

Nutrition Field Schools: Integrating nutrition and agricultural research results for collaborative learning in Mali

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Integrating Relevant Research Results from a range of Projects

- INSTAPA:** Local Malian millet variety high in Fe (Hama et al 2013)
High losses of Fe due to decortication (Hama et al 2012)
Training Manual for SME's on infant foods (Dossa et al 2013)

- Anbe Jigi:** 50% of sorghum produced by women used for children's food (van den Brook, 2010)
Soil fertility in women's field extremely poor
Sorghum foods always prepared with decorticated grains
100%, 97%, 69% of children (below 2 years) below RDA for Fe&Zn, energy and protein
Soaking whole sorghum grain before mechanical milling results in high quality flour

- HOPE:** Cluster-based farmer-field schools to work on knowledge intensive technologies
Hi Fe-sorghum varieties are adapted to women's field conditions, preferred grain quality

- Africa Rising:** Use of whole grain and local leafy vegetables reduce cost of food preparation
New opportunities for diversifying women's crop production



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and public and private institutes and organizations,
governments, and farmers worldwide



Nutrition Field School Concept:

Organization:

- Village level women groups
- Commune health centers as site for training of trainers
- 4 Women and 1 man trained as trainers for each group
- Professionals at health center support the program
- Facilitators from local NGO
- Project researchers as resource persons

Program:

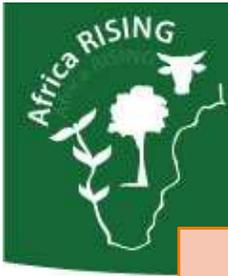
- Monthly meetings on nutrition issues
- Day 1 Training of Trainers
- Days 2-4, trainings in clusters
- Monthly visits to farmer managed crop trials

Content :

- Feedback discussion of experiences with previous session (recipe, knowledge)
- Basic nutrition and health knowledge
- Joint cooking of one improved recipe
- Learning about a specific crop group

Next steps: Assessing use of recipes; monitor change in crop diversity and management practices in women's fields; evaluate nutritional benefits ; jointly identify improved crop production and food preparation options





SWOT analysis conducted with nutrition partners after year 1



Feedback from a woman Participant:

Hawa Coulibaly, trainer at Bana (MPessoba commune):

“The training has significantly decreased the number of malnourished children in our village. Since the start of the training sessions, all women who have practised what they have been taught have given good testimonies/remarks about the nutritional status of their children. For me personally, my child Aboubacar, was supported by MSF (treatment of severe malnutrition), but since I learnt the techniques of preparation of enriched porridges I have taken charge of the feeding of my child. Today he is doing very well.”

Strengths:

- Women are key target group
- Improved use of local products
- Linking nutrition and use of local crops
- Participatory development of modules and training materials
- Great level of interest from participants and other family members

Weaknesses:

- Roads/distances make it difficult for women from some villages
- Delayed start of activities
- Trainers have tendency to focus on recipes, and less on other messages

Opportunities/Potential:

- Good working relationships established
- Confidence of women in the locally chosen trainers
- Local radio station interested to contribute

Threats/Risks:

- Climatic conditions limit some activities
- CSCOM have many activities, understaffed