

Southeast Asia: Rice

INTRODUCTION

Rice is the staple food for more than half of the world's population. By 2050, the demand for rice will be double what the world is producing today. Consequently, it is significant that more than 90% of the world's rice supply is produced in Asia and predominantly by smallholder farmers.

Challenges

- An increasing global demand for rice, particularly in Asia, coupled with unpredictable weather calamities in the last few years has put immense stress on rice farmers in the region
- These calamities, which threaten the livelihoods of millions of smallholders, have necessitated farmers find new ways to grow additional rice varieties in a manner that is efficient, sustainable and resilient to increasingly unpredictable climate shocks

PROJECTS

Indonesia

- Since 2018, this Better Life Farming project has been running in Central Java, East Java and Banten
- Better Life Farming developed four key access points to support smallholders in conjunction with local partners: access to the knowledge and technology; access to markets, access to finance and risk management
- Locally, we have partnered with PRISMA to help finance some of the project's activities, and with BNI Bank to provide collateral free loans to the smallholders
- The companies TPS & Medco have come on board as offtakers who will purchase the farmers' yield for a fair price

Successes

- In 2018, the project coverage was 6,920 farmers with a total of 6,920 hectares of farmland
- In Banten, an incremental yield of 27.1% and an increase of 73% in net income was achieved in comparison to current farmers in the same region in 2018

Thailand

- Projects in Thailand began in May 2017
- Proper crop disease control is a major issue for many smallholders across Thailand
- Better Life Farming has partnered with input provider Rung-anun, and with SATI who provides drone spraying services
- Better Life Farming's goal in Thailand is to implement effective and efficient farming approaches

Successes

- In 2018, the Better Life Farming project region for Thailand was Sisaket
- The project involved 138 farmers with a total of 275 hectares of farmland
- Being involved in the project meant farmers experienced an incremental yield increase of 17% and an increase of 18% in net income in comparison to current practice in the Sisaket region

The Philippines

- Better Life Farming has been working with numerous local partners across this project
 - Input Providers - D'Farmers Agrivet, Yara
 - Mechanization Partner – BOFAMCO
 - Finance and Insurance Provider – Cropital/PCIC
 - Offtaker – EBR Rice Mill
- We identified 5 pain points for farmers across the value chain:
 - 1) Access to viable/sustainable finance
 - 2) Better net income
 - 3) Access to technology
 - 4) Fair and stable market
 - 5) Risk mitigation and crop insurance
- Better Life Farming aims to provide solutions towards these pain points by engaging various partners to provide a holistic offer for helping smallholders in the Philippines

Successes

- Since 2018, Better Life Farming has been active in the regions of Bohol, Leyte, Samar; Lanao del Norte and Zamboanga del Norte
- 1,533 farmers with a total of 2,500 hectares of farmland were part of the Better Life Farming project in the Philippines
- In Bohol, one of the key project regions, smallholders experienced an incremental yield increase of 57% and an increase of 170% in net income in comparison to farmers in the region

Vietnam

- Since June 2018, Better Life Farming has worked in Northeast Vietnam in the area of Yen Ba and in the South Vietnam Mekong delta (Tien Giang, Hau Giang, Can Tho, Long An, Dong Thap)
- Vinafood has joined the project as a local offtaker
- Better Life Farming and its local value chain partners, Minh Tam and Trung An, share trainings on topics such as *"Farming as a business"* & *"Crop protection and safe use"*

Successes

- In 2018, the rice project in Vietnam involved the following regions: Long An, Dong Thap, Tien Giang, Hau Giang, Can Tho, and Kien Giang
- 1,260 farmers with a total of 1,718 hectares of farmland participated in the Better Life Farming project in 2018
- In Long An, smallholders received an increase of 26% in net income