

Consultative General Assembly of Rice Farmers consultation framework

Bamako Mali

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Upper River Region

INTRODUCTION

- Agriculture is the second dominant sector in The Gambian economy
- Employ over 70% of the total work force
- Contributing on average, 25.30 percent of Gross Domestic Product GDP
- It produces about 50% of the national food supplies with less than 50% of the country's total arable land resources currently being utilized

INTRO CONT.

- The sector generates approximately 40% foreign exchange earnings and provides two-thirds of total household income
- About 91% of the extremely poor and 72% of the poor in The Gambia are involved in the agricultural sector

RICE FARMING IN THE GAMBIA

- ❑ Rice is now grown virtually all categories of arable land in all regions of the country and various development strategies employed to increase production and productivity
- ❑ Despite the fact that it is the main staple food for most consumers, its production is grossly limited with only an average of 18.7% of total cereal cultivated area devoted to paddy



- Since 2005 land under cultivation has increased tremendously over the period to date. This was due to the introduction of new varieties of rice including NERICA in The Gambia and other institutional arrangements at regional level.
- Nerica has been on high demand since its introduction, and this could be manifested on the increase in the number of hectares cultivated yearly from 2005.

- Prior to the NERICA Project intervention, area under cultivation was only 240 Ha with an average yield of 0.5MT/Ha.
- In 2007 total land area cultivated was 3900 Ha with an average yield of 1.6 MT/Ha.
- In 2008, area cultivated was 7800 Ha with an average yield of 2 metric tonnes /Ha

RICE GROWING ECOLOGIES IN THE GAMBIA

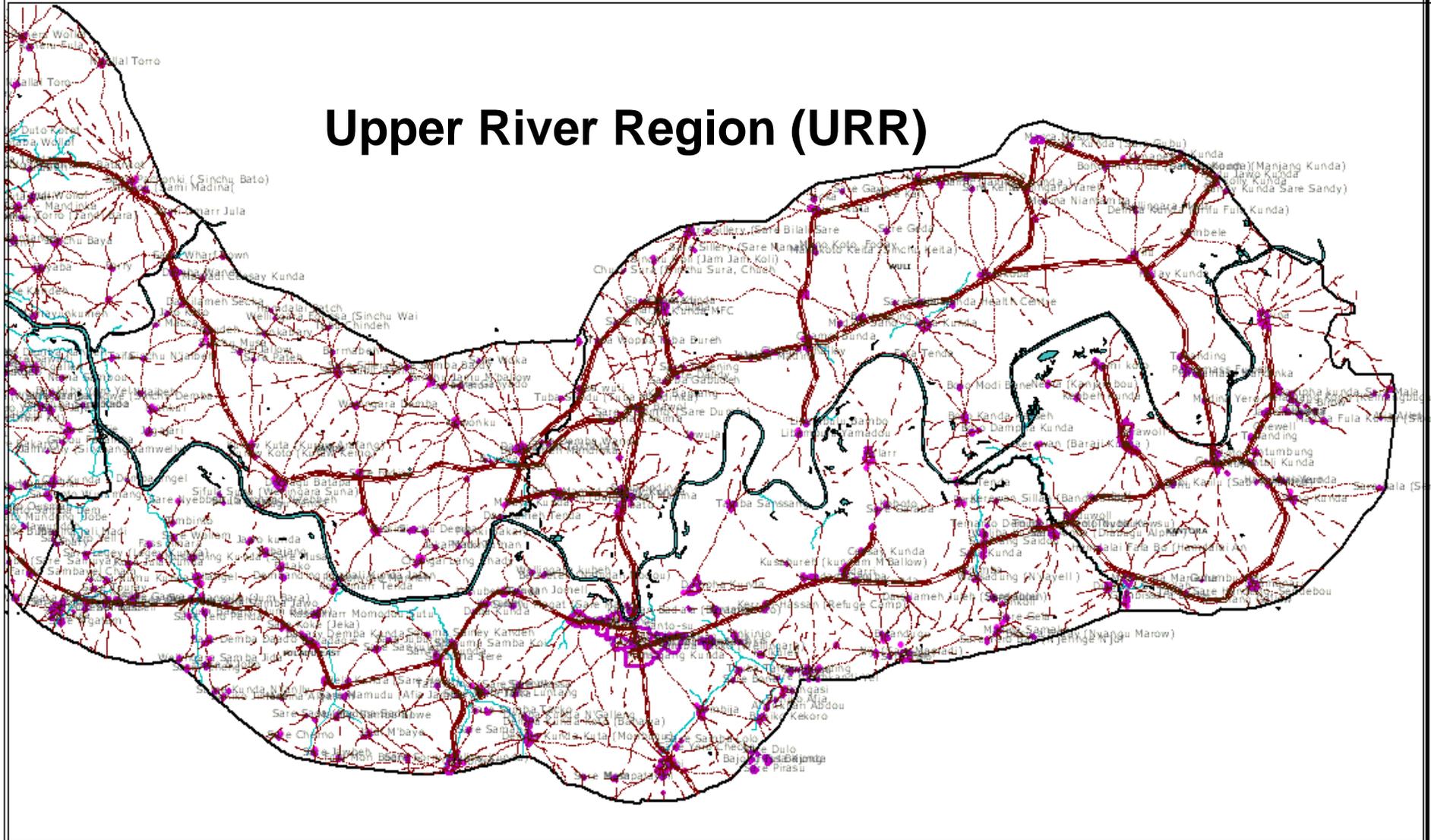
- Upland
- Low land rain-fed
- Tidal irrigation
- Mangrove
- Pump irrigation

The Gambia



SETTLEMENT MAP SHOWING UPPER RIVER REGION

Upper River Region (URR)



Objective

Derived and linked to The Gambia's vision 2020:

To transform agriculture into a sustainable, modernised, diversified and export oriented sector; which contributes to improved food security, farmers' livelihood and overall economic growth.

Prior to NERICA Project Intervention

- Area under rice cultivation: 400Ha
- Average yield: 0.5 MT/Ha
 - Mainly lowland/Hydromorphic
 - Prone to flash flooding and terminal drought
 - Use of traditional non-improved rice varieties of long duration
 - No cohesive rice farmer organization
 - Last recorded rice development intervention was between 1977-1983

2005 – 2007

PVS and CBSS

2006: 15 Ha under 5 NERICA Varieties
selected from the PVS

3 villages each doing 5Ha

1Ha per variety

- NERICA 1
- NERICA 2
- NERICA 3
- NERICA 4
- NERICA P163

REGIONAL SENARIO

Seed sourcing form one farmer community to another community

- Expanded the CBSS
- Grain production 650 Ha
- Seed 25 Ha
- Average yield 1.6 MT/Ha

RFA FORMATION PROCESS

RFA MEETING

**LOWLAND RICE UNDER
HARVEST**



REGIONAL SENARIO

- Reinforce farmer groups
- Farmer group formation
- Production and group management training
- June 2008, a regional NERICA Rice Farmer Association was formed
 - 30 villages
 - 600 Female
 - 240 Male
- Total Area Cultivated: 1,300 Ha
- Average yield 2 MT/Ha

REGIONAL SENARIO

- More farmers wanting to join the association
- 200 villages
- 1,600 Female
- 1,400 Male
- 8 Youths groups joined
- Total production 4,125 Ha
- Average yield 2.4 MT/Ha

Regional Association

- Village – District – Region
- Formation of National Association is in progress as a program for NACOFAG intends to federate all the regional rice farmer associations

DISTRICT - REGION

Successes

- Collective bargaining power
- Access to inputs
- Access to farm machinery
 - Project
 - Revolving fund
- Collective marketing of paddy
- Milling and marketing



ASSOCIATION PADDY MARKETING ACTIVITY 2009







Successes

Current savings \$155,000

Assets: 4 Tractors
 5 Power-tillers
 7 Threshing machines
 2 Milling machines











Feeding yourself – Ready for the market

The way Forward: Strategies

- Commercialized rice production (rice production as a business)
- Spreading the success of the Upper River Region to the whole country
 - Recognition by the Ministry of Agric.
 - Nationwide sensitisation campaign

CHALLENGES

- Lack of fund/finance to acquire processing equipments
- Unavailability of appropriate machinery for harvesting
- Inadequate storage facilities
- Poor road network linkages and water to production centres
- inadequate knowledge and skills in production and marketing

CHALLENGES CONT.

- Pests control and storage mgt
- High cost of processing paddy
- Lack of trade support for local rice producers, processors and traders
- Lack of market competitiveness

RECOMENDATION

- Establish micro-finance units through credit institutions for rice farmers
- Provide farm implements/equipments for production and processing of rice
- Encourage private sector participation
- Train farmers on production and marketing technique
- Strengthen the formation of rice farmer and management networks

RECOMMENDATIONS CONT.

- Exchange of knowledge and best practices
- Road network and water improvement in production areas
- Increase knowledge through sensitization on branding, packaging etc.

Thank You

