



## Mali Oils Project

October 1998 — December 2003

EnterpriseWorks' intervention in Mali began in 1995 in an effort to establish a commercial system for the local manufacture and sale of ram presses (to extract oils from seeds) and to promote sesame production to supply those presses. In 1998, however, high demand and prices for sesame on the international market coupled with the recent production increases made Mali an attractive source of sesame for exporters. Prices for sesame seed increased so much that processing of sesame oil was no longer profitable relative to cottonseed oil. Thus, the hoped for cash savings and benefits from ram press promotion activities were far less than expected.



Accordingly, in 1999, EnterpriseWorks changed its strategy from promoting local oil processing with the presses to supporting sesame cultivation for export in order to take advantage of the larger potential profits for farmers. Press promotion was halted in favor of increased seed distribution, promotion of sesame growing through media campaigns, and extension to farmers. EnterpriseWorks also developed a website to aid buyers and sellers of sesame find key information about the African sesame market, [www.africansesame.com](http://www.africansesame.com).

---

<b>Economic Participants</b>	8,237 --- in 2001
<b>Enterprises Assisted</b>	8,221 --- in 2001
<b>Total Monetary Benefits</b>	\$293,727 --- in 2001
<b>Cumulative TMB</b>	\$1,396,538
<b>Project Budget</b>	\$1,056,204
<b>Primary Funder</b>	USAID/Mali

---

### OBJECTIVES

- Increase commercial sesame production through planting seed distribution and extension services.
- Facilitate the Malian export market for sesame by hosting 'bourses' where sesame producers and exporters can interact and negotiate prices.

### PROGRESS REPORT

**Organic sesame in production.** In Koro during 2001, EnterpriseWorks collaborated with SOPRADEX, a Burkina Faso-based exporter, to produce organic sesame, which has a higher value on the international market. EnterpriseWorks assisted in collection of the information required for certification, and, in exchange, SOPRADEX signed purchase contracts with the villages. The 1998, 1999, 2000, and 2001 crops were snatched up by exporters and had a conservatively estimated combined value of over \$1.2 million despite a 40% drop in the international price in 2000 and 2001. Even at reduced prices, the 2001 crop had an estimated value of just over \$300,000 to Malian farmers. Due in no small measure to EnterpriseWorks promotion efforts, sesame is fast becoming an important cash crop for Mali.

**Extra support for project.** In late 2001, EnterpriseWorks was awarded a \$400,000 grant from USAID's African Trade and Regional Investment Program (ATRIP) to support promotion of Malian sesame at the subregional and international level. These additional resources will compliment USAID/Mali's funding and help EnterpriseWorks further develop the market for Malian sesame.

### **LESSONS LEARNED**

**Changing economic factors guide project implementation.** With changes in both local and international prices for sesame and the economic ramifications of such changes, EnterpriseWorks shifted its program from one of oil processing through sale of presses to commercial promotion of sesame for export. Such project flexibility was key to successfully sustaining this component of EnterpriseWorks' intervention in Mali and kept the project on target to meet its contractual objectives of realizing substantial increases in income for small, Malian producers.