



Access to Seeds
Index



Progress Report Q2 2019

Apr – Jun 2019

This report provides an overview of the activities, milestones and progress in developing the Access to Seeds Index 2019 in the period April – June 2019.

Amsterdam, 30 June 2019



Bridging the gap between the
world's leading seed companies
and the smallholder farmer

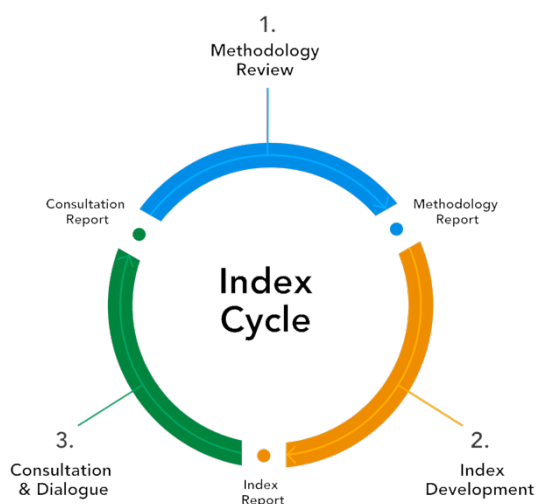
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| General Project Data | |
|-----------------------------|---|
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1. Introduction

This report provides an overview of the activities, milestones and progress in developing the Access to Seeds Index 2019 in the period April – June 2019. In this period, the second step of the Index Cycle was finalized with the publication of the Access to Seeds Index for Western and Central Africa and the synthesis report.



The Index Cycle consists of three steps. As a first step, the methodology for the Access to Seeds Index is developed, after consultation with stakeholders and experts. In the second step, company performance is analyzed, resulting in an Access to Seeds Index. After publication, the third step of dialogue and consultation starts, in order to discuss the index's findings and insights.

After this final stage, the cycle starts again, using insights from the consultation phase to review the methodology.

2. About the Access to Seeds Index

The Access to Seeds Index evaluates and compares seed companies according to their efforts to improve access to quality seeds of improved varieties for smallholder farmers. The index seeks primarily to identify leadership and good practices, providing an evidence base for the discussion on where and how the seed industry can step up its efforts.

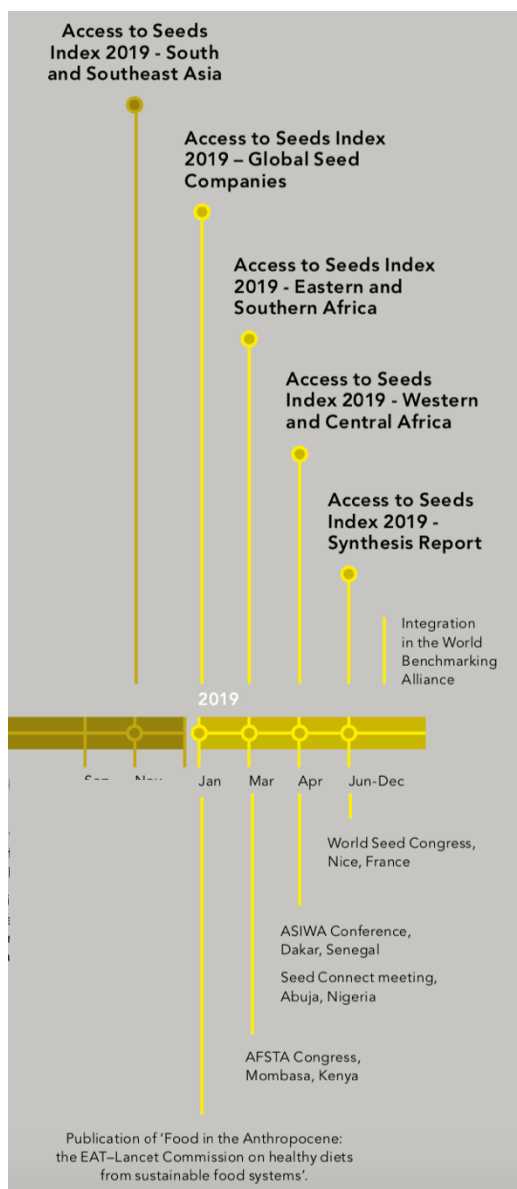
Private sector engagement is at the heart of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations in 2015. By creating a better understanding of the seed industry's performance, the index aims to contribute to the achievement of these goals.

Hunger is a daily reality for almost one billion people around the world. The global population is expected to grow by a further two billion in the coming decades, precisely in those regions that are currently considered food insecure. Improving access to seeds for farmers in those regions is key to meeting future food demands. This is where the seed industry can play a crucial role.

Based on how important stakeholders – farmers, governments, scientists, NGOs and the industry itself – view the role and responsibility of the seed industry, a methodology was developed with clearly defined criteria. After publication of each index, the methodology is reviewed and updated. Using this iterative approach, the index aims to monitor progress over time.

The Access to Seeds Index is published by the Access to Seeds Foundation, an independent, non-profit organization based in The Netherlands. The Access to Seeds Foundation is part of the Index Alliance, a group of foundations dedicated to establishing industry benchmarks measuring corporate performance towards the SDG-agenda.

3. Progress Overview Q2 2019



This section provides an overview of activities and milestones in the period April - June 2019. The main goal of this period was completing the synthesis report for the 2019 Access to Seeds Index and improving the website as data platform.

1. Access to Seeds Index for Western and Central Africa

The publication of the first Access to Seeds Index for Western and Central Africa was postponed from March to April 2019, when the opportunity came up to launch the study at the meeting of the Alliance for the Seed Industry in West Africa (ASIWA) Dakar, Senegal (11, 12 April). The next week the results were presented at the SeedConnect Conference in Abudja, Nigeria.

2. Farmer Roundtable Dakar

A consultation of farmer representatives in West Africa took place in Dakar, on 10 April 2019. Representatives of unions of farmer cooperatives in West Africa gathered for a roundtable hosted by Asprodeb to discuss the results of the first Access to Seeds Index for Western and Central Africa.

3. GAIN review of business accountability mechanisms in Nutrition

On April 3, 2019, GAIN published its report 'A review of business accountability mechanisms in nutrition'. It analyses existing initiatives that measure company performance on their contribution to healthy diets and sustainable food production. Although GAIN concludes that

'the analysis shows that the space appears crowded' it also underlines that the Access to Seeds Index is unique in its focus on measuring performance of seed companies.

4. Presentation at World Seed Congress

For the first time, the International Seed Federation allowed the Access to Seeds Index to present its findings at its annual global congress. At this occasion, ISF secretary general Michael Keller thanked the Index for putting the SDGs on the industry's agenda.

5. Access to Seeds Index 2019 – Synthesis report published

On 11 June, the synthesis report was published, providing an overview of all findings of the Access to Seeds Index 2019. Although not part of the operational plan as the 2019 Index was intended to be published only online, this report was compiled in response to requests by stakeholders.

6. Media analysis: over 450 media worldwide covered the 2019 Index

End of June, the Access to Seeds Index published an overview of media coverage. Over 450 media – national, regional, global and industry, both print and online, covered the Index. Articles were published in English, French, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Thai, Hindi, Italian, French, Hungarian, Spanish, Portuguese and German.

4. Contribution of Activities to Objectives and Deliverables

A detailed overview of the Theory of Change, overall objectives and deliverables of the Access to Seeds Index was provided in an earlier quarterly report (Q2 2017). The overview below indicates how the activities and milestones of Q2 2019 contribute to the overall objectives of the Access to Seeds Index.

Overall Objectives

1. Increase transparency on current strategies and activities of seed companies to improve access to seeds for smallholders and their contribution to the SDG-agenda.
2. Provide an evidence base for the conversation within and with the seed industry on how it can step up their efforts.
3. Encourage companies to increase transparency and performance of their efforts to improve access to seeds for smallholder farmers.
4. Provide insights on performance of individual companies to enable other stakeholders to cooperate or build partnerships with seed companies.
5. Strengthen the position of the Access to Seeds Foundation through a global alliance with other index initiatives and relation with established global organizations

| | Overall objectives | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| | Increase Transparency | Enable Dialogue | Encourage Companies | Enable Partnerships | Strengthen Foundation |
| Activities and Milestones Q2 2018 | | | | | |
| Access to Seeds Index for Western and Central Africa | | | | | |
| Farmer Roundtable Dakar | | | | | |
| GAIN review of business accountability mechanisms in Nutrition | | | | | |
| Presentation at World Seed Congress | | | | | |
| Access to Seeds Index 2019 – Synthesis report published | | | | | |
| Media analysis: over 450 media worldwide covered the 2019 Index | | | | | |

5. Progress Overview

This project works towards four deliverables following the Index Cycle of (1) methodology review (2) index development (3) conversation and dialogue. The four deliverables are created following the steps below. The project is currently on schedule.

| Activity | Due date | Progress |
|----------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| Identify regional partners | 31 March 2017 | Completed |
| Landscaping studies finalized | 30 Sept 2017 | Completed |
| Public consultation methodology | 30 October 2017 | Completed |
| Expert Review Committee meetings | 30 November 2017 | Completed |
| Methodology finalized | 31 January 2018 | Completed |
| Design Research Process ready | 31 March 2018 | Completed |
| Methodology Report published | 31 March 2018 | Completed |
| Index Alliance created | 31 May 2018 | Finalized end of 2017 |
| Publication Index Reports | 31 March 2019 | Finalized April 2019 |
| Regional Roundtables | 30 November 2019 | One organized (Dakar, April) |
| Consultation Report | 31 December 2019 | |

6. Variation from the Original Plan

In this period, all activities were conducted according to plan. The publication of the Synthesis Report on the 2019 Access to Seeds Index was not included in the operational plan, but added in response to stakeholders that requested for a pdf report, in addition to the online reports.