

Minutes of Fifteenth Steering Committee Meeting (SC15) Nairobi, Kenya, 10-June-2019

Coalition for African Rice Development (CARD) organized its 15th meeting of Steering Committee (SC) members at Sarova PanAfric Hotel in Nairobi (Kenya) on 10th June of 2019. This is the first SC meeting in the CARD phase 2. Representatives of AfricaRice, Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japan International Research Center for Agriculture Sciences (JIRCAS), International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), New Partnership for African Development (AUDA-NEPAD), World Bank and World Food Program (WFP). Representatives from Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) were present as observers. Representatives from African Development Bank (AfDB), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), East African Community (EAC), Economic Community for Central African States (ECCAS) and Economic Community for Western African States (ECOWAS) sent apologies. The meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Ibrahim Gourouza of NEPAD and Dr. Bing Zhao of WFP.

Objectives

The objectives of the SC15 were to (i) finalize the membership of IsDB and the regional economic communities (RECs) into the SC, (ii) obtain a consent on the 2019-20 annual plan of CARD, (iii) invite commitments from the SC members on leading the CARD activities at the country level and the required financial and technical support for the process, and (iv) share information on rice-related interventions by the SC members in the CARD member countries. Within the fourth objective, AfricaRice, WFP, AUDA-NEPAD and IsDB made their specific presentations to share some details of their programs/projects and their potential collaboration with and contribution to the CARD.

Membership of RECs and IsDB in SC

Seventh General Assembly Meeting (GM7) of CARD stakeholders relegated the SC members to decide by themselves on the way of including RECs as new SC members. Given the growing importance of regional rice trade in Africa, almost all the SC members expressed the willingness to welcome REC on board. However, the absence of all the invited RECs at the SC15 meeting raised concerns amongst the current SC members on whether RECs will be able to self-finance their participation at the CARD meetings. The SC members requested CARD Secretariat, in collaboration with AUDA-NEPAD, to seek clarification from the RECs on their financial position and the scope for financial commitments in engaging with the CARD process.

IsDB had recently expressed its interest in joining the CARD-SC. IsDB presently invests over \$244 million in the rice sector in 10 CARD member countries through the CAADP framework of AUDA-NEPAD. IsDB largely focuses on raising smallholder rice productivity, improving access to markets and strengthening of the institutional capacities. Since NRDS is within the scope of national agriculture investment plans of all the CARD member countries; IsDB believes that by joining the CARD-SC, it will be able to leverage its investments, grow new partnerships, and monitor and communicate with the rice stakeholders in the CARD member countries. The present CARD-SC members appreciated the interests evinced by the IsDB in the rice sector development. The SC members welcomed the IsDB as a new CARD-SC

member and formed a consensus of sending the SC's positive proposal of IsDB's inclusion to the next General Meeting.

CARD's plan of activities for 2019–20

Citing a 55% share of the CARD labeled projects amongst all the rice-related projects in CARD member countries, the CARD Secretariat invited comments on the effectiveness of the methodologies employed during the first phase of CARD in formulating and implementing the NRDS and other sub-sector specific strategies. The methodology is largely based on a consultative process led by the country specific NRDS taskforce. CARD guided the taskforce in engaging the country government, development partners and other stakeholders of the rice value chain. In this context, the CARD Secretariat informed the SC members that it has planned to make progression on establishing the NRDS in both the existing and new member countries this year, through a series of working weeks, with more efforts given to the new member countries. The SC members noted that although the level of funding available to the rice sub sector is high enough, the capacity of the governments is not adequate to make good use of them. The SC members agreed that the CARD should continue its emphasis on country ownership and its host country driven approaches towards achieving resilience, industrialization, competitiveness and empowerment of the rice sector at both the country and regional levels. SC members also discussed that the NRDS should clearly describe (i) resource mobilization strategy, (ii) engagement process for RECs and private sector in NRDS implementation, and (iii) monitoring & evaluation process for the NRDS.

The CARD Secretariat also proposed to work on improving its website, increasing the efficiency and frequency of information flow at national and regional levels, and organizing regional workshops, regional training activities, in addition to organizing the 8th General Meeting (GM8) and 16th SC (SC16) meetings. It was agreed that the sequence, theme and frequencies of the regional workshops shall be decided based on the progress on discussions between the CARD Secretariat and the individual RECs on the overall plans of collaborative strategic regional action plans. The CARD Secretariat raised the possibility of utilizing the assessment studies made by FARA on the training needs in several of the CARD member countries. FARA confirmed that the report on the needs assessment conducted in 24 countries will be very useful to the CARD's purpose, but the report will not be finalized until August 2019. FARA will communicate with the CARD Secretariat, as and when the report on the needs assessment becomes available.

SC member representatives from IRRI, AfricaRice and JICA shared the training opportunities created by their organizations within the rice sector of the CARD member countries. The CARD Secretariat proposed to hold the GM8/SC16 in May or June 2020 in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. The CARD Secretariat informed the SC members that the second phase of CARD will be officially launched at the seventh meeting of Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 7) in August 2019. The tentative program of CARD side event at TICAD 7 was shared.

Lead roles of SC members at the country level

During the first phase of the CARD, JICA country offices served as Process Assistance Office (PAO) for the country level CARD activities; by providing financial and logistical support to CARD working weeks in all the 23 member countries. However with an increase in number of member countries to 32, relying entirely on JICA's support may not be tenable. Citing some

examples of contribution from the SC members in the country level activities during the phase 1, the CARD Secretariat sought the SC members to take a voluntary option of serving as a PAO in the countries of their choice. Since none of the SC members could readily take a position on this proposal, the members proposed that the CARD Secretariat makes a case for specific support from each SC member in the appropriate CARD member countries. The SC members will then request their respective headquarters and the corresponding country offices to examine the case for providing the required assistance. Representative from IFAD indicated that while most of the IFAD's country level support is in response to specific and direct requests from the line Ministries of the host countries; IFAD shall consider a generic proposal for supporting the CARD activities. In this regard, the CARD Secretariat was advised to develop a concept note and submit, together with NEPAD, the request to the IFAD through the CARD-SC representative.

Engagement of RECs in CARD process

CARD Secretariat shared the preliminary analyses on the present engagements of RECs in rice sector development in their respective regions. It was suggested that rice self-sufficiency with a regional perspective should be explored; however countries should be encouraged to produce in sustainable manner. Regional self-sufficiency can come after the countries exhaustibly sought their possibility of reliable supply of domestically produced rice at country level. The biggest challenge among the African countries is that unlike the Asia countries, point of aggregation is not yet developed. The SC members suggested that the CARD Secretariat prepares a concept note on how the RECs could be synergistically engaged by the CARD's processes.

Rice-related activities of SC members in CARD member countries

Prior to the SC meeting event, the CARD Secretariat circulated a matrix of intervention themes across key elements of rice value chain to all the SC members. The inputs on the matrix by the different SC members were confirmed by the members at the SC meeting. WFP, AfricaRice and NEPAD made special presentations to further elaborate their major activities in CARD member countries, and their possible contributions to the CARD process. A summary of the key rice-related project/program activities in CARD member countries is presented below:

i) AGRA

AGRA currently works in 11 countries and rice is one of the commodities it is supporting to improve productivity. AGRA supports the country governments to build systems to promote sustainable rice production, through providing conducive environment and using the public private partnership model. Currently AGRA has a rice project in Ghana where they help to enhance productivity and competitiveness. AGRA is keen to enable the countries production capacities so that they produce rice in a sustainable manner.

ii) FARA

Currently FARA is focusing on 6 commodities and rice is one of them. The focus is to mainstream mechanization into small holder's farming activities and work to engage the youths to be able to embrace agriculture. FARA is corroborating with AfricaRice. FARA is currently carrying out a capacity need assessment for various commodities including rice, and will continue to corroborate with CARD to promote rice production in Africa.

iii) IFAD

IFAD is providing support to IRRI and AfricaRice in rice research, currently it has shifted funding from maize to rice. IFAD also works through South- South cooperation. For the development side, IFAD is of the opinion that countries need to prioritize value chain and then proceed to mobilize resources. IFAD is currently supporting rice/fish value chain in Malawi and Cote d'Ivoire. IFAD is promoting value chain of rice with that of groundnut and sorghum.

iv) IRRI

IRRI is working in various countries in Africa and is committed to replicate the success from 60 years of Asian experience in Africa. In collaboration with AfricaRice, IRRI focuses on training of the local farmers on raising the productivity. Currently it works in East and South Africa countries such as Tanzania, Burundi, Mozambique and Kenya. Many varieties are already released through collaboration with AfricaRice. IRRI is currently working on the use of molecular markers and genomics in identifying superior varieties. IRRI also helps in building capacities in the production of breeder seeds. In coordination with the Indian government, South-South collaboration for training Africans on all aspects of the rice value chain is being implemented.

v) WFP

WFP is working on strengthening food systems around the world in order to provide nutritious food to the needy. In 2018, more than 93 million people worldwide were supplied with food mostly through home feeding program initiative. About 10% of the world food procurement in 2018 (which stands at about 360,000 tons) was rice and 6.3 % of the rice procured was from African countries. WFP is currently involved in carrying out rice fortification in West Africa. Staple crops such as cereals are being fortified with micronutrients such as zinc and iron. Fortification is mostly done at the post-harvest levels. WFP is collaborating with government, private sector and non- governmental organizations to help the African continent on food fortification.

vi) WB

WB's support to the agricultural sector in Africa is about 2.2 billion USD, of which a good percentage is meant for supporting the rice sector. WB supports in the area of research, infrastructure and market development. Currently WB supports the supply of rice mills in Ghana and Tanzania to enhance quality of the domestic rice. It also supports PhD programs. The second phase of WAAPP and EAAPP is expected to commence in the next year.

vii) JIRCAS

JIRCAS is currently carrying out rice research on resistance to blast. JIRCAS is corroborating with AfricaRice. JIRCAS has ongoing projects in Ghana, Tanzania and Burkina Faso. These projects aim to improve water use efficiency in irrigation systems.

viii) JICA

JICA spend about 25million USD for bilateral Technical Assistance cooperation each year, and is currently running projects in 17 countries in Africa, with 3 more countries to be included soon. There are several projects with grants and loans in several countries. It is also involved in regional cooperation on extending technical packages to other countries. Currently JICA is planning to increase the number of scholarships for studying in Japan to between 20-30 students every year. JICA collaborates with private sector especially in the area of agricultural mechanization. JICA is covering part of the finance for the phase 2 of the CARD Secretariat.

ix) AfricaRice

AfricaRice is promoting Continental Investment Plan for accelerating Rice Self-Sufficiency in Africa (CIPRISSA) in 11 pilot countries with funding from African development bank. The

purpose is to provide countries with credible information on rice sector for policy making and decisions on investments. Data collected at country level were analyzed to make projections for the required investments for each country. Timeline to attain rice self-sufficiency was then proposed, provided the necessary investments are made at country level.

x) GROW AFRICA

GrowAfrica was set up to address challenges derived from implementing the National Agriculture Investment Programs (NAIP). The Country Agribusiness Partnership Framework (CAP-F) was a response to the Malabo declaration which was a model aimed at increasing private sector involvement in Agricultural development. CAP-F which is implemented in 15 countries is aimed at developing each country's priority value chain. In each of the country the NAIP was analyzed and the priority value chain was established. Through the priority VC, a multi stakeholder platform (MSP) is set up. In this regard, synergy is necessary so as to minimize the challenges of duplication and to promote regional strategy.

xi) Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)

IsDB is a multilateral bank with 57 members and 27 of these members are African countries. The bank has invested a regional value chain project, whose cumulative value amounting to 244 million USD in 5 West Africa countries – Guinea, Niger, Senegal, and Gambia. About 3 countries (Benin, Burkina Faso and Mauritania) are in the pipeline for investment in 2019. Over 100 million USD investments is planned for 2019 to 2020. Tremendous opportunity exists for IsDB to contribute to the CARD2 initiative. The current NRDS is a starting point in developing some of the aforementioned programs. Some key features of the programs include: 1) Country ownership, 2) VC approach, 3) Private sector engagement and 4) Monitoring and evaluation mechanism. The program's outcome has impacted directly on 2 million households across 10 countries out of which 40% are women and youths. It intends to raise productivity by about 3-6t/ha, reduce significantly import bill which currently stands at 1.2 billion USD and generate 150,000 jobs in 10 countries.