

From the 21<sup>st</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> October 2015, the Syngenta Foundation's **Seeds2B Africa Connect** initiative held its **first Open Day Event in Senegal**. The event was a success, with 20 local and international seed companies in attendance. This first event was dedicated to starting to build the business links between West African buyers and domestic and foreign technology owners. Thank you for joining us and for your valuable feedback, which will help us continually improve our Seeds2B service! We also want to thank you for your confidence in Seeds2B, as your partner in West Africa!

**Seeds2B Africa Connect** is technology transfer and match-making initiative, which identifies and makes available the best varieties for the agro-ecologies and markets in Senegal and Mali and more generally, West Africa. Varieties are assessed by Seeds2B on behalf of breeders, with successful candidate products advanced and advertised for local sale. This demand-led trialing, registration and market linkage service connects and coordinates local seed producers and distributors with public and private breeders, in order to find the best tropically adapted technology to meet smallholder farmer needs.

Objectives of the event	Attendees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn more about the local context - agriculture in general and seeds market (for foreign guests) and identify business opportunities</li> <li>• See how the varieties are performing in the field</li> <li>• Connect technology owners and local seed producers and distributors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Variety owners/ managers of foreign seed companies</b> who submitted varieties to Seeds2B for trialing in West Africa</li> <li>• <b>Local seed companies' representatives</b>, to learn more about varieties currently under trial, and to start business discussions</li> <li>• <b>External parties</b> involved in the development of public-private and private-private partnerships.</li> </ul>

## Summary of the event's activities

1. **Introductory session** where all participants had the opportunity to introduce their business and promote their companies, activities, and strategy. There was also a presentation and open discussion on the Seeds2B approach, to explain how the initiative can support the participants' business development.
2. **Wholesale market** visit to understand how the smallholder farmers' production is organized to supply the main consumption hubs.
3. **Retail markets and supermarkets**: visit to the town, to see the range of products available to end customers, including the quantity, quality, diversity and price of the products.



4. **Variety trials:** visits to different locations, farming systems (on-farm, on-station, small-scale, large scale) of adaptation trials (*does the variety works well or not?*) and marketing trials (*active demonstration of good material*). Variety owners can assess how their material performs under local conditions, while local seed companies can see potential good varieties to add to their portfolios.



5. **Value chains:** discussions and field visits to see how farmers are involved in specific value chains and need to supply quality goods to their customers (example of a farmer group visited, linked with pearl millet processing actors).

6. **Communication to local media:** local radio and TV took part in the event. A good way to raise people's and farmers' awareness of this initiative, and spread information about performing varieties to farmers.



7. **Visit to an agro dealer shop** to see how the agri-inputs are sold and the product range available to farmers (i.e. current market leader varieties, pricing, etc).

8. **Engage in business-to-Business (B2B) discussions:** after the field visits, a specific time slot was dedicated to organize one-to-one discussions between variety owners and local seed companies. These meetings were aimed at understanding each other's portfolio, and starting business development discussions.

The first edition of the **Seeds2B Africa catalogue** was shared with all participants. This catalogue showcases the best varieties assessed by Seeds2B, having showed good performance across years and growing conditions, and received positive farmer feedback. It is a valuable promotional tool for variety owners starting business in Africa to build awareness among local seed companies of the newest varieties available.

**For a copy of this catalogue, please contact us!**



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