

## **A brief background on Monty Patrick Jones, FARA's Executive Director**

Monty Jones is the Executive Director of FARA and co-winner of the prestigious 2004 World Food Prize. He won the award based on his discovery of the genetic process to create the New Rice for Africa (NERICA) which gives higher yields, shorter growth cycles and more protein content than its Asian and African parents.

He is a Sierra Leonean and has spent the last 20 years of his career life in Africa working in the international agricultural research for development institutions.

In 1991, Monty Jones moved to WARDA to become its principal breeder where he developed the NERICA rice in close collaboration with his fellow scientists at WARDA and with other scientists from Asia, Europe and the US. He then disseminated NERICAs through participatory approaches by working at multiple levels of associates from scientists to extension workers and farmers organizations to governments and NGOs.

Monty Jones' work on NERICA has increased rice production in West and Central Africa and has given savings to many African governments on rice imports. Through his work, WARDA was awarded the prestigious CGIAR's King Badouin Award in 2000. In September 2001, he received the National Order of Merit of Côte d'Ivoire given by the Ivorian President. He also received in 2004, the Insignia of the Grand Officer of the order of the Rokel from the Sierra Leone President on his work on NERICA.

Since joining FARA in 2002 as its Executive Director, he has mobilized key decision makers including the African Union and NEPAD, as well as major investors in African agriculture development on working together towards the achievement of the Africa's vision. Through his advocacy, he has created awareness that coordinated efforts in agricultural research for development and increased African ownership would enhance effective African agricultural research. He advocates for more responsive organization to its stakeholders to increase production and alleviate poverty in the region. Through his leadership, FARA has been recognized as the African Regional Organization by the International Scientific Community for Agricultural Research for Development. He has been listed as one of the 100 most influential people in the world by the Times Magazine for 2007.

He did his BSc in Agriculture General from Njala University in Sierra Leone, MSc in Plant Genetic Resources and PhD in Plant Biology from the University of Birmingham in the UK.