

# CHAP embarks on System of Rice Intensification (SRI) program in Guinea

**Robert S.M. Bimba, Community of Hope Agriculture Project (CHAP)**

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The Russian and Ukrainian war, coupled with COVID-19 and global food crisis, is affecting food security across Sub-Saharan. The Community of Hope Agriculture (CHAP), which is based in Liberia, has extended operations in neighboring Mano River countries (Sierra Leone and Guinea). Together with Guinean partners, a new CHAP project, entitled “FEED La Guinea, has kicked off with SRI trial plots on two hectares in Kalako, Guinea, with over 100 smallholder farmers coming together to learn SRI methods.

The effort in Guinea was initiated after the visit of Bishop Dr. Joseph Dore, President of Alliance des Eglises et Missions Evangeliques de Guinea (AEMEG) to Liberia SRI field in December of 2021. Robert S.M. Bimba, the SRI focal person for Liberia, President of Destined for Greatness (D4G) Global, and Director of CHAP, accepted the invitation and started operation in June; the first rice was transplanted July 15, 2022.



CHAP sent one of her SRI experts, Jacob Fayiah Kengefi, to help layout the field, train farmers in SRI nursery management, and explain the SRI principles. Since the work began in Kalalo, Guinea, there is great momentum among smallholder farmers to learn more about SRI. The vision of feeding Guinea with home-grown rice is resonating with key stakeholders, including the Chairman of the National Transition Assembly, Religious Affairs and other actors.

The Principles of SRI are:

- Plant a single plant/hill
- Transplant young seedlings (@ 2-leaf stage)
- Adopt wide spacing - planted in a grid pattern
- Alternative Wetting and Drying (AWD)
- Use mechanical and manual weeder
- Use organic amendments as base fertilization





Most of the farming groups are women-dominated and eager to learn more about SRI for the first time.

To ensure that what farmers produce is bought in a timely manner, CHAP is working on launching the “I love Guinea Rice” and “Feed la Guinea” campaigns to get a buy-in from consumers for local home-grown rice.

## More about the Community of Hope Agriculture Project (CHAP)

The Community of Hope Agriculture Project (CHAP) is a national initiative that has been working in urban and rural communities in Liberia since August 2008. It was founded due to human need and is in keeping with the scriptures. CHAP is known for initiating several innovations and Climate-Smart Agriculture programs in Liberia, many of which are now replicable in other sub-regions. CHAP is the focal organization and leader for the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) and System of Crop Intensification (SCI) in Liberia and is part of the National Executing Entity for Climate Rice Resilient Production (a regional project in Liberia under the West Africa Regional SRI body). CHAP also operates a Farmers Advisory Services (FAS) to provide extension to rural areas.



CHAP is presently implementing a service contract for digital farmers mapping, the EULAP- Partners Project for 6,600 smallholders’ farmers in 7 counties; the Agriculture Colleges Youth Internship Program that provides opportunities to bridge the education gap; the UNDP/MOCI Livelihood and Job Creation Project that focuses on youth and women entrepreneurs; Advocacy on Food Security and Nutrition with the WASH program to drill wells; VSLA; Peace Building; Farm Business Investment Opportunity (FABIO); and Rice Investment Scheme for Empowerment (RISE), which was initiated by CHAP. CHAP recently started operations in Sierra Leone and Conakry Guinea during 2022. CHAP is set launch one of its biggest flagship programs, the “Feed Liberia Campaign.”

CHAP presently promotes agro-forestry; SRI and other types of Climate Smart Agriculture; digital mapping of farmers/farms to designate markets, tree crops, animal husbandry and aquaculture; cassava processing; producing high-quality seed rice; and supplying milled rice to farmers and a few markets.

CHAP continues to partner with SRI-Rice at Cornell University, Cultiv8 Nation (USA), Governments of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, Center for National Rice Specialization Mali, Abide Owego, Morningstar Fellowship USA, Christ Mandate Mission(CMM), UNDP Liberia, Concern Worldwide, Welthungerhilfe, World Bank, RICOWAS and national research institutions.