



Wealth, if  
you use it,  
comes to an  
end.

Learning, if  
you use it,  
increases.

*-Swahili Proverb*



**Agile International**  
Growing food, nourishing minds, flourishing culture.

# What issues is Agile International addressing?

The nation of Mali in West Africa is challenged by a number of social problems: diminished food supply, the unequal status of women, a slow erosion of culture, and limited educational opportunities. The key to making positive changes on all these fronts is through food, and that's where Agile International is poised to make solid contributions.

## Mali & Food

- ✓ This is a nation that can and should have an abundance of food for its population. The Niger River, one of West Africa's major rivers, provides irrigation for Mali's vast agricultural lands.
- ✓ Mali's fertile farmland has drawn the interest of international investors who have procured huge tracts of land to use for production of exportable food commodities.
- ✓ Small farmers who have been the backbone of Mali's food supply are losing their farms because ancestral residence on these lands predates laws of ownership and land titles. More land is now owned by fewer people. Without their lands, farmers are limited to working as employees of large farming companies and have to purchase food from other sources.

## Sustainability

- ✓ Traditional sustainable farming practices and seed stocks are being lost as westernized higher yield practices have been adopted. Not all of the new practices have succeeded in Mali's environment and the exposure to introduced pesticides has been harmful.
- ✓ Reliance on imported hybridized seeds has altered the economics of small farmers, reducing their income and their ability to provide for their families.

## Women

- ✓ While women form the vast majority of agricultural workers in Mali, traditional rules prevent them from owning lands. If a woman is divorced or her husband passes away, she loses access to the land she has been working to provide for her family.
- ✓ Improving the opportunities for women in Mali will result in their direct contribution to community development.
- ✓ Increased girls' education, decreased teen pregnancy, decreased school drop out rates and decreased early marriage. It is a key component to reducing poverty, increasing educational levels, and strengthening families.

## Education

- ✓ While education for all Mali children is free through the 9th grade, the lack of money for supplies needed to tend to their studies prevents many Malian children from completing their education. Only 15% of children move on to secondary schools.
- ✓ The majority of children in Mali stop attending school by age 12, limiting their skill levels, reducing their potential, which inhibits their economic advancement.
- ✓ Education rates for girls are much lower than for boys, leaving women with fewer opportunities when they are looking for work.



## Our Mission

Agile International's mission is to return Western Africa to food abundance by empowering local women farmers and restoring the cultural wisdom that underlies traditional sustainable agriculture. We seek to break free from the endless cycle of foreign aid and food imports by producing nutritious food, generating enough income to support and educate children, and preserving the cultures and customs that create strong families and communities.



# How will Agile International address these problems?



## **Procure land.**

Agile International procures plots of farmland and provides women with access to these lands to produce their own food and generate revenue to care for their families.

## **Empower Women.**

Agile aims to vertically integrate its business model so women farmers will sell their produce to women-owned restaurants, spawning a new generation of women entrepreneurs in a nation where women's rights have lagged due to social traditions.

## **Advance education.**

A key piece of Agile International's mission is to promote education by giving more families the means to pay their children's school expenses. We will foster a culture of equal access to education as a means of improving economic opportunity.

## **Make it sustainable.**

In a strategic partnership with the Department of Agricultural Science at Colorado State University will instruct Malian farmers in the latest agricultural techniques to improve crop and livestock yields.

## **Pay it forward.**

Each Malian farmer will help instruct 10 other farmers about how to implement these agricultural methods on their own land to improve their crop and livestock yields.

## **Spread the word.**

This model program is designed to expand so that hundreds of rural communities in Mali, and the surrounding countries in West Africa, would directly benefit from this innovative and practical program.

# Who does Agile International partner with?

## From the USA:

- **Dr. Kraig Peel**, from the Department of Agricultural Science at Colorado State University (CSU), in Fort Collins, Colorado who has a passion and expertise for sustainable agricultural development in the United States and West Africa. CSU's graduate students will teach farmers how to combine traditional and modern sustainable agricultural practices that will improve yields without having to rely on expensive imported fertilizers, pesticides, or patented biotech seeds that farmers must repurchase each year.
- **Carl Hammerdorfer**, Executive Director of the Center for Advanced and Sustainable Enterprise (CASE) at Colorado State University. Mr. Hammerdorfer has been in this program since 1988 which largely focuses on developing countries. Both Dr. Peel and Mr. Hammerdorfer have been to Mali and are familiar with this dry land.
- Henry (Hank) DeBey, Owner & Founder of **Wings for Farmers**. To provide clean energy transportation, Agile International (AI) has partnered with Wings For Farmers which uses Wind Powered Aircraft, called Levopters, which derive their power from wind differentials. No fuel is needed and no greenhouse gases are emitted. Levopters extract power from the ever-present differences in winds at different altitudes. Levopters will be deployed in Mali to provide

affordable air services to African farmers so they can increase their profits by transporting their crops to distant, more lucrative markets.

- AI is a member of **Colorado Coalition for Africa Empowerment (CCAIE)**. This group is comprised of 10 Colorado based NGOs, who operates in 19 African countries. CCAIE has a combined experience of over 100 years and ensure that its members are in compliance with the "best practices" being used today.
- We have partnered with a SCORE volunteer and counselor, **Michael Chesnut**. Mr. Chesnut is a 35-year veteran Associate Director in Beauty Care from Proctor & Gamble and has been mentoring non profit organizations for 11 years. SCORE's work is supported by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and has been in existence for nearly 50 years.

## From Mali, West Africa:

- AI is working in conjunction with **GRIDAC**, a local NGO to educate women in the prevention and treatment of HIV/Aids and to promote women's reproductive health.
- AI has also partnered with **CAFO**, another local NGO head of local women's associations to assist AI continuous effort in mobilizing women and the community at large for a successful achievement of AI's mission.



Founder Fatoumata Doumbia

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