

Partnering for Innovation



# StrigAway™ Maize to Address Striga in East Africa

September 27, 2018

# Partnering for Innovation's Results



**6 Years**  
*of partnerships*

**94**

*new agricultural products  
and services commercially  
available to smallholder farmers*



**50**  
*partners*

*More than*  
**1 million**  
*smallholder  
farmer customers*



**\$65 million**  
*in sales*

**17 countries**

# AATF Partnership Background

- January 16, 2014-January 31, 2018
- Originally \$4.2 million between USAID funding and AATF's contribution
- Partnership sought to scale commercialization of imazapyr-resistant (IR) maize seed in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda
- Striga affects 100 million farmers and 1.4 million ha of maize in East Africa, with losses of 30-80 percent
- Private sector seed companies would produce, coat, distribute, and market IR-maize seed to smallholder farmers
- AATF would drive market development, farmer training, and support with IR-maize technology
- Initial goal of 955 MT of sales of IR-maize with country-specific targets
- Produced 688 MT and sold 634 MT, reaching nearly 101,000 SHFs

# StrigAway™ Maize Results



This maize plot has been completely taken over by striga in western Kenya.



Maize cobs: IR maize (left) and non-IR maize harvested from the same *Striga* infested farm (*Gospel Omanyua*)

# StrigAway Scaling Plan

- Register imazapyr in Uganda
- Produce and coat IR-maize for commercial sale
- Install seed processing lines with partner seed companies
- Establish demo plots in each country
- Sell IR-maize produced (less a certain percentage lost in processing)
- Carry out postharvest trainings at demo plots
- Hold agrodealer trainings for correct handling and marketing strategies
- Establish agrodealer-led demo plots
- Repeat the cycle over subsequent seasons

## Scaling Challenges

- Difficulty in multiplying certified seeds due to agronomic challenges, drought, fall army worm (FAW), conflict, maize lethal necrosis (MLN)
- Equipment needed for seed coating. New technology for most seed companies. Equipment importation/installation delays
- Seed companies struggled to market to SHFs due to complexity of use (e.g., some results after one season but eradication requires 7 seasons of use, handling instructions/gloves) and agrodealers (e.g., safe storage, limited shelf life, explaining technology to SHFs)
- Competition with higher yielding maize varieties, which can outperform StrigAway™ in areas with lower striga infestation
- Big players (e.g., Tanseed, Kenya Seed Co.) felt market was limited and did not prioritize producing and marketing
- Difficult as implementing partner to secure PERSUAP (Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safer Use Action Plan)

## Stakeholder Tensions

- BASF-led registration of imazapyr faced challenges with regulators
- CIMMYT could not meet seed companies' demand for breeder seed
- Seed companies struggled with production and coating of seed, educating SHFs and agrodealers on handling and use of StrigAway™ technology
- Agrodealers needed help in marketing the technology to SHFs, especially on safe handling and need for several seasons to see good return on investment
- AATF faced challenges in incentivizing some seed companies to invest time, energy, and money in StrigAway™ technology

## Scaling Lessons Learned

- Smaller seed companies may prefer to scale new and more niche seed technologies compared to larger state seed companies, but face challenges in production and marketing
- Multiplication of new seed varieties takes time and technical capacity – and entails significant risk for small seed companies with limited resources
- Agrodealers play a vital role in scaling new seed technology, especially for smaller seed companies, through demo plots or as trusted information sources – but they need incentives to promote a particular product over others
- In partnerships to scale agricultural technologies, we find it more effective and sustainable for the private sector company to lead with support from NGO partners

# Connect With Us

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