Promoting cotton by-products in Eastern and Southern Africa
National Capacity Building Workshop Zambia

Increasing seed cotton production

Lusaka, 6-8 December 2017
Figure 1: Average yield trends in different regions

kg of lint per hectare

Source: ICAC
Figure 2: Average yield by region in Africa

kg lint per hectare

Northern Africa

Franc Zone

Other SSA countries

Source: ICAC
Figure 3: Trends in seed cotton production and lagged seed cotton prices in Zambia

Sources: Central Statistics Office (CSO) – production indicators, Cotton Board of Zambia – prices
Possible reasons for declining seed cotton production

Extension Service (1)
✓ scarcity of capacity to effectively transfer knowledge and skills to the smallholder farmers
✓ Existing capacity for extension in smallholder cotton systems in Zambia is not only thin but also extremely scattered in the form small private sector (individual ginners) teams
✓ The current extension model has a number of weaknesses: minimal outreach, logistically wasteful, confusing to the farmers, promotes disharmony amongst ginners and could be a cause of side-buying/selling
✓ Sourcing experts by individual ginners is not only unsustainable but also very expensive
Possible reasons for declining seed cotton production

Extension (2)

✓ Unfavorable agent : farmer ratios
✓ Absence / lean public extension
✓ Inability by ginners to attract qualified field agents
✓ Ginners limited budgets’ –funding gaps
✓ Poor/negative attitudes of extension agents
Possible way forward to increase seed cotton production

✓ Multi-ginner synergy: Centralize training
✓ Advocate multi-ginner extension to reduce the cost per cotton company
✓ Inclusion of a ToT module to improve extensionist-farmer-relationship
✓ Policy intervention to make it mandatory for every ginner to develop a staff development plan;
✓ Multi-ginner sourcing of experts lowers per gin costs;
✓ Establish a centralized mechanism for agents / farmer training
Possible reasons for declining seed cotton production

- **Inputs**
  - Seed quality and quantity used
  - Deteriorating characteristics of the older cotton variety
  - Minimal use of mineral fertilizer if any
  - Deviation of cotton inputs for other crops
  - Poor quality of pesticide inputs
  - Possible development of pesticide resistance
  - Poor knowledge in pesticide use and application
  - Poor crop husbandry
  - Labor shortage
Possible way forward to increase seed cotton production

**Inputs**

✓ Revise pesticides regulatory framework
✓ Phasing out old pesticides
✓ Rotation of pesticides to avoid resistance
✓ Training in application techniques
✓ Strengthening research to continue the search for and optimize alternative options for the control of cotton pests
✓ Ensuring adequate input and delivery to farmers in terms of quantity and quality
✓ Strengthening research on cotton breeding
✓ Introduction of new varieties from other countries
Possible reasons for declining seed cotton production

Economics
✓ Fluctuating of seed cotton producer price
✓ Fluctuating exchange rates
✓ Competition from other crops, e.g. soybean, groundnuts
✓ Opportunity costs for farm labor
✓ Decreasing investment in farmer trainings (loyalty of farmers, side selling)
✓ Decreasing pre-financing of inputs (loan recovery)
✓ Low investment in environmental programs (CA)
Possible way forward to increase seed cotton production

**Economics**

✓ Contract sanctity
✓ Development of a price setting mechanism
✓ Set up a price smoothing fund
✓ Pre-planting prices (?)
✓ Improving cotton industry data collection
✓ Mechanisation
✓ Set-up of agricultural credit systems
✓ Levelling the playing field
**Possible reasons for declining seed cotton production**

**Climate change**
- Unpredictable weather pattern
- Crop husbandry techniques not yet adapted to the new climatic conditions
- Lack of available adapted varieties

**Possible way forward**
- Development and research on new agricultural managing practices
- Strengthening research on cotton breeding
Possible reasons for declining seed cotton production

Policy Framework

✓ No or low interference by the MoA or MoTCI in the cotton sector
✓ Weak governing bodies
✓ Cotton Act out dated
✓ Price setting discussions between Ginner Association (ZCGA) and Producer Association (CAZ) not allowed
✓ Price setting transparency
✓ No stringent conditions of market entry
Possible way forward to increase seed cotton production

Stringent conditions of market entry to ensure that:

• Companies applying for operating licences shall fulfill the following:
  ✓ Provision of adequate inputs (seed and chemicals)
  ✓ Effective extension provision (ratio: farm to extension agent, qualification of extension staff, training material and approach)
  ✓ Having an own operational gin
  ✓ Before starting to submit proven record of contracted farmer
  ✓ If a company is found involved in side trading to revoke the operating licence

• Development of a price setting mechanism
• Enhance multi-stakeholders representation
• Change of cotton sector model
What could be the way forward to increase cotton production in Zambia

• Fostering a good extension-farmer relationship given the strategic role of extension agents in delivery of productivity enhancing innovations for a sustainable increasing cotton production?
• Ensuring adequate input and delivery to farmers in terms of quantity and quality?
• Scaling-up of GAP/CA/IPPM training to farmers by improving extension service delivery?
• Strengthening research in terms of cotton breeding and pest management?
• Re-visiting the policy framework?
• Stringent conditions of market entry of new companies?
Thank you very much for your attention!

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