

Name of the activity, component or project

Drought tolerant maize – CYMMIT and partners in Southern Africa

Name of the country, and the date of the intervention

Southern Africa region

A brief description of the challenge you faced,

Food security and farmers income are regularly threatened by shortfalls in maize yields in southern Africa, where maize is an important staple food. Local seed systems are deficient. Certified seed is often too expensive for small farmers and sometimes not adapted to their conditions. The challenge was to identify germplasm which tolerates drought during critical stages of maize growth and feed these varieties in formal and informal seed systems in Southern Africa.

How you approached it

Under the coordination of CYMMIT a regional research program was started involving partners from NARS from throughout the region. Critical traits for drought tolerance were identified and fed into breeding programs.

The development impact, and Name and email address of a contact person for further information

Today, the first varieties with drought tolerance are available and crop already over 1 mio. ha of land. Informal and formal seed systems picked up the new material and form sustainable production and supply chains for seed delivery. Impact is already significant in scale and will increase and is anticipated to increase at rapid speed. New investments in the development of more drought tolerant lines are lined up.

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