

**Thematic session 1:****Inclusive Rice Farming in Africa**

Date: Monday, 9th March, 2026 Venue:
Novotel Hotel, New York Room

Concept note**1. Context and Justification**

Rice is one of the fastest-growing staple foods in Africa, with demand surging due to population growth, urbanization, and shifting dietary preferences. However, the continent still relies heavily on imports, straining national budgets and heightening exposure to global market shocks. Bridging this gap requires not only boosting production but also making rice farming more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable.

Inclusive rice farming extends far beyond yield gains; it is fundamentally about empowering the people at the heart of the sector, especially women, youth and marginalized groups. Women are indispensable in cultivation, processing, and marketing, while youth inject innovation, technology, and dynamism into the value chain. Yet both groups remain constrained by limited access to land, finance, inputs, modern technologies, and decision-making forums. Such systemic inequalities suppress productivity and prevent the rice sector from realizing its full potential.

To foster more equitable participation, enhanced profitability and sustainability, an Inclusive Rice Farming Policy Brief has been developed through a collaborative effort by AfricaRice, IRRI, AGRA and JICA in support of the CARD Secretariat, highlighting policy priorities and evidencebased recommendations for implementing gender transformative approaches within CARD member countries, ensuring that the benefits of increased rice production are shared by all. GM10 provides a unique opportunity to share these findings, showcase ongoing initiatives and actions by stakeholders that are driving inclusivity across Africa's agricultural landscape, and provide insights into government actions on gender inclusion in the agricultural sector.

Click the following links to access the published Policy Brief :

English Version: <https://agra.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/CARD-Policy-Brief-on-InclusiveRice-Farming.pdf>

French version: https://agra.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/CARD-Policy-Brief-on-InclusiveRice-Farming_FR.pdf

2. Objectives of the Session

This session brings together experts, practitioners, researchers, and policymakers to exchange experiences and chart the way forward on inclusive rice farming in Africa. It raises awareness by

sharing key findings from the Inclusive Farming Policy Brief, showcasing initiatives and government actions, and identifying both challenges and opportunities for integrating women and

youth into rice value chains. The discussion will generate actionable recommendations to strengthen rice development strategies and build a more equitable, resilient, and sustainable sector across Africa. To achieve this aim, the specific objectives of the session are:

1. Present and discuss key findings and evidence-based recommendations from the Inclusive Rice Farming Policy Brief to mainstream gender and youth inclusion into National and Regional Rice Development Strategies within CARD member countries.
2. Highlight ongoing initiatives and projects that promote inclusive practices in African agriculture, including rice farming.
3. Highlight lessons learned and good practices in ensuring gender and youth inclusion in agriculture, including rice farming.
4. Provide a platform for dialogue among stakeholders on scaling inclusive rice farming approaches at policy and program levels.

3. Session approach and proceedings (Duration: 90 minutes):

The session will adopt a dynamic format, combining technical presentations with interactive discussions. This approach is designed to ensure a smooth flow, allowing participants to collectively absorb and reflect on the content. The program will proceed as follows:

Session component	Duration	Details / Responsible
A. Opening & Session Framing	5 minutes	Dr. Lilian Muasa (CARD): Introduction and overview of session objectives
B. Panel Presentations	40 minutes (10 min each)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. Gaudiose Mujawamariya, Gender Focal and Country representative AfricaRice, Madagascar : Inclusive Farming Policy Brief -Key findings 2. Dr. Jummai Yila, Senior Scientist and Country representative IRRI, Uganda: Inclusive Farming Policy Brief-Policy recommendations 3. Mrs. Sariaka Ramangason , Gender Focal, Ministry of Agriculture Madagascar: Ministry/organization perspective: Actions and strategies advancing inclusion in Madagascar’s agriculture 4. Mrs Helene Razafindrasoa , Lead of Womens Groups Federation, Madagascar: Projects/initiatives/evidences driving inclusive farming in Madagascar
C. Panel Discussion & Reflections	20 minutes	Dr. Lilian Muasa: Lead discussion among panelists on synergies, successes, challenges, and opportunities for advancing inclusive rice farming in Africa
D. Plenary Q&A with Participants	20 minutes	Dr. Lilian Muasa: Open floor for participants’ inputs, reflections, questions, and knowledge sharing
E. Closing Remarks	5 minutes	Wrap-up, summary of key takeaways, and next steps