REGIONAL TRAINING WORKSHOP ON ARC/GIS AND MOBILE DATA COLLECTION USING 'SURVEY 123' FOR THE SRI-WAAPP PROJECT

DAKAR: 3-6 AUGUST 2015

SUMMARY REPORT

FAMILY PHOTO

1. Introduction

The Rice Intensification System (SRI) was developed in Madagascar in 983-1984 by Father Henri de Laulanié, a French Agronomist. It is an innovation that changes conventional rice cultivation practices by allowing rice plants to better express their production potential. In practical terms, it involves producing rice with less seeds, water, and mineral fertilizer on an organic-rich and well ventilated soil.

A commissioned regional project entitled "Development and wide dissemination of the Rice Intensification System (SRI) in West Africa", submitted to WECARD by CNS-RICE/WAAPP, **at the request** of WAAPP countries, was approved and officially launched in July/August 2013. It covers thirteen (13) countries, which are currently WAAPP members, for a first phase of three (3) years.

Three regional workshops have been organized since the start of the project, in February 2014 in Porto Novo, Songhai Centre (Benin), in August 2014 in Kpalime (Togo), and in February 2015 in Abidjan (Cote d'Ivoire). These workshops brought together representatives of all the thirteen (13) WAAPP countries and the Regional Project Coordination team (CNS-Riz/Institute of Rural Economy and SRI-Rice, Cornell University, USA).

Following discussions during the Abidjan workshop, the participants made the following major recommendations:
- establishment of the SRI baseline situation in each country;
- harmonization and simplification of data collection tools and content provided by the regional coordination, taking into account those used in WAAPP.

Based on the recommendations of the Abidjan workshop, and in order to harmonize methodological approaches, the Regional Coordination Unit organized a regional methodology workshop on SRI baseline studies and implementation of the monitoring and evaluation system developed in Cotonou (Benin) in May/June 2015. In this workshop, the participants (comprising mainly WAAPP monitoring and evaluation officials) were introduced to the new mobile data collection method ('Survey 123'), with an initial training to facilitate the implementation of a one-to-two months test/pilot phase. The participants also received introductory training in the use of the ArcGIS Online platform for data management and visualization maps based on the project data.

Given the encouraging results of this initial training, the participants unanimously recommended that the Regional Coordinating SRI should organize another workshop to deepen their knowledge.

2. Objective

The overall goal of this workshop is to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation system of the SRI project so as to develop the technical capacity of the various stakeholders in the countries.

The specific objectives are as follows:
- collect and incorporate data from the test pilot phase of the mobile platform;
- develop the capacity of national stakeholders of the project in mobile data collection and management so that they can in turn be trainers in their respective countries on their return;
- develop technical performance in the use of ArcGIS Online for data collection, visualization and mapping to improve the current monitoring and evaluation system;
- develop national data collection plans, including implementation timelines and stakeholder roles and responsibilities.

3. Expected Outcomes

The expected outcomes of the workshop are as follows:
- The difficulties, errors and proposed changes of the system taught in the Cotonou workshop are presented and discussed;
- Participant's capacity to use the mobile data collection platform (Survey 123) is improved in terms of training other national stakeholders;
- Participants will be able to:
  * establish an operational data collection plan at national level, including

stakeholder roles and an implementation schedule;
* organize training for other national stakeholders in the use of the mobile data collection platform;

- The new data collection platform is adopted by the participants who undertake to use it in their respective countries as from the 2015-2016 season;

- The participants receive extensive training in ArcGIS for the management of project data, the creation of map visualizations and the reporting of results, as well as the development of narrative web applications ('Story Maps')

4. Conduct of the workshop

This workshop took place at Hotel Ndiambour in Dakar from 3 to 6 August 2015.

It started with the welcoming and registration of participants, and installation of officials. The first day was marked by the official opening and presentations by the various delegations, in accordance with the fixed agenda.

This workshop was attended by delegations from eleven (11) of the thirteen (13) currently WAAPP member countries, the Regional Coordination team of the SRI Project (CNS-Riz/IER), the SRI-Rice Centre of Cornell University (USA), and the Senegal WAAPP 2A Coordinator who chaired the workshop. The attendance list is attached.

4.1   Opening Ceremony

Given the technical nature of this workshop, the formal aspects of the opening ceremony were reduced. However, the ceremony was graced by the presence of the Senegal WAAPP Coordinator and Cornell University, and speeches were delivered by the host country and the Regional of SRI/CNS-Riz Coordination.

The Senegal WAAPP Coordinator, in her welcome speech, extended a warm welcome to all the delegations on behalf of the Senegalese Authorities and expressed the availability of her team to make participants' stay in Senegal enjoyable.

In his speech, the Regional Coordinator of the SRI Project presented the context within which the training workshop was organized, namely following the recommendations of the Cotonou workshop that brought together all the monitoring and evaluation officials of the thirteen countries. At the Cotonou workshop, the participants, particularly the Monitoring and Evaluation Officials, wanted to deepen their knowledge on the two tools presented (Survey 123 and ArcGIS), which they considered as a powerful means of communication for the entire WAAPP Program because they can go beyond the SRI project. He also laid emphasis on efforts made by the Regional SRI Coordination to organize the workshop, including the logistic

arrangements and coverage of the trainer's expenses as well as those of delegations of countries that requested for support due to lack of financial resources. In conclusion, he reiterated the objectives of the workshop and insisted that the workshop was intended to train trainers who would return to their countries and train other stakeholders. While thanking the host country, Senegal, for the warm welcome, he expressed the hope that the tools to be presented would help to significantly improve reporting in the monitoring and evaluation of the SRI project activities.

The opening speech was made by the Senegal WAAPP Coordinator. After a brief review of SRI outcomes in Senegal, she called on all participants to pay special attention to the session. She pointed out that this would allow WAAPP stakeholders, in addition to the SRI project activities, to develop communication tools, particularly for map visualization and trends in technology adoption areas.

Furthermore, the workshop also carried out the following activities:

1. Establishment of the Workshop Bureau comprising:
    - Chairperson: Mrs. Mariétou DIAWARA, Senegal WAAPP Coordinator;
    - 1st Rapporteur: GASSAMA Ibrahima Sambegou, RSE/WAAPP Guinea;
    - 2nd Rapporteur: Charles EBOJEI, M & E/WAAPP Nigeria.
2. Presentation and adoption of the draft program and general information about the organization; and
3. Self-introduction by the participants;
4. Reiteration of the expected outcomes, summarized in the points below:
    - The participants are trained and are able to in turn train the local teams who could not attend the workshop;
    - The participants are able to fill the forms and use the tools developed;
    - The participants are able to produce the maps of their target areas and share "story maps";
    - Comprehensive discussions on the follow-up to this workshop, particularly sustainability of activities, involvement of champions, etc.

4.2   Presentations

Presentations started with that of the Regional Coordinator of the SRI project (CNS-Riz) which was an overview of the Regional SRI Project (the monitoring and evaluation system, indicators, the checklist for implementation of the monitoring and evaluation plan, etc.).

In continuation of the workshop and in accordance with the adopted agenda, the following points were developed:

   A- _Day 1 :_

* Survey 123 Installation Guide;

* Presentation of the integrated collection system;

* Introduction to Survey 123, ArcGIS online, story maps, etc.

Following the presentations, questions were asked, particularly on:
- the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders (Champions, Facilitators, M & E Officials) in data collection, entry, control and sharing;
- reliability and temporal safeguard;
- cost of creating a user account for another project;
- responsibility of Cornell University in data collected by countries;
- linkage between ArcGIS and other tools developed by WECARD, particularly E-extension, etc.

Satisfactory answers were given to these questions by the trainer and the Regional SRI Coordination.

At the end of the day, for practical exercises, groups were formed according to language affinities and countries, the installed Survey 123 and Form C (Event Report) were presented. An example of current event was presented.

B- Day 2 :

The second day started, in accordance with the agenda, at 9 a.m. After a brief review of the agenda for the day by the Chairman, some new participants were introduced.

The presentations of the day focused on:

- Connection to ArcGIS Online (profile management, language change, etc.);
- Group management, which gives access to the entire content of a group (e.g.: SRI WEST AFRICA), download the forms in Excel format and conduct analyses on that basis;
- Content management for the creation of target zones (layers) with graphic objects (points, surfaces, etc.), with the possibility of changing the background map and making a map note.

Following these presentations, discussions focused on the linkage between ArcGIS and Survey 123. At this level, a practical exercise was conducted, linking RSI Form C (Event) recorded in Survey 123 as needed on ArcGIS.

The day ended with a video exchange, on Skype, with the SRI Centre Coordinator of Cornell University in Ithaca, USA, who expressed her satisfaction with the holding of this session and congratulated the organizers and all delegations for the strong mobilization.

C- Day 3 :

The third day, like the previous ones, began with a story of the day to entertain the participants, diverse information and review of the agenda by the Chairperson of the

Workshop.

The Regional SRI/CNS-Riz Coordinator reiterated the checklist of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, and all other tools to help improve reporting in this project.

The presentations for the day started with a brief overview of the exercises of the previous day, and clarifications.

The presentations focused on:

The construction of "story-maps" in group work through maps and other documents. A case study was presented.

At the end of the day, the groups worked on the File for creating "story maps'.

D- Day 4:

The fourth day, in accordance with the agenda, started with presentations of group work (countries) in plenary session. Each delegation presented its project (story maps). Then followed discussions on each presentation, which mainly focused on:

- how to add the logo;
- map content management to take only items that have a link with the map presented;
- organization of the page design, etc.

Following the presentations, the participants were informed of the formal creation of an ArcGIS website for SRI Project stakeholders: "SRI Organization West Africa." Discussions were held on the means of communication between members registered on the site. To enhance discussions, the decision was taken to use, in addition to this website, emails, and "sriwestafrica" facebook group to share publications (photos, movies, documents, specific issues, etc.).

Before finishing the "training" part of the workshop, the trainer reviewed the modules with a focus on:

- the use of Survey 123 to fill the forms;
- updating to download new files;
- data entry "offline" and sharing in "connection or online";
- viewing of information on the forms in ArcGIS;
- adding a map note for target area creation.

Then the revised SRI manual for adaptation to the agro-socio-economic and environmental specificities of each country was presented by the trainer.

The last part of the workshop was devoted to discussions on cross-cutting issues moderated by the Regional Coordinator.

The discussions focused on two key issues, namely:
1. What are the major problems in proper implementation of monitoring and evaluation in terms of feedback, reporting and providing information in files?
2. How can WAAPP resources be mobilized at country level for the implementation of SRI activities?

From the above questions, the diagnosis is as follows:

- difficulties in financing and implementing SRI activities in some countries;
- lack of feedback after the various meetings on the SRI;
- failure to submit activity, indicators monitoring and information filling reports on SRI implementation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

After the discussions, the following recommendations and proposals were made:

For the participants
✓ provide systematic feedbacks on meetings upon return from missions;
✓ meet the deadlines for reporting, filling out forms and indicator information on the SRI at country level.

For National WAAPP Coordinations
✓ facilitate the provision of adequate financial resources for the timely implementation of SRI activities.

For the Regional SRI Coordination and Cornell University
✓ share the standard format of activity reports with the participants;
✓ strengthen interaction with local SRI teams (RSE, National Facilitator, Champions, etc.) through reminder messages, exchanges on social networks (Facebook);
✓ involve champions in training and other meetings on the SRI;
✓ share the Abidjan workshop recommendations.

For the regional TTL of the World Bank
✓ raise stronger awareness among national Co TTL and WAAPP coordinators for effective integration and funding SRI activities on appropriate time.