



Media Release

Diverse and robust seed systems are critical in light of climate change, for food and nutrition security, and for the resilience of local economies

3 September 2016, Honolulu –The Global Alliance for the Future of Food has launched [*The Future of Food: Seeds of Resilience, A Compendium of Perspectives from Around the World*](#) at the IUCN World Conservation Congress today.

“Maintaining and enhancing agricultural biodiversity and food sovereignty is critical in light of global challenges such as climate change, and seeds play an important role in that,” says Kyra Busch, Program Officer at The Christensen Fund and lead of the Global Alliance’s Agroecological Transitions Working Group.

Underpinned by an overview of efforts to protect and improve seed systems written by agricultural biodiversity researchers Emile Frison and Toby Hodgkin, the compendium includes commentaries from a diverse range of experts, including farmers, community activists, business representatives, researchers, and scientists.

Each commentary provides its own valuable perspective on the state of agricultural biodiversity, the inherent value of seeds, the threats to seed systems, and how funders and advocates can strengthen the diversity and resilience of community based, farmer managed seed systems.

“Seed diversity is being eroded and community based seeds systems, representing tremendous complexity, are under threat,” says Global Alliance Executive Director Ruth Richardson. “As individual foundations working in regions around the world, we wanted to know where we could collectively focus our efforts to address this issue; because we believe seeds are core to sustainable, secure and equitable food systems.”

Not all contributors agree on the best way forward, but common themes emerge, pointing to opportunities for stakeholders in philanthropy, farmer organizations, policy and research institutions, and donor agencies. The compendium highlights:

- Threats to, and factors affecting, the preservation and maintenance of seed biodiversity;
- What is needed to protect and enhance community based seed systems;
- The social institutions and socio-economic factors that are supporting seed biodiversity;
- Good policy practice on, and barriers to, agricultural biodiversity embedded in legislation at international, national and regional levels; and,

- Key actors in agricultural biodiversity, funding gaps, and recommendations for strengthening community based efforts.

The Global Alliance will be sharing its recommendations and exploring how to best work with others to strengthen support for community based and farmer managed seed systems at key events over the coming months, including the Global Consultation on Farmers' Rights in Bali, the Committee on World Food Security in Rome and the Convention on Biological Diversity meetings in Mexico.

The full compendium report and related materials can be downloaded at: www.futureoffood.org

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The Global Alliance for the Future of Food is a collaboration of philanthropic foundations that have come together to strategically leverage resources and knowledge, develop frameworks and pathways for change, and push the agenda for more sustainable food and agriculture systems globally.

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