

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20523
BIBLIOGRAPHIC INPUT SHEET

FOR AID USE ONLY

Batch 78

1. SUBJECT CLASSIFICATION	A. PRIMARY Food production and nutrition	AE10-0000-G208
	B. SECONDARY Agricultural economics—Mali	
2. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Mali country report		
3. AUTHOR(S) Zalla, Thomas		
4. DOCUMENT DATE 1976	5. NUMBER OF PAGES 7p.	6. ARC NUMBER ARC
7. REFERENCE ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS Mich.State		
8. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES (Sponsoring Organization, Publishers, Availability)		
9. ABSTRACT		

10. CONTROL NUMBER PN-AAF-316	11. PRICE OF DOCUMENT
12. DESCRIPTORS Education, higher Mali Manpower Sahel	13. PROJECT NUMBER
	14. CONTRACT NUMBER AID/afr-G-1260 GTS
	15. TYPE OF DOCUMENT

NOT ARIA

AID/REF-C-1260 GTS
Mich. State
PN-AAF-316

Master's Program in Agricultural Economics
For Students from the Sahel

Mali Country Report

As in Senegal, the availability of sufficient numbers of students admitted to the BAC is not a constraint on the development of university trained agricultural sector manpower in Mali. With more than 1000 students admitted to the BAC in 1974, the Institut Polytechnique Rural, Mali's only university level agricultural training institution has had no trouble meeting its enrollment objectives. Rather, the country's policy of providing training and subsequent employment for all students holding the secondary-level baccalaureate is causing imbalance in the number of senior level technicians relative to the junior level staff. By 1978, for example, the Direction d' Eaux et Forêts in the Ministry of Rural Development will have as many senior and middle level technicians as junior level staff.¹

Available manpower projections in Mali indicate an aggregate need for about 450 university level agricultural graduates between 1974-78. Over the same period, the IPR will provide 300 such persons and students returning from university degree programs abroad will number about 150, creating an overall balance in manpower needs and availability at this level. After 1978, the tendency will be toward a surplus of such personnel unless output at the IPR is reduced below planned levels. It appears that such a reduction will be implemented. Thus, Mali, alone, among the Sahelian countries, will achieve an overall balance in the demand and supply of university level agricultural manpower over the next 3-4 years.²

A number of university level personnel will require graduate training in agricultural economics. Although available manpower projections do not

itemize agricultural economics as an area of concentration, they do indicate a probable need for 5-6 such persons per year based on ratios prevailing in other Sahelian countries. The largest number of these would be concentrated in the Institute of Rural Economy and at I.P.R. for its training staff.

For the coming year, there was widespread interest in the Master's training program in agricultural economics at MSU. Partly because of preproject contacts between Malian officials and MSU, Mali is ready to capitalize on the training program in 1977. In fact, interest was so widespread that it became necessary to tell several institutions that USAID priorities for African Manpower Development Project funding in Mali could not entertain their requests for this year. This was in spite of a still severely constrained manpower situation which will not be alleviated until 1978-80.

The largest single source of nominees this year will come from the Ministry of Rural Development. The Director General is preparing a list of ten names to be submitted for the two positions available under the AMDP. In addition, various services within the Ministry have put forward their own nominees. It is not known at this point whether their candidates will be included in the final list from the Director General. If they are not, it may present a dilemma for USAID over which requests should receive priority. From the point of view of the MSU program, selection according to qualification rather than sponsoring organization would be preferable. This, however, is somewhat contrary to the intent of AMDP and appears unlikely to be followed anywhere in the Sahel.

Turning to detailed requests, the Institute of Rural Economy and the Director of Agricultural Services have each nominated a candidate for this

year, Mrs. Sy and Mr. Chickna Touré, respectively. I was able to interview both, but would need to see the details of their academic studies to make a decision. On the basis of information given during the interview, I would consider both candidates as borderline cases.

The Director of Water and Forestry Resources also nominated three candidates and has forwarded their names to his superiors. I was able to interview one of them, Mr. Dramane Koulibaly. On the basis of what he described, he would make an excellent candidate for the program. The other two candidates, Mr. Amadou Koné and Mr. Seydou N'Diaye were not stationed in Bamako and could not be interviewed.

The Ministry of Plan also expressed an interest in nominating candidates as did the IPR at Katibougou. Both were told that sufficient places under AMDP were not available to entertain their requests this year, but that USAID would welcome nominations next year..

USAID has programmed two students for graduate studies in agricultural economics at MSU as part of its livestock sector development project, Mr. Souleymane Diallo, Chief of the Economics Division of OMBEVI, the livestock marketing board, and Mr. El Bechir Maiga, now studying in France. I was able to interview Mr. Diallo and feel that it is unlikely that he will be admitted for graduate studies at MSU. I did not interview two other candidates nominated for studies in agricultural economics at Wisconsin and Purdue.

Other USAID projects which might include agricultural economics training are the Cereals Markets Promotion, the OACV and Operation Haute Volta integrated rural development projects. The PRP's of each of these are in the process of definition with funding scheduled to begin in FY 1978.

On the basis of discussions with several Malian officials, most notably Dr. Ngolo Traore, Director of the Rural Economy Institute, and Mr. Almouzar

Maiga, Assistant Director of OMBEVI, Mali is very anxious to reinforce the IPR at Katibougou, especially in agricultural economics. Hit with the abrupt withdrawal of a UNESCO technical assistance team in 1974, the institute has been adjusting ever since. On top of the staffing problems introduced by the withdrawal of UNESCO staff, enrollment in both the middle and senior level programs has been expanding rapidly, increasing almost threefold since 1972. As a result, the quality of education at Katibougou has fallen rather sharply with the consequence that the institute's graduates have recently been downgraded in civil service classification. Government is aware of the situation. It recently negotiated a five million ADB loan to improve the technician level training program and a 7.5 million FED grant to improve the senior level Ingenieur program. Staffing problems have been reduced by drawing on civil servants for part-time teaching roles, but more permanent solutions are required.

The current curriculum for the university level cycle includes only 8% economics and management on the basis of class hours and 6% on the basis of total hours. In the past there has usually been only one professor of rural economy. This year there is no one to teach rural economy. Thus, the institute's agricultural economics component needs to be strengthened, both in terms of the quantity and quality of courses offered.

I discussed the possibility of introducing a rural economy specialization in addition to those of the technical agriculture disciplines with the Assistant Director of IPR at Katibougou. He told me they had wanted to start a rural economy graduate specialization but could not get financing. However, graduate specializations in agriculture, agricultural engineering, water and forest resources and animal sciences are being planned with assistance

from the Bene-Lux countries. Although not originally planned, he was very receptive to the idea of an undergraduate or Ingenieur level specialization in agricultural economics.

The program of studies at Katibougou leading to a diploma of Ingenieurs des Science Appliques is not unlike other university level agricultural training institutions in the Sahel. A four-year program with a heavy practical orientation, it produces graduates who are immediately operational but less well prepared for normal graduate (3rd cycle) level studies without further preparatory work. Many such graduates in Mali fill policy and administrative roles where a knowledge of economics and management would be most helpful. However, given the universal unavailability of an agricultural economics specialization in this and similar institutions throughout the Sahel, such positions must of necessity be filled by more narrowly trained technicians.

Although a large proportion of Mali's need for agricultural economics training can be met by undergraduate Ingenieurs, there will continue to be a need for graduate level specialization as well. An in-country 3rd cycle specialization probably could not be justified solely on the basis of Mali's own needs. But as a regional institution admitting students who have completed a four-year Ingenieurs des Travaux or similar course, it could be. Such schools now exist in Niamey and Ouagadougou, in addition to that of the IPR itself. Students from Mauritania and Chad are now obliged to go abroad for all university level agricultural training, except for animal science in the latter. For these two countries, both the four-year undergraduate cycle and a two-year graduate cycle would be of interest. In fact, Chad had 7 students enrolled in the Ingenieur cycle at IPR in 1975.. Niger and Upper Volta also had 7 enrollees each. The RCA, Togo and Gabon provided another 13 out of a

a total enrollment of 523 in the university level cycle. This could easily be expanded, especially via AMDP funding for study in Africa.

A USAID sponsored proposal to establish both an Ingenieur level and a graduate level (3rd cycle) specialization in rural economy or agricultural economics would be welcomed by IPR and the government of Mali. A minimal package would include one American professor and 10 scholarships for Master's training abroad for the undergraduate program. A later phased graduate program would require an additional American professor and Ph.D. training for 3 or 4 of those showing the most promise among those ten getting their Master's. Ideally, such a package would include funds for field research conducted by the rural economy staff and additional housing at Katibougou. The undergraduate specialization is needed immediately and is justified in terms of the number of students now passing through the Ingenieur cycle. The graduate program could probably be justified only on a regional basis. The role of the IPR with respect to regional training in agricultural economics is discussed in the trip report.

¹James Bingen: Report of a Study on Agricultural Manpower, Training and Extension in the Republic of Mali, USAID Contract No. 688-000-4, June 1976, Mimeo.

²Ibid.

Tom Zalla
December 1976