



# Africa RISING - Ghana

Sustainable Intensification of Cereal - based Farming System  
in the Sudano - Sahelian Zone in Ghana



## Report of the Africa RISING Ghana Stakeholders' Workshop, Tamale, Ghana, 28-29 March 2012

### Day One (March 28, 2012)

#### 1.1 Opening

The workshop was officially opened by Dr A.B. Saifu (Director General) of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Ghana. He stressed the importance of maize and legume based farming systems in the three northern regions for food security. He urged institutions represented to contribute effectively to deliberations and to future implementation once their respective roles have been defined in the Africa RISING project. He urged IITA as the lead institution in the implementation consortium to ensure that partnerships to be developed works well. He hoped to see an increased livestock-cereal based systems interaction working well during and after the project.

Other speakers during the opening were the USAID representative – Dr. Nino Nadiradze and Isaac Gyamfi (Country Representative of IITA, Ghana). Dr. Nadiradze assured participants of USAID's support under the "Feed the Future Initiative" to increase production and productivity of key crops in the sudano-sahelian zone.

#### 1.2. Participation

Table 1 shows the list of participants. The fifty (50) participants at the workshop came from national, international agricultural research institutes, universities, USAID mission in Ghana, local NGOs, Ministry of Food and Agriculture (Women in Agriculture / Crops Services Units), Ghana Health Service and private sector.

#### 1.3 Presentations and discussions

##### 1.3.1 Morning Session

1.3.1.1 *Background, context and objectives:* Dr. Asamoah Larbi in a power point presentation provided the background to the workshop and set the context for the two day workshop. The main purpose of the workshop was to present and discuss the Africa RISING project with partners invited. Discuss and review the draft work plan for the project based on an initial

concept note submitted to USAID, obtain insight into existing projects and programmes in the regions that could have linkages with the new project and discuss potential roles that could be played by various institutions operating in the regions. The workshop discussed tentatively selected target districts and communities for their suitability for the implementation of the proposed draft activities.

*1.3.1.2 Overview of project concept note:* Dr. Alpha Kamara highlighted the poverty situation in the three northern regions of Ghana, the bio-physical constraints such as poor soil fertility, striga infestation, drought, high gender inequalities and inadequate infrastructure to support agricultural production. He drew on his personal experiences from northern Nigeria to enrich the discussion on the challenges in maize-legume farming systems and their interaction with animal/livestock as the basis for designing the African RISING project. The focus of the Africa RISING project in providing path ways out of hunger and poverty for small holder farmers particularly women and children through sustainable intensification technologies were emphasized.

*1.3.1.3 USAID Ghana and food security:* Dr. Nadiradze from the USAID Ghana mission gave a broad overview of the mission's food security objectives under the "Feed the Future Initiative" under which Africa RISING is funded. She confirmed USAID's support for Ghana's efforts in food security and was confident that Ghana possesses the human resource capacity to develop and implement effective food security projects and programmes.

*1.3.1.4 Work plan presentation and review:* Dr. Alpha Kamara presented the 2012 work plan . He indicated how similar projects have been successfully implemented in northern Nigeria. He stressed the need for effective partnerships in scaling up successful innovations in intensified cereal-based systems.

*1.3.1.5 Partnerships and linkages:* The IITA team assured participants that the success of Africa RISING depends on the identification and good partners and a strong commitment from these partners in the execution of planned activities. The workshop therefore would afford IITA and SARI the opportunity in identifying some potential public and private sector partners to be engaged during implementation.

*1.3.1.6 Discussions/suggestions from participants:* The participants raised concerns that 'value-chain' approach is not so prominent in the entire project design. Dr. Alpha Kamara and Asamoah took note of this concern and promised to give further consideration to this observation. Dr. Karbo suggested that the livestock-crop interaction should be further strengthened since to his mind this was weak in the design. Dr. Kanton recommended that the project consider including sorghum and millet systems given the fact that these two staples are key in household food security especially in Upper East region. The IITA team assured him that ICRISAT will work on these systems and could consider these crops as part of a mixed cropping system within the mandate crops for Ghana under the project, namely, maize and legumes

### *1.3.2 Afternoon session*

Presentations were done by the following institutions to highlight their on-going activities in order to enable the new project understand and identify potential linkage points as well as determine the potential role these institutions can play in Africa RISING. The organizations were

- CSIR (SARI, Crops Research Institute, Food Research Institute, Animal Research Institute)
- Ministry of Food and Agriculture (Women in Agriculture Development and Crop Services Divisions from the three regions),
- Ministry of Health (Ghana Health Services – Northern Region),
- Development projects (Northern Rural Growth, Nandom Agricultural Project, and Rice Sector Support Project),
- Non-governmental organizations (Catholic Relief Services, Urban-Net, ACDEP, Cowpea Group, Seed PAG, Northern Guinea fowl Farmers' Association, and Yara Company); and
- Africa Rice on the rice-based systems.

Though some potential partners could be identified after the presentations, Dr. Asamoah indicated that the identification, screening and selection of partners would be an on-going activity over the life of the project. He encouraged institutions present to continue to offer their support as they have done to date.

### **Day Two (March 29, 2012)**

The day commenced at 9:00am with a recap of the previous day's proceedings. Dr. Asamoah Larbi highlighted once more the key elements of the project work plan and how this would be expected to address the key challenges and problems in maize-legume farming systems in the three northern regions. He indicated that the project will ensure a strong crop-livestock interaction in testing and validating a basket of options for improved household food security.

Participants broke up into three working groups to discuss the implementation of 2012 work plan. The discussion included an agreement on the activities to be conducted, protocols, roles and responsibilities of partners, project sites and timelines. Some of the suggestion obtained at the group level fed into the continuous review of the work plan by Dr. Asamoah and other project staff.

Some of the key suggestions coming out of the group work for consideration by project management were:

- Intensify capacity building activities not only for SARI researchers but also staff of MoFA and NGOs that would be involved in the project.
- Project should consider the use of US Peace Corp staff who may have specialized skills on specific subjects that have bearing on the project activities e.g. agronomists

- Project should source its seed needs from SeedPAG for the first year.
- Need for more visibility in the entire project design on livestock/animal-crop interaction at the household level

The group did not come to consensus on the tentative selected target districts. The project team decided to end the discussion on district/community selection to be concluded during the regional level consultations planned by the project team.

### **3. Key recommendation**

Following the intensive group level discussions the participants recommended that round-table discussions with relevant partners in the various regions be held post-workshop to fine tune and firm up the region based activities within the framework of the broad work plan to ensure smooth project take off.

### **4. Closing**

The two day workshop ended on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2012 at 4:50 pm with closing remarks from Dr. James Kombiok who expressed thanks to all participants and institutions represented. Other key persons – Dr. Nadiradze and Mr. Gyamfi of IITA expressed similar gratitude to participants for the lively deliberations at the workshop for the past two days.

**Table 1. Participants' list (Stakeholders Workshop, Africa RISING-Ghana, March 28-29, 2012)**

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