



PACT II

June 2013 – May 2014

Baseline Report



July 2013

SOMMAIRE

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1 Context

As a follow on to the *Projet d'Assistance Ciblée aux Communautés de Tchirozerine* (PACT) program completed May 31st, 2013, the goal of PACT II is to consolidate initial recovery gains achieved in the food security and livelihoods situation of communities in the Tchirozerine Department affected by repeated crises, in order to prevent them from sliding back into extreme vulnerability. Its principal objectives are to enhance producers' crop production and restore the livelihoods of producers and micro-entrepreneurs in the four targeted communes: Agadez, Dabaga, Tabelot and Tchirozérine. At program startup, a baseline survey was conducted through sampling of 20 villages in the projected implementation area. This survey also highlights some of the gains from the PACT program, which will guide PACT II program implementation, though does not have sufficient statistical relevance to draw impact conclusions with an acceptable degree of confidence.

2 Objectives and Methodology

2.1 Objectives

1. Evaluate household dietary diversity scores (HDDS) and household survival strategies
2. Analyze the food security situation in target villages in order to hone intervention strategies to improve household livelihood strategies
3. Evaluate the level of knowledge and practices of VSLA beneficiaries under PACT I
4. Gather information about the agricultural products most in demand for target farmers
5. Identify the most promising small enterprise value chain opportunities
6. Establish a baseline to monitor progress related to the project's desired outcomes and goal.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1. Secondary Data Collection

An initial preparatory phase focusing principally on review of secondary data helped to better understand implementation results achieved through PACT and key priorities for PACT II. Using secondary data the program team defined the objectives of the baseline, the study zone, and the surveys to be used.

2.2.2. Primary Data Collection

Prior to data collection, a random sampling based on the « sampling step » method identified 20 villages among the four communes in which the survey would be carried out.

Commune	Total number of villages	Number chosen for survey	Sampling strategy for village
Agadez	5	2	Sampling step
Dabaga	14	5	Sampling step
Tabelot	15	5	Sampling step
Tchirozerine	11	8	Sampling step
Total	45	20	

2.2.3. Data entry and analysis

Data entry was provided by a contractor using an Excel database developed by Mercy Corps' Monitoring and Evaluation team. Isolation of errors and most analysis was done using SPSS 19.

3. Study Results

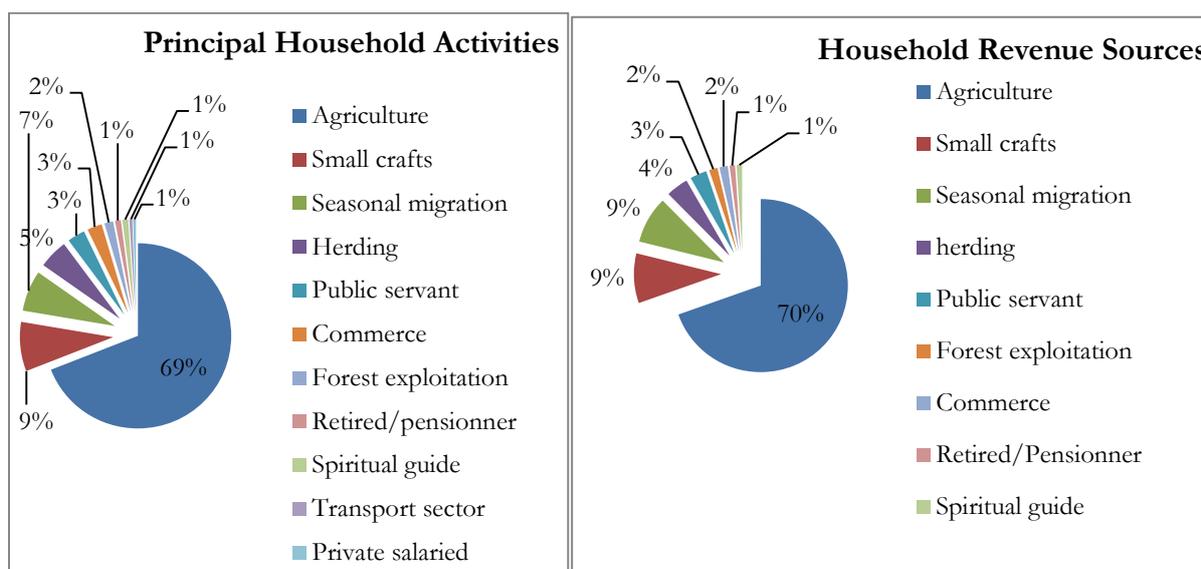
3.1. Socio-economic

Level of formal education of heads of households, disaggregated by sex:

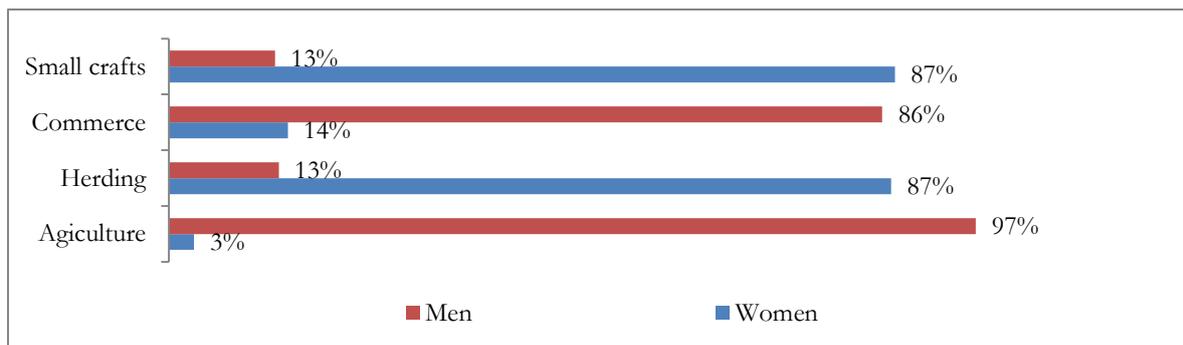
Sex	None	Primary	Middle school	High school	Higher-level	Koranic	Literacy training	Total
Male	69	16	6	11	4	46	24	176
Female	14	3	0	0	0	3	1	21
Total	83	19	6	11	4	49	25	197

Twenty one of the households surveyed were women-headed; the education level of these heads of household was fairly low. Only four of them had numeracy training – or 19% – compared to 34% of men lead households. The surveying method asked questions of both the men and women of each household.

3.2. Principal household activities and income sources

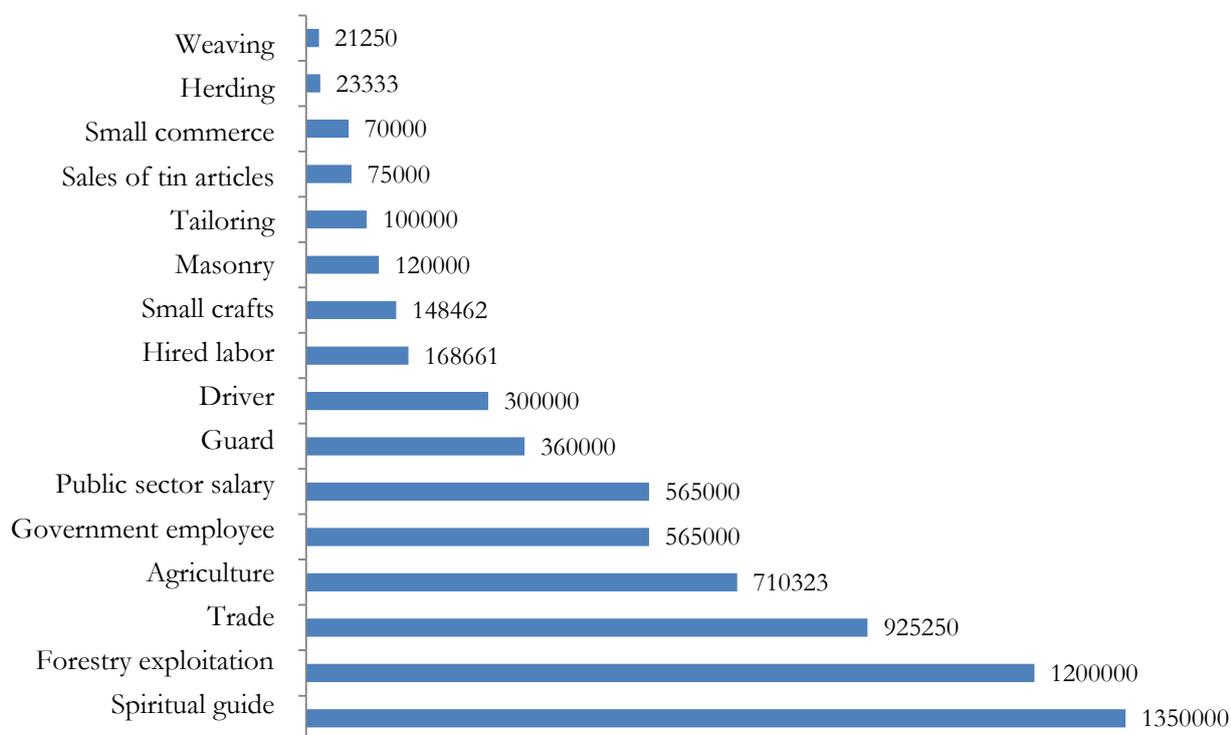


Agriculture remains by far the principal revenue source for households, followed by handicrafts and migration/remittances. Other income generating activities of note include small-scale animal husbandry, small commerce, and weaving. Some activities are practiced principally by women while others principally by men – generally, women are less involved in agriculture than animal husbandry.



In terms of average annual revenue of these different activities, *maraboutage* (traditional spiritual guide/advisor), forestry and commerce are at the head of the list, as shown below. Agriculture, while being the principal activity in terms of numbers of people involved, is only the fourth in terms of annual revenue generated, behind the other activities mentioned above.

Average annual revenue by activity



3.3. Results linked to project goal:

3.3.1. Household Dietary Diversity Scores (HDDS)

Dietary Diversity Score	Total number of households	Agadez	Dabaga	Tabelot	Tchirozerine
Below Average	8	37%	52%	20%	24%
Average	104	11%	33%	25%	46%
Above average	87	51%	15%	55%	30%
	Total	~100%	100%	100%	100%

104 households, or just under 50% of those surveyed, had an HDDS between 3 and 4 -- that is to say consuming between three and four different groups of food on a daily basis. 87 households (43%) had an HDDS of over 5, while eight households surveyed (4%) had a dietary diversity score between 1 and 2 (two food groups (most commonly cereals and sugar)) consumed daily.

Nutritional Diversity Score	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Frequency
Below Average	1	2.0	1.0	8
Average	3	4.0	3.0	104
Above average	5	10.0	5.9	87
Total	1	10.0	4.6	199

Among households with weak or average nutritional diversity scores, there was not much variance in score. However, among the 87 households with an above-average score, scores ranged from 5 to 10, with an average of 5.9.

3.3.2. Food consumed by more than 50% of the households in each quartile

NDS weak	NDS average	NDS above average
Cereals	Cereals	Cereals
Sugar	Sugar	Sugar
	Miscellaneous, including Spices	Miscellaneous, including Spices
	Oil and fat	Oil and fat
	Vegetables	Vegetables
		Fruits
		Milk and milk products

Even in a vegetable producing zone, the study found that only about 50% of families include vegetables and fruits as part of their daily diet, suggesting that the lower-score profiles may be selling more than they consume. None of the three profiles consume foods rich in vitamin A, and consumption of legumes and tubers is also very weak among all profile groups.

3.3.3. Household Food Security: Coping Strategies Index (CSI)

Coping Strategy Index	Agadez	Dabaga	Tabelot	Tchirozerine
Acceptable Food Secure	38%	21%	49%	30%
Moderate food insecure	41%	30%	28%	36%
Critical food insecure	22%	49%	23%	34%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

In terms of classification, those households using 4 or fewer coping strategies were given a CSI score of “acceptable.” Moderate food insecurity is termed having between 4 and 7 different strategies used during the week, and critical food insecure is defined as those who had to engage 7 or more different survival strategies during the week.

Household Hunger Scale:

The collection and analysis of the HHS was based on three principle survey question points:

- No food in the house due to lack of means
- Need to go to bed hungry
- The need to go a day without eating.

The only difference was an adjustment in the questionnaire timeframe from the 30 days (recommended by the HHS tool), to 7 days, with a goal of improving accuracy in recollection.

Project area hunger status:

HHS Profile	Number of households	Percentage
Little or no household hunger	116	58
Moderate household hunger	58	29
Severe household hunger	25	13
Total	199	100

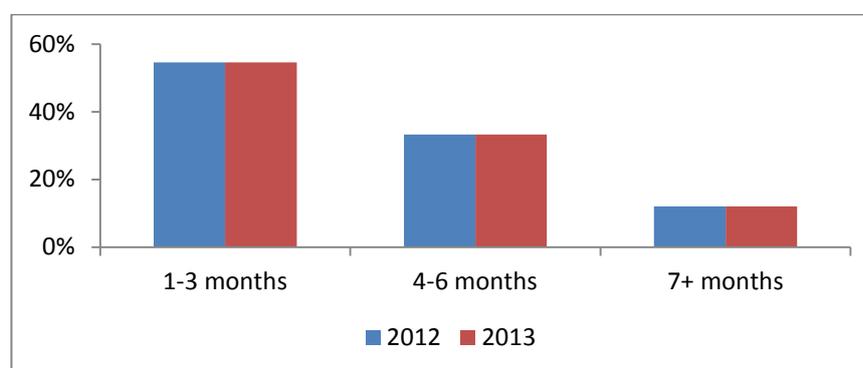
Situation by locality:

Locality	Total number of households	Little or no household hunger (%)	Moderate household hunger (%)	Severe household hunger (%)
Agadez	21	48%	33%	19%
Dabaga	50	36%	42%	22%
Tchirozerine	49	88%	8%	4%
Tabelot	79	57%	33%	10%

3.4. Results as they relate to project objectives

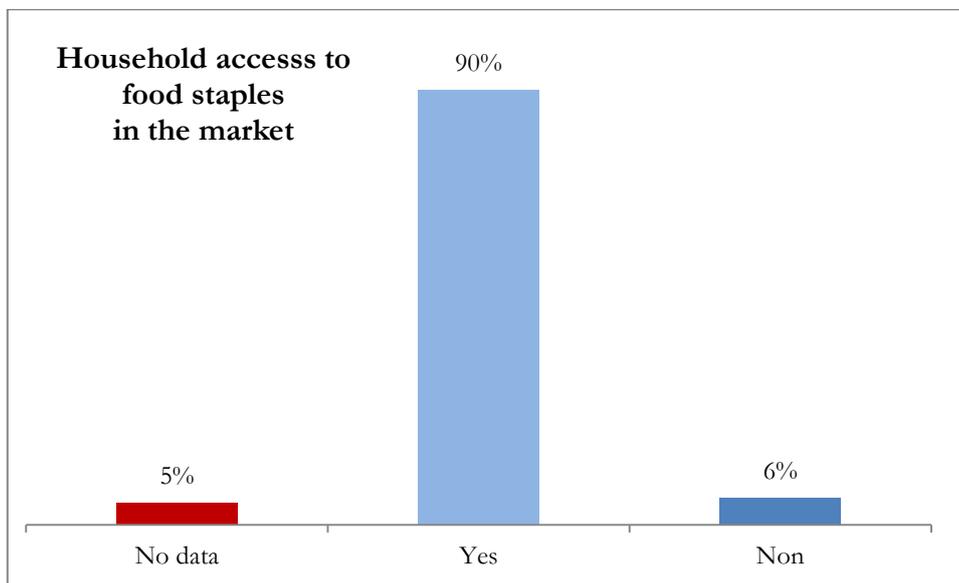
3.4.1. Objective 1: Producers enhance crop production

Household Food Self-Sufficiency, 2012 and 2013

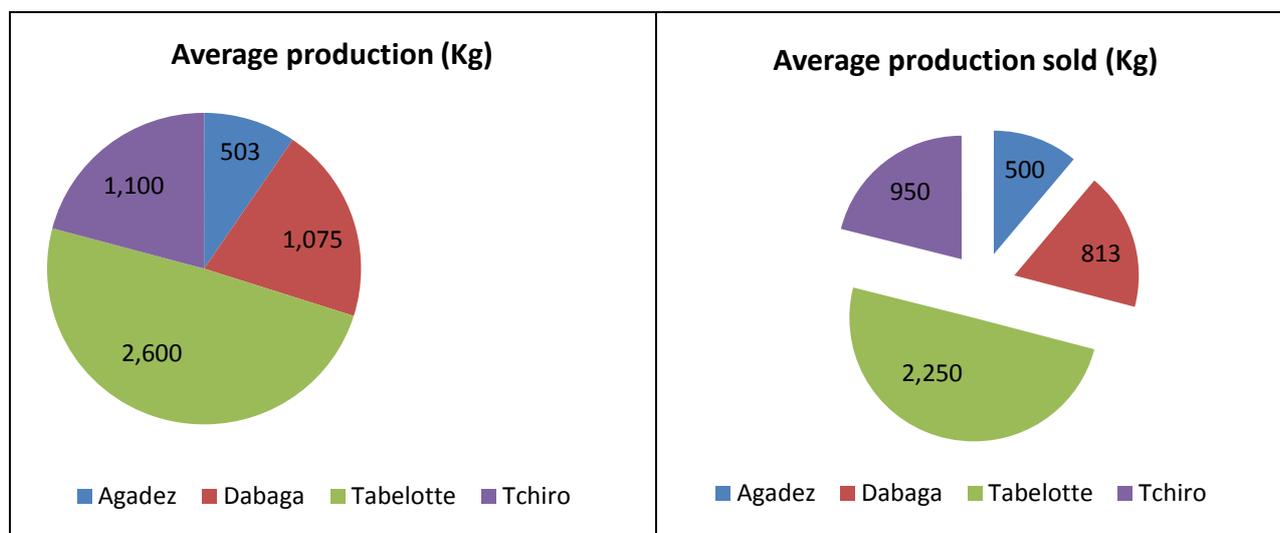


Uniformity between 2012 and 2013 is likely related to the challenge of calculating food self-sufficiency in a context where the principle income activity is market gardening.

At the time of the baseline survey, 43% of households reported having food reserves while 45% reported having none. 90% of households surveyed affirmed that their food items are available in local markets, so it is possible that food reserves were purchased rather than produced by households.



Average production and sales (kg) of maize, wheat, onions, potatoes, and other vegetables.



Tabelotte commune households produced the most agricultural products followed by Tchirozerine with the average production of 2,600 kg and 1,100 kg per household, respectively. Average household production within the other communes varied between 500 and 1,000 kg. For all communes, more than half of the production is sold. This result explains in part the nutritional diversity scores, which may be linked to producers' difficulties in conserving their produce.

3.4.2 Objective 2: Producers and micro-entrepreneurs restore their livelihoods activities

Current main small enterprise activities

Agadez	Dabaga	Tabelot	Tchirozerine
Sale of garden produce			
Seasonal animal rearing	Seasonal animal rearing	Seasonal animal rearing	Seasonal animal rearing
Masonry	Small commerce	Crafts	Crafts
Small commerce	Crafts	Day labor	Day labor

Sale of garden produce is the number one activity in all communes followed by seasonal animal rearing. Of note: garden produce activities are principally a male-initiated activity, all animal rearing is principally a women initiated activity, as this baseline study demonstrated earlier. Crafts are much less prominent in Agadez than in the other communes. Craft activities consist principally of weaving mats (« kaba »). Small commerce is most often house-front sales of small articles.

4. PACT Program Gains (2012-2013)

As PACT II is a follow on program to PACT, a comprehensive endline survey will be conducted at the end of PACT II to measure cumulative results. The opportunity of the baseline for PACT II was seized however to measure preliminary results from PACT. Though of the 20 villages randomly chosen for the baseline, only seven benefited from previous PACT activities (of which only five had usable data), and results below can therefore not be generalized to all PACT results. After data analysis, it was seen that information from only five of these seven villages was able to be analyzed.

4.1. Effects of Cash for Work on the Communities

Of the five villages interviewed, money was received most often by women with the exception of Alercess, where those who did the work picked up the money. Principal uses for the money for beneficiary households included securing food, nonfood items such as clothes soap and even medicine.

4.2. Seed support effects

As Alercess and Alikinine households received seeds late, these groups held onto their seeds for use in the next gardening cycle. Villages receiving seeds through vouchers all observed an improvement in production. This improvement, according to recipients, was linked not only to having received better seeds, but because of improved infrastructure, which helped protect garden farmland from the risks of water erosion.

4.3. VSLA activities

Membership numbers which averaged 21 per group, did not vary much between the time of their creation and the time of the survey. Training activities occurred over the course of five months with different villages, with a visit from the trainer every two weeks. A number of different training themes were cited as useful: respect of regular savings deposit habits, holding of meetings,

awareness raising on HIV, discussions on loans and mechanisms for reimbursement, and ensuring understanding between members.

At the time of the survey only one of the groups (Alercess) had been able to initiate income generating activities (notably small commerce and knitting). Loan amounts were 10,000 F CFA, with reimbursement in two monthly payments. Three of the five groups interviewed had used the funds for social assistance with interest upon reimbursement.

5. Recommendations for implementation

- ⇒ Raise awareness among producers about garden products with a high-protein value (peas and beans) and rich in vitamin A (carrots, squash, sweet potatoes) as a key path to improved nutritional diversity.
- ⇒ Emphasize vegetable transformation and conservation to better address household nutritional needs over time.
- ⇒ Initiate a quick assessment of the capacity of VSLA groups for recommendations to the VSLA partner, ASUSU.
- ⇒ Ensure close monitoring to maximize impact with beneficiaries. Ideally this would be no more than 10 or 12 villages for field agent.