



BENCHMARKING TO UNLOCK POTENTIAL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Securing a sustainable food future is one of the main focus areas of the World Benchmarking Alliance

An important part of the legacy of Kofi Annan, the seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations, was showing the world that it makes sense to set shared global targets for development. During his term in office, the UN adopted the Millennium Development Goals, a set of eight targets to be achieved by 2015. An evaluation in 2013 pointed out that a lot of progress was made, albeit not enough. One of the major lessons drawn from this experience was that the UN should do more to mobilize the potential of the private sector to achieve the next set of goals, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to which the UN unanimously agreed in 2015.

Benchmarking provides the key to do so, concluded the Business & Sustainable Development Commission (BSDC) in 2017. In its flagship report, [Better Business, Better World](#), it showed that sustainable development presents an enormous growth opportunity—if business can understand economic, social, and environmental challenges as future value drivers.

According to the commission, a well-designed benchmarking process allows individual companies to decide for themselves how to develop sustainably, in line with the Global Goals, while at the same time setting them all on a competitive “race to the top”. It allows individual investors and civil society to hold companies effectively to account for investing in and promoting good corporate performance on sustainable development. And it provides an incentive for companies to improve on their corporate sustainability performance.

An example was set by the [Access to Medicine Index](#). By benchmarking pharmaceutical companies biennially since 2008 on their efforts to make medication available and affordable in developing countries and to dedicate more research efforts on the eradication of neglected tropical diseases, it has effectively influenced the strategies and portfolios of Big Pharma.

The initiator understood that by ranking and comparing companies against each other, the competitive spirit that drives every industry could be channeled towards making a positive impact. By basing the metrics on what society at large – investors, governments, science and NGOs – expect from an industry, the benchmark also provides guidance to companies on what this positive impact should look like.

Although most existing benchmarks tend to focus on industry leaders, another benchmark,

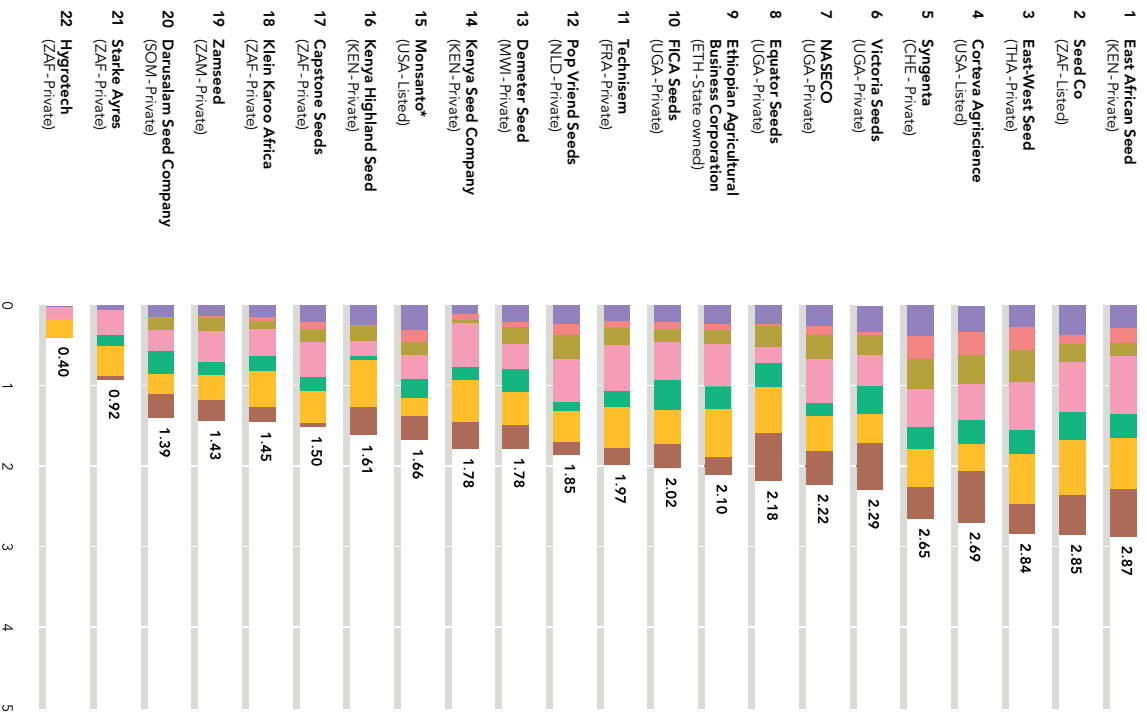
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Access to Seeds Index 2019

Eastern and Southern Africa



Measurement areas

- Research & Development
- Intellectual Property
- Genetic Resources
- Governance & Strategy

Seed Production
Marketing & Sales
Capacity Building



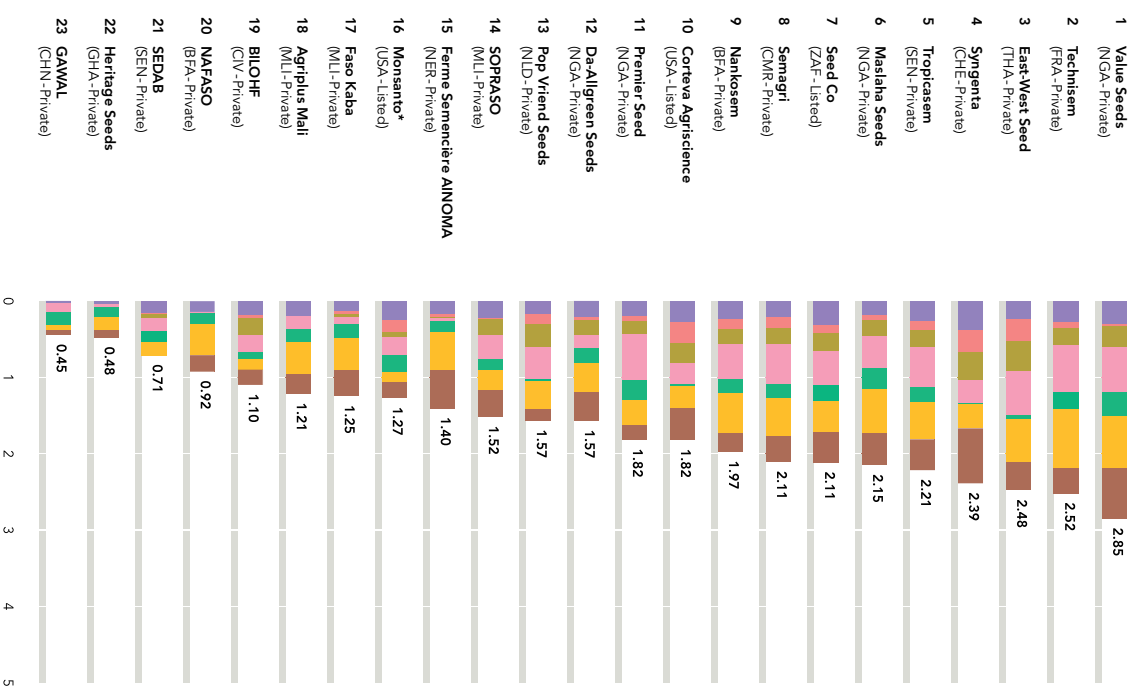
Access to Seeds Index

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Access to Seeds Index 2019

Western and Central Africa



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