



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Implemented by



Sawki is helping communities rehabilitate pastoral lands with Food for Assets Activities. The establishment of half-moons greatly improves fodder regeneration.

YEAR 2: THIRD QUARTERLY REPORT

April- June 2014

Niger Development Food Aid Program “Sawki” 2012-2017

Sawki is helping communities rehabilitate pastoral lands with Food for Assets Activities. The establishment of half-moons greatly improves fodder regeneration.

COUNTRY CONTACT	HEADQUARTERS CONTACT	PROJECT SUMMARY
Moustapha Gaye Chief of Party Address: Quartier Issa-Beri, Rue IB28 BP: 10632, Niamey, Niger Telephone: +227-2073-9633/34 Email: mgaye@ne.mercycorps.org	John Stephens Senior Program Officer Address: 45 SW Ankeny Street, Portland, OR 97204, USA Telephone: +1 503 896 5028 Email: jstephens@mercycorps.org	Award No: AID-FFP-A-12-00012 Start Date: 08/17/2012 End Date: 08/31/2017 Report Date: 04/30/2013 Total Award: \$19,312,269

I. Executive Summary

Mercy Corps, Africare and Helen Keller International are implementing a Development Food Aid Program (DFAP) entitled “*Sawki*” that is designed to respond to the food security needs of more than 92,092 beneficiaries in Maradi and Zinder, two of the most food insecure regions of Niger. Within these regions, *Sawki* is targeting 62 villages based on criteria of social vulnerability, economic opportunities and agro-pastoral linkages.

During this reporting period, the program accomplished the following activities:

Related to SO1: Health/ Nutrition:

- ✓ 7 new field agents trained in ENA ;
- ✓ 18 health agents and *Sawki* staff trained in Family Planning ;
- ✓ 3391 sensitization sessions held by Leader Mothers to PLW on ENA ;
- ✓ 1628 participants including 214 men sensitized on health and nutrition best practices in collaboration with the telecommunications company Orange ;
- ✓ 1233 cooking demonstrations organized for 22,745 participants including 1851 men ;
- ✓ 7279 children under 5 screened for acute malnutrition in the *Sawki* intervention zone in Zinder ;
- ✓ 556 home visits to 1059 pregnant and lactating mothers by Leader Mothers ;
- ✓ CLTS launched in 26 villages Demi-E.

Related to SO2: Agriculture/ Livestock:

- ✓ 56 out of 137 vegetable garden coordinators trained in community life skills;
- ✓ 57 FFS established with 1,364 members to promote improved agricultural techniques;
- ✓ 1024 farmers including 584 in Maradi and 440 in Zinder supported with agriculture inputs;
- ✓ 18 agriculture field facilitators (including 6 *Sawki* agents, 8 interns from the university of agronomy and 4 government agriculture agents) trained in FFS techniques for field supervision of FFS activities in communities;
- ✓ 2264 women (406 in Maradi and 1858 in Zinder) received vouchers to purchase vegetable gardening inputs;
- ✓ 15 water management committees created;
- ✓ Rehabilitation started for 20 irrigation wells (for vegetable gardening);
- ✓ 245 Livestock Value Chain Coordinators (LVCC) (150 in Zinder and 95 in Maradi) and 22 auxiliary para-veterinarians (17 in Zinder and 5 in Maradi) trained in herd management;
- ✓ 2,037 persons, including 1100 women, sensitized on livestock best practices;
- ✓ 20 out of 40 producers trained on seed multiplication;
- ✓ 2478 persons (1387 in Zinder and 1091 in Maradi) including 794 women participated in food for assets;
- ✓ 149,519 half-moons constructed on 478 ha.

Related to Gender Activities

- ✓ 54 members of husbands' schools and 18 women participated in 2 training sessions on gender and advocacy;
- ✓ 112 husbands' schools established in 56 villages;
- ✓ 888 sensitization sessions conducted in 74 safe spaces.

II. Program Overview

Mercy Corps, Helen Keller International (HKI) and Africare have joined their expertise in Niger to deliver a comprehensive package of activities, supported through partnerships with the Government of Niger (GON), local NGOs, the National Institute of Agronomy Research (INRAN) and the private sector. Sawki's overall goal is to reduce food insecurity and malnutrition among vulnerable populations in Niger, with a special emphasis on empowering women and adolescent girls to achieve this goal. The two strategic objectives (SO) are:

SO1: Reduce chronic malnutrition among pregnant and lactating women and children under five with an emphasis on children under two

SO2: Increase the local availability of and households' access to nutritious food by diversifying agricultural productivity, rural households' income and increasing resilience to shocks

III. Program Activities

Program Integration

The Sawki Program Management Unit (PMU) oversees all program activities to ensure that Sawki's integrated approach improves outcomes in each sector while strengthening community-based organizations.

This quarter, Sawki also brought on a group of interns (both men and women) from the University of Maradi to support community participation in diverse program activities including FFS, garden coordinator groups, husband schools and care groups.

Coordination

Sawki continues to build collaborative relationships between consortium partners to improve outcomes. First, the program management unit (PMU), comprised of senior Sawki staff from Mercy Corps, Africare and Helen Keller International, all based in Maradi, participate in all programmatic and administrative meetings. Weekly, monthly, quarterly and ad-hoc coordination meeting bring together all Sawki staff with partners representing the Ministry of Agriculture, Public Health, Planning, the 3N and INRAN. A steering committee including the three country directors of consortium partners and the CoP also meets regularly, as do the three DFAPs in order to maximize coordination within the intervention area. Finally, Program or consortium representatives regularly attend relevant cluster meetings, including the Nutrition Cluster meetings organized by the Department of Nutrition and UNICEF at the regional and national levels.

Mercy Corps is also building effective partnerships with the private sector to support the program's objectives. Notably, an agreement was made with Orange telecoms to implement

behavior change communication activities in Sawki communities using technology, which has already shown impressive results with over 3,000 community members attending sessions.

SO1: Chronic malnutrition among pregnant and lactating women & children under five is reduced

The health and nutrition program activities have continued during the reporting period in all 62 villages of Maradi and Zinder and include the following actions:

- Training community health promoters and CSI health workers in family planning;
- Supervision and monitoring of community education related to ENA and FP in care units, care groups, safes spaces and by health promoters;
- Cooking demonstrations using CSB + and local products;
- Strengthening communication on ENA through radio broadcast messages;
- Joint supervision of field activities with implementation partners (CSI, DS and DRSP);
- Support CSI fair events in intervention areas;
- Organization of malnutrition screening at the community level

Program Achievement during reporting period (SO1)

Activities	Achievement			Quantitative and Qualitative Description
	Achieved	Ongoing	No	
<i>SO1: Chronic malnutrition among pregnant and lactating women & children under five is reduced</i>				
IR 1.1: Appropriate nutrition practices during a child’s first 1,000 days adopted by pregnant women, mothers and caretakers				
ENA training for health staff, conducted by master trainers	X			7 field agents including 4 in Zinder were trained in ENA. The other field agents had been trained the previous quarter.
Provide rations for leader mothers every six months		X		Food ration distribution is under way in Maradi (bulgur) and will continue in Zinder. It covered 763 leader mothers including 503 in Zinder and 260 in Maradi
Monthly community meetings on ENA themes and behavior change, conducted by community health promoters	X			3391 sensitization sessions were organized in the two regions. They covered 44853 participants including 3446 men and 41401 women in all 62 villages.

Food distributions for pregnant and lactating women and children under 2 (every 2 months during the first two years of their participation)		X		Food distribution for PLW continued this quarter. 1194 PW, 1204 LW and 3912 children under 2 in 39 villages (18 in Zinder) received food rations. Food distribution continues in the remaining 23 villages in Zinder in July.
Cooking demonstrations at distribution sites on preparation/ consumption of nutrient rich foods and animal products		X		1233 cooking demonstrations were performed during the reporting quarter and reached 22745 participants (1851 men and 20867 women). The demonstrations started with CSB and Bulgur in the first phase and local food items in subsequent phases.
Rehabilitate 20 wells, in collaboration with Ministry of Environment and Hydrology		X		The contract for the rehabilitation of 15 wells (including 9 in Zinder) was completed with local firms. The work started at the end of June and is expected to be finalized during the following quarter.
Improve 30 wells (install animal troughs, solar pumps, pulley systems)		X		The well rehabilitation process is ongoing.
Establish water-user committees (includes defining management roles and responsibilities, water use payment system, etc.)		X		The setup of water management committees continues in Maradi. 6 committees are already in place in 6 villages in Maradi.
Identify cost-efficient individual solutions to improve water quality, such as bio-sand or silver filters, or Aqua tabs		X		The process is ongoing with meetings held with Animas Sutura for a partnership to promote Aquatab and to sensitize on water sanitation in the communities.
Demi-E partner facilitate awareness-raising/analysis on sanitation conditions, as part of Community Total Led Sanitation (CTLS)			X	Demi-E has begun CTLS in 15 out of 26 villages.
<i>IR 1.2 Appropriate nutrition practices and healthy timing of first pregnancy adopted by adolescent girls and their partners</i>				
Sensitize communities on delayed childbirth and the health and economic benefits of girl's education through influential male and female community members. Specifically, awareness raising campaigns (health caravans, radio talk shows)		X		This quarter, Sawki contacted private local radio stations to broadcast sensitization messages. In Zinder contracts have been drafted for a pilot test, while in Maradi sensitization caravans have been organized through the partnership with Orange Niger.
Establish/strengthen Safe Spaces (weekly discussion groups for adolescent girls on ENA practices and life skills).		X		32 sensitization sessions were organized in safe spaces. These sessions benefited 1,321 participants in Zinder (beneficiary numbers from Maradi are still being collected by program staff).
Safe Space participants and group mentors receive rations for participation in meetings (distributed every 6 months)		X		393 adolescent girls and mentors in 8 villages in Zinder received 25 kg of lentils each, and distribution is ongoing in July for the remaining 54 villages.

<i>IR 1.3 Counseling and care appropriately provided by health centers and other community actors</i>				
Collaborate with Ministry of Health and UNFPA to strengthen supply management of family planning supplies		X		One meeting was already held last quarter with UNFPA to discuss the strategy to be put in place. Another meeting is planned with the same team once the communities are selected.
Train health facility staff to deliver high quality service and messages for ENA, family planning and integrated management of childhood illnesses		X		15 government health field agents (CS, CSI et DS) of the districts of Guidan Roundji and Dakoro (Maradi) have been trained in ENA and family planning.
Establish an active screening and referral system for malnutrition at the community level		X		7279 children under 5 have been screened for malnutrition in Sawki zone in Zinder. 1061 were referred to health centers for malnutrition, with yellow level (865) and red-level MUAC (196).

IR 1.1: Appropriate nutrition practices during a child's first 1,000 days adopted by pregnant women, lactating mothers and caretakers

This quarter, Sawki continued to train new field agents on ENA, best nutrition practices, and awareness-raising approaches. During the reporting period, Sawki supported community groups, including care groups and safe spaces, to carry out 3,391 awareness sessions to promote ENA and hand-washing for the benefit of 44,853 participants, including 3,446 men.

In 8 Maradi villages, Sawki carried out behavior change communication activities in partnership with Orange Telecoms that included entertainment and contests for participants. These sessions proved highly popular with participating communities and saw over 3,000 community members in attendance. Similar events will be carried out in other Sawki villages next quarter. Radio broadcasting messages on ENA were also prepared and made available for transmission during prime time.

During the reporting period, the program distributed complementary CSB+ rations to 6,310 pregnant and lactating women and children under 24 months, and distributions will continue in early July. Cooking demonstrations were carried out at ration distribution sites to feature recipes using CSB+ as well as locally-available products. During the reporting quarter, 1233 cooking demonstration sessions were conducted for 22,745 participants. In the next quarter, these recipes will be taught to all members of community structures.

To strengthen the implementation of good nutritional practices, home visit sessions are organized by community health workers and Leader Mothers. During the reporting period 831 home visits were organized which touched 556 households, or 1,760 individuals.

For better access to drinking water and improvement of water quality, the program is rehabilitating 5 drinking water wells and 9 traditional garden wells for women in Zinder and 6 wells for drinking water in Maradi. Water management committees are being established in all targeted villages.

Promoting good sanitation practices through community-led total sanitation (CLTS) is underway in the Sawki intervention area. During the past quarter Demi-E submitted its first report on the launching of the activities in 15 villages in Zinder and 2 villages of Maradi.

IR 1.2. Appropriate nutrition practices and healthy timing of first pregnancy adopted by adolescent girls and their partners

With regards to nutrition and gender activities, adolescent girls in each community are grouped into structures called safe spaces in which girls are educated about good nutritional practices and family planning by female mentors, selected by the communities as positive role-models for girls. 32 sessions were held in Zinder this quarter, involving 1,321 participants. Similar sessions were also carried out in Maradi, but program staff is still collecting beneficiary data about these sessions. Both mentors and adolescent girls participating in safe space activities (with at least an 80% attendance level) receive a ration of 25kg of lentils every six months. This quarter, distributions started in late June and reached eight villages in Zinder for a total of 393 beneficiaries.

Finally, Sawki conducted additional trainings on ENA and FP for 18 actors, including 15 representatives of the ministry of health in the Sawki intervention area.

IR 13 Counseling and care appropriately provided by health centers and other community actors

With the aim of continuing to engage and build the capacity of public health agents, Sawki provides training and support to agents working in health centers and village level “health huts.” Joint visits are planned next quarter to monitor the progress of health partners and identify opportunities to further reinforce existing local health care mechanisms. During the reporting period, Sawki organizes malnutrition screenings of children under 5 in Zinder, reaching 7279 children, of whom 1061 were referred to the health centers, including 196 with severe malnutrition and 865 with for moderate malnutrition.

SO2: Local availability and households’ access to nutritious food increased

During this reporting period, the following activities were implemented in support of the agriculture and livelihood strategic objective (SO2):

- Preparation of the farmer field schools and fodder production activities;
- Identification, training and support to seed multipliers;
- Support to garden coordinators with vouchers for small cultivation equipment;

- Launch of EWS/ER activities;
- Pastoral land reclamation through FFA;
- Monitoring of pilot livestock producers;
- Monitoring of pilot forage sites and para-vets;
- Evaluation of fodder crop harvest;
- Training of Sawki field agents and ministry of livestock agents in herd management, animal reproduction and milk production activities;
- Implementation of community structures.

Program Achievement during reporting period (SO2)

Description of Activities	Achievement			Quantitative and Qualitative Description
	Achieved	Ongoing	No	
SO2 Local availability and households' access to nutritious food increased				
IR 2.1: Household consumption of diversified nutritious food increased from agricultural and pastoral production				
Agricultural trainings for 135 women per village by Garden Coordinators during production cycle		X		To date, 56 out of 137 garden coordinators have been trained. Remaining sites in Zinder and all sites in Maradi will be trained the following quarter.
Provide vouchers for key inputs or services to women's garden participants	X			2264 women (406 in Maradi and 1858 in Zinder) received hand tools to improve their vegetable gardening production capacity.
Establishment of gardening well user committees and maintenance plans		X		15 (6 in Maradi and 9 in Zinder) water management committees were formed.
Rehabilitation or construction of gardening wells and rainwater harvesting techniques		X		4 enterprises selected for the rehabilitation of 20 wells including 6 village water drinking wells in Maradi and 14 (2 garden wells to rehabilitate, 2 garden boreholes to create and 10 garden wells to create) in Zinder
IR2.2: Land and Livestock productivity increased at household and community levels				
Establish learning plots for improved agricultural technique trainings on volunteer farmers' land		X		57 FFS (42 for millet and 15 for cowpea) have been setup including 22 in Maradi (16 for millet and 6 for cowpea) and 35 in Zinder (26 for millet and 9 for cowpea).
INRAN to provide 5-day training to GoN extension services/STA/etc., refresher training in Year 3	X			The training of 21 seed multipliers was completed this quarter, with the participation of 3 government extension agents.
Training of farmers by agriculture value chain coordinator (AVCC) on production techniques	X			1364 volunteer farmers selected and trained in 57 FFS in 49 villages.

Subsidy of \$35 to producers		X		<p>265 outstanding participants of last year FFS selected (155 in Maradi and 110 in Zinder) are supported by the program to replicate production techniques learned during the FFS. Each of the 256 selected winners will supervise 4 farmers willing to adopt the new production practices. Each awardee will receive improved seeds of millet and cowpea to be sown on 0.5 ha.</p> <p>1024 volunteer farmers comprising 584 in Maradi and 440 in Zinder have been identified to replicate improved production techniques under the supervisions of last year FFS best performers. They will also receive improved seed of millet and cowpea to sow on 0.5 ha.</p>
Subsidy to cover 50% of price of 3 goats (year2)		X		<p>1478 goats (594 in Zinder and 884 in Maradi) will be distributed to benefit 739 vulnerable women (442 in Maradi and 297 in Zinder) to help reconstitute their herd</p>
Livestock value chain coordinators will train 15 herders or animal owners	X			<p>245 LVCC (150 in Zinder and 95 in Maradi) and 22 APV (17 in Zinder and 5 in Maradi) have been trained on herd management. 111 women were among the LVCC (53 in Maradi and 68 in Zinder) including 15 adolescent girls (6 in Maradi and 9 in Zinder).</p> <p>For FY15, 742 farmers (154 in Maradi and 588 in Zinder) are volunteering to participate in both irrigated and rainfed fodder production.</p> <p>The trained LVCC organized information dissemination and awareness sessions for the benefit of the communities. 786 persons including 359 women attended.</p>
Identification of 30 seed multipliers per region		X		<p>41 seed multipliers were identified (21 in Maradi and 20 in Zinder). 20 out of 21 in Maradi have been trained.</p>
Training for 150 para-vets at GoN veterinarian training center in Maradi (10 days)			X	<p>6 monitoring missions to 21 APV were conducted. This helped inventory 5355 animals treated and dewormed (3880 in Zinder and 1475 in Maradi). This included 1147 cows, 1178 sheeps, 698 goats, 36 camels, 95 donkeys. 2201 poultry were also vaccinated. The animal health services benefited 2602 persons who paid for the services.</p>
<i>IR .2.3 Household incomes increased</i>				

Identify key value chains & develop buyer/seller relationships		X		A tender was launched and the analysis of offers to select a consultant is ongoing. The consultant will conduct value chain studies in mid-August.
Cross-cutting IR: Household and community resilience to shocks improved through community development and good governance				
Identify gaps in collection and sharing of data related to Early Warning Systems		X		✓ An EWS/ER strategy was discussed and developed in all 41 Zinder villages. Also in Zinder, 8 Sawki agents, 8 members of CSR/SAP/PGCA and mayors were trained on EWS.
Contests to recognize greener villages (yearly grants of \$2,000) for up to 10 winners to implement soil and water improvement projects (Year 2)		X		6 sites have been identified for reforestation.
FFA activities (Year 2)	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 7 pastoral land sites were recovered using half-moons; ✓ 149519 half-moons constructed on 477.7 ha (274.3 ha in Zinder and 203.4 ha in Maradi); ✓ 7 sites management committees created and trained.

IR 2.1: Household consumption of diversified nutritious food increased from agricultural and pastoral production

During the third quarter Sawki supported women garden coordinators and their trainees to face major constraints identified at the end of last cropping season, including lack of water, inadequate small cultivation tools and poor social organization of women engaged in this activity.

Regarding tools, Sawki helped 2,264 women (406 in Maradi and 1858 in Zinder) purchase necessary tools through a voucher system. Tools included metal buckets, watering cans, shovels, hoes, rakes and hoes. Agricultural fairs were organized for the provision of these tools through negotiation with selected vendors.

To strengthen the organizational capacity of gardeners, 56 gardens coordinators received training in organizational skills, which will help equip them for success in facilitating the work of their gardening groups. The trainings were conducted for a selected number of sites in Zinder. Sites in Maradi and remaining sites in Zinder are scheduled for the next quarter.

With regard to water access, 20 market gardening wells are to be rehabilitated or constructed, including 6 wells for vegetable gardening in Maradi, and 10 wells and 2 boreholes in Zinder. Two additional wells for market gardening are to be rehabilitated. After the launching of call for

tender, the process led to the selection of 4 companies for the execution of the work that has already begun.

IR2.2: Land and Livestock productivity increased at household and community levels

As part of the dissemination of agricultural technologies that Sawki put in place over the past year, 57 FFS (42 for millet and 15 for cowpea) were established total, including 22 in Maradi (16 for millet and 6 for cowpea) and 35 in Zinder (26 for millet and 9 for cowpea). 1364 farmers are involved in these 57 FFS that cover 49 villages in the project intervention area. Input requirements for the FFS were estimated by INRAN and equipment needs for the conduct of FFS were established by the Sawki team. A total of 203.25 kg of improved seeds (millet and cowpea) was purchased for FFS tests, and 18 facilitators (including 6 Sawki staff, 8 student interns and 4 agricultural agents) participated in an INRAN training of trainers. The monitoring and facilitation structure is composed of support from the ministry of agriculture, INRAN, the 8 student interns of University of Maradi and the Sawki staff to supervise farmers engaged in the FFS.

To ensure dissemination of new agricultural practices taught during FFS, Sawki is supporting 265 outstanding trainees and 1024 volunteer farmers from 2013 FFS (an average of four volunteer farmers matched with each outstanding farmer) who will replicate lessons learned from the FFS to their own fields and promote the techniques to their peers. Each outstanding trainee will receive seeds from Sawki composed of improved varieties of millet and cowpea to sow 0.5 ha of each. Each outstanding trainee will support and mentor approximately 4 volunteer farmers (a total of 1024 have been identified), and these farmers will receive millet and cowpea seeds adequate to sow approximately 0.5 hectares total.

Regarding improved seed multiplication, 41 seed multipliers were identified - 21 Maradi and 20 in Zinder. This quarter, 15 Maradi seed multipliers were trained on seed multiplication for millet, while the remaining 6 received training on cowpea production. The training sessions were conducted by the head of the seed multiplication section of the Maradi Regional Office of Agriculture. Then, the 21 trained seed multipliers received start up support including seeds and basic hand tools. Of the 21 seed multipliers identified in Maradi, 6 were given 100 kg of cowpea seeds, and 15 received 50kg of millet seeds – in total, 1250 kg of seeds were distributed thus far to sow an area of approximately 105 hectares.

To increase livestock production, Sawki conducted livestock training of trainers as well as beneficiary trainings this quarter. The 13 Sawki field staff and 8 government livestock technical officers who had been trained on forage and poultry during the first quarter received additional training during the reporting period on herd management, animal reproduction, animal breeding and milk production. The latter will in turn train the livestock value chain coordinators (LVCC).

18 fodder production sites are monitored by Sawki field agents, government livestock technical agents and INRAN to provide support and advice to producers.

Also during the reporting period, 245 LVCC (150 in Zinder and 95 in Maradi) and 22 APV (17 in Zinder and 5 in Maradi) received training on livestock management. Among the LVCC, 111 are women (53 in Maradi and 68 in Zinder) including 15 adolescent girls (6 to Maradi and 9 in Zinder). Following the trainings, program staff are already observing a change in mindset of participants as more and more are considering livestock rearing as a business. After the training, LVCC conduct briefings and awareness sessions for other producers in their community.

In terms of animal health, 22 para-veterinarians conducted information awareness campaigns for 3828 farmers including 1670 men and 2184 women. Added to this is a) the treatment and deworming of 1,542 cattle; 3,465 small ruminants and poultry 3083; and b) the identification of more than 47,862 birds that require vaccination.

The process of introducing improved breed for genetic enhancement of local breed through hybridization started during the reporting quarter. The program targeted 41 villages in Maradi and Zinder based on well-defined criteria to introduce more performing genitors composed of 41 Isa Brown roosters, 41 Guinea fowl Galor males, 109 red goats and 41 Balami rams to improve existing breeding stock.

IR 2.3. Household incomes increased

The program plans to carry out a study on value chains for which the terms of references have been developed and validated. The consultant selection process is ongoing at the writing of this report. The objectives of this study are as follows:

- Define the different components of each value chain and their function;
- Identify the product flux by component;
- Develop a map for each product at the area of intervention of the program;
- Analyze the interrelationships between all stakeholders in the value chains, determine the various steps where women intervene, and analyze their participation in terms of strengths, opportunities and threats;
- Analyze markets structure in the area of intervention of the program;
- Analysis of sector competitiveness and competitors;
- Suggest a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) for each value chain;
- Identify areas of strategic direction to improve the competitiveness and comparative advantages of each of the value chains at local, department and regional levels and propose a scheme for women entrepreneurs' emergence and women's entrepreneurship development in the value chain sub-sectors.

Cross-cutting IR: Household and community resilience to shocks improved through community development and good governance

- ✓ **Land reclamation activities using FFA**

The program has recovered rangeland on 7 sites including 3 in Maradi and 4 in Zinder. 149,519 half-moons were completed in an area of 477.7 ha of which 274.3 ha recovered in Zinder and 203.4 ha in Maradi. This FFA activity benefited 2,478 workers (1,387 in Zinder and 1091 in Maradi) composed of 794 women and 1684 men.

✓ **Seeding the regained pastoral land with herbaceous seeds**

132 kg of herbaceous seeds and 780 kg of *Cenchrus biflorus* were acquired for the 203.4 ha of land in Maradi. Herbaceous seeds for Zinder are being purchased. Seeding operations will occur during the month of July 2014.

IV. Gender

1. Finalizing the gender analysis process

An initial gender analysis report was commissioned by the 3 DFAPs, but unfortunately this report did not meet the expectations of the 3 consortia as the consultant did not fulfil the terms of the assignment nor make valid recommendations. A contract with a second consultant was pursued to complete data collection, and the first draft of the report will be completed in August 2014.

2. Safe Spaces for Adolescent Girls

The program continues to monitor activities in the safe spaces that are conducting weekly meetings under the leadership of mentors. Adolescent girls who participate in safe spaces continue to receive information on early marriage and the importance of education, and Sawki is already seeing positive results from these efforts (see the success story at the end of this report.)

3. Training of husbands' schools in gender and advocacy

During the reporting period the program organized two training sessions on gender and advocacy for 54 members of husbands' schools, 18 women from care groups, FFS members and groups of garden coordinators. Following these trainings, members of husbands' schools made the following commitments to improve men and women relationships:

Reduction of women's workload in the following activities: fetching for water and firewood; assisting in the management of animals; giving money to women for grain milling; supporting women to access health services and deciding together on all matters related to reproductive health; advocating publicly for women duties and rights; supporting child care costs.

Strengthening production activities and women's entrepreneurship: Men will support women's structures to develop IGA; allow women to travel out of their communities as part of their IGA activities.

Education / training / literacy: Men will allow girls and boys to perform all activities without discrimination and educate girls and boys or bring them to the Koranic school; help in the literacy of women and men.

Strengthening dialogue between men and women and shared decision making: All these commitments by member of husbands' schools will be broken down into an action plan that will be evaluated periodically by the program.

4. Reduction of women workload

The program support for reducing women's workload continued with the identification of beneficiary communities and mill operators and the establishment of management committees for the equipment. The purchase of equipment consisting of 4 threshers, 15 mills, 100 rickshaws for water transport and 5 groundnut oil presses was completed during the reporting quarter. The month of August will be devoted to effective hand-over of all equipment to community organizations.

V. Commodity Management

Commodities received during the quarter: During the reporting quarter most of the food commodities were announced by bill of lading ADS 206372. Through the Bill of Lading. 36,500 kg of CSB+ was announced but only 36,167 kg were received in Zinder warehouses. The program executed the operations with Baltic Control for the survey and CAT-logistics and DAMCO for the inland transportation to Zinder.

Commodities distributed during the quarter: This quarter the distribution of food to PM2A and FFA beneficiaries was conducted jointly by the commodity distribution team and health and nutrition field agents for CSB+ and agriculture and livelihood field agents for food for assets activities.

Distribution to nutrition and safe space beneficiaries: During the quarter, the program organized additional distributions to eligible persons who have not received food during the past distributions, in order to reduce some conflict at the village level. Pregnant and lactating women and children under 24 months benefited from distributions in 39 villages. In total 6,840 people received food rations in both regions including 1,315 pregnant women, 124 lactating women and 3,912 children aged 6-24 months. 378 adolescent girls, 26 mentors and 5 health promoters received their rations. To catch up with the delay in distribution, 16 kg of CSB+ per beneficiary was distributed in the region of Zinder. In total, 77,879 kg of CSB + was distributed to nutrition beneficiaries and 9,900 kg lentils to adolescent girls and safe spaces mentors. 32 kg of CSB +, 4 kg of bulgur and 4 kg of lentils were used by agents of SO1 for cooking demonstrations.

Distribution for Food For Assets: Distributions for FFA were held in three sites in Guidan Roundji Department (Maradi) and four sites in Mirriah Department (Zinder). Each distribution site includes several villages which participated in the work. A total of 140,638 kilograms of food was distributed to 2,502 people including 1,601 men and 901 women. The food distributed was composed of 101,998 kg bulgur, 25,229 kg of lentils and 10,909 kg of vegetable oil. Distributions were organized at all sites with SO2 field agents who supervised the work. The participation of SO2 field agents helped settle various claims easily.

Food commodity balance for the ending quarter: During the quarter, the program has registered the loan reimbursement of CSB + and vegetable oil by Save The Children. The food

balance at the end of the quarter shows a balance of 186,412 kg of bulgur with 114,814 kg available at Sawki central warehouses and the remaining at the distribution sites. The balance for CSB + is 707,242 kg of which 688,420 kg are in Sawki warehouses and the remaining at the distribution sites. For vegetable oil the balance is 19,042 kg of which 14,754 kg are in Sawki warehouses and the remaining at the distribution sites. At the end of the quarter the global food situation is the following.

Tableau 1: Food commodity balance for the ending quarter (Kg)

Items	Bulgur	CSB+	Lentils	Vegetable Oil	Total
Opening balance for quarter	288,464	737,404	223,522	24,451.89	1, 273,842
Quantities received during quarter	0	36,167	0	0	36,167
Distribution during the quarter	102,002	77,911	35,408	10909.315	226,230
Quantities borrowed by Save The children	0	11,650	0	5489.21	17,139
Ending balance quarter	186,412	707,242	188,084	19,042.06	1, 100,780
Difference	50.00	68	30	-10	138

Comment: The quarter end balance revealed negative deviations in bulgur, CSB + and lentils. Loss of 50 kg of bulgur is recorded by the carrier, 68 kg of CSB at distribution centers 47 kg in the village of Dan Gado. A loss of 25 kg of lentils was recorded at Kourko and 5 kg by the transporter at Falki Baba. A loss of 4.5 kg oil was recorded at Falki but absorb by the surplus recorded in the oil.

VI. Monitoring & Evaluation

The reporting period was marked by series of activities for the M&E team. These activities range from capacity building to field missions scheduled for the quarter.

Capacity building

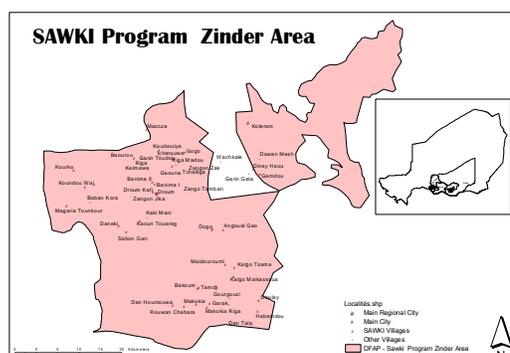
Three types of training were conducted to strengthen the capacity of the program staff in the following areas:

Introduction to Access: 6 weekly training sessions were conducted by the M&E team for the benefit of program staff from April to May 2014. This training is to meet the need expressed Sawki staff to learn the basics of Microsoft Access to facilitate their work. 10 staff including 2 women ranging from managers to field staff attended these sessions, which will continue during the following quarter.

Training on CSPro for data entry: This training took place in April and involved M&E staff only. It was a practical training for 3 staff that had to create step by step a data entry template using the post distribution questionnaire conducted by Sawki. This allowed the team to learn how to install the software and how to develop a user-friendly data entry template. The next annual survey in August-September 2014 will be an excellent opportunity to enhance the staff capacity to use the software.

Training of field agents on the use of GPS hardware: The Sawki ITC Database Officer led two training sessions for program’s agriculture field workers on the use of a GPS. One session was held in Karazomé in Maradi Region and the other session in Droum in Zinder Region. A total of eleven agents (7 in Zinder and 4 in Maradi) benefited from this training. Their new knowledge will allow them to participate in data collection for the geo-referencing of program activities.

Updating the Sawki area of intervention maps: The M&E team collected additional data to update the Program intervention maps.



Post distribution monitoring report

During the reporting period the M&E team completed and shared the program’s first post-distribution monitoring report. The report made clear recommendations to enable management to have a better view of how distribution is really happening and what needs to be corrected to improve the food distribution system. Listed below are actions recommended by the M&E team to carry out in order to have a more effective food distribution system:

- ✓ Ensure the 2-month interval between two distributions at each village;
- ✓ Make plan to allow beneficiaries that were “left out” to receive food ration;
- ✓ Develop a realistic schedule for transportation and distribution of commodities to the sites before each distribution;
- ✓ Monthly update of the lists by taking into account the new beneficiaries in each village;
- ✓ Make sure that the distribution is conducted by a team of two persons at least instead of one;
- ✓ Increase awareness of beneficiaries on the benefits of consuming the food product in order to reduce the quantity that could be traded with others;
- ✓ Restructure complaint committees where they are not functioning effectively;
- ✓ Train the complaint committees on how to play their role.

Field missions

At least 5 missions to monitor field activities were conducted by the M&E team individually or in group. At the end of each monitoring mission recommendations are made and shared in order to improve the implementation of program activities.

Program meetings

During each quarter, weekly, monthly and quarterly meetings are organized to measure the progress of the program and to formulate or adjust plans. The quarterly coordination meeting is extended to external program partners (representatives of ministries of agriculture, livestock, health, planning, 3N and INRAN) of the two regions. The quarterly coordination is the main decision making occasion of the program. The meeting is chaired by the CoP and involves all senior program staff.

Supervision missions

Supervision missions including that of the PMU ensure that program implementation is well balanced between the two regions and among program components. Essentially this quarter missions focused on field activities, training activities in the intervention villages.

During the reporting quarter the program recorded major visits: Two supervision missions including one including Niger's USAID Director and one with the DFAP AOR were conducted in Maradi; and a field mission of the High Commissioner of 3N Initiative in Maradi accompanied by the Chargé de Mission of the US Embassy occurred during the reporting period.

Staff recruitment

During the quarter just ended, a WASH Officer and 2 nutrition field agents were recruited for Maradi to replace those who resigned. A Commodity Tracking Officer 1 and 2 commodities agents were also recruited. This recruitment process took significant time in both the recruitment itself and the new staff orientation.

I. Challenges

- ✓ One of the major challenges is the harmonization in implementation of health and nutrition activities between the two regions. Measures are taken to solve the problem through more frequent meeting to share information on implementation status and better coordination with the M&E team;
- ✓ The absence of all health and nutrition field staff in Maradi during the whole quarter negatively impacted the program implementation. Finally all field staff are in place. One had a motorcycle accident in the field resumed work during the quarter;
- ✓ There is still a delay in the rehabilitation of wells;
- ✓ The low number of home visits to pregnant and lactating women due to missing field staff due to sickness/accident or resignation.

II. Lessons learned

At this stage in the program, the key lessons learned include the following:

- ✓ It is essential to have regular home visits to PLW if the program wants to have greater impact and touch all PM2A beneficiaries-- mainly care takers;
- ✓ The program needs to ensure that health and nutrition teams coordinate more with the food commodity team to ensure updated lists of beneficiaries-- but also to be both present at the distribution sites;

III. Success story

"I'm Baaratou, I'm 20, married with 2 children. I was identified as a mentor by the girls in my village since the creation of the safe space in April 2013. Since that date we received a series of trainings and also support and advice from the Sawki program. These trainings allow us to support, train and educate adolescent girls who participate in safe spaces. Among the topics discussed, the major one is on early marriage; its definition, its consequences but also on how to prevent it. Myself, as a mentor, I should be among the actors who must work in the fight against early marriage. I always gave my example with regard to this phenomenon; I've always said that if I had my choice, I'd be in school, not a housewife, and this has attracted much attention of many girls. Thank God I did not have a fistula but I suffered a lot during my first pregnancy and delivery at 16 and the second 2 years later. I assure you many girls are aware and do not hesitate to refuse a marriage at 14 years, 15 years and even 16 years. The history of Hannatou Sani is a perfect illustration of the awareness of girls.

Hannatou Sani is 14, she has not had the opportunity to be enrolled in school and is one of the girls who participates regularly in the safe spaces activities. Four months ago, Hannatou's parents wanted to give her in marriage. She explained that she is not yet big enough to go to a home as their mentor told them even if one chooses to marry early, you wait until you're at least 16 years old. Also, that there are many consequences associated with getting married early. Despite her tears and refusal, Hannatou's parents did not listen to her because they were under pressure from the parents of the bridegroom who already paid the dowry 1 year earlier. Hannatou, very desperate, came to tell me the same story I already heard through her aunt. I consoled her and I asked her permission to go talk to her parents, which she accepted. After discussions with Hannatou's mother, I finally understood that she herself is obliged to celebrate the marriage because of the pressure of the groom and his parents. With my insistence, the mother asked me to give them a few days to negotiate a postponement of marriage. A few days later, Hannatou came joyfully to me, thanking me for having interceded with her parents who agreed to postpone her marriage to next year."

