



PRO-GRACE workshop
October 10
Crete





Who we are

SeedNL is a public-private partnership between the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, the Foreign Office, the Dutch potato organisation and the Dutch seed association (Plantum), that leverages Dutch expertise from internationally operating companies, civil society organisations, knowledge institutes and government authorities for integrated seed sector development with partners in LMICs.

We provide tailored advice and initiates multi-stakeholder partnerships between the Netherlands and LMICs based on enhanced learning and knowledge sharing, prioritising multi-stakeholder collaboration and nationally led strategies in LMICs.

Aim

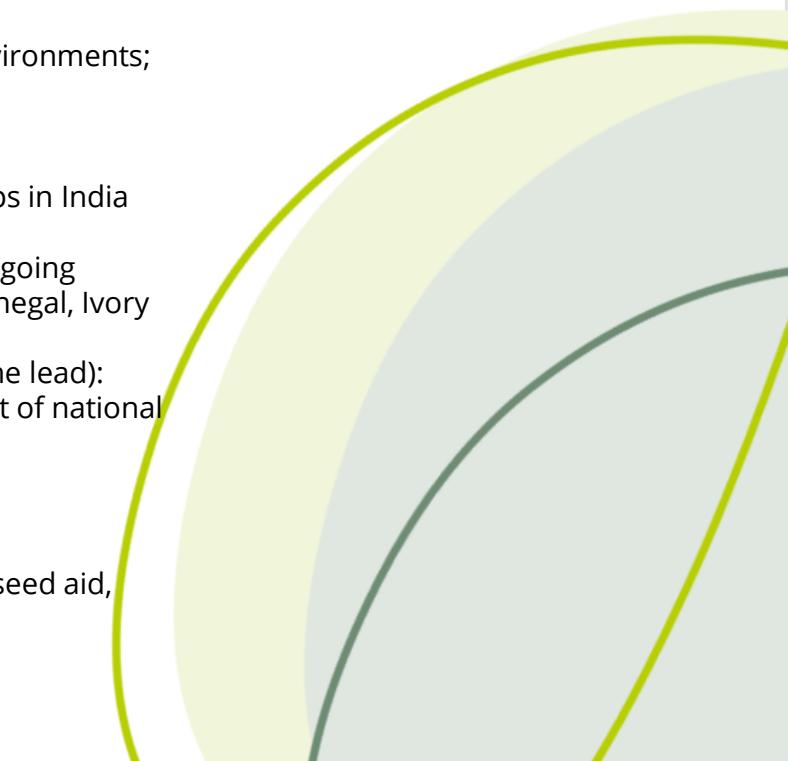
Seed system and sector development in low and middle income countries, improving the productivity of farmers and contributing to global food security, and thus SDG2.

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SeedNL in practice

As a PPP, SeedNL can facilitate multi-stakeholder discussions without representing any single actors perspective, thereby opening doors to new conversations, collaborations, and partnerships.

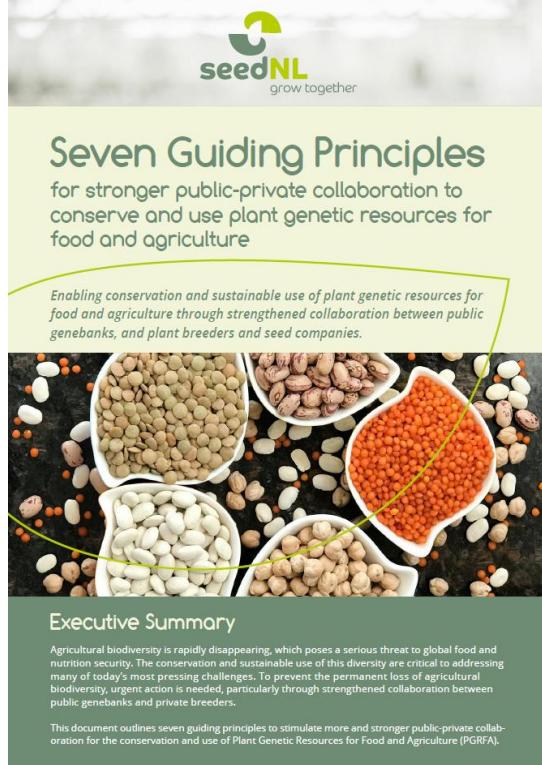
- Pillars of work: (1) Learning; (2) Partnership initiation; (3) Enabling environments; (4) Investment in ISSD
- Partnership initiation pillar:
 - Flagship programmes in Nigeria and Ethiopia, new partnerships in India and Bangladesh
 - Smaller scale (scoping) activities in Mozambique and Egypt, ongoing advisory services to embassies in Ghana, Tanzania, Egypt, Senegal, Ivory Coast, Uganda, and Indonesia
 - Partnership initiation process (with national governments in the lead): needs-based advisory services, scoping missions, development of national roadmaps, implementation design.
- Learning pillar:
 - Evaluation of programmes and learning from experiences
 - Furthering contentious discussions: Farmers/breeders rights, seed aid, PGRFA conservation and use



Seven Guiding Principles

for stronger public private collaboration to conserve and use plant genetic resources for food and agriculture

1. Recognise the urgency of mutually beneficial collaboration to prevent loss of PGRFA
2. Build trust between national, public, and private stakeholders
3. Facilitate easier access to PGRFA by standardising procedures
4. Jointly facilitate an enabling environment for PGFRA conservation and use
5. Ensure uniform access and benefit sharing along with keeping PGRFA within the public domain
6. Embrace unconventional partnerships to drive collaborative innovation
7. Build genebank capacity to strengthen global collaboration



The image shows the front cover of a document titled 'Seven Guiding Principles'. The cover features the 'seedNL' logo with the tagline 'grow together'. Below the logo, the title 'Seven Guiding Principles' is displayed, followed by a subtitle: 'for stronger public-private collaboration to conserve and use plant genetic resources for food and agriculture'. A green curved line highlights the subtitle. Below this, a photograph of various legumes (lentils, beans, chickpeas) in white bowls is shown. The bottom section of the cover is a dark green band containing the 'Executive Summary' and a brief description of the document's purpose.

Seven Guiding Principles

for stronger public-private collaboration to conserve and use plant genetic resources for food and agriculture

Enabling conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture through strengthened collaboration between public genebanks, and plant breeders and seed companies.

Executive Summary

Agricultural biodiversity is rapidly disappearing, which poses a serious threat to global food and nutrition security. The conservation and sustainable use of this diversity are critical to addressing many of today's most pressing challenges. To prevent the permanent loss of agricultural biodiversity, urgent action is needed, particularly through strengthened collaboration between public genebanks and private breeders.

This document outlines seven guiding principles to stimulate more and stronger public-private collaboration for the conservation and use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA).

Recognise the urgency of mutually beneficial collaboration to prevent loss of PGRFA

Collaborations can center around:

- regenerating accessions
- knowledge sharing (including plant material evaluations)
- conducting collecting missions
- providing services
- raising awareness

CGN has undertaken collecting missions through legal agreements with the countries of origin, with (financial) support from and closely coordinated with private breeding companies, most recently in Uzbekistan and Jordan



Build trust between national, public, and private stakeholders

Trust is essential for:

- successful international (UN) negotiations to formulate policy
- the recognition that private breeders and seed companies are part of the solution

Elements to establish trust include:

- openness about flows of benefits;
- transparent collaboration principles and formalised cooperation;
- publicising and sharing collaboration results (possibly after a short embargo period);



HZPC worked with the CIP and previously the Syngenta Foundation to develop five new potato varieties. The genetic diversity used came from the CIP genebank and breeding programme. In 2021 the first new variety was released. When a newly developed variety is sold, a percentage of HZPC's profit goes to CIP. In countries where HZPC is not active, CIP is permitted to distribute the new variety freely.

HZPC and CIP are expanding the project to East Africa

Embrace unconventional partnerships

Working with more unusual partners, including associations or foundations, whose different positions and perspectives can be key to furthering collaborations



EVA
European Evaluation Network



The European Evaluation Network brings together genebanks, research institutes and private sector breeding companies to evaluate genetic plant materials held in European genebanks and to make them accessible for use. Early access to genetic information is beneficial to companies breeding programmes. EVA now has 6 crop-specific networks that bring together 29 participating genebanks, 49 breeding companies and 34 research institutes, from over 20 countries

Build genebank capacity to strengthen global collaboration

Building national capacity amongst regulatory bodies and genebanks on implementing international policies, including quality standards

The private sector could play a key role in this capacity-building support, both financially and in-kind, by

1. informing genebanks on what information is beneficial to be shared on accessions;
2. the quality requirements needed when exchanging PGRFA;
3. training genebank staff on conducting regeneration of accessions.



During the establishment of the vegetable genebank facility in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, in collaboration with Pusat Inovasi AgroTeknologi-University of Gadjah Mada, East-West Seed International offered financial and in-kind support to infrastructure development (greenhouses and laboratories), donated PGRFA, and provided training for genebank staff.

Community of Practice: Breeders & Genebanks

Why?

- Bridge the growing gap between breeders & genebanks
- Strengthen trust, collaboration & use of agrobiodiversity

What?

- A Community of Practice (CoP) to share knowledge & practices, taking into account the guiding principles
- Members: (1) public and private breeders and genebank curators; (2) biodiversity representatives in seed associations and genebank managers; (3) supported by observers from international organisations (e.g. Crop Trust)

How?

- Online workspace for linking and learning
- Twice-yearly online meetings and/or crop-focused workshops
- Facilitation of joint activities: material exchange, evaluation, collecting, mentoring, policy feedback

Goal (2026–2027 Pilot):

- Focus on vegetables (Europe, SE Asia, Global South)
- Enhance practical collaboration to better manage genetic resources for food & nutrition security

Let SeedNL know if you are interested in becoming a member!

Q&A and discussion

Questions for consideration:

- Does collaboration with LMICs need to be further embedded in PRO-GRACE/GRACE RI work?
- Does collaboration with private sector need to be further embedded in PRO-GRACE/GRACE RI work?
- What barriers to collaboration do you experience, and what could be suggestions to overcome them?

Do you have experiences and/or inspiring examples to share (now and/or as part of showcasing campaign)?



Thank you!

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Photo by <https://unsplash.com/@markusspiske>