

# AFRICA RISING - Enhancing partnership among Africa RISING, NAFKA and TUBORESHE CHAKULA Programs for fast tracking delivery and scaling of agricultural technologies in Tanzania Quarterly Report

01 January 2020 – 31 March 2020



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**Cover photo**

Farmers and together with extension staff inspect a beans QDS demo in Nkala Village, Momba District.  
Photo credit: Japhet Masigo/IITA.

## I. ACTIVITY OVERVIEW/SUMMARY

<b>Activity Name:</b>	AFRICA RISING - Enhancing partnership among Africa RISING, NAFKA, and TUBORESHE CHAKULA Programs for fast tracking delivery and scaling of agricultural technologies in Tanzania.
<b>Activity Start Date:</b>	1 October 2017
<b>Activity End Date:</b>	30 September 2020
<b>Name of Prime Implementing Partner:</b>	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA)
<b>Contract/Agreement Number:</b>	BFS-G-11-00002
<b>Name of Subcontractors/Sub awardees:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI), Dakawa/Chollima</li> <li>• Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI), Hombolo</li> <li>• Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI), Uyole</li> </ul>
<b>Major Counterpart Organizations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District Agricultural Councils</li> </ul>
<b>Geographic Coverage (districts, regions, and/or Zanzibar)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Babati District (Manyara Region)</li> <li>• Wanging'ombe District (Njombe Region)</li> <li>• Kilombero District (Morogoro Region)</li> <li>• Iringa Rural, Mufindi and Kilolo Districts (Iringa Region)</li> <li>• Mbarali District (Mbeya Region)</li> <li>• Mbozi and Momba Districts (Songwe Region)</li> </ul>
<b>Reporting Period:</b>	01 January 2020 – 31 March 2020

### I.1 Executive summary

The Africa RISING-NAFAKA partnership project focuses on the delivery and scaling of promising interventions that enhance agricultural productivity in Tanzania. The key interventions are the promotion of climate-smart agricultural innovations, dissemination of best-bet crop management packages, rehabilitation and protection of natural resources, and reduction of food waste and spoilage. The project focus is on three crop enterprises—maize, rice, and legumes (common bean, chickpea, cowpea, and green gram)—with nutrition and postharvest handling as cross-cutting themes. The key partners in the project include one USAID-funded project under the Global Food Security Strategy (GFSS) Initiative in Tanzania—CMSD/NAFAKA—national agricultural research institutions (Dakawa, Hombolo, and Uyole), District Councils, as well as the private sector (seed companies, millers, and processors), and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). During the current quarter, project activities were implemented in eight districts in the regions of Iringa, Mbeya, Morogoro, Njombe, and Songwe, all in the GFSS Zone of Influence (Zoi).

Four key activities were implemented during the reporting period. The first was the establishment of more demonstration sites (13 for maize, 79 for legumes, and 52 for rice) and 190 model farms for rice. The second was the training of 30,293 farmers (17,575 males, 12,718 females) in subjects ranging from

soil and water management, good agronomic practices, and pests and disease management. Another activity was working with TOSCI on the inspection and approval of sites for QDS production. Two hundred and four QDS farmers (130 males, 74 females) were confirmed for rice and 158 (106 males, 52 females) for common beans production by TOSCI. The fourth was routine data quality assessment in Mbeya, Iringa, and Morogoro regions (Mbarali, Iringa Rural, and Kilombero districts, respectively). This was a joint activity by Africa RISING and NAFKA conducted in six villages (two per district). It was established that the government extension staff and village-based agricultural advisors are aware of the data collection guidelines and implement them to a great extent. For the organizations implementing the project (IITA and ACIDI/VOCA), one of the main suggestions was to develop and implemented a training plan for M&E and implementing it for project staff since some seemed to be less knowledgeable regarding the updated Feed the Future indicators and how to manage the associated data.

The main challenges encountered during the quarter are: (i) an outbreak of fall armyworm that was successfully addressed through use of appropriate chemicals by farmers supported by extension staff and agrodealers; (ii) extreme rainfall in all locations that affected the growth of all crops and (iii) the outbreak of COVID-19, which led to the stopping of all meetings with more than ten participants (meaning that no training of any sort for large numbers could take place; movement to communities is also restricted).

The key planned activities for the next quarter, all dependent on de-escalation of the COVID-19, are: (i) training of farmers, extension staff, machinery fabricators and dealers, and QDS producers; (ii) sending messages to farmers using the Mwanga ICT platform; (iii) monitoring visits to project sites and data collection; and (iv) conducting field days.

## 1.2 Summary of results to date

Indicators	FY 18/19 target	Q1 FY18/19	Q2 FY18/19	Q3 FY18/19	Q4 FY18/19	Achievements FY 18/19	Percentage achieved FY19	LOP target	LOP achievements to date	LOP percentage achieved
EG.3.2 Number of individuals participating in USG food security programs [IM-level]	70,852	20,167	30,293			50,460	71.2%		67,897	95.8
*EG.3.2-24 Number of individuals in the agriculture system who have applied improved management practices or technologies with USG assistance [IM-level]	66,188								64,657	97.7
*EG.3.2-25 Number of hectares under improved	92,000								87,856.51	95.5

management practices or technologies with USG assistance [IM-level]										
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\*Data for these indicators are to be reported in Quarter 4 after the annual outcome survey.

### I.3 Evaluation/assessment status and/or plan

Assessment Type	Planned for (date)	Status
Routine data quality assessment	March 2020	Completed

## 2. ACTIVITY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

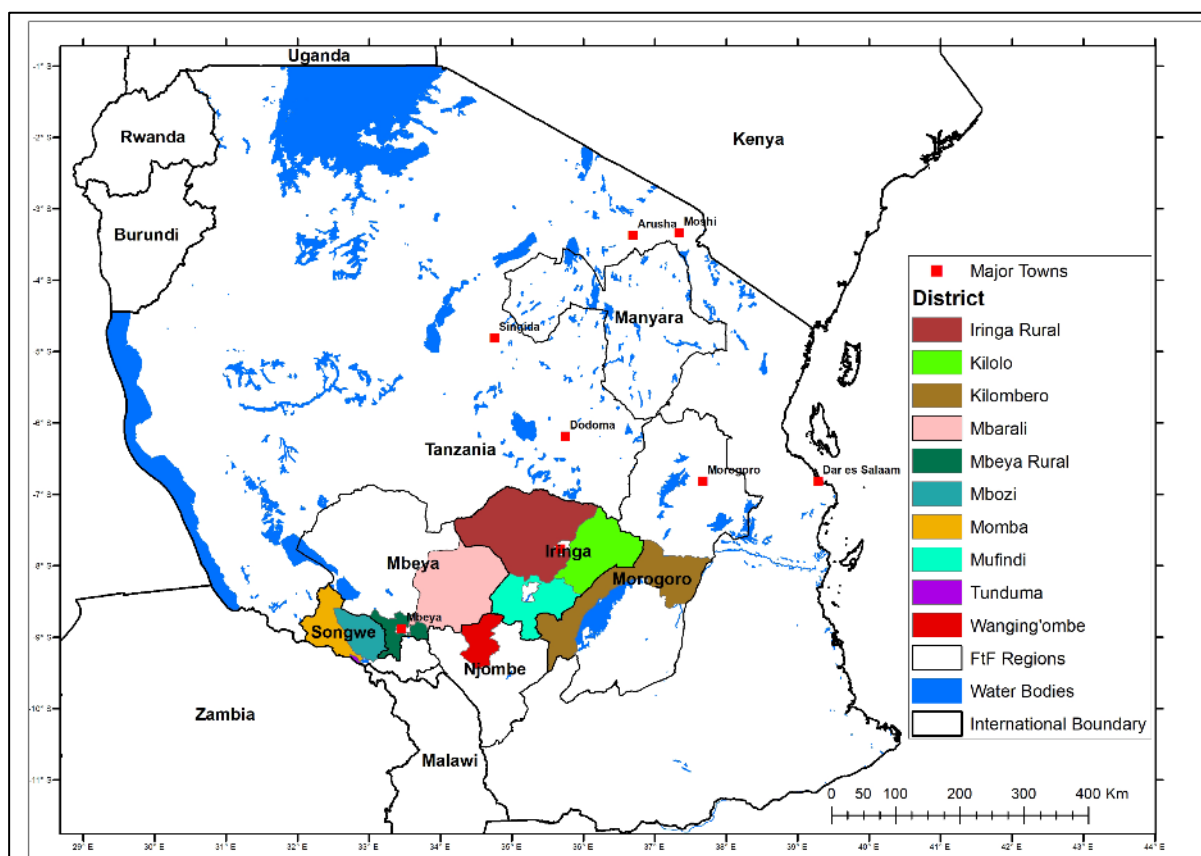
### 2.1 Progress narrative

Africa RISING and partners are involved in the delivery of agricultural information and technology packages through a network of projects and other public and private sector actors, including ACDI/VOCA that leads NAFKA, the USAID-funded cereals project in Tanzania. These collaborations are aimed at improving efficiency and enhancing disciplinary integration while contributing to the goals of the Global Food Security Strategy (GFSS) of harmonizing regional efforts to fight hunger and poverty in countries with chronic food insecurity and insufficient production of staple crops. Attractive interventions in this project include the promotion of climate-smart agricultural innovations, dissemination of GAPs, rehabilitation and protection of natural resources, and postharvest management.

The project focuses on three crop enterprises (maize, legumes, and rice) with postharvest handling and nutrition as cross-cutting themes. The key partners in the project include the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) as the Lead institution, three Institutions of the Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI)—Dakawa, Uyole, and Hombolo—and one USAID-funded cereal crops project, NAFKA (led by ACDI/VOCA). These work in partnership with the district local government institutions, specifically DAICOs, the private sector (seed companies, millers, and processors), and NGOs to deliver on the following objectives:

1. Introduce and promote improved and resilient varieties of food crops to farm households in a manner that complements their ongoing farm enterprises, contributes to sustainable agricultural resource management, and offers nutritional advantages and alternative marketing channels.
2. Disseminate GAPs along with the most promising new crop varieties suited to widely representative agroecological zones and market proximity.
3. Protect land and water resources and foster agricultural biodiversity through the introduction of soil and water management practices.
4. Introduce and promote postharvest management technologies for maize, rice, and legumes to reduce losses and bring the quality up to marketing standards.
5. Offer and expand capacity-building services to members of grassroots farmers' associations, platform partners, and development institutions in the scaling process, paying particular attention to the unique opportunities available to women farmers as technical and nutritional innovators and resource managers.

The project is currently being implemented in five regions in Tanzania: Njombe, Morogoro, Iringa, Mbeya, and Songwe, all in the FtF Zol (Fig. 1).



**Figure I:** Project locations.

All project activities contribute to the Development Objective (DO2) of the USAID Tanzania Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS); inclusive of broad-based economic growth being sustained. This is Year 3 of the second project phase, and we plan to achieve the Life of Project (LoP) targets of 70,852 individuals benefitting from the project activities and 92,000 ha under improved technologies as a result of the project interventions.

## 2.2 Implementation status and planned activities

### 2.2.1 Establishment of demonstration sites and model farms

By the end of the first quarter (December 2019), some project locations had not yet received rains. Luckily, in the current quarter, almost all the project districts received ample rainfall to support the establishment of demonstration and learning sites as well as model farms. Thirteen demo sites for maize, 79 for legumes, and 52 for rice were established in addition to 190 model farms for rice. When combined with those established in the first quarter, it brings the total to 117 demos for maize, 89 for legumes, and 52 for rice in addition to 240 model farms (190 for rice and 50 for maize), all spread over 160 villages in the project districts. Tables 1–3 show the distribution of the demos and model farms by district.

**Table 1:** Maize/legume demonstration sites established during the 2019/2020 cropping season

District	Type of demo		
	Maize		Beans
	Maize variety/fertilizer/lime	Maize variety/fertilizer/SWM	Common bean variety vs fertilizer
Iringa DC	13	7	20
Kilolo	30	7	10
Mufindi	10		10
Wanging'ombe	8	2	10
Mbozi	25		24
Momba	15		15
<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>89</b>

**Table 2:** Rice demonstration sites established during the 2019/2020 cropping season

District	Type of rice demo			Total
	Improved varieties /fertilizers (VarFer)	Improved varieties/managing salt-affected soils (SAS)	Improved varieties/alternate wetting and drying technology (AWD)	
Mbarali	20	—	1	21
Iringa Rural	8	2	1	11
Momba	10	—	—	10
Kilombero	10	—	—	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>52</b>

**Table 3:** Model farms for maize and rice established in 2019/20 cropping season

District	Maize	Rice	Total
Iringa Rural	8	26	34
Kilolo	7		7
Mufindi	5		5
Wanging'ombe	5		5
Mbozi	15		15
Momba	10	29	39
Kilombero		40	40
Mbarali		95	95
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>240</b>

Due to floods and excessive surface runoff, as a result of heavy rainfall in some areas, the establishment of some demos and model farms had to be postponed, and others were destroyed. Table 4 shows the proportion of rice demos and model farms that were established compared to what was planned. For maize growing areas, demo plots for beans have been the most affected, and farmers plan to replant once the rains subside.

**Table 4:** Planned number of rice mother demos and model farms and their establishment status by 31 March 2020

District	Mother demos			Model farms		
	Planned	Established	Achievement (%)	Planned	Established	Achievement (%)
Mbarali	21	21	100	100	95	95
Momba	10	10	100	50	29	58
Iringa Rural	13	11	92.3	50	26	52
Kilombero	10	10	100	50	40	80
<b>Overall</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>96.3</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>76</b>



Farmers weeding their beans demo plot in Nansama Village, Mbozi District. Photo credit: Evodia Mkangala/ACDI VOCA.



Lead farmers checking the progress of the maize demos in Lungwa (left) and Ihanda (right) villages in Mbozi District. Photo credit: Evodia Mkangala/ACDI VOCA.

## 2.2.2 Training activities

The main training activities for this quarter targeted farmers and were largely implemented by government extension staff with support from the project team. Training focused on good agricultural practices, soil and water management, fertilizer application, and IPM (Table 5).

**Table 5:** Farmers trained in various practices in rice, maize, and legumes

<b>District</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Iringa Rural	1,487	1,232	2,719
Kilolo	1,665	1,243	2,908
Mufindi	519	423	942
Wanging'ombe	693	604	1,297
Momba	2,149	1,200	3,349
Mbozi	1,689	976	2,665
Mbarali	7,571	5,409	12,980
Kilombero	1,802	1,631	3,433
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,575</b>	<b>12,718</b>	<b>30,293</b>

Beneficiaries in selected villages also received additional training depending on identified special needs. Training was conducted for 74 farmers in semi-arid locations of Iringa Rural and Wanging'ombe districts on the use of oxen-drawn ridgers. Participants were drawn from the villages of Ndolela (36 males, 6 females) and Litundu (14 males, 18 females) from Iringa Rural and Wanging'ombe districts, respectively.



Farmers in Ndolela Village, Iringa Rural District being trained on use of oxen-drawn ridgers. Photo credit: Zakaria Maseta/TARI Hombolo.



Members of the Michenga Village Farmers Group in Kilombero District being trained on how to construct bunds in their rice fields for improved water and crop management. Photo credit: Salum Ngakatiele/Kilombero District Council.

### 2.2.3 Production of Quality Declared Seed (QDS)

Following on the refresher training for producers for rice and common beans, final inspection, approval, and registration for QDS production was done in collaboration with TOSCI. For rice, 204 producers were approved, as indicated in Table 6.

**Table 6:** Number of farmers approved for rice QDS production during the 2020 cropping season

District	Male	Female	Total
Momba	9	1	10
Iringa DC	7	8	15
Mbarali	43	26	69
Kilombero	71	39	110
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>204</b>

For common beans, 158 QDS farmers were approved for production, as indicated in Table 7.

**Table 7:** Number of farmers approved for the production of common beans QDS during the 2020 cropping season

Location (cluster)	Male	Female	Total
Momba	28	2	30
Mbozi	26	20	46
Iringa	12	13	25
Wanging'ombe	11	4	15
Kilolo	11	4	15
Mufindi	18	9	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>158</b>



Emily Sikanyika, a QDS bean farmer in Lwaso Village, Momba District inspecting his field. Photo credit: Fikilio Gambi/ ACIDI VOCA.



Fidelis Mlowe, a rice QDS producer in Utyego village, Mbarali District tends his crop. Photo credit: Jamson Mwilana/Mbarali District Council.

#### 2.2.4 Routine quality data assessment

This is reported under section 6.

#### 2.2.5 Problems and challenges

The main challenges were:

- i. The outbreak of Fall Armyworm (FAW) in January 2020 in Songwe and Iringa regions. However, the pest was well managed by the project implementing team by ensuring that demos were sprayed with adequate pesticides. Appropriate technical assistance was provided to farmers by extension staff, and VBAs and rural agrodealers have stocked the right pesticides for farmers to access for use in their fields.
- ii. Heavy rains led to the destruction of some crops (especially beans and rice) and delays in establishment of demos and QDS farms.
- iii. The outbreak of COVID-19 has affected project activities in the form of cancellation of the various planned training activities, supervision of field activities as well as meetings with partners.



A farmer in Lipangalala Village, Kilombero District standing in her flooded field besides transplanted rice seedlings. She cannot plant until the water level subsides. Photo credit: Filbert Mzee/ACDI VOCA.



A joint team of NAFKA and Africa RISING staff together with farmers and extension officers assess the extent of flooding of rice fields in Ichonde Village, Kilombero District. Photo credit: Japhet Masigo/IITA.

### 2.2.6 Planned activities

The key planned activities for the next quarter include:

- i. Training of more farmers and QDS producers on the different crop production practices in relation to the seasonal needs as well as postharvest management.
- ii. Training of extension staff, farmers, and agrodealers on postharvest management.
- iii. Sharing ICT-based messages focusing on agronomy, pest and disease management, and postharvest management, targeted for farmers and extension staff.
- iv. Monitoring visits to project sites and data collection.
- v. Conducting field days in all districts to showcase the benefits of the technologies at the demos for all crops.

## 3. INTEGRATION OF CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND USAID FORWARD PRIORITIES

### 3.1 Gender equality and women's empowerment

The Africa RISING-NAFAKA project approach emphasizes gender consideration at all levels of project implementation. In the process of building capacities of farmers, both males and females are trained, considering different gender groups, i.e., adult males and females and the youth (both sexes). Both male and female members have equal opportunities in the groups, and efforts are being made to increase the number of females taking part as male participants constitute about 70% of project participants.

### 3.2 Youth engagement

Youth involvement is a key aspect of project interventions. The youth are equally encouraged to participate in all activities. So far, about 22% of the project participants are young adults under 29 years of age, and we have put additional efforts in place to attract more youth, such as recruiting younger VBAs and QDS producers and targeting youth groups.

### 3.3 Local capacity development

As in the past years, the project continues to work with Government agricultural extension staff at district and village levels. In addition, the collaboration by Africa RISING and NAFKA continues in supporting and training VBAs who not only complement extension staff training but also play a key role as frontline actors in the rural agro-input dealer network. Furthermore, the project works with farmers' groups and associations whose capacities are developed in GAPs and related technical areas.

### 3.4 Integration and collaboration

The NAFKA field staff coordinate the activities of the Africa RISING-NAFAKA partnership project supported by Africa RISING in all the project Districts. In addition, we have successfully sought collaboration with the private sector (Corteva, Seed Co, Meru Agro, ETG, Beula Seeds, Agriseed, Tanzania Fertilizer Association, and AgroZ) to support demo sites in all project Districts. We have also sought collaboration with Esoko for ICT-based services as well as NGOs, such as Helvetas, for postharvest management activities.

### 3.5 Sustainability

The close collaboration with the GoT, extension staff at District level, and private sector actors aims at linking the farmers to partners and development initiatives that will provide support beyond the life of the project. In collaboration with the NAFKA project, the team works with VBAs and selected Lead farmers who manage demo plots, provide access to inputs, and produce QDS for legumes and rice to sustain the availability of varieties being taken to scale. Furthermore, the project team plans to continue to link local input and other service providers (e.g., machinery, crop insurance) with farmers and local extension staff to ensure the technologies continue to be accessible after the project ends.

On sustainability of QDS activities our efforts to form associations at cluster and apex levels are aimed at ensuring that members can have access to services after the project has ended. We also plan to start supporting the associations in managing Savings and Internal Lending Communities/Committees (SILC) for members to have resources for enhancing their activities. We have also successfully linked the QDS producers in Districts where we have left or scaled down activities to seed sources (TARI). We hope to do the same for other Districts as the project gets close to its end.

On sustainability of ICT interventions, we have lobbied the local governments at District and Regional levels to appreciate the importance of using ICT to deliver extension and incorporate the costs into their budgets. So far, there is positive feedback from Momba District Council where the DAICO is actively lobbying for inclusion of the ICT component in their budget. TARI institutes (Uyole, Selian), agri-businesses such as fertilizer companies (Minjingu), seed companies (Meru Agro), micro-finance institutions, and millers have also expressed willingness to support the ICT platform, especially with respect to developing content and delivering bundled services to the smallholder farmers who would otherwise be left out of such engagements because they are considered to be financially risky.

### 3.6 Environmental compliance

In accordance with the project, PERSUAP, and other guidelines, the team emphasizes the judicious use of agroinputs by promoting integrated soil fertility management without damaging the natural resource base. In semi-arid locations We encourage farmers in semi-arid locations to use improved in-situ water conservation technologies, such as tied ridges. Management technologies for soils on steep slopes or those affected by acidity or high salinity and calcium content underlie the approach used in this project. Given the increase in problems of water availability for production, we emphasize the importance of using organic manure and minimizing the use of water in rice production. This is done, among other methods, by promoting the water-saving technologies such as the AWD technology and by establishing bunds around paddy plots. Also, the training of farmers and extension staff on the safe use and handling of agro-chemicals is one of the focus areas of the project.

### 3.7 Global climate change

Since the project is operating in the context of climate change, we have embraced scaling of technologies and agricultural practices that enhance resilience to climate variability.

### 3.8 Policy and governance support

The project's activities are in line with the policy of GoT in fostering agricultural development and also contributing to ASDP II. Consequently, the team has received support from National, Regional, district, and village local governments in all areas where the project activities are implemented in the form of joint implementation of development activities.

### 3.9 Private sector engagement, Public Private Partnerships (PPP), and Global Development Alliance (GDA) collaboration

The project works directly with agro-input/seed companies in Tanzania, e.g., Meru Agro, Syngenta, Seed Co, and Corteva. Their staff have been instrumental in providing guidance on matters related to agro-inputs as well as in participating in the rural agro-input network spearheaded by the NAFKA project. We are also working closely with Esoko to ensure that we integrate ICTs into our activities.

The demand for mechanical shellers/threshers and hermetic storage bags has increased owing to the increase in awareness about the technologies. We established a partnership with the Poly Machinery Co. Ltd based in Dar es Salaam that can supply mechanical shellers/threshers and provide spare parts and after-sales services to farmers. We also established a partnership with two manufacturers of hermetic storage bags: AgroZ and PPTL Co. Ltd. The companies have shown an interest in continuing to work with farmers and other supply chain actors to strengthen the supply network, especially in the rural areas. This will enhance the continuity of the use of the technology. AgroZ will also supply Aflasafe, which was recently approved for use by farmers in Tanzania to mitigate aflatoxin contamination of grains.

### 3.10 Science, technology, and innovation

Use of ICTs via the “Mwanga” platform as well as GIS for targeting and scaling of technologies will potentially contribute to good results in the farming communities through the uptake of improved technologies in the form of improved crop varieties, GAPs, postharvest management, pest and disease management, and natural resource management.

## 4. STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION AND INVOLVEMENT

See sections 3.3 and 3.4.

## 5. MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

Nothing to report this quarter.

## 6. MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND LEARNING

The PMP indicators are presented in Annex I.

A routine data quality assessment (RQDA) activity was conducted in three districts—Mbarali, Iringa Rural, and Kilombero—covering two villages each. The Africa RISING and NAFKA project teams met with extension staff and Village Based Agricultural Advisors (VBAA) for the purposes of this activity, with the assessment being guided by joint reviews of data source documents for the first quarter of 2020. For this report, the Feed the Future indicator that was the subject of the RQDA was EG.3.2 Number of individuals participating in USG food security programs [IM-level] (NAFKA reviewed additional indicators in addition to this one).

Prior to the interactions with extension staff and VBAs, Africa RISING and NAFKA staff in the Mbeya and Iringa offices met to review internal M&E systems. As a result of the RDQA, it was noted that the data collection forms were well filled and filed, with the emphasis being put on the need for timely submission to the NAFKA M&E unit by the field staff (within the quarter) so that they can be reported in a timely manner. It was also noted that once a data collection form is approved as complete at the M&E unit, a copy should be shared with the field staff for their records and for sharing with their other supervisors (especially with respect to government staff). At organizational level, it was noted that most of the project implementing staff were not conversant with the FtF/project indicator definitions and data collection and reporting procedures. It was thus recommended that a training plan be developed to ensure that all implementing staff are trained on the indicators and the procedures of data collection.

## 7. SPECIAL EVENTS FOR NEXT QUARTER

None.

## 8. ANNEXES

### 8.1 Annex I. Performance against PMP indicators for Project Year VI (2019/20)

Indicator / disaggregation	Target 2020	Quarter 1 (Oct–Dec 2019)	Quarter 2 (Jan– Mar 2020)	Quarter 3 (Apr–Jun 2020)	Quarter 4 (Jul – Sept 2020)
EG.3.2 Number of individuals participating in USG food security programs [IM-level]	70,852	20,167	30,293		
* EG.3.2-24 Number of individuals in the agriculture system who have applied improved management practices or technologies with USG assistance [IM-level]	66,188				
*EG.3.2-25 Number of hectares under improved management practices or technologies with USG assistance [IM-level]	92,000				

\*These indicators are measured annually. Therefore, data for 2019/20 will be available in the last quarter of the project year and reported in the annual report.

## 8.2 Success story

### **Tanzania's rice farmers profit from improved techniques and seeds**

Four years ago, back in 2016, Justin Mbuji was very frustrated with paddy production. Despite his best efforts, yields were frustratingly low, and he was at his wits end on what he could do to turn things around. As a young boy growing up at Mbuyuni Village in Mbarali District of Tanzania, he had seen better days when rice farming was the mainstay and income earner for most families. It however seemed that those days were firmly in the past. Poor yields from his one-acre paddy field meant he couldn't generate enough income to comfortably meet the needs of his family of three children and a wife.

One of the ways to boost his paddy production, he knew, was to start planting improved rice varieties.

“Even when available, most of us could not afford to buy the improved seeds. The other challenge was that they could only be purchased far from our district. In a way, we were therefore always stuck with cultivating our local rice varieties, even though the yield was always very disappointing,” explains Justin. “In those days, yield from my paddy was always stuck at between 15 – 17 bags (100 kg each).”

Justin's turning point came in early 2017, when together with some of his fellow paddy producers at Mbuyuni Village, he volunteered for trainings on improved rice production by the Africa RISING – NAFKA project.

The farmers were first introduced to salt-tolerant improved rice variety (TXD 306) and then trained on community seed multiplication as a means of addressing the challenge of access to improved rice variety seeds. Through classroom-like lessons and on-field demonstrations, Justine and his fellows were also trained on seed production principles and good agricultural practices such as weed management, fertilizers application and management of salt-affected soils.

“I saw immediate results when I started using the new improved rice variety from the project and following the good agricultural practices we were trained on,” notes Justine. “In that cropping season 2016/17, I harvested 40 bags of quality rice from the same paddy field for the first time!”

Buoyed by the encouraging results, In the subsequent cropping season (2017/18), Justine expanded his paddy enterprise to also include production of quality declared seed for variety TXD 306 on a separate 3-acre field. Since then, success has only begotten more success.

“In 2018 and 2019 respectively, I sold 132 bags of improved paddy seeds harvested from the 3-acre quality declared seed paddy field and could not believe it!” he states. “I sold each bag at Tsh.150, 000 and earned Tsh. 19,800,000. I am very grateful for this project; it has really transformed my life.”

With the profit earned from the paddy business, Justin has renovated his house, comfortably pays for his children's school fee and purchased a 2-acre farm at Mbuyuni Irrigation Scheme.

“My next move is to expand my quality declared seed production to the new 2-acre parcel of land that I recently purchased at Mbuyuni. I plan to also collaborate with the village agricultural extension staff to educate my fellow farmers about how they can improve their rice production,” notes Justine.

“We are grateful that Africa RISING-NAFAKA project has offered these trainings that have benefitted not only Justine, but also the 3,000 farmers who live within this Ward,” notes Mbuyuni Agricultural Extension Officer, Ms. Lucy Mbugi. “Farmers are now aware of improved seeds and the adoption levels for improved rice variety (TXD306) has increased together with better field management,” she adds.

Despite being a staple crop and a major component of food security and income for many smallholders in Tanzania, rice yields have generally lingered at a lowly average of between 1 - 1.5 tons/ha (10-15 bags) for the over 1.68 million smallholder growers like Justin. The Africa RISING – NAFKA Project is collaborating with several actors in the rice value chain to improve the productivity of this important crop in Iringa, Kilombero, Mbarali and Momba districts in Tanzania. So far, in collaboration with the Tanzania Official Seed Certification Institute (TOSCI) and local government authorities, the project has trained at least 68 farmers and established at least 45 quality declared rice seed farm in Mbarali district. The project is collaborating with quality declared seed associations in various districts as well as other key actors in the seed industry like the Tanzania Agriculture Research Institute (TARI), Agriculture Seed Agency (ASA), Tanzania Official Seed Certification Institute (TOSCI) and local governments authorities to ensure sustainable availability and accessibility of improved paddy seed at district levels. The project has also equipped farmers and seed producers with entrepreneurship and agronomy knowledge.



Justin Mbuji inspecting his quality declared seed (QDS) paddy field. Photo credit: Japhet Frednand/IITA.



TXD 306 QDS seed sample at harvested from Justine's paddy field. Photo credits: Japhet Frednand/IITA.



Justine standing outside his renovated house at Mabadaga Village in Mbarali District. Photo credit: Japhet Frednand/IITA.

