

Minutes of Twelfth CARD Steering Committee Meeting (SC 12)

The twelfth meeting of the steering committee members of Coalition for African Rice Development (CARD) was held in the conference room in the office of the Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) at Nairobi, Kenya on 29th August 2016. The meeting was attended by representatives of the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Africa Rice Center (AfricaRice), AGRA, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences (JIRCAS), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and the World Bank. International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) was absent with apology. The meeting was convened by the out-going co-chair, AfricaRice (represented by Dr. Harold Roy-Macauley) and in-coming co-chair, FAO (represented by Mr. Bukar Tijani). The list of participants and the meeting agenda are attached as annexes.

1. PURPOSE

The purposes of the SC12 are to; (i) apprise the progress made by CARD since the previous SC meeting (SC11), (ii) seek consent on the process of mid-term and final evaluation of CARD, and, (iii) brainstorm a framework for the next phase of the CARD initiative after 2018 (phase II).

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF SC11 MEETING

The meeting reviewed and approved, with minor grammatical edits, the minutes of SC11 that was held on the eve of the sixth CARD General Meeting (GM6) on November 17, 2015, in Accra, Ghana.

3. DISCUSSIONS ON CARD ACTIVITIES

3.1. PROGRESS ON CARD ACTIVITIES: Mr. Takanori Satoyama, the General Coordinator of the CARD Secretariat made a presentation on the update of CARD activities:

- All CARD member countries, with the exception of Ghana and Mozambique, had ratified their National Rice Development Strategy (NRDS). CARD has assisted in revising the NRDS documents in Ghana and Mozambique, since the approval of the earlier versions of the documents are stalled due to administrative and political changes in these countries. The official approval process on NRDS is expected to be completed shortly in the two countries.
- Total paddy rice production in Sub-Sahara Africa has increased by 74% (from the baseline of approximately 14 million tons in 2005-07 (average) to 25.158 million tons in 2014), suggesting that CARD is most likely to achieve its overall goal of doubling rice production by 2018.
- The increments in production is significant in the high volume production countries (such as Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Tanzania, followed by Guinea, Mali and Sierra Leone), while the increase in percentage is high in a number of low volume production countries (such as Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Togo and Zambia).
- The production in Madagascar has not significantly increased from the base year of 2008, mostly because of the suspension of international assistance due to the political turmoil in 2009. It is, however, expected that the rice production in Madagascar will increase from 2015 on as the donor support resumed from 2014.
- The number of CARD labeled projects in member countries presently stands at 110
- All of the ten pilot countries assisted under the CARD initiative for improved rice seed sector have formulated National Rice Seed Development Strategy (RSDS). Also all of them, except for Burkina Faso, have developed the project concept notes for the implement of RSDS in their countries.

- The CARD initiative for improved rice seed sector was extended to 11 additional countries, and all of these new batch countries, except for Liberia, have drafted their RSDS.
- Regarding the CARD mechanization initiative which already covers eight countries, namely Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Mali, Senegal, Tanzania, Rwanda and Uganda, only Cote d'Ivoire and Madagascar have completed the process of formulation of mechanization strategy and project concept notes. The drafted mechanization strategy will be finalized in Cameroon and Senegal, while CARD is planning to strengthen the existing mechanization strategy in Rwanda and Mali to make their strategies more implementable. Nigeria showed its interest in joining the CARD mechanization initiative, and the drafting of the mechanization strategy is expected to start shortly.
- Regarding the capacity development, a training program has been carried out through IRRI-JICA triangular cooperation to build the capacity of human resources in CARD member countries in seed sector. This training was designed based on the CARD initiative for improved rice seed sector.
- CARD was represented in the 7th African Agriculture Science Week (AASW 7) in June, 2016.
- CARD organized a side event to show case its achievements and successful stories from some CARD countries, as well as to present the scopes of its future at the occasion of the 6th Tokyo international Conference for African Development (TICAD VI) on 25th August, 2016.

3.2. MID-TERM EVALUATION OF CARD

A mid-term evaluation of CARD has been carried out in order to collect qualitative information to contribute to the CARD final evaluation that will appraise the relevance and effectiveness of CARD in rice sector development in Africa. One consultant was recruited by IFAD to undertake this assignment of the mid-term evaluation and the IFAD consultant collected some preliminary information, parts of which were shared at SC11 and 6th CARD General Meeting (GM6). Meanwhile another consultant was recruited by JICA to compliment the information collected by the IFAD consultant. However, the information collection and final reporting have not been completed by the consultants due to the discontinuity of duties by the IFAD consultant. Despite the continuous efforts by IFAD and the CARD Secretariat, the IFAD consultant has not replied to the communications from CARD.

- Given the limited time left in the current phase of CARD (2008-2018), the SC members observed that it is not worthy of pursuing the mid-term evaluation, and instead suggested that the final evaluation on CARD should be well planned and organized based on the lesson from the mid-term evaluation to avoid the repetition of similar failure.
- The SC members further suggested that since the information collected for the mid-term evaluation nevertheless should be useful to the final evaluation of CARD. Therefore, the CARD secretariat and SC members will continue retrieve information from the IFAD consultant, while JICA will make the data collected by the JICA consultant available. The retrieved data will be handed over to the evaluators who will take on the CARD final evaluation.

3.3. FINAL EVALUATION OF CARD

To assess the effectiveness and relevance of the CARD initiative in developing rice sector in Sub-Saharan Africa, the CARD Secretariat proposed a plan for final evaluation. The SC members suggested that the final evaluation shall be organized at (a) the regional/continental level covering all CARD member countries and (b) the national level in selected CARD countries. Also some of the CARD countries will conduct evaluation on their NRDS, and the results of NRDS evaluation shall also be incorporated in the CARD final evaluation as much as possible. It was further suggested that a pool of resources from the different partner organizations shall be generated for the CARD final evaluation and a consultancy firm (instead of individual consultant) shall be engaged. It was learnt that JICA has already allocated some financial resources for the CARD final evaluation; and only a Japanese consultancy firm shall be eligible. Nevertheless, the Japanese consultancy firm is allowed to form a consortium in which other consultancy firms from Africa can join the evaluation process. After deliberating on the modalities, the SC members came to the following consensus:-

- The regional/continental level evaluation of CARD and the country level evaluation of CARD in selected countries will be conducted through the JICA funding process in which Africa based consultancy firms shall be encouraged to join a consortium
- Even though the CARD countries have primary responsibility of fund mobilization for the NRDS evaluation, resources from FAO (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea Conakry, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Uganda and Tanzania) and World Bank (Guinea Bissau, Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Mozambique and Madagascar) shall be used to recruit national consultants and organize NRDS evaluation at country level.
- CARD Secretariat will draft the two sets of terms of references (TOR); one for regional and national CARD evaluation; and the other for NRDS evaluation (standard format TOR that is subject to modification according to the each country's contexts). TOR shall have the assessment framework on relevance, efficiency, impact and sustainability of CARD
- The final evaluation shall be completed and finalized before the end of 2017. CARD Secretariat shall facilitate sharing of preliminary results and progress of the final evaluation process amongst the SC members at the next SC meeting (SC13).

4. WAY FORWARD FOR CARD

CARD has been a unique initiative that supports the advancement of rice sector across the continent by engaging African governments, private sector and development partners. GM6 recommended that given the growing importance of rice in food security and economic development of the CARD member countries, the CARD initiative shall be extended beyond its current phase (2008-2018). It was also proposed that further revision of its scopes and approaches, and inclusion of other important crop (besides rice) shall be considered under the next phase of CARD. The meeting deliberated on this subject as follows:-

- CARD initiative should be extended into a second phase
- Regarding the duration of the second phase, different ideas were suggested according to the periodic cycles of overarching continental initiatives such as; i) TICAD (every 3 years - thus 9 or 12 years for the next phase of CARD), ii) the CAADP framework of AU-NEPAD (up to 2025), and (iii) The sustainable Development Goals –SDG of UN (up to 2030). Meanwhile it was agreed that the time frame should be decided based on the overall goal of the CARD second phase, therefore the overall goal shall be set before making final decision on the duration of the second phase of CARD.
- It was agreed that, rather than diversifying its efforts into other crops, CARD should retain its focus to only on rice crop, at least for the first five years of the second phase. Nonetheless, the scope of CARD in terms of target crops will be decided based on the results of the CARD final evaluation.
- A few suggestions were made on the overall goal of the next phase of CARD, such as productivity increase, self-sufficiency and value addition. While the meeting agreed to continue discussion and make final decision in SC13 in 2017, it was confirmed that the overall goal/ target should be attractive/catchy to draw attention from stakeholders, measurable, and achievable.
- During the second phase, CARD shall maintain its current approaches (production strategies based on agro-ecological zones, South-South Cooperation, capacity building and whole value chain approach), but lay additional emphasis on quality improvement, market competitiveness, entrepreneurship and enabling environment that are already entailed in the whole value chain approach.
- Regarding the membership of CARD, a letter should be sent to current CARD countries to confirm their interest in remaining in CARD in its second phase.
- Also a letter shall be sent out to all non-CARD member countries in Sub-Sahara Africa to request the expression of interest in joining the second phase of CARD. The final evaluation report (it might be the draft report) shall be attached to the letter. The non-CARD countries that are affiliated with Africa Rice (Chad, Guinea Bissau, Malawi, Niger,) and IRRI (Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Gabon) will be encouraged to express their interest in joining CARD.

- The countries that express their interest will be reviewed based on the screening criteria such as; i) importance of rice in national economy, ii) existence of more than two DPs/research institutions that support rice sector, iii) potential for rice production, and, iv) commitment of the government. Considering the capacity of the CARD secretariat, the number of new member countries should be maximum ten. The procedure for approaching and screening of new CARD countries will be elaborated in SC13.
- The meeting also discussed the membership of the CARD Steering Committee. Some SC members suggested that SC should be expanded to representatives of CARD countries, private sector and farmer representatives. The meeting agreed to continue the discussion in SC13 and make final decision based on the results of the final evaluation. The decision needs to be in accordance with the CARD operation guideline and manual, or the CARD operation guideline and manual should be changed as appropriate.
- Second phase of CARD shall require additional human and financial resource contributions from partner organizations

5. SC MEMBERS' UPDATE ON CARD RELATED ACTIVITIES

The CARD SC members shared their contributions to CARD and/or rice related activities since the previous SC meeting (SC11).

5.1. AFRICARICE

AfricaRice has supported rice production in several CARD member countries through research and development, germplasm exchange, technology transfer and capacity building. The major outputs include the following:-

- To facilitate continued rice cultivation in Ebola affected countries, quality seed of NERICA varieties was produced in Côte d'Ivoire and transferred to Guinea through an emergency support project funded by Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Japan
- To provide African rice farmers with field specific management guidelines in various production and market systems, RiceAdvice (an Android based decision support application) was developed and disseminated. RiceAdvice is an interactive tool, which can be used both online and offline.

5.2. AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

AfDB has been supporting CARD member countries in addressing a spectrum of challenges constraining advancement of rice sector. With an investment of 22 billion USD, rice represents the most heavily invested agriculture value chain by the bank. The major activities include the following:-

- Increasing productivity and reduction of importation bill by disseminating New Rice for Africa (NERICA) in regional member countries. The NERICA project was jointly funded by AfDB, JICA and UNDP.
- Support to agricultural research for the development of rice as one of the strategic crops through CGIAR centers such as IITA, AfricaRice and IFPRI
- Creating a repository of proven rice related technologies that are tailored for the African context and dissemination of such technologies for African agricultural transformation
- Construction of new irrigation infrastructures and rehabilitation of existing irrigation infrastructure for expansion of area under rice cultivation

5.3. FARA

The Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) participation in CARD revolves around the following;

- The formation and operation of the South-South partnership for mechanization of rice production at the smallholder level in Africa. This activity was carried out in partnership with Africa Rice center, IRRI and partners from 17 CARD countries. Linkages were established with equipment manufacturers, marketers and public mechanization research outfit in Thailand and Brazil.
- FARA established a virtual interaction platform among the stakeholders which is still running and providing information to support decision of stakeholders from the different countries.
- FARA developed a bankable project proposal to extend the knowledge gained from the rice mechanization platform to other commodities in Africa. The proposed project will also give attention to the smallholders set up and aim to proffer solution to mechanization issues at the short, medium and long-term basis.
- FARA has documented key knowledge and information exchanges among stakeholders into three volumes. The documents are published as e-books and disseminated widely among stakeholders in Africa agriculture.
- FARA continue to integrate the knowledge from the mechanization platform and other initiatives into the different Innovation Platform that is established on rice in the countries and at the continental levels.

5.4. IRRI

In 2015 and 2016, CARD related results from IRRI activities are as follows:-

- 5 new IRRI varieties have been released in Mozambique (2), in Malawi (2) and in Burundi (1). Six other varieties are being tested in National Performance Trials before release.
- Breeder seeds from the IRRI- released varieties have been produced by IRRI to feed into seed systems in Mozambique and in Burundi.
- In capacity building for rice production, 2640 farmers have been trained by IRRI in rice technologies using the Farmer-Field-School concept in Burundi and in Mozambique.
- A new project JICA-IRRI has started in 2016 for seed production, participants to these courses are selected in the 23 CARD countries, three trainees each

5.5. JIRCAS

JIRCAS HAS BEEN SUPPORTING CARD MEMBER COUNTRIES THROUGH THE FOLLOWING RESEARCH PROJECTS IN ORDER TO HELP ACHIEVE THE GOAL OF DOUBLING RICE PRODUCTION IN AFRICA:-

- Evaluation of supplementary irrigation system in Northern Ghana
- Establishment of a differential system for characterizing blast isolates
- Capacity support by engaging 16 JIRCAS staff members under the ‘Food Security in Africa’ project which is expected to support studies on:-
 - improved breeding materials for tolerance to nutrient deficiencies;
 - simple diagnostic tools to evaluate soil fertility;
 - improved water management technologies; and
 - impact assessment and factor analysis of farmers’ acceptance of these new technologies

5.6. JICA

JICA provides bilateral aid in the form of Technical Cooperation, Japanese ODA Loans and Grant Aid.

- In Senegal, JICA has supported both upland rice development in Mid-Senegal and irrigation development for rice in Senegal Valley Basins in cooperation with many donors like France (AFD), Spain and World Bank. For growing needs of irrigation development, we are inviting more partners like AfDB recently.
- In Cameroon, based on the technical assistance project for introducing rice production and increasing productivity of upland rice in 2012-2016, JICA has started the project phase 2 which includes irrigated rice too, and at the same time, we are implementing the survey for irrigation

development and other rural infrastructure by soft loan in parallel with on-going World Bank loan project.

- Under CAADP process, JICA also supports capacity development program in Japan together with CARD Secretariat from 2016 to 2018, which is starting with focusing on infrastructure development in distribution and marketing stage this year.
- Capacity development program on seed value chain development including research and extension has started in collaboration with JICA and IRRI.
- In September 2016, JICA and JIRCAS are to implement joint preparatory surveys in Madagascar and Burkina Faso regarding effective use of fertilizer and new variety development.

6. AOB

The meeting agreed the following:

- The next SC meeting (SC13) shall be convened during the first week of December 2017
- The next in-coming co-chair will be AfDB.
- The GM7 will be organized sometimes around September to October 2018. Details will be discussed and agreed in the SC 13.