

## Three years of “Upland Rice Variety Selection Techniques Course for Sub-Saharan African Countries.”

AAI undertook three assignments to lead the region-specific training course, “Upland Rice Variety Selection Techniques Course for Sub-Saharan African Countries” during the three years from 2006 to 2008. Even after the three-year training program ended as planned, we have been feeling the continued need for this kind of training. The importance of rice cultivation in Africa was reaffirmed at the TICAD IV held in May 2008. This is manifested in the establishment of the Coalition for African Rice Development (CARD) initiative. JICA Tsukuba is examining the possibility of continuing to organize similar courses. At this juncture I would like to report on the profiles of trainees over the last three years.

A total of 30 trainees from 12 countries completed the courses in the last three years’ three training courses. The country providing the largest number of trainees was Tanzania (six trainees), the second country was Zimbabwe (four trainees) but the total number of trainees from West Africa was just seven. There were no Francophone participants, with the exception of trainees from Benin, who were accepted within the framework of individual training as a counterpart for a JICA expert. The first year’s training course in 2006 was designated for Anglophone African countries, most of the participants came from east and southern African countries.

As shown in Table 2, all the Anglophone countries in Group 1 have been accepted into the training course, with the exception of the five Francophone countries. Gambia and Benin from Group 2 have been admitted to the course but none from the seven remaining countries. If JICA is to continue offering similar courses, it is necessary to explore the possibility of accepting the 12 countries that were not admitted in the past. In order to achieve this, a course must be designed that would suit Francophone participants. At the same time, it is necessary to continue to accept trainees from countries such as Ethiopia, Malawi and Zimbabwe. Although these countries are not CARD candidate countries, there are great needs for upland rice cultivation and there are many enthusiastic trainees in these countries.

Furthermore, as emphasized in the previous issues of AAI News, it is highly important to support activities of trainees in their countries after training has been completed, in addition to continuing to support new trainees. The former trainees in the 12 countries are important human resources who could play a significant role in the CARD related projects that will be developed in coming years. We have put together a list of all the trainees and their achievements last year so that we can share the information with JICA and other offices in their countries. We will continue our support for the ex-trainees to assist them, so that they can make full use of what they have learned in the training courses. (Kojima, Feb.2009)

Table 1: Number and Nationality of Trainees for the Upland Rice Variety Selection Techniques Course for Sub-Saharan African Countries from 2006 to 2008

Participating Countries	Number of Trainees
Benin	2
Ethiopia	2
Gambia	1
Ghana	1
Nigeria	2
Malawi	4
Mozambique	2
Kenya	2
Tanzania	6
Sierra Leone	1
Uganda	3
Zimbabwe	4
Total	30

Table 2: Candidate countries for the CARD initiative and countries that were admitted to the training course for sub-Saharan African countries  
Note: Shaded countries are participating countries for the training course

		West Africa	Central Africa	East Africa	Southern Africa
Candidate Countries for CARD Support	Group 1	Ghana Guinea Mali Nigeria Senegal Sierra Leone	Cameroon	Kenya Tanzania Uganda	Madagascar Mozambique
	Group 2	Benin Burkina Faso Ivory Coast Gambia Liberia Togo	Congo (DRC) Central African Republic Rwanda		
Non CARD Candidate Countries that were admitted to the course				Ethiopia	Malawi Zimbabwe