



SCALING UP CLIMATE-RESILIENT RICE PRODUCTION IN WEST AFRICA

(Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia,
Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo)

REGIONAL LAUNCH WORKSHOP REPORT

Bamako, Mali

January 16 to 18, 2023



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ACRONYMS

ANCAR	National Agency for Agricultural and Rural Advice
ANADER	National Rural Development Support Agency
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
SC	Steering Committee
CORAF	West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development
CRS-Rice	Regional Center of Specialization on Rice
ARCN	Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria
NDA	National Directorate of Agriculture
EE	Executing Entity
AF	Adaptation Fund
IER	Institut d'Economie Rurale
ICAT	Institute of Consulting and Technical Support
INRAB	National Institute of Agricultural Research of Benin
INRAN	National Institute of Agronomic Research of Niger
IRAG	Agricultural Research Institute
IRAS	Institut de Recherche Agronomique Des Savanes
IRASL	Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute
MDR	Ministère de Développement Rural
PIM	Project Implementation Manual
CN	Concept Note
OSS	Sahara and Sahel Observatory
PACE	Projet Agricole de la Communauté de l'Espoir
PPR	Project Performance Report
CRRP	Climate Resilient Rice Production
AWPB	Annual Work Plan and Budget
SG/MAEP	Secrétariat Général du Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Elevage et de la Pêche
SRI	Sustainable Rice Intensification
ToRs	Terms of reference

I. CONTEXT

In the West African region, rice is a staple food and plays a major role in the food security of rural and urban populations. Its production is largely ensured by small farmers, whose means of subsistence and income remain very low. Demand for rice in the region, which is constantly growing due to population growth and increased consumption, now exceeds production, leading to a constant increase in rice imports. This situation weighs heavily on public budgets and exposes the region to the volatility of world market prices.

West Africa has been identified as one of the regions particularly vulnerable to climate change. This is due to naturally high levels of climate variability, heavy reliance on highly climate-sensitive rain-fed agriculture, particularly rice, and limited economic and institutional capacity that cannot cope with the negative impacts of climate change. . To address these problems, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) launched, in 2013, a regional initiative called "Rice Offensive", with the aim of achieving rice self-sufficiency in by 2025, using a Climate Resilient Rice Production (CRRP) approach.

It is with a view to contributing to the realization of this initiative that the request for the RICOWAS project was developed, capitalizing on the achievements of the SRI-WAAPP regional project "Improving and scaling up the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) in west Africa ".

Implemented by the Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) and financed by the Adaptation Fund (AF), the RICOWAS project was approved by the AF on October 21, 2021 during the 37th session of its Board of Directors. Administration.

The RICOWAS regional project aims to improve the resilience to climate change and increase the productivity of smallholder rice systems in West Africa using a climate-resilient rice production approach, benefiting 13 ECOWAS countries.

Specifically, it aims to:

- Strengthen the resilience and capacity of smallholder rice farmers and other actors in the rice sector by enabling them to use sustainable agroecological land and water management strategies that respond to climate change threats in their respective localities;
- Help farmers implement and improve CRRP, using the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) method and locally adapted soil and water conservation management approaches;
- Support a communication platform and engage in advocacy to promote an effective exchange of knowledge and expertise among various stakeholders in West Africa and elsewhere;
- Facilitate the creation of a coalition of partners at the national and regional levels for the improvement of CRRP.

In order to achieve these specific objectives, the RICOWAS project is structured around three main components:

- **Component 1:** Strengthen human and institutional capacity in climate-resilient rice production (CRRP);
- **Component 2:** Assist farmers to scale-up Climate-Resilient Rice Production (CRRP); and
- **Component 3:** Strengthen communication, advocacy and partnerships to scale up CRRP.

At the regional level, the project is executed by the Regional Center of Specialization on Rice, hosted by the Institute of Rural Economy of Mali, under the Ministry of Rural Development (CRS-Riz/IER).

At the national level, the project is executed by the following 13 Executing Entities:

Benin	General Secretariat of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (SG/MAEP) / National Institute of Agricultural Research of Benin (INRAB)
Burkina Faso	Direction générale des études et des statistiques sectorielles / Ministère de l'agriculture et des aménagements hydro-agricoles
Ivory Coast	Agence Nationale d'Appui au Développement Rural (ANADER) / Ministère de l'Agriculture et du Développement Rural
The Gambia	Ministry of Agriculture
Ghana	CSIR-Savanna Agricultural Research Institute (SARI)
Guinea	Agronomic Research Institute (IRAG)
Liberia	Community of Hope Agriculture Project (CHAP)
Mali	Direction Nationale de l'Agriculture (DNA)
Niger	Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique du Niger (INRAN)
Nigeria	Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria (ARCN)
Senegal	Agence Nationale de Conseil Agricole et Rural (ANCAR)
Sierra Leone	Rokupr Rice Research Centre/Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI)
Togo	Institut de Conseil et d'Appui Technique (ICAT)

The RICOWAS project should be launched no later than August 2022, according to the date initially planned considering the objective of the sixth month from the first transfer of money received from the Adaptation Fund, on February 25, 2022. OSS, acting as a regional implementing entity, has identified institutional obstacles, beyond its control, caused by the sanctions that have been imposed by ECOWAS, since January 2022 on Mali, which hosts the regional coordination unit (CRS-Riz/IER). This situation led the OSS to ask the FA Board for a 6-month postponement of the start date of the project initially scheduled for August 24, 2022, to February 24, 2023. In the meantime, the fiduciary unit of the OSS has initiated the preparation of all the legal documents necessary for the smooth running of the project. However, the finalization of certain sections of the grant agreements could not be completed due to the lack of details relating to the relationship between the national implementing entities and the regional entity based in Mali. On July 3, 2022, ECOWAS decided to lift all these sanctions, which made it possible to resume the process according to the project document, without major changes and the official launch date of the project was fixed in consultation with the partners of execution for January 18, 2023.

In the meantime, the OSS initiated the due diligence process, commonly known as "Due Diligence" of all the national executing entities as well as the Regional Specialization Center on Rice (CRS-Riz), hosted at the Institute of Rural Economy (IER), which represents the Regional Executing Entity, through a questionnaire previously prepared for this purpose.

This verification included a series of examinations aimed at carrying out the legal, financial, accounting, tax, environmental and technical analysis of each executing entity. In particular, it made it possible to

identify risk factors related to the execution of project activities in order to take them into consideration during project implementation.

With regard to the Regional Implementing Entity, OSS organized a Due Diligence mission to the offices of CRS-Riz/IER in Bamako, from October 10 to 14, 2022 in order to enhance the evaluation and further verify the information provided through the completed questionnaire.

Specifically the mission made it possible to:

- Present, discuss and complete the answers provided through the Due Diligence questionnaire;
- Evaluate the technical, financial and accounting performance of CRS-Riz/IER;
- Assess the procurement procedures;
- Check the compliance of the project with the regulations and standards (technical, financial, environmental, social and gender) in force in the country;
- Present the role and responsibilities of the regional steering committee of the project and its composition;
- Identify capacity building needs;
- Present the elements of the Grant Agreement and the conditions of entry into force;
- Plan the regional project launch workshop and propose a roadmap with the tasks and responsibilities of OSS and CRS-Riz/IER.

Preparations continued in consultation between OSS and CRS-Riz/IER until the date of organization of the regional launch workshop, the subject of this inception report.

II. WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the regional workshop are to consolidate the understanding and ownership of the RICOWAS project by the various stakeholders, to publicize its official launch to a wide audience in the sub-region and to train the various entities and institutions involved in the execution of the project on the technical, financial, regulatory and management aspects related to its implementation.

Specifically, these are:

- Inform relevant stakeholders about the objectives and expected results of the project;
- Present the philosophy and implementation approach of the project;
- Present and agree on the institutional arrangements for their approval by the Regional Steering Committee of the project;
- Present project implementation requirements and procedures;
- Review the work plan and budget for the first year of the project;
- Identify and plan priority activities for the first year of the project;
- Officially announce the start of the project; and
- Organize the first Regional Steering Committee of the project.

III. WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS

The inception workshop was preceded by two first days devoted to technical sessions for the focal points of regional and national entities implementing the project as described below.

Technical Sessions

On the sidelines of the regional launch workshop, working sessions and group work were organized with the various entities and institutions involved in the execution of the project to discuss and exchange on:

- The philosophy of the project and its history;
- Technical and financial management capacities;
- The potential environmental and social risks associated with the project;
- Gender aspects and consideration;
- Compliance with the regulations and standards set out (financial, environmental and social communication) in force in the countries concerned;
- The first activities and their planning according to the project document and in accordance with the exchanges undertaken during the various sessions.

Day 1: January 16, 2023



Group photo – technical sessions

The first day of technical work sessions which preceded the regional launching workshop began with an opening session moderated by Mr. Abdelkader DODO, coordinator of the Water Department at OSS who invited Mr. Modibo SYLLA, Director General of the Institute of Rural Economy, to deliver the welcome remarks to the various participants representing the 13 national executing entities. Subsequently, Mr. DODO asked everyone to introduce themselves before proceeding to the presentation of the objectives of the two days of work as well as their expected results. He also continued on the presentation of the OSS and showed the link and the conformity of the project with the different technical and scientific axes of the OSS 2030 strategy.

Prior to commencement of the work sessions, Mr. Ghazi GADER, coordinator of projects and programs at OSS, presented the project, its objectives, components and budget. He also presented the operating structure through the institutional set-up while specifying the role of each of the entities as well as the subsidiary and governance bodies such as the Regional Steering Committee and the Technical and Scientific Committee. He further specified the components relating to the institutional set-up where a session was dedicated to this during the second day where further clarifications were made and the participants proceeded to the validation of the final programme which was presented for approval.

As part of this first day and taking into account that some participants were recently appointed as members of the national executing entities, a session presenting the synopsis of the project and the consultative process followed which was undertaken by Dr. Erika STYGER, Professor-Researcher at Cornell University. Cornell University was one of the key partners with CORAF in the promotion of SRI within the framework of the SRI-WAAPP project, financed by the World Bank. Dr. STYGER, recalled the main results of the SRI-WAAPP project which should be scaled up within the framework of the RICOWAS project. She shared some good practices and showed some champions in different project partner countries,

In order to ensure the common understanding of the implementation approach of the RICOWAS project, a presentation of the project philosophy and the general methodology of its execution was undertaken by Mr. Aziz BELHAMRA, project manager. In his presentation, he highlighted on the need to have a global and coherent understanding and approach of the activities in order to be able to ensure effectiveness and efficiency in their execution. Thereafter, a session of questions and answers followed by debate was held with all the participants in order to collect their concerns and provide them with the necessary clarifications.



Sessions techniques

The first day included group work sessions where all the participants were invited to develop, according to their understanding and on the basis of the previous sessions and presentation, the action plan for the first year. This exercise was undertaken in groups of three countries. At the end of the group work, each of the designated rapporteurs presented the results of their group's work and then the CRS-Riz/IER team presented the summary of the work and of the whole day accompanied by recommendations, comments, and other inputs made following all presentations.

Conclusions and results of the work of the day 1:

- Define the institutional set-up of the project with a view to its validation by the RSC;
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of each entity;
- Refine and adopt the criteria for selecting sites and beneficiaries;
- Identify areas of synergy with existing projects;
- Ensure the application of the Bottom-up approach for the execution of activities at community level; and
- Identify a budget line for the launch of the project at national level.

Day 2: January 17, 2023

The second day of technical work started with a session moderated by Mr. Abdelkader DODO, who invited Mr. GADER to give a general overview of the content of the Project Implementation Manual (PIM), which was shared with all executing entities for amendment prior to final adoption.

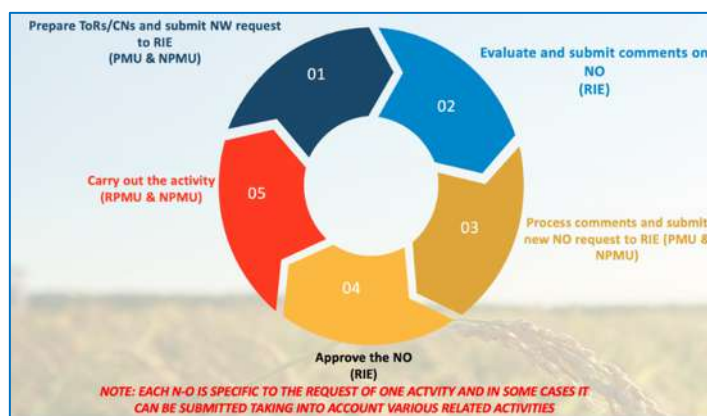
Mr. GADER then continued his presentation with a reminder of the institutional arrangements presented the previous day and agreed by all the stakeholders during the development of the project document.

He then presented the roles and responsibilities of each entity involved in the RICOWAS project where participants took note of the different roles and identified the Top-Bottom and Bottom-Up approach to reporting. They were also informed about the synergies related to the arrangements and the technical assistance provided by OSS to overcome the various obstacles that could be encountered during the execution of the project.

Subsequently, a question-and-answer session followed with all the participants around the final structure of the institutional arrangements which was retained to respond to the various requests for clarification and which was agreed upon by the unanimous adoption of these provisions.

Mr. GADER continued with the presentation of the No-Objection (N-O) procedure and its importance which constitutes a preliminary examination allowing the OSS to evaluate and assess whether or not to approve a procurement action related to specific projects, including the applicant's submission of terms of reference (ToRs) and/or related Concept Notes (CNs) detailing the procurement methodology and selection criteria. Once notified, the N-O commits the executing entity and OSS to the execution of the activity. He also presented the thresholds and the need to align the N-O with existing national procurement procedures.

The OSS team clarified the various questions asked by the participants and noted the mandatory requirements that each entity is required to respect while considering their respective specificities.



Mr. Steve MUHANJI, Projects and Programs Coordinator at OSS, facilitated the second part of the sessions by presenting the different types of reports and the templates that will be provided to the executing entities as well as the deadlines for submission.

He also underlined the role of the Regional Executing Entity who is responsible for the elaboration of the consolidated report containing 14

annexes (13 NNE + 1 REE) to be submitted to OSS on the 10th of every month and which will serve as a basis for the preparation of the Annual Project Performance Report (PPR) to be submitted to the AF.

Mr. MUHANJI then presented the different sections of the periodic technical and financial reports and explained that each section includes explanatory notes on how to develop the sections.

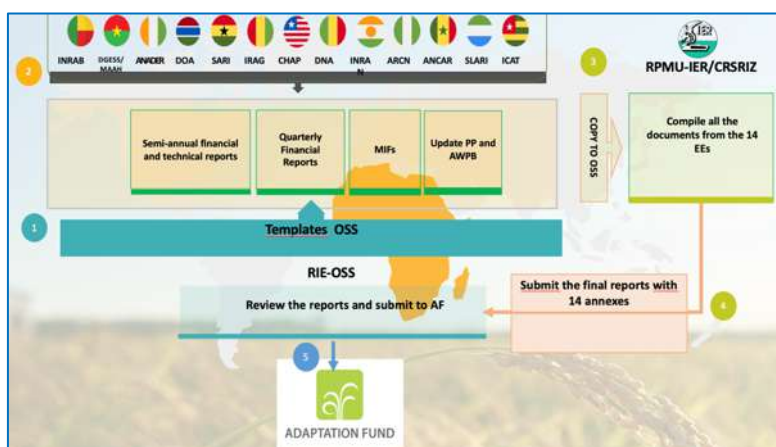
Mr. BELHAMRA took over to present to the participants the aspects related to financial reporting. He particularly insisted on the presentation of the different sections and the way to present them. Mr. BELHAMRA also presented the reports on the Monthly Interim Financial Statements (MIFs) which provide information on the operations of each entity with regard to disbursements and the use of funds indicating their importance and the way in which they will be utilized. He also presented the disbursement request template and guidelines as provided by OSS as well as the mandatory supporting documents which must be submitted with these requests.

The third part of the session was provided by Mr. MUHANJI who presented and explained the 15 principles of the Adaptation Fund by giving some examples for each principle within the framework of the project activities. He emphasized to the participants that during execution, it is mandatory to apply these principles in order to ensure alignment with the different needs of the project.



Mr. MUHANJI then presented the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) process, which is an obligation in the execution of the project and is linked to an ongoing consultation process throughout the life of the project.

He emphasized that the FPIC process ensures that the different perspectives of affected communities are taken into account equally, through an inclusive decision-making process. As part of the implementation phase of the project, he stressed that OSS and its partners are committed to conducting participatory monitoring and evaluation of the agreements reached with indigenous communities and their representatives, in a transparent and efficient manner. He noted that this ensures inclusion within the framework of the 15 principles of the AF.



Mr. MUHANJI ended by presenting the grievance mechanism, which is a tool to provide various groups and individuals affected by environmental, social and gender impacts, resulting from the project's activities, supported by OSS, an accessible, transparent, fair and effective process for submitting and addressing their complaints. He also underlined that the grievance could be anonymous and recommended informing the OSS of any complaint that may arise in the context of the execution of the project.

He then detailed the process and procedures and lastly invited the EEs to consult the grievance guide on the OSS website.

Mrs. Nadia KHAMMARI, coordinator of the communication department at OSS, closed the day with a presentation on the communication aspects of the RICOWAS project. She explained to the participants the guidelines for reporting from the Executing Entity level to the Regional Implementing Entity level. She also presented the reporting methods in relation to the roles and responsibilities presented above. She also highlighted the "do's and don'ts" of communication with supporting examples.

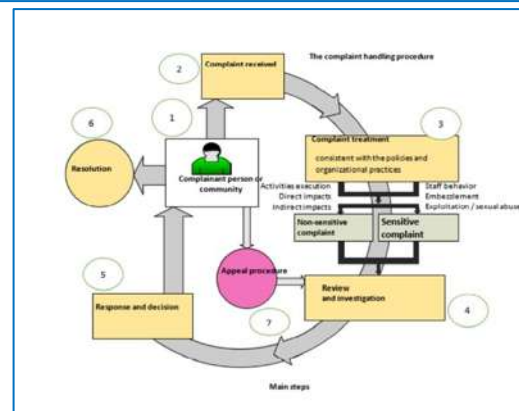
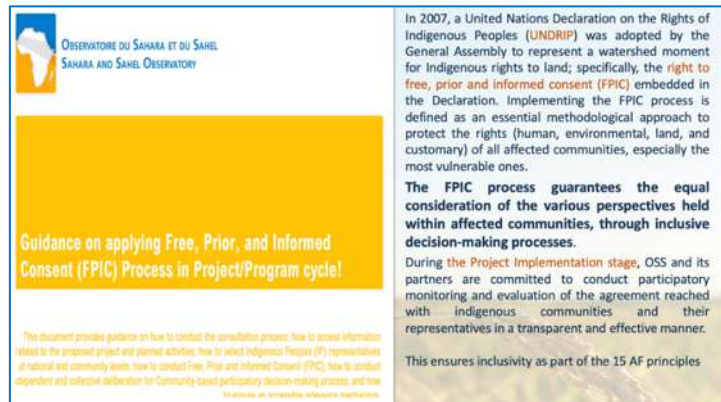
She also pointed out that each EE must have documentation dedicated to communication relating to project interventions and the operations for which it is responsible.

Finally, she noted that the OSS communication team will be available to support the EEs with their communication needs and provide them with the necessary support taking into account the complexity of the RICOWAS project.

The day ended with the presentation of the IER/CRS-Riz team, the summary of all the day's sessions, relating the recommendations, comments, and other inputs made following all the presentations.

Main conclusions and outcomes of the day 2:

- Establish a detailed work plan;
- Share working documents and reporting templates (financial and technical);
- Clarify the role of each regional executing partner (CORAF and Cornell University);
- Train the executing entities on financial and management aspects;
- Respect the 15 principles for environmental and social safeguards;
- Develop and implement an effective communication plan;
- Accelerate the agreement development and formalization between the implementing entity and the executing entities; and



- Share the report of the kick-off workshop, which is considered as the start-up report of the project.

IV. LAUNCH CEREMONY

The regional project launch workshop organized on January 18, 2023 in Bamako, Mali brought together more than 100 participants representing the various regional and national executing entities of the 13 beneficiary countries, representatives of sub-regional institutions and key partners of the project as well as civil society, research and the media (Annex 2: List of participants and media).

The opening ceremony was marked by the welcoming remarks from Mr. Modibo SYLLA, Director General of the Institute of Rural Economy, who recalled the importance of partnerships and networking stressing that made the RICOWAS project possible thanks to the commitment of institutions such as OSS, IER, Cornell University and all the regional entities working in the countries.

Further this, In his speech, Mr. Niéyidouba LAMIEN, Representative of CORAF and ECOWAS, expressed the satisfaction of the ECOWAS Director of Agriculture to see this kind of project operationalized and come to consolidate the implementation of policies within the framework of the 'Rice Offensive' initiative in 13 of its member countries, congratulating all the institutions that invested in the approval of the RICOWAS project, assuring them of ECOWAS's commitment in its support for the implementation work.

The Executive Director of CORAF, through his representative, assured that his institution as the technical



Launching Workshop Opening Ceremony Panel



Part of the participants at the launch workshop

arm of ECOWAS will play its part to contribute to the success of the project, through a number of mechanisms, including the organization of the working environment and research to pool efforts and the provision or assistance in the mobilization of financial resources for the benefit of centers of specialization. Mr. LAMIEN also reiterated CORAF's satisfaction to see that not only CRS-Riz is positioned to ensure the regional execution of the project, but also that the RICOWAS project consolidates and amplifies the achievements in the dissemination of SRI technologies, garnered as part of the implementation of the SRI-WAAPP.

For his part, Mr. Frédéric DABIRE, representative of CILSS, in his speech highlighted the importance of such an initiative for the region, particularly in the context of climate change and the predisposition of his institution to accompany and support the implementation of the project.

In his opening speech, Mr. Nabil BEN KHATRA, Executive Secretary of OSS recalled the objectives of the project, reaffirming the organization's commitment to look towards possible solutions and to do everything possible to achieve them.

The start of the project was officially announced by HE Mr. Modibo KEÏTA, Minister of Rural Development of Mali, who expressed his satisfaction with the collaborative process put in place to allow this project to take shape and materialize. Mr. KEÏTA did not fail to recall Mali's commitment to support and accompany the implementation of the project, considering the crucial importance of such an initiative given the preponderant place occupied by food insecurity in the entire West African region. He also underlined the need to reverse the paradox of rice importation while the region has the necessary resources to achieve self-sufficiency in rice production, or even to export it.

Annexes 4 to 7, present some publications on the launch of the project, in social networks, written media and online.



*Opening remarks by HE Modibo KEÏTA,
Minister of Rural Development*



Speech by Mr. Nabil BEN KHATRA, Executive Secretary of OSS

Dr. Karim TRAORE, coordinator of CRS-Riz, presented the RICOWAS project, its objectives, its components as well as its expected results, recalling the process of its development to the participants of the launch. He continued with the presentation of the agreed institutional arrangements which will be discussed at the Regional Project Steering Committee meeting.

The rest of the workshop consisted of the organization of two panels. The first brought together OSS in its capacity as Regional Implementing Entity, CRS-Riz/IER in its capacity as Regional Executing Entity and CORAF and Cornell University in their capacity as regional execution partners.

Mrs. Khaoula JAOUÏ, Coordinator of the climate department at OSS, took the floor to present the OSS, its mission and the services offered to member countries, the 2030 strategy, climate actions, the role and responsibilities of the organization as an entity accredited to access climate funds, as well as technical and financial partners.

Dr. Karim TRAORE, Dr. Lamien NIEYIDOUBA and Dr. Erika STYGER, respectively representing CRS-Riz/IER, CORAF and Cornell University, presented their institutions, where a feedback on the experiences and lessons learned from the SRI- WAAPP, the main results of the consultation process carried out during the drafting phase of the project document and finally the expectations and prospects within the framework of the RICOWAS project.

The second Panel brought together representatives of the executing entities of the 13 beneficiary countries of the RICOWAS project. The presentations followed the same pattern as those of CRS-Riz/IER,

CORAF and Cornell University where they presented their institutions and countries as well as the part they play in the RICOWAS project taking into account the experiences and lessons learned.

After a question-and-answer session with all the speakers, the IER/CRS-Riz team presented a summary of the main recommendations resulting from the workshop.

Finally, Mr. Khalifa TRAORE, Scientific Director of the IER proceeded, on behalf of the Director General, to the official closing of the regional workshop to launch the RICOWAS project.



Group photo – RICOWAS regional launch workshop

V. MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE LAUNCH

The main recommendations of the launch have been summarized below:

- Importance to engage with CORAF, CORNELL and other key partners towards execution of tasks;
- Ensure the involvement of national authorities and communities throughout the different phases of implementation in order to ensure ownership of project results;
- Need to maintain perfect communication and coordination between all the actors involved in the project;
- Good understanding of donor procedures and requirements to ensure good project management;
- Considering the potential difficulties in accessing the intervention areas during implementation and the complexity to undertake tasks;
- Be cognizant of the regional dimension approach of the project noting the key role of CRS-Riz/IER as the REE who will be in charge of all aspects related to communication and knowledge dissemination;
- Take into account the agricultural calendars of the communities and the rainfall patterns; and
- Follow up on the security barriers and political interventions required to facilitate project implementation.

VI. REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE RICOWAS PROJECT (RSC)

The first RSC of the project was organized on January 18, 2023 by CRS-Riz/IER, taking advantage of the presence of representatives of the 13 beneficiary countries as well as those of the most important sub-regional organizations invited to the official launch. The presidency was given to Dr. Niéyidouba LAMIEN, Program Manager and Focal Point, Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security, representing CORAF in its capacity as a sub-regional organization directly involved in the implementation of the "Rice Offensive" initiative which was in charge of the first phase of the SRI-WAAPP program and also as responsible for the supervision and evaluation of the ECOWAS Centers of Specialization.

After the opening, which was marked by a word of welcome from the Scientific Director of the IER, Mr. Khalifa TRAORE, who thanked the participants for their presence and their commitment, he gave the floor to Mr. Karim TRAORE, coordinator from CRS-Riz who presented the agenda of the meeting, summarized as follows:

- Validation and adoption of the meeting agenda;
- Presentation and approval of the ToRs of the Regional Steering committee;
- Presentation and approval of the institutional arrangements of the project;
- Presentation and approval of the Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) for the first year, the regional entity and the national executing entities;

A discussion session followed each presentation and recommendations from participants are summarized below:

Presentation and approval of the ToRs of the Regional Steering Committee (RSC) members

- Need to reduce the number of members of the regional RSC to 18 people. The following has been recommended for this purpose:
 - CORAF will represent both ECOWAS, UEMOA and CILSS, being all organizations representing ECOWAS.
 - The presidents of the national SC will represent their country in the regional SC. They must each designate a substitute in the absence of the first person in charge.
 - CORAF, Cornell University and CILSS will sit on the regional SC as observers alongside OSS.
 - The representativeness of each member must be at a level that will allow them to make decisions on the spot.
- It was unanimously recommended that the CRS-Riz/IER review the ToRs presented by integrating the recommendations of the participants and share the proposal with the partners for a final opinion before final adoption.

Presentation and approval of the institutional arrangements of the project

The institutional arrangements were presented and discussed in a first step in plenary during the working days with the regional and national executing entities and in a restricted meeting with the CRS-Riz/IER as a regional executing entity and the CORAF and Cornell University in their capacity as regional executing partners, who agreed on the final institutional structure for the implementation of the project.

At the end of the presentation given by Mr. Karim TRAORE, the participants in the RSC unanimously approved the agreed institutional arrangements and recommended accelerating the contracting process in order to be able to commence activities.

Presentation and approval of the Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) for the first year

A first budgeted annual work plan for the first year of the project covering the period February 2023 – January 2024, was prepared by CRS-Riz/IER, based on the work carried out by the various EEs during the technical work sessions and presented to the RSC by Dr. Karim TRAORE.

At the end of this presentation, the participants agreed that this first AWPB should be sent to the various national EEs to use it as a model and complete the preparation of the various AWPBs of year 1, taking into account the context of each country with a view to submit them to OSS for No-Objection.

For the Regional Executing Entity and the two regional implementing partners, they were called upon to coordinate together to prepare a work plan and budget for the entire duration of the project, specifying the responsibilities for the execution of activities according to the areas of specialization of each of the entities. This AWPB will be submitted to OSS for No-Objection.

VII. CONCLUSION

The workshop achieved these objectives and ensured a successful, publicized launch with a wide audience both in Mali and in the sub-region.

At the end of the workshop, the conclusions can be summarized as follows:

- A firm commitment from the Malian authorities, sub-regional partners and regional and national implementing entities to successfully implement the project;
- A common understanding of project philosophy;
- Clear knowledge of agreed institutional arrangements;
- Better understanding of OSS procedures by executing partners.

VIII. ANNEXES

Annex 1: Programme

Monday, January 16, 2023 – Technical sessions

Hour	Activities
09h00 – 09h30	Opening session: Introduction and welcome Round table of participants
9:30 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.	Presentation of the objectives and expected results of the sessions Presentation of the OSS and its intervention strategy
9:45 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Sharing experiences and lessons learned from previous phases of the SRI-WAAPP project
10:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Coffee break
11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Presentation of the philosophy and approach to project execution
11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Discussion
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Operational planning and priority activities for the first year of the project (group work)
1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Lunch
2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Restitution of group work
3:30 p.m. – 3:50 p.m.	Coffee break
3:50 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Summary and conclusion

Tuesday, January 17, 2023 – Technical sessions

Hour	Activities
09h00 – 10h45	Presentation of the Project Implementation Manual: Implementation Requirements and Procedures
10:45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Coffee break
11:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Technical and financial reporting procedures No Objection Procedure
12:30 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Discussion
1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Lunch
2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Presentation of the 15 environmental and social principles of the FA Presentation of the gender analysis and its action plan

	Presentation of the grievance mechanism of the project
3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Discussion
3:30 p.m. – 3:40 p.m.	Communication and exchange procedures
3:40 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Discussion
4:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Coffee break
4:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Recommendations and next steps

Wednesday, January 18, 2023 - Launch workshop


Hour	Activities
08h30 – 09h00	Registration
09h00 – 09h30	Opening Ceremony: Welcome, Speeches and Opening Speeches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Word of welcome from the CEO of IER/CRS-Riz - Speech by the representative of CORAF/ECOWAS - Speech by the CILSS representative - Speech by the SE of OSS - Opening speech by the Minister of Rural Development of Mali
9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Coffee break and group photo + Media interviews
10:30 a.m. – 10:40 a.m.	Presentation of the objectives of the workshop and adoption of the agenda
10:40 a.m. – 10:55 a.m.	Project display
10:55 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Panel 1: Presentation of the Regional Implementing Entity, the Regional Executing Entity and the regional implementing partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) - IER/CRS-Rice, - CORAF, - Cornell University
11:30 a.m. – 11:40 a.m.	Discussion
11:40 a.m. – 12:40 p.m.	2nd Panel Presentation of implementing entities and partners at the national level (13 National Implementing Entities)
12:40 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Discussion
1:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Recommendations and closure of the inception workshop
1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Lunch


Regional Project Steering Committee

Hour	Activities	Responsible
3:00 p.m.-3:15 p.m.	Welcome and introductions - Adoption of the agenda	Mr. Karim TRAORE IER/RSC/Rice Coordinator
3:15 p.m. – 3:25 p.m.	Opening speech and official opening of the meeting	Mr. Modibo Sylla CEO of IER
3:25 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.	Presentation of the ToRs of the RSC	Mr. Karim TRAORE IER/RSC/Rice Coordinator
3:45 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.	Presentation of the institutional arrangement	Mr. Karim TRAORE IER/RSC/Rice Coordinator
4:15 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.	Presentation of the budgeted work plan from February 2023 to January 2024	Mr. Karim TRAORE IER/RSC/Rice Coordinator
4:45 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.	Discussions, Recommendations, Next Steps and Closing.	

Annex 2: List of participants


Monday, January 16, 2023

 **OBSERVATOIRE DU SAHARA ET DU SAHEL**
SAHARA AND SAHEL OBSERVATORY

 **ADAPTATION FUND**

LISTE DE PRESENCE DES PARTICIPANTS 16-01-2023

Atelier Régional de Démarrage- Regional Inception Workshop




MISE À L'ÉCHELLE D'UNE RIZICULTURE RÉSILIENTE AU CLIMAT EN AFRIQUE DE L'OUEST


SCALING UP CLIMATE RESILIENT RICE PRODUCTION IN WEST AFRICA


(Bénin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambie, Ghana, Guinée, Libéria,
Mali, Niger, Nigéria, Sénégal, Sierra Leone et Togo)

January 16-18, 2023, Bamako-Mali

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OBSERVATOIRE DU SAHARA ET DU SAHEL
SAHARA AND SAHEL OBSERVATORY

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OBSERVATOIRE DU SAHARA ET DU SAHEL
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Tuesday, January 17, 2023

OBSERVATOIRE DU SAHARA ET DU SAHEL
SAHARA AND SAHEL OBSERVATORY

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Atelier Régional de Démarrage- Regional Inception Workshop



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Wednesday, January 18, 2023

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OBSERVATOIRE DU SAHARA ET DU SAHEL
SAHARA AND SAHEL OBSERVATORY

ADAPTATION FUND

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62	Nadani Oualkara	M		Mali	Malivid		73-11-67-67	
63	Yacouba Keita	M	B	Mali	Malivid		72-25-50-76	
64								
65	Amadou Banga Diallo	M	B	Mali	Malivid		97-59-64-68	
66								
67	Oumar Diallo	M	B	Mali	Malivid		93-51-18-53	
68								
69	Modou FAYE	M	B	Mali	Malivid		76017677	
70	Seiza Doucoure	F	B	Mali	Malivid		76485576	
71	Ebenazer YAO Sagna	M	B	Mali	Malivid		79597103	
72	Adama Kone	M	B	Mali	Malivid		72912688	
73	Jonas Aly SAGNON	M	A	Mali	MAUVID		7214 61 82	
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85								
86								
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90								
91								
92								
93								
94								



Annex 3: List of journalists

Wednesday, January 18, 2023

OBSERVATOIRE DU SAHARA ET DU SAHEL
SAHARA AND SAHEL OBSERVATORY

ADAPTATION FUND

LISTE DE PRESENCE DES JOURNALISTES 18-01-2023

Atelier Régional de Démarrage- Regional Inception Workshop



MISE À L'ÉCHELLE D'UNE RIZICULTURE RÉSILIENTE AU CLIMAT EN AFRIQUE DE L'OUEST

SCALING UP CLIMATE RESILIENT RICE PRODUCTION IN WEST AFRICA

(Bénin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambie, Ghana, Guinée, Libéria,
Mali, Niger, Nigéria, Sénégal, Sierra Leone et Togo)

January 16-18, 2023, Bamako-Mali

N°	Participant Name/Last name	Gender (M/F)	Age A>35 B<35	Country	Position/Institution	Email	Telephone	Signature
1	Joumbi Dacou						78162090	
2	Makam Sissoko	M	B	Mali	AMAP(ESSOR)	makam.sissoko@gmail.com	77885735	
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4	Soumaila Bamba	M	B	Mali	L'ESSOR	photographe	75184087	
5	Mohamed Karamate	M		MALI	MALI 24	journaliste	71221127	
6	Eloi TOGO	M		Togo	Africable TV	journaliste	66468799	
7	Ishma Tereke	F		Mali	ORTM		76032245	
8								
9	Salimata DAO	F		MALI	ORTM	lisaketa@yahoo.fr	73366202	
10	Boulouca Sylla	M		Mali	Télé Prave	BS3206872@gmail.com		



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11	Tenomba DIAKITE	F		Mali	AKITI		86975788	
12	Badara Ali Koita			Nali	Naligne		7276847	
13	Soubouroune COULIBALY			Guinean de Inde			76463522	
14	Misseton Cissé	F		Nali	Echomédias		70-2175-73	
15	Dawda Coulibaly	M		Nekaty	Nekaty		72.66.68.12	
16	Krissum Thera	M		Nali	Augurthm		76323313	
17								
18	Kalitou Diabaté	M		Mali	Lettre du peuple		72747543	
19	Falaye Sissoko	M		Mali	Reussite Mali		77379221	
20	Saibou Touré	M		Mali	com VON		78639903	
21	Seri Haïja	M		Mali	CCM HDR		76247176	
22	Briéma Diallo	M		Nali	22 Septembre		73086471	
23	Tidiane SIDIBE	M		NALI	Kayes Bompfou		79270613	
24	Alassane Cissé	M		Mali	Notre voie		79861532	
25	Baba Touré	M		La Foudre			78243144	
26	Fakoumata Coulibaly	F		Le Sursaut			73983006	
27								





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31								
32	Djenébo Samaké	F		Mali	TM1	Djenébo.samaki764@gmail.com		
33								
34	PAUL YAPI N'Guersan	M		Mali	TM1			
35	Dembélé Sabeleh	M		Mali	Le Focus	rapen.8468@hotmail.com	76225638	
36	Narcisse Gti	M		Mali	Instat-Media		73363199	
37	Issa Fane	M		Mali	Bko News+	Bamakonecos@gmail.com	70373799	
38								
39								
40								
41								
42								
43								



Annex 4: Communication and Media

Facebook



Twitter



Press articles in newspapers.



Online publications.

- OSS website : http://www.oss-online.org/fr/RICOWAS_OSS
- SRI-Africa website (The System of Rice Intensification in Africa) : <https://sri-africa.net/index.php/2023/02/07/official-launch-of-the-ricowas-project-january-18-2023-in-bamako/>
- Radio MIKADO FM : <https://soundcloud.com/mikado-fm/lancement-de-linitiative-ricowas-a-bamako>
- Lejecom: the newspaper of the Malian economy : https://www.lejecom.com/Projet-Ricowas-Plus-de-14-millions-US-pour-la-productivite-du-systeme-rizicole-en-Afrique-de-l-Ouest_a6581.html
- Mali24.info : <https://mali24.info/production-du-riz-les-experts-du-projet-ricowas-en-conclave-a-bamako/>
- Maliweb.net : <https://www.maliweb.net/economie/agriculture/projet-ricowas-plus-de-14-millions-us-pour-la-productivite-du-systeme-rizicole-en-afrique-de-louest-3008722.html>
- COMMODAFRICA : <https://www.commodafrica.com/31-01-2023-du-riz-resilient-au-climat-lobjectif-du-projet-ricowas>