



## Africa RISING Farmers Field Day: Short Report



Location: Bougouni and Koutiala

October 2017



## INTRODUCTION

Africa RISING farmers field day was organized from October 03 to 06, 2017 in Bougouni and Koutiala districts at the four technology parks (Flola, Madina, M'Pessoba and N'golonianasso) in partnership with Sorghum and Millet scaling project (ARDT\_SMS). The visit was attended by more than 300 people in each district. The main objective of the farmers field day was to enhance awareness of farmers and regional agriculture extension workers on Africa RISING best technologies and innovations that sustainably intensify agricultural productivity. The four technology parks were implemented in the year 2015 to 2016 as sites for research, capacity building and outreach (dissemination) of best technologies.

In Bougouni the guest of honour was the representative of the district développement council and agriculture service of Bougouni. The mayors of Faradiéle and Kouroulamini communes, researchers from ICRISAT, IER, WorldVeg and the president of FENABE were also present. In Koutiala the farmers field day was honored by the deputy "Prefet" or chairwoman of the district government (Koutiala "circle"). M'pessoba village chief and mayor ("maire") of the M'Pessoba municipality also attended the field day. Other representatives included researchers from ICRISAT, World Veg and heads of the partner NGOs (AMEDD, AMASSA, CAAD), the technical services of Koutiala "circle" (Agriculture, Livestock, Water and Forestry, Health) and local radio stations and more than three hundred farmers from the five intervention villages (Sirakélé, Zansoni, Namposséla, N'golonianasso and M'pessoba.).

### Bougouni district farmers field day

In Bougouni the farmer field day took place on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2017 at the two technology parks, Flola and Madina which are located at 24 and 20 km respectively from Bougouni town. The local event was facilitated by FENABE and the site coordinator. A total of 60 Africa RISING beneficiaries (Flola: 20, Dieba: 10, Sibirila: 10; Madina: 20) and 152 farmers from ARDT\_SMS partners in Bougouni (AOPP: 13; EUCORD: 63; CMDT: 13 and Malimark: 63) attended the field day. The program of the field day started in the morning at Flola Technology Park with a traditional music band and dance was played to welcome visitors. The ceremony started at 10:00 AM at Flola and ended at 4PM at Madina technology park. In his opening remark Mr. Toumani Sidibé, the coordinator of FENABE, presented the village Chief and made a brief description of the daily program. The village chief of Flola thanked Africa RISING program for the initiative and welcomed the team with 10 colas nuts. Dr. Birhanu Zemadim, coordinator of Africa RISING Mali, thanked everybody for coming and the Chief village for the welcoming. He mentioned the presence of the Chief Scientist Dr. Asamoah Larbi who came from Ghana for the Farmer's field day and make important contribution by witnessing the value for money. For this second phase, the Chief scientist encouraged farmers to work on promising technologies that are developed in phase I and showcased at the technology parks. Africa RISING technologies have been developed in partnership with IER, WorldVeg, ILRI, FENABE, AMEDD, CAAD and GRAADCOM.



Figure 1: Partial view of farmers' field day participants in Bougouni



### Visiting technologies:

Participants proceeded to a guided visit of the technologies in the parks. The technologies visited included soil fertility management trials with cow manure, poultry manure and mineral fertilizer tested on 3 varieties of sorghum (Fadda, Soumba and Tieble), contour bounding trials on maize (Sotubaka) and sorghum (Pablo), and demonstration of Integrated Striga and Soil Fertility Management (ISFM) through intercropping of Sorghum and Cowpea in addition to micro dosing of mineral fertilizer.



Figure 2: (a) Description of soil fertility management trial by Dr. Akinseye, (b) Participants visiting agro-forestry species planted on contour bunds for soil fertility management and erosion control

The guided tour of the technology visits at Madina technology park started at 2PM with the visit of vegetable trials (Figure 3a). One important observation made here was the field plots of onion and okra impressed female and male farmers. the presentation of double purpose sorghum and sorghum hybrid technologies was also done (Figure 3b). Participants were briefed with the difference between sorghum hybrids and local varieties of sorghum, and use of double purpose sorghum as a source of animal feed and human nutrition.



Figure 3: (a) Vegetable trial visit, (b) description of dual purpose and sorghum hybrid by Dr. Baloua Nebie

Demonstration of chopping machine and improved silos for feed improvement was also made (Figure 4 (a) and (b)). Dr Nantoume explained thoroughly the concept of the silage making, the conditioning

of the chopped straw and its stocking in the silos for later use. Participants were enthusiastic during the presentation and asked many questions answered by the presenter and the technicians.



Figure 4: (a) Demonstration of chopping machine chopping sorghum straw and, (b) silage making

After the end of the guided visit and presentation of research activities, a discussion session was held under the hut that serve as a training area in the parks. Several comments and questions were made on the technologies and answers were provided by researchers and other contributing partners. Farmers provided their testimonials regarding the technologies and the Africa RISING program in general as follows:



**Adama Samake:** 36 years old farmer in Flola. I was among the first group of farmers who were supported and trained to build contour bunding in my field to control erosion and improve the fertility of the farm land. With the presence of bunds my crops are still green while most of the nearby fields were hit by dry spells and most crops died.



**Zie Samake:** 40-year-old farmer and seed producer in Madina. He encouraged his fellow farmers to show more interest for the training activities and to adopt the developed technologies. He regretted to observe few of his fellow farmers are more attracted to the food and drinks provided than understanding the use of the technologies and he alerted farmers to maximize the technologies available to them.

Mr Goita who is the representative of the district agriculture services thanked the participants for their engagement and encouraged farmers to adopt the technologies, and the message was again echoed by Dr Birhanu who stressed the importance of the technologies and advised farmers to take advantage of the opportunities provided. The field day ended with the words of the mayor of Faradie who thanked all the participants for their time and wished everyone a safe journey back.

The event of the field day was recorded and broadcasted by Radio Banimonotie in Bougouni district.



### Koutiala site farmers field day

In Koutiala the farmer field day took place on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2017 at M'Pessoba and N'Golonianasso technology parks. A traditional music band was played to welcome visitors. Welcoming speech was provided by AMEDD and the village chief. Africa RISING Mali coordinator and the chief scientist also made opening remarks. The guest of honor mentioned the importance of the field day for agricultural actors and thanked the partnership of international and national actors.

### Visiting technologies:

Different trials that include intercropping of sorghum with cowpea, soil and water conservation technology, production of improved composting, dual purpose and hybrid sorghum and different trials of vegetable production were visited (Figure 5).

Similar to the event in Bougouni participants discussed several technology and reflected their views. Questions concerning the advantages and disadvantages of using fertilizers, and the time it takes to produce compost using cotton and sorghum stems were discussed. Advantages of dual purpose and sorghum hybrid was discussed as well. The field day was concluded with two recommendations farmers made, (i) the need to expand the technology parks in other intervention villages, and (ii) improve access to dual purpose and hybrid sorghum seeds.



Figure 5: (a) Discussion on sorghum cowpea intercropping, (b) Demonstration of erosion control measures (c) production of improved compost, and (d) use of overhead water tanker for cowpea seed production



More pictures of the farmers' field day are available in the following links:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/icrisatwca/albums/72157685454351780>

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