

Improving the lives of rice producers in Tanzania

Tanzania **direct** funding target: £200,000

Shinyanga is among the main rice-producing areas of Tanzania, yet producers are unable to make a decent living. But research shows potential to develop 'premium' rice production to attract higher prices. By following improvements made in other regions, Oxfam will work with producers to improve all stages of rice production, to find new markets and establish secure and sustainable incomes.



Winnowing rice, Shinyanga.
Photo: Jenny Matthews/Oxfam

The Project

Part of Oxfam's wider work to scale-up agricultural production in Tanzania, this is the first of a three-year project to improve rice production, trading, and marketing.

In Shinyanga, we will work with partners to train producers to grow high-yield, drought-resistant, better-quality, higher value rice, to process rice more efficiently; to improve packaging and marketing; and to trade in new markets. This will give families more income; making them better able to provide for themselves and giving them a more secure future.

Project aims

The aim is to improve the lives of rice producers by:

- establishing strong, self-supporting producer groups in which members support each other to produce, process, package, and market their rice in new markets
 - improving the quality and quantity of rice, through better cultivation and processing, allowing producers to get a better price, to earn more, and have reliable sources of food and income
 - creating 'demonstration farms' through which farmers will learn low-cost farming methods, including soil and water management, and use of livestock manure and crop residues instead of chemical fertilisers, to improve land for their crops
- building producers' knowledge, skills, and confidence to improve their bargaining power in new markets
 - establishing wider links in the rice trade, to overcome the lack of local marketing opportunities, and be able to compete in wider urban, regional, and even world markets
 - promoting training and involvement of women – until now involved only as unskilled labourers – allowing them to earn, and raise their status in their communities.

Supporters, communities, local partners and Oxfam – working together to change lives

Background



Woman farmer in paddy field, Shinyanga. Photo: Oxfam

In Shinyanga, 25 per cent of farms grow rice for food and income. But in recent years, demand for Shinyanga rice has fallen, mainly due to it not

meeting other areas' standards – for example, poor processing results in stones not being removed before sale. Others have moved into production for 'premium markets' such as urban supermarkets, whereas Shinyanga rice has been sold mainly at local markets.

Research – part of Oxfam's existing work in the region – shows that if quality, processing, and marketing is improved, there's great potential to recapture markets – locally and in urban centres and for export. This will give secure sources of food and income. We can also improve the lives of women who are

engaged in low-status labouring work, by targeting them for business enterprise training.

As part of Oxfam's wider work to scale-up agricultural production in Tanzania, we work with partner organisations, with technical and organisational input from government ministries and state educational bodies. We will establish producer groups and provide training to increase yields, grow higher quality rice, and enhance processing, marketing, and organisational skills, improving the lives of rice producers now and in the future.

The Plan

Activities

- establish strong, self-supporting producer groups through which members will support each other to produce, process, package, and market quality rice in new markets
- provide training for two representatives from each of 150 villages in three districts, who will then train their group members in improved farming methods: cultivation of high-yield, drought-resistant, better-quality varieties of rice; and improved rice-handling, storage, and packaging
- to make credit facilities available so producer groups can purchase tools, equipment, and services, and to pay for basic needs, such as health care, until such

time as rice can be sold at higher prices, (so they are not forced to sell when prices are low)

- identify traders and millers to be involved in training and inter-district forums and to provide processing and marketing services
- give accounts and record-keeping training to producers and traders
- provide starter kits, containing drought-resistant seed, training manuals and teaching resources, for use on 'demonstration farms'
- organise farmer-to-farmer training through visits to other rice-producing areas where yields are improved and 'premium' varieties of rice grown
- improve water retention and reduce soil compaction



Rice for sale in Shinyanga town market. Photo: Oxfam

through use of low-cost, organic methods such as composting crop residues and animal manure, and mulching

- work with the local government to organise produce shows and farmers' days to demonstrate and promote good practices.

The Impact

As a result of the project:

- working together, rice producers will improve all aspects of rice production and marketing
- the demand for Shinyanga rice will rise, regain its market share, and break into new markets
- the price of rice received by farmers will increase 100 per cent from £5/bag to £10-£12/bag
- rice yields will double in three years (from 10-20 bags/acre to 20-40 bags/acre)
- up to 6,000 rice producers and their families will have food and income to sustain their families and lift themselves out of poverty.

Who will benefit?

Over three years, 6,000 rice producers and their families, across three districts. Two-thirds will be women.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring will be through regular field visits by our staff and partner organisations. Monitoring indicators will be developed and used to produce monthly and quarterly progress reports. At the end of the project, a year-by-year evaluation will be conducted.

Sustainability

After nine months, producers will be trained and putting into practice what they have learned. By the end of the

project, they will be adept at working together, using shared 'buying power' to negotiate best prices for tools and equipment; and will be able to finance their own processing costs, thus ensuring the continuation of the work beyond the three years. Strong links will be developed with the government and local organisations to ensure their continued technical support to groups. Relevant government departments will ensure that agricultural policies support and promote the work.

The People



Better markets

"This project will be of great benefit to us. It will help us to find better markets for our crops and establish buying centres where prices will not fluctuate greatly throughout the year. And with the new irrigation, we will be able to grow more, regardless of the seasonal rainfall patterns."

*Simon Kasmiri,
Mwang'halanga village,
Shinyanga.*

Increasing skills

"With good harvests it's possible to buy assets, such as livestock, which, if later there are food shortages, can be sold to buy food. I hope this project will help us to reach better markets for our rice. There are good varieties of rice available now, and with Oxfam's help, we will increase our income, and knowledge and skills as rice farmers."

*Kasmiri Bukwele of
Buyonge village Shinyanga*

More income

"Rice farming could give us income for necessities and school fees. But I usually end up selling at a loss because it is the buyer who fixes the price, since I am in need, I agree to sell at the price set."

"I believe this project will contribute by helping in the search for better markets for our crops, and with increased harvests I will earn more and overcome my poverty."

*Mwanne Yusufu, Matanda
ya Chamaguha, Shinyanga*

Lives will improve

"If farmers and traders are supported to improve production, processing and marketing, they will have secure sources of food and income, and their lives will improve significantly."

*Professor Aida Isinika, Oxfam
Programme Co-ordinator,
Shinyanga*

About **direct**

By supporting direct projects you're joining a global network of supporters, local people and partner organisations, all working with Oxfam to end poverty and suffering for good. From helping whole communities to protect themselves against disaster, to working with national governments to transform a country's schools, to helping individual families to earn a living, all direct projects offer you the chance to change lives.

Other countries needing your support:

Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Brazil, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Honduras, India, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritania, Nepal, Philippines, Sudan, Viet Nam, West Africa regional, Zambia.

The Budget

Total £200,000

Establishing producer groups and identifying millers and traders **£27,358**

Agricultural training and starter kits **£56,800**

Training in post harvest handling practices **£41,400**

Project management, monitoring and evaluation **£29,987**

Identifying new markets and improving marketing and negotiation skills **£29,455**

Development of credit facilities **£15,000**

Tanzania: country profile



Population	39 million
Development	Ranked 159th (of 177) on the HDI ¹
Life expectancy at birth	51 years
Percentage of population living on less than \$1 a day:	59%
Percentage of population living on less than \$2 a day:	90%
GDP per capita (UK GDP per capita \$33,238)	\$674
Agriculture as a percentage of GDP	45%*
Children under-weight for age (% under age 5):	22%

All data: UNDP Human Development Report (2006) except *: World Bank Group 2006.

¹The UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) is a composite measure of three dimensions of human development: life expectancy, education and standard of living.