



Left: Seed Science Center Global Seed Programs Leader Joe Cortes addresses attendees of the 2nd World Seed Conference in Rome in September. **Right:** Yuh-Yuan Shyy (far left) and Adelaida Harries (center) pose in Lusaka, Zambia, with attendees of the SADC regional variety release catalogue workshop.

CENTER SCIENTISTS FACILITATE SADC REGIONAL VARIETY RELEASE CATALOGUE WORKSHOP

Seed Science Center Global Seed Programs Leader Joe Cortes, Scientist Adelaida Harries, and IT Specialist and Scientist Yuh-Yuan Shyy facilitated a workshop on the Southern African Development Community (SADC) regional variety release catalogue October 26-29 in Lusaka, Zambia.

Attending the workshop were representatives from the private sector including the African Seed Trade Association (AFSTA) and from 13 SADC member countries. They included Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Objectives of the meeting were to:

- 1) analyze existing seed varieties on the national list based on information submitted by 10 SADC countries;
- 2) identify varieties with different denominations that have been released in at least two countries and that are potential varieties for inclusion in the SADC catalogue; and 3) introduce and train attendees on a new Web-based software system being developed by the Iowa State University Seed Science Center.

The software, being designed and implemented by Shyy, will allow

applications for new variety releases in two countries to be entered on-line into the SADC variety release system. National seed authorities will also be able to use the system to operate their national variety release systems.

“The outcome of this workshop was very significant,” said Cortes. “We made a great deal of progress in analyzing the national variety listings of the 10 countries for future inclusion in the regional variety release catalogue,” he said. “It is one of the first crucial steps in providing access to seed of improved varieties to benefit farmers, breeders, and seed companies—the whole seed system. Add to that the training, which signifies that this electronic system is becoming a reality, and it is clear that the momentum has begun. There is no doubt that this project will pick up speed and produce dramatic results.”

Organized by Iowa State University and the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), the workshop was part of the Southern African Seed Systems Development Initiative Project for the SADC countries. It was funded by USAID Southern Africa.