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Competitive African Rice Initiative (CARI)

Integrating smallholder rice farmers in four Sub-Saharan countries into sustainable business models within the rice value chain

Challenges

Rice is one of the most important staple foods in Africa. Demand is rapidly increasing: The population is growing, people are moving to urban areas and consumer behaviour is changing. 90% of all locally cultivated rice is produced on small fields with an acreage of less than one hectare. Local production does not meet the continent's demand for rice. Average yields in Sub-Saharan Africa are the lowest in the world. There is lack of knowledge of modern farming techniques, high-quality seeds, fertilisers and crop protection practices. Necessary infrastructure for efficient storage, transport and processing is also often not existent. Given that prices for their products are low, smallholder farmers are left only with low income margins. As a result, most of the rural population in rice producing areas lives in poverty or even below the poverty line.

Our approach

The Competitive African Rice Initiative assists the national rice industry to support smallholder rice farmers to increase their incomes and to supply their families and the whole region with high-quality rice. Up to now, on average smallholders earn less than two USD per day. On behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and co-funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Walmart Foundation, GIZ is implementing the CARI project in four African countries. This happens in cooperation with local implementing partners such as Technoserve, Kilimo Trust, and John A. Kufuor Foundation. The aim is to increase productivity and improve the quality of smallholder farmers' rice produce. Local processing and marketing companies benefit from a reliable supply with



Project name	Competitive African Rice Initiative (CARI)
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Walmart Foundation
Implementing organisations	Deutsche Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH John A. Kufuor Foundation Kilimo Trust TechnoServe
Project area	Nigeria, Ghana, Burkina Faso and Tanzania
Project duration	November 2013 until June 2018
Project budget	€ 21.04 Million

CARI's activities operate along four intervention areas:

1. Improved productivity
2. Established value chain linkages
3. Improved access to financial services
4. Improved policy framework for the rice sector

high-quality rice, as they enter into constant supply relationships with smallholders. Local businesses gain better access to financial services, as national policies create more favourable framework conditions for the production of and the trade with rice. With this, a stable value chain is developed, connecting input suppliers, rice farmers, millers and distributors. This benefits the entire sector. Smallholder farmers



Photo left: Rice field © GIZ

Photo right: Nutrition training © GIZ





Photo left: CARI project regions © GIZ

Photo right: Mrs. Stella Bonaventura © GIZ

receive favorable (in-kind) loans from rice millers or input suppliers in order to buy high-quality inputs at the right time. The farmers are trained on how to organize their businesses according to market demand.

Special emphasis is put on cooperation with local partners. CARI promotes the commitment of local private and public companies through a fund, which has to be matched with the partners' own resources. This way, sustainability and demand-driven production is increased.

Impacts in figures...

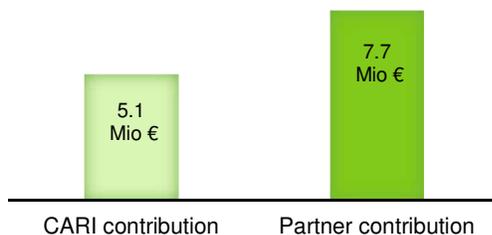
More than 370,000 beneficiaries have increased their income and improved their food security.

More than 106,000 smallholder farmers have received the training in good agricultural practices and Farmer Business School.

Yields per hectare have increased **by up to 136%**

More than 150,000 small-scale farmers have been involved in the project in 4 countries, of which **more than 30%** are female.

Investments into the rice value chain:



... and in stories!

In its objective to increase the income of smallholder farmers in a sustainable manner and to supply the project region with high quality rice, the Competitive African Rice Initiative aims at reaching 150,000 smallholder men and women. Knowledge has been improved on good agricultural practices, in business skills, small scale parboiling, organization in groups, mechanisation, in family nutrition and marketing. Millers receive support on processing efficiency and marketing and information about consumer preferences and appreciation and competitiveness of their brands.

One of the participants of the trainings is Stella Bonaventura. She is a single mother, raising her six children and running the 6 ha family farm in Tanzania. In order to improve the financial situation of the family, she joined the CARI program. As part of the program, she attended trainings in which she learned how to cultivate her land, how to apply fertilizer in the most effective way, and how to harvest in order to receive the highest quality and quantity possible.

„I have had difficulties with the yields in the first season due to a drought. The second season looked much better. I have been able to harvest 32 bags of rice, with 90 kg per bag. That exceeded my expectations by far.“

Stella has been able to sell these 32 bags at a good price. With the additional income she received, she was able to send her oldest son to secondary school in Dodoma.

Through the support she received from CARI, Mrs. Bonaventura has more than doubled her income. She has obtained additional agricultural knowledge and is now looking positively into the future.

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