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: Improved rice paddy quality and quality niébé processing for improved nutrition and increased farmer development in Mali	

high infestation rate (of local varieties and in storage) and the difficult storage require significant investments in; improved seeds and production practices, phytosanitary treatments and expensive storage systems such as triple bags, all of which are out of reach of the average smallholder niébé producer most of whom are women. The membership of the relatively small number of FOs concentrating on exclusive and intensive niébé production consists primarily of women. These FOs tend to have weak organizational capacity, equipment and inputs to properly invest in the niébé value chain and integrate this crop into their overall farm business which handicaps its development. To promote the cowpea value chain, it is necessary to address the capacity building needs throughout the chain and better organize the actors to provide a quality product to market.

The inadequate and inefficient milling operations typical outside of the large-scale industrial sector in Mali result in high rates of broken grains, but this is compounded by the poor quality of paddy delivered by farmers and their organizations, and traders to mills of all sizes. This project will strengthen the role of the farmer organizations as the intermediary between farmers and rice millers. Farmers will receive training in agronomic practices to ensure paddy quality, better contractual arrangements, and be introduced to new sources of harvest financing. They will benefit from better drying and storage facilities and management practices to be introduced at the FO level to reduce breakage, improve quality to result in increased end value.

Rice strengthen the four main rice F O's capacity to produce and deliver quality paddy rice to rice processing units.

<p>Rice quality promotion and food safety education – (includes radio programming for awareness building)</p>	<p>Audience research and partner consultations; development of programming and key messages based on production activity; identification of partners for WASH training; WFP supply chain & Food tech to work with SOCODEVI to train on food safety and post-harvest handling; capacity building of local (Segou and San) partner radio stations.</p> <p>Capacity building of local radio stations; broadcasting of technical info and project progress; focus group facilitation for feedback on programming and project.</p> <p>Production and broadcast of interactive program series; support for targeted producers and extension agents</p> <p>Plan for next steps via focus groups and share feedback with local authorities and partner radio stations.</p>
<p>Farmer training –</p>	<p>Agreement with farmer organizations; agreements with Ministry of Agriculture; training plan; targeting of lead farmers (including women & youth) and 24 plots for improved inputs; training in improved paddy cultivation techniques;</p> <p>Training of agricultural extension agents in M&E system for the project Harvest assessment; repeat of training program as needed on 24 plots; exchange visits among producers; identification of women & youth farmers; agricultural extension agents monitoring using set indicators; WFP and SOCODEVI update results framework</p>

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<p>Equipment procurement –</p>	<p>Purchase and installation of silos, tarpaulins for drying; (Support of FOs stimulate) private sector investment in additional processing equipment</p>
<p>FO access to finance via SOCODEVI managed revolving fund –</p>	<p>Inclusion of WFP into the SOCODEVI internal FO credit selection and financing system; needs analysis; adapt credit facility to the beneficiaries of this project; Adjustments to existing SOCODEVI credit program to absorb the caseload</p>

Reporting

Execution of work and monitoring plan with reports. First project review.

Production and broadcast of
interactive program series; support

	<p>selection and financing system; needs analysis; adapt credit facility to the beneficiaries of this project; Adjustments to existing SOCODEVI credit program to absorb the caseload of this project; targeting first main group of borrowers; testing the reimbursement mechanisms (in kind and cash) Phase out of interest subsidies and default guarantees. Impact assessment of guaranteed revolving fund</p>
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FO linked to markets –

Introduction of FOs to agribusiness (information sharing): assistance with contracts and traceability
Support potential buyers procure from FO's via WFP adapted

The project concept note was submitted to the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) and they have a history of working with WFP and SOCODEVI

Item	Expenditure	GAFSP	Co-financing	Total
1	Project Administration & Logistics	135 116	13 620	148 736
2	Guarantee Investment/revolving fund FOs	1 200 000	15 000	1 215 000
3	Capacity building FOs	450 000	15 000	465 000
4	Human resources	164 880	81 000	245 880
5	Equipment & Material for FOs	650 000		650 000
		300 000		
		100 000		100 000
		2 999 996	124 620	3 124 616

At both levels granted the reimbursement mechanisms are well monitored, the funds should revolve and accrue interest, which will be held in the FO's bank or micro finance accounts (possession of an account is a prerequisite for selection the project).

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Low acceptance by
farmers

Community based participatory planning
(involving partners, community and govt.) to

<p>Increase the earning potential of farmers through increased production and quality control of their paddy, milled rice and niébé.</p>	<p>10% reduction in the rate of broken grains per ton of rice due to improvements in agronomic practices and post-harvest handling.</p> <p>Increase the extraction rate of milled rice for those FO's selling milled rice</p> <p>Increase in the price of paddy, milled rice or niébé due to improved quality</p> <p>Increased profit attributable to impact aggregation on market access and improved quality commodity</p>
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Improve the ability of FOs to support their members' production of higher quality paddy, milled rice or niébé

FO's are supposed to be the dearing house of services for their member farmers, however oftentimes their capacity to meet the equipment, input and training needs of their farmers is low. So, the project intends to strengthen the identified FO capacity gaps through

<p>Malo will produce fortified rice using local rice paddy and imported fortified kernels and support local production of artisanal fortified bean flour</p>	<p>With the capacity building fund, Malo will train the niébé producers and a group of youth interested in agribusiness in niébé processing and fortification</p> <p>Malo will purchase paddy or milled rice from FO's for fortification and will themselves fortify rice and train those FO's (women and youth) interested in fortification to create local processing and distribution networks</p>
<p>Through the project monitoring mechanisms create an ad hoc knowledge sharing platform among the project implementers, the agricultural extension service and the FOs.</p>	<p>A knowledge sharing platform for dialogue and collaboration exists among the project team, the 5 FOs and the government extension service including the seed service.</p> <p>Establish a steering committee to assemble the project beneficiaries and the implementing partners.</p>
<p>Increase the utilization of rural radio networks to disseminate information and increase knowledge of the best production techniques for quality paddy and niébé</p>	<p>RRI works with local radio stations in Segou and San to broadcast programming on the best agronomic practices to produce quality paddy and niébé. Three programme series will be developed and diffused concerning: 1) coverage of the rice and niébé crop cycles, various topics of interest to farm communities; 2) provision of weather and rain information via collaboration with Mali-Meteo 3) a platform for exchange of information among technical services and FO members.</p>

This project is a continuation of WFP's smallholder farmer development activities, which began with the P4P initiative. It complements the evolved WFP smallholder and value chain portfolio, to which SOCODEVI has been a long-time partner via their local initiative Feere Diyara.

The MMI Mali project will complement SOCODEVI's current \$14.5 million 5-year (2014-2019) project, called Feere Diyara ("Sales were good!") that supports 16 FOs in four regions including the three main irrigated rice zones amongst others and engages in rice and niébé commercialization which will be complemented by MMI Mali's focus on quality enhancements.

The composition of the Steering Committee and the community ownership of the project results will provide a favourable basis for encouraging other farmers in the community to adopt similar practices. Hopefully given the nutrition and economic benefits of processing/value addition will attract others to the subsector and catalyse further private sector investment.

The approach chosen of community based participatory planning from the conception of the project will increase the project acceptability with the target populations and their sense of ownership. Additionally, the value chain approach that plans towards the end user will not only encourage the farmer to consider questions of quality, food safety and end line consumer, but will also allow for the crowding in of other value chain actors. The promotion of endogenous solutions for economies of scale will also allow for multiple context specific implementation models in the different regions of the country. This approach should facilitate duplication and scale up as needed.

This project has been designed partially in response to priorities from the Minister of Agriculture, in that it targets underserved populations; women and youth. The project is also targeting a highly profitable and nutritious value chain, niébé which despite its popularity in the Malian diet is under produced. In terms of the use of local inputs (material and industry), the promotion of resilient production practices, and the connection of smallholder farmers to domestic markets. The project is based on professional agricultural organizations, institutions whose lifetime is not tied to that of the project.

The project is also in line with several other agriculture and rural development initiatives underway in the country at present. It is perfectly in line with all national agriculture and rural development policies and schemes.

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Leasehold Improvements (diesel generator, electrical wiring, soil levelling, cleaning, water and plumbing, pest control, and minor repairs and renovations)	5,800,000	\$10,140
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Farmer Organisations Contribution

In terms of the contribution of the farmer organisations the basic physical assets (100 ton warehouses, farm animal, small farm machinery and other agricultural equipment) of each FO can be estimated at between \$55 000-\$60