



## Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management Collaborative Research Support Program

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### **Trip Report: Mali** 29 June-16 July 2011

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**Purpose:** To re-start the baseline survey for LTRA-8 and initiate data collection for the Technology Networks CCRA-8

**Sites Visited:** Institut d'Economie Rurale (IER)/Sotuba, Bamako; CRRA/Mopti; IER SubStation Koporo pen; and the villages of Koporo pen, Oro, and Diallassougou

#### **Description of Activities**

Last year the baseline survey in Mali was initiated at one of the four sites (Konobougou), but the team was unable to complete the surveys at the other sites. At the beginning of July this year, Penda Sissoko Sow put together a new survey team to complete this work, starting in the region of Mopti (Bankass and Koro). The baseline survey was completed in four villages (two target villages with farmer trials and two control villages) after I left the field.

The survey site in Mopti was selected for the Technology Networks CCRA survey module as well. After review and revision of the CCRA questionnaire, Penda Sissoko Sow and I trained a team of four men and two women interviewers in Mopti. One of the men had participated in the initial survey and was selected as the survey leader. Both the baseline questionnaire and Technology Network module were reviewed question by question. The French version of the baseline questionnaire was not well edited as there were a few "englishisms." Consequently, some of the instructions had to be further clarified. Although at times complex, the questionnaire is a solid survey instrument and the interviewers were able to collect the data required.

The Technology Network module was the subject of intense discussion as we worked on assuring a single understanding of the attitudinal/beliefs questions and the procedures for recording responses. Given the importance of meanings, we carefully came to a common Bambara translation of each of the perception/belief items. There was good discussion and both

men and women participated. Unfortunately, the Mopti research villages are predominantly Dogon, and an additional translation from Bambara was required, particularly for the women.

The original baseline survey and CCRA module were administered to 20 farm households by the men interviewers. Only the CCRA survey module was used to interview leading wives by the women interviewers. Farm men and women from an additional ten households were selected to complete a sample size of 120 households for the CCRA survey.

Survey interviews began after introducing ourselves in the target village of Koporo pen near the Koporo pen IER Sub-station in the Commune Rurale of Koro. Once the survey team got into the rhythm, it took about a day and a half to complete the interviews before moving on to the control village of Oro in the same Commune. Penda Sissoko Sow then returned to Bamako to complete other business. We got started early in Oro and completed the entire village by nightfall. That evening, Moussa Keïta and I field tested the survey instrument for the agricultural service sector/community level actors with the highly recognized IER researcher associated with the farmer field trials. We made a couple of adjustments, but the pre-test was a success.

After an early morning interview of a women's association president the next day, we left for Diallassogou in the Commune Rural of Bankass. This village is at least an hour and a half from Bankass on trails cut through the fields between villages. The village, like Koporo pen, is quite large, but more sophisticated in that they play an important role in commerce with Burkina Faso. The rains came as we began our interviews and the day ended abruptly. The next day the team completed their interviews. I left late that afternoon to return to Mopti and then on to Bamako the next day. The remaining Technology Network survey instruments will be scanned and emailed to me by Moussa Keïta.

The Mopti research site is in the Senou (a millet growing plain) in Dogon country. Around Koporo pen, farmers conduct mixed cropping (millet/cowpea; millet/cowpea/hibiscus; or millet/peanuts). Millet is often planted before working the soil and then furrows may be made between the planted rows. Other crops are between the millet rows. Rarely is a single crop planted to a field. In contrast, the fields in the area of Diallassogou are planted largely to millet, and often in mounds rather than plowed furrows. The soils are largely sandy with perhaps more silt/clay around Diallassogou. Camels, horses, and bullocks are used as draft animals. One could see at planting time, that there were still a lot of fields with millet stocks in them. I would guess at 15-20 percent coverage. These stocks are less likely to be seen closer to the villages.

Around Koporo pen, extension agents (particularly IER researchers) are highly regarded for their advice and supply of inputs. However, there is one story circulating that suggests that they are not always appreciated. Some farmers were provided with short-cycle varieties of millet and they produced well in the short period, but as they were the first to produce grain, the birds quickly targeted them and they lost considerable production in comparison to their neighbors who did not plant the precocious variety. Consequently, the precocious variety and the agents who brought them are not well received.

## **Suggestions and Recommendations**

1. I will have funds transferred directly to the IER account from Blacksburg to cover expenses for the Technology Networks survey work conducted by Moussa Keita.
2. After a final review of the Technology Networks agricultural service sector/community actors survey instrument, Moussa Keita will return to the Senou and conduct up to 40 interviews with key actors identified during the household level surveys. I will provide him a list of at least 30 actors to interview identified in the household surveys. The remaining respondents will be identified during the agricultural service sector/community interviews.

**List of Contacts Made:**

Name	Title/Organization	Contact Info (address, phone, email)
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