

<Press Release>

The TICAD VI Side event on the Coalition for African Rice Development (CARD)

“Progress of CARD and the Future of Rice Sector Development in Africa”

The Sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD VI) will be held on 27th and 28th August 2016 in Nairobi. Prior to TICAD VI, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) co-organized a side event on the Coalition for African Rice Development (CARD), titling “Progress of CARD and the Future of Rice Sector Development in Africa” at Sarova Panafric Hotel on 25th August.

The side event was officially opened by the remarks by H.E. Mr. Willy Bett the Honorable Cabinet Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries of Kenya, and Mr. Hiroshi Kato, the Vice-President of JICA. The event was joined by high profile participants such as Agriculture Ministers and high rank officials from a number of African Countries, the heads of some development organizations/institutions, prominent private corporations, and representatives of rice producers from across Africa. In the event, the participants reviewed the progress made under the CARD initiative and discussed the future direction of rice development in Africa, through presentations by prominent speakers. VIP attendants such as Dr. Agnes Kalibata (AGRA President), Dr. Harold Roy-Macauley (Director General of AfricaRice), Dr. Matthew Morrell (Director General of International Rice Research Institute - IRRI), and H.E. Mr. Rivo Rakotovoao (Hon. Minister for Agriculture of Madagascar), commented on the key presentations and shared their views on what Africa should do toward the further rice sector development. As the conclusion, side event confirmed the remarkable progress Africa made in terms of rice production in the last 7 years, nonetheless there remains need of continuous and accelerated efforts to meet the rapidly increasing rice demand in the Continent. Further production increase calls for mobilization of additional resources and implementation of right sets of policies and integration of efforts made by rice producers, African government, research institutions, development partners and private sector. The event was concluded with confirmation of the strong commitment and supports to CARD by all stakeholders as well as the importance of CARD as a platform where all stakeholders can interact, coordinate and cooperate for the development of rice sector in Africa.

CARD is a consultative group of bilateral and multilateral donors and African and international institutions that was launched in 2008 at the Fourth Tokyo International Conference for African Development (TICAD) with the objective to double rice production in sub-Saharan Africa by 2018.

CARD provides 23 African member countries and relevant partners/institutions with opportunities for coordination, capacity development and other assistance to support the development of African rice sector. CARD assistance includes the support in formulation of National Rice Development Strategy (NRDS) through which each country addresses issues along the rice value-chain in order to boost rice production. NRDS was revised and officially validated in Ghana October 2015. Thus, CARD has contributed to notable achievements in productivity improvement, increased investments and expansion of the area planted, which Africa experienced after the international food price hike in international market in 2008.