



## SAME PROJECT– OFDA II DIFFA

Ensuring food security and livelihood refurbishment for displaced populations and vulnerable hosts in the Diffa region



# FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

LAST VERSION



Dr. ISSAKA IDRISSE MOSSI  
Consultant



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**Dr Issaka Idrissa Mossi**

Consultant

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# ACRONYMES AND ABBREVIATIONS

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ACF: Action Against Hunger

APV: Auxiliary Para - Veterinary

AREN: Association for the Revitalization of Livestock in Niger

CAD: Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Development Cooperation (OECD).

CCH: Humanitarian Coordination Cell

CFW: Cash For Work

ICRC: International Committee of the Red Cross

DREC: Regional Directorate of Civil Status

OCHA: Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

OFDA: Office of United States Foreign Disaster Assistance

PAM: World Food Program

PRODAF Family Farming Development Program

CSR: Social Reconstitution of the Livestock

SAME: Food Security and Livelihoods

TIM: Unconditional Money Transfer

UNHCR: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

USAID: United States Agency for International Development

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# CHAPTER 1

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

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This report presents the outcomes of the external final evaluation of the project «Ensuring Food Security and Restoring Livelihoods for Displaced Populations and Vulnerable Hosts in the Diffa Region" (SAME-Diffa). This evaluation piloted from 25 October to 18 November 2017 is the result of the financing agreement between ACF - Spain and OFDA – USAID, contained in the project document. It is completed for accountability and transparency expected towards both the key financial partner and the other stakeholders (beneficiary populations of the project, local, regional and national authorities, other project partners, etc.) in the context of the project's undertaken activities.

### **1.1. The evaluation objectives**

#### **1.1.1. The overall objective**

The overall objective of the evaluation is to review the results achieved in implementing the project and to identify areas where improvements can be made. It's also to appreciate the acquired experiences and capitalize them to improve Diffa's emergency response effectiveness and efficiency.

#### **1.1.2. Specific objectives**

According to the ToRs, the evaluation mission had to achieve the following specific objectives:

- i) Assessing the effectiveness of the project implementation strategy and its acceptance by both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries;
- (ii) Measuring the overall efficiency of the project on improving the diet and strengthening the livelihoods of beneficiary households;
- iii) Evaluating attainment of the project results in relation with the initial project document.

In addition, the ToRs recommend that the evaluation should:

- i) Identify and analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the project design, implementation and management.
- ii) Identify and analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the partnership established with the State's decentralized services.
- iii) Identify and analyze the constraints and restricting factors related to the Diffa region and also those factors that enabled the implementation of the project.
- iv) Assess the implementation level of the project's first phase recommendations
- v) Record lessons learned and best practices related to project design (project relevance), process quality (efficiency and ownership), implementation quality (effectiveness, ownership of results and sustainability), which could be useful for future interventions.

vi) Take into account cross-cutting elements such as gender, specific vulnerabilities (for instance, poor households managed by pregnant or lactating women, people with disabilities or the elderly, etc.) in the approach and evaluative process.

These were the benchmarks used by the evaluation mission, which guided their choice of the methodological process implemented.

## 1.2. Field and Methods of the evaluation mission

### 1.2.1. Scope of the evaluation

The evaluation covers the entire implementation period of the project, which is 12 months (going from August 25, 2016 to August 24, 2017) and also all actions carried out by the project with the funding from the Office of the United States Foreign Disaster Assistance. (OFDA - USAID).

### 1.2.2. Evaluation criteria

Methodologically, the evaluation questions are based on the criteria recommended by the OECD DAC which are included in the terms of reference of this mission, namely: (i) the relevance of the project; (ii) the effectiveness of implementation; (iii) the implementation efficiency; iv) the effects of project interventions; iv) viability (sustainability) of the achievements recorded by the project implementation.

### 1.2.3. Data sources and information

In order to operationalize these criteria, the evaluation has combined, in a complementary manner, three (3) main data and information sources:

- i) **The existing abundant documentation** on the project's intervention context and also the project's periodic progress reports (technically and financially). Capitalizing this documentation has allowed to better define the purpose of the interviews with stakeholders in the concerned municipalities.
- ii) **The use of data and information collected through direct interviews (individually and collectively)**, in a semi - structured approach with various project's stakeholders such as ACF Niger mission; ACF intervention bases in the Diffa region; SAME Diffa Project Leaders; the Niger Association for Livestock Revitalization (AREN) in Diffa; the regional, departmental and communal technical services in charge of agriculture, livestock and environment; municipal authorities; project beneficiaries; traditional authorities; etc.
- iii) **The outcomes from debriefing sessions held in Diffa and Niamey** as well as **feedback meetings** on the evaluation results carried out in Niamey.

### 1.2.4. Technical process

**The evaluation process** started on October 25 and ended on November 25, 2017 in the following main steps:

- i) **Introductory phase:** This consisted of analyzing the ToRs and establishing a common

understanding between the consultant and the ACF mission. Explanations and additional outlooks have been widely discussed. This preliminary phase was also used to design the methodological, organizational and logistical framework for the evaluation mission and to start collecting the available documents for the project.

- ii) **Document review:** This step entailed collecting needed data and information from various project stakeholders and using them to formulate arguments for answers to questions raised.
- iii) **Synthesis and analysis of collected data and information.** This step allowed the consultant to share the preliminary analysis and conclusions with the project implementation managers in Diffa (ACF Base) and in Niamey (ACF Office - Spain).
- iv) **Interim evaluation report:** It includes comments and suggestions that are reasoned and deemed relevant, recorded during the analysis sessions and preliminary conclusions by the evaluation mission.
- v) **Presentation to the ACF mission in Niger of the interim report.**
- vi) **Final Evaluation Report:** It includes relevant comments and suggestions recorded during the Interim Report Presentation Session.

Overall, the evaluation technical process can be schematized as follows:

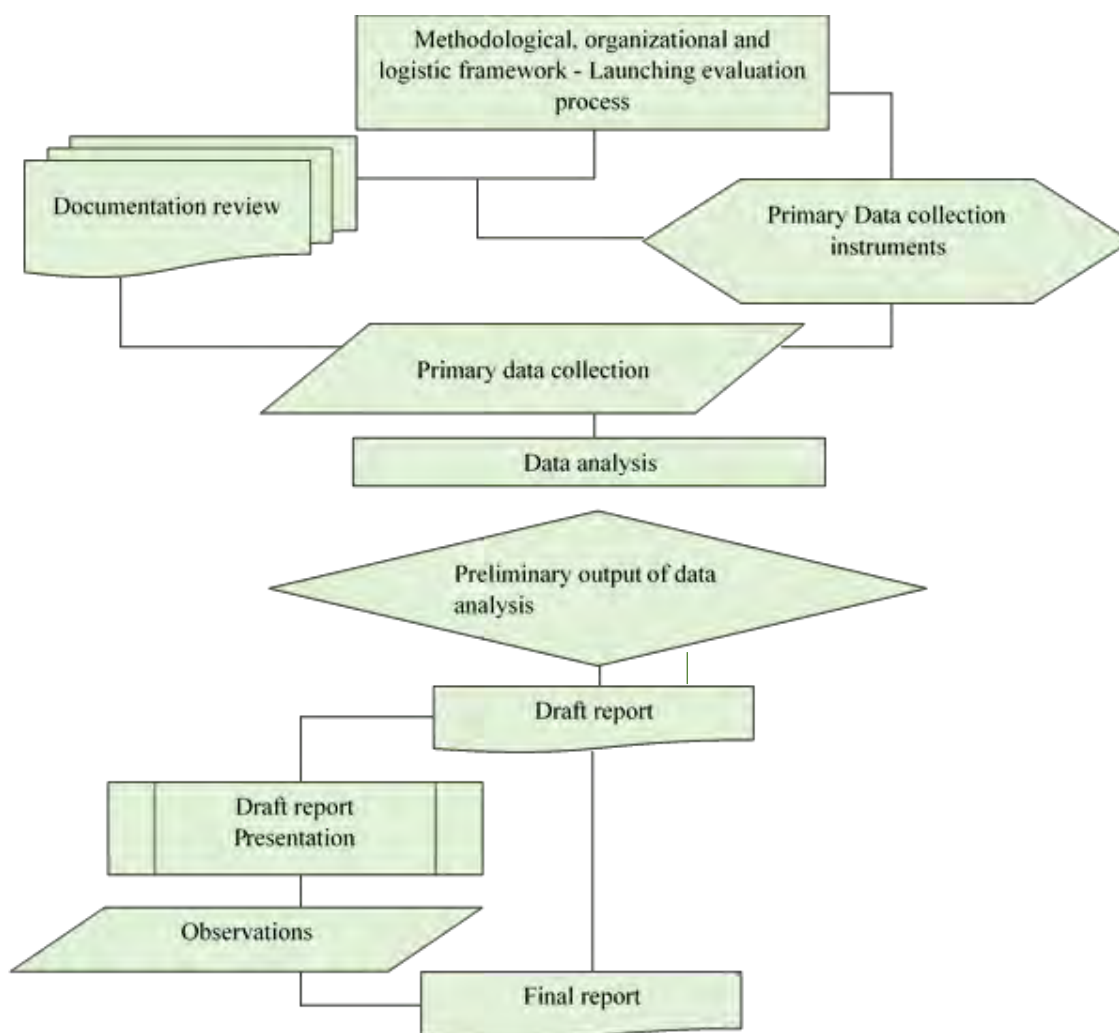


Figure 1: Diagram of the evaluation process

### 1.3. Difficulties encountered

The evaluation mission did not encounter any major difficulties that could hinder its progress. Nevertheless, it came across the following minor issues:

- i) Many executives from the State's technical services who have previously participated in the implementation of the project and were likely to be better equipped to contribute to this current evaluation were no longer in the project area. People who replaced them had not taken office yet or had just done so, and were only slightly familiar with the process, so they could not contribute as fully as we'd expect.
- ii) Due to their busy schedule, the mission was unable to meet the mayors of the four (4) communes of the project area. However, it has been able to work with their representatives who are the vice mayors and general secretaries of the communes.
- iii) To comply with security instructions related to the context of the region, departure for field trips could only be done after daily security briefings, and were to return mandatorily to Diffa before 17:00.

### 1.4. Structure of the report

This report, which presents the results achieved by the evaluation mission, is structured with the following chapters:

- i) **General introduction** presenting the nature, objectives, scope and methodological approaches adopted, as well as the various difficulties encountered during the field phase.
- ii) **Synopsis on the project**, providing an overview of the intervention through a presentation of the general context and a summarized description of the project evaluated.
- iii) **Analytical review of project performance** using criteria recommended by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, effects / impact and sustainability). This review includes the identification of some lessons learned in implementing the project.

## CHAPTER 2

# SYNOPSIS OF THE PROJECT

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### 2.1. Overview of the general context of the intervention

Since February 2015, the Diffa region has been facing a situation of serious security tensions due to the persistence of direct attacks from the terrorist group Boko Haram. The instability thus created has caused massive forced displacements of people in the region, mainly from Nigeria. In June 2017, the Diffa Regional Directorate of Civil Register (DREC) has estimated at 248,991 the number of refugees, displaced or returned in the region. However, this number is considered well below the reality. Rather, according to the 2017 Humanitarian Needs Overview assessment, the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance in the Diffa region is officially around 340,000.

People who have fled insecurity have found themselves in a context of extreme instability, worsening the situation of host communities. Indeed, due to the huge security situation, the local households, whose life generally relies on agro-pastoral activities and trade with Nigeria, have come to face a drastic and significant loss of their incomes and livelihoods, increasing existing vulnerabilities such as poverty, poor access to basic social services (water, sanitation, hygiene, health, education, recurrent food shortage, climate change, floods, inter-community conflicts, and epidemics, etc).

Furthermore, access to cropland has also become a major concern. In addition to the insecurity that prevents people from returning to their fields, there is a significant reduction of cultivated land and a significant environmental degradation, due to the installation on these lands of many spontaneous sites to shelter refugees and other displaced persons.

In terms of nutrition, the global acute malnutrition rate in the Diffa region is among the highest in the country. It peaked at 17.1%, and has been in constant decline since 2013 (12.7% in 2013, 13.8% in 2014).

Finally, the context of the project's intervention remains affected by factors tending to reduce the spaces for humanitarian intervention: indeed, the actual insecurity context is exacerbated by strong terrorist threats associated with the dissemination of refugees and displaced persons on several spontaneous sites through the region, and the ban on motorcycles in the region, etc. constitute serious obstacles for humanitarian organizations to gain access to populations in need.

The current situation in the Diffa region presents major issues and challenges. Despite strong and serious threats related to the difficult and uncertain context, humanitarian actors are strongly mobilized behind the momentum driven by the Niger Government as part of the implementation of the Humanitarian Plan for the Diffa Region launched in March 2015. Thus, in addition to the state, national, regional and local structures, the Humanitarian Response Matrix (MHR) of September 2017 shows that 27 National NGOs, 33 International NGOs, 4 Red Cross Movements, 11 Human Rights Agencies, and UN, are joining their efforts to provide

answers to the immediate needs of vulnerable populations in a humanitarian emergency.

The SAME Diffa - OFDA II project is an initiative of ACF – Spain, aiming to participate in the global synergy of emergency humanitarian actions and the re-launching of strategies for the populations severely hit by the security crisis imposed on them.

## 2.2. Description of the evaluated project

### 2.2.1. Design, beginning and duration of the intervention

In the context of the above-mentioned humanitarian emergency, Action Against Hunger (ACF - Spain), initiated a first intervention between August 2015 and August 2016 to contribute to *"ensuring food security and livelihood recovery" for displaced populations and vulnerable hosts in the Diffa region* ". The evaluation carried out at the end of this intervention established its relevance and positive effects on the living conditions of the targeted populations, particularly in contributing to provide proper responses to their immediate and basic needs. Learning lessons from this first experience and taking into account a context still characterized by a high vulnerability for refugee or displaced populations and host communities, ACF - Spain has formulated a new intervention and extending its benefits to new beneficiaries not covered in the first phase.

As with the first intervention, the project to which the current evaluation is related was undertaken with funding from the *Office of United States Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)*, for a budget of US \$ 1,000,000 over a period of 12 months (from August 25, 2016 to August 24, 2017) and executed by a local team of the mission ACF - Spain in Niger.

### 2.2.2. Intervention areas and target groups

In order to participate efficiently in the humanitarian dynamics initiated in the region and in partnership with the local authorities and technical services in charge of agriculture, livestock and the environment, ACF has identified four (4) communes from the Diffa region as project intervention zones (ZIP), which are: **Diffa** (2 villages), **Chétimari** (4 villages), **Mainé Soroa** (9 villages) and **Goudoumaria** (4 villages). It's thus a total of 18 villages that have been selected, according to the following criteria:

- Presence of displaced persons, returnees or refugees;
- Farm or forage deficits by zone;
- Free access to market garden sites (sites not located in the militarized zone);
- Water availability on sites for at least 5 months, shallow wells;
- Land degradation (presence of glacies);
- Presence of cuvettes threatened by silting.

A total of 1100 vulnerable households were targeted, including 100 households with no manpower, or 7,700 people recognized as very poor, displaced, refugee, host families, returnees and residents.

### 2.2.3. . Objectives and the intervention expected results

The SAME-Diffa project is part of a dynamic driven by the Government of Niger and its partners to provide appropriate, adapted and effective responses to the major humanitarian emergency challenges resulting from the serious security situation prevailing in the Diffa region since May 2013. The main objective of the project in this perspective is to contribute to "meeting the immediate and basic needs of host and displaced populations affected by Boko Haram activities in the border area between Niger and Nigeria".

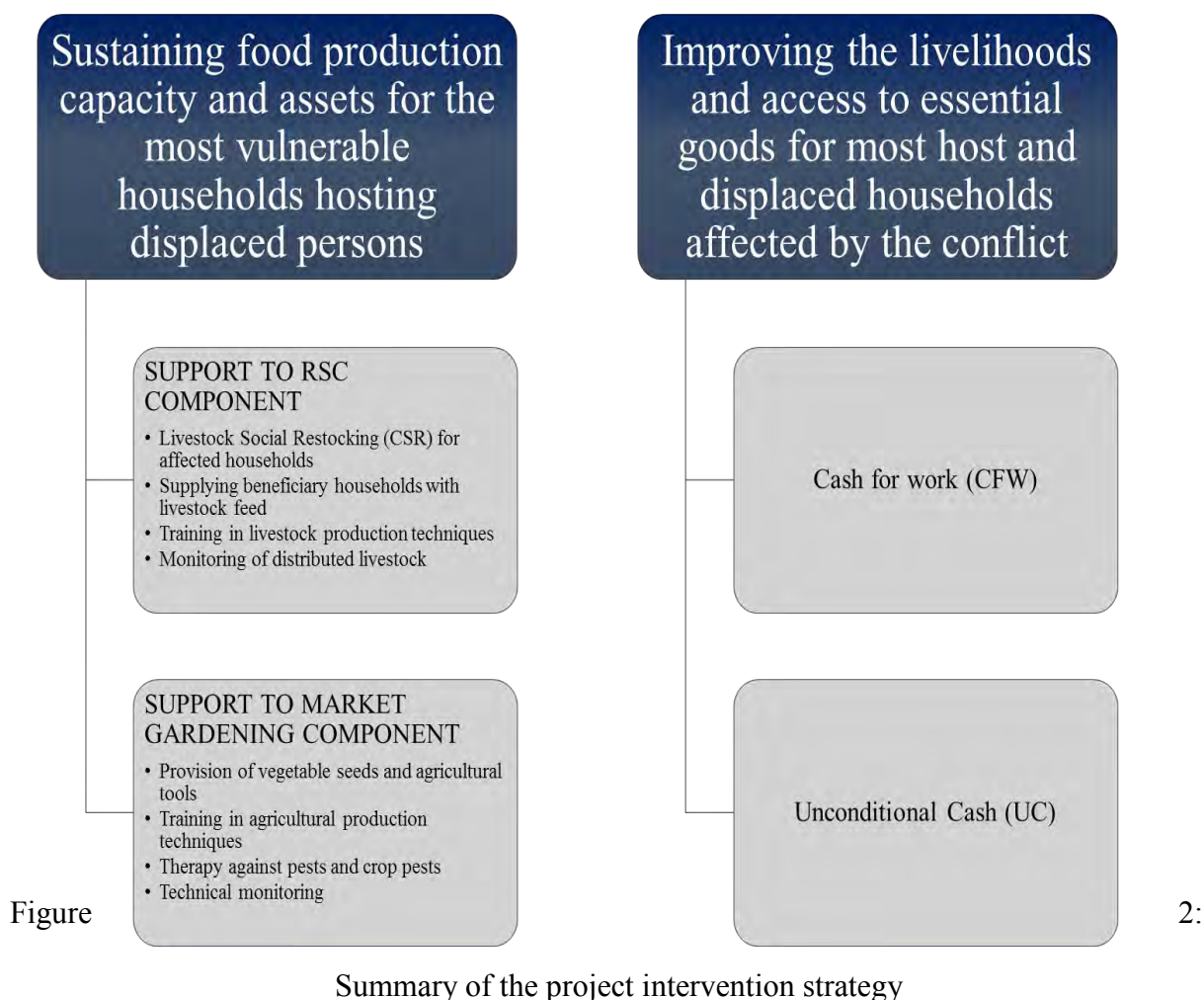
More specifically, it aims to "improve the food security and living conditions for Nigerien host and displaced populations affected by the humanitarian crisis in the Diffa region". To this end, the project has pursued two (2) main results:

- (i) Maintaining the food-production capacity and the assets of most vulnerable households hosting internally displaced persons;
- (ii) Improving livelihoods and access to essential advantages for most host and displaced households affected by the conflict.

### 2.2.4. Operational component and project's key strategies

To achieve the expected results, the project activities are articulated around three (3) operational components:

- i) **Market gardening** support to strengthen household food security. This component is articulated around an operational strategy including vegetable seeds and agricultural tools supply, training in agricultural production techniques, and technical monitoring.
- ii) **Social livestock restocking (CSR)** to acquire and strengthen vulnerable households' assets. This component includes acquiring and distributing goats (goats and billy goats) to affected households, supplying livestock feed, vaccinating, training in animal production techniques, and monitoring animals distributed by a private veterinarian.
- iii) **Cash transfer** carried out through cash for work (CFW) and unconditional money transfer or unconditional cash transactions (UCT). This initiative allows beneficiaries to purchase the basic necessities of their choice while improving their dignity and strengthening the local socio-economic fabric.



### 2.2.5. Reference indicators

According to the project's logical framework, performance indicators are set by the operational component. They show the expected performance of the project's operations and are structured as follows:

<b>Sustaining food production capacity and assets for the most vulnerable households hosting displaced persons</b>		
<b>Components</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Performance indicators</b>
<b>SUPPORT TO RSC COMPONENT</b>	i) Livestock Social Restocking (CSR) for affected households	1. Number of targeted households in the PIA: 350 households 2. Number of beneficiaries and by type: 2450 beneficiaries (in an average of 7 persons per household) of which 52% are women and 48% men 3. Number of goats distributed to beneficiaries in the PIA: 3 goats and one billy goat at reproductive age per targeted household, making a total of 1050 goats and billy 350 goats
	ii) Supplying beneficiary households with livestock feed	1. Number of distribution phases: 2 distribution phases undertaken in the PIA. 2. Number of 50kg bags of livestock feed distributed: all 350 beneficiary households from the CSR receive each 4 bags (3 bags of wheat bran, and 1 bag of cottonseed cake) per

		distribution phase (i.e. 2100 bags of wheat bran and 700 bags of cottonseed meal in 2 distributions)	
	iii) Training in livestock production techniques	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Training of trainers: 14 agents from Action Against Hunger and 9 agents from the Technical Service of Livestock trained or retrained.</li> <li>2. Training beneficiaries: 175 beneficiaries trained i.e. 50% in each village.</li> </ol>	
	iv) Monitoring of distributed livestock	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of interventions by the private veterinarian before and during the distribution: 4 interventions over 6 months</li> <li>2. Number of animals vaccinated or treated: 1050 goats and 350 billy goats</li> <li>3. Number of supervision missions carried out by the technical services</li> </ol>	
<b>SUPPORT TO MARKET GARDENING COMPONENT</b>	i) Provision of vegetable seeds and agricultural tools	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Number of households targeted in the PIA: 500 households</li> <li>ii) Number of beneficiaries and by gender: 3,500 beneficiaries (an average of 7 persons per household) of which 52% are women and 48% men</li> </ol>	
	iii) Training in agricultural production techniques	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Trainers training: 8 ACF agents, 4 technical service agents</li> <li>ii) Beneficiaries training: 500 beneficiaries including 52% women</li> </ol>	
	iv) Therapy against pests and crop pests	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Area treated against pests and other pests: 25 ha</li> </ol>	
	ii) Technical monitoring	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Number of supervision missions carried out by the technical services (according to the memorandum of understanding)</li> </ol>	
	Improving the livelihoods and access to essential goods for most host and displaced households affected by the conflict		
	<b>Components</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Performance indicators</b>
<b>CASH TRANSFERS</b>	Cash for work (CFW)		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Number of employees with cash for work (CFW) activities, by sex (1000 households, 7000 individuals, 52% women)</li> <li>ii) Average total amount in CFA francs of a single person's income from CFW activities (32, 500 CFAF / person / month, for 3 months, i.e. 97, 500 CFAF)</li> <li>iii) Total amount of transfers through CFW activities (97.500,000 CFAF)</li> </ol>
	Unconditional Cash (UC)		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Number of beneficiaries reached through unconditional cash transfers, by gender (100 households, 700 persons, 52% of women)</li> <li>ii) Total amount of transfers through UC activities (9750000 CFAF)</li> </ol>

Table 1: Table of the Project indicators

## CHAPTER 3

# ANALYTICAL REVIEW OF PROJECT PERFORMANCE

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The project evaluation is based on the criteria recommended by the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC). These criteria have been included in the terms of reference of this mission. They are:

- i) The project relevance (consistency with needs, priorities, policies and principles, etc.);
- (ii) The implementation effectiveness (achievement of project-targeted outcomes, factors influencing results achieved);
- (iii) The implementation efficiency (adequacy of resources in relation to results achieved);
- (iv) The project interventions effects and impacts;
- v) The viability (sustainability) of the achievements recorded in implementing the project.

### **3.1. Project relevance**

#### **3.1.1. Suitability for context and needs**

- i) The context of formulation and implementation of the SAME - OFDA II project is characterized globally by: an unprecedented humanitarian crisis that has hit the Diffa region hard since 2013; an agro - pastoral campaign with an agricultural production deficit in 94 villages for a population estimated at 62 055 individuals and a forage deficit of more than 52% estimated at about 2 137 835 tons of dry substance, i.e. a need for 1,257,574 UBT to be covered. The region of Diffa being pastoral, as such, has been declared totally deficit. To these deficits of the campaign is added the case of thousands of displaced whose food needs are covered only to 63% in 2016.
- ii) The SAME - OFDA II Diffa Project is based on strategies associated with the State and other partners' to reduce food and nutritional needs of vulnerable households and also in terms of livestock complementation. Given the context and the factors founding the SAME - OFDA II Diffa project, its relevance was largely emphasized by the local communities and the various regional directors in charge of agriculture, livestock and environment during the interviews carried out by the evaluation mission.
- iii) The villages identified for the project intervention during the geographic targeting operations are among the villages estimated to be in deficit both in terms of agricultural production and fodder. In addition, these villages are among the areas most affected by the humanitarian crisis (Diffa, Chétimari, Maïné Soroa and Goudoumaria).
- iv) The Boko Haram conflict has resulted in displacing more than 300,000 people (refugees, displaced persons and returnees) within the Diffa region. With the strategies that are being developed, the SAME - OFDA II Diffa Project contributes to the collective strategy put in

place by Niger's Government, international and national non - governmental organizations, and the United Nations agencies. All of them have been working together to provide emergency and post - crisis recovery assistance to victims and their host communities. In this regard, OCHA's humanitarian needs overview for the 2017 period provided estimates of 340,000, the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance in the Diffa region.

### 3.1.2. Suitability for current humanitarian emergency plans in the region

- i) The SAME - OFDA II Diffa project was designed within the context of the ongoing humanitarian crisis in the Diffa region. It contributes to improving the food security and living conditions of the Nigerien host and displaced populations affected by this crisis, through:
- Maintaining the food production capacity and assets of the most vulnerable households hosting displaced persons;
  - and improving the livelihoods and access to essential goods for most host and displaced households affected by the conflict

These objectives are in line with the humanitarian plan initiated by the Government of Niger (March 2015), the interagency contingency plan for Nigerien humanitarian assistance (July 2016 - July 2017) and ACF-Spain's response plan for the Diffa humanitarian crisis. All these plans are designed, among other, to ensure the humanitarian support to people affected by the current security crisis in the Diffa region.

More specifically, they place emphasis on appropriate responses to the food needs for affected populations, and their livelihoods recovery. Although an upward tendency has been noted by the beneficiary communities themselves during the group interviews conducted in the villages, the needs, which are the basis of this project's formulation, are still relevant. A rapid assessment by ACF (in March 2017) confirms the relevance of project interventions, emphasizing the decrease in host populations' livelihoods due to pressure from displaced populations and returnees.

Through its soundness with ongoing humanitarian plans in the region, the project is part of a regional dynamic to develop more appropriate, better targeted and coordinated responses to the needs of vulnerable populations.

### 3.1.3. Consistency with ACF intervention principles

- i) Coherence with the ACF intervention conditions: the project implemented in the Diffa region is fully in line with ACF's international intervention conditions. Indeed, the security situation created by the terrorist sect "Boko Haram" in the region of Diffa is undoubtedly a serious and unprecedented threat to the food security of the people who live there, in a context of endemic poverty and extreme vulnerability.

In fact, more than a hundred humanitarian agencies and development organizations (national and international) are currently working alongside Niger's Government and other local communities to deal with the consequences of this serious crisis through a variety of strategies (such as emergency, relief and development).

The situation prevailing in the region of Diffa, especially in the project's intervention areas has created a social disintegration of communities, pressing more the affected population in a situation of extreme multidimensional vulnerability (physical insecurity, food insecurity and

malnutrition, including also water shortage, perilous hygiene and sanitation, poor health and education, and lack of shelter, etc.).

Finally, the project intervention enabled a reduction of the risks on populations' survival by succeeding with strategies centered on people's autonomy and the dignity recovery. These interventions also reduce the risk of radicalization of some populations, especially young people, who are Boko Haram's main targets, especially if they are in a situation of temptation due to deprivation.

- ii) **Consistency with ACF' intervention principles:** ACF Intervention charter defines the principles that are applicable in the implementation of all projects and programs initiated at the international level within its regions of intervention.
- The assessment of the relevance of the project, in light of these principles, is based on the project design, but also on the facts and perceptions of the stakeholders that the mission met in the project areas.
- a) **Independence:** In its actions or interaction with other stakeholders, the evaluation mission has noted no tendency of the project behaving as a political sub-structure, instrument or adjunct of any organization. The rules, procedures and intervention strategies meet perfectly the strategic and operational intervention provisions in line with the mission of ACF, nationally and internationally. The strategies contained in the project document are consistent with the national scope strategies for food and nutrition security and the emergency plan for the Diffa region. This strategic and programmatic anchoring should be considered rather as a sign of relevance to the basic needs of the poor and vulnerable populations of the project's intervention areas.
  - b) **Neutrality and non - discrimination:** According to the mission, the project implementation was neutral and non-discriminatory. The interventions were carried out without any religious, political, racial or ethnic considerations of the beneficiaries. All the project's actions were designed and executed on the sole basis of populations' vulnerability to food and nutrition, livelihoods insecurity in the Diffa region. In addition, all villages and affected populations are located in areas recognized to actually be affected by this crisis. The application of these principles was highlighted with satisfaction by all the stakeholders met on the ground by the evaluation mission.

In their design, the strategies implemented emphasize men and women's equal participation in all operational aspects of the project. However, in the implementation process, a certain prevalence of male-headed households, compared to those headed by women, was noted by the mission.

  - c) **Free access to victims:** the evaluation mission noted that the mechanisms of coordinating partners for the response at the regional level have established a mapping of interventions in areas affected by the crisis. Also, geo-targeting of both location and beneficiary households has been made on a participatory basis. On the basis of this mapping, and despite some restrictions in mobility due to the insecurity prevailing in the area, the project still had free access to beneficiary target groups. ACF provides direct control of the implementation and accountability of USAID/OFDA and regional and local authorities towards beneficiaries.
  - d) **Professionalism and Transparency:** Although the evaluation mission's interactions with the project implementation teams have been somehow limited in time and it has mainly been able to engage with senior officials, and hold quality work sessions with them, the mission recognizes however their level of professionalism quite satisfactory. In addition, to strengthen professionalism in the implementation of the project, collaboration

protocols have been signed with the State's concentrated technical services. In some specific areas, private service delivery arrangements have been made (such as private veterinarian). In addition, the ACF Diffa Base team's participation in several collaborative and decision-making spaces at the regional level, as part of the management of the ongoing crisis, was considered professionally satisfactory by the regional authorities. (Regional Crisis Management Committee, Humanitarian Coordination Cell, Technical Working Groups - Water, Sanitation, Hygiene and Food Security) and the municipal authorities from the project intervention areas. The target groups have also noted with satisfaction that their agendas have been respected as well.

The interviews carried out by the evaluation mission with various institutional partners in Diffa confirm that ACF is achieving the project's implementation in accordance with the expectations expressed by regional and local authorities, particularly with regards to collaboration and transparency (respect for the humanitarian principles and the State's principles of emergency intervention in the areas affected by the crisis, involvement of local authorities in information and communication of the content and modalities of interventions within the commune and with grassroots communities, participation of local authorities in the whole cycle of project implementation, with the regional crisis management committee and in the sectorial working groups, etc.)

Accountability, in terms of responsibilities, is supported by a system of reporting and communication at all levels of implementation by all stakeholders including state services.

### **3. Conclusions and recommendations**

The project was designed and funded with a view to helping to cope with the humanitarian emergency in the Diffa region. Its content is an integration of emergency and recovery strategies. This combination is particularly relevant in the context of the project's intervention context, where these two dimensions (urgency and recovery) must go hand in hand if, in the long term, it is desired to have tangible effects on the survival of the affected people, their communities, and on the restoration of their livelihoods. It is about the incompressible needs of the populations vulnerable by the occurrence of this crisis which persists in the region of Diffa. Indeed, providing answers to the immediate needs of a population in distress, trapped by a situation that endangers human life, is certainly an operation of eminently humanitarian and urgent nature. However, it is equally true that targeting the dimensions of restoring the productive capacities and livelihoods of the affected population is fundamentally relevant, particularly in this part of the country. This is because of the general nature and the very high level of household vulnerability, especially in rural areas. Indeed, the increased vulnerability of a large number of households in this already weakened zone creates favorable conditions for the recurrence of such humanitarian crises. It is therefore important to note that, through this project, ACF and USAID / OFDA are working on aspects of reducing the vulnerability of populations to food insecurity and the degradation of their incompressible means of existence.

In addition, the project's strategic and operational options are in line with the choices made at the regional level for the humanitarian care needed for the victims of the security crisis (refugees, displaced populations, returnees). Both in its design and in its implementation, the relevance of the project is proven. This conclusion is unanimously shared by all stakeholders (particularly, beneficiaries) met by the evaluation mission in the different communes visited.

Taking into account the conclusions set out above, the evaluation mission makes the following recommendations:

- i) *In order to reinforce the relevance of the strategic options directed towards raising vulnerable groups' living conditions in the project intervention areas, it is recommended to integrate into the project's conceptual structure strategies focused on household's sustainable development support, such as income-generating activities (IGA), especially for women, in among others, vegetable gardening and animal farming sectors.*
- ii) *In order to reinforce market gardening activities and obtain the sustainability of the induced effects, the evaluation mission recommends promoting and supporting a collective organization of beneficiaries to best develop market garden sites.*
- iii) *In order to enhance the potential for qualitative changes in food security for vulnerable households and their livelihoods recovery or security, the evaluation mission recommends opening up the time horizon for the project over a longer period of time (for instance between 2 and 3 years). This will have the effect, on the one hand, of reinforcing the achievements to eventually reach the threshold of irreversibility and, on the other hand, of benefitting from a wider and more appropriate time span to draw the lessons needed for a good experience capitalization for better effectiveness of ACF interventions.*

### **3.1. The project's effectiveness**

#### **3.1.4. Geographic targeting and targeting of households**

The geographical targeting of the project intervention area (PIA), which started in October 2016, was completed in November 2016, 3 months after the official beginning date of the project. It was conducted according to pre-established criteria, in partnership with the municipalities and the technical services concerned (Agriculture, Livestock, Environment). The criteria were: i) the presence of displaced persons, returnees or refugees; ii) the deficit of crop or forage by area; iii) the free access to market garden sites (sites not located in the militarized zone); iv) the water availability at sites for at least 5 months, shallow catch basins; land degradation (presence of glaucis); presence of cuvettes threatened by silting. It's based on lists of villages proposed by the communes, then, 18 villages meeting the above criteria were selected in 4 communes of the region as follows: 2 villages in Diffa commune, 9 in Maïné Soroa commune, 3 in the commune of Chétimari and 4 in the commune of Goudoumaria.

Targeting of beneficiary households was carried out in November 2016 based on the Household Economy Approach (HEA). After the census and computer categorization of households, the households were scrutinized and sorted. The operation took place under the supervision of community leaders, local authorities, the ACF team, and the State's decentralized technical services from the agriculture, environment and livestock departments. This inclusive and community-based targeting was carried out in optimal conditions of transparency, which minimized the risk of omitting some beneficiaries and guaranteed the necessary objectivity and neutrality of all stakeholders.

Note however that the targeting operation in Maïné Soroa commune was slowed down due to the mobility restriction in the area and military search operations.

The selecting of beneficiaries is essentially made based on the vulnerability of households and their particular condition within the context of crisis affecting them. Subsequently, more other specific criteria were also established according to the nature of the activities and the standard case of beneficiaries and this, based on a common agreement. These specific criteria are:

- **Market gardening support component:** (i) vulnerable households with access to vegetable land; ii) water availability on market gardening sites; iii) site with no security check; iii) Vulnerable households with children under 5 or pregnant and lactating women (FEFA) with access to land and at least one strong hand for the activity
- RSC component and livestock feed: i) vulnerable agro-pastoral households who have lost their animals as a result of the crisis; ii) vulnerable households with children under 5 or pregnant or lactating women (FEFA) who have lost their livestock; (iii) vulnerable households with elderly or disabled persons who have lost their animals.
- **Cash transfer component:**
  - Cash for work (CFW): vulnerable households with a strong hand to participate in the work including vulnerable households benefitting from market gardening support and CSR.
  - Unconditional transfers or unconditional cash: i) households headed by pregnant or lactating women with no fit worker ; ii) households with elderly people with no fit worker; (iii) households of disabled people with no fit worker.

The table below indicates the beneficiary households' breakdown by component and by commune.

Commune	Market gardening			Livestock			Cash For Work			Unconditional Cash		
	M	W	Total	M	W	Total	M	W	Total	M	W	Total
<b>Diffa</b>	0	0	0	80	32	112	101	30	131	4	10	14
<b>Chétimari</b>	0	0	0	204	34	238	215	16	231	7	22	29
<b>Mainé-Soroa</b>	256	13	269	0	0	0	287	18	305	2	15	17
<b>Goudoumaria</b>	178	53	231	0	0	0	248	85	333	10	30	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>851</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2: CSR and livestock feed beneficiaries breakdown by gender, village, commune and department

In total, the project has targeted 1100 households including 500 benefiting from market gardening support and CFW, 350 from RSC and CFW, 150 from CFW only, and 100 households from unconditional cash.

### 3.2.2. Risk monitoring on security conditions

The mission remarked the organization of a security meeting every morning, conceived as a place for communication and information exchange regarding the latest developments on security in the area as well as the instructions given for traveling around. In this regard, ACF Diffa base is collaborating with other humanitarian partners working in the area regarding many issues and particularly on security

### 3.2.3. Accountability exercise:

The significance of the objectives set for the project design requires that a clear and impartial account be made periodically on the recorded performances. It is an obligation for the project management to provide accurate and credible performance assessments and analytical progress reports that can be used as a basis for decision-making. In this perspective, the implementation reports that are regularly produced remain essentially descriptive of the activities carried out. They are not very analytical and only provide little information on the results (changes produced or induced in the conditions and quality of life of the project target groups). However, it should be noted that most of these results (effects / impacts) will only be visible in the medium and long term. Accountability requires the existence of a results-based management and accountability framework.

ACF has also put in place a system for centralizing and handling complaints as part of the project operations implementation. This system is part of a transparency process to ensure the neutrality of its interventions and compliance with required ethical standards of integrity and effectiveness. However, this system is only at its developing stage and as such is somewhat misunderstood. In SAME - OFDA Diffa, for instance, where it is already implemented, the project stakeholders, including the beneficiary groups, do not seem to have understood its importance. Rather, they confuse it with a space to show gratitude and thanks to ACF.

*In the light of the above, the evaluation mission recommends:*

- *Developing and proposing to implementing actors a results-based performance reporting framework;*
- *Pursuing the development of a system of collecting, centralizing and handling complaints. This implies strengthening the understanding between the different stakeholders including the target groups benefitting from the project regarding the objectives and significance of this system.*

### 3.2.4. The operational components effectiveness

#### 3.2.4.1. Support to the Livestock Social Recovery (LSR) component

This component has been operationalized through the following strategies: (i) livestock social recovery for households affected by the crisis in the project areas; (ii) supplying of livestock feed; (iii) training in animal production techniques and (iv) monitoring of animals (goats) distributed for a period of 6 months.

350 vulnerable beneficiary households in the communes of Diffa and Chétimari are involved in this component of the project. The outcomes of the implementation are as follows:

### i.) LSR Beneficiary households breakdown

At the end of the project, the breakdown the LSR beneficiary households including livestock feed is as follows:

Communes	Beneficiaries			Goats distributed					Livestock Feed Distributed					
	Villages	M	W	Total	Men		Women		Total	Men		Women		Total
					Goats	Billy - goats	Goats	Billy - goats		Whea t bran	Cotton seed	Whea t bran	Cotto n seed	
Chétimari	Garin	58	16	74	174	58	48	16	296	522	174	144	48	888
	Toudou													
	Malan Mainari	74	3	77	222	74	9	3	308	666	222	27	9	924
	Youramdi	72	15	87	216	72	45	15	348	648	216	135	45	1044
<b>Total Chétimari</b>		<b>204</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>612</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>952</b>	<b>1836</b>	<b>612</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>2856</b>
Diffa	Kangarwa	22	5	27	66	22	15	5	108	198	66	45	15	324
	Mamari	58	27	85	174	58	81	27	340	522	174	243	81	1020
<b>Total Diffa</b>		<b>80</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>1344</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>284</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>852</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>1400</b>	<b>2556</b>	<b>852</b>	<b>594</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>4200</b>

**Table 3: LSR and livestock feed beneficiaries breakdown by gender, village, commune, and department**

## ii.) Factual assessment

Component	Strategies	Performance forecast	Performance completion	Key findings
LSR SUPPORT COMPONENT	i) Affected households Livestock Social Recovery (LSR)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of households targeted in the PIA: 350 households of which 52% are women and 48% men</li> <li>Number of beneficiaries and by gender: 2450 beneficiaries (average 7 persons per household)</li> <li>Number of goats distributed to beneficiaries in the PA: 3 goats and one billy goat of reproductive age per targeted household, totaling 1050 goats and 350 goats</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>350 beneficiary households</li> <li>1050 goats and billy 350 goats (total 1400 goats) distributed i.e. 3 goats and one goat for each beneficiary household</li> <li>81.15% of male beneficiaries against 18.85% for women</li> <li>All animals have been checked and validated by livestock technical service agents before being received</li> <li>All the animals received were vaccinated, dewormed, closed by the private veterinarian and handed over to the beneficiaries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% achievement, but the goal of 52% of women beneficiaries is far from being achieved. It is 18.85% against 81.15% of men</li> <li>A second distribution of 87 goats and 26 billy goats (113 goats) for 59 beneficiary households (case of Youramdi) who lost either all or more than one animal received following a plague epidemic took place in July 2017</li> <li>The supplier experienced significant mortality during quarantine period (170 goats or 12% of quarantined livestock)</li> <li>12 goats rejected, about 1% of the total</li> </ul>
	ii) households beneficiaries supply with livestock feed supply	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of distribution phases: 2 distribution phases undertaken in the PIA.</li> <li>Number of 50kg bags of livestock feed distributed: all 350 beneficiary households of the LSR received each 4 bags per recipient (3 bags of wheat bran, and 1 bag of cottonseed cake) per distribution phase ( total 2100 bags of wheat bran and 700 bags of cottonseed meal in 2 distributions)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 phases of livestock feed distribution completed</li> <li>Each recipient received 12 bags of 50 kg of cattle feed (9 bags of wheat bran and 3 bags of cottonseed cake)</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>150% completion</li> <li>NB: following the call from the Food Crisis Cell (CCA) to dealing with likely pastoral crisis, the project requested and received reallocation of the budgetary balance from the purchase of livestock feed, to carry out a third distribution, thereby strengthening beneficiaries capacities to cope with this crisis.</li> </ul>
	iii) Training in livestock production techniques	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training of trainers: 14 agents from ACF and 9 agents from the Livestock Technical Service trained or retrained.</li> <li>Training of beneficiaries: 175 beneficiaries trained or 50% in each village</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14 agents from ACF and 9 agents from the Livestock Technical Service were trained or retrained during the three days</li> <li>175 beneficiaries have been trained, i.e. 50% in each village</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% achievement</li> <li>Note: The training of ACF agents is necessary to provide close supervision to the beneficiaries. The training of livestock agents could be considered as a space for exchange and coordination of approaches of the</li> </ul>

			<p>topics discussed. In fact, these technical managers are professionals in these areas and their mission is exactly to supervise and strengthen the capacities of producers in their respective spheres of intervention.</p>
<p>iv) Monitoring of livestock distributed</p>	<p>1. Number of interventions from the private veterinarian before and during the distribution: 4 interventions over 6 months  2. Number of animals vaccinated or treated: 1050 goats and 350 goats  3. Number of supervision missions by the technical services:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 4 planned interventions are performed by the private veterinarian according to the agreed agenda.</li> <li>▪ During the 4 missions carried out by the veterinarian, all the animals presented were treated according to the detected pathologies</li> <li>▪ Monitoring zoo-technical indicators (overall morbidity rate, mortality rate including missing animals, cross rate, pathology monitoring, etc.)</li> <li>▪ Follow-up by the technical services (regional, departmental and communal)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Partnership agreements for monitoring have been signed with technical services and private veterinarians.</li> <li>▪ However, we note that these agreements came with a lot of delay</li> <li>▪ During the monitoring missions some beneficiaries did not show the animals received at the agreed sites</li> </ul>

Table 4: LSR achievements summary table

### iii.) Analysis of achieved outcomes

In terms of technical implementation, the mission notes that all planned activities have been 100% executed. However, analyzing data and information collected from the field and examining the factual overview of this component allow a certain number of observations, including:

#### a) Targeting intervention villages and households

- The LSR involved 5 targeted villages from 2 communes within the project intervention zone (PIZ). This targeting was carried out using a collaborative approach involving beneficiary communities; mayors and municipal elected officials, representatives from the State's decentralized technical services at the regional, departmental and communal levels, and the project implementation team. The criteria were clearly specified and take into account not only the vulnerability of households, but also the agro - pastoral characteristics of the beneficiaries. Such targeting approach has the advantage of increasing the chances for success in restoring the productive capital of crisis-affected and vulnerable households. The statistics collected by the private veterinarian in charge of the livestock distributed revealed the beneficiary households interest in this recovery operation.
- The approach used for targeting promoted transparency, objectivity and neutrality in the selection made, and has been very well appreciated by the communities, local authorities, and the livestock technical services This allowed for better acceptance of the outcomes that emerged from the targeting process, leading to broad adherence of all stakeholders.

#### b) The goats' acquisition

- The animals' direct acquisition was rather an administrative and financial operation, certainly to meet ACF and OFDA administrative and financial procedures in the process of goods and services procurement. Some technical steps of the LSR process of acquiring and distributing animals have not been carefully observed, in particular regarding the definition of technical criteria, the selection of animals, and their quarantine according to the normal standards, etc.
- Several weaknesses were noted at this level:
  - The supplier is not obligated to have a certificate of quality control from the livestock technical services to quarantine animals. However, such a provision, when it exists, would have reduced the risk of quarantining animals already showing disease signs or simply not meeting the technical specifications. Note that the animals concerned are not intended for fattening but for breeding only. As such, it is qualitative criteria such as animal's health, its age, and shape, etc. which are rather prioritized.
  - Quarantine was performed with no technical supervision, although the appropriated animals were inadequately supplied by the supplier during this period, which increases their stress. In addition, there was high mortality among animals (12%) carrying incubating diseases during this quarantine. After examination, it turned out to be Small Ruminant Plague (PPR), presumably because suppliers were either

unaware of the health instructions or just failed to respect them. In any case, there was a high risk of spreading the epizootic from these outbreaks centers (Mamari and Yoramdi) towards other villages hosting the quarantine sites. A prior control by the competent services would have substantially reduced these risks. It should be noted as a major failure that the State's vaccine system is poorly provided. As an illustration, according to the Regional Directorate of Livestock of Diffa, last year, the vaccination rate in the region was only 58%. The reasons given to explain the situation included among others, the lack of resources, the prevailing insecurity and the neglect from pastoralists insufficiently sensitized on the importance of vaccinating their animals, which is anyway at no cost.

The private veterinarian interventions started at the time of distribution (at the end of the quarantine period) in order to:

- Check conditions and respect for quarantine;
- Assess animals physical (their health, overweight, age, and others) before ACF approval of their purchase;
- Vaccinate, de-worm and strengthen selected animals in vitamins.

However, failing to involve technical livestock services before and during quarantine, the services from a vet would have been useful during this period and would have had the advantage of minimizing the epidemiological risks, optimizing quarantine time and animals' quality at arrival, improving the animals' custody conditions including their feeding, etc.

- The animals were delivered by lot from the quarantine sites regardless of the dates of entry for each lot, which would have ensured that these animals actually spent the time required for proper pre-examination (which is at least one week). Each lot should have been treated separately according to their dates of entry. The direct consequences resulting from this failure are, among others, the reception, vaccination and distribution of certain animals' already carrying disease. The proof here is that two (2) weeks after their delivery to the beneficiaries, 113 goats allocated to 59 beneficiary households of Youramdi died and had to be replaced by others, at the project's expense. In addition, there have been cases of animals rejected for non-compliance which in fact would not even have had to go into quarantine.
- The supplier specifications have not been previously approved by the technical services of livestock to certify its technical conformity, relevance and effectiveness to the provisions contained therein.

### **c) Goats and livestock feed distribution**

350 vulnerable households are concerned by goat distribution (i.e. 3 goats and 1 billy goat per household). The choice of the goat type has been found suitable by the technical livestock services for many reasons, including for qualities such as adaptability, resistance, short reproduction cycle, hardiness, etc.; Beneficiary households also approved the choice related to the flexible keeping conditions of this type of small ruminant, so that distribution was supported by three (3) phases of spaced (of average of one and a half month) livestock feed distributions. Each beneficiary thus received a total of 12 bags of 50 kg of animal feed (9 bags of wheat bran and 3 bags of cottonseed meal), i.e. 4200 bags of 50 kg (a total of 210 tons) i.e. 3150 bags respectively of wheat bran (157.5 tons) and 1050 bags of meal (52.5 tons).

This contribution from the project «covers largely the needs for goats' keeping and securing the animals distributed". However, the mission noted that the delivered livestock feeds were not certified by the livestock services putting at risk of moisture or other inappropriate materials, existing non-renewed stock, etc. This certification would have ensured the quality of the stock delivered and its consistency.

The parity of women targeted by LSR activities (52%) was also not met. Beneficiary men remain are still largely predominant (81.15%).

**(d) Training on small ruminant husbandry techniques and practices**

- Trainers' training was carried out on the following topics: diagnostic techniques, primary prevention and treatment of common small ruminant diseases; sanitary hygiene (prophylaxis); domestic animals' (small ruminants) good feeding practices in the context of the project intervention area; milking hygiene; use of milk and its by-products.
- In addition to this training, implemented by a team of 14 project officers and 9 livestock technical service officers with enhanced capacity to train beneficiaries, 175 beneficiaries have been trained, i.e. 50% in each village. The approach chosen for duplication of the training received consisted of sharing the knowledge acquired with other beneficiaries or any other people living in the village. It is a support strategy deemed necessary by the target populations to enable them having the capacity to better ensure animals' health and productivity.

**d) Distributed animals' monitoring**

- Agreements for the monitoring of distributed animals have been concluded with technical services and private veterinarians. However, these agreements were enacted with a lot of delay (during the implementation), since they should occur before the start of the project. The reason given to justify such a situation is, as per usual, the slowness of the administrative system. This has led ACF to take steps to redress the situation by negotiating the beginning of the activities' monitoring with the technical services and the private veterinarian. Although this weakness has been corrected, it still remains non-compliant with the principle of professionalism contained in ACF interventions charter at the international level and its status as an international NGO with a broad organizational, institutional, and technical experience.
- Despite the delay in contracting the technical services and the private veterinarian, the distributed livestock periodic monitoring was constant and well ensured (4 monitoring missions carried out in six months). Follow-up periods have been opportunities to deal with cases of illness and to provide advice to beneficiaries.
- While the technical services involvement was an important and necessary strategy to ensure the quality in implementing the LSR component of the project, the mission noted however some delays, regarding particularly their interventions, which only started in the animals' distribution phase. Possibly, if the technical services and the veterinary service provider had participated upstream in the definition of the goats' acquisition criteria, selection, and supervision during the quarantine, the shortcomings previously mentioned

could have been detected on time and promptly corrected. The technical services involvement or at least that of the supplying veterinarian at the various pre-distribution stages would have contributed to reduce the significant risks in the process of this important phase.

Some beneficiaries were unable to present the animals received at the agreed sites during the private veterinarian's follow-up missions, either because the animals were supposedly with shepherds somewhere else, or because the owners were absent during the monitoring mission. The mission believes that coupling livestock feeding sessions with animal distribution could help to fill such gaps.

The mission also noted the lack of local monitoring in the villages to provide first aid for sick animals or support for zoo-technical advice to the communities. In addition, there is a lack of veterinary products and zoo-technical inputs *in situ*

#### **iv.) Conclusion and recommendations**

The LSR component was implemented with the aim of enabling agro-pastoralist households affected by the current crisis in the project's intervention zone to recover their autonomy and livelihoods in a dignified and respectful manner. When looking at the project achievements table, the indicators show a 100% performance for all activities included in the component. The evaluation mission noted the satisfaction of beneficiaries as well as the technical livestock services and the municipal authorities with the operational and technical choices implemented. With a view to strengthening and improving future ACF interventions on LSR, the evaluation recommends the following:

- *The animals' acquisition phase, including the development of the supplier's specifications, the selection and quarantine of the animal, the actual pre-purchase, and the animal's inspection, is a critical step for the success in LSR strategy. It involves administrative and financial as well as technical items that cannot be neglected. To reinforce this step, the mission recommends that the technical services and the private veterinarian be fully involved as early as possible.*
- *In order to effectively take into account the requirements and standards for procuring animals under the LSR, the mission recommends placing the development of the specifications of the suppliers' specifications and animals' feed under the direct supervision of the technical livestock services or any other actor with proven expertise.*
- *Require from animals' feed suppliers to provide a quality certification delivered by the technical livestock services.*
- *In collaboration with the State's decentralized technical services, AREN and the private veterinarian, promote the establishment of para-veterinary auxiliaries (PVA), who would eventually be huge human resources trained and equipped with veterinary products and zoo-technical inputs to support PIZ populations in rebuilding and maintaining animals. These PVAs could also be used in the post-project monitoring process to support both project beneficiaries and other community members having their own cattle.*

- Ensuring that all agreements for the LSR technical monitoring are actually signed before the beginning of assigned activities. This would prove the intended professionalism and good image of ACF towards its partners.
- Joining the evaluation mission to the animals' feed distribution to optimize their effectiveness and effects on animals' health.

### 3.2.4.1. Market gardening support and fencing

The support component for market gardening activities is comprised of the following main strategies: (i) vegetable seeds and agricultural tools supply; (ii) training in agricultural production techniques.

As part of this component, the project involved 500 households in the communes of Goudoumaria (9 villages) and Maïné Soroa (4 villages).

#### i.) Beneficiary households breakdown

Department	Commune	Village	Market gardening beneficiaires		
			Men	Women	Total
Goudoumaria	Goudoumaria	Kadjikou Kouini	12	3	15
		Kania	37	7	44
		Kanoumari	47	13	60
		Kouloumfardou	82	30	112
		<b>Total Goudoumaria Commune</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>231</b>
Maïné-Soroa	Maïné-Soroa	Amadouram Soussoulwa	15	1	16
		Boula Brim	38	5	43
		Rakka	39	4	43
		Kayawoua	35	0	35
		Tchagamari Dina	26	2	28
		Lawaan Ajiri	17	0	17
		Lawan Adjì Kaomani	30	0	30
		NGuel Kariya	23	1	24
		NJoudoua	33	0	33
<b>Total commune Maïné-Soroa</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>269</b>		
<b>Total PIZ</b>			<b>434</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>500</b>

Table 5: Households benefiting from market gardening support component activities

The market gardening support component concerned 86.80% of male beneficiaries against 13.20% of female beneficiaries.

## ii.) Factual assessment

The status of the component implementation is described as follows:

Component	Strategy	Performance forecast	Performance completion	Key findings
MARKET GRADENING SUPPORT COMPONENT	i) i) Vegetable seeds and agricultural tools delivery	ii) Number of households targeted in the PIZ: 500 households iii) Number of beneficiaries and by gender: 3,500 beneficiaries ( average 7 persons per household) of which 52% are women and 48% men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 500 households actually beneficiaries</li> <li>• Each household received a kit including 10g of lettuce, 10g of cabbage, 10g of sweet pepper, 25g of onion, 12.5kg of potatoes and a pile of sweet potato cuttings;</li> <li>• Each household received a tool kit including one (1) rake, one (1) daba, one (1) hoe (hoe) and one (1) 12-liter plastic watering can.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad men predominance (86.80%) over women (13.20%)</li> </ul>
	iv) Training in agricultural production techniques	i) Training of trainers: 8 ACF agents, 4 technical service agents ii) Training of beneficiaries: 500 beneficiaries including 52% women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 26 officers were trained including eighteen (18) from Action Against Hunger and eight (8) from the agriculture services.</li> <li>• Training of producers in two stages: 482 households of whom 16 non-beneficiaries trained at the first session and 250 producers beneficiaries of the project trained at Session 2, i.e. 50%</li> </ul>	More than double of the agents normally involved (233.33%) were actually trained  Beneficiaries' training objectives largely exceeded
	v) Action against pests and crop pests	i) Area treated against pests and crop pests: 25 ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 85% of the areas sown were protected against pests, i.e. 21.3 ha out of 25 estimated for all beneficiaries</li> </ul>	
	vi) Technical monitoring	ii) Number of supervision missions from the technical services (according to the Memorandum of Understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All planned missions were carried out according to the Memorandum of Understanding</li> </ul>	

Table 6: Table of the market gardening support component achievements

### iii.) Achieved outcomes analysis

#### a) Targeting of intervention villages and households

- The situation of insecurity (existence of higher risks or areas of military operations) has made inaccessible some areas with high market gardening potential. Therefore, the project had to focus its activities on the market gardening support component in the communes of Maïné Soroa and Goudoumaria with lesser risk. In these two (2) communes, the villages were targeted on the basis of a list of villages recognized as vulnerable, compiled by the Agriculture Technical Services in relation with the regional system of prevention and management of the food crises through participatory and community approach.
- The 500 direct beneficiary households (in total 3500 people) are dispersed throughout 13 villages in the PIA and shows a high prevalence of men (86.80%) compared to women (13.20%). This situation reflects the social distribution of activities within the communities in the PIA, where market gardening activities are naturally assigned to men, who are the owners of the land. However, the evaluation mission noticed a strong interest amongst the women to be more integrated in strategies concerning market gardening support. This is extremely significant, since it shows a clear tendency to change, driven by the chronic vulnerability of households in the entire project area and beyond. In addition, many single women (widows or separated women) have found themselves in a situation where they have to deal alone with their family's needs.

#### b) Vegetable seeds supply

- The selection of distributed seeds carried out in cooperation with the technical services identified the right types of crops adapted to the agricultural context in the selected sites, in particular in the oasis basins. It should be noted that State services use the same types of seeds (certified by the producer) as part of their programs.
- In addition to the overall delay in launching the project, the evaluation mission noted that the seed procurement process also experienced some difficulties that increased the delay in the delivery of these seeds. In fact, after a preliminary selection operation, the seed germination test proposed by the selected supplier was unsuccessful (it garnered a result of 54%, while the acceptable result for cereal seeds must be at least 80%). Vegetable seeds, when certified, have the germination test results written on the packaging to verify that it is not an old stock. After this first unsuccessful selection operation, the process was launched again (with the selection of a supplier, a new germination test, and the decision making). This new operation was fortunately successful, but, since the whole process had taken a long time, a huge delay in the seed distribution became unavoidable and the cropping calendar was, as such, seriously disturbed.
- The distribution finally took place in the second half of January 2017, which shows a significant delay compared to the growing season (September - October) for some crops (such as lettuce, cabbage, and sweet pepper, etc.) and even July for other long-cycle crops (such as potato and onion).
- At all sites in Maïné Soroa and Goudoumaria, the mission noted poor access to water for irrigation. This situation is likely to have a negative impact on the use of bio-pesticides and the culture phenological development. To deal with this problem, it is advisable to consider alternative solutions such as market gardening or support in appropriate means of dewatering. But it may also be useful to have a strategic partnership with other

stakeholders in the same area to ensure that these additional needs expressed by the beneficiary populations themselves are met. There is, for instance, the Family Farming Development Program (PRODAF), funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), in its start-up phase in the same areas.

- Vegetable farms that are small (average 0.05 ha per beneficiary) remain exposed to wandering animals, as that these project intervention areas are considered, by definition, pastoral areas.

### c) Training in agricultural production techniques

- The objective of the training of trainers was to improve participants' knowledge of agricultural techniques, practices adapted to the context of oasis basins and pest identification techniques, as well as the production of organic pesticides using local products. It allowed the reinforcement of the capacities of 26 agents, including 18 from the project and 8 from the Agriculture Technical Services. It has also allowed training teams to understand the preparation and application of bio pesticides, with a formula that includes: 2 aqueous solutions, one pepper-based and the other petroleum and soap-based (oil cream). Note that this training was conducted by the Diffa Regional Director of Agriculture.
- The training of beneficiaries was carried out in two phases: the first involved 482 households, 16 of whom were non-beneficiaries, and centered on the following themes: technique of nursery seedlings production, field preparation and sowing / transplanting; conducting in fields market gardening crops; highest vegetables' enemies, and techniques to protect crops using bio pesticides.
- The second training took place at the end of May on all market gardening sites and involved 250 producers, i.e. 50% of the beneficiaries, and centered on the following themes: cultural techniques and irrigation (as a reminder); market gardening crops' enemies, techniques for fighting them ; harvesting techniques; performance evaluation; storage & and conservation of vegetables.
- These trainings are very important for the beneficiary communities; however, the timing was squandered again. The trainings occurred very late (at the end of May) in relation to the seed distribution (which took place in January), that is to say, after the producers have already finished transplanting their crops. As a result, producers were not sufficiently prepared to start their season with newly acquired knowledge. With the present situation, which has affected the current production, we can only hope that the knowledge acquired by the producers will at least be useful for future campaigns. For that, it is important to consider assessing the level of appropriation of the knowledge acquired by these producers.

### iii.) Conclusion and recommendations

The market gardening component implements strategies aimed at meeting the food and nutritional needs of vulnerable households. Nevertheless, it has been subject to a conflict between administrative and financial procedures regarding seed purchase and cultural calendar which incompressible datum. This conflict caused significant delays that impacted crop development. Even though the monitoring reports show that "*this activity allowed an increase in household food coverage of at least three (3) months and allowed them to reap substantial cash income,*" the evaluation mission cannot confirm this statement. Indeed, vegetable crops

were already largely affected by the delay at the beginning of the season. March and April's hot weather is incompatible with farmed crops. This opinion has been confirmed by the Agricultural Services at all levels. In addition, the beneficiaries of the project assessed their coverage of food needs as a group as lasting between ½ months to 2 months, depending on the size of the household. However, this in itself is a positive result when considering the conditions of vulnerability in which these populations are rushed since the outbreak of this crisis across the Diffa region. For that and in order to improve the results of this market gardening support strategy, the evaluation mission makes the following recommendations:

- *Pursuing support in the field of market gardening to sustain the achieved results while improving timing (ideally between October and November) for seed distribution operations and make more consistent the crop calendar for different crops. This will enhance the production and consequently the results at the end of the campaign. It is also necessary to improve the timing for producer training (ideally in November).*
- *Seeking out to develop strategic partnerships, particularly with regard to access to irrigation water and dewatering facilities, on one hand, and, on the other hand, with fences to protect developed areas. These strategies are in fact complementary to those already supported by USAID / OFDA funding.*
- *Reinforcing the development of cuvettes by exploiting larger areas and consolidating better organization amongst producers, especially women.*

### 3.2.4.3. Money transfer component

#### i.) Beneficiary households breakdown

In total, all villages (18 of them) were involved in CFW operations and 16 in the unconditional money transfers (UMT). The beneficiary households are spread as follows:

Department	Commune	Village	CFW beneficiaries			Unconditional cash beneficiaries		
			M	W	Total	M	W	Total
<b>Diffa</b>	Chétimari	Garin Toudou	63	13	76	2	3	5
		Malan Mainari	75	1	76	2	4	6
		Youramdi	77	2	79	3	15	18
	<b>Total Chétimari</b>		<b>215</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>29</b>
	Diffa	Kangarwa	34	2	36	1	5	6
		Mamari	67	28	95	3	5	8
<b>Total Diffa</b>		<b>101</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	
<b>Mainé-Soroa</b>	Mainé-Soroa	Amadouram Soussoulwa	24	1	25	0	2	2
		Boula Brim	38	5	43	0	5	5
		Rakka	39	5	44	1	2	3
		Kayawoua	37	1	38	0	1	1
		Tchagamari Dina	27	5	32	0	0	0
		Lawaan Ajiri	28	0	28	0	1	1
		Lawan Adji Kaomari	30	0	30	0	0	0
		NGuel Kariya	23	1	24	1	2	3
		NJoudoua	41	0	41	0	2	2
		<b>Total Mainé-Soroa</b>		<b>287</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>15</b>
	Goudoumaria	Kadjikou Kouini	22	22	44	0	2	2
		Kania	53	8	61	3	7	10
		Kanoumari	58	17	75	3	5	8
Kouloumfardou		115	38	153	4	16	20	

<b>Total Goudoumaria</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Total PIZ</b>	<b>851</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 7: Distribution of CFW activities beneficiaries

## ii. Factual assessment

This operational part of the project is implemented through cash for work (CFW) and unconditional monetary transfers (UMT). From its design, this component is an initiative that would allow beneficiaries to receive short-term income in order to secure their basic necessities while maintaining dignity and socio-economic fabric. The component aims at restoring, even in part, the population's purchasing power and prevent them from opting for negative or degrading survival means such as begging, theft or other illegal smuggling. To this end, it has been approved unanimously by all target groups encountered by the evaluation mission. This opinion is also highly valued in the way that it is based on fairness. Indeed, the most vulnerable households such as those with elderly people, people with disabilities, or pregnant women, etc., were targeted by UMT operations while those physically fit are involved in CFW activities. The cash transfers allowed these households to meet some of their basic needs such as health, clothing, shelter, and food, etc. Other households have been able to develop even small ruminants activities.

The activities of this component began on March 1, 2017 and lasted three (3) months and 13 days over three months as anticipated, and involved 1100 households, i.e. 7700 people, spread as follows: 1000 households (7000 people) for CFW activities, with a large men predominance (85.10%) versus 14.90% women. Unconditional cash transfers (UMTs) benefited 100 households (700 people), with a disparity favoring women (77%) against men (23%).

The two parts of this component (CFW and UMT) enabled injecting a total amount of 125 840 000 FCFA, out of a forecast of 107 250 000 FCFA, into the economy of these villages, which corresponds to an implementation rate of 117.33% as on August, 24.

As part of the CFW component of money transfer, activities are identified primarily based on environmental consideration, which is selected in a participatory way with stakeholders, including the Technical Services from the Environment, Agriculture, Forestry and Land Management offices, and also municipal authorities, etc. Villages and intervention sites are also selected based on a participatory methodological targeting approach implemented by the project.

Commune	Village/Site	Number of households	Type of activity	Planned area	Completed area	Achievement rate
<b>Diffa</b>	Kangarwa	36	Half-moon	17,25	20,24	117%
	Mamari	95	Half-moon	45,53	53,42	117%
<b>Chétimari</b>	Garin Toudou	76	Half-moon	36,42	42,73	117%
	Malan Mainari	76	Half-moon	36,42	42,73	117%
	Youramdi	79	Half-moon	37,86	44,42	117%
<b>Mainé Soroa</b>	Amadouram Soussoulwa	25	Dune fixation	14,06	16,5	117%
	Boula Brim	43	Dune fixation	24,19	28,38	117%
	Rakka	44	Dune fixation	24,75	29,04	117%

	Kayawoua	38	Dune fixation	21,38	25,08	117%
	Tchagamari Dina	32	Dune fixation	18	21,12	117%
	awaanAjiri	28	Dune fixation	15,75	18,48	117%
	Lawan Adji Kaomari	30	Dune fixation	16,88	19,8	117%
	NGuelKariya	24	Dune fixation	13,5	15,84	117%
	NJoudoua	41	Dune fixation	23,06	27,06	117%
<b>Goudoumaria</b>	KadjikouKouini	44	Dune fixation	24,75	29,04	117%
	Kania	61	Dune fixation	34,31	40,26	117%
	Kanoumari	75	Dune fixation	42,19	49,5	117%
	Kouloumfardou	153	Dune fixation	86,06	100,98	117%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>		<b>532,36 ha</b>	<b>624,63 ha</b>	<b>117%</b>

Table 8: CFW activities breakdown by type and by site

The physical assessment of the completed activities indicates an execution rate of 117% on all sites, due to a 13 working days extension per person.

#### i.) Explanation of achieved outcomes

In view of the achievements outlined above, the evaluation mission notes that all planned activities have been implemented. Nevertheless, it makes the following observations:

##### a) About CFW activities

CFW's activities have been designed to provide income to the project's target groups, to allow them meeting their immediate and basic needs in the context of the humanitarian emergency in the PIA and throughout the whole Diffa region. In this, they have reached their goals. Interviews with the beneficiary households revealed that income secured through these activities was used, respectively and in order of importance, for food expenses, debt reimbursement, clothing and purchasing of animals, as well as other expenses related to social responsibilities such as baby showers and weddings. Some of the women previously engaged in income-generating activities and who, because of the crisis, were forced to give them up, have found through these activities a new opportunity to build capital to restart their business.

The activities carried out within the framework of CFW fundamentally affect the structural bases defining the vulnerability of households, through activities of strategic importance, such as soil conservation and recovery with, for instance, building half-moons and fixing duns. This option is well conceived in view of environmental issues in the project area such as glacis, silting of pastoral zone and oasis basins, duns endangering homes, etc. All these issues have an impact on food and nutrition security and on households' living conditions

In addition, work carried out has provided employment to the villages' workforce for over 100 days, in a context where the employment opportunities of rural households are very rare or even impossible. In addition, coupling these activities with those of the other components, such as support for LSR, was strongly appreciated by the project beneficiaries. Despite the contextual difficulties, the range of activities put in place by the project and the results that derived from it have provided an opportunity to extend food coverage for households in need during the

indicated period. It has also helped to keep the village's manpower focused on the major challenges directly involving them and their immediate environment.

As a result of all of this, the households benefitting from this component have shown their satisfaction. Its relevance is also reinforced by a good involvement of the Technical Services in the completion, supervision and strengthening of actors' technical abilities.

Nevertheless, the evaluation mission recommends the following:

- The half-moon technique aims at recovering degraded, unprotected and encrusted land for agricultural, pastoral or forestry purposes. Thus, to attain its main purpose, the lands inside half-moons must be enriched with organic manure to be used for cultivation (half) and improved with planted ligneous species and / or seeding with herbaceous plants, which has not been the case on the project's intervention sites.
- To ensure these structures' effectiveness and eventually attain the expected effects, the agricultural half-moons earth beads of are to be redone annually. Regarding silvo-pastoral half-moons, it's recommended an annual maintenance of the beads and an increase in height to prevent overflow. Given the nature of the project financing and its duration (12 months), these measures were neither taken into account nor organized with the Environmental Technical Services, beneficiary communities and municipal authorities. As a result, the sustainability and positive benefits ultimately associated with these works are not guaranteed.
- Project intervention sites must be protected from wandering animals in the early years until vegetation restoration. This requires good organization of the beneficiary community and good involvement of technical services and municipal authorities. These possibilities are not yet anticipated and discussed.
- The dunes are fixed using quadratic windbreaks. Fences protect against wind erosion and reduce the movement of sand to fields, homes and other infrastructure. The vegetation installation takes at least three years and brings organic material and debris to the soil, thus adjoining its structure. It is therefore necessary to monitor and maintain the protected dune for at least a few years, which requires a good organization of the community. This possibility is not yet taken into account
- These weaknesses involve the risk of compromising the expected effects of the works achieved: *«missing the opportunity to kill two birds with one stone»*.

**a) About unconditional monetary transfer activities (UMTs)**

The UMT activities that have been developed have actually benefitted the poorest people in the target groups. They have reached their objectives within the time horizon of the project, enabling beneficiaries to meet a number of basic food and non - food needs and strengthen their resilience in this humanitarian emergency context. These activities are undertaken to supplement activities from other partners involved in the project's intervention zones such as free food distribution, shelter, water, hygiene and sanitation, health, etc.

**ii.) Conclusion and recommendations**

- *Given the structural nature of the activities implemented within the CFW strategy, and with a view to ensuring the sustainability of their effects in the long term, particularly on the natural resources, managing and sustaining acquired results by the development of a partnership to supplement the works achieved is to be envisioned.*
- *In order to ensure the sustainability of the expected effects of the work that has been carried out, it is also necessary to contribute to setting up an organization at community-level, to ensure the safeguarding of treated sites and community monitoring. In any case, this should be done under the technical supervision of the Environmental Services and the involved communes.*
- *It is also urgent to undertake complementary and necessary technical activities on the structures built, to ensure getting agricultural and pastoral impacts, in order to improve in the medium and long-term the conditions of food security and maintain the productive capital of rural households in the project's intervention areas.*
- *Dans le cas d'un autre cycle, il convient d'intégrer, dès la conception du projet, les stratégies d'appropriation et de pérennité des acquis de concert avec les communautés, les communes et les services techniques régionaux, départementaux et communaux.*
- *In the case of another cycle, the strategies of appropriation and sustainability of the achievements should be integrated from the project's design, in partnership with communities, communes, and technical services at the regional, departmental and communal levels.*

### 3.3. Project's efficiency

#### 3.3.2. Key findings

Efficiency indicates the way project resources have been converted into results through its activities. Possible shortcomings will be analyzed and the strengths emphasized to allow the mission to decide whether or not to sustain the intervention in the next section.

The project has reached great financial performance, even though the operational start-up phase had a 2-month delay. At the end of the project, the budget execution presented was as shown below:

Activities component	Forecast in \$	Execution in \$	Execution rate
LSR and animal feed	\$ 142 228	\$ 142 228	100,00%
Market gardening support	\$ 38 007	\$ 31 248	82,22%
Money transfer	\$ 197 255	\$ 213 241	108,10%
H/R Logistics/Support	\$ 622 510	\$ 613 282	98,52%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 000 000</b>	<b>1 000 000</b>	<b>100,00%</b>

Table 9: Financial statement (from accounting documentation)

In general, the evaluation mission notes that overall technical forecasts were carried out at costs below expectations:

- i) Positive gaps from the forecast have been achieved, in particular on the LSR activities (22274 USD), due to animal prices' decrease on the markets compared to the previous year. The remainder allowed for a second purchasing of 113 goats to replace those who died in Youramdi, commune of Chetimari, as a result of a plague epidemic. The LSR implementation would have been more efficient if the technical conditions of animals' procurement had been observed more thoroughly (see LSR component section).
- ii) The financial implementation of the cash transfer component resulted in all technical forecasts and a positive gap in the budget, thus extending the duration of the CFW and the unconditional cash transfer by 13 days.

Despite these performances achieved in the implementation of the project, fulfilling the financial execution procedures of project activities established in ACF's overall management system, some difficulties were however noted:

- i) Both budget planning and execution show operating costs over 60% from the overall budget, that are related to coordination, human resources, transportation, leasing, as well as miscellaneous administrative costs. It appears that less than 40% of the funding was actually allocated to the operational components of the project. In addition, these operating costs represent more than 150% of the amount allocated to technical activities and executed under LSR, market gardening, and cash transfer. This is due both to a lack of applying accounting principles (non-control of cost centers) and to a relatively heavy coordination chain.
- i) Delays in establishing partnerships with technical services have also deferred some activities' implementation, particularly those related to actors' training.
- ii) A quite long timeframe between purchase requests, orders and delivery has contributed to delaying the market gardening support activities. This is critical because these activities depend on a crop calendar, a fundamental fact that must be strictly observed for optimized returns. .
- iii) The achieved iteration in the purchase of seeds has extended the time required to start market gardening activities, which is already well beyond the crop calendar.

### 3.3.2. Conclusion and recommendations

Although overall the project technical implementation and financial implementation have been successful, it is obvious that the project was subject to a constant conflict between concerns over administrative and financial procedures and technical achievements. Given the nature of the activities and the project time-horizon, which is 12 months, it appears that the delays imposed by the procedures negatively impacted the project's technical execution. On this end, the mission recommends the following:

- *Ensuring a better consistency between the timeframe for completing administrative and financial procedures and the technical execution deadlines, taking into account the requirements related to the type of activities to be carried out. This would allow for a better balance between the need to respect administrative procedures and the concerns related to the expected results in implementing the project.*
- *Conducting results-based budgeting and cost centers to reduce the impact of overall operations' cost on the total budget.*
- *Rationalizing the project coordination chain to reduce associated costs.*

### 3.4. Project's effects

### 3.4.1. Key findings

The question related to effects and impacts refers to changes (desired or not) produced or induced on target groups and their living conditions as a result of project interventions. How has the project contributed to improving the food and nutrition security of households affected by the Boko Haram crisis? How are their livelihoods maintained and protected? How has the coverage of the immediate and basic needs of the populations affected by the humanitarian crisis in the communes of Diffa, Maïné - Soroa and Chétimari and Goudoumaria improved? Has the project had unexpected negative effects?

These are all very important questions for which the present evaluation mission cannot provide clear answers using proven factors and given the very short duration of the project cycle. Evaluating the effects would require a step back in time and a more specific study. However, in the case of this evaluation, the mission relied mainly on the perceptions of the various stakeholders and especially those of the direct beneficiaries and technical services who participated in the process. Thus, the assessment of the effects will be made socio-economically and environmentally in terms of beneficiary households affected populations' tangible knowledge, skill and practice in livestock farming and market gardening.

- i) The support and training provided by the project in key areas such as small ruminant farming techniques, agricultural production techniques, vegetable crops pest fighting using local products, and soil recovery allowed the direct beneficiaries to get a satisfactory understanding and skills for improving small ruminants (especially goats) farming, producing vegetables and develop the oasis bowls located in the PIA. However, continuous training of beneficiaries and replication of their acquired knowledge and techniques will ultimately allow to best enhance this knowledge and skills.
- ii) CFW and Unconditional Cash activities have allowed many beneficiaries to regain their lost capital and improve their living conditions through the acquisition of small ruminants, agricultural production and market gardening tools, IGAs, home improvement, and debt repayment. The mission notes in this regard a good contribution from the project in providing autonomy to the target groups, and reducing their vulnerability to food and nutritional insecurity. Overall, these interventions have positively impacted the people's livelihoods and supported the economy in the intervention villages and beyond, throughout the whole Diffa region.
- iii) There is a good tendency towards natural regeneration in some areas with glacis such as Kangarwa, Garin Toudou, and Kania, etc. because of the half-moons completed. However, this trend could be reversed if these silvo - pastoral half – moons, which only live up to 3 years, are not strengthened. In the event of another cycle of this project, provision should be made for planting in these structures, which will make it possible to accelerate vegetation recovery and restructure the soil. This strategy could be usefully complemented by reforestation operations.
- iv) People with disabilities and the elderly have had the opportunity to maintain their dignity by meeting their priority and incompressible needs. However, the sustainability of this strategy's effects is not guaranteed over the medium and long term.
- v) The evaluation mission did not note any negative collateral changes as a result of project interventions. However, there is a need for watching the development of "assisted behaviors and mentality" among beneficiary populations that may undermine the changes advocated by the project and the values strongly expressed by ACF.

### 3.4.2. Conclusion and recommendations

The responses provided by the SAME Diffa project in the context of humanitarian emergency have yet to show their medium and long-term effects on securing vulnerable households' conditions and rebuilding their livelihoods. In the short term, which constitutes the time horizon for this project's execution, desirable change dynamics have arisen. These dynamics must be supported, reinforced and supervised in order to enhance and eventually produce the expected effects and impacts. In order to reinforce the change effects induced by the project or to which it contributed, the evaluation mission makes the following recommendations:

- i) *Strengthening the ACF / OFDA strategic partnership by researching and developing a complementary partnership for another cycle of at least three (3) years, which will enable the definition and implementation of a more comprehensive strategy in the medium and long term and whose effects will have a greater potential for sustainability.*
- ii) *Continuing the coaching and training replication strategy on techniques acquired by the beneficiaries, in order to reinforce the control of learned techniques in the different components*
- iii) *CFW's strategy, based on land conservation and recovery operations, provides income to target populations. It also promotes the regeneration of vegetation cover as well as restructuring soils for agricultural and sylvo - pastoral activities, with special attention to environmental issues within the PIA. To this end, this strategy must be pursued and reinforced in a more organized and community - oriented way, which will improve the potential of sylvo - pastoral lands. Works completed must also be secured through plantation (reforestation) or seeding. In the case of silvo-pastoral half-moons, availability of seed and herbaceous releases and tree seedlings is very essential. For dune fixation operations, the effects are long-lasting but require careful monitoring and maintenance for at least three years. Furthermore, to be successful, it is necessary to organize the community for their full grassroots participation, as well as that of local authorities and technical services on the basis of agreements clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder.*

## 3.5. Sustainability

### 3.5.1. Conditions for the sustainability of project achievements

Sustainability is measured by the possibility for the communes of Diffa, Chétimari, Maïné Soroa and Goudoumaria, as well as beneficiary households to preserve the benefits generated by the project when it comes to an end. Benefits are physical achievements such as soil conservation and recovery works, livestock distributed, market gardening activities, and capacity building actions like training or support for various target groups, and use of allocated income, etc.

From this viewpoint, the sustainability of project achievements depends on:

- i) The project relevance;

- ii) The level of ownership of the project outputs by the various actors and mainly the beneficiary communities;
- iii) The monitoring and coaching actions at the level of local management structures, and in the State's technical services day-to-day activities.

### **i.) Relevance:**

Our studies mentioned above have highlighted the project's relevance in all its strategic components. However, this project's relevance as designed and implemented still remains confronted to an inconsistency between the time horizon, the nature of the problem, and the type of responses provided.

### **ii.) Project achievements appropriation:**

The appropriation of the project achievements was a success and involved stakeholders and mainly the beneficiary communities who have largely undertaken it during project implementation. The first step in this process regards participation / mobilization in the identification of needs (diagnostic phase) and in the implementation of actions.

In general, when it comes to implementing project components, the appropriation of the acquired activities falls under the responsibility of actors, particularly the target communities and in a collective way. Yet, it appears here that implementation on all sites has been rather individual. As such, management on a community basis was not applied.

The technical support granted by the project to the beneficiaries, particularly in the areas covered by the various components of the project, has actually contributed to boosting beneficiaries' production capacities and still remains an achievement whose irreversibility will depend on the use of the techniques learned. For this purpose, technical monitoring and supervision is absolutely necessary.

### **iii.) Monitoring and supervision:**

Monitoring and coaching functions play a vital role in the search for sustainability of project achievements. This is understood and applied by ACF, which during this cycle has actually favored a participative mode of implementation based on partnership with private suppliers and State bodies. Nevertheless, shortage in human and logistic from the State's technical structures has limited their capacities to intervene frequently as wished. Despite these shortcomings, however, the State's technical services' involvement in the monitoring and supervision process will always be essential due to their good knowledge of the environment and their status as a technical authority, officially representing the Government and its decentralized authorities. In addition to these important comparative advantages, they also ensure the visibility and integration of achievements in local / regional / national development plans, thereby ensuring efforts of convergence and integration towards common goals.

Finally, monitoring and mentoring by community-based organizations has not yet taken shape during this one-year implementation cycle, yet they proceed from the appropriation and control of operational and strategic processes implemented. There is therefore a need for initiatives to develop in the event of another eventual cycle of the project.

### 3.5.2. Conclusions and recommendations

- i) *To consolidate the sustainability of the achievements, it is essential that ACF continue mobilizing financial and technical partners, in order to ensure a better consistency of the project over time;*
- ii) *A process of community empowerment in the management of project achievements should be initiated. This empowerment is highly dependent on the accountability and control of the strategic and operational processes related to the project (monitoring sites developed during CFW operations, setting up an operational monitoring of the proximity of animals in the target communities, achievement of community works to facilitate access to water for irrigation, etc.)*
- iii) *Pursue and strengthen the partnership with the State's technical structures to monitor and coach communities.*

### 3.6. Some lessons learned

- i) Integrating humanitarian relief activities into recovery activities produces good results, especially if it takes into account, on the one hand, local values such as solidarity, respect for commitments made and respect for customs, etc. and, on the other hand, collaboration with other partners and their strategies, partnership with the State's technical services, and communes and communities participation in defining strategic and operational options.
- ii) Geographical and household targeting through collaboration from all stakeholders including direct target groups, municipal authorities, customary authorities, State technical services, allows for building trust with partners and improves ACF's image and reputation among Government, CCH, technical services, customary authorities, communal authorities, and target groups. In addition, it also allows for a better acceptance of the project's activities by population.
- iii) The animals' procurement stage being critical for the success of LSR, all relevant technical services from the livestock services and other private suppliers must be included in the process in order to minimize the significant risks related to it.
- iv) It seems also important to clearly indicate in the supplier's specification that animals should be supplied from an area where vaccination has actually taken place and that animals are healthy, in good condition and at reproductive age. The supplier should also be explicitly required to feed normally animals during the quarantine period.
- v) Minimizing the incidence of diseases by treating animals before being distributed in addition to the treatment they previously received according to their area of provenance and keeping location

- vi) Training strategies in the areas of market gardening aimed at strengthening the technical capacity of beneficiaries and improving production, to be effective, should be carried out sequentially before seed distribution.

### 3.6. Summary of the recommendations

Evaluation criteria	Recommendations	Time horizon		
		CT	MT	LT
Relevance	1. Include into the project's conceptual structure strategies to strengthen on a sustainable basis, household's incomes (in particular development of IGAs)	■		
	2. Promote and support the collective organization of beneficiaries for market garden sites' optimum development	■		
	3. Open the project's time horizon over a longer period (2-3 years) to enhance the potential for qualitative changes in food security of vulnerable households and the restoration / securing of their livelihoods		■	
Effectiveness	1. In order to strengthen the accountability exercise in the project implementation chain, a performance-based reporting framework needs to be developed and proposed to the implementing actors.	■		
	2. Continuing developing the mechanism for collecting, centralizing and handling complaints. This involves the training of stakeholders, mainly the target groups benefitting from the project, on the objectives of this strategy	■		
	3. Involve the technical services and the private veterinarian from the cattle acquisition phase	■		
	4. Submit to the control of technical livestock services or any other with proven expertise the development of animals suppliers specifications	■		
	5. Make compulsory to animal feed suppliers the provision of quality certification issued by technical livestock services	■		
	6. Promote the implementation of para-veterinary auxiliaries (VPA) in collaboration with the State's decentralized technical services, AREN and the private veterinarian		■	
	7. Ensure that all agreements for the technical monitoring regarding LSR are actually signed before the start of activities.	■		
	8. Mix livestock distribution periods and animal feed distribution to optimize the effectiveness of monitoring missions and their effects on the health of distributed animals	■		
	9. Continue support in the fields of market gardening to consolidate results achieved while improving the timing	■		
	10. Seek and develop strategic partnerships, particularly with regard, on one hand, to access to irrigation water and means of drainage and, on the other hand, to protection fencing of the exploited areas.		■	
	11. Reinforce cuvettes valorization by exploiting larger areas and set up better organization of producers, particularly women	■		
	12. Ensuring consolidation of the acquired activities through the development of a partnership to supplement the works completed using biological tools, so that the lands are used for agriculture or silvo-pastoral purposes	■	■	
	13. Contribute to the establishment of an organization at the community level to ensure community monitoring and the necessary treated sites' protection	■		
	14. Undertake complementary and necessary technical activities for works completed to ensure achieving environmental effects and agricultural and pastoral impacts	■		

	15. In the event of another cycle, it is necessary to integrate, from the project's design, strategies of appropriation and sustainability of the achievements in collaboration with the communities, communes, and also the regional, departmental and communal technical services.	■
<b>Efficiency</b>	1. Ensuring a better consistency between the deadlines for the completion of administrative and financial procedures and the technical execution deadlines, taking into account requirements related to the type of activities to be carried out	■
	2. Taking into an account results-based budgeting and cost centers to reduce the impact of overall operations and overhead on the overall budget.	■
	3. Rationalize the project coordination chain to reduce associated costs	■
<b>Effects</b>	1. Strengthen the ACF / OFDA strategic partnership by researching and developing a complementary partnership for another cycle of at least three (3) years, which will enable defining and implementing a more comprehensive response strategy, clearly positioned on the medium and long term and whose effects would have a greater potential for sustainability	■
	2. Pursuing coaching strategically duplicating training of techniques acquired by the beneficiaries, in order to reinforce the control over the techniques learned from the various components	■
	3. Continue and consolidate in a more organized and community-based manner, CFW's strategy based on conservation and land recovery operations.	■
	4. To seek within the framework of this strategy, the participation of grassroots-organized communities, local authorities and technical services through agreements clearly defining the contributions, roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder	■
<b>Sustainability</b>	1. . To consolidate the sustainability of the achievements, continue the mobilization efforts of the financial and technical partners to ensure a better consistency of the project over time in light of the nature of the problems and solutions initiated	■
	2. Initiate a community empowerment process in the management of project achievements.	■
	3. To pursue and strengthen the partnership with the State's technical bodies for monitoring the achievements and coaching the project's beneficiary communities	■

## **APPENDICES**

**1. Evaluation mission TORs**

**2. List of conducted meetings**

## ANNEXE 1: Terms of Reference



### TERMS OF REFERENCE

For the project final external evaluation

**Project "Ensuring Food Security and Restoring Livelihoods for Displaced Populations and Vulnerable Hosts in the Diffa Region" (Food security and livelihoods recovery for the most vulnerable displaced populations in Diffa region)**

Projet funded by  
**OFDA - USAID**

#### PROJECT DETAILS

<b>Project title</b>	"Ensuring Food Security and Restoring Livelihoods for Displaced Populations and Vulnerable Hosts in the Diffa Region"
<b>Localisation</b>	Commune of Diffa, Chétimari, Maïné-Soroa et Goudoumaria; Departement of Diffa and Maïné-Soroa et Goudoumaria, Région of Diffa
<b>Secteur</b>	Food security and livelihoods
<b>Durée</b>	12 months
<b>Début</b>	August 25, 2016
<b>Fin</b>	August 24, 2017
<b>Bailleur de fond</b>	OFDA - USAID
<b>Langue du projet</b>	French - English
<b>Budget du projet</b>	US \$ 1,000 ,000
<b>Siège ACF responsable</b>	Action Against Hunger-Spain
<b>Mission responsable ACF</b>	Action Against Hunger in Niger
<b>Type d'évaluation</b>	Final external evaluation

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

### Map of the project area

The project "Ensuring Food Security and Restoring Livelihoods for Displaced Populations and Vulnerable Hospitals in the Diffa Region" funded by OFDA - USAID, is implemented in the Diffa region, particularly in the communes of Diffa and Chétimari, department of Diffa and in the commune and of Maïné Soroa.

### Project Overview

Action Against Hunger has been working in Niger since 1997 to provide multi-sectoral assistance ( water, hygiene, sanitation, food security, nutrition, health, etc.) to the most vulnerable populations.

Action Against Hunger began its interventions in Diffa in 2015 following Boko Haram attacks in the region. The Diffa region thus becomes particularly affected as it was already subject to chronic food and nutritional insecurity and poor access to water as well as sanitation and hygiene facilities. Arrival of an estimated 150,000 refugees and returnees from Nigeria as a result of Boko Haram attacks from 2013 has aggravated the pressure on the already exhausted hosting capacity of the Diffa communities.

It is in this context that Action Against Hunger received a second grant from OFDA to implement this project on food security. The purpose of this project is to respond to the immediate and basic needs of host and displaced populations affected by Boko Haram activities in the border area between Niger and Nigeria for reaching new beneficiaries not covered in the first phase.

### Project objective, target beneficiaries and management structure

#### Objectives

**Overall objective:** To address the immediate and basic needs of host and displaced populations affected by Boko Haram activities in the border area between Niger and Nigeria.

**Specific objective:** To improve the food security and living conditions of Nigerien host and displaced populations affected by the humanitarian crisis in the Diffa region

#### Outcomes

- Outcomes 1: Sustaining food production capacity, as well as the most vulnerable households hosting displaced persons achievements.
- Outcomes 2: Improving livelihoods and access to essential goods for most host and displaced households affected by the conflict.

The project beneficiaries are very poor, displaced, refugee, host families, returnees and indigenous people from the 3 project communes. These beneficiaries should not have received the support from Action Against Hunger for the project previously funded by OFDA in the same area of intervention and covering the same type of activities.

The total number of beneficiaries is 1,100 households, i.e. 7,700 people. Of these households, 660 households had to be part of the host population and 440 households, refugees, displaced or returned. Of the 1,100 households, 1,000 benefited from Cash for Work and 100 from

unconditional Cash. In addition, from these 1100 households, 850 receive other support, either for market gardening (500 households) or for rebuilding of livestock (350 households); Which implies that 250 households only benefit from CASH (CFW or CI). Finally, the interventions took place in 18 villages (see Annex 1).

This project is fully integrated into the context, characteristics of food and nutrition insecurity, as well as into the programmatic framework and strategy defined at the national level in Niger. In addition, the project takes into account planning and management processes in the area (taking into account the institutional framework in relation to the decentralization strategy). Its implementation is coordinated with other stakeholders (WFP, Save the Children, IRC, etc.) and other ongoing projects.

At Action Against Hunger, the Niger Mission is under the responsibility of the Madrid headquarters where a multidisciplinary team provides support to the local team in charge of implementing the project.

### **The project current status**

The project ended on August 24, 2017 and the activities carried out according to the planned plan. All activities planned to date, despite delays in the first months of the project., have been completed.

## **PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION**

### **Evaluation rationale**

This final evaluation is part of a transparency approach and accountability towards beneficiaries, partners and donors in order to have a clear vision on the results achieved by the project. The project approach is geared towards meeting immediate needs and in the medium term (recovery). For this reason, it is important for Action Against Hunger to evaluate the project outcomes and capitalize on the experience gained in order to improve the effectiveness and relevance of the emergency response to Diffa.

### **Evaluation objective (s)**

- Evaluating the project overall effectiveness and efficiency on improving the diet and strengthening the livelihoods of beneficiary households
- Assessing the relevance of the project implementation strategy and its acceptability by beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries
- Evaluating the project achievement results in relation with the initial project document

### **Evaluation target users**

The evaluation direct users are food safety technical advisers at headquarters and in the field, operations departments, and the quality from Niger and Madrid missions; Indirect users are Action Against Hunger International Network, donors, government, local authorities, ministries, UN Agencies, Clusters, NGOs and NGO consortia, as well as leading humanitarian platforms (such as ALNAP).

### **Use of the evaluation**

The evaluation recommendations should be used to improve and redefine Action Against Hunger's approach in future interventions in Diffa, taking into account the constraints and limiting factors inherent to the region. The study should also generate knowledge about the

project design (relevance), quality of the procedure (efficiency, ownership) and quality of implementation (effectiveness, ownership of results and sustainability). It also aims to identify possible innovations in approaches and methods and to draw lessons and recommendations for future interventions.

## **EVALUATION AREA**

### **Scope of the evaluation**

The evaluation should take into account the objectives, outcomes and indicators mentioned in the project document. It will have to examine also the standards and quality of the goods and services produced by this project from the opinion of the direct and indirect beneficiaries, community leaders, members of the activities community management committees, local authorities, government technical departments, Action Against Hunger technical and management services, other field operators, executing, support, management, monitoring, evaluation, and other resource persons.

The evaluation should make allow to clearly identify the project strengths and weaknesses,, those of the partnership established with the state decentralized structures, and to identify also the lessons learned in order to formulate concrete recommendations. It is important that this evaluation also measures the degree of implementation of the formulated recommendations from the first phase of the intervention.

### **Cross-sectional elements**

ACF suggests cross-cutting elements to be included in the assessment such as issues related to gender, specific vulnerabilities, protection, environmental impact, local actors' involvement, and partnership or accountability.

### **Evaluator's profile**

The evaluator should have the following profile:

- Holding an University degree in Agronomy, Rural Development or Project Management;
- Have an experience in the field of SAME (development / humanitarian context);
- Having a proven field experience in multi-year project evaluation;
- Having a significant experience in coordinating, designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating projects;
- Having Knowledge in participatory research methods;
- Being independent from the parties involved;
- Having a perfect command of French, both spoken and written;
- Having a good understanding of donors requirements;
- Being available for evaluation duration.

## **APPLICATION SUBMISSION**

Applicants meeting the required criteria and interested in submitting can apply by filling a technical offer (including the consultant's CV) and a financial proposal to Action Against Hunger, 213 Béli Street, Niamey, no later than 25 September 2017 at 10:00 am .

The technical and financial offers must be enclosed and bearing the words "Call Applications for final external evaluation OFDA DIFFA".

## **APPENDICES**

REPARTITION DES BENEFICIAIRES PAR VILLAGE ET PAR ACTIVITE						
COMMUNE	VILLAGE	Cash For Work	Cash Inconditionnel	RSC	Maraîchage	Nbre Total de Bénef
DIFFA	Kangarwa	36	6	27	0	42
DIFFA	Mamari	95	8	85	0	103
<b>TOTAL DIFFA</b>		<b>131</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>145</b>
CHETIMARI	Garin Toudou	76	5	74	0	81
CHETIMARI	Malan Mainari	76	6	77	0	82
CHETIMARI	Youramdi	79	18	87	0	97
<b>TOTAL CHETIMARI</b>		<b>231</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>260</b>
MAINE SOROA	Amadouram Soussoulwa	25	2	0	16	27
MAINE SOROA	Boula Brim	43	5	0	43	48
MAINE SOROA	Rakka	44	3	0	43	47
MAINE SOROA	Kayawoua	38	1	0	35	39
MAINE SOROA	Tchagamari Dina	32	0	0	28	32
MAINE SOROA	Lawaan Ajiri	28	1	0	17	29
MAINE SOROA	Lawan Adji Kaomari	30	0	0	30	30
MAINE SOROA	NGuel Kariya	24	3	0	24	27
MAINE SOROA	NJoudoua	41	2	0	33	43
<b>TOTAL MAINE</b>		<b>305</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>322</b>
GOUDOUMARIA	Kadjikou Kouini	44	2	0	15	46
GOUDOUMARIA	Kania	61	10	0	44	71
GOUDOUMARIA	Kanoumari	75	8	0	60	83
GOUDOUMARIA	Kouloumfardou	153	20	0	112	173
<b>TOTAL GOUDOUMARIA</b>		<b>333</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>373</b>
<b>TOTAL GENERAL</b>		<b>1000</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>1100</b>

## APPENDIX 2: List of achieved meetings

FIRST AND LAST NAMES	ORGANIZATION	POSITION	CONTACT
<b>Niamey</b>			
Marie Christine Cormier		Country Deputy Director	Tél. : 88719641 Email : mcormier@ne.acfspain.org
Gabriel Villarrubia	ACF mission in Niger	SAME Coordinator	Tél. : 88228694 Email : gvillarrubia@ne.acfspain.org
Illiasou Dandakoye	ACF mission in Niger	SAME Technical manager	Tél. : 99494424 Email : samadou@ne.acfspain.org
Rikky Ilunga Kazadi	ACF mission in Niger	MEAL coordinator	Tél : 88495332 Email : rilunga@ne.acfspain.org
Clara Melis Meynar	ACF mission in Niger	Procurement officier	Tél : 88495373 Email : cmelis@ne.acfspain.org
<b>Diffa</b>			
Prime N'Kurunziza	ACF Sapin Diffa base	Base chief	Tél. : 89250694 Email :
Cheik Amadou Tidjane Dieng	ACF Sapin Diffa base	Diffa Logistics coordinator	Tél. : Email :
Adama Traoré	ACF Sapin Diffa base	SAME Program manager	Tél. : Email :
Hamidine Abdou	ACF Sapin Diffa base	SAME Project manager	Tél. : 88228631 / 97747311 Email : ahamidine@ne.acfspain.org
Bachir Maïboudjé	ACF Diffa base / SAME Project	Supervisor	Tél. :99977869 Email :
Koudi Tchiroma Djbrillou	ACF Diffa base / SAME Project	Supervisor	Tél. : 88124562 Email :
Ali Idi Moussa	ACF Diffa base / SAME Project	Project trainer and mobilizer representative	Tél. : Email :
Boukar Kazelma	Regional Director of Agriculture	Regional Director	Tél. : 96262065 Email :
Boureïma Halidou Maïga	Regional Directorate of Livestock	Regional Director	Tél. : 96406895 Email : 90444408

Col. Almandjir M ; Badamassi	Regional Direction of Environment and DD	Regional Director	Tél. : 96406895 Email : 90444408
Cdt Saidou Hama	Regional Direction of Environment and DD	Regional Director	Tél. : 96278673 / 90604888 Email :: hamasaidou@yahoo.fr
Adamou Mani	Departmental Directorate of Livestock	Departmental Director	Tél. : 96077887 Email :
Issa Bonga	AREN / Regional office	Administrator	Tél. : 96266337 / 91067860 / 93266337 Email :
Cdt Habou Adamou	Departmental Direction of the Environment	Departmental director	Tél. : 96582726 Email :
Hamza Alio Djibrilla	Veterinary services independent provider	Veterinarian Doctor,	Tél : 96985533 Email : aliohamza@yahoo.fr
<b>Maïné Soroa</b>			
Tahirou Moussa	Town hall	Secretary General	Tél. : 96282698 /90354843 Email : tahiroumoussa92@yahoo.fr
Chaïbou Gréma Ari	Departmental Directorate of Agriculture	Head of Agricultural Statistics Service	Tél. : 96487423 / 90284470 Email : arichaïbou@gmail.com
Lawan Zoubeïrou	Departmental Direction of the Environment	Departmental director	Tél. : 96551689
Gagara Lawan Mamadou	Departmental Direction of the Environment		Tél. : 96401167
<b>Chétimari</b>			
Djibrilla Mallam Kalla	Town hall	Mayor	Tél : 96269307 / 90322039