

Farming techniques that will feed a family

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The Food and Agriculture Organization estimates that poor countries will spend up to one hundred seventy billion dollars this year to import [redacted]. This is an increase of forty percent from last year. The United Nations agency says the rising price of food over the past year is a serious problem because most hungry people also live in [redacted].

A humanitarian organization based in Washington, D.C. has a new anti-hunger project. Women for Women International is teaching poor women in Sudan and Rwanda a new food production system called commercial integrated farming. The women are trained to grow [redacted] that not only feed their families, but also earn them a profit.

Pat Morris is program director at Women for Women International. The group launched its commercial integrated farming program in Rwanda. Female farmers receive information about what kind of seeds to use, how to farm without [redacted] and when to harvest. The program also provides business skills training. Mizz Morris says women being trained in Rwanda could more than triple the amount of money they earn from farming.

With integrated farming, the women [redacted] animals and different crops on one piece of land. Animal waste provides fertilizer. Some of the crops can be used as animal feed. In Rwanda, the women have been able to grow traditional crops like [redacted] and sorghum grain along side higher-value crops, such as [redacted]. A hectare of farmland in Rwanda used to earn about four hundred twenty dollars a year. But a family using integrated farming techniques on the same piece of land can earn as much as three thousand five hundred dollars a year.

Women for Women International works with local community partners to design and carry out its integrated farming program. Grace Fisiy is an agricultural business expert working in Rwanda and Sudan. She says the local [redacted] in both countries have helped educate people about [redacted] farming.

Women for Women International plans to train at least three thousand women in Sudan and Rwanda. Mizz Fisiy hopes the program will [redacted] to other countries as well.