



ON DIT quoi?

A newsletter from Africa Rice Center (WARDA)

3 best local innovations identified and awarded



Steering Committee Meeting of The Third Steering Committee meeting of the project on Participatory Technology Development and Dissemination of Technologies in Rice-based Cropping Systems (PADS), supported by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), took place, 18-19 April, at WARDA, Cotonou. Dr P Van Mele is PADS Regional Coordinator.

Participants reflected on the broad-based partnership approach promoted by the project, with the national project management committees comprising researchers, NGOs, university and extension staff members from Ghana, The Gambia, Guinea and Mali. Research related to the social dimensions of the Participatory Learning and Action Research (PLAR) training was presented, and a sustainable livelihoods approach introduced to assess

PLAR impact across all 25 PLAR sites. The results will be used to orient a more quantitative impact assessment strategy.

Also the results, challenges and opportunities of video-supported group training were discussed. In 2006, the rice seed health videos had been shown to over 9000 farmers and initial lessons related to the use of videos as a tool to strengthen partnerships emerged.

Awards for best local innovations: Throughout the project, 38 local innovations on sustainable crop, pest and seed management were documented. An external jury identified the three best innovations from each country; contributors were awarded a certificate and financial prize by the DG and ADG-R&D. Various local innovations are currently scientifically being tested by the NARS. In this third and final year, we decided to emphasize the documentation of local innovations dealing with bird, rat and grass-cutter control.

Hands-on training

Script writing workshop: On 20 April, Participatory Technology Development and Dissemination of Technologies in Rice-based Cropping Systems (PADS) participants received a hands-on training on the development of radio scripts, using their submitted local innovations as content material. The course was facilitated by Felix Houinsou from IITA who assists WARDA in all local communications activities.





Visitors to WARDA

A delegation from the Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement (CIRAD), France, visited WARDA and IITA, Cotonou, 13 April. The delegation comprised:

Dr Robert Habib, Director, CIRAD PERSYST
 Dr Marcel de Raissac, Assistant Director, CIRAD PERSYST
 Dr Hubert Guérin, Africa Focal Point, Division of European and International Relations
 Dr Jacques Pagès, Regional Director for Continental West Africa
 Dr Patrick Prudent, CIRAD Correspondent for Benin

The delegation met with the WARDA DG, the two ADGs and scientists to discuss the new partnership between French research institutions and WARDA. The discussions covered DG's recent visit to CIRAD, possible themes for collaboration and the forthcoming visit by a WARDA scientific team to Montpellier in June 2007 in response to CIRAD's invitation to develop joint proposals. The meeting was followed by a visit of the delegation to WARDA laboratories.

Did you know?

Ms Catherine Mgende, CGIAR Media Specialist, is visiting WARDA, Cotonou, 2– 5 May. She assists WARDA to raise its visibility primarily in Eastern Africa. During her visit, she will discuss media plans for this year and interview researchers for media stories.

New publications

- Proceedings of the Regional Workshop on HIV/AIDS and Agriculture: Implications for Food Security in West and Central Africa. For copies, please contact Achuzia Jacinta, Publication Assistant
- Innovations in Rural Extension: Case Studies from Bangladesh, edited by P Van Mele, A Salahuddin and N. P. Magor, is now available for downloading online at:
<http://www.irri.org/publications/catalog/innovations.asp>



ON DIT
 “AKWABA”



Ibrahima Bamba
 Post Doctoral Fellow
 16 April 2007

Matty Demon
 Agricultural Economist
 2 May 2007

ON DIT
 “BYE BYE”

Victorien Randriamahonina
 27 April 2007

ARI Steering Committee meeting

The African Rice Initiative (ARI) Steering Committee met, 23-27 April, at WARDA, Cotonou. The meeting was organized by the ARI Regional Coordinator Dr I Akintayo.

National coordinators from seven pilot countries of the NERICA Dissemination project funded by the African Development Bank (AfDB) presented their annual reports. Special invitees, representing ARI donors and partners -- Dr Kae Yanagisawa from UNDP, Dr N. Nguyen from FAO and Dr Robert Anyang, Uganda Agricultural Productivity Enhancement Program (APEP) -- also made presentations.

Recommendations made at the end of the meeting include:

- More emphasis to be put on the participation of women in the project activities, training, and complementary technologies development.
- Focus on the recycling of the seed stock every 3 years to avoid seed mixture.
- WARDA and NARS to address NERICA 1 and NERICA 2 susceptibility to Sitophilus.
- Adapt the Uganda success story in the use of private sector to boost NERICA seed enterprise, post-harvest equipments and other inputs in the participating countries.
- Continue to put emphasis on Breeder and Foundation seed production, distribution and variety maintenance to satisfy seed demands.
- Continue facilitating the development of complementary technologies.
- Enhance capacity building in member countries to produce all categories of seeds to ensure the sustainability of the mechanism.



Felicitation

At the closing ceremony of ARI Steering Committee meeting, Dr S Y Dogbé was awarded a plaque in deep appreciation for his exemplary selfless contribution to rice R&D and his dedicated service as Chair of the African Rice Initiative (ARI) Steering Committee (2002-2006).



Events

- Training on Proposal Development, WARDA, Cotonou, 28 May - 1 June

Seminars

- “The genome analysis case history of Rhodesgrass: an increasingly important tropical forage species” by Dr Benjamin E.Ubi, Associate Professor and Director of the Biotechnology Research & Development Centre, Ebonyi State University, Nigeria, 11 April
- “Avoiding common faults in written French” by Maimouna Diatta, French Editor, 20 April
- “WARDA’s Finances” by ADG-CS, 26 April
- “Report on AGM06” by Ali Toure, 1st GSS representative to participate in AGM, 27 April

Hello! Bonjour!

For the first time at WARDA-Cotonou, English and French language training classes are being organized. Classes in English begin from 1 May 2007 and in French from 3 May 2007. Happy learning!!

My family!



WARDA and members of the African Rice Initiative (ARI) Steering Committee bidding farewell to Victorien Randriamahonina on 27 April 2007

On dit “Congratulations” to:

Eklou Attiogbevi-Somado, on his new assignment as Coordinator of INGER-Africa

Drame Khady Nani, PDF on the new arrival in her house.

African proverb!

Smooth seas do not make skillful sailors!

Sport

It is the time of the year when you can cheer your favorite NERICA team. The annual football tournament will be kicked off on 4 May 2007:

Team 1 = Administration + Operation
Team 2 = Research & Development