


Farmers in West Africa now have the chance to grow and sell more crops on the open market following investment from the U.K. Department for International Development (DFID). 

A funding package worth £9.04 million (US\$14.3 million) will help farmers in Mali, Ghana and the Ivory Coast improve food security and increase income potential through support for producers who want to transform smallholdings into larger agricultural enterprises.

The investment will be made in Injaro, a West African agricultural-focused fund, which makes sustainable investment into small and medium-sized agriculture businesses, according to a British government release.

The money will also help provide better quality seeds and fertilizer for farmers.

U.K. International Development Secretary, Justine Greening MP, says the support package is a clear example of how Britain is using its expertise to help 'the poorest move out of poverty'.

"Economic development is the only way countries can leave behind enduring and chronic poverty for good," she said in a release.

"The funding will enable farmers in West Africa to grow larger supplies of crops and help them trade what they grow.

"This not only allows farmers to grow enough produce to feed their families but can also turn small-holder farmers into budding agricultural businesses, boosting their prosperity in the long term."

Injaro chief executive Jerry Parkes says the investment has a three-point plan: to increase and sustain the supply of affordable and better quality seeds for farmers; supply essential products and services to growing local consumer markets; and help companies make the most of export opportunities.

Dutch and French development financial institutions FMO and Proparco have also contributed to the Injaro fund.

"These new investments give our fund scale and legitimacy in the impact investment space, helping to build a track record that will attract further private investment into this emerging asset class," Parkes said in a release.

"With an increased fund size of US\$49 million we hope to positively impact over one million smallholder farmers and low income persons in West Africa."

Photo: Injaro

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