

RICE REPORT FOR MALAWI

Department of Crop Development
Ministry of Agriculture, Malawi

Introduction

- Malawi is a landlocked country in South Eastern Africa endowed with spectacular highlands and extensive lakes.
- Lying along the Eastern African Rift Valley, Lake Malawi accounts for more than 1/5 of the country's total area.
- It is bordered by Tanzania to the North, Mozambique to the East and South and Zambia to the West.
- Wide range of soils:
 - red earths with brown soils and yellow gritty clays on Plateaus.
 - Alluvial soils occur on the lakeshores and in the Shire Valley while
 - hydromorphic (excessively moist) soils, black clays and sandy dunes on the lakeshore.

Introduction.....

- 2 main seasons : the dry season (May to Oct) & the wet season (Nov to April)
- Predominantly agro- based economy
 - The sector accounts for about 22% of total GDP
 - About 80% of the national export earnings come from agriculture
 - 85% of 16 million national population is employed in the agriculture sector.

Analysis of the Agric. Sector

- Malawi agriculture comprises the smallholder and estate sub-sectors.
- The smallholder subsector is predominantly subsistent and characterized by low productivity, fragmented small land parcels of less than 0.5ha on average.
- The estate sub sector is mainly commercial and characterized by high productivity levels.
- Factors causing low productivity:
 - Low adoption of agricultural technologies including quality seeds and inorganic fertilizers,
 - Low mechanisation'
 - Low technical labour skills
 - Poor agricultural financing and
 - Weak linkages to markets.

Way Forward

- In order to address the above challenges the Malawi Government came up with the National Agricultural Policy (NAP) and the National Agriculture Investment Plan (NAIP).
- The National Agricultural Policy envisages that a successful implementation of interventions in identified key priority areas would put the nation on a trajectory to sustainable agricultural transformation.

Rice Production in Malawi

- Maize is the staple food crop for the country, seconded by rice.
- Rice cultivation is mainly Rainfed lowland (85%), lowland irrigated (10%) and upland rainfed (5%).
- Rice mainly grown by smallholder farmers under irrigation in Saharas and in wetlands during the rainy season.
- Major rice producing areas:
 - **Lake Malawi Shores** - Salima, Nkhotakota, Nkhatabay, Karonga and Bwanje in Dedza;
 - **Lower Shire** - Chikwawa and Nsanje
 - **Along Lake Chilwa** - Machinga, Zomba and Mangochi;
 - Mchinji, Mzimba.

Rice Production in Malawi.....

- Rice is a source of carbohydrates and which was commonly consumed by urban population and during festive seasons like Christmas
- With crop and food diversification, trend has changed leading to increased consumption of by the new generation as compared to the old generation.
- Currently rice is being grown in most of the district where there are wetlands
- Notable varieties are Kilombero, Faya14M69, Mtupatupa (TCG10), Nunkile (Pusa33), Lifuwu, Wambone, Kayanjamalo, NERICA4, Mpheta, Katete, Nanzolo, Makafaci and Wachangu.
- Average national yield is 1.2mt/Ha against potentials of >5ton per ha with good management.
- Production and productivity is low due to dependency on rain-fed production.

factors limiting rice prodn. & productivity

- Limited access to improved rice seed due to unorganised seed system.
- Low fertilizer use due to high inorganic fertilizers cost
- Damaged irrigation infrastructures due to natural disasters such as floods.
- Climate change associated with rainfall pattern
- Reliance on family labour
- Limited access to technical support from agricultural extension officers
- Limited access to market information as well as markets.
- Poor productive farmer organizations such as cooperatives
- Lack of coordination among different players Inadequate scientists doing research on rice

Opportunities to increase prodn. & productivity

- Availability of large bodies of water for irrigation
- Presence of rice cooperatives which just requires to be reorganized.
- Availability of markets both domestically and internationally although not well organized.
- Willingness of commercial banks to fund commercial farmers in infrastructure investments.
- Enabling policies by government.
- Subsidies in rice such as certified rice seed.
- Availability of both human and financial resources in the Academia, Private Sector and Civil Society Organizations.

Stakeholders in the rice value chain

ORGANIZATION	ROLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Department of Agricultural Research Services and Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources	carrying out various research in breeding, agronomy and production quality basic rice seed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Department of Agricultural Extension Services	Disseminative approved technologies to rice farmers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Department of Crop Development	Mounting rice demonstration on new varieties, agronomic practices and training Agricultural Extension Workers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Department of Agricultural Planning Services	Developing concept papers <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Strategies- Bills- Policies

Stakeholders in the rice value chain

ORGANIZATION	ROLE
<p><u>Private Sector</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fertilizer Association of Malawi • STAM eg SeedCo • Grain Traders Association of Malawi eg NASFAM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supplying farmers required fertilizers in rice production - Marketing of certified rice seed - Providing market for paddy rice.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processors (Millers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing market for the Small and Medium Enterprises
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retailers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marketing of the milled rice (polished rice)
<p><u>Development Partners</u></p> <p>JICA, World Bank, IFAD, AGRA, KAFACI, IRRI, Africa Rice</p>	<p>Providing the most needed finances</p>

Rice Production Trends in Malawi

YEAR	AREA (HA)	PRODUCTION (MT)
2015	65,761	111,437
2016	53,676	83,757
2017	64,881	121,079
2018	63,971	112,312
2019	70,501	131,372
2020	76,632	142,591
2021	75,773	155,414

Rain-fed Rice Production

YEAR	AREA (HA)	PRODUCTION (MT)
2015	61,187	93,901
2016	49,880	70,536
2017	60,848	106,128

Expectations from the CARD Initiative

- The initiative would assist the country in sharing experience and tap knowledge with countries which has achieve great strides in rice production.
- The nation aim is to increase paddy yield per unit area in irrigated schemes and also increase both yield and area of rain fed rice to meet both domestic and export demand.
- The vehicle for achieving the above goal thus the National Rice strategy (2014 – 18) expired in 2018.
- The Ministry started the activity of developing new strategy with the help of CARD and JICA Malawi office in 2020 but COVID 19 disturbed the whole process.
- The ministry is trying to come up with a new road map in consultation with all stakeholders in the rice value chain.