



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

MADAGASCAR

BEFORE & AFTER

Communities Reclaim Abandoned Land

Rehabilitating irrigation systems and reclaiming land makes room for rice

Madagascar has one of the highest levels of per capita rice consumption in the world. The country also has an abundant amount of low-lying land suitable for rice cultivation. But on the country's eastern coast, poor management practices and lack of access to appropriate technologies led people to abandon large tracts of prime rice paddies. Farmers resorted to slash-and-burn rice cultivation on the surrounding hillsides that have severely damaged the environment.

Since 2004, USAID has helped communities reclaim over 1500 hectares of rice paddies by rehabilitating over 200 kilometers of primary irrigation canals, enabling communities to return to lowland rice cultivation, helping conserve the natural environment, and paving the way for watershed reclamation.



Photo: CARE

BEFORE The rudimentary irrigation system in this valley had broken down, making the land either too wet or dry for cultivation. The surrounding hillsides had been used for slash-and-burn agriculture, and the basin was clogged with silt and invasive plants.



Photo: CARE

AFTER With assistance from USAID, communities rehabilitated irrigation systems, reclaimed the basin surface, and created a local water management committee. Now, rice paddies flourish and communities are planting tree crops. USAID's assistance has reduced watershed erosion, helped conserve the environment, increased rice productivity, and raised local household incomes.

Telling Our Story

U.S. Agency for International Development
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