



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



**The International Treaty**  
ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES  
FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

**Views, Experiences and Best Practices as an example of possible options for  
the national implementation of Article 9 of the International Treaty**

*Note by the Secretary*

*At its [second meeting](#) of the Ad hoc Technical Expert Group on Farmers' Rights (AHTEG), the Expert Group agreed on a revised version of the [template](#) for collecting information on examples of national measures, best practices and lessons learned from the realization of Farmers' Rights*

*This document presents the updated information on best practices and measures of implementing Article 9 of the International Treaty submitted by Malawi on 1 August 2019.*

*The submission is presented in the form and language in which it was received.*



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## **Template for submission of**

### **Measures, Best Practices and Lessons Learned from the Realization of Farmers' Rights as set out in Article 9 of the International Treaty**

#### **Basic information**

- Title of measure/practice  
**Farmer participation in decision making**
- Date of submission  
**31<sup>st</sup> July 2019**
- Name(s) of country/countries in which the measure/practice is taking place  
**Malawi**
- Responsible institution/organization (name, address, website (if applicable), e-mail address, telephone number(s) and contact person)

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- Type of institution/organization (categories) **Civil Society Organization**

#### **Description of the examples**

##### **Mandatory information:<sup>1</sup>**

CEPA has been conducting policy advocacy on seed related policy and legal frameworks where the focus was for the frameworks to recognize and promote farmers' rights. . In 2018 the Department of Agriculture Research Services (DARS) was reviewing the Seed Bill as such CEPA conducted an analysis of the draft Seed Bill and mobilized like-minded stakeholders including farmers to have a dialogue meeting with the seed Bill drafting team. During the dialogue sessions CEPA playing a facilitating role of having the sessions conducted in local language to ensure that farmers effectively participate. Major outcome of the process was the observation that most of concerns/issues raised by the farmers during the dialogue session were addressed in the revised Seed Bill document.

- Brief history (including starting year), as appropriate

CEPA has been conducting policy advocacy on seed related policy and legal frameworks where the focus was for the frameworks to recognize and promote farmers' rights. In 2018 the Department of Agriculture Research Services (DARS) was reviewing the Seed Bill as such CEPA conducted an

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<sup>1</sup> This mandatory information is required in order for the measure/practice to be included in the Inventory.



analysis of the draft Seed Bill and mobilized like-minded stakeholders including farmers to have a dialogue meeting with the seed Bill drafting team.

At this meeting, the discussions were conducted in Chichewa, a local language which enabled farmers to participate in the discussions. The farmers were able to raise different seed related issues affecting them. They also questioned some of the provisions in the draft Seed Bill, for instance prohibiting the exchange of seed amongst farmers and limited involvement of farmers in decision making, to which the policy makers responded and committed to change in the bill. It was agreed at the meeting that the Bill was not promoting farmers' rights and that the Bill should specify that it is just for formal seed system. DARS also committed to develop a separate farmers' rights policy framework and tasked the Civil Society present to engage them on this.

When the Bill was revised it was observed that most of the issues raised by the farmers were addressed in the Bill. For instance the provision prohibiting farmer seed exchange was removed and it also included the representation of farmers in one of the committees to be established.

- Core components of the measure/practice (max 200 words)

As a lead organization in policy and advocacy issues in Malawi CEPA takes an active role in advocating for seed related policies and other legal frameworks pertaining to agrobiodiversity including Farmers Right's. Core components of the promotion work on Farmer Participation in Decision making included; (i) Mobilization of like-minded stakeholders and farmers to have a dialogue with the drafting team for the Malawi Seed Bill and analyse the Draft Seed Bill. (ii) Ensuring that there is facilitated participation of the farmers involved through use of local language in the dialogue process so that the farmers better understand the discussions and equally contribute towards the process.

- To which provision(s) of Article 9 of the International Treaty does this measure relate

- Art. 9.1
- Art. 9.2a
- Art. 9.2b
- Art. 9.2c
- Art. 9.3

**Other information, if applicable**

- Please indicate which category of the Inventory is most relevant for the proposed measure, and which other categories are also relevant (if any):

No.	Category	Most relevant <sup>2</sup>	Also relevant <sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Please select only one category that is most relevant, under which the measure will be listed.

<sup>3</sup> Please select one or several categories that may also be relevant (if applicable).



1	Recognition of local and indigenous communities', farmers' contributions to conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA, such as awards and recognition of custodian/guardian farmers		
2	Financial contributions to support farmers conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA such as contributions to benefit-sharing funds		
3	Approaches to encourage income-generating activities to support farmers' conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA		
4	Catalogues, registries and other forms of documentation of PGRFA and protection of traditional knowledge		
5	In-situ/on-farm conservation and management of PGRFA, such as social and cultural measures, community biodiversity management and conservation sites		
6	Facilitation of farmers' access to a diversity of PGRFA through community seed banks <sup>4</sup> , seed networks and other measures improving farmers' choices of a wider diversity of PGRFA.		
7	Participatory approaches to research on PGRFA, including characterization and evaluation, participatory plant breeding and variety selection		
8	Farmers' participation in decision-making at local, national and sub-regional, regional and international levels	✓	
9	Training, capacity development and public awareness creation		
10	Legal measures for the implementation of Farmers' Rights, such as legislative measures related to PGRFA.	✓	
11	Other measures / practices		

- In case you selected 'other measures', would you like to suggest a description of this measure, e.g. as a possible new category? \_\_\_\_\_
- Objective(s)  
Recognition and promotion of farmers' rights in policies and legal frameworks.
- Target group(s) and numbers of involved and affected farmers<sup>5</sup>  
14 farmers (2 male and 12 females) participated in the Seed Bill dialogue meeting
- Location(s) and geographical outreach  
Malawi: farmers came from different districts
- Resources used for implementation of the measure/practice  
\_\_\_\_\_

<sup>4</sup> Including seed houses.

<sup>5</sup> Any classification, e.g. of the types of farmer addressed, may be country-specific.



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Financial support from the Development Fund of Norway and African Centre for Biodiversity.

- How has the measure/practice affected the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture? Please describe the achievements of the measure/ practice so far (including quantification) (max 200 words)

By removing seed exchange prohibition provision, farmers will continue to use, save, share and exchange seed which will contribute to conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA.

The policy makers present at the dialogue meeting also allowed farmers to sell their local seed as long as it is well labelled as such which was not allowed before.

- Other national level instruments that are linked to the measure/practice
- Are you aware of any other international agreements or programs that are relevant for this measure/practice?

ITPGRFA promotes farmers rights which includes a right to sell and exchange seed as well as a right to participate in decision making

- Other issues you wish to address, that have not yet been covered, to describe the measure/practice

### **Lessons learned**

- Describe lessons learned which may be relevant for others who wish to do the same or similar measures/practices (max 250 words).

Involving the farmers to actively participate in policy dialogue increased the chances of influencing decision making which is very difficult when it is just civil society alone with the presence of the affected beneficiaries of decisions and policy documents

- What challenges encountered along the way (if applicable) (max 200 words)

Unwillingness of government to promote farmers' rights and recognize it as one way of achieving food security and climate change adaptation and resilience especially for resource poor farmers.

- What would you consider conditions for success, if others should seek to carry out such a measure or organize such an activity? (max 100 words)

Involvement of farmers in advocacy and ensure that the discussions are carried in a medium where farmers are comfortable in

### **Further information**

- Link(s) to further information about the measure/practice

[www.cepa.org.mw](http://www.cepa.org.mw)