

Michigan State University
Department of Agricultural, Food and Resource Economics
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Strengthening the Capacity of the Malian Government to Develop Analytical and Market-Based Food Security Responses

Annual Work Plan 2009
February 2009

The final project document between the USAID Contract Office and MSU was signed on December 4, 2008. During December, 2008, the MSU team set up basic office accounting procedures, began technical support to the Mali CAADP national team, continued discussions with IPR/IFRA begun in October 2008 (under previous USAID/Mali funding) on the design of IPR/IFRA's agricultural economics program, and provided technical support to the Food Security Commissariat (CSA). For the purposes of this work plan, Year 1 of the project is defined as calendar year 2009. This work plan outlines activities to be carried out during 2009 to further each of the four objectives of the Associate Award. The activities are summarized visually in Figure 1.

Objective 1: Further Enhance and Develop Technical and Analytical Skills for the CSA and Related Support Agencies

Year 1 of the project will focus on seven types of activities under this objective. The first two involve needs assessment and training in policy and program analysis within the Commissariat à la Sécurité Alimentaire (CSA) itself and within the CSA collaborating agencies. Activity 3 involves developing and carrying out a workshop for the CSA (including the staff of its regional delegations) on food security concepts and concepts of monitoring, for use in implementation of the local food security plans, while under activity 4, MSU will help identify and work with economists currently within the CSA system, who will receive extended in-service training in policy analysis. The fifth set of activities involves identifying, designing, and beginning the empirical studies on key grain marketing issues that lie at the heart of the CSA's analytic agenda. The sixth set of activities involve assessing and responding to the equipment needs of the CSA and related agencies, and the final set of activities are related to the information campaign concerning the objectives of the SNSA.

1.1 Strengthening the Analysis and planning capacity within the CSA (Activities 1.A1-1.A5 in fig. 1)

During the months of January and February, MSU will work with the CSA headquarters staff to identify its needs in policy and program analysis. Based on the assessment, the MSU team will develop training modules for the staff during the period February-April and then begin the training of the CSA headquarters staff beginning in April. This training (both in-service and workshops) will continue throughout 2009. Some of this work (including the development of some of the modules and some of the training) will be carried out with local Malian partners who

have expertise in this area, such as the Direction Nationale de la Statistique et de l'Infomatique (DNSI) and the Centre d'Etudes et de Renforcement des Capacités (CERCAP).

In addition to the training needs of the headquarters staff of the CSA identified above, in February, 2009, the Commissioner requested that MSU organize a retreat for her and a number of high-level Malian analysts and key advisors to discuss critical agricultural marketing and policy issues facing Mali. MSU will aim to organize this workshop during the month of March.

The planned study tour of the Commissioner and a few of her key advisors to the US (Michigan and Washington) to examine the role of empirical analysis in food policy processes is tentatively scheduled for July. If the "soudure" proves to be a particularly critical period for Mali this year, this date may have to be pushed back until September.

1.2 CSA collaborating agencies trained (Activities 1.A6-1.A8 in fig. 1)

In a manner parallel to that carried out with the CSA headquarters staff, the project will solicit information from CSA-affiliated agencies (*services rattachés*) about their training needs (February-March), design training materials (April-June), and plan and carry out training programs with them (April-September). As with the CSA staff, some of this work will likely take place with Malian specialized agencies such as DNSI and CERCAP. It may also make sense to involve some of the staff of IPR/Katibougou in such activities, as the work would be complementary to that described below in developing IPR/IFRA's agricultural economics program.

1.3 Methodology workshop for CSA on food security concepts and monitoring implementation of the local food security plans (Activities 1.A9-1.A11 in fig. 1)

In order to strengthen its ability to carry out its mandate, the CSA staff (including new staff being hired for the planned regional delegations of the CSA, need further training on concepts of food security and on basic concepts and methods of monitoring and evaluation. This training will build upon earlier training MSU provided to the CSA staff when MSU first began working with the CSA in 2004. The project will develop training materials for such a methodological workshop in April-June, work with the CSA Bamako staff in August to identify the appropriate participants for the training, and carry out the training in September. This timing should allow the CSA sufficient time to identify and recruit staff for the regional delegation offices.

1.4 Identify economists to work with the CSA (Activities 1.A12-1.A14 in fig. 1)

The original terms RFA called for MSU to help identify 2 economists that the CSA would recruit as part of its staff. Subsequent discussion with the CSA led us to discover that there are already 3 people trained as economists working within the CSA system: one in the CSA headquarters staff itself, one managing IFAD-funded CSA projects (with an office in the Hippodrome), and one working at the PRMC office at OPAM. MSU will work with this group rather than propose hiring new staff for the CSA. Under this set of activities, the economists to work with the CSA were identified in January; any additional computer equipment or furniture needed for them will

be provided in February and March, and starting in March, MSU will involve these economists in the planning and design of the CSA grain marketing studies described below.

1.5 Marketing studies (Activities 1.A15-1.A16 in fig. 1)

The key policy choices facing the CSA involve the organization of the cereals marketing system in Mali—for example, the role of cereals banks in the system. Thus, at the request of the CSA, the project will work with the CSA-affiliated economists and other Malian specialists to carry out 3 marketing studies aimed at providing a stronger empirical basis for future food policy decisions in Mali. The themes for these studies were tentatively identified in January and will be validated with the CSA in March. They include an evaluation of the changing structure of cereals markets over the past 20 years (including the role of cereals banks) and implications of these changes for national marketing policies, the role of the market in the food security strategies of rural households in chronically deficit zones (such as the 166 “most vulnerable communes” indentified by the CSA), and the evolving nature of farmers’ cereals marketing strategies in different regions of the country. Planning of such studies also began in January (literature review and review of previous questionnaires) and will run through March, when the studies will be launched, in conjunction with the OMA and IER. They will continue throughout the year and into year 2 of the project.

1.6 Updating the computer equipment of the CSA and affiliated agencies (Activities 1.A17-1.A18 in fig. 1)

The RFA calls on the project to help the CSA and related agencies update computer and related equipment critical to their carrying out their roles. The project will inventory the equipment needs in January and February, determine which requests it can respond to, and then purchase and install the equipment over the period March-August.

1.7 SNSA awareness campaign (Activities 1.A19-1.A21 in fig. 1)

The RFA calls for the project to develop and support, in conjunction with the CSA, an awareness campaign of SNSA and food security activities nationwide, with particular emphasis on market-based and economically sustainable activities. Such an awareness campaign is aimed at improving the level of the public debate about food security issues in Mali. The project will work with the CSA’s Communication Department in February and March to identify the key themes for the campaign, jointly develop with the department and with appropriate local consultants the campaign plans and materials in April and May, and begin the campaign in June. It will continue throughout the rest of 2009.

Objective 2: Assistance in Implementing Food Security Plans Country-wide

Year 1 will focus on development of approaches to measure implementation of the local plans and initial evaluation of the progress in implementation of the plans in 30 communes to test the methods developed. Twenty communes will be selected from the 166 “most vulnerable” communes, with an additional 10 selected from outside this group. Selection of the communes will be made in consultation with the USAID/Mali’s decentralization team to assure overlap with the communes in which that team is working. We will also be exploring the Peace Corps the

possibility of involving volunteers to help support the monitoring effort. During year 1, training materials for local evaluation will also be developed, and an inventory of local organizations that can be involved in monitoring will be developed.

2.1 Evaluate current status of plan implementation (Activities A2.1-A2.5 in fig. 1)

During February and March, MSU will work with the DNSI (which has special expertise in program monitoring and evaluation) to develop locally sustainable methods for monitoring the implementation of the local plans, which will be tested in year 1. Once the “test communes” have been identified jointly with the USAID/Decentralization team in March, initial information, planning, and training missions to those communes will take place in the period March-May. The formal training workshops will be held for the 30 communes in the period June-August. During the initial missions to the areas, the project will also identify local organizations or individuals who can provide technical support to the communes for the monitoring efforts. Contracts for such support will be signed by the project with the organizations in August, and the project will monitor the implementation of the contracts and of the monitoring process throughout the rest of the year in order to fine-tune the methods for monitoring the implementation of the plans.

2.2 Planning of joint MSU and USAID/Decentralization Team activities (Activities 2.A6-2.A9 in fig. 1)

In February and March, MSU will establish a calendar for regular consultation with the USAID/Mali Decentralization Team for joint activities related to the local plans. An initial meeting with Dennis Bilodeau took place on Feb. 13. USAID/Mali hopes to have chosen the contractor for the second phase of the decentralization project by March 15, and once that group has been selected, MSU’s meetings with the decentralization group will intensify. The planning and carrying out of joint activities related to the implementation of the local-level plans in the “test communes” where the decentralization team is working will begin in April and continue throughout the year. This activity will also include identification of the appropriate indicators to monitor local plan implementation (May and June) and identification of appropriate data, frequency of collection, and methods of collection to be used (June-August).

Objective 3: Development of an Academic and Practical Curriculum for the University of Bamako/IPR Katibougou in support of Malian educated analysts in the range of components to ensure continuing food security (Activities A3.1-A3.9 in fig. 1)

Based on conversations with the IPR/IFRA leadership during their visit to MSU in October, 2008, a decision was made to merge two IPR/IFRA initiatives: one aimed at developing teaching programs in agricultural policy analysis and the second aimed at developing a major (at both the undergraduate and masters level) in Agricultural Economics. The decision was made to proceed with developing a program in agricultural economics, one of whose specializations will be in policy analysis. This decision was made in order to assure that the policy analysis taught and carried out by IPR/IFRA was based on a strong foundation of applied economics. The year 1 activities thus are expressed in terms of the agricultural economics program, but with the understanding that within that program a strong emphasis will be placed on food policy analysis. Nine activities are planned in 2009 in support of this project objective.

From late February through mid-April, IPR/IFRA and an external Malian consultant will conduct a study of the supply of demand for agricultural economists in Mali, with the aim of identifying the skill sets needed by potential employers of new graduates (Activity 3.A1) and the human resources within the country that can be drawn upon to help support the program (Activity 3.A2). This study will provide an initial snapshot, and will complement an earlier evaluation that IPR/IFRA carried out in 2007-08 of teaching programs in agricultural economics in several West African and North African countries. The identification of human resources in agricultural economics in Mali will be an ongoing activity throughout the year in order to help build an active agricultural economics community that can help support the program (e.g., through participation in the visiting lecturer series) and raise the level of debate on food security issues in the country. In May, a workshop involving internal and external stakeholders will be held to validate the study and its implications for the design of the new program (Activity A3.3). MSU faculty members working with IPR/IFRA will participate in this workshop. The study of the demand and supply of agricultural economists in the country will also provide information useful in identifying members for an external advisory panel for the program (e.g., potential employers of graduates from the program), and MSU will work with IPR/IFRA colleagues starting in May to put that panel in place (Activity 3A.4). We anticipate that the process will take until July to complete.

Based on the findings of the study just described and the earlier study of other agricultural economics programs in the sub-region, MSU faculty will work with IPR/IFRA colleagues, beginning in March, on the design of the curriculum at the undergraduate and masters' levels. This work (Activity 3A.5), which will continue throughout the year, will focus both on overall program design and the design of individual courses. IPR/IFRA's computer and other equipment needs to support the program will be evaluated and between March and August, the appropriate equipment will be procured and installed (Activity 3A.6).

Based on the emerging design of the curriculum, it should become clear the areas in which IPR/IFRA will need to strengthen its human resources. Thus, starting in September and running through the end of the year, MSU faculty will work with IPR/IFRA colleagues to develop a long-term faculty recruitment and training plan to help undergird the program in the coming years (Activity 3A.7). In the short-run, IPR/IFRA will need external help to get the program started, so beginning in July and running throughout the rest of the year (and into years 2 and 3), faculty and graduate-student exchanges will begin both to bolster local teaching resources and to allow IPR/IFRA faculty to visit MSU (and possibly other schools in North America) and learn more about curriculum and teaching methods there. We anticipate that this set of activities (3A.8) will begin with MSU faculty and graduate students visiting IPR/IFRA starting in July and offering short-courses on key topics, such as project and program analysis. The first IPR/IFRA junior faculty member is slated to begin a masters program in Agricultural Economics at MSU in September (Activity 3A.9), which will require IPR/IFRA to identify the individual by March.

Based as on the information gathered in the ongoing inventory of human resources available in Mali in agricultural economics and food policy analysis, and as a way of launching the new program in agricultural economics, MSU and IPR/IFRA will begin a distinguished lecture series in agricultural economics and policy analysis in August (3.A10). This series will continue

throughout the project, with the aim of establishing a tradition of IPR/IFRA, both in Katibougou and through the Bamako Annex, becoming a venue for outstanding discussions of economic issues facing Mali, particularly those related to agricultural development and food policy.

Objective 4: Completion of the Mali Round Table through support to the committee on the development of the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development (CAADP) Program

If the schedule adopted by ECOWAS and the West African CAADP countries at the Feb. 16-19, 2009 ECOWAS/CAADP meeting in Dakar is respected, most of the activities under this component will be implemented in year 1. Under this objective of the project, MSU will help organize periodic consultations of the Malian technical team and provide technical support to the analysis (e.g., provision of the social accounting matrix for Mali for the modeling exercise; and help in producing the briefs and brochures called for in the CAADP process). These activities (A4.1 and A4.2) will start in January and will continue through the holding of the regional CAADP donor roundtable, currently scheduled for October, 2009. MSU will also assist the Malian secretariat (based in the Ministry of Malians Abroad and African Integration) in its coordination role and participate in and help support the Malian technical team's participation in national and regional meetings related to the development and implementation of the CAADP compact (Activities 4.A3 and 4.A4). This latter component includes participation in the February 2009 regional meeting in Dakar with ECOWAS, IFPRI, and USAID; the planned workshop for the validation of the national report in June, and the regional donor roundtable in October. Activities 4.A3 and 4.A4 are scheduled to run from January through November in order to allow two months of time to wrap up any follow-up work that may result from the regional roundtable.

5. Cross-cutting Activities

In addition to the work in support of the individual project objectives, MSU will also undertake activities to support the implementation of overall project. These include acquisition of project vehicles and other equipment in February and March (Activity 5A.1 in figure 1), hiring of additional support staff in February and March (A5.2), who will be jointly paid for and shared with other MSU Mali-based activities, and ongoing consultation with and reporting to USAID/Mali throughout the year (Activity A5.3).

**Figure 1. Strengthening the Capacity of the Malian Government to Develop Analytical and Market Based Food Security Responses
Implementation Calendar
2009**

	2009											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
I. Further Enhance and Develop Technical and Analytical Skills for the CSA and related support agencies.												
1.1 Strengthening analysis and planning capacity within the CSA												
1.A1: Needs assessment												
1.A2: Training module development												
1.A3: Training planned and carried out												
1.A4: Workshop for Commissioner & key advisors												
1.A5: Study tour for Commissioner and key advisors												
1.2 CSA collaborating agencies trained												
1.A6: Needs assessment												
1.A7: Training materials developed												
1.A8: Training planned and carried out												
1.3 Methodology workshop												
1.A9: Training materials developed												
1.A10: Identify participants												
1.A11: Workshop organized and held												
1.4 Identify economists to work with the CSA												
1.A12: Identify economists												
1.A13: Economists' computers/office furniture provided												
1.A14: Involvement of Economists in CSA studies												
1.5 Marketing studies												
1.A15: Study topics identified												
1.A16: Planning and implementation												
- Study 1:												
- Study 2:												
- Study 3:												
1.6 Equipment updates												
1.A17: Needs assessment												
1.A18: Purchase and installation												
1.7 SNSA awareness campaign												
1.A19: Identify themes												
1.A20: Campaign plans developed												
1.A21: Campaign plans implemented												
2. Assistance in Implementing Food Security Plans Country-wide.												
2.1 Evaluate current status of plan implementation												
2.A1: Evaluation method developed												
2.A2: Information, planning and training missions												
2.A3: Training sessions												
2.A4: Signed contracts for evaluation work												
2.A5: Contract monitoring and followup												
2.2 Planning of joint MSU and USAID/Decentralization Team activities												
2.A6: Meeting calendar set up												
2.A7: Planning and carrying joint activities out.												
2.A8: Identification of performance indicators for plan implementation												
2.A9: Data, frequency and methods identified												
3. Development of an Academic and Practical Curriculum for the University of Bamako/ IPR Katibougou in support of Malian educated analysts in the range of components to ensure continuing food security.												
3.A1: Analysis of needed skill sets												
3.A2: Carrying out an inventory/census of human resources in Mali												
3.A3: Workshop to validate study of demand and supply of ag. economists in Mali & its implications for program design												
3.A4: External advisory panel												
3.A35: Development of a curriculum												
3.A6: Upgrading computer equipment/systems												
3.A7: Plan for additional training/recruitment												
3.A8: Faculty/graduate student exchanges												
3.A9: IPR/IFRA faculty member to study at MSU is identified and begins program at MSU												
3.A10: Development of a guest lecture series												

**Figure 1. Strengthening the Capacity of the Malian Government to Develop Analytical and Market Based Food Security Responses
Implementation Calendar (cont'd)
2009**

	2009											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
4. Completion of the Mali Round Table through support to the committee on the development of the CAADP Program												
4.A1: Help organize periodic consultations												
4.A2: Technical support to compact development												
4.A3: Help the Malian secretariat in its coordination role												
4.A4: Participate in national and regional meetings related to the development and implementation of the CAADP compact												
5. Cross-cutting Activities												
5.A.1 Office equipment acquisition												
5.A.2 Hiring additional support staff												
5.A.3 Ongoing reporting and consultation with USAID/Mali												