

Case Study

Rice Market Research in East and West Africa

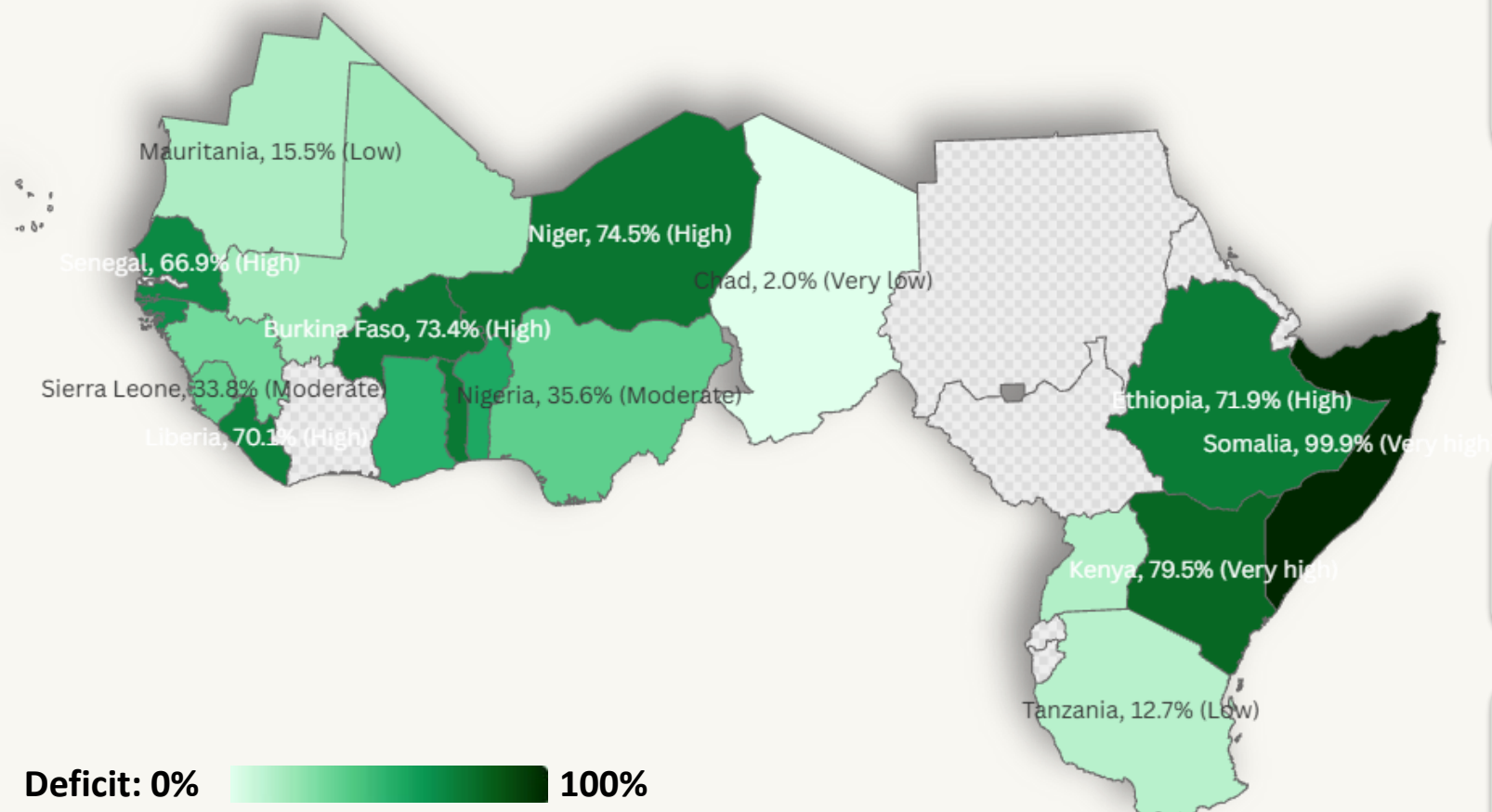
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Africa rice market: growing demand, persistent supply deficit

The latest comparable milled rice production and consumption balance



42%

East and West African countries currently produce only 42% of the rice they consume, compared to approx. 60% average for all African countries

Demand is structurally supported by population growth, urbanization, rising incomes and a shift in consumer preferences toward rice. [Source](#)

African countries are projected to increase their share of global rice imports from 35% currently to 45% by 2035. [Source](#)

Further increases in population and per capita rice consumption could raise African demand for rice to around 150 Mt by 2050. [Source](#)



Overall market specifics and key risk factors

The demand outlook is robust; the main uncertainty is the pace of local productivity gains and the volatility of import economics.

STRUCTURAL MARKET SPECIFICS

Import dependence is structural

Africa imports approximately 40% of the rice it consumes, although dependence varies substantially by country. [Source](#)

Production growth has relied on area expansion

Average yields have been broadly stagnant while area expanded ~40% over the past decade. [Source](#)

Area expansion has limits

Land, irrigation, infrastructure and environmental constraints reduce the sustainability of area-led growth. [Source](#)

KEY RISK FACTORS

Policy & market-access — High

Tariffs, quotas, import licenses, subsidies and self-sufficiency policies can quickly change landed economics or restrict access to attractive markets.

Origin concentration & export policy — High

African import demand depends heavily on a small number of Asian origins. Export restrictions or supply shocks in India, Vietnam, Thailand or Pakistan can disrupt availability and margins.

FX & working-capital — High

Rice is typically purchased in USD while customers sell in local currency. Depreciation, high interest rates, and limited access to trade finance can weaken purchasing power and raise credit risk.

Domestic substitution — Medium / long term

Yield improvements, irrigation and government support can increase local production and slow import growth in some markets, although strong demand growth should keep imports material.

Logistics & execution — High

Port congestion, inland transport, warehousing constraints and customs delays can materially increase landed costs and erode trading margins.

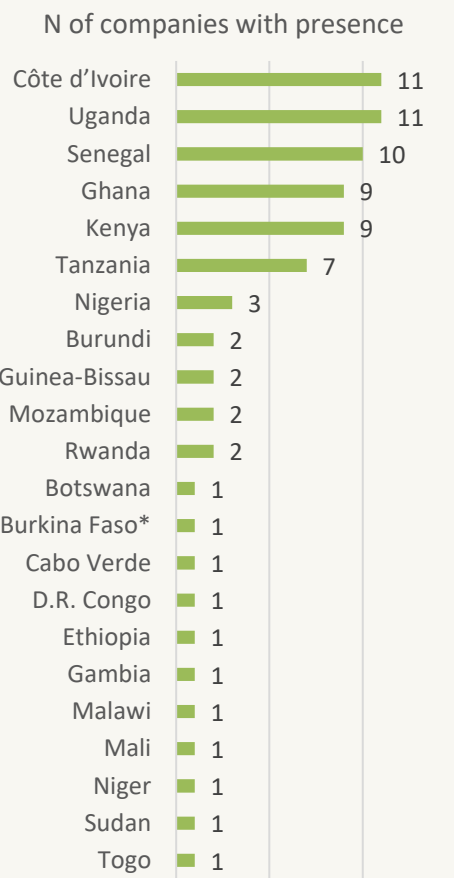
Route-to-market & counterparty — Medium

Local importers and distributors often control warehousing, wholesale networks and customer access. Weak counterparties or limited downstream reach can constrain market penetration and collections.

Key message: Demand growth supports the trade opportunity, but profitability depends on managing policy, sourcing, FX, logistics and local market access.

Research coverage: 50 company and trader entries in East and West Africa

The 50 reviewed company entries have 79 explicitly listed company-country presences across 22 countries, including origination activity.



Methodology and data collection

The analysis combines desk research from company websites, annual reports, regulatory filings, government and trade directories, and available shipment databases. Findings were cross-checked where possible, with sources and confidence assessments recorded in the supporting table. Unavailable or unsupported information is marked **NA**. Country coverage counts each company entry in every explicitly named market; group and subsidiary entries remain separate. Competitor tiers and strategic relevance are qualitative assessments, not market-share rankings. Historical figures and shipment samples are identified and are not treated as current annual volumes.

The research covers four types of market participants

Tier	Representative companies	Why they matter
1 Global platforms	Olam Agri, LDC, ETG / Nusrico	International sourcing and African market access
2 Regional platforms	CIC, Bakhresa, Shree Agro	Multi-country distribution or processing networks
3 Key national players	SDTM-CI, CMGA, CASL, Popular Farms, WACOT, Nice Rice, GNPA	Country-specific import, milling or distribution roles
4 Additional traders	EMK, Mujje Tukole, Hainaka, Tradepass, DSF and others	Local and cross-border activity, with uneven scale disclosure

** WACOT represents TGI's Nigerian rice business. Tier 4 does not imply low commercial importance.*

The underlying company table contains a detailed analysis of ownership, geographic presence, scale, rice sourcing, operating models, brands, customer channels, and strategic relevance, along with sources and confidence assessments. These slides highlight the main findings. Unsupported or unavailable information is marked NA.

Four operating models describe the main routes to market

Companies combine sourcing, processing and distribution in different ways, often operating across multiple models.

Operating model	How it works	Representative companies	Key competitive strength
Global commodity merchants	International origination, freight and supply to African buyers	LDC, Olam Agri, ETG / Nusrico	Access to origins and international trade execution
Importers & destination distributors	Procurement abroad, destination storage and sales through local channels	CIC, Shree Agro, SDTM-CI, Imaginario	Customer relationships, distribution reach and brands
Integrated producers / millers	Own farms, outgrowers or purchased paddy supply mills and downstream sales	CASL, Popular Farms, WACOT, Mwea Rice Mills	Reliable paddy supply and processing capability
Regional / cross-border traders	Collecting paddy or rice and supplying processors or buyers across neighbouring markets	IBS Agro, Hainaka, Mujje Tukole	Local procurement networks and cross-border market access

These models overlap. Olam Agri and ETG combine trading with processing, while millers may also import or export rice.

Countries show different competitive structures:

WEST AFRICA

Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire

CIC, Shree Agro and SDTM-CI illustrate import and distribution networks.

Nigeria and Senegal

Popular Farms, WACOT and CASL illustrate domestic paddy sourcing and milling.

[See the full data table](#)

EAST AFRICA

Tanzania and Kenya

Wilmar Rice, Flamingoo, Mwea and Nice Rice illustrate milling and domestic or regional sales.

Uganda

Mujje Tukole illustrates trade and processing. Kibimba adds a historically integrated production model.

Organizational patterns across the researched rice-market companies

50 company entries reviewed | 35 with units/functions mapped | 28 with named people | 69 person–role records

Classification is based on the extraction of publicly available data. [Cumulative table](#). Three organizational patterns were assessed, with the following criteria: (A) requires at least two explicit business segments or managed portfolios; (B) requires at least two identified country businesses/offices; (C) requires at least two explicit functions or departments.

13 fully supported (26%) company profiles:

Observed organizational feature	Number	Companies	Interpretation
A. Business-line organization	5	Olam, LDC, ETG, Bakhresa, Shree Agro*	Responsibilities are organised around segments, divisions or managed commodity portfolios. These range from large diversified groups to smaller trading businesses.
B. Country-network organization	2	CIC, Galaxies	The organisation includes identified country businesses or offices. This establishes geographic structure, but not the degree of local autonomy.
C. Functional organization	7	Stallion, Shree Agro*, CIC Ghana, CASL, Flamingoo, IBS Agro, Sinai	Responsibilities are differentiated by function, such as operations, sales, procurement, finance or technology. Reporting relationships are generally less visible.

* Shree Agro appears in 2 categories and combines commodity portfolios with functional responsibilities.

26 partially supported (52%) company profiles:

Main reason for “partial” status	N	Companies
Leadership identified, but responsibilities insufficiently mapped	10	CMGA, CCMN, ADC, SDRCI, DSF, Nice Rice, Kibimba, Mujje Tukole, Kouma et Frères, Imaginario
Parent/subsidiary relationship established, but internal structure unavailable	7	WACOT, Wilmar Rice Tanzania, GADCO, CIC Sénégal, S.S. COM, SDTM-CI, CIC Côte d’Ivoire
Operating activities identified, but not confirmed as organizational units	5	NB Services, SODEFITEX, Tana, PRM Bulamu, RM Holdings
Governance or executive structure documented, but outside the three categories	4	GNPA, SONAM Abidjan, Mwea Rice Mills, Western Kenya Rice Mills

11 NA (22%) company profiles, where public data was not sufficient

Main recruitment risks and challenges in the region

High**Scarcity of sector-specific senior talent**

The challenge is not the overall number of candidates, but the smaller pool with proven experience in commodity trading, origination, procurement, risk, logistics, milling and agribusiness operations.

High**Retention and competition for proven talent**

The most attractive candidates are often already employed and recruited through direct search rather than open applications. Scarcity increases the risk of counteroffers and poaching, particularly for senior roles.

High**Cross-border mobility & relocation**

Moving specialists between African markets involves bureaucracy. Studies report regulatory fragmentation and processing delays as barriers to efficient labor mobility. For senior expatriate/regional hires, housing, schooling and family considerations are also important.

Medium**Fragmented talent pools across countries and languages**

East and West Africa are not one market. Relevant talent is spread across Anglophone and Francophone countries. For senior regional roles, English/French bilingual capability can substantially narrow the pool.

Medium**Candidate identification, verification & recruitment-governance risk**

Talent information is fragmented across LinkedIn, local platforms, executive-search networks and personal referrals. Where formal recruitment channels are weak, employers may rely heavily on professional and personal networks, reducing transparency and consistency.

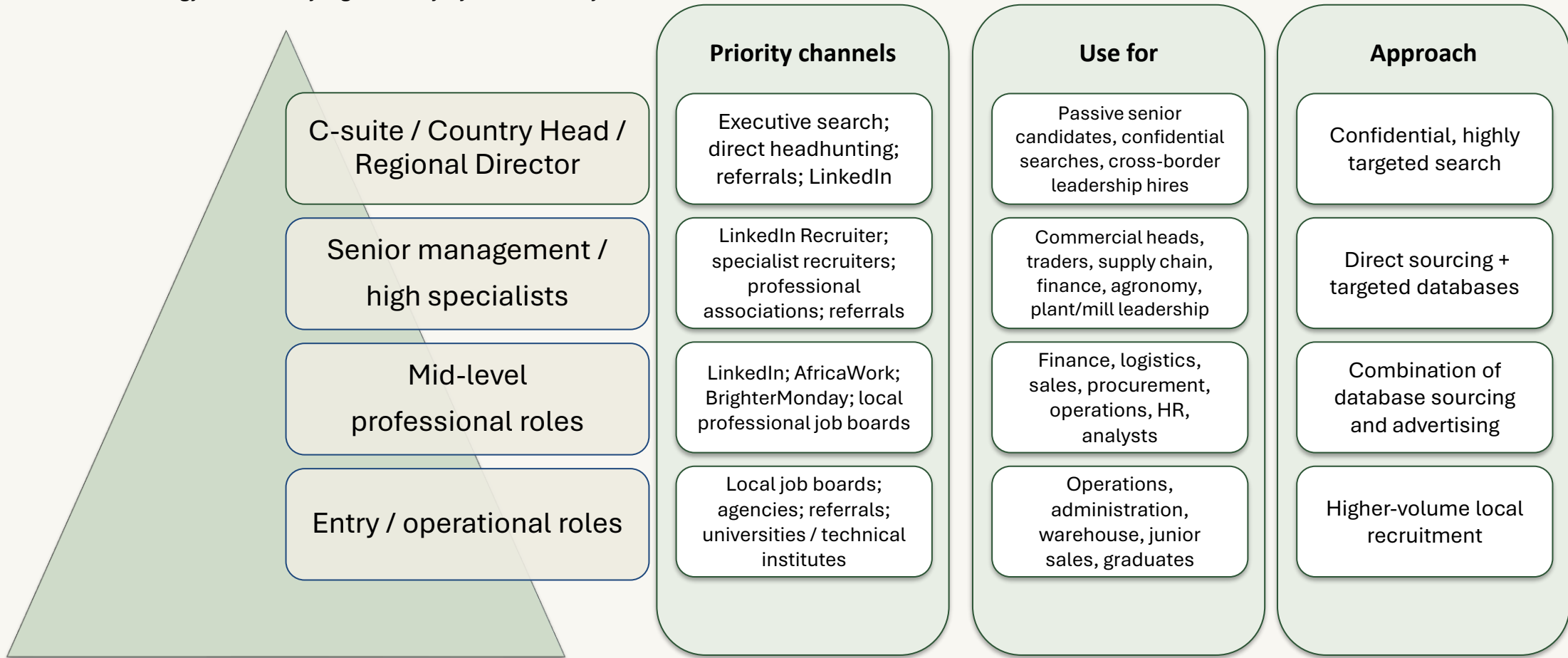
Medium-low**Compensation, FX and benefits volatility**

Competitive packages can move quickly because of inflation and currency depreciation. Mobility packages are also affected by large differences in local cost of living and exchange-rate volatility.

For scarce African leadership and specialist talent, recruitment should start with the market and competitor map, not with a job advertisement.

Recruitment channels by seniority

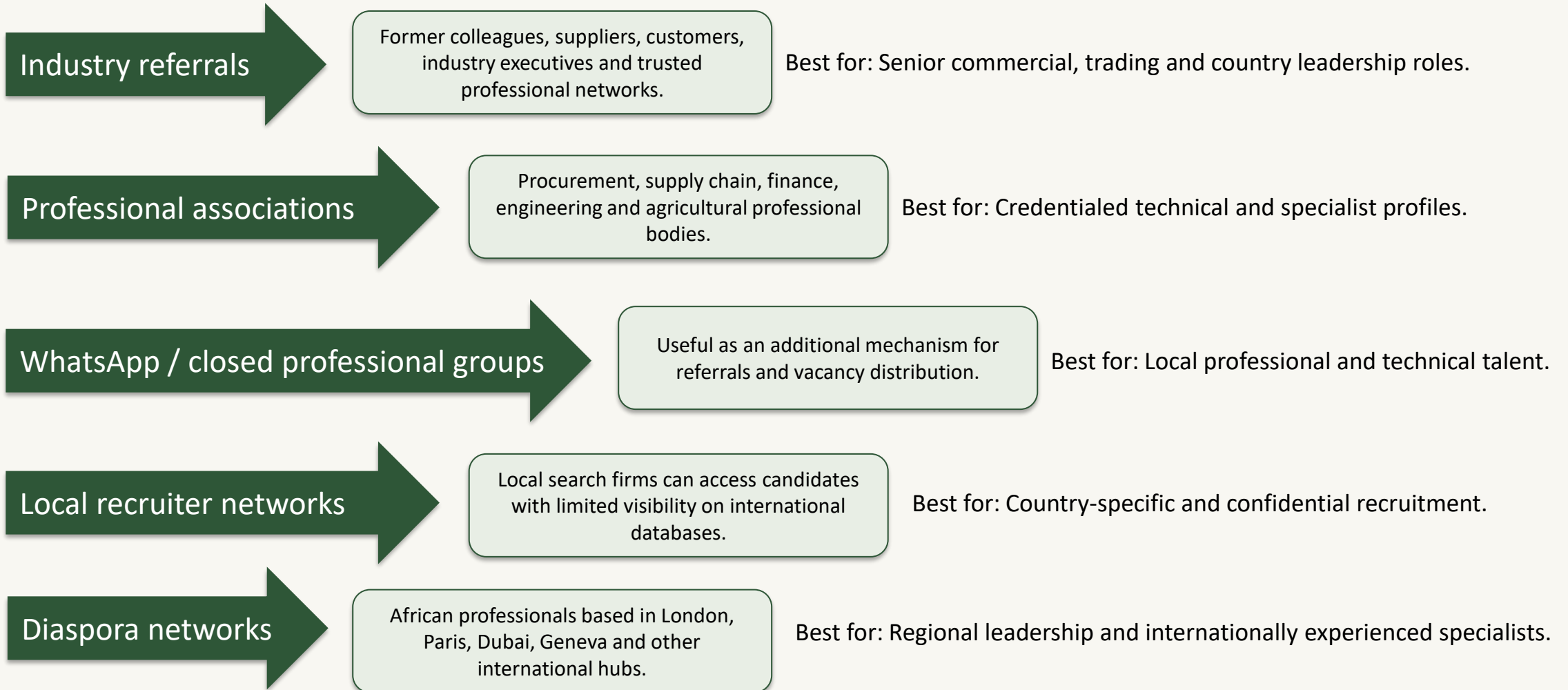
Channel strategy should vary significantly by role seniority



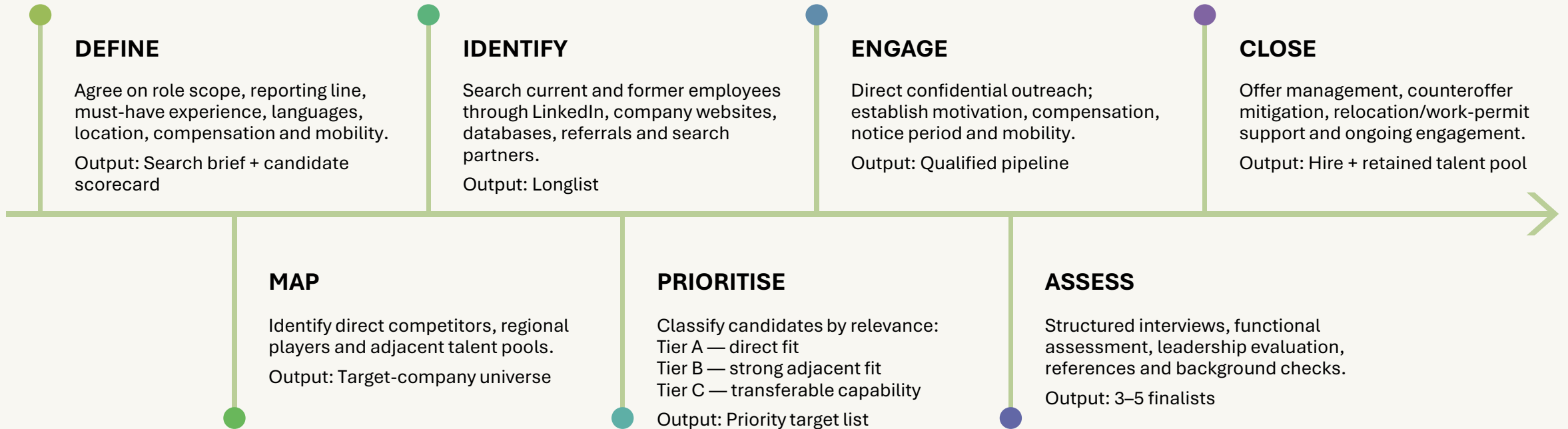
Regional resources: [AfricaWork](#): Presence across 37 African countries, 4 million registered candidate profiles.

[BrighterMonday Kenya](#): 3 million candidate talent pool, Pro Recruit specifically used for senior, technical and specialist hiring.

Local networks and diaspora channels expand the accessible talent pool



Search execution: from market mapping to qualified shortlist



The critical element is the map. For a rice/commercial search, it includes:

1. Direct competitors: Olam Agri, LDC, ETG/Nusrico, Wilmar and other international commodity traders.
2. Major regional rice players: CIC, Bakhresa, Stallion, WACOT, SDTM and similar integrated importers/processors.
3. Adjacent talent pools: grain traders, FMCG distributors, port/logistics operators, milling businesses, processors and food-import companies.
4. Transferable-function talent: candidates from commodities, feed, edible oils, logistics or broader agri-supply chains whose skills transfer into rice.

Building the talent map from the competitor landscape

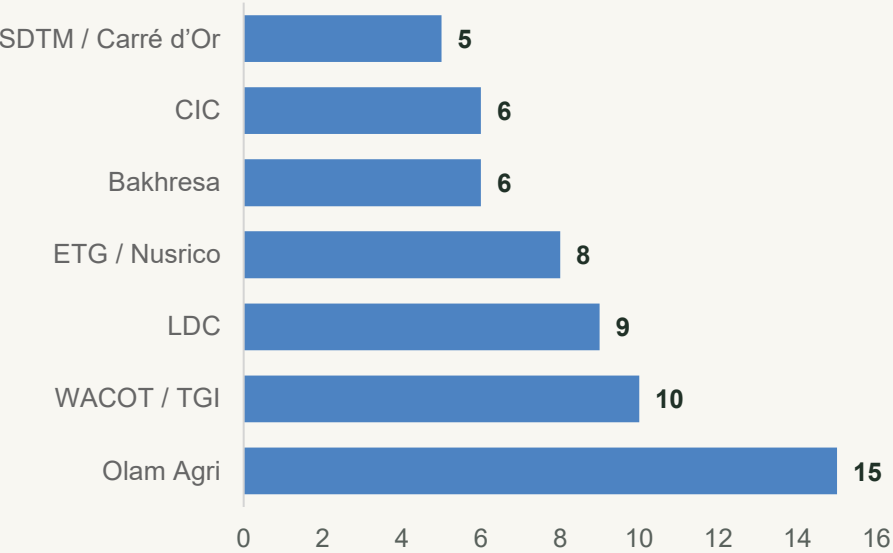


85 profiles identified across 23 priority employers

85 total profiles | 23 companies | 67 LinkedIn URLs | 82 supported by secondary sources | 26 fully verified

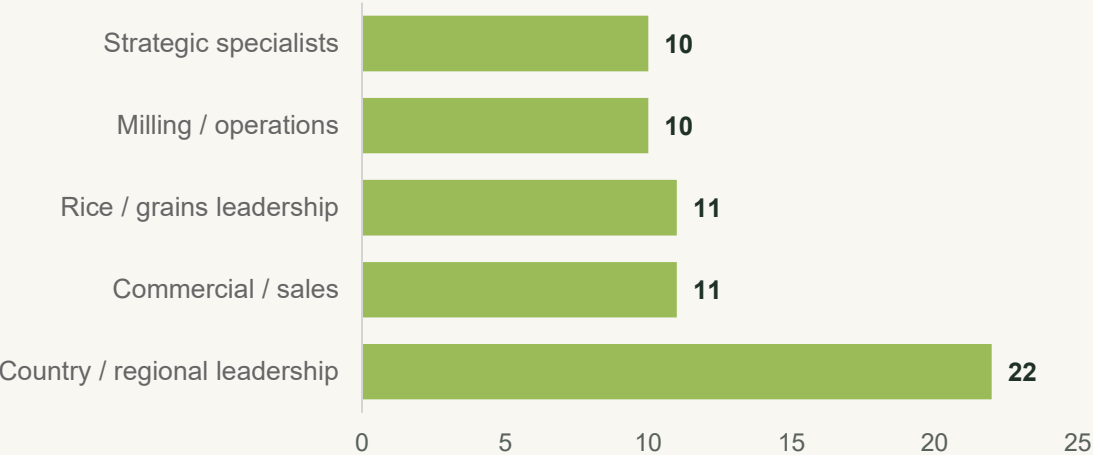
Largest company clusters

The seven largest company groups account for 59 profiles, or 69% of the database.



Functional profile

The five largest talent families represent 64 profiles, or 75% of the mapped pool.



Market coverage

The strongest local clusters are in Nigeria, Tanzania, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal and Ghana. Global and regional roles add visibility into African rice flows.

Search priority

80 profiles meet Priority A or B criteria, creating the core pool for further assessment.

The project mapped the rice market, competitor landscape and relevant talent

50 Companies reviewed

4 Operating models

69 Public person-role records

85 talent profiles

Research completed

- Assessed market demand, supply constraints and commercial risks
- Mapped 50 company and trader entries across 79 documented country presences
- Analyzed operating models, organizational structures and public leadership
- Built and quality-controlled an 85-profile talent database

Main conclusions

- **The market opportunity is execution-intensive**
Demand growth and persistent production deficits support continued trade, but profitability depends on policy, foreign exchange, logistics, counterparties and route-to-market access.
- **Different competitors provide different talent pools**
Global merchants are the closest source of expertise in trading, origination, and execution. Regional distributors and millers provide local sourcing, operations and customer-network capability.
- **A relevant talent pool exists, but public visibility is uneven**
The database contains 85 profiles across 23 priority employers, including 80 Priority A or B profiles. Leadership and operations are more visible than the commercial and trading teams.
- **The search should combine evidence with direct market access**
Public research provides a strong starting universe. Confidential search, referrals and specialist networks are needed to verify availability, mobility and fit.



Thank you

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