

The Mali Agribusiness Entrepreneurial Incubator Center

Introduction

Mali is a landlocked country in West Africa with an area of 1240000 square kilometer and a population of 11340480 inhabitants.

About 80 % of the labor force in the country is engaged in farming. The country is well endowed with natural resources such as water (Niger River and Lakes), land, sunshine and gold.

Recently the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded a grant through the Association Liaison Office (ALO) to train seven Malian scientists in the US (four from Institut d'Economie Rurale : IER) and (three from Institut Polytechnique Rural de Formation et de Recherche Appliquée : IPR/IFRA).

The training covers subjects such as Biotechnology, Engineering, Agricultural Education and Business Communication. The American Universities partners under this grant are Montana State University and the University of Saint Thomas in Minnesota.

At the end of their participants training, IER and IPR/IFRA will collaboratively create an “Agribusiness Entrepreneurial Incubator Center”: ***“Linking Biotechnology and Research Education with the development of agribusiness in Mali”***.

Mission statement

“The Agribusiness Entrepreneurial Incubator Center” is dedicated to providing biotechnologies research-based packages for strengthening food and water quality to develop agribusiness in Mali.

Vision

“The Agribusiness Entrepreneurial Incubator Center”, a self sustaining organization, seeks to be recognized as a leader in supporting and developing agribusiness in Mali.

Target Groups

Two main groups are targeted:

1. Those already operating in the agribusiness
 - Agribusiness Entrepreneurs (rural, urban)
 - Male and Female Farmers
 - Farmers’ organizations
2. Those that may or are willing to be in agribusiness
 - Young graduates
 - Young drop-outs
 - Returning migrants

- Retired civil servants
- Dismissed workers
- Women organizations

3. Others

- Personnel of Public Services and NGO

Each group will be described by the following questions:

Where are they?

What motivates them to be in agribusiness?

What is their literacy level?

What is their professionalism level?

What is their market?

Objectives

- Collect and disseminate biotechnologies research-based packages to current and prospective agribusiness entrepreneurs
- Act as an interface between:
 - Public sector (Governmental structures at national, regional and local levels)
 - Private sector (Financial Institutions, NGO, Individuals, etc.)
 - Clientele (Farmers, Agribusiness Entrepreneurs, etc.)
- Develop educational and training programs for agribusiness entrepreneurs
- Provide technical assistance to agribusiness entrepreneurs
- Manufacture and commercialize appropriate farm tools for agribusiness entrepreneurs

Outcomes

In the short and intermediate terms

- Available appropriate technology for Malian clientele
- Alleviated clientele's physical work and working time
- Practical engineering skills provided to fresh engineers
- Developed skill of seed production and pests management by an adequate information system for reaching a local small-scale farmers getting the technology,
- Availability of disease free seeds in adequate quantities and in reasonable time
- Increased number of agribusiness entrepreneurs

- Agribusiness entrepreneurs and farmers have access to private funding
- Farmers' Increased skills and knowledge of the use of biotechnologies-based commodities
- Farmers' increased skills of business plan development
- Value-added to farm products

In the long term

- Best established information system to disseminate seed technology to local small- scale farmers
- Mastered seed technology by young graduates, rural drop outs youth, farmers organizations
- Agribusiness entrepreneurs have improved their ability to stay in business
- Jobs and wealth creation
- Reduced poverty
- Improved standard of living

Activities

The Agribusiness Entrepreneurial Incubator Center will conduct the following activities:

- Biotechnology research on target commodities
- Production and commercialization of target commodities generated through biotechnology
- Outreach research innovations
- Development of educational and training programs for agribusiness entrepreneurs
- Information, Education and Communication of biotechnology network actors
- Manufacturing and commercialization of appropriate farm tools for agribusiness entrepreneurs
- Consultation.