

## **Kita Mali**

### **SYNOPSIS**

*Water shortage in Kita, a small agricultural town in Mali, has hampered cotton production and so, the Malian government has embarked on a project to revitalise the area, including the building of five dikes.*

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### **SCRIPT**

#### **COMMENTARY**

170 kilometers West of Bamako, capital of Mali. We are in Kita, a small provincial town with 4,000 inhabitants. Here, as elsewhere in Africa, people owe their survival to agriculture. 20 years ago the one time capital of groundnut production switched to cotton and soon became a major producer. But water shortages are now jeopardising cotton production. In 2004 the Ministry of Agriculture launched P.D.R.I.K - a programme to develop the Kita region and find a way out of the crisis. Agronomist, Siné Konaté, has been running the project from the start.

#### **ITV, SINÉ KONATÉ, AGRONOMIST**

*«The aim of PDRIK is to promote development in the Kita region by increasing agricultural production. The keystone of this project is irrigation. Here at the Ministry of Agriculture we have to stimulate agricultural production. We have to cope with an unpredictable climate and we depend on rainwater for irrigation. We need better management of our water resources if we are going to make the most of our land and the efforts made by producers. »*

## **COMMENTARY**

111 villages and more than 80,000 inhabitants are concerned. The village of Niantanso, a hundred kilometers from Kita, is one of the main beneficiaries of the government programme. Two dikes have been built at a cost of \$8,800 to regulate irrigation.

## **ITV, FAMAKA AWA DEMBELÉ – HEAD OF THE PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

*«The dike over there holds back the water. Before, the rain would run off irrigating just a small surface area. Now we have the dike the water is held back».*

## **ITV, DIKE MANAGER**

*«Now the paddy fields are irrigated the rice can complete its cycle. The rice must be immersed for at least 60 days. With the dikes we now have over 60 days' supply. Before the rainwater would come and go in a couple of hours now it is held back for days, even months, on the paddy fields and the rice can finish growing. »*

## **COMMENTARY**

Rice cultivation is a priority : fertilizer is sold for less and producers have access to more tools. Everything possible is done to intensify production.

## **ITV, WAREHOUSE KEEPER**

*«This sowing machine was donated by the PDRIK. It is far quicker than sowing by hand : now we can cover half a hectare a day. Before it would take 4 or 5 people, 2 to 3 days to cover the same area.»*

## **COMMENTARY**

Production has considerably increased and the villagers are finally managing to get by.

## **ITV, BAMANKA TRAORÉ – PRESIDENT OF THE VILLAGE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION**

*«A lot has changed in our lives thanks to the project and there have been many improvements... Before farming was complicated but now the dike is in place it is easier to get things done. »*

**ITV, FAMAKA AWA DEMBELÉ – PRESIDENT OF THE PDRIK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

*«Until now a hectare of land would not even yield 500 kilos. Now with PDRIK we have different varieties that are better adapted to conditions here. We appreciate that. »*

**COMMENTARY**

The project is all the more appreciated as it has led to the construction of about 20 schools and 10 health care centres known as CESCO.

**ITV, MRS TOURÉ DIAKITÉ – OBSTETRICIAN**

*«I deal with pre-natal consultations, deliveries and check-ups for the children. Before the CESCO, people had to go as far as Kita for the nearest clinic. Some of the older women here are midwives. »*

**COMMENTARY**

But the picture is not quite as rosy as it seems: this health care centre is not actually at Niantasso – it is 45 kilometers away. There is a centre in Niantasso but there is not enough money for equipment. Worse still, just 2 of the 10 centres are fully operational.

*Ambiance*

**COMMENTARY**

In the past 5 years the Ministry of Agriculture has spent \$25 million and just 72 villages out of 111 have benefited from the programme. But with 5 dikes in place and 170 kilometres of new roads to open up the region the project's record is not so bad. However progress can also bring problems – particularly for the environment.

### **ITV, BOKA TRAORÉ**

*«When you open up an area like Kita – a region with dense forests 80% of which are protected – there can be negative aspects. When the seasonal harvests are over the peasants turn to forestry – instead of other activities – to survive. There is intensive logging of Ranvier and I would like to see something being done to make sure other market gardening activities and small scale cultivation are available once the ‘rainy season’ is over... this will prevent them over-exploiting Kita’s timber resources. Kita is so beautiful with its forests and woodland and lots of visitors come here. »*

### **COMMENTARY**

For agronomist, Siné Konaté, it is vital to maintain long-term development of the Kita region. Left to their own devices, will the villagers here make good use of the resources they have? Professional training is a key part of the answer....in other words there is still a lot to be done.

### **ITV, SINÉ KONATÉ, AGRONOMIST**

*« A project like this doesn’t last forever. If there are two consecutive phases, continued survival depends on human resources – With training people can find funding themselves. We will not be here forever. »*

**END**