

# Japanese experts commit to reinforce rice production in Cameroon

By Marior Tanyi in Yaounde

The government of Japan and the government of Cameroon are working hand in glove to improve on the production of rice in the country.

Both parties are collaborating through the Japan International Cooperation Agency, JICA, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development within its project dubbed Project for the Development of Irrigated and Rainfed Rice Cultivation, PRODERIP.

The ongoing cooperation was highlighted during a guided tour to some PRODERIP project sites Wednesday March 24 in Yaounde.

During the guided tour at the rice production farm in the Nkolbissong neighbourhood, Yaounde in the Centre region, the project coordinator briefed the press on the different stages of the production of rice from seedlings to planting, harvesting drying, piling and consumption.

Speaking during the tour, the PRODERIP Technical Team leader at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Mirabel Johnbang, noted that the main aim of the cooperation in the domain of irrigated and



Johnbang explaining at the Yaounde rice field during yesterday's tour with the media

rainfed rice is to improve on the quantity and quality of the Ndop rice that is greatly consumed in Cameroon, as well as reduce the quantity of imported rice.

She went further to note that "...working with the Upper Noun Valley Development Authority, UNVDA, we discovered that a lot has to be done to improve on the quality of the Ndop rice but more still needs to be done at the level of quality so as to make it up to standard."

"Since the start of this project in 2017, we have been able to train over

23,000 farmers and explored over 90 hectares of land. As such, we train extended staff and farmers who, in return, train other farmers," she explained.

"...Once this is done," Mirabel Johnbang said, "we give out selected treated seedlings of the rice for cultivation. Once the rice is harvested and dried, it is sent to Yaounde in Nkolbissong piling house where it is cracked."

According to the National Coordinator of PRODERIP, Fotack Emile, once the rice is sent to

Yaounde, it goes into the piling machine where the grains are piled and sent to another machine where they are separated from the stones and broken grains and later package for sale.

The authorities of the farm went further to note that they operate four seedling multiplication sites in Cameroon, located in Ndop, Yaounde, Bafoum and Ebolowa.

It should be said that in recent years, rice consumption in Cameroon has increased considerably.

Achieving rice sufficiency is therefore an important issue for Cameroon. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Japan International Cooperation Agency, JICA, are in this light, implementing the technical cooperation project to help Cameroon become self-sufficient in rice.

As such, they are promoting Upland and irrigated rice varieties and providing support at various levels of the value chain, from seed production to the development of the distribution channel.

Yesterday's tour ended at the Cami Yaounde agency with a presentation on the various services that the company has to offer to the public

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