



To improve the livelihoods of
agro-pastoralists through
enhanced forage
production, grazing and
landscape management

Forage Seed Fund Guidelines

February 2022

1. Introduction

The Integrated & Climate Smart Innovations for Agro-Pastoralist Economies and Landscapes in Kenya's ASAL (ICSIAPL) project is a Multi Donor Action, funded by the European Union (EU) in the framework of the European Union's Initiative on climate relevant Development Smart Innovation through Research in Agriculture Action (DeSIRA), and by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs/DGIS of the Kingdom of the Netherlands through the modality of delegated cooperation and a Contribution Agreement. The European Union Delegation in Kenya and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN) in Nairobi are responsible for the execution of this funding, with EKN in the lead.

The implementing partners of ICSIAPL are SNV Kenya/Netherlands Development Organisation and the Kenya Agriculture and Livestock Research Organisation (KALRO). The project's timeframe is from 1 January 2021 – 31 December 2023 and it works in Narok, Kajiado and Taita Taveta counties.

The overall objective of ICSIAPL is to improve livelihoods of agro-pastoralist communities through improved forage production and livestock husbandry, building on commercialisation of climate smart innovations and sustainable landscape and rangeland management in the three counties. An important project strategy is to apply forage research and to fast-track innovations through supporting the private sector to adopt and facilitate building more resilient and market-based solutions for improved forage production and livestock husbandry by agro-pastoralists and other livestock keepers, commercial forage producers, ranches and conservancies.

This will be achieved through adoption and upscaling of improved forage seed technologies, sustainable forage management practices and stronger seed and forage value chains, both in the landscape where cattle and goats/sheep are grazed, and in areas where fodder crops are planted and harvested – either for cut and carry or for conservation in form of hay or silage to overcome the dry season. The project has particular emphasis on creating opportunities for women and youth.

In support of fast-tracking adoption of improved forage seed varieties, the ICSIAPL project has established a Forage Seed Fund.

2. Background

Introduction, adoption and upscaling of the use of improved forage seed varieties will contribute significantly to increased productivity of the livestock sector in Narok, Kajiado and Taita Taveta. Further this will contribute significantly to landscape and rangeland restoration and reduced enteric methane intensity.



During the implementation year 2021, ICSIAPL project supported agro-pastoralist communities and other livestock keepers and ranches with the establishment of demo plots with 20 varieties of suitable forages for lower (10) and higher rainfall areas (10). In 2022 this intervention will be replicated in other parts of the three Counties the project works in.

The 2021 demo plots have received a good response from farmers and farmer groups that were exposed to the new forage varieties through farmer field days and on-farm training. Early adopters have indicated their interest and willingness to try out some of the forages shown in the demo plots at a slightly larger scale in their own farms or in the ranches/conservancies. To facilitate these early adopters and – by doing so - the process of upscaling forages that were planted in the 2021 demos, the project has established a Forage Seed Fund.

The rationale of this Fund is to facilitate a 3-step approach moving from (a) demo plots initiated by the project for exposure and training, to (b) subsidized seed for upscaling of selected forages from the demo plots by early adopters in their own farms to expand volumes and to trigger demand for seed from private seed companies, to (c) commercial upscaling by seed companies. In this 3-step approach the involvement and role of forage seed companies increases with each step. The first 2 steps are mainly to create awareness and demand that is required for the private sector (seed companies) to step in and invest in local presence and tailored marketing & sales strategies or models, that take into account the needs of the agro-pastoralists.

3. Scope of the Forage Seed Fund

3.1 Objective

To facilitate adoption and initial upscaling of improved forage seed varieties and good management practices by early adopters. Both for improved pastures and rangelands and for enhanced fodder crop production and conservation.

3.2 Geographic scope

Narok, Kajiado and Taita Taveta counties, especially around selected project target areas.

3.3 Trials by early adopters

3.3.1 The Forage Seed Fund is meant to facilitate early adopters to try some of the forages showcased in the demo plots in their own farms at scale and for feeding to their livestock. The trials focus on a limited number of forage seed varieties (1-3) and maximum 1 (one) acre per seed variety in (semi-) intensive livestock keeping systems, but may be larger in ranches and conservancies, especially when investing in landscape rehabilitation through reseeded with natural grasses.



- 3.3.2 The maximum grant amount or subsidy per applicant is for individual farmers and agro-pastoralists KES 35,000; for ranches and conservancies this is max. KES 75,000.
- 3.3.3 Depending on the interest for the Fund (i.e. number of applications received) and the availability of the forage seed, the project may decide to reduce the seed quantities requested for, by decreasing the proposed acreage to be planted and the value of subsidy. This is to allow more farmers to get access to the Fund in case demand is high.
- 3.3.4 The Fund has reserved 50% of the available budget of EUR 60,000 (approx. KES 7.5 million) for the 2022 March-April-May (MAM) rainy season. The remaining balance will be made available for the 2022 October, November, December (OND) rains, and for the 2023 MAM rainy season if the budget allows. Within these windows the principle of "first come first served" applies and applications will be assessed and granted as soon as they are received until the available budget for the window is exhausted.
- 3.3.5 The Fund strives for an equal distribution of the budget for free forage seeds across the 3 counties.
- 3.3.6 5% of the total budget available for the Forage Seed Fund may be used by the project for feed and/or soil analysis of forages and soils in the demo and trial sites to guide best practices.

3.4 Target group and focus

The Forage Seed Fund targets early adopters from the following stakeholders:

- Commercialising (market-oriented) agro-pastoralists and other livestock keepers.
- Producer organisations (i.e. Cooperatives, CBOs, Self Help Groups).
- Ranches and conservancies.
- Commercial forage producers

Within this target group the Forage Seed Fund will focus on early adopters that have been exposed to the demo plots and were trained by the project. This includes ToTs, demo plot owners, agro-pastoralists or farmers trained through the farmer field schools, ranches and conservancies plus their membership. Identification and selection of these early adopters will be facilitated by the ICSIAPL County Technical Advisors (CTAs), KALRO, and the demo plot coordinators representing the County Governments.

3.5 Shortlist of suitable forages and size of grant for forage seeds

- 3.5.1 Based on performance of forages and farmer perceptions and preferences in the demo plots and trials established by ICSIAPL in 2021, the project pre-selects forage seed varieties that are suitable, available, accessible and affordable. This shortlist may change during the project implementation period, but for the 2022 March-April-May rainy season the pre-selection is listed in Annex 1. The list also gives an



indication as regards the agro-ecological requirements (i.e. rainfall, altitude, soils) for the selected forages.

- 3.5.2 The list includes forages that are registered in Kenya by the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS) and which appear in the National Crop Variety List. In addition, the project may try in specific farms or locations research materials (forage seeds) to assess farmer acceptability and crop performance before commercialisation. Also native grass species/varieties improved through selection by KALRO, may be added to the list for the purpose of landscape rehabilitation (e.g. re-seeding, over-seeding).
- 3.5.3 The project will make available fact sheets and instructional materials for establishment and management of selected forages as well as skills-based training materials.
- 3.5.4 The project will provide a list of the suppliers and their contacts for the pre-selected forages.

3.6 Roles and responsibilities

3.6.1 The project

- The project will make available the Guidelines and Application Form for the Forage Seed Fund, that will be shared with the early adopters through a targeted approach.
- The ICSIAPL County Technical Advisor (CTA) - in consultation with KALRO, ToTs, producer organisations, county livestock department, consultants (whichever are applicable) – will facilitate identification and selection of the early adopters and will do a pre-screening of the filled application form. He/she will advise the ICSIAPL Business Innovation Advisor (BIA) and the Project Manager (PM) on the application.
- The Business Innovation Advisor reviews the advice of the CTA and validates if the advice and the application are in line with the list of pre-selected forage seeds and the available budget (both per client and for the Fund). He/she also lists the relevant seed suppliers and the price per kilogram and per acre for the requested seed.
- The Project Manager approves or disapproves the application form and refers to the advice from the CTA and BIA. He/she will at all times take into account the Fund's criteria, the guidelines and budget availability as stipulated in these Guidelines.
- Once the application is approved, the project will order, pay and provide the requested seed – if available - free of charge through the Forage Seed Fund.

3.6.2 The applicant

- The applicant is the entity or person who owns, leases or otherwise uses the land where the forage seeds will be planted.
- The applicant will fill out and submit the Application Form to request for the forage seed, taking into consideration the guidelines and criteria provided by the project.



Submissions will be done to the ICSIAPL CTAs at the SNV field offices based in each of the 3 counties.

- A producer organisation may act on behalf of a number of applicants (members) and is encouraged to consolidate the individual applications and the requests in one folder or list. The producer organisation may receive the seeds on behalf of the bundled applicants/members and distribute.
- The applicant is responsible for fencing, ploughing, harrowing, seeding and management of the forage crops and all costs and labour related to these activities, including purchasing and application of fertiliser and/or manure and crop protection materials.
- The applicant commits to follow the CSA/good practices and instructions given by the project as regards establishment, management, harvesting and use of the forage seeds and the forages.
- The applicant will give access to the site and cooperate with project staff and affiliates, peer farmers, seed companies and other stakeholders in case the project wishes to organise exposure visits, field days or trainings targeting other farmers.
- The applicant will also cooperate and give access to the project staff and affiliates to assess performance of the forages, take soil and feed samples, and to document in writing or through photos, videos and the media the activities on site. If so requested he/she will carry out some basic record keeping of yields and production to be used for performance measurement and to build a business case for fodder production.

4. Disclaimer

ICSIAPL will not take responsibility or liability for any costs or losses made by the applicant for participating in the application process or as a result of planting the seeds requested for and growing and feeding the forages. By filling out and signing the Application Form, the applicant or its representative acknowledges that he/she is aware of this provision and in that he/she is in full agreement.



Annex 1. List of Pre-Selected Forage Seed Varieties

NB: Pre-selection is based on performance, suitability, availability and registration

| | Seed Supplier | Remarks |
|--|-------------------------|---------|
| High rainfall (> 800 mm) Cut and carry | | |
| Grasses | | |
| Panicum maximum Mombasa or Siambasa | U-Farm, Advantage Crops | |
| Brachiaria Cobra | U-Farm, Advantage Crops | |
| Brachiaria Cayman | U-Farm, Advantage Crops | |
| | | |
| Legumes | | |
| Sweet Potato Vine | KALRO | |
| Desmodium | KALRO | |
| Purple Vetch | KALRO | |
| | | |
| Low rainfall (< 800 mm) Cut and carry | | |
| | | |
| Sugargraze (Forage Sorghum) | Advanta Seeds | |
| Nutrifeed (Pearl Millet) | Advanta Seeds | |
| | | |
| Legumes | | |
| Dolichos | KALRO | |
| Cowpea | KALRO | |
| | | |
| Low rainfall (< 800 mm) Pasture grasses | | |
| Cenchrus Ciliaris Baringo spp (Foxtail) | RAE | |
| | | |
| Low rainfall (< 800 mm) Landscape rehabilitation | | |
| Cenchrus Ciliaris | KALRO | |
| Enteropogon Macrostachyus | KALRO | |
| Eragrostis superba | KALRO | |
| Chloris roxburghiana | KALRO | |

