

INTRODUCTION

In sub-Saharan Africa dryland, women are major contributors to the agricultural economy, but face various constraints that limit them from achieving optimal production and agricultural development. We lack evidence on the decision taking and management powers of women when it comes to the issues of household income allocation, livestock and cash crops management and marketing, and water management across countries and ethnic groups in West Africa. The study analyzes the role played and place reserved for women in Mali, Nigeria, Niger and Ghana with special emphasize on who and how decisions are taking about household's non-farm activities, income allocation, livestock and cash crops management and marketing as well as water management.



METHODS

Sex disaggregated data was collected in 520 Households from 6089 individuals from ten sites across Mali (1866), Nigeria (3448), Niger (336) and Ghana (439) through household surveys coupled with focus group discussions across 2 action transect routes : Kano-Katsina-Maradi (KKM between Niger and Nigeria) and Wa-Bobo-Sikasso (WBS between Ghana, Burkina Faso and Mali). Transects were selected to be complementary, with KKM sampling a range of contrasted biophysical conditions, with more homogeneous socio-economic conditions while WBS samples a range of contrasted socio-economic conditions, with more homogeneous biophysical backdrop (Fig. 1)

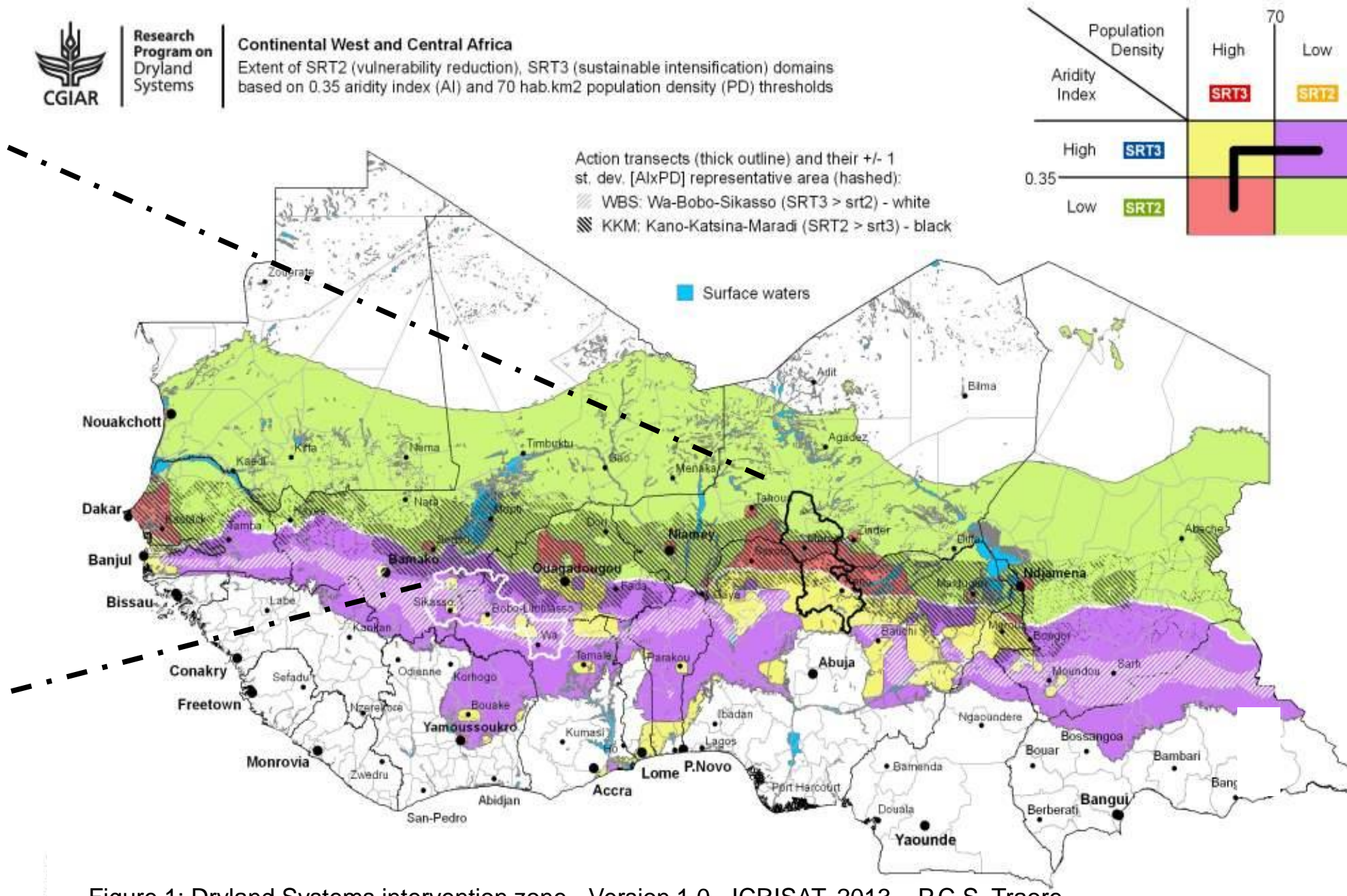
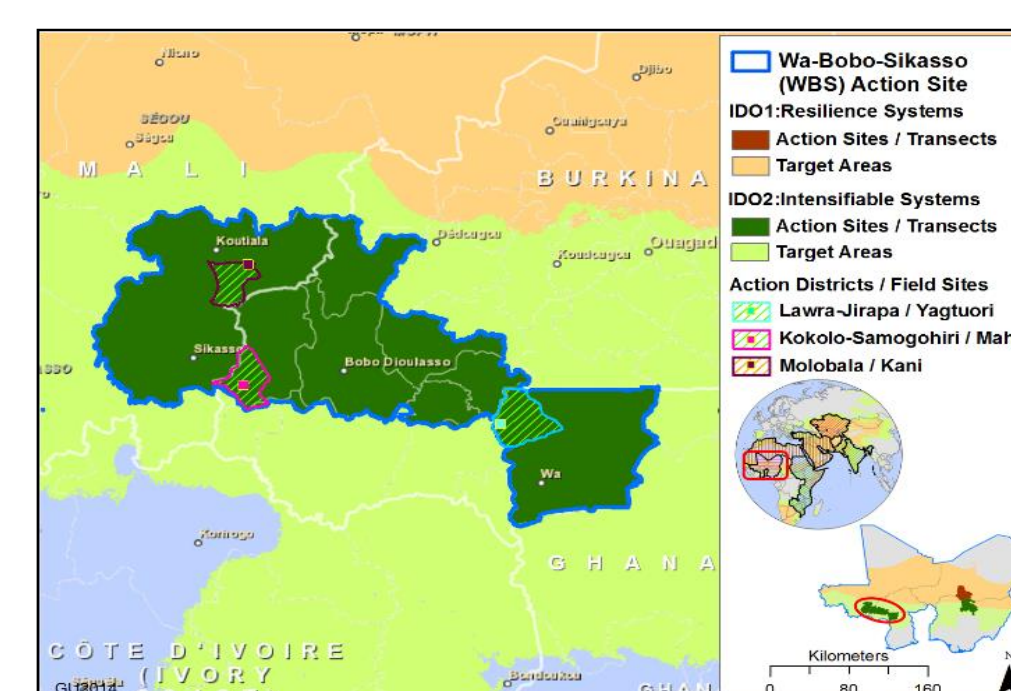
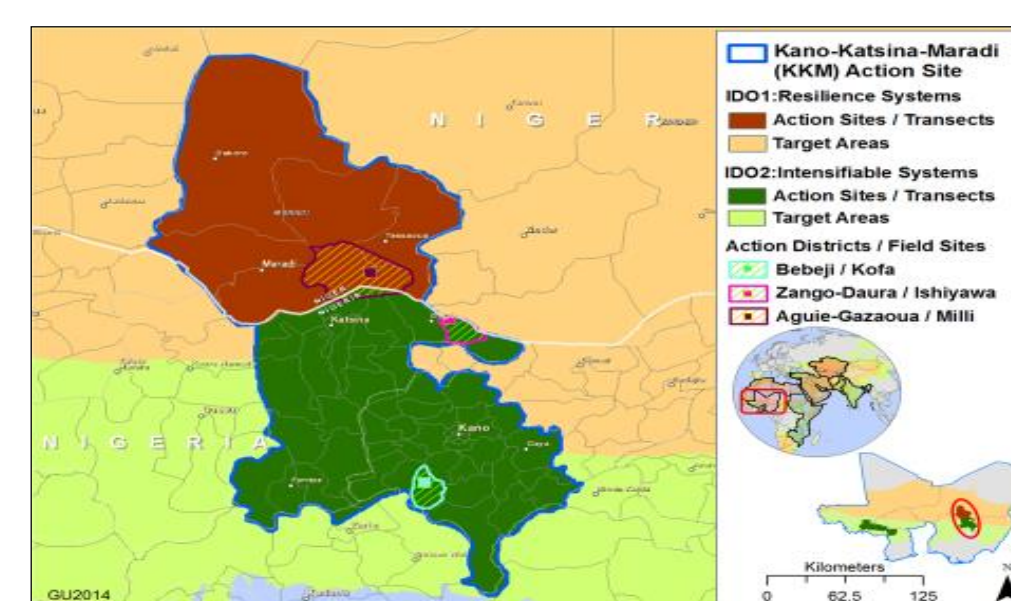


Figure 1: Dryland Systems intervention zone - Version 1.0 - ICRISAT, 2013 – P.C.S. Traore
Data source: Zomer et al., 2008 - www.cgiar-csi.org (Aridity Index), LandScan / ORNL, 2001 (Population Density)

RESULTS

DECISION TAKING FACTORS	Ghana			Mali			Niger			Nigeria		
	% Men (n=212)	% Women (n=221)	Diff. Signif.	% Men (n=967)	% Women (n=877)	Diff. Signif.	% Men (n=156)	% Women (n= 150)	Diff. Signif.	% Men (n=1795)	% Women (n=1637)	Diff. Signif.
Staple crops selection and management	55.29	44.71	(1.75)ns	97.67	2.33	(75.2)***	85.71	14.29	(3.64)*	97.24	2.76	(122.5)***
Cash crops selection & management	50	50	(0.002)ns	33.33	66.67	(7.79)***	-	-	-	86.96	13.04	(33.8)***
Staple crops marketing	29.63	70.37	(9.1)**	100	0	(5.54)**	100	0	(1.00)ns	100	0	(51.9)***
Cash crops marketing	-	-	-	100	0	(4.62)**	0	100	(2.01)ns	100	0	(45.3)***
Management of small ruminants	82.61	17.39	(9.54)***	83.33	16.67	(9.54)***	14.29	85.71	(3.64)*	67.48	32.52	(11.7)***
Management of large ruminants	66.67	33.33	(0.77)ns	97.06	2.94	(28.1)***	100	0	(1.00)ns	91.94	8.06	(39.7)***
Marketing of small ruminants	83.33	16.67	(1.84)ns	100	0	(1.84)ns	100	0	(1.00)ns	100	0	(45.3)***
Marketing of large ruminants	-	-	-	100	0	(2.76)*	-	-	-	90.16	9.84	(35.6)ns
Management of water for agriculture	16.67	83.33	(2.52)ns	100	0	(0.92)ns	-	-	-	-	-	-
Management of water for consumption	4.35	95.65	(10.9)***	20.83	79.17	(8.79)***	20.83	79.17	(8.79)***	-	-	-
Non-farm activities	50	50	(0.002)ns	86.36	13.64	(10.5)***	33.33	66.67	(0.67)ns	63.64	36.36	(0.56)ns
Household income allocation	55.56	44.44	(0.16)ns	11.63	88.37	(28.79)***	-	-	-	100	0	(2.73)*
Zero decision	53.11	46.89	(2.05)ns	50.15	49.85	(9.13)***	52.14	47.86	(0.53)ns	43.34	56.66	(397.5)***



A. Household income allocation

Result revealed highest difference in gender unbalanced decision taking about household income allocation in Mali (Pearson Chi2 p-value <0.001) and Nigeria (p-value <0.01). In Ghana, household income allocation decision power is fairly shared between men (55.56%) and women (44.44%). No evidence from Niger on household from the survey.



B. Non-farm activities

In Mali, 14% of women have powers on managing non-farm activities and related income, which is not significantly different from the situation in Nigeria (<34%). These women include household heads, grand-daughters and spouses. In Niger 36% of them are able to deciding on non-farm activities. The best case is observed in Ghana, where the decision taking on managing incomes from non-farm activities are equally shared between men and women.

C. Water management

Women decide on managing water for household consumption in most of the cases (95% in Ghana, 79% Mali and Niger). In Ghana, women with access to lands have full decision power and right on managing agriculture water – while in Mali agricultural water management is totally under men's control (100%).

D. Livestock management

Very few women have decision and control power over small ruminants marketing (16%) and management (17%) and on large ruminants' management (33%) for milk production, with no control on large ruminants marketing in Ghana. While in Mali, no women make decision on marketing small and large ruminants. Women management roles are limited to animals sending for grazing, herding, and manure collection and usage for land fertilization. In Niger, the majority of women (86%) manage small ruminants, but with no decision making power on marketing small and large livestock. Small and large livestock management and marketing (e.g. milk, meat, butter and leather/skin) are control by the male household heads or related member in charge (e.g. grandson, uncle or brother of the household head)

CONCLUSION

Having control in marketing products doesn't mean that women have equal control on managing income generated from sales. They choose the market where products are sold, bargain the prices but they report and/or return generated income to the male household head after transactions. These cross-countries power unbalances are found to be culturally rooted in traditional norms. Most of these norms deny women rights beyond usufruct rights to factors such as land, animals, water usage and trees species to be planted, all which need to be unpacked and further understood.