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**Stephen Mbithi Mwikya**

My name is Stephen Mbithi, Dr Stephen Mbithi. I come from Kenya and I represent the horticulture producers in Kenya.

Our experience with plant variety protection and UPOV have been extremely positive in the fact that since Kenya signed and became a member, Kenya has been able to enjoy an increase in inward investment into the farming community of superior varieties, especially in flowers and also in vegetable seeds that would otherwise have not come into the country because the investors feel protected by the law in Kenya with regard to their investments on the knowledge, on the varieties.

I think that our participation as a country into UPOV has been mainly very useful in raising awareness among producers on the need to invest in better varieties but more important to understand that those better varieties require protection, require that the innovators recoup their investment and in turn the trust between the breeder and the farmer can result in even more research which helps in what we are doing.