

Consortium of Rice Seed Enterprises and Millers (*COSEM-Riz*)

PARTNERSHIP GUIDELINES

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Background

AfricaRice has been and is still involved in promoting the deployment of quality rice seed of high yielding and stress tolerant improved and climate smart-rice varieties within and across countries in the region. This action is contributing to the reduction of food insecurity, malnutrition, and poverty, in Africa. Recently, the AfricaRice-bred rice hybrids have been added to the portfolio of mega rice varieties that are being promoted. This effort is realized in collaboration and with the support of seed enterprises and millers, the National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARIs), national seed regulatory agencies, extension services, development projects, and NGOs, at both the country and regional levels.

AfricaRice initiated functional partnerships with seed enterprises and millers with the production of quality seed of mega rice varieties such as the NERICAs, since they are in high demand in the countries. In effect, breeder seed and where necessary, foundation seed, are produced by AfricaRice and supplied to seed enterprises for the production and commercialization of certified seed, for the benefit of smallholders and commercial farms. The seed enterprises engage in and meet the cost of production of the certified seed at their facilities and/or in fields of farmer seed producers.

AfricaRice and the NARIs provides quality assurance including training and skills enhancement on the techniques of quality seed production, seed inspection and quality control, entrepreneurships, and monitoring, evaluation and learning. These among others, will enable the seed enterprises to produce and market certified seed that meet the seed certification requirements of the national seed regulatory authorities, as well as standards required by the national and regional seed markets.

Formation of a Consortium (*COSEM-Riz*)

The formation of a consortium was informed by the increasing interest expressed by seed enterprises and millers to partner with AfricaRice, recognizing its comparative advantages in assuring quality rice seed production; and distribution by seed enterprises and millers through the following actions:

- (i) Purification of the quality of seed of the highly demanded old rice varieties dominating farmers' fields;
- (ii) Capacity to supply breeder seed of existing mega rice varieties derived from pure genetic material in the AfricaRice genebank;
- (iii) Supply of breeder seed of new rice varieties in addition to the old varieties, aimed at producing foundation and certified seed;
- (iv) Organization of events, including field days, to demonstrate the performance of the AfricaRice-bred rice hybrids;
- (v) Co-investing in awareness including sensitization, campaigns and field days, and demand creation events on rice hybrids such as the hosting of on-farm demonstrations by seed enterprises;
- (vi) Capacity building for national partners including seed enterprises on the production of high-quality rice seed that meets the expected seed quality standards of the market, and for quality paddy production;
- (vii) Enhancement of the quality of domestic milled and parboiled rice in national and regional markets that can compete with imported rice.

Membership to *COSEM-Riz* is based on two complementary processes: (i) selection of pre-qualified applicants that responded to the *Expression Of Interest (EOI)* launched by AfricaRice and based on the criteria in the Annex; and (ii) commitment to the *Code of Conduct* outlined in this Guideline.

Goal of the *COSEM-Riz*

The overall goal is to contribute to the establishment of sustainable seed systems that will improve the performance of the rice value chain. Specifically, functional Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) with seed enterprises and millers will be established to promote the use of quality seed of high yielding stress tolerant mega rice varieties and hybrids.

Promotion of mega rice varieties and hybrids

Quite recently, among a portfolio of high yielding hybrid rice varieties bred by AfricaRice, ISRIZ-09, which is preferred for its aroma and good grain quality in Senegal, was released by the National Agricultural Research Institute in Senegal (ISRA) in the ECOWAS region. This created an opportunity for the systematic renewal and replacement of rice seed at the community level, based on market incentives. This re-energized seed enterprises and millers to enhance their partnerships with AfricaRice, to promote quality rice seed at national and regional levels, and as necessary, other technology toolkits¹ that can help realize the yield potential of rice varieties in farmers' fields.

The framework for the deployment of quality rice seed by the consortium (Fig.1), is guided by the following elements: (i) ready-to-use research products; (ii) awareness creation among users of research results and catalyzing demand for the research products; (iii) use of multiple delivery and distribution channels to reach rural communities where the majority of rice value chain actors live; and (iv) capacity building to enhance the skills of rice value chain stakeholders to better produce quality rice seed, paddy and milled and parboiled rice for urban markets – where better price for quality rice exists.

¹ Technological packages and approaches such as e-registration, Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), RiceAdvice, ASI Thresher, Rice Paddy Cleaner, GEM rice parboiler, innovation platforms, etc. that enable improved rice varieties and hybrids to realize their potential in rice food systems including market opportunities.

Deployment of quality rice seed and tool-kits in partnership with the Consortium of Rice Seed Enterprises and Millers (*COSEM-Riz*)

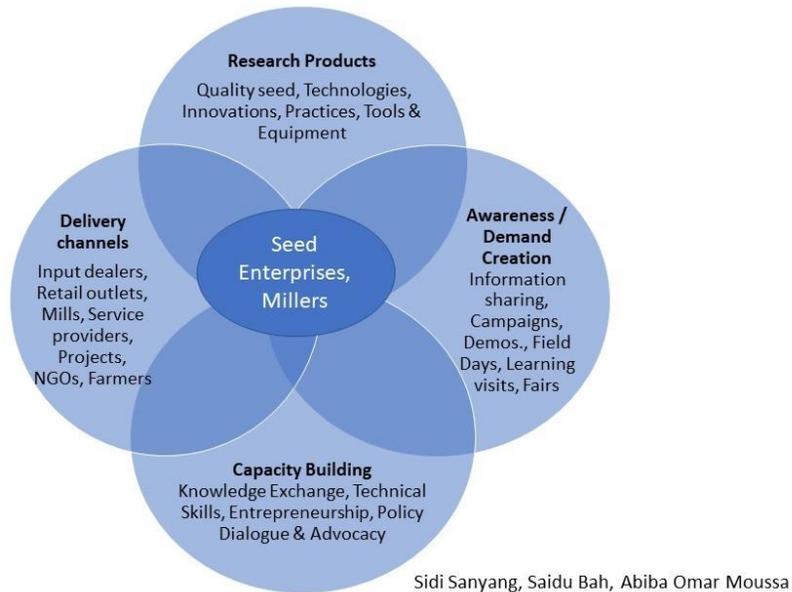


Fig.1. Framework for the deployment of quality rice seed and toolkits

Code of Conduct

While *COSEM-Riz* recognizes the strategic position and role played by national and regional associations and platforms of seed enterprises and millers, it will not replicate these nor compete with them. *COSEM-Riz* will, instead, leverage the strategic advantage of the national and regional associations and platforms of seed enterprises and millers, to catalyze policy dialogue and advocacy in the seed sector, and market intelligence and logistics, to rapidly transport and distribute quality rice seed within and across borders of countries.

Membership to *COSEM-Riz* will, therefore, be on an individual basis for each participating seed enterprise and or miller. Continued membership in *COSEM-Riz* will depend on the level of satisfaction of each individual member. *COSEM-Riz* will be guided by a Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) framework where each seed enterprise and miller will commit to co-invest in one or more of the business models of the PPP (Fig.2).

Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) Framework for seed scaling

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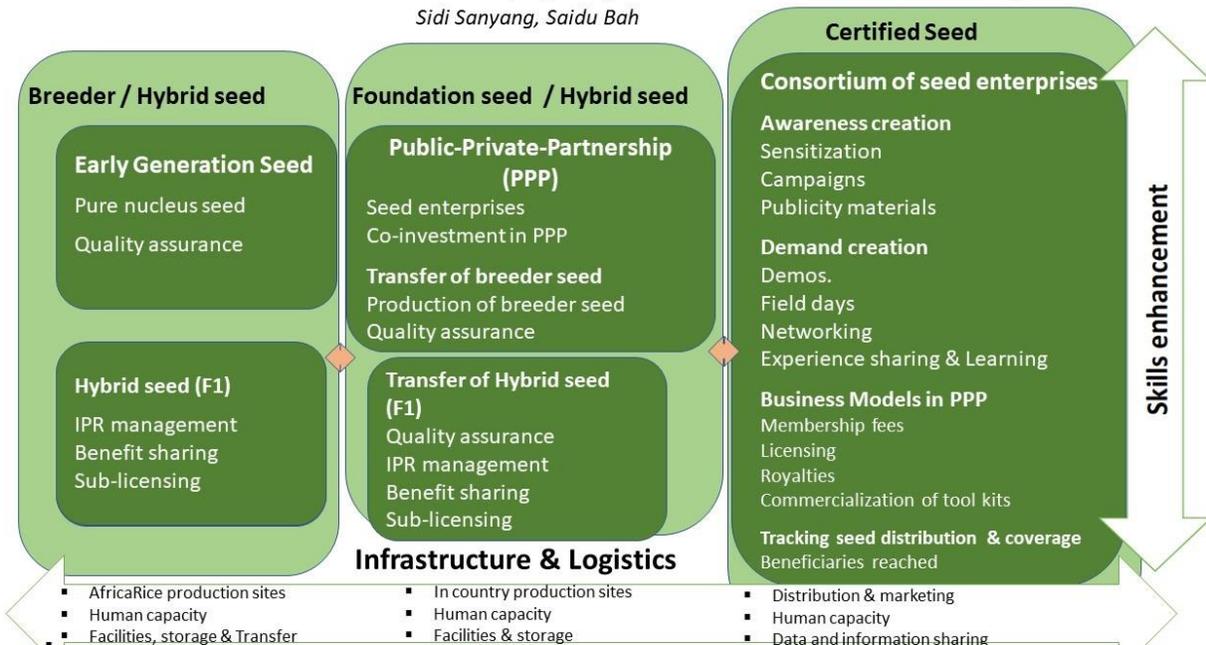


Fig.2. Public-Private Partnership Framework

Consortium members will jointly commit to:

- Demonstrate willingness and buy-in, and invest through financial contributions, in one or more of the business models, to access technologies and toolkits and to sustain the consortium in the deployment of products and services in the rice value chain;
- Co-invest in quality rice seed production and commercialization for mutual benefit and impact;
- Undertake joint commercial ventures where feasible and share market intelligence on national and regional seed demand;
- Co-invest in hosting on-farm demonstrations in collaboration with national partners, in order to showcase, promote and deploy new rice varieties, hybrids, and toolkits;
- Co-invest in capacity building of consortium members, employees, and rice value chain actors;
- Accept non-exclusive license model in accessing products and services on offer;
- Recognize Intellectual Propriety Rights (IPR) including the custody of the parents of the hybrid rice bred by AfricaRice;

- Actively engage with national varietal release processes to accelerate the release of new and high performing rice varieties and hybrids;
- Demonstrate commitment to share data and information on the following issues: (i) volume of foundation seed produced each year; (ii) volume of certified seed produced each year; and (iii) quantities of certified seed commercialized per year, within and outside the country of establishment/location;
- Commitment to jointly publish and showcase evidence-based case success stories for greater visibility of the seed enterprises and impact, to attract the interest of policy makers and funders.

Expected Outputs

- Sustainable Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) business models, practices, and benefit sharing established;
- Farmer access to and use of quality rice seed of improved and climate-smart rice varieties and hybrids increased;
- National seed road maps and toolkits established;
- Varietal replacement and renewal using new high yielding and stress tolerant rice varieties in rice food systems enhanced;
- Capacity of rice value chain actors in a PPP institutional arrangement enhanced.

Expected Outcomes

- Functional Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) business models to sustain rice seed system in the input market;
- New improved rice varieties and hybrids increasingly dominate the rice food system;
- Quality paddy and consumer preferred domestic milled and parboiled rice compete with imported rice in national and regional markets.
- Increased incomes and jobs in the rice value chain

Annex: Criteria for the pre-qualification / pre-selection of seed enterprises and millers based on the Expression Of Interest (EOI) launched by AfricaRice

1. Provide a completed vendor response form (Annex 1); dated, signed; stamped with the seal of company;
2. Provide a certificate of registration in a domain similar to the activities of the requirements;
3. Show proof: pictures of facilities to produce, process and store seeds that will be produced;
4. Demonstrate evidence of working with farming communities in the commercialization of quality seed for the benefit of smallholders and entrepreneurs;
5. Demonstrate distribution and or sales pathways of the certified seeds to be produced to enable AfricaRice to follow-up the spread and adoption of the improved varieties among smallholders and commercial farmers;
6. Demonstrate willingness to actively work with AfricaRice from production to the commercialization of the quality seeds so that not only technical support is provided by AfricaRice but also, information and data are available to AfricaRice on seed movement within and across countries, and area covered by the improved varieties. This information is critical for AfricaRice, to make informed decisions and policy in the development of the rice sector;
7. Demonstrate willingness and capability to actively engage in varietal replacement by strategically replacing of old / existing varieties that are over 10 years old with new / elite rice varieties.