

Minutes of Eighteenth Steering Committee Meeting (SC18) Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 29-30 September 2022

Coalition for African Rice Development (CARD) organized its 18th Steering Committee meeting (SC18) at Julius Nyerere International Convention Center in Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) during 29th and 30th of September 2022. Physically present were representatives of African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF), AfricaRice, Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), World Food Program (WFP), East African Community (EAC), and Southern African Development Community (SADC). Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences (JIRCAS) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) joined online. Representatives from African Development Bank (AfDB), African Union Development Agency - New Partnership for African Development (AUDA-NEPAD), Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), World Bank (WB), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), and Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) were absent. The meeting was co-chaired by Dr. Kayode Sanni of AATF and Mr. Fahari Marwa of EAC Secretariat.

Objectives

The primary objectives of the SC18 were to (i) share the progress made by CARD and its steering committee members in CARD member countries during the past year, and (ii) review and endorse the work plan for CARD for 2022/23.

Day 1, September 29, 2022

CARD's activities on formulation, monitoring, and evaluation of NRDS in member countries

Dr. Yusuke Haneishi, General Coordinator of CARD Secretariat refreshed the SC members on how the targets on the area under rice production, yield, and total production were set for phase 2 (2019-2030) of CARD. To achieve this goal, CARD's major intervention involves guiding its member countries to formulate and implement the second National Rice Development Strategy (NRDS2). Of the 32 member countries; 6 countries have established their NRDS during the past year, taking the total number of countries that have completed the NRDS formulation to 21. Eleven other member countries are presently preparing and/or finalizing their NRDS2. In addition, CARD has also helped East African Community (EAC) develop and validate EAC Rice Development Strategy (ERDS).

Based on the recommendations of the Eighth General Meeting (GM8) of the stakeholders of CARD, CARD Secretariat has set up a web interface for tracking overall progress on the implementation of NRDS and key performance indicators under each of the four founding principles viz., Resilience (R), Industrialization (I), Competitiveness (C), and Empowerment (E). Dr. Haneishi also highlighted how rice-related projects/interventions shall be tracked in member countries using the CARD's web interface. With support from JICA, CARD has recently conducted a domestic resource cost analysis on the competitiveness of the local

rice in 15 CARD member countries, the result of which will be uploaded on the CARD website.

Given the challenges in attaining homogeneity during the aggregation of paddy grains from smallholder farmers in Africa, the SC members emphasized the importance of including grain quality and market price as parameters while measuring the competitiveness of local rice against imported rice. The SC members also discussed if impacts at the farmer level could be captured as one of the indicators for measuring the effectiveness of the NRDS implementation process.

Contribution of SC members in NRDS implementation in CARD member countries

The SC members have been contributing to the development of the rice sector in member countries through their programs, projects, and partnerships with public and private stakeholders of the rice value chain.

WFP (Dr. Zhao): Rice accounts for 13% of all commodities distributed through the WFP projects in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The rice is mainly sourced from local smallholder farmers and sometimes from the intra- and inter-regional markets in Africa through the private sector. The SC members discussed how the linkages between smallholders and the NRDS implementation process through country offices of WFP can be enhanced in member countries and how the fortification of rice can be promoted in Africa.

JIRCAS (Dr. Tsujimoto): By mainly contributing to rice research in Africa, JIRCAS helps achieve improvements in on-farm productivity and total production in CARD member countries. The representative from JIRCAS highlighted how integrated rice farming systems, production of technical manuals, release of new rice varieties, and introduction of technologies such as P-dipping that were developed through JIRCAS collaboration, could help increase rice production in CARD member countries.

JICA (Mr. Kubota): As a major and direct sponsor of CARD's human resources and Secretariat's annual activities, JICA has been a major supporter of NRDS formulation and implementation in member countries. JICA is currently developing a Strategy for Rice Development in Africa (to be available by February 2023). Besides contributing through technical cooperation projects, JICA regularly provides training opportunities for CARD member countries on the implementation of the NRDS. Special CARD grant aid from JICA is presently provided for promoting NRDS implementation in Nigeria, Zambia, and Madagascar, especially for strengthening their existing seed systems.

IRRI (Dr. A. Ismail): IRRI'S accomplishments in the last two years are: (i) replacing old varieties (18 new high-yielding varieties released, of which 11 in Burundi, 3 in Somalia, 2 in Tanzania, and 1 each in Kenya and Mozambique, (ii) improving popular varieties by their upgrading for tolerance of drought, salinity, cold, and for good grain quality, (iii) expanding the breeding network from 19 locations in 2020 to 31 locations in 2022 and other locations are in the pipeline, (iv) breeding lines regularly shared in Mozambique, Zambia, Uganda, Ethiopia, DRC, and Burundi, (v) strengthening the rice seed system value

chain and few models developed in Kenya, Tanzania and Mozambique, along with some other activities including the establishment of a digital seed demand-supply management system in Tanzania, The prospects for the future are related to (i) regional engagements with CARD member countries in the framework of “Seed Without Borders” as in Asia, aiming to strengthen enhance regional cooperation in the seed sector and the harmonization of seed systems and policies, (ii) strengthening of the South-South cooperation in terms of private sector engagement, improved seed systems, knowledge sharing, and (iii) establishment of a strong network for crop protection.

IsDB (Mr. Ceessay): The Bank’s vision for the agriculture and rural development sector is to support technological, institutional, and policy changes in African member countries. In this regard, one of the key objectives is to see how public finance can help mobilize more and better involvement of all stakeholders. The IsDB Regional Rice Value Chain program, which is implemented in phases since 2018, involves 10 African countries (Cameroon, Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Mali, Gambia, Guinea Conakry, Sierra Leone, Niger, and Senegal). This program which is based on the value chain approach has the following 2 specific objectives: (i) food security/food Sovereignty and (ii) solid and stable governmental trade balance. IsDB has close cooperation or is intending to establish cooperation with other institutions in Africa such as Africa Rice, IRRI, AGRA, and CARD. For example, AGRA is involved in the IsDB rice value chain projects in Burkina Faso and Benin whereas, through CARD, the Gambia has been assisted this year to develop its National Rice Development Strategy. IsDB will support CARD in capacity building or provide finance in its member countries. IsDB is a member of the ECOWAS Rice Observatory and thus has participated in the regional validation workshop of the Rice Offensive Action Plan 2020-2025. IsDB’s assistance in the rice value chain which is a combination of loans and grants is only provided to member states. That’s why in East and Southern Africa, only Uganda and Mozambique (member countries) have IsDB supported projects, respectively.

IFAD (Mr. Belhamissi): IFAD’s business model is to finance projects aligned with governments’ priorities in the framework of the Country Strategic Opportunities Program (COSOP), which has a duration of 5 years. For including rice under IFAD projects in a country, CARD needs to work closely with the IFAD Country Director. IFAD requires that grants at the country level lend support to on-going IFAD loan projects in the country. Since 2020, funds allocated under new grants have been used to finance emergency responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. Recently IFAD has started discussions on restarting new grants at the country level. This shall open new opportunities for including rice in the countries’ portfolio and it is not so difficult if the request comes from the Government and if they are compliant with the IFAD policies on climate change, biodiversity, and gender issue.

FAO (Mr. Anaadumba): FAO supports rice sector development in SSA mainly through South-South cooperation, and, by doing so, is supporting the CARD member countries. FAO rice projects have assisted countries through various training programs by sending beneficiary country representatives to Southeast Asian countries such as Vietnam and the Philippines. The examples of countries supported by the FAO Rice Program in Africa are Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea Conakry, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania, and

Uganda. Some specific areas under this framework cover; a) Capacity development and experience-sharing for rice value chains in countries such as Tanzania & Côte d'Ivoire, b) Support for the socio-economic assessment of hybrid rice in Madagascar, c) China's technical assistance on the rice value chain in various countries, and d) Sustainable development of rice value chain in Sierra Leone. As part of the South-South cooperation, China has made available to FAO 150 million USD. Now instead of South-South Cooperation, "South-South & triangle cooperation (SSTC)" is the new terminology. NRDS is supposed to guide all organizations in the issue of the rice value chain in each CARD member country. FAO will discuss with the CARD Secretariat how it can help the regional rice strategy formulation and implementation by the regional organizations.

AGRA (Dr. Bigirwa): AGRA supports 3 key rice initiatives: (i) Rice Systems' development, (ii) Competitive African Rice Initiative in East Africa (CARI-EA), and (iii) ECOWAS Rice Observatory. AGRA's major contributions include the following: Rice system development in 15 countries. Increased mechanization through pilot projects in Burkina Faso and Mozambique for simple machinery that can be made locally. Rice flagships in Burkina Faso and Ethiopia involve helping the Government to bring on board all stakeholders for the objective of rice self-sufficiency. Center of Excellence for seed system in Africa (from end to end) by working with the Government to identify gaps and propose investment plans to remove constraints. Key results of CARI-EA include (i) integration of input and output markets, (ii) facilitation of value chain actors to access financial services, and (iii) processing and marketing/branding. AGRA also supports the operationalization of ECOWAS Rice Observatory (ERO).

AATF (Dr. Sanni): AATF's intervention focuses on the development of hybrid rice industry. It is involved in building the capacity of seed companies. AATF's major contributions include the following: 22 new female parents fixed and released as project global public goods - aromatic lines, with a high seed yield of 1.3 tons/ha, potential for rice hybrid grain yield of higher than 9 tons /ha. Three new rice hybrids were commercially released in Kenya. Hybrid seeds are to be promoted in 3 ways: (i) grain quality for consumers, (ii) yield advantage for farmers, and (iii) seed yield advantage for seed companies. AATF initiated discussions with the Centre for African Bio-Entrepreneurship (CABE) to help streamline hybrid rice seed and grain trading across Africa using e-Subira platform. Scaling activities in hybrid rice have started in Togo, Nigeria, and Rwanda.

AfricaRice (Prof. Jalloh): AfricaRice organizes the Council of Ministers in charge of Agriculture once every 2 years. The meeting is attended by DPs as observers. CARD and JICA are recommended to be associated with this Council of Ministers of Agriculture of AfricaRice. Under the Council of Ministers, there is a technical committee composed of the Directors General of the research institutions of the continent whose role is to inform the Ministers on all agricultural issues. Science Week, organized by AfricaRice, is now held in December every year. This year, it will be organized from 14 to 16 December and all organizations in the CARD SC meeting are invited. Apart from the positive influences through New CGIAR initiative, there are specific achievements including 1) several varieties with yields of more than 5 tons/ha for rainfed lowland released and registered in Mali and Rwanda, 2) three red rice varieties with improved nutritional qualities released

in Madagascar and 4 varieties in Uganda, 3) parboiling systems in East and Southern Africa proved to improve quality and strengthen women's autonomy with additional income.

ECOWAS (Dr. Adebowale): ECOWAS has developed an action plan for implementing rice development strategies that are articulated under Rice Offensive. To coordinate the interventions in the region, ECOWAS has established ECOWAS Rice Observatory (ERO). ERO is responsible for: a) coordinating Government, private sector, and donors' investments into market-driven, b) providing input for policy harmonization, and c) facilitating access to finance across the value chain. ERO is operating at both regional and national levels supported by a full-time Secretariat.

EAC (Mr. Marwa): Established in 2020, the EAC rice platform (ERP) is responsible for promoting the rice sub-sector in the EAC region. ERP is a regional forum composed of 12 nominated representatives by partner states engaging both public and private sectors, aiming to share and resolve challenges faced by the rice value chain in the region. With technical support from Kilimo Trust and CARD, ERP members have recently formulated and validated EAC Rice Development Strategy (ERDS). Through its principles of mutualism and complementarity with the implementation of NRDS in each Partner State, the ERDS aims to double rice production in the region by 2030. The validated ERDS will be submitted to the EAC Council of Ministers through Sectoral Council for Agriculture and Food Security (SCAFS) for approval.

SADC (Mr. Samikwa): CARD member countries belonging to SADC include Angola, DRC, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zambia. SADC has identified rice as one of the 14 value chains identified in terms of great potential for regional upgrading. An exercise of mapping the rice value chain has currently been undertaken with the following objectives: (i) to quantify, assess and analyze the value chain at the national and regional levels using current production and export figures, (ii) to conduct a SWOT analysis and (iii) to obtain recommendations at both national and regional levels for optimization and potential upgrading the value chain. The next steps include (i) finalization and validation of the mapping and analysis of the rice value chain study report, (ii) development of the SADC Rice Value Chain Strategy, and (iii) implementation of the Strategy. Support from the CARD's SC members is sought for the formulation of the SADC Rice Strategy and its implementation.

Day 2, September 30, 2022

Report on TICAD8 and its CARD side event

Mr. Osamu Kubota (JICA) presented the report of TICAD8 CARD side event held virtually on 22nd August 2022. The objective of the side event was to promote the African rice sector under CARD Initiative and discuss future challenges to increasing rice production and achieving self-sufficiency, as well as CARD's role in supporting these efforts. Various side events were followed by TICAD8 plenary sessions, held in Tunis on 27th and 28th August. The main output of the plenary was the **Tunis declaration** on the three pillars: a)

economy (realizing structural transformation for sustainable economic growth and social development), b) society (realizing a resilient and sustainable society), and, c) Peace and stability (realizing sustainable peace and stability). The participants included Japan, 48 African countries (20 Heads of States), International Organizations, and Private Companies among others.

The SC members discussed the need for learning from Tanzania and Madagascar to achieve self-sufficiency in rice production in other CARD member countries. These experiences could include varietal development, extension, decentralization of Quality Declared Seed inspection and certification processes, and the role of the public and private sectors in extension services. The example of extension support and the need for public-private partnership using Village Based Advisors (VBA) and Rice Advisor (e-Platform sharing information on best agronomic practices, and meteorological data) in Ethiopia was emphasized.

Way forward for supporting ECOWAS Rice Offensive Action Plan and EAC Rice Development Strategy (ERDS)

Dr. Haneishi presented how CARD has been supporting the regional blocs through its engagement in formulating ECOWAS Rice Offensive Action Plan and EAC Rice Development Strategy (ERDS). He explained that complementary effects expected through the implementation of the regional strategy to scale the impact of member countries' NRDS implementation is one of the main reasons for the CARD's support to the RECs for their regional rice strategy preparation.

There was a general consensus that DPs like IsDB, JICA, AGRA, IFAD, IRRI and AfricaRice have an interest in supporting the implementation of ERDS. However, it was recommended to CARD Secretariat to approach the DPs one by one for concrete commitments taking into consideration the modus operandi of each organization and priority areas of their interest. The SC members also emphasized that recipient countries need to show their commitment by means of contribution even in kind. The example of Uganda putting money to contribute to the projects was emphasized.

AfricaRice recommended CARD Secretariat revisit the CIPRISSA document that shows some optional scenarios on what to do to achieve rice self-sufficiency through mainly engaging the private sector. The SC members also recommended that before the preparation of NRDS2, there is a need to carefully analyze the gaps of NRDS1, derive lessons from it, and inform what needs to be done to achieve better results with the implementation of NRDS2.

The participating SC members proposed that SADC should be the one to come next under CARD's support for regional rice development strategy preparation, because of its passion, commitment, and its engagement in the ERDS validation process and SC18. Furthermore, SADC is already planning to allocate some budget for this activity for the 2023/24 financial year. However, given the fact that some SC members could not attend this meeting due to overlapping agendas, it was decided to share this proposal with them and seek their opinions before a final decision is made and communicated to SADC.

CARD M&E

CARD Secretariat provided detailed information on the development of the M&E framework, its indicators and targets for 2030. The total area was set at 18.7 million hectares, with a yield of 3.0 tons/ha and total production of 56 million tons. Baseline studies have been started by local consultants in each member country that has completed and validated its NRDS2. This data collection for CARD's 4 overall and 8 R.I.C.E. indicators is expected to be continued every year by NRDS TF up to 2030.

Data generated from surveys will inform the planned Annual Rice Sector Review Meetings at the country level and be shared with rice stakeholders in the country and the regional economic community (REC). The same data will also be used for the CARD M&E dashboard on the CARD website for wider dissemination.

SC member's contribution towards CARD activities

Dr. Haneishi raised the issue about the request sent to IFAD, before the pandemic, over its support to CARD Secretariat's activities. The IFAD representative indicated that the request should be reoriented so that they are now based on the country's demand-based and IFAD priorities at the country level. However, he was open to continuing discussions with CARD Secretariat, especially in areas like training, data collection, and annual review meetings as well as the coordinating role of CARD. The SC members also deliberated on the following items: -

- 1) Angola's participation in the CARD initiative: Although this is not yet endorsed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, CARD Secretariat continues to work with the Ministry of Agriculture for endorsement.
- 2) South Sudan's strong wish to join the CARD Initiative: CARD Secretariat will try to find ways to work with the EAC Secretariat to either support the preparation of their NRDS or documents for domesticating ERDS.
- 3) Political turmoil: Central Africa, Chad, Mali, Guinea, and Sudan face security issues that hinder CARD Secretariat from directly supporting them. CARD Secretariat is presently communicating with those countries to seek alternative funding sources to let their process move. It was suggested that CARD Secretariat should discuss with concerned parties on a case-by-case basis.

General discussions

During the general discussions, the following were raised by SC members: -

- There is a need for harmonization of CARD with continental organizations like CAADP
- There is a need for reflection on the future of rice production under the current environmental concerns.
- CARD M&E needs to include aspects related to trade, per capita consumption, and other quality related variables.
- Annual work plan of CARD Secretariat should include the communication aspect to get the message on achievements out.
- Communication products should be produced to reach internal and external audiences including SC members, the private sector, and other wider stakeholders.

- CARD should engage CAADP, NEPAD, and AU, and by doing so become more visible. CARD Secretariat should consider bringing more staff on board.
- The Action Plan needs to be more comprehensive with a certain level of detail to attract the adherence of potential partners.
- CARD needs to establish a knowledge management framework with success stories to enhance visibility.
- EAC needs to go to the field to make contacts with partners to mobilize funds not only relying on the SC members.

CARD Way forward (2022/23)

The SC members agreed to the following course of action for the next year: -

- 1) Continuing support for the formulation of NRDS2 in the remaining 12 countries, and for the implementation of the same in the countries that have already formulated.
- 2) Continuing support to ECOWAS and EAC for their Regional Strategy implementation and SADC for its Regional Strategy formulation.
- 3) Continuing the M&E Baseline study in countries where NRDS revision is done.
- 4) Supporting the organization of Annual Rice Sector Review Meetings at the country and regional levels where possible (for better coordination of running projects/ programs/training by SC members). These meetings at the country level shall ideally take place before the regional review meetings.
- 5) The 9th General Meeting/19th SC meeting will be held in 2023 (July or September) in Cote d'Ivoire.

Closing remarks

Mr. Kubota, JICA, in his closing remarks, appreciated the efforts made by the CARD Secretariat to bring physically the SC members around the same table to discuss the challenging issues of food security under a difficult environment imposed by the food crisis as a result of climate changes and the war in Ukraine. Mr. Kubota highlighted the following: -

- Better coordination at the regional level, especially for the two regions that have already developed their strategy, ECOWAS, and EAC, was considered crucial for the success of the CARD initiative.
- JICA continues its support for the NRDS process, especially the implementation of NRDS2 and its M&E.
- The SC members are invited to collectively support the smooth implementation of NRDS2 and CARD's M&E.
- CARD activities are now attracting more attention as a consequence of the food crisis that the world is experiencing.
- CARD Secretariat is advised to seize the momentum gained from this meeting and follow up with more discussions with each SC member to get more in-depth and concrete decisions on how each of them can further support CARD activities.
- CARD needs to further enhance collaboration and coordination among the SC members and even other DPs supporting the rice sector in Africa, taking into consideration that no single partner alone can make enough impact.