



RICOWAS

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.

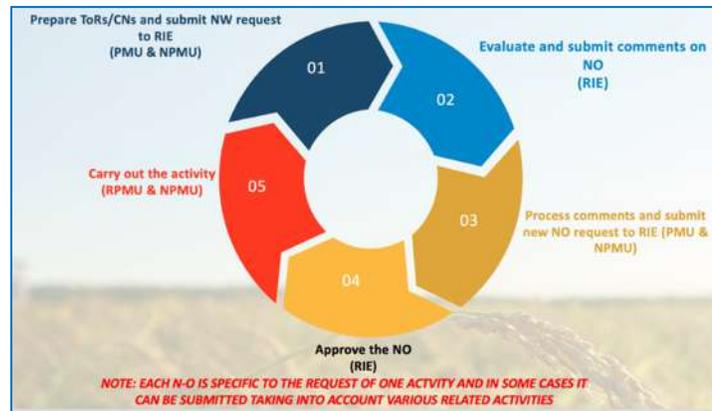


Mr. GADER then continued his presentation with a reminder of the institutional arrangements presented the previous day and agreed by all the stakeholders during the development of the project document.

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.

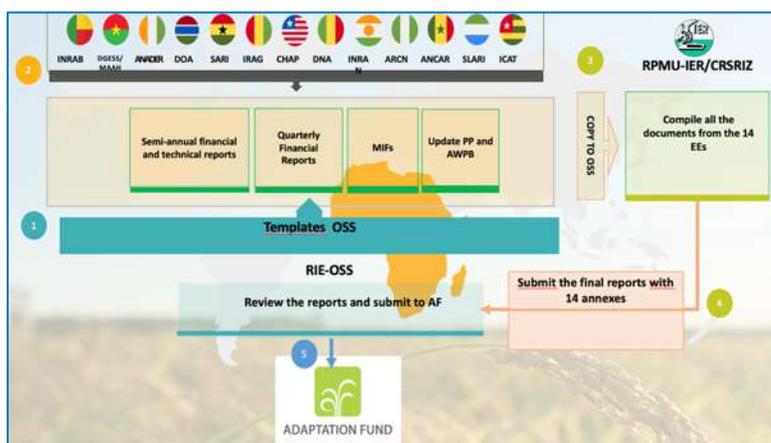
Mr. GADER continued with the presentation of the No-Objection (N-O) procedure and its importance which constitutes a preliminary examination allowing the OSS to evaluate and assess whether or not to approve a procurement action related to specific projects, including the applicant's submission of terms 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.

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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.



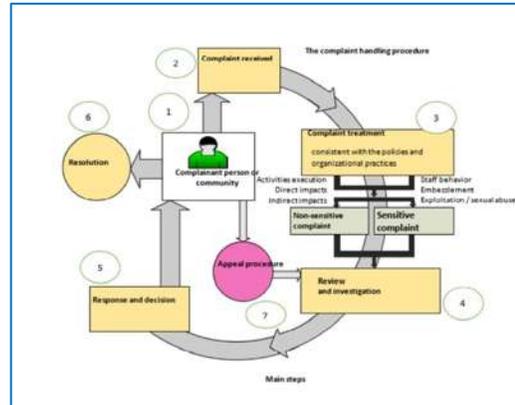
Mr. MUHANJI then presented the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) process, which is an obligation in the execution of the project and is linked to an ongoing consultation process throughout the life of the project.

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 NIEYIDOUÏBA 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 TRAOE, 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



OBSEVATOIRE 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

RICO WAS

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	Samuel Opani Abchrese	M	A	Ghana	Reserch Scientist	su2155@protonmail.com	02445126338	
2	ISSAH SUGRI	M	B	GHANA	RESEARCH	isugri22@gmail.com	0243850292	
3	Mohamed K Dicko	M	A	MALI	Scientist/IER	m.kedicko@gmail.com	+2137629776	
4	SARIKOU SENOU	N.	A	MALI	Conseil IDNA	senousarikou@yahoo.fr	66939967	
5	Sikandria GUILLELY	M	A	Mali	Point F. Net & NA	salink@protonmail.com	+21376337001	
6	Mahamadou Zoubeidou HAIGA	M	A	MALI	Conseiller DNA	mahamadou1983@gmail.com	+21379069158	
7	Bréhima TANGARI	M	A	MALI	CS/Chercheur	brehima.tangari@cgiar.org	+21379069158	
8	Robert S.M. Bamba	M	B	LIBERIA	Executive Director	robertbamba@yahoo.com		
9	Samuel S Harding	M	A	Sierra Leone	Research	teumas.symba@cgiar.org	+2328820892	
10	Moussa NIGATIIESSOU	N.	A	NIGER	DB/INRM	imoussam@yaho.com	+22797719935	





N°	Participant	Gender (M/F)	Age A>35 B<35	Contry	Position/Institution	Email	Telephone	Signature
11	Dr Kanim Traore	M	A	MAH	IER/CRS-n3	Ktraore@yahoo.com	+223 76189588	[Signature]
12	Ramadoulie H. Sayer	F	A	Gambia	coordinator	louleyce@fmail.com	+220 7704895	[Signature]
13	BAGWILIMA Dadjid	M	A	TOGO	ICAT	Gagdadje20@yahoo.fr	+228 22 29 03 17	[Signature]
14	YARI Moutial	M	A	Cote d'IV	CNFC	m.yari@conoci.com	+225 05 46 74	[Signature]
15	XIA MIEN Konobun Alisa	M	A	Cote d'W	CCRID	Khioumeu@17Equilibre.com	+225 07 33 36	[Signature]
16	TOURE ADAMA	M	A	Burkina Faso	medan/KARAK	adalam@medan.org	+226 20 66 2	[Signature]
17	Dr KAMAYE MAAZOU	M	A	NIGER	CNEDD	kamayemaazou@yahoo.fr	+227 96 98 76 70	[Signature]
18	UMAR UMAR ABDULLATHI	M	A	NIGERIA	ARCN	umar.umar.abdullah@3is.com	+234 8036435114	[Signature]
19	Achin Anusuke Ephraim	M	A	NIGERIA	ARCN	anushake@3is.com	+234 8036762784	[Signature]
20	LEGBEGBAT H. Sina	M	A	BENIN	MAEP	senafik@live.fr	+229 97 49 34 35	[Signature]
21	KEUKE ROFANOFF	M	A	BENIN	MAEP/INUZAD	hrosanoff@gmail.com	+229 69 58 84	[Signature]
22	Dr Saikou E. Sanyang	M	B	Gambia	Director Genes	sailkora@gmail.com	+220 7691676	[Signature]
23	Esther Styger	F	A	USA	Prof	est8@cornell.edu	+1 607 279 92 03	[Signature]
24	Dr Barry Mamadou Pillo	M	A	Guinée	IRAG	billobarry@hotmail.com	+224 620 46 30 01	[Signature]
25	Abdou Baye SY	M	A	Senegal	ANCAR	bayesyl@ycs.koofr	+221 77 64 12 84 3	[Signature]
26	Souleymane Dickou Werra	M	A	Guinée	IRAG	sdickou@ycs.koofr	+224 620 46 30 01	[Signature]
27	LOTSI Kokou	M	A	Togo	ICAT	lotsikokou2002@yahoo.fr	+228 22 29 03 17	[Signature]





N°	Participant	Gender (M/F)	Age A>35 B<35	Country	Position/Institution	Email	Telephone	Signature
27	Mariam GRAMIS	F	B	Senegal	JG	Mariam.gramis@gmail.com	00221 78.637.14.68	
28	Houlou Adama	M	A	Mali	P. Focal	ahacouji@yahoo.com	91125712	
29	LAMEN NIEYIDOURA	M	A	Senegal	Gestionnaire P	nieyidouralamen@gmail.com	+221 77 288 2015	
30	ILBOUBA IRISSA	M	A	Senegal	P. Focal	ilbouba.iris@post.mg	70731111	
31	Carole Sobgn	F	B	Senegal	CGRAF	Carole.sobgn@gmail.com	78196665	
32	Boukanda Vally	M	A	Mali	NA	vallyboukanda@gmail.com	78196665	
33	Moussa Sissoko Ouleymatout	F	A	Mali	Gestionnaire AD	ouley@hotmail.com	76965909	
34	Matthew LS-JBOKU	M	B	Sierra	Lease ADG	M.ljokun@stap.org	+221 78 73 848	
35								
36	Modibo Sylla	M	A	Mali	DG-IER	syllamodibe08@gmail.com		
37	Kalifa Traore	M	A	Mali	DS-IER	ibosimon_1@gmail.com		
38	ABDELKADER DODO	M	A	TUNISIE	OSS	abdelkader.dodo@oss.org.tn		
39	TRAORE ISSA	M	A	Mali	Dir IER	issahane2008@gmail.com	76171983	
40	Chazgi GAZER	M	A	TUNISIA	Project Coord.-OSS	chazgi.gazer@oss.org.tn		
41	Khaoula Jaoui	F	A	TUNISIA	OSS	khaoula.jaoui@oss.org.tn		
42	Steve Nahanji	M	A	TUNISIA	OSS	Steve.Nahanji@oss.org.tn		
43	N. Aziz Belhamra	M	B	TUNISIA	OSS	aziz.belhamra@oss.org.tn		





N°	Participant	Gender (M/F)	Age (A>35, B<35)	Country	Position/Institution	Email	Telephone	Signature
44	Bamoussa Sacko	M	A	Mali	Technicien	sackobamoussa@gmail.com	25 58 36	
45	oumou Sangaré	F	B	Mali	Technicien		76 85 33 67	
46								
47	Bouboucou Bouré	M	B	Mali	Interprète	bouboucou@igpho.org	79 11 32 06	
48								
49	SACKO Youcoule dit PAP	M	B	MALI	INTERPRETE	sackoyoucoule@gmail.com	77 69 29 52	
50	Nadia Khammani	F	A	TUNISIA	OSS	nadig.khammani@oss.org.tn		
51	Talek Tiki	F	B	TUNISIA	OSS	maleh.tiki@oss.org.tn		
52								
53								
54								
55								
56								
57								
58								
59								
60								



Tuesday, January 17, 2023



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Atelier Régional de Démarrage- Regional Inception Workshop



MISE À L'ÉCHELLE D'UNE RIZICULTURE RÉILIENTE 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	Samuel Oppong Abetresese	M	A	Ghana	Focal point/SARI	sam555oppo@yahoo.com	0244512-6538	
2	Thomouat Dicko	M	A	MALI	Scientist/IER	mlsDicko@gmail.com	+223 777776	
3	Karam Traore	M	A	MALI	IER-CRS-riz	karamtraore@yahoo.com	+223 76153838	
4	Diakaridia Coulibaly	M	A	Mali	Facility Nat	galiakaridia@gmail.com	+223 701	
5	BACHILINA Dago	F	A	Togo	Amidant LICAT	bagdago2002@yahoo.com	+228 90310291	
6	Moussa MINGA Illiassou	M	A	NIGER	DB/INRIAN	imoussim@gmail.com	+9779435	
7	Matthew L.S. Gboku	M	A	Sierra Leone	ADG/SLARI	m.gboku@slarugansl.com	+08738433	
8	Samuel Sanku Hardy	M	A	Sierra Leone	Researcher	leumas1962@yahoo.com	08820 8402	
9	ISSAH SUGRI	M	A	GHANA	CSIR-SARI	isugri22@gmail.com	+2332+3856292	
10	ROBERT S.M. Bimba	M	B	Liban	Expert Data	robertbimba	+23177015	





N°	Participant	Gender (M/F)	Age A>35 B<35	Contry	Position/Institution	Email	Telephone	Signature
11	TANGARA Brehima	M	A	MALI	IER/CS	brehima.tangara@iers.org	7916700	[Signature]
12	ACHINI AWUHE EPHRAIM	M	A	NIGERIA	CAO/ARCN	awuhebaj@yahoo.com	+2348036762784	[Signature]
13	Dr. Saïkou E. Sanyang	M	A	Gambus	DG-DOA	Saïkoue@gmail.com	+2207691676	[Signature]
14	ERIKA STYGER	F	A	USA	Prof	erika@cornell.edu		[Signature]
15	NADIA KHAMMARI	F	A	TUNISIA	Coordination du Programme	nadia.khammari@adp.org.tn		[Signature]
16	Abdoulaye Sy	M	A	Senegal	Director/ANCAR	syaboulaye@yahoo.fr	776452803	[Signature]
17	LEGBAGAH SENE	M	A	BENIN	MAEP	senefnk@live.fr	22597492435	[Signature]
18	Alama Drame	F	A	Senegal	DG-ANCAR	ama.drame@anscar.org	786371468	[Signature]
19	Sarika SENOU	F	A	Mali	CI/Division DNA	sarika@unicef.org	66932961	[Signature]
20	Moukoko Oly	M	A	MALI	IER	oly@unicef.org		[Signature]
21	HMME Sissoko Ouleymateou	F	A	MALI	IER	ouley@hetmail.com		[Signature]
22	ABDELKADER DOB	M	A	TUNISIE	OSS	abdellader.dob@oss.org.tn		[Signature]
23	Khadoua Jaoui	F	A	TUNISIE	OSS	khada.jaoui@oss.org.tn		[Signature]
24	STEVE MUHANJI	M	A	TUNISIA	OSS	steve.muhanji@oss.org.tn		[Signature]
25	Ghazi GAOUL	M	A	TUNISIA	DR	ghazi.gaul@adp.org.tn		[Signature]
26	Aziz Belhamki	M	B	TUNISIA	OSS	aziz.belhamki@adp.org.tn		[Signature]
27	MALEK TRIKI	F	B	Tunisia	OSS	malek.triki@adp.org.tn		[Signature]





N°	Participant	Gender (M/F)	Age (A>35, B<35)	Country	Position/Institution	Email	Telephone	Signature
27	NIAMIEN Kouakou Sébastien	M	A	Cote d'Ivoire	CCRID	kniamien07@gmail.com	0707043336	
28	YAPI Montiel	M	A	Côte d'Ivoire	ONFE	m.yapi@amadurci.com	01054674	
29	Ramadoulie H. Sayan	F	A	Gambia	GRAR	tonie400@gmail.com	7904945	
30								
31	Hadougui Abdoumou	M	A	NIGER	INRAN	hadougui@yahoo.com	22270130862	
32	Umar Umar ABDULLAH	M	A	NIGERIA	ARCN	umarumarabd3108036436114@gmail.com	22270130862	
33	TOURE ADAMA	M	A	Burkina Faso	MARAH	adalcouet8@yahoo.com	22270130862	
34	Souleymane Diawara	M	A	Guinée	IRAG	sdiaawara@gmail.com	22270130862	
35	Mamadou Billo BARRY	M	A	Guinée	IRAG	billobarry@hatma.com	22270130862	
36	Mahamadou Z MAÏGA	M	A	Mali	DNA	mahamadou1983@gmail.com	79069158	
37	LOTSI KOKOU	M	A	Togo	ICAT	lotsi.koku2004@yahoo.fr	22270130862	
38	Boubacar Bâ	M	B	Mali	Interpêche	boubacarba@yahoo.com	7911980	
39	NIAMIEN MEYI	M	B	Senegal	CORAF	n.lamienn@coraf.org	721772882015	
40	Kouko Rofanff y.s.	M	A	BENIN	MAEP/INRAD	krosandf@gmail.com	22270130862	
41	De Kamaye Maïzon	M	A	NIGER	CNE-DA	kamayemaizon@yahoo.fr	+227969814702	
42	Caroline Sobgui	F	B	Senegal	CORAF	C.sobgui@coraf.org	721772882015	
43	Abdou IRISSA	M	A	Senegal	Cent foraf	irissad@coraf.org	7073212	





N°	Participant	Gender (M/F)	Age A>35 B<35	Country	Position/Institution	Email	Telephone	Signature
44	Bandjiou Cou Sacko	M	B	Mali	Technicien San	bandjioucou@univ-gsi	97507836	
45	Oumar Sangare	M	B	Mali	Technicien San		76 85 3547	
46	Sacko Youcoule dit PAP	M	A	MALI	Interprete	sackoyoucoule@gmail.com		
47								
48	Boubouneou Biss	M	B	Mali	Interprete	boubouneou@univ-gsi	7911 3206	
49	Geriba Doumbi	M	B	Mali	Production video	geriba@univ-gsi.com	7648597	
50								
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Wednesday, January 18, 2023



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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	Karim Traoré	M	A	MALI	IER/CRS-riz	kartraor@yaho.com	+223 761895835	[Signature]
2	Mahamadou Z MAÏGA	M	A	MALI	DNA	mahamazou1983@gmail.com	+223 79069158	[Signature]
3	Keane Fintoko Ouleymator	F	A	MALI	IER	ouley@hstmail.com	+223 96965909	[Signature]
4	Aboumoussa K Dicko	M	A	MALI	IER	mdicko@pma.com	+223 78277716	[Signature]
5	Samuel Soki Herdy	M	A	Sierra Leone	SLARI	lewas@slari.org	+232 88208402	[Signature]
6	SANOU Abdoul Karim	M	A	Nigeria	Rice Policy Advisor CEDEAO	ak-sanou@hbnal.fr	+234 912 1693668	[Signature]
7	Adamou Traoré	M	A	Mali	Aboum IER	adamoutraore@pma.com	+223 76461204	[Signature]
8	Bourena KONE	M	A	Mali	IER	[Handwritten]	[Handwritten]	[Signature]
9	Abdoulaye Sy	M	A	Sénégal	AN	lounes@yaho.com	+221 76398400	[Signature]
10	Abdoulaye Sy	M	A	Sénégal	ANCAR	layen@yaho.com	[Handwritten]	[Signature]





N°	Participant	Gender (M/F)	Age A>35 B<35	Contry	Position/Institution	Email	Telephone	Signature
11	Matthew I. S. G. K.	M	A	Sierra Leone	ADG/SLAR	M. g. k. s. g. k. @slar.gov.sl	+224773843	[Signature]
12	Mamadou Billo BARRY	M	A	Guinée	Secretariat	billobarry@indomal.gu	+22462046	[Signature]
13	Souleymane Niawara	M	A	Guinée	IRAC	souleymane.niawara@gmail.com	+224628034969	[Signature]
14	NIAMEN KONKON ABEN	M	A	Cote d'Ivoire	CRID	kniamen.crid@gmail.com	0707082334	[Signature]
15	MOSSI ALIHO HASSAN	M	A	NIGER	IR/INRATN	imossi@yaho.fr	+2272771995	[Signature]
16	Ahmad A. Diallo	M	39	MALI	Al Audi'oum	ahmad.diallo@univ-mali.com	923063	[Signature]
17								
18	Issa TRAORE	M		MALI	IBI Gm'	issat@ibigm.com		[Signature]
19	DABIRE Frederic	M	A	Burkina Faso	CILSS	frederic.dabire@cilss.int	+22670286908	[Signature]
20								
21	Sékou KONE	M	A	Mali	DGRAEND	sekou.kone@dg-raend.org	66762961	[Signature]
22	YAPI MARTIAL	M	A	Cote d'Ivoire	CNFC	m.yapi@cnfc.ci	0901074674	[Signature]
23	Kouadio Kabore N'Drag	M	A	Mali	ASOT	kouadio.kabore@asot.org	76316747	[Signature]
24	Umar Abdoullahi U	M	A	Niger	ARCN	umar.abdoulhaji@arcn.ni	08536436114	[Signature]
25	Achin Awuke Ephraim	M	A	Nigeria	ARCN	awukeachin@yahoo.com	0803672704	[Signature]
26	Marianne Dramé	F	A	Senegal	DG ANCAR	marianne.drame@ancar.sn	786371468	[Signature]
27	HAOUALI Adamar	M	A	NIGER	PF/NIGER	ahouali@pf-niger.org	91125718	[Signature]





N°	Participant	Gender (M/F)	Age (A>35, B<35)	Country	Position/Institution	Email	Telephone	Signature
27	Finst A Abedu	M	B	Cote d'Ivoire	Adaptation Coordinator	E.Abedu@cgiar.org	+2250585667373	
28	Robert S.M. Bimba	M	B	Liban	CTAP	robert.l@liban.net	+2317701554	
29	Eska Styles	F	A	USA	Prat	eska@cornell.edu	+6072991203	
30	Toure ADAMA	M	A	16 Tchad	MARINA	adamatou15@yahoo.fr	7032061	
31	TANGARA BREHIMA	M	A	Mali	CS/IER	brehima.tangara@yahoo.com	7032061	
32	Ramatoallie H. Sany	F	A	Ghana	GIRAY	houlie4000@gmail.com	+2209904015	
33	Samuel Opan Abereese	M	A	Ghana	CSIR/IFP	sam555@csir.gov.gh	0248126358	
34	ISSAH SUGRI	M	A	GHANA	CSIR-SARI	isugri22@gmail.com	+233243850292	
35	Sacko Youwélé dit PAP	M	A	Interprete	sackoyouwelle@gmail.com	77692952		
36	MMP TRAORE Fatoumata	F	A	MALI	CT/MDR	fatoumatraore@yahoo.fr	761430	
37	TRAORE Amadou Chieck	M	A	Mali	CT/MDR	amadoumah@yahoo.fr	76217157	
38	Diakhalidia LOULMAZY	M	A	Mali	P. focal	cdick15@yahoo.com	76337001	
39	Sarikou SENOUCHE	M	A	Mali	DINA CI	C/D/Min.	66932962	
40	Bacouba Coulibaly	M	A	Mali	MDR	calimet	76-9241-18	
41	Faliry Boly	M	A	MALI	Interpro-Riz	faliryboly@yahoo.fr	76466598	
42	Badji MAHARAJA	F	A	MALI	PASSIP/GIZ	badji.maharaja@yahoo.fr	76143280	
43	Mahamatou SANOGO	M	B	MALI	MDR	-	84-07-64.91	





N°	Participant	Gender (M/F)	Age (A>35, B<35)	Country	Position/Institution	Email	Telephone	Signature
44	Dr Bourema Dembélé	M	A	MALI	AGIS	dbourema574@gmail.com	76440714	[Signature]
45	EMARIEN NDIAYE BOURA	M	B	Senegal	CORAF	n.lamiou@coraf.org	+221 77 288 2015	[Signature]
46	Caroline Sobgnou	F	B	Senegal	CORAF	C.sobgnou@coraf.org	+221 77 48 48 48	[Signature]
47	Dr Kamaye Maïzon	M	A	NIGER	Secrétaire Exécutif CNEAD	kamayemaizon@niger.gov.ni	+227 96 88 74 70	[Signature]
48	Mamadou Dombil	M	A	Mali	ONRN	mamadoudombil@onrn.gov.ml	82607158	[Signature]
49	Elisabeth vai de Alho	F	A	Mali	GTZ Agence	Elisabeth.Vai-de-Alho@giz.de	82607158	[Signature]
50								
51								
52	Abou Papa Haïdara			Mali	CCon NOR			7673435
53	Mohamedou TRAORE	M	B	MALI	CCon NOR		77.88.15.90	[Signature]
54	Boubacar Ba	M	A	Mali	Interprète	Boubacar.ba@nora.gov.ml	77 11 32 06	[Signature]
55	Doro Diallo	M	A	MALI	Chargé Ministre		84.07.64.91	[Signature]
56	Bandjoucou Sacko	M	B	MALI	Technicien son	bandjoucou.sacko@nora.gov.ml	7563836	[Signature]
57	Oumar Sangaré	M	A	Mali	Technicien son		76853547	[Signature]
58	Ballo Ibrahim	M	A	Mali	logiciel	ibrahim201@gmail.com	77401131	[Signature]
59	Pansa Paul Kane	M	B	Mali	graphiste	kane.pansa@gmail.com	96.76.184	[Signature]
60								





N°	Participant	Gender (M/F)	Age A>35 B<35	Country	Position/Institution	Email	Telephone	Signature
61	Moumoune Traore	M	B	Mali	ELIM		78810211	[Signature]
62	Nadani Ouattara	M		Mali	Malivid		73-11-67-67	[Signature]
63	Yacouba Keita	M	B	Mali	Malivid		72-25-50-76	[Signature]
64								
65	Amadou Banga Diallo	M	B	Mali	Malivid		97-59-64-68	[Signature]
66								
67	Oumar Diallo	M	B	Mali	Malivid		93-51-18-53	[Signature]
68								
69	Modou FAYE	M	B	Mali	Malivid		76017677	[Signature]
70	Senza Doucoure	F	B	Mali	Malivid		76485576	[Signature]
71	Ebenzer Yaro Segla	M	B	Mali	Malivid		79597103	[Signature]
72	Adama Kone	M	B	Mali	Malivid		72912698	[Signature]
73	Jonas Aly SAGNON	M	A	Mali	MAUVIS		72146182	[Signature]
74								
75	Havaron SOW	M	A	Mali	Malivid		90613388	[Signature]
76	Khaoula Jaoui	F	A	Tunisia	OSS	khaoula.jaoui@oss.org.tn		[Signature]
76	Nadia Khammai	F	A	Tunisia	OSS	nadia.khammai@oss.org.tn		[Signature]
77	Ghazi Gader	M	A	Tunisia	OSS	ghazi.gader@oss.org.tn		[Signature]





N°	Participant	Gender (M/F)	Age A>35 B<35	Country	Position/Institution	Email	Telephone	Signature
78	Steve Nuharji	M	A	Tunisia	OSS	steve.nuharji@oss.org.tn		
79	Nabil Ben Khadra	M	A	Tunisia	OSS	nabil.ben.khadra@oss.org.tn		
80	Mohamed Aziz Belhamra	M	B	Tunisia	OSS	aziz.belhamra@oss.org.tn		
81	Abdelkader Dodo	M	A	Tunisia	OSS	abdelkader.dodo@oss.org.tn		
82								
83	Malek Tiki	F	B	Tunisia	OSS	malek.tiki@oss.org.tn		
84								
85								
86								
87								
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92								
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Annex 3: List of journalists

Wednesday, January 18, 2023



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 Ouedraogo						7862090	[Signature]
2	Makani Sissoko	M	B	Mali	AMAP/ESSOR	makani.sissoko@amap.org	77885735	[Signature]
3	Etienne Niene	M	B	Mali	Radio Kleden	nieneniene@radio-kleden.com	66569000	[Signature]
4	Soumaila Bamba	M	B	Mali	L'ESSOR	photographe	75184087	[Signature]
5	Mohamed Bamoute	M		MALI	MALI 24	journaliste	71221127	[Signature]
6	Eloi TOGO	M		Togo	Africable TV	journaliste	66468799	[Signature]
7	Issma Toure	F		Mali	ORTM		76032245	[Signature]
8								
9	Sakimata DAO	F		MALI	ORTM	lisaketa@yahoo.com	73366202	[Signature]
10	Boubacou Sylla	M		Mali	Togo Private	BS3206872@gmail.com		[Signature]





N°	Participant	Gender (M/F)	Age A>35 B<35	Contry	Position/Institution	Email	Telephone	Signature
11	Theromba DIAKITE	F		Mali	AKITI		86975728	[Signature]
12	Badara Ali Koita			Mali	Naligine		72776847	[Signature]
13	Soubouroune COULIBALY			Guinean de Inde			76463522	[Signature]
14	Missetou Coué	F		Mali	Echomédias		70-2175-73	[Signature]
15	Daouda Coulibaly	M		Nekaty	Nekaty		72.66.68.12	[Signature]
16	Krissum Thera	M		Mali	Aupunkhu		76323313	[Signature]
17								
18	Kalitou Diabaté	M		Mali	Lettre du peuple		72747543	[Signature]
19	Falaye Sissoko	M		Mali	Reussite Mali		77379221	[Signature]
20	Saïbou Touré	M		Mali	com VDR		78639903	[Signature]
21	Seni Maïga	M		Mali	CCOH HDR		76247176	[Signature]
22	Brihima Diallo	M		Mali	22 Septembre		73086471	[Signature]
23	Tidiane SIDIBE	M		MALI	Kayes Bomples		79270613	[Signature]
24	Alassane Cissé	M		Mali	Nohe voie		79861532	[Signature]
25	Baba Toure	M		La Foudre			78263146	[Signature]
26	Fatamata Coulibaly	F		Le Sursaut			73983006	[Signature]
27								





N°	Participant	Gender (M/F)	Age A>35 B<35	Country	Position/Institution	Email	Telephone	Signature
27	① Umar Guindo	M		Mali	R. Wood		9 2162159	
28	Ousmane Tangara	M		Mali	ST-TV	ST-TV@orange.ml	92890007	
29								
30	Assam Traore'	F		Mali	Le Reporter	assam.traore@ymail.com	76-30-17-96 142	
31								
32	Djenébo Samate'	F		Mali	TM7	Djenébo.samate'764@ymail.com		
33								
34	PAUL YAPI N'Guersan	M		Mali	TM7			
35	Dembéle Sabeleh	M		Mali	Le Focus	napien.8468@protonmail.com	76225638	
36	Narcisse Gaji	M		Mali	Instat-Media		73303155	
37	Issa Fane	M		Mali	BKo News+	issafane@orange.ml	70373799	
38								
39								
40								
41								
42								
43								



Annex 4: Communication and Media

Facebook



Twitter

OSS @OSS_Comms · 16 janv.
 In prelude to the official launch of #RICOWAS, first meeting in #Bamako between the representatives of the 13 beneficiary countries.
 #Benin #Burkina_Faso #Côte_d'Ivoire #The_Gambia #Ghana #Guinea #Liberia #Mali #Niger #Nigeria #Senegal #Sierra_Leone #Togo
oss-online.org/en/RICOWAS

OSS @OSS_Comms · 26 janv.
 Highlights of the #RICOWAS project inception workshop, January 16-18, 2023, Bamako.
 .#RICOWAS major contribution for #climate_resilient #rice production in #West_Africa is brought to light.
 @OSS_Comms
oss-online.org/en/RICOWAS_PHT

OSS @OSS_Comms · 18 janv.
 Official launch of #RICOWAS project. January 18, 2023 #Bamako #Mali
 Concrete #solutions closely related to the #lives of the #African #populations.
 #climate_change
 #food_security
 #adaptation
 #rice_production
oss-online.org/en/RICOWAS_OSS

OSS @OSS_Comms · 20 janv.
 ORTM, @Mali's national TV channel, speaks of the #RICOWAS project regional inception workshop.
 Follow the link hereunder to find out more about the @OSS_comms appearance, the project expected results and potential beneficiaries.

facebook.com
 Atelier Régional de Démarrage « Mise à l'échelle d'une riziculture...
 288 views, 14 likes, 1 loves, 0 comments, 3 shares, Facebook Watch
 Videos from Ministère du Développement Rural: Atelier Régional de ...

OSS @OSS_Comms · 19 janv.
 High-level meetings and promising #prospects for enhanced #collaboration between @OSS_Comms and #Mali on the occasion of the official launch of the RICOWAS project, January 19, 2023, Bamako – Mali.
 Read more oss-online.org/en/RICOWAS_OSS...

OSS @OSS_Comms · 18 janv.
 #Benin #Burkina_Faso #Côte_d'Ivoire #The_Gambia #Ghana #Guinea #Liberia #Mali #Niger #Nigeria #Senegal #Sierra_Leone #Togo
 #Climate #Africa #OuestAfrica #RICOWAS
oss-online.org/en/ricowas_en

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>