

SRI COOPBOD / BARUDEV INITIATIVE IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Introducing a Learning-by-Practicing Method (LbPM)

on

SYSTEM OF RICE INTENSIFICATION (SRI)

Conducted at Mbueni-Njinikom Sub Division, Boyo Division,
North West Region, CAMEROON

29th Nov – 02nd Dec, 2016



FOR

SRI-Rice, Cornell University, U.S.A.

BY

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Acknowledgement

I wish to thank Mr.Chah Bam Terence, the Mayor of Njinikom Sub-Division, for providing huge support during our stay in Njinikom and its environs for seeing that the SRI research and dissemination activities are carried out smoothly without any hindrance.

I wish to extend my gratitude to BARUDEV as our host and to the many local rice farmer-members without whose informative learning material the SRI introduction in Mbueni would have not been so successful.

I would like also to give great thanks to SRI-Rice, the SRI International Network and Resources Center at Cornell University in the USA, and especially to Professor Norman Uphoff and to Mr. Henry Ngimbu of CSRII in Zambia for their devotion as my unwavering mentors and seeing that Cornell University provides us with the travel advance needed to carry out a successful SRI introduction trip in the Boyo district.

In conclusion, the positive response emanating from the 37 farmers visited in Mbueni-Njinikom was motivating and inspiring because the main purpose of the SRI program was to see farmers benefiting from *better productivity and gains from their rice yields*.

With best regards,
Fieshi Julius
SRI COOPBOD Coordinator
Ndop, Cameroon

1. BACKGROUND

This report has been compiled to provide insights from the Cornell University-supported introduction activity for System of Rice Intensification (SRI) under the “Learning-by-Practicing Method (LbPM)” approach that took place 29th November– 02nd December, 2016 in Njinikom Sub-Division, Cameroon.

The technical training materials used and the training action plan were prepared to strengthen the capacity of responsible farmers located within Mbueni and neighboring communities. The training was tailor-made to support SRI-Rice's desire to get the best out of this farmer-initiated effort.

Objective of work: Carry out participatory capacity-building training in System of Rice Intensification (SRI) ideas and methods in Boyo Division, Cameroon. The programmed introduction of SRI in Boyo was encouraged by SRI-Rice in response to a suggestion from SRI COOPBOD in Ndop conveyed by its coordinator Fieshi Julius, to work with BARUDEV, an NGO based in Njinikom which had contacted SRI-Rice for assistance in introducing SRI to the farmers with whom it was working in northern Cameroon. SRI-Rice considered this initiative as an opportunity to research and evaluates farmer and NGO initiative for the dissemination of SRI in a farmer-to-farmer manner.

Duration of travel trip: 03 days in Njinikom.

GOAL (First field visit: Nov/Dec 2016): A participatory approach was conducted during the familiarization period, covering seed selection, harvesting and post-harvest activities (lectures) identifying the challenges faced with traditional methods of rice-growing in the area and introducing SRI to the farmers in Mbueni-Njinikom of Boyo District.

2. PLANNED PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Date (November)	Morning	Time	Afternoon	Time	Evening	Time	Responsible persons
Tues. 29 th	Travel from Ndop to Bambui	10:00	Stop-over in Bambui / Arrive Boyo	16:00	Visit BARUDEV office	17:30	Julius and Bernard
Wed . 30 th	Classroom sessions Familiarization, farmer-to-farmer knowledge exchange and lessons-sharing	08:30-12:30	Field visits Farmer-to-farmer knowledge exchange, and lessons-sharing farm visits	13:30-17:00			Bernard, Julius and both Teams
Thurs . 1 st	<i>Farmer-field school (FFS)</i> <i>Practical lessons on After-flowering farming activities (weeding & soil aeration, pest & disease control, harvest & post-harvest preparatory activities)</i>	08:30-12:30	<i>Classroom lessons</i> <i>- Field monitoring & evaluation</i> <i>-Next visit planning and training evaluation</i>	14:00-17:00			Bernard, Julius and both Team
Fri. 2 nd	Start-off from Boyo	6:00	Stop-over in Bambui / Arrive Ndop	16:00	Depart to various homes	17:30	Julius

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR SRI PROJECT IN MBUENI-NJINIKOM(BOYO DISTRICT)

Measurable objective	Indicators	Target	SRI training outcome
Training the farmers in Mbueni on SRI techniques with special attention on harvesting and post-harvest management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of field (FFS) training sessions conducted by Julius and Bernard • % reduction in seed loss and damage resulting from improved post-harvest and storage management 	<p>Introductory approach</p> <p>Bernard is in charge of supervising seed selection for next season</p>	<p>To avoid crop loss and damage at harvest, farmers learned and acquired knowledge on how to determine best harvesting practices and threshing, planning, and necessary tools.</p> <p>Farmers also received lectures on post-harvest and storage management involving; on-farm bulking, seed moisture content observations, measures in transporting paddy and suitable storage requirements.</p>
Training materials	Provision of SRI hand-outs and seasonal calendar	32 copies distributed	Farmers get introduced to SRI practical modalities from handout in preparation for next farming seasons

OVERVIEW OF SRI INTRODUCTION PROGRAM IN MBUENI AND BAISO COMMUNITIES

DAY 1



On 29th of November 2016, there was strike action in the North West Region (NWR) of Cameroon which hindered us from using the usual public means of transport, and so we had to negotiate (hire) a private vehicle to travel from Ndop to Njinikom.



Julius and the COOPBOD team meeting Bernard and the BARUDEV team for the first time at the Mid Way Hotel at Njinikom round-about was an exciting moment since we had never met each other before. We took supper together while planning for next day's activities. Bernard suggested that we meet the farmers of Mbueni on the 30th off December as had been programmed. After the familiarization and planning exercise, everyone left for their hotel rooms to rest and get ready for the next day.

DAY 2



This day was a very remarkable one for COOPBOD members as the SRI introduction in Boyo brought lessons, experiences, and many challenges as shown below.

- The road networks to the farms were poor having improper bridges. From Njinikomto Eleh community, where the motorable road ended, we covered a distance of over 81 km, with deep valleys and very steep hills, within just 1 hr 12 minutes, which we covered on the motorbikes. We crossed 5 wooden bridges, and then a 6th bridge was miscalculated by one motorbike rider, who ended up falling -- together with the board chairman of SRI COOPBOD -- and rolling down a valley of about 7 m, together with the bike. This was a sad moment as we had to pull them out together with the bike, and this took over 1 hr for them to regain back their consciousness. We continued the journey by trekking 3.8 km up and down hills before reaching the Mbueni community. We rested for 20 minutes at the compound of the quarter's headman, and then trekked another distance of 1.3 km before reaching the rice fields. The bike rider had a splint on his left hand, and Mr. Chiatoh Henry (our board chairman) had hit his right hip hard on a stone inside the bridge hole.



The common mode of transport is by trekking or motorbikes, although the latter seemed more risky.

Below are some pictures of the rice fields of Mbueni



During this field visit, COOPBOD members had lesson-sharing with the farmers in relation to the practices already undertaken to obtain the results that we were seeing. The new SRI farming practices were explained, with emphasis on seed selection, harvesting and post-harvest operations in order to obtain very well-selected and well-handled seeds for the next season. Bernard volunteered to supervise the seed-selection exercise.

- ❖ The pictures below communicate the discussions and exercises that were made. Before departure, the farmers promised to have selected and harvested their rice seeds latest by February 15th 2017, and through Bernard they will send a copy of the itinerary for next season.



These families depend on rice for their food, health, education, etc.





CHALLENGES

- The SRI COOPBOD team had no access to reliable transport to facilitate this movement from one station to the other. We were at all times carried on motorbikes, sitting behind with our training materials and gadgets (laptop, camera, accessories, resource books), and this had some negative impact on the training delivery, e.g., time schedule, poor photographs (camera and laptop were tampered with on public bikes), etc..

WAY FORWARD

- The anticipation for the SRI program in Boyo is based on the premise that it is an on-going activity that will cover farming seasons of 2017 and beyond. Therefore, the activity that has been covered in this introduction/research trip is the first in a series. We are yet to conduct a full seasonal training to farmers of Boyo as was the case in Ndop. We are very anxious to see this succeed, but our major difficulty may be finding the funds to see this action through.

Courtesy call visit to the Mayor and Delegation of Agriculture

DAY 3

The rapid spreading and utilization of SRI methods and adaptations of SRI practices to local conditions in Boyo Division and Njinikom Sub-Division in particular will require the Government's good will and support. Therefore, Julius, Bernard and the teams visited the Mayor's Office and Agricultural posts in Njinikom to pay a courtesy call and have informal discussion of SRI.



Discussing with the Government officials, top items were the farmers' shortcomings as seen below:

- Poor and inaccessible farm-to-market roads,
- Very little knowledge on modern techniques of cultivating rice and other crops,
- No machines to polish the harvested rice for consumption or for sale,
- No indication of any buyer for rice in the community,
- Malnutrition, illiteracy, unplanned pregnancies, and child abuse are very common, with poor nutrition and incomes as a result of the above points, etc.

In response, the mayor regretted the situation of his people (in Eleh, Mbueni and Baiso communities) and promised us that he will actually keep track of those communities to encourage them. He further told Bernard to remind him in February 2017 for the Council to mobilize some funds to purchase a small fuel engine for them to start using. He also promised to see about the roads and bridges before 2018.

APPENDIX

1) Participation:

a) **SRI COOPBOD team:**

- Fieshi Julius P.
- Chitoh Henry
- Ngweboh Memuna
- Mokom L. Clement
- Tume Julita

b) **BARUDEV team:**

- Chiabi Benard Ful
- Fuisain Olivia

2) Attendance Sheet (see attachment below)



SRI COOPBOD / BARUDEV
 (Farmer to farmer research Mbueni Community)
Attendance Sheet



S/N	Name	Structure	Contact	Sign
01	Fieshi Julius P.	SRI COOPBOD	679854425	
02	Chiabi Benard Ful	BARUDEV	679367237	
03	Chitoh Henry	SRI/COOPBOD	677652199	
04	Mokom L. Clement	SRI/COOPBOD	675074382	
05	Ngweboh Memuna	SRI COOPBOD	670693184	
06	Tume Julita	SRI COOPBOD	675317656	
07	Fuisain Olivia	Barudev	672 529 481	
08	John Bombe	Farmer		
09	Kobert Ambo	Farmer		
10	Paul Nkhal	"		
11	Muam Kitiense	"		
12	Smala Klamangeh	"		
13	Munang Godfrey	"		
14	Efang Marcel Akfu	"		
15	Etia Ekah	"		
16	Azongwe Joseph	"		
17	Akuih Kone	"	662 334 719	
18	Godreel Ngang	"	664 080 832	
19	John Ngwa	"		
20	Victor Chi	"		
21	Smiler Namangeh	"	651 677 854	
22	Lawrance Ngwa	"		
23	Marcel Akfu	"	661 160 110	
24	Eric che	"		
25	Eveline Mbu	"		
26	Christian Aka	"		
27	Hope Eban	"		
28	Adeline Ekah	farmer		
29	Magdeline Ngwa	"		
30	Glady's Echue	"		
31	Francisca Agha	"		
32	Emelda Neki	"		
33	Comfort Kabuh	"		
34	Sabrina Offue	"		
35	Jecika Gikah	"		
36	Celine Mbo	"		
37	Celine Abong	"		
38	Lucas Offue	"		
39	Richard Bangsi	"	664 144 522	
40	Jenesis Mbah	"	666 998 330	
41	Ngum Elvis	"	668 284 840	
42	Botye Irene	"	670 247 350	
43	Suh Gideon	"	681 741 323	

Fieshi Julius Pangyat

Chiabi Benard Ful

3) Handouts given to participants (see attachment below)

4) Work plan sample (see attachment below)

WORK-PLAN FOR SRI ORGANIZATIONS

Activity	July Week				August Week				September Week				October Week				November Week				December Week			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Board meetings (backstopping and planning)																								
Farmers group Presidents' meetings (backstopping and planning)																								
Farmers Group meetings (backstopping and planning)																								
Finance and income-generating sub-committee meetings																								
Disciplinary sub-committee meetings																								
General assembly meetings																								
Other/s																								



5) Seasonal calendar sample (see attachment below)

SRI FARMING SEASONAL CALENDAR 2013 FOR NSSP

Activity 2013	July Week				August Week				September Week				October Week				November Week				December Week			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Preparing of SRI farm record-keeping																								
Local farmer-based method of seed germination potency testing																								
Nursery management and priming																								
Transplanting																								
Field preparation and management																								
Water management																								
Organic fertilizer preparation and application																								
Weed control and aeration measures																								
Pest and disease management																								
Field routine maintenance and monitoring during flowering stage																								
Harvest management																								
Post-Harvest and storage management																								
Farmer's field-days and end of season planning																								
Savings and resource sustenance actions																								
Other/s																								



DEPARTURE BACK TO NDOP.....

Evaluation meeting in Ndop

