



Support to two students enrolled in a PhD program in Africa

Technical and financial support is available for two students enrolled in a PhD program in Africa to work on key research topics in Mali

About AfricaRice

AfricaRice is a leading Pan – African rice research organization committed to improving the livelihoods in Africa through strong science and effective partnerships. AfricaRice is one of the 15 international agricultural research centers that are members of the CGIAR System Organization (CSO). It is also an Intergovernmental association of African member countries. Its membership comprises 28 countries with headquarters in Côte d'Ivoire.

Project

The Africa Rice Center leads in Mali the project “Scaling Gender-Equitable System of Rice Intensification (SRI) in Mali: A One Health Approach for Resilient Rice Systems and Improved Nutrition and Malaria Outcomes”. The goal of this project is to catalyze the widespread and gender-inclusive adoption of SRI among Malian smallholder farming communities in Segou, Sikasso and Koulikoro (more than 60% of the country’s rice production comes from these regions).

In Mali, rice is a crucial staple and income source for smallholder farming households. However, conventional flooded cultivation faces challenges like low yields, excessive water use, and pest/disease susceptibility - exacerbated by climate change impacts like droughts and increased pest pressures. The System of Rice Intensification (SRI), an agroecological approach co-developed in Madagascar, offers a sustainable alternative comprising practices like younger seedling transplanting, soil aeration, and alternate wetting/drying (AWD). Despite SRI's potential, scaling SRI adoption among Malian smallholders, especially women facing educational barriers, encounters socio-economic and cultural obstacles. This research investigates strategies to promote widespread SRI uptake, examining gender dynamics influencing household adoption decisions and the role of digital platforms like Rice Advice in disseminating information.

While SRI agronomic benefits are well-researched, knowledge gaps remain around gender dynamics in technology adoption contexts like Mali, quantifying nutrition and health impacts, and strategies for equitable, gender-responsive scaling through tailored policies and support systems. This research aims to fill these critical gaps, generating evidence to inform initiatives that harness SRI's potential for building sustainable, health-promoting, climate-resilient, and gender-equitable rice production systems in Mali.

Technical and financial support is available for two students already enrolled in a PhD program in an African University to work on the following key research topics in Mali. Students are expected to collaborate and support each other, but each selected Ph.D. student will focus on one of the below research topics:

1. **Topic 1:** Determinants of adoption of SRI combined with Climate Information Services (CIS), and evidence on gender dynamics influencing SRI and CIS adoption decisions within smallholder household contexts in Mali to inform tailored, gender-responsive strategies to promote equitable SRI uptake.
2. **Topic 2:** Evaluate the multidimensional impacts of SRI adoption on key outcomes like food and nutrition security, and malaria incidence.

Position

Technical and financial support will be provided to each selected student for one year with a possibility of extension following excellent performance. The financial support will cover research costs including the per diem during the field activities, and regional travel.

The students should already be enrolled in a Ph.D. program at one of the graduate schools of an African University. Tuition fees will not be provided as part of the financial support.

The students will be hosted by AfricaRice during the research and training. The successful candidates are expected to start on 01 April 2025.

Qualifications

- Be already enrolled in a PhD program at an African University;
- Proven qualifications in advanced use of statistical methods (econometric analysis and rigorous impact assessment techniques such as the use of Randomized Controlled Trials Approach (RCT)).
- Excellent analytical skills preferably demonstrated through previous research or work experience (e.g. MSc thesis, peer-reviewed papers, reports)
- Proficient in English and French
- Ability and willingness to work in an international team of researchers.
- Ability and willingness to travel to Segou, Sikasso and Koulikoro regions of Mali
- Good writing skill in English is an advantage
- Evidence of previous publications in quality peer-reviewed journals is an advantage

Eligibility

- The candidate must hold a passport from one of the 28 member states of AfricaRice. See the AfricaRice website for the list of countries.
- The candidate should have already been enrolled in a PhD program in an African University.

Application procedure

Candidates should submit the following documents as pdf file(s):

- 1) Evidence of enrolment in a PhD program at an African University
- 2) Motivation letter stipulating the motivation for conducting research on the selected topic by the candidate;
- 3) Curriculum vitae, concise and focusing on relevant work experience, publications, and scientific engagement;
- 4) Recommendation letter, provided by the candidate's PhD supervisor;
- 5) University transcripts, detailing BSc and MSc degrees.

How to apply

1. To apply, send the documents above in a single e-mail to: l.dalie@cgiar.org
2. Put "**PhD research supported by McKnight project in Mali**" as the subject of the e-mail

AfricaRice promotes equal opportunities and believes that the diversity of its staff contributes to excellence. We thank all candidates, but only shortlisted candidates will be contacted. For more information on AfricaRice, please visit our website at: **www.AfricaRice.org**.

Closing date: **14 March 2025**