

Using the Mudu Fund to Nurture a Market



Left: Traditional Parboilers in use

Right: TADCO Parboiler in use

Ninety-nine per cent of the parboiling in Kano is carried out by women. The women involved in this business are often the poorest along the rice value chain despite the fact parboiling has a considerable impact on the quality and cost of rice at the end of the chain.

PrOpCom has been working with these women parboilers since the beginning of its implementation phase and found after many observations and a study that the parboiling techniques they were using have not changed in several generations, and the outcome of the traditional equipment is not efficient.

This motivated PrOpCom to introduce improved parboiling equipment to help in improving the quality of parboiling,

increasing milling yields, increasing the quality of processed rice and increasing income for the women. PrOpCom approached three fabricators in Kano and encouraged them through its Stakeholder Innovation Fund (now known as the Mudu Fund), for research and development of an improved parboiler. TADCO limited fabricated the best equipment at relatively low cost, with low time consumption (for steaming the rice) and the best output quality of rice parboiled.

TADCO Nigeria Limited is a company based in Kano State which fabricates and sells rice processing equipment. The company is also involved in the purchase, processing and packaging of domestic Rice for sale within the country. The company's experience with processing and packaging rice led it to design a new improved parboiler that would address some of the issues experienced with traditional rice parboiling. The design incorporates a false bottom to facilitate steaming versus cooking and taps to aid the evacuation of hot water once soaking is complete.

With PrOpCom's support through the Stakeholder Innovation Fund TADCO started the mass-fabrication of improved parboilers and the accessories. PrOpCom also organised the demonstration of the new parboiling system to women's groups within the Kura-Kano processing corridor. These demonstrations helped prove to the women that the new equipment parboiled more efficiently than the traditional parboiler and produced a better grade of rice at the end which could fetch a higher price at the market.

In packaging the product for market, TADCO bundles with the parboiler several items necessary to operate the equipment so the customers get an all-in-one product. They have also included the cost of training each new customer on how to use the equipment into the total cost.

According to TADCO's Finance Director, Ya'ou Bala Mohammad, TADCO has started the design patent registration process for their product to protect it against copies. After that, they plan to expand their market to other Northern states of Nigeria by partnering with the states and local governments.

Year	Sales (Numbers)
2006	32
2007	2
2008	519
Total	553