

AGRA Impact Series



Training Transforms Prospects for Niger Women Rice Farmers

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The Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) has helped Niger reduce the need to import food, narrowing its demand gap for rice, through a program that supports female rice farmers to boost productivity.

AGRA began working with rice farmers across the largely agrarian state in North Central Nigeria in 2019 to help improve cultivation, production and sales, with the belief that good harvests lead to progress in Africa's agricultural transformation agenda.


Rice farming is an age-old practice for communities across Niger and a major source of income, but low revenues from rice sales have meant that families have struggled to take care of their basic household needs.

The use of traditional methods of planting,

harvesting and processing along with poor market distribution have all contributed to low profits for farming communities.

Farmers also struggle with high-interest rate loans, price instability due to poor processing methods, and a lack of aggregation centres, which mean they are forced to make costly and time-consuming journeys to sell their product.

AGRA has supported a number of female rice producers in Gbako, a Local Government Area of Niger State, to form a group called the Lemu Women Rice Processors, and delivered training,



which has helped them to set up fully equipped community resource centres and to expand their trade and capacity for earning.

AGRA has delivered training in areas like agro-input - with new dealers like Tecni Seed and Da-All Green even emerging as a result - and in output market distribution, including rice processing, which is helping the women and young people in the group to maximize their profits.

By cleaning and processing the rice they harvest, the farmers are able to make up to 400 Naira (N400) profit per bag - a much bigger market opportunity since clean rice has higher value. Rice varieties like Faro 44 and Faro 52 are

cleaner than the traditional varieties grown.

AGRA has also developed connections with Lemu Microfinance Bank so that members of the group can acquire finance of between N200,000 to N400,000 per person, with agreements brokered by SG 2000 and NAMDA.

For Mariam, one of the beneficiaries in the group, the extra profit she now earns means that she can take care of her family's basic needs, including bills, food and clothes.

“The benefits of AGRA teaching us how to properly process rice without stones and chaff has increased our profits on how much we sell a mudu of rice; previously unprocessed rice