

the Naledi3d Factory Capacity building in rural communities - Sorghum

Purpose: A series of five *i3dlo's* look at Sorghum, one of the most important crops grown across Africa. These *i3dlo's* address a number of important aspects of Sorghum production. They look at "Origins and diversity" - how the plant evolved as a crop and the various cultivars in use today; "plant characteristics" - seeds, leaves, root structures etc.; "Sorghum as a food source"; "Planting for success" - land preparation and the growth cycle and finally, a look at "Yields" and factors affecting yield, which includes rainfall and temperature.



Partners:
W.K.Kellogg Foundation
& World Links Trust

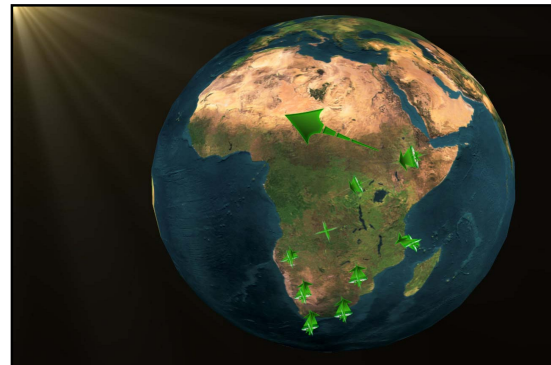


In a Nutshell:

Through a collaboration between the Naledi3d Factory and the World Links Zimbabwe Trust, this project has produced a range of *i3dlo's*, which were translated into Shona and Ndebele by World Links and taken to rural communities in Zimbabwe (and in particular, to smallholding farmers) to provide them with relevant farming and life skills that have a direct impact on agricultural productivity.

Sorghum - versatility in action:

Sorghum was domesticated in Africa around 3,000 BC, subsequently spreading to Arabia, Asia and eventually, to North America in 1700 via the slave trade. Today, around 8% of Africa's farmed land is under Sorghum - 24 million hectares. It is a highly versatile and nutritious food source (porridge, unleavened breads (eg "injera"), cakes and syrups). It is also used as animal fodder and in beer-making. The plant is drought tolerant and grows well even in areas where maize performs poorly.



Sorghum - some characteristics:

Sorghum is characterised by a modest leaf area, but huge roots systems - a single tap root with finely branched lateral roots reaching 2 metres and more as it seeks out moisture deep in the soil. This ability to yield grain under dry conditions makes sorghum a crucial tool in the fight against world hunger. It can grow in sunny, dry, hot semi-arid regions, but also in tropical climates, thrives in temperatures of 30 degrees and even up to 45 degrees. Average yields in Africa are around 700Kg /Ha.

