Press Release

17 October 2017

Mr. Laouali Amadou is the graduate student winner of the BIFAD Award for Scientific Excellence in a Feed the Future Innovation Lab. He is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Maradi in Niger and is also a junior scientist at the National Institute of Agricultural Research of Niger (INRAN).

Mr. Amadou works with the USAID Feed the Future Sorghum and Millet Innovation Lab. He has worked with a consortium of scientists from Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Senegal on the biological control of the millet head miner, *H. albipunctella*. This insect is the most important pest of pearl millet in that region and can lead to up to 85% reduction of crop yield. The focus of Mr. Amadou's work has been to develop scale-up culture procedures for beneficial insects that can be released to help control the millet head miner. The economic benefits of this approach were estimated to be over $200 million annually.

The growth and release of the beneficial biocontrol insects will help facilitate the establishment of a 'cottage industry' to prevent and/or limit damage of the millet head miner. Mr. Amadou and his colleagues have conducted a preliminary study to determine the economic viability of this approach in conjunction with a regional farm organization in Niger and found the approach to be economically viable.

The Board for International Food and Agricultural Development (BIFAD) is a presidentially appointed federal advisory committee established in 1975 under Title XII of the Foreign Assistance Act, as amended. Recognizing the critical role of US land-grant institutions in agricultural development, domestically and abroad, and the importance of their engagement in USAID development programs, the BIFAD's main purpose is to advise USAID on agriculture and higher education issues pertinent to global food security in developing countries.

For questions, please contact the Designated Federal Officer for BIFAD, Dr. Clara Cohen, at **ccohen@usaid.gov** or 202-712-0119.

Photo credit: Laouali Amadou