

The Enhanced Integrated Framework of Mali Presented in the KIP Pavilion at EXPO 2015

By Flavia Fang and Marco Riccardi

From June 8 to 14, the National Implementation Unit of Mali under the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) has presented an exhibition in the KIP Pavilion at Expo 2015 to demonstrate their work, strategies and results in supporting the development of small enterprises and women empowerment through inter-sectorial activities of Agroforestry trade.

During the week, the EIF Mali in company with its operating cooperatives have offered to the visitors exquisite tastings of fresh mangoes, jams and juices produced from typical fruits like mango, hibiscus, baobab and ginger. Products including karité and gum arabic have been presented as well as impacting documentaries on the working life in the villages of Mali.

EIF is a multi-donor programme promoted by six multilateral agencies (World Bank, UNCTAD, ITC, IMF, WTO and UNDP) that supports Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to be more active players in the global trading system by helping them tackle supply-side constraints to trade. In this way, the programme works towards a wider goal of promoting economic growth and sustainable development.

Activities in Mali started in 2005 with the creation of the National Implementation Unit of EIF which has been working for the achievement of established objectives by organizing the actors in the sectors, protecting the resource, organizing and strengthening the capacities of rural women, increasing the production and improving product's quality, developing infrastructure, increasing the supply of target products in Mali on the market and adding value through partnership between government and the private sector.

Based on proven comparative advantages of the country and the number of people from small producers and rural women who are engaged in the sectors, the EIF Mali has been supporting private and existing local community initiatives in non-traditional agricultural sectors like mango, shea butter, gum arabic and related sub-products. Besides creating employment for young people and women, the initiative aims also to provide a development model based on the processing of local products while respecting local knowledge.



The representative of the Ministry of Commerce Mohamed Sidibé underlined that the position of women has significantly increased during the last years in Mali, thanks to initiatives like this. Among the cooperatives involved in the project, the most successful examples are the Kene Yiriden Dried Mango processing factory with 26 women employees among a total of 36 and the Fruit Processing Unit of Yanfolila (UTRAFUY) which will be totally owned by women in late 2015.

Exhibiting their project in the KIP Pavilion has enabled the Mali Group to establish interesting contacts with institutional and private sector organizations. The President of the Congress of Deputies of the Spanish Government, for example, has visited the exhibition in company with the vice director of the Spanish Pavilion, showing great enthusiasm and attention. Organizations of the retail sector and cooperatives, as well, have shown their interest in the displayed products, many of which have proposed to establish contacts and to import the products from Mali.

The EIF exhibition in the KIP Pavilion has also attracted the attention of the Italian RAI television. The coordinator Mr. Sidibé has been invited by the Programme *RAI Talk* to present the initiatives underway and their great achievements up to now. In that context, the coordinator pointed out that EIF supports local and endogenous development through an inclusive approach.

Local economic sectors (mango, gum arabic and shea butter) supported by EIF and presented in the Pavilion highlight how their development contribute to retract the desertification process underway in the country. The bottom-up and participated development approach is an added value that help encourage the local people to stay in their territories.

During the presence of the EIF Project in the KIP Pavilion, the dialogue between the KIP International School and EIF has been strengthened. The coordinator Mr. Sidibé has ensured the participation of Mali in the opening event of the exposition on territorial mental health in KIP Pavilion and in the International meeting of Local Economic Development Agencies which will be organized by the KIP Pavilion from 21 to 23 September. Furthermore, the EIF is interested in establishing partnerships for implementing Local Development Agencies in Mali where the Trade Programme of EIF works.

Lastly, the coordinator of the EIF has confirmed the interest of the Government of Mali in participating in



the promotion of the World Fund for Territorial Development.

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