THE ROLE OF PVP IN PROMOTING DEVELOPMENT OF CROP VARIETIES THAT ADAPT TO, AND MITIGATE, CLIMATE CHANGE – EXAMPLE OF KENYA

Simon M. Maina
Head, Seed Certification and Plant Variety Protection
KEPHIS
Introduction

• The Kenyan economy is largely dependent on agriculture for raw materials, food security, employment and general livelihoods.

• Climate change has resulted in increased temperatures, changes in seasonal trends and patterns.

• In recent years, Kenya has witnessed extended dry periods and rainfall outside the normal seasons.

• With the changing climatic conditions, the country has witnessed emergence of new pests and diseases such as maize Lethal Necrosis (MLN), Fall Army Worm (FAW) among others.

• It is therefore very important for breeders to develop varieties that are resilient to harsh agro-ecological conditions.
Plant Variety Protection in Kenya

• The office to administer the PVP was established in 1997 and has functioned under KEPHIS since 1998
• Kenya acceded to UPOV under the 1978 Convention in 13th May 1999
• The Seeds and Plant Varieties Act was amended in 2012 to incorporate aspects of the 1991 Act of the UPOV.
• In May 2016, Kenya acceded to the 1991 Act of the UPOV Convention.
• Kenya grants PBRs for all plant genera and species
Plant Variety Protection in Kenya

• Establishment of a PVP office and subsequent membership to UPOV, conferred the following advantages:
  • Readily available UPOV test guidelines for most of the Agricultural crops
  • Trained personnel through cooperation with UPOV and UPOV members on development of national test guidelines.
  • Collaboration and cooperation between the breeders and the testing authority on variety description.
• KEPHIS engaged in sensitization of breeders to develop new varieties and benefit from the PVP system.
• This led to increased introduction of crop varieties
Development of Climate Smart Varieties

- During the last 10 years, breeders have embarked on development of drought tolerant varieties of maize, sweetpotato, cassava, sorghum, pigeon peas, amaranth, rangeland grasses among others.
- There are also efforts to release pest and disease tolerant varieties to counter emerging pests as a result of climate change.
- Sixteen (16) varieties tolerant to Maize Lethal Necrosis Disease (MLND) have been released,
- Varieties of Fall Army Worm (FAW) tolerant maize are under evaluation.
Comparison of drought tolerant varieties released during the periods 1980-1999 and 2000-2019

- 34 varieties released in 1980-1999
- 230 varieties released in 2000-2019
Development of Climate Smart Varieties

Comparison of drought tolerant varieties released during the periods 1980-1999 and 2000-2019

- **MAIZE**: 127
- **SW.POTATO**: 28
- **CASSAVA**: 16
- **SORGHUM**: 35

Number of varieties released
Comparison drought tolerant varieties released during the periods 1980-1999 and 2000-2019

- **Amaranth**: 2 varieties released in 2000-2019
- **Rangeland Grasses**: 5 varieties released in 2000-2019
Development of Climate Smart Varieties

Increased production through breeding of better yielding and drought tolerant varieties

Legend

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Varieties</th>
<th>Performance of drought tolerant maize varieties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New drought tolerant varieties</td>
<td>Performance of drought tolerant maize varieties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check Varieties</td>
<td>Performance of drought tolerant maize varieties</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: KEPHIS VCU Data - 2017
Development of Disease Tolerant Varieties: Food Security

- Development and release of MLN tolerant varieties thus improved yields

Legend:
- **New MLN tolerant variety**
- **Check (control) varieties**

Source: KEPHIS VCU Data; 2015
Conclusion

• There is considerable development of climate resilient varieties following introduction of plant variety protection in Kenya.

• This has come as a result of:
  • Breeders having assurance on return of investment following development of new varieties.
  • Enhanced capacity for testing of new varieties through cooperation with UPOV and UPOV members.
  • Collaboration and co operation between the breeders and the testing authority on variety testing.
Thank you for your kind attention!

For more information contact:
Managing Director
KENYA PLANT HEALTH
INSPECTORATE SERVICE (KEPHIS)
P. O. Box 49592-00100 Nairobi, Kenya.
Tel: +254-722 891000
E-mail: director@kephis.org
Website: www.kephis.org