

Story of Change

Catalysing Technology Transfer between Small Holder Farmers in Kenya and South Africa



A visit to a poultry and vegetable farmer in Bronkhorstpruit, Pretoria in South Africa.

Intini Research and Consulting, RISA Funded Project Milestones

- Developed a cooperation framework on technology transfer for small holder farmers in Kenya and South Africa.
- Organised stakeholder engagement forums for researchers, small, and medium enterprises from South Africa and Kenya.
- Identified information exchange portals for small holder farmers in Kenya and South Africa.



About the RISA Fund

The Research and Innovation Systems for Africa (RISA) Fund is a programme to support and strengthen research and innovation systems in six countries: Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, and Ethiopia. The programme runs from 2021 to 2024 and is funded by UKAid.

About Intini Research and Consulting, RISA Funded Project

Intini Research and Consulting Ltd is a South African firm offering advisory and consulting services in innovation management, business strategy, and project management with emphasis in the biotechnology, pharmaceutical, healthcare technology, agriculture, and biofuel industry sectors.

The main objective of the RISA funded project was to ensure innovative technologies reach smallholder farmers through government and private sector support by developing frameworks that facilitate the exchange of knowledge between the two countries.

"We were looking at putting together a tailor-made cooperation framework that would support cooperation between South Africa and Kenya, to accelerate transfer of knowledge and technologies, and for use by small holder farmers to solve issues of food insecurity," explains Siya Ntutela, managing director of Intini Research and Consulting LTD.

Stakeholder Engagement Forums

The team held three successful stakeholder engagement forums with researchers and small micro and medium enterprises (SMMEs) from South Africa and Kenya. The first forum was a virtual meeting with South African researchers and technology transfer officials at the universities. The second forum was a joint South Africa – Kenya hybrid workshop with researchers and technology transfer officials, and the last forum was a physical meeting held in Kenya for researchers and SMMEs.

The stakeholders discussed components and modalities of a cooperation framework between the two countries and potential collaboration on sustainable bilateral projects that have an impact in the communities.

To develop an effective cooperation framework, key informant interviews were conducted with officials from the Department of Science and Innovation in South Africa, Technology Innovation Agency from South Africa, and the Ministry of Education Science and Technology in Kenya. In addition, the team interviewed about two-hundred farmers in South Africa and Kenya to understand gaps and challenges, as well as the need for knowledge and technology exchange.

Development of Investor Ready Projects

A stream of projects that would support the cooperation framework were identified. This was necessitated by the fact that communities ought to develop their own seeds and feeds, given that smallholder crop farmers have challenges in accessing certified seeds, while poultry and fish farmers do not have enough feeds for their livestock.

Four projects were identified and grouped into two major projects focusing on developing seed for potatoes and vegetables and developing feed for fish and poultry. The projects were grouped under an umbrella theme of *Our Seed, Our Feed, and Our Food* with the sole purpose of empowering communities to develop their own vegetable seeds and animal feeds.

"We want farmers and communities to develop and use their own seeds for potatoes and vegetables, grade and multiply their own seeds, and to make food for their chicken and fish. We want to train them on tissue culture and other facilities in their own villages so that they can expand their agricultural activities. These projects will help communities make their own seed and feed using both high-tech-middle-tech and low-tech innovation models," says Ntutela.

Development of Information Exchange Portal

Cooperation platforms that can be utilised for knowledge exchange, trainings, and technology sharing were identified. Events such as the Kenya Innovation Week, the BIO African Convention, and the Innovation Bridge should be used as platforms for sharing knowledge and pitching to investors and funders. An information technology platform (website) was also proposed as a means of sharing information on trade, funding opportunities, seminars, and other related information.



“The Kenya innovation week which was held at the end of the year in Nairobi was cited as a platform for information exchange, where farmers in South Africa could learn what happens in Kenya in regard to skills and technologies that have been used by small holder farmers,” explains Ntutela

The Cooperation Framework

The draft cooperation framework was shared at an online workshop attended by about twenty-four participants who gave insightful comments, suggestions, and recommendations. The participants also studied bilateral agreements in science and technology between the two countries. Policies in Kenya and South Africa were analysed with a view to develop a cooperation framework that will improve collaboration between the two countries.



“We had policies developed which can be used when traders want to cooperate between South Africa and Kenya. Now that we have combined these laws together the researchers will conduct research according to these policies - failure to which there will be consequences,” says Ntutela.

The framework was shared with government departments in each country for review and adoption.

Thank You RISA

“We are thankful to the RISA Fund, for supporting innovation ecosystems in the continent. There were challenges along the way given the short period of time for the study. The farmers were very cooperative providing all the needed information,” says Ntutela.

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