



# NASECO

Access to Seeds Index

**Corporate data**  
Headquarters: Kampala, Uganda  
Ownership type: Private  
Group revenue (2017): N/A  
www.nasecoseeds.net

Formed in 1996, Nalweyo Seed Company Ltd (NASECO) breeds, produces and sells a variety of hybrid and open-pollinated varieties of field crops and vegetables. The company markets its portfolio to local and international non-governmental organizations and wholesale and retail distributors across home markets in Uganda and beyond in the region. Smallholder farmers are its main clientele.

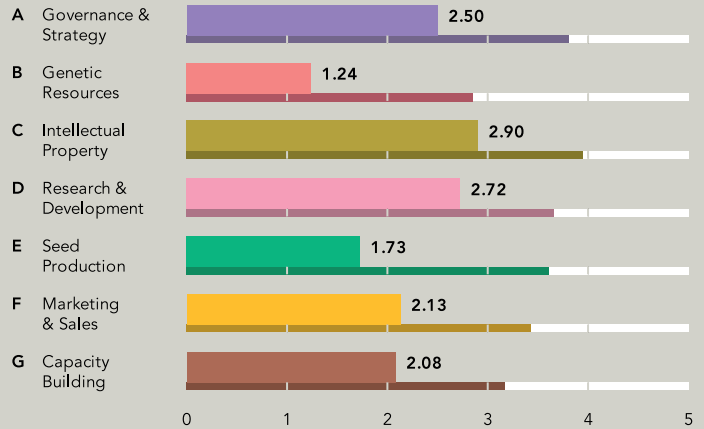
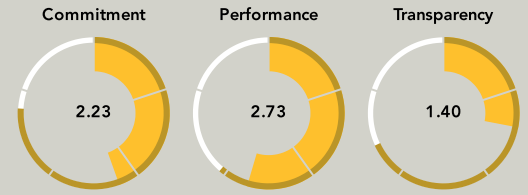
**7**

rank out of 22  
score 2.22

## Eastern and Southern Africa

NASECO ranks seventh in the Eastern and Southern Africa Index, performing strongly albeit with a marginal fall in both position and score from the 2016 Index. The company scores highest in Intellectual Property, reflecting its tailored pricing strategies and its positions and policies on farm-

saved seed and the breeders' exemption, both of which are beneficial for smallholder farmers. The company also performs well in Research & Development, where it considers a wide array of smallholder-specific traits in its research activities and reports on efforts to tackle important regional diseases. Its smallholder-centric targets and contributions to regional policy setting are reflected in its Governance & Strategy score, while its use of Product Placement Officers (PPOs) to reach remote areas is notable in Marketing & Sales. However, a lack of disclosure and transparency influences NASECO's lowest scores, in Genetic Resources and Seed Production.



## Leading practices

■ The company considers the needs of smallholder farmers within its research programs, including the integration of local knowledge and feedback. Specific traits considered in its research efforts include drought tolerance and consumer cultural preferences, as well as major regional diseases such as maize lethal necrosis and fall armyworm.

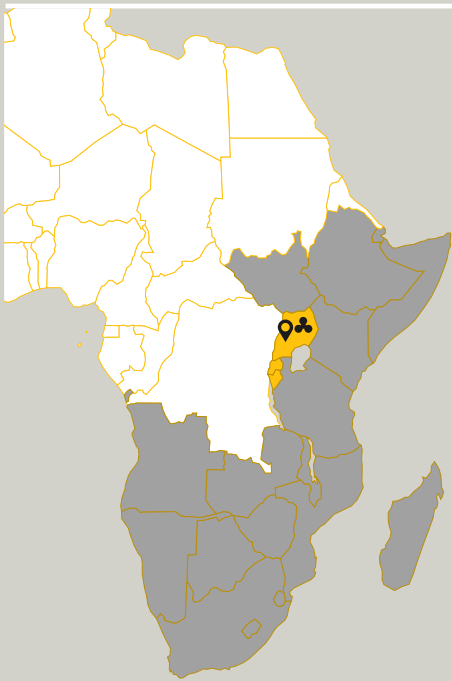
■ The company uses an innovative PPO network to create sustainable product demand and reach remote areas in Uganda. PPOs identify distributors, agents and retailers, and transport seed using low-cost models, such as public transportation. They also provide training to shop attendants.

## Areas for improvement

■ NASECO is encouraged to increase its public disclosure on a number of key issues relating to improving access to seeds for smallholder farmers, including the availability of its portfolio in index countries and the extent of its seed activities in the region.

■ The company is encouraged to develop a tracking mechanism through which it can map its progress toward smallholder farmer targets.

■ The company can also improve its stakeholder accountability by formalizing and publishing its policy regarding labor standards within seed production.



## Operations in scope

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

## Notable findings

■ NASECO has set a target to reach 750,000 smallholder farmers as customers in index countries Uganda, Burundi and Rwanda, as well as the Democratic Republic of Congo.

■ The company plays a significant role in improving industry compliance with regulations regarding seed certification and quality control in Uganda and the region, in partnership with the National Seed Certification Service and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), among others.

■ The company contributes to genetic conservation through material donations to centers in the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), as well as the Uganda national gene bank, leading Ugandan universities and also by conserving its own germplasm collection.

■ NASECO supports the rights and freedoms of farmers in the region by allowing smallholders to replant and reuse seeds, with no obligation to repurchase seeds for each new growing season.

■ The company predominantly sells seed in 1kg and 2kg packages. In Burundi, however, it tailors its pricing model with packages as small as 250g, and the company's network of PPOs links with a large number of smallholder beneficiaries. NASECO reports that the availability of smaller packages allows smallholders to gradually build their way out of subsistence farming.

■ The company engages with farmer groups in Uganda for seed production, offering contracts to smallholder outgrowers. Its production team ensures compliance with the Ugandan Labour and Safety Act, including strict prohibition of child and forced labor.

■ The company has a number of affordability schemes to ensure accessibility of its seed for smallholders. This includes wholesale prices for farmer groups, free delivery for larger seed orders and season-long interest-free loans for agricultural inputs.

■ NASECO employs a large number of PPOs to create awareness of its products and provide smallholders with agronomic training. The company uses this network of officers to host thousands of field demonstrations and hundreds of field days ("yield days") per growing season. In its home market of Uganda, NASECO particularly encourages women and young people to participate in these events.

■ The company provides agronomy training in all three countries where it is present, employing dedicated extension staff in Uganda and Burundi, as well as the Democratic Republic of Congo in Central Africa. 40% of the smallholders reached are estimated to be women farmers.

■ The company has created a network of off-takers to assist smallholder farmers in gaining greater access to output markets. It has identified pumpkin as an important crop, with Ugandan smallholders linked to both processors and organized traders.

## Portfolio information

Index crops in portfolio	Sales			Seed type			Source		
	BDI	RWA	UGA	Hybrid	OPV	GM	Own breeding program	Public research institute	Licensed from other company
<b>Field crops</b>									
Beans, dry			●	●				●	
Maize	●	●	●	●	●			●	
Sorghum			●		●			●	
Soybean			●		●			●	
<b>Vegetables</b>									
Cabbage			●	●					●
Green pea			●		●				●
Lettuce			●		●				●
Onion			●		●				●
Pepper (hot)			●	●					●
Pepper (sweet)			●		●				●
Pumpkin			●	●					●
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)