

Seminar

From the System of Rice Intensification in Madagascar to WeConnectFarmers and the Future of Agriculture in Africa

Speaker: Benoît Thierry

Founder of *WeConnectFarmers* and *IdealDev*; previously with IFAD

Venue: 100 Mann Library or by [Zoom](#)

Date: Wednesday, April 30, 2025

Time: 4:00- 5:00 PM



Benoit Thierry is a tropical agro-economist and geographer who has worked extensively in Southeast Asia and Africa. After graduating from ISTOM and the Sorbonne University in France, he began his career assisting family farmers and smallholders by working with NGOs in Bolivia, then Mali/Senegal, and Cambodia during the 1980s and 1990s. Between 1996 and 2022, he worked in 25 African and Asian countries, first with the UN Development Program (UNDP), then with the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), and finally with IFAD, the International Fund for Agricultural Development.



While posted in Madagascar, Thierry learned about the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) and oversaw its evaluation and extension there and in Central Africa. After launching and managing IFAD regional offices in Southeast Asia and West Africa, he created several knowledge platforms and communities-of-practice for farmers and agripreneurs, including *WeConnectFarmers* (<https://www.weconnectfarmers.com/>). In 2022, he took early retirement and returned to France, founding the *IdealDev* agency (<https://idealdev.org/>).