



**REGIONAL WORKSHOP FOR FINALIZING AND LAUNCHING THE PROJECT
« IMPROVING AND SCALING UP OF THE SYSTEM OF RICE INTENSIFICATION IN
WEST AFRICA »**

Saly, July 30 to August 2nd, 2013

CONCEPT NOTE

SRI Mali



SRI Nigeria/Canon-Jigawa



SRI au Ghana/Tamalé



I. Introduction

The West Africa Agriculture Productivity Program (PPAAO/WAAPP), funded by the World Bank (IDA), aims at making agriculture more productive and sustainable while promoting more integration in the ECOWAS region. Specifically, it provides a sub-regional framework on the basis of which ECOWAS countries are working together to implement the national and regional agricultural strategies for the generation and dissemination of technologies. The main objective of PPAAO/WAAPP is to contribute, on a sustainable basis, to increasing productivity of priority crops in participating countries.

CORAF/WECARD was mandated by ECOWAS to manage the implementation of PPAAO/WAAPP at the regional level. Among the implementation tools, is the Regional Competitive Fund (RCF) which allows selecting and funding research and development projects on a competitive or commissioned basis. The RCF allows the alignment of projects with the countries priority needs and contributes to improving the quality of projects while ensuring the promotion of excellence.

The creation of CORAF/WECARD's Regional Competitive Fund is primarily driven by three factors: openness and diversification of scientific partnerships; orientation towards demand driven research and regional priorities; and improvement of the quality (relevance and scientific quality) of research activities. Thus, the RCF facilitates regional cooperation, deals with regional priorities and expands partnerships.

The System of Rice Intensification (SRI) is an innovation technique that changes the traditional practices of rice production by allowing rice plants to better express their production potential. In practical terms, SRI aims at producing rice with less seeds, less water, less fertilizer on a soil rich in organic matters and well drained.

Since 2001, most of the countries involved with PPAAO/WAAPP were conducting small-scale SRI trials with an average yields ranging from 7.5 t/ha to 11 t/ha compare to 2 to 5 t/ha for the traditional practices. It is therefore safe to say that, in West Africa, there is a need to scale up these successful experiences.

Thus, the National Center of Specialization on Rice (CNS-RIZ-), with the support of CORAF/WECARD, teamed up with some partners, especially the SRI International Center of Cornell University, to take up the subject. It is worthwhile to note that, in the framework of PPAAO/WAAPP, Mali has set up the CNS-RIZ which is a major initiative toward strengthening the regional as well as international cooperation for the development of the rice sector in West Africa.

An important step was the regional meeting held in Ouagadougou, July 26 and 27, 2012. Representatives of various categories of actors from the thirteen PPAAO/WAAPP countries took part of that meeting. They mandated the CNS-RIZ to coordinate the process of drafting a Regional Commissioned Project, on the improvement and the scaling up of SRI, to be submitted to CORAF/WECARD for funding. The project entitled « Improving and Scaling-up the System of Rice Intensification in West Africa» was approved by CORAF/WECARD Governing Board during its June 2013 meeting.

CORAF/WECARD and the project coordination team are organizing a regional workshop for finalizing and launching the project.

II. Objective

The objective of the workshop is to bring together key partners of the project for their finalization and official launching. It will allow a participatory planning for a better

understanding of objectives, expected results, the methodology and implementation plan of activities.

Specifically, the workshop will allow participants to:

1. Understand CORAF /WECARD's Strategic and Operational Plans;
2. Become familiar with administrative and financial procedures, process of implementation of Innovation Platforms, environmental and social policies, Gender strategy and M&E System put in place in CORAF/WECARD;
3. Review and harmonize methodological approaches for a perfect implementation of the project;
4. Develop an annual work plan and budget (AWPB), in accordance with project deliverables;
5. Review roles and responsibilities of all partners involved in the implementation of the project related to governance, management, communication, knowledge sharing and learning etc.;
6. Review and finalize the contract between CORAF /WECARD and the coordinating institution of the project.

III. Expected Results

The following results will be generated at the end of the workshop:

1. Participants have a good understanding of Strategic and Operational Plans of CORAF/WECARD, its administrative and financial procedures, the process of setting up innovation platforms, environmental and social as well as gender policies and the M&E system;
2. Activities and methodological approaches of the project are harmonized;
3. Annual Work Plans and Budget are drafted and adopted in a participatory manner;
4. Roles and responsibilities of all partners involved in the implementation of the project for the governance, management, communication, knowledge sharing and learning are defined;
5. Agreement between CORAF/WECARD and the coordinating institution is refined.

IV. Methodology and Approach

The Director of Programmes of CORAF/WECARD will facilitate the workshop with the support of the Manager of SC Programme and CORAF/WECARD staff.

General ideas and harmonization of working methods will be discussed in plenary sessions and deepened in different working groups.

The general mode of operation will be based on:

- Joint and descriptive plenary sessions, which will focus on PowerPoint presentations to provide information on the background, concepts and methodologies;
- Separate work groups to develop ideas, knowledge and useful results;
- A facilitating exchange in plenary to encourage ownership through discussions to develop a consensus

Simultaneous translation in English and French will be provided.

V. Date and Venue

The workshop is scheduled from July 30th to August 2nd 2013 and will be held at the LAMANTIN BEACH HOTEL at Saly Portudal.

VI. Participants

The workshop will bring together about 65 participants including:

- Program Managers and members of the Executive Secretariat of CORAF / WECARD
- Coordinators and teams of the project at regional and national levels;
- Representatives from the thirteen (13) WAAPP countries;
- Representative of the World Bank;
- Representatives of Cornell University;
- Other key stakeholders.

The agenda of the workshop and relevant information will be provided in due course.