



FACTSHEET

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Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

PLANT CLINICS AND PLANT DOCTORS TO REDUCE CROP LOSSES



Thanks to strong demand and broad support from the relevant partners (governments, NGOs, farmers) the project was implemented quickly and was greatly expanded within a short space of time. One year after its launch, 182 clinics in 16 countries had been set up around the world. Now, in 2015, Plantwise is operating in 34 countries on every continent and advising some two million farmers worldwide. The goal of the project is to establish several hundred clinics in about 40 countries by 2020.

An independently conducted evaluation in Kenya, Tanzania and Rwanda concluded that Plantwise is a highly relevant, effective, efficient and well-organised global programme which is making a substantial contribution to improving the efficiency of national plant health systems.

The Plantwise programme aims to reduce crop losses to improve the food security of poor rural population groups. Decentralised, community-based plant clinics help farmers identify and combat plant pests and diseases in a timely manner. This SDC-supported programme is currently operating in benefiting two million farmers worldwide.

Plantwise is comparable to a network of decentralised health centres: a range of community-based plant clinics support smallholder farmers with practical advice on plant pests and diseases and ways to combat them. Plantwise helps local agricultural services to set up and run plant clinics. Local agricultural advisers are trained to become "plant doctors" who help identify plant pests and diagnose plant diseases. They provide information and advice tailored to the farmers' needs. Thanks to this support, the farmers can combat pests and diseases affecting their crops, increase their yield, and earn a higher income. The clinics are set up in local markets and other easily accessible locations, giving them direct contact with farmers.

Collaborative cooperation

Plantwise is led by CABI and supported by the SDC. To search for local organisations capable of setting up a plant clinic, Plantwise works at the local, regional and national levels with farmers' organisations, ministries of agriculture and agricultural advisers. Plantwise connects plant clinics with national and international diagnostic



laboratories in order to support plant doctors with difficult diagnoses and ensure scientific accuracy. Plantwise also facilitates contact between clinics and with other important actors such as research institutions, universities, government authorities and the agri-food industry.



Collecting data to combat plant pests and diseases more effectively

Plantwise helps local organisations to collect and process data from the plant clinics, for example about the plant species affected, the nature of the problem (pest or disease), and the recommended pest control method. The data are forwarded to a national and/or global database, the Plantwise Knowledge Bank, which provides users with basic information about the distribution of pests and diseases affecting the main agricultural crop plants and methods to combat them.

An analysis of these data makes it possible to determine the spread of plant pests and diseases and forecast their potential geographic movements in the future. The more countries are aware of a potential threat and the earlier they find out about it, the better they can assess the risks, orient their research, make policy decisions, plan treatment strategies and advise farmers.

Some 500 million smallholder farmers in developing countries produce food for almost two billion people. Consequently, reductions in crop losses not only lead to improved living conditions for these farmers but also to increased food security for entire regions.

The project in brief

Department

Global Cooperation

Theme

Food security

Country/Region

34 countries worldwide

Partners

CABI, national institutions, NGOs

Background information

Expert advice given at the right time and place is important to ensure the agricultural production and livelihoods of farmers.

Project goal

Reducing crop losses to improve food security and the living conditions of poor rural populations.

Target groups

Smallholder farmers, agricultural advisers

Costs

SDC: CHF 1.5 million per year

Duration

2011–2017

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