



Alatona Irrigation Project: Overcoming Challenges to Make Resettlement a Tool for Sustainable Development

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PLAN

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I. Introduction



PIA (projet d'irrigation d'Alatona):

- ❑ Objective: Increase agricultural production by irrigation of 21,000 ha in an undeveloped part of the Office du Niger (ON) irrigation system.
- ❑ First of three tranches: 5200 ha financed by Millennium Challenge Corporation and implemented by Millénium Challenge Account Mali (MCA).
- ❑ Resettlement (of all tranches) affects traditional lands of 33 villages in northern Mali, where rainfed agriculture is precarious and often not successful.
- ❑ Project allows for new immigrants (called NA or new arrivals)

Les périmètres de l'Office du Niger



II. Project Activities

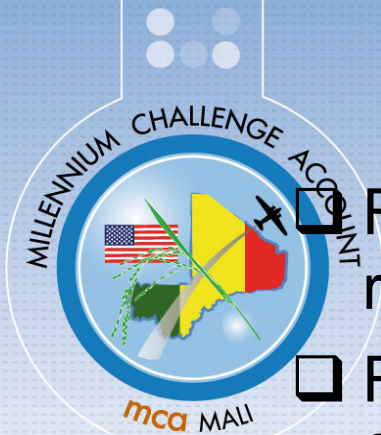


- Improving capacity and flow of the main canal system serving the Office du Niger
- Attribution of lands with private title to provide land security, breaking new ground
- Resettlement (including new villages and new housing), social infrastructure (schools, health facilities, wells, latrines...)
- Agricultural Services: training, assistance, starter kits with tools, seed and fertilizer, support to form producer cooperatives, women's cooperatives and water organizations
- Financial Services to provide agricultural credit



III . Socioeconomic Context

- Population has poor income; social and economic services are weak (or non-existent).
- Villagers live at a subsistence level – no NGO and little government support.
- 44 % of the population is less than 15 years old.
- 70% have no education – 29% have attended Koranic school.
- Most of the Peulh population are livestock herders with some farming and seasonal work in other irrigation areas.
- 33 villages of about 800 concessions (8000 people) must move



- ❑ Resettlement follows World Bank OP 4.12; donor requires use of international practice.
- ❑ Resettlement Action Plan (RAP), approved in 2008, is implemented by MCA with assistance of a private consultant (AECOM).
- ❑ Users of affected land become project beneficiaries.
- ❑ Implementation faces many challenges:
 - Logistics (moving people before doing construction and not possible in the rainy season);
 - Needs for training and assistance to PAPs (very few can read or write);
 - Respect for environment;
 - Remote location -- no roads, only paths.





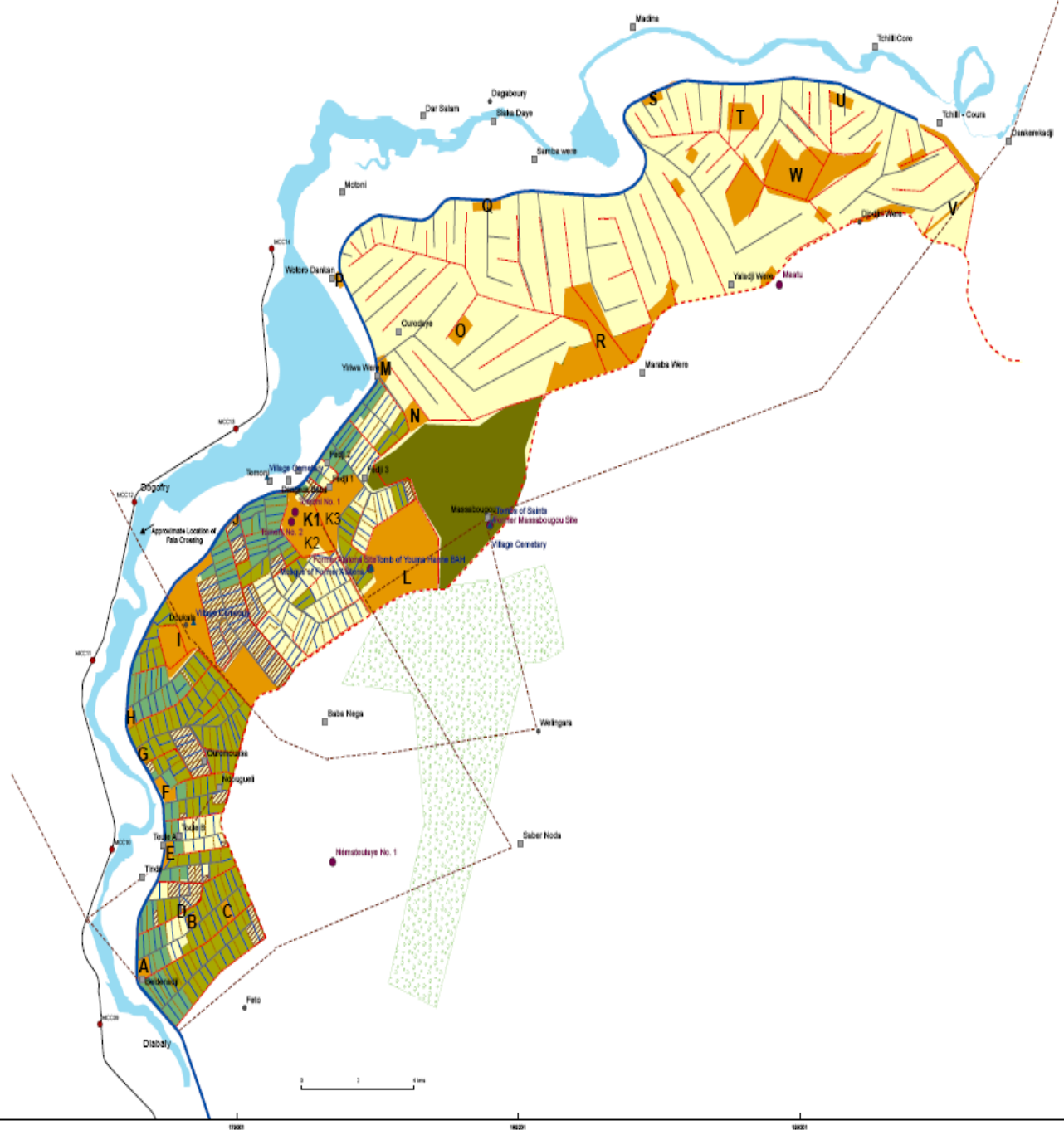


IV. Benefits to PAPs

- RAP provides for improved housing and social conditions:
 - New house, latrine for each concession;
 - Monetary compensation for outbuildings, animal enclosures, and porches;
 - Women's market gardens (500 m²) to increase women's income and improve family nutrition;
 - Access to schools, health centers, potable water, markets, warehouses; and
 - Tombs, cemeteries and sacred sites respected.



The RAP defines village locations and new parcels of land along irrigation canals to mimic villages' relationship to each other, prior to resettlement.











□ RAP offers Economic Rehabilitation:

- Land with secure property titles
 - 2 ha as compensation, 1 single crop and 1 double crop
 - 3 ha single crop land to purchase at low price with 20-year mortgage
- Three agricultural starter kits
 - Rainy season rice: Pair of oxen, fertilizer, seed, plow, harrow, wheelbarrow, sacks for the harvest, costs for extra labor
 - Double cropping dry season: Seed and fertilizer for 1 ha of shallots and harvesting sacks
 - Market garden: seed, fertilizer, baskets, hoes, pails and harvesting sacks
- Production system with less risks and initial deposit in microcredit organizations



IV. Challenges

- Logistical and timing problems
 - Moving PAPs while building the works is necessary to complete project by Compact end (September 2012) – all in the same place at the same time.
 - Phased parcel allocation and resettlement to allow PAPs to resettle and plant at the right time:
 - 1000 ha and 197 PAPs resettled by June 2010
 - 2400 ha and remaining 606 PAPs resettled by May 2011
 - 1600 ha by October 2011
 - Stake out and bound parcels, allocate by lottery and attribute to each PAP concession -- in rhythm with agricultural calendar, but some planting occurred late anyway.

A Race Against Time



- Complete resettlement housing sites: construct houses, latrines, wells, warehouses, schools, & markets; plant trees and windbreaks.
- Move the PAPs to resettlement zones.
- Some must move to new villages in 2010 so land development can continue, but crop parcels not ready, so allocate “rental” land for new arrivals (who have not arrived).
- RAP required trees to be cleared and stockpiled for use as firewood for cooking [some stolen by people outside zone or burned by the construction contractor].
- Distribute the starter kits so planting can occur [80 out of 197 were delivered late]







More Challenges



■ Training and Support

- Train members of 800 concessions, most of whom are pastoralists, in how to plant, how to use fertilizer, how to sell products;
- Assist in establishing producer organisations (cooperatives) and women's groups for market gardens, with a mostly illiterate population attached to traditional ways of life.
- Put in place structures and train staff to manage and operate the community irrigation works.







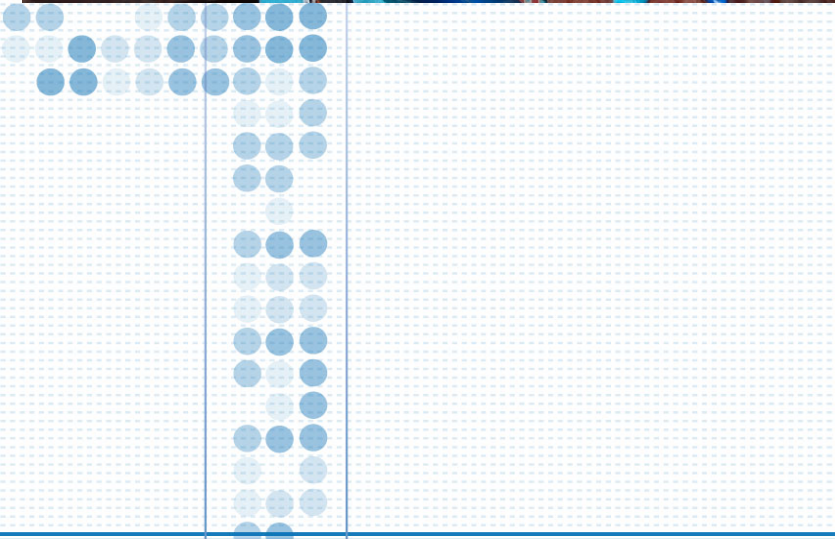
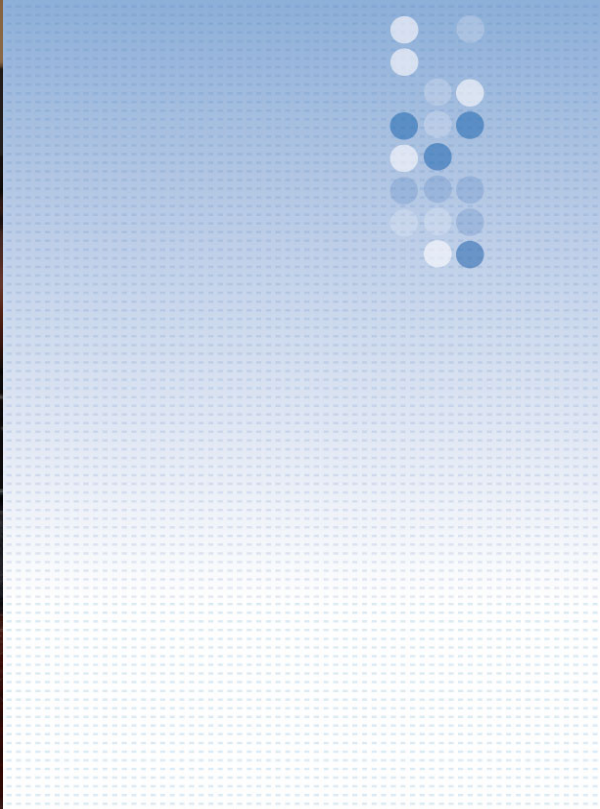






V. Conclusion

- Prior to the project, the population had no services and meager income, but hoped to benefit from the project.
- Project made the PAPs beneficiaries.
- Agro-pastoral and pastoral populations are converting to production of irrigated rice .
- Rice yields up to 7 tons per ha and about 4 tons per ha for two-thirds of the concessions.
- Women heads of households are among the top producers
- As of end May 2011, all 33 villages resettled.
- Children attending school for the first time.





□ A villager quote

After 13 years of travel, which took me to Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Cameroon, Mauritania and Equatorial Guinea, to do whatever work I could get -- watchman, street seller, cook, and driver, it is only with the Alatona Project that I understood that development had arrived at my very own doorstep. I decided in 2009 to settle back here and grab hold of it.

Oumar Diallo and his rice from the 2010-2011 season



Lessons Learned



- A good plan – a high quality RAP – is key.
- Development takes longer on the ground than what is planned in a document.
 - Delays in contracts and in civil works
 - Strikes and security issues
 - Works do not always “work” right
 - Bureaucracy is slow to adapt to project ideas
 - Changes require consultations with the PAPs
- Resettlement implementation must adapt:
 - Resettlement requires many spare tires (literally and figuratively)
- Alatona’s resettlement has set the standard for good resettlement in Mali, but created a dilemma for other projects with less money!