This book addresses strategies and approaches through which professionals can support informal seed supply, and link these with the conservation and use of the huge genetic resource base of crops and local varieties. The aim of all the strategies, case studies and reflections on experiences presented in this book is to improve the availability of and access to seeds and varieties, thereby improving the livelihoods of small-scale farmers in Ethiopia and beyond. Do you want to read the rest of this article? Request full-text.

Seed systems in Ethiopia can be divided into two broad types: the formal system and the informal system (sometimes called local or farmers seed system). Both systems are operating simultaneously in the country and difficult to demarcate between the two. NARS (EIAR & RARIs) is responsible for variety development and supply of initial seed, and ESE and RSEs are playing key roles in mass production of improved seeds. MoA is also involved in variety release, multiplication, certification, and distribution of seeds in the country. The informal seed system (either self-saved seed or farmer-to-farmer seed exchange) accounts for 90% of the seed used by smallholder farmers (Belay, 2004), while the share of improved seed is less than 10% (Tables.