

## Africa RISING in West Africa: Sustainable intensification of crop-livestock farming systems in the Guinea Savannah zone

The Guinea and Sudano savannah zone of West Africa is dominated by small-holder farmers who depend mostly on rain-fed crop, livestock, and crop–livestock farming systems. Main staple crops are cereals (maize, rice, sorghum, pearl millet), legumes (groundnut, cowpea, soybean, Bambara nut, pigeon pea), and vegetables (roselle, okra, pepper) grown in pure stands or mixtures. Trees and shrubs are used for food, feed, and soil conservation.

Cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, chicken, guinea fowl, turkeys, and ducks are reared for meat, milk, land preparation, transport, manure, and cash under extensive and semi-intensive systems with limited feed, shelter, health care, and breeding management. Farmers have limited access to veterinary services, and improved livestock breeds.

Diets of farm households are often dominated by staple foods which are deficient in micronutrients resulting in poor nutritional status, especially among pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, and children below 24 months of age.

Farmers have limited access to input and output markets, and enabling institutions and policies are also lacking. Traditional knowledge sharing methods are inadequate, leading to lack of information on improved technologies and best-bet agricultural practices, especially among women.

**Table 1:** Africa RISING intervention countries, regions and districts

Country	Region	District
Ghana	Northern	Tolon, Savelugu
	Upper East	Bongo, Kassena
	Upper West	Nadowli, Wa West
Mali	Sikasso	Bougouni, Koutiala

### Research-for-development focus

In West Africa, the project is building multi-stakeholder partnerships to identify and validate solutions to the above challenges experienced by smallholder crop-livestock farmers.

The research-for-development focus is on:

1. Building research-for-development platforms
2. Economic validation of sustainable intensification technologies
3. Intensification and diversification of crop-livestock farming systems



## Ghana partners

Agricultural Development and Value Chain Enhancement Program (ADVANCE), Agricultural Technology Transfer Project, The World Vegetable Center (AVRDC), International Center for Tropical Agriculture, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), International Water Management Institute, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Ministry of Health, Post-Harvest Losses Innovation Laboratory, Savanna Agricultural Research Institute, Small Scale Irrigation Innovation Laboratory, Wageningen University

## Mali partners

Association Malienne d'Eveil et de Développement Durable, Afrique Verte, World Agroforestry Center, International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-arid Tropics, Institut d'Economie Rurale, International Livestock Research Institute, World Vegetable Center, International Food Policy Research Institute, Mouvement Biologique du Mali and Compagnie Malienne de Développement des Textiles.



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The Africa Research In Sustainable Intensification for the Next Generation (Africa RISING) program comprises three research-for-development projects supported by the United States Agency for International Development as part of the U.S. government's Feed the Future initiative.

Through action research and development partnerships, Africa RISING will create opportunities for smallholder farm households to move out of hunger and poverty through sustainably intensified farming systems that improve food, nutrition, and income security, particularly for women and children, and conserve or enhance the natural resource base.

The three projects are led by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (in West Africa and East and Southern Africa) and the International Livestock Research Institute (in the Ethiopian Highlands). The International Food Policy Research Institute leads an associated project on monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment.

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