Senegal Farmer Networks Respond to COVID-19

A Summary of Ongoing Research
Farmer-led Value Chain Networks

- Seed multiplication and distribution
- Input procurement
- Credit facilitation and crop insurance
- Extension advice
- Field and harvest mechanization
- Crop marketing
- Real-time climate data information
- Digital membership tracking

How will they respond to COVID-19?

Naatal Mbay Notes: Available at www.ipar.sn and dec.usaid.gov
Leveraging Networks for COVID-related Research

- 4 networks
- 3 regions
- July - November
- Sample size: 800
- 25 network field agents
- Digital data collection
- Virtual coordination and trainings
- Comparative analysis with previous year data
- COVID-19 household response survey
- Network leadership focus groups
Facing Two Concurrent Shocks

2019 Rainy Season
- Farmers entered COVID-19 with lower household grain stocks
- Increase in unpaid loan balances
- Lower yields and lower marketable surplus

COVID-19
- Barriers creating food shortages, disrupting crop marketing, and increasing price of lean season purchases
- Pressure to divert seed stocks to food
- Limited network interactions impeding preparation for 2020 season
- Constraints on field laborer movements creating higher cost and lower productivity
Farmer Networks Take Charge

- Meeting 2019 contractual commitments
- Negotiating with banks
- Early negotiation with input suppliers
- Allocation of PPE grants
- Distributing short cycle maize and cowpea to rice farmers to reduce lean season
- Maintaining group subscription to the SMS weather service
- Relying on local radio for extension and personal safety messaging
- Ensuring food aid and PPE benefits reach members
- Planning for swift 2020 seed harvest, bagging, and storage to protect seed capital
Farmer Priorities for 2021

- Rebuild and diversify the seed capital for traditional crops
- Promote short cycle maize, sorghum, and cowpea
- Diversify into off-season horticulture to spread production calendar
- Tighten “at-risk” harvest/loan collection period
- Include unpaid balance securitization in network contracts
- Negotiate firm pre-season contracts with buyers a greater portion of harvest
- Expand internal communication network to collect and transmit data with the membership
Drawing On and Building Social Capital to Adapt and Respond

Networks are:

- Maintaining inclusive, consultative processes with their members while being decisive
- Helping their membership maintain and establish links to private and public resources to respond to the pandemic
- Planning next year’s response and taking measures to support disadvantaged groups and protect productive assets
Next Steps

- Networks will analyze their COVID-19 surveys to test their assumptions about their responses.
- Networks will adapt their strategies to provide and advocate for more targeted support to their most vulnerable members.
Thank you! Come hear more during SEEP 2020!