



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 Switzerland on 31 July 2019.

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



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: Promotion of Article 9 implementation through International Cooperation and Official Development Assistance (ODA)
- Date of submission: July 2019
- Name(s) of country/countries in which the measure/practice is taking place: Nepal, Uganda, Burkina Faso, Uzbekistan and Bolivia
- Responsible institution/organization (name, address, website (if applicable), e-mail address, telephone number(s) and contact person): Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
- Type of institution/organization (categories): Government
- Collaborating/supporting institutions/organizations/actors, if applicable (name, address, website (if applicable), e-mail address, telephone number(s)): Bioversity International

Description of the examples

Mandatory information:¹

- Short summary to be put in the inventory (max. 200 words) including:
 - Implementing entity and partners
 - Start year
 - Objective(s)
 - Summary of core components
 - Key outcomes
 - Lessons learned (if applicable)

The project “Improving seed systems for smallholder farmers’ food security”, funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, is implemented by Bioversity International in Bolivia, Uzbekistan, Burkina Faso, Uganda, and Nepal with the objective of reducing vulnerability of smallholders by improving farmers’ access to diverse and adaptive crop varieties and quality seed and in local seed systems. The project started in 2013 and is now in its second phase (2017 – 2021). It focuses on:

- enhancing capacity of smallholders and related institutions through various training and capacity development to produce seed of good quality in large enough quantities;
- developing seed marketing models to enhance value chains and improve seed delivery mechanisms;
- improving quality of seed produced by engaging seed quality assurance organisations in the countries to develop alternative quality assurance mechanisms. More policy-related interventions around registration of farmers’ promising varieties and developing quality assurance mechanisms for farmer’s seed systems are also key aspects.

Based on lessons learned the intervention strategy is guided by three principles:

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



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- the activities will primarily seek to ensure sustainability of the project's interventions;
- increased efforts will be made to inform and influence decision making processes;
- actions will be adopted to ensure that possible gender differences are addressed.

- Brief history (including starting year), as appropriate:

The Swiss Government through its Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) contributes to the implementation of Article 9 of the International Treaty.

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

The intent of SDC's work is to promote seed programs and policies that reflect the needs and realities of smallholders stipulating the complementarity of informal and formal seed systems to enhance smallholders' access to sufficient, affordable, diversified and locally adapted plant genetic resources, including local and improved varieties. The different projects and approaches of the integration of Farmers' Rights focus on national, regional and global level.

Link evidence from the field to the national, regional and global policy setting levels: The project "Improving seed systems for smallholder food security" aims to increase directly the availability and diversity of planting materials to small-holders to reduce vulnerability to external shocks as well as improving policy dialogue at various levels, on equity and redistribution issues regarding seed systems. Smallholders in developing countries will get (1) political recognition for their role in germplasm conservation as well as (2) get improved access to the necessary diversity of planting material needed for their families' food security and (3) through enhanced policy dialogue at national, regional and global levels, seed systems and relevant policy frameworks will be better connected to the realities of smallholders.

- Description of the context and the history of the measure/practice is taking place (political, legal and economic framework conditions for the measure/practice) (max 200 words)

In most developing countries, the so-called formal seed sector provides only about 20--30 percent of the seed used by farmers; farmers source the rest of their seed from 'informal' sources, including their farm-saved seed, exchanges with neighbours and family, and local markets. As a result, agricultural productivity, food security, and environmental sustainability is largely influenced by the performance of local seed systems. Smallholder farmers in remote and vulnerable areas often require crop varieties with different combinations of traits than available in formal sector-bred varieties, with their need driven by local agro-ecological condition. These farmers livelihoods depend upon their access to quality seed of a range of crops and crop varieties adapted to their local conditions. In the recent years, policy debates in the global arena are highlighting the complementarities on formal and informal seed sectors and the importance of farmers' seed systems in improving productivity, resilience, and food security. Recommendations for further integration of the formal and farmers' systems at various points in the seed chain/seed cycles and inclusion of such strategies in national seed policies have been made in global policy arena.

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

Art. 9.1 x

Art. 9.2a x

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 ²	Also relevant ³
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		x
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		x
4	Catalogues, registries and other forms of documentation of PGRFA and protection of traditional knowledge		x
5	In-situ/on-farm conservation and management of PGRFA, such as social and cultural measures, community biodiversity management and conservation sites		x
6	Facilitation of farmers' access to a diversity of PGRFA through community seed banks ⁴ , seed networks and other measures improving farmers' choices of a wider diversity of PGRFA.	x	
7	Participatory approaches to research on PGRFA, including characterization and evaluation, participatory plant breeding and variety selection		x
8	Farmers' participation in decision-making at local, national and sub-regional, regional and international levels		x
9	Training, capacity development and public awareness creation		x
10	Legal measures for the implementation of Farmers' Rights, such as legislative measures related to PGRFA.		x
11	Other measures / practices		

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

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

⁴ Including seed houses.



- 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)
- Target group(s) and numbers of involved and affected farmers⁵
- Location(s) and geographical outreach

- Resources used for implementation of the measure/practice
- 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)
- 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?
- 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).
- What challenges encountered along the way (if applicable) (max 200 words)
- 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)

Further information

- Link(s) to further information about the measure/practice
https://www.eda.admin.ch/deza/de/home/aktivitaeten_projekte/projekte-fokus/projektdatenbank.filterResults.html/content/dezaprojects/SDC/en/2012/7F08265/phase2?oldPagePath=/content/deza/de/home/aktivitaeten_projekte/projekte-fokus/projektdatenbank.html

Further information should be submitted by Bioversity and its partner organizations.

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