

5 July 2023
Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire

The 9th CARD General Meeting Co-chairs' Summary

The 9th General Meeting of CARD was held at Sofitel Abidjan Hotel Ivoire, Cote d'Ivoire on the 4th and 5th of July 2023. National Rice Development Strategy (NRDS) Focal Points and delegates from 32 CARD member countries, CARD Steering Committee members, South-South Cooperation Partners, guest speakers, and rice sector stakeholders in Cote d'Ivoire and other countries, attended the meeting. Co-chair, Dr. Baboucarr Manneh, Director General of AfricaRice welcomed the participants.

In his remarks, Dr. Manneh mentioned that rice has become important for Africa's food security, more than ever before. However, local production is not enough to meet the market demand. While there are plenty of challenges along the value chain; solutions are available. CARD's Resilience-Industrialization-Competitiveness-Empowerment (RICE) approach encapsulates the way forward for resolving these challenges. CARD's General Meeting provides a forum for sharing lessons learnt and making suggestions for achieving self-sufficiency in rice.

In her opening remarks, Ms. Aggie Konde, Vice President of AGRA, representing Dr. Agnes Kalibata, Director of CARD Secretariat and President of AGRA urged the participants to take a holistic approach in achieving self-sufficiency in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Referring to rice production in Mali, Nigeria and Tanzania; she opined that other CARD member countries could also transform their rice value chains to achieve self-sufficiency and make locally produced rice affordable and nutritious. Reaffirming the commitments of AGRA, she expressed confidence that CARD could achieve the target of doubling rice production earlier than 2030.

His Excellency Katsuya Ikkatai, Ambassador of Japan thanked Government of Cote d'Ivoire for hosting GM9. Recalling the launch of CARD Phase 2 at TICAD 7, the Ambassador reiterated the Government of Japan's determination and commitment to Africa's food security through the CARD initiative.

On behalf of the Honorable Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development; Honorable Minister of Justice and Human Rights of Cote d'Ivoire Mr. Sansan Kambile welcomed representatives of CARD member countries, SC members, and experts from Asia. Applauding the CARD member countries and SC members for achieving the target under CARD's first phase; he underscored the importance of sharing individual country's experiences and information through this meeting in realizing rice self-sufficiency in Africa.

Agenda 1: Report of the previous General Meeting and Progress of CARD Phase 2

The General Meeting appreciated the progress made by CARD and reaffirmed CARD's major goal of re-doubling rice production from 28 million tons in 2018 to 56 million tons by 2030 in Sub-Saharan Africa.

- In GM8, we deepened the discussions on how to realize the NRDS-2 targets by aptly engaging governments, development partners, private sector, and South-South Collaboration partners at national and regional levels.
- In 2021, about 32.3 million tons of rice were produced from 15.35 million hectares, with an average yield of 2.1 tons/ha.
- At the current pace of production increase, it will be difficult to achieve CARD's production target by 2030, and it is, therefore, necessary for all stakeholders to accelerate their efforts.
- 25 of 32 CARD member countries have officially validated their NRDS-2. 5 countries are in the final stages of the validation process, and 2 countries are presently formulating their NRDS-2.
- CARD has also assisted in the formulation and validation of the East African Community Regional Rice Development Strategy.
- Implementation of NRDS-2 has been undertaken through 76 projects in 21 countries since the beginning of CARD Phase 2 in 2019 up to 2021. This number is not exhaustive and members should provide more complete numbers on on-going rice projects.
- CARD has put in place a new monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework to track the progress of NRDS implementation at a country level and regional level through a set of 12 indicators.
- 7 member countries have established methodologies for their M&E, together with baseline figures for the indicators, and 4 countries are currently undertaking baseline studies; Remaining countries will plan and conduct studies in the coming months.
- Efficient implementation of NRDS2, which has already been developed in many of the CARD member countries, is essential.

- With M&E baseline studies already conducted or planned in several member countries, the CARD Phase 2 is at the implementation stage.

Agenda 2: Updates of NRDS formulation / Implementation

- The General Meeting welcomed the significant progress made under the NRDS process in each country. It commended the increasing number of collaborations with the private sector to promote industrialization, and the increasing number of collaborative projects with new development partners as a positive change.
- Top priority areas identified under the NRDS-2 of member countries include advancements in market systems and access, total production, on-farm productivity, governance/coordination of the rice sector, grain quality, cultivable land areas, extension services on the adoption of improved technologies, harvest and postharvest handling, climate smart farming, management of land, water and natural resources, pest control, access to finance, seed production, mechanization, and capacity building of stakeholders.
- Interventions that could improve the efficiency of domestic markets in creating demand for, supplying, and facilitating access to farm inputs and services for producers, and local rice products to consumers have become the most common priority amongst member countries.
- Increasing total rice production and on-farm productivity through environmentally sustainable integrated interventions and resilience to climate change has become paramount for the stakeholders under the NRDS-2 in several countries.
- Many countries have also prioritized the importance of improving market competitiveness through significant advancements in grain quality of the locally produced rice.
- Extension approaches that will facilitate the access and adoption of good rice production practices and technologies such as improved seeds, varieties, and farm machinery have gained importance under the NRDS-2.
- Several countries have also prioritized improving the governance and coordination of policies and stakeholders' activities along the rice value chain to maximize the impacts of the various strategic interventions under NRDS-2.

Agenda 3: Research on Productivity Improvement

- Rice yield trends in 5 countries (Kenya, Niger, Senegal, Benin, and Mali) in SSA show that Green Revolution is gradually taking place.

- The General Meeting expressed its admiration for the empirical research presented by Prof. Keijiro Otsuka and Prof. Yukichi Mano and affirmed the importance of rice research and extension through training in all domains.
- Empirical evidence from Tanzania, Uganda and Cote d'Ivoire suggest that training on rice farming intensification using improved seeds and machines, and water management can make a green revolution happen in SSA.
- Case studies conducted in Cote d'Ivoire showed that use of two-wheeled tractors for land preparation, crop establishment (seeding and transplanting), crop care (weeding, fertilizer application, and water control), and harvesting increases smallholders' rice yields.
- Econometric analyses conducted in Mwea, Kenya revealed that small multi-stage milling machines could improve the grain quality and hence the adoption by reducing the financial burden of potential adopters.
- GM9 recognized the need to provide evidence-based policy support for governments and other stakeholders.
- In this context, CARD's plans for M&E of NRDS at a national level and Regional Rice Development Strategies (RRDS) at a regional level will help improve the rigor and quality of rice-related policy making processes in CARD member countries, as the M&E data collected on key indicators shall provide additional evidence and justification for policy reforms in rice sub-sector in Africa.

Agenda 4: Coordination through CARD initiative

- By providing coordination of the rice subsector between various actors within public sector, between a host government and development partners, and between national governments and regional economic communities (RECs), the CARD initiative widens the efficiency and impacts of rice sector development.
- The General Meeting welcomed the growing support of development partners to the rice sector.
- The NRDS-2 and RRDS provide policy narrative and rationale for fund mobilization from not only the development partners, but also the private sector and South-South cooperation countries.
- AGRA: GM9 acknowledged the critical roles of AGRA in planning, building partnerships, and technical and institutional backing in executing priority interventions identified under the NRDS through 'flagship programs'. AGRA's success in bringing the private sector through inter-ministerial arrangements in Ethiopia needs to be replicated in other CARD member countries.

- FAO: GM9 acknowledges the pivotal roles of FAO in data generation and in catalyzing South-South Cooperation through technical cooperation projects and multi-stakeholder partnerships. FAO's focus on systems approach should help CARD member countries build new multi-sectoral and multi-lateral partnerships.
- IRRI: GM9 noted that delivering high yielding, nutritious, climate-resistant varieties and technologies, and capacity building are the major areas of interventions. Since the development and delivery of new variety seeds take over 10 years in each country, a collaborative regional approach to develop, test and release seeds of improved varieties for similar ecologies through harmonized policies can accelerate doubling of rice production in SSA.
- AfDB: The General Meeting recognized the magnitude of funding from the AfDB-led Dakar 2 initiative (about \$ 70 billion for the next five years). This provides an excellent opportunity to fund concept notes that national task forces have prepared to date through fund matching exercises in each country to gain momentum under NRDS implementation.
- GM9 welcomed the progress being made through cooperation between SSA and other rice-growing regions through the following South-South cooperation partners.
 - Brazil is keen to support scaling up of technical capacity building through private sector engagements.
 - Egypt is willing to help SSA develop institutional linkages between research, extension, and farmers.
 - Philippines will continue to train extension agents from CARD member countries on tailored extension methods for seed production and rice cultivation at PhilRice.
 - Thailand expressed confidence in training SSA on sustainable rice production in rainfed and lowland ecologies.

Agenda 5: Good Practices for Industrialization of the Rice Sector through Private Sector Engagement

- Under the RICE approach, NRDS-2 of CARD member countries envisage industrialization of rice production, processing and marketing through micro, small, medium, and large enterprises along the entire rice value chain.

- Four countries viz., Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Mozambique highlighted the progress in the industrialization aspect of the rice value chain: -
- Cameroon
 - Afrifood Private Ltd. is engaged in contract rice farming, processing, packaging, branding, and marketing of local rice on a large scale.
 - PlaYce Yaoundé, a retail shopping center distributes 'New NdopRice', a locally produced and packaged rice by Upper Nun Valley Development Authority.
- Ethiopia:
 - Following an initial wave of investments by the government and development partners, about 92% of the NRDS implementation costs will be borne by private sector.
 - Saudi Star Agricultural Development Company is currently developing about 14,000 ha of land for rice production and an industrial processing capacity of about 1 million tons of paddy per year.
 - To provide sustainability to such industrialization efforts, the government facilitates value chain upgrading to smallholders at functional-, process-, and product levels.
- Kenya:
 - The industrialization has gained importance under at least 3 segments of the value chain namely input supply, rice processing and finance.
 - New medium- and large-scale rice mills have been set up by private sector in major rice production areas to increase processing, packaging, and marketing capacities for local rice production.
 - The economies of scale of agro-input marketing has increased in rice producing areas, as the number of agro-dealers and value of purchased inputs have grown significantly.
- Mozambique:
 - Under NRDS-2, the Sustenta program engages private sector in promoting (i) technology transfer, (ii) production financing, and (iii) market linkages for smallholder farmers.
 - The partnership between Wanbao Private Limited and Mozambique's Limpopo Downstream Irrigation Scheme Company has added 20,000 Ha of new rice production capacity.
 - Driving factors for industrialization includes training support for farmers, integrated input and service supply system, sale and purchase

contracts at pre-established prices, advance payment of 50% of the costs against deduction at source, and tripartite financing agreements.

Agenda 6: Collaboration with Private Sector Players

- Presentations by Local Rice Promotion Project (PRORIL2) in Cote d'Ivoire, AfricaRice and Cambodian Rice Sector Support Project (IFC/WB) reaffirmed the need for a fair and equitable business environment to promote the role of the private sector in strengthening the rice value chain and promoting industrialization through public-private partnerships and collaborations.
- PRORIL2: With an objective of stabilizing the supply of rice from farmers to local markets in Cote d'Ivoire, the project builds and nurtures collaboration between farmer groups/cooperatives and private partners along the value chain such as seed producers, small-scale millers, local distributors of milled rice, and financial institutions. By minimizing cash-based financial assistance, the project minimizes transaction costs and leakages.
- AfricaRice: To support private sector-led industrialization in the postharvest segment of the local rice supply chain, AfricaRice has established a state-of-the-art laboratory for testing the quality of seeds and grains. To promote the offtake of postharvest machinery by private sector, 39 small-scale rice innovation processing centers have been set up. By collaborating with private sector on mass fabrication/manufacturing through these centers, industrialization is promoted.
- Cambodia: Government's deregulation policies and duty-free access to European Union (EU) markets shored up private sector investments and transformed Cambodia's rice sector. Collaborations between government, private sector and development partners have positioned Cambodia as a rice exporter. The IFC/WB's RSSP project addresses market risks and failures by helping private sector devise export strategies that will meet global market expectations on quality and safety. One of the key lessons learnt from Cambodia's success for CARD member countries is to identify and collaborate with committed 'Lead Firms': -
 - in their own interest (participative, and financially contributing, not for free) and
 - together on the enabling environment of the rice sector to the benefit of all stakeholders

- Recognizing the challenges of working with the private sector, CARD will consider and share better public-private partnership measures within the member countries.

Agenda 7: Progress with RRDS through RECs

- The General Meeting appreciated the importance of a regional approach for developing the rice value chain, as more countries become interdependent for goods, services, and investments.
- East African Community (EAC), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and Southern African Development Community (SADC) presented the progress made in formulating and/or implementing their respective regional strategies.
- EAC:
 - With technical and financial assistance from CARD, East African Rice Platform (ERP) members formulated EAC Rice Development Strategies (ERDS) and ERDS Implementation Plan (ERDSIP) which have been validated and adopted by EAC's Sectoral Council for Agriculture and Food Security.
 - ERDS aims to double rice production in the region by facilitating the integration of rice value chain development in the EAC Partner States
 - Mutualism and complementarity to NRDSs of Partner States form the guiding principles of interventions under the ERDS.
 - It is proposed that an EAC Rice Advisor shall be appointed under the EAC Secretariat to liaise with ERP members, CARD Secretariat, development partners, line Ministries and NRDS task force members of the Partner States and to oversee the ERDS implementation.
- SADC:
 - Despite being home to some of the largest rice producers (such as Tanzania and Madagascar), the SADC region is a net importer of rice.
 - SADC's Industrialization Strategy has identified rice as a crop with the greatest potential for agro-processing in the region.
 - SADC is presently conducting a detailed mapping of rice trade and rice value chain analyses in the region.
 - Upon completion of the analyses by September 2023, SADC plans to recruit a consultant for leading the formulation and validation of its regional rice development strategy by FY 2023-24.

- SADC expects CARD to provide technical backstopping and financial support in organizing a validation workshop for the strategy.
- ECOWAS:
 - ECOWAS' Rice Offensive (strategy) and its action plans are coordinated by ECOWAS Rice Observatory (ERO).
 - ERO ensures actions taken at the regional level are based on national priorities in line with NRDS.
 - ERO coordinates governments, private sector and development partners into market driven solutions.
 - ERO provides inputs to regional policy harmonization and facilitates value chain financing.
 - ERO also collects and shares data on regional rice sector development for M&E purposes.

GM9 emphasized on closer alignment of regional and national strategies and the need for support from development partners in the implementation of ERDS and ECOWAS Rice Offensive.

Agenda 8: Progress of NRDS M&E

The General Meeting reaffirmed the importance of M&E in the implementation of NRDS and requested the Secretariat to provide the necessary support for establishing country-specific M&E methodologies through baseline studies and conducting the Annual Rice Sector Review Meeting in each country.

- GM9 reaffirmed that the "RICE 12 Indicators" adopted at the GM8 is a flexible evaluation framework that can include additional indicators that are tailored to the member country's NRDS.
- It was advised that countries that have already conducted M&E baseline studies need to conduct annual monitoring (Annual Rice Sector Review Meeting), and the other countries need to complete or start M&E baseline studies as soon as possible.
- Results of the M&E will be shared with development partners and private sector to mobilize further investments in the rice sector.

Two countries that have completed the M&E baseline study, namely Tanzania and Togo, presented how they set up their baselines and how they plan to organize M&E going forward.

- Tanzania:
 - With the support of the JICA country office and the Ministry of Agriculture, the NRDS-task force (TF) members engaged two individual consultants for collecting baseline data for the 14 NRDS-2 M&E indicators and setting methodologies for future M&E activities.
 - While secondary data were collected from the government's institutional databases, primary data were collected through field surveys in 5 representative rice-growing districts.
 - NRDS-TF will conduct M&E of the NRDS-2 implementation by tracking the changes in baselines of each of the 14 indicators and organizing Annual Rice Sector Review meeting with stakeholders from this year.

- Togo:
 - Through the JICA country office and Ministry of Agriculture, the NRDS-TF engaged consultancy services of DUTYCO SAS for collecting primary and secondary data for the 12 NRDS indicators.
 - The secondary data were collected from various government departments' and development partners' projects.
 - Based on the suggested methodologies and sources; the NRDS-TF has put in place a plan for conducting M&E of NRDS-2 until 2030.
 - NRDS-TF will organize a 2-day Annual Rice Sector Review Meeting in which various rice stakeholders will review and assess progress made on the 12 NRDS-2 indicators.

Agenda 9: Way Forward

The meeting reaffirmed the importance of the comprehensive RICE approach to ensure a stable rice supply in the face of climate change and other global headwinds. One-third of CARD Phase 2 (2019-2030) has passed and implementation should now be the focus. A common understanding was formed that each actor needs to play their respective roles and yet work together with a sense of urgency towards our shared goal of boosting rice production and productivity in SSA.

To maximize the efficiency of various rice-related policies and interventions, and improve their impacts; seamless policy dialogue and coordination amongst stakeholders becomes important at national and regional levels. Coordination of rice sector development has also been identified as one of the top common priority areas under the NRDS-2 in CARD member countries. GM9 hence proposed CARD Secretariat to improve coordination amongst various

stakeholders at national and regional levels utilizing its M&E framework; by collecting information on rice-related policies and interventions, identifying gaps, and improving policy alignment and investments in line with NRDS-2 and RRDS.

The meeting confirmed the crucial roles played by private enterprises in rice value chain development through producer goods supply and services, processing, trade, and employment generation. Leveraging the private sector through multi-stakeholder partnerships can further enhance job creation and smallholders' access to markets, productivity, profitability, and therefore socio-economic sustainability of rice farming in CARD member countries. GM9 asserted the important roles of governments in enabling private investments through coherent policy frameworks at national and regional levels, climate-smart innovations, extension services, infrastructure development, and access to finance.

In order to ensure the implementation of the NRDS and RRDS in each member country, the General Meeting requests the CARD Secretariat to:

- Improve coordination among rice value chain stakeholders to avoid duplication of efforts, ensure policy alignment, and harmonize various rice-related interventions and progress,
- Promote policy dialogues between various stakeholders, especially the private sector,
- Assist NRDS and RRDS Focal Points in identifying the gaps in interventions through M&E activities and Annual Rice Sector Review meetings, and take leading roles in coordinating with development partners for filling the gaps,
- Facilitate timely mobilization of funds and investments by sharing M&E activities, especially the Annual Rice Sector Review Meeting of CARD member countries, with development partners and the private sector,
- Catalyze South-South Cooperation as a means for further industrialization in member countries, taking cues from the robust private sector-led supply chains of quality rice in Cambodia and other parts of Asia and also Latin America,
- Disseminate information on issues and measures raised at the meeting to encourage private sector investment and participation in the rice value chain and promote industrialization,
- Strengthen partnerships among research institutions, private sector, RECs, development partners, and South-South cooperation partners,
- Organize fund-matching activities for NRDS implementation under the Dakar 2 initiative,

- Facilitate information-sharing on research, technology, and good practices related to rice sector development,
- Provide training on the CARD GeoPortal for NRDS Focal Points so that they can update their country activities, projects, and data on M&E indicators directly,
- Share good practices of the Technical Assistance component of the rice-related projects and facilitate the selection of appropriate personnel for CARD-related training, and
- Follow up on the Letter of Intent to join the CARD by Hon. Minister Josephine L Yanga in South Sudan

GM9 proposed Madagascar as the host country for the next General Meeting (GM10) in 2025.

The meeting was concluded Mr. Osamu Kubota, Vice President of JICA, who congratulated and thanked the participants for the successful two days of discussions.

Co-chairs

Day 1

AM: Dr. Baboucarr Manneh
Director General, AfricaRice

PM: Mr. Christian Kouamé Bi,
Director of Production Support, ADERIZ, Côte d'Ivoire

Day 2

AM: Mr. Shinjiro Amameishi
Deputy Director General, Economic Development Department, JICA

PM: Ms. Vestine Nyandwi
Director General of Agriculture, Ministry of Environment, Agriculture, and Livestock, Burundi