

Farmer Research Networks: Women's Fields 2012-2017



START HERE

Collaborations with emphasis on farmer participation

"Our relationship with scientists has improved; our ideas, concerns and our knowledge are now much more taken into consideration"
Hádjara Oumarou, Vice President of FUMA Gaskiya

Integrate farmer knowledge into the research process

Context

- A survey on the daily time allotments (n=45, 3 sites) shows that men work 8 hrs/day and women 14 hrs. **Time-saving management options** (such as partial weeding) can help women.
- In Niger, **soils are mostly sandy** and nutrient deficient. Farmers use fertilizers to mitigate the limiting elements of nitrogen and phosphorus in millet production. However, fertilizers are often not affordable or accessible to farmers, especially to **women who cultivate less fertile land usually located far from the village.**

Make the research process empowering: build social, technical, and methodological capital through the farmer-research co-creation process



Networked datasets reveal useful patterns of performance

2014: Urine trials showed that the benefit of urine can range from 0 to 300 kg/ha **depending on site and soil type.**
2015: **Partial weeding**, or only doing the 1st weeding, and removing them only before they set seed, has been shown advantageous in terms of **time gains and protection of young seedlings** against early season **sand storms.**

Link social and technical inquiry



Analysis of larger datasets provides better understanding of options by contexts

2015: Trials to test different combinations of organic fertilization and weeding on millet production was conducted by 81 women in 3 villages.

- In 1 village the combination of organic manure/urine and partial weeding was highest yielding followed by that of organic manure/urine and complete weeding, which was the highest for the other 2 villages, soil types and social classes.
- Older women without help obtained the highest yield** for all treatments followed by older women with help. The reason might be that younger women with kids are busier. For older women with help, the work may not be properly done by the helpers who are not well supervised.

 2017: Development of **App** to refine farmer **typologies** + streamline trial protocols = 1,655 farmers **conducting** 2655 tests belonging to 212 farmer organizations.

Rural organization form a collective infrastructure -> grassroots research capacity

The FUMA Gaskiya federation is made up of 21 unions that aggregate 420 local farmers organizations totalling **12,131 members**, among them 6,665 women. They have worked with the CCRP since 2006 on participatory research in **collaboration** with other projects and leading their **own** projects.

Ensure genuine collaborative engagement

Gender

Increased use of contextually appropriate options by farmers

2015:

- Women said they **spend 2-3 times less time** using partial instead of complete weeding.
- Women **add urine to compost**
- They liked the urine technology because it is easier to get **without spending money, and produces fast growth.**
- It was observed that **worm attacks at millet fields were reduced after the application of urine.**

Inclusion: convene diverse stakeholders

Other actors inspired and FRNs spread

2016: 3-day **women-to-women exchange visit** (n=420) discussed **access to land, position of women** in society.

- 6 open days** (n=450): co-learning between farmers, researchers, extension agents, **traditional rulers and politicians.**
- 6 broadcasts** of 3 **radio** scripts by women groups -> share with other farmers

West Africa Community of Practice



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