CIMMYT/CGIAR-derived Improved Varieties
Registration on COMESA Variety Catalogue

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Who release varieties developed by CIMMYT/CGIAR?

- CIMMYT/CGIAR centres do not release any “variety”. Partners (public/private) release CIMMYT/CGIAR products (hybrids or improved OPVs) as “Varieties”, following national rules and regulations.

- CIMMYT/CGIAR responsibility is to develop improved germplasm (inbred lines, hybrids, improved OPVs) and deploy these through partners (public/private).

- CIMMYT has an open and transparent policy on how CIMMYT-derived products (hybrids/improved OPVs) are allocated to the partners, based on defined criteria and process of allocation.
Allocation of CIMMYT’s Elite Maize Hybrids

CIMMYT-derived pre-commercial hybrids are allocated and licensed on a non-exclusive or semi-exclusive basis to interested partners in SSA, Asia and Latin America, based on submission of a Product Allocation Request Form.

- **Non-exclusive**
  - When NARS release CIMMYT developed hybrid in their respective country and license to more than one company to market a particular hybrid/OPV, e.g. Uganda and Ethiopia NARS

- **Semi-exclusive**
  - Allocated for one particular partner with credential for a particular country or group of countries
  - Same hybrid can be allocated to different partners in different geographical areas e.g. EA and WA; Latin America and Africa
Ownership of Parental Inbred Lines developed by CIMMYT/CGIAR

• While CIMMYT-derived hybrid combinations are allocated and licensed to partners (on a semi-exclusive / non-exclusive basis), the ownership of parental inbred lines remains with CIMMYT, and the parental lines are international public goods:
  • Can be used in different hybrid combinations
  • Can be used for further research
• ALL CIMMYT/CGIAR germplasm is invariably provided to partners on Standard Material Transfer Agreement (SMTA).
Ownership of Combination Hybrids

• “Combination hybrid” means the partner uses CIMMYT inbred line(s) in combination with its own proprietary inbred line(s) to develop the hybrid (e.g., CML395/CML202//Partner’s inbred line)
  – CIMMYT lines are provided on Standard Material Transfer Agreement (STMA), as always.
  – The hybrid combination is proprietary to the partner institution
  – Germplasm ownership of CIMMYT inbred line(s) remains with CIMMYT
Options for Partners to include CIMMYT/CGIAR-derived Improved Maize Varieties on COMESA Variety Catalogue

• CIMMYT-derived maize varieties, released by seed companies or NARS (and further sub-licensed to third parties), for a specific country or a group of countries (licensed on a semi-exclusive / non-exclusive?? basis by CIMMYT) can be registered on COMESA variety catalogue

• For specified country/ies for which CIMMYT allocated/licensed the product/hybrid to the partner, as mentioned in the product allocation certification and agreement

• For any additional country/ies (not mentioned in the certificate/agreement), the partner needs to seek prior permission from CIMMYT.
Variety Naming in COMESA Catalogue

- Not all CIMMYT products allocated or licensed to partners may become “commercial varieties”; some may not pass through further evaluation/NPT.
- Partners give commercial (brand) names for released varieties.
- Commercial name of the variety is used in COMESA catalogue.
- Under no circumstances CIMMYT reveals the pedigree information on the hybrids allocated/licensed to seed companies, as this is absolutely confidential.
Variety Naming in COMESA Catalogue

• For example, Company X and Company Y have been allocated a particular CIMMYT-derived pre-commercial hybrid **CKH16XXXX**, for southern Africa and East Africa, respectively.

• Company X and Company Y will give different brand names to the same hybrids for commercial purposes.

• However, these Companies are expected to commercialize the hybrid only in the geographies for which these were licensed (as per the agreement).

• Both Companies can register these varieties in COMESA catalogue for the respective geographies.
Variety Naming in COMESA Catalogue

CKH16XXXX released

Company X in

Company Y in

Kenya

Tanzania

Uganda

Ethiopia

Brand name A

COMESA Catalogue

Brand name B
How can we effectively track if Variety A and Variety B are same (based on same CIMMYT hybrid)?

- CIMMYT Maize Program Director (Dr B.M. Prasanna) proposes as below:
  - Each product needs to be given an unique **Variety Identification Number (VIN)**; the VIN remains the same (although the brand name is different), even if a particular hybrid is allocated to more than one partner.
  - **VIN is distinct: alpha-numerical (letters + numbers)**

- CIMMYT code (CKH, CZH, CEH, CAH etc.) and pedigree are absolutely confidential, to protect the commercial interests of the company.
**Varietal Identification Number (VIN)**

- VIN will be provided by CIMMYT to the partner who is allocated/licensed a particular hybrid, and the same VIN is informed to COMESA.
- Partner must include the VIN when a hybrid is nominated as an entry for National Performance Trial (NPT).
- VIN should be prominently displayed on commercial seed bag (besides the Brand Name) when a variety is commercialized in a country (for which the product was licensed by CIMMYT).
- If a VIN is already registered in a particular country by an institution, another institution cannot release the same hybrid in that country with a different entry name.
- If an institution sub-licenses a hybrid (with specific VIN) to different seed companies, the companies need to mention the same VIN, although the brand names are different for different seed companies.
Conclusions

• CIMMYT-derived maize products/hybrids allocated to different partners in different countries/geographies (on a semi-exclusive basis) can be potentially registered on COMESA catalogue, by using the VIN and commercial name.

• The modalities for VIN need to be defined by further consultation among different organizations developing and releasing improved varieties in Africa (including CGIAR, public sector, and private sector).