

Meeting Minutes

Day at the SC/GM	DAY ZERO
Date	09/03/2026
Time	10:30-12:20
Agenda	Steering Committee Meeting
Speaker	Amameishi Shinjiro
Title of Presentation	Progress of CARD Phase 2 and its future direction (Presentation & Discussion) (Continued)
Key Messages from the speaker (Key facts, views, suggestions)	General Coordinator Presentation ▪ Paddy production and yield not on track ▪ Rice yields stagnant over the past 15 years ▪ Consumption per capita 26.0kg and self-sufficiency rate 58.3% as at 2023. This overall result will not lead to achieving CARD phase2 goal by 2030 ▪ 12 recommendations of co-chair summary of GM9 presented and comments received ▪ NRDS and C/Ns elaboration since SC20 pointed out & emphasis on M&E and ARSRM. ▪ Challenges of NRDS process & ARSRM listed ▪ Summary of regional level activities and CARD contribution ▪ Support to CARD country activities by each organization listed ▪ Expectation for CARD SC members identified and request for more contribution advocated ▪ 4 important thematic issues in rice sector development to be discussed later in the day ▪ CARD visibility through newsletter and the need to subscribe by members ▪ Admission of 5 new member countries during this GM10 ▪ There is a need to be consistent with Kampala-CAADP Declaration to achieve self-sufficiency in SSA through better coordination of RECs ▪ Institutionalization and capacity building of NRDS/RRDS is critical ▪ Emphasis put on Resources Mobilization using SIEM as a basic approach and RICE methodology ▪ The role of CARD as a continental agenda deserves more visibility ▪ It is necessary to recognize that there are many crops competing with rice in the market. Therefore, there is

	need to identify the aspects of strengths and look at production of rice as a business ▪ Apart from technical issues CARD needs to address policy and financial aspects with Private Sector playing a central role.
Key Discussion Points (Comments, Required Actions, Next Steps)	Comments on the presentation of GC by SC members • JIRCAS. The JIRCAS Project Leader Dr Yasuhiro Tsujimoto noted that rice yield has stagnated. It is important to know why average yield is going down, what are the main factors responsible for the low yield. even though climate change could be one of the factors limiting yield, However, is there any reliable data to suggest that area expansion is responsible for lowering yields? Yield in the irrigated ecosystem is increasing but overall yield is reducing this is because of the contribution of the low yield obtained in the rainfed upland ecosystem. The question that should be asked is whether area expansion is bad. In his conclusion he noted that Land is limited so that continuous expansion is not sustainable. As part of information sharing, he mentioned that JIRCAS is currently working on two new projects launched for diversification and technology dissemination in Madagascar • AATF. Dr Sani of AATF noted that there is the need to highlight the countries that can help to attain self-sufficiency so we can target more effort in their areas of comparative advantage. He pointed that more Mills have been established in the last few years but the major challenges right now is paddy to operate at installed capacity. Farmers need to be supported to produce more paddy. Post-harvest losses continue to increase so what do we need to do. There is the need to set clear goals to encourage private seed companies to multiply seeds for the farmers at affordable price. Intra-regional market needs to look at movement of paddy within the region through the AfCFTA • There is a need to continue provision of incentives to encourage private companies. • There are many crops competing with rice in the market. We need to identify the aspects of strengths and empower the countries to achieve the targets, including the reduction of post-harvest losses. Finally, he stated that apart from technical issues we need to address policy and financial aspects to accelerate production and achievement of the CARD phase2 goal.

- **AFRICARICE.** The AfricaRice Deputy Director General & Director of Research Dr. Bindraban observed that the high investment in the rice sector has not yielded the required result. Why are yields still low. He pointed that Investment in irrigation could be one of the answers to increase yield. However, there is the need to create more business opportunities around new varieties and set up seed development and increase adoption which is very important.

He emphasized the need to re-think the way forward and one of his suggestions is ‘social construct’ where the people work together like what happened in Asia countries many years ago. He also emphasizes increase training on GAP and for the farmers to see rice production as a business. He concluded by noting that lack of GAP can reduce yield by up to 50%.

Finally, he stated that CARD need to focus on technical issues. eg seed multiplication. Therefore, the need to mobilize resources from government, DPs and stimulate business opportunities in the RVC in order to increase rice production.
- **AFRICARICE 2.** The Program Leader for Policy, Innovation System & Impact Assessment Dr. Arouna Pointed out that even though overall production is increasing but yield is decreasing. He noted that extension agents are supporting more of the farmers in the irrigated ecologies more than the farmers in the upland ecologies where cultivation area is high. It should be noted that the contribution of the rainfed upland is very important because this is where the smallholder rice farmer is located.

He pointed out that there are policy inconsistencies by the government of SSA countries. therefore, there is the need to promote one voice for continental dialogue on rice policies.

There are policy and technical issues that impede the high adoption of improved technologies by smallholder farmers

Working with Governments on RVC capacity building, with particular attention to indicators set and in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance for the required funding to the rice sector
- **IFAD:** Representative and Country Director of IFAD, Mr. Biwole explained that IFAD has invested around 3 billion USD across the continent. He stated that there is the need to work more closely with Governments to

	advocate financing for rice sector through the collaboration between the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Finance. AGRA. The Regional Director East & Southern Africa. Dr Muhinda emphasized that it is misleading to present average yield for the whole of Africa rather than at country level. He, proposed that apart from general issue, a “deep dive” focusing on specific issues is required at the next SC. He further proposed that there is the need to focus on specific countries with good practices so other countries can learn from. He frowns against government continuous borrowing to invest in white elephant irrigation facilities, that are poorly executed. He emphasized that the right advice needs to be provided to policy makers for targeted investment in the rice sector. He mentioned that it is important to measure self-sufficiency at the continental level rather than at country level JICA. The JICA Deputy Director General Dr Hitoshi Fujie also commented on the CARD GC’s report. According to him it is essential to thoroughly analyze the underlying reasons for prolonged stagnation of yield in Sub-Saharan Africa countries. He noted that Though Africa is in a phase of expanding rice cultivation, the increasing number of new farmers may be lowering average productivity. Furthermore, given that rainfed rice accounts for large part of area of rice production in SSA, enhancing its productivity through the development and dissemination of appropriate technologies is an urgent priority WFP. The WFP Senior Advisor and Head of Food System. Dr. Onesphore, emphasized that the private sector needs to coordinate with the government for the use of the massive irrigation schemes in many of the countries. He explained that many countries have irrigation systems that could be harnessed to improve yields but that implementation of the irrigation programs in most of the countries are faulty, hence poor food production. He pointed out that policy makers need to revise this trend in order to guaranty food security in Africa through increased yield of rice. AFDB. The Chief Agricultural Economist of AfDB, Mr. James Peters emphasized that policy in Africa is very weak. According to him in order to harness investments into the rice sector development there must be
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	coordination between the needs of the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Finance. He advised for a coordinated effort for advocacy to Ministry of Finance to present the NRDS. He explained that the capacity of extension staff is low and that this need to be boosted in order to disseminate the right technology that will enhance rice production and the needed funding. He pointed out the necessity of the NRDS focal points of each country to liaise with the bank country offices for further discussions on possible fund mobilization. • Summary from the Co-chair: the Co-chair Prof Fatunbi of FARA, summarized as follows: i) emphasis on the general need to persuade the government of the individual countries to invest in technologies. ii) need to support the farmer with subsidy in order to increase production but such subsidies need to be spelled out clearly what the subsidies should support. iii) There is the need for knowledge and technology transfer from the South-South Cooperation. iv) For any proposal to scale through, the DPs recommend that there is the need to engage the Ministry of Finance in many of the countries. v) Environment and social management interventions is necessary to facilitate international financial institutions interventions. vi) Need to build strong business plan around rice investment in the NAIP. vii) RECS have a role to play to accelerate the implementations of the NRDS
	Presentations of rice related activities by SC Members 1. AATF. Dr Kayode pointed out that AATF is an Agricultural Transformation organization. AATF is supporting the development of hybrid rice seed to drive increased yield it is doing this through 3 strategic areas which include accelerating technologies and Linking climate change resilience in rice production. Currently working in 32 countries. Intervention is on hybrid rice seed technologies to take care of the private sector. 11 hybrid rice varieties released so far in Kenya. AATF is Engaged in production of parental lines which private seed companies can take to scale hybrid rice production. 2. AFDB. Mr James Peter stated that AfDB is working on improving technologies and rice is included. 4 projects already in the pipeline. About 14 projects so far being executed, next year additional 6 countries with rice inclusive. Focus is on production and processing.

	Lesson learnt is that there is low data. AfDB support technology transfer 3. FARA. Prof Fatunbi explained ways in which FARA contribute to agriculture development these include seed system, policy coordination. FARA is coordinating with AfDB to implement the TAAF program through training of trainers and partnership support. Facilitating high level dialogue in seed certification. Transferring technology. Moving rice technology downstream. Complimenting research organization 4. IFAD. Mr. Biwolé stated that IFAD Invest in countries through loans and grants. Currently about 3 billion USD in RVC development. Currently there is a change in grant policies. IFAD conduct competitive bidding for projects. Even though IFAD work more closely with government but resources are mobilized through country offices. 5. ISDB. Mr Badji participating online stated that IsDB has invested 500 million USD in several CARD member countries since 2018. He advised that there is the need for a coordinated approach to deliver rice production through the value chain to address challenges along the RVC. It is also necessary to coordinate with partners to reach objectives. IsDB support full scale adoption of digital technologies in the agric sector 6. JIRCAS. JIRCASA representative explained that 2 new projects are on-going in Madagascar. These are Rice and Forest project and the dissemination of new technologies in Madagascar. Continuous household engagement is also being implemented 7. WB. World Bank representative pointed out that Food System Resilient Program (FSRP) is being implemented in phases. It has regional outputs and impacts. Has a food system approach. There are 3 areas- supporting and transformation of the seed system, partnership with organizations. There is a JICA-WB collaboration in Madagascar for sustainable rice system intensification. AgriConnect- with 3 pillars- improve infrastructure, mobilize private capital. 8. WFP. Mr Onesphore stated that WFP support rice value chain through the school feeding program. Has invested 39 million USD per year for the past 6 years. Prioritize local procurement which averaged 295 in 6 years as locally produced rice is much cheaper than the imported rice in many countries. In Gambia as in many countries WFP buy local rice to use for school feeding program.
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	• Closing remarks by the Co-Chair. A number of strategic issues have been raised. For the next 4 years the SC members need to double efforts in the RVC. All efforts to be streamlined into the Kampala-CAADP framework
Name of the Minutes-Taker	Mike Nasamu & Carlos Zandamela