

Investing in a New Way of Farming for A Better Future



The SRP standard areas are:

- Farm management
- Pre-planting
- Water Use
- Nutrient Management
- Pest Management
- Harvest and Post-harvest
- Health and Safety
- Labor Rights

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Before, we used to farm like our parents, without knowing whether it was good for our soil. Today, I keep a logbook, plan my crops, and know how to protect both my children and my fields.

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Awa Ouedraogo, a rice producer from the Hauts-Bassins region of Burkina Faso, remembers a time when rice farming was a simple, often inefficient cycle of hard labor and low yields.

Like countless smallholder farmers across West Africa, she faced a difficult reality. Her farming practices were contributing to environmental problems, from water pollution to greenhouse gas emissions, all while leaving her family's future uncertain.

That reality began to change with the introduction of the **Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP)**. Developed by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in partnership with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and other stakeholders, the SRP standard provides a new way to farm. It's an approach based on 41 requirements that covers everything from farm management to labor rights.



Awa and other farmers in the MOVE implementing countries began to adopt these standards, learning a new set of techniques. For the first time, they were able to optimize their farming, making simple yet powerful changes. They learned to use less water through mid-season drainage and practiced optimized leveling, resulting in an average **water saving of 20% per crop** cycle. They also cut back on pesticides, reducing applications from six to four per season. For these farmers, the new methods meant a healthier environment for their children and a safer harvest.

The impact goes far beyond environmental benefits. By adopting the SRP standard, farmers have also seen improvements in their livelihoods and reported a reduction in the number of workdays needed to produce a kilogram of rice, which meant they could work more efficiently and spend less time on strenuous tasks.

The most inspiring change has been the transformation of social dynamics within communities. The SRP standard, with its *"leave no one behind"* principle, has **tackled long-overlooked issues like child labor prevention, equal pay, and occupational health and safety.** For women like Awa, this has meant greater involvement in farm decisions, better access to training and resources, and more control over their own income.

In the supported cooperatives, women's participation in agricultural and financial decisions has increased by 30%, giving them greater control and agency.

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Women are now more involved in decision-making within farms, with improved access to training, resources, and income management.

~ Awa Ouedraogo

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The introduction of the SRP standard by the MOVE project goes beyond building technical capacities; it's a tool for social, economic, and environmental change. The encouraging results observed so far from reduced water use to increased empowerment for women demonstrate the need to continue supporting producers like Awa. By scaling up sustainable rice farming practices across the region, we can ensure a more resilient and profitable future for everyone.

