



ISAAA AfriCenter



STRONGER TOGETHER

**ISAAA AFRICENTER
ANNUAL REPORT 2022**

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VISION

To be the leading
bioscience
communication
enablers for a food
secure and healthy
Africa

MISSION

To provide an inclusive
platform that informs
Africa's policies and
markets on ethical and
effective bioscience
solutions

APPROACH

1) Communication and Knowledge Sharing

- Improving awareness and knowledge on crop biotechnology

2) Capacity Building

- Strengthening capacity for effective science communication

3) Policy Engagement

- Creating a favourable environment for crop biotechnology development

4) Media Engagement

- Enhancing more balanced and accurate reporting on agri-biotechnology and biosafety

5) Our New Frontier

- Repositioning AfriCenter to meet new challenges in the biosciences landscape.

6) Strategic Partnerships

- Creating synergies to maximize impact and optimize resources



Message from the Board Chair

Robert Karanja, PhD

On behalf of the Board and Staff of ISAAA AfriCenter, I am honoured to present to you our Annual Report for the year ending December 2022. This report captures AfriCenter's key achievements and opportunities in line with its mandate to contribute towards a food secure Africa free hunger and poverty.

The Center provides communications and policy support services on all aspects of crop biotechnology and biosafety. It promotes science-based biosafety and regulatory frameworks for biotechnology in Africa, and advocates for policies that support the responsible use and application of biotechnology to improve food security and livelihoods on the continent. AfriCenter exercises a high degree of independence which makes its operations credible as it interfaces with various institutions and partners that serve developing countries.

AfriCenter has a team of multidisciplinary experts who develop and implement strategic development communication programs that are well focused for maximum impact. The team provides communication and policy support services to promising projects across Africa and offers trainings on effective science communications. A number of AfriCenter staff are certified to conduct net-mapping that helps in identifying relationships between and among stakeholders for effective outreach and impact.

Further, the Center co-ordinates seeing-is-believing biotech study tours for Africa's key agri-biotech stakeholders. We often partner with different actors to facilitate such visits for experiential learning on all aspects of agri-biotech and biosafety. Given the polarized nature of agricultural biotechnology, the Center has a rapid response mechanism to address contentious issues when they arise.

To broaden its expertise and optimize performance, AfriCenter works with a network of Associates who contribute to its mission through involvement in various programs, on a need-basis. The Associates come from reputable public and private institutions from across the globe and are drawn from various disciplines that complement our areas of focus. The Center is seen as a one-stop source of current agribiotech and biosafety information in the continent.

AfriCenter is now expanding its communications, policy advocacy and knowledge sharing activities beyond crop biotechnology, and extending to livestock, environment and One Health approach. It is for this reason that we are developing a new five-year Strategic Plan (2023 – 2028) that will position the Center to be a leading bioscience communication enabler for a food secure and healthy Africa. With our expanded focus, we hope to leverage our expertise and networks to better address the evolving needs of developing sustainable food systems and planetary health. I thank all our partners who have journeyed with us over the years and invite new ones to join our call.



Message from the Director

**Margaret Karembu, PhD,
MBS**

Since its inception, ISAAA AfriCenter has worked tirelessly to deliver the benefits of modern biotechnology tools to smallholder African farmers. Our unwavering dedication has yielded remarkable results, as evidenced by the increased adoption of biotech crops in the region, growing from three in 2018 to eight in 2022. Moreover, the long-standing ban on the importation of genetically modified (GM) crops in Kenya, which persisted for a decade, was finally lifted. This significant milestone highlights the importance of intentional, consistent, and concerted efforts in overcoming policy hurdles.

At AfriCenter, we have consistently advocated for an enabling environment for biotechnology development in Africa. We strive to ensure that policy and decision makers remain informed about local and global progress in agri-biotech and biosafety. Through policy roundtables, national dialogues, and our pioneer seeing-is-believing biotech study tours, we actively engage stakeholders and foster awareness. Our collaboration with the private sector has resulted in a favorable policy shift in Kenya, addressing the country's feed shortage, which was declared a national emergency in 2021. However, recent parliamentary debates have exposed misinformation among legislators, underscoring the need for intensified outreach in policy circles.

The dedication and resilience exhibited by our entire team have been truly exceptional. Their passion, expertise, and relentless pursuit of excellence have propelled us forward, enabling us to meet our goals and deliver outstanding services. We are grateful for their unwavering commitment to our shared vision and for consistently going above and beyond to deliver exceptional results.

I remain inspired by Africa's spirit of Ubuntu - the belief in a universal bond that connects all humanity - and call on all our friends and partners to continue working stronger together. The progress this far has been made possible by many valued partners whose trust, dedication and commitment continues to motivate us.

Executive Summary

The Annual Report presents a comprehensive overview of AfriCenter's achievements, initiatives, and impact in the past year. As a recognized leader in promoting knowledge sharing, capacity building, policy engagement, and media engagement, our organization has played a vital role in enhancing coverage and communication of biosafety issues, thereby facilitating evidence-based decision-making.

In our ongoing commitment to raising awareness and combating misinformation, we have made significant strides in providing credible scientific information on global trends and socio-economic impacts of agri-biotech to various stakeholders. To achieve this, we have developed and updated a range of accessible knowledge products, including the third edition of our popular booklet, "Genome Editing in Africa's Agriculture." Additionally, our monthly e-newsletter, the DrumBeat, has continued to reach over 6,000 active subscribers, showcasing bioscience expertise in the region and promoting the One Health (OH) approach.

To encourage dialogue and foster public participation, we have collaborated with key partners to organize impactful awareness creation and outreach activities. One notable initiative involved supporting the establishment of four Bt cotton demonstration plots in eastern and western Kenya, which served as platforms for peer-to-peer experiential learning. We also facilitated a gender-responsive farmers' participatory varietal selection (FPVS) event for GM cassava, as well as several study tours to the GM cassava field trial site, engaging stakeholders from various backgrounds.

In our endeavor to enhance the capacity of those who influence public opinion on agricultural innovations, we conducted four science communication training workshops. Notably, during the Annual Meeting of African Science Academies (AMASA), we prompted close to 100 scientists from 25 National Science Academies to engage the public on the protracted GMO debate. As a result, these experts felt compelled to hold a press briefing to address misconceptions and provide accurate information.

Media engagement remains a core aspect of our work at ISAAA AfriCenter. We conducted more than 20 media events, including five media science cafes covering diverse topics. Several study tours were organized, enabling journalists to visit Bt cotton farmer demonstration plots, GM cassava field trials, and feed millers. Recognizing journalistic excellence, we continued to celebrate the efforts of journalists through the annual OFAB media awards. As a result, the year 2022 witnessed the highest number of accurate media stories on GMOs, with over 100 million media impressions generated.

The Africa Biennial Biosciences Communication (ABBC) symposium, known for its African-based and African-led multi-stakeholder engagement, has become a crucial platform for addressing communication issues in bioscience innovation in Africa. The African Coalition for Communicating about Genome Editing, initiated during ABBC2019 and officially launched in ABBC2021, has already established three chapters in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Nigeria. The Ethiopia and Kenya chapters collaboratively secured funding for the recently launched Striga Smart Sorghum for Africa project. ABBC2023, scheduled for August 22-24, will gather stakeholders from the agri-food sector to explore the evolution of genetic improvement and share best practices in communication.

As we move forward, we embrace the opportunities that lie ahead, and we remain resolute in our vision of a food secure Africa free of hunger and poverty. Together, we will continue to shape the future of biosafety and share knowledge on agricultural biotechnology and biosafety through strategic communications and outreach for informed policy and choice.



Hon. Geoffrey Odanga, Member, Agriculture and Livestock Committee of Kenya's National Assembly catches a glimpse of the 'Bt Cotton FAQ' booklet during an agri-biotech engagement with policy makers

KNOWLEDGE SHARING FOR INFORMED POLICY AND CHOICE

AfriCenter strives to increase knowledge and awareness on agricultural biotechnology in Africa. The Center's goal is to share credible information to diverse audiences to facilitate informed policy and choice. This information is shared in a structured and systematic way that cultivates public trust. We strive for a debate that is informed by credible scientific information and evidence. Ultimately, we aim to create a reliable knowledgebase to champion evidence-based decisions.



**Development of
Simplified Knowledge
Products**



**Grassroots
Outreach**



**Biotech Sensitization
Forums and Study Tours**

Development of Knowledge Products

AfriCenter continues to develop simplified information, education and communication (IEC) materials that address information needs of different stakeholders.

The following products were produced in 2022

- o A brief on UK-Kenya synthetic biology technology transfer model
- o Peer-reviewed publications
- o Second edition genome editing in Africa's agriculture booklet
- o Short impact videos
- o The DrumBeat e-newsletter

UK-Kenya Synthetic Biology Technology Transfer Model

The UK is a world leader in synthetic biology R&D. In recent years, Kenya has recorded a steady rise in synthetic biology research for application in agriculture, health, and environmental restoration. This model describes lessons in policies, regulations, and modalities of transferring synthetic biology innovations developed in the UK.



Peer-reviewed Publications

The majority of African countries do not have defined policies and regulatory frameworks for governing synthetic biology R&D.

These publications provide a synthesis of the status of the policy environment, with recommendations for building an enabling environment for synthetic biology R&D in Kenya.

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6317508>

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7229371>

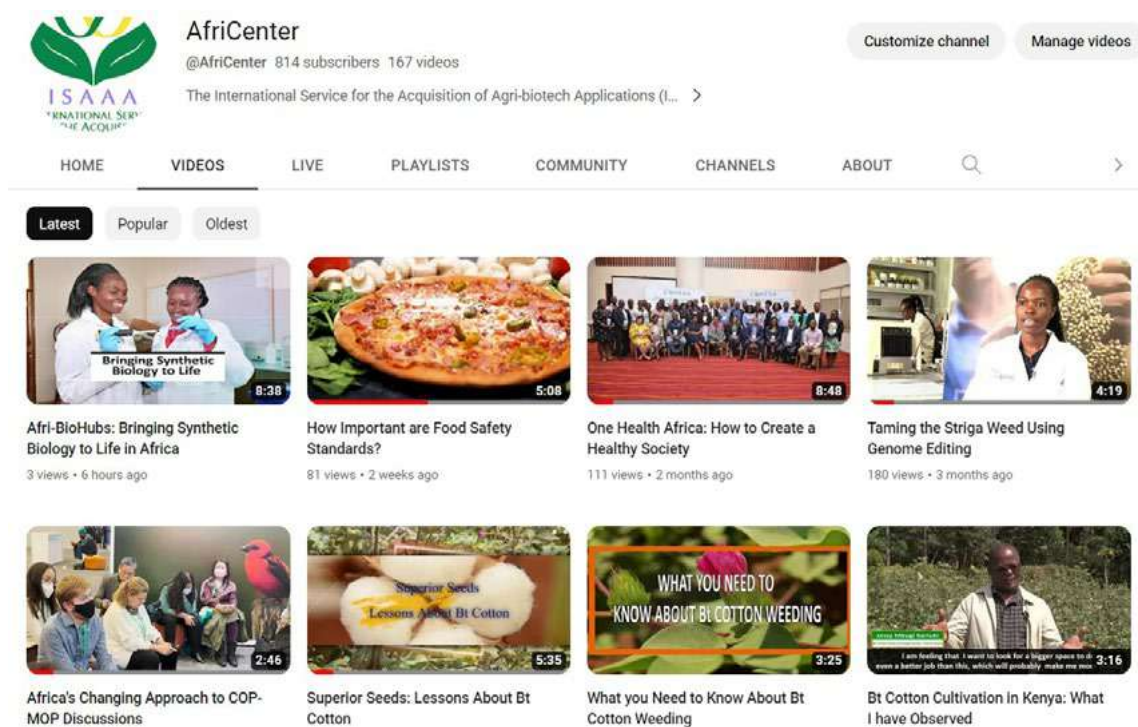
Booklet on Genome Editing in Africa's Agriculture (Second Edition)



The purpose of this booklet is to highlight genome editing projects and experts that are making use of this technology in Africa

Short Impact Videos

AfriCenter has carved out a niche in highlighting agribiotech innovations in Africa and bringing them to the public domain through short videos capturing important voices and milestones. In 2022, more than 20 short videos on crop biotech and other innovative gene technologies were developed and disseminated through social media as well as screened in various stakeholder workshops, reaching over 100,000 viewers.



AfriCenter
@AfriCenter 814 subscribers 167 videos
The International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (I... >

HOME VIDEOS LIVE PLAYLISTS COMMUNITY CHANNELS ABOUT

Latest Popular Oldest

- Bringing Synthetic Biology to Life**
3 views • 6 hours ago
- How Important are Food Safety Standards?**
81 views • 2 weeks ago
- One Health Africa: How to Create a Healthy Society**
111 views • 2 months ago
- Taming the Striga Weed Using Genome Editing**
180 views • 3 months ago
- Africa's Changing Approach to COP-MOP Discussions**
2:46
- Superior Seeds: Lessons About Bt Cotton**
5:35
- What you Need to Know About Bt Cotton Weeding**
3:25
- Bt Cotton Cultivation in Kenya: What I have Observed**
3:16

<https://www.youtube.com/@AfriCenter>

The DrumBeat e-newsletter

The DrumBeat is a monthly e-newsletter that tells the African bioscience story. The publication amplifies bioscience development on the continent and nurture a favorable policy environment. In 2022, AfriCenter published and shared 12 publications of the DrumBeat. The publication has over 5,000 subscribers comprising policy makers, media, development partners, scientists, and academia.



As a researcher I often find myself referring to DrumBeat's well-researched content to enhance my lessons and discussions around agricultural innovation.

Roy Kiambi, scientists KALRO biotechnology center-Kenya

<https://africenter.isaaa.org/the-drumbeat/>

KEY IMPACT



Increased confidence for adoption of agricultural biotechnology in the continent as a result of factual information about the technology.



Modalities for adoption and utilization of synthetic biology innovations in Africa were initiated

Grassroots Outreach

ISAAA AfriCenter places grassroots mobilization as one of its core endeavors. To facilitate dialogue and foster public participation, the Center, together with key partners, supported:

4

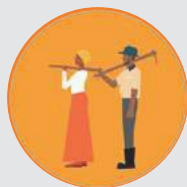
Bt cotton demonstration plots in eastern and western Kenya. The aim of these farms is to serve the target grassroots communities for experiential learning on best practices of Bt cotton cultivation,

2000

farmers sensitized



KEY IMPACT



Farmers trained on stewardship and best agronomical practices in Bt cotton commercial cultivation using on-site farm demonstration.



Capacity building of grassroots communities with biotech demonstration farms for experiential learning.

Biotech Sensitization Forums and Study Tours

Public and stakeholder sensitization through forums and tours has increased knowledge and appreciation of agricultural biotechnology in Africa. These outreach activities have instilled confidence and facilitated adoption of biotech crops. Seeing-is-believing study tours to biotech crop fields have provided key stakeholders with experiential opportunities on the benefits of biotech crops.

In 2022, the Center organized and facilitated six in-country biotech study tours to Bt cotton demonstration plots and VIRCA Plus' confined field trials (CFTs). Close to 300 stakeholders comprising of policy and decision makers, journalists, extension workers, farmers and regulators took part in the study tours.

Close to

300

stakeholders comprising of policy and decision makers, journalists, extension workers, farmers and regulators took part in the study tours.



KEY IMPACT



The Council of Governors pledged to work with the national government to formulate more policies in support of agricultural biotechnology.



Positive stories from media practitioners increased awareness of the technology and shed light on Kenya's progress and capacity.



Challenges in Bt cotton commercial cultivation identified and communicated to the relevant value chain stakeholders.



Farmers trained on Bt cotton best agronomical practices and stewardship

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Despite the severe drought that we continue to experience, I am happy that farmers could visit and learn from my Bt cotton farm, which has withstood the challenge, assuring that I will still earn an income. The low cost of production to its self-protecting nature motivates me, I will double production in the coming season from 0.02 hectares to 2.5 hectares, so that I can realize at least 5 tonnes of the cotton yield.

Mr. Jesse Kariuki, a farmer leader, Central Kenya





One Health (OH) stakeholders from across Africa participate in a Regional OH Science Communication and Leadership Training.

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR EFFECTIVE SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

Effective communication about agribiotech and biosafety is essential for ensuring that the public is informed about the technology and that trust, and confidence is built in the regulatory processes governing these technologies.

AfriCenter has remained alive to the need of well-trained and informed partners in the field of crop biotechnology. The center has therefore invested heavily in capacity building programs for partners who play a key role in shaping public opinion and who confront agricultural biotechnology and biosafety issues regularly.



Science and Biosafety Communication Training



Building Capacity for International Biosafety Negotiations

Science and Biosafety Communication Training

Effective communication about agri-biotech and biosafety is essential for ensuring that the public is informed about the technology and that trust, and confidence is built in the regulatory processes governing these technologies. AfriCenter invested heavily in capacity building programs for partners who play a key role in shaping public opinion and who confront agricultural biotechnology and biosafety issues regularly.

To achieve this, the Center:

Equipped

104

African scientists and communicators with Science Communication Skills

Enhanced the capacity of

27

African biosafety regulators to effectively communicate for informed biosafety outreach strategies

Updated

23

key biotechnology stakeholders from Malawi on current trends on communicating about genome editing and regulatory environment

Building Capacity for International Biosafety Negotiations

Low participation of African party states in international biosafety negotiations remains a challenge. ISAAA AfriCenter Synergized partners to prepare and coordinate participation of African party states in international negotiations.

42 Africa's Early Career Professionals trained on relevant biotech topics and the need for participation in the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UN-CBD) Biodiversity Conference (COP-15) negotiations

40 participants from 10 African countries discussed multilateral benefit-sharing from digital sequence information (DSI) on genetic resources

Through the support of US Department of Agriculture (USDA), participated in the Tenth meeting of the conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the parties to Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COP-MOP 10) in Montreal, Canada. Under the banner of Academia and Research, AfriCenter undertook to provide technical support to the African Group of Negotiators with up-to-date briefs on the matters up for discussion, especially on Target 17.

KEY IMPACT



Stakeholders' capacity to develop key messages and engaging the mass media enhanced.



Increased stakeholders' understanding of safety considerations of genome edited products



A network of young professionals was formed to articulate biotech and biosafety aspirations in regional and international levels.



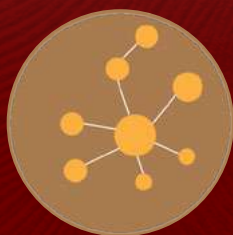
The interactions and extensive discussions from the preparatory meeting enhanced participants' level of preparedness and understanding of COP-MOP's key issues.



Betty Maina, Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for Trade and Industrialization (2020-2022) and Prof. Hamadi Boga, Principal Secretary for Crop Development and Agricultural Research (2020-2022) admire a Bt cotton crop during a study tour of India

POLICY ENGAGEMENT FOR EVIDENCE-BASED DECISION MAKING

Fostering a favorable policy environment for crop biotechnology is key in accelerating research, development and commercialization of biotech crops. Policy makers are critical actors that facilitate formulation of enabling policies. Empowering them with credible and factual information on agri-biotech and biosafety forms a strong basis for creating a sustainably favorable policy environment for agri-biotech. It is for this reason that AfriCenter engages policy and decision makers to ensure they are well-versed with agri-biotech and biosafety advancements, both locally and globally.



**Net-mapping:
Mapping out Key
Actors**



**Seeing-is-believing
Study Tours and
Sensitization**



**National Engagements
and Dialogue on Agri-
biotech**

Net-mapping: Mapping Out Key Actors

AfriCenter held a number of net-mapping exercises that help understand, visualize and discuss layers who influence acceptance and adoption of different crop biotech products and One Health (OH) agenda. Here is a breakdown of the net-mapping activities held:

19

participants from state agencies took part in a net-mapping exercise to identify and map out synthetic biology stakeholders in Kenya. Key stakeholders that will influence the research, development, and adoption of synthetic biology applications in Kenya were identified.

14

Rwanda's cassava stakeholders participated in the identification of key stakeholder in agri-biotech landscape in Rwanda and defining the linkages among the actors and their influence on effective research, development and commercialization of CBSD-resistant biotech cassava in Rwanda.

Netmapping of One Health influencers

70

Participants

4

African countries. Kenya, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique



Netmapping of One Health influencers in Mozambique

Seeing-is-Believing Study Tours and Sensitization

AfriCenter held a study tour and a sensitization forum on crop biotechnology and biosafety. The objective of the tours was to provide experiential learning opportunities for policy makers and biosafety regulators. The tours provided an opportunity for policy makers and regulators to witness crop biotechnology's potential first-hand. Below is a breakdown of the tours:

Regulators from Kenya's National Variety Release Committee visited GM cassava CFT site in the coastal Kenya. The aim of the study tour was to update government officials and NVRC on R&D progress with disease-resistant GM cassava ahead of National Performance Trials.

Government technocrats and biosafety regulators were sensitized on biotech cassava. The aim of the meeting was to provide a platform for strengthening biosafety coordination for sustained biotech development in Kenya.



Experiential learning for farmers in a Bt cotton farm in Embu

National Dialogue: Role of Agri-Biotech in Animal Feed Sector

ISAAA AfriCenter and partners hosted a national dialogue on the role of agri-biotech innovations and trade in building a sustainable animal feed system in Kenya, at the University of Nairobi. The dialogue brought together 180 participants including private sector players, policymakers, scientists, academia, crop and livestock farmers, feed manufacturers, traders, health professionals, environmental experts, civil society, and the media.



KEY IMPACT

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The ten-year ban on importation and utilization of GM foods was effectively lifted.
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The study tours enlightened regulators as they expressed confidence that such exposures help them make more informed decisions.
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Rwanda netmapping exercise laid the ground for development of a policy-engagement strategy for biotech cassava research, development and adoption in the country.



African scientists under the auspices of the Network of African Science Academies (NASAC) hold a press conference to assure the continent that approved GMO crops are safe and healthy.

MEDIA ENGAGEMENT FOR INCREASED COVERAGE OF AGRIBIOTECH AND BIOSAFETY ISSUES

The media shapes public opinion in the way it selects, packages and presents information to its audiences. Therefore, having a group of journalists and editors with factual knowledge on agricultural biotechnology is an important asset. In that respect, Afri Center invests heavily in engaging members of the fourth estate in order to improve accurate reporting on agri-biotech and biosafety.



Science Cafes



Media Awards to celebrate exemplary Science Journalism

Science Cafes

200

Journalists sensitized on
Science Reporting

AfriCenter, through OFAB-Kenya, hosted a virtual media science café on deployment of Striga-smart sorghum in Kenya. The journalists were sensitized on the importance of genome-editing and its applications in agriculture



Media Awards to Celebrate Science Reporting

AfriCenter and OFAB Kenya held the annual media awards gala, popularly known as OFAB-Kenya Media Awards (OMAs). The Awards sought to acknowledge journalists for their consistency in reporting on agriculture biotechnology.



KEY IMPACT



Increased and more accurate reporting with close to 130 million media impressions.



Stronger linkages and networks between journalists and other stakeholders that include scientists and policy makers.



Improved understanding and confidence in media reporting on agri-biotechnology, biosafety and health.

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Science journalism is significant in transforming Africa's agriculture. Input by journalists is critical in informing the public about several major drivers that put the world on track towards ending hunger and malnutrition.

*Ms. Sofia Tesfazion, Director,
Resource Mobilization, AATF*





A One Health study tour in Nairobi Kenya

OUR NEW FRONTIERS

Over the last two years, ISAAA AfriCenter has been broadening its scope and diversifying its activities. While agricultural biotechnology will continue to be a focus area, the organization is also exploring opportunities to engage in other emerging areas. By expanding its portfolio and investing in new technologies, the Center hopes to leverage its expertise and networks to better address the evolving needs of African agriculture and the challenges facing the continent.



**Africa Science
Dialogue Series**



**Capacitating One
Health in Eastern
and Southern Africa
(COHESA) Project**



**Striga Smart
Sorghum for Africa
(SSSfA) Project**



**Animal
Biotechnology**

Africa Science Dialogue Series

AfriCenter initiated the Africa Science Dialogue Series, an African-led science series whose objective is to bridge the widening gap between science and society through timely interventions on various types of misinformation on innovations in Agriculture, Health and the Environment.

Crop protection and toxicology experts held two series to prepare an expert report on safe and responsible use of crop protection products for improved agricultural productivity

Journalists sensitized on the role of agri-innovations in addressing food security and escalating food and feed prices

Media events (interviews, talk shows and press conferences) held to address misinformation and concerns about GMO foods thus assuring public confidence on these foods

Under the Series, AfriCenter supported the Annual Meeting of African Science Academies (AMASA)

KEY IMPACT



Through the Africa Science Dialogue initiative, Africa science academies assured the continent that GMOs are safe.



Response to queries and concerns on GMOs is timely and efficient thanks to the Africa Science Dialogue platform.



Increased buy-in and willingness by the private sector to trade in GM commodities and crop protection products.

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The Science Academies in Africa recommend adoption and commercialization of approved GM crops as one of the sustainable options in addressing food insecurity and providing livelihoods of the population. The move to embrace GM technology will not only benefit Kenya but the whole of Africa where more than 100 million people are facing acute food insecurity due to drought.

**Prof. Norbert Hounkonnou,
President, Network of African Science
Academies**



Capacitating One Health in Eastern and Southern Africa (COHESA) Project

Capacitating One Health in Eastern and Southern Africa (COHESA) is a title-explained project that aims to generate an inclusive Research & Innovation ecosystem, facilitating rapid uptake, adaption and adoption of solutions to One Health (OH) issues, with the OH concept embedded across society in Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA). Based in 11 Eastern and Southern Africa Countries, the COHESA project is led by a consortium of International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), International Service for the Acquisition of Agri Biotech Applications (ISAAA) AfriCenter and French Agricultural Research Center for International Development (CIRAD). The project is delivered through work packages that focus on understanding OH capacity, knowledge and information sharing, promoting National and regional OH collaboration and governance and building the future OH workforce to deliver OH solutions. The project is being delivered through in-country multipliers that understand the local OH landscape and contextualize the integrative practice to their local set up.



COHESA Regional training on science communication

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We are not only limited by the silos we live in as experts but also by our nature to gate-keep information and knowledge sharing. The workshop has provided us with illuminating experience and opportunity to share ideas and best practices towards improving OH. Additionally, learning how to effectively engage the media has been a standout for me. We have to remember that the media are the representative of the people, and thus when we engage, we are directly engaging the public.

Dr. Gloria Igihozo, University of Global Health Equity, Rwanda



Striga Smart Sorghum for Africa Project

ISAAA AfriCenter is leading other partners to implement Feed the Future Striga Smart Sorghum for Africa (SSSfA), a new public-private partnership project that utilizes CRISPR genome editing technology to develop Striga-resistant sorghum varieties for Kenya and Ethiopia. Striga is a parasitic weed responsible for up to 100 percent yield loss in Africa's staple cereals, thus posing a great danger to the livelihoods of millions of smallholder farmers on the continent.



The project was launched in December 2022 and presided over by key Kenya and Ethiopia Government technocrats and leadership of Kenyatta and Addis Ababa Universities.

KEY IMPACT



First Africa led genome edited project on a staple crop

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Sorghum is one of Ethiopia's staple crops and is a major food security crop in Eastern Africa. Sadly, Striga infestation on this important cereal crop has caused about 50-100 per cent yield loss. This project will go a long way in enhancing sorghum production and improving the food security situation in the country thus improving livelihoods of close to 5 million households.

Prof. Teklehaimanot Haileselassie, Crop Biotechnologist at Addis Ababa University, an SSSfA Project team member



Animal Biotechnology

In the past decade, the animal biotechnology field has made remarkable progress in the development of genetically modified and genome-edited animals. Through advanced techniques like CRISPR-Cas9, scientists can precisely modify animal genomes, leading to improved traits, disease resistance, and increased productivity in livestock. These advances hold promise for addressing food security. However, proper policies, regulatory frameworks, and public acceptance will have a huge influence on the adoption of animal biotechnology products. As such, ISAAA AfriCenter leads science communication and policy advocacy in for animal biotechnology in Africa. In September 2021, ISAAA AfriCenter and partners co-organized the 4th international workshop on regulatory approaches for animal biotechnology held in São Paulo, Brazil. The workshop addressed various elements of regulatory frameworks for the food and environmental safety assessment of products from animals produced using animal biotechnologies.





Africa Coalition for Communicating about Genome Editing Nigeria and Kenya

FORGING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR A BETTER AFRICA

AfriCenter partners with like-minded credible institutions in the agricultural biotechnology and biosafety sector. These partnerships seek to ensure a coordinated approach to optimize resources and synergies expertise. Owing to AfriCenter's policy engagement and communications track record, partners frequently contract the Center to undertake communication and policy engagement activities in support of their projects.

Key Areas of Partnership include:



Development of communication and outreach strategies



Enhancement of knowledge sharing and awareness creation on agricultural biotechnology



Spearheading seeing-is-believing biotech study tours and sensitization workshops for several stakeholder groups



Provision of policy outreach support



Execution of science communication trainings

Our Partners

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our partners who have been instrumental in our success. It is through their unwavering commitment, expertise, and collaborative spirit that we have been able to make significant strides in promoting evidence-based decision making.



Conclusion

The scale of our ambitions must match our capability to deliver, inspect and recollect our activities. We will continue being committed to our vision of being the leading bioscience communication enabler for a food-secure and healthy Africa by providing an inclusive platform that informs Africa's policies and markets for ethical and effective bioscience solutions. With the changing bioscience landscape, AfriCenter is adopting a new strategy to provide best bioscience solutions to emerging challenges that include climate change, emergence of new pests and diseases, misinformation about new innovations, conflicting policies, silo approaches and so on. We thank all our partners and invite new partnerships as we strive to integrate efforts and make Africa healthy, food secure and resilient to the dynamic climate for our future, coming generations, and the planet.

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*A single
bracelet does
not jingle*

Congolese proverb