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Research Conclusions

Guidelines for good practice in
supporting
on-farm conservation
of agricultural biodiversity

www.africanfarmdiversity.net



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Good Practice Guidelines

- “What projects must provide, call down or ensure”
- For supporting grassroots on-farm conservation of agricultural biodiversity
- **INTEGRATED APPROACH:** range of incentives AND services



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What farmers want

- Market channels
- Knowledge on production techniques
- Fora to exchange material + information
- New crops for new markets, changing climate, better nutrition
- Traditional varieties for cost, access, heritage



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Providing incentives

- Market channels, increasing yields, reducing costs, prizes
- Different incentives have different effects
- Prizes encourage specialists not wide uptake
- Income from sales to community seed bank good for one, good for many
- No conflicting incentives



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Providing knowledge

- Traditional techniques are not enough
- Validate and build on farmer knowledge
- Introduce **appropriate** new techniques
- Fitting with existing culture an advantage



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Working with farmers 1

- Put front-line staff in project area on long-term basis
- Exploit existing gender roles to create conditions for effective participation
- Approach that creates opportunity to meet



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Working with farmers 2 - Groups

- Existing or new groups can be used
- Group interests must coincide with project objectives
- Spend time and resources on:
 - group formation
 - institutional capacity building
- Use contact farmers to cut costs



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Institutional arrangements

- Project champion
 - clear vision, capacity to mobilise
- Identify and involve stakeholders
 - political will from government
 - national institutions, where exist, for service delivery
 - industry, where interests coincide



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Funding chain

- Keep it short
- Autonomous, reliable, locally based managers
- Government structures are bureaucratic - OK for regulation/control but not for service delivery



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High resource requirements

- Sufficient local staff
- Committed project champion operating at national level
- Service delivery by project or partner institutions
- Transport for inputs and outputs
- Opportunities for membership fees, levies, consultancy fees?



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Location

- Fertile soils but projects' IPM/organic approaches sustained soil
- Poor roads infrastructure
 - farmers keen on project
 - high costs for project



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Sustainability & replication:

- Integrated approach: range of incentives, services
- Popular with farmers (market, production, PGRFA)
- Clear, market-based (prices) not project-based (prizes)
- Sources of agricultural biodiversity
- Group or non-group, contact farmers, gender-sensitive
- Short non-gov funding chain, local staff
- Project champion, involved stakeholders
- High resource requirements (claw back?)
- On-farm conservation not relevant nation-wide: fertile soils, medium-high wealth groups
- Weakly integrated areas – a blessing and a curse