

# “25 years strong: Innovating quality seed for Africa’s sustainable agriculture”

## AFSTA CONGRESS - Kigali, Rwanda, March 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

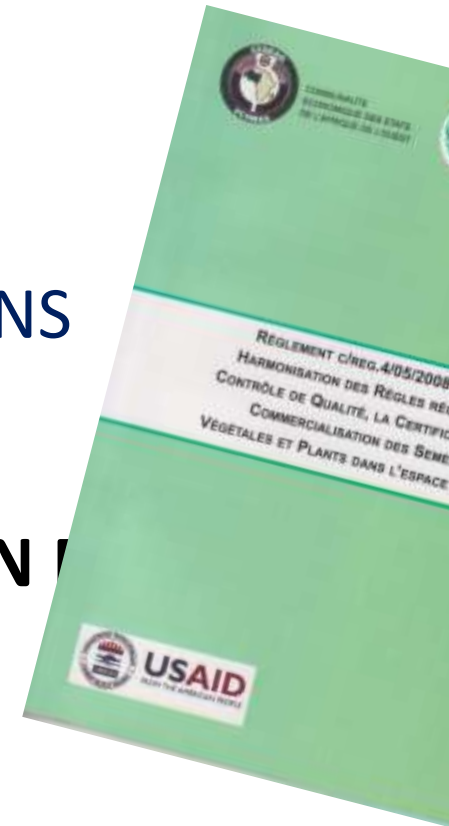
### PRESENTATION PLAN

I. BACKGROUND AND RATIONAL

II. SCOPE OF THE HARMONIZED REGIONAL SEED REGULATIONS

III. IMPLEMENTING APPROACH

V. MAJOR CONSTRAINTS TO REGULATION IMPLEMENTATION



# “25 years strong: Innovating quality seed for Africa’s sustainable agriculture”

## AFSTA CONGRESS - Kigali, Rwanda, March 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

### I. BACKGROUND AND RATIONAL (1/2)

- *Quality seeds of improved plant varieties contribute more than 40% to the increase in the yield of plant production.*
- *They must therefore remain available and accessible, for:*
  - *food and nutritional security of populations;*
  - *the implementation of regional agricultural policies (ECOWAP, PAC, CSSA);*
  - *the promotion of sustainable agriculture, and*
  - *the promotion of regional integration, through the regional common seed market.*
- *It is in this vein that the ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS have agreed to harmonize the **rules** governing quality control, certification and marketing of plant seeds and seedlings, in the region of their jurisdiction.*

# “25 years strong: Innovating quality seed for Africa’s sustainable agriculture”

## AFSTA CONGRESS - Kigali, Rwanda, March 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

### I. BACKGROUND AND RATIONAL (2/2)

- These **rules** constitute the “[Harmonized Regional Seed Regulations](#)”, adopted by these InterGovernmental Organizations (IGOs), according to their own internal procedures:
  - i) the **CILSS Framework Convention** on plant seeds and the regional consultation framework of March 2006;
  - ii) the **Regulation C/REG.4/05/2008**, of May 18, 2008, harmonizing the rules governing quality control, certification, marketing of plant seeds and seedlings in the ECOWAS region, and
  - iii) the **Regulation No. 003/2009/CM/UEMOA**, of March 27, 2009, harmonizing the rules governing quality control, certification and marketing of plant seeds and seedlings within the UEMOA.

# “25 years strong: Innovating quality seed for Africa’s sustainable agriculture”

## AFSTA CONGRESS - Kigali, Rwanda, March 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

### III. SCOPE OF HARMONIZED REGIONAL SEED REGULATIONS

**Variety Release**, based on regionally agreed terms (DUS & VATE tests required)

**Quality control & certification of seeds**, based on regionally agreed procedures and standards (Enabling Technical Regulations)

**Phytosanitary Control and Certification**, based on operating procedures and standards to be established (lists: A1, A2, RNQPs)

**Marketing of seeds**, based on procedures for obtaining approval for the conduct of commercial activity

# “25 years strong: Innovating quality seed for Africa’s sustainable agriculture”

## AFSTA CONGRESS - Kigali, Rwanda, March 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

### III. SCOPE OF HARMONIZED REGIONAL SEED REGULATIONS

**Variety Release**, based on regionally agreed terms (DUS & VATE tests required)

- ✧ **To be released a candidate variety must successfully pass DUS & VCUS examination tests, to verify, in particular, that:**
  - (i) it is new, homogeneous and stable (DUS), and
  - (ii) it is adapted to the farming system (VCUS), by examining:
    - the yield and its components;
    - the sensitivity to the biotic & abiotic factors;
    - the technological and environmental value.
- ✧ **Capacity building trainings, are organized towards SVC actors**



# “25 years strong: Innovating quality seed for Africa’s sustainable agriculture”

## AFSTA CONGRESS - Kigali, Rwanda, March 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

### III. SCOPE OF HARMONIZED REGIONAL SEED REGULATIONS

**Quality control & certification of seeds, based on regionally agreed procedures and standards (Enabling Technical Regulations)**

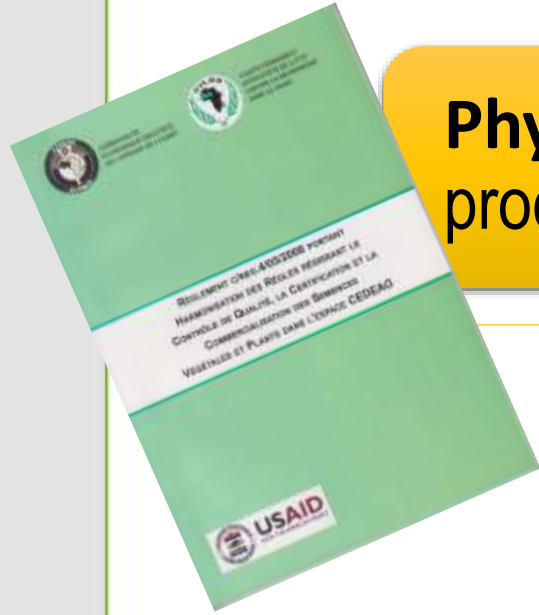
- ✧ **The seed quality is defined by standards (Breeder, Foundation, Certified seeds (R1, R2) – Executive Regulation - ETRs**
- ✧ **The standards are agreed for 20 ECOWAS priority crops, for which the ETRs are developed and validated by the West Africa Seed Experts and adopted by the Regional Seed Committee.**
- ✧ **Capacity building trainings, are organized towards SVC actors**



# “25 years strong: Innovating quality seed for Africa’s sustainable agriculture”

## AFSTA CONGRESS - Kigali, Rwanda, March 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

### III. SCOPE OF HARMONIZED REGIONAL SEED REGULATIONS



**Phytosanitary Control and Certification**, based on operating procedures and standards to be completed (lists: A1, A2, RNQPs)

- ✧ The phytosanitary condition of seeds is defined by the category of the pests found in the seed batch – Executive Regulation:
  - (i) Category A1: *Quarantine pests, senso stricto*;
  - (ii) Category A2: *Quarantine pests, with control method, &*
  - (iii) Category RNQPs: *Regulated Non-Quarantine Pests*
- ✧ These standards allow the Phyto Inspectors to decide, when controlling seed batches for importation or exportation.
- ✧ Capacity building trainings are organized towards SVC actors

### III. SCOPE OF HARMONIZED REGIONAL SEED REGULATIONS

Marketing of seeds, based on procedures for obtaining approval for the conduct of commercial activity

- ✧ **With respect to the ECOWAS Seed Regulation Provisions:**
  - **Only *varieties registered in the Regional catalogue* can be marketed at the regional level;**
  - **Marketing seeds by producers-distributors and distributors is *subject to official accreditation***
  - **All seed distributors must keep a *stock accounting***
  - **State of *storage and transportation conditions*, etc.**

# “25 years strong: Innovating quality seed for Africa’s sustainable agriculture”

## AFSTA CONGRESS - Kigali, Rwanda, March 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

### IV. IMPLEMENTING APPROACH OF THE REGIONAL SEED REGULATIONS

- (i) Draft templates of the required regulatory texts and then validated by the Directors Generals of Agriculture (DGAs) of the 17 IGOs’ Member States;*
- (ii) These validated and widely shared templates served as reference documents, for the 17 MS to undertake the required policy reforms;*
- (iii) Explanatory and advocacy regional workshops were organized and awareness-raising missions to some Member States;*
- (iv) The **Executive Regulations (ER)** were developed and adopted by CRSPAOS (on Variety Release, Quality Control and Phytosanitary Control, etc.);*
- (v) **Capacity building workshops**, towards Seed Value Chain actors, were organized at regional and national levels on **VR, SQC, SPC, Marketing, ...***

**“25 years strong: Innovating quality seed for Africa’s sustainable agriculture”**  
**AFSTA CONGRESS - Kigali, Rwanda, March 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

**V. MAJOR CONSTRAINTS TO REGULATION IMPLEMENTATION BY MEMBER STATES**

<b>• Constraints related to <b>Policy Reforms</b></b>	<b>Potential solution</b>
<b>• Constraints related to <b>Variety Release</b></b>	<b>Potential solution</b>
<b>• Constraints related to <b>Seed Quality Control</b></b>	<b>Potential solution</b>
<b>• Constraints related to <b>Phytosanitary Control</b></b>	<b>Potential solution</b>
<b>• Constraints related to <b>Seed Marketing</b></b>	<b>Potential solution</b>

# “25 years strong: Innovating quality seed for Africa’s sustainable agriculture”

AFSTA CONGRESS - Kigali, Rwanda, March 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## V. MAJOR CONSTRAINTS TO REGULATION IMPLEMENTATION BY MEMBER STATES

• Constraints related to <b>Policy Reforms</b>	Potential solution
1. <u>Weak understanding of the provisions of the Regulations</u> , to properly conduct required policy reforms, by MS, including National Seed Committees (NSCs)’ Members	• <i>Create the awareness of NSCs’ Members &amp; Seed Value Chain (SVC) actors on the benefit of policy reforms</i>
2. <u>Weak capacity of these NSCs</u> , as Consultative Bodies on any national vs regional seed related matter	• <i>Strengthen capacities of NSCs’ Members to play their advisory role, through trainings</i>
3. <u>Weak support to Member States in the conduct of these policy reforms</u>	• <i>Put in place an operational funding mechanism to support the seed sector, by MS Governments</i>
4. <u>Low enforcement of the provisions of these Regulations</u> , as result of the aforementioned weaknesses	• <i>Organize explanatory &amp; advocacy missions in Member States, on Regional Seed Regulations</i>

# “25 years strong: Innovating quality seed for Africa’s sustainable agriculture”

## AFSTA CONGRESS - Kigali, Rwanda, March 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

### V. MAJOR CONSTRAINTS TO REGULATION IMPLEMENTATION BY MEMBER STATES

• Constraints related to <b>Variety Release</b>	Potential solution
1. <b><u>Poor understanding of Variety Release procedures</u></b> (DUS & VCU tests), by Plant Breeders and the NSCs’ Members	● <i>Train Plant Breeders, including NSCs’ Members on the Variety Release procedures</i>
2. <b><u>Insufficient conservation facilities of variety collections or reference varieties</u></b>	● <i>Establish conservation facilities and support the constitution of reference collections</i>
3. <b><u>Country released varieties could not be necessary the best for the farming systems</u></b> (improved varieties, climate-smart, resilient, well-adapted, more resistant to pests & diseases), as result of the aforementioned weaknesses	● <i>Train Plant Breeders and NSCs’ Members on Variety Release procedures to ensure that the released varieties are scientifically the best</i>

## V. MAJOR CONSTRAINTS TO REGULATION IMPLEMENTATION BY MEMBER STATES

• Constraints related to <b>Seed Quality Control</b>	Potential solution
1. <u>Poor understanding of regulation procedures for Seed Quality Control and Certification</u> , by Field & Batch Inspectors, including Seed Lab Analysts and NSCs’ Members	● <i>Train Accredited Inspectors, Seed Lab Analysts, including NSCs’ Members</i>
2. <u>Insufficient operational seed infrastructural facilities equipment &amp; materials</u> for data collection, etc.)	● <i>Strengthen MS capacities, through building sufficient operational facilities, and purchasing equipment &amp; materials</i>
3. <u>Insufficient number of Seed Inspectors</u> , including seed Lab Analysts	● <i>recruit the number required for the conduct of field &amp; batch inspections &amp; seed lab analysis</i>
4. <u>Standard Quality of so called “Certified Seeds” could not be fully met</u> , as result of the aforementioned weaknesses	● <i>Strengthen capacities of Certification Agencies to properly conduct Seed Quality Control activities</i>

# “25 years strong: Innovating quality seed for Africa’s sustainable agriculture”

AFSTA CONGRESS - Kigali, Rwanda, March 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## V. MAJOR CONSTRAINTS TO REGULATION IMPLEMENTATION BY MEMBER STATES

• Constraints related to <b>Phytosanitary Control</b>	Potential solution
1. <u>Poor understanding of regulation procedures of Seed Phytosanitary Control &amp; Certification</u> , by PP Inspectors at the MS borders, including NSCs’ Members	• <i>Train Borders Controllers, including NSCs’ Members and Cross Border Authorities</i>
2. <u>Lack of operational phytosanitary Laboratories</u>	• <i>Put in place operational phytosanitary facilities</i>
3. <u>Insufficient number of phytosanitary Inspectors</u> at the country land, air & sea borders	• <i>Recruit the required number for the conduct of border phytosanitary inspections</i>
4. <u>Lack of a National reference document developed</u> with the official lists of harmful organisms, carried by seeds and categorized into lists A1, A2 & RNQPs, in most of MS	• <i>Develop the “National Reference Document” with the national official lists of harmful pests, categorized into lists A1, A2 and RNQP</i>
5. <u>Weak capacity to identify National/Regional</u>	• <i>Strengthen Border Controllers’</i>

# “25 years strong: Innovating quality seed for Africa’s sustainable agriculture”

AFSTA CONGRESS - Kigali, Rwanda, March 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## V. MAJOR CONSTRAINTS TO REGULATION IMPLEMENTATION BY MEMBER STATES

• Constraints related to <b>Seed Marketing</b>	Potential solution
1. <u>Poor understanding of regulation procedures of Seed Marketing</u> , by agrodealers (seed producers-distributors and distributors), including NSCs' Members	● <i>Train agrodealers, including NSCs' Members</i>
2. <u>Lack of organized marketing seed system</u>	● <i>Put in place operational Marketing system</i>
3. <u>Weak financial capacities of agrodealers, including lack of campaign credit</u>	● <i>Strengthen financial capacities, through putting in place a campaign credit</i>
4. <u>Ignorance of seed marketing strategies</u>	● <i>Educate agrodealers on marketing strategies</i>
5. <u>Lack of dissemination channels on information related to the availability of seeds of a given class</u>	● <i>Putting in place dissemination channels</i>
6. <u>Unsold seed batches</u> as result of the	● <i>Strengthen capacities of agrodealers</i>

# Synoptic table on implementation of Regulations

**Mesures à prendre pour faciliter la mise en œuvre des règlements semenciers régionaux harmonisés — *i.e.*, réformes politiques ↓**

- |   |
|---|
| <sup>1.</sup> Publication au Journal Officiel (#87/...)   |
| <sup>1.</sup> Institution d'un Catalogue national des espèces et variétés végétales #9.3/80.3   |
| <sup>1.</sup> Mise en place d'un Comité national des semences (CNS) #10.2/80.2  |
| <sup>1.</sup> Création de Fonds d'appui au secteur semencier (FASS) #10.2/-   |
| <sup>1.</sup> Détermination des superficies minima & maxima /culture & /parcelle #26/24   |
| <sup>1.</sup> Existence d'Unités de Triage & Conditionnement des Semences (UTCS) #48/...  |
| <sup>1.</sup> Détermination de la gamme des emballages autorisés #51/49   |
| <sup>1.</sup> Détermination de la redevance de certification #61/59.3   |
| <sup>1.</sup> Détermination des conditions d'octroi de l'agrément pour la commercialisation des semences #71.3/69.3                                       |
| <sup>1.</sup> Détermination des mesures pour sanctionner les violations #82.2/82.2  |
| <sup>1.</sup> Établissement de la liste des agents habilités à effectuer des vérifications de conformité (agents de contrôle publics & privés) #83.1/11.2 |

**“25 years strong: Innovating quality seed for Africa’s sustainable agriculture”**  
**AFSTA CONGRESS - Kigali, Rwanda, March 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

**Thank you  
for your kind attention!**



**CORAF**

[www.coraf.org](http://www.coraf.org)

Trente ans au service de l'Innovation Agricole en Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre

Thirty years of Agricultural Innovation in West and Central Africa

