ACTION PLAN FOR SEED PRODUCTION IN THE GAMBIA:

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COUNTRY: THE GAMBIA

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Strategy:

The overall strategy in the seed industry will be the enhancement of the role of farmer-based seed initiatives including on-farm seed selection and multiplication, community seed farms and village seed stores. At the same time, the fledging private sector, at present made up of private seed growing farmers, will be encouraged to progressively enhance their participation as seed providers to reduce the load on the public seed sector programme which will be continued under Ministry of Agriculture through NARI.

1. SEED BOARD MEMBERS:

National Seed Council:

Under the authority of the Minister, Ministry of Agriculture, a National Seed Council (NSC), shall be established and charged with the overall responsibility for advising the Government on all matters relating to the Seed Policy and all ensuing legislations and protocols as well as seed industry planning and implementation.

The NSC shall be composed of representatives from all relevant stakeholders. The terms of reference of the NSC shall reflect its crucial role of serving as guide, counsel, arbiter and lobbyist on behalf of the seed to review industry. Government has accepted to consider stakeholder representation on the NSC as follows:

- Ministry of Agriculture (DOA & NARI)
- The Seed Sector (2 representatives)
- Farmers' Associations
- Seed Growers
- Universities
- National Planning Commission
- Agro-industry
- Extension
- Plant Quarantine
- Finance and Economic Affairs
- NGOs
- Development Partners

NSC shall, as the need arises, draw on outside expertise and co-opt representatives of other stakeholders, particularly specialized agencies of the UN and donors, to attend its meetings in observer status.

2. SEED BOARD ACTIVITIES:

i. **SEED PRODUCTION**:

The NSC will meet at least three times in a year to discuss on the performance of the seed industry. The first meeting shall be held prior to the start of the season to assess the state of preparedness for the season. The second shall be held prior to harvesting to enable possible short-comings to be identified for correction. The third meeting shall be held after harvest to ascertain the actual seed quantity produced.

Generation System of Seed Multiplication

In the national seed programme, a four-generation system of seed multiplication will be followed. This means that recognition will be given to four seed classes, namely, breeder, foundation, registered and certified seed:

Breeder seed: Is the progeny of nucleus seed. Breeder seed will be under the direct control of the originating breeder or breeding station and will be used for the production of foundation seed:

Foundation seed: Is the progeny of breeder seed and will be produced by the STU as a public sector responsibility.

Registered seed: May be produced from foundation seed, especially where the multiplication factor of the seed is low. Both foundation and registered seed shall be produced under the general supervision of the sponsoring breeders.

Certified seed: Will be produced from Foundation or Registered seed and the production will be largely carried out by contract seed growers.

In the event of a serious shortage of seeds, the mandated authority, acting under the National Seed Council, will authorize the recognition of a temporary fifth class called Commercial Seed, which shall comprise appropriately lowered standards of previously failed certified seed lots or a production from the multiplication of the certified class.

Finally, recognition will also be granted to Quality Declared Seed, in line with the FAO/QDS concept but its applicability will be confined to projects and programmes specifically authorized and mandated to operate under that concept. The QDS system is a seed production and quality assurance concept which allows developing seed programmes to achieve good levels of quality seed production with limited resources.

Plan based on the Draft NRDS on Area and Certified Seed Requirement:

Ecology	2012		2013	
	Area (Ha)	Seed Needed (Kg)	Area (Ha)	Seed Needed (Kg)
Irrigated	10, 400	416, 000	15, 000	600, 000
Rain Fed Upland	54, 000	2, 160, 000	80, 000	3, 200, 000
Rain Fed Lowland	12, 800	512, 000	40, 000	1, 600, 000

ii. **NEW VARIETY APPROVAL:**

For variety evaluation, release and withdrawal, a Variety Release Committee (VRC) shall be constituted under the authority of the NSC. The VRC shall be made up of relevant technical members of the NSC, other relevant experts outside NSC and co-opted researchers who may be relevant to specific crops or varieties being considered. The procedures for variety release will be formulated and presented to the Minister of Agriculture as one of the early acts of the NSC when inaugurated.

Variety Tested in Research Station:

VARIETIES CULTIVATED / RELEASED

Ecologies	Most Popular Rice Varieties Cultivated (Local and Improved	Rice varieties released / adopted over the last ten years (1997 – 2007)	State of Dissemination of NERICA varieties
Irrigated	IET3137, ITA212, TNS14 & IR64.	TNS14 & IR64	Low
Upland strict	IR19746, NERICA 1, 4 & 8.	IR19746 & NERICAs	High
Upland with supplementary irrigation	N/A	N/A	High
Upland with ground water	ATM3 & P105	ATM3 & P105	High
Lowland	RASI, CCA, ATM3 & P105	ATM3 & P105	High
Mangrove	WAR1, WAR77-2-2-2 & ROK5.	N/A	High

MAJOR CONSTRAINTS TO RICE PRODUCTION

Ecologies	Biotic constraints	Abiotic constraints	Socio-economics constraints
Irrigated	Water Control	Unleveled fields	High Fertilizer Cost
Upland strict	Weeds	Low Soil Fertility	Water
Upland with ground water	Weed Control	Insect & Vertebrate	Land Preparation
Lowland	Weeds	siltation	Credit
Mangrove	Pest & Diseases	Salinity	Access to Road

3.0 PROBLEM AND ACTION:

Shortages of Facilities:

A. Problems:

General Constraints:

- Lack of Paddy Fields in Experimental Station
- Lack of sustainable seed production & product market
- Lack of access to foundation
- Lack of training on quality seed production
- Failed rejected seed crops due to management problem
- Lack of poor information about the availability characteristics and price of seed of improvement varieties.

Farmers

- ✓ Inadequate choice of improved varieties.
- ✓ Excessive recycling of seed
- ✓ Inadequate knowledge on production practices
- ✓ Expensive seed
- ✓ Unavailability of seed at communities.
- ✓ Inadequate functional farmer organizations

B. Action (Solutions)

- ✓ Training of breeders, agronomists, extension officers and seed Producers and inspectors.
- ✓ Construction of infrastructure for breeding and seed testing in regional centres.
- ✓ Quality Control
- ✓ Strengthening of cooperatives
- ✓ Training farmers in seed production.

- ✓ Development of data collection system for data collection on seed
- ✓ Localize inspections
- ✓ Strengthening breeding
- ✓ Government to be active in breeding
- ✓ Engagement of private sector
- ✓ The seed producers need to follow established regulations; adherence to these regulations is monitored.
- ✓ Funding (need for credit to produce the seed)

3.1 Staff

Problem:

- Seed Managing Knowledge at Regional Seed Stores
- Inadequate skills in rice seed production
- Lack of efficient breeding programs
- Lack of breeding and seed testing infrastructure both at regional and districts level.
- Inadequate staff.
- Lack of body to determine seed requirements per season.

Action:

- Training at AfricaRice
- Strengthening of Training programme at NARI
- Formulation of training master plan for seed Production