

The Period in Review: January 2002 to April 2003

Last year, we changed the reporting period for the *WARDA Annual Report* from a calendar year to one covering May through April; however, that reporting period was not reflected in the annex ‘The Year in Review.’ This year, we are bringing the activities report in line with the reporting period for the Report as a whole by covering the period from January 2002 through April 2003.

A team from the WARDA Sahel Station undertook a **diagnostic evaluation of the LANASOL laboratory** in Nouakchott, Mauritania from 9 to 11 January 2002, in order to assess the status of the lab and determine the requirements for soil and water analysis.

The **Participatory Technology Development (PTD) Project** Steering Committee met in Ibadan, Nigeria, from 12 to 16 January 2002. Partners from NARS (broadly defined, i.e. including development agencies, NGOs and universities), Hohenheim University and WARDA appraised field activities, re-charted the project focus, and developed a logical-framework for the second phase.

The Annual Review and Planning Meetings in 2002, ‘**WARDA Science Days**,’ were held at Headquarters from 22 to 25 January.

Members of the ROCARIZ Economics Task Force attended a **Training Course on Methodology of Impact Assessment of Agricultural Technologies** at Headquarters from 18 to 23 February. This was the first activity in WARDA’s drive to build up regional capacity in impact assessment. The 10 participants

represented nine WARDA/ROCARIZ member states. Topics covered included concepts and methods of impact assessment, estimation of production, consumption and social-welfare impact, econometric methodology, and an introduction to SPSS software.

A **training course on Participatory Learning and Action Research for Integrated Rice Crop Management (PLAR-ICM)** was held at Headquarters from 25 February to 8 March. The workshop came at the end of a nine-month program of PLAR-ICM in two inland valleys in Côte d’Ivoire. Participants included partners from *Agence nationale d’appui au développement rural* (ANADER), *Projet national riz* (PNR) and four farmers from the pilot study villages of Bamoro and Lokakpli. (For more details of the work on PLAR-ICM, see ‘Participatory Learning and Action Research for Integrated Crop Management in Inland Valleys,’ pages 23–32.)

In March, the technology transfer team went from WARDA Headquarters to Grand Lahou, southern Côte d’Ivoire to run a three-week **Workshop on the Construction of the Thresher–Cleaner**. The 18 machinists were divided into four groups, each of which

worked on constructing their own thresher–cleaner. Despite the fact that Côte d’Ivoire is a Francophone country, the Ivorian incarnation of the machine has been named ‘ANWAR,’ for ANADER–WARDA. The machinists duly trained then returned to their home towns. A few weeks later, the new machines were brought to WARDA Headquarters for demonstration. Machinist Camara Mamadou from Katiola constructed a prototype that was sold to a member of a farmers’ cooperative and used by farmers at the irrigated perimeter of Lope.



Camara Mamdou with his prototype ANWAR (BV 001), Katiola, June 2002—he has subsequently made and sold two more thresher–cleaners

The Inland Valley Consortium (IVC) Annual Workshop and CFC Project Meeting were held in Bohicon, Benin from 11 to 15 March. As usual, progress from the past year was reviewed and work-plans developed for the coming year.

End-of-project feedback workshops for the DFID project ‘Preventing soil degradation in irrigated rice-based cropping systems in Burkina Faso and Mauritania’ were held at Niassa, Sourou valley, Burkina Faso, 14–15 March, and at Foum Gleita, Mauritania, 11–12 April. Workshops were attended by NARES partners and farmers. During the workshops,



ANWAR thresher–cleaner demonstration, M’bé, June 2002



Proud owner of ANWAR BV 001, Lamine Coulibaly, operating the thresher–cleaner for farmers in the Lope perimeter

recommendations were made on research and development interventions for the prevention and mitigation of soil degradation. These recommendations form the basis for integrated crop management options for problem soils that will be evaluated by WARDA, farmer groups and NARES partners over the next three years.

On 25 and 26 March 2002, the **PTD Project** held a **Scientific Workshop** at Ibadan, Nigeria. The 24 participants comprised WARDA scientists, project students and their supervisors, and national researchers,

who reviewed the 2001 season results, in particular the progress made by the PhD students.

The 2002 ‘crazy season’ started at WARDA Headquarters on 26 March, when delegates gathered at Headquarters to discuss and finalize the project document for the **African Rice Initiative (ARI)**, in advance of the official launch of the Initiative at the Houphouët-Boigny Foundation for Peace in Yamoussoukro, Côte d’Ivoire on 27 March. The Initiative was launched by HE Pascal Affi N’Guéssan, Prime Minister of Côte d’Ivoire, on behalf of HE Laurent Gbagbo, President of the Republic. Full details were given in last year’s feature ‘The African Rice Initiative: Taking the NERICAs to Sub-Saharan Africa’ (*WARDA Annual Report 2001–2002*, pages 7–12).

On 27 March 2002, participants from the Nigerian Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs), universities of agriculture, NGOs, National Cereals Research Institute (NCRI), National Seeds Service (NSS), National Rice/Maize Centre and WARDA met at Ibadan, Nigeria, to discuss the on-going **PVS activities in Nigeria. Six Nigerian states**—Ogun, Kwara, Nasarawa, Kaduna, Ekiti and Niger—were considered ready for the implementation of PVS-extension. Participants were informed that PVS trials in 2002 had helped three varieties on the road to official release in Nigeria—NERICA 1, WAB189-B-B-B-8-HB and ITA 321. The next meeting of the Nigerian Variety Release Committee, and therefore the release of these varieties, has been fixed for 16 July 2003.

The **Participatory Adaptation and Diffusion of technologies for rice-based Systems (PADS)** project held its annual Steering Committee meeting at Headquarters on 4–6 April. PADS is the umbrella project for the PLAR-ICM activities (*see above*, and pages 23–32). The project is active in Côte d’Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana and Guinea.

On 8 April, NRI Weed Scientist David Johnson returned to WARDA Headquarters to chair a **Wrap-up workshop for the DFID Wild Rice Control Project**. The timing—just before 4Rs (*see next item*)—enabled interested researchers who had not been involved in the DFID project to attend the meeting to hear about the project outcomes and recommendations. An awareness folder on wild rice is being prepared for publication by DFID and WARDA.

Then on 9–12 April, WARDA hosted the **Second Regional Rice Research Review (4Rs)**, the biennial meeting of the ROCARIZ Task Force members and other rice stakeholders from the region and beyond. About 150 participants attended from Africa, Europe and the USA. Three-quarters of participants were NARES scientists, development agents and farmer-group representatives from member countries. This year saw the introduction of a ‘National Scientist Award’ for ‘Best Paper’ (won by Dona Dakouo and co-workers from INERA, Burkina Faso), ‘Best Presentation’ (won by Babou O. Jobe, NARI, The Gambia) and ‘Outstanding Contribution to rice research and development’ (won by Mamadou M’Baré Coulibaly, IER, Mali). The 4Rs was followed by a meeting of the ROCARIZ Steering Committee on 13–15 April.



Participants at the 4Rs meeting held in M'Bé from 9 to 12 April

The **Second INGER-Africa Review and Planning Meeting** was held at Headquarters on 15–17 April. INGER is the ‘leading light’ in making WARDA truly Africa-wide in its field of influence (*see* feature ‘The Africa Rice Center—Recognizing WARDA’s Role in Sub-Saharan Africa,’ pages 7–12). This year, the workshop drew breeders and genetic-resource staff from 24 countries, including Burundi, DR Congo, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia and Zimbabwe, as well as all 17 WARDA member states. The issue of intellectual property rights was given some prominence, with speakers from the CGIAR, IRRI, UPOV and WARDA.

Next, the **Participatory Rice Improvement and Gender/user Analysis (PRIGA) Network** met for its **annual meeting** at Headquarters from 18 to 23 April. Of particular note this year was the inclusion of a **training workshop on PVS-extension** during the first two days. As usual, the proceedings of the meeting will be published; however, this year they have been delayed by staff departures and the intervention of the Ivorian crisis.

The year’s run of back-to-back meetings came to a close with a **Workshop on Seed Priming** on 24–25 April, chaired by David Harris, who represents DFID on the PRIGA Network. The seed-priming activity has ‘piggy-backed’ on the participatory varietal selection (PVS) of the PRIGA Network, and been reported in the annual summary proceedings of the same. However, seed priming is likely to ‘take on a life of its own’ from 2002.

Meanwhile, the full **WARDA Board of Trustees** met (again at Headquarters) from 22 to 26 April.

The **PTD Project** held a **Training Workshop** at Abakaliki, Nigeria, from 26 April to 10 May. Participants—comprising farmers, extension agents, NGO representatives, researchers from national

research institutes and universities—learnt more about the PTD approach and technology dissemination, including limitations in its role in enhancing rice production in Nigeria.

On 16 May, the Director General was invited to a **breakfast meeting with the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria** in Abuja. Dr Nwanze made a presentation on the NERICA rices and the prospects for rice in Nigeria. Taking the opportunity offered by the presence at the same meeting of a delegation from the Government of Japan, he also thanked Japan for its support to the NERICA work at WARDA. During the three-day visit to the Nigerian capital, Dr Nwanze also met with the Federal Minister of Agriculture and the Special Adviser on Food Production; he also held a press conference.

The **Third WARDA/National Experts Committee Meeting** was held at Headquarters from 11 to 13 June. Among the many items on the agenda was the first airing of the possibility of referring to WARDA as ‘The Africa Rice Center.’

WARDA Sahel Station staff participated as trainers in a four-month **training of extension officers for irrigated-rice cultivation**, organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), from 15 June to 15 October. One of WARDA’s rice fields at Ndiaye (Sahel Station) was also used for practical sessions.

The new **ARI Consortium Management Committee** met for the first time at Headquarters on 27 and 28 June. Particular focus was on the need to encourage the committed donors to ‘pay up’ and on the need to move quickly with the recruitment of the General Coordinator.

A **rapid appraisal survey** of the irrigated-rice sector in **Nigeria** was conducted by WARDA between 28 June

and 13 July. The two-person WARDA team initiated fieldwork to assess opportunities and constraints to improving irrigated-rice productivity in Nigeria, and to identify irrigated-rice research and development priorities in Nigeria. This study complements WARDA's on-going assessment of the Nigerian rice sector, and is being supported by USAID (*see* Box 'Rice sector strategy for Nigeria' on page 18–19).

The **General Assembly of WECARD/CORAF** took place in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, from 23 to 26 July. The location within our host country enabled WARDA to show a 'presence,' with display of publications and posters.

As part of its on-going program, the **PTD Project** held four **Field Days** during August, September and October, to demonstrate, discuss and evaluate various technologies (both indigenous and modern) with farmers at the project sites. The field days also afforded opportunities for rice-production stakeholders to discuss the season's progress, and to discuss management problems encountered in the trials and other field-related difficulties faced during the season. A total of 327 farmers, extension agents, national research partners and staff from development projects (88 of them women) participated in the events at (1) Ogun, Nigeria, on 22 August, (2) Dassa and Glazoue, Benin, on 24–25 August, (3) Ebonyi, Nigeria, on 26 September, and (4) Kogi, Nigeria, on 24 October.

The CGIAR in general, and WARDA in particular, were well represented at the **UN World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)** in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September. In particular, Japan, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the CGIAR sponsored a Special Event on NERICA Rice on 31 August.

A **Farmers' Field Day** was held on 27 August at Kaswan Magani village, Kaduna State, Nigeria, to mark

the 'handing over' of a new rice-farmers' association to the State ADP. The group, comprised of about 100 farmers, derived from WARDA's PVS work, which had completed its three-year cycle of PVS-research. Some of the farmers were already growing between 2 and 5 ha of WARDA varieties (including NERICAs). As part of the official recognition ceremony, a Kajuru local government official was in attendance.

Subsequent to the WSSD, UNDP organized a **Press Visit** to WARDA Headquarters and Abidjan on 4 September. Journalists came from *Agence France Presse*, the BBC, *Jeune Afrique Economie*, *Radio France Internationale* (RFI), regional press and a media production team.

From 18 to 28 September, a multi-disciplinary **monitoring tour** of NARES and WARDA scientists visited activities of WARDA outreach programs **ROCARIZ, INGER-Africa and PRIGA** in the upland, lowland and mangrove-swamp rice ecologies of Guinea (*Guinée Maritime, Moyenne Guinée and Haute Guinée*). The team found that NERICA 3 is widely cultivated as Guineans prefer its short bold grains. In *Moyenne Guinée*, this variety suffered 15–20% stem-borer attack. Recommendations from the team, particularly on communication and information



NERICA 3 in the acid soils of *Moyenne Guinée*

channels, were submitted to WARDA and Guinean NARES.



Planting of iron-toxicity-tolerant variety in the associated mangrove swamp of Guinea

The **Executive and Finance Committee of WARDA's Board of Trustees** (EFC) met at Headquarters on 16–18 September, where it approved the 2003 budget proposal and resolved several policy matters.

On 19 September, events in Côte d'Ivoire conspired to leave Headquarters and Main Research Center staff trapped in their homes in Bouaké, as well as four EFC members in a hotel in the center of town. A week later, senior staff and others were able to relocate to Abidjan. The full story of WARDA's 'survival under fire' is reported elsewhere in this Report (pages 13–22). Although WARDA continued to operate from Abidjan, all events scheduled to take place at Headquarters had to be rescheduled, relocated or both.

On 4 October, a meeting was held with representatives from **Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)** in Ibadan, Nigeria, on a proposal for **in-country training of Agricultural Development Project (ADP) personnel in seed production**. The JICA seed expert expected to be hosted at WARDA Headquarters should be available to help with project implementation. Discussions also covered the topic of the improvement of farm implements.

The first **CGIAR/World Bank McNamara Seminar**, held on 25 October in Tokyo, Japan, fielded WARDA's successful story of NERICA development and its potential in Africa's food-security dilemma. The Director General made a presentation, held several interviews and met members of the press.

Essentially unaffected by the Ivorian crisis, the **Irrigated Rice Program** and **NARES partners** in Mauritania organized, on 5 November, a final review and evaluation workshop in Nouakchott to present results, experiences and lessons from the **collaborative program 'Improving Irrigated Rice Productivity in Mauritania: Participatory evaluation, adaptation and transfer of improved irrigated rice technologies.'** The workshop brought together the different partners who participated in the implementation of the program (WARDA, SONADER, CNRADA and farmer groups). The collaborative program was funded through a grant to SONADER from the World Bank.

From 13 to 16 November, the **Irrigated Rice Program** held a **Review and Planning Workshop** with NARES partners at the Sahel Station (Ndiaye, Senegal). Participants comprised agronomists and economists from Burkina Faso (INERA), The Gambia (NARI), Mali (IER) and Senegal (ISRA and SAED), along with WARDA personnel from the Sahel Station and Headquarters. The participants reviewed past and on-going activities in rice research and development for irrigated systems, and then defined joint strategies and activities for the period 2003–2005. This led to a follow-up tour by the irrigated-rice economics team to finalize modalities for implementation of the 2003 work-plan.

Because of a World Bank moratorium on travel to Côte d'Ivoire, a visit from the CGIAR Chairman and Director to Abidjan had to be cancelled. The visit had been planned to coincide with a meeting of the Board of Trustees Executive and Finance (EFC). Most members

of the EFC were also prevented from visiting Abidjan at that time, because of travel limitations imposed by various embassies. However, **Board of Trustees Vice-Chairman** Richard Musangi insisted on visiting WARDA at its temporary headquarters in Abidjan in December. While there, he met up with new Ivorian Board member Bamba Gué, met with Management to discuss issues related to the management of the Ivorian crisis, and held a meeting with staff working in Abidjan. Prof. Musangi and Dr Gué also held meetings with several Ivorian ministers, donor representatives and ambassadors of WARDA member states, which culminated in a diplomatic luncheon and press conference. Prof. Musangi's visit was a gesture of support and encouragement from the Board in general.

The first batch of WARDA Main Research Center staff relocated to occupy temporary accommodation at ICRISAT's Research Station at Samanko in Bamako, Mali, during the weekend of 25–26 January 2003. Remaining research and research-support staff relocated over the following weeks, leaving staff from the Director General's Office, Administration and Finance Division, Corporate Services Division, and Training, Information and Library Services to maintain headquarters activities from Abidjan. From the research side, the African Rice Initiative (ARI), genetic-resources activities and HIV/AIDS initiative continued to be coordinated from Abidjan. (*See also* 'Crisis in Côte d'Ivoire: WARDA "Under Fire",' pages 13–22.)

During the *Journée porte-ouverte* (open day) organized by ISRA in Dakar from 7 to 12 February 2003, WARDA Sahel demonstrated varieties and the thresher-cleaner, and displayed several posters highlighting results from irrigated-rice research and development in the Senegal River valley. The WARDA stand was visited by a wide range of participants, including the Head of State HE President Abdoulaye Wade, senior government officials, NGO groups and civil society representatives.

Rather than going ahead with the planned wrap-up workshop for the end of phase 1, the donors supporting the **PTD Project**—GTZ and BEAF (BMZ)—visited project and partner sites—Ibadan, Ikenne, Abeokuta and Lokoja in Nigeria, and Dassa and Glazoue in Benin—from 23 February to 9 March 2003 to evaluate the project, concluding that "A second project phase is justified" in order for the users and stakeholders—farmers' organizations—to achieve the full benefits of the PTD approach. (For more details on PTD phase 1, *see* Box 'More than one way to crack an egg: Participatory technology development in Benin and Nigeria,' pages 30–31.)

Senegalese President HE Abdoulaye Wade (center, red tie) visiting the WARDA stand at ISRA's *Journée porte-ouverte*



WARDA stand and visitors reviewing display, *Journée porte-ouverte*, Dakar, February 2003



The WARDA **Board of Trustees** met for its annual meeting Bamako, Mali, from 24 to 28 February. This year saw a reshuffling of responsibilities, with Richard Musangi taking over as Board Chairman and Edwin Price as Vice Chairman and Chairman of the Nominating Committee. Board members took time to visit WARDA’s temporary research facilities in the ICRISAT Research Station, Samanko, and to address the staff. (*See also* ‘Crisis in Côte d’Ivoire: WARDA “Under Fire”,’ pages 13–22.)

Coincident with the Board meeting, the **Director of the CGIAR**, Francisco Reifschneider, visited WARDA’s temporary research station in Samanko, Bamako, where he addressed senior staff, management and Board on 27 February. He expressed his pleasure at finally being able to visit WARDA staff in their temporary facilities after travel restrictions blocked his planned visit in December 2002. He conveyed the CG’s gratitude for the fortitude that WARDA staff and management had shown during the Ivorian crisis to date, commending the “heroic effort to sustain operations.” He assured everyone of the System’s concern over staff security, and of their continued support, as well as that of the donors. Subsequently, Dr Reifschneider, outgoing Board Chairman Lindsay Innes and Director General Nwanze met with the Prime Minister of Mali and key Malian authorities.

On 3–7 March, WARDA hosted a **wrap-up workshop for the WARDA/DFID Rice Blast Project** at Accra, Ghana. Project personnel from Horticulture Research International (HRI, UK), WARDA and NARS scientists

from Burkina Faso (2), The Gambia (1), Ghana (11) and Nigeria (1), along with representatives from DFID and FAO. The project has developed molecular tools for characterizing blast lineages, and successfully analyzed pathogen diversity through a novel field-trapping technique (WARDA) and laboratory pathotyping (HRI). These tools are ready for transfer to other NARS to expand this work. After the workshop, a discussion was held on the possibility of a follow-on project to promote the molecular and characterization tools, and to utilize the characterization data in the development of durable blast resistance.

On 7 March, a WARDA team presented some preliminary propositions for a **‘Strategy for rice sector revitalization in Nigeria’** at the Federal Ministry of Agriculture in Abuja, Nigeria. The strategy is the proposed major outcome of the USAID-funded project ‘The Nigerian Rice Economy in a Competitive World: Constraints, Opportunities and Strategic Choices.’ At the meeting, WARDA researchers were able to present a summary of the project’s main findings to the Minister of Agriculture himself, then a more detailed report to a selection of policy-makers from the Ministry, including the Permanent Secretary, with question-and-answer session. For a summary of the project findings and elements of the strategy, *see* Box ‘Rice sector strategy for Nigeria’ (page 18–19).

From 17 to 21 March, CIRAD Plant Physiologist Alain Audebert returned to co-organize the **First Workshop on Iron Toxicity in Rice-based Systems in West Africa**. Having been originally scheduled for November 2002 at WARDA Headquarters, the workshop finally took place in Cotonou, Benin. The workshop assessed the state-of-the-art of research and development activities aimed at mitigating iron toxicity in rice-based farming systems in the region. Some 19 researchers attended the workshop from Belgium, Benin, Burkina Faso, France, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo and WARDA.

CGIAR Director Francisco Reifschneider (left) with former WARDA Board Chairman Lindsay Innes at the 23rd Meeting of the Board of Trustees, Bamako



The findings of this workshop are summarized elsewhere in this Report (*see* ‘Donor Country Profile: France — Plant physiology,’ pages 47–49).

On 28 March, the Director General held a **Press Conference** at the Hotel Sofitel in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire. He restated that WARDA was continuing to function in Côte d’Ivoire, as it had done since the beginning of the Ivorian crisis, and despite rumors to the contrary. In particular, WARDA was continuing to maintain its Headquarters in Côte d’Ivoire with headquarters staff and several others temporarily working from offices in Abidjan. He also gave an update on the perceived situation in Bouaké and at WARDA’s property in M’Bé.

From 9 to 11 April, **PADS Project** partners from Benin, Mali, Togo and WARDA met at Samanko, Bamako, to review project (PLAR-ICM) activities at the four project sites, including presentation of results and

planning for the 2003 season. This partially overlapped with a visit from **NRI/DFID** personnel (10–18 April) to discuss various projects and activities on integrated pest management (IPM).

The **ROCARIZ Steering Committee** met at Samanko on 22 April to review progress on small-grant projects funded in 2002; to discuss the 2002 and 2003 monitoring tours; potential modes of operation in relation to WARDA’s emerging new Strategic Plan; expansion of activities (especially small-grant projects) within Central Africa, and preliminary ideas for the 2004 Regional Rice Research Review (4Rs).

The 2003 annual review and planning meeting, ‘**Research Days 2003**,’ took place from 28 April to 2 May at Samanko. Research presentations were based on thematic groups, designed to encourage greater interaction among researchers and promote interdisciplinarity.