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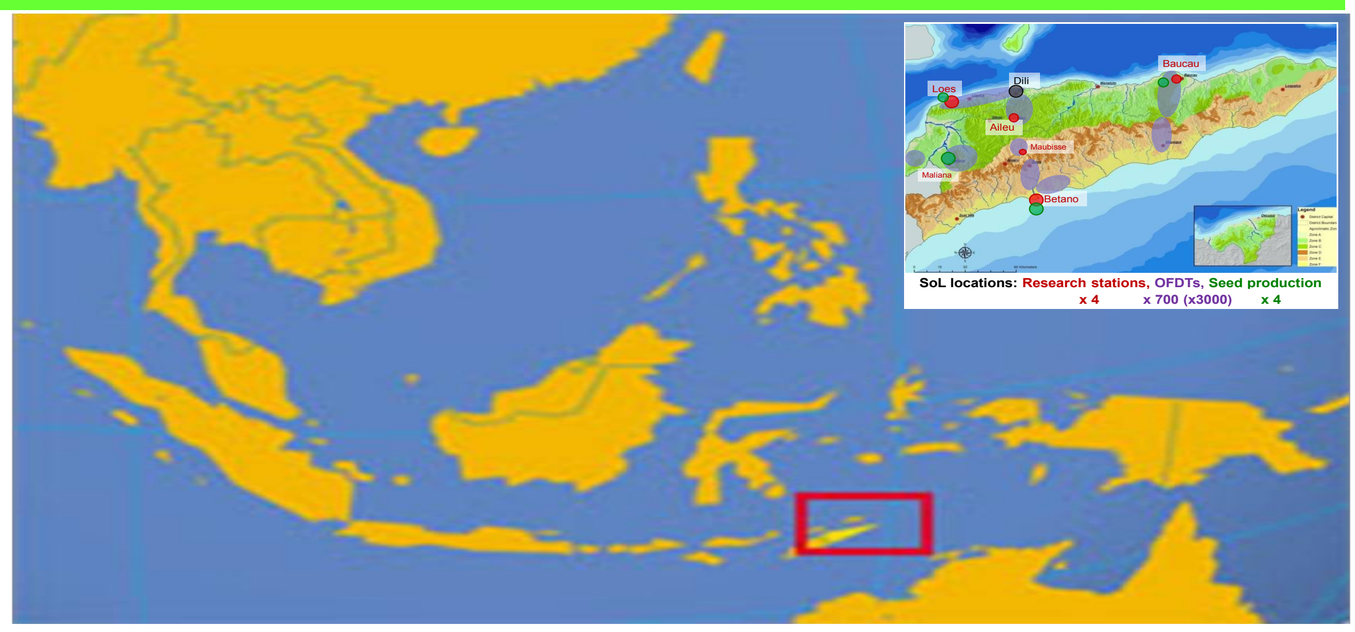
MAIZE IN TIMOR—LESTE

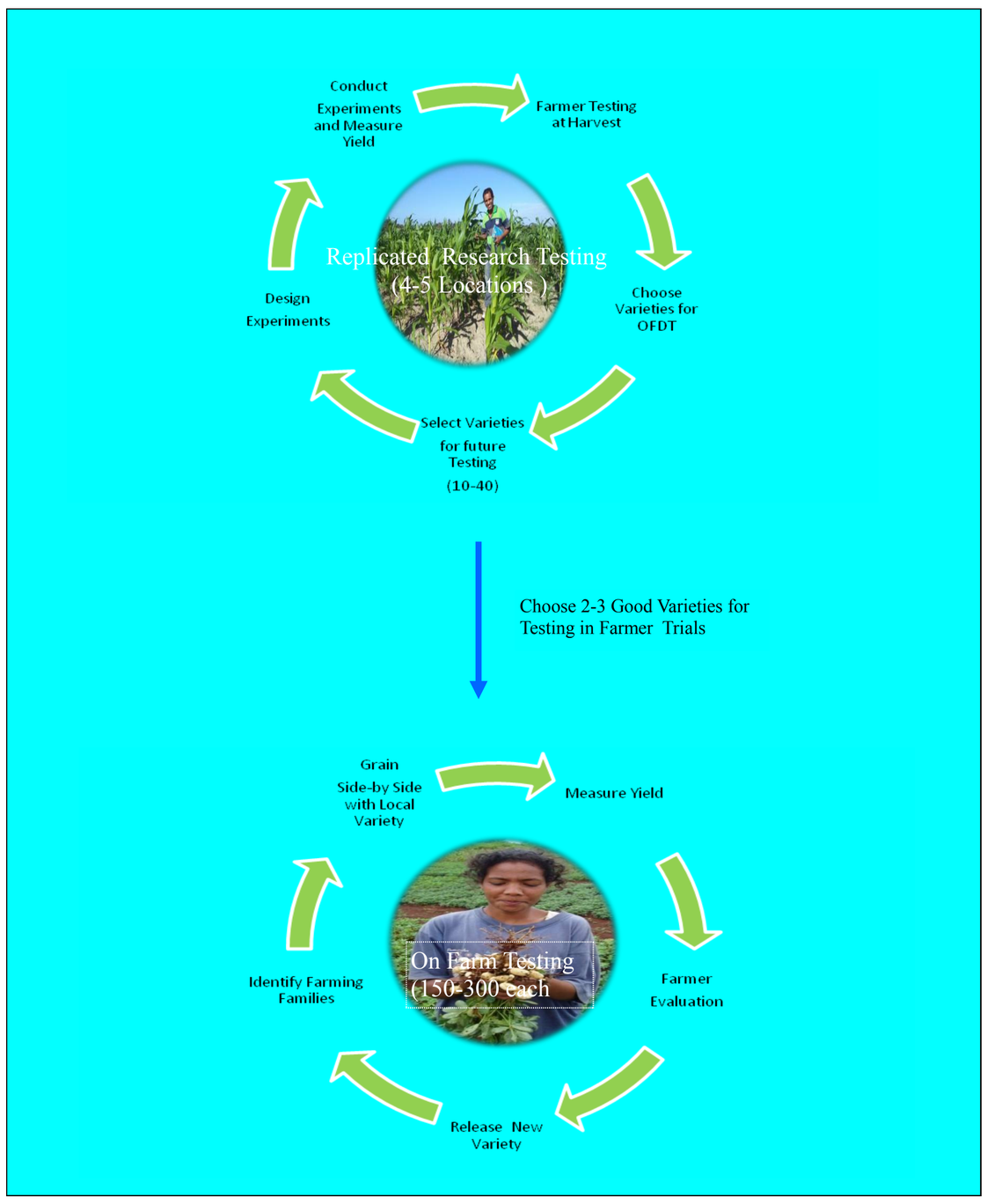
HOW ARE NEW VARIETIES RELEASED

ABSTRACT

Agriculture sector plays an important role in Timor-Leste (TL) as almost **80%** of its population relays on this sector. It is estimated that around 40% of all households involving in agriculture sector are subsistence farmers with low inputs farming practices. There are various food crop commodities grown in TL, however; maize (Zea Mays L.) is one of the most staple crops. Some of high potential maize varieties for yield improvement were tested in replicated trials at different agro-ecological zones across TL and three superior varieties were released. All introduced maize varieties tested at the beginning of MAF/SoL program was intended for increasing production and improving food security. In contrast, the observation for current maize testing is focusing on nutritional improvement and mycotoxin resistance (Aflatoxin).



MAIZE IN TIMOR-LESTE



HISTORY

MAF/Seeds of Life (SoL) was launched in the year 2000 with the aim of increasing farmers' yields, by releasing **new seed varieties** that are high yielding, good tasting, and pest and downy mildew resistant.

SoL tests new varieties in two phases, replicated research station trials and unreplicated on-farm trials. Farmers are included at both phases of the selection process. So far three maize varieties, **Sele** (LYDMR CIMMYT from India), **Suwan 5** (Suwan 5 from Thailand) and **Noi Mutin** (CMU Var.12 from the Philippines) have been released.

Farmers have shown preference for new varieties, and with the **higher yield** many farmers can now sell excess produce at the market.
MAF/SOL will continue to search new maize varieties that reduce malnutrition and Aflatoxin problem. In 2013 MAF has introduced 19 varieties from Nigeria (**IITA**) are yellow color, contains **vitamin A , Aflatoxin** and Downy Mildew resistant.

CONCLUSION

MAF/SoL has a goal of improving food security in Timor-Leste through the introduction of improved crop varieties specially maize varieties and associated technologies which will result in increase food production. So, currently 19 new maize varieties were introduced from Nigeria (IITA) for further trial focusing on nutritional improvement and mycotoxin (Aflatoxin) resistance observations.

REFERENCE

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