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# Critical aspects of public private partnerships in germplasm development

Increasing ECPGR knowledge and opportunities on  
Private Public Partnerships for the use of  
Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

ECPGR workshop, Bonn, 7th. -9th. June 2017

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# PPP - Critical aspects: What is a PPP?



- PPP = buzzword; good and bad
- PPP NOT a tool to fund public tasks; NOT a magical invention to get somebody else to do the job or pay for it...
- PPP has been existing for very long time, pre-dating the buzzword.
- Standard “way of collaboration” in e.g. Norway under many names. E.g. companies with public and private owners.
- Serving fundamentally important but difficult to fund tasks in a given business area & of societal importance

# PPP - Critical aspects: Examples

Norwegian «PPP»'s:

- Graminor plant breeding company
- Sagaplant - Norwegian plant health center

Funding of networks

- Norwegian community seed bank
- Norwegian network for participatory plant breeding
- .. public funded projects and activities in NGOs, companies and organizations

*Not important that the collaboration fits a certain definition of PPP, but that it does the job...*



# PPP - Critical aspects:

## General features of «Public» (genebanks)

- Understand potential of genetic variation
- Poor understanding of commercial context
- Underfunded & struggle with basic conservation tasks
- Often back-log on C & E, lacking knowledge of specific traits
- Over-estimate capacity of the seed value chain
- Very long-sighted
- Project based activities
- Frame = ITPGRFA, Nagoya, CBD - access



# PPP - Critical aspects:



## General features of «Private» (plant breeders)

- Limitation: must be commercially viable
- Focus on «substitutions» to genetic solutions earlier
- Short-sighted; engage in (max?) 1,5 breeding cycle of time
- % invested in R&D high (15-20%)
- Tough priorities; taking 1 R&D-task in = another out...
- High probability of success - “Proof of concept”
- Ability to capture value of investment low – exclusivity?
- Frame = UPOV

# PPP - Critical aspects:

## What do we want to achieve?

- Fill C&E gap?
- Support plant breeding companies?
- Reinforce links between genebanks and users?
- Counteract increase in orphan crops?
- Secure long term breeding goals – e.g. climate change adaptation?
- Strengthen resilience in seed value chain?
- Increase diversity in plant production systems?



# PPP - Critical aspects: Potential & limitations



- Addressing specific tasks / traits in specific crops
- Specific and well defined goal
- Realistic topics; must be doable within a certain time, with a high probability to succeed. Important to know
  - \* Value      \* Costs      \* Estimated time      \* Workload
- Must be a priority for all parties
- Exclusivity? – IPR clarified up front
- ***Insight of the specific seed value chain...***





# PPP - Critical aspects: Funding model

- Funding model must be agreed (& tailored)
- Public /private share defines what kind of work can be done. A 50/50 model (e.g. Nordic) limits the objectives to a certain level of work relatively close to the R&D of private partners
- Flexible share model (e.g. 10-90% share for either public or private) provides for a model to address topics of different «distance» to markets, e.g.:
  - 10% private share – basic studies
  - 90% private share – very close to marketing

«Basic»

0% private



«Applied»

100% private

# PPP - Critical aspects: Communication

- Communication must be taken serious... engaged and knowledgeable
- Continuous task; about progress, expectation to results, ongoing work, goals, economic and societal values.
- Must address relevant policy agendas; bio economy, green transition, rural livelihood, organic agriculture, food safety/security, conservation issues, DSG's, etc.
- Fuel public interest and policy level/funding body dedication
- Remind that the general public are the consumers of food and the voters for the parliaments and governments providing public funding...



# PPP - Critical aspects: Expectations

- Realistic expectations – know your partners, and what's in it for them - for both public and private parties
- Realistic understanding of capacities
- Estimated value of work for all parts must be known/estimated, and possibly agreed between parties
- Frame must be clear
- Structure must be clear
- Costs must be clear
- Risks must be clear
- Rights must be clear



# PPP - Critical aspects: Funding



- Dedication in scale and time to fit purpose
- Funding must be long term, secured and stable (as much as possible) – requires perpetual work to secure, public budgets may be annual
- Funding must be managed
- Requires transparency
- Trust amongst partners
- Willingness to share results and agree how to provide access
- IPR must be managed

# PPP - Critical aspects: Practical aspects

- Must have a central contact point/secretariat
- Handling formal frames for a PPP:
  - economy, calls, evaluation of proposals, project contracts, collaboration agreements, RoP/ToR/Concept notes, reporting adm. economy and scientific, documentation, audits, partner contacts, IPR-Nagoya-ITPGRFA, etc etc.
- Lobbying towards private sector and towards public funding
- Develop the PPP
- Requires a neutral and well respected platform – ECPGR?



# PPP - Critical aspects: Perspective

- Understand value chain of the specific crop addressed
- Who and where is the value captured?
- Who and where are the investments done? Often investments to exploit PGR happens in research and breeding links, but value are captured in the last 2 steps of the value chain. Could/should that be changed?
- Would other actors in the value chain be interested in collaboration/participation?
- Would a facilitating “umbrella”/network for PPP’s defined by MoU/concept be more useful?



# PPP - Critical aspects: Vision?....

- European PPP network = “umbrella”-structure for multiple crop/trait specific partnerships
- ECPGR = European PPP secretariat, tasks:
  - Develop MoU, frame for partnership & concept
  - Model contracts & model collaboration agreements; relevant docs. & reporting formats
  - IPR and exclusivity/time advantage frames / legal frames
  - Secretariat, members, economy, calls, evaluation, reporting, audits, communication, etc etc
- Individual PPP projects
  - Crop & trait specific
  - Relevant partners
  - Tailored to the problem and the partners
  - Follow structure, rules and set-up by secretariat
  - Own project leader, reference group and steering body



# PPP - Critical aspects: Vision?....

- Would it
  - be possible?
  - solve the challenges?
  - be efficient?
  - be fundable?
  - be stable?
  - work?

What are the alternatives?

Which specific projects could we envisage?







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# THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

Acknowledgements:

Mads Randbøll Wolf & Jessica Kathle  
Roland von Bothmer & Anders Nilsson  
Nordic plant breeding entities

THANK YOU to:

Organizers ECPGR  
Funding GERMANY

