

PRESS STATEMENT

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS SEED AND FOOD CULTURE HARVEST FAIR, NAIROBI

11th October, 2022

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We stand here to re-affirm the remarkable value of our indigenous seed and food in assuring food security, community nutrition, resilience and in maintenance of a common heritage that connects the past, present and future generations.

Indigenous seeds are seeds that have been grown, selected and managed by local communities through several generations. They are naturally adapted through an influence from local environmental factors in their growing environments. These seeds and food present great value in adapting to changing weather patterns, varied soil types, temperature, pressure, clouds, wind, humidity and rainfall.

These seeds and food are also resilient to threats arising from pests, disease and human interventions. These seeds possess a high-level of intra species diversity. They are heterogenous and polymorphic.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We also stand here to appreciate the impeccable role played by our smallholder farmers in seed breeding and development of better seed varieties every season through seed selection using their seed cultures, traditional knowledge in seed, food production and variety maintenance.

In the light of these, we announce the launch of the **FIRST, National Indigenous Seed and Food Culture Harvest Fair**, a disclosure to the fervent need to recognize that food production is an economic and socioecological function that links people with nature.

Promotion and support of our indigenous seed and food assure sustainability of not only our food sufficiency but also an integral life support system that provides life and a food-secure future thereby reducing poverty, enhancing food and nutrition security, besides improving natural resources and life in harmony with Nature.

The National Seed and Food Harvest Fair, which kicks off tomorrow, **12th October, 2022 at the National Museums of Kenya, Nairobi will continue until 14th as a precursor to the World Food Day celebrations on 16th October, 2022.**

This National Indigenous Seed and Food Culture Harvest Fair showcases a rich and diverse seed and food culture, which is a measure of the country's bountiful inheritance of genetic resources, a treasure trove of our traditional knowledge and innovations, which reach out to the current and future generations.

Ladies and gentlemen,

To fully support and promote our indigenous seed and food system, we **recommend** the following actions:

- Revitalization of local food production systems traditions at the household level
- Development of laws to promote and support Farmer Managed Seed Systems (FMSS).
- Promotion of Agrobiodiversity and agroecological practices to enhance livelihoods through food and nutrition security.
- Conservation of landscapes and ecosystems to promote and not adulterate indigenous plant and livestock varieties through indiscriminate release of GMOs into the ecosystems
- Gene banking and cataloguing all indigenous seed varieties for posterity.
- Empowerment of farmers through freedom to use buy, share and sell seeds amongst themselves as in their traditional setting.

Who we are:

We the representatives of smallholder farmer groups, civil society groups, Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), Faith-based Organizations (FBO) Consumer networks including; BIBA Kenya, Inter-Sectoral Forum on Agrobiodiversity and Agroecology (ISFAA), PELUM Kenya, SEED Savers Network and African Biodiversity Network (ABN).

THANK-YOU!

