



**MINISTRY OF  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
OF DENMARK**

**Danida  
Alumni  
Network**



*A part of Danida Fellowship Centre*

## QUALITY COTTON FOR FARMERS COMPETITIVENESS IN TANZANIA



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## **1.0 Introduction**

On June 16, 2021, Danida Fellowship Center (DFC) announced the completion of evaluation of the proposals submitted for a Danida Alumni activity grant. The grant among others focused on provision of financial support to organize local activity (s) with the objective of strengthening local alumni network and continue efforts to make a positive impact in community and/or professional field of expertise. In addition, the grant also aims to continue the connection between the alumni and Denmark and act as development ambassador of Denmark in respective country.

As part of the initiative our alumni team (Michael Baha, Felister Y. Tibamanya, Lukelo Msese) proposal was selected among others to enhance capacity to selected lead cotton farmers and extension officers in Meatu District on quality cotton to increase the competitiveness of their cotton in Tanzania. The activity involved on sight training which took place on August 06, 2021, in Mwanhuzi, Meatu and later followed by a radio session which was held at local radio Faraja in Shinyanga on August 06, 2021, to increase the audience.

### **1.1 The Goal of the Training.**

Quality Cotton for Farmers Competitiveness in Tanzania activity aimed at creating awareness to farmers in Meatu district, Simiyu region on cotton quality, keeping them aware of how it affects crop competitiveness and sustainability. It aimed at serving as means to reduce the post-harvest losses given that most of the seed cotton that is rejected in the buying posts by the buyers is usually thrown or given to livestock. It was a means for inclusion of alumni who are in north – west Tanzania to share our experience and togetherness as beneficiaries of Danida scholarship /grants. The programme is attached as part of the invitation (see Annex B). The activity expected to involve and invited about 45 participants

through invitation letters, Tanzania Danida Alumni WhatsApp group, LinkedIn and Facebook, and the expected number was managed to participate, out of them 31 were cotton farmers and extension officers, 1 cotton board expert, 1 bioRE expert, 1 bioRE representative. 12 Tanzania Danida alumni (3 participated physically while 9 participated virtually via Zoom meeting).

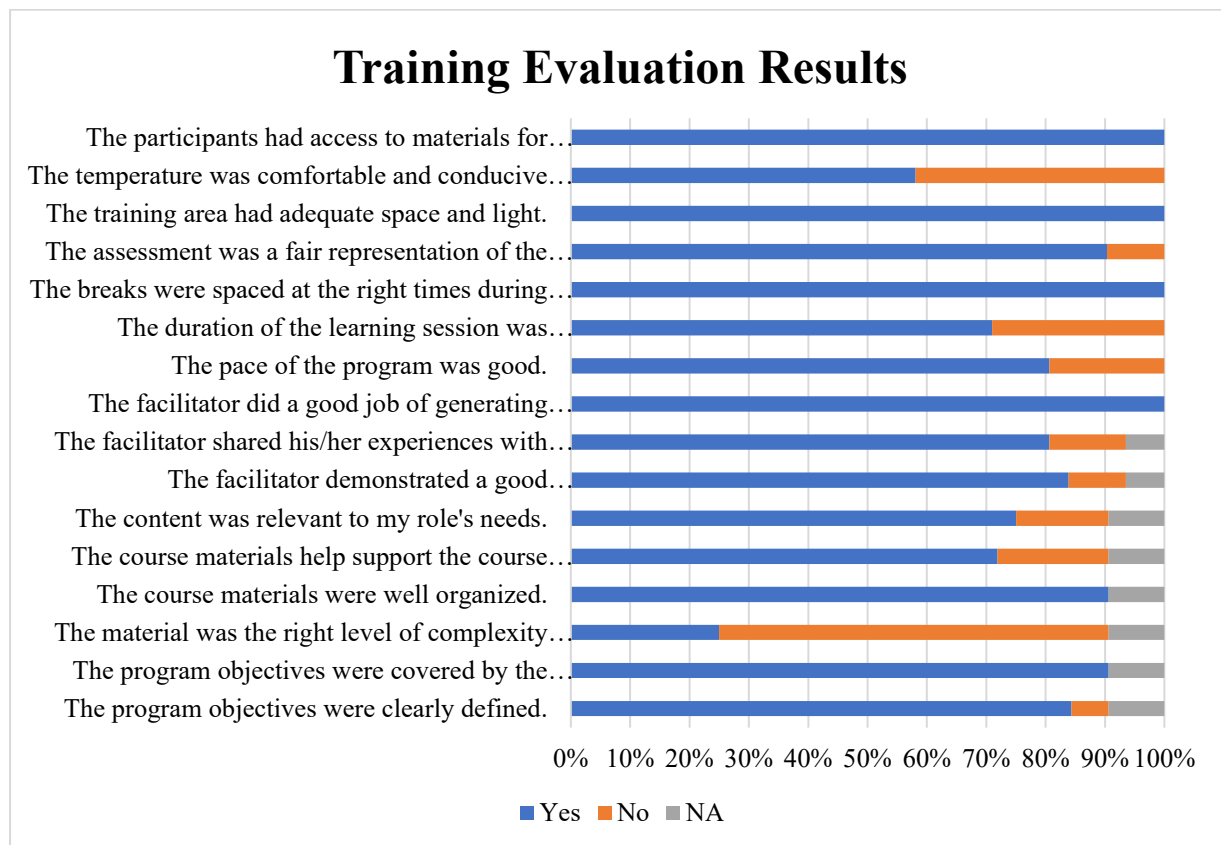
## **2.0 Training Methods and Activities**

To impart knowledge to the beneficiaries of the training several methods were used including lectures, discussions, case studies and demonstrations. The lectures on quality were provided in two ways whereas Michael who is an alumni provided a lecture based on the results from their cotton research project (SCOPA), Tanzania cotton board expert provided quality lecture based on regulatory status and experience from their supervision, and bioRe Tanzania expert provide lectures considering experience from farmers who are operating under contract farming. These lectures were followed by demonstration of cases from different villages where the problem of cotton was common and how it was caused. Beneficiaries were also invited to a warehouse to see the demonstration of how quality standards are followed at the store level. After every session, the beneficiaries of the training were given the chance to discuss to give out their thought of the questions that were posed. The questions were all on cotton quality specifically origin and causes of poor quality and means of solving the problem. The final discussion was led by Felister and Judith to check whether farmers had grasped necessary knowledge on cotton quality as a means sustainably increase their cotton competitiveness for domestic and foreign market. As part of increasing sustainability of cotton quality even to non-participants farmers in the training, the trained farmers participated in selecting leaders for follow to train their non-trained cotton farmers. Thus, the coordinator of the activity will time to time contact these selected leaders among cotton farmers to check if they are also

involved in training and sharing the knowledge they have acquired to other farmers. This general means the main approach used is Training of Trainers (TOT) approach i.e., trained cotton farmers are going to be trainers of cotton non-trained farmers in their respective villages.

### 3.0 Training Evaluation

The training involved farmers from different villages in Meatu and Maswa districts and the extension officers from the two districts. It involved creating their capacity based on research results, regulatory point of view and experience from the buying firm. In the end of the training the facilitators collected feedback of the training to farmers, extension offices and alumni concerning the program objectives, course content and its relevance, facilitator knowledge and effectiveness, facilities provided and overall thoughts of the participants. The results are summarized in the graph below:



### **3.1 Overall Thoughts from the Participants**

Majority of the participants had a picture of the problem of quality in the cotton sector. With the blame equally spread to both farmers and the buyers of the cotton. From the buyers side the idea for them to destroy the quality is because of the belief that buyer is distorting their weighing scale which compromise the weight of the cotton to compensate the loss associated with scales they normally mix water, add stones and sand which later distort cotton quality in the international market. It was suggested for a regulator harmonizes the situation by ensuring the needs of both farmers and buyers are considered during the buying campaign period.

The participants agreed with the idea of forming a collective committee on quality which involved both farmers and extension officers which will be a foundation stone for dissemination of knowledge to other farmers and buyers on cotton quality, its causes, and implications in the international market. This led to the selection of the following leading members.

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2. Kanoni Ntujo – Vice Chairperson - +255 620403186
3. Shimishi Sukuma – Secretary - +255 683 717 825
4. Angela Seba – Assistant Secretary - +255 626 111 310
5. Pascal Robert – Treasurer - +255 766 860 579

The participants were given to develop their annual work plan to ensure sustainability and they managed to develop one where they will be meeting once every month.