recorded for sharing

French interpretation available

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INTRODUCTION

Agenda

● Background (ISSD Africa - SDC)
● Reflections from USAID
● SERT overview
● Reflections from Implementers
● Questions
Effective seed insecurity response

8 Action Research Topics

1. Developing the seed sector in fragile states
2. Effective seed insecurity response
3. Agrobiodiversity, seeds and climate change
4. Enabling seed policies
5. Enhancing seed quality assurance
6. Business models for EGS
7. Creating demand for quality seed
8. Gender dynamics in seed systems

Action learning questions

- How can we improve the impact of emergency seed interventions?
- How can emergency interventions help create more resilient and improved seed systems in the long-term?
1. Importance of Agriculture and Seed in BHA
2. Chronic Seed Issue in BHA Agriculture Applications
3. Why is SERT as a resource important?
Importance of Agriculture and Seed in BHA

- FY 21: 185 agriculture applications inc. 121 with seeds and seedling components totaling $234.7m
- BHA among the largest donors globally in emergency seed aid.
- BHA requires seed assessments when seed is provided in same location for 3 consecutive seasons.
- Seed AID in terms of total value and # of countries is increasing.
- Close to 2 decades BHA has supported initiatives to improve emergency seed assessment (SSSA) and more recently RSSA under S34D
Chronic Seed Issues in BHA Agriculture Applications

1. **Lack of needs assessment** / seed insecurity is not characterized, i.e. – How does the cropping area / actual seed need of target farmers relate to the seed being requested? How are the target farmers seed security impacted by the emergency?

2. **Needs assessment with no rigor or methodology** – recommendations not linked to findings.

3. **Low /no recognition of local seed sources** and/or sources outside of formal seed channels.

4. **Response modalities tend towards direct distribution**, limited use of markets, limited effort to promote market pluralism.

5. **Seed quality identified as an issue but with no discussion of the crop specific seed quality issues**.

6. **General reference to ‘improved seed’ or ‘climate smart agriculture’ but no clear indication of the desired farmer characteristics** / seed varieties and how these characteristics / varieties address the emergency seed challenges faced by farmers.

7. **Formal seed certification seen as a requirement** with no alternatives.
Why is SERT as a Resource Important?

1. Emergency Seed AID has persistent challenges and SERT can help emergency seed aid practitioners to better diagnose emergency seed need and identify opportunities to leverage existing seed system capacities.

1. SERT recognizes and builds on existing emergency seed security/seed assessment tools and resources.
SERT Background
Humanitarian Context

- Rising seed aid
- Repetitive seed aid
- Creating farmer dependency
- Damaging seed enterprise development

Need for practical tool to guide response options
Seed Emergency Response Tool (SERT)

**Development:** Mercy Corps & ISSD Africa with SeedSystem, input from USAID and implementers. Builds on 30 years of lessons learned

**Audience:** policy makers, program managers and field staff engaged in emergency and early recovery agricultural response; non-technical staff and experienced professionals

**Aim:** provide guidance on seed security interventions: assessing possible need; setting goals; choosing among responses; designing specific field action; evaluating

**English and French**

Complimented by the Context Analysis Tool (CAT)
SERT
Central Features
1. Seed System Fundamentals
2. Seed Security & Program Goals

Seed Systems and resilience programming

- Systems
- Diversity (crops and varieties)
- Diversity (supply channels)
- Availability and access
- Mobilization
3. Response Interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Direct distribution</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Direct Seed Distribution (DSD)</td>
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<td>Local procurement and distribution of seed</td>
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<td>Provision of modern varieties</td>
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<td>Food aid to serve as 'Seed protection ration'</td>
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<td><em>Market-based approaches focused on clients (demand)</em></td>
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<td>Seed fairs, combined with vouchers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
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<td>Vouchers</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Market-based approaches focused on suppliers</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Market-based support to supply side (agrodealers/traders)</td>
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Response Interventions

**DIRECT DISTRIBUTION**

**SEED FAIRS/VOUCHERS**

**CASH TRANSFER**
Market-based Responses

Informal markets
cereals, legumes, other crops

Formal markets (agrodealers)
maize, vegetable seed
## 4. Decision Trees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key questions to shape humanitarian response</th>
<th>Evidence/indicators</th>
<th>If Yes</th>
<th>If No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Is a seed security-linked intervention feasible?</td>
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</table>
| A.1 Readiness. Is the farming population ready to engage in agriculture? | 1. Move to A.2  
2. Are there other crucial nonagricultural aid options to support the population? |        |       |
| A.2 Means. Does the population have the means to engage in agriculture (e.g., land, labor, other inputs, credit)? | 1. Move to A.3  
2. Can supplementary aid help lessen non-seed constraints? |        |       |
| A.3 Broad context. Are the major context changes affecting agriculture during this stress period clearly understood? | 1. Move to A.4  
2. What additional information processes could be put in place to clarify the situation? |        |       |
| A.4 Do no harm: general context. Can a humanitarian response be implemented in the current scenario (consider short- and longer-term effects)? | 1. Move to section B: SEED SECURITY  
2. Can harmful effects be alleviated with altered strategy? (Analyze each item in terms of potential harm.) |        |       |

If No, consider other non-seed aid.
### 4. Decision Trees

For the constraint of **SEED ACCESS**, there are several possible response options.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key questions</th>
<th>Evidence /indicators</th>
<th>CASH</th>
<th>VOUCHERS</th>
<th>SVF</th>
<th>DSD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>C.2.1 Context</strong>&lt;br&gt;Does the context allow for this type of intervention?</td>
<td>1. 2.</td>
<td>Are there sufficient market outlets supplying formal or informal seed?&lt;br&gt;Are outlets within reasonable distance?&lt;br&gt;Is it safe/feasible for recipients to travel?&lt;br&gt;Do donors/gov'ts allow for this modality?</td>
<td>Are there sufficient market outlets supplying formal or informal seed?&lt;br&gt;Are outlets within reasonable distance to recipients?&lt;br&gt;Is it safe/feasible for recipients to travel?</td>
<td>Is it safe/feasible for recipients to congregate and travel?&lt;br&gt;Are vendors willing to travel to fair venue?</td>
<td>C.1 above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Review possibility of other interventions that enable seed access and solve constraint(s) directly above.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C.2.2 Logistics</strong>&lt;br&gt;Can the necessary logistics be put in place?</td>
<td>1. 2.</td>
<td>Are either direct or digital transfer of 'cash' options available?&lt;br&gt;Can all recipients including the most vulnerable be reached with this approach?</td>
<td>Have sufficient vendors willing to accept vouchers been identified? Cross-reference with C.2 (4,5,6,7).</td>
<td>Can enough fairs be organized at needed scale and in time, with staff trained?</td>
<td>Can vouchers be printed in time?</td>
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5. Guiding Principles

Themes
1. Seed System Security Assessment (SSSA)
2. Response type
3. Goal of the intervention
4. Context
5. Timeliness
6. Market-based assistance
7. Crop and variety choice
8. Seed quality
9. Farmers’ choice
10. Feedback at multiple key stages
SERT GUIDING PRINCIPLES

#7 Crop & Variety Choice

The crops and varieties selected for the intervention should suit the context and user needs

Technical notes

a. Seed and intervention goal
b. Traditional versus modern varieties
c. Varietal preferences, including those related to gender
d. Crop preferences, including those related to gender
e. Realistic management conditions
f. Self- and open-pollinated varieties
g. Genetically modified organisms (GMOs)
h. No suitability, no intervention
SERT CENTRAL FEATURES

Technical Support

- Indicators of acute shock vs chronic stress
- Seed quality advice
- Evaluation checklists
  
  post-harvest
  ↓
  after one season
  ↓
  after multiple seasons
SERT Central Features

1. Seed systems fundamentals
2. Charts on seed response types
3. Decision trees to select specific actions
4. 10 Best practice principles for implementation
5. Resources
Feedback welcome!

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Thank You!