

FEED THE FUTURE MALI CEREAL VALUE CHAIN ACTIVITY

The Mali Cereal Value Chain (CVC) activity is a \$24.9 million award funded by USAID/Mali under the Feed the Future (FTF) Presidential Initiative, which harmonizes hunger- and poverty-fighting efforts in countries with chronic food insecurity and poverty. Focusing on Mali's staple cereals (millet, sorghum, and rice), the CVC project promotes inclusive and equitable agricultural sector growth through increased value chain integration and competitiveness, which will lead to broad-based economic growth.

Intervention Approach

The USAID/Mali CVC activity takes a facilitative approach to value chain development, ensuring that project efforts lead to sustainable partnerships and increased benefits for all actors operating within the value chains, as well as enhanced long-term food security in the target areas. The project promotes integration, empowerment of women, resilience of vulnerable communities and populations, and inclusive development in the sorghum, millet and rice value chains in Mali. This includes key activities necessary for value chain integration and competitiveness such as production, research and technology dissemination, marketing, processing, trade, finance, capacity building, and elements of policy reform.



1,764 women have been trained in Intensive Rice Systems/Urea Deep Placement. Photo Credit: CVC Project

Principal aspects of the implementation approach include:

- Building capacity across an array of business development services and agricultural production skills;
- Strengthening relationships among value chain actors;
- Supporting services and promoting the enabling environment necessary for long-term competitiveness.

Working within the USAID/Mali Feed the Future Strategy

USAID/Mali's Feed the Future strategy focuses on the core agricultural value chains of livestock (cattle, sheep, and goats) and cereals (millet, sorghum, and rice). Together, these two value chains cover the majority of Malian agricultural production, which itself contributes to the lives and livelihoods of around 80 percent of Malians. FTF programs are intended to increase food security and decrease poverty through the development of the complete value chains, from farmer to end user. By providing development support all along the value chain, and incorporating the private sector where possible, USAID Feed the Future programs are designed to provide sustainable development long after the interventions themselves are complete.

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The CVC award is the central component of USAID/Mali's overall Cereal Value Chain strategy, which also includes a series of coordinated activities that contribute to the promotion and sustainability of the cereals value chain by targeting smaller, more narrow interventions. The CVC award – as it spans the FTF Zone of Influence and covers the broadest range of interventions – takes the leading role in cereal value chain coordination and integration with support from other FTF awards which center on policy reform, applied research dissemination, and increasing access to finance and financial services.

The USAID CVC project contributes to achieving the goals and objectives of the USAID/Mali FtF strategy by:

1. Increasing access to food through increased incomes and ability to purchase food;
2. Increasing food availability through main season production and off-season or integrated production of more diverse and nutritious foods;
3. Enhancing utilization and consumption of increased quantities of high-quality, nutritious foods with household-level behavior change and nutrition education that applies both knowledge and practice.

Results

Since its inception in 2014, the CVC Activity has:

1) Increased Agricultural Productivity in Millet/Sorghum and Irrigated and Dryland Systems:

- Facilitated improved technologies on 57,310 hectares (25% female, 75% male);
- Assisted 48,092 (28% female, 72% male) farmers apply new technologies or management practices;
- Facilitated short-term training on agricultural productivity or food security for 31,765 (19% female, 81% male) individuals.

2) Expanded Markets and Trade:

- Facilitated the signing of 411 purchase/sale intention agreements between producer organizations and wholesalers, between cooperative unions and the World Food Programme (WFP) and between wholesalers and WFP for the purchase by WFP of 2,022 MT of rice, 2,043 MT of sorghum and 2,200 MT of millet;
- Linked 411 farmer groups to buyers, and 19,093 micro- small-enterprises, including farmers, receiving USG assistance to loans.

3) Increased Resilience of Vulnerable Communities and Households Increased

- Trained 2,751 producers including 1,117 women on issues related to water management in irrigated areas in the region of Mopti and in the Sikasso;
- Trained 4,644 farmers including 1,764 women in Intensive Rice Systems/Urea Deep Placement in partnership with the technical service providers.

4) Strengthened Local Capacities and Systems

- Trained 18 business development services agents in financial intermediation and identified five viable sources of funding for value chain actors;
- Assisted 66 producer organizations to develop and submit their business plans to banks and facilitated access to a 926,500,000 million FCFA loan from *Banque Malienne de Solidarité* for the Federation of Unions for the Rural Development of Youwarou.

Contact Information

- USAID:Mali:
 - Web: www.usaid.gov/mali
 - Tel: +223 20 70 23 00
 - Email: Bamakoinfo@usaid.gov
 - www.facebook.com/USAIDMali
 - Twitter: @USAIDMali
- The Cereal Value Chain Activity:
 - Chief of Party: Richard Cook
 - Tel: 20 20 10 67
 - Email: rcook@acdivoca.org