SCALE Seeds Learning Group for USAID/BHA-funded Programming

Session One

August 10, 2022

This Seeds Learning Group is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).
The contents are the responsibility of the SCALE Award and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

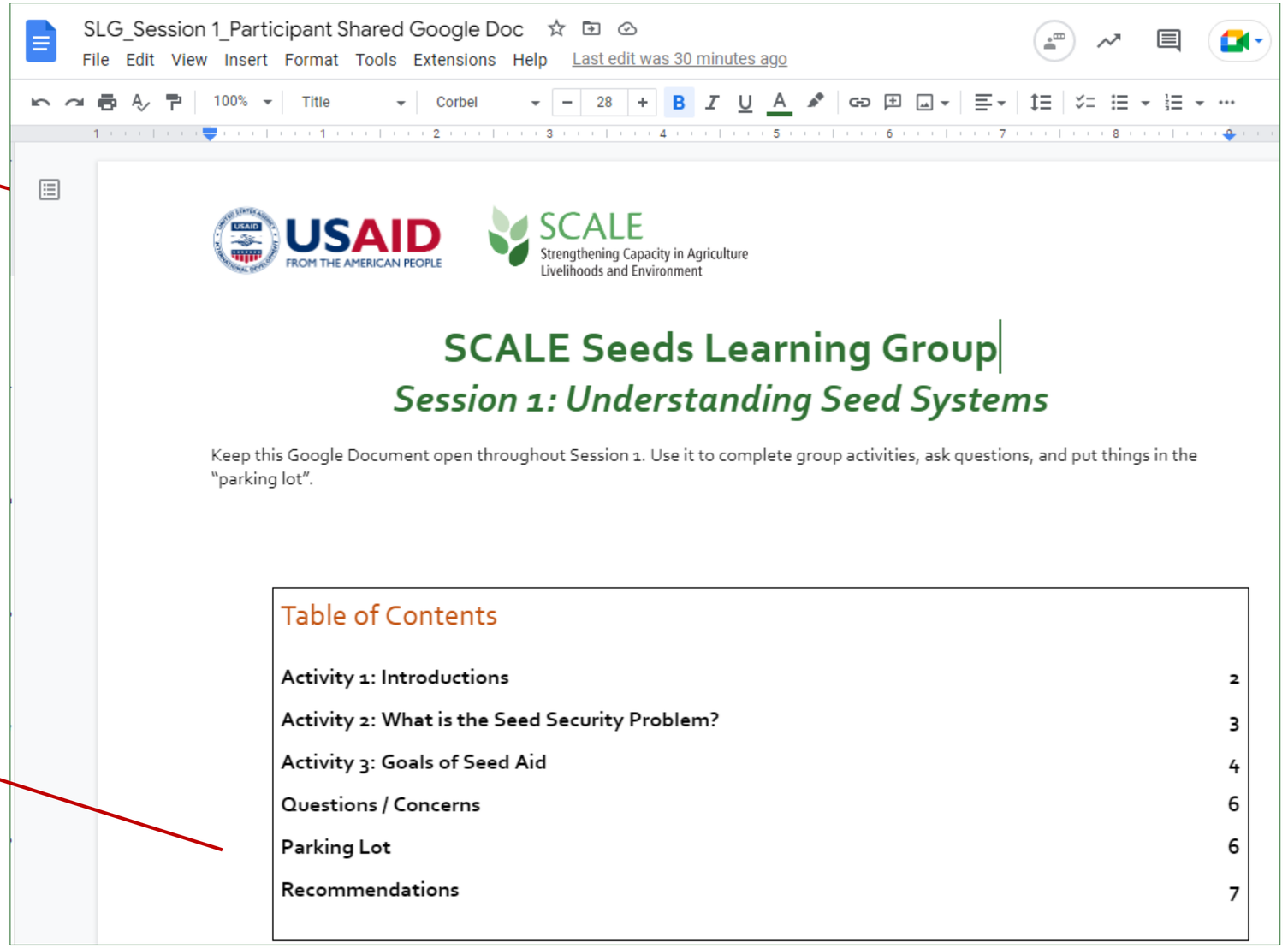
Welcome & Housekeeping

- Welcome to the Seeds Learning Group!
- Introduce yourself in the chat
- Use the chat to ask questions, share comments throughout
- Stay muted if you aren't speaking; come off mute for discussions and breakout groups
- Use camera if your internet supports it
- Session is recorded for sharing

Shared Google Document

Use this icon, on the left side of the Google Doc to move between contents of the document

Click on any of the "Table of Contents" titles to jump to that section of the document.



Facilitator Introductions

Louise Sperling

Research Director, SeedSystem

Wilfred Ouko

Program Advisor, Mercy Corps, SCALE & ISSD Africa

Abby Love

Senior Specialist, Mercy Corps, SCALE

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Operations Officer, Mercy Corps, SCALE

Today's Agenda

Overall Learning Group

1. Seeds Learning Group Background
2. Learning Group aims & ground rules

Session One: Understanding Seed Systems

3. Seed system fundamentals
4. Summary and after-session task

Participant Introductions

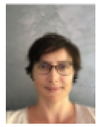
- Open the shared Google Document and go to **Activity 1: Introductions**

- Scroll through and read your colleague's "big questions"

- Is this a priority for you too?
  - If a priority, put an **X** in the column marked "This is a priority"
  - If this question is NOT a priority for you, put an **X** in the column labeled "This is not a priority"

Take **5 minutes** to look through document!

Activity 1: Introductions

Photos	Name	Project Name	Country	One big question you have about seed systems or seed system assessments (SSA/SSSAs) ?	This is a priority.	This is not a priority.
	Amenti Chali	Resilience Food Security Activity (RFSA/Ifaa)	Ethiopia plus other countries	Does the seed system/seed system assessment include imported seeds or locally produced ones only?		
	Joanne Cagin	Multipurpose Assistance to Conflict affected populations (MAC) in eastern Congo	Democratic Republic of Congo	How can we coordinate the implementation of an SSSA in multiple locations we multiple teams (how much time, resources, training will it take for the teams)?		
	Ina Schonberg	Multiple	Global	How to integrate / adapt SSSA into ongoing programs and proposal/ pre-program planning?		
	Odoch Patrick Marvin	Graduating to Resilience Activity	Uganda	How do we strengthen the local seeds multipliers capacity to ensure availability of quality seeds in the local market.		

SEEDS LEARNING GROUP

BACKGROUND

SCALE Consultations on Seed Systems Assessments in March 2021

- Two implementing partner consultations
  - USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA)-funded programs
    - HQ technical advisors
    - Program implementers

Aim: better understand the variation in uptake and usage of Seed System Assessments in BHA-funded programming

Key findings

1. Most applications fail to include an SSA or some equivalent

2. Although completed country SSA are available online, they are not widely accessed by implementers

3. Limited expertise/capacity of staff in understanding the purpose of the tools/methods for an SSA.

4. Limited awareness and/or availability of tools, resources, and research related to the analysis of data.

Key Recommendations

1. **Support more socialization on information and resources**
   - through co-creation of additional trainings
   - lighter touch support to help partners access, navigate, and use the tools, past reports, and e-training available on seed system assessment (SSA).

2. **Clarify the BHA guidelines and expectations for assessments in ongoing programs**
   - e.g. the three consecutive year expectation in BHA's emergency application guidelines

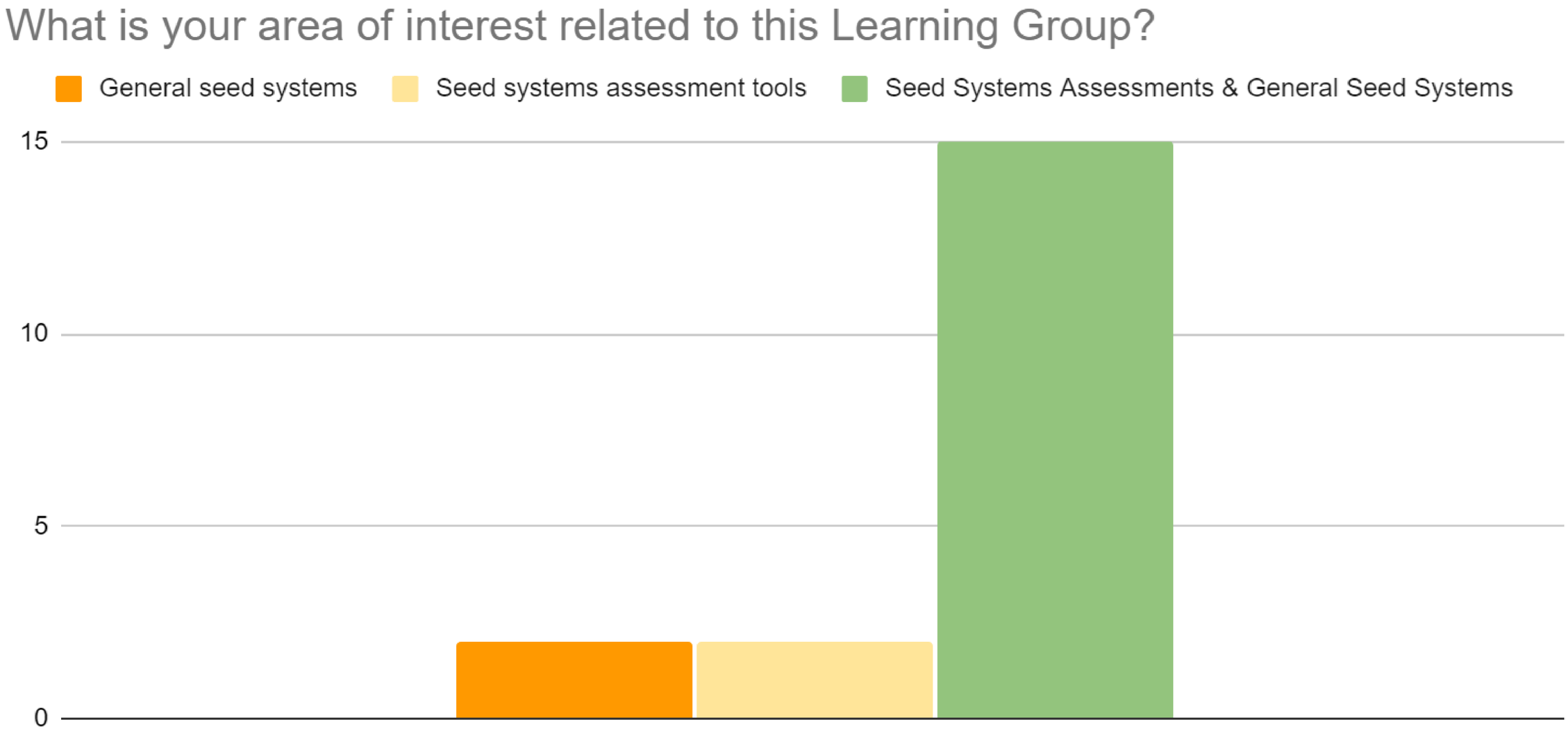
LEARNING GROUP AIMS

Learning Group Aims

Participants leave with:

- Solid understanding of **general seed systems**
- Solid understanding of **seed system assessment (SSA)** and how to access and use **existing tools, trainings** and other resources
- Strong awareness of **common pitfalls**- and how to avoid them
- Clear understanding of **BHA expectations** around SSA

Your Expectations



Your Expectations - Other

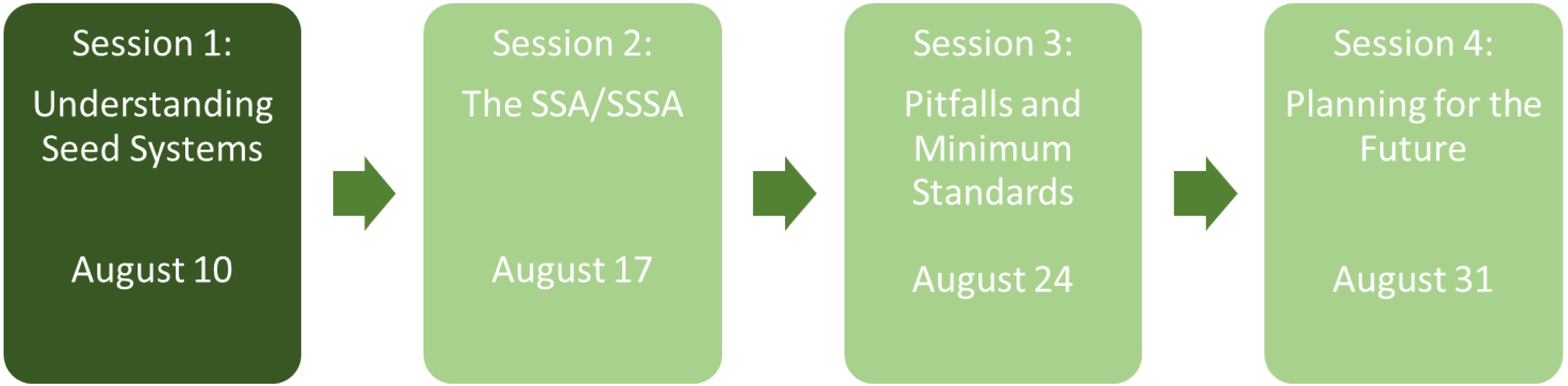
Other topics of interest mentioned

- Seed selection and seed certification system
- Cash-based assistance
- Climate Smart Agriculture
- Nutrition
- Seed production principles and quality assurance
- Seeds system policy and framework
- Market system of the Seeds system

Out of scope

- Livestock in humanitarian programmes
- Youth and livelihoods in seed systems

Seeds Learning Group Session Map



Ground Rules

- Lively and honest interactions
- Very practical
- All participants attend all sessions
- All do your best to have good access to internet
- Participants do the modest ‘home exercises’
- Reduce distractions (close email, etc.) during sessions
- Share your experiences
- Be vocal about your needs!
- Anything else?

SESSION ONE:

UNDERSTANDING

SEED SYSTEMS

Session One Agenda

1. What is seed?
2. Seed security framework
3. Seed system basics
4. Goals of seed aid work
5. Summary and after-session task

WHAT IS SEED?!!

What is Seed?

Scratch Sheet

#	Is this seed?		Comments
	Yes	No	
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			

1.Is this Seed?

2. Is this Seed?

3. Is this Seed?

4. Is this Seed?

5. Is this Seed?

6. Is this Seed?

7. Is this Seed?

8. Is this Seed?

What is Seed?

ANSWERS and DISCUSSION

#	Is this seed?	
	Yes	No
1	X	
2	X	
3	X	
4	X	
5	X	
6	X	
7		X
8		X

Summary

- Seed can be sourced from different places
- Different signals help people determine if it can be planted
  - Formal sector: labels/expiration dates; dyes; packaging
  - Informal sector: storage conditions (cobs, on trees); sorting
- Always important to visually inspect; and test (if possible)
- Remember that seed has to be: right crop, right varieties, healthy, good germination

SEED SECURITY FRAMEWORK (SSF)

Seed Security Framework

Parameters	Definition
Availability	Sufficient quantity of seed of adapted crops is within **reasonable proximity** (spatial availability) and **in time** for critical sowing periods (temporal availability)
Access	People have **adequate income** or other resources to purchase or barter for appropriate seeds
Seed Health / Quality	Seed is healthy: good physical, physiological and sanitary quality
Variety Suitability / Quality	Varieties are **adapted, meet farmers' preferences** (men and women) and are market-acceptable

IDENTIFYING SEED SECURITY PROBLEM

TESTING OUR UNDERSTANDING - Fun!

Activity Instructions: What is the Seed Security Problem?

- Break into 4 groups
- Take **<u>7 minutes</u>** to discuss 5 seed security scenarios and decide which seed security problem each is referring to.
  - *Nominate 1 person to facilitate the group*
  - *Nominate 1 person to take notes <u>on scratch sheet</u> which problem for each scenario*
- Then we will come back together and discuss.
- Any questions?

Availability | **Access** | **Seed Health/quality** | **Variety suitability/quality**

Activity 1: What is the Seed Security Problem?

1. The household does not have sufficient common bean seed for the upcoming season and wants to acquire more from local markets. BUT now is also the time for school fees. The family has no 'extra' seed money.
2. Modern varieties of sorghum have been distributed following a drought. While their heads (panicles) are big, the stems are too short and not tasty for fodder. The farmers, here, are agro-pastoralists.
3. Cassava Mosaic Disease has wiped out all healthy planting material and there are NO clean stems to plant, not anywhere in the region.
4. Farmers say that insects are attacking their cowpea in storage (losses of even 70%) and the grains that survive rarely emerge (sprout) when planted.
5. Very few in the village have even tried new varieties of maize as there are no agro-dealers anywhere in the province. These commercial sellers say the area is just too remote and transport too costly.

Availability | **Access** | **Seed Health/quality** | **Variety suitability/quality**

What is the seed security problem (1)?

The household does not have sufficient common bean seed for the upcoming season and wants to acquire more from local markets. BUT now is also the time for school fees. The family has no ‘extra’ seed money.

Availability | **Access** | **Seed Health/quality** | **Variety suitability/quality**

What is the seed security problem (2)?

Modern varieties of sorghum have been distributed following a drought. While their heads (panicles) are big, the stems are too short and not tasty for fodder. The farmers, here, are agro-pastoralists.

Availability | **Access** | **Seed Health/quality** | **Variety suitability/quality**

What is the seed security problem (3)?

Cassava Mosaic Disease has wiped out all healthy planting material and there are NO clean stems to plant, not anywhere in the region.

Availability | **Access** | **Seed Health/quality** | **Variety suitability/quality**

What is the seed security problem (4)?

Farmers say that insects are attacking their cowpea in storage (losses of even 70%) and the grains that survive rarely emerge (sprout) when planted.

Availability | **Access** | **Seed Health/quality** | **Variety suitability/quality**

What is the seed security problem (5)?

Very few in the village have even tried new varieties of maize as there are no agro-dealers anywhere in the province. These commercial sellers say the area is just too remote and transport too costly.

Availability | **Access** | **Seed Health/quality** | **Variety suitability/quality**

Which problem is this?

ANSWERS and DISCUSSION

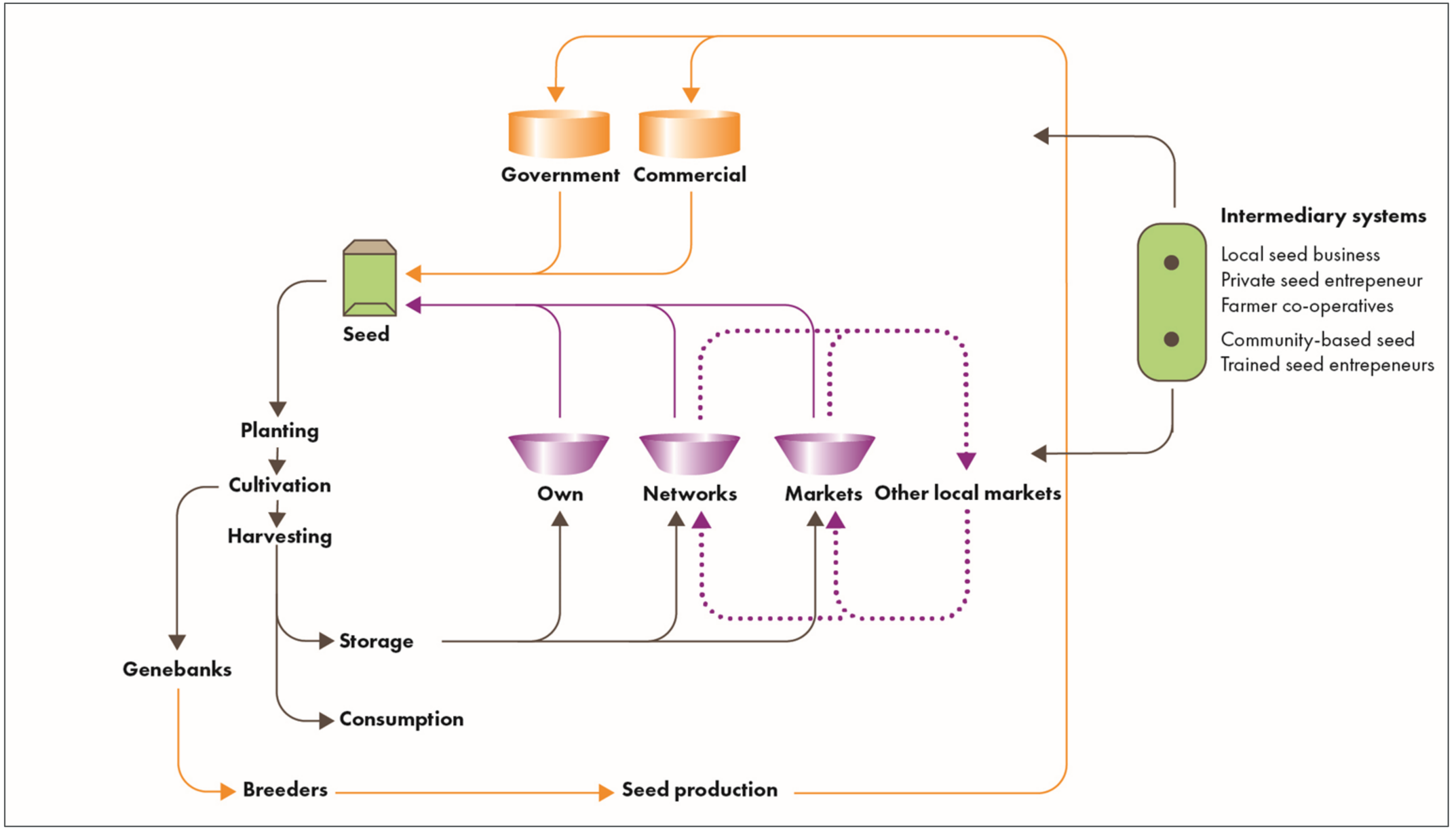
	Access	Availability	Seed Health	Variety Suitability
1 Family has no extra seed money	X			
2 Modern varieties of sorghum post-drought				X
3 Cassava Mosaic Disease wiped out planting material		X	X	
4 Insects attacking cowpea in storage		X	X	
5 No agro-dealers for new maize varieties	X	X		

DISCUSSION

Explore common seed security problems faced by participants

SEED SYSTEMS BASICS

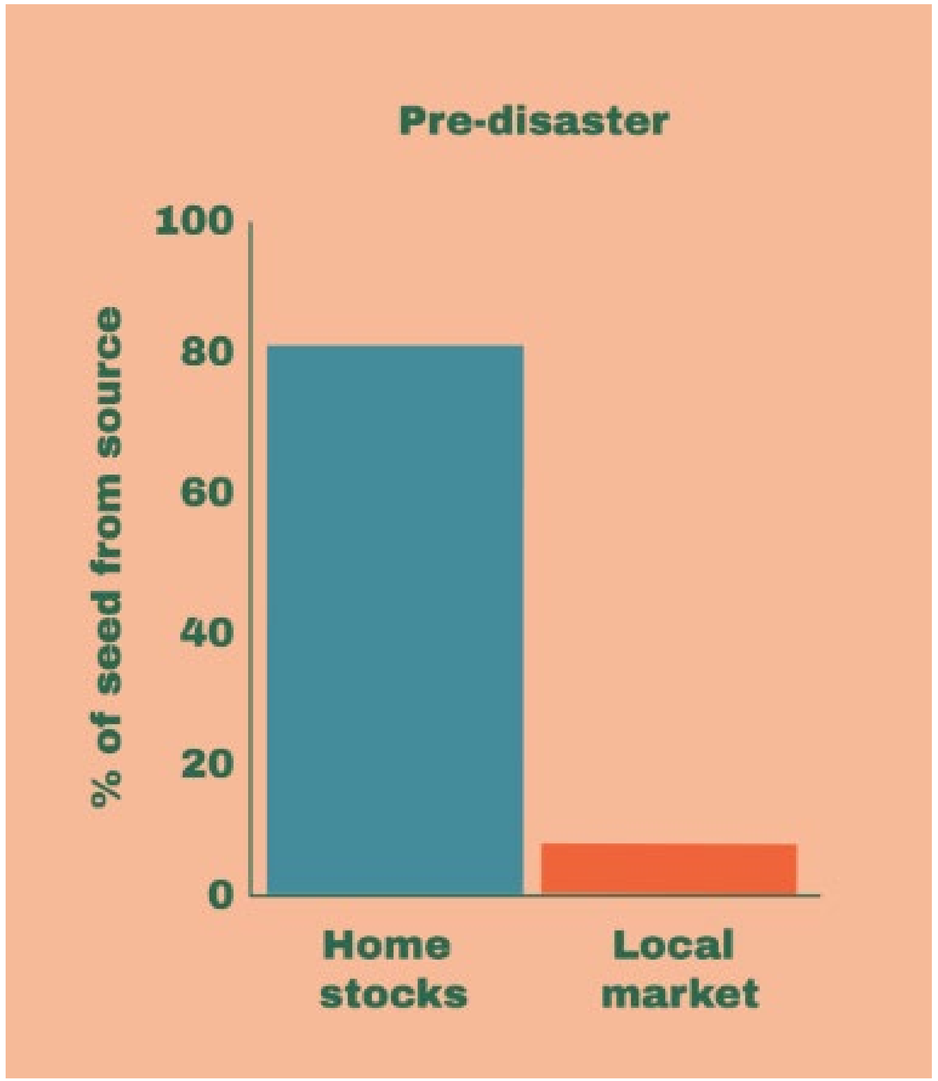
Channels through which Farmers Source Seed

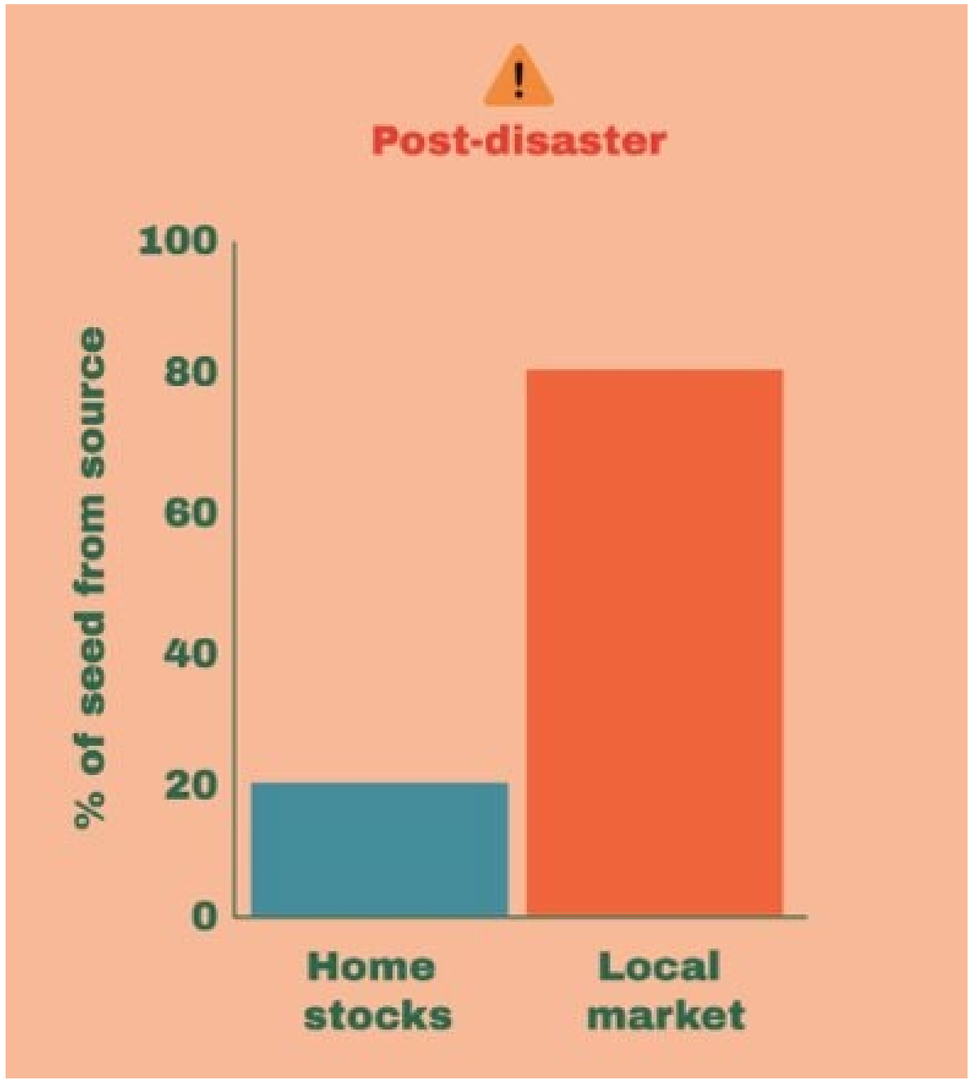


Focus: key crops + seed supply channels (sample)

Crop	Home saved (%)	Social networks (%)	Local markets (%)	Formal + Comm. sector (%)	Seed aid (%)	Total (%)
Maize	45	5	15	20	15	100
Rice	55		15		30	100
Cassava	70	30				100
Beans	20		70	10		100

Seed channel use can change during stress





SEED OUTLETS

Agro-dealers

Few legumes– except for FISP, sometimes

Local Markets (grain/seed)

- Not all grain can be sown.
- But some ‘grain’ also is ‘very good seed’ (potential seed)
  - Adapted (right variety)
  - Good quality

Farmers own stock

Traditional Granaries

Maize cobs hung to dry

Open Plastic Buckets

Seed Producer Groups

Summary of seed systems + discussion

- Formal, informal and intermediary systems all matter
- Seed channel use varies by crop
- Poorer farmers may use different mix of channels from wealthier
- Seed channel use may change after disaster
- One channel is not necessarily better than another

Goals of seed aid work

Seed aid can be designed for different goals:

- Food security
- Nutrition
- Climate resilience
- Income generation

Goal	Crop/varietal issues: broad choices
Food security (classic approach)	• Major staple crops • Crops/varieties responsive to inputs
Nutrition	• Focus beyond calories to include nutritive elements: • Varieties biofortified with micronutrients • Crops contributing to dietary diversity • Specialty crops: leafy vegetables, orange-fleshed sweet potatoes
Climate resilience	• Crops that tolerate abiotic stress: >Heat tolerant crops/varieties; >Water efficient crops/varieties • Crops that add value or diversity to resource base >Legumes to fix nitrogen >Fodder crops; Perennials
Income generation	• Crops geared to markets ('high value crops') • Crops linked to value-added/ processing chains • Crops linked to non-food livelihood activities (e.g., fiber production)

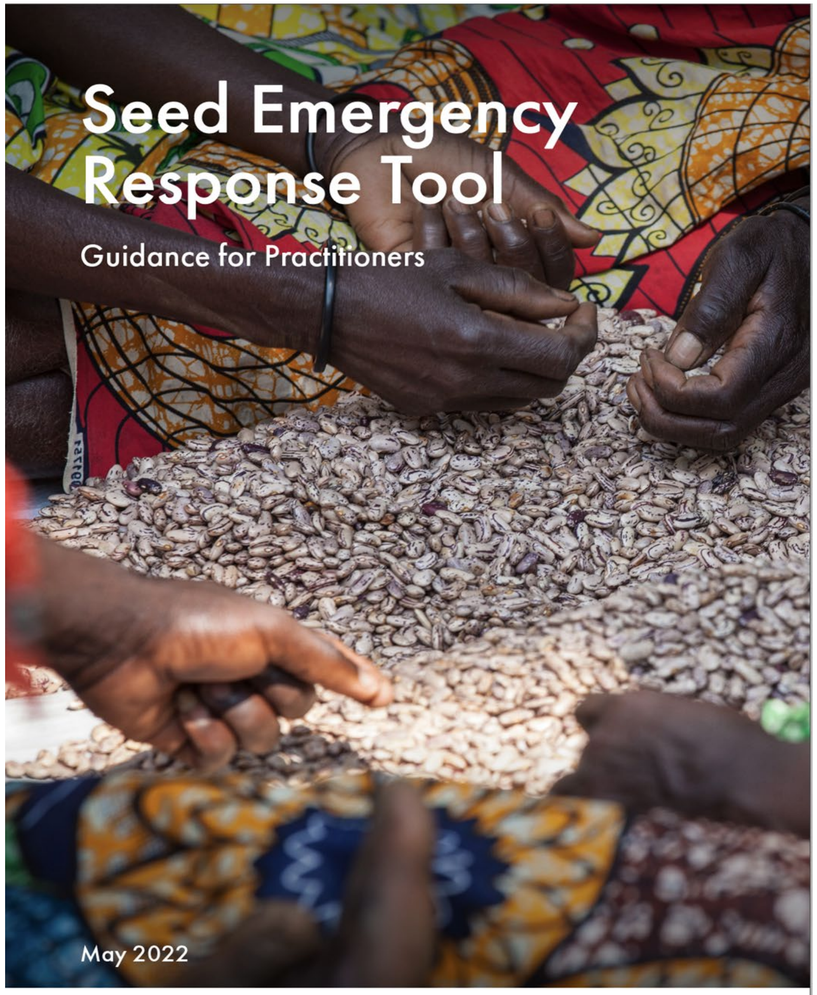
Activity!

- Go to Google doc, **Activity 2: Goals of Seed Aid**
- Write your name, organization and put X's in the columns that reflect your organization's seed aid goals. Put as many X's as appropriate.

		Typical goal of your seed aid (select all that apply)				
Name	**Organization**	**Food security**	**Nutrition**	**Climate resilience**	**Income generation**	**I don't know**
Abby Love	Mercy Corps	X			X	

Context Analysis Tool

Seed Emergency Response Tool

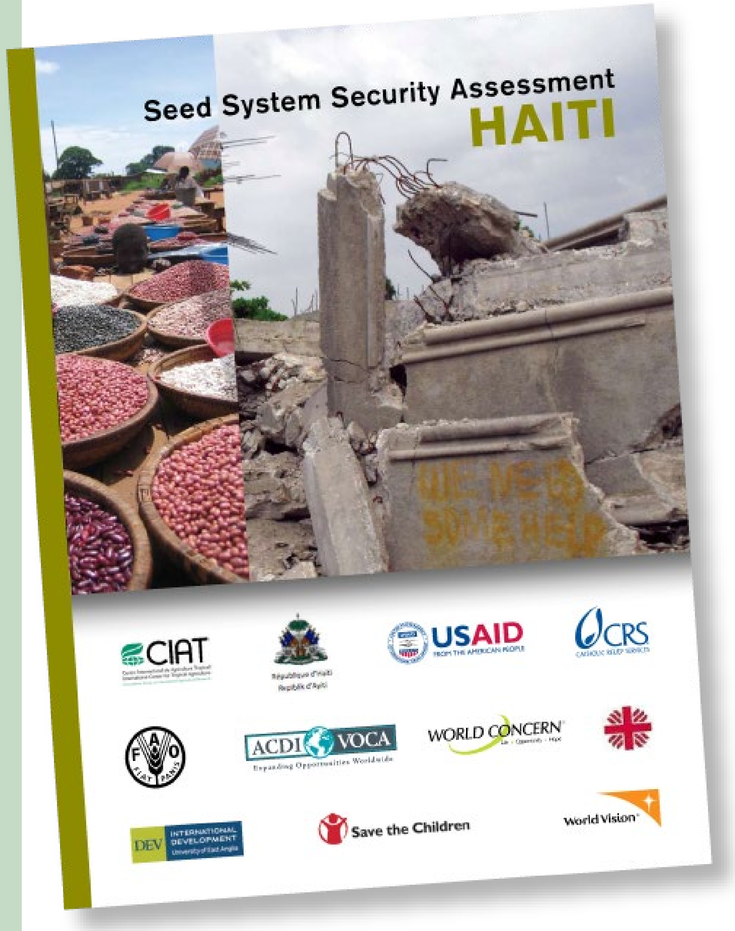


Questions?

- What future needs do you have related to what we discussed today?
- Do you have any recommendations to improve practice?
- Reminder: you can always use the shared Google document to add questions, recommendations, etc.

Summary of Session 1

- Met each other!
- Rationale and background for Seeds Learning Group
- Explored 4 key concepts
  - What is seed
  - Seed security framework
  - Seed system basics
  - Goals of seed aid work



After Session Task 1

- All participants to look at SSSA reports
- Choose 1 report
- Identify one BIG thing learnt/stuck out (or not)
- Prepare <1 minute report to share back

Examples of SSSAs implemented

- SSSA-Burkina-Faso (2017) by CRS
- SSSA-Burundi (2017) by CRS and partners
- SSSA-DRC (2012) by CIAT and partners
- SSSA-Ethiopia (2016) by CRS and partners
- SSSA-Haiti (2010) by CIAT, FAO and partners
- SSSA-Kenya (2011) by CRS and partners
- SSSA-Madagascar (2013) by CIAT, CRS and partners
- SSSA-Southern-Malawi (2011) by CIAT and partners
- SSSA-Mali (2006) by CRS and partners
- SSSA-Sierra-Leone (2014) by CRS and partners
- SSSA-South Sudan (2010) by CIAT, FAO and partners
- SSSA-NW-Syria-Sept-2015
- SSSA-Timor-Leste (2013) by CRS, Mercy Corps and partners
- SSSA-Zambia (2013) by CRS, CIAT and partners
- SSSA-Zimbabwe (2009) by CIAT and CRS

Next week: The Seed System Assessment (SSA/SSSA)

Session 1:
Understanding Seed Systems

August 10

Session 2:
The SSA/SSSA

August 17

Session 3:
Pitfalls and Minimum Standards

August 24

Session 4:
Planning for the Future

August 31


Naval