1. Introduction

- Maize and legumes are an important source of food security and livelihoods among smallholder farmers of Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA).
- Between 2010 and 2014, SIMLESA-1 embarked on developing Conservation Agriculture (CA) based sustainable maize-legume cropping systems in five countries of ESA with the goal of reaching 500,000 farmers in 10 yrs.

2. SIMLESA-1: 2010-2014

Activities hinged on socio-economics, agronomy and seed multiplication

Objective 2: Productive, resilient and sustainable maize-legume systems
- Baseline studies
- Establishment of long term CA trials
- On-farm exploratory trials
- Seed road maps established
- Innovation platforms
- M&E and Gender (Objective 4)
- Capacity building (objective 5)

Objective 3: Uplifting maize and legume varieties available
- Identification of promising maize and legume varieties
- Participatory variety selection with farmers
- Seed road maps

Objective 1: Improved understanding of socio-economic characteristics
- Baseline surveys
- Adoption surveys
- Markets and value chain studies

3. SIMLESA-2: 2014-2018

Increased focus on sustainable intensification, integration and impact.

Scaling now a major activity component

4. Highlights

- Maize varieties compatible with intercropping systems identified
- Water conservation and labour savings from CA demonstrated
- Superior yields from legume rotations in CA realized across ESA
- The positive impacts of CA practices on risk, incomes and the environment analysed and disseminated
- Innovation platforms contributed to scaling out and sustainability
- Over 46,000 (17,000 female, 29,000 male) farmers reached by 2014.
- 22 PhD and 42 MSc students trained.

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