

Rice Situation in The Gambia

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Introduction



Rice Production Systems

- Predominantly rainfed
 - 85.8% of total hectage
 - 57.8% of total paddy production
- Ecologies
 - Upland pure rainfed
 - Hydromorphics (Bantafaros)
 - Freshwater tidal swamps
 - Mangrove tidal swamps
 - Water controlled irrigated swamps
 - Improved freshwater tidal
 - Low-lift pump irrigation

Importance of Rice in The Gambia

- Rice is the staple in The Gambia
- 66% of income is spent on food
- 30.9% of amount on food is cereals and cereal products
- 83.2% of Cereal and Cereal products is rice

Total Rice production and Demand

- Population: 1.8 million
- Per capitata consumption: 117.33 kg
- Demand: 211,194 MT (milled rice)
- Production: 22,980 MT (milled rice)
- % Self sufficiency: 11%
- Deficit: 89%

Major Constraints to Sustainable Increased Rice Production



Climatic/Environmental Constraints

- Declining soil fertility (upland production)
- Decline in annual rainfall (year-to-year variation)
- Increased frequency of intensive rainfall and run-off, resulting in severe floods
- Upland erosion
- Sedimentation of the lowland rice fields
- Saline intrusion
- Increasing soil acidity (acid sulphates)

Socio-Economic Constraints

- Lack of ready access to inputs/farm implements
- Lack of ready access to credit
- Lack of ready access remunerating marketing channels
- Poor crop management
- Poor and inadequate infrastructure
- High post-harvest and processing losses
- Inadequate national capacity

National Policies and Strategies for Sustainable Increased Rice Production




Important Natural Resources for Considerable Potential

- Abundant arable land for both upland and lowland rice production
- Largely unexploited vast fertile lowland swamps along the River Gambia
- Abundant surface water for year round irrigation within the freshwater zone of the River
- A semi-arid tropical climate with high solar radiation
- A growing season of 365 days

Short-term Strategies

- Intensive promotion of the NERICAs for expanded and improved upland rainfed rice production
- An improved seed production programme to provide urgently needed quantity and quality of suitable seed varieties
- Provision of ready access to inputs/farm inputs, particularly fertilizer

Medium and Long-term Strategies

- Improve national capacity (NARS staff/ infrastructure)
 - Improved irrigation infrastructure
 - Improved germplasm maintenance
 - Improved crop management
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Conclusion

Through

- Improved irrigation expansion/Intensification
- Increased production/productivity

To development the eastern half of the country with its vast fertile lowland swamps along the freshwater zone of the River Gambia, into the country's breadbasket region.

Thus developing a home-grown genuine Green Revolution for The Gambia