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Resilience and Economic Growth in the Sahel – Enhanced Resilience (REGIS-ER)

FINAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION REPORT (English Version)

Centre d'Expérimentation, d'Études Économiques et Sociales de l'Afrique de l'Ouest Afrique (CESAO), and
Centre d'Études, de Recherche et de Formation pour le Développement Économiques et Social
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DISCLAIMER

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ACRONYMS

ADROC	Association pour la R�dynamisation et le Renforcement des Organisations
APOR	Action pour la Promotion des Organisations Rurales
AREN	Association pour la R�dynamisation de l'�levage au Niger
AZN	Association Nodde Noto
AZND	Association Zood-Nooma pour le D�veloppement
BDL	Bioreclamation of Degraded Lands
CBO	Community Based Organization
CBSP	Community Based Solution Provider
CF	Conservation Farming
COVID	Corona Virus Disease
CP	Community Provider
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
EAA	Eau et Assainissement d'Afrique
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FMNR	Farmer-Managed Natural Regeneration
FY	Fiscal Year
GPS	Global Positioning System
HA	Hectare
HDI	Human Development Index
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IR	Individual Provider
KII	Key Informant Interview
KOKARI	Local NGO in Niger
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NCBA CLUSA	National Cooperative Business Association/Cooperative League of USA
NCE	No-Cost Extension
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRM	Natural Resource Management
PCPR	Community Resilience Plan
PDC	Communal Development Plan
REGIS-ER	Resilience and Economic Growth in the Sahel – Enhanced Resilience
RISE	Resilience in the Sahel Enhanced
SAREL	Sahel Resilience Learning
SBCC	Social Behavior Change Communication
SDP	Sahel Development Partnership
SECCA	Self-Managed Community Savings and Loan Strategy
URC	University Research Company
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VVV	Vaccinateur Volontaire Villageois
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Illustrations Tables	v
Charts	v
TABLES	v
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	3
The authors of this report include the following:	3
These authors were assisted by:	3
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	Error! Bookmark not defined.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	vii
INTRODUCTION	1
1. OVERALL PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECT	3
1.1. Context and financing of the project	3
1.2. Project implementation partners	3
1.2.1. International partners of the American consortium	4
1.2.2. National partners	4
1.3. Project phases	5
1.4. Project coverage	6
1.5. Beneficiaries and participants in the project	7
2. SOURCES OF EVALUATION DATA	8
2.1. Administrative sources	8
2.2. Quantitative and Qualitative Survey of Project Target Groups	8
2.2.1. Methodology of the quantitative survey	9
2.2.1.1. Sampling plan	9
2.2.1.2. Choice of sampling method	9
2.2.1.3. Sample size of villages by country and by Sub-group	10
2.2.1.4. Distribution of the sampled villages by country and by sub-group	10
2.2.1.5. Sample size of households by country and by sub-group	11
2.2.1.6. Drawing of the sample of households in each village	12
2.2.1.7. Sampling for qualitative data collection	12
2.2.1.8. Interviews with key informants	12
2.3. Interviews with local institutions in the approach based on REGIS-ER coaching for the period 2019-2020	13

2.4.	Organization of teams and collection of quantitative data	13
2.4.1.	Organization and deployment of teams in the field.....	13
2.4.2.	Alternative data collection strategy in inaccessible areas.....	14
2.5.	Safety and health protection devices for field staff	14
2.5.1.	Security devices	14
2.5.2.	Health protection measures for field staff against COVID-19	15
2.6.	Additional Computer processing of data.....	15
2.7.	Constraints, difficulties and limits of the evaluation.....	15
2.8.	Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents by subgroup and country ...	16
2.8.1.	Structure of the surveyed households.....	16
2.8.2.	Heads of surveyed household by gender	18
2.8.3.	Sample coverage	18
2.8.4.	Spatial distribution of key informants	19
3.	KEY QUESTION 1: TO WHAT EXTENT HAS THE REGIS-ER PROJECT ACHIEVE ITS STATED OBJECTIVES?	19
3.1.	Level of achievement of sustainable livelihood activities.....	19
3.1.1.	Providers of Community Based Solution Providers (CBSP) and Individual Providers (IP). 19	
3.1.2.	Habbanayé	20
3.1.3.	Poultry	21
3.1.4.	Food and Animal Health	22
3.1.5.	Regeneration/Conservation Agriculture.....	22
3.1.6.	Bio-Reclamation of Land (BDL)	22
3.1.7.	Savings and Credit.....	24
3.1.8.	Level of achievement of Governance and Natural Resources Management, Gender Equality and Youth Employment Activities.....	26
3.1.9.	Strengthening Natural Resource Management.....	26
3.1.10.	Risk and disaster management.....	27
3.1.11.	Risk preparedness:.....	28
3.1.12.	Strengthening the ability to manage conflicts.....	29
3.1.13.	Strengthening governance.....	30
3.1.14.	Implementation of activities for access to water, sanitation, nutrition and health	

3.1.14.1. Rehabilitation of Water Points.....	31
3.1.14.2. Improved access and use of latrines	32
3.1.15. Water User Associations (AUE) and Water Point Management Committees (CGPE)	33
3.1.16. Social Communication and Behavior Change (SBCC)	33
3.1.17. Access to Health Services (AHS) and Household Nutrition	34
3.1.18. Feeding practices for children aged 6 to 23 months	35
3.1.19. Average number of food groups consumed daily	36
3.1.20. Hygiene and Sanitation	36
4. RESEARCH QUESTION 2: WHAT INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS INFLUENCED THE CAPACITY OF THE PROJECT IN ACHIEVING EXPECTED RESULTS?	37
5. RESEARCH QUESTION 3: WHAT PROJECT ACTIVITIES WERE MOST IMPORTANT TO STRENGTHEN THE RESILIENCE OF CHRONICALLY VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLDS IN ITS GEOGRAPHIC AREAS?	39
5.1. High impact activities on household resilience	39
5.2. Reduced frequency of land disputes compared to the past	41
5.3. Satisfaction with land management for the benefit of women	42
6. .. RESEARCH QUESTION 4: HOW DID THE PROJECT ACTIVITIES ALIGN WITH THE PRIORITIES OF THE BENEFICIARIES (SOCIAL, CULTURAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL)?	44
6.1. Analysis of the relevance of the project	44
6.1.1. For the first level (international and regional)	44
6.1.2. For the national level in Burkina Faso	44
6.1.3. The national level in the case of Niger	46
6.2. Alignment of the project with the needs of producers	46
6.3. Analysis of project coherence	47
7. . RESEARCH QUESTION 5: WHAT WERE THE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE RESULTS ARISING FROM PROJECT ACTIVITIES?	48
7.1. Project performance by strategic objective	48
7.1.1. Level of achievement of the indicator targets of strategic objective 1: Sustainable economic well-being	48
7.1.2. Regenerative/Conservation Agriculture Indicators	51
7.1.3. Level of achievement of the targets of the indicators of Objective 2: Governance and Strengthened Institutions	53
7.2. Strengthened management of natural resources	54

7.3. Strengthening disaster risk management	54
7.4. Reinforced conflict management	54
7.5. Coordination of government and region.....	54
7.6. Achievement of the indicator targets of Objective 3: Improved health and nutrition 56	
7.6.1. The number of children under 5 reached by the nutrition program	58
7.6.2. Number of children aged 0-23 months reached by the community nutrition program59	
7.6.3. Number of pregnant women reached by nutrition activities.....	60
7.6.4. Number of people trained in child health and nutrition	60
7.7. Overall performance of the REGIS ER project	60
7.8. Unexpected positive effects of the project	60
8. RESEARCH QUESTION 6: TO WHAT EXTENT IS THE NEW APPROACH TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT, BASED ON THE FRAMEWORK OF LOCAL INSTITUTIONS (MUNICIPAL COUNCILS, CITIZEN WORKING GROUPS AND VILLAGE-LOCAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES) HELPED TO ACHIEVE ITS GOALS?	61
8.1. Strengthening governance	61
8.1.1. Strengthening the capacities and coordination of the government and the region 61	
8.1.2. Integration of local conventions integrated into PDC/PCD	62
8.1.3. Ability of respondents to continue to implement their governance activities after project withdrawal.....	63
8.2. Local governance	63
9. RESEARCH QUESTION 7: HAS REGIS-ER COMPLIED WITH THE ENVIRONMENT, GENDER INTEGRATION, GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND YOUTH GUIDELINES, POLICIES AND REGULATIONS?	64
9.1. Project compliance with USAID policy and procedures	64
9.1.1. Compliance with local governance	64
9.1.2. Compliance with the gender approach	65
9.1.3. Compliance with the youth approach	66
9.1.4. Compliance with environmental issues.....	67
10..... RESEARCH QUESTION 8: WHAT ARE THE LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE REGIS-ER IMPLEMENTATION EXPERIENCE THAT CAN BENEFIT OTHER PROJECTS, IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS, BENEFICIARIES AND STAKEHOLDERS?	67
10.1. General Conclusion.....	68

10.2. Recommendations.....	70
REFERENCES CONSULTED	71
Annex A: Scope of Work	74
ANNEX B: REGIS-ER Project Target Commune Surface Areas, Population and Population Density	77
ANNEX C – Map of Project Zones.....	78
ANNEX D: List of Villages Surveyed.....	78

Illustration

Charts:

Chart 1: Heads of Household Breakdown by Sex.....	188
Chart 2: Comparison of mid-term and final evaluation of perceptions on Habbanayé.....	21
Chart 3. Perception of achieving BDL objectives by country.....	23
Chart 4: Respondents' ability to continue BDL activities.....	24
Chart 5: Cumulative average value of self-managed community loans and savings.....	25
Chart 6. Distribution of beneficiaries by gender and age by cumulative value of self-managed community loans and savings.....	25
Chart 7. Number of strengthened informal savings and credit groups.....	26
Chart 8.: Respondents' Opinion of the Statement that The Objectives of Natural Resource Management Are Being Met (Subgroup 1 – Subgroup 2).....	27
Chart 9. Achieving the objectives of the water point rehabilitation activity.....	32
Chart 10: Comparison of achievements and targets for people using improved latrines.....	33
Chart 11. Level of satisfaction with the organization of AUEs and CGPEs.....	33
Chart 12. Consumption of food groups according to the level of dietary diversity during the favorable period.....	35
Chart 13. Types of activities carried out under REGIS-ER.....	40
Chart 14. Beneficiaries assessments of the level of achievement of project objectives.....	41
Chart 15. Characterizations of beneficiaries of interactions between different components of the project.....	41
Chart 16. Perception of the frequency of conflicts compared to the past (sub-group 1 + sub-group 2).....	42
Chart 17. Distribution of improved technologies or management applied by sex and age group.....	51
Chart 18. Breakdown of farmers by type of technology.....	52
Chart 19: Distribution of areas by sex and country.....	53
Chart 20. Comparison of targets and achievement of the indicator.....	59
Chart 21. Comparison of targets and achievements of the indicator.....	59

Tables:

Table 1 : Distribution of intervention villages in Burkina Faso and by sub-group.....	10
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Table 2: Distribution of intervention village in Niger and by sub-group.....	10
Table 3: Size of the sample of villages by country and by sub-group.....	13
Table 4: Size of the sample of households by country and by sub-group.....	11
Table 5: Distribution of interviews with key informants in Burkina Faso and Niger of the REGIS-ER Project.....	13
Table 6: Distribution of local institutions for the interviews in Burkina Faso and Niger.....	13
Table 7: Breakdown of respondents by region, country and sub-group.....	17
Table 8: Household/respondent breakdown by commune, country and sub-group.....	17
Table 9: Sample coverage rate by country and subgroup (%).....	19
Table 10: Table: Breakdown of Key Informants by Country, Region and Sub-gropu..	19
Table 11: Knowledge of REGIS-ER's Objectives Through Disaster Risk Management Interventions.....	29
Table 12: Percentage of Households achieving objectives by sub-group in terms of communication strategies, techniques and themes.....	34
Table 13: Dietary diversity in infants and young children.....	36
Table 14: Proportion of households (in %) using latrines.....	37
Table 15: Respondents' satisfaction with the land management system (acquisition and transfer).....	43
Table 16: Performance indicators for REGIS ER strategic objective 1: Increased economic well-being and sustainable livelihoods.....	48
Table 17: Performance indicators of strategic objective 2 of the REGIS ER project: Governance and strengthened institutions.....	55
Table 18: Aucune entrée de table d'illustration n'a été trouvée. Performance indicators of strategic objective 3 of the REGIS ER project: Improvement of health and nutritional status.....	57
Table 19: Overall performance of the REGIS ER project.....	60
Table 20: Quantitative statement of non-beneficiary villages having adopted REGIS ER project activities.....	61
Table 21: Capacities of respondents to continue implementing their activities without REGIS-ER support.....	63

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The results of surveys of beneficiaries in the field, through interviews with past and present beneficiaries of REGIS-ER, indicated that the project has had a favorable impact on the target populations in both countries. Indeed, the data shows that the impact of the project is undeniable. By analyzing the data from surveys of beneficiaries and key partners, as well as the use of project documents, we note that beneficiaries and partners are generally satisfied with the project and the results produced.

The three main project strategic objectives pertain to (1) sustainable livelihoods, (2) enhanced governance, and (3) improved health and nutrition practices. Beneficiary assessments of these objectives revealed the following:

Strategic Objective 1 - beneficiaries listed in order of importance the activities that contributed to the success of this objective. These are: the bio-reclamation of degraded soils; Habbanayé or the possession of assets in the areas of breeding; conservation and regeneration agriculture; home and market gardens. Efforts to increase income through savings and credit activities were also appreciated, but they were limited in some areas by local habits and beliefs.

Strategic Objective 2 - beneficiaries also expressed great appreciation for the efforts made in the project to improve their health and nutritional levels by implementing activities that improved their access to safe drinking water. This also expanded the diversity of their diet. Many beneficiaries also expressed their appreciation for the behavior change activities that led them to adopt healthier practices.

Strategic Objective 3 - the project's efforts to increase the participation of women in community decision-making are commendable. In this regard, the project has helped to erode, however modestly, traditional customs that generally exclude women from participating in the governance of their communities. In terms of governance aimed at promoting gender equity, there is still much to be done in this area, as the changes of cultural norms cannot be observable in the short term. However, the results already achieved have helped start a gradual process of enlarging the role of women at the community level.

It should also be noted that in re-focusing its interventions at the geographical level, the project has increasingly focused on strengthening local governance in recent years. This effort is at the heart of the project's sustainability plan. In particular, the project worked with some communal governments to help them in drafting Commune Resilience Plans that could be integrated into Commune Development plans. This process of building the capacity of local governments to competently design and implement their own development plans is essential to sustaining many of the project's activities. Unfortunately, only a few communes have the capacity to generate the funds necessary to draft and implement these plans.

The report is mainly built on the responses to the following eight research questions:

1. To what extent has the REGIS-ER project achieved its stated objectives?

2. What internal and external factors influenced the ability of the project to achieve expected results?
3. Which project activities were most important in building the resilience of chronically vulnerable households in the targeted geographic areas of the project?
4. How have the project activities aligned with the priorities of the beneficiaries, and do they reflect the local social, cultural, economic and environmental context?
5. What were the positive and negative results of the project activities?
6. To what extent has the new project implementation approach, based on the coaching of local institutions (municipal councils, citizen working groups and village-local development committees), helped to achieve its objectives?
7. Did REGIS-ER comply with the environment, gender mainstreaming, gender-based violence and youth guidelines, policies and regulations?
8. What are the lessons learned from the REGIS-ER implementation experience that can benefit other projects, implementing partners, beneficiaries and stakeholders?

Summary of responses to research questions and recommendations

Research question 1: Achievement of objectives, the performance achieved through the three strategic objectives was analyzed.

For strategic objective 1, we find that the following activities were performed well and led to the achievement of the objectives. They include:

- Community Based Solution Providers (CBSP) and Individual Providers (IP), whose quantitative and qualitative results allowed determining this activity helped beneficiaries of the project to have: I) an increase in income; ii) better absorption and adaptation capacity to cope with shocks and stresses; and iii) a better nutritional and housing situation for households.
- Habbanayé made it possible to strengthen community links by promoting and extending the traditional support model to households in need. At the end of the project's implementation in 2020, 98.7% of the beneficiaries interviewed mentioned that the objectives of the Habbanayé activity were achieved with regard to: i) the increase in household income (64.9%); ii) the constitution of subsistence assets for households in a situation of chronic vulnerability (63.6%) and iii) the improvement of the nutritional status of communities that consume goat milk and its by-products (51.1%).
- In addition to rearing small ruminants, the project also experimented with poultry farming. It was found that 84.6% of the respondents engaged in poultry farming declared that poultry farming achieved its objectives, because it contributed to: i) an increase in household income and ii) a diversification of the household's basic diet.

- Animal health and nutrition are among the activities that have made the breeding of small ruminants or poultry successful. In fact, 76% of the beneficiaries of breeding activities mentioned that animal health and feed made it possible to fight against animal mortality, but also to be more competitive in terms of marketing. The result has been an increase in household income and beneficiary satisfaction for the services provided by the Village Volunteer Vaccinators (VVV).
- Conservation agriculture, which is a production system based on soil conservation and improvement of their natural productive potential (fertility), has contributed to the improvement of yields according to group discussions with beneficiaries.
- The same groups of beneficiaries attested that bio-reclamation of degraded land through training and support for equipment has helped in the recovery of uncultivated soils using mainly natural methods such as water retention in the fields owned by farmers. A majority of those interviewed (62.3%), including 64.9% in Burkina Faso and 55.1% in Niger, believe that the project has largely achieved its objectives because of the bio-reclamation of degraded land. Respondents also said that the objectives of the bio-reclamation of degraded soils activity achieved the following: i) an increase of the land available for the planting of crops and ii) higher yields for target crops (such as grains, vegetables and nursery plants).
- The savings and credit program is generally satisfactory for the benefiting populations, since the achievement as a percent of the global funding target was 108%, or 111% in Niger and 102% in Burkina Faso. The total initial target was the establishment of 1,350 savings and credit groups and 1,312 groups were organized (768 in Niger and 544 in Burkina Faso).

In some cases, the performance of these activities still calls for more effort with regard to:

- animal breeding (Habbanayé) - it is important that certain veterinary health products be made available, that the skills of VVVs be strengthened to increase their effectiveness and efficiency in the implementation of activities as well as the training of beneficiaries in the production of crop production.
- the bio-reclamation of degraded land - the beneficiaries must be properly equipped with working materials.

In terms of Governance and Management of Natural Resources, gender equality and youth employment, it is noted that:

- The strengthening of the management of natural resources helped in restoring the fertility of degraded soils. In both countries, 97.7% of beneficiaries engaged in this activity agreed that the objectives of this activity were achieved because the bio-reclamation of land allowed for: i) the reduction of soil degradation; and ii) the availability of a larger area for crops and crop yield gains.

- In terms of disaster risk management, REGIS-ER has set up: i) response teams who are trained and ready to intervene in the event of a disaster; and ii) other groups which are responsible for alerting local authorities and state services in the event of a disaster.
- Communities have also been strengthened in the prevention and management of conflicts. Eighty-four percent of respondents in Burkina Faso and 69% in Niger declared that they strongly or moderately agreed with the achievement of the objectives of this program, giving an average of 81% for both countries. Thus, the capacity of communities to manage conflicts is an element of project success, especially if the establishment of management committees and the training of the actors who lead it is considered. This approach has served as an effective instrument for the reduction of land conflicts and resulted in the strengthening of social values with regards to land management. The outstanding outcome has been the virtual disappearance of conflicts between farmers and herders around water points.
- REGIS-ER contributed to the establishment of governance instruments such as the development of a Commune Development Plan (PCD), which is essential for a commune. The inclusion in the PCD of documents that allow for the consideration of resilience issues, strengthens local governance and promotes participatory community development.

It should be noted, however, village chiefs have limited capacity to deal effectively with communal leaders to manage their natural resources. In addition, during this final project evaluation, 84.8% of respondents (90.9% in Burkina against 66.6% in Niger) declared that they did not know the objective of the project in terms of the risk management related to disasters, especially given that the latter constitutes one of the causes of the shocks for which the population should be better prepared so they can be more resilient.

At the level of strategic objective 3 the following can be reported:

- For access to drinking water, the project contributed to the rehabilitation of water points by building or repairing them. Thus, in 2020, REGIS-ER planned to rehabilitate 175 water points in Niger and 265 in Burkina Faso. The project has effectively rehabilitated or built 178 water points in Niger and 263 in Burkina Faso, for an implementation rate of 113% and 99% respectively. In terms of the total life of project target for water points, the project planned to repair or construct a cumulative total of 461 water points.
- Combating open defecation is one of the project's hygiene and sanitation priorities. Thus, by the end of 2020, 18,955 improved latrines had been built or rehabilitated for a cumulative achievement of 18,800 for the year, i.e. a life of project achievement rate of 101%. In Niger, the target for 2020 was 15,800 for a cumulative achievement of 15,821 while in Burkina, the target was 3,000 and 3,124 structures were built. In each of these countries, the completion rate is well over 100%. Evaluators noted that 64.2% of

households in the project areas had regular access to and used a latrine.

- Concerning the improvement of health services, 94.6% of the people interviewed believed that the objectives aimed at improving access to health services have been achieved. Regarding satisfaction with the practices learned in nutrition, the field survey also noted beneficiary satisfaction (59.3% for Burkina Faso and 50.5% for Niger).

Research Question 2: Internal and external factors that influenced the capacity of the project in achieving results.

The involvement of commune councils (CM). The CMs also adopted communal plans for the promotion of resilience (PCPR) which served as a roadmap in the implementation of project activities and objectives. Thus, eight of the thirteen concentration municipalities had completed their PCPRs in 2020.

- Partnerships at the community level through the establishment of citizens' working groups (CWG) and by involving local development committees (Niger) and village development councils (Burkina Faso) [CLD/CVD].
- Service provider platforms, which have significantly improved their operational capacity and visibility with local stakeholders by working directly with CLDs/CVDs to provide information and goods services on the overall needs of villages in inputs for activities.
- The importance given to collaboration, learning and adaptation (CLA) through the organization of several workshops, especially in 2019.

As for the external factors that negatively influenced the project, it is undeniable that it is above all:

- The rise in insecurity in four REGIS-ER intervention regions (North-Center, Sahel and East in Burkina Faso, and Tillabéri in Niger) which affected the project in its implementation and performance; and
- The deterioration of the security situation was particularly rapid in Burkina Faso, leading to the limitation of the movement of project staff and the modification of its mode of intervention with the development of innovative working methods. (For example, providing people in the field with cell phone credits so they could achieve project business on the phone.)

Research Question 3 - it is noted that the project owes its success to:

- high-impact activities that have significantly improved sustainable economic growth and the well-being of beneficiaries. The most successful high-impact activities according to the beneficiaries surveyed are (in descending order): bio-reclamation of degraded land, Habbanyé, regeneration/conservation agriculture, savings and credit, and finally the home and market gardens.

- capacity building of beneficiaries through training and equipment, eight beneficiaries out of ten stated that conflicts are on the decline compared to the past. In Niger, as well as in Burkina, the proportion of respondents who perceive the decline in the frequency of conflicts is an impressive 82.6%.
- community meals have enabled the adoption of good nutritional practices among mothers.

(See below Research Question 4.)

Research Question 5 - on the positive and negative results of the project

Evaluators noted that based on the indicators, the REGIS-ER project achieved a completion rate of 105% with regard to improving the increased economic well-being and sustainable livelihoods of beneficiary populations. Of the 19 indicators assessed, 14 exceeded, 4 essentially met expectations and 1 failed to meet expectations. The latter relate to project performance indicator 1.2.6. (Number of companies/ firms/CBSPs involved in the provision of food security related services and/or processing of agricultural products now operating more profitably (at cost or above) achieved 78. Although these indicators did not reach 100% of their life-of-project targets, it is worth noting their high achievement rate, which underscores the hard efforts deployed by the project.

Regarding Strategic Objective 2 on the strengthening of governance and institutions, the REGIS-ER project achieved an implementation rate of 96%. This level of execution did not fully meet the target of Strategic Objective 2 but is close to meeting the target. Of the 10 indicators used to assess this objective, we should state that 8 indicators met or exceeded expectations (define as 90% or higher level of achievement), 1 indicator nearly met expectations (80-90%) and 1 indicator did not reach.

As for Strategic Objective 3 on health and nutrition, this final evaluation indicates that the project achieved an achievement rate of 98% in terms of improving the health and nutritional status of the beneficiary population. As above, 8 indicators essentially met or exceeded their targets and 2 indicators nearly met their targets. The lowest achievement rate which is 84% is recorded for indicator 3.1.3 (a multi-part indicator related to improved sanitation). It is, therefore, concluded that for its three strategic objectives the REGIS-ER project has achieved an overall performance rate of above or near 100%.

The project was also a success in the way it inspired other non-beneficiary communities who voluntarily adopted certain activities and programs implemented in the REGIS-ER project areas. Thus, the project yielded some unanticipated positive results. Among these additional positive results, is the adoption in 2016 of CF technology by non-beneficiary villages following training organized by the project.

For research questions 4, 6, and 7 on project alignment and its compliance with USAID policies and procedures, a set of elements which guided the responses as summarized below.

The relevance of the project is analyzed in terms of its alignment with public policies and development priorities of the governments of the two countries. Thus, a critical analysis of the activities carried out within the framework of the project makes it possible to say that the project falls within the priorities of governments in terms of economic and social development policy.

REGIS-ER appears to be good example of a multisector resilience project. Also, the alignment of the project with public policies can be understood at two levels. The international and regional level on the one hand and the national level on the other hand, including alignment with the needs of the beneficiary populations of Burkina Faso and Niger.

As for the alignment of the project with the needs of beneficiaries in both Burkina Faso and Niger, REGIS-ER offers new perspectives to vulnerable populations of the Sahel in the grip of recurrent crises due to the effects of climate change and insecurity that affects their livelihoods. REGIS-ER was set up in order to tackle the root causes of the chronic vulnerability of people residing in the project intervention areas through the implementation of strong actions to improve their economic well-being in general and their health and nutritional situation in particular.

In this regard, the project's intervention activities are on target: (i) the diversification of economic opportunities, (ii) the intensification of agriculture and livestock farming adapted to the climate, and (iii) the improvement of marketing of agricultural and livestock products, and access of beneficiaries to financial services, which are economically promising sectors, and which offer enormous potential to beneficiaries of project intervention areas. All these efforts are aligned with the goals of the host governments.

In terms of project compliance with USAID policy and procedures, the evaluators noted that with regard to local governance, the implementation of the REGIS-ER project intervention strategy took into account the USAID policy and procedures which includes the different and complementary phases summarized below:

- Taking into account the disaster risk management's approach - the Disaster Risk Management activity's major objective is to develop early warning systems for a rapid response (SCAP-RU) and preparation against possible disasters, at the commune level;
- Taking into account the rapid early warning system (EWR): in terms of the rapid early warning system which has enabled communities to be equipped with information needed to prepare for disaster response; and
- Strengthening conflict management as set out in the USAID document on "Supporting Peace Processes for Prevention, Resolution and Recovery" following a conflict.

The project is also compliant with the gender approach. Indeed, the evaluators found that REGIS-ER is in full compliance with the USAID Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy of March 2012, as well as with the August 2020's draft update of this document titled "2020 Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women Policy. This compliance is best reflected on page 22 of "REGIS-ER Gender Strategy and Action Plan" project dated April 2015. The most

notable project activities in this regard were: land tenure for women, health and nutrition; schools for husbands; credit and savings groups and "Habbanayé" (livestock assets). The project has disaggregated its performance indicators by sex and women's empowerment.

In terms of compliance with the USAID Youth Approach, the project is indeed in full compliance with the USAID Youth in Development Policy of October 2012. REGIS-ER has taken into account all of USAID's recommendations on the revised technical application of the project and has implemented its Positive Youth Development Framework (PYD) which was designed to increase the engagement of young people aged 15 to 35 in their communities.

Project compliance with environmental issues is seen by reference to USAID Environmental Operational Policy regulations as stipulated in its Automated Directive System (ADS) Chapter 204, starting with the completion of a review of a 64-page Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) in January 2013 which expired in February 2018. This IEE was amended in 2018 by a long pesticide assessment report (394 pages) and an action plan for safer use (PERSUAP) which was valid until the end of 2020. (This PERSUAP also covered another RISE project, REGIS-AG.) These documents were approved by USAID. REGIS-ER also completed its USAID-approved Environmental Monitoring and Mitigation Plan (EMMP) in April 2014, which has been applied by the project.

Research Question 8 - on lessons learned from the implementation of this project.

The lessons learned by and the success of REGIS-ER offers the following recommendations, as appropriate, for similar projects.

Recommendations are made asking REGIS-ER to inspire the success of other similar USAID projects.

1. Where applicable, more attention should be given to the establishment of microcredits to take into account the religious practices of some communities;
2. In terms of animal health and nutrition, increase the number of animals people are able to receive.
3. Augment the veterinary services provided by the VVVs to beneficiaries and work to reduce mortality rates while improving birth rates.
4. Maintain the capacities of local institutions so that they continue to be involved in the monitoring and evaluation of activities in order to guarantee the sustainability of the achievements of the project.
5. Maintain training for capacity building of resource persons at the head of village development councils, local development committees, opinion leaders such as committees of elders and the heads of socio-professional organizations.

Conclusion

This final evaluation report concludes that REGIS-ER has produced satisfactory results in terms

of its three strategic objectives. This conclusion is based on the following key findings:

- For Strategic Objective 1, the beneficiaries, as well as the key informants, are unanimous in recognizing that the REGIS-ER project produced globally positive results because it contributed to significantly improve the economic growth and the well-being of the beneficiaries, and thereby building greater resilience of the target populations.
- Project interventions have contributed to the increase in the social capital of households, activities such as Habbanayé, regenerative agriculture and bio-reclamation are activities with a high impact on resilience, and they can be replicated under the same conditions in similar areas in the Sahel.
- As for Strategic Objective 2: The achievement of results has been made possible through the establishment of consultation and dialogue frameworks in support of the implementation of actions. The establishment of principles of collaboration between community members, training for capacity building of resource persons at the head of village development councils, local development committees, opinion leaders, such as committees of elders, heads of socio-professional organizations, etc. provided key support.

The training themes which focused on the values of tolerance, putting lessons and training into practice, and integrating development plans into village, communal and regional development plans were important. Also, contributing to the project's success was a focus on improving governance, natural resource and disaster risk management, conflict prevention and management and better coordination among local and regional governance structures.

- Strategic Objective 3: The project's information, education and communication activities have enabled it to record positive effects within the population. Also, the strengthening of the capacities of local governance structures has also made it possible to reach the maximum number of beneficiaries for the establishment of programming, implementation and monitoring-evaluation structures. These are, for example, COGES, CVDs, Water User Associations (AUEs), water point management, hygiene and sanitation committees.

INTRODUCTION

The overall objective of this final evaluation was to determine whether the project achieved its main objective of increasing the resilience of targeted households and communities. USAID defines resilience as: *"The ability of individuals, households, communities, countries and systems to mitigate, adapt, and recover from shocks and stresses in a way that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth."*

USAID is also emphasizing a relief approach that addresses the root causes of chronic vulnerability through nutrition-led agriculture and livestock; better health and hygiene, stronger governance and the management of natural resources. In addition, USAID promotes greater awareness and the use of practices that help mitigate the negative impacts of climate change and increase the active participation of women and youth.

This report therefore concerns the final external performance evaluation of USAID/Senegal's activity entitled "Resilience and Economic Growth in the Sahel - Reinforced Resilience" (REGIS-ER) implemented by the NCBA/CLUSA. It is intended that this report will provide the sponsors with the information they need to reach a conclusion on the effectiveness of REGIS-ER in achieving the stated objectives of the project. The main recipients of this report are:

- USAID / Senegal, Sahel Regional Office
- USAID / Niger
- USAID / Burkina Faso
- NCBA / CLUSA
- Key stakeholders such as central and local governments of Burkina Faso and Niger, technical extension services, beneficiaries, other donors, community partner organizations (CBOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

After presenting the project and the conditions for carrying out the surveys of this evaluation, the report is constructed as a set of answers to each of these eight research questions which are as follows:

1. To what extent has the REGIS-ER project achieved its stated objectives?
2. What internal and external factors influenced the ability of the project to achieve expected results?
3. Which project activities were most important in building the resilience of chronically vulnerable households in the targeted geographic areas of the project?
4. How have the project activities aligned with the priorities of the beneficiaries, and do they reflect the local social, cultural, economic and environmental context?
5. What were the positive and negative results of the project activities?

6. To what extent has the new project implementation approach, based on the supervision of local institutions (municipal councils, citizen working groups and village-local development committees), helped to achieve its objectives?
7. Did REGIS-ER comply with the environment, gender mainstreaming, gender-based violence and youth guidelines, policies and regulations?
8. What are the lessons learned from the REGIS-ER implementation experience that can benefit other projects, implementing partners, beneficiaries and stakeholders?

Thus, these main evaluation questions are centered on how REGIS-ER achieved its objectives, and on the sustainability of its approach subsequent to the end of the project; and on the relevance of the project, its effectiveness, and its compliance with USAID's gender, environment, and youth policies and guidelines. The report examines the research questions across the three strategic objectives of the project which are:

1. Sustainable livelihoods - diversified economic opportunities, more climate-smart agriculture, animal production and increased access to financial services;
2. Improved governance - strengthening natural resources, disaster risk management and conflict prevention, increased coordination between regional and local governance structures;
3. Improved health and nutrition - improved access to safe drinking water and improved health and nutrition practices.

I. OVERALL PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECT

1.1. Context and financing of the project

The Sahel region has suffered over the past half-century from multiple large-scale humanitarian emergencies and is considered as one of the most fragile and troubled regions in the world. USAID recognized in 2012 that responding to costly emergencies does not effectively address underlying causes. Therefore, USAID has developed its Resilience in the Sahel Enhanced (RISE) initiative aimed at harmonizing existing and new humanitarian and development assistance efforts to focus on building resilience in agro-pastoral and marginal areas of agricultural subsistence in the Sahel.

REGIS-ER is RISE's flagship multisectoral project. It aims at increasing the resilience of chronically vulnerable populations in the targeted marginal agricultural and agro-pastoral areas in Burkina Faso and Niger. The programmatic trajectory of the project underwent modifications during its implementation.

Actually, the project was originally designed for an implementation period of five (5) years, from November 2013 to November 2018. In 2018, USAID granted the project a 13.5-month extension at no additional cost. The end of the project was therefore moved to December 31, 2019. From At that point, USAID granted a further \$6.6 million and extended the project until the end of 2020. COVID-related delays prompted USAID to extend the project until March 31, 2021, thus allowing more time for its closure. This final three-month extension yields a total period of 88.5 months as the full life of the project.

The total USAID funding for the project is \$76,645,520. Since its inception in November 2013, the primary agent for implementing this large and complex project has been the *National Cooperative Business Association/CLUSA International* (NCBA/CLUSA), which has also contributed approximately \$10,416,858.87 in resources and in-kind as a share of the costs for the implementation of the project. This is more than the \$7 million NCBA/CLUSA was supposed to contribute to its cost share. Therefore, the total value of the project is \$87,062,379. This total amount translates into a per capita cost of the initial project target population of approximately \$87 per person. Of the total amount of funding provided by USAID, more than \$5 million went directly to NCBA/CLUSA as approved overheads. Six percent (6%) of the total project budget was used for monitoring and evaluation.

Over \$ 8million was used to fund agreements for services provided by implementing partners. The dates of these agreements, the names of the 11 partner organizations of the consortium (international and local), and the services provided by each partner are cited below.

1.2. Project implementation partners

For the implementation of the REGIS-ER project, NCBA-CLUSA worked with international and national partners. Thus, at the international level, the project recruited three international partners

from an American consortium and eight national partners which are NGOs or associations from Niger and Burkina Faso.

1.2.1. International partners of the American consortium

The project has established a partnership agreement with the following American partners:

1. Sheladia Associates - irrigation, water use management and M&E, 11/15/13 - 02/28/21
2. University Research Co. (URC) - health / nutrition and behavior change, 11/15/13 - 02/31/18
3. Dimagi - Stakeholder monitoring systems, 11/21/2013 - 05/31/18

1.2.2. National partners

There are eight national partners, including three from Burkina Faso and five from Niger. They are:

1. Mwangaza Action, community health, nutrition and gender, Burkina Faso and Niger, 15/11/13 - 31/12/20
2. EAA-Niger (Water and Sanitation for Africa), Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), 15/11/13 - 30/09/20
3. EAA-Burkina Faso, 15/11/13 – 29/02/16
4. A2N (Nodde Nooto Association), livestock services, Burkina Faso, 11/15/13 - 12/31/18
5. ADROC (Association for the Redynamization and Strengthening of Organizations), governance, development of producer organizations and training, Niger, 15/11/13 - 30/09/2019
6. KOKARI, supporting activities to access financial services, Niger, 15/11/13 - 30/09/18
7. AREN (Association for the Revitalization of Livestock in Niger), livestock services, 11/15/2013 - 10/31/18
8. APOR (Action for the Promotion of Rural Organizations), Niger, governance, training in the development of producer organizations, 15/11/13 - 31/12/18

It should be noted that all these partner organizations started their collaboration with the project in November 2013, but that only a few of them continued after the end of the initial project in November 2018. In fact, only three (Sheladia, EAA and Mwangaza) of the eleven partners remained active during the last two years of the project.

1.3. Project phases

From October 2016, the project began its intensification phase. This phase focused on the following eight program areas:

1. Habbanayé (livestock assets, animal feed and health)
2. Horticulture (gardening for sale and consumption to improve nutrition)
3. Access to financial services
4. Resilient production systems (rainfed agriculture, CF, FMNR, BDL)
5. Disaster risk management and local institutions
6. Water services
7. Hygiene and sanitation
8. Community health and nutrition

During this period, additional emphasis was placed on scaling-up of two high impact activities, namely CF/FMNR and Habbanayé. In 2017, the project was able to fully implement this scaling-up phase which ended on December 31, 2018, when the project increased its focus on the implementation of its sustainability strategy. The sustainability strategy was drawn up in 2017 and validated in January 2018. The date of December 31, 2018 coincides with the withdrawal from the project of 12 of the 25 initial communes managed by the project. (Note. Five additional communes were managed in Burkina Faso by two NGO partners for two years, March 2016 to March 2018.)

The withdrawal of the project from 12 out of its 25 initial, directly managed communes, which reflects a reduction in the geographical coverage area of the project, made it possible to consolidate its activities in a smaller area and, consequently, to increase its concentration on strengthening resilience. The transition to this phase of sustainability allowed the project to focus on the training of “Coaches” to build the capacity of community and communal development entities (e.g. commune councils, citizen working groups and local village development committees). Important actors in this process were project staff and the community solution providers (CBSPs) who were trained by the project.¹

In May 2018, the project began working on building planning capacities and, in August-September 2018, on training trainers in the development of municipal resilience plans (Communal Plan for the Promotion of Resilience, - PCPR-). In addition, municipal councils and citizens' working groups started working on their PCPR- in October-December 2018. Since January 1, 2019, the project has focused on strengthening local institutions. It has thus become increasingly a

¹ In Niger, they are called local development committees, and in Burkina Faso, the same structure is called village development councils.

governance project that emphasizes the development of community and communal development and resilience plans.

Since October 1, 2019, the project has also been involved in a realignment that would make it favorable to the implementation of USAID's Partnership for the Development of the Sahel (SDP). This change in project activities placed emphasis on the promotion of youth entrepreneurship and related grants. As these activities are relatively new and will continue until the end of the project at the end of March 2021, this evaluation has only been able to give them partial attention.

1.4. Project coverage

Initially, in 2013, the project covered a total of 800 villages (457 villages in 20 communes - includes the five communes managed by two NGOs in Burkina Faso - and 343 villages in 10 communes in Niger). Project villages in Burkina Faso² were located in the northeast of the country, while villages in Niger were in three disparate regions: Tillabéri in western Niger; Maradi in central Niger; and in the southern part of the Zinder region in eastern Niger. Therefore, the western boundary of the initial project in Burkina Faso is over 1,200 kilometers from its eastern border in Niger. (See Annex C for the geographic areas of the project in the two countries.)

It is worth emphasizing that for two years five communes in the North and Center North regions of Burkina Faso were managed indirectly for the project by two NGOs until the withdrawal from these two areas in March 2018 and September 2019, respectively. These two NGOs are: SOS Sahel International and AZND (Zood-Nooma Association for Development). The first NGO, SOS Sahel International intervened on behalf of the project in three communes (Ouindigui, Sollé and Titao), and the second NGO AZND acted in two communes namely Kongoussi and Tikaré.

These two NGOs initially focused on activities related to Conservation Farming (CF) and Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR). Later, to these interventions were added bio-reclamation of degraded lands (BDL), community health, meals, and assistance to the financial services component of the project (SECCA). Thus, in these five communes, REGIS-ER was only indirectly and partially active for two years (2016-2018).

During the last two years of the concentration phase of the project, the security concerns, the deliberate decision to consolidate the achievements of the project, and an alignment of REGIS-ER activities with the new USAID SDP program, as stipulated in the project's cost extension agreement. All these factors contributed to the gradual reduction in the number of communes covered by the project.

² See appendix B for a complete list of the 25 initial target communes managed directly by REGIS-ER, plus the five in Burkina Faso managed for two years by two NGOs, with their populations in mid-2018, and the area and population density of each commune.

As of January 1, 2019, the project coverage decreased from 25 to 13 communes (six communes in Burkina Faso and seven in Niger). This was part of the one-year no-cost extension phase, which USAID granted to NCBA/CLUSA for project implementation. In October 2019, the size of the project coverage was further reduced to eight communes, leading the project to cease its activities in four communes in Burkina Faso and four in Niger. This latest reduction in project coverage resulted in the withdrawal from two regions in Niger (Maradi and Zinder) and one region in Burkina Faso (Center-North).

This final reduction in the size of the project coverage was made at the request of USAID as part of its one-year, \$6 million extension of the project. In making this decision, USAID took into consideration not only security concerns, but also took into account other USAID-funded activities implemented in Burkina Faso and Niger. These activities included three Food Security Development (DFSA) activities in Niger and one DFSA in Burkina Faso implemented by US NGOs and their local partners.

Clearly, these gradual changes in geographic coverage, as well as in the composition of interventions and the number of villages targeted by the project, posed additional challenges to the evaluation team. Sometimes it was more difficult to know which project activity to evaluate and where to locate a given activity. REGIS-ER has had several phases and over the past two years, it has evolved into a different project working in different locations.

The 13 communes have an estimated population of 1,088,082 inhabitants, or about 60% of the total population which is estimated at 1,817,123 inhabitants for the 30 initial target communes (including the five communes managed by two NGOs). The initial population represents less than four percent of the combined total population of the two countries (Burkina Faso and Niger) which is around 45.7 million.

1.5. Beneficiaries and participants in the project

The project targets chronically vulnerable households in agro-pastoral and marginal agricultural areas of these two countries. Although it is difficult to calculate the total number of direct beneficiaries of the project, it is estimated that over 300,000 households have been reached by the project since its inception in November 2013. It is also estimated that the number of hectares under improved agricultural management techniques promoted by the project is over 90,000 ha. The estimated number of cattle, goats and chickens impacted by project interventions is unknown, but project managers estimate this number is over 95,000.

Project reports show 319,753 households reached in the project's areas of intervention, using the ratio of 7 people per household gives a total number of beneficiaries of 2,238,271 people. It is remarkable that this number is almost equal to the total number of residents of the 30 communes in 2020. (As noted below, the number of beneficiaries of the project can include additional people reached by partner organizations outside its geographic focus areas.)

On the other hand, the project also indicates that it did not reach all members of each household and that only a proportion of the people residing in each household were reached. The project refers to the people it has reached as “participants” and estimates that it has reached 1,981,133 participants since the start of the project in November 2013. This number of participants represents around 89% of the total number of beneficiaries estimated in the previous paragraph.

The above calculations do not include people residing in neighboring villages who were not targeted by the project but who have adopted one or more of the project interventions. Even if it is difficult to estimate with precision this type of “spin-off” effect of the project, it is believed that many communities have adopted the interventions in villages not targeted by the project. For example, project managers estimate its CF training programs have enabled 2,282 farmers from 643 non-project villages to implement CF techniques on approximately 1,270 hectares. In addition, there are other project documents that provide evidence of the impact of project interventions in a dozen other villages that were not targeted by the project.

2. SOURCES OF EVALUATION DATA

The data used for the final evaluation of the REGIS-ER project come from two sources:

2.1. Administrative sources

Data from administrative sources were collected from:

- Annual activity reports on the implementation of the project from 2013 to 2020
- Project mid-term evaluation report
- Annual work plans from 2014 to 2020
- Other documents provided by the documentary research

All documents from administrative sources that were used for the preparation of this report are appended in the bibliography.

2.2. Quantitative and Qualitative Survey of Project Target Groups

In its approach, and in accordance with the Terms of Reference of the final evaluation, the evaluation team, in addition to the data provided by the administrative sources mentioned above, collected data from various target groups, through a quantitative and qualitative survey. The quantitative survey was administered to a sample of households living in the intervention areas of the REGIS-ER project, while the qualitative part of the survey covered key informants through individual interviews and focus groups of communities in the project intervention area. A presentation of the methodological approach used and the results of the survey is given in the following.

2.2.1. Methodology of the quantitative survey

2.2.1.1. Sampling plan

The sampling plan describes the process followed to choose the survey units from which the data was collected. Sampling for the collection of quantitative data involves three stages:

- the choice of the sampling method;
- determination of the sample size, if applicable; and
- the selection of survey units with the realization of a census cartography of the villages.

(It is to be noted that the sampling was conducted without the provision by the project management unit of a list of beneficiaries.)

2.2.1.2. Choice of sampling method

The adopted sampling method is stratified in two groups. This involved regrouping the REGIS-ER intervention villages into two homogeneous sub-groups. Here, the stratification criterion was "whether or not the village belonged to the REGIS-ER project concentration area. This made it possible to determine the two strata.

Sub-group 1: It includes all the villages of the 17 communes where the REGIS-ER project intervened during the period 2014-2018, only to strengthen the resilience of the communities of these villages.

Sub-group 2: It includes all the villages of the 13 concentration communes (FY 2019 annual report), where the REGIS-ER project intervened, not only from 2014 to 2018 to strengthen the resilience of the communities, but also in 2019 for the consolidation of the achievements of the project, then in 2020 with a focus on the SDP) zone. Tables 1 and 2 below present the distribution of villages by sub-group for each country.

Table 1 : Distribution of intervention villages in Burkina Faso and by sub-group

Burkina Faso	Villages for Sub-group 1	Villages for Sub-group 2							TOTAL
		<i>Barsalogho</i>	<i>Bouroum</i>	<i>Gayéri</i>	<i>Manni</i>	<i>Sebba</i>	<i>Seytenga</i>	Tota l	
	209	50	36	22	91	20	25	244	453

Table 2 : Distribution of intervention villages in Niger and by Sub-group

		Villages for Sub-group 2							
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Niger	Villages for Sub-group 1	Bandé	Droum	Guidan-Roundji	Filingué	Sakoira	Tagazar	Tondikandia	Total	TOTAL
	109	43	47	25	25	23	41	30	234	343

2.2.1.3. Sample size of villages by country and by Sub-group

Out of a total of 800 villages in the REGIS-ER intervention zone, 57.1% or 457 villages are in Burkina Faso while 42.9% or 343 villages are in Niger. However, for various reasons (inaccessibility due to the rainy season, insecurity linked to terrorist attacks, etc.), four villages in Burkina Faso were removed from the list and are therefore not part of the sampling frame for the selection of samples. These are the villages of Bartiébougou and Tanguisonguima in the commune of Bartiébougou, the village of Tambiga in the commune of Foutouri, the village of Kourougou in the commune of Gayeri. As a result, the number of villages in the operational sampling frame was only 796 in total, including 453 in Burkina (56.9%) and 343 in Niger (43.1%).

The size of the primary sample (villages) was determined in a reasoned manner. Indeed, in regards to the budget dedicated to this final evaluation, the evaluation team had to proceed by simulation to determine the maximum sample size that the allocated budget was permitted to cover. In addition, the first comments received from the stakeholders based on the inception report, suggested to cover at least 120 villages instead of the 80 villages which were initially planned to be covered.

For this final evaluation, the sample size retained was 120 villages for the two countries. Assuming that the sample structure is comparable to that of all the villages constituting the sampling frame, the distribution of the sample between the two countries was done in the same proportions as that of all the villages in this sampling frame. Of the 120 villages in the sample initially planned, 56.9% or 68 villages are in Burkina Faso and 43.1% or 52 villages are in Niger.

2.2.1.4. Distribution of the sampled villages by country and by sub-group

For the evaluation team and in agreement with the commissioner, the main criterion for the allocation of the sample was dictated by the fundamental objective of the REGIS-ER project, namely, to strengthen the resilience of populations and boost economic growth in the Sahel. Therefore, greater importance has been given to sub-group 1 in which the project has been fully implemented respecting its initial objectives during the normal life of the project which is five years (2014-2018).

On the other hand, relatively less importance was given to sub-group 2, corresponding to the area of the extension (or concentration) phase of the project. Indeed, this phase, which lasted only 15 months during the period 2019-2020, can be considered as a “bonus” granted by USAID with the aim of supporting the 13 benefiting communes in order to consolidate and strengthen the

partnership for local development in the Sahel. In view of the above, 80% of the sample was allocated to sub-group 1 and 20% to sub-group 2 (see Table 3 below).

Table 3: Size of the sample of villages by country and by sub-group

Country	Sub-group	Sub-group 2	Total
Burkina Faso	54	14	68
Niger	42	10	52
Total	96	24	120

2.2.1.5. Sample size of households by country and by sub-group

Knowing the number of villages in each sub-group in each country, and given that a sample of 12 households should be drawn from each village for the survey, the sample size of households in each sub-group was calculated by multiplying the number of villages by 12. Ultimately, the overall sample size was 1,440 households (see Table 4).

Table 4: Size of the sample of households by country and by sub-group

Country	Sub-group I	Sub-group 2	Total
Burkina Faso	648	168	816
Niger	504	120	624
Total	1,152	288	1,440

As discussed above, the sampling is stratified and has two groups. In the first stage, the sampled villages were drawn within each of the sub-group. At the second level, there was the drawing of households.

At the time of data collection in the field, many of the sampled villages in Burkina Faso and Niger were in a situation of insecurity due to the terrorist attacks. Actually, apart from the four villages in Burkina Faso which were removed from the sampling frame, the evaluation team did not have any other information on the villages at risk due to terrorism or any other factors that could constitute a major obstacle to data collection in the field. The sample drawing process took place in two stages:

First, in each country and within each sub-group, a simple random selection was carried out (systematic selection) from the exhaustive list of intervention villages. Second, the list of villages drawn at random was reviewed at all times during the field data collection process in collaboration with the project team and the relevant local authorities of the communes concerned, in order to determine and replace the villages that were presenting serious risks for the teams deployed in the field.

The replacement of an at-risk village was done on the basis of the initial random selection method, under the responsibility of the staff of the evaluation team and in order to preserve the randomness of the sampling throughout the period of collection. Unfortunately, many villages in the initial

sample were inaccessible due to insecurity. In addition, a large number of randomly drawn replacement villages were also inaccessible for the same reason.

Therefore, in accordance with what was planned in the initial technical offer, the evaluation team opted for an alternative approach, which is sampling by reasoned choice. To do this, the list of intervention villages of the REGIS-ER project was made available to the teams deployed in the field. It was up to each team, in collaboration with the competent local authorities, to identify accessible villages where data collection was possible, taking into account the following criteria:

the village chosen as a replacement had to be from the same commune as the village to be replaced; and, when a replacement village was from a commune different from that of the replaced village, the respective communes of these two villages belonged to the same sub-group.

2.2.1.6. Drawing of the sample of households in each village

The selection of second-degree households required exhaustive lists of these households for each village. These lists were established in the field by first listing the households in the village with the help of local resource persons (CVD, counselor, etc.). This random approach made it possible to draw 12 households in each village.

2.2.1.7. Sampling for qualitative data collection

The collection of qualitative data took the form of individual or group interviews with key informants and stakeholders.

2.2.1.8. Interviews with key informants

At the level of key informants, semi-structured interviews were conducted.

Table 5 below lists the key informants.

Table 5: Distribution of interviews with key informants in Burkina Faso and Niger of the REGIS-ER Project

Key Informants	Number of Interviews	
	Burkina Faso	Niger
USAID/Senegal, Regional Sahel Office	3	3
REGIS-ER Project Management	3	3
NCBA/CLUSA/Washington	3	3
Regional Direction of Agriculture	1	1
Regional Director of Health	1	1
Regional Director of Livestock	1	1
Regional Director of Labor	1	1
Regional Director of Water and Hygiene	1	1
Total	14	14

2.3. Interviews with local institutions in the approach based on REGIS-ER coaching for the period 2019-2020

In order to take into account, the coaching-based approach of REGIS-ER for the period 2019-2020, interviews with certain local institutions were carried out (Table 6).

Table 6: Distribution of local institutions for the interviews in Burkina Faso and Niger.

Local Institutions	Number of Interviews	
	Burkina Faso	Niger
Municipal Council (Conseil Municipales)	3	3
Citizen Work Group (Groupe de Travail Citoyen)	3	3
Village Development Committee (Comité de Développement Villageois)	3	3
Total	9	9

In addition to semi-structured interviews with key informants and certain local institutions, group discussions or focus group discussions (FGDs) were organized with the main stakeholders of the project in order to deepen the semi-structured interviews. For these group discussions, about 1 out of 4 villages was involved (17 out of 68 villages in Burkina Faso and 14 out of 52 villages in Niger). For the choice of villages, the following criteria were considered. The village had to:

- be part of the sample of the quantitative survey,
- present a factor related to the intervention of REGIS-ER (positive or negative) worthy of interest for the evaluation team, and
- have a diversity of activities or interventions carried out.

As in the quantitative survey, the collection of qualitative data in villages depended on the accessibility of these villages.

2.4. Organization of teams and collection of quantitative data

Following the recruitment and training of field staff followed by the testing of data collection tools, the teams were deployed in the field. But once on the ground, faced with the insecurity situation in some localities, the evaluation team also implemented an alternative strategy to carry out the survey in the insecure areas.

2.4.1. Organization and deployment of teams in the field

The staff deployed in the field for the data collection were organized in 12 teams, including six in Burkina Faso and six in Niger. Each team consisted of five people, including one controller and four investigators. These teams were under the responsibility of six supervisors, including three in Burkina Faso and three in Niger. Each of the teams in Burkina Faso and Niger was assigned ten villages, taking into account the mastery of the local language by the investigators for the interviews.

Each interviewer was provided with a tablet where the questionnaires (households, partners and key persons) were programmed on ODK-Collect. The questionnaires filled out by the investigators were uploaded to the Ona.io platform, after the controller had verified the quality of the work of the enumerator. The travel of the enumerators in the field in Burkina Faso was done on motorcycles while in Niger 4x4 vehicles had been made available to them, due to the insecurity and the long distances between the localities. The field teams received regular visits from supervisors to check the quality of work and follow up on instructions and difficulties of the survey.

2.4.2. Alternative data collection strategy in inaccessible areas

For inaccessible areas, the recommended methodological approach was to collect data by phone calls. Such an alternative approach is not common in Burkina Faso and Niger, especially when it comes to household surveys in rural areas. This methodological approach to collecting data by telephone concerned only the quantitative survey, but not the qualitative survey, and was structured around four stages:

- i. Counting of households in each village with the help of focal points;
- ii. The selection of 12 households for the administration of the questionnaire;
- iii. Collecting of the telephone numbers of the 12 households sampled, with the help of focal points from the villages concerned (Village Development Committees in Burkina Faso and village chiefs in Niger); and
- iv. Administration of the questionnaire by telephone to the 12 sampled households.

With this alternative approach, the collection tools initially planned for the data collection were no longer applicable *in extenso*, in particular with regard to all the parts of the questionnaire, which require the physical presence of the interviewer in the household. For example, this was the case with anthropometric measurements for which the use of height gauges and personal scales is compulsory and requires the physical presence of two investigators and the presence of the mother and the child. Therefore, instructions were given to the teams for the quantitative survey questionnaire to be fully administered except for the anthropometry part. On the other hand, the individual or group interview guides could not be administered.

2.5. Safety and health protection devices for field staff

Some measures had been taken by ESCWA to deal with the deleterious security situation in certain localities in the survey area. Likewise, arrangements had also been made with regard to COVID-19 to ensure the protection of field staff.

2.5.1. Security devices

In view of the fragile security situation in some of the localities covered by the investigation, the teams were required to announce themselves to the regional, provincial and communal authorities

of the areas in which they were to work. The teams had a letter of introduction with them, which they presented to the authorities. It was therefore recommended that investigators avoid any behavior that could make them suspect in the eyes of the population. They were prohibited from engaging in discussions on sensitive topics, especially those related to terrorism, so as not to appear suspicious and expose themselves to attitude risks. In addition, team members should not be isolated from each other in the field, especially when moving from one location to another. In areas where insecurity was very prevalent in Burkina Faso, as in Niger, supervisors and their controllers had to collaborate with the relevant authorities (communal authorities, FDS, REGIS-ER project managers) before deciding whether or not to cover the localities concerned.

2.5.2. Health protection measures for field staff against COVID-19

Faced with the COVID-19 pandemic, instructions were given to field staff, in regard to respecting barrier measures and they included:

- Washing of hands with soap and water or use of a hand sanitizer before entering households;
- Wearing of a protective mask;
- Avoiding all contact with respondents in households while having respectful attitudes towards the populations targeted by the survey; and
- At the end of the household interview, leaving each other avoiding all contact.

2.6. Additional Computer processing of data

Computer processing of the data consisted essentially of cleaning the databases. Statistical imputations were also made to supplement the missing data. As the village sampling was stratified, it was necessary to create the databases for the two sub-groups at this stage of the computer analysis process. The cleaned database was exported to the SPSS software and EXCEL for final analysis and use in this evaluation report.

2.7. Constraints, difficulties and limits of the evaluation

Under usual conditions, carrying out the final evaluation of such a complex project would have been a huge challenge. This challenge was even more important to face in view of the proliferation of violent extremism, and of the pandemic of COVID-19 in Burkina Faso and Niger. Certain difficulties were also linked to the period of carrying out this assessment during the rainy season, which this year was exceptionally heavy. All these factors combined were constraints that made it difficult to access beneficiaries and target villages.

In fact, investigators often had to be informed by the relevant local authorities and by the defense and security forces (FDS) of security problems in some specific areas, and consequently indicated that it was not advisable to go to such areas. In addition, the security issue made people suspicious of people outside their communities, especially given that they usually arrived on motorbikes to

collect data and information on REGIS-ER. Moreover, the poor state of the roads did not make it easy for investigators to travel from one village to another. Finally, in some of the older intervention villages of the project, households no longer exactly remembered the activities carried out by the project or confused the activities of the project with other projects operating in the same locality.

Also, the displacement of nearly a million people in Burkina Faso further complicated the conduct of this assessment in some benefiting villages where not only was access to households no longer easy, but beneficiaries could not be surveyed because they were displaced to other places, often outside the administrative entity of their home residence. Furthermore, one of the main limitations of this evaluation was that a complete and solid base of data and information had not been established before the implementation of the project.

Thus, there was basic information on the target geographic areas of the project which was not collected. For example, information on geographic size and population levels was not readily available. Also, a list of concerned households and villages and key information about them was not readily available. It would have been useful for this evaluation to have such a list available, as well as the list of all beneficiaries and participants as well as the project interventions from which they benefited.

It should also be noted that the project was not evaluated as expected at the end of its initial five-year implementation. The project was the subject of a mid-term evaluation in 2016 and a report of this evaluation was published in September 2016. The results of this evaluation report are compared, where possible, to the results of the 2016 mid-term evaluation. This limits the comparative analysis needed to assess the changes made since the initial intervention of REGIS-ER in late 2013.

However, despite the constraints, difficulties and limitations associated with this final evaluation, the report presents useful analysis and evidence on the performance of REGIS-ER. Also, the experiences of implementing this project as documented in this report should be used in the design of future assistance activities in the Sahel Region, Africa and elsewhere.

2.8. Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents by subgroup and country

In this section are presented results on the households and respondents' profiles.

2.8.1. Structure of the surveyed households

A total of 1,428 households were covered by the survey, of which 82.4% were in sub-group 1 and 17.6% in sub-group 2. In Burkina Faso, 706 households were surveyed, with 417 in the North Central, 217 in the Sahel and 72 in the East. Among the surveyed households, 84.7% were in sub-group 1 and 15.3% from the sub-group 2. The low number of surveyed households in the Eastern Region is due to the inaccessibility and the insecurity of most REGIS-ER intervention villages in

that region. In Niger, 722 households were surveyed, with 252 in Maradi, 410 in Tillabéry and 60 in Zinder. Of the 722 households surveyed, 80.2% were in sub-group 1 and 19.8% in sub-group 2.

Table 7: Breakdown of respondents by region, country and sub-group

Country/Region	Sub-Group 1 (%)	Sub-Group 2 (%)	Total Households
Burkina Faso	84.7	15.3	706
North Central	85.6	14.4	417
East	66.7	33.3	72
Sahel	88.9	11.1	217
Niger	80.2	19.8	722
Maradi	92.1	7.9	252
Tillabéry	6.5	93.5	62
North Tillabéry	100.0	0.0	253
South Tillabéry	92.6	7.4	95
Zinder	3.3	96.7	60
Total	82.4	17.6	1,428

Source: CESAO / Quantitative and Qualitative Survey

The table below gives the distribution of the surveyed 1,428 households/respondents by country and by sub-group. The list of all the villages surveyed is attached at Annex D.

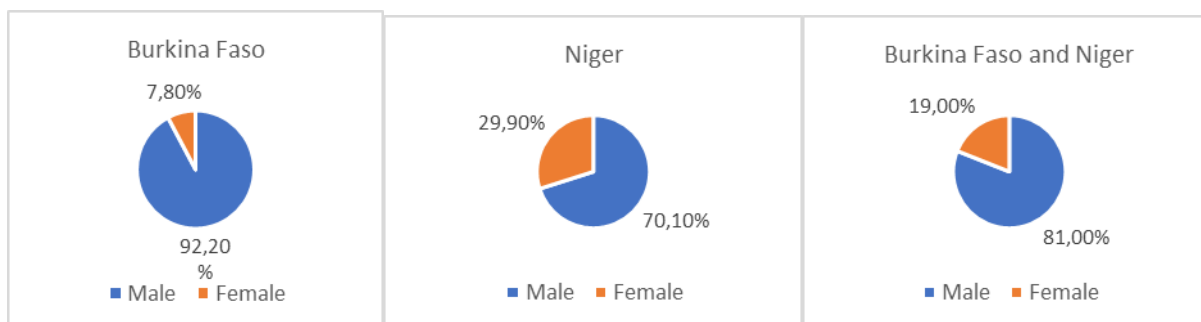
Table 8: Household/respondent breakdown by commune, country and sub-group

Country	Commune	Number of respondents		Total		Country	Commune	Number of respondents		Total
		Sub-group 1	Sub-group 2					Sub-group 1	Sub-group 2	
Burkina Faso	Bani	62	0	62		Niger	Band	0	31	31
	Barsallogho	12	37	49			Droum	2	27	29
	Bouroum	0	23	23			Filingue	3	10	13
	Dori	48	0	48			Guidanroumdji	0	20	20
	Gaye	0	12	12			Imanan	88	3	91
	Kongoussi	109	0	109			Kourthey	254	0	254
	Manni	48	12	60			Sabonmachi	232	0	232
	Nagbingou	48	0	48			Sakoira	0	14	14
	Ouindigui	49	0	49			Tagazar	0	26	26
	Sampelga	35	0	35			Tondikandia	0	12	12
	Seytenga	0	24	24			Total	579	143	722
	Tikaré	48	0	48						
	Titabe	43	0	43						
	Titao	96	0	96						
	Total	598	108	706						

2.8.2. Heads of surveyed household by gender

Of the surveyed 1,428 household heads in both countries, 1,157 were men (81%), and 271 were women (19%). In Burkina Faso, 706 heads of households were composed as follows: 92.2% of men and 7.8% women. In Niger, of the 506 heads of households, 70.4% were men and 29.6% were women. The proportion of female heads of households in Niger is about four times higher than in Burkina Faso. These results are illustrated by the graphs below.

Chart 1: Heads of Household Breakdown by Sex



2.8.3. Sample coverage

In Burkina Faso, out of 68 villages sampled, the coverage rate was 89.71%. Of the 816 planned households, 706 were surveyed or 86.52%. In Niger, one additional village was surveyed and additional households were also surveyed. Thus, instead of 52 villages initially planned for sampling, 53 were actually surveyed, representing a coverage rate of 101.92%. Of the 624 households initially planned, 722 households were surveyed, representing a coverage rate of 115.71%.

The initial overall planned sample was 120 villages, 68 in Burkina Faso and 52 in Niger. At the end of the field work, 114 villages were actually surveyed, representing a coverage rate of 95%. As for the household sample, of the 1,440 planned households, 1,428 were actually surveyed, representing an overall coverage rate of 99.17% as shown in the table below.

Table 9: Sample coverage rate by country and subgroup (%)

Country/Sub-Group	Villages Provided	Villages Respondents	Rate (%) Cover	Households Provided	Households Respondents	Rate (%) Cover
Burkina Faso	68	61	89.71	816	706	86.52
Sub-group 1	54	51	94.44	648	598	92.28
Sub-group 2	14	10	71.43	168	108	64.29
Niger	52	53	101.92	624	722	115.71
Sub-group 1	42	43	102.38	504	579	114.88
Sub-group 2	10	10	100.00	120	143	119.17
Sub-groups and 2	120	114	95.00	1,440	1,428	99.17

Source: CESA / Quantitative and Qualitative Survey

2.8.4. Spatial distribution of key informants

The table below provides the breakdown of key informant interviews. Thirty-four key informants were interviewed in Burkina Faso and 57 in Niger, for a total of 91 key informants. The table data reveals that of the 91 key informants interviewed, only five of them (all from the Zinder region) came from sub-group 2 and belonged to extended project areas.

Table 10: Table: Breakdown of Key Informants by Country, Region and Sub-group

Country	Region	Number of key informants		Total
		Sub-group 1	Sub-group 2	
Burkina Faso	Dori	10		10
	Fada	9		9
	Kaya	15		15
	Total	34		34
Niger	Maradi	18	0	18
	North Tillabéry	22	0	22
	South Tillabéry	8	0	8
	Tillabéry	2	0	2
	Zinder	2	5	7
	Total	52	5	57

In order to meet the requirements of the SOW (see copy in Annex B), the following sections respond to the eight key questions included in the SOW.

3. KEY QUESTION 1: TO WHAT EXTENT HAS THE REGIS-ER PROJECT ACHIEVE ITS STATED OBJECTIVES?

For this question, the three strategic objectives of the project were analyzed. The aim is to ascertain whether or not the implementation of the project's interventions achieved its stated three strategic objectives.

3.1. Level of achievement of sustainable livelihood activities

Of the three expected results of the project, the first focuses on diversifying economic opportunities, intensifying climate-friendly agriculture and livestock, improving the marketing of agricultural and livestock products and finally access to financial services for beneficiaries. In the pages that follow, it is noted accordingly the level of achievement of the sustainable subsistence activities implemented by the project.

3.1.1. Providers of Community Based Solution Providers (CBSP) and Individual Providers (IP).

The objective of the Community/Individual providers was to support their emergence at the village level in order to help ensure that vulnerable household members have the necessary products, services and information at their disposal that they need to support increased food security and

resilience. Achieving this indicator required improving financial services, governance and the ability to coordinate resilience actions. This entailed raising the capacity of microfinance structures and building the capacity of community and individual providers so they can help facilitate access to financial services for as many community members as possible. The project has worked to address the causes that prevent access to financial services.

The quantitative and qualitative results of the project suggest that it has achieved positive results. Indeed, the approach adopted by the project for the implementation of its activities has achieved good results when compared to the performance indicators reported in the mid-term project evaluation. About 75% in key informants interviewed in Niger were in complete agreement that the objectives had been achieved and 89.7% in Burkina Faso expressed the view that the project's objectives had been achieved.

Project beneficiaries cited the following reasons for the achievement of this key objective:

1. Increased incomes;
2. Better ability to cope with shocks and stresses;
3. Acquisition of prestige to serve communities;
4. Building increased human capital; and,
5. Improved nutritional status and better.

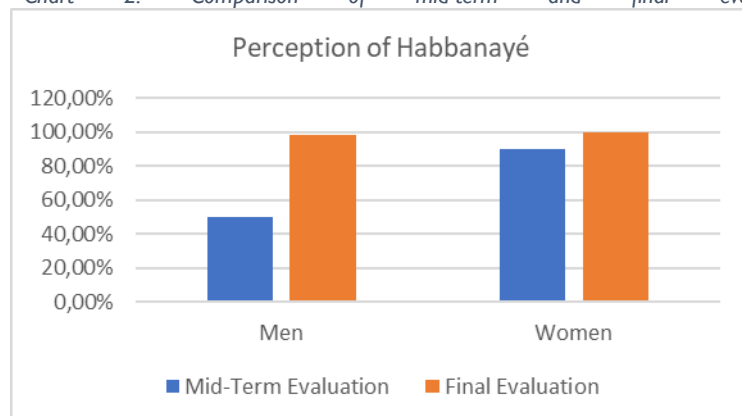
3.1.2. Habbanayé

The main objective of the Habbanayé activity is to strengthen the community by promoting and extending the traditional support model for households in need by giving them small ruminants (goats in general) so they were better able to cope with sporadic shocks and stresses. As part of the project, communities selected the recipients of animals (small ruminants, poultry), as well as providing training on their breeding and the maintenance of good animal health by offering vaccination programs.

In 2020, 98.7% of the beneficiaries surveyed mentioned that the objectives of the Habbanayé activity had been achieved. In the mid-term evaluation in 2016, 83% of respondents also said that the objectives of the Habbanayé activity were met. These results show that Habbanayé has achieved its goal by being highly valued by both women (targeted direct beneficiaries) and men. Indeed, Habbanyé is also experiencing growing and visible popularity among men.

While 50.0% of men said that Habbanayé's objectives have been achieved in the mid-term evaluation, 98.2% expressed support for this activity. As for the women beneficiaries, they unanimously stated that this activity has largely achieved its objectives in 2020.

Chart 2: Comparison of mid-term and final evaluation of perceptions on Habbanyé



Source: CESAO-CERFODES, final evaluation of the REGIS-ER project, November 2020

The three main elements supporting the achievement of Habbanyé's objectives were cited by respondents as follows:

- Increase in household incomes (64.9%);
- Possession of subsistence assets (63.6%) for households with chronic vulnerability; and
- Improved nutritional status in communities that consume goat's milk and its by-products (51.1%).

While one of the measures of success of Habbanyé is the increase in household incomes (Burkina Faso 74.2%, and 61.5% in Nige)), its nutritional improvement facet is viewed differently in the two countries (56.2% in Niger and 37.1% in Burkina Faso).

In addition, group discussions also confirmed that Habbanyé has led to noticeable changes in the resilience of communities by contributing to household well-being. However, the high insecurity level in some villages affects this activity. For example, is the following quote: *"We have experienced terrorist unrest in our village from where we had to flee with our cattle and because of the lack of hay and space for the continuity of this activity, we lost our livestock."* (Excerpt from focus groups with male Kayara beneficiaries.)

3.1.3. Poultry

The aviculture business seeks to capitalize on the rapid and lucrative cycle of chicken meat production to improve the purchasing power of beneficiaries and the resilience of households. The project addressed constraints associated with the poultry value chain, taking into account the health, diet and habitat of poultry. For 84.6% of respondents, poultry raising met its objectives by increasing household incomes and diversifying household diets.

One focus group characterized the benefits of poultry raising as follows: *"With the training received in poultry raising, we were able to improve the breeding of hens. Before, none of the women knew the value of correct hen breeding. We did not know what enriched rations we should*

give to chickens. With the increased production of chickens, we were able to have eggs and chickens that we sold to pay for the children's schooling and to pay for our small needs.”. (Excerpt from focus groups with women beneficiaries of Illeguer.)

3.1.4. Food and Animal Health

The objective of the animal health and nutrition activity was to promote improved animal health in rural areas. The result of this activity was a positive impact on households in need of a rapid return on its investment. The majority of beneficiaries of this activity also believed that the project has achieved its animal health and nutrition objectives with 76% of respondents stating that the exercise of this activity resulted in the following:

- Increased household incomes, and
- Satisfaction with the services provided by VVVs and other animal health service providers.

However, some recipients believed that this activity could have been more successful if the project had addressed the following:

- Shortage in the number of veterinary health products;
- Inefficiency of the VVVs in the exercise of the activities entrusted to them; and
- Low level of training of animal feed participants.

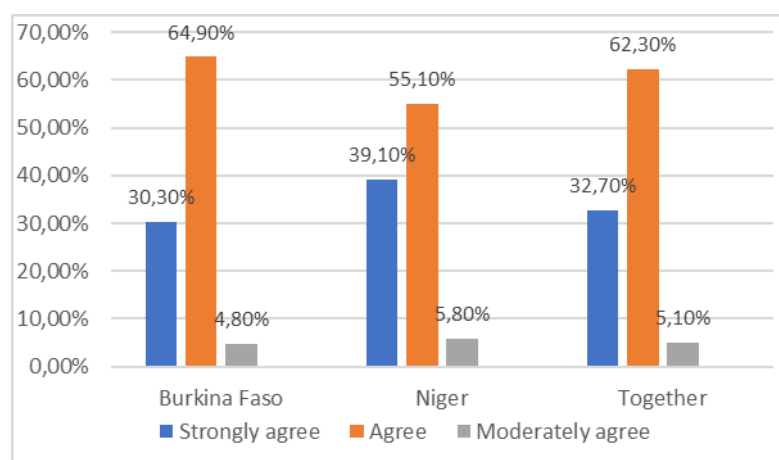
3.1.5. Regeneration/Conservation Agriculture

Conservation agriculture is a production system based on soil conservation and improving the natural productive potential (fertility) of soils in order to obtain optimum and regular higher yields. The field survey revealed that 44.1% of informants in Burkina Faso and 26.1% of those in Niger believed that regeneration agriculture is the first activity among those offered by the project that contributes the most to an increase in the well-being of their households. At the same time, there was a sizeable percentage of respondents who believed that regeneration agriculture is the second most important activity (23.5% in Burkina Faso and 24.7% in Niger). Therefore, the success of this activity is mixed in view of the relatively small proportion of beneficiaries who believed this activity has achieved its objectives.

3.1.6. Bio-Reclamation of Land (BDL)

BDL involves the use of various water retention methods in farmers' fields. This may include the construction of stone bunds, *zai* holes and/or the installation of a vegetable cover composed of okra and sesame. All respondents perceived that the BDL had mostly met its objectives. The majority of respondents surveyed (95%) agreed that the project had largely met its BDL objectives (of which 62.3% agreed and 32.7% strongly agreed). The percentage breakdown of these respondents by country is as follows: Burkina Faso - 95.2% and Niger - 94.2%.

Chart 3. Perception of achieving BDL objectives by country



Source: CESAO-CERFODES, final evaluation of the REGIS-ER project, November 2020

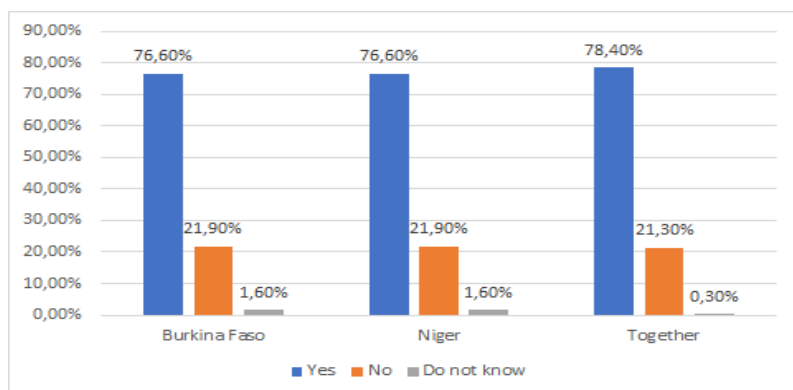
For respondents who agreed that the BDL activity had achieved its objectives, the elements of success cited were as follows:

- Increase in land available for planting crops (77.1%);
- Higher yields from targeted crops (69.2%); and
- Raised household resilience levels by improving the fertility of previously degraded soils.

The testimony of a BDL participant provided this supporting view: *With the training on agricultural techniques, we have received such as zai and stone, our fields have become more fertile because we manage to keep the water in our fields. Our harvests are higher and we are able to sell a lot, which allows us to better maintain our families. For example, we manage to pay for our children's education.* (Excerpt from the focus group of male beneficiaries of Dougouri Ouidi (Commune of Ouindigui) in Burkina Faso.

When asked whether they would be able to continue to implement BDL activities without the support of REGIS-ER, the majority of respondents (78.4%) answered in the affirmative. In both Burkina Faso and Niger, 76.6% of respondents said they would be able to continue this activity. However, 21.3% of respondents in each country said they would be unable to continue their BDL activities. According to them, the main reasons for this are: insufficient space, lack of labor and work equipment.

Chart 4: Respondents' ability to continue BDL activities



Source: CESA0-CERFODES, final evaluation of the REGIS-ER project, November 2020

3.1.7. Savings and Credit

The project planning target in terms of the average total value of self-managed community loans and savings was 747,223 CFA francs³ (USD 1,358), or 486,296 (USD 884) for Niger and 260,927 (USD 474) for Burkina Faso. The average value of self-managed community loans and savings to date is 808,723 CFA francs (USD 1,470) or 542,167 (USD 985.75) in Niger and 266,556 (USD 484.64) in Burkina Faso (see chart below). Compared to the situation of the beneficiaries at the mid-term evaluation, the project's performance exceeded its planned target.

It can therefore be said that the project's objective has now been achieved and generally satisfactory since the target achievement level is 108% in Niger and 102% in Burkina Faso.

Chart 5: Cumulative average value of self-managed community loans and savings



Source: CESA0-CERFODES, final evaluation of the REGIS-ER project, November 2020

When these results are examined according to gender, it is observed that women benefited the most from these loans. The mid-term evaluation confirmed this assessment, as 58% of the amounts were allocated to women, compared to 99% at present.

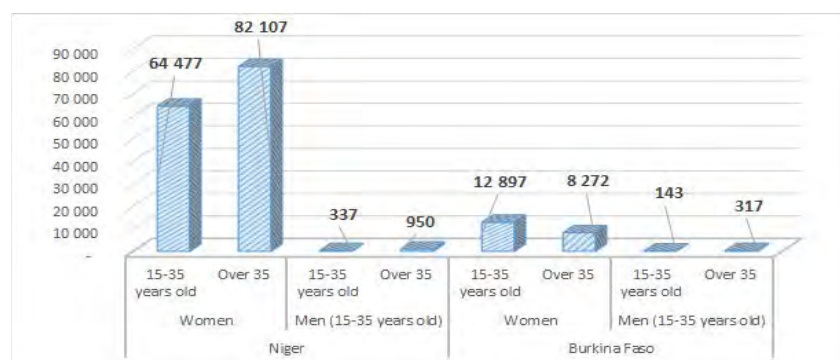
In analyzing the situation by country, Niger comes out on top in terms of the cumulative value of self-managed loans and savings (see chart below). The security situation that prevailed from 2014

³ The exchange rate of FCFA to USD was made on the basis of USD 1 to 550 FCFA

to 2020 in Burkina Faso could explain the low cumulative value of self-managed community loans and savings in Burkina Faso. Indeed, the project's area of intervention in Burkina Faso has experienced increasing insecurity since 2015 with repeated extremist attacks, and communal conflicts in the North Central, Eastern and Sahel regions.

It has been almost impossible to organize and mobilize beneficiaries in these parts of the country to facilitate access to credit to beneficiaries. Finally, the project's intervention area that consists of the North Central, Eastern and Sahel regions of Burkina Faso, the majority of beneficiaries prefer to invest in livestock production, which yields a profit of 20 to 25% per year, depending on the specialties of the estate.

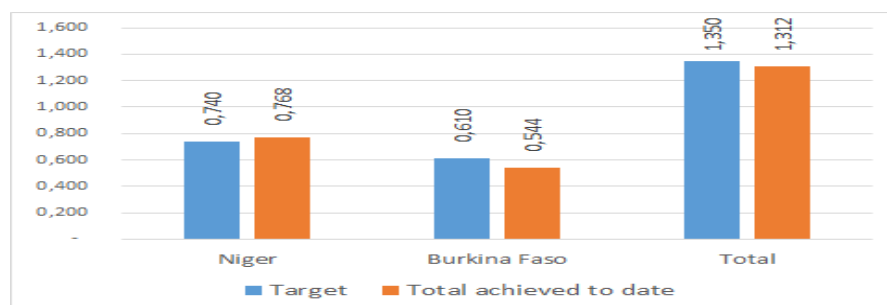
Chart 6. Distribution of beneficiaries by gender and age by cumulative value of self-managed community loans and savings



Source: CESA0-CERFODES, final evaluation of the REGIS-ER project, November 2020

Another project planning target or objective was the number of active informal savings and credit groups to be strengthened. One of the intervention strategies used by the project and its partners in terms of savings and credits was support for the establishment of savings and credit groups. The implementation of the intervention strategy has resulted in overall good results. The performance indicator was reached at 97% to 104% in Niger, and 89% in Burkina Faso. A total of 1,312 savings and credit groups have been set up out of 1,350 expected, including 768 in Niger and 544 in Burkina Faso (see chart below).

Chart 7. Number of strengthened informal savings and credit groups



Source: CESA0-CERFODES, final evaluation of the REGIS-ER project, November 2020

The analysis undertaken by this evaluation of sustainable subsistence activities conducted by the project indicates an overall achievement of its main objectives in both Burkina Faso and Niger. The project's success in implementing activities in the areas of Habbanayé, poultry raising, BDL and credit and savings have increased household incomes and assets. However, it was found that additional efforts are needed with the following:

- More work is needed to make sure veterinary health products are available and the skills of VVVs are improved, and more training is needed in the area of forage production; and
- Good equipment needs to be made available to participants to enable them to increase and improve BDL activities.

3.1.8. Level of achievement of Governance and Natural Resources Management, Gender Equality and Youth Employment Activities

This section continues a response to key question 1, but it specifically focuses on the achievement of results through interventions aimed at raising awareness of issues related to good local governance. It also covers natural resource management, disaster risk reduction, conflict prevention and management, and strengthening and local institutions.

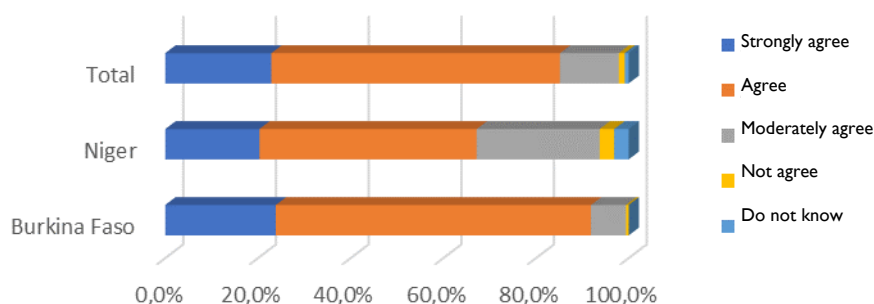
3.1.9. Strengthening Natural Resource Management

The project has strengthened local governance in its areas of intervention in Burkina Faso and Niger through:

- The establishment of new local institutions and the strengthening of their capacity for the management of natural resources; and
- A participatory approach that allowed communities in the project areas to participate in various natural resource management meetings about appropriate mechanisms and plans for the recovery of degraded soils.

The objective of the natural resource management activity was to restore the fertility of degraded soils through the development of written agreements, including mapping existing resources, socio-economic infrastructure, livestock corridors, and potential conflict zones. The survey gathered the views of the respondents on whether or not the project's objective on natural resource management had been achieved. According to the results presented in the chart below, only 1.4% of respondents disagreed with the assertion that the project achieved its objectives in this area. This was the case in both countries and in both sub-groups. The breakdown of responses with regards to the achievement of this project objective is as follows: 14% moderately agree, 17.4% strongly agree and 66.4% agree. A total of 97.7% agreed with the achievement of the objectives of this activity.

Chart 8: Respondents' Opinion of the Statement that the Objectives of Natural Resource Management Are Being Met (Subgroup 1 – Subgroup 2)



Source: CESAO-CERFODES, final evaluation of the REGIS-ER project, November 2020

The main elements that support this positive assessment are:

- Reduction in soil degradation;
- Availability of a larger area for crops; and,
- Increased crop yields.

All in all, all respondents in both countries have expressed their willingness to continue this activity without REGIS-ER thanks to the knowledge gained. A minority of respondents surveyed who indicated that the objective was not achieved mainly cited the following reasons:

- Limited capacity of village chiefs to deal effectively with communal leaders in the management their natural resources; and
- Lack of water retention infrastructure.

3.1.10. Risk and disaster management

The main objective of the Disaster Risk Management activity is to develop early warning systems for rapid response and preparedness for possible disasters at the commune level. The most frequent risks and disasters are related to droughts or floods, causing drastic declines in agro-pastoral production. The consequences of these disaster risks are famine, malnutrition, rural exodus and displacement of entire villages in the event of severe crises.

Disaster Risk Management is about building community resilience by reducing their vulnerability to environmental and other shocks. The specific objectives are: build the capacity of communities so that they can avoid the major impacts of shocks; help communities reduce risks through behavioral change; and to understand how disasters occur. Moreover, capacity building at every level so that everyone is better prepared to respond to disasters, including at the government level.

The project's implementation strategy includes three main themes: (1) prevention (strengthening the capacity of volunteers and civil servants, transmission of information, public awareness in the broadest sense and implementation of disaster contingency plans); (2) response (implementation

of assistance plans that cover risks and events in a timely manner), and (3) recovery (adoption and implementation of measures to care for victims and restore their dignity).

As part of its disaster risk management component, the project has enabled communities to be equipped with early warning and disaster response systems. According to the project's annual reports, all the actions have been carried out and have enabled communities to develop early warning and disaster response systems that effectively function as planned by the project.

The effective operation of these systems is confirmed by the project participants interviewed in the field. Depending on the respondents, the reasons for this assessment are:

- Existence of a prevention community committee that alerts every time a potential risk occurs;
- Availability of information that helps communities cope with difficult situations;
- Information on the climate situation provided regularly by the local development committee;
- System which lessened the consequences of the disastrous flooding situations this year; and
- Trained people share their knowledge and this has been useful to the whole community.

In the mid-term evaluation, all respondents (100%) both countries were in complete agreement that the objectives of the Early Warning System (EWS) had been achieved. According to the respondents, the achievement of this objective was helped by the following:

- Rescue teams are trained and ready to respond to disasters, as already evidenced by responses to floods and fires;
- Quick mobilization of rescue teams, thus limiting the extent of the damage; and
- Groups are established to notify local authorities and state services in case of a disaster.

3.1.11. Risk preparedness:

The Disaster Risk Management activity also enables different communities to prepare for any disasters. At the communal level this involves the adoption and development of strategies to prevent and adapt to these disasters. To this end, the project has enabled the training of more than 800 people in Burkina Faso and Niger to prepare for disasters (according to its reports). The same sources indicate that several thousand people are using climate information or implementing risk reduction actions to improve resilience to climate change. The data collected from the field survey of households and information provided by key informants indicated that project support has enabled different communities to implement activities that strengthen their resilience, exemplified by the following:

- Moved houses away from flood basins areas and water runoff areas;

- Strengthening habitats;
- Consideration of protection techniques in habitat construction;
- Strengthening habitat walls; and
- Early protection measures.

During this final project evaluation, respondents who benefited from the interventions were asked to say whether they were aware of the project's objective on disaster risk management activity. A review of the table below shows that 84.8% of respondents (90.9% in Burkina Faso and 66.6% in Niger) said they did not know about this project objective. Similar proportions are observed in each of the two sub-groups as shown in the table below. As a result, it is likely that the majority of respondents did not know whether the project's disaster risk management objective had been achieved because they did not know about this objective.

Table 11: Knowledge of REGIS-ER's Objectives through Disaster Risk Management Interventions

Sub-group		Do you know about REGIS-ER's Disaster Risk Management Objective? (%)			
		Yes	No	Nsp	Total workforce
Sub-Group 1	Burkina Faso	4.1	91.0	4.9	590
	Niger	5.0	67.7	27.4	201
	Total	4.3	85.1	10.6	791
Sub-Group 2	Burkina Faso	5.8	90.4	3.8	104
	Niger	9.1	60.6	30.3	33
	Total	6.6	83.2	10.2	137
SUBGROUP1 and SUBGROUP2	Burkina Faso	4.3	90.9	4.8	694
	Niger	5.6	66.7	27.8	234
	Total	4.6	84.8	10.6	928

Source: CESAO-All/Quantitative and Qualitative Survey

3.1.12. Strengthening the ability to manage conflicts

The objective of conflict prevention and management is to implement the conflict resolution framework as put forth in the USAID document, "Accompanying Peace Processes for Conflict Prevention, Resolution and Recovery." Project interventions in conflict prevention and management have enabled the implementation of several activities, including the implementation of conflict prevention, conflict assessment and conflict resolution mechanisms.

For example, 84% of respondents in Burkina Faso and 69% in Niger say they strongly or moderately agree that the objectives are being met, or 81% for both countries. Also, 83% in Burkina Faso and 62% in Niger, or 78% of respondents in both countries, perceive that conflicts are seldom or not frequent, compared to the past. According to the respondents, the following findings were cited:

- No conflict in their community;
- No conflict thanks to the support of the community elders;
- Implementation of the principle of collaboration between farmers and herders;

- Putting lessons and training into practice;
- Communities say they live in peace among themselves, but the problem of insecurity is caused by terrorists who come from elsewhere;
- Existence of values of tolerance in the community;
- Low frequency of land-related conflicts;
- Peaceful resolution of conflicts within families;
- Recording fewer conflicts than before; and
- Actions of local development committees are helpful.

The capacity of communities to manage conflicts is one of the elements of success of the project, especially considering the establishment of management committees and the training of the actors who lead it. These project actions served as an effective tool for:

- Reducing land conflicts;
- Strengthening social values to manage land;
- Virtual disappearance of conflicts between farmers and herders around water points; and
- Increasing women's access to land for agricultural activities.

3.1.13. Strengthening governance

The main objective of the local governance enhancement activity is to hold coordination meetings with local authorities and other development partners (CARE, Mercy Corps, ACDI-VOCA, OCADES, FAO, CRS) to discuss opportunities for improved coordination between partners working in the area of resilience. The project has had interventions related to the strengthening of governance, regional capacity and coordination. For example, all interviewees in Burkina Faso and Niger considered all these activities to be important, helping enable the following:

- Solving basic problems and implementing an effective development strategy; and
- Resolving the community's elementary grievances.

Furthermore, some interviewees cited the following:

- Governance strengthening is needed from the lowest level to the highest in order for better planning to occur and community development to be boosted; and
- There is a need for training in management and governance.

In addition, the integration of local agreements ('conventions') (CLCs) into the Communal Development Plans (PDC/PCD) was started in 2019. In addition to CLCs, the Communal Resilience Plans (PCDR) are also included in the PDC/PCRs. Thus, documents essential for the consideration of the needs of the population in the medium-term are available thanks to the support

of the project. The integration of local conventions into PDCs/PCDs enabled the production of documents in the thirteen communes of Burkina Faso and Niger where the project concentrated its activities in 2019. Thus, the following is noted:

- 11 of the 13 municipalities have PCDs;
- 8 of the 13 municipalities of concentration in FY19 have a PCDR integrated into their PDCs/PCDs); and
- 7 of the 13 concentration communes in FY19 have a CLC integrated into their PDC/PCD.

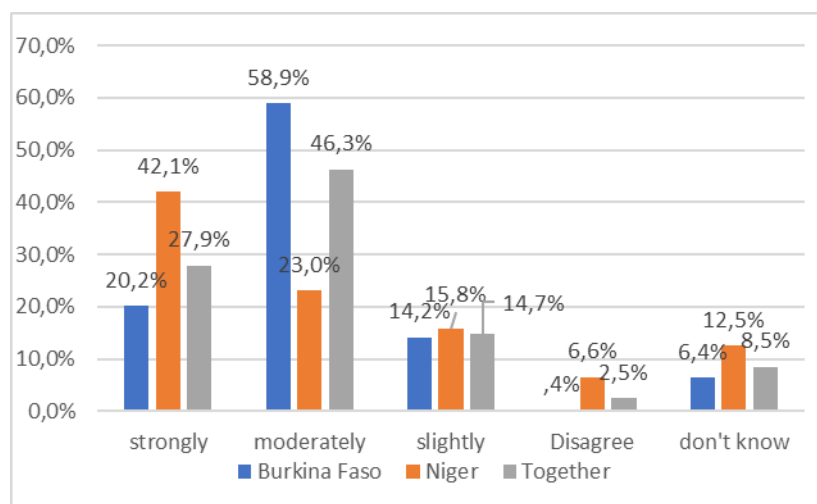
The development of a communal development plan is essential for a commune, but its own resources are often insufficient. Therefore, the support of the project has been a welcomed contribution to the elaboration and implementation of the CDPs. In addition, the integration into the CDP of documents that address resilience issues strengthen local governance and foster participatory community development.

3.1.14. Implementation of activities for access to water, sanitation, nutrition and health

3.1.14.1. Rehabilitation of Water Points

The rehabilitation of water points involves the construction or repair of water points (wells, pumps) in the project's target communities. Its main objective is to improve the community's access to safe drinking water. Based on recipient survey data and compared to other project interventions, for this activity the majority of respondents did not attach high importance to this activity. According to the beneficiaries of this activity and in comparison with the other interventions of the project, this activity is important to them. Indeed, 65.1% of the surveyed beneficiaries from Niger and 81.2% of Burkina said that it is "very important" or "important". Thus, 31% of surveyed beneficiaries in Niger and 90.3% in Burkina Faso considered that the objectives of the rehabilitation of water points are strongly or moderately achieved.

Chart 9. Achieving the objectives of the water point rehabilitation activity



Source: CESA0-CERFODES, final evaluation of the REGIS-ER project, November 2020

With regard to the rehabilitation of water points, it is noted that by 2020, the project was planning to rehabilitate or build 175 water wells in Niger and 265 in Burkina Faso. The number of wells actually rehabilitated or built by the project is 178 in Niger and 263 in Burkina Faso, representing an execution rate of 113% and 99%, respectively. Therefore, it can be concluded the project has achieved its goal for the rehabilitation of water points in these two countries. Performance data for this water point project component indicates that by the end of 2020:

- A total of 123,350 people had access to safe drinking water in Burkina Faso and Niger (the planned target was 123,250), therefore, the achievement rate is over 100%; and
- The breakdown of the number of people who have access to safe drinking water is 44,750 in Niger and 78,600 in Burkina Faso.

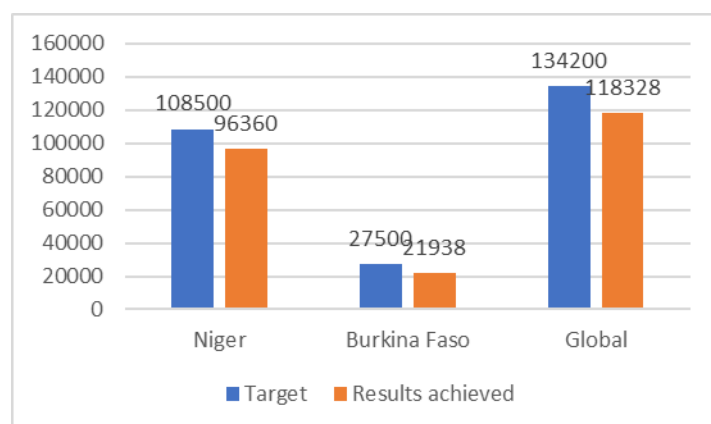
3.1.14.2. Improved access and use of latrines

Project performance data also show that by the end of 2020, 18,955 improved latrines were built or rehabilitated versus a planned target of 18,800, which is a completion rate of 101%. In Niger, the target for 2020 was 15,800 and the achievement level was 15,821. In Burkina Faso, the target was 3,000 and 3,124 structures were built. In both these countries, the completion rate was more than 100%.

As for the number of people with access to latrines was 96,390 in Niger in 2020, against a target of 108,500, hence an execution rate of 89%, while in Burkina Faso this number was 21,938 in 2020 and the target was 27,500, yielding an achievement percentage of 85%.

However, the fact that people have a latrine doesn't mean its actual use. Indeed, according to the survey, there are 64.2% of the respondents who use latrines. This rate is 77.9% in Burkina Faso and 47.9% in Niger.

Chart 10. Comparison of achievements and targets for people using improved latrines



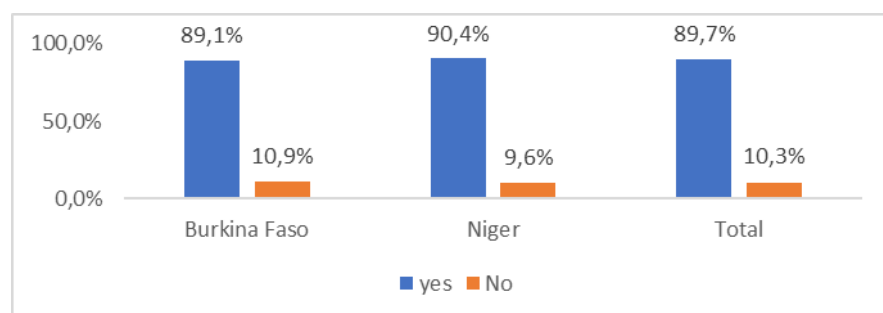
Source: CESA0-CERFODES, final evaluation of the REGIS-ER project, November 2020

3.1.15. Water User Associations (AUE) and Water Point Management Committees (CGPE)

The project supported the organization of water user associations (AUE) and Water Point Management Committees (CGPE) with the main objective of establishing or reviving entities that would ensure the long-term management of wells and boreholes. These were, therefore, actions that aimed to put in place a mechanism that would ensure the sustainability of the intervention for augmenting the access to safe drinking water.

According to beneficiaries of this intervention, 89.7% of the surveyed beneficiaries declared to be satisfied with the action of AUE and CGPE. The satisfactory level is 90.4 in Niger and 89.1 in Burkina Faso. For the beneficiaries, the lack of visibility as well as the inadequate training of CGPE are the main reasons that explain the low level of satisfactory of communities.

Chart 11. Level of satisfaction with the organization of AUEs and CGPEs



Source: CESAOCERFODES, final evaluation of the REGIS-ER project, November 2020

In the organization of the AUEs and CGPEs, the project implemented complementary activities such as governance and water point management. According to the respondents involved with these activities, 13% of those surveyed in Niger and 12.7% in Burkina Faso attached importance to these activities.

3.1.16. Social Communication and Behavior Change (SBCC)

Overall, 25% of respondents noted that they were aware of the project's objectives for social communication and behavior change activities (SBCC) and 97.4% believed that these objectives have been achieved. This disparity between knowing about SBCC objectives and the achievement of those can possibly be explained in the following way. The ability of respondents to remember a component is subject to memory, but an assessment of the achievement of component objectives may be linked to the ability of those surveyed to recall actual practices.

The following table summarizes the level of achievement of objectives among those surveyed regarding the strategies, techniques and communication themes deployed during the implementation of the project.

Table 12 Percentage of Households achieving objectives by sub-group in terms of communication strategies, techniques and themes

Objectives achieved	Strategies, techniques and communication themes (%)					
	Gasa	Edm	Posters and pictures	Digital Media	Dietary activity	ATPC
SUBGROUP 1	50.2	32.4	36.7	31.6	32.0	44.5
SUBGROUP 2	30.6	36.4	25.3	21.9	22.1	25.5
Together	46.6	33.1	34.6	29.8	30.1	40.9

Source: CESA-CERFODES, final evaluation of the REGIS-ER project, November 2020

GASA or Adolescent Support and Support Group

EdM: School of Husbands

Digital Media (community video)

Dietetic Diversity (community meal)

ATPC - Total Sanitation Driven by Communities

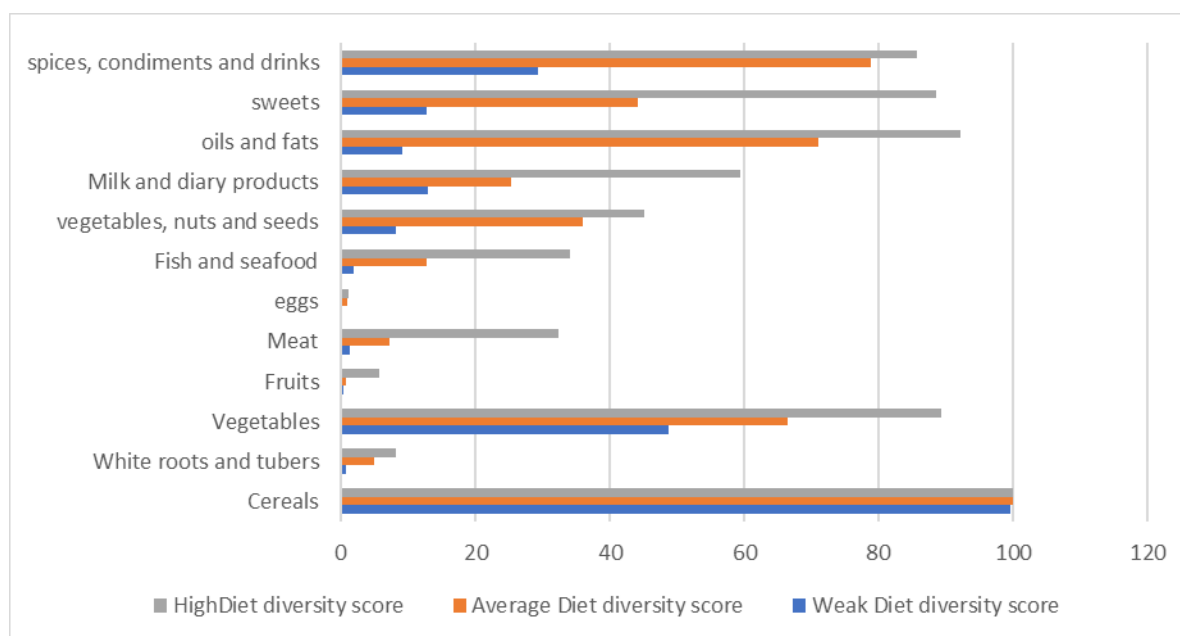
3.1.17. Access to Health Services (AHS) and Household Nutrition

Overall, the survey showed that 94.6% of the people surveyed believe that the objectives aimed at improving access to health services were more or less achieved, with 94.6% respectively in Burkina Faso and Niger. Regarding satisfaction with the practices learned in nutrition, the survey also notes a level of satisfaction of 59.3% for Burkina Faso and 50.5% for Niger.

The results of this final evaluation show that the day before the survey, cereals were eaten by 99.8% of the households visited. The staple foods for all households therefore consist mainly of cereals. However, fruits, meat and fish were respectively consumed by 1.5%, 9.2% and 11.8% of the households surveyed.

As the chart below shows, households with average diversity, for the most part, eat more vegetables, fish, oil and sugar. Households with high dietary diversity are distinguished by their access to foods such as fruit, meat, milk and dairy products. It was therefore revealed from this analysis that the proportion of households with a high dietary diversity score would be significantly better if the households were consuming foods rich in animal proteins such as meat, fish, milk and eggs.

Chart 12. Consumption of food groups according to the level of dietary diversity during the favorable period



3.1.18. Feeding practices for children aged 6 to 23 months

Minimum diversity

Dietary diversity makes it possible to assess the quality of the food intake enjoyed by a child from the age of six months. In both countries, the final assessment notes that 28.8% of children ate four or more food groups. This proportion is 44.33% in Niger and 15.95% in Burkina Faso. Compared to the different results of the SMART survey (Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transition) in both countries, we note that in Niger the 2019 SMART survey gave a proportion of 6.3% of children having a minimum acceptable dietary diversity at the national level.

Although there are disparities within regions with regard to the national survey, the performance achieved in Niger shows that nutrition activities and those focused specifically on infants and young feeding children have been successful. This success is measured through the Mother-to-Mother discussion sessions through community meals, which were the right occasions to unfold and advise mothers on good child nutrition practices. However, in Burkina Faso, the proportion of children with a minimum acceptable diversity remained relatively below the performance at the national level, according to the 2018 SMART survey proportion was established at 24.6%.

Table 13: Dietary diversity in infants and young children

Minimum Diversity	Numbers	Proportion (%)
1	53	11.3
2	109	23.2
3	172	36.7
4	64	13.6

5	56	11.9
6	9	1.9
7	4	0.9
8	1	0.2
9	1	0.2
Total	1,319	3.85

Source: CESA0-CERFODES, final evaluation of the REGIS-ER project, November 2020

3.1.19. Average number of food groups consumed daily

In Burkina Faso, according to the 2018 SMART survey, out of seven defined food groups, the average number of food groups consumed by children aged 6 to 23 months is 2.05.

The results of the final assessment for both countries indicate that out of seven defined food groups, the average number of food groups consumed is 3.03. This shows a superior performance in the project areas compared to the national results of these two countries. With regard to the distribution by sub-group, the average number of food groups consumed by children was 2.96 in sub-group 1 and 3.51 in sub-group 2, which knows a better situation in terms of the average number of food groups consumed daily by children.

REGIS-ER's approach consisted of strengthening household knowledge and skills about the diversification of diets. Key project actions in nutrition with the full participation of communities have made it possible to obtain encouraging nutritional results for households. The elements that allowed these positive results are:

- Actions to identify, promote and improve the availability of local food products in the target villages; and
- Behavior changes in the dietary practices of household members which resulted in beneficial health and nutritional impacts for women and children.

3.1.20. Hygiene and Sanitation

The project's hygiene promotion activity aimed at enabling the population to have good quality water and to prevent water-borne diseases. The final evaluation noted that 64.2% of households use a latrine with respectively 65.6% in sub-group 1 and 57.7% in sub-group 2. In Burkina Faso, according to the continuous multisectoral survey (EMC 2014) conducted by the INSD, 49.5% of households had a latrine, and in Niger this figure is 36% according to the Demographic and Health Survey and Multiple Indicators conducted by the National Institute of Statistics (INS) 2012. This performance shows that the Information, Education and Communication activities carried out within the framework of the project have had positive effects within the population and bodes well for a healthier living environment in the intervention sites.

Table 14: Proportion of households (in %) using latrines

Sub-Group	Use of latrines		Total
	Yes	No	
Sub-Group 1	65.5	34.4	100
Sub-Group 2	57.7	42.3	100
Total	64.2	35.8	100

Source: CESAOCERFODES, final evaluation of the REGIS-ER project, November 2020

The breakdown of types of infrastructure used are as follows: improved latrines (32.8%) and unimproved latrines (67.1%). In addition, 51.1% of people say they are satisfied with the hygiene practices learned. This non-negligible proportion of people who use latrines is favorable in the effort against open defecation and the fight against diarrheal diseases. This is one of the main objectives of the project.

4. RESEARCH QUESTION 2: WHAT INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS INFLUENCED THE CAPACITY OF THE PROJECT IN ACHIEVING EXPECTED RESULTS?

As we have seen through the findings and analyses provided for research question 1, most of the project activities achieved their objectives. Very often the achievement of these objectives has been determined by internal and external factors that this section discusses. Internal and external factors are of various kinds, but they were often worked to complement one another in contributing to the success of the project.

Project documents note that success factors stem from the participation of beneficiaries in the implementation of the project, through coaches and commune governments on the one hand, but also through the involvement of decentralized technical services and national and international implementing partners. In fact, according to the 2019 annual report of the project, it is clear that the following factors were decisive.

REGIS-ER has transferred the implementation of its programs to local institutions in its 13 communes of concentration. Thus, the project has signed coaching contracts with local institutions in each commune in order to help them achieve their objectives, in particular by:

- Ownership, consolidation and intensification of resilience activities;
- The application of successful best practices; and
- Improving performance, in particular by providing support to communities on the path to self-reliance.

Among the internal factors that influenced the success of the activities, it is necessary to note the involvement of the commune councils (CM). They also adopted communal plans for the promotion of resilience (PCPR) which served as a roadmap in the implementation of project activities and objectives. Thus, most of the thirteen concentration communes had their PCPRs. With these

roadmaps of resilience within municipal councils, we have observed a strategic appropriation of programs by the CMs who have thus succeeded in coordinating initiatives aimed at promoting resilience in their communes by seeking partners, but also by guiding partners who wish to intervene in their communes.

In addition to commune councils, REGIS ER has also empowered partners at the community level through the establishment of citizens' working groups (CWGs), and by involving local development committees (Niger) and village development councils (Burkina Faso) [CLD/CVD]. The supervision provided by the CLD/CVD of REGIS-ER also contributed to revitalizing village structures. This activity has increased their capacity and motivation to contribute to the development of their village, not only from a technical point of view, but also from a point of view of administration and management of activities, because it is these community bodies that are considered as leaders of these communities. Beyond the resilience sector, the CWGs and CLD/CVDs have become real engines of local development and social cohesion in their communes and communities.

Finally, among the factors internal to the project, it is also necessary to retain the platforms of service providers who have considerably improved their operational capacity and their visibility with local stakeholders by working directly with the CLDs/CVDs to provide information and goods and services to satisfy the overall needs of the villages in terms of important inputs.

In addition, REGIS-ER devoted considerable attention and resources to Collaboration, Learning and Adaptation (CLA) during the year 2019, organizing more than a dozen workshops of learning at central and regional levels in order to highlight the progress and performance of local institutions, governmental and traditional authorities, technical services and partners working in the same fields.

Another factor that contributed to the success of the project was the stability of the project management unit. It is noted that several key project staff remained in their posts throughout the project implementation period. In addition, the profile of this staff was adapted to the content of the project. However, it must be recognized that certain factors negatively influenced the project. This is the case of the rise of insecurity in four regions of intervention of REGIS-ER: North-Center, Sahel and East (Burkina Faso) and Tillabéri (Niger). The deterioration of the security situation was particularly rapid in Burkina Faso, leading to the limitation of the movement of project staff and the adaptation of its mode of intervention with the development of innovative working methods.

Conclusion: the performance of the REGIS-ER project was influenced by internal and external factors including among others:

☐ Internal factors that influenced the performance of the project:

- (i) Involvement of commune councils in communal plans for the promotion of resilience (PCPR);
- (ii) Empowerment of community partners by citizen working groups (CWG), local development committees (CLD) in Niger and village development committees (CVD) in Burkina Faso; and
- (iii) Importance given to Collaboration, Learning and Adaptation through the organization of several workshops, especially in 2019.

□ External factors that influenced the performance of the project:

Rising insecurity in four of REGIS-ER's intervention regions: Center-North, Sahel and East (Burkina Faso) and Tillabéri (Niger). The deterioration of the security situation was particularly rapid in Burkina Faso, resulting in:

- (i) limitation of travel for project staff;
- (ii) the paralysis of the administration in some intervention communes; and
- (iii) Adaptation of the mode of intervention of the project by the development of innovative working methods.

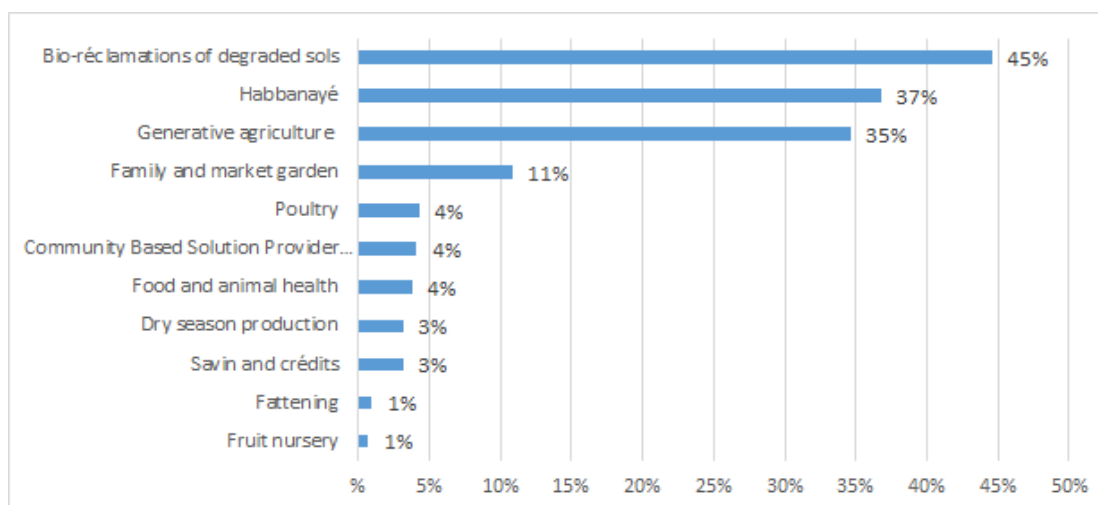
5. RESEARCH QUESTION 3: WHAT PROJECT ACTIVITIES WERE MOST IMPORTANT TO STRENGTHEN THE RESILIENCE OF CHRONICALLY VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLDS IN ITS GEOGRAPHIC AREAS?

5.1. High impact activities on household resilience

While most of the project's activities have produced positive or encouraging results, there are activities that have been shown to be particularly effective in building the resilience of chronically vulnerable households. An analysis of the data collected, combined with the use of the information and other data contained in the various reports, make it possible to say that the results of the activities aimed at achieving the performance indicators of strategic objective 1 (diversification of economic opportunities, climate-adapted agriculture and livestock intensification, marketing and improved access to financial services) are generally positive.

In fact, the beneficiaries, as well as the key informants, are unanimous in recognizing that the REGIS-ER project produced globally positive results. They claim that the project has helped to improve economic growth and the well-being of beneficiaries. The activities carried out that have allowed the significant improvement of sustainable economic growth and the well-being of beneficiaries are (in descending order): bio-reclamation of degraded soils, Habbanayé, regeneration/conservation agriculture, and family and market garden (see chart below).

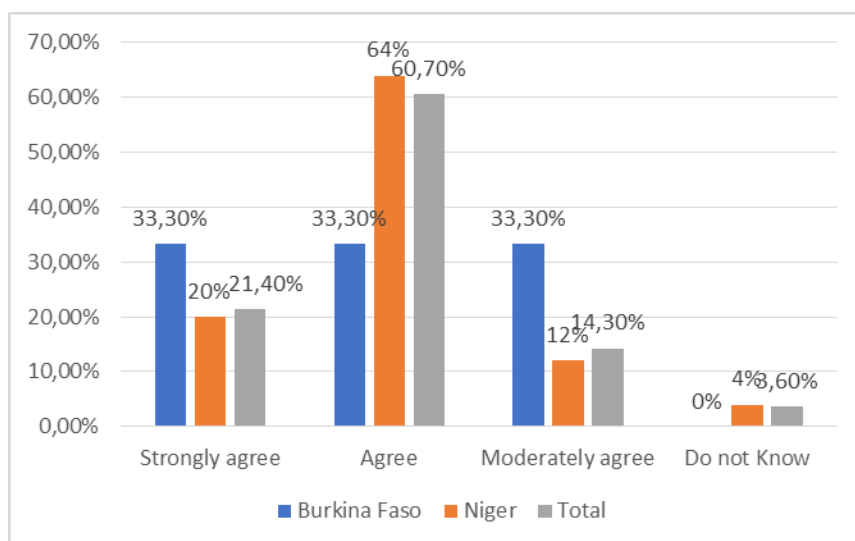
Chart 13. Types of activities carried out under REGIS-ER



Source: CESAO-CERFODES, final evaluation of the REGIS-ER project, November 2020

One in five respondents (21.4%) affirmed that the project has greatly contributed to improving the sustainable economic growth of their household and their well-being, and more than two in three respondents (60.7%) agreed the project made important contributions to improving the economic growth of their household and their well-being. Thus, 82.1% credited REGIS-ER with having improved their economic well-being. (see chart 14 below).

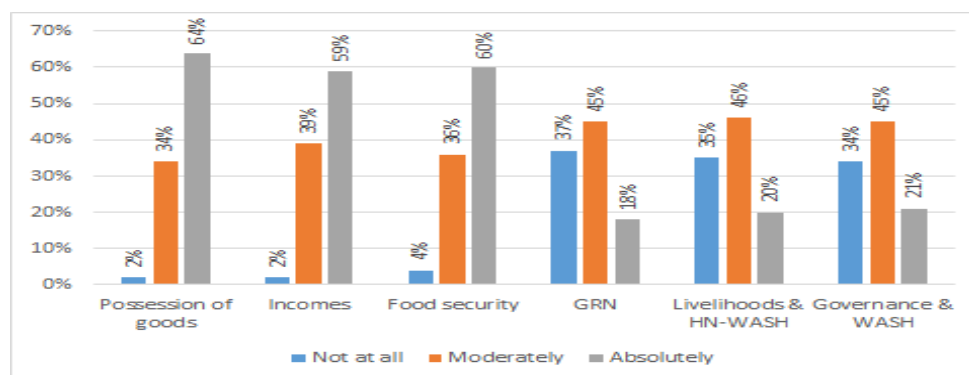
Chart 14. Beneficiaries' assessments of the level of achievement of project objectives



Source: CESAOCERFODES, final evaluation of the REGIS-ER project, November 2020

Among the interventions that contributed to the increase in household capital, the key informants surveyed cited possession of goods (64%), followed by food security (60%) and increased income (59%). (See graph below).

Chart 15. Characterizations of beneficiaries of interactions between different components of the project



Source: CESAOCERFODES, final evaluation of the REGIS-ER project, November 2020

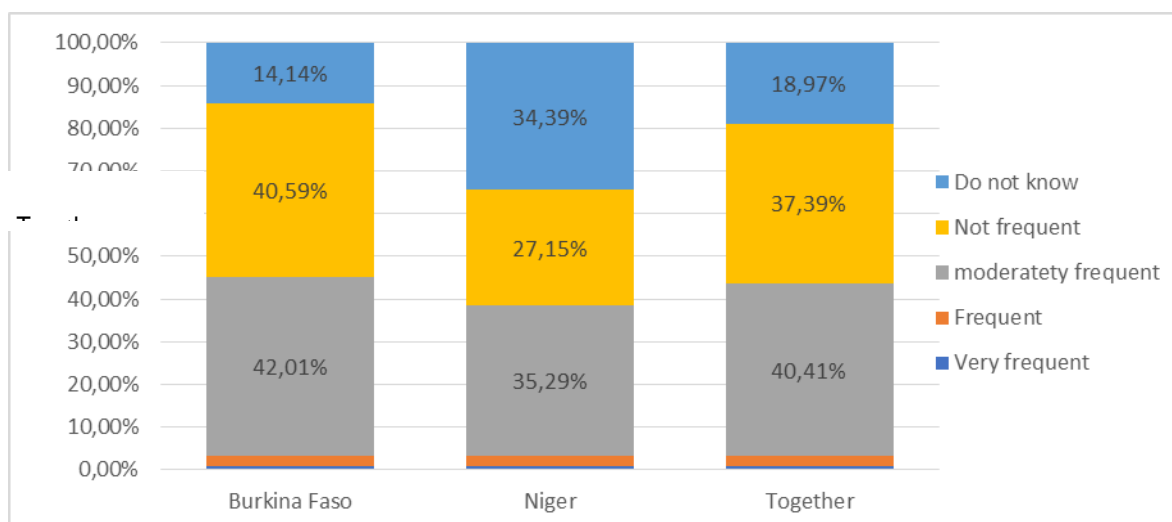
5.2. Reduced frequency of land disputes compared to the past

The survey collected data on respondents' perceptions of the frequency of conflict when comparing the current situation with that of the past. The responses provided by the respondents are illustrated by the graph below. In both countries, 928 respondents (221 in Niger and 707 in Burkina Faso). All these respondents perceived the frequency of conflicts lower than in the past. Among respondents from the two countries, only 0.75% of them said that land disputes have become very frequent compared to the past and 2.48% say that these conflicts have become frequent. On the other hand, 40.41% of these respondents find that conflicts have become infrequent, and 37.39% of them say that these conflicts are no longer frequent.

In other words, 77.8% of respondents said that conflicts are currently on the decline compared to the past, hence a significant improvement in the situation they are currently experiencing when compared to what they have experienced in the past. It should be noted that other actors have already carried out activities related to land disputes in the same areas as REGIS-ER. For example, before the RISE Initiative, USAID, through Burkina Faso's first compact, had implemented a significant package of rural land activities. Thus, the land law had been adopted to allow greater access to land, especially by women. Therefore, the respondents' appreciation of the decline of conflicts, in comparison with the past years, should be considered as accumulated actions deed by the various stakeholders in the REGIS-ER area

In Niger, among the 221 respondents, 62.44% said that the frequency of conflicts is declining compared to the past. The proportion of respondents who perceived the decline in the frequency of conflicts is the highest, reaching 82.6%. All of these results are illustrated by the graph below.

Chart 16. Perception of the frequency of conflicts compared to the past (sub-group 1 + sub-group 2)



5.3. Satisfaction with land management for the benefit of women

In terms of land management in rural areas, it has often been a source of inter-community conflict, especially between herders and farmers. Alongside these conflicts, issues of equity in access to land are often acutely posed, in particular access to land by women. During this final evaluation, one of the questions asked to the respondents was whether they were satisfied with the land management system, in particular the acquisition or transfer of land by women.

The table below shows that 47.6% of respondents in both countries and in the two sub-groups declared to be satisfied (51.7% in Burkina Faso and 36.5% in Niger). The examination of the data at the level of each sub-group indicates that in sub-group 1 these proportions are 50.8% for both countries (54.5% in Burkina Faso and 39.5% in Niger), In sub-group 2 only 28.6% satisfaction was recorded (31.7% in Burkina Faso and 18.8% in Niger).

The data in the table show that the proportion of respondents who say that they are not satisfied with the land management system for women remains high, especially in sub-group 2, with 44.4% in the two countries and twice as high in Burkina Faso (50.5%) than in Niger (25%). Among all the respondents, 22.9% were nonetheless recorded to have remained undecided (Niger - 50.5% and 14% for Burkina Faso). It is remarkable that this finding remains almost the same in each of the two sub-groups, with a higher proportion in sub-group 2.

Table 15: Respondents' satisfaction with the land management system (acquisition and transfer)

Sub-group		Satisfied with the land management system (acquisition and transfer) to women's groups? (%)			
		YES	NO	NSP	Total number
Sub-group 1	Burkina Faso	54.5	32.2	13.3	587

	Niger	39.5	11.1	49.5	190
	Total	50.8	27.0	22.1	777
Sub-group 2	Burkina Faso	31.7	50.5	17.8	101
	Niger	18.	25.0	56.3	32
	Total	28.6	44.4	27.1	133
Sub-groups 1 & 2	Burkina Faso	51.2	34.9	14.0	688
	Niger	36.5	13.1	50.5	222
	Total	47.6	29.6	22.9	910

Source: CESAO-AI/Quantitative and qualitative survey

6. RESEARCH QUESTION 4: HOW DID THE PROJECT ACTIVITIES ALIGN WITH THE PRIORITIES OF THE BENEFICIARIES (SOCIAL, CULTURAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL)?

6.1. Analysis of the relevance of the project

The relevance of the project is analyzed in terms of its alignment with public policies and the development priorities of the national governments of the two countries. Thus, a critical analysis of the activities carried out within the framework of the REGIS-ER project makes it possible to say that the project falls within the priorities of governments in terms of economic and social development policy. This is how the REGIS-ER project emerges as RISE's flagship multisectoral resilience project. Also, the alignment of the project with public policies can be understood at two levels. The international and regional level on the one hand, and the national level on the other, including alignment with the needs of the beneficiary populations.

6.1.1. For the first level (international and regional)

The project meets the international commitments to which Burkina Faso and Niger have subscribed. These are two of the most important Millennium Development Goals adopted and called the Sustainable Development Goals (MDGs-SDGs). These are the MDGs which aim to “Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger” and “Promote gender equality and empowerment”. For SDGs, these are SDGs 1 to 5 and SDG 10 stipulated as follows:

- SDG1: eradicate extreme poverty and hunger;
- SDG2: end hunger, ensure food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture;
- SDG3: enable everyone to live in good health and promote the well-being of all at all ages;
- SDG4: ensure access for all to quality education, on an equal footing, and promote lifelong learning opportunities;
- SDG5: achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls;
- SDG10: reduce inequalities within countries and from one country to another.

The project also fits, at the regional level, with the agricultural policy objectives of regional institutions like ECOWAS and WAEMU, which aim to reduce food dependency in West Africa.

6.1.2. For the national level in Burkina Faso

In the case of Burkina Faso, the objectives of the project fit harmoniously with those defined in:

- The Strategic Framework for the Fight against Poverty (2000 to 2010) included in the Accelerated Growth Strategy for Sustainable Development (2010-2015) and today in the National Economic and Social Development Plan (PNDES) for the period 2016-2020. The alignment fits into the overall objective of the PNDES, which aims to structurally transform the Burkina Faso's economy, for strong, sustainable, resilient, inclusive growth, creating

decent jobs for all and leading to the improvement of social well-being. Alignment can be understood at the level of axes 2 and 3, which aim to develop human capital and boost sectors with potential for the economy and jobs. The aim is, at the level of the above-mentioned axes, to achieve cumulative growth in per capita income capable of reducing poverty, strengthening human capacities and meeting basic needs, within an equitable and sustainable social framework;

- **The National Gender Policy (PNG, 2009):** the project objectives are aligned with public education policies and aim to fight against social and socio-cultural constraints in order to help women who are bullied and excluded from strong actions in terms of political and socio-economic development and promotion. Thus, the adoption of the PNG in 2009 enabled the government to operationalize the commitments it made through the ratification of various international and regional conventions favorable to women's rights and gender equality, promoting national gender-sensitive development policies;
- **The Rural Development Strategy (SDR) for 2016-2025:** the overall objective of the strategy is to contribute, in a sustainable manner, to food and nutritional security, to strengthen economic growth, and to reduce poverty. It is through the specific objectives that we can better appreciate the alignment of the project with the SDR. These objectives are, among others: increase sustainably the production and productivity of agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries and wildlife productions; improve the competitiveness of agro-sylvo-pastoral wildlife sectors in order to ensure the sustainability of rural household income; facilitate the development and transfer of technologies in the agro-sylvo-pastoral field; ensure sustainable access to drinking water and sanitation for the populations; significantly reverse the trend of environmental degradation and the harmful effects of climate change; and strengthen the resilience of vulnerable populations to food and nutrition insecurity, the adverse effects of climate change and economic shocks;
- **The Prospective Vision of Decentralization (VPD) by 2040:** one of the essential functions of local authorities is to provide the populations with public services that meet their needs. For local authorities to be effective in this regard, they must fully exercise the related powers. USAID, through the REGIS-ER project, works to involve the local authorities in the effective exercise of the competences devolved to them, namely the municipal project management in partnership with the decentralized technical services of the state, while involving the population in order to have their support in the implementation of the project;
- **The National Sustainable Development Policy (PNDD) by 2050:** the vision of the PNDD is to ensure that by 2050, Burkina Faso becomes an emerging country within the framework of sustainable development where all sector strategies, all development plans and programs contribute to improving the standard and quality of life of the populations, especially the poorest.

6.1.3. The national level in the case of Niger

As for the national level, in the case of Niger, we can, among others, retain:

- **The 3 N initiative "Nigerien's feed Nigeriens":** it is a political commitment that aims to protect Nigeriens from famine and thirst. The initiative integrates the poverty reduction strategy in order to guarantee the conditions for the full participation of the population in national production and in improving their incomes. Indeed, faced with the chronic shortage of food products, especially cereals, food insecurity is an increasing constant and worrying fact because it generates poverty which is gaining ground every day in the rural world.

Thus, it is planned, within the framework of the implementation of the initiative, to create pastoral wells, to promote the employment of young people and women, family farms with the installation of boreholes and improvement of the average export rate of livestock by rehabilitating and building modern slaughterhouses. And for the prevention and management of food crises and the fight against malnutrition, the initiative aims to strengthen the capacities for anticipation and efficient management of crises, as well as the creation of security stocks in cash and physical stocks as well as the revitalization of agricultural research in order to allow the exploitation of research results.

- **The Economic and Social Development Plan (PDES) 2012-2015** at the level of axis 3, which aims to ensure "Food security and sustainable agricultural development".
- **The national nutrition security policy in Niger (2016-2025):** this is the commitment through which Niger works to ensure that the policies and instruments that protect and improve nutritional security and the living environment of Nigerien women and all Nigeriens, particularly at the level of vulnerable groups, are formulated and guide the decisions and actions of the government and its partners.

6.2. Alignment of the project with the needs of producers

An analysis of the project's expected results reveals that there is an alignment of this project with the needs of beneficiaries in both Burkina Faso and Niger. Indeed, the project offers new perspectives to vulnerable populations of the Sahel in the grip of recurrent crises due to the effects of climate change and food insecurity. Under these conditions, producers needed a new alternative to build their livelihoods and improve their well-being.

The project's emphasis with its activities, including the creation of diversified economic opportunities, the intensification of agricultural and animal production and marketing, and the improvement of health and nutrition. This emphasis therefore satisfies the needs of the population. Basically, the to obtain more money and food.

The project's overall approach was conducted in a holistic manner, involving many activities and actors to improve the sustainable management of natural resources, disaster risk management, prevention and management of conflicts by the beneficiaries themselves. Finally, there is the prioritization of rural women as beneficiaries who are poor and vulnerable. Group discussions with beneficiaries confirm the relevance of the project. *Before, in the context of hygiene, we had harmful habits for our health but we did not know, but today we know it and avoid them. Before there was only a latrine in a village courtyard. But now, all the courtyards have improved latrines, each household has a hand washing device and in this context our village was crowned first in the hygiene competition between the different villages of the commune.* Extract from focus groups with male beneficiaries of Kossoguin (Kaya in Burkina Faso).

6.3. Analysis of project coherence

An analysis of the project's coherence focuses on the alignment of actions initiated under the project that are in line with the needs of the beneficiaries, which are women and young people. Thus, it is recognized, since 1960, year of the independence of both Burkina Faso and Niger, the two countries have experienced appreciable economic growth with an uneven evolution in annual economic growth rates. Unfortunately, both countries have been confronted, since 2014, with major persistent phenomena such as insecurity, which manifests itself through terrorist attacks, community and identity conflicts, and is reflected in a massive displacement of the population from insecure areas to those that are supposedly quieter from a security point of view. In addition, since 2019, the health crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic, has forced the governments of both countries to take drastic measures (confinement of populations, curfews, closure of borders, etc.) in order to counter the pandemic.

It is therefore obvious that all these different measures have had a strong impact on the economy of both countries which was, unfortunately faced for several years with a recurring food crisis linked to multiple years of drought and attacks by crop pests (attacks by armyworms, seed-eating birds, locust invasions, etc.). The major challenge both countries is the high population growth rate, estimated in 2017 at 3.1% in Burkina Faso and 3.82% in Niger. Moreover, the majority of population is below 25 years age. The high rate of population growth affects economic growth, high rates of unemployment, illiteracy, health care, and consequently increases poverty, especially among women and young people.

Another consequence of rapid demographic growth is the high rate of children who are malnourished, the low rate of access of the population to basic social services, such as electricity and drinking water. The implementation of the project was therefore based on the observation that it was no longer appropriate to continue to treat the recurring crises experienced by both countries as situations of extreme urgency. It is an intervention strategy that is not only costly but does not contribute to lasting solutions to the underlying causes of the crises faced by the population. There

is a need to move towards the application of durable solutions both in time and space in order to increase the resilience of chronically vulnerable populations.

This is how the REGIS-ER project was designed in order to tackle the root causes of the chronic vulnerability of the populations in the project intervention areas through the implementation of strong improvement actions for their economic well-being. Therefore, the project focused its intervention efforts on (i) the diversification of economic opportunities, (ii) the intensification of agriculture and livestock farming adapted to the climate, and (iii) the improvement of marketing of agricultural and livestock products, and access of beneficiaries to financial services.

7. RESEARCH QUESTION 5: WHAT WERE THE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE RESULTS ARISING FROM PROJECT ACTIVITIES?

To answer this research question, the analysis focuses on the performance of the project by strategic objectives. This will make it possible to see the positive results on the one hand and the negative results on the other.

7.1. Project performance by strategic objective

A project performance analysis is carried out on the basis of performance data reported by REGIS-ER. The assessment of the overall level of achievement of the project is made in relation to the achieved levels of the indicators of the three strategic objectives of the project. For each strategic objective, the indicators are classified according to their achievement levels.

7.1.1. Level of achievement of the indicator targets of strategic objective 1: Sustainable economic well-being

The following table shows the performance indicators of the REGIS-ER project relating to strategic objective 1. Based on the intermediate results, it determines for each indicator the planned objective and the level of achievement actually achieved. The green color indicates that the indicator exceeds the revised target, the yellow color indicates that the indicator has reached the planned target, and the red color means that the indicator has not reached its planned target.

Table 16: Performance indicators for REGIS ER strategic objective 1: Increased economic well-being and sustainable livelihoods.

Performance indicators	Planned Target	Achievement	Achievement rate	Color
Strategic objective 1: Increased economic well-being and sustainable livelihoods				
Intermediate result 1.1: Diversified economic opportunities				
1.1.1. Percentage of households declaring an increase in their income thanks to non-agricultural economic opportunities (excluding rain-fed agriculture)	92%	92%	100%	

1.1.2. Number of full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs created with US government assistance (C)	5 250	5 747	109%	
1.1.3. Number of people trained in skills relevant to off-season work (not cumulative [NC])	111 400	124 420	112%	
Intermediate result 1.2. Increase in production and marketing				
1.2.1. Number of farmers who applied improved technologies or management practices (C)	180 000	181 976	101%	
<i>EG.3.2- 24 Number of people in the agricultural system who have applied improved technologies or management practices with USG assistance.</i>	180 000	181 976	101%	
1.2.2. Number of hectares benefiting from improved management practices or technologies with U.S. government assistance (C)	82 530	92 246	112%	
<i>EG.3.2- 25 Number of hectares under improved technologies or management practices with USG assistance</i>	82 530	92 246	112%	
1.2.2. bis. Hectares under new or improved / rehabilitated irrigation or drainage services due to USG assistance (broken down by new vs. Continuing) (C)	583	590	101%	
1.2.3. Number of people who have received short-term training in agricultural productivity or food security (NC) supported by the US Government	228 000	227 234	100%	
<i>EG3.2 (1.2.3.bis.) Number of people participating in the USG food security program. (NC)</i>	1 747 145	1 981 133	113%	
1.2.4. Number of private for-profit enterprises, producer organizations, water users' associations, women's groups, trade and business associations and community organizations (CBs) receiving development assistance organizational structure of the United States government related to food security during the reporting year (C)	11 515	12 269	107%	
1.2.5. Number of private for-profit enterprises, producer organizations, water user associations, women's groups, professional and trade associations and community organizations (CBs) that have applied technologies or improved management practices at the organization level with assistance from the U.S. government (C)	7 534	7 518	100%	
1.2.6. Number of businesses / enterprises / CBSPs involved in the provision of food security related services and / or processing of agricultural products now operating more profitably (at cost or above) (NC)	672	525	78%	
1.2.7. Number of households directly benefiting from U.S. government assistance under Feed the Future (C)	269 093	319 753	119%	
Intermediate result 1.3: Better access to financial services				
1.3.1 Value of agricultural and rural loans as a result of US government assistance (in USD \$) (NC)	2 255 141	2 328 780	103%	
<i>EG.3.2-27. Finance Agricultural Values attributed to USG aid (in \$ USD) (NC)</i>	-	2 381 119		
1.3.1. bis Value of SECCA loans (in \$ USD) (NC)	747 223	808 723	108%	

1.3.3. Number of active informal savings and credit groups strengthened (C)	1 350	1 312	97%	
1.3.4. Value of savings accumulated by project beneficiaries (in USD) (NC)	2 303 666	2 441 752	106%	
1.3.5. Number of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), including farmers, receiving agriculture-related credit with U.S. government assistance (NC)	1 570	1 693	108%	
Overall achievement rate of performance indicators for Increased Economic Well-being and Sustainable Livelihoods			105%	

	Expectations met (90 -110%) or exceeded (>110%)	18
	Expectations nearly met (80-90%)	0
	Expectations not met (<80%)	1

Strategic objective 1 of the REGIS project revolves around 3 intermediate results which are:

1. Intermediate result 1.1: Diversified economic opportunities;
2. Intermediate result 1.2. Increase in production and marketing; and
3. Intermediate result 1.3: Better access to financial services.

A total of 20 performance indicators are identified to assess the level of achievement of this strategic objective. However, indicator EG.3.2-27. (Agricultural finance values attributed to USG aid (in \$ USD) does not include a target value defined beforehand for the project. This indicator will not be taken into account for the evaluation of the level of achievement of this strategic objective.

Therefore, 19 indicators will be considered. Thus, on the basis of the indicators, the REGS- ER project made an achievement rate of 105% in terms of improving the increased economic well-being and sustainable livelihoods of the beneficiary populations. This result indicates a particularly good performance of the project for this strategic objective. This result is attributable to the multiple activities of diversifying economic opportunities, intensifying climate-adapted agriculture and livestock, marketing and improving access to financial services.

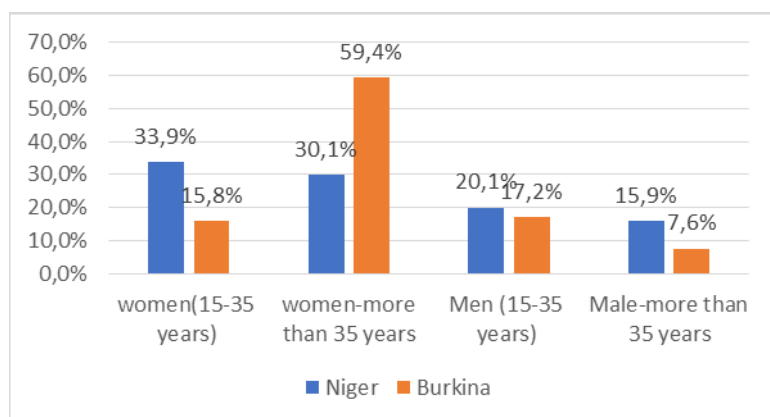
Of the 19 indicators assessed, 14 exceeded their planned targets defined at the start of the project. three just achieved their planned targets while two failed to meet their targets. The latter two are indicator 1.2.6. (Number of companies/firms/CBSPs involved in the provision of food security related services, and/or processing of agricultural products at a higher profitability, achieved 78 %, and the indicators 1.3.3. (Number of active informal savings and credit groups strengthened achieved 97%) . Although these indicators did not reach their targets, it is worth noting their high achievement rates.

7.1.2. Regenerative/Conservation Agriculture Indicators

➤ Number of farmers having applied improved technologies or management practices

According to the project performance data indicators, It is estimated that 165,160 farmers applying improved technologies or management practices at the end of 2020. were reached versus a target of 180,000 expected at the end of 2020 (a rate of achievement of 92%). This indicator is 97,010 in Niger and 68,150 in Burkina Faso. In Niger, it is noted that young farmers (between 15 and 35 years of age) who have applied these new techniques represent 54% of beneficiaries, while in Burkina Faso, they represent 33% of all beneficiaries. In Niger, the two most used technologies are manual CF-FMNR (29.4%) and improved crop varieties (13.9%). In Burkina Faso, CF-FMNR (30.2%) and manual CF-FMNR (31.2%) were the most used technologies.

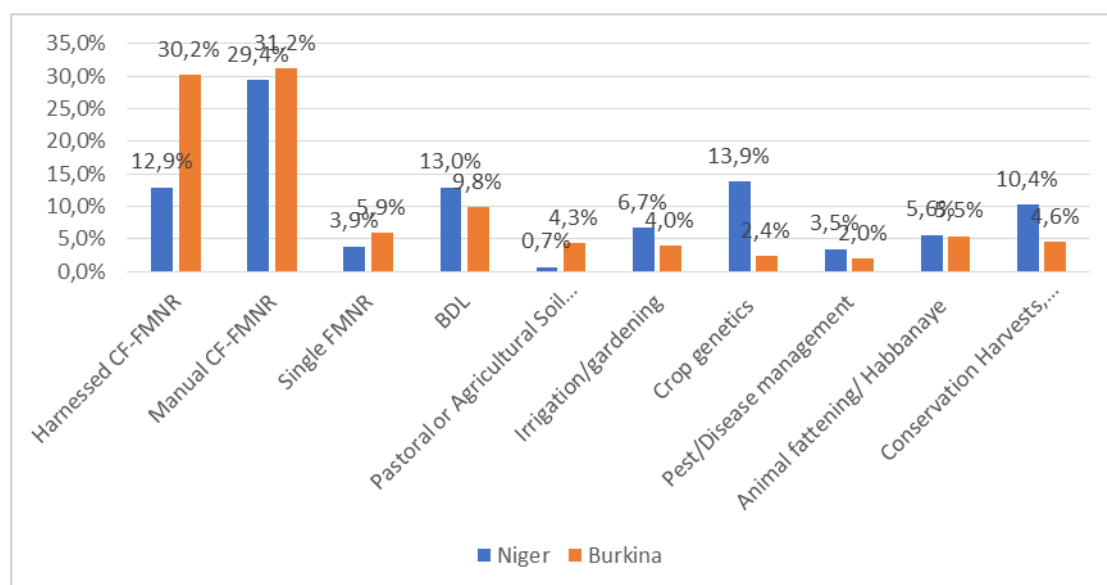
Chart 17. Distribution of improved technologies or management applied by sex and age group



Source: CESAOCERFODES, final evaluation of the REGIS-ER project, November 2020

In terms of distribution by gender, it turns out that 64% of producers who have applied technologies or improved management are women in Niger. This proportion is 75.2% in Burkina Faso. The technologies from which they benefited the most were the CF-MNR manual in Niger (29.4%) and Burkina Faso (31.2%).

Chart 18. Breakdown of farmers by type of technology



Source: CESA-CERFODES, final evaluation of the REGIS-ER project, November 2020

➤ Number of hectares benefiting from improved management practices or technologies with assistance from the US Government

The number of hectares that have benefited from improved management practices or technologies with the help of the US government is 75,054 hectares (ha), of which 31,812 ha are in Niger and 43,242 ha in Burkina Faso. Overall, the target of 82,530 ha in 2020 was reached at 91%.

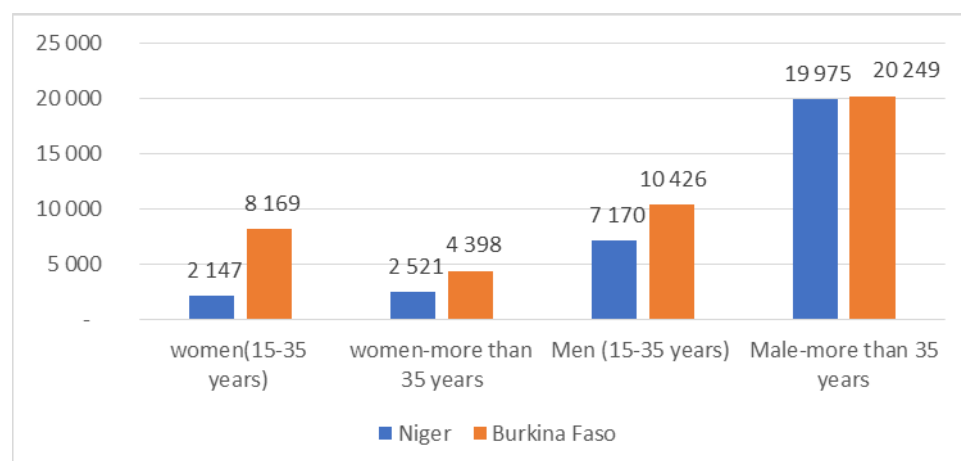
It is noted that the areas concerned in Burkina Faso are greater than those in Niger while the number of farmers who have applied these techniques is higher in Niger (97,010) than in Burkina Faso (68,150). This situation is attributable to the initial planning of the project, which aimed to cover 34,329 ha in Burkina Faso and 48,201 ha in Niger. In Niger, 4,667 ha belonged to women and 12,567 ha belonged to women in Burkina Faso.

Overall, there is a strong difference between the proportion of land cultivated by men (77%) with that cultivated by women (23%). This could be explained by the fact that most of the agricultural land is managed by men in both Niger and Burkina Faso⁴. By way of illustration, in Niger, it is 19%⁵ in Niger for hydro-agricultural development and in Burkina Faso, it is between 10% and 12.5% for the period 2013-2018 for all agricultural areas.

⁴ Burkina Faso 2018 agriculture dashboard (http://cns.bf/IMG/pdf/maah_tableau_de_bord_statistique_agriculture_2018.pdf)

⁵ <http://www.fao.org/3/ca0205fr/CA0205FR.pdf>

Chart 19: Distribution of areas by sex and country



Source: CESAO-CERFODES, final evaluation of the REGIS-ER project, November 2020

➤ **Number of hectares improved/rehabilitated in irrigation or drainage services due to USG assistance**

The area affected by the rehabilitation of irrigation or drainage services due to USG assistance is 549 ha against a target of 583 ha. In Niger, this quantity is 489 ha, which corresponds to an achievement rate of 102% compared to the target of 480 ha, against 60 ha in Burkina Faso where the target is reached at the 58% level. Almost all of the areas that benefited from this intervention have benefited previously from similar services offered by earlier projects.

7.1.3. Level of achievement of the targets of the indicators of Objective 2: Governance and Strengthened Institutions

There are 10 performance indicators for strategic objective 2, grouped around 4 intermediate results which are:

1. Intermediate result 2.1: Strengthened management of natural resources
2. Intermediate result 2.2: Strengthened disaster risk management
3. Intermediate result 2.3: Reinforced conflict management
4. Intermediate result 2.4: Capacity and coordination of the government and the region strengthened

Regarding the strengthening of governance and institutions, the REGIS-ER project achieved an implementation rate of 96%. This level of execution did not meet the target of Strategic Objective 2, but remains very close to the target. Of the 10 indicators used to assess this objective, 3 indicators exceeded their targets, 1 indicator reached its target and 6 indicators did not reach their targets. For this last group of indicators, the lowest level of achievement is 76% belonging to

indicator 2.2.2. (Number of communities with effective early warning and disaster response (EWR) systems with U.S. government assistance). Four of the indicators that did not reach their targets have an achievement rate of between 91% and 99%.

7.2. Strengthened management of natural resources

- Regarding the number of institutions, local structures set up or strengthened thanks to USG assistance, it is noted that following the implementation of the 2020 activities, the number of institutions and structures established or strengthened since the start of the project is 988. This number thus corresponds to the achievement rate of 118%.
- In terms of the number of community residents attending NRM meetings, it should be considered that with the additional 150 community residents participating in NRM meetings in 2020, the rate has increased to 9,318 while the planned target was 9,550. Thus, the achievement rate reached is 98%.
- Regarding the number of hectares under natural resource management plans (CL), an additional effort was made in 2020 by the project in the field of natural resource management. This effort allowed the indicator to be 100% achieved.

7.3. Strengthening disaster risk management

- For the number of people trained in disaster preparedness with assistance from the US government, it stands at 824 in 2020, so the indicator reached was 103%.
- Twenty-one communities were targeted to be equipped with early warning and disaster recovery systems (EWR) operating effectively with assistance from the US government. The activities of 2020 made it possible to add to this number. Thus, the indicator was 100% achieved.

7.4. Reinforced conflict management

As for the number of conflict prevention systems, conflict assessments or response mechanisms supported by the assistance of the U.S. Government, the project made it possible to set up 560 systems for conflict prevention, conflict assessments or response mechanisms. The achievement rate for the indicator was consequently 100%.

7.5. Coordination of government and region

Project support with assistance from the U.S. Government enabled the integration of eight local conventions into the PDCs/PCDs. This number shows that the indicator is 100% met. With 460 hectares of agricultural land registered in the name of women in the project areas, the target has been exceeded and stands at 113%.

Table 17: Performance indicators of strategic objective 2 of the REGIS ER project: Governance and strengthened institutions

Performance indicators	Target	Achievement	Achievement rate	Color
Strategic objective 2: Governance and institutions strengthened				
2.A. Number of community level plans implemented with NRM, conflict management or DRM components (C)	160	161	101%	
2.B. Number of people using climate information or implementing risk reduction actions to improve resilience to climate change, as supported by US government assistance (C)	117, 000	116, 691	100%	
Intermediate result 2.1: Strengthened management of natural resources				
2.1.1. Number of institutions, local structures set up or strengthened thanks to USG assistance (NC)	1, 292	1, 180	91%	
2.1.2. Number of community residents attending NRM meetings (NC)	5, 350	5, 210	97%	
2.1.3. Number of hectares under natural resource management plans (CL) (C)	2, 350, 500	2, 327, 082	99%	
Intermediate result 2.2: Strengthened disaster risk management				
2.2.1. Number of people trained in disaster preparedness through US government assistance (NC)	1, 100	921	84%	
2.2.2. Number of communities with early warning and disaster response (EWR) systems functioning effectively with U.S. government assistance (C)	21	16	76%	
Intermediate result 2.3: Reinforced conflict management				

2.3.1. Number of conflict prevention systems, conflict assessments or response mechanisms supported by US government assistance (C)	700	674	96%	
Intermediate result 2.4: Strengthened capacities and coordination of the government and the region				
2.4.1. Number of local agreements integrated into PDC / PCD (C)	8	9	113%	
4D. Number of hectares of agricultural land registered in the name of women (C)	630	659	105%	
Overall achievement rate of governance performance indicators and strengthened institutions			96%	

Legend	State of indicator	Number of indicators
	Expectations met (90 -110%) or exceeded (>110%)	8
	Expectations nearly met (80-90%)	1
	Expectations not met (<80%)	1

7.6. Achievement of the indicator targets of Objective 3: Improved health and nutrition

To achieve improved health and nutritional status of beneficiaries, the REGIS-ER project has defined 10 performance indicators based on two intermediate results:

1. Intermediate result 3.1: Increased access to drinking water;
2. Intermediate result 3.2: Improved health and nutrition practices.

The final evaluation indicates that the project achieved an achievement rate of 98% in terms of improving the health and nutritional status of the beneficiary populations. Out of the 10 indicators for Strategic Objective 3, 3 indicators exceeded their targets, two indicators met their targets while five indicators did not meet their targets.

Among the indicators that have not reached their targets, three have an achievement rate of between 91% and 99%. The lowest achievement rate, which is 84%, is recorded for indicator 3.1.3.c (Number of villages free from open defecation (ODF) thanks to the assistance of the U.S. government via REGIS-ER). This result is explained by the difficulty of maintaining ODF status in the villages, sometimes due to external factors. For example, heavy rains in the Zinder region

which caused the collapse of latrines in beneficiary villages. It is realized that while community-led total sanitation is a possible activity, maintaining villages in ODF status remains a challenge.

Table 18: Performance indicators of strategic objective 3 of the REGIS ER project: Improvement of health and nutritional status

Performance indicators	Target	Achievement	Achievement rate	Color
Strategic objective 3: Improved health and nutritional status				
Intermediate result 3.1: Increased access to drinking water				
3.1.1.a Number of water points built or repaired via REGIS-ER (C)	440	461	105%	
3.1.1.b Number of people with access to an improved drinking water source (C)	123,250	123,350	100%	
3.1.3.a Number of improved sanitation facilities constructed or repaired with US government assistance through REGIS-ER (C)	18, 800	18, 568	99%	
3.1.3.b Number of people with access to an improved sanitation facility thanks to U.S. Government assistance (C)	134, 200	118, 328	88%	
3.1.3.c Number of open defecation free (ODF) villages thanks to US government assistance through REGIS-ER (NC)	163	137	84%	
Intermediate result 3.2: Improved health and nutrition practices				
3.2.2. Number of children under 5 reached by nutrition programs (C)	150, 000	150, 290	100%	
3.2.2.bis Number of children under two years of age (0-23 months) receiving nutrition interventions at the community level under programs supported by the	44, 300	40, 256	91%	

United States Government (C)				
3.2.2.a Number of pregnant women benefiting from specific nutrition interventions under programs supported by the US Government (NC)	17, 000	19, 448	114%	
3.2.4. Number of people trained in child health and nutrition through USG via REGIS-ER (NC)	333, 000	334, 747	101%	
3.2.4.bis HL.9-4 Number of people receiving vocational training in nutrition under programs supported by the United States Government (NC)	4, 150	4, 006	97%	
Overall achievement rate of performance indicators on Improving health and nutritional status			98%	

Legend	State of indicator	Number of indicators
	Expectations met (90 -110%) or exceeded (>110%)	8
	Expectations nearly met (80-90%)	2
	Expectations not met (<80%)	0

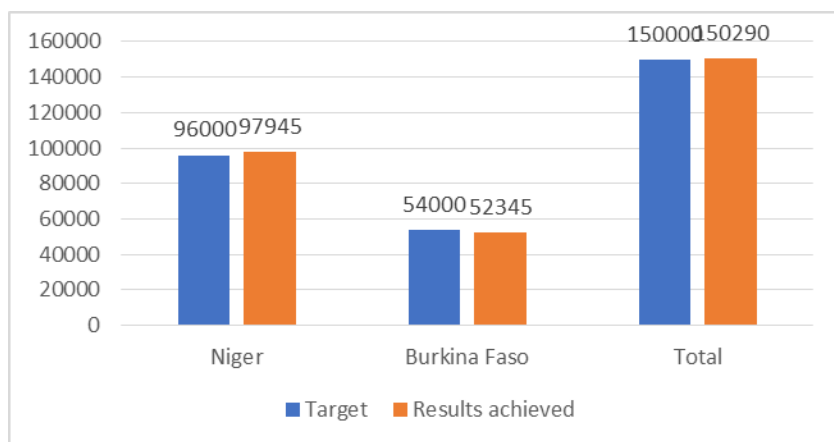
By referring to other data sources such as those from field surveys, we have confirmation of the successes observed by these different components as can be seen in the following sections.

7.6.1. The number of children under 5 reached by the nutrition program

Children under 5 are a fairly vulnerable population and highly prone to undernutrition. Nutrition programs for this group allow parents to adopt good nutrition and health practices that support the full development of children 0 to 5 years old.

In Niger, the number of children targeted by the nutrition activity of the project is estimated at 97,945 while in Burkina Faso, it reached 52,345. In these two countries, the target set by the project was 96,000 and 54,000 respectively for Niger and Burkina Faso, giving an execution rate of 102% and 97% respectively.

Chart 20. Comparison of targets and achievement of the indicator



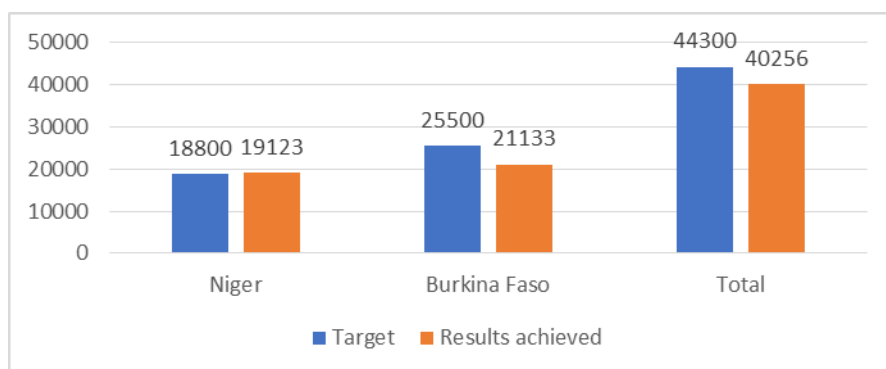
Source: CESA-CERFODES, final evaluation of the REGIS-ER project, November 2020

The gender analysis shows that girls represent 46.8% in Niger and 50.3% of beneficiaries in Burkina Faso.

7.6.2. Number of children aged 0-23 months reached by the community nutrition program

The harmonious development of the child begins with good nutrition from an early age. Nutrition actions that target most children from 0 to 23 months help to increase their chances of survival through proper adoption of nutrition practices for different ages. In regards to the performance data, the numbers of the beneficiary's children are 19,123 in Niger and 21,133 in Burkina Faso for the project. The targets in both countries were respectively 18,800 in Niger and 25,000 in Burkina Faso; thus the achievement rates are respectively 106% in Niger and 84.5% in Burkina Faso.

Chart 21. Comparison of targets and achievements of the indicator



Source: CESA-CERFODES, final evaluation of the REGIS-ER project, November 2020

7.6.3. Number of pregnant women reached by nutrition activities

Nutrition, more generally, and good nutrition for pregnant women is an essential component for a good development of pregnancy and the birth of a healthy child. Nutrition activities for pregnant women contributed to healthy pregnancies and a good prognosis for the baby.

Regarding the number of pregnant women involved in nutrition activities, the performance indicators show that the number of beneficiary women is 19,448 for a target of 17,000. There is an over achievement, as the rate is 114%. Specifically, there are 14,175 women in Niger and 5,273 women in Burkina Faso. In both countries, the execution rates are respectively 125% and 93%.

7.6.4. Number of people trained in child health and nutrition

The training sessions are a key activity to build the capacities of men and women, for the behaviors' change to improve child health and nutrition. In Niger, there were 177,407 beneficiaries of the capacity building training in child health and nutrition. This figure is far beyond the planned target which was 175,000. In Burkina Faso, the target set by the project was 158,000 and 157,340 people received capacity building, a percentage of achievement of 100%.

7.7. Overall performance of the REGIS ER project

Based on the assessment of the project's performance in its three strategic objectives, it appears that the REGIS ER project achieved an overall performance rate of 100%. Overall, the REGIS project has achieved the objectives set, although more needs to be done. It should be noted that with a view to a new phase, the strengthening actions must be carried out at the level of strategic objectives 2 and 3, which points to a strengthening of governance and institutions, and the improvement of health and nutritional status.

Table 19: Overall performance of the REGIS ER project

Goal performance	Achievement rate	Color
Strategic objective 1	105%	
Strategic objective 2	96%	
Strategic objective 3	98%	
REGIS ER project Total	100%	

7.8. Unexpected positive effects of the project

The project has also produced unexpected positive results. Among these via 301 groups in 643 villages. An estimated 2,282 farmers practiced these improved techniques on 1,269 hectares. unexpected positive results, it can be cited the adoption in 2016 of CF technology by non-beneficiary villages following the training of 68 NGO staff by the project. Those trained promoted

CF-RNAA summary presented in the table below shows some overall results in terms of the number of people and hectares are presented in the following table.

Table 20: Quantitative statement of non-beneficiary villages having adopted CF-RNA project activities

Number of local NGO and FFP staff trained	Number of non-REGIS villages	Number of CF-RNA groups	Number of CF-RNA farmers	Area having practiced CF-RNA in ha
68	643	301	2,282	1,269.57

Among the villages concerned, the following villages can be cited: Villages of Banguel Dao, Banguel Dao Didjolé, Bellaré for SECCA, CF and MtM activities.

The effects of replication of project activities in non-beneficiary areas were facilitated by linking the CVDs of these villages with the ARCs of Soffokel, which are among others were the following farmers: Diallo Amadou, Dicko Hadjatou in the commune of Bandiédaga Gourmantché and Namantougou Tallata.

8. RESEARCH QUESTION 6: TO WHAT EXTENT IS THE NEW APPROACH TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT, BASED ON THE FRAMEWORK OF LOCAL INSTITUTIONS (MUNICIPAL COUNCILS, CITIZEN WORKING GROUPS AND VILLAGE-LOCAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES) HELPED TO ACHIEVE ITS GOALS?

8.1. Strengthening governance

The aim of strengthening governance is to develop the capacities of local institutions (municipal councils, citizen working groups, platforms of community service providers and local development committees/Village Development Councils) on the consolidation and intensification of resilience development activities, including facilitating meetings of local authorities and other development partners.

8.1.1. Strengthening the capacities and coordination of the government and the region

The main objective of the governance strengthening activity is to organize coordination meetings with local authorities and other development partners (CARE, Mercy Corps, ACDI-VOCA, OCADES, FAO, CRS) to discuss the possibilities of improving coordination between partners working in the field of resilience.

This is why project had interventions on the activity of Strengthening governance, Regional Capacity and Coordination. Thus, all those interviewed in Burkina Faso and Niger saw the activity on Strengthening Governance, Regional Capacity and Coordination to be very important, in comparison with other REGIS-ER interventions. In fact, this governance strengthening activity made the following possible:

- The resolution of basic problems and the establishment of an effective development strategy and,
- Resolution of basic community grievances

The achievement in the Sahel of aid and training which have been beneficial to the populations.

Some interviewees recommended strengthening governance activities because for them:

- This needs to be a reality that will strengthen governance from the lowest level to the highest. There is a need for better planning and good governance to boost community development; and
- There is a need for training in the area of management and governance.

8.1.2. Integration of local conventions integrated into PDC/PCD

The integration of local agreements (CL) into the Communal Development Plan (PDC/PCD) is a new activity integrated in 2019. In addition to the local agreements (CL), the Joint Resilience Plans (PCPR) are also integrated into Communal Development Plans. Thus, we can see the existence of these essential documents taking into account the needs of the populations in the medium-term plans of the communes, thanks to the support of REGIS-ER. The integration of local conventions integrated in PDC/PCD activity enabled the production of documents in the thirteen communes of Burkina Faso and Niger concerned by the extension of project activities in 2019:

- 11 of the 13 communes have PCDs;
- 8 of the 13 communes with a concentration of FY19 have a Common Resilience Plan (PCPR) integrated into their Communal Development Plan (PDC/PCD);
- 7 of the 13 communes with a concentration of FY19 have a local agreement integrated into their municipal development plan.

The preparation of a municipal development plan is essential for a commune, but its own resources are often not enough. This is why the support of the project has been of great contribution to the achievement of PCDs. In addition, the integration into the PCD documents that allow the consideration of resilience issues that strengthen local governance and promote participatory community development.

8.1.3. Ability of respondents to continue to implement their governance activities after project withdrawal

The sustainability of the achievements of the project is of critical importance. This is why, within the framework of this final evaluation, the survey questioned the beneficiaries as to their capacity to continue to implement the activities for which they received support, even after the project comes to an end. From the responses provided by the respondents, it emerges that 33.3% of them in both countries and in the two sub-groups affirmed their ability to continue the activities after the end of the project, of which 36.9% were in Burkina Faso and 22.6% in Niger. Within sub-group 1, this percentage was 31.6%, including 35.1% in Burkina Faso versus 21.5% in Niger. In sub-group 2, the percentage was 42.4%, including 47.1% in Burkina Faso versus 28.6% in Niger as indicated by the results presented in the table below.

Table 21: Capacities of respondents to continue implementing their activities without REGIS-ER support

Sub-group		Ability to continue to implement your current activities without REGIS-ER support			
		YES	NO	NSP	Total Number
Sub-group 1	Burkina Faso	35.1	53.1	11.9	590
	Niger	21.5	350	43.5	200
	Total	31.6	48.5	19.9	790
Sub-groups2	Burkina Faso	47.1	49.0	3.8	104
	Niger	28.6	42.9	28.6	35
	Total	42.4	47.5	10.1	139
Sub-group 1 & sub-group 2	Burkina Faso	36.9	52.4	10.7	694
	Niger	22.6	36.2	41.3	235
	Total	33.3	48.3	18.4	929

Source: CESA0-AI / Quantitative and qualitative Survey

8.2. Local governance

Since its conception, one of the three strategic objectives of the project relates to the strengthening of governance, and the implementation of the project has largely taken into account the strengthening of local governance through:

- The establishment of institutions and the strengthening of their capacities for the management of natural resources;
- A participatory approach that enabled communities in the project area to participate in various meetings on the management of natural resources, so that they take ownership of the mechanisms and management plans for the recovery of degraded soils;
- Training of communities in disaster risk management;
- Providing communities with effective EWR systems;

- The establishment of conflict prevention systems, conflict assessments or response mechanisms; and
- The integration of local conventions in the PDC/PCD.

9. RESEARCH QUESTION 7: HAS REGIS-ER COMPLIED WITH THE ENVIRONMENT, GENDER INTEGRATION, GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND YOUTH GUIDELINES, POLICIES AND REGULATIONS?

9.1. Project compliance with USAID policy and procedures

The project's compliance with USAID policy and procedures was analyzed from the perspective of compliance with issues related to local governance, environmental issues, gender and youth.

9.1.1. Compliance with local governance

The implementation of the project's intervention strategy took into account USAID policies and procedures, which includes the different and complementary actions as cited below:

- **Taking into account the disaster risk management approach:** The Disaster Risk Management activity's major objective is to develop EWRs systems for a rapid response (SCAP-RU) and preparation against possible disasters, at the level of the commune.
- **Taking into account the rapid alert system:** In terms of rapid alert systems to enable communities to be equipped with information systems in order to prepare for disaster response (EWR), there was the establishment of the early warning system made it possible to set up a prevention committee which alerts each time there is a threat. Communities were provided information to help them deal with emergency situations. People were also trained people who shared their knowledge with others.
- **Risk preparedness:** In both countries this has resulted in the establishment of habitats far from flood-prone areas and consideration of water run-off in the establishment of habitats, the strengthening and consideration of techniques for protection in the construction of habitats.
- **Strengthening conflict management:** The goal of conflict prevention and management is to implement the conflict resolution framework as set out in the USAID document on "Supporting Peace Processes for prevention, resolution and recovery" following a conflict.
- **Capacity building and coordination of the government and the region:** The governance strengthening activity consists of supporting the organization of coordination meetings with local authorities and other development partners (CARE, Mercy Corps, ACDI-VOCA, OCADES, FAO, CRS) in order to discuss the possibilities of improving coordination between partners working in the field of resilience;

- **The integration of local agreements integrated into PDC/PCD:** The integration of local agreements (CL) in the Communal Development Plan (PDC/PCD) is an activity initiated from 2019. In addition to local agreements (CL), the Common Resilience Plans (PCPR) are also integrated into the Communal Development Plans. The creation of these documents take into account the needs of the population in the short-, medium- and long-term plans in the communes is one of the major contributions of the project.

9.1.2. Compliance with the gender approach

The evaluators found that REGIS-ER is in full compliance with USAID's March 2012 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy, as well as a draft update of the document entitled "2020 Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women Policy." This compliance is best reflected in the 22-page "REGIS-ER Gender Strategy and Action Plan" dated April 2015. This plan addressed multiple gender imbalances. The most notable project activities in this regard were: women's land tenure, health and nutrition; engagement of men in schools for husbands; credit and savings groups and "Habbanayé" (livestock assets). In addition, the project has disaggregated its performance indicators by sex.

Since its initial technical proposal dated May 9, 2013, NCBA/CLUSA has worked with its Gender Specialist to ensure it complies with USAID policies. It is presented in Annex C of its proposal a four-page action plan for gender equality, which outlines everything it plans to do to increase the benefits and participation of women in project activities. Women's performance goals were therefore deeply rooted in the project's three main strategic objectives and in its field activities. A review of this 2013 action plan and the 2015 gender action plan of the project, as well as the recent observations of the members of the evaluation team in the field, confirm the conclusion that REGIS-ER is in full compliance with the USAID gender mainstreaming and gender-based violence policies.

The REGIS-ER project in its design and implementation incorporated the equity aspect. Vulnerable women have priority in many project activities: BDL, oasis garden, Habbanayé and soil and water conservation work. The project also worked with men in agro-pastoral production, governance and also health and nutrition. In the health and nutrition component, "schools for husbands" have been set up alongside mother-to-mother schools. The Husband Schools help improve husbands' perceptions and behaviors in relation to gender-based violence.

In addition, the initiation of the concept of model husbands, chosen on the basis of the standard accomplishment of several small actions identified at the community level (among others the man must accompany his pregnant wife to prenatal consultations, bring skewers of meat or fish to his pregnant or breastfeeding wife and accompany her to the health center for Family Planning...) Also the project's gender sensitive certification ceremony was useful in promoting gender equity.

The group discussions carried out with the beneficiaries show that the REGIS-ER project, through its sensitizations, succeeded in improving the status of women at the community level while

reducing disputes between men and women at the household level. This extract from the focus group composed of men in the of Mai Tsa Tsasaka community reveals the involvement of women in decision-making at the community level. *“The relationship between men and women is good and we have noticed several changes because the men alone do not make the decisions without the presence of women and they are involved in all the activities of the village.”* » Extract of focus group man from Mai Tsa Tsasaka (Maradi in Niger).

9.1.3. Compliance with the youth approach

Since the submission of its revised technical request to USAID in March 2018, the project appears to be in full compliance with the USAID Youth in Development Policy of October 2012. Taking into account all recommendations of USAID on the revised technical application of the project, the project began to implement its Positive Youth Development Framework (PYD), which was designed to increase the engagement of young people aged 15 to 25. This PYD framework mainly focuses on three areas:

- i) strengthening of skills and assets;
- ii) promote the contributions of young people in the community; and
- iii) create an environment conducive to the empowerment of young people.

A primary objective is to make the voice of young people heard in the affairs of their communities and to increase their access to economic opportunities. The PYD framework of the project made youth its main target in its final phase which started in mid-2019 and will continue until the end of the project in March 2021. The PYD framework brought the project to mainstream more firmly young people in its support activities for local institutions. These institutions include the following: municipal councils (CMs); Citizen Working Groups (CWG); and service provider platforms (community solution providers - CBSP). The PYD approach process includes the following activities:

- Train project staff and members of local institutions
- Identify economic opportunities in the targeted communes
- Help 160 young people prepare business plans for specific economic opportunities
- Grant 218 small business grants to young people (individuals and groups)
- Integrate the concerns of young people in the development plans of the communes (PDC)
- Support the actors of each commune to adopt youth promotion strategies
- Help adolescent girls understand and enjoy their rights
- Develop income-generating activities for young women

According to the data from the performance indicators, it appears that for the jobs generated by the micro-enterprise activity for the fattening of animals, 32.4% of jobs in Niger and 67.6% of those in Burkina Faso concern young people (15 to 35 years old).

9.1.4. Compliance with environmental issues

The project complied with USAID environmental operational policy regulations as stipulated in its Automated Guidance System (ADS) Chapter 204, beginning with the completion of a 64-page Initial Environmental Review (IEE) in January 2013, which expired in February 2018. This IEE was amended in 2018 by a long pesticide assessment report (394 pages) and a Safer Use Action Plan (PERSUAP) which was valid until late 2020. (This PERSUAP also covered another RISE project, REGIS-AG.) All of these documents have been approved by USAID.

REGIS-ER also completed its USAID-approved Environmental Monitoring and Mitigation Plan (EMMP) in April 2014. As far as project evaluators can determine with project managers, this EMMP has been consistently followed for the entire duration of the project. This determination and the relevant documentation provided by the project managers on this matter enabled the evaluation team to conclude that REGIS-ER was in compliance with USAID environmental procedures, policies and regulations.

10. RESEARCH QUESTION 8: WHAT ARE THE LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE REGIS-ER IMPLEMENTATION EXPERIENCE THAT CAN BENEFIT OTHER PROJECTS, IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS, BENEFICIARIES AND STAKEHOLDERS?

In terms of lessons learned and good practices, the following is retained.

Microcredit as it is known today has grown since the 1970s thanks to Professor Muhammad Yunus. He started promoting micro-credit in Bangladesh where he created the Grameen Bank or bank for the poor. He conceived it as a tool in the fight against poverty, misery and exclusion. Microcredit services aim to allow people excluded from the traditional banking system to develop activities allowing them to finance, and with the income generated from the activities carried out, to take charge of themselves and to cover the costs related to the education of children as well as health expenses, etc.

It is from this vision of microcredits that in Burkina Faso and Niger there have been many efforts over several decades to promote community credit and savings groups. REGIS-ER project continued in its interventions areas this long experience with microcredit in both countries.

Remarkably, the activities for which the population had a minimum of technical mastery were often those with the greatest success. These are Habbanayé, poultry farming, animal feed and health, regeneration/conservation agriculture and bio-reclamation of degraded land. They

contributed to increase incomes, better adaptation of beneficiaries to cope with shocks, the constitution of a better stock of human capital, the acquisition of better nutritional status.

Activities whose objective is to strengthen community links are those that have been successful. This is the case with the Habbanayé activity, which consists of livestock reproduction while strengthening the traditional support model for vulnerable households. This activity is put in place by the community as a model allowing vulnerable households to receive some livestock (small ruminants, poultry) for production and reproduction, helping them to cope with shocks and other disasters.

The most important conditions for the success of conflict prevention and management actions reside first and foremost in setting up a conflict resolution framework which supports the implementation of conflicts prevention, management and resolution actions. It is only after having put in place the conflict resolution frameworks, that related activities can be undertaken to prevent and manage well conflicts. Conflict prevention therefore requires the establishment of principles of collaboration between community members, the training of village development advisers, local development committees, opinion leaders, committees of elders (elders), heads of socio-professional organizations. Also important are the stressing the values of tolerance and being able to put into practice the lessons and training received in conflict prevention, management and resolution.

In terms of disaster risk prevention and management, it is important to build the capacities of communities by providing them with effective systems for early warning and disaster response. The intervention strategy, which consists in building the capacities of communities so they can respond rapidly to potential threats with appropriate measures to deal with a crisis situation. Trained disaster response could be quickly mobilized and intervene in the event of a disaster to mitigate the extent of the damage.

Improving the resilience of communities in the face of crises and disasters requires the strengthening of grassroots governance through the establishment and development of the capacities of local institutions. Thus, strengthening governance can take place at various levels. There is the local level through the integration of resilience into development plans such as village, communal and regional development plans. Through the consolidation and intensification of resilience activities, including the facilitation of the holding of consultation and dialogue meetings, local authorities and other partners are strengthened, communities are more resilient and able to intervene every time there is a crisis.

10.1. General Conclusion

At the end of the evaluation mission, it can be concluded that the REGIS-ER project has produced satisfactory results which have achieved its three strategic objectives as initially defined at the onset of the project.

Strategic Objective 1: Beneficiaries, as well as the key informants, are unanimous in recognizing that the REGIS-ER project produced globally positive results because it contributed to significantly improving the economic growth and the well-being of the beneficiaries and built greater resilience of the population facing shocks. Among the interventions that have contributed to the increase in the social capital of households, we can cite activities such as Habbanayé, regenerative agriculture, bio-reclamation which have enabled the acquisition of goods, the improvement of food security and increased income.

Moreover, there were project activities that did not reach their performance targets, but nonetheless were beneficial to many people. For example, the introduction of irrigation in those limited areas where it was possible benefitted many people.

Strategic Objective 2: In view of the results achieved, the project also achieved this objective. The achievement of results has been made possible through support for the establishment of consultation and dialogue frameworks in order to support the implementation of actions. The establishment of principles of collaboration between community members, training for capacity building of resource persons at the head of village development councils, local development committees, opinion leaders, such as committees of elders, and heads of socio-professional organizations. The training topics mainly focused on the values of tolerance, putting lessons and training into practice, integrating development plans into village, communal and regional development plans. The topics also included improving governance through the strengthening the management of natural resources, disaster risk management, conflict prevention and management, better coordination between local and regional governance structures;

Strategic Objective 3: This objective concerns improved health and nutrition, better access to drinking water, better health and better nutritional practices. Emphasis was placed on information, education and communication activities which enabled the project to record positive effects within the population, capacity building of structures which made it possible to reach the maximum number of beneficiaries, and establishment of programming, implementation and monitoring-evaluation structures. These are the COGES, the CVD, the UAEs, the management committees of water points, hygiene and sanitation.

The implementation of project activities enabled most households to have access to and use latrines. Hygiene and sanitation practices learned contributed to a reduction in open defecation and diarrheal disease. As the main source of drinking water supply is boreholes and pump wells, the project contributed greatly to improving drinking water sources. The project did have difficulties in achieving certain aspects of some of its activities under this objective and others because of the high level of insecurity caused by violent extremism.

10.2. Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to USAID and NCBA/CLUSA.

❖ **In terms of diversification of economic opportunities, intensification of agriculture and breeding**

- Special emphasis should be given to the establishment of microcredits to take into account the religious practices of the populations;
- Increase the number of animals given to beneficiaries to breed; and
- Improve the veterinary services provided by the VVVs to beneficiaries and work to reduce mortality rates while improving birth rates.

❖ **In terms of governance and strengthening of local institutions:**

- Maintain the capacities of local institutions so that they continue to be involved in the monitoring and evaluation of activities in order to guarantee the sustainability of the achievements of the project; and
- Maintain training to build the capacities of resource persons at the head of village development councils, local development committees, opinion leaders such as committees of elders (elders), and heads of socio-professional organizations. Such training will strengthen the integration of development plans into village, communal and regional development plans, as well as strengthen the improvement of governance within local structures for the management of natural resources, disaster risk management, prevention and management conflicts, and better coordination between local and regional governance structures.

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Annex A: Scope of Work

Purpose: CESAO will conduct an external final performance evaluation of USAID/Senegal’s Activity entitled “Resilience and Economic Growth in the Sahel – Enhanced Resilience (REGIS-ER)” implemented by NCBA CLUSA. This evaluation will help the Mission measure activity results to date and measure the effectiveness of the activity’s approach in achieving its stated goals. Performance results, lessons learned, and the success of the supported activity are to be shared with the USAID/Senegal’s Sahel Regional Office.

The evaluation will be conducted in three phases over a three- to four-month period, with preliminary finds formally presented in September 2020. However, we expect some flexibility on the task dates for this activity according to the evolving COVID-19 situation in Niger and Burkina Faso.

- Phase I: Planning, methodology, and tools
- Phase II: Data collection and compilation
- Phase III: Data analysis and reporting.

CESAO will prepare an evaluation matrix for USAID and REGIS-ER review during Phase I of the assignment. The evaluation matrix will propose the most appropriate and feasible data collection method for each of the evaluation questions—specifying the type of data that the team will use to answer each question. CESAO will provide briefings to REGIS-ER team and USAID at the end of phase II; and preliminary report for questions and comments in Phase III. Additionally, the CESAO will hold a debriefing session with USAID and REGIS-ER team before finalizing the report.

The audience of the Performance Evaluation final report will be:

- USAID/Senegal, Sahel Regional Office
- USAID Niger,
- USAID Burkina Faso,
- NCBA/CLUSA,
- Key stakeholders such as the central and local governments in Burkina Faso and Niger, the technical extension services, the beneficiaries, other donors, partner Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and NGOs.

USAID will provide the Evaluation Team with a package of background materials, including:

- Cooperative Agreement and modifications.
- Program quarterly and annual reports, work plans, AMELP and field visit reports.
- DQA reports.

- REGIS-ER's Mid-term Performance Evaluation.
- RISE Mid-term Evaluation.
- Baseline and midline data collected to date.
- Any relevant studies or background reports used to support the activity.
- SAREL's RISE Baseline Survey Report.

All background documents will be provided to the Final Evaluation Team at the start-up of this evaluation to support this exercise.

CESAO will develop quality control systems, including developing detailed data collection guides and overseeing field data collection. CESAO will apply mixed-method design and will review the midterm evaluation tools and refine them or adjust them as needed for the final evaluation. The data collection methods will include the following:

- **Key Informant Interviews (KII)** with relevant stakeholders and key informants in order to provide context in which to view the quantitative data collected via surveys and to get a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the program. Local government authorities, USAID AOR, partner organization representatives, and other relevant individuals as determined by the consultant.
- **Focus Group Discussions (FGD)** to obtain perceptions of various stakeholders including CBSPs, municipalities, and local groups.
- **Quantitative Surveys** administered to CWG, CVD, and other groups and possibly households to the limited extent considering the security situation on one hand and the data requirement on the other.

Sampling would be done among all the REGIS-ER villages covering those in the original 5-year period as well as the villages from the communes of concentration during the two-year extension period.

Key Questions:

As a final performance evaluation, the evaluation questions will focus on how well REGIS-ER achieved its goals and what is the sustainability of its approach beyond activity implementation. Specific questions include:

Goal Achievement: To what extent has REGIS-ER achieved its objectives in relation to its expected results/targets? What internal and external factors have influenced the ability of the project to meet expected results and targets? Indicators, targets, and achievements for each intermediate result will be explored; and causal links between output and outcome variables will be explained. Extent of achievement for each output and outcome indicator will be rated in following manner.

- Exceeded target
- Achieved target
- Did not achieve target

Relevance: Which elements of the program are likely to have the most significant impact on building the resilience of chronically vulnerable households in the RISE zone of intervention, and which do not? How do these elements align with beneficiary priorities, and the local social, economic and environmental context? What are the unexpected positive or negative outcomes resulting from the project? The areas to be examined include:

- Income generating activities of farmers, farmer groups, women’s groups, youth groups, etc., such as Habbanayé (livestock assets), irrigation, conservation farming, etc.
- Role of community-based service providers (CBSP) and their contribution to resilience.
- Nutrition, maternal and child health and WASH.
- Governance: strengthening local institutions, increasing citizen participation, and accountability and responsiveness.
- Identification of the combination of the program elements (or subset of elements) that are likely to render most significant impact.

Effectiveness: To what extent has REGIS-ER’s new implementation approach based on coaching Local Institutions (Municipal Council, Citizen Working Groups and Village/Local Development Committees) achieved its objectives in relation to its expected results/targets? What is the sustainability of this approach beyond REGISER implementation? What are the lessons learned that could benefit RISE II implementing partners, beneficiaries and stakeholders?

Compliance: Did REGIS-ER comply with USAID’s Environmental and Gender Integration/Gender Based Violence/Youth policies and regulations?

ANNEX B: REGIS-ER Project Target Commune Surface Areas, Population and Population Density

BURKINA FASO				NIGER			
Commune	Surface Area – km ²	Population	Population Density per km ²	Commune	Surface Area – km ²	Population	Population Density per km ²
Kongoussi	799.0	99,779	124.9	Guidan Roundji	1,009.0	95,791	94.9
Tikaré	344.0	49,146	142.9	Sabon Machi	600.0	35,988	60.0
Bouroum	1,291.0	64,146	49.7	Tagazar*	1,314.0	107,131	81.5
Nagbingou	477.0	23,279	48.8	Filingué*	4,802.0	92,097	19.2
Barsologho	577.0	113,691	72.1	Imanan	1,667.0	38,783	23.3
Manni*	433.6	95,976	221.4	Tondikandia*	2,847.0	108,991	38.3
Bartiébougou	882.6	23,963	27.2	Kourthey	2,308.67	61,670	26.7
Foutouri	3,374.4	22,403	6.6	Sakoira*	1,173.0	26,776	22.8
Gayéri*	768.1	75,748	98.6	Bandé	836.0	114,242	136.7
Ouindigui	460.2	39,003	84.8	Droum	866.0	102,306	118.1
Sollé	416.0	25,145	60.4				
Titao	2,000.9	92,173	46.1				
Bani	1,559.0	80,659	51.7				
Dori	2,532.0	150,008	59.2				
Sampelga	677.0	30,136	44.5				
Seytenga*	698.0	45,193	64.8				
Sebba*	943.0	45,994	48.8				
Solhan	1,256.0	36,972	29.4				
Tankou-Gounadié	1,023.0	25,121	24.6				
Titabé	818.0	29,671	29.3				
Total (20 communes)	22,329.8	1,033,348	46.7	Total (10 communes)	17,422.67	783,775	45.0
TOTALS FOR BURKINA FASO AND NIGER: Surface Area – 39,752.47 km²; Population – 1,817,123; Average Population Density – 48.85							

Notes/Comments:

The project management reports reaching 319,753 households in both countries and uses 7 persons per household to arrive at a total number of beneficiaries of 2,238,271. As this number is greater than the mid-2018 population of the project's 30 communes of 1,817,123, it is concluded that the project counts everyone in its operational zones as a beneficiary and just not the adult population in the villages it actually reached. At the same time, this could mean that using 7 people per household for both countries is too high of a number.

The total number of people cited above reached by the project is a small percentage of the total national population level. Niger is estimated to have a 2020 total population of 24.6 million and the project reached about 3% of this total. Burkina Faso is estimated to have a 2020 total population of 21.1 million and the project reached about 5% of this total. The national annual population growth rate of 3.84% in Niger is the highest in the world. The national annual population growth rate in Burkina Faso is 2.86%, the 16th highest in the world.

Over nearly half of the population in Niger is below 15.2 years of age and in Burkina Faso its median age is 17.6 years. The combined population of these two countries is estimated at 45.7 million. Since the inception of the project in late 2013, it is estimated that the population of the two countries has grown by 3.6 million people. The population of Niger is projected to double by 2040, and that of Burkina Faso is projected to double by 2046.

The total land area of Niger is 1,266,700 Km² (80% uninhabitable desert) and that of Burkina Faso is 273,600 Km². Therefore, in Niger the project's 30 communes represent about 1.4% of Niger's total surface area and in Burkina Faso this percentage is about 8.2%.

The average population density in Niger is 19 persons per Km² and in Burkina Faso it is 76 persons per Km².

The 30 communes (10 in Niger and 20 in Burkina Faso) initially targeted by the project represent a small percentage (about 4.5%) of the combined total of 616 communes in these two countries (351 in Burkina Faso, and 265 in Niger).

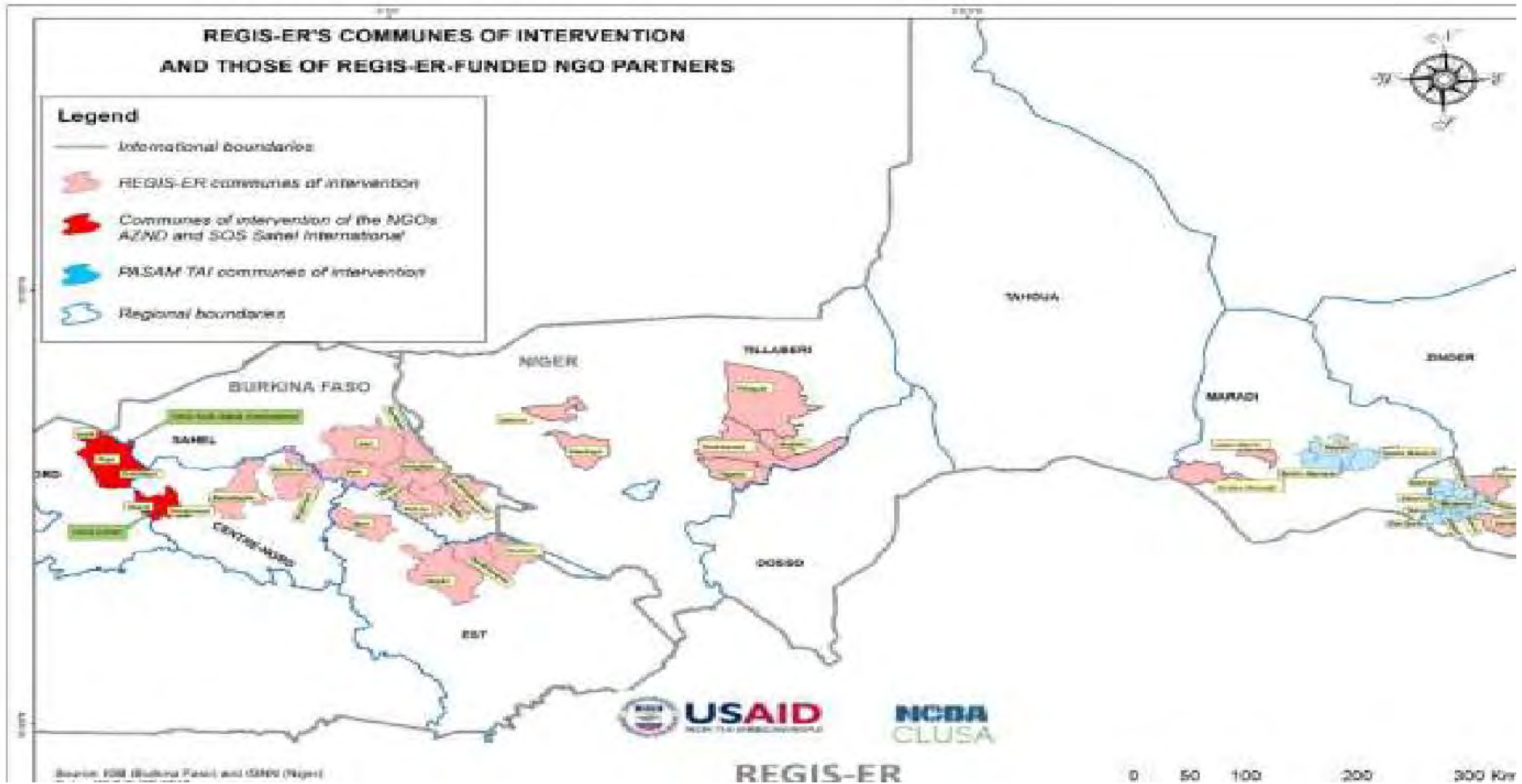
Up until December 13, 2018, the project worked in 25 communes (15 in Burkina Faso and 10 in Niger). Prior to October 1, 2017, the project worked through local NGO partners to cover five additional communes in Burkina Faso, making a total of 30 targeted communes. On January 1, 2019, security concerns obliged the project to reduce its focus to 13 communes.

Beginning in January 2019, the project further reduced its focus to the 8 communes marked with an asterisk in the above table. This last reduction of focus communes involved withdrawing from the Maradi and Zinder Regions in Niger and the Centre Nord Region in Burkina Faso on October 1, 2019. These remaining 8 communes have a population of 597,906, or about 33% of the original total of 1,817,123. This total represents about 4% of the total population of Burkina Faso and Niger.

Sources:

Population numbers were taken from: <https://citypopulation.de/Africa.html>. The population numbers used in this source were taken from national census data for each country and are extrapolated for mid-2018. Commune surface data was provided by REGIS-ER managers who used local national sources. Other statistics were taken from the U.S.'s Central Intelligence Agency World Factbook for each country. The UN's Population Division statistics were also consulted.

ANNEX C – Map of Project Zones



ANNEX D: List of Villages Surveyed

Burkina Faso		Niger	
Sub-group I			
Commune	Village	Commune	Village
Bani	Amsia	Filingue	Kochelan bella
	Babirka Ouro sori		Touloua
	Bani	Imanan	Aguiwan
	Bani Sana issiaka		Ferao 1
	Kallo		Ferao 2
Tialel	Kochelan bella		
Barsallogho	Kossoguin		Natchira
	Kossoguin		Tassi dey banda
Dori	Balandagou		Touloua
	Gotougou	Kourtey	Farié Haoussa
	Guide		Koria Haoussa
	Welde katchirga		Koulbogou
Kongoussi	Badinogo n°2		Haoussa
	Dinguilga		Lossa peulh
	Kouka bingabo		Sona Kadio
	Lourgou		Sorbon Haoussa
	Nongsoum		Boukou
	Rissiam		Daikouira
	Sankondé		Dalwey
	Tangaye		Diadia peul
	Yargo		Farié Haoussa
Manni	Dakiri		Karamantounka
	Margou		Kokomani haoussa
	Nayela		Koria Haoussa
	Pagoupeulh		Koulbogou
Nagbingou	Boalin I		Haoussa
	Horere		Lossa bella
	Kouini		Lossa kado
	Pirkou		Lossa peulh
Ouindigui	Koumna		Mara
	Koumna koudougo		Sansani Haoussa
	Tassambo		Sona bella
	Tiffélé		Sona Kadio
Sampelga	Damdegou		Sona peul
	Niagassi		Sorbon Haoussa
	Woulmassoutou		Tourkouli peul delewa
Tikaré	Gonga	Sabonmachi	Angoulou hamani
	Ouampega		Baourotta
			Dan barde

	Tampèlga Zano			Dan Dadi bouda Dan guarki
Titabe	Diamana Tiale Tiékangnibi Titabe			Dan Toudou Samaila Dara amadou Fiadi Guidan boka Halli
Titao	Dougouri noogo Dougouri ouidi Illigué Salla Sillia Tansalga Titao / secteur 7 Yooda mossi			Kalgo arzika(ffp) Magaginbounou Mai tsatsaka Maza tsaye moussa Tadone(ffp) Tribu incha hassane Zangon iguidis
Sub-group 2				
Commune	Village		Commune	Village
Barsallogho	Ambara		Bande	Gabi Sawaya Hakini
	Basma		Droum	Gourbébé
	Gabou		Filingué	Dirga I
	Tamasgo		Guidanroumdji	Katare Dogon Farou
	Tamasgo		Imanan	Dirga I
Bouroum	Ambara Kayara		Sakoirra	Sakoirra
Gayérie	Oue		Tagazar	Gao taweye Tinkafai
Manni	Gori Koumiyarin			
Seytenga	Bellare Tao			
Tondikandia	Ganda bangou simintodo			