



**AFRICAN AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY FOUNDATION**  
**FONDATION AFRICAINE POUR LES TECHNOLOGIES AGRICOLES**

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## **WEMA Management Response to ESCC Audit report 2010 Key Findings and Recommendations**

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The AATF and the WEMA teams have reviewed the ESCC Audit Report 2010 and appreciate the findings and recommendations made. Below please find WEMA management's responses to the key findings and recommendations made.

### **Key findings and recommendations**

#### **Overall ESCC evaluation of the WEMA project remains good**

*Response:* The project appreciates that stakeholders believe that it is addressing the ESCC issues in the project. Engagement with the diverse range of stakeholders will continue especially with seed companies and related stakeholders as the project progresses into the deployment phase where they will be playing a key role.

#### **Self-reported knowledge of the WEMA project has improved in all five countries**

*Response:* The improvement in the average rating of the self-reported knowledge by stakeholders in all the five countries is noted. The project appreciates the fact that the stakeholders find communication materials disseminated by the project and stakeholder workshops useful in increasing this knowledge and will continue to review these tools constantly to ensure that they remain relevant in providing information on the project. The project also appreciates and commends the efforts of its external stakeholders and partners in circulating WEMA information materials. Efforts will also be made to engage more with stakeholders in Tanzania and South Africa and the seed companies.

#### **Interactions among WEMA partners is 'very good' but more inclusion of the National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) is needed**

*Response:* The expertise of the NARS is pivotal to the project and WEMA is constantly working at enhancing interactions with all partners including the NARS to leverage their diverse expertise and competencies, foster their ownership of the project and lay the groundwork for effective product delivery. The NARS are contributing their expertise in breeding, field testing, seed multiplication and distribution to the project. This engagement continues to increase based on discussions among the partners, and the NARS are now represented on all levels and in all committees including the Operations Committee (OPSCOM) of the project.

### **Communication with stakeholders has improved, particularly in Mozambique**

*Response:* Keeping stakeholders engaged through various communication activities is a key aspect of the WEMA project. The project periodically reviews the strategy and will continue to do so to ensure that all stakeholder information needs are taken care of.

### **WEMA communication could respond to a wider range of stakeholders in a more tailored fashion**

*Response:* Stakeholders commented on the need to broaden engagement and bring on board a wider range of stakeholder groups such as seed companies, agricultural extension services, smallholder farmers, Ministry of Agriculture policy makers, technical and resource consultants and more farmer associations.

WEMA Project would like to note that managing stakeholders' expectations in the project is key to successful communication and outreach activities. The project therefore endeavors to ensure that communication around the project is in line with and supports project progress.

The project is therefore engaging with all the groups mentioned above at various levels – such as meetings with communities around the confined field trials and through national and regional stakeholder meetings. This engagement will continue more intensively from 2011 and as the project moves into the deployment phase of the WEMA conventional varieties. Given the varying information needs by the above groups, communication to each stakeholder category will be tailored to meet the need.

To provide more information on the progress the WEMA project is making, a stakeholder newsletter and annual report for public dissemination to be available as from 2011. Engagement with the media will continue including invites to project events where opportunities will be provided for them to interact with the project scientists.

### **There remains a need for WEMA to capitalize on the potential for synergy and support from a wider range of stakeholder organizations**

*Response:* The WEMA project realizes and appreciates the role played by partnering with the relevant stakeholder organizations. A variety of stakeholders need to be engaged as the project progresses through the different phases of development. WEMA is already working with a wide range of partners and will continue to expand that base depending on the relevant roles. As the project moves into the deployment phase in 2013 especially for the WEMA conventional varieties, the communications team and the newly formed deployment team plan further engagement of farmers' associations, seed companies, seed regulators, biotech communication organizations and agricultural research and extension services.

### **Royalty free aspect of WEMA is considered advantageous, but stakeholders need more information about it**

*Response:* In January 2008, the African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF), the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT) and the Monsanto Company (Monsanto) signed a collaboration agreement to work together, under a philanthropic mandate, to develop and deliver drought tolerant maize adapted to local conditions for use by smallholder farmers in South Africa and by any farmer in the rest of sub-Saharan Africa at a cost that is reasonably within their means.

The collaboration agreement incorporates the relevant research and commercial licenses necessary to develop and eventually deliver project outputs to the intended beneficiaries.

In the agreement, CIMMYT and Monsanto respectively grant to AATF a personal, non-transferable, non-exclusive, fully paid-up, royalty-free license to each of the drought-tolerant maize lines to be developed in the project. CIMMYT and Monsanto also give AATF the right to grant royalty-free sublicenses to seed companies and other such entities that are able to deliver the same to smallholder farmers. The sublicense from AATF to a seed producer will include specific requirements to provide appropriate quality control and stewardship of the product.

Stakeholders can find information on the royalty free aspects of WEMA available in the Project Collaboration Agreement and Intellectual Property Rights and Licensing document posted on the WEMA web pages for public access <http://www.aatf-africa.org/userfiles/Wema-Summary-Collaboration.pdf> and <http://www.aatf-africa.org/userfiles/wema-ip-policy.pdf>. These documents were revised to improve clarity in 2010. Continued enhanced engagement between the project and stakeholders such as seed companies will ensure that IP issues around the project are discussed further with them.

### **There is need for enhanced capacity building of the NARS and agricultural extension services**

*Response:* The WEMA project offers a unique opportunity for technical research and human capacity building in the National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) during the development phase of the project. There are also opportunities for study tours and short training workshops to build capacity of the various WEMA teams. The WEMA project will continue to provide such opportunities as necessary. However, the project funding does not provide for higher level trainings like PhD and Masters.

Agricultural extension staff members are engaged during the WEMA national stakeholder meetings held annually and at the various confined field trial (CFT) community sensitization meetings held during 2010. This engagement will be enhanced as from 2011 as the project progresses to deploy the WEMA conventional varieties.

### **Kenya**

#### **There exists a favourable regulatory and political climate to successfully implement the project in Kenya**

*Response:* WEMA is engaging with the policy makers and regulatory organizations on issues around biosafety and intellectual property (IP) ownership. There will be regular updates and interactions with the regulatory authorities in all the five WEMA countries where these issues will be addressed.

### **Mozambique**

#### **Greater interaction with regulators responsible for seed release is needed in Mozambique**

*Response:* Deliberate efforts are being made to engage with seed companies and regulators in all WEMA countries including Mozambique as the project prepares to field test and deploy the WEMA conventional varieties.

## **South Africa**

### **Addressing the anti-GMO movement prior to deployment may help reduce unfavourable reactions to WEMA in South Africa**

*Response:* The WEMA project engages in stakeholder outreach to raise awareness of the project and its goals and answer questions related to the project. The WEMA project in South Africa has been engaging the CFT community in Lutzville by providing factual information on GMO's and addressing the concerns they have about the technology. The project is also working with other biotech organizations in South Africa to assist in providing more information on GM technology. The engagement with the community and with the biotech organizations will continue from 2011 onward.

### **Funding and financial responsibilities for the next phase of the project should be decided early**

*Response:* Preparations for Phase 2 of the WEMA project have already begun. A WEMA project deployment team and a sub-committee to prepare a concept note and funding proposal are already operational.

## **Tanzania**

### **A strict liability clause in the Biosafety regulations in Tanzania is likely to be a hindrance to implementation of the WEMA project**

*Response:* The strict liability clause in the biosafety regulations of Tanzania may affect the implementation of the project in the country. The relevant Tanzania authorities are looking into the issue and WEMA awaits the outcome.

## **Uganda**

### **Absence of a comprehensive Biosafety law in Uganda could hinder the progression of WEMA to commercialisation**

*Response:* The WEMA project encourages educational outreach especially through sharing of information that could help inform decision making. In this regard, it continues to provide policy makers and other decision-makers in Uganda with relevant information when required, whether on biotechnology specifically or agricultural development generally that may also contribute to the development of relevant enabling policies in the country. The project works with different government departments and institutions in this endeavor such as the Uganda National Council of Science and Technology (UNCST) and Uganda National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO). It also engages with other initiatives such as the Open Forum for Agricultural Biotechnology (OFAB) and the Program for Biosafety Systems (PBS) in information dissemination.

### **WEMA is actively engaging and informing journalists**

*Response:* The project recognizes the important role the media plays in disseminating information to the public. Thus engagement with them is key. This will continue as the project progresses to ensure that they get opportunities to interact especially with the project scientists at events where they can get more information and updates.