



# ON DIT quoi?

A newsletter from Africa Rice Center (WARDA)

## Seeds of knowledge

About 20 participants from nine French-speaking countries and two JICA volunteers attended a training workshop on Seed Multiplication Techniques, 27-31 August, in Porto Novo, Benin.

The workshop was part of a series of programs on capacity strengthening in seed production that is being organized by ARI and JICA for scientists, technical staff and extension agents of the English- and French-speaking countries in the sub-region.

The training workshop was coordinated by Dr R Ikeda, and WARDA scientists were invited to share their expertise with the participants.

The workshop topics ranged from the principles of seed multiplication to morphology and physiology of rice, characteristics of rice and methods of seed multiplication. This training will enable the participants to produce high-quality registered and certified seeds of rice.



## WITA 9 and WITA 12 well appreciated in Côte d'Ivoire!

A joint monitoring team from WARDA (Dr Sitapha Diatta), PNR, and CNRA visited the lowlands of Bouafflé, Oumé, Gagnoa, Divo and Abengourou in Côte d'Ivoire, 18-31 July, to evaluate the performance of the varieties WITA 9 and WITA 12.

The team found that WITA 9 and WITA 12 were popular with farmers in the areas they visited. Both the varieties were high-yielding. WITA 9 was especially liked because not only did it give an average yield of 7.5 t per ha in farmers' fields, it was also tolerant to rice yellow mottle virus and iron toxicity. Both the varieties are liked for their grain quality and taste.

## PADS award-winning local innovations selected by Farm Radio

Four of the award-winning local innovations documented during the PADS project have been turned into radio scripts and are now hosted by the Developing Countries Farm Radio Network—a Canadian-based organization working in partnership with about 300 radio broadcasters in 39 African countries.

These radio scripts were developed to share information about local agricultural innovations during a PADS training workshop on 20 April at WARDA in Benin. An international jury selected the top three innovations from each country in terms of sustainability and scaling-up potential. Participants from each of the countries then learnt how to turn these winning stories into radio scripts during a 1-day scriptwriting workshop with the help of F. Houinsou from IITA.

# Assessing the profitability of rice- and maize-based production systems

As part of the USAID-funded project on “Stratification of Rice and Maize Production Systems”, a Validation Workshop was held, 16-18 August, in Accra, Ghana.

The objective of this project is to contribute to the improvement of agricultural productivity and competitiveness in support of ECOWAP-CAADP operational objectives. The project covers five countries: Benin, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Mali and Senegal.

The 3-day workshop was held in Accra to review and validate the results of the country studies by researchers, donors and policy makers.

## Learning to assess impacts

Fourteen participants from seven West African countries took part in the Impact Assessment Training Workshop that was organized by WARDA, 23-25 August, Accra, Ghana, just after the African Association of Agricultural Economists Conference.

The 3-day program introduced the participants to state-of-the-art methods and tools of impact assessment—which is a rapidly growing field—with a particular focus on their applications to assessing the impact of agricultural research and projects.

The workshop sessions dealt with conceptual issues, economic models, econometric methods as well as practical issues related to survey design, stochastic data mining and stochastic sensitivity analysis.

An important aspect of the learning workshop was the introduction of the participants to the use of the main statistical software STATA and SPSS. Another major component of the workshop was the practical exercises involving estimation of adoption models and assessment of impacts on selected productivity and welfare outcomes.

Participants from the project countries and representatives from USAID-West Africa Regional Program Office (WARP), the Sahel Institute (INSAH) and ECOWAS attended the workshop, which was organized by WARDA and the Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System in West Africa (ReSAKSS WA) based at IITA.

## Sharing information on HIV/AIDS and agriculture in West Africa

As part of an IFAD-funded project, all the institutions working on HIV/AIDS in Benin were invited to a meeting to share information on HIV/AIDS and agriculture. The meeting was organized by Dr Rita Agboh-Noameshi at WARDA, Cotonou, on 30 August.

Participants included UNAIDS, FAO, the Programme national de lutte contre le VIH/SIDA (PNLS) and the Comité national de lutte contre le VIH/SIDA (CNLS) of UNDP/WFP.



## Bravo!

Arthur Agossou Vido, WARDA Student under the supervision of Dr Moussa Sié, received the highest score for his Masters thesis on “The history of rice in Benin: Case of Atacora region”. He was congratulated by his panel of examiners for his very clear and comprehensive presentation.

## Seminars

- Didier N. Zounegnon, Student, under the supervision of Drs O.Youm / Francis Nwilene, presented a seminar on “The importance of rice stem-borer populations and damage in some ecologies of Benin,” on 6 August at WARDA, Cotonou.
- Dr Paul Van Mele, WARDA Technology Transfer Specialist, presented a seminar on “Video: a tool to develop pro-poor markets—Experiences from Asia and Africa” on 6 August, at WARDA, Cotonou.
- Dr Robert Kagbo, USAID-WARP, Accra, Ghana presented a seminar on “The re-organization of the cereal networks and the evolving CAAPD Process,” on 7 August, at WARDA, Cotonou.

## My family!

On dit “Condolences” to :  
Dr Vincent Bado for the passing away of his mother on 3 August  
George Maina on the passing away of his mother on 14 August

## African Proverb!

The lizard that jumped from the high Iroko tree to the ground said he would praise himself if no one else did!

## Visitors to WARDA

About 75 students from the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Benin, Nigeria, visited WARDA, Cotonou, on 14 August.

## CFHF-funded weaver ants project launched in Tanzania

The Conservation, Food, and Health Foundation (CFHF)-funded ‘Promoting Ant-based Pest Control in Tree Crops in Africa’ Project as part of IVC was launched in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania in August.

In the second phase of the project, Tanzania was included as a third country alongside Benin and Guinea. The decision to include Tanzania was based on several criteria: it is a focal country for WARDA and it has ample inland valley systems with rice and tree crops.