Entry No. IRRC-0172

Category	: International Rice Research Conference
Select Theme	: Sustainable and equitable farming systems
Endorsement email	:
Keyword 1	: System of Rice Intensification (SRI)
Keyword 2	: Yield gaps
Keyword 3	: Digital and big data in rice farming
Title of Entry	: Closing the Rice Production Gap in West Africa by Scaling Up the System of Rice Intensification (SRI)
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Select only one type of presentation	: 15 minute oral presentation
Abstract	: Rice is a primary staple food for most of the 430 million people living in West and Central Africa. While overall rice production in West Africa increased by 24% from 2010 to 2016/17 to 9.9 million tons of milled rice, rice consumption grew by 35% during the same period. Self-sufficiency rate in 2016/2017 reached 54%. The goal set by the “Regional Rice Offensive” of the ECOWAS States is to reach rice self-sufficiency by 2025, producing 24 million tons of milled rice. The System of Rice Intensification (SRI) an agro-ecological and climate-smart methodology for increasing rice productivity, can play a crucial role in closing the rice production gap in West Africa. Based on pronounced interest in SRI in West Africa, the regional project “Improving and Scaling up the System of Rice Intensification in West Africa” (SRI-WAAPP), was commissioned by CORAF/WECARD as part of the West Africa Agriculture Productivity Program (WAAPP) under the political umbrella of ECOWAS and supported by the World Bank. The project ran from 2014 to 2016 covering 13 countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. This paper will focus on i) presenting the scaling-up approach adopted across the 13 countries, and ii) summarizing the results obtained in 733 farmers’ fields when using the SRI methodology. Some key results include: by the end of the project 50,048 farmers – of whom 33% were women – grew SRI rice at 1,088 sites on 13,944 hectares across the 13 countries. The project trained 33,514 people, mostly farmers, and including 1032 technicians. For irrigated rice SRI yields averaged 6.6 t/ha compared to 4.23 t/ha for conventional rice (N=292 sites), a 56% increase. In rainfed lowland systems, SRI yields averaged 4.71 t/ha, compared to 2.53 t/ha for conventional rice (N=441), a 86% increase. If 100% of rice farmers in West Africa had used SRI in 2017 as under the project, rice self-sufficiency would already have been achieved with a 5% surplus. Replacing rice imports with rice grown in the region would have saved 4.16 billion USD in foreign exchange for 2017

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