



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 information on best practices and measures of implementing Article 9 of the International Treaty submitted by Ethiopia on 1 June 2021.

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 :
Training and awareness creation work shop for Community Seed Banks
- Date of submission: **May 30/2021**
- Name(s) of country/countries in which the measure/practice is taking place : **Ethiopia**
- Responsible institution/organization (name, address, website (if applicable), e-mail address, telephone number(s) and contact person) : Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute,
Website: www.ebi.gov.et
Contact person: Dr. Melesse Maryo,
E-mail: melessevid@gmail.com,
Tel. +251930289288
- Type of institution/organization (categories): **Conservation and Research**
- Collaborating/supporting institutions/organizations/actors, if applicable (name, address, website (if applicable), e-mail address, telephone number(s)) : Institutions working on Community Seed Banks such as Ethiopian Organic Seed Action (EOSA), MELCA-Ethiopia, Regional Bureau of Agriculture

Description of the examples

Mandatory information:¹

- Short summary to be put in the inventory (max. 200 words) including:
 - Implementing entity and partners: Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute
 - Start year :2021
 - Objective(s):
 - to establish a national community seed banks (CSBs) platform that will support existing community seed banks and networks of nearly 30 CSBs in different agro-ecological zones of Ethiopia,
 - scale out their activities and achievements, and contribute to strengthening the informal seed system.
 - Summary of core components
 - Farmers supported to sustainably use and conserve PGRFA.
 - Households in different agro-ecological zones networked and trained on quality seed production from planting to storage.
 - Exchange on technical CSB management and sustainable business model experience among different agro-ecological zones.

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



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- Locally adapted varieties are re-introduced, conserved, disseminated with farmers' participation.
 - Seed systems enhanced to promote use of adapted varieties through Community Seed Banks (CSB) and Field Gene Banks (FGBs).
 - Local agricultural systems are diversified for enhanced resilience through cultivation of cereals, pulses and others.
 - Crop species of PGRFA characterized, phenotyped, evaluated, documented, pre-bred, for traits of importance to adaptation and resilience.
- Key outcomes
 - Lessons learned (if applicable)
- Brief history (including starting year), as appropriate :
 - Since 1994 the Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute established community Seed Banks (CSB) and Crop Conservator Associations (CCA) and conserved indigenous crop varieties maintained by farmers in dynamic agro-ecosystems on farmers' field. In Ethiopia farmers play a central role in the conservation of germplasm and associated traditional knowledge and hold a major portion of the existing genetic resources.
 - Core components of the measure/practice (max 200 words):
 - To date, over Thirty community seed banks are functioning, and crop conservation associations are organized in Tigray , Amhara, Oromia and South Nations Nationalities and Peoples (SNNP) regional states of Ethiopia with a total members of around 7000 crop conservator farmers including the newly established four additional community seed banks in Amhara National Regional state and one in the southeast of Ethiopia, Bale Zone. Trainings on Conservation and sustainable utilization of genetic resources, community knowledge, legal frameworks related to farmers' right and access and benefit sharing were given to crop conservation associations, development agents under ministry of Agriculture, Cooperatives offices, local administrative staff and others working closely with CSBs.
 - 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) :
 - Trainings, awareness creations, experience sharing visits, seed supply to CSBs and capacity building.
 - Though the project started recently, before the inception of the project several measures related to farmers right has been executed in the country such as:



- Changes and adaptations of the legal framework (seed policy, law or regulatory documents) to promote crop diversification in production systems have been improved:
 - Recent amendment of seed policy, agriculture and rural development policy, plant breeder's right proclamation. The Draft National seed policy (MoA, 2019), Ensures conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA, promotes diverse seed systems, protects community knowledge and farmers' and pastoralists' rights in agreement with international agreements. Require participation of farmers and pastoralists in the identification, registration, conservation, and sustainable utilization of traditional varieties as well as development of new plant varieties. It aims to establish a traceability mechanism for identification of PGRFA used in new plant varieties that plant breeders wish to protect.
 - Ethiopian seed proclamation N0. 782/2013 concerns the improvement of seed for agricultural production in Ethiopia. It shall ensure that the supply of quality seed is made available to farmers, agro-pastoralists and 'other seed users. Ethiopian seed regulation No. 375/2015 and plant breeder's right Proclamation No.1068/2017 are also recent amendments. Ethiopia has however adopted the first plant breeders' rights proclamation in 2006, which has now been repealed by proclamation No. 1068/2017. The current plant breeders' proclamation is aimed at promoting the economic contribution of the seed sector by ensuring the guarantee of plant breeders' rights by harmonizing it with international practice. The proclamation also recognizes in its preamble the centuries old customary knowledge and practice of saving, using and exchanging of seeds by farmers and pastoral communities of Ethiopia and their enormous roles in conserving the agrobiodiversity resources used to develop new varieties. Besides the preamble, there are substantive provisions which deal with farmers rights.
- 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 X
 - Art. 9.2c X
 - Art. 9.3 X

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	X	
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		
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		
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.		
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)
- Target group(s) and numbers of involved and affected farmers⁵
- Location(s) and geographical outreach
- Resources used for implementation of the measure/practice

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.

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



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- 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).
 - A total of 61 varieties of 34 field and horticultural crop species have been conserved in 30 community seed banks and on-farm conservation sites and restoration of farmers' varieties which were lost from the locality has been conducted for different crop species through the CSB and CSA.
- What challenges encountered along the way (if applicable) (max 200 words)
 - Lack of assessment on the status of the existing on-farm PGRFA
 - Lack of integration among stakeholder working on PGRFA.
 - Weak documentation on the existing landraces in the country.
 - Poor awareness creation on on-farm conservation and use of genetic resources
 - Lack of modalities that sets premium pricing that encourages farmers to continue producing landraces.
- 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.ebi.gov.et/a-new-project-focusing-on-community-seed-bank-has-been-launched/>