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Fake seed still rampant on Malawi market – Report

February 21, 2019 Christopher Mwandama –Nyasa Times [1 Comment](#)

Seed companies in the country say despite efforts to end the problem of fake seed on the market, the issue is still persisting mainly because of agro-dealers.

The complaints are contained in a report titled the African Seed Access index produced by TASAI.

The report which was authored by Edward Mabaya, Richard Kachule and Mainza Mugoya, was released during the Seed sector stakeholders workshop which took place yesterday in Lilongwe.



Fake seeds hurting farmers

Reads part of the report: "Seed companies indicated that they received a total of 20 reports of fake seed sales in 2016. This figure is likely to be underestimating, as most cases of fake seed sales are not officially reported. On average, seed companies are not satisfied with the government's efforts to stamp out fake seed, rating these as poor (38 per cent). According to the seed companies, the main sources of fake seed are agro-dealers who repackage seed in used packages and other seed companies who do not have sufficient controls over the handling of their seed packages."

The report also notes that the current penalties imposed on fake seed dealers are too lenient to act as deterrent.

"The maximum fine is K70 000, approximately U\$98. The 2013 draft seed bill proposes harsher penalties of K500 000 million," the report reads.

But in an interview with *Nyasa Times*, Mainza Mugoya, Program Coordinator for the African Seed Access index, said Malawi is making huge strides in coming up with policies and regulations that will help reduce challenges in the seed sector.

"This meeting has come at a right time as it has drawn participants from SADC countries as well as Comesa. Malawi is heading in the right direction in managing issues of seeds. Despite challenges like fake seed on the market there are strong institutions and frame works that can eliminate such challenges," said Mugoya.

Senior Deputy Director in the Department of Agriculture and Research Services David Kamangira in a separate interview that government has put in place an enabling environment to help the seed industry grow.

"Cabinet already approved the national seed policy and other legal instruments are also in place to make sure that farmers are the greatest beneficiaries," said Kamangira.



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Chairman of Seed Traders Association (STAM) John Lungu also concurred with Kamangira that Malawi is trying hard to work closely with other SADC countries to make sure that quality seed is made available to all who require it.

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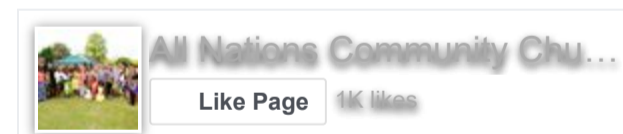
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