



# East Africa Rice Conference 2021

Inclusive and Sustainable Rice System Development:  
Opportunities and Challenges

**18-20 May 2021**

## BACKGROUND

Africa has become a major consumer of rice with an estimated annual import cost of 5-6 billion USD. Between 2010 and 2035, an additional 116 million tons of milled rice will be needed worldwide to meet this increasing demand, of which 30 million tons will be needed for Africa.<sup>1</sup>

The potential for growth in Africa's rice sector is enormous. A rapid increase in the area for rice, irrigated as well as rainfed, is necessary. In particular, it is vital to expand the irrigated areas as only 17% of the rice-growing areas in Africa is currently irrigated. Average yield is extremely

low—at 1.0 to 2.5 ton per ha—which can at least be doubled. If proper interventions are in place, the existing potential of Africa can enable the region to produce more than its needs for consumption, allowing it to become self-sufficient or even a rice exporter. In recent years, many rice-growing countries in Africa have formulated or revised their National Rice Development Strategy (NRDS) through the facilitation of the Coalition for African Rice Development (CARD). Through the implementation of NRDS, each country has been trying to develop its rice sector, with support from development partners and involvement of the private sector. In East Africa, the East Africa Rice Development Strategy (EARDS) is under formulation, led by the East African Community (EAC), to capture the opportunity of increasing demand for rice as a region.

<sup>1</sup> [Crops that feed the world 7: Rice](#)

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Considering the increasing importance of rice in Africa in general and in East Africa in particular, it will be important to discuss and share experiences among countries in relation to the existing challenges and emerging opportunities, in the effort to ensure adequate domestic production to fulfill the ever-increasing demand, thus the inception of the East Africa Rice Conference (EARC) 2021.

The conference will build upon previous efforts and discussions toward achieving agricultural growth, food and nutrition security, and rural development as outlined in the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP). Additionally, it is an opportunity to revisit progress towards the 2014 Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods commitments adopted by African Union (AU) Heads of State and Government, including but not limited to ending hunger, improving resilience of livelihoods and production systems, and ensuring that agriculture plays a significant role in reducing poverty in the region.

In particular, the Conference will serve as a platform to consolidate the collective efforts of the key players in the rice sector in the region and discuss important topics surrounding these identified themes: (a) rice research and development, (b) inclusive markets & value chains, (c) rice-based livelihoods: gender and youth integration, (d) integrated rice sector development in a changing climate, (e) inclusive finance & investment, and (f) agricultural policy & reforms. The discussions surrounding these themes will help countries to strategically align their national priorities to realize the urgent need to transform food systems and build back better from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic to end hunger and malnutrition while ensuring that food systems are sustainable and inclusive.

The outcomes of the discussions will also be made available in preparation for the United Nations Food Systems Summit 2021 happening in September or October.

This Conference will bring together key players in Africa's rice sector—governments, development partners, civil society including youth and farmers groups, the research community and academe, donors and investors, and the private sector.

Initially, the conference was designed for a large in-person gathering but in light of the pandemic, the organizers decided to conduct the conference through a hybrid of virtual and in person events, following all health and safety protocols.

## CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

1. To facilitate knowledge exchange on rice sector research and development at national and regional levels;
2. To take stock of public, private, and donor-supported initiatives to inform policy-making and implementation; and
3. To boost multi-stakeholder collaboration toward achieving national and regional rice self-sufficiency, increasing food and nutrition security, and alleviating poverty through inclusive and sustainable production and commercialization.

## CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

Participation for the virtual conference is planned for around 500-1,000 attendees. For the simultaneous onsite country workshops, around 15-20 participants will be invited in Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda while 30-35 participants will be invited in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Tanzania.

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## CONFERENCE STRUCTURE

To realize the conference objectives, the 3-day conference will be a hybrid of face-to-face and virtual events. It will start with the 1-day simultaneous onsite country workshops in six countries in East Africa: Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, Burundi, and Rwanda, followed by a 2-day virtual event.

### Simultaneous country workshops

In-depth discussions to accelerate rice sector development in East Africa will focus on the following themes:

- A. Rice research and development
- B. Inclusive markets and value chains
- C. Rice-based livelihoods; Gender and youth integration
- D. Integrated rice sector development in a changing climate
- E. Inclusive finance and investment
- F. Agricultural policy processes & reforms

### Virtual conference

The virtual conference will include the following activities:

- Plenary sessions
  - Challenges and opportunities for accelerating and sustaining rice self-sufficiency in Eastern Africa
    - Accelerating and Sustaining Rice Self-Sufficiency in Eastern Africa: Challenges and Opportunities
    - Aligning rice sector development policy and national agriculture investment plan
  - Supporting policy and investment in national and regional rice sector development
  - East Africa Rice Development Strategy
- Technical parallel sessions
  - Rice research and development
    - Innovations in Rice Mechanization and Postharvest: Adapting to African Conditions
    - Establishing Regional Centers of Excellence for Rice R&D
  - Inclusive markets and value chains
    - Rice Commercialization and Livelihood Outcomes: Lessons from APRA
    - Marketing and Value Addition: The Experience of Rice Processors
  - Rice-based livelihoods; Gender and youth integration
    - Access and Control of Land and Natural Resources: Gender integration
    - Jobs and Employment Opportunities in the Rice Sector: Opportunities for Entrepreneurships for Youth
  - Integrated rice sector development in a changing climate
    - Integrated Rice Seed Sector Development: Country Experiences
    - Enhancing Sustainability and Resilience in Local & National Rice Systems to Cope with Climate Change
  - Inclusive finance and investment
    - Improving Access to Credit & Finance for Small Producers and Processors
    - Rice Sector Financing & Public -Private Partnerships
  - Agricultural policy processes & reforms
    - Agricultural Policy Reforms (Production, Nutrition, and Market)
    - Rice, Dietary Changes and Household Food & Nutrition Security
- Research and innovations showcase
  - Innovation pitches from African youth
  - Cooking videos of East African rice varieties
  - Poster presentations from early career researchers
  - Highlights from development partners and donors on their work in Africa
- Sponsored side events (panel discussion, showcase/demo, networking session)



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## DAY 1 18 MAY IN-COUNTRY WORKSHOPS

(By invitation only)

0830-0900

Arrivals and Registration

### OPENING SESSION

0900-1030

WELCOME, OBJECTIVES, PROGRAM,  
AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES  
OPENING REMARKS  
KEYNOTE SPEECH

1030-1100

Break

### TECHNICAL PARALLEL SESSIONS 1

(small group discussions)

1100-1200

STREAM A - RICE RESEARCH AND  
DEVELOPMENT  
STREAM B - INCLUSIVE MARKETS  
AND VALUE CHAINS  
STREAM C - RICE-BASED  
LIVELIHOODS; GENDER AND YOUTH  
INTEGRATION

1200-1300

Lunch break

### TECHNICAL PARALLEL SESSIONS 1

(CONTINUATION - SMALL GROUP  
DISCUSSIONS)

1300-1400

1400-1430

### PRESENTATION OF SUMMARIES

1430-1445

Break

### TECHNICAL PARALLEL SESSIONS 2

(SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS)

1445-1545

STREAM D - INTEGRATED RICE  
SECTOR DEVELOPMENT IN A  
CHANGING CLIMATE  
STREAM E - INCLUSIVE FINANCE  
AND INVESTMENT  
STREAM F - AGRICULTURAL POLICY  
REFORMS

1545-1600

Break

1600-1630

### TECHNICAL PARALLEL SESSIONS 2

(CONTINUATION - SMALL GROUP  
DISCUSSIONS)

1630-1700

1700-1730

Presentation of summaries

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## DAY 2 19 MAY VIRTUAL

0830-1000

### OPENING PROGRAM

OPENING REMARKS  
KEYNOTE SPEECHES  
PARTNERS' STATEMENT  
TECHNICAL PARALLEL SESSIONS  
TEASERS

1330-1500

### TECHNICAL PARALLEL SESSIONS (STREAMS A1-C1)

STREAM A1 - INNOVATIONS IN RICE MECHANIZATION AND POSTHARVEST: ADAPTING TO AFRICAN CONDITIONS  
STREAM B1 - RICE COMMERCIALIZATION AND LIVELIHOOD OUTCOMES: LESSONS FROM APRA  
STREAM C1 - ACCESS AND CONTROL OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES: GENDER INTEGRATION

1030-1230

### PLENARY SESSION 1

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACCELERATING AND SUSTAINING RICE SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN EASTERN AFRICA

ACCELERATING AND SUSTAINING RICE SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN EASTERN AFRICA: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES  
ALIGNING RICE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND NATIONAL AGRICULTURE INVESTMENT PLAN

1500-1630

### TECHNICAL PARALLEL SESSIONS (STREAMS A2-C2)

STREAM A2 - ESTABLISHING REGIONAL CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE FOR RICE R&D  
STREAM B2 - MARKETING AND VALUE ADDITION: THE EXPERIENCE OF RICE PROCESSORS  
STREAM C2 - JOBS AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE RICE SECTOR: OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIPS FOR YOUTH

1230-1330

### SIDE EVENT (PLATINUM SPONSOR)

1630-1800

Poster presentations (Early Career Researchers, Contributing Partners, Key Nat'l/Reg'l Orgs) and Sponsor promotions segment

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## DAY 3 20 MAY VIRTUAL

0830-1015

### PLENARY SESSION 2

SUPPORTING POLICY AND INVESTMENT IN NATIONAL AND REGIONAL RICE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT: EXPERIENCES OF JICA EAST AFRICA RICE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (EARDS) OPERATIONALIZATION OF EARDS

1015-1100

### DESIGN CHALLENGE PITCH

1100-1230

### TECHNICAL PARALLEL SESSIONS (STREAMS D1-F1)

STREAM D1 - INTEGRATED RICE SEED SECTOR DEVELOPMENT: COUNTRY EXPERIENCES  
STREAM E1 - IMPROVING ACCESS TO CREDIT & FINANCE FOR SMALL PRODUCERS AND PROCESSORS  
STREAM F1 - AGRICULTURE POLICY REFORMS AND FORESIGHT - PRODUCTION, VALUE CHAINS, & MARKET

1230-1330

**Lunch break - Rice-based recipes cooking videos**

1330-1430

### SIMULTANEOUS SIDE EVENTS (PLATINUM/GOLD/SILVER)

1430-1600

### TECHNICAL PARALLEL SESSIONS (STREAMS D2-F2)

STREAM D2 - ENHANCING SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE IN LOCAL & NATIONAL RICE SYSTEMS TO COPE WITH CLIMATE CHANGE  
STREAM E2 - RICE SECTOR FINANCING & PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS  
STREAM F2 - RICE, DIETARY CHANGES AND HOUSEHOLD FOOD & NUTRITION SECURITY

1600-1700

### PLENARY SESSION 3

FINAL REFLECTIONS AND NEXT STEPS & CLOSING

## EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND DELIVERABLES

At the end of the conference, we are expected to achieve the following:

- Identified policy reforms to transform Africa's rice sector through scientific innovations;
- Forged collaborations between and among key players in the rice sector of Africa; and
- Determined national and regional priorities budding from the in-country and regional discussions.

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## ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Name	Position and organization	Responsibility
<b>Abdelbagi M. Ismail</b>	IRRI Regional Representative for Africa, Nairobi	Chair
<b>Hannigton Odame</b>	Regional coordinator, APRA, Nairobi	Co-chair
<b>Yusuke Haneishi</b>	General Coordinator, CARD Secretariat, Nairobi	Member
<b>John Thompson</b>	CEO, APRA UK	Member
<b>Aida Isinika</b>	Country Lead, APRA Tanzania	Member
<b>Dawit Alemu</b>	Country Lead, APRA Ethiopia	Member
<b>Temina Lalani-Shariff</b>	Director, Advocacy & Brand, IRRI	Member
<b>Bancy Mati</b>	Director, Water Research and Resource Center and Professor, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya	Member
<b>Miriam Kinyua</b>	Professor, University of Eldoret, Kenya	Member

## PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Name	Position and organization	Responsibility
<b>John Thompson</b>	CEO, APRA, UK	Chair
<b>Hannigton Odame</b>	Regional coordinator, CABI/APRA, Nairobi	Co-chair
<b>Rosemary Murori</b>	IRRI Country Representative for Tanzania and Kenya	Member
<b>Yusuke Haneishi</b>	General Coordinator, CARD Secretariat, Nairobi	Member
<b>Dawit Alemu</b>	Country lead, APRA Ethiopia	Member
<b>Kiyoshi Shiratori</b>	Chief Advisor, EthioRice	Member