



# Kenya Highland Seed

Access to Seeds Index

**Corporate data**  
Headquarters: Nairobi, Kenya  
Ownership type: Private  
Group revenue (2017): KSH 600,000,000  
www.royalseed.biz

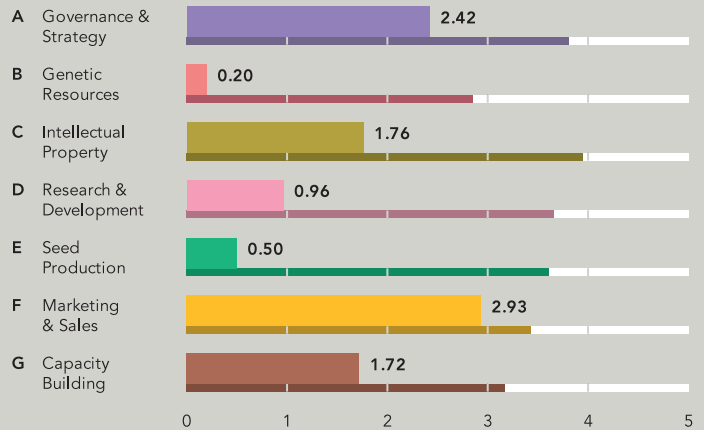
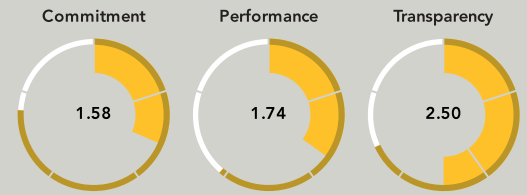
Kenya Highland Seed was established in 1998 and now operates in seven countries in the region. It supplies vegetable seed, both open-pollinated varieties (OPVs) and hybrid varieties under its Royal Seed brand. It markets its seed through its network of 250 agro-dealers in Kenya and Tanzania, with agents in Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi. In Tanzania and Uganda, smallholder farmers make up 100% of the company's clientele, whereas in Kenya they make up 40%.

**16**  
rank out of 22  
score 1.61

## Eastern and Southern Africa

Kenya Highland Seed ranks 16th in the Eastern and Southern Africa Index, with an almost identical score as it achieved in 2016, once again reflecting an inconsistent performance across the measurement areas. The company performs strongly in Marketing &

Sales, thanks to the prevalence of both hybrid varieties and OPVs in its portfolio, the full availability of its portfolio in all but one index country where it is present and the diverse transport methods it employs to ensure it meets demand in remote areas. The company's commitment to smallholder farmers and evidence of clear targets is reflected in its decent performance in Governance & Strategy. In Capacity Building, it provides sporadic extension services, albeit with attempts to include women and youth. A lack of disclosure and positions supportive of the specific needs of smallholder farmers results in low scores in both Genetic Resources and Intellectual Property. A poor score in Seed Production is attributable to the lack of involvement of smallholder farmers in the company's production chain.



### Leading practices

The company has a distribution network of 250 agro-dealers in Kenya and Tanzania, and operates through agents in Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda. It also works with governments and non-governmental organizations to distribute seed. In addition to delivering to all towns in the regions where it operates for no extra charge, the company has invested in several transport methods to ensure that its seed is available in remote areas. In Tanzania and Uganda, for example, it uses local buses and, where these services are unavailable, motorbikes, in addition to a Wells Fargo courier service for delivery to its agro-dealers.

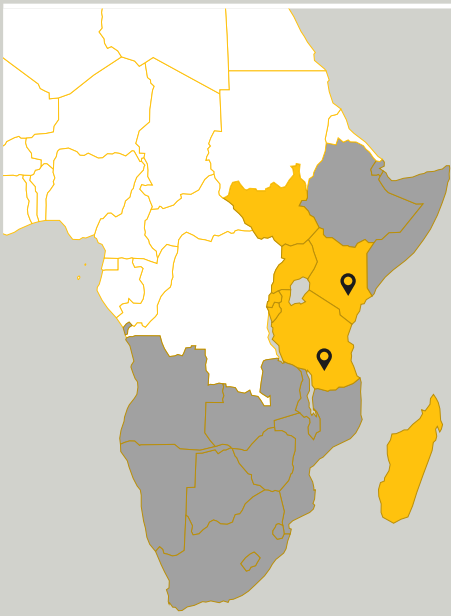
### Areas for improvement

Kenya Highland Seed reports on core access to seed-related activities, including marketing and smallholder farmer training, in its main business hubs Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The company is encouraged, where possible, to apply these strategies in other index countries where it is present.

The company reports that it does not have codes of business conduct in place that set internal standards on anti-corruption, lobbying activities, and social and labor standards. It is encouraged to develop and publicize codes in order to drive internal behaviors and enhance stakeholder accountability.

The company can improve its Transparency score by making commitments and activities related to smallholder farmers more readily available to stakeholders and other relevant actors, particularly related to Genetic Resources and Intellectual Property.

The company can improve its Seed Production score by formalizing a commitment to smallholder involvement in its production activities.



### Operations in scope

- Countries in scope
- Company presence
- 📍 Production locations
- 📍 Breeding station/R&D

### Notable findings

- Kenya Highland Seed works with a number of local farmer groups in Tanzania. The company disseminates information to these groups in the Mbyea, Songwe, Mwanza, Moshi and Morogoro regions, among others, on the benefits of certified seed. It also works closely with sellers from the Kariakoo market in the capital Dar es Salaam.
- One of Kenya Highland Seed's core focus areas is working with smallholder farmers in the region. It states that it aims to reach 60,000 farmers as either customers or through training.
- The company tracks and traces genetic material by working with the Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS). The company imports seed with batch and lot numbers, along with a scratch code on each packet. Smallholder farmers can text this code to KEPHIS to determine whether the seed is certified, allowing any complaints to be traced to the company and also to where the seed was produced.
- The company does not have a breeding program but does work with local research institutes, primarily the Kenya Agricultural & Livestock Research Organization (KALRO) and Egerton and Kenyatta universities for maize variety development, with planned work on dry beans.

- The company works with the Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund (in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda) and Fintrac (in Tanzania) to improve smallholder farmer access to improved seed selected through company testing.
- The company uses M-Pesa, a mobile money transfer service, for customer payments, increasing the accessibility of seed for smallholders in Kenya.
- The company has 120 demonstration fields across Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, of which 60% are managed by women farmers.
- The company partners with agricultural input companies on good agricultural practices demonstrations on the integration of fertilizer and seed.
- The company encourages inclusivity in its extension services by inviting whole families to attend and participate in these services. Similarly, it works closely with a Saithya Sai primary/secondary school to train students in basic farming methods.

### Portfolio information

Index crops in portfolio	Sales							Seed type			Source		
	BDI	KEN	MDG	RWA	SSD	TZA	UGA	Hybrid	OPV	GM	Own breeding program	Public research institute	Licensed from other company
<b>Vegetables</b>													
Cabbage	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●				●
Carrot	●	●		●	●	●	●		●				●
Cauliflower	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●				●
Cucumber	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●				●
Eggplant	●	●		●	●	●	●		●				●
Green bean	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●				●
Green pea	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●				●
Lettuce	●	●		●	●	●	●		●				●
Melon	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●				●
Okra	●	●		●	●	●	●		●				●
Onion	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●				●
Pepper (hot)	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●				●
Pepper (sweet)	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●				●
Pumpkin	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●				●
Sorghum	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●				●
Squash	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●				●
Tomato	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●				●
Watermelon	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●				●

Angola (AGO), Botswana (BWA), Burundi (BDI), Eswatini (SWZ), Ethiopia (ETH), Kenya (KEN), Lesotho (LSO), Madagascar (MDG), Malawi (MWI), Mozambique (MOZ), Namibia (NAM), Rwanda (RWA), Somalia (SOM), South Africa (ZAF), South Sudan (SSD), Tanzania (TZA), Uganda (UGA), Zambia (ZMB), Zimbabwe (ZWE)

### Local crops in portfolio

Amaranth | Spider plant | Hairy nightshade | Jew's mallow | Crotalaria | Sukuma wiki