

## SAFEGUARDING FOOD SECURITY AND RURAL LIVELIHOODS THROUGH EASIER ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES

There is an often significant lack of standards concerning the exchange of information on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture stored in gene banks. In this context, the project aimed to improve the value and use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture through facilitated access to scientific information and capacity development, contributing to the implementation of the Global Information System of Article 17 of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

It aimed to achieve this through three main components:

(i) the development of a web portal to connect plant genetic resources information systems and datasets, (ii) the development and promotion of standards for germplasm description and documentation and (iii) the organization of training activities in two main regions to document germplasm available in the Multilateral System of the International Treaty and other useful information for plant breeders, farmers and researchers.



### WHAT DID THE PROJECT DO?

The project increased the access to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture information thanks to the development of a new global common standard for germplasm in the form of Digital Object Identifiers and the establishment of a global portal for their registration. Training material was produced in all official languages and capacity-building activities and courses delivered in preselected target subregions and countries. A number of outreach events were organized in collaboration with other FAO units and with external technical collaborating organizations, while hubs were established in both the Near East and North Africa and Southern Africa regions.

### IMPACT

Capacity to register crop germplasm dates in the Global Information System increased in a number of countries and there is more widespread awareness of the value and need to share this data. The information generated by the global portal, in particular the number of materials available in the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing, is being proposed as a new indicator to measure progress in the context of the development of the Global Biodiversity Framework.

### KEY FACTS

**Contribution**

USD 1 167 547

**Duration**

January 2017 – December 2019

**Resource Partners**

Federal Government of Germany -  
Federal Ministry of Food and  
Agriculture (BMEL)

**Partners**

International Treaty on Plant Genetic  
Resources for Food and Agriculture

**Beneficiaries**

Plant breeders, researchers, farmers,  
gene banks, research institutions,  
universities, as well as  
holders/developers of plant genetic  
resources

## ACTIVITIES

- Stakeholder consultation held at global level, attracting 40 experts to discuss the best permanent and unique identifier to adopt for the global portal.
- A set of standards for the exchange of information on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture validated. Version 2.1 published in July 2017, following the review by the Scientific Advisory Committee of the Global Information System.
- Descriptors and guidelines for the Global Information System printed and published online in 2018 in four languages.
- Online module for the registration of Digital Object Identifiers for plant genetic resources for food and agriculture published.
- Training provided to over 300 experts working on gene bank management and plant breeding.
- Workshops on strengthening national capacities on plant genetic resources held in Egypt and South Africa in 2017.
- Two workshops focusing on formal publications and citation mechanisms held in Tunisia in 2018.
- Three events and back-to-back workshops held in the Latin America and the Caribbean Region in 2019, including delivery of presentations on crop descriptors and Digital Object Identifiers to 17 countries.
- Highly detailed set of statistics and the feedback received from users published online.



### Project Code

FAO: GCP/GLO/685/GER

Donor ID: BMEL GenR 2016-3

### Project Title

Implementation of the pilot phase of the Global Information System on Plant Genetic Resources of Article 17 of the ITPGRFA

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