



## Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

Online Version: <https://www.feedthefuture.gov/article/feed-future-helps-smallholder-rice-farmers-weather-storm-mali>

## Feed the Future Helps Smallholder Rice Farmers Weather the Storm in Mali



USADF

Feed the Future rice farmers in Northern Mali pose near inputs saved for next year's growing season.

Mahamadou Siddeye Toure, the local village chief of Bourem Sidi Amar in the Timbuktu Region of Northern Mali, watched as his town fell to rebel insurgents in April 2012.

Gone were the Malian Government's subsidies for inputs and access to local technical services and banks that supported the yearly rice campaign—an economic lifeline for farmers who supply rice for local and national consumption.

Despite the difficult political situation, a Feed the Future project in Northern Mali was able to fill this critical gap in services so smallholder farmers could still acquire inputs for the growing season.

The disruption of the traditional rice supply chain threatened to lead to food shortages and, even worse, possible displacement for villagers in Bourem Sidi Amar. The Tchiri Cooperative, a farmers' group sponsored by the U.S. African Development Foundation (USADF) under Feed the Future, had inputs to cover only about 15 percent of their production lands.

Following the coup, USADF worked with the cooperative to ensure funds were properly disbursed to local vendors in Mopti, Mali to pay for short-cycle rice seeds, fertilizer and fuel, which cooperative members then transported by boat on the Niger River to Bourem Sidi Amar in August 2012. These inputs ensured that farmers did not suffer from a failed season and their families did not experience hunger.

After receiving 4.9 tons of seeds and 14 tons of fertilizer along with oil and fuel, the Tchiri Cooperative was able to plant 70 hectares of rice and harvest 210 tons of un-milled rice. This quick action helped ensure stability for Bourem Sidi Amar's community of smallholders despite the insecurity and threats brought on by conflict.

"My villagers and I would have had no other choice but to leave our homes and join refugee camps without support from USADF's Feed the Future program," said Chief Toure, who has worked closely with the Tchiri Cooperative's 260 members. "This assistance ensured access to rice inputs that allowed us to produce enough rice to feed everyone in our village."

After this year's harvest, producers have enough rice to feed their family members, and the cooperative's 34 ton stock will provide inputs for next year's agricultural season. Income generated from the sale of rice also enabled Tchiri members to

plant 13 hectares of wheat following the rice harvest.

*USADF's Feed the Future grants in Mali support farmers to increase production, improve their access to inputs, increase yields, strengthen market linkages, and increase resilience to drought. The U.S. Government continues to provide assistance to meet food security needs across Mali as part of a case-by-case policy and legal review of the political situation.*