



Samaritan’s Purse

USAID/FFP/EFSP

Food Assistance to Build Resilience in Communities (FABRIC)

Republic of Niger

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Project Overview

Launched in September 2012, FABRIC is a one-year Emergency Food Security Program (EFSP) under USAID’s Food for Peace (FFP) initiative, implemented in partnership with Samaritan’s Purse (SP). This project is decreasing household vulnerability to food insecurity in four communes (Ayorou, Banibangou, Goroual, and Dingazi) in the northern Tillabéry Region of Niger, targeting 40 communities and 8,100 direct beneficiaries. Through food for work (FFW) activities, off-season gardening, nutrition and environmental awareness education, and water point installation and rehabilitation, households will have increased year-round availability of food and improved dietary diversity, while building communities’ overall resilience.

Project Summary

Sector:
Food Security

Objective:
Decrease household vulnerability to food insecurity in 40 communities in the northern Tillabéry Region of Niger through increased year-round availability of food at the household level and improved dietary diversity

Number of Targeted Beneficiaries Planned (Entire Project):
8,100 direct beneficiaries/participants; 30,600 total beneficiaries

Total FFW participants: 3,500
Total gardening direct beneficiaries: 4,600

Number of Beneficiaries Reached to Date:

8,100 direct beneficiaries/participants from 7,603¹ households (HHs); 89,715² total beneficiaries
Total FFW participants: 3,500 (883 female; 2,617 male)
Total gardening direct beneficiaries: 4,600 (3,607 female; 993 male)

Cost per Beneficiary to Date:

\$ 240.57 per direct beneficiary/participant
\$ 21.72³ per beneficiary

Accomplishments:

Gardening activities concluded in April, 2013, with a total estimated yield of 278.014 MT of vegetables (approximately 60.4 kg per household). The midterm evaluation revealed that 89.5% of gardening beneficiaries had produced and consumed vegetables from their garden plots, compared to 53.1 % who were producing and 51.4% who were consuming garden vegetables before the FABRIC project. The three remaining garden fences were also completed at the beginning of April. A total of 3,447 beneficiaries attended all nutrition education sessions in April and May, where the last five nutritional topics were covered. Thus, 3,237 beneficiaries were educated on all 10 nutritional topics. According to the midterm evaluation in April, 81.6% of gardening beneficiaries could name at least six household nutritional practices, compared to 51.4% before FABRIC.

Water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) activities continued throughout this quarter. Rehabilitation was completed on the two remaining wells. Thus, all five rehabilitated wells are now operational. However, only one of these wells is currently meeting the targeted sanitary risk score. Work is in progress to build fences around the other four wells to reduce their sanitary risk scores. Four hand-dug irrigation wells were completed, and five Californian irrigation systems were installed at garden sites. Sixteen of the 20 water sources for garden sites have been completed. Additional hand-dug irrigation wells are being constructed to account for the remaining water sources for garden sites. Water storage basins are also being constructed at certain garden sites to facilitate irrigation and allow beneficiaries to continue gardening activities in the future; 20 of planned 28 basins have been completed. Ten water point committee training sessions were organized this quarter, for a total of 25 sessions conducted to date. All 20 water point committees that were formed have been trained at least once; the five water point committees for the rehabilitated wells have been trained twice.

Food for work activities continued in the all four communes throughout the quarter. In April and May, land reclamation and tree nursery participants worked and received monthly food rations. Grass seed was purchased locally during this quarter and sown in demi-lunes and banquettes.

¹ 497 households were involved in both activities: gardening and FFW

² Total beneficiaries from 7,603 households, with an average household size in the target communes of 11.8, as shown in the baseline assessment; no duplication (Total targeted beneficiaries were calculated using the national average of seven members per household, and assuming duplication of numerous households involved in both activities.)

³ Amount calculated using the total direct and indirect USAID cost-share expenses through June 2013 (\$ 1,948,623.44) divided by the total number of beneficiaries reached to date (89,715)

Land reclamation concluded at the end of May, while tree nursery activities continued into June. During this quarter, 661.299 MT of food commodities were distributed to 3,500 HHs in April, 3,498 in May, and 640 in June to compensate for 674 Ha of land reclamation, digging of tree transplantation holes, and tree growing. Thus far, a total of 1,170.686 MT of food commodities have been distributed. The project target of 1,107 MT of food distributed has been reached and exceeded. A total of 1,264 Ha of land, out of 1,360 Ha planned, was rehabilitated through the construction of 533,169 demi-lunes, 1,201 banquettes, and 269,216 zai holes. More food was distributed than planned, while less land was rehabilitated than planned, for two reasons. First, the proposal assumed that 750 FFW participants would work for three months and 992 for three months in the Commune of Ayorou, however, all 992 participants actually worked for six months, requiring more food than planned. Secondly, the target for land rehabilitation was calculated assuming that all participants' work would contribute to additional Ha of land rehabilitated. However, FFW committee members received food rations for their work in supervising activities, and tree transplantation holes were dug on land that has already been rehabilitated, thus not adding to the total amount of land rehabilitated. In April and May, 2,495 FFW participants attended all environmental awareness education sessions where 10 sustainable environment topics were taught. Thus, a total of 3,447 participants have been taught all ten topics.

Issues, Concerns and Adaptations:

Tree seeds were sown in over 400,000 tree bags. However, despite replanting of many of the bags, only 214,043 tree seedlings are growing. The extended dry season and lack of rains has caused many challenges for this activity, because the seedlings were not able to be transplanted by the planned time. Additionally, muddy pond water being used for watering; high temperatures and lack of shade; insect, lizard, and rodent infestations; and difficult access to water at some sites have caused low rates of germination. In order to increase the number of trees planted and make up for the lost seedlings, the direct seeding technic⁴ will be used in addition to the transplantation of the surviving seedlings.

It was originally planned that the tree nursery participants would transplant the tree seedlings to the transplantation holes that were dug on FFW rehabilitated land. However, some transplantation sites are far from the tree nursery sites and not accessible for participants. Additionally, there was no rain at the end of June when the trees needed to be planted, and not all tree seedlings are ready to be transplanted. Furthermore, communities have expressed resistance to watering the seedlings until the time when they can be transplanted without any compensation during the planting season. As a solution to this challenge, remaining oil will be given to participants next quarter as fair compensation⁵ for watering the seedlings until they can be transplanted, as well as for transplanting the seedlings and direct seeding.

With the start of the rainy season, it will be very difficult, and in some places impossible, for the work on the remaining water points, well fences, and basins to progress because of the heavy rains and the inaccessibility of some sites when roads are flooded. The inability for work to advance during the rainy season, combined with the unpredictability and slowness of suppliers to

⁴ Instead of planting the tree seeds in tree bags and waiting for them to grow before transplantation, the tree seeds will be planted directly in the transplantation holes during the rainy season.

⁵ Rations will be calculated at roughly the same value for one day's wages of work.

perform, has prompted SP to request a no-cost extension allowing the project to continue until November 30, 2013. A no-cost extension request was submitted on July 2, 2013.

Performance Indicators

The following tables show cumulative activity and result indicators compared to planned, baseline, and target data. A midterm evaluation was conducted in April to measure result indicators. It should be noted that baseline data was collected following the harvest in October 2012, while the midterm evaluation was conducted in April 2013, at the beginning of the lean season.

Table 1: FABRIC Activity Monitoring Table

Strategic Objective	Intermediate Result	Activity Indicators		Current Quarter	Cumulative to Date	Total Target
<i>Increased year-round availability of food at the HH level</i>	Increased availability of food for beneficiary HHs	# of MT of commodities purchased & distributed	Planned	607.900	1,107	1,107
			Actual	661.299	1,170.686	1,170.686
			% achievement	109%	106%	106%
		# ha of land rehabilitated through FFW	Planned	725	1,360	1,360
			Actual	674	1,264	1,264
			% achievement	93%	93%	93%
	Increased local food production from gardening	# of beneficiaries receiving seeds, tools, and inputs	Planned	0	4,600	4,600
			Actual	0	4,600	4,600
			% achievement	-	100%	100%
		# of garden water sources established	Planned	0	20	20
			Actual	9	16	16
			% achievement	-	80%	80%
Increased knowledge of sustainable environmental practices	# of FFW participants attending sessions on all training topics	Planned	2,508	3,500	3,500	
		Actual	2,495	3,447	3,447	
		% achievement	99%	98%	98%	
<i>Improved dietary diversity</i>	Rehabilitated wells are functioning and well maintained	# of wells rehabilitated	Planned	0	5	5
			Actual	2	5	5
			% achievement	-	100%	100%
		# of water point committee training sessions	Planned	0	10	10
			Actual	10	25	25
			% achievement	-	250%	250%
	Increased knowledge of HH nutrition practices; increase in HHs consuming vegetables	# of gardening participants attending sessions on all the ten nutrition topics	Planned	4,600	4,600	4,600
			Actual	3,237	3,237	3,237
			% achievement	70 %	70 %	70 %

Table 2: FABRIC Results Monitoring Table

Result	Indicator	Baseline Data	Target	Midterm Evaluation
Strategic Objectives				
Increased year round availability of food at the HH level	% HH that eat at least 3 meals a day	86.6%	No significant change during hunger season	92.1%
	% HH with moderate or severe hunger	69.1%	30 % decrease	38.2%

	% HH adopting a survival coping mechanism at least once in 7 days	28.4%	No significant change during hunger season	15.8%
Improved dietary diversity	% HH with adequate dietary diversity	12.8%	N/A	28.9%
	Dietary score	5	8	5.8 ⁶
Intermediate Results				
Increased availability of food commodities at beneficiary HHs	# of HHs receiving food from FFW distributions	0	3500	3500
Increased knowledge of sustainable environmental practices	% FFW HHs who can identify 6 or more sustainable environmental practices	47.1%	80%	56.6% ⁷
Increased knowledge of HH nutritional practices	% of gardening who can name 6 or more HH nutritional practices	51.4%	80%	81.6%
Increased food production from off-season gardening	% of participants producing vegetables	53.1%	80%	89.5%
Increase in HHs consuming vegetables from their garden plot	% of HHs consuming crops from their garden plots	51.4%	80%	89.5%
Rehabilitated wells are functioning and well maintained	% wells with a sanitary risk score of less than 2	0%	100%	0% ⁸

Plan for Next Quarter

The transplantation of tree seedlings and direct seeding are planned for July. Four fences will be constructed around rehabilitated wells, and three hand-dug irrigation wells will also be completed next quarter. The final evaluation is scheduled for next quarter.

Success Stories

Illiassou Yaya, 31 years old, lives in the village of Alkonji I in the Commune of Goroual with his wife and four children. Illiassou's family benefitted from FABRIC's off-season gardening activity, and produced potatoes, lettuce, cabbage, onions, and peppers. Illiassou and his family consumed a portion of the vegetables that they grew and sold the rest, earning 80,000 FCFA (\$160).

"Today I was able to realize my dream that is dear to my heart. I was able to purchase a plow for 35,000 FCFA (\$70) thanks to the money that we earned through off-season gardening," said Illiassou, "As you can see, this year, I have increased the size of my field because I will now be able to plow a large amount of land in a short amount of time with the help of my new plow. Plus, when I finish, I will provide temporary labor for other farmers and earn 7,500 FCFA (\$15) per day."

Illiassou is among the young men in his village who annually migrate to Cotonou, Benin in search of work. Illiassou says that he is finished migrating now that he can earn a living and provide for his family from home. "Thank you very much for your support. People always say that we do not have the means, but in my opinion, anything is possible if we are willing. Tomorrow I will have a tractor!" concluded Illiassou.

⁶ Gardening activities only provided food from two food groups, so it is still hard for HHs to consume food from eight different groups; the original target was set too high.

⁷ In April, these trainings had just begun in some of the communes.

⁸ In April, at the time of the midterm evaluation, none of the wells had a score of less than 2, but now one well does.