

despite the distribution of thousands of tons of early-maturing cowpeas season after season in Mozambique, very few farmers continue to grow it.

This problem can largely be avoided by letting farmers decide on the crops and varieties they require. An unsuspecting humanitarian agency might accept the advice of a commercial seed company holding large stocks of a particular variety, but this is not always in the best interests of farmers. By letting farmers choose, the commercial seed company will start responding to the needs of farmers.

Considerations

Vouchers through established retailers

This approach assumes that an established network of seed retailers exists, and that commercial seed companies have seed stocks that can be distributed through an already established system. The high demand for seed created by the distribution of vouchers might necessitate providing seed retailers with inventory credit that can be recovered when the vouchers are redeemed for cash.

Seed fairs

Before seed fairs are implemented, it is necessary to train staff and sensitize local communities to what is being proposed. Detailed training manuals in English and Portuguese are available and a cadre of trainers already established. It is recommended that commercial seed companies be fully briefed on the seed fair



In Somalia, seed trading is traditionally done by women.



No. 0186

500 USHs.

SEED VOUCHER

Seed vouchers like this one give farmers the flexibility to choose the varieties they want.

approach. They can then be invited to participate in the fairs so that farmers have access to the largest possible number of crops and varieties from which to choose.



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