A New Generation of Maize for Africa

1. **Maize** occupies more farmland than any other staple crop in Africa.

2. **On average, growth in maize productivity across Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) appears stagnant**... but that average hides significant progress being made in many countries who have important lessons to share with their struggling neighbors.

3. **Most African farmers experience drought several times every decade.**

4. **Since 2006, the Drought Tolerant Maize for Africa (DTMA) project, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, has been working to develop and deliver drought-tolerant maize varieties and 60,000 metric tons (MT) of seed to African farmers by 2016.**

5. DTMAs work has created a number of new, high-yielding, drought-tolerant maize varieties, mostly hybrids which yield on average nearly 49% more grain than OPVs on-farm. Hybrids are becoming more and more popular in Africa.

6. **DTMA has made 205 releases**, representing 194 distinct varieties, mostly hybrids which yield on average nearly 49% more grain than OPVs on-farm. Hybrids are becoming more and more popular in Africa.

7. The new hybrids yield higher than or comparable to the commercial varieties currently on the market. Even some of the new OPVs give comparable yields to the popular commercial hybrids, especially under drought conditions.

8. Many of the new varieties have other desirable traits in addition to drought tolerance and superior yield.

9. **Variety releases by DTMA were in partnership with both public and private institutions.**

10. When selecting varieties, farmers are principally concerned about grain yield, ear maturity, stay-green characteristics, and kernel texture are also important.

11. **Yellow and orange maize varieties are common in West Africa, but outside of West Africa, only Angola, Mozambique and Ethiopia have released a few yellow or orange maize varieties.**

12. DTMA provided local seed companies with germplasm and technical backstopping for seed production, as well as financial support to popularize the new varieties throughout stemos, field days, and media.

13. In 2014 alone, DTMA facilitated the production of nearly 52,000 metric tons of certified seed of improved maize varieties across the target countries, enough to plant more than 2 million ha and touch the lives of approximately 5.2 million households.

14. Adoption monitoring surveys indicated that farmers are already growing DTMA varieties, though the level of early adoption varied from country to country.

15. **Constraints preventing wider adoption by farmers of drought-tolerant maize varied significantly from country to country, meaning we will need tailored strategies to overcome them.**

16. **US $150 million of additional funding is required in the next 10 years to scale drought-tolerant maize and continue developing new varieties that incorporate tolerance to multiple stress factors. Increased investment in research by the National governments is the key for sustainable productivity growth** in the long run.

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