Final Report, 2009 National Workshop-Conference of SRI Trainers
(jointly hosted by SRI-Pilipinas, the Bureau of Soils and Water Management, and the Agricultural Training Institute)

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Prepared by: Roberto Verzola, SRI-Pilipinas Coordinator
Submitted: 28 February 2010
Final Report, 2009 National Workshop-Conference of SRI Trainers
(jointly hosted by SRI-Pilipinas, the Bureau of Soils
and Water Management, and the Agricultural Training Institute)

The National Workshop-Conference of System of Rice Intensification (SRI) Trainers was successfully held Sep. 28-30, 2009 at the Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM), Elliptical Road, Quezon City.

The meeting was held despite strong floods that hit Metro Manila on Sep. 26-27 due to typhoon Ondoy (Ketsana). Because of the disaster, the welcome dinner for participants scheduled for the evening of Sep. 27 was cancelled. Although several confirmed participants cancelled their travel plans, the meeting began as scheduled on Sep. 28, at 8am.

Attendance

All in all, 34 participants attended the meeting, including guests Prof. Norman Uphoff of the Cornell Institute for Food, Agriculture and Development (CIIFAD) and Dr. Marguerite Uphoff. The participants included 7 women and 27 men. The list of participants is attached as Appendix A.

Among those who had confirmed their participation, 17 people (including two whose plane tickets we had already paid for), cancelled their trips at the last moment due to the floods. The list of those who had confirmed their participation but were unable to make it is also in Appendix A.

Second Meeting in Mindanao

Due to the trip cancellations, only one participant from Mindanao made it to the meeting. But because a government agency, the BSWM, agreed to co-host the Manila meeting and shoulder the cost of the meeting venue as well as the lodging costs of the participants, and also because we had fewer participants than we had planned for in terms of food and transport costs, we did not spend our entire budget for the meeting. We decided to use the left-over funds, with the permission of funder Oxfam-GB, to hold a similar but smaller meeting for SRI trainers in Mindanao. The meeting was held on Nov. 20-22, 2009 at the ATI Training Center in Kabacan, Cotabato, with 20 participants attending. The Agricultural Training Institute (Reg. 12) of the Department of Agriculture was the co-host for the meeting. The list of the participants in the Mindanao meeting, including invitees who were not able to make it, is in Appendix B.

Three-Day Program

The Manila meeting followed the announced program schedule, which included updates by the participants, assessment of the training module, review of the principles and practices of SRI, discussions about a new funding proposal, and international updates. A highlight of the programme was the lecture given by Prof. Norman Uphoff, foremost advocate of SRI trials in the international scientific community and among governments, which reviewed recent SRI developments in the scientific arena as well as the extent of adoption of the SRI method in various countries. The detailed program schedule is attached as Appendix C. Professor Uphoff's presentation is available separately on the CD version of this report.

The Mindanao meeting followed essentially the same schedule as the Manila meeting, with Prof. Uphoff's slides on international developments being presented by SRI coordinator Roberto Verzola. The meeting outputs confirmed as well as enriched the results of the Manila meeting. The Mindanao meeting likewise ended on a very positive note. It also ensured that the SRI Pilipinas network was as rooted in Mindanao as in Visayas and Luzon.

One highlight of the two meetings before they ended was the sharing of seeds, where participants who
had brought rice seeds with them and shared the seeds with other participants. This has become a tradition in SRI Pilipinas meetings.

Each participant also received a copy of the SRI Book, a compilation of scientific articles, CIIFAD reports and media stories on SRI. A copy of the SRI Book also comes with this report.

MEETING OUTPUTS

The following meeting outputs already incorporate points raised in the Manila meeting as well as the Mindanao meeting. On the whole, the points raised by participants in the Mindanao meeting generally coincide with those raised in the Manila meeting. Where the distinction is important, it will be mentioned in the text.

The outputs detailed below are the results of the sharing of experiences, insights and lessons by the participants in the two meetings. The outputs were generated as follows: in plenary, the participants wrote on meta-cards their inputs on the three major topics of the meeting: 1) a review of SRI principles and practices and local innovations; 2) an evaluation of the SRI training modules; and 3) inputs for a new funding proposal for the network. The plenary then broke into three groups, each group working on one of the three major topics, using the plenary meta-card inputs as their starting material and deepening the discussion on the topic. The group outputs were then presented in plenary for further discussions, inputs and comments. Each group then met again to work further on their assigned topic, when they again presented in plenary for final comments and approval by the meeting as a whole. Thus while the outputs below are listed by topic/group, they were approved by the whole meeting in plenary.

TOPIC 1: SRI Principles and Practices and Local Innovations

The participants reaffirmed the following SRI principles and practices, having confirmed them in their own production fields and/or trial plots as well as in similar experiences by the farmers they have trained. Furthermore, the participants have also tried, in combination with these generally accepted SRI principles and practices, the following local innovations which they found effective and which may be considered, upon further validation and discussion, to be either extensions of, improvements on, or complementary to existing SRI practices.

1) Seed selection. Careful seed selection through the use of salt water or some similar means of separating the denser seeds from the less dense ones. Here are local innovations:
   - Add salt to the water in an open container and put in eggs. Keep adding salt until the eggs float, indicating that the water is salty enough (i.e., more dense than the eggs). The seeds that sink in this salt water solution are good, well-developed seeds. Those that float should be discarded because they lack density, meaning nutrients.
   - Include varietal trials (planting one to several dozens of varieties simultaneously) in the first SRI trial, in order to identify which varieties are more responsive to the SRI approach; multi-variety trials improve the probability of achieving some success on first try (SOFT).
   - Use of varieties known for their high tillering rates, or of longer maturing varieties that allow for more tillering time.
   - Use of upland varieties for drier (unirrigated) conditions.
   - Learning to collect and select own seeds: just before harvest, look for robust, highly productive plants; harvest their panicles individually and hand-thresh; dry the seeds and store these in preparation for the next crop; first drying should reduce moisture content to 13-14%; redrying after 15 days for at least 2 hrs (between 9-12am) further reduces moisture; seed testing should be conducted regularly for viability and germination rate.
   - Maintaining a community seed bank, sometimes in cooperation with a local agricultural school.
   - Learning to breed farmers' own seeds (some of the participants had rich experience breeding their own lines, some of which had become quite popular).
2) **Seedbed preparation.** Lower sowing density to facilitate separation of seedlings. Some **local innovations:**
- Use only 5-10 kg of seeds per hectare of rice field.
- Seed soaking in bag: 24-48 hrs (for farmers who use hybrid seeds, 8-12 hrs is enough); incubation (after soaking): 24 hrs, turning bag upside down every 4 hrs.
- Lower density seedbeds for minimizing root entanglement among seedlings (one bag of seed per square meter of seedbed).
- Modified *dapog* to produce loosely-matted seedlings that can be rolled like sleeping mats, for easier transport in bulk to the fields.
- Use of old banana trunks cut in half for portable seedbeds.
- Alternatives to the dry-bed (modified *dapog*) method: wet-bed method, seed-box method.
- Lower density seedbeds for minimizing root entanglement among seedlings (one bag of seed per square meter of seedbed).
- Modified *dapog* to produce loosely-matted seedlings that can be rolled like sleeping mats, for easier transport in bulk to the fields.
- Use of old banana trunks cut in half for portable seedbeds.
- Alternatives to the dry-bed (modified *dapog*) method: wet-bed method, seed-box method.

3) **Seedling age.** Transplanting seedlings earlier, when they are younger (8-15 days old, two-leaf stage).

   **Local innovations:**
   - 7-day old seedlings as well as older seedlings have also been tried with some success; in Indonesia, one farmer has successfully used seedlings as young as 4 days.
   - Direct seeding (see below); the direct-seeded seedlings are planted along marked rows with spacing following standard SRI practice.

4) **Transplanting with care.** Transplanting with care and as quickly as possible (within 30 minutes after uprooting from the seedbed), to avoid damaging the roots and to minimize trauma to the plants, thus facilitating recovery of the transplanted seedlings. **Local innovations:**
   - Direct seeding of germinated seeds, to eliminate the trauma caused by transplanting.
   - Use of modified *dapog* for easier seedling separation with minimum root damage and enabling the loosely-matted seedlings to be rolled like sleeping mats for easier transport to the fields.
   - Another option is hand-broadcasting of germinated seed, with plants denser than typical for SRI practice (say, 25 kg/ha). Then the emerging plants are thinned when 10-12 days old, in a square geometric pattern by using a rotary weeder to “weed” the field and plough under 80-90% of the young plants and leaving seedlings just at the intersections, as if the field had been transplanted according to SRI recommendations (first tried in Sri Lanka).

5) **Planting distance.** Planting single seedlings per hill and at wider distances to minimize competition between plants for sunlight and soil nutrients. **Local innovations:**
   - Planting distances of 20 cm up to 50 cm have been tried with varying success. The optimal distance apparently depends on soil fertility and is best determined through local trials; the more fertile the soil is, the higher production will be from fewer plants.
   - Two seedlings per hill have been tried especially where farmers are concerned about Golden Snail attacks.
   - Plant excess seedlings more densely near the *pilapil* (bunds), as source of transplanting material in case some of the seedlings do not survive.

6) **Weed control and soil aeration.** Using a mechanical rotary weeder/cultivator to control weeds as well as to aerate the soil and encourage the growth of soil organisms. **Local innovations:**
   - Various local rotary weeder/cultivator designs have been developed and used. In fact each locality tends to evolve its own favorite design.
   - A motorized weeder design that cultivates four rows per pass has been developed.

7) **Water management.** Intermittent wetting and drying, instead of continuous flooding of the rice fields,
to encourage roots to grow deep. **Local innovations:**
- Using permaculture design methods for the efficient distribution of water throughout the fields using only gravity.
- Maintaining a small fishpond in the lowest portion of the ricefields, for water storage among other functions.
- Digging canals around the inside of rice plots, for water storage and snail control, while keeping the rest of the fields relatively drier; where there is a lot of flooding in surrounding fields and water control is difficult, planting SRI on raised beds within such fields has given good results in Indonesia.
- Participants have noted that the effectiveness of water management practices depend on soil type.

8) **Soil fertility.** Using organic methods to restore and maintain the fertility of the soil by encouraging the growth of soil micro- and macro-organisms. **Local innovations:**
- Use of Korean Natural Farming (KNF) methods using SRI to encourage the growth of beneficial microorganisms. KNF includes the growing of indigenous microorganisms (IMO), and the making of fermented fruit juices (FFJ), fermented plant juices (FPJ), oriental herbal nutrients (OHN), fish amino acid (FAA), lactic acid serum (LAS), brown rice vinegar (BRV), etc. These concoctions are used not only to enhance soil fertility but also to speed up composting, control pests, remove foul odors due to animal excretions, and improve feed conversion ratios in poultry and livestock.
- Use of carbonized rice hull (CRH) as soil conditioner.
- Use of bokashi and the commercially-sold Effective Microorganisms (EM).
- On-farm production of compost and organic fertilizers.
- Vermiculture for the production of vermicompost.
- Use of locally-available guano for enhancing soil fertility.

9) **Pest management.** Using ecological pest management methods consistent with the goal of enhancing the growth of soil organisms. **Local innovations:**
- Use of Korean Natural Farming (KNF) methods using SRI to encourage beneficial soil organisms, which in turn help limit the growth of undesirable organisms.
- Rice seedlings are planted not on the intersection of the marker lines, but slightly offset from the intersection. The marker lines are grooves in the soil that tend to accumulate water. Golden Snails tend to travel along these water-filled grooves rather than on unsubmerged soils. Thus, seedlings planted right in the intersection of these grooves are perfectly located for snail attack and become easy prey to the mollusks. When seedlings are instead planted offset from these intersections, they are less accessible to the snails, which will usually not venture on drier soils.
- Use water-filled side canals and banana or yam leaves to attract Golden Snails for easier collection and eradication.
- Use various organic attractants for pests like the black bug for easier collection and eradication.
- Use tubli, red chili, and tobacco soaked in water to control the rice bug *(atangya)*
- Use soap, cooking oil and similar ordinary kitchen materials for holding the various plant extracts above in suspension.
- Use cooking oil and chopped garlic and onion as spray to control tungro. These are mixed with water to control, through spraying, the spread of tungro and to help the affected rice plants recover from the disease.
- Use of foliar pesticide from *kakawate* and neem leaves, *makabuhay* stems, and goat manure to control pests and improve the health of rice leaves
- Use of careful and timely water control to limit the mobility of the Golden Snail while the rice seedlings are vulnerable to their attack and to release them later in the field to attack subsequent weed growth, whose younger and softer shoots they prefer.
- Use of Korean Natural Farming methods to extract calcium from collected Golden Snails.
- Use of IMO to prevent Golden Snail eggs from hatching.
Use of ducks for snail and weed control.

Weed suppression through careful land preparation: at least 6” plowing depth; soak for up to one week and level with the suyod; plow across field, then level again; drain the water and dry the fields until weeds appear; after one week, apply about 40 bags of organic fertilizers and do the final harrowing and levelling; leave overnight; create the markers for transplanting seedlings (using the offset method to avoid the Golden Kuhol); the whole land preparation process can take at least 30 days.

Use of IMO during land preparation to hasten the germination of weed seeds and facilitate weeding.

Land preparation option: use key-check #2 of the Philrice palay-check system.

10) **Crop diversification.** When the SRI method has been mastered and higher yields can be consistently attained, convert some of the rice fields to vegetables and other crops. **Local innovations:**

- Planting *ampalaya* (bittergourd) and/or other vegetables along the *pilapil* (rice bunds).
- Alternating rows of two or more rice varieties (e.g., main crop with aromatic variety).
- Focusing on “fancy” rice varieties (black rice, red rice, aromatic rice, sticky rice, etc.) which fetch higher prices in the market).
- Going into commercial seed production for higher income.

In addition to the participants' reaffirmation of the basic principles and practices of SRI, they further asserted that SRI is best considered as part of a more general approach commonly known as sustainable agriculture. Sustainable agriculture systems also include such approaches as:

- organic agriculture (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements)
- biodynamic agriculture (Rudolf Steiner)
- nature farming (Masanobu Fukuoka)
- permaculture (Bill Mollison)
- agroecology (Miguel Altieri)
- biointensive farming (John Jevons/Ecology Action)
- Korean natural farming (Korean Natural Farming Association)
- other lesser known approaches

SRI has in common with these sustainable agriculture approaches many of the following general principles:

- back to basics / back to nature
- socially acceptable
- ecologically sound
- holistic
- integrated, diversified, organic farming systems

**TOPIC 2: SRI Training Methods and Modules**

There was agreement among participants that each SRI trainer was free to explore and use his/her own training methods and modules, based on current SRI principles and practices as well as local innovations, according to what he/she thought was best for a particular set of trainees and situation. Thus, the methods and modules detailed here serve mainly for reference, to be adapted and modified as field trainers saw fit. In particular, the training approaches discussed covered the whole range from one-day trainings to season-long trainings patterned after farmers' field schools.

The following set of reference SRI training modules was developed in the meeting. Given the depth and extent of the reference modules, the training strategy specifies the season-long approach. However, as noted earlier, this does not preclude the conduct of one-day trainings depending on the readiness of the participants, the availability of resources, and the schedule of the trainer. The participants proposed that a technical working
group be convened to work on these modules further, and that these modules be circulated among all members of
the network for continuing improvement and the incorporation of local innovations.

SRI Training Strategies:
1. intensive (season-long)
2. on-site (in farmers' fields)
3. field trials/learning farms that allow farmers to see for themselves how SRI plants grow, mature and bear fruit
4. hands-on, participative, to enable trainees to have direct experience in various aspects of the SRI approach
5. start small, with trial plots of a few hundred square meters instead of a hectare or more
6. use of the local language
7. information, education and communication (IEC) tools
   ○ SRI book, primer and other reading materials
   ○ SRI video (World Bank video, ADRA video, local video)
   ○ Flip charts and similar materials that need no electricity or high-tech equipment
   ○ precisely-sized SRI primers that take full advantage of the cheapest postal rates
8. Monitoring, documentation of results

SRI Training Modules
Contents
I. Introduction
   1. History/Scenario (SRI principles and practices)
      a) International situation
      b) Philippine situation
   2. S & M values
   3. Economics of SRI
II. The healthy rice plant: a description
III. Rice plant management
   1. Seed selection
   2. Land preparation
   3. Seedbed preparation
   4. Transplanting
      a) care in transplanting
      b) seedling age (phyllochrons)
      c) number of seedlings per hill
      d) distance between hills
   5. Water management
   6. Rotary weeding
IV. Pest management
   1. insects
   2. diseases
   3. weeds
   4. Golden Snail
V. Soil amendment and amelioration
   1. Understanding the living soil
   2. Organic fertilizer production
      a) ordinary composting
      b) vermi-composting
      c) bokashi
   3. Foliar fertilizer production (Korean natural farming)
   4. Carbonized Rice Hull (CRH) production
   5. Biodynamic inputs
TOPIC 3: SRI Funding Proposal

The Manila meeting discussed in detail the proposed budget for the next phase of the SRI-Pilipinas training program. The proposed budget is attached as Appendix D. The proposal suggests a maximum funding target of P7 million, for a one-year project that will cover 100 municipalities, and which can be repeated year after year until all rice-producing municipalities are covered.

The Mindanao meeting, however, came up with a somewhat different suggestion: a joint proposal involving P2 million for NGO activities and P21.3 million for government activities, coordinated by the ATI. We decided to leave the two proposals separate and to decide based on actual discussions with potential donors which proposal to push through. The P2 million Mindanao proposal for NGOs is simply a scaled-down version of the P7 million Manila proposal. The NGO portion of Mindanao proposal is attached as Appendix E. The government portion, prepared by Mindanao meeting host ATI Region XII under Center Director Noe Ysulat who was present in both Manila and Mindanao meetings, is attached as Appendix F.

The raw transcription of the meta-cards and manila papers prepared during both the Manila and Mindanao meetings are included in Appendix G for reference.

Some photos taken during the Manila meeting are in Appendix H. Photos taken during the Mindanao meeting are in Appendix I. More photos are included in the CD version of this report.

SRI-Pilipinas Provincial Training Program

The meeting heard, discussed and made suggestions to the draft of the Terminal Report of the SRI-Pilipinas Provincial Training Program, which will be submitted to the Department of Agriculture as soon as the program's financial report is done. The draft report is attached as Appendix J.

Gender Balance in the Meeting

The Manila meeting attained a gender ratio of eight women to twenty-six men among the participants. While far from ideal, we feel this was the best we could do, given that we specifically asked invited organizations to include women among the participants they were sending. We note that among those who confirmed, more women were unable to come than men, perhaps due to the flooding and bad weather that marred the Manila meeting.

However, we are not proud of the gender ratio in the Mindanao meeting, which was one woman to nineteen men. Among the factors that possibly led to this was that the invitations were made mostly by our government partner in Mindanao, and although we tried to get them to invite more women, they were also constrained by their – as well as our – range of contacts. A conclusion that emerged from our discussion about this poor gender balance in the Mindanao meeting was for subsequent SRI meeting to invite husband-and-wife teams (we had three in the Manila meeting). This was an offshoot of the light-hearted discussion regarding occasional (though temporary) conjugal conflicts triggered by the unconventional SRI practices. We would like to try this approach in subsequent meetings.

Financial Report

As a result of the unexpected disruption of the original meeting plans due to typhoon Ondoy (Ketsana),
and because the government offices that co-hosted the meeting (BSWM in Manila and ATI-XII in Mindanao) agreed to shoulder the participants' lodging and meeting venue, the actual expenses for some budget items depart significantly from the budget, as summarized below. The financial report detailing how the P250,000 meeting fund from Oxfam-GM was spent is in Appendix K.

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In closing, we would like to again thank Oxfam-GB, BSWM, ATI-XII, and all the speakers and participants, for making the successful 2009 National Workshop-Conference of SRI Trainers possible.

We also thank the Action for Economic Reforms (AER) for agreeing to accept the Oxfam-GB funding on behalf on SRI-Pilipinas.

Prepared by:

Roberto Verzola  
Coordinator, SRI-Pilipinas  
26 February 2010
# Appendix A: Manila Meeting Participants and Other Invitees

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<th>Name</th>
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<td>Former provincial DA employee, now farmer</td>
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<td>YSULAT, Noe</td>
<td>N. Cotabato</td>
<td>Center Director, ATI-XII</td>
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**Invited but could not come:**

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<th>Organization/Office</th>
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<td>Xavier Univ Sustainable Agriculture Center</td>
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<td>PPRDI</td>
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<td>PPRDI</td>
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<td>TACDRUP</td>
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<td>Romblon</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAKISAMA</td>
<td>national farmers' federation c/o Cris Aguelo</td>
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## Appendix C: Program Schedule

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sep. 28, Monday</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2009 National Workshop-Conference of SRI Trainers</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00</td>
<td>Opening Program Introductions</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:45</td>
<td>Overview of workshop-conference, Group assignments</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00</td>
<td>Activity reports – individual participants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00</td>
<td>Break Activity reports -- continuation</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:15</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:30</td>
<td>Small Group workshops</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Break</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plenary reports of small group recommendations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plenary discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In the evening, small groups will incorporate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>suggestions raised in the plenary, and prepare</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>an updated report for the next day</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sep. 29, Tuesday</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00</td>
<td>Review of first day</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:45</td>
<td>Presentations by Groups I, II and III</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:00</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:00</td>
<td>Plenary discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The objective of the morning session is to settle</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>major areas of contention that have emerged in each</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of the three Groups</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lunch Break</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public Forum – International Updates: SRI in other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>countries</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guest Speaker: Prof. Norman Uphoff, Cornell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Institute for Food, Agriculture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resumption of Plenary discussion</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In the evening, the small groups will again</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>incorporate suggestions covered in the plenary,</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and prepare a fresh report for the next day</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sep. 30, Wed.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00</td>
<td>Final group reports</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>Formal adoption in plenary of the group reports</td>
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<td>Closing Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Departures</td>
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**Group I:** SRI Principles, Practices and Local Innovations  
**Group II:** The SRI Training Modules, Methods and Content  
**Group III:** Project Proposal for Nationwide Municipal-Level SRI Field Trials

This workshop-conference was organized by SRI-Pilipinas and is co-hosted by the Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM). We thank Oxfam-GB (Phils.) for the financial support that made this meeting possible.
Appendix D: Project Proposal discussed in the Manila meeting

BUDGET SUMMARY FOR SRI TRAINING COVERING 100 TOWNS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>50 trainors</th>
<th>100 towns in 50 provinces</th>
<th>8500 pesos/1-day session</th>
<th>3 session/town at most</th>
<th>30 farmers/training</th>
<th>3000 farmers total</th>
<th>25500 pesos/town</th>
<th>TRAINING TOTAL</th>
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<td>400000 pesos/wkshop</td>
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<td>6000 Regional coordinators</td>
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Highlights:
- target: training in 100 towns
- demand-driven: we will respond to all training requests
- will rely on 50 existing trainors all over the Phils
- a training will consist of at most 3 one-day training sessions
- no money will be spent on food (farmers' counterpart)
- main program output: organic/SRI trainors all over the Phils
- target: training in 50 towns
- demand-driven: we will respond to all training requests
- will rely on 50 existing trainors all over the Phils
- a training will consist of one-day training sessions
- no money will be spent on food (farmers' counterpart)
- main program output: organic/SRI trainors all over the Phils
Appendix F: Summary of ATI proposal discussed in the Mindanao meeting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item of Expense</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<td>Personnel (1)</td>
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<td>1,500,750</td>
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<td>Travel (2)</td>
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<td>562,500</td>
<td>562,500</td>
<td>1,125,000</td>
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<td>Supplies (3)</td>
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<td>Indirect Costs (6)</td>
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<td>TOTAL PROJ COST</td>
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<td>5,412,500</td>
<td>5,412,500</td>
<td>21,338,250</td>
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Appendix G: Transcription of Meta-Cards and Manila Paper Outputs

Output of Manila-Group I: SRI Principles and practices

META-CARDS
- More with less – less can give you more
- Better soil aeration
- Single planting
- Counterparting/convergence
- Wide spacing
- Early rice planting
- Conservation of biota
- conservation of seed diversity (diversification of crops; varieties)
- intermittent irrigation
- biodiversity
- diversified farming system
- sustainable
- living soil
- knowledge-based
- seed selection (seed varietal trials)

Principles:

Seed selection
Living-soil
Knowledge-based
Sustainable
Biodiversity
Diversified farming system
Less can give you more
Diversification
Better soil aeration
Intermittend irrigation
Conservation of biota
Conserve diversity of seeds
Wide spacing
Counterparting-convergence
Single-Planting
More with less

Output of Manila-Group II: SRI Training Modules/Methods

META-CARDS
Inclusion of the ff modules in SRI training
- CRH production
- organic input production (seeds, fertilizers, pesticides)
- pest control of weeds, snails
- soil management
- field day

One-day training
Module:
- History
- SRI steps
- Soil fertilization management
- Water management
Tools and steps in monitoring
- farm plan
- actual transplanting
- seed selection
- seed banking / breeding
- Include 20x20cm during the wet season

Experiential learning

Inclusion of consolidated local practices (e.g. vegetable production)

Underscore effect of chemical farming on the soil (as entry point for SRI training)

SRI principles and practices:
- Land prep
  - at least 6” depth in plowing
  - soak up to one week the level with 'suyod'
  - then plow across then level again
  - drain the water, and dry the fields till weeds appear up to one week
  - then apply basal organic fertilizer (about 40 bags of organic fertilizers)
  - final harrowing and levelling
  - Let it stay overnight
  - the next day, create the markers for transplanting seedlings

Suggested Golden Kuhol eradication and by-product uses
Do not insist on training a group that is not asking for training
Develop local trainers in every target area
Include value formation in training
Discuss agronomic/economic aspect (Rene Jaranilla presentation)
Consider costs and returns
Training module should include economic analysis
How to estimate rice yields
The first module should be economic analysis of rice production (SRI vs. conventional)
How to plant
Seedbed preparation for SRI (modified dapog system)
Include phyllochrons
Consider mass production of organic fertilizers with analysis, before trainings
Organic fertilizer production
Making foliar fertilizer (fermented) out of Golden Kuhol (Kuhol amino acid)
Vermiculture composting
SRI-Organic foliar sprays management

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Strategy:
- season long
- on site
- field trials/learning farm
- hands-on, participative
- start small
- local language
- IEC
  - SRI manual
  - video (World Bank, local video)
  - chart
- Monitoring, documentation of results

SRI Module
Contents

- I. Introduction
  - History/Scenario (7 principles of SRI)
    - International situation
    - Philippine situation
  - S & M values
  - Economics of SRI
- II. What is a healthy rice plant
- III. SRI Principles and Practices
  - Seed selection
  - land preparation
  - Seedbed preparation
  - Transplanting
    - Age (phylochron system)
    - number of seedlings
    - distance
  - Water management
  - Rotary weeding
- IV. Pest management
  - insects
  - diseases
  - weeds
  - Golden Snail
- V. Soil amendment and amelioration
  - Understanding the living soil
  - Organic fertilizer production
    - vermi composting
    - bokashi
    - ordinary composting
  - Foliar fertilizer production (Korean nature farming)
  - CRH production
  - Biodynamic inputs
- VI. Seed banking / seed production
- VII. Diversified farming systems
- VIII. Farm planning (strategy – SRP)

SRI Principles and Practices: Local Innovations

Technologies Innovations

I. Land preparation
  - Weed suppression diversification; SRI with nature farming technologies

II. Seedlings
  - Planning/scheduling
    - 8-12 days transplanting
    - staggered growing on seedbed
    - 1+1+1 theory (?)

III. Principles
  - holistic approach
  - production of inputs

IV. Documentation
  - common monitoring/evaluation forms
  - regular monitoring
    - establish trial farms
META-CARDS
Strategy/methodology
2 days training should include the making of effective microorganisms (demo + hands-on)
Step by step kung paano gawin ang SRI
Kailangan ng magandang weeder design
Complete module about SRI and organic farming (season-long training)
Specific modules for every step of the way supported with documentations and testimonials
1-day training dapat captured na lahat ng mga kailangan sa SRI kasama ang paggawa ng organic fertilizer
Applicability of the modules to different scenarios like water availability, weather consideration, trainees attitude, etc.
Training should be hands-on
1 day lecture + 1 day field exposure
a. actual na paggawa ng seedbed
b. pagbunot ng punla/transplanting
   • pagtatanim
   • paggawa ng concoctions (IMO, FPJ, FFJ, OHN, etc.)
   • planning workshop para sa participants
The training module should include hands-on training on different organic inputs and soil amendments
Participative training
Use the World Bank SRI video and add audio in the local language
SRI training manual needed
Pls review SRI primer and give suggestions
Dapat bigyang pansin ng trainers ang documentation
Documentation
Use Noe Ysulat's approach: bring sample plants, count tillers, grains
Gumamit ng pop-ed sa pagtuturo
Sana magkaroon ng nagkakaisang pamamaraan sa pagbibigay ng pag-aaral sa SRI
Sana maipasok sa module ang lahat ng success o subok na pamamaraan ng mga magsasaka na matagal nang nag-SRI
Content should be in the local dialect
SRI Weed management module
Pest and disease management module
Water management module
epektibong pagkontrol sa kuhol
Season-long training (with hands-on)
on-site training
season-long training with defined modules
Module on SRI transplanting
SRI history in the Philippine setting (Margate system)
When to transplant
Establish trial plots (field trials) as output of the training
Season-long training with field-trials

Output of Manila-Group III: SRI Proposal

META-CARDS
Documentation funds
Seedlings are transplanted early
Environment friendly
Absolutely full organic
Economically viable
Weeders as incentive for farmers' coops
Budget for food of farmers/pax
Counterpart of farmers should be travel expenses, training/trial site
Figures and accounting, liquidation and budgeting updated and reasonably prepared for easier
comprehension
Budget for monitoring + evaluation
Include annual trainers’ conference
Proposal should include incentives for trainers
generate funds locally
Objectives like refreshers, initial trainings, follow ups and support programs must be justified and given
equal consideration
Include organic fertilizer production in budget proposal
Kung 1-day training lang ang popondohan, mas maraming area/farmers ang coverage
National networking
Strategic area coverage
Consider the cost-benefit ratio
Participation of the academe in conducting SRI trials
Check claims: higher milling recovery, better nutritive value, better eating quality
Fund sourcing, networking, linking not limited to government programs and local resources and backed up
with credible and thorough studies
Local officials/LGUs must undergo rigid training on SRI, organic farming and /or NFS training, with proper
budget counterparting
Strategic/tactical engagement
counterparting
SRI institutionalization
Counterparting/partnership with ATI-DA, academe, LGUs, SRI Pilipinas, local NGOs
Field trial area: 1000 sqm or less
Trials should cover both dry and wet seasons

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- 100 towns
- 70 farmers/town per year
- 3 meetings/town per year
- National coordination

National Coordinator
- National coordinator / Field coordinator for Luzon
- Field coordinator for Visayas (part-time)
- Field coordinator for Mindanao (part-time)

SRI Institutionalization thru networking / trainer accreditation
Field trials in wet / dry seasons

Fund releases
- SRI funding window of the DA
- Release of funds to LGU partner subject to SRI certification
- Formal info to the LGU partner
- P31,000 per town (3 barangays / town)

META-CARDS
SRI principles and practices / Local innovations:
Mahirap mag-construct ng punlaan sa styrofoam. Kaya para nang sabog tanim ang punlang dinagdagan ko
lang ng organic fertilizer para madaling bunutin.
SRI Training Module: I prefer 1-day seminar kaysa season-long training. Pagbasehan na lang yung brochure.
Incorporate the economic development impact, eg. Comparative studies
contribution on ecological awareness and conscientization
network strengthening
venue of sharing innovations and resources
Ang mga prinsipyo ng SRI ay dapat kilalaning nakapaloob sa mga prinsipyo ng Sus Ag at sa Sus Dev sa
pangkalahatan.

Back to basic
Socially acceptable
Principle of return
Holistic approach/science
revival of bayanihan culture/spirit
economic viability
cultural acceptability
Kailangan ma-include lahat ng mga farmer innovations na makakatulong sa pagpapalago ng palay
bigyang halaga ang SRI at organic sa lahat ng magsasaka
Ecologically sound
Socratic approach in education
Science of agriculture
Bigyang halaga ang ibig sabihin nitong philosopher: “That rice plant is a living creature that have great potential, this potential will only be realized if we provide them the best conditions for their growth. Because if we provide them the new and better wys, they will repay our efforts several times over. We don't treat them like a little machine and to do things not natural for them to do.”

META-CARDS
Emphasize thorough land preparation
Raising of seedlings:
− use of charcoal
− other substrates (coco coir)
− raise seedlings in the upland
Core SRI practices: 1) younger seedlings 2) wider distances, 3) intermittent irrigation, 4) mechanical weeding, 5) use of organic fertilizers
Malaman ang tamang land prep
Water management
Appropriate na sukat o layo ng pagtatanim
Depth of planting and time
Technology on weed suppression and proper soil aeration
Epektibong pagkontrol sa damo laluna pag rainfed area
Iba't ibang practices sa water management, halimbawa: sa sandy loam na lugar, pumpara sa clay loam, magkaiba ang kanilang water requirements
SRI principles and practices:
− prepare the land by plowing 6” or more in depth
− soak the farm up to one week then harrow it
− plow again crosswise, the let the water in for another week
− drain the water, dry the field and let the weeds grow for up to a week
− then apply basal 40 bags of organic fertilizer per ha
Incorporate concoctions in watering
use papaya trunks/leaves for golden snail prevention
diversification for additional income
use of IMO to prevent golden snail eggs from hatching
use high tillering varieties
maximum care of plants during their 1st and 2nd tillers
the role of microbes
IMO farm approach/field day

Seed preparation methods and recommendation of suitable seedbed designs
CRH + soil + organic fertilizers
Age of seedlings:
− SRI is below 15 days
− more than 20-25 days old still SRI?
- 10 kg per ha
- 25x25cm distance
- intermittent flooding (water management)
- transplant within 30 min after pulling
- single planting per hill

Is 20x20cm still SRI?
Is transplanting 15-22 day old seedlings still SRI?
Can we call it pure organic if the rice seeds are hybrid?

Diversification
Strengthening of learning farms (DIFS)
Integrating vegetable farming and fishponds with SRI practices, for sustainability
the system should be SRI organic / NFT combinations of technology
Sa SRI kailangan kasama ang gulay para maipakita ang magandang bunga ng malusog na lupa at malaking bagay ang dagdag na kita ng magsasaka, bukod pa sa palay.
Kailangang maipakita sa datos ang pagkakaiba ng SRI sa conventional na pamamaraan mula sa synthetic at organic fertilizers hanggang sa pamamahala ng mga insekto.
Constant and regular monitoring of SRI trial farms
Proper monitoring of field trials
Ipasunod ang giya ng SRI
Common monitoring/evaluation forms
proper documentation of SRI field trial results
Kailangan ang masinop na pagdodokumento ng mga practices at innovations ng SRI
documentation of field trials
Establishment of baseline data.

Output of Mindanao-Group I: SRI Principles and practices

METACARDS
Development of more direct seeding approaches and methods
promote varietal adaptation (field trials)
Farmers produce their own seeds
- handpick the seeds
- find strong and healthy plants with more tillers
- handthreshed the selected seeds
- store and dry for the preparation for next crop
Seed selection using eggs and salt
- open container
- eggs
- salt
- seeds
- Add salt to the water in an open container and then put egs. The salt is enough if the eggs float. Finally put the seeds and good seeds will sink. Wash the seeds immediately.

Promotion of locally adapted varieties
Seed selection (use salty water, etc.) should NOT be omitted
Land preparation must not be less than 30 days (1 month)
popularization of local innovations
SRI practice: lessen the distance to 20 cm
Age of plant to be transplanted: 10-15 days old
Mechanized rotary weeder
- 4 rows per pass
- save weeding time for labor
seedling preparation thru modified dapog
crop establishment through direct seeding
1-2 times rotary weeding or soil disturbance
modified dapog with seed density of 1 bag per sqm seedbed area
rotary weeder: it must be mechanized, not manually-operated for easier management
use several/many varieties in the initial SRI trial
using preferred varieties
seed preparation using banana trunks has high % recovery
guano crusher: bat manure
  - guano collected by farmers
  - put in the crusher machine, product will be powered guano
  - distribute to the farmers for fertilizer without depending on outside inputs
  - plant seedlings above the marker line
Land preparation using the key check #2 of the palay-check system
SRI methods of raising rice be incorporated by duck raising

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Land preparation
  - at least 30 days fallow period
  - return rice straw
  - spray soil-conditioners/decomposers
  - first plowing – after 3-7 days land soaking
  - second plowing – apply organic fertilizer/vermi-cast
  - harrowing/levelling
  - final levelling/using wooden planer
  - option: palay key-check #2

Seeds and seedbed preparation
  - seed requirement: 5-12 kg
  - drying:
    - first drying – MC 13-14 (at least 15 days stock)
    - redrying – at least 2 hrs – 9am-10am
    - seed testing for viable seeds – rag doll method (dormancy)
  - soaking:
    - hybrid – 8-12 hrs
    - inbred – 24-48 hrs
  - incubation:
    - 24 hrs – turn upside down every 4 hrs
  - seedbed preparation
    - modified dapog (dry bed method)
    - wet bed method
    - seed box method

Output of Mindanao-Group II: SRI Training Modules/Methods

META-CARDS
develop pool of SRI experts/trainers for extension/research
involvement of more farmers in the conduct of field trials through FFS
seed promotion throu demo establishment cum FFS
follow up of adopters by the trainer
introduce the use of organic farming practices
analysis of different concoctions (IMO, FPJ, FFJ, OHN etc)
application of natural stickers from coco-extracts
control of kuhol using improvised wooden apparatus for making small canal between plant hills
training modules must be written in local dialects depending on the place where the method is introduced or taught.
Nutrient management: soil resource and accounting management (SRAM)
farmer to farmer approach
enhance presentation of methods/modules using visual aids
incorporate updates on organic practices
trainers should be hands-on practitioners
discussion of the effects of chemicals on the soil, plant, microorganisms, NEs, environment, man
discussion of organic materials – advantages: yield, environment, health, microorganisms etc.
introduce concept of diversification at the end of SRI training
improve and keep updating SRI Book as an important tool of trainers

Govt Advocacy
Training seminar on SRI must be on grassroot level with trial farm and financial support
promoting SRI: production input support especially on the small farmer holder
Integration of SRI with govt extension (locally, nationally)
Govt agencies to support SRI program rather than opposing and making discouraging comments and reports
SRI should be included in the FFS packages conducted by the DA, LGU (municipal/brgy)

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Planting:
- distance – 25x25 cm
- 8-12 days
- modified dapog – 8-10 days
- wet bed - not less than 12 days
- transplant seedlings within 30 minutes
- use straight-row planting using marker
- 1-2 seedlings per hill
- offset the seedlings from the line intersections
- plant excess seedlings beside the bunds (pilapil)

Weeding: soil aeration
- use the rotary weeder lengthwise and crosswise
- weed every 7-10 days
- weed at least twice before panicle initiation
- manual weeding around the rice plants

Fertilization:
- vermi-cast: 10 bags
- natural compost: 15-20 bags
- application of organic foliar fertilizer every soil aeration or at 7-10 days interval
- apply early in the morning or late in the afternoon

Water management:
- intermittent flooding: 2-3 cm every 10 days' interval

Pest management:
- alternative pest management – OHN, hanging of odorous materials, planting of insect repellants,
  “sticking” for birds, IHE

Harvesting:
- 85% mature
- return rice straw to the fields

Storage and processing internal quality control system

Output of Mindanao-Group III: SRI Proposal

META-CARDS
SRI demo farms must always be put at the location where most possible adaptors go and see easily.
Procedures of adapting the method must be printed in tarpaulins and displayed on the field
Conduct demo SRI (small plot) in a barangay
Establishment of demo area by piloting or modelling per municipality
Project proposal should have govt, academic and NGO component
Award system: “outstanding SRI farmers” (SRI natl/regional) annual conference
Motorized de-weeders should be made available to SRI practitioners
Assistance for farmer-innovators to conduct demonstration trials such as: certified seeds and organic fertilizer provision
Promoting SRI: it must have production input support especially on the small holder farmers (production subsidy)
Produce a trainer (at least 1 per municipality)
Training seminar on SRI must be on grassroot level trial farm and financial support
incorporate product processing
Info materials on SRI to be distributed in govt outlets like FITS centers

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produce a trainer (at least 1 per municipality)
develop pool of sri experts/trainers for extension research
involvement of more farmers in the conduct of field trials through FFS
SRI promotion through demo establishment cum FFS
follow up of adaptors by trainers

Advocacy in government
− SRI should be included in the FFS packages conducted by the DA, LGU (municipal/brgy)
− govt agencies to support SRI program rather than opposing and making discouraging comments and reports
− integration of SRI with govt extension locally and nationally

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1. Training seminar on SRI must be at the grassroot level with trial farms and financial support
2. 
   a) establishment of demo area for piloting / modelling per municipality
   b) conduct demo sri (small plot) in a barangay
   c) SRI demo farms must always be put at the location where most possible adaptors go and see easily.
3. 
   a) Promoting SRI: it must have production input support especially on the small holder farmers (production subsidy)
   b) Assistance for farmer-innovators to conduct demonstration trials such as: certified seeds and organic fertilizer provision
   c) Motorized de-weeders should be made available to SRI practitioners
4. Project proposal should have govt, academic and NGO component
   a) Info materials on SRI to be distributed in govt outlets like FITS centers
   b) incorporate product processing
   c) Award system: “outstanding SRI farmers”
   d) SRI national/regional) annual conference
5. SRI Magazine/Publication

Proposed budget for SRI-Pilipinas P2.7 million
Proposed budget for ATI Region 12 P21.3 million
Appendix H: Manila Meeting Photos (CD version of this report has more)
Appendix I: Mindanao Meeting Photos (report on CD has more)
Appendix J: SRI-Pilipinas Provincial Training Program, draft report

SRI-Pilipinas Terminal Report (Draft)
by Roberto Verzola, Coordinator, SRI-Pilipinas

Introduction

The national SRI training program was initiated by SRI-Pilipinas, an informal consortium of NGOs, academics and government researchers who are promoting the use of the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) in the Philippines in an organic context. The program was supported by the Department of Agriculture through a grant of P875,000. The grant fund was received for SRI-Pilipinas in trust by the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM). The training program was supervised by SRI-Pilipinas coordinator Roberto Verzola, with the help of SRI-Pilipinas researcher Byron Resuello and SRI-Pilipinas national trainer Venancio Garde Jr.

Outputs and outcomes

This report covers the 50 trainings held by SRI-Pilipinas in 49 provinces throughout the Philippines. The trainings benefited an estimated 1,000 farmers. Not all farmers adopted SRI, but we estimate around 5% (50 people) of the trainees mastered the method and are now in a position to conduct trainings themselves, providing SRI-Pilipinas with a core group of experienced SRI farmers and trainers nationwide who can help implement the next phase of the national SRI training program. SRI-Pilipinas fields trainers only after they have had at least two seasons of experience (one wet, one dry) in applying SRI practices.

Lessons:

- **One-to-five-day training periods.** While a one-day training (half-day lecture, half-day hands-on) is sufficient good enough many farmers to pick up all the necessary information to try SRI themselves, some farmers need at least three, perhaps more, meetings for better transfer of knowhow and knowledge. We believe that the one-day training remains the most cost-effective approach in getting farmers to try SRI. Where longer training periods are tried, we propose as a maximum **five one-day sessions**, to cover the following essential topics:
  - **Session 1** – Organic fertilizer production with fermented activators, organic matter, soil life;
  - **Session 2** – Seedbed preparation, seed selection, varietal choices;
  - **Session 3** – Transplanting, water management;
  - **Session 4** – Weeding, pest management; and
  - **Session 5** – harvest, ratooning, diversification, field day.

Where local authorities or the local hosts are willing to provide counterpart funds to support training periods longer than one day, SRI-Pilipinas can follow the above schedule. For a three-day training, Sessions 2, 3 and 4 can be collapsed into one. But the one-day training session remains our minimum goal, relying on our primer, training video, and the SRI Help Line (0908-2475-475) to do the rest. After all, SRI-Pilipinas has trained many farmers, who learned very well, with just one session. In fact, many have taught themselves SRI by simply reading our primer.

- **Look for farmer-innovators.** While the training program should serve as many farmers as possible, it should **focus on the innovators: farmers who are eager to immediately try out the method** in their farm, and leave for later those who just curious but non-committal or even highly sceptical and are ready to give up at the slightest problem, or those who mainly expect doleouts. Thus, SRI-Pilipinas will continue its approach of offering its trainings mainly to farmers, farmers’ groups and local authorities who show a strong interest in the program, a commitment to allocate their own resources for the training, and who are ready to conduct a field trial at once.

- **SOFT SRI: Success-on-first-try SRI.** While a 100% success rate is not possible, the primer, video, other training materials, and the training program itself should **focus on attaining the highest**
**Probability of success for the farmer's first trial.** Success-on-first-try (SOFT) means producing a significant number of high-tillering plants on the farmers' first trial plot. SOFT SRI raises farmers' confidence and morale immensely and is a major factor in securing a foothold in an area. For SOFT SRI, we need to maintain contact with the trainees throughout the planting season, either through regular face-to-face training sessions (FFS), individual farm visits, or SMS, the latter being the least expensive way of doing so.

- **Ideal group size: 25-35.** A smaller training group makes inefficient use of training resources and the trainer's time. A larger group becomes more unwieldy. A training group size of 25-35 farmers is ideal. The greatest advantage of a larger group is the higher possibility of seeing very impressive success-on-first-try SRI results (SOFT SRI) in some farmers, so that farmers who do not succeed on first try will not automatically conclude that the method itself does not work, but will instead try to analyse why they did not succeed while others did. Seeing a profusely-tillering rice plant is the most effective argument that convinces farmers of the viability of the SRI method.

- **Only three monitoring questions for farmers.** Farmers do not want to spend their time collecting data for researchers, and it is not fair to expect them to. The collection of agronomic and economic data for research should be assigned to researchers, if funds are available to hire them. If not, then the only information we need to get from farmers who are currently using SRI are: i.) how many planting seasons have they been trying SRI, including the current one, ii.) what portion of their current rice production uses SRI, and iii) how does their SRI yield compare to their previous yields? Confirmed repeat-users who are already using SRI in production are a clear signal that the SRI method is considered an improvement over existing farmers' practice. Valid and important conclusions can be made out of these two pieces of information alone. Production-level repeat users mean that SRI will soon be spreading by itself, diffusing from farmer to farmer, barangay to barangay.

- **Most cost-effective: SMS.** The most cost-effective method of promoting SRI among farmers is to announce that the SRI primer and training video will be sent for free by mail to those who text their mailing address to the SRI-Pilipinas Help Line (0908-2475-475). A determined farmer should be able to try SRI out simply by following the primer instructions carefully, as what several of our SRI trainers simply did. Still, these farmers should be strongly encouraged to convince their neighbors to try the method also. The more of them try, the greater the chances at at least one of them will succeed. Farmers who try SRI this way can be encouraged to report their results, if we offer more free videos and/or manuals to those who do so. SRI-Pilipinas should allot sufficient budget for this option in the next phase of its training program.

- **Verifying farmer claims.** Farmers should be trained to expect regular third-party verification of their claims, whether it is a yield claim or a claim that they are using SRI methods or that they are using organic methods. It should be explained to them that independent verification is important for people who may be willing to pay premium prices for the farmers' organic produce. This will prepare them for third-party certification or their organization's internal quality control system that is so necessary for an organic production program that is credible to consumers and the market.

- **Nationwide.** Regardless of the level of funding available, SRI-Pilipinas should continue its strategy of nationwide coverage of its training program. After conducting trainings in almost every rice-growing province in the Philippines, SRI-Pilipinas can now service requests for training by sending a trainer from the same province or from a nearby province, reducing training costs further. The next phase of its training program is to conduct trainings – and thereby produce more accessible farmer-trainers – in any municipality that requests such training. As long as those who request the training manifest not only curiosity but a real commitment to actually try the method, no request for training to SRI-Pilipinas will be turned away,

- **Prompt fund releases.** Funds for trainings must be released promptly, because farmers follow very strict planting schedules, and delays can result in missing entirely the window of opportunity for implementing the program. For instance, when the first rains of the season start, farmers will proceed with the necessary farm work like plowing the fields, levelling the land, preparing seedbeds, soaking seeds, and so on. The weather waits for no one, least of all fund releases. Fund releases for farmers programs should
not be delayed. The full release of the DA grant was a key to the program's relative success. It would have been extremely paralyzing if the program had to wait for tranches to be released.

**Problems:**

- **Delays.** The fund was received March 2006, too late for the 2006 dry season. Program implementation began April 2006. Only a few provinces were covered in the second half of 2006 due to problems in implementing SRI during the rainy season. Many groups contacted for the first half of 2007 were too busy in the national elections. We therefore adjusted the program to enable trainings even in during the rainy season. Thus more trainings were conducted in the second half of 2007 and throughout 2008, when the training program was finally concluded.

- **Low budget.** The original budget was meant to spend around P9,500 per one-day training in as many rice-producing provinces as can be covered. Because of the delays in the release of the funds and general inflation, the actual costs have gotten higher when the project began in earnest. A frequent response among some NGOs and farmers' groups was that the fund was too small for a one-day training. There was a positive side to this small budget: it acted as a filter, where those who were mostly interested in the funding stayed away, and the program was left with groups who were truly eager to try out the method and were even willing to allot some of their resources to make the training happen. This problem actually gave the program its most valuable lesson.

- **Lack of provision for full-time implementors.** The original program design, because of the pressure to keep the project proposal at the least possible cost, did not provide for full-time implementors, only for a trainer who will actually conduct the training. This resulted in a slower than usual implementation of the project, which was compounded by complications arising from the election period, changing weather patterns, low budget, etc. While keeping project costs as low as possible remains a valid goal, provisions for full-time implementors must be made in order not to hobble the project itself.

- **Changing weather patterns.** A number of scheduled trainings had to be postponed or cancelled altogether due to unseasonal rains or dry spells, as well as major floods that washed out seedbeds and newly-planted fields. This is probably already the impact of climate change and there is very little that can be done except to learn how to adapt to a more fickle climate.

**Next step, next phase**

This program has planted the seeds of SRI in most of the major-rice producing provinces in the Philippines, in the form of least one SRI practitioner-farmer that is potentially a trainer/model-farmer in their province as well as neighboring provinces. The SRI-Pilipinas requirement for a qualified SRI trainer is one who has done SRI for at least two straight seasons (i.e., a wet and a dry season).

The next step is to gather all SRI trainers and some potential trainers who have been part of the program, to sum up their SRI implementation as well as training experiences, and to tap their collective wisdom to improve the SRI training module and its various components. The main goal of the module remains the same: the put into the SRI primer, training video, curriculum and other materials everything that is needed to ensure the highest possibility success-on-first-try (SOFT).

This national SRI training evaluation meeting should then initiate the next phase of the SRI training program: to replicate the previous trainings in municipal-level trainings, incorporating the improvements adopted from the SRI trainers' meeting. We hope to conduct around 1,500 such trainings in the rice-producing municipalities/cities of the Philippines, with the possibility of two or more trainings among the top rice producers. This phase will conducted in ten identical sub-phases of 150 trainings at a time. Summing up, evaluation and planning will be conducted at the end of every season, to keep collecting lessons and improving the training module. The details and costs of this phase will be worked out at the first national SRI trainers' workshop.

**The future**
When the municipal-level phase of the program is done, we will be ready to do training in every rice-producing barangay in the country, tapping the trainers we have developed at the municipal level.

Conclusion

SRI-Pilipinas has two “winners” on hand: 1) The SRI set of practices itself is proving to be easily implemented, widely applicable, and farmer-friendly. It has been diffusing gradually among farmers, despite efforts from some sectors of the rice industry to discredit it. 2) The SRI Pilipinas low-cost nationwide approach to training and field trials, which has enabled us to extend our nationwide reach with little funding. The low-cost approach and nationwide coverage of the SRI-Pilipinas training program is a relatively unique experience which offers lessons for other non-government organizations as well as government agencies. It is an important political capital of the consortium, that enhances its credibility in fund-raising as well as training. It is also consistent with the SRI principle of “more with less”, of getting more benefits with lower costs, more outputs with less inputs.

SRI-Pilipinas is hopeful that the Department of Agriculture, given its public commitment to convert at least 10% of all ricelands in the country to organic production, will continue supporting the SRI-Pilipinas training program, as it enters its next phase.

Drafted by:

Roberto Verzola
SRI-Pilipinas Coordinator
## Appendix K: Financial Report

### SRI National Trainors’ Conference-Workshop

**Sep. 28-30, 2009 / Nov. 20-22, 2009**

#### Breakdown of Actual Expenses

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Lodging</th>
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<th>Training materials</th>
<th>Honoraria</th>
<th>Others</th>
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#### Detailed Withdrawals

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**Total Withdrawals (Column total):** 250,000.00

#### Detailed explanation of A (34,922 + 1,900 + 1,408 + 800 = 39,030) above

**A. Manila pax reimbursements (c/o VGJ)**

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Explanation:

1. The total fund of P250,000 from Oxfam-GB was deposited in a BPI checking account on Sep. 22, 2009.
2. Most withdrawals were made by issuing checks (as reflected in the attached bank statements, except two which were made by ATM because the amounts were needed right away.
3. Withdrawals are supported by official receipts or (in the case of one missing OR) a photocopy of the encashed check.
4. P39,030 was disbursed through SRI-Pilipinas Training Coordinator Jun Garde. The supporting papers detailing how this amount was spent are included in this report.
5. P45,000 was disbursed through SRI-Pilipinas Coordinator Roberto Verzola. The supporting papers detailing how this amount was spent are also included in this report. The total expenses exceeded the

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6. SRI-Pilipinas is expecting a refund from the ACE Travel Agency for two unused tickets (by Edward Judilla of Bacolod City and Victoriano Tagupa of Cagayan de Oro City, both of whom cancelled their trips at the last moment). As of Jan. 29, however, the agency was still unwilling to specify how much the refunded amount will be after various penalties are deducted by Cebu Pacific, and when the refund will be released. We propose to use any refunded amount for photocopying additional copies of the SRI Book and of this report.