

Projected Impact



Establish a new West African global value chain for fonio, with Mali as the epicenter.



Result in 2,400 metric tons per year of new exports by the end of the 2.5-year project, with a value of more than \$5 million.



Create a market for 13,714 farmers in Mali, and \$4.5 million in smallholder sales.



Yolélé's snacks made from fonio, including fonio chips, will make their way into more U.S. households through the Mali Shi/Yolélé partnership with the Trade Hub. Photo credit: Yolélé

About Mali Shi

[Mali Shi](#) is a Malian agro-processor that is part of the OMNIUM Mali Group, an industrial conglomerate operating in Mali for more than 20 years. Its mission is to transform local raw materials into value-added agricultural products through sustainable partnerships with rural production organizations. Through these partnerships, Mali Shi is committed to participating in the rural and socio-economic development of communities. Partnering with Mali Shi in this project is [Yolélé](#), a U.S. company founded in 2017 to create economic opportunity for smallholder farming communities and share Africa's ingredients and cuisines with the world.

Co-Investment Partnership

The USAID-funded West Africa Trade & Investment Hub (Trade Hub) awarded a \$1,985,087 co-investment grant, made possible through [Prosper Africa](#), to Mali Shi to organize a fonio supply chain that meets international best practices and establishes direct linkages to U.S. commercial markets for all fonio products produced through the project. The project will result in 2,400 metric tons per year of new exports by the end of the 2.5-year project, with a value of more than \$5 million. The project will leverage an additional \$11.6 million from private sources to create 13,714 agricultural jobs, particularly among women, and \$4.5 million in smallholder sales.

Partnership Opportunities

Growing awareness of and demand for ancient and heritage grains and their associated health benefits are creating new market opportunities for fonio, a nutritious but underutilized grain consumed mostly in West Africa. Due to the grain's nutritional density, *Wall Street Journal* and *Cooking Light* named fonio as a new superfood, a market that is expected to grow nearly 6 percent by 2025. In addition, the global market for gluten-free food, including fonio, is expected to expand from \$3.73 billion in 2019 to \$6.43 billion in 2025. This project will establish the United States as the #1 market for fonio and West Africa Sahel as the #1 producer and processor. Beyond its nutritional benefits, fonio also yields significant opportunities to generate jobs and income in West Africa, particularly amongst women.



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