Rice Strategic partnership

Overview

Rice (Oryza sativa) is the second most important food crop in Tanzania after maize. Official data indicates that an estimated 2.2 million MT of rice is produced annually, making Tanzania the biggest rice producing country in the region with an average yield of 2.2 tonnes per hectare (NRDS-II, 2019). More than 70 percent of rice production in the country originates from six leading regions of Shinyanga, Tabora, Mwanza, Mbeya, Rukwa and Morogoro. Other regions include Songwe, Katavi, Arusha, Kilimanjaro, Kigoma, Manyara, Iringa, Mara and Tanga. It is estimated that 20 per cent of all farmers in Tanzania are involved in rice production (FAO, 2015).

Smallholder farmers under rain-fed conditions grow most Paddy (rice) in the low lands. Some small farmers grow and irrigate their farms under schemes using traditional or semi improved schemes. Larger farms have larger areas under irrigated cultivation but large-scale commercial rice farming is not common and limited to few private firms in Mbeya, Morogoro and the Coast regions where they use schemes which have been privatized (FAO, 2015).
The most common varieties of rice produced in the country include Kilombero, Supa, Zambia, Kyela Ndefu and Saro 5. Saro 5 (TXD 306) is the only improved seed commonly produced in Tanzania.

Key Stakeholders in the Rice Partnership

Public Sector, Private sector, Development Partners, farmers organizations, and Civil Society Organisations
46 partners including Smallholder farmers, Private Sector such as Yara, TARI, Mashamba and tractors, LonAgro, Obo Investment, Raphael Group, Mtenda Kyela Rice, Mbeya Rice company Dick Lukala, NMB, CRDB; public sector like TBS, TIC, Ministry of Agriculture, ASA, TARI, Apex organizations like Rice Council of Tanzania, ACT, AMBERICO and Development Partners funded projects like USAID NAFAKA project, Kilimo Trust, NORAD TAPP2 Project, contributed to the preparation of the rice strategic partnership TOR and workplan.

The Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania (SAGCOT)

Is a public-private partnership that seeks to catalyse responsible agribusiness investments in the country's southern corridor. The SAGCOT Centre Ltd serves as a partnership broker and information hub to facilitate socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable value chain investments. The SAGCOT Centre actively promotes and facilitates strategic partnerships in order to promote a harmonized approach and to improve synergies among key stakeholders within and across priority value chains.

What makes the rice partnership a strategic partnership?

Rice Value chain flow of products starts from inputs to the final consumption/market and has the linkage to animal feed industry as well as to the energy sector. The final market products include rice for human consumption while the rice brans are an important commodity in the animal feed industry. Rice husks is used in the SAGCOT region as an alternative source of energy especially for burning earth bricks and firing boilers at factories like the Lafarge Holcim Mbeya Cement factory. There is no official records of exact quantities and volumes of husks used as energy source but piles seen at millers' sites indicates that the rice husks are yet to be fully utilized as alternative energy source. Rice from the corridor forms a part Tanzania commodity trade with neighboring countries. Currently Tanzania rice is exported mostly to Zambia, Rwanda, Ugandat, Kenya, Southe Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Rice from the Mbarali, Ihemi and Kilombero clusters is also traded locally whereby Dar es salaam remains the biggest market followed by Tanga and Arusha.

Improvement of food security and livelihoods.

The Rice farmers in the SAGCOT region has double productivity and triple profitability of rice farmers from the present 2.1 tonnes to average of 10 tonnes per hectare especially in Mbarali District.. The partnership vision is to reach the global production of up to 13 tonnes per hectare.

Seeks end-to-end value chain solutions

The Rice Partnership was strategically built to include stakeholders from each node in the value and actors from all rice producing hotspots in the SAGCOT such as Mbarali and Kyela in Mbeya, Momba and Ileje in Songwe, Kilombero in Morogoro and Pawaga in Iringa Region.

Inclusive and sustainable impact

Besides being the second food crop in Tanzania, rice provides employment to at least 230,000 farmers and a source of energy to millions of people and animals. It grows best in warm regions and warm valleys, areas often characterized by high population densities. Investing in the rice value chain is therefore an opportunity to support the dietary needs of rapidly growing populations – both rural and urban – and supports income-generating opportunities for rural rice farmers.

Although rice is such an important crop, its productivity levels is still lagging behind the global average of 8 tons per hectare, according to the local government authority statistics. The rice Partnership's objective is to double productivity and triple profitability for participating farmers.

Demonstrates Positive Environmental impact

The System of Rice Intensification (SRI) was introduced to Tanzania in 2009 by then a SAGCOT Partner Kilombero Plantations Limited in an effort to increase the country's food security. SRI methods have lifted smallholder yields from 3 tons/ha to over 5 tons/ha, and by 2014 it tripled the average production of 6,500 farmer families in Kilombero. SRI methods increase yields by over 30 percent while using 40 percent less water than conventional methods. SRI has proved to use limited amount of water and it is not labor-intensive. It is an organic method that uses younger seedlings singly spaced and typically hand weeded with special tools.

For Mbeya, the SRI farming doubles rice production per hectare, citing Madibira scheme as one example whereby through SRI production has increased to 10 tonnes per hectare, from 4 tonnes per hectare (traditional farming). In Uturo scheme, the SRI method increased production to 13 tonnes per hectare from 5.7 tonnes (traditional farming) - Cornell University.

Offers scalability or replication

Partners' Coalitions and consortiums have reached a number of farmers and provided training on new sustainable agriculture technologies, good agricultural practices leading to an improved quality of rice produce. For instance, the Apex of Mbeya Rice Cooperatives (AMBERICO), a rice farmers apex has 20000 members who have benefited from the services provided by ACT through TAPP 2, NMB, RAPHAEL Group, Kilimo Trust and YARA. The farmers in Mbarali have benefited from the SAGCOT Integrated Knowledge and Information for Agriculture (SIKIA).

Exploration for external markets, rice quality and standards improvement were the main focus in the rice strategic partnership in 2021. Raphael Group Ltd from Mbarali Cluster has become the first company to export very high-quality rice to France largely through SCL facilitation. In addition, SCL worked with TANTRADE and Tanzania Embassies in Asia, Arabian countries, SADC, and EAC to identify markets and their demand for rice from Tanzania. All have expressed demand for Tanzanian rice; but the most proactive has been from the DRC where on-going dialogue facilitated by SCL is focusing on opening up routes across Lake Tanganyika to ease the logistics burden currently faced by agribusiness.

The overall national productivity per hectare shows that productivity remains low at 2.5 against the potential of 6.5 tonnes per hectare. Addressing the existing challenges will accelerate improvement in productivity and commercialisation of the rice value chain.

OPPORTUNITY	CHALLENGES
Increased Supply of improved Rice Seeds:	Inadequate availability of improved Rice seeds, Low adoption of improved rice seeds varieties, Inadequate of pre-basic seeds
Increased production and Productivity of Rice	Low Production and Productivity, lack of dedicated irrigation schemes for Rice growing, limited mechanization for the crop, subsistence farming instead of commercial, low and improper utilization of fertilizers
Improved Marketing System	Unstructured Marketing System, Unreliable supply of electricity and poor road networks
Increased Collaboration among members of the Strategic Partnership	Poor coordination among actors, presence of weak farmer organization
Increased access to Finance	Limited availability of crop financing
Policy and Enabling Environment	Unpredictable business environment

For more information please contact us

SAGCOT Centre Limited

5th Floor, Ikon Building
Bains Avenue, Masaki
P.O. Box 80945
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Tel: +255 22 260 1024
+255 22 260 0146
Fax: +255 22 260 2368

Email: info@sagcot.co.tz
Web: www.sagcot.co.tz