



AUSTRALIA-AFRICA PLANT BIOSECURITY PARTNERSHIP

Locations Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Dates 13/06/2014 - 30/04/2017

Summary Agricultural trade is a powerful engine for economic growth, poverty alleviation and food security but diseases are impacting it. Countries are therefore looking for ways of making agricultural trade secure. This initiative aims to facilitate trade by addressing plant pest and disease problems that hinder agricultural exports and threaten food security. The programme focusses on strengthening plant biosecurity skills in in Africa based on the experiences of Australian experts.

The problem

Plant biosecurity capacity is key for successful agricultural trade as well as protecting the resources on which the trade is based. Many countries in Africa rely on agriculture for economic development and food security, so where plant biosecurity capacity is lacking, there can be major negative impacts.

Many new pests have arrived in Africa in recent years, constraining trade and limiting production, so national capability to address and prevent such problems needs strengthening. National Plant Protection Organizations (as defined by the International Plant Protection Convention) are central to this capability and need a range of skills and capabilities. These include supporting and working with private sector producers and traders. Regional collaboration and cooperation is also necessary as plant biosecurity threats rarely affect only a single country.

What we are doing

The Australia-Africa Plant Biosecurity Partnership is a plant biosecurity capacity development programme that uses Australian expertise to strengthen biosecurity skills and planning in Africa. This will support increased production, market access for African farmers and improved food security.

This AUS\$1.6 million programme focusses on strengthening plant biosecurity skills in Africa. The initiative aims to facilitate trade, including intra-regional trade, by strengthening countries' capacity to address plant pest and disease problems that hinder agricultural exports and threaten food security. We are working with 45 biosecurity fellows who are acting as 'change champions' in their countries and helping improve national and regional plant biosecurity.

The programme involves training, mentoring and placements in relevant Australian agencies, and through regional organizations (COMESA, IAPSC – the Regional Plant Protection Organization and FAO), aims to foster links between related initiatives.

Results so far

A regional workshop in October 2014 identified priority areas for plant biosecurity capacity development. These included diagnostic skills, risk analysis and management, emergency response and eradication, surveillance and management of key pests, early warning and biosecurity planning. 'Soft' skills such as policy advocacy and negotiation were also highlighted as important.

In 2015, the first networking and training workshop was held, and 15 senior fellows completed internships in Australia with host organizations. In 2016, two further workshops have been held, delivered by experts from Australia and Africa, including the Australia-Africa Plant Biosecurity Partnership senior fellows. One further workshop took place in Lusaka in early 2017. Monitoring and evaluation has been built into the Australia-Africa Plant Biosecurity Partnership, as well as communication and networking.

Donors

CABI Development Fund (CDF), Australian International Food Security Research (AIFSRC) within ACIAR

Partners

Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), Plant Biosecurity Cooperative Research Centre, Crawford Fund

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