Strategies for upscaling SRI in the MENA region

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I have suggested seven ideas and proposals to put better strategies for SRI activities in the MENA region.

1) Establishing the Virtual Extension Research and Communication Network (VERCON) to establish and strengthen linkages among the human and institutional elements of agricultural research and extension systems on SRI activities of MENA region, by take advantage of the general characteristics of global networks to be more modern and effective tool in the link between agricultural research and extension. This VERCON network will focus on the idea of online education on principles of SRI systems, activities, and innovations for MENA region. Internet experts can be used to establishing this network.

2) Cooperating with FAO to establishing SRI experts/consultants committee from the MENA countries, they will be advisors in the SRI-2030 program or in FAO for the SRI system. To be their work officially, an order will issue for their new position by SRI-2030 program or FAO. Their work and suggestions will contribute to revitalizing and expanding the implementation of the SRI system support by the FAO organization to be binding to implementing in the MENA countries. The location of this committee should be determined, and this committee should also act as a supreme consultants. Write down the duties of this committee, and defines its responsibilities, among these duties: a) planning or schedule training programs on the SRI system in the MENA region. b) the possibility of encouraging, supporting and manufacturing innovations, especially in the aspect of mechanizing the SRI system and its dissemination in MENA countries. c) working on application of SRI system in large scale areas with less labors. d) and last but not least, learning program for SRI farmers on how
produce of organic manure in their field to reduce production costs, etc. all these will be strategic plans for SRI-2030 program.

3) Preparation of project proposals on the SRI system by the SRI consultants committee, or SRI experts in the MENA countries region, and implementing its in the fields for smallholders rice farmers. These proposals will send to the governments of MENA countries officially (from SRI-2030 program, or FAO to governments). These project proposals including the financial support (from international organizations or government support) with providing the farmers by agricultural inputs, and recommend to buy grain yield from them at a higher price than the traditional cultivation method, because it is an healthy food, and also to encouraging other farmers to apply the SRI system due to its positive benefits achieved.

4) SRI experts/consultants committee propose to the countries of the MENA region (through the SRI-2030 program or FAO) to selling transplanting machines for SRI farmers whom have large areas, with a subsidy of 50% of its price and in easy installments, to cultivating of SRI system in large areas.

5) SRI experts/ consultants committee of MENA region (through the SRI-2030 program or FAO), proposes to encourage the possibility of manufacturing or purchasing the single, double, triple manual or motorized rotary hoes for using to remove weeds grown in SRI fields, and implementing its in large areas instead of using chemical weeds pesticides that pollute the environment, to reducing pollution of the environment of rice growing area.

6) SRI experts/ consultants committee of MENA region urge all countries members to exchanging new machinery or equipment innovations (simple tools) used in the SRI fields among the member countries of the MENA region, and urge them to manufacturing these inside each country, or buy its to facilitate application of SRI system.

7) Establishing a strategy for the MENA region to produce organic fertilizer inside the field soil by plowing the soil that contains the remains of roots and plant residuals after harvested by taking
advantage of the activity of microorganisms in the soil with supply few moisture within one month only, the organic material will decomposed. In this way the organic fertilizer will be produce in a simple way. This idea aims to produce organic fertilizer at no additional cost, as the farmers whom was trained to manage this simple method by himself. We need to develop an active plan that will be supervise by soil and fertility experts in the MENA region countries.

All of these strategic suggestions, its need work hard and together to mature these ideas and make it easy to apply.

Good luck for you