

Feed the Future Initiative in Mali

Mali's Feed the Future strategy will launch a new generation of rural entrepreneurs through:

- The development of agricultural and health systems;
- The introduction of technological innovations; and
- By building institutional capacity to spur a private sector-led approach to sustainably reduce poverty and hunger in Mali.



USAID constructed this dike to develop low level rice farming, helping increase food security.

Photo: Ryan Vroegindewey, USAID/Mali

To implement these goals, USAID builds on the successes and lessons learned of past investments in agriculture and health; leverages the capacities of bilateral and multilateral donors; and partners directly with local non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, the private sector, and the Government of Mali. Interventions focus on increasing inclusive growth in the agricultural sector and improving peoples' nutritional statuses, particularly women and children.

Core investment areas

Core Feed the Future investment areas were developed in collaboration with the Government of Mali, and in accordance with the development goals of relevant ministries. These investment areas include:

- **Strengthening three priority value chains:** rice; millet and sorghum; and livestock;
- **Addressing high levels of nutritional deficiency**, especially among women and children (in collaboration with the USAID Health office);
- **Improving the enabling environment** for agricultural trade and investment; and
- **Building education and national research capacity** among Malian institutions.

The three priority value chains were chosen in accordance with the national priorities as outlined in the National Priority Investment Plan for the Agriculture Sector (PNIP-SA). Interventions were originally planned for 143 communes in Sikasso, Mopti, Timbuktu, and two communes in the Alatona region of Segou where the Millennium Challenge Corporation had a significant investment. These four regions were chosen for their high rates of poverty and low nutritional indicators, while target communes within these regions were selected for their high agricultural potential and the presence of USAID and other donor programs.

Disruption of programming

All USAID programming was initially suspended after the coup, but later, a number of food security programs under Feed the Future were approved to restart in accordance with coup legislation and policy. Due to continuing security concerns, Mali's FY 2013 Feed the Future allocation, however,



was reduced to \$11.6 million. This led to a reduction in the planned intervention area: programs only operated in a maximum of 113 communes, a reduction in population of approximately 750,000 people.

Cereals Value Chain

USAID has recently launched our new core Cereals Value Chain activity, which began in early January 2014, working with ACDI/VOCA. We will be strengthening it with several field supports and small awards, including scale up activities to increase access to high quality inputs (seeds, fertilizers), and partnering it with our upcoming Mali ADAPT Climate Change Adaptation program, for in-field adaptation and soil conservation. Additionally, the independent monitoring assessment has just been awarded as well, and will be on the ground only shortly after you will.

Livestock Value Chain

The Livestock for Growth program which should be awarded before the end of the year. In addition to standard value chain strengthening, there will be activities in support of the Malian government's pastureland program – capacity building both the expansion of the program itself and the Ministry of Rural Development (which covers livestock and fisheries) ability to manage programs. This, too, will be linked with the Mali ADAPT program for pastureland management, soil conservation, and restoration of degraded lands.

Nutrition

In recognition of FtF's renewed focus on nutrition sensitive agriculture, we are working on a joint procurement with the Health team for a buy in to the centrally-managed SPRING mechanism. This activity will combine increases in vegetable production with health and behavior change activities. It is currently intended for covering the gap in co-location between health and the FTF Zone of Influence, but could be expanded as needed in out years.

Private Sector

Currently, our only planned direct private sector activity is a Development Credit Authority program with support from the State Department, West Africa Bureau and USAID in Washington. It, and its related technical assistance program, should be awarded by the end of FY 2014.