

# FOOD & BUSINESS APPLIED RESEARCH FUND

Ensuring Sustainable and Sustained Food Security by enhancing local parboiled rice value-Chain Competitiveness in Gogounou and Banikoara areas in Benin (PARCR)



## Consortium Members

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## Project description

In spite of the increasing demand, the potentials of local production as well as the numerous supports to this crops production in Benin, local rice competitiveness in the urban markets is still weak.

### Objectives:

- ✓ The overall objective is to develop a national partnership on innovative practices promoting local rice that contribute to ensuring a market-oriented food security. Specifically, this joint intervention aims to enhance local rice competitiveness on the urban markets in Benin through upgrading players' knowledge

### Method:

- ✓ Development of Farmer Fields School approach: it is a framework in which producers and the technicians adapt the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) to local conditions.
- ✓ Development of knowledge on rice parboiling: through participatory methods women rice processors learn how to obtain quality parboiled rice with the processing-tray in comparison with their own methods.
- ✓ Development of Innovations Platform (IP): IP are frameworks including various stakeholders, where innovations are developed. These innovations are related to production, processing, marketing, access to production factors and financing.
- ✓ Advocacy towards authorities for better care to rice channels.

### Impact:

- ✓ Increase of the availability and the quality of local parboiled rice;
- ✓ Improvement of the stability of the local parboiled rice supply in the towns of Borgou and Alibori;
- ✓ Improvement of the accessibility of quality local parboiled rice with competitive cost.

## Impact activities and preliminary results

- ✓ Organization of a study on the rice added value chain in Gogounou and Banikoara: the baseline study gave more insight on the organization of the rice sector, the economic aspects in production, processing and marketing, the access to production/processing factors, and it enabled to know that the organization is still weak due to the weak link between the various stakeholders.
- ✓ Continuous learning of System of Rice Intensification (SRI) technology in 20 Farmers Fields Schools (FFS): a learning guideline has been elaborated jointly with INRAB, DEDRAS, the technicians of Communal Unions of Producers (UCP), the technicians of the Communal Sector of Agricultural Development (SCDA) and the producers. This guideline is used to facilitate the FFS for adaptation of SRI to local conditions.
- ✓ Organization of 2 workshops for the establishment of 2 Innovations Platforms in Gogounou and Banikoara which regroup several actors (producers, processors, traders, inputs suppliers, solders, restaurant owners, etc.). After the establishment an action plan has been elaborated for each IP. Within these IP, ideas and innovations are developed to solve the issues which the actors are facing.
- ✓ Training of local solders on manufacturing of rice parboiling-tray: in total, 20 solders of Gogounou and Banikoara has been trained. They are ever since able to produce rice processing-tray and sell them to the women rice parboiling; so this facilitated the access to that material to the women.
- ✓ Continuous training and follow-up of women rice parboiling of 20 cooperatives of Gogounou and Banikoara in modern method of rice parboiling rice by using the rice processing-tray. Net improvement of the quality of the rice parboiled by the women themselves is observed today.

## Opportunities and challenges

### Opportunities

- ✓ The rice currently plays an important role in the food security in Benin. It appears as one of the basic food of the households, its demand is upon its local production. That is why there is recourse to imported rice. So there is a good market opportunity for the local rice.
- ✓ Nigeria a bordering country of Benin is a big market to sell the local rice due to its big density of population. Also, Niger and Burkina Faso are sahelian countries with annual deficits in cereals. All these countries shop with rice in Benin and are near of Gogounou and Banikoara.

### Challenges

- ✓ The labelling of the local parboiled rice: for a good penetration of the market, mostly the ones urbans, it is important to develop the labelling of the local parboiled rice. For that, it is also necessary to develop a system of centralization of the rice for homogeneity of the quality. This will solve the marketing issue.
- ✓ The sustainability of the IPs: the problem of the sustainability of the IPs is in terms of financing and leadership for their good functioning.
- ✓ The adaptation of the rice production to the climate changes: in the FFS, the implementation of the project is facing to the rainfall variations due to climate changes.
- ✓ The financing of the rice production and rice processing: the Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) are reticent to give credit to these actors of the rice chain.



Photo n°1: Participatory learning of rice sowing in FFS



Photo n°2: Participatory learning of rice parboiling



Photo n°3: Training of local solders on parboiling-tray manufacturing



Photo n°4: Parboiled rice obtained at the end of a learning session