

**Thematic session 3:****Enhancement of On-farm Rice Productivity**Date: Monday, 9th March 2026 (15:30-17:00)

Venue: Novotel Convention – Room (N-Convention)

Concept note**1. Context and Justification**

In Africa, rice plays a central role in people's diets and is an economic driver for millions of rural families. However, producers face persistent challenges: soil impoverishment, limited access to improved seeds, sometimes inappropriate use of fertilizers, and gradual deterioration in soil health. These constraints hold back productivity and fuel dependence on imports, even though demand for rice is rising steadily. Unlike other cereals whose production has undergone more marked changes, rice production has remained relatively stable for several years. This stability, against a backdrop of strong growth in demand, makes it even more urgent and strategic to improve rice-growing productivity to reduce dependence on imports and guarantee food security.



Faced with this situation, every initiative aimed at boosting productivity at farm level is an essential step, not only for the continent's food security, but also for sustainably improving the incomes of small-scale farmers. The aim of this session is to highlight the technical, scientific and practical solutions available, and to reflect collectively on how they can be disseminated on a large scale.

2. Session objectives

This session is not just about taking stock. Above all, it aims to create a forum where researchers, practitioners and decision-makers from different African countries can share their experiences, compare their results and work together to imagine the next steps. Through targeted presentations and interactive discussions, the aim is to:

- Put into perspective the current situation of soil fertility, fertilizer management and the use of improved seeds across the continent.
- Share research innovations, in particular high-performance varieties adapted to poor soils.
- Present integrated practices for sustainable soil management and the rational use of fertilizers, illustrated by case studies, such as that from Madagascar.
- Stimulate a frank dialogue between experts and participants to identify concrete solutions adapted to different national contexts;
- Identify the levers for disseminating and scaling up these innovations in all CARD member countries.

3. Approach and proceedings (90 minutes)

The session will take a dynamic approach, alternating between technical presentations and interactive discussions. The aim is to maintain a steady pace while allowing the content to be assimilated collectively. The program will be as follows:

- 1) Opening and introduction (10 minutes) - Presentation of the theme and context by the moderator.
- 2) Technical presentations (50 minutes) - Three presentations will illustrate current innovations: The technical presentations will highlight both the results of the research and the prospects for disseminating the innovations. Three presentations by researchers will illustrate the scientific advances:
- 3) An open dialogue will bring together researchers, technical and financial partners (TFPs) and national institutions. This discussion will not only identify the major challenges and share concrete solutions but will also consider how innovations can be disseminated on a large scale and replicated in different countries. It will also aim to strengthen collaboration between research, public decision-makers and TFPs, to ensure better support for producers.

Session Schedule (15:30 – 17:00)

Component	Duration	Details/ Responsible
A. Opening & Session Framing	5 minutes	Opening and session introduction by the Moderator: Andry Randriantsoa, Reional Advisor CARD
B. Panel Presentations	45 minutes (15 mn each)	Moderator: Introductory presentation: overview of fertilizers, soil health, and improved seeds. 1. Rikolt: Sustainable Rice Platform Standard 2. Dr Yasu Tsujimoto -Project Manager JIRCAS: varieties adapted to poor soils and better fertilizer management 3. Prof. Tantely Razafimbelo -Director-Researcher LRI: soil management and rational use of fertilizers
C. Panel Discussion & Reflections	15 minutes	Interactive discussion and exchanges (Q&A, replication pathways)
D. Plenary Q&A with Participants	20 minutes	Open floor for participants' inputs, reflections, questions, and knowledge sharing
E. Closing Remarks	5 minutes	Closing and conclusion of the session