



**Draft methodology for the 2021
Access to Seeds Index**

**Report for public consultation
December 2020**

From 16 December 2020 to 31 January 2021, the World Benchmarking Alliance (WBA) is holding a public consultation on the draft methodology for the 2021 Access to Seeds Index as a spotlight benchmark of its food and agriculture transformation. Interested stakeholders are invited to review the draft and share their comments (via the accompanied feedback form) with us by emailing to info@accesstoseeds.org.

This consultation is part of WBA's continuous stakeholder engagement process. It builds on earlier presentations and meetings with a wide range of stakeholders, with input from an Expert Review Committee, companies, civil society, business associations and investors. Feedback is invited on any element of the document. Certain sections include the consultation questions, and WBA encourages respondents to reference the questions where possible when providing feedback.

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Introduction

Achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2: Zero Hunger requires enabling farmers to produce more food, particularly in regions of the world's that lack food security. The 2020 edition of the [State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World report](#), published by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), shows that the world is 'off track' to achieve zero hunger by 2030. Success is still possible, but only by ensuring all people have access to not only enough food but also to nutritious foods that make up a healthy diet.

Insufficient access to quality seeds of improved crop varieties is still one of the many constraints smallholder farmers face in diversifying crops and increasing their productivity and income. Improving smallholder farmers' access to seeds is thus an essential part of the solution to global food and nutrition insecurity. Seed companies are increasingly responsive to this challenge. However, many smallholder farmers – who account for the much of the agricultural activity in regions lacking food security – are yet to be reached.

Fulfilling the diverse needs and demands of smallholder farmers requires a market-based approach, but a challenge of this magnitude clearly cannot be solved by the private sector alone. Governments play a critical role in creating the right conditions for markets to flourish. Other actors, such as non-government organisations (NGOs) and farmer organisations must join forces with seed companies to accelerate smallholder farmers' capacity to gain knowledge and adopt new technologies that will enhance productivity.

The Access to Seeds Index is designed to create a better understanding of how seed companies are improving access to quality seeds and, in turn, contributing to achieving the SDGs. Two indexes have been published so far, in 2016 and 2019. These have gained substantial and increasing participation from companies in data collection, as well as significant media attention globally and a growing stakeholder group. Our methodologies and benchmarks serve as roadmaps for seed companies on the steps they can take to meet their stakeholders' needs and expectations.

After each edition of the published index, the methodology is reviewed based on stakeholders' feedback and addresses new developments. These discussions provide input for a thorough review of the previous indexing methodology. For the 2021 Access to Seeds Index methodology review, there is a greater focus on simplifying the methodology by reducing the number of indicators and aligning with the World Benchmarking Alliance's (WBA's) food system transformation agenda.

This draft methodology details the proposed indicators (topic-specific outcomes expected of the company), rationale (how the seed industry can contribute to the topic) and elements (what the index will be assessing companies against for the respective indicator) for each measurement area for the 2021 Access to Seeds Index. **The document is now open for public consultation and stakeholders are invited to submit their feedback (via the accompanied feedback form) before 31 January 2021 by email to info@accesstoseeds.org.** The index team will consider the feedback when preparing the final methodology, which will be evaluated by an Expert Review Committee (ERC) before publication in February 2021.

Acknowledgements

This draft methodology was not revised in isolation. The Access to Seeds Index and WBA would like to thank those who helped update and revise the indicator list. We thank seed companies and the industry at large for contributions throughout the draft methodology review. Moreover, we are grateful to our regional and global ERCs for their guidance and support.

WBA is funded by a group of governments, foundations and philanthropic organisations that share our vision for the future. We want to thank WBA funders and, specifically, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for their support, without which none of our work would be possible. A full list of WBA's funders is set out on the final page of this report.

Our continually growing alliance of more than [180 organisations](#) represents civil society, business networks, financial institutions and multilateral organisations, with SDG 17: Partnerships for Goals at its core. WBA would like to thank its Allies for the support and expertise they provide. We look forward to their contributions during the consultation period.

The role of the seed industry

Improved crop varieties have enabled farmers in advanced agricultural systems to triple their yields. What is the seed industry doing to enable smallholder farmers in developing regions to achieve similar results? The Access to Seeds Index aims to shine a light on this question. The index seeks primarily to identify leadership and good practices, providing an evidence base for the discussion on where and how the seed industry can do more.

Since its establishment in 2012, the Access to Seeds Index has set out to increase transparency around the seed industry and encourage the industry to enhance its contribution to key SDGs. Two indexes have been published so far, in 2016 and 2019. These have gained substantial and increasing participation from companies in data collection, significant media attention globally and a growing stakeholder group.

The third Access to Seeds Index, launching in 2021, will include three regional indexes: for South and South-east Asia (SSEA), Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) and Western and Central Africa (WCA). The index will focus particularly on the contribution of local and regional companies in providing access to seeds for smallholder farmers alongside their global peers. The range of companies in scope reflects the industry's highly diverse and locally driven nature. The 2016 and 2019 indexes showed that small and medium-sized national and regional companies outperform their global peers in multiple areas relevant for reaching smallholder farmers. They also provide linkages between farmers and global players through research and distribution partnerships.

With seed companies still only reaching 10% of the world's smallholders, a lack of access to quality seeds persists in many emerging economies. However, the overall improvement in performance between 2016 and 2019 indicates the industry's growing recognition of, and responsive approach to serving, this significant client segment. The 2021 index will evaluate the industry's improvements in recent years, along with the rising number of local and global seed companies operating in all regions.

This will also shine a light on the industry's ability to contribute to change in the coming decade, with possible substantial impacts on food and nutrition security in the countries that need it most.

How the index works

The Access to Seeds Index measures and compares the efforts of the world's leading seed companies to enhance the productivity of smallholder farmers. By matching the expectations of stakeholders in and around the seed industry with company performance, it helps to clarify the role that the seed industry can play and brings transparency to the contributions of individual companies. Through its findings, it contributes to an informed dialogue on how companies can step up their efforts. The approach is based on four components.

Clear expectations

To encourage the industry to assume greater responsibility in facilitating smallholder farmers' access to seeds, expectations need to be stated clearly and collectively. Initial questions are considered, such as: What is expected of the industry? What role could it play? These questions are asked and answered through multi-stakeholder dialogue, to help formulate a balanced stakeholder agenda.

Objective measurement

The balanced stakeholder agenda is translated into a methodology, with indicators that clearly measure the performance of each company included in the index. For reasons of independence and impartiality, the Access to Seeds Index has no personal or financial ties to the companies assessed. An independent ERC, which includes representatives from relevant stakeholder groups, advises on the index methodology.

Positive reinforcement

The index seeks to highlight good practices and recognise leadership in the sector. It rewards companies that take responsibility; develop innovative, inclusive business models; and bring knowledge and expertise to a partnership programme. By improving transparency in the industry, the index seeks to benchmark and improve the performance of these companies over time.

Transparency and dialogue

The index creates and improves transparency around the roles that individual companies play, by identifying good practices such as new products, successful partnerships, and innovative, inclusive business models. In so doing, it feeds informed opinion on the role of the private sector, which is essential for a meaningful dialogue about helping smallholder farmers to improve their businesses. As an independent platform, the index brings unique data to the table while complementing research conducted by global organisations, including the World Bank, on enabling agricultural growth and the role of governments. The index aims to bring these information sources together in the dialogue.

Consultation question:

Q1. Do you have general feedback on the Access to Seeds Index?

Integration into the World Benchmarking Alliance for greater impact

Following the publication and positive reception of 2019 Access to Seeds Index, it was clear that the index had played a role in improving the transparency of the seed industry. It has also encouraged progress on key issues across the industry and provided a welcome evidence base for dialogue. However, to sustain and broaden this impact and embed the index in the wider sustainable development context, it was necessary to build partnerships with a broader coalition. As a result, the Access to Seeds Foundation aligned and integrated its model with the WBA. The Access to Seeds Index will now be released as a 'spotlight benchmark' under WBA's food and agriculture transformation. The index's purpose has not changed, however. It will continue to focus on and provide deeper insights into the specific contribution of the seed industry to the SDGs, in particular SDG 2: Zero Hunger.

About the World Benchmarking Alliance

WBA is a diverse and growing group of organisations from across the globe, motivated by the common ambition to create a world that works for all – as embodied by the SDGs. We share the vision that achieving these goals requires a systems perspective, as each of the 17 SDGs is interlinked. We also agree that to accomplish systemic transformation, the private sector has a key role to play.

WBA uses a systems approach to develop benchmarks, placing a strong emphasis on transforming the systems that have the greatest potential to drive economic, environmental and social progress. Systems thinking helps us make better sense of the issues, as well as identify the most influential companies in each system. By 2023, WBA will have benchmarked 2,000 companies – the '[SDG2000](#)' – across seven systems transformations that we believe are vital for putting our society, planet and economy on a more sustainable and resilient path over the next decade and beyond (Figure 2). Benchmarks will be produced for all seven systems, of which food and agriculture is one, with accompanying methodologies helping to support systems change.

The social transformation sits at the core of the model because it represents topics, such as human and labour rights, that are fundamental to achieving the SDGs irrespective of the sector or transformation. For this reason, all SDG2000 companies will be assessed on these topics.

Figure 1: WBA's seven systems transformations



WBA's food and agriculture transformation

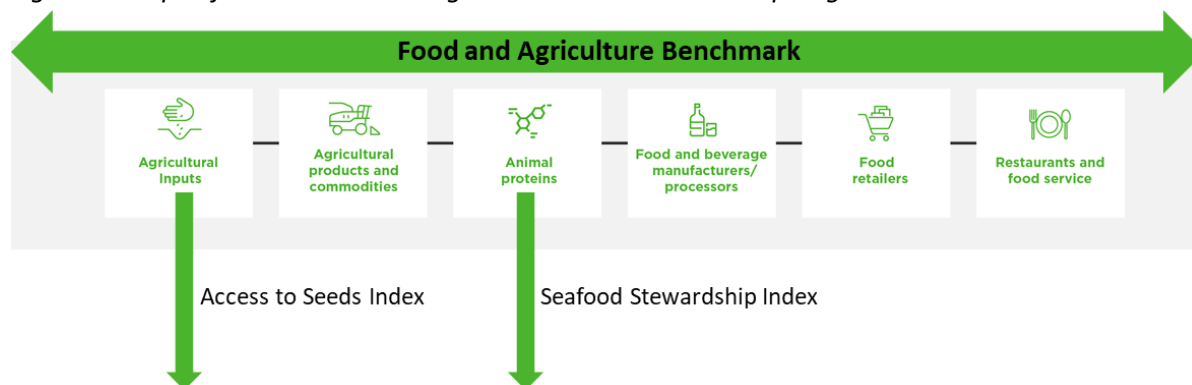
For a food systems transformation, action is required across all sectors and industries in the food system. Given that the system is highly interwoven, business leadership is vital to ensuring all companies play their part, acknowledging their purpose and strengths within the value chain. Good leadership will provide better access to healthy diets and help us to create a healthy planet and a system that leaves no one behind. Within WBA's food and agriculture transformation, the Food and Agriculture Benchmark takes a broad approach that includes maintaining the Access to Seeds Index and the Seafood Stewardship Index in parallel, to provide in-depth assessments of the seed and seafood industries.

The Food and Agriculture Benchmark and spotlight benchmarks

The Food and Agriculture Benchmark takes a holistic approach to food systems transformation, assessing companies throughout the food value chain on a broad set of indicators under its four measurement areas: governance, nutrition, environmental and social. As such, it seeks to unravel the role and performance of the companies and industries in scope and provide evidence on where companies are showing leadership and stewardship and where they are lagging behind.

The Food and Agriculture Benchmark focuses on breadth in terms of company scope as well as performance against the indicators, but also acknowledges the need to gain an in-depth understanding of the role of particular industries and issues within the food value chain, notably through 'spotlight benchmarks'. The Access to Seeds Index and the Seafood Stewardship Index serve such purpose, providing in-depth assessments of the performance of the seed and seafood industries. Both spotlight benchmarks are developed under the umbrella of the food and agriculture transformation but operate in their respective ecosystems of industry and stakeholders. WBA seeks to align methodologies where needed and where possible, to accommodate a comparison of results and ensure clarity for companies in scope. In the second half of 2021, the third Access to Seeds Index and second Seafood Stewardship Index will be published alongside the Food and Agriculture Benchmark.

Figure 2: Scope of WBA's Food and Agriculture Benchmark and spotlight benchmarks



The Food and Agriculture Benchmark will broadly assess the performance of 350 keystone companies – that is, companies with a disproportionate influence on the food value chain – on their contribution to global food systems transformation. Among them are several large seed companies. Where keystone companies shape markets, smaller companies play a central role in the last-mile delivery of products in specific markets. In the case of the Access to Seeds Index, they are crucial for reaching smallholder farmers and building their capacity.

The Access to Seeds Index deepens insights into the contributions of the seed industry. This includes small and medium-sized seed enterprises at local and regional levels in South and South-east Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, both of which face high levels of hunger and rural poverty. The seed industry, with its key position at the start of the global food chain, is vital for realising multiple sustainability goals. Chief among them is the goal of doubling smallholder farmers' productivity and incomes as part of efforts to achieve food security and end hunger (SDG 2), which the seed industry is well positioned to support.

Alignment with the Food and Agriculture Benchmark

The measurement framework within the Access to Seeds Index methodology was based on multi-stakeholder dialogues and research. As a spotlight benchmark, the Access to Seeds Index aligns where relevant with indicators included in the Food and Agriculture Benchmark. This ensures linking pins for a synergetic analysis at the level of the overall benchmarks and at a company level for those companies that are included in both. The indicators have been adjusted where needed for an analysis of topics specifically relevant to seed companies

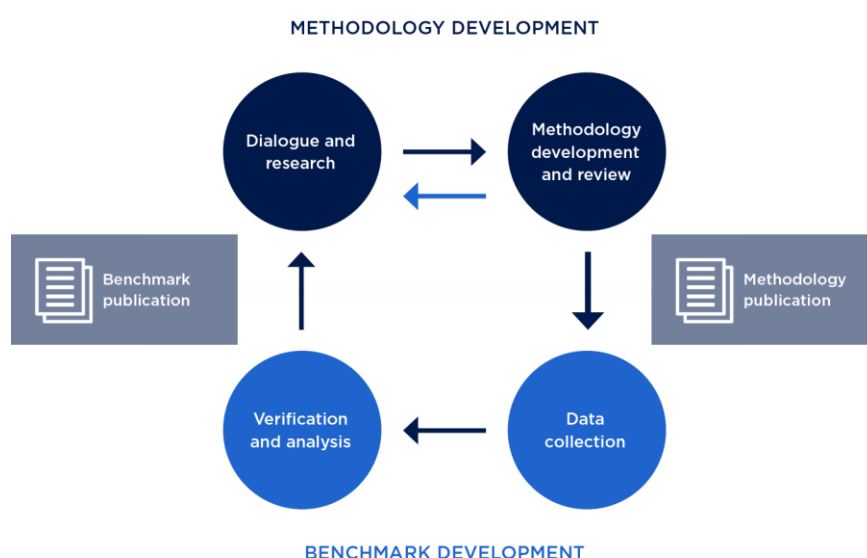
Table 1: Alignment of indicator topics between Access to Seeds Index and Food and Agriculture Benchmark

Access to Seeds Index	Food and Agriculture Benchmark
A1. Access to seeds for smallholder farmers	A1. Sustainable development strategy
A2. Governances and accountability	A2. Governance and accountability for sustainable development
A3. Stakeholder engagement	A3. Stakeholder engagement
B1. Conservation of genetic resources	B5. Soil health and agrobiodiversity
D4. Social and labour rights in seed production	D19. Child labour
	D20. Forced labour
	D21. Living wage
	D22. Health and safety
E1. Quality and safety of varieties	C7. Food safety
E4. Packaging and labelling	C4. Clear and transparent labelling
E5. Affordability	C2. Accessibility and affordability of healthy foods
E8. Other agricultural inputs	B6. Fertiliser and pesticides use
F5. Access to output markets	D23. Farmer productivity and resilience

Process and timelines

The benchmark is published in accordance with the benchmark cycle (Figure 3), from methodology development to data collection, analysis and publication. With the review of the methodology – through stakeholder input and expert advice – the cycle starts again. Public consultation on the methodology for the 2021 Access to Seeds Index kickstarts this process, which culminates in publication of the index in the second half of 2021. Throughout the process, companies will be informed about key engagement opportunities, timeline changes and development updates.

Figure 3: WBA benchmarking cycle



Methodology review and dialogue

The World Benchmarking Alliance organised roundtable conferences after the publication of the 2019 index, to open the dialogue on the index findings and help to create an understanding of the role the seed industry can and should play. This also provided input for the methodology review.

Companies provided feedback at industry events in 2019, including at the African Seed Trade Association (AFSTA) Congress in Nairobi, Kenya; the Seed Connect conference in Abudja, Nigeria; the World Seed Congress in Nice, France; SeedWorld in Bangalore, India; and the Asian Seed Congress in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. In 2020, they also provided responses at the AFSTA event in Zambia and the Indian Seed Congress in Delhi, India. In addition, farmers organisations provided feedback during three roundtables, held in Dakar in Senegal in April 2019, Kathmandu in Nepal in November 2019, and Nairobi in Kenya in November 2019.

Expert Review Committee

The development of the methodology for the Access to Seeds Index is overseen by a multi-stakeholder ERC (see Table 2). The diverse composition of the ERC ensures that different viewpoints and perspectives are considered when establishing the methodology. The ERC provides strategic guidance, recommendations and advice on the scope, structure and content of the index. ERC members will meet throughout 2020–21 to provide similar guidance on creating the methodology for the benchmark.

Table 2: Members of the ERC for the Access to Seeds Index

Ajay Vir Jakhar	Chairman, Bharat Krishak Samaj (Farmers' Forum, India)
David Spielman	Senior Research Fellow and Program Leader, Rwanda Strategy Support Program at International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)
Luigi Guarino	Director of Science, The Global Crop Diversity Trust
Michael Halewood	Principle Scientist, Leader of Genetic Resources and Seed Policies Group, Alliance of Bioversity International and International Centre for Tropical Agriculture
Ram Kaundinya	Independent consultant
Stephen Mugo	Independent consultant
Thomas Osborn	Former (retired) senior officer for Seed Policy, FAO Seed and Plant Genetic Resources Service

Figure 4: 2021 Access to Seeds Index Development Plan



Public consultation process

The methodology for each iteration of the index is the result of extensive stakeholder engagement and expert review. It is refined and improved based on lessons learnt from previous indexes as well as changing expectations around the role of the seed industry. For this, the index through World Benchmarking Alliance engages with a variety of stakeholders within and outside the industry. The ERC provides advice on the proposed changes and adjustments. In addition, the index is updated to align with the latest science and societal expectations.

The draft methodology for the 2021 index, including scope, measurement areas and indicators, is currently open for public consultation – for six weeks from the December 2020 publication date. This allows stakeholders an opportunity to provide feedback on the methodology via email. The final methodology will be published in first quarter of 2021.

Data collection

The data collection for the benchmark is due to start in March 2021. In around an eight-week timeframe, companies will be asked to complete a survey in a carefully managed process that ensures equal treatment of each company. To facilitate the process, a user-friendly online data collection platform is being developed. Each survey will be prepopulated on the basis of publicly disclosed corporate information. The 2021 Access to Seeds Index will include corporate data from throughout 2018–20.

Data analysis

Data analysis at company and industry levels is overseen by the Access to Seeds Index research team. For verification purposes, the researchers conduct an extensive quantitative and qualitative check of each indicator for each company. Cross checks are carried out and technical (external) experts review the analysis for specific areas. Scoring is carried out according to scoring guidelines, approved by the WBA Executive Board, and published alongside benchmark results. Companies that choose not to complete the survey will be evaluated based solely on publicly available information and will not be able to appeal the results.

Consultation question:

Q2. Do you have general feedback on the draft Access to Seeds Index methodology?

Weighting approach

The weighting used previously across the measurement areas has been revised. The new weighting is based on a consideration of the following:

- **Stakeholder priorities.** Extensive input on the methodology was received through stakeholder consultation, which contributed both to the revision and update of the measurement areas and to the relative importance assigned to each.
- **Business activities that have the greatest potential impact.** While seed companies engage in a variety of business activities that can have an impact on smallholder farmers, some of those activities have greater potential impact than others.
- **Performance ‘on the ground’.** The focus of the 2021 index is on tracking companies’ practices and programmes as they happened – as opposed to planned practices. These are regarded as having the greatest potential impact on access to seeds for smallholder farmers.

Weighting distribution for the 2021 index

Table 3: Overview of measurement area weighting

Measurement area	No. of indicators	Weight (%)
A. Governance and strategy	3	10
B. Genetic resources conservation and intellectual property management	6	15
C. Research and development	6	20
D. Seed production	4	15
E. Marketing and sales	8	25
F. Capacity building	5	15

Consultation question:

Q3. Should certain measurement areas be given more or less weight?

Scoring approach

Scoring takes place at the indicator level. The index will typically use a three-point scale with one-point increments of 0, 1, 2; or a five-point scale of 0, 0.5, 1, 1.5, 2. In each case, 2 is the highest score, 1 the mid-point and 0 the lowest. The increments are linear and equal.

As part of the methodology development, scoring guidelines for the company assessment are under development for each indicator. The scoring guidelines will be published with the final rankings.

Publication of the 2021 Access to Seeds Index

The 2021 Access to Seeds Index is scheduled for publication in the second half of 2021.

Scope of the 2021 index

The 2021 index will include three regional indexes: for South and South-east Asia, Eastern and Southern Africa and Western and Central Africa. The index will focus particularly on the contributions of local and regional companies in giving smallholder farmers access to seeds alongside their global peers.

The index methodology explains which countries, companies and crops are within the scope of the research. A detailed [report on index's scope](#) was published on 10 November 2020. Below is a summary of the outcomes of a review of the scope as part of work on the 2021 methodology.

Geographic scope

The geographic scope for the 2021 index will be similar to that for the 2019 index. To facilitate comparability and to measure the progress of the industry's approaches in various regions and countries, no major changes have been made to the geographic scope. Malaysia was added to the scope following the advice of regional stakeholders. Due to its location, the country is important for the South-east Asian seed trade.

According to the results of the 2020 Global Hunger Index, 92% of the countries covered by that index have a moderate to alarming food security burden. Although a few countries have a lower food security burden, the challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic are severely impacting multiple countries and territories, and there are grave concerns about the exacerbation of poverty and hunger.

Crop scope

The Access to Seeds Index focuses on smallholder farmers' access to quality seeds for major global crops, including field crops and vegetables. In addition to global crops, the index also evaluates company activities in relation to local crops, sometimes referred to as orphan or underutilised crops. While other crops, such as cotton and forage crops, are also relevant for smallholder farmers, the index's focus is on food crops for direct human consumption.

Company scope

The 2021 index will assess the performance of 72 companies, providing insights at industry and company levels and from regional and country perspectives. It comprises three regional indexes: South and South-east Asia, Eastern and Southern Africa, and Western and Central Africa.

With ongoing consolidation in the seed industry and the growth of regional seed companies, the 2019 company scope was reviewed to incorporate these changes. New companies were added to the list as a result of desk research and suggestions made by regional consultants. The selection criteria for the 2021 company scope are:

- regional presence or a dominant position in one country
- physical presence and business activities in the region
- an integrated seed business model and/or
- peer recognition as a leading company.

To assess investments by globally active seed companies in the three regions, all global seed

companies meeting the criteria will be included in the indexes for the regions where they have a presence. The 2021 index also aims to evaluate the efforts of five advanced seed-producing cooperatives from Western and Central Africa, which were selected based on input from local partners in the region.

Consultation question:

Q4. Do you have general feedback on the scope of the Access to Seeds Index?

Key outcomes of the measurement area and indicator review

The review and dialogue have resulted in a number of proposed changes and updates to the measurement areas and indicators for the 2021 index. Key outcomes of the discussion are listed below.

A sharper focus in the measurement areas and fewer indicators

Evaluation of the 2019 index and feedback from key stakeholders proposed a review of measurement areas and reducing the number of indicators. A significant outcome of the review is the combination of two measurement areas, genetic resources and intellectual property, with fewer but more focused indicators within the combined measurement area. Further proposed adjustments benefit the alignment with WBA and the role of the 2021 index as a spotlight benchmark under WBA's food and agriculture transformation. The index addresses unique issues within the seed industry, and also covers medium-sized and small companies that are outside the scope of the Food and Agriculture Benchmark. The alignment of the Access to Seeds Index with the Food and Agriculture Benchmark is mainly reflected in the Governance and Strategy measurement area. Overall, 27 indicators were removed, taking the total number from 59 to 32.

Removal of indicator categories from measurement areas

The approach of categorising indicators in each measurement area in four categories of Commitment, Performance, Transparency and Leadership has proven to be highly complex. To simplify the methodology, the indicator categories have been removed. Depending on data requirements, the categories are still embedded in the indicators, albeit less explicitly and predominantly focused on action-oriented data. Removing indicator categories has been the main driver of the reduction in the number of indicators.

Cancelling the option of providing data under non-disclosure

WBA and the Access to Seeds Index seek to promote the importance of increasing transparency and accountability of the private sector. As such, the default assumption is to measure public disclosures and increase the amount of information that companies share with all stakeholders. To level the playing field for the smaller companies in the scope of the index, which often have less external exposure than large globally operating companies, the 2021 index survey will accept information that companies have not yet published externally. However, the option to provide information under a non-disclosure agreement will no longer be available.

Continued focus on food crops

Some companies and stakeholders have advocated to include forage crops and cotton in the crop scope. However, 2019 data indicates that only a few companies in the scope of the index are active in these crops in addition to food crops. While the index acknowledges the relevance of these crops for smallholder farmers, the index's focus remains on food crops. Hence the 2021 index will only assess companies for their activities in providing access to quality seed for food crops, but not for their activities on forage crops or cotton.

Adding questions on the implications of COVID-19 for seed business activities

To determine the impact of COVID-19 on seed businesses, the index survey will include questions about the implications of the pandemic lockdowns in relation to relevant indicators. However, data collected will not be used for company assessment.

Consultation question:

Q5. To what extent is COVID-19 affecting company activity in relation to smallholder farmers in 2020 compared to 2019? Are these two years still comparable, or totally different?

Proposed measurement areas and indicators

The following sections describe the indicators within each measurement area. The indicators follow a standard format:

- **Measurement area:** one of six measurement areas considered crucial for increasing access to quality seeds of improved crop varieties for smallholder farmers in index regions
- **Indicator:** sets out the topic-specific outcomes expected of the company
- **Rationale:** sets out how the seed industry can contribute to the topic
- **Element(s):** sets out what the index will be assessing companies against for the respective indicator.

A. Governance and strategy

This measurement area evaluates whether companies have strategies in place to help improve smallholder farmers' access to seeds. It highlights the way in which companies include smallholder farmers in their core business strategies, by assessing their governance structures and stakeholder engagement programmes.

A1. Access to seeds for smallholder farmers

- **Indicator:** The company has objectives and targets for increasing access to seeds embedded in its strategy and business model.
- **Rationale:** Seed companies can help to increase smallholder farmer productivity in a sustainable way by increasing farmers' access to knowledge, technologies, crops varieties and seeds. Strategies articulate how companies will contribute based on their portfolios, assets and capabilities.
- **Elements:**
 - The company has a strategy to help provide smallholder farmers in index countries with better access to seeds.

- The strategy includes the company’s approach to activities such as:
 - conservation of genetic resources
 - intellectual property rights management
 - research and development
 - seed production
 - marketing and sales
 - capacity building.
- The strategy sets realistic but ambitious objectives aligned with the company’s strategy to increase smallholder farmers’ access to seeds.
- The company periodically reviews the strategy and objectives to ensure they remain fit for the changing contexts, and it reports performance against the objectives.

A2. Governance and accountability

- **Indicator:** The company has a governance system that includes board or highest level responsibility and accountability for its targets relating to access to seeds. To facilitate the effective implementation of the strategy, board members have access to seeds objectives and incentives to reward the effective delivery of relevant company strategies and initiatives.
- **Rationale:** A governance structure that links goals and targets relating to access to seeds to the roles and remuneration of the company’s board members is important to ensure the accountability of the company with respect to its contributions.
- **Elements:**
 - The company assigns decision-making and oversight responsibility for access to seeds to the highest governance.
 - The company links performance criteria in the remuneration policies for members of its highest governance body to company objectives for increasing access to seeds.

A3. Stakeholder engagement

- **Indicator:** The company engages with stakeholders on issues relating to access to seeds and incorporates the outcomes of these activities in its strategy and operations.
- **Rationale:** Stakeholders may raise concerns that could influence medium- or long-term financial or operating performance or create acute short-term financial impacts through the loss of licence to operate, reputational damage, changes to customer demand, and disruption to business viability. Regularly engaging with stakeholders (such as local communities, governments, academia and NGOs) contributes to a company’s understanding of diverse and frequently opposing perspectives. It can drive innovation, and shape robust and inclusive approaches. Companies are expected to proactively engage in multi-stakeholder dialogues and initiatives related to building an environment that supports access to seeds. For instance, companies can contribute to this through lobbying activities, their involvement in national, regional and international seed associations, and by helping to advance local seed sectors. Complaints, disputes and significant adverse impacts raised by stakeholders are to be addressed and resolved. Engagement processes are expected to produce a clear output or action and an acknowledgement of how stakeholder inputs are used.
- **Elements:**

- The company describes its process for identifying relevant stakeholder groups, including communities it impacts, civil society, governments, workers/employees, and how it engages these groups.
- The company discloses the process of stakeholder engagement and reports on how outcomes of this engagement and the identification of risks and opportunities are integrated in its strategy to provide access to seeds.

Consultation question:

Q6. Have all the main challenges regarding access to seeds and the role of companies in Governance and strategy been adequately reflected in the indicators?

B. Genetic resources conservation and intellectual property management

Genetic resources are fundamental to sustainable food production; however, agricultural practices can impact existing genetic diversity. This measurement area seeks to clarify how companies support the conservation of genetic resources and how they share the benefits resulting from their use of publicly available genetic material. Seed companies use intellectual property (IP) protection to generate a return on research and development investment. IP protection can, however, restrict established practices in the seed industry such as further breeding by other actors and on-farm seed saving. Furthermore, because national seed laws and other IP regulations differ and many emerging economies still lack seed and/or other IP laws, this measurement area also seeks to clarify and assess the positions of companies regarding IP in general. This includes their activities relating to patents and how companies provide access to their products in countries where regulations are still under development.

B1. Conservation of genetic resources

- **Indicator:** The company is involved in programmes and/or initiatives that encourage the conservation of a diverse set of crops and genetic resources used by smallholder farmers in index countries, such as collaboration with and/or support for international, national and/or community genebanks.
- **Rationale:** Conservation and use of a diverse set of crops and genetic resources in index countries are vital for seed companies and smallholder farmers. Seed companies can help preserve local crop diversity and the local seed system by supporting community seed banks. Additionally, companies can help preserve agricultural biodiversity by, for example, engaging with local governments; supporting community, national and international genebanks; and using local landraces in their breeding programmes.
- **Elements:** The company assists public (international and national) genebanks to conserve and use the germplasm of crops grown in index countries. It undertakes activities to help conserve and use the genetic diversity of crops in local seed systems and/or for the in situ conservation of local agrobiodiversity in index countries.

B2. Access to company genetic resources

- **Indicator:** The company makes genetic resources available for developing varieties useful for smallholder farmers.
- **Rationale:** Access to genetic resources is important for breeding companies, public research institutes and smallholder farmers to develop varieties or identify landraces or minor local crops tailored to local conditions and crop preferences. Support for better access to company genebanks can facilitate the development of new varieties appropriate for smallholder farmers.
- **Elements:** The company undertakes activities to support its position on making old varieties and/or other germplasm, including that of companies it has acquired, available without restrictive conditions to public genebanks, NGOs or other entities for the benefit of smallholder farmers in index countries. The company is contributing its own germplasm to collaborative projects aimed at developing varieties useful to smallholder farmers and it is placing such materials under the multilateral system of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA).

B3. Benefit sharing

- **Indicator:** The company shares monetary and/or non-monetary benefits as outlined in international treaties such as the ITPGRFA.
- **Rationale:** Benefit sharing refers to how companies share the benefits resulting from their use of genetic resources, thereby contributing to international efforts to promote their conservation and use. Benefit sharing includes monetary and non-monetary contributions to conservation and use of genetic resources, such as to the Global Crop Diversity Trust under multilateral agreements like the ITPGRFA and the Nagoya Protocol of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).
- **Elements:** The company undertakes activities to support monetary and/or non-monetary contributions within the framework of access and benefit sharing, such as through the Benefit-sharing Fund of the ITPGRFA, and specifies the amounts or contributions.

B4. Breeders' exemption

- **Indicator:** The company allows the use of crop varieties protected by plant breeders' rights for further breeding and refrains from using restrictive measures such as contractual clauses.
- **Rationale:** Breeders' exemption makes crop varieties protected by plant breeders' rights available for further breeding, although this access can be restricted through the use of contractual clauses.
- **Elements:** The company clarifies its position regarding breeders' exemptions.

B5. Farmers' privilege

- **Indicator:** The company allows the saving, use, exchange and sale of farm-saved seeds by smallholder farmers in index countries and refrains from employing restrictive measures such as contractual clauses.
- **Rationale:** The long-established farmers' privilege allows on-farm seed saving, exchange and, in some countries, sale of seed by smallholder farmers. This privilege can be restricted by seed companies – for instance, by the use of contractual clauses.

- **Elements:** The company clarifies its position regarding farm-saved seeds by smallholder farmers in index countries.

B6. Licensing

- **Indicator:** The company offers royalty-free licensing and/or lower-price licensing of protected material for use in index countries.
- **Rationale:** Tailored or royalty-free licensing strategies can improve access to patented varieties, traits, methods and technologies for national agricultural research institutes and private plant breeders, thereby promoting the development of new varieties appropriate to the needs of smallholder farmers.
- **Elements:** The company offers royalty-free and/or lower-price licensing for the benefit of smallholder farmers in index countries.

Consultation question:

Q7. Have all the main challenges regarding access to seeds and the role of companies in Genetic resources conservation and intellectual property management been adequately reflected in the indicators?

C. Research and development

This measurement area focuses on companies' research and development (R&D) efforts, including through partnerships with (local) research institutes. It especially relates to activities that consider local conditions in the index region and the key crops for farmers in the region. These activities include adapting global crops for local use and breeding programmes for local crops to improve such characteristics as pest and disease resistance and climate resilience.

C1. Plant breeding activities in index regions

- **Indicator:** The company has its own and/or collaborative breeding activities in index regions.
- **Rationale:** Companies can increase the availability of a diverse set of crop varieties that meet the needs and preferences of smallholder farmers in index regions and strengthen local research capacity through their plant breeding activities in the region. Such activities can focus on global and/or local crops.
- **Elements:** The company has its own and/or collaborative breeding activities in the index region. The company also invests in building the capacity of local researchers in the region.

C2. Local participation in breeding/variety development

- **Indicator:** The company has mechanisms in place to ensure the participation of local farmers, consumers and other stakeholders in its breeding programmes in index regions to understand and consider their knowledge, preferences and feedback.

- **Rationale:** Specific needs, preferences and knowledge can be incorporated into companies' breeding programmes by involving local farmers, consumers and other stakeholders in variety breeding and selection.
- **Elements:** The company has a system in place that helps inform its breeding programmes with participation and feedback from local farmers, consumers and other stakeholders in index countries, with specific attention to feedback from women farmers.

C3. Variety testing

- **Indicator:** The company conducts multi-locational research station and on-farm trials to determine the suitability of varieties for smallholder farmers in index countries. This include varieties that are not yet widely grown in the country from the company's portfolio (including the portfolio of other companies for which the company is an agent) and/or from public research institutes.
- **Rationale:** Testing of varieties that are already available but not yet grown in a country, either from the company's own collection or from research institutes, is a fast route to determining if varieties are suitable for the market. By conducting variety trials and on-farm demonstrations, for example, companies can test varieties in their existing portfolio for suitability in index regions.
- **Elements:** The company has variety trial locations in index countries and provides details of the source of varieties – that is, the company's own breeding programmes and/or other breeding programmes such as those of public research institutes

C4. Developing improved varieties of global crops

- **Indicator:** The company has its own breeding programme and/or collaborative breeding programme with the objective of developing varieties of global crops appropriate for smallholder farmers in index countries.
- **Rationale:** Plant-breeding activities focused on global crops demonstrate companies' commitment to the smallholder farmers' needs and preferences in index regions. Plant breeding is the starting point for increasing the availability of improved varieties of global crops in index regions. Dedicated breeding programmes for global crops demonstrate a high level of commitment to helping smallholder farmers.
- **Elements:** The company has global crops in its portfolio for which it has active breeding activities for smallholder farmers. The company uses landraces and other local genetic materials in such programmes.

C5. Developing improved varieties of local crops

- **Indicator:** The company has its own breeding programme and/or collaborative breeding programme that includes breeding and screening of varieties of local crops appropriate for smallholder farmers in index regions/countries.
- **Rationale:** Plant breeding activities focused on local crops demonstrate companies' commitment to the needs and preferences of smallholder farmers in index regions. Plant breeding is the

starting point for increasing the availability of improved varieties of local crops in these regions. Dedicated breeding programmes for local crops demonstrate a high level of commitment to helping smallholder farmers.

- **Elements:** The company has local crops in its portfolio for which it has active breeding activities for smallholder farmers.

C6. Breeding programme for specific traits

- **Indicator:** The company's breeding programme targets specific traits useful to smallholder farmers in index countries. These include production under low input conditions, early maturity to avoid drought, local taste and cultural preferences, pest and disease tolerance/resistance, increased crop robustness, climate change resilience and nutritional value.
- **Rationale:** Dedicated plant breeding programmes targeting specific traits important to smallholder farmers can significantly improve crop yield, performance and acceptance even under low input conditions and in marginal agro-ecologies. These traits include tolerance to abiotic stresses such as heat, drought, flooding and salinisation, and tolerance to biotic stresses such as pests and diseases. Similarly, the development of improved varieties with specific traits that increase a crop's nutritional value can contribute significantly to food and nutrition security.
- **Elements:** The company has breeding programmes focusing on traits important for smallholder farmers such as:
 - early maturing varieties to avoid drought
 - tolerance or resistance to biotic stresses
 - tolerance or resistance to abiotic stresses (e.g. drought and heat tolerance)
 - improved nutritional value
 - longer shelf life
 - local tastes and cultural preferences
 - tolerance to regionally important pests and diseases.

Consultation question:

Q8. Have all the main challenges regarding access to seeds and the role of companies in Research and development been adequately reflected in the indicators?

D. Seed production

Through local seed production, companies can address the limited availability of quality seeds while advancing the local seed sector. This measurement area seeks to identify whether companies produce seeds locally and the extent to which smallholder farmers are involved in this process.

D1. Seed production activities in index region

- **Indicator:** The company produces seeds in index countries through its own facilities or by partnering with local companies or farmer organisations.
- **Rationale:** Seed companies have extensive skills and experience in seed production that can be very useful for advancing local seed sectors. Global companies that produce seeds in local

production facilities can create employment opportunities and encourage knowledge transfer. Through partnerships with local seed companies and farmer organisations, companies can transfer advanced technologies and expertise.

- **Elements:** The company has seed production locations in index countries and is involved with local players, such as farmer organisations, intermediates and local companies, in these activities.

D2. Engaging smallholder farmers in seed production

- **Indicator:** The company involves smallholder farmers in its seed production in index countries.
- **Rationale:** Seed companies can encourage local seed production in index countries by engaging with smallholder farmers to produce seeds under fair contractual arrangements. Working with smallholder farmers generates income and helps to build to capacity.
- **Elements:** The company engages with smallholder farmers in seed production activities in index countries. The company offers formal contracts, either directly or through intermediates, to smallholder farmers detailing arrangements for product prices and sharing profits and risks.

D3. Quality management in seed production in index countries

- **Indicator:** The company has management systems in place to ensure quality throughout its seed production processes in index countries.
- **Rationale:** Seed quality depends on a comprehensive approach to quality assurance based on international standards. To ensure consistent quality, seed companies and their local partners or contract growers should have robust seed quality management systems in place in index countries. These systems should cover seed production, post-harvest handling, storage, processing and packaging.
- **Elements:** The company has internal and/or external quality management systems in place to ensure consistent quality in the seed production process. It publishes the percentage of company seed production covered by internal and/or external quality management systems in index countries.

D4. Social and labour rights in seed production

- **Indicator:** The company respects the social and labour rights¹ of workers in seed production in index countries.
- **Rationale:** Companies should respect social and labour rights and adhere to international social and labour standards in producing seeds in index countries. This includes the right not to be subject to forced labour and child labour, respecting the health and safety of workers, and paying workers a living wage.

¹ This indicator focusses on social and labour rights that are most prevalent in the seed production activities.

- **Elements:** The company respects the right not to be subject to child labour and forced labour, respects the health and safety of workers, and pays workers a living wage. The company monitors compliance with these issues.

Consultation question:

Q9. Have all the main challenges regarding access to seeds and the role of companies in Seed production been adequately reflected in the indicators?

E. Marketing and sales

This measurement area assesses how companies make quality seeds of improved varieties available and affordable to smallholder farmers and promote their use. This could include tailored packaging and building trusted distribution networks as well as offering demonstration activities that promote their use.

E1. Quality and safety of varieties

- **Indicator:** The company has protocols in place in accordance with international best practices to ensure biosafety and increase product suitability and quality when marketing improved varieties in index countries.
- **Rationale:** Various index countries have legislation and regulations regarding the testing of new varieties, but the national institution's capacity to implement the regulations is weak or, in some cases, non-existent. It is the role of seed companies to ensure that only varieties suited to local conditions are released into the market. This can be done through professional variety testing and adherence to internationally adopted quality control protocols and codes such as biosafety.
- **Elements:** The company has protocols for ensuring the quality and safety of varieties when launching new varieties in index countries, and for introducing new varieties in index countries that lack approval and registration protocols. It also has biosafety protocols and codes for those companies that market genetically modified seeds.

E2. Distribution channels

- **Indicator:** The company has established dedicated distribution channels and/or agrodealer networks in index countries that make its seeds accessible to smallholder farmers, including in remote areas.
- **Rationale:** When companies enter a new market, an existing distribution network can be used or new distribution channels created. This is particularly relevant when trying to reach smallholder farmers in remote regions.
- **Elements:** The company has distribution channels and established networks to service remote areas in index countries.

E3. Diverse portfolio

- **Indicator:** The company has made a diverse portfolio of seeds, seed types and varieties available to smallholder farmers in index countries.
- **Rationale:** Companies can enhance access to seeds by offering a diverse portfolio of crops and varieties. This includes offering open-pollinated varieties (OPVs) alongside hybrids. By considering the diverse needs of smallholder farmers as entrepreneurs, companies can build the resilience of their business activities.
- **Elements:** The company makes diverse seed types and varieties available for the crops in its portfolio.

E4. Packaging and labelling

- **Indicator:** The company packages its products in quantities appropriate to the needs of smallholder farmers in index countries. Additionally, its packaging includes information in a local language with pictograms, and manufacture and expiry dates.
- **Rationale:** Companies can offer tailored packaging appropriate to the needs of smallholder farmers. Seed packaging should include clear instructions and warnings in the local language with pictograms.
- **Elements:** The company offers seed packages to smallholder farmers in appropriate sizes, with instructions in local languages and pictograms, and include track and trace systems.

E5. Affordability

- **Indicator:** The company is involved in programmes directly or through partnerships that help make seeds more affordable to smallholder farmers in index countries, such as by providing credit and insurance services.
- **Rationale:** Smallholder farmers generally require smaller quantities of seeds and a pricing strategy adapted to their local situation. Affordability can also be improved when companies partner with other organisations to introduce finance or insurance services.
- **Elements:** The company has programmes that include microfinance, insurance schemes, credits, tailored cost models and optional collective bargaining and purchasing for smallholder farmers in index countries.

E6. Quality assurance and after-sales

- **Indicator:** The company has implemented management systems to maintain seed quality throughout the distribution system and that ensure counterfeit seeds are not sold under its brand in index countries. It also makes grievance mechanisms available to smallholder farmers in index countries.

- **Rationale:** Companies can take steps to ensure that seed quality is maintained throughout the distribution system and that counterfeit seeds are not sold under their brand in index countries. These steps include customer feedback and grievance mechanisms for smallholder farmers.
- **Elements:** The company has management systems to ensure seed quality during distribution and sales. These include certified quality assurance systems to assure germination/vigour and seed health, monitoring of its distribution networks, and assurance that seeds are not sold beyond their shelf life. It also has programmes to prevent the distribution of counterfeit seeds and to provide after-sales support.

E7. Demonstration and promotion strategies

- **Indicator:** The company has programmes including field days, demonstration services and promotional activities to create awareness of products suitable for smallholder farmers in index countries.
- **Rationale:** Demonstrations and other promotional activities, including field days and initiatives targeting lead farmers and involving local communities, improve local knowledge about different varieties and their potential. During demonstrations and on-farm trials, the use of adjacent technologies such as agrochemicals, fertilisers and irrigation can be introduced to create awareness for smallholder farmers in index countries.
- **Elements:** The company undertakes demonstrations and/or promotional programmes in index countries to encourage smallholder farmers to use new varieties. This includes approaches to reach women smallholder farmers.

E8. Other agricultural inputs

- **Indicator:** The company makes an effort to ensure that smallholder farmers in index countries have access to the necessary agricultural inputs other than seed, and that they learn about appropriate and sustainable use of these inputs.
- **Rationale:** Companies can help smallholder farmers to access other agricultural inputs such as fertilisers and pesticides, and support them in appropriate use of these inputs.
- **Elements:** The company promotes the use of other agricultural inputs such as fertilisers and pesticides in appropriate quantities and with instructions suitable to smallholder farmers, to ensure appropriate and sustainable use.

Consultation question:

Q10. Have all the main challenges regarding access to seeds and the role of companies in Marketing and sales been adequately reflected in the indicators?

F. Capacity building

This measurement area focuses on how seed companies invest in local capacity building to ensure that farmers have the right knowledge and tools to realise the full potential of quality seeds of improved varieties. This area presents many opportunities for public–private partnerships.

F1. Extension services

- **Indicator:** The company offers agricultural extension services to smallholder farmers in index countries, directly or through local public or private partners.
- **Rationale:** Extension services are activities that build the capacity of smallholder farmers. These include the use of improved varieties and the appropriate application of other agricultural inputs and sustainable business practices. Companies can offer extension services themselves or in partnership with local organisations.
- **Elements:** The company offers extension services and tracks the number of smallholder farmers reached and specifies whether activities are carried out alone or in partnership.

F2. Programmes for women farmers

- **Indicator:** The company supports programmes, directly or through partnerships, designed to enable women farmers in index countries to access and use quality seeds and adjacent technologies.
- **Rationale:** Companies can engage women farmers in agricultural training, address the specific demands of women farmers and organise tailored programmes for this target group.
- **Elements:** The company has tailored programmes targeted at women or in which more than 50% of the participants are women, and tracks the number of women farmers reached.

F3. Next-generation farmers

- **Indicator:** The company has programmes in place to engage next-generation farmers in agriculture, such as support for formal education programmes and/or institutions.
- **Rationale:** Companies can engage next-generation farmers in agriculture and can organise tailored programmes for this target group. Companies thereby support formal agricultural education programmes and/or institutions for next-generation farmers in index regions.
- **Elements:** The company has tailored programmes for the next-generation farmers and tracks the number of next-generation farmers reached.

F4. ICT

- **Indicator:** The company supports, directly or through partnerships, initiatives that advance the use of information and communications technology (ICT) by smallholder farmers in index countries to help build their capacity and inform their decision-making.
- **Rationale:** ICT and mobile services provide numerous opportunities for smallholders to grow as entrepreneurs – for instance, by offering access to agronomic support and technical information. By collecting and aggregating data from farmers, ICT also enables companies and other actors to better understand the demands and needs of smallholder farmers.
- **Elements:** The company has ICT programmes in index countries that build the capacity of smallholder farmers by providing information about such topics as seed prices and farming practices, and weather-related alerts.

F5. Access to output markets

- **Indicator:** The company is engaged in developing the food value chain in index countries through direct or collaborative involvement in initiatives that link smallholder farmers to output markets.
- **Rationale:** Most farmers grow crops not only for their own use but also for commercial sale. Seed companies can help farmers increase their profitability by linking them to output markets and/or assisting in developing a local or regional market. Companies can partner with other organisations to offer farmers training in post-harvest handling and product hygiene.
- **Elements:** The company has programmes to improve smallholder farmers' access to output markets and/or partners with other organisations in the food value chain serving the same purpose.

Consultation question:

Q11. Have all the main challenges regarding access to seeds and the role of companies in Capacity building been adequately reflected in the indicators?

Annex

Annex 1: WBA guiding principles

WBA developed a set of guiding principles to guide its work and reflect its values and mission (see Figure 6). These principles were formed in collaboration with global stakeholders throughout the consultation phase and were refined based on input and feedback from roundtable consultations, online surveys and expert meetings.

The principles are divided into three categories: operational principles that explain how WBA functions; benchmark development principles that address how the benchmarks are designed; and content principles that cover what the benchmarks assess. Currently, the guiding principles reflect the outcomes and findings from WBA's global consultation phase. However, the world is changing rapidly, and additional insights and perspectives are likely to emerge over time. Consequently, these principles may evolve – in consultation with stakeholders – to reflect new findings and realities.

Figure 5: WBA guiding principles

Operational principles	
Inclusive	The WBA actively engages with and involves all stakeholders in building the Alliance and the benchmarks.
Impartial	The WBA and its benchmarks are equally responsive to all stakeholders.
Independent	The WBA and its benchmarks are independent from the industries and companies they assess.
Focused on impact	The WBA and its benchmarks promote dialogue and measure impact on the SDGs to create positive change.
Collaborative	The WBA collaborates with stakeholders and Allies to enhance alignment of corporate performance with internationally agreed sustainability objectives.
Free and publicly available	The WBA is a public good, and its benchmarks and methodologies are free and publicly available to all.
Benchmark development principles	
Relevant	WBA benchmarks focus on sustainable development issues most relevant to industries' core businesses and on the industries and companies that can make the most significant, actionable and unique contributions to these issues.
Clear in method and intent	WBA benchmarks are transparent about their methodology, development processes and results.
Complementary	WBA benchmarks build upon the work done by others, adding further value with a focus on SDG impact.
Responsive and iterative	WBA benchmarks are updated regularly to reflect evolving stakeholder expectations, policies, developments, and company performance.
Content principles	
Balanced	WBA benchmarks assess both positive and negative impacts that companies might have on the SDGs.
Reflective of societal expectations	WBA benchmarks reflect the extent to which companies' performance on relevant SDGs aligns with stakeholders' expectations.
Forward-looking	The WBA and its benchmarks engage and assess companies on their current performance on the SDGs and on exposure to sustainability risks and future opportunities.

Annex 2: Alignment with other benchmarks, standards, and reporting initiatives

The Access to Seeds Index indirectly aligns with several other benchmarks, standards and initiatives listed below. However, its indicators have been adjusted where needed for an analysis of topics specifically relevant to seed companies.

Table 4: Overview of alignment with key sources and stakeholders

Measurement area	Key sources and stakeholders
Governance and strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Reporting Initiative • Sustainability Accounting Standards Board • SDG Impact Standards for Enterprises (2020) • Sustainable Development Goals Disclosure Recommendations (2020) • World Economic Forum – <i>Toward Common Metrics and Consistent Reporting of Sustainable Value Creation</i>
Genetic resources conservation and intellectual property management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bioversity International (Agrobiodiversity Index) • Food and Agriculture Organization, Sustainability Assessment of Food and Agriculture Systems Guidelines • International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture • Convention on Biological Diversity
Research and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and Agriculture Organization Corporate Statistical Database • Food and Nutrition Security Results and Indicator Framework (2019) – Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Seed production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Labour Organization • WBA’s Corporate Human Rights Benchmark • Global Reporting Initiative • KnowTheChain • United Nations Global Compact • United Nations Guiding Principles
Marketing and sales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Nutrition Foundation • Global Reporting Initiative • Refinitiv • Coller FAIRR Protein Producer Index Methodology (2020) • Committee on World Food Security and the Food and Agriculture Organization – Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems • Food and Nutrition Security Results and Indicator Framework (2019) – Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee on World Food Security and the Food and Agriculture Organization – Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems • Food and Nutrition Security Results and Indicator Framework (2019) – Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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