



**USAID**  
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**MALI**

## SUCCESS STORY

### A Rice Mill Addresses Food Security in Mali

**With new equipment working at full capacity, the mill can address demand for high quality processed rice and animal feed**



*“USAID’s support for developing our business plan and purchasing new equipment was instrumental in our growth”*

Sekou Bocoum grew up in the major rice and cattle producing region of Mopti. He saw a market demand for high quality locally produced rice—if Malian farmers could produce the same consistent quality as imported rice from Asia. Using a little seed money, Mr. Bocoum established *Rizerie et Fabrication Aliment de Bétail* and started milling rice for the growing Malian urban market.

Mr. Bocoum’s ambition to expand and further develop the mill was barred by a problem common to many Malian agri-businesses, lack of finance. Luckily, in 2010, USAID issued a call for applications targeting agro-processing entrepreneurs, a key segment of the cereal value chain. Mr. Bocoum was selected to receive a small grant. The grant, plus help developing a business plan and new connections to over 3,000 USAID-supported local rice producers, enabled Mr. Bocoum to convince a local bank to make him a medium term loan. He could then expand his facility and equipment and is now annually processing 2,000 metric tons of high quality rice.

Seeing another market opportunity in animal feed, Mr. Bocoum sought a high quality affordable product and found a formula developed through another USAID-supported project. USAID support in the 1960’s helped establish three Malian research laboratories, National Research, National Veterinary, and Animal Nutrition Laboratories. Together they had developed and tested a feed blending locally available inputs, including rice husks and a local forage called “*Bourgou*”. The blend produces a higher quality, lower cost feed and has proven to be a positive financial investment for Mr. Bocoum. Despite processing 4,000 metric tons of animal feed annually, the mill cannot keep up herder demand. Mr. Bocoum is one of the few private companies continuing to ship animal feed to the northern regions of Mali and has been spotted by Red Cross and World Food Program as a possible rice and feed supplier.

*“USAID’s support for developing our business plan and purchasing new equipment was instrumental in our growth”,* said Mr. Bocoum who continues to look for new and innovative ways to expand his business, lower his costs and streamline his activities. Mr. Bocoum’s success illustrates how private sector initiatives, with proper investment and support, are the drivers of a food secure Mali.