

TRAINING ON QUALITY DECLARED SEED (QDS) SYSTEM FOR RICE SEED PRODUCERS UNDER GMT SUPER RICE TRADERS LIMITED KYELA-MBEYA, TANZANIA



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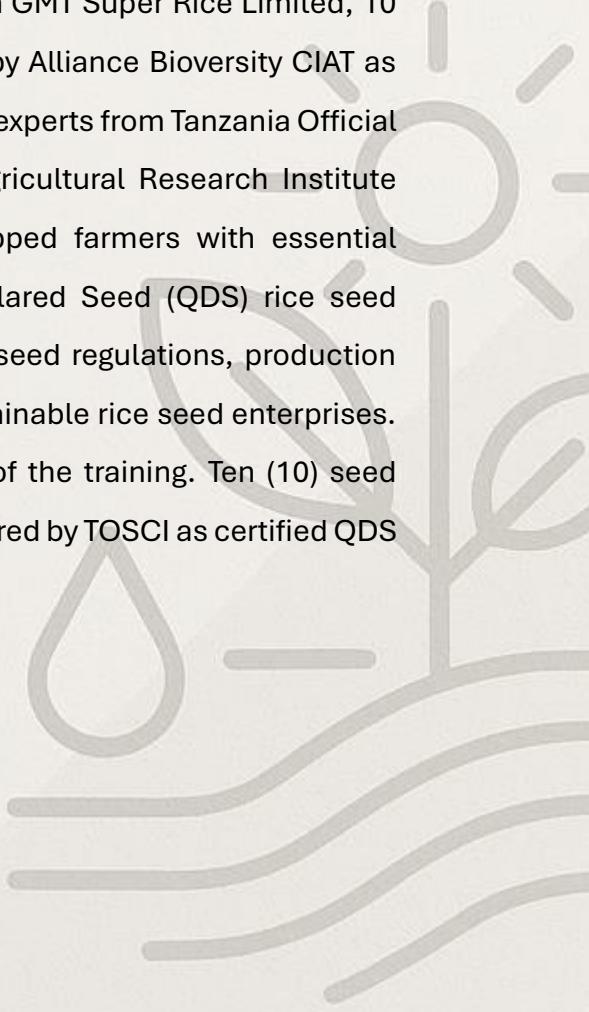
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Executive Summary

A training was held targeting GMT Super Rice staff and farmers with the overall objective being to strengthen farmers' understanding of rice quality seed systems, enhance compliance with seed production standards, and promote sustainable rice seed enterprises. The workshop benefitted representatives from GMT Super Rice Limited, 10 rice producers from Kyela Mbeya. The training convened by Alliance Bioversity CIAT as part of Growing Together Program by IDH was facilitated by experts from Tanzania Official Seed Certification Institute (TOSCI) and the Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI) Dakawa. The two-day training successfully equipped farmers with essential knowledge and practical skills required for Quality Declared Seed (QDS) rice seed production. Participants gained a solid understanding of seed regulations, production standards, and the business principles necessary for sustainable rice seed enterprises. Certificates were awarded to all participants at the end of the training. Ten (10) seed producer (5 males and 5 females) were certified and registered by TOSCI as certified QDS Rice producers under GMT Super Rice Limited.



Importance of Quality Seed for Rice Production in Tanzania

Quality seed is the foundation of successful rice production. It ensures uniform germination, vigorous crop growth, and higher yields, which are critical for meeting Tanzania's growing demand for rice. Certified seed varieties are bred for traits such as disease resistance, tolerance to local climatic conditions, and improved grain quality. Using quality seed reduces production risks, enhances input efficiency, and supports farmers in achieving better market returns. In contrast, reliance on low-quality or recycled seed often leads to poor crop performance, increased pest and disease pressure, and reduced profitability. Therefore, promoting access to and adoption of quality seed is essential for improving productivity and food security in Tanzania's rice value chain.

Growing Together, a NORAD-funded initiative implemented by IDH in collaboration with Alliance Bioversity International and CIAT, Rikolto and East African Grain Council (EAGC) seeks to transform local food markets, improve local food security and economies and increase the income of smallholder farmers. Growing Together seeks to extend investment readiness support to the SMEs that work with the project. The program seeks to support over 60,000 smallholder farmers (50% women) to adopt more climate adaptive and regenerative agriculture practices and achieving 30% more yield per hectare. The project targets SMEs along the maize, rice, sunflower, soybean and common bean value chains in Iringa, Njombe, Mbeya, Dodoma, Manyara and Morogoro regions. In line with this goal, a training workshop targeting GMT Super Rice staff and farmers on rice quality declared seed (QDS) production.

Company Profile

GMT Super Rice Limited was founded in 2010 as an agro-input shop targeting smallholder farmers engaged in agriculture and livestock production. In 2021, it was formalized as a registered company, marking an expansion into rice and maize aggregation and milling. GMT is in Kyela District, with sourcing activities extending to the Nyasa districts. The GMT location serves as a pivotal access point to essential regional markets in Southern African nations, such as Zambia, Zimbabwe, and DRC. With multiple established irrigation schemes in the area and a limited number of commercial rice off-takers, GMT aims to create a sustainable and commercially focused rice supply chain in the region, improving farmer incomes while safeguarding the environment. The company utilizes the existing rice irrigation schemes that are presently underused to improve the production and productivity of the farmers. By providing essential services to farmers, including quality seeds, agronomic training, and access to inputs, finance, and key markets, GMT creates an environment that allows contracted farmers to commercialize the supply chain and promote gender inclusion, particularly in Kyela where women face limited economic opportunities.

Training on Rice Quality Declared Seed (QDS) Production

To ensure timely access to quality seeds, GMT Super Rice Traders Limited, in collaboration with CIAT, Tanzania Official Seed Certification Institute (TOSCI) and the Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI), conducted a two-day training on Quality Declared Seed (QDS) production for selected rice farmers in Kyela District, Mbeya Region. The training took place from 18th - 19th November 2025 and aimed at strengthening farmer's capacity and practical knowledge on QDS production, seed quality management, seed regulations, and business aspects of rice seed enterprises.

Objectives of the QDS Training

The overall objective of the training was to strengthen farmers' understanding of quality seed systems, enhance compliance with seed production standards, and promote sustainable rice seed enterprises. Ultimately, the training aimed to increase the availability of improved rice seed, thereby improving the rice value chain, marketability, and the livelihoods of farming communities. Refer to program in Annex 1.

Participation and Approach

The workshop was attended by representatives from GMT Super Rice Limited, 10 rice producers from Kyela Mbeya. The training was facilitated by Frank Mwilenga from TOSCI Njombe Centre, assisted by Vicent Marwa a rice expert from TARI Dakawa. Juma Kapiligi represented the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT. Refer to attendance list in Annex 2.

The training was delivered through presentations, interactive discussions, Q&A sessions, and practical demonstrations. A participatory approach was used to actively engage farmers and encourage experience sharing.

Training Sessions

Day 1 Activities

After registration and the official opening session, TOSCI and TARI representatives provided an overview of their mandates and roles in seed development and certification.

The first day focused on introducing participants to key aspects of seed systems and regulatory requirements in Tanzania. Participants were taken through the process of evaluating, approving, and registering new seed varieties, as well as seed classes and factors that contribute to early seed deterioration. Additional sessions included an introduction to national seed systems and seed quality standards that guide QDS production.



Frank Mwilenga from TOSCI delivering session during QDS Training

The day concluded with interactive sessions where farmers asked questions related to seed production challenges, regulatory issues, and best practices. These discussions helped clarify key concepts and reinforce understanding of technical and regulatory requirements for QDS producers.

Day 2 Activities

The second day focused on technical and practical aspects of rice QDS production. The session began with a recap of Day One, followed by a detailed presentation on best agronomic practices for rice seed production. A session on major pests and diseases affecting rice emphasized identification, control, and preventive measures crucial for maintaining seed purity and field health. Participants were trained in the characteristics

of quality seeds and procedures for maintaining seed purity during the production cycle. Practical demonstrations on seed sampling and seed germination testing were conducted to equip farmers with essential field and laboratory skills.



Vicent Marwa, a rice expert from TARI-Dakawa delivering rice agronomic training

Further sessions covered the proper filling of seed quality assessment forms, post-harvest handling, and storage practices critical for preserving seed viability and quality. The final session introduced QDS as a business opportunity, highlighting record keeping, cost-benefit analysis, pricing strategies, packaging, labeling, and promotion of QDS.

Certification and Registration of QDS Rice Producers

Certificates were awarded to all participants at the end of the training. Ten (10) seed producer (5 males and 5 females) successfully registered as certified QDS Rice producers under GMT Super Rice Limited.



Benward Lihawa (GMT Manager), presents a certificate to seed producer Winfrida Mwaja, with Frank Mwilenga (TOSCI)

Summary and way forward

The two-day QDS training was successfully implemented and equipped farmers with essential knowledge and practical skills required for quality rice seed production. Participants gained a solid understanding of seed regulations, production standards, and the business principles necessary for sustainable rice seed enterprises. The collaborative effort between GMT Super Rice Traders Ltd, TOSCI, and TARI ensured the

effective delivery of both technical and regulatory guidance aimed at enhancing the availability of quality rice seed in Kyela District. Continued support and follow-up will further strengthen farmer's capacity and contribute to improved rice productivity.

Acknowledgements

The Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT extends its sincere gratitude to all stakeholders who contributed to the success of this training workshop in Tanzania. This initiative was made possible through the generous funding from NORAD, channeled via IDH. We deeply appreciate the Tanzania Official Seed Certification Institute (TOSCI) and Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI) for their invaluable technical support throughout the workshop. Our heartfelt thanks also go to the farmers who are ready to support the rice transformation through availing quality seed. We acknowledge the active participation of GMT Super Rice Limited for the collaboration on this initiative.



Annexes

Annex 1: QDS Training Program at Kyela Mbeya

DAY 1		
TIME	ACTIVITY	FACILITATOR
08:30 – 09:00	Arrival and Registration	All participants/ GMT Super Rice
09:00 – 10:00	Introductions and Opening Session	GMT Super Rice Traders Ltd.
10:00 – 10:30	TOSCI and TARI Introductions and Its Roles	Mr. Frank (TOSCI) & Mr. Vicent (TARI)
10:30 – 11:30	TEA BREAK	ALL PARTICIPANTS
11:30 – 12:00	Evaluation, Approval and Registration of New Seed Varieties	Mr. Frank (TOSCI)
12:00 – 12:30	Seed Classes and Factors Leading to Early Seed Deterioration	Mr. Frank (TOSCI)
12:30 – 13:00	Seed Systems in Tanzania	Mr. Frank (TOSCI)
13:00 – 14:00	LUNCH	ALL
14:00 – 14:30	Seed Quality Standards	Mr. Frank (TOSCI)
14:30 – 15:30	Questions and Answers	Mr. Vicent (TARI)
15:30 – 16:00	Seed regulation governing production of QDS Seeds	Mr. Frank (TOSCI)
16:00 – 16:30	Questions and Answers	Mr. Vicent (TARI)
DAY 2		
08:30 – 09:00	Arrival, Registration, and Recap	All
09:00 – 10:00	Best agronomic practices for rice seed production	Mr. Vicent (TARI)
10:00 – 10:30	Diseases and Pests in rice production	Mr. Vicent (TARI)
10:30 – 11:30	TEA BREAK	All
11:30 – 12:00	Characteristics of quality seeds & maintenance	Mr. Vicent (TARI) & Mr. Frank
12:00 – 12:30	Seed Sampling practical	Mr. Frank (TOSCI)
12:30 – 13:00	Seed germination testing	Mr. Frank (TOSCI)
13:00 – 14:00	LUNCH	ALL PARTICIPANTS
14:00 – 14:30	Filling seed quality assessment forms	Mr. Frank (TOSCI)
14:30 – 15:30	Post-harvest handling and storage of QDS rice seed	Mr. Vicent (TARI)
15:30 – 16:00	QDS as business oriented and Evaluation - Record keeping - Cost Benefit Analysis - Pricing - Promotion - Packaging & labeling	TARI & TOSCI
16:00	Closing and participants departure	GMT Super rice traders limited

Annex 2: List of Participants

Name	Gender	Village/District	Designation
Winfrida B Mwaja	F	Lubaga – Kyela	Farmer
Sabina P Kanyekela	F	Riruba – Kyela	Farmer
Peter W Mwakabungu	M	Mabunga – Kyela	Farmer
Mark A Mwasokwa	M	Kikuba – Kyela	Farmer
Kaisi B Mwalwimba	M	Kisale – Kyela	Farmer
Raphael A Mwakalambi	M	Kikuba – Kyela	Farmer
Zaituni S Ngumbine	F	Ngana – Kyela	Farmer
Rosta R Mwapwele	F	Ngana – Kyela	Farmer
Beti A. Mwalwaka	F	Kisale – Kyela	Farmer
Nulu Kayebe	F	Lubaga – Kyela	Farmer
Deusdedith Byamungu	M	Kikusya – Kyela	GMT Super Rice Ltd
Baraka T Sanga	M	Kikusya – Kyela	GMT Super Rice Ltd
Grace J Mboka	F	Kikusya – Kyela	GMT Super Rice Ltd
Benward Lihawa	M	Kikusya – Kyela	GMT Super Rice Ltd
Tacy Mathew	M	Kikusya – Kyela	GMT Super Rice Ltd
Frank Mwilenga	M	Njombe	TOSCI, Njombe
Vicent Marwa	M	Dakawa	Rice Expert, TARI
Juma Kapiligi	M	Arusha	Alliance -CIAT

