

Building Long-Term Food Security while Managing Food Crises: Insights from Mali

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Mali's Challenge

- In 2002, Mali adopted a new National Food Security Strategy (SNSA)
- In 2004, a new Food Security Commission (CSA) was created in the Office of the President to implement the SNSA
- CSA's mandate: Move the country from crisis management long-term *structural* food security
- MSU's mandate: Help CSA develop the capacity to carry out its mandate

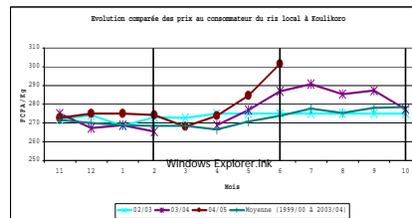
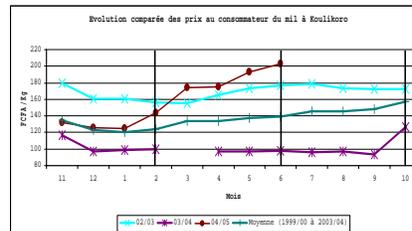


CSA's Challenge

- Carry out its mandate in the context of:
 - Low incomes
 - Risky agricultural production
 - A tradition of top-down policy management
 - Mali's commitment to political decentralization
 - Integrated cereals markets in West Africa
 - A food crisis in 2004/05 due to locusts, drought, energy shock, & low-level civil war in Côte-d'Ivoire



Context in 2004/05



MSU/PROMISAM-CSA Activities

- With support from USAID/Mali, PROMISAM is carrying out 4 types of activities:
 - Help CSA develop its capacity, & define its role & implementation strategy
 - Help local communities (communes, cercles, regions) develop their own food security programs
 - Develop and strengthen the CSA's documentation center
 - Advise on managing the 2004/05 food crisis

Helping the CSA Develop Capacity & Define its Role: Key Results

- Firm decision to shift emphasis from emergency relief to structural food security
- Pursue structural food security through a decentralized approach by helping local communities develop their own f.s. programs
- CSA as a coordinating body (of National Food Security Council, local food security committees, PRMC, and affiliated agencies—OMA, SAP,...) and as a think tank rather than an implementing agency

Facilitating the Development of Local Food Security Plans

- Aim is to help Mali's 703 communes, 49 cercles, & 8 regions develop their own food security programs
- MSU is helping develop the participatory approaches & piloting them in Gao & Sikasso regions



Facilitating the Development of Local Food Security Plans

- Elements
 - Training of trainers (mayors, CCC, women's group leaders) in concepts of food security
 - They in turn return to local communes to work to:
 - Establish priorities
 - Inventory local resources & projects
 - Identify gaps
 - Commune plans are then brought together at cercle & regional levels



Facilitating the Development of Local Food Security Plans

- Aim: Link locally defined priorities to nationally funded programs (FAO's PNSA, decentralization funds, etc). Put local people in charge of the agenda
- Working with other USAID teams (governance, health, & com-dev) & partners.



Facilitating the Development of Local Food Security Plans

- Enthusiastically received at local levels
- Examples of constraints sited:
 - Bad water
 - Weak land & tree tenure by women
 - Problems of access to inputs
- Examples of emerging proposals
- Current status: Gao finishing up; have done 43 of 152 communes in Sikasso. Aim is to cover whole country by end of 2006.



Developing the Documentation Center

- Support system for local & national planning efforts
- Developing databases on who is doing what where, in order to facilitate cross-community learning
- Will track indicators (input to SAKSS)



Advising on the Management of the 2004/05 Food Crisis: Key Impacts

- Toned down the panic through making empirical information on market conditions widely available
 - Stressed integration of W. African markets
 - Clarified debate on cereals balance sheet
- Got CSA to work through PRMC
- Convinced gov't to work **with** the private sector to facilitate tax-free imports of 150,000 tons of grain & removal of local (illegal) taxes.
 - Initial reluctance
 - Prices now falling in advance of fall harvest

Perspectives

- Work in Progress—
Focus is on:
 - developing a strong, technically competent food security office
 - Local capacitation—
putting local people in the driver's seat



Perspectives

- Key challenges:
 - Making plans consistent across communes, cercles, regions, and the nation
 - Merging the bottom-up definition of priorities with the top-down funding
 - Developing policies regarding grain exports in years of short crops
 - Developing tools to deal with pervasive risks in Malian food system



More Info: http://www.aec.msu.edu/agecon/fs2/mali_fd_strtgy/index.htm