

Farmer Testimony | Kinsa Sidibeh | Central River Region South (CRRS)

My name is Kinsa Sidibeh. I live at Touba Demba Sama Naimina East District, and am married with one son and a daughter. My group started SRI production two years back, and it is one of the best farmer groups in the district, which enabled me to become the best SRI farmer among the other members trained on SRI. I assisted my fellow members in increasing the productivity of their areas following the steps on SRI, which has earned them high yields. Due to my skills in advocacy and lobbying, which I got from National Women Farmer Association (NaWFA), women have access to farmland, but very few have ownership and control over their land. I have negotiated with buyers during the rice marketing period on the farmers' behalf for increased prices and fairer trade.

When we started the programme, many of the women found SRI challenging due to its labour intensity, and some complained about the use of the organic manure and its limited availability in terms of quantity, as well as difficulties with water management due to following tidal irrigation. As farmers became familiar with SRI methodology and realized far better gains, all complaining is now the thing of the past. SRI practises have increased among Gambian farmers because high yield increases are helping them in the area of children's school fees, health services, etc.



Kinsa's SRI plot during two different visits by the SRI-WAAPP M&E team

I have attended a lot of training on SRI, where I serve as a role model. I know that I am highly skilled now and participate in many associations and meeting with decision-makers in my region. Due to these facts, I was nominated by WAAPP1c-Gambia to go to Togo to learn more about SRI and share my own experience with my contemporaries.

I am the president of a group of 75 women, all SRI farmers. The group is one that benefited from both management and advocacy trainings, and members exercise their skill and rights to be able to get good rice seeds and fertilizer through the WAAPP to boost production. The impact or results are that before SRI, I was able to produce only 1 ton of rice per hectare. Now using the skills learned from the training in Togo and with guidance from the national SRI facilitator and champion, I am harvesting 4.5 tons/ha. This has persuaded 74 other women from communities and clusters to use the good practices/methodology of SRI.

My group was able to get the above SRI training through the SRI-WAAPP project, working with NARI and NaCOFAG/NaWFA. This project has been a milestone in upgrading the status of farmers groups. My sincere thanks go to WAAPP and its collaborators in the name of the women farmers association for helping our women farmers to reduce poverty in their households and my community at large.

— Prepared by Fatou Samba-Njai, SRI Champion, The Gambia



Kinsa again in her rice plot doing tiller counts, where she counted 45-57 tillers, and taking close pictures of the tillers.



A view of Kinsa's field, also during the 2015 dry-season cropping period.