Workshop on preparation of National Rice Development Strategy (NRDS)  
(2-5 February, 2009, WARDA, Benin)

The Coalition for African Rice Development (CARD) Initiative has made good progress since the 1st General Meeting held October 2008 in Nairobi where the 12 candidate countries were selected as the 1st group\(^1\). These countries are requested to prepare a National Rice Development Strategy (NRDS), wholly owned by the government, drawing on the support of the CARD secretariat as necessary.

The Workshop to assist the 1st group countries in formulation of NRDS was held at Africa Rice Center (WARDA) in Benin from 2nd to 5th February, 2009. Participants from African governments as well as resource persons from FARA and AGRA\(^2\) discussed several key issues for enhanced rice production through review of all draft NRDS and ended up with a clear idea on how to improve them. A strong commitment to the CARD Initiative was recognized by governments’ ownership in formulation process of NRDS which includes rice production, post-harvesting and marketing. Reflecting a number of comments, these counties have already submitted their NRDS to the CARD secretariat by the end of February.

Based on these procedures, the 2nd General Meeting will be held at the JICA Research Institute in Tokyo in the early June. The objectives of this meeting are to present NRDS by the 1st group countries as well as to stimulate supporting partners’ actions and plans for alignment/coordination efforts.

\(^1\) Cameroon, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Uganda

\(^2\) FARA: Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa, AGRA: Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa