

**Field Day on the System of Rice Intensification (SRI):
A New Method of Rice Cultivation Technique
28th October 2006**

Participants attending:

1. Farmers from Kanglung geog (Manthung, Pangthang, Thragom and Ritsadung)
2. Kanglung Gup (chief guest), Tshogpas, and Risungpas
3. Few science students of Sherubtse College
4. Agriculture extension of Kanglung geog
5. Office staff and field staff of RNRRC, Khangma

Pictorial summary of the Field Day



Participants familiarized to SRI method of rice growing Solarization technique SRI techniques



Visual familiarization on SRI method Demonstration & dissemination on SRI



Crop cutting of SRI fields Stumps per hill of a SRI rice plant



Thrashing and weighing (4 kg/6m²) Feedback from farmers

Summary of the Field Day

The presentation on the SRI method was received well by the participants as it provided a visual understanding on the principles of SRI as well as familiarized farmers on the procedures of this new method of rice cultivation technique that is “getting more from less”. Besides, the participants were also familiarized to the new method of raising healthy seedling/nursery by solarization technique. The field visit by participants to the SRI fields was an eye-opener to them on SRI method of rice cultivation besides their knowledge on conventional method.

For many participants, the field day was first of its kind to be attended. All the participants made good use of the time by actively participating in the event. The presence of the staff of RNRSC Khangma for the entire field day was encouraging and reflected a good team spirit. The use of local dialect (Sharchop) had a good impact to the farmers as they could easily understand and grasp the messages well.

The farmers were taken aback to see so many healthy tillers and panicles with large filled grains grown from a single seedling in the SRI plots. The yield of the crop cut (above 4 kg/6m²) further increased their interest and understanding on the potential of SRI rice plants. By then, their recently acquired knowledge on the method for getting more rice from less inputs such as seeds, water, fertilizers, land, capital and labour -- by mobilizing biological processes using this new SRI method -- was well proven and understood by the farmers.

Finally, the refreshments and the lunch served during the programme were a good arrangement for the participants, who took their share with great respect for the “small grain” that feeds many people all across the globe.

Personally, it has been an enjoyable experience, getting out and teaching something to the people to make them aware of the new innovative method of rice cultivation outside of their ‘little world.’

Feedback from the participants

The general feedback of the presentation and the field by the participants was positive. The Gup (block administrator) voiced that this new method would be a great relief to poor farmers now using lots of seeds for raising their nurseries, lots of standing water in the fields throughout the rice-growing period, lots of money expended for fertilizers, herbicides and labour, etc. He further mentioned that SRI is not totally a different method from the conventional method that our farmers practice. Only a little bit of modification needs to be made.

One farmer from Pangthang mentioned that he now understood the reason for getting low productivity of his rice fields besides applying chemical fertilizers. He made a point to try this SRI method in some of the fields in next growing season. Another farmer from

Ritsadung explained that his eyes are now opened to better ways of rice cultivation by participating in this programme.

A lady farmer from Ritsadung thanked us for providing new knowledge on rice cultivation, and she informed us that she should have been familiarized to this new method earlier. However, she informed us that she will not let this new knowledge be buried in the sands of time.

Other farmers also explained that they are going back to their homes with good knowledge on an effective method of rice cultivation without having to invest much but greater rice productivity.

Follow up activity

A total of 12 farmers have given their words to at least try evaluating SRI technique in some of their rice fields next season. Since the ground work has just begun. It is befitting to have some farmers try this method in different soils, climates and elevations to better understand the biological yield attainable from a rice plant using SRI under different conditions.

Some of the farmers requested for some more help in the fields next season to enable them to carry out this new method correctly. In addition, the lone agriculture extension worker of Kanglung geog also voiced to start this new technique in the farmers' fields next year. The RC Khangma and I will be helping the new starters as well trying to evaluate SRI trials further in bigger areas next season.

-- Karma Lhendup, Sherubutse College

Field Day Program – October 28, 2006

9:00 - 9:15 A.M	- Registration
9:20 - 9:25 A.M	- Welcome address by Mr. Namgay Wangdi
9:25 - 10:00A.M	- Presentation on new innovative method of rice plantation (SRI) by Mr. Karma Lhendup
10:05 - 10:30A.M	- Tea and snacks
10:30 - 12:00A.M	- Demonstration on SRI fields and yield measure by Namgay Wangdi and Karma Lhendup.
12:00 - 1:30 P.M	- Demonstration on Japanese Marker, yield measure and upland rice plus <i>pangbara</i> by Namgay Wangdi
1:30 - 2:30 P.M	- Lunch
2:30 - 3:30 P.M	- Feedback session from the participants
3:30 - 3:40 P.M	- Vote of thanks