

Bigger harvests, healthier families

Rwanda is home to more than 11 million people, many of whom are farmers. They cultivate a wide array of crops on less than an acre of land on average in two major growing seasons. Boosting agricultural productivity is among the best ways of raising their living standards out of poverty and hunger. By 2019, One Acre Fund's intervention will provide over 236,000 farmers with a complete package of support including improved seeds and fertilisers, financing, training, and market facilitation with the aim of increasing their income by 50% within one growing season. This sustained income will enable farmers to invest in children's schooling, livestock or new business ventures, increasing the quality of life of roughly 1.4 million people.

DURATION: 2016-2019

FOCUS AREA: Sustainable Livelihoods and Ecosystems

COUNTRY: Rwanda

PARTNER: One Acre Fund



CONTEXT

Over 70% of Rwandans live in rural areas, and four-fifths of the adult workers are smallholder farmers. Agriculture is central to the country's economy. However, Rwanda's cereal yields are significantly lower than the global average (1.5 tons per hectare compared with 3 tons in Asia and Latin America). Poor agronomic practices prevent farmers from getting the most out of their seeds, fertilisers and soils. The main barriers are the lack of access to improved varieties of crops and fertilizers, the absence of storage facilities and of links to market opportunities.

ACTION

One Acre Fund provides smallholder farmers living in remote rural areas with access to improved seed, fertilizer, and agriculture trainings, helping them improve their crop yields and therefore impacting their quality of life within one growing season. The core package of support includes:

- **Financing credit** in the form of flexible asset-based loans for farming inputs, such as improved seeds and fertilizers, food-safe insecticide dust, or crop insurance against excess rain or drought.
- Distribution of **farming inputs** directly to farmers' villages.
- **Trainings on modern agricultural techniques** such as weeding, plant spacing, composting, crop rotation, harvesting, proper drying and "micro-dosing" of fertilizer.
- **Market assistance** to help farmers store their surplus into the off-season (for instance providing sealed bags) and sell their crops not immediately after harvest, when prices are low, but later in the year when they are more favourable.

All these services are provided together.

EXPECTED RESULTS

By 2019 One Acre Fund plans to:

- train 236,000 Rwandan farmers, indirectly reaching roughly 1.4 million people
- significantly increase farmers' income on every planted acre by 50%
- ensure a repayment rate of micro-loans of 97%

LONG-TERM STRATEGY

The programme builds upon the strong foundation that One Acre Fund has established in Rwanda, one of the most mature and promising countries of its operations. It also benefits from the Rwandan government's strong commitment to supporting stallholder farmers. One Acre Fund is focused on increasing the density of farmers served in the country.

One Acre Fund's operating model requires farmers to pay back for all the products and services they receive through small, flexible micro-loans. This allows the organisation to cover nearly 80 percent of their field operating costs, be financially sustainable, grow in size and scale its impact.