

ISSUES AND REPORTING FORMAT OF THE FOOD GRAIN PRODUCTION
TECHNOLOGY VERIFICATION PROJECT.

338.1

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INTRODUCTION

This report highlights the results of the "Food Grain Production Technology Verification Project" whose activities were implemented in eight countries through the financial assistance of the African Development Bank. The project has enhanced on-farm verification trials involving farmers, and extension development agents through "research-extension-interphase" activities.

The main objectives of this project are:

- i) To narrow the "yield gap" of the performance of technologies between on-station and on-farmers' field, which has been one of the missing links prior to enhancing the adoption of improved crop production innovations. The project is intended to speed up the process of transforming research results into extension recommendation and production.
- ii) To promote and forge linkages between on-station and on-farm technology verification trials so that broad technological options are delivered to the farmer. Consequently, the extension agents would have easy access not only to technology, but also would acquire updated information and technical knowledge about the particular innovation being promoted for adoption. Concurrently, researchers, through such a "research-extension-interphase" activity could receive direct feedback information on the performance of a particular technology (at early stage).
- iii) To facilitate the delivery of technological options that could minimize risks of crop failures due to environmental and socio-economic constraints.

Table 1. Project sites, farmers' participation and number of technological options evaluated in the eight participating countries

Country	Project Sites (villages)	Number of farmers managing trials			Farmers with access to trials	Technological options verified
		1990	1991	1992		
Burkina Faso	12 CRPA districts	197	509	112	32,000	3
Cameroon	15	20	25	25	50,000	4
Ghana	32	70	70	650 ⁺	10,000	4
Mali	25	NA	19	25	40,000	2
Niger	2	10	15	NA	2,000	5
Nigeria	9	NA	30	73	20,000	4
Senegal	30	30	50	80	50,000	4
Togo	5	100	150	215	6,000	2
TOTAL	130	427	868	1180	210,000	28

Source - (Ref. 1, 6 and 10)

NA - Not Available

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1.0. ISSUES THAT INFLUENCE PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS.

Specific achievements of the project activities in participating countries seem to vary considerably. Some of the important elements that influenced success of the project activities in the respective sites are:

- (i) Simplicity of the on-farm trials design - the main purpose being to effectively demonstrate that the technology under consideration not only could increase yield but also could be advantageous to farmers. In general, project design in most of the participating countries need to be simplified focusing on few factors.
- (ii) Appropriateness of technologies.
Farmers' opinions and participation in assessing the appropriateness of technology is crucial. Researchers, extension workers and farmers should meet not only to plan on-farm trials activities, but also to review results of previous seasons. A clear cut set of criteria which combines technical feasibility with socio-economic feasibility (i.e., social benefits and economic returns) need to be carried out to determine the appropriateness of particular technology.
- (iii) Adequacy of research.
Technologies included in verification trials under the project should go through adequate periods of testing on-station and multilocation trials. Multidisciplinary research team should be involved at various levels of experimentation and analysis of trials. Socio-economic evaluation should be conducted to determine the cost effectiveness and feasibility of the technology and its acceptance.
- (iv) Access of technology to farmers.
Farmers can be exposed directly (those involved in managing trials) and indirectly to the verification trials.
 - (a) Individual versus group approach: The group approach has proved to be an effective means of directly involving many farmers at the same time.

The SAFGRAD Technology Verification Project.

- Choice of technologies for verification.
 - . criteria.
 - . history of research on the technologies.
 - . evidence of yield and economic advantage of new technology over farmers practice.
 - . the number (or percentage) of farmers affected by the problem which the technology is proposed as solution.

- Number of years of testing at verification stage.
 - . trial distribution.
 - . number of testing sites (fields) for each trial type.
 - . number of treatments and replications per site.
 - . number of field days per site.
 - . number of farmers involved directly and indirectly.

- Extension involvement.
- For each trial:
 - . objectives.
 - . Methodology (materials and methods).
 - . Results: agronomic, statistical economic.

- Conclusion.

Researchers decision (i.e. to continue, discontinue or recommend, and the reasons).

1985

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