

**Project Title:** "Breeding cowpea (*Vigna unguiculata* (L.) Walp.) for resistance to biotic stress for Mali's agro-ecological zones"

**Institute:** Institut d'Economie Rurale (IER), Mali

**Funding Period:** April 2009 – December 2021

**Summary:** The IER project started back in 2009 under the leadership of the late Dr Mamadou Touré. Dr Sory Diallo took over as PI in 2016 and the project came to an end in 2021. The project commenced with trials of new *Striga* resistant lines produced at IER. The four most popular varieties (Korobalen, Sangaraka, Djiguiya and Cinzana Telimani) were multiplied and disseminated to farmers and have now received certification. In 2016, a further five early and medium maturing *Striga* resistant lines (CZ06-3-1, CZ06-2-17, CZ06-1-05, CZ06-4-16 and CZ06-1-12) were disseminated to farmers and sent for certification and release in the national and ECOWAS seed catalogues.

With KT's funding, IER have now developed a further five early maturing (CZ16-6-56, CZ16-1-1-147, CZ16-2-1-15, CZ16-3-1-71, CZ16-1-1-91 and M'Barawa) and five medium maturing *Striga* resistant lines (CZ16-3-2-11, CZ16-2-2-8, CZ16-3-2-37, CZ16-3-2-48, and CZ16-3-2-42), so they could take part in advance yield trials; and an additional four early maturing (KT2-26-9, KT2-12-6 and KT1-44-4) and 3 medium maturing (KT2-23-3, KT2-23-8 and KT1-26-9) *Striga* resistant lines to undergo farm trials. The best performing of these lines are expected to be selected for release. Research conducted by the Dr Sory Diallo for his PhD showed that one region (Koporo, Mopti) has a different race of *Striga* to the other regions of Mali, which have Race 2. Dr Diallo identified a source of resistance to *Striga* Race 2 (IT97KD-499-35) and SSR markers associated with that resistance. Using these markers, the resistance allele was introgressed in to two local varieties (Amary-Sho and M'Barawa) and these lines were advanced to undergo trials for their release.

The cowpea improvement lab at IER, fully powered by solar power, was funded by the Kirkhouse Trust.



Field of a new, early maturing, *Striga* resistant variety (Acar 1) developed by IER, Mali

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