

CRS Mali
Likhaiv: Restoring Food Security and Livelihoods in Nara Circle
Agreement No. AID-FFP-G-14-00031

Project Start Date: July 9, 2014
Project Completion Date: December 31, 2014

FINAL REPORT

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Introduction of the Likhaiv Project to local leaders in Bofonde¹

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¹ Photo credit: Samake ADC Likhaiv project – CSPEEDA

I. Introduction

Mali's National Committee Analysis for the Harmonised Framework Report in March 2014 predicted that 55% of the population of Nara Circle, in the northern part of the Koulikoro Region, would enter phases 2 (stressed) to the maximum rating of 5 (famine) during the lean season of June to August 2014.² Mali's December 2013 early warning system (*Système d'Alerte Précoce*, or SAP) report³ supported these findings by elevating the status in four communes of Nara Circle – Dogofry, Guénéibé, Nara, and Koronga – to “severe economic difficulty.” The Early Warning Groups (EWGs) established by CRS' FFP-funded *Duwute*⁴ project predicted a similarly poor harvest in 2014.

In May 2014, CRS submitted an Emergency Food Security Project proposal, called “*Likhaiv*⁵: Restoring Food Security and Livelihoods in Nara Circle.” *Likhaiv* proposed to alleviate severe food insecurity and support livelihoods recovery for 5,105 households (HHs) in 29 highly food insecure villages in the communes of Dogofry, Guénéibé, and Koronga in Nara Circle.

The principal components of the project included: Unconditional Cash Transfers (UCT) for livelihoods restoration and for food, and the strengthening of capacities in nutrition, gender, agropastoral systems, and natural resource management.

USAID provided a pre-award authorization letter on July 11, 2014, which authorized expenses starting on July 9, 2014, so that CRS could begin operations. CRS received the full agreement (AID-FFP-G-14-00031) on August 8, 2014.

CRS carried out this project in partnership with *Centre Sahalien de Prestation, d'Etudes, d'Ecodéveloppement et de Démocratie Appliquée* (CSPEEDA), a local organization. CRS and CSPEEDA also worked with CAMEC, a local microfinance institution, for the transfer of cash to the beneficiaries.

This final report provides information on the activities carried out during the project's life from July to December 2014.

II. Summary of Achievements (July-December 2014)

All (100%) of the activities planned for the *Likhaiv* project were achieved on time. The following sections provide general descriptions of the achievements. The details by indicator are related in Attachment 1: Indicator Tracking Table.

Beneficiaries reached: The project reached 5,013 HHs, or 98% of the target of 5,105 HHs. This difference in the number of HHs is due to CRS' detection of 91 duplicate (i.e., registered twice) beneficiary HHs during the payment process, as well as to the absence of 1 HH that had left the villages to seek better living conditions in Mauritania, after the beneficiary identification phase. However, it is worth noting that the total number of beneficiary individuals was 35,410, or 90% of the population in the target area.

² SAP, Commissariat à la Sécurité Alimentaire, Présidence de la République. Rapport d'Atelier, Dec 2013.

³ *Système d'Alerte Précoce*, Commissariat à la Sécurité Alimentaire, Présidence de la République. *Evaluation Définitive de la Situation Alimentaire du Pays. Campagne Agricole 2013-2014* (March 2014).

⁴ *Duwute* means “to support oneself” in the Soninke language.

⁵ *Likhaiv* means “a response to the pleas of vulnerable people” in the Maure

Beneficiaries disaggregated by age and sex: A preliminary study yielded basic demographic social indicators for the populations in the 29 target villages, such as a gender balance in the target population of 51% females to 49% males, among the total number of 35,410 individual beneficiaries.

Table 1: Project beneficiaries disaggregated by age and sex

Gender	Age						Total	%
	0-6 mos	6-24 mos	25-59 mos	5-18 yrs	19-60 yrs	60+ yrs		
Male	652	1,491	2,417	6,316	5,679	924	17,479	49%
Female	657	1,399	2,177	5,361	7,266	1,071	17,931	51%
Total	1,309	2,890	4,594	11,677	12,945	1,995	35,410	100%

Cost per beneficiary: The cost per beneficiary was calculated by dividing the total program costs (1,360,187 USD) by the total number of actual beneficiaries (35,410). The currency conversion rate in the project proposal is FCFA 474.635 = USD 1 (based on THE April 22-28, 2014, rate), but the currency conversation rate during the project's implementation was on average FCFA 500 = US \$1. For these cost calculations, CRS has used the actual rate of FCFA 500 = US \$1.

Table 2: Project cost per beneficiary

	Planned	Achieved	Comments
Cost/beneficiary to donor	\$ 45.68	\$ 38.41	The individual beneficiary target was 29,781, but the actual number reached during the project was 35,410. The discrepancy is due to the increased # of HHs targeted compared to the original version of the proposal.
Cost/HH to donor	\$ 266.44	\$ 271.33	The HH target was 5,105, but the project reached 5,013.

Unconditional Cash Transfers (UCT): Four payments per targeted HH were made in all of the 29 selected villages with the well-informed support, beneficiary mobilization, and organization of CSPEEDA on the days of payment. The responsibility for payments was entrusted to the CAMEC microfinance institution, with supervision and support provided by the CRS accounting team.

The ration for the UCT for Livelihoods was a fixed amount of 25,000 FCFA (50 USD) per HH, which was determined based on CRS' estimate of the prices of seed and animals in local markets.⁶

The ration costs for the UCT for Food varied depending on the size of the HH, at about \$5.12 USD per person per month for families in the smallest size group. This is in-line with SPHERE nutritional requirements (2,100 Kcal, 53 g protein, 40 g fat), provided 50% of daily nutritional needs⁷, and was based on market prices in the area. The project sought to cover 50% of the daily nutritional needs of members of targeted HHs by permitting them to purchase food on the local market. The average amount received per HH member decreased as the size of the HH increased. This mitigated the risk that recipients might artificially inflate the reported size of the HH, and also offset the benefits of economies of scale that larger HHs tend to possess, compared to smaller HHs. Also, larger HHs are more likely to have multiple people generating income, unlike smaller families. It also minimized the risk of dependency on the project.

⁶ It was estimated that each HH would possess 0.5-1 ha of land for cultivation, requiring an outside figure of 10 kg of millet seed, which costs around 780 FCFA/kg, or \$15.6 for 10kg. According to market contacts in the zone (February 2014), a goat could be purchased for 18,000 FCFA (\$36) and a lamb could be purchased for 22,000 FCFA (\$45). Vaccinations and deworming were relatively inexpensive at 200-4,000 FCFA (\$0.50-8).

⁷ <http://www.spherehandbook.org/en/appendix-6/> follows the WFP/UNHCR Guidelines for Estimating Food and Nutritional Needs in Emergencies (Annex III: Nutritional values of commonly used food aid commodities in Emergencies, (<http://pfeda.univ-lille1.fr/Infos/1999/0327wfpE.htm>))

The total amount used for transfers for the 5,013 HHs during this project was \$835,266 USD (417,633,000 FCFA). Please see Table 3 below for the breakdown.

Table 3: Unconditional Cash Transfers for Project Likhaiv

Type	Total amount paid	Frequency of payment	Amount received per HH												
Unconditional cash transfers for livelihoods	\$ 250,650 USD (125,325,000 FCFA)	1 payment: End of August	25,000 FCFA (\$ 50 USD)												
Unconditional cash transfers for food	\$ 584,616 USD (292,308,000 FCFA)	3 segments: August, September, and November	The ration provided per household was as follows: <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>HH Size</th> <th>Ration</th> <th>Total received</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Up to 7 members</td> <td>\$ 35.87 USD</td> <td>\$ 107.61 USD</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8-22 members</td> <td>\$ 56.52 USD</td> <td>\$ 169.56 USD</td> </tr> <tr> <td>23+ members</td> <td>\$ 61.96 USD</td> <td>\$ 185.88 USD</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	HH Size	Ration	Total received	Up to 7 members	\$ 35.87 USD	\$ 107.61 USD	8-22 members	\$ 56.52 USD	\$ 169.56 USD	23+ members	\$ 61.96 USD	\$ 185.88 USD
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Time from award of agreement to possession of the cash transfers by beneficiaries: The time between the start date on the agreement (August 1, 2014) to the first transfer of cash to the beneficiaries was planned for 30 days but actually occurred after only 11 days, on August 12. However, if one calculates the time from the receipt of the PAL to the first transfer of cash, the length of time was 33 days.

Community organization: Various community committees and volunteer groups were set up by the project in order to strengthen the community capacities and reinforce the project's sustainability.

Table 4: Community committees and volunteer groups established by Project Likhaiv

Commune	Selection committees		Feedback committees		Livelihood leaders		Nutritional Volunteers		Gender Role Models		Number of villages
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	
Dogofry	39	13	26	13	39	26	13	39	26	26	13
Guénéibé	30	10	20	10	30	20	10	30	20	20	10
Koronga	18	6	12	6	18	12	6	18	12	12	6
Sub-totals	87	29	58	29	87	58	29	87	58	58	0
Total	116		87		145		116		116		29

The project team held 116 general meetings with 9,810 participants from the target villages; of these participants, 6,798 were women and 3,012 were men, for a female participation rate of 69.3%. The themes developed during these group sessions included: project activities and objectives, beneficiary selection criteria, partner roles and responsibilities, and cash use (i.e., cash for livelihoods and hunger prevention). In order to reach the maximum number of beneficiaries in the surrounding communities and villages in the project area, CRS also used radio broadcasts to disseminate information on the above-mentioned subjects, as well as on: Ebola Virus Disease (EVD), gender and development issues in collaboration with the agriculture services, plant protection, water and forests, health and livestock for community behavior change, application of agricultural production techniques, natural resource management, hand washing with soap, and livestock vaccination (e.g., at the proper time with the right vaccines). Exact figures are not available on the number of listeners who tuned into those radio broadcasts.

Training: CRS and CSPEEDA conducted trainings with the assistance of the appropriate local Government of Mali (GoM) technical services, i.e., the Agricultural Services, the Plant Protection Service, the Environment Service, and the Health Service. These trainings were aimed at community mobilization groups on gender and development, nutritional volunteers in their respective fields, livelihoods leaders, Early Warning Groups, and emergency response groups (GAP RU).

For each training, the following topics were covered:

- **Livelihoods:** The livelihoods training covered market gardening (i.e., parceling, row making, installation of nurseries and transplanting, use of organic manure); recycling of crop residues (i.e., constitution of cattle feed, composting); grain storage techniques; regeneration of natural plant resources; and the construction of improved barns.
- **Nutrition:** The nutrition trainings covered two main areas: nutrition essentials and the feeding of infants and young children.
 - **Nutrition Essentials:** The area of training covered exclusive breastfeeding, complementary feeding, feeding sick children, nutrition for women, the prevention of Vitamin A deficiencies, the prevention of anemia (lack of iron), and the prevention of disorders due to iodine deficiencies.
 - **Feeding Infants and Young Children:** This area of training covered complementary feeding, supplementary feeding, malnutrition, the causes of malnutrition, and iodine deficiencies
- **Gender and development:** The gender training followed six modules: (1) the concept of gender, (2) the context of the approach, (3) gender as a tool, (4) gender for social transformation, (5) different types of community dialogue, and (6) notions of community dialogue. This training was completed via a final assessment and the delivery of relevant documents to the team for the further training of community mobilization groups and project beneficiaries. By the end of the training, all participants were able to define gender and list ways of mainstreaming gender in the household.
- **Monitoring and management of risks:** The trainings for the EWG and GAP RU covered the Early Hazard indicators, the groups' roles and responsibilities, and how to complete early warning system, or SAP, forms.

Table 5: Activity implementation table

Type of Training	Activities planned	% Activities Achieved	Observations
Livelihoods (agropastoral management and natural resource management)	Training for communities on agricultural techniques, composting, livestock, and natural resource management.	100%	5,801 participants (3,125 women and 2,676 men) This training included 1 initial training and 2 refresher trainings for 145 livelihoods leaders (i.e., 5 per targeted village). These livelihoods leaders were responsible for cascade trainings in each village.
Nutrition	AEN et ANJE ⁸	100%	7,410 participants, including 7,134 women and 276 men

⁸ Essential Nutrition Actions (AEN) and Nutrition Actions for Children and Pregnant and Lactating Women (ANJE)

	Organization of malnutrition screening meetings	100%	268 children were found to be moderately malnourished, and 72 were found to be severely malnourished. Severely malnourished children were referred to health facilities, and both monitoring and counseling on appropriate nutrition were provided to moderately malnourished children.
	Distribution of sensitization kits	100%	29 boxes of images, 29 boxes of advice cards, and 100 Shakir bands were distributed.
Gender and development	Training of community mobilization groups	100%	116 participants, including 58 women and 58 men
	Sensitization of beneficiaries and communities on gender and gender social transformation	100%	87 meetings held with 6,380 participants, including 4,744 women.
Monitoring and management of risks	Refresher training for EWG members on their roles and responsibilities, collecting data, and risk indicators	100%	348 participants, including 58 women and 290 men ⁹
	Community meetings held	100%	Analysis of collected information

III. Impact of the project

The impact of the project was measured through the following monitoring and evaluation activities: an After Action Review (AAR) combined with a Real Time Evaluation (RTE), two post-distribution monitoring visits, two CRS monitoring visits, three monitoring visits from CSPEEDA, and a final evaluation. Key findings from all of the evaluations are summarized below:

IR1.1: Vulnerable HHs use cash to restore livelihood assets

All (100%) of the respondents interviewed during the final evaluation said that they had restored their productive assets compared to the previous lean season.

According to the second CRS post-distribution monitoring visit, a minority of recipients used their UCT for Livelihoods to buy seeds, repair agricultural equipment, or treat their animals. In total, only 16% of the total cash paid to beneficiaries was used for agricultural inputs/equipment.

⁹ These groups were established during the *Duwute* project and were revitalized in some villages due to the notable departure of some members. These groups benefitted from two training sessions held in each village on the roles and responsibilities of the members, and on the SAP information sheets, hazard trigger indicators, the system of relaying feedback to the circle level. The trainers assisted each village group in holding monthly meetings.

The reason for this low percentage is because the distribution of UCT for Livelihoods is very time-sensitive, and the project began later than planned. The UCT for Livelihoods was originally meant to be distributed in June, the period in the targeted zone when livelihoods inputs are most needed due to the agricultural schedule. However, because the PAL arrived in July, and the final grant agreement arrived in August, the UCT for Livelihoods did not take place until August 12. With the agricultural season in mind, CRS did what it could to jump-start activities as quickly as possible. CRS used its private funds to conduct the beneficiary identification, equipment purchasing, and seed assessment in July, which allowed it to conduct the UCT for Livelihoods transfer only a few days after the agreement was issued.

91% of the people trained, among those surveyed, have applied at least one of the improved agriculture and livestock production technologies or skills from their *Likhaiv* training (Source: *Likhaiv* Final evaluation).

However, because the UCT for Livelihoods occurred in August, during the lean season, and because it occurred at the same time as the first UCT for Food, the project's beneficiaries tended to use their livelihoods funds to meet their immediate food needs, and hence, the low 16% rate of expenditure on agricultural inputs.

Likhaiv project support in the form of cash payments kept families together and aided in preventing negative coping strategies. The cash distributions were correlated with a considerable decrease in migration rates in the targeted households. This constituted additional household labor made available for domestic and agricultural input needs, thereby further reinforcing livelihood assets through increased capacity to prepare for the coming agricultural season (Source: *Likhaiv* Final evaluation).

IR 1.2: Vulnerable HHs use improved agriculture and livestock production technologies or skills

As referenced earlier in the report, various trainings and events on the following themes were organized by CRS, CSPEEDA, the Technical Service of Agriculture and Livestock, and the latter's local partner:

- **Agricultural sector:** Topics included pre-, during, and post-harvest cultivation procedures, seed selection techniques, weed elimination and control (especially striga¹⁰), compost production techniques, and market gardening production techniques. Agricultural training proved useful and illuminating for the participants, especially the explanation of striga biology, which allowed the participants to understand this plant's enormous capacity to hinder production.
- **Animal husbandry sector:** The subjects concerned livestock feed production techniques from crop residues and natural forage (e.g., silage, storage, and grass conservation), and livestock management.
- **Fertilizer:** This training covered the importance of organic fertilizer use in agricultural production and the disadvantage of intensive production on output and the environment.

In the *Likhaiv* final evaluation, 163 people out of 190, or 86%, confirmed that they had been trained on and/or informed about new agricultural techniques/animal production, and 91% of those who had been trained said that they had applied at least one of the technologies or skills that they had learned.

¹⁰ Striga is the parasitic plant épirhize, which is very common in Africa, and which attacks food crops (e.g., sorghum, millet, maize).

Table 6: Applied agricultural/animal techniques

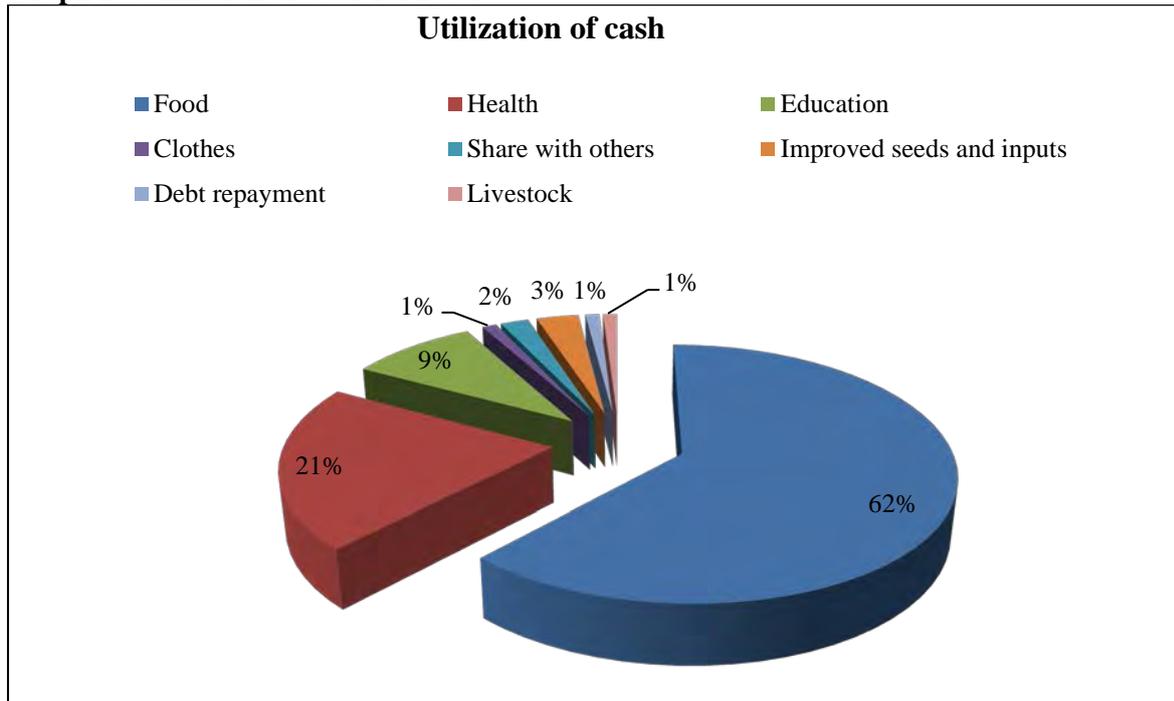
New technologies	Use of agricultural/animal techniques	
	Number of respondents who said they applied the techniques	Percentages
Crop maintenance	91	61%
Composting	84	57%
Striga prevention	65	44%
Vaccination of animals	40	27%
Production of improved animal feed	38	26%
Market garden production technologies	35	24%
Grain storage techniques	29	20%
Pest prevention strategies	23	16%
Improved shade structure construction	17	11%
Anti-erosion measures	16	11%
Recycling of crop residues	13	9%
Regeneration of natural plant resources	10	7%
Forage protection firewalls	9	6%

IR2.1. Vulnerable HHs used cash to purchase food and other basic needs

Post distribution surveys revealed that 62% of the UCT for food was spent on feeding the household, 21% of it was spent on health, and the remaining 17% was spent on expenses such as school fees and materials. The relatively high percentage which was spent on health can be attributed to the region's high rates of malaria during this time of year. The health expenses largely went towards medicine and hospital fees. In total, 99% of the surveyed beneficiaries confirmed that they improved access to food and other basic needs thanks to the UCT.

The majority of products purchased under the food category were mainly cereals, legumes, and garden products. It is also worth noting that although the majority of children under 5 years in Mali eat the same diet as other HH members, CRS found that surveyed household decision-makers spent a certain amount for the purchase of powdered milk, cereal flour, and vegetables, suggesting that these cash grants for the lean period were able to improve the nutritional status of HH members, including children and pregnant and lactating women.

Graph 1: Utilization of UCT for Food



IR2.2. Vulnerable HHs use improved nutritional practices and/or behaviors

The training and awareness-raising sessions on good nutrition were performed during the cash payments for the lean season, with the intent of influencing the financial decisions made by the beneficiaries after the cash was distributed.

During the distribution, one of the key messages was a call for women to take better care of their children’s nutritional needs, as well as those of pregnant and breastfeeding women. These trainings and awareness-raising sessions promoted key behavior changes such as: the adoption of exclusive breastfeeding and the use of local products in nutritional improvements for malnourished children and pregnant women. The local nutrition volunteers (4 per village, for 116 total), who were put in place and trained during the project, organized examination sessions in the villages to raise awareness of the nutritional status of children in the community and in order to refer children with severe acute malnutrition for consultation at local health centers.

As reported in the *Likhaiv* Final Evaluation of February 2015, 89% of respondent beneficiaries claimed to have been trained, informed, and made aware of good nutritional practices by the *Likhaiv* project.

Table 7: Use of new nutritional techniques

Nutritional techniques	Use of nutritional techniques	
	Number of respondents who said they applied this nutritional technique	Percentage
Optimal nutrition for pregnant women	94	59%
Optimal nutrition for all household members	88	55%
Exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months	84	53%
Good nutritional care for the sick and severely malnourished children	45	28%
Adequate vitamin A intake for women and children	43	27%
Child weaning strategies	36	23%
Adequate iron intake for women and children	35	22%
6 market garden production technologies	29	18%
Adequate intake of iodine by all household members	20	13%

Gender empowerment: Cash was mainly granted to women in the targeted households, as studies have confirmed a direct correlation between women’s empowerment to make crucial household financial decisions, and substantial improvements in overall household nutrition and hygiene. According to the post-distribution monitoring, training community leaders on gender roles has had a significant impact on women’s participation in decision-making within households. 93% of respondents during the final evaluation confirmed that women had a say in allocating various amounts of the distributed cash. This was close to the figure of 97% that CRS collected in its second post-distribution monitoring report.

The implication of women in decision-making on the use of cash increased from 79% to 97% during the project.
(Source: *Likhaiv* PDM 1 and PDM 2).

During the project, CRS and CSPEEDA set up gender models in all 29 of the targeted villages. A total of 116 groups of “models,” i.e., people who could model good practices, each consisting of two men and two women, were selected and trained. These men and women were selected based on their willingness to enact change at the community level, as well as their availability to undertake sensitizations around gender. The group members’ primary responsibilities included holding sensitization sessions, making HH visits, encouraging change at the HH level through conversations and observations, and sharing information on their progress with CSPEEDA staff. These groups monitored the application of their recommendations at the HH level in their communities. For

example, they observed whether the men in their village engaged more in HH chores and assisted women in collecting water and firewood.

IR 2.3. Field staff monitor markets to ensure quality, quantity, and prices

CRS conducted market assessments 2 weeks before the project began, monthly during the project, and 6 weeks after the project ended (i.e., during the final evaluation). The purpose of this monitoring was to assess whether the project had created excessive fluctuations in the market prices for common items, or whether the project had caused shortages of such items. CRS’ principal finding was that the cash distributed by the project did not affect the availability of the primary necessary items in the market. Additionally, the final evaluation indicated that the price of major cereals remained relatively stable during the project’s intervention period, taking into account normal seasonal changes.

Table 8: Price monitoring

Commodities	Prices before, during, and after project in FCFA
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	2 weeks before the project began	July	August	September	October	November	December	6 weeks after the project ended
Millet	209	275	300	300	280	240	230	230
Sorghum	278	280	300	300	280	240	220	220
Local rice	360	400	400	380	320	400	340	340
Imported rice	367	380	390	400	400	400	375	375
Niebe	591	800	750	800	600	450	500	500
Peanuts	660	860	880	800	750	600	525	525
Oil	889	800	850	900	900	900	800	800
Sugar	444	450	450	450	450	450	425	425

Source : Monitoring and Evaluation CSPEEDA

Others findings from the RTE and final evaluation:

CRS found through the RTE and final evaluation that 37% of those surveyed preferred unconditional cash, 36% preferred food distribution, 23% preferred "cash for work," and 2% preferred supplies of drinking water. Additionally, some beneficiaries reported that they preferred other types of assistance, such as the distribution of non-food items (1%), food for work (1%), and gardening support (1%).

IV. Challenges Encountered

1. **Limited livelihoods impact due to late start to project:** As noted previously in the report, the project's late start compared to the plan outlined in the proposal meant that only 16% of surveyed beneficiaries used their UCT for Livelihoods to buy agricultural inputs/equipment. CRS attempted to minimize the effects of the late start by commencing some activities in July using its private funds.
2. **Difficult access due to sporadic insecurity:** Sporadic insecurity in the project areas meant that CRS staff were sometimes unable to travel to the villages of Liboize Tinaguid and Accor Tagdaouss in Guinebe Commune, mostly during October 2014.
3. **Difficult access due to flooding:** The flooding in the Communes of Koronga and Dogofry in October meant that fields were destroyed by rains as soils were washed away. This caused issues for cash distributions as roads became impassible through flooding.
4. **Limited long-term impact due to problems during 2014-2015 agricultural season:** This project was meant to off-set and prevent long-term damage from the poor 2013-2014 agricultural season. However, the beneficiaries also experienced problems and poor returns during the 2014-2015 agricultural season. The late start and early cutoff of rains during the 2014 planting and harvest seasons, plus increased pests, resulted in high crop losses. Also, in certain locales (such as the village of M'Borie), the water points dried up. As a result, the project will not provide as great a long-term impact as hoped in terms of preserving long-term livelihoods. During the implementation period, CRS did work – as discussed in this report – with local technical services to strengthen the beneficiaries' capacity to defend against pests.

V. Lessons Learned

1. **Increased efficiency through the use of iPads:** CRS found that its use of iPads improved the efficiency and accuracy of data collection, monitoring, and transparency. They were particularly useful for beneficiary registration and cash distributions.
2. **Increased efficiency through the creation of ID cards with bar codes:** Each beneficiary HH received an ID card, and each card had a unique bar code. This was efficient, as it greatly reduced the work required of the project team in matching beneficiary IDs to the correct HH profile in the project database.
3. **Improved monitoring through the use of geopositioning software:** The project team was able to collect the geographic coordinates of all 29 targeted villages, and it used geopositioning software to create a useful implementation area map.
4. **Importance of precise timing in distributing UCT for Livelihoods:** As discussed above, UCT for Livelihoods must be distributed at exactly the right time during the agricultural calendar in order for the cash to be used for its intended purpose. Otherwise, beneficiaries will apply it to their most urgent, current needs, such as for food.
5. **Importance of locally recruiting field agents:** CRS found that by locally recruiting field agents for this project, it was able to speed up local acceptance of the project and improve overall management. (These field agents were in charge of beneficiary identification, community mobilization, and training for various groups and volunteers that the project set up.)
6. **Gender empowerment through gender models:** In the targeted villages, gender models were established to act as agents of sustainable change through support; monitoring; serving as an example for social change in the village; leading information sessions to build awareness; holding meetings with village leaders and other influential members of the community; and coordinating with women's groups in the target villages. The topics that these models discussed with other community members were mainly the involvement of women in the community development process and considering specific actions for women in that planning process.
7. **Feasibility of complaints committees:** CRS found that its model of the locally-based complaints committee worked and was appropriate for the context. These committees were part of the feedback mechanism and helped to increase the project's transparency and communication, as well as providing a way to resolve misunderstandings with the beneficiaries. It should be noted that these committees received only 10 complaints about the beneficiary identification process during the course of the project.
8. **Usefulness of conducting a gender mapping during gender sensitization/awareness activities:** CRS found that the gender mapping exercise helped convey the importance of discussing gender in the communities, as it highlighted the importance of women's responsibilities in the HH. Project staff anecdotally reported that men showed more respect towards women and that they were more likely to share decision-making around the use of the cash, as well as decisions around food and HH nutrition.

VI. Program Management and Coordination

CSPEEDA's project team held three monthly meetings, in addition to a quarterly meeting in collaboration with CRS' project team. In addition to the CRS and CSPEEDA *Likhaiv* team, the members from community Early Warning Groups and the Mayors from the 3 targeted communes attended the meeting.

CRS maintained strong ties with its partner staff and was in daily contact with field agents to ensure that activities were well-planned and executed. CRS Mali is also part of an active NGO network and communicates regularly with other actors (e.g., IRC, Guamine, SOS Sahel, Technical Services) in the Nara Circle to avoid duplication of activities.

VII. Implementation of Exit Strategy



Regarding the transition/exit strategy outlined in the proposal, the project team involved the local authorities and local technical services (e.g., the Agricultural Services) at every opportunity and enlisted them to support and be involved in the project. Additionally, CRS supported and strengthened the EWGs, which had been set up during the previous *Duwute* project. Finally, the trainings provided through this project – on gender, nutrition, and livelihoods techniques – will continue to benefit the beneficiaries well after the project’s end, helping beneficiaries to minimize the impact of future shocks.

List of Attachments:

1. Attachment 1: Indicator Tracking Table
2. Attachments 2-3: *Likhaiv* Success Stories
3. Attachment 4: *Likhaiv* photos

Attachment 1: Indicator Tracking Table (ITT)
 CDS NAB EPW Labors
 FINAL REPORT - 20 March 2014

Indicator Table	Indicators	Target	Baseline	Value at end of the Period	Percentage of Achievement	Comments
G1M	Number of beneficiaries targeted and reached	20,791 people	N/A	35,410 people	170%	The difference is due to the treatment of 4 HHs targeted compared to the original plan. The number of beneficiaries changed from 4,254 HHs (initial proposal) to 5,108 HHs (after the interim survey), in order to take into consideration the pregnancy rate of 20%.
	# of HHs enrolled	5,105 HHs	N/A	5,334 HHs	100%	Initially, 5,334 vulnerable HHs were enrolled in the program.
	Cost per beneficiary (calculated by dividing the total program cost (direct and indirect costs) by the total number of total beneficiaries)	\$45.68	N/A	\$38.41	N/A	Initially, 4,254 HHs were targeted, or 70,761 individuals. On this basis, the cost per beneficiary was \$45.68 USD. However, the actual number of beneficiaries targeted through this project was 5,108 HHs, or 35,410 individuals. As a consequence, the final cost per beneficiary was \$38.41.
	Number of people benefiting from USG-supported social assistance programming	35,775 people	N/A	35,410 people	99%	Figure reached using an average HH size of 7.
	Number of vulnerable households benefiting directly from USG assistance	5,105 HHs	N/A	5,013 HHs	98%	
SO1	% of men and women in targeted HH who say they have renewed their productive assets by the end of the project	100%	N/A	100%	100%	All (100%) of those interviewed during the final evaluation said that they had renewed their productive assets compared to the previous baseline.
RI.1	% of sampled HH (disaggregated by sex or head of HH) who say they are using cash-to-renew household assets	100%	N/A	100%	100%	
Oupe 2.1.1	# of days from donor signed agreement to distribution to beneficiaries	30 days	N/A	11 days from agreement 33 days from PAL	N/A	The PAL was dated July 9; the agreement was signed dated August 1, and the first distribution took place on August 12.
	Planned # and value of cash transfers distributed to beneficiaries (disaggregated by sex and age)	\$ 250,220 (1 cash per HH of \$50 per HH) 34,510 beneficiaries or 5,105 HHs	N/A	\$ 250,600 (1 cash per HH of \$50 per HH) 35,091 beneficiaries or 5,013 HHs	98%	Due to initially double-counting 91 HHs and the departure of 1 HH from the area, the number of HHs reached was 5,013 or 98% of the target. Beneficiaries disaggregated by sex and age: Men: 49% and Female: 51% 0-9 months: 1,309 6-24 months: 2,040 25-59 mos: 4,364 60-99 mos: 11,677 10-99 yrs: 12,545 60-99 yrs: 1,093
	Planned # and value of cash transfers disbursed by beneficiaries (disaggregated by sex and age)	\$ 250,220 (127,620,000 FCFA) 34,510 beneficiaries or 5,105 HHs, with 1 UCT per HH	N/A	\$ 250,600 (128,020,000 FCFA) 35,091 beneficiaries or 5,013 HHs, with 1 UCT per HH	98%	Please see comments for G11.
	Actual # and value of cash transfers distributed to beneficiaries (disaggregated by sex and age)	\$ 250,220 (127,620,000 FCFA) 34,510 beneficiaries or 5,105 HHs, with 1 UCT per HH	N/A	\$ 250,600 (128,020,000 FCFA) 35,091 beneficiaries or 5,013 HHs, with 1 UCT per HH	98%	Please see comments for G11.
	Actual # and value of cash transfers disbursed by beneficiaries (disaggregated by sex and age)	\$ 250,220 (127,620,000 FCFA) 34,510 beneficiaries or 5,105 HHs, with 1 UCT per HH	N/A	\$ 250,600 (128,020,000 FCFA) 35,091 beneficiaries or 5,013 HHs, with 1 UCT per HH	98%	Please see comments for G11.
	% of targeted HH who received cash for livelihood assets	100%	N/A	98%	98%	Due to initially double-counting 91 HHs and the departure of 1 HH from the area, the number of HHs reached was 5,013 or 98%.
RI.2	% of sampled HH (disaggregated by sex or head of HH) who say they are using improved agricultural and livestock production technologies or skills	100%	N/A	91%	91%	91% of those surveyed during the final evaluation said that they had applied at least one of the improved agricultural and livestock production technologies or skills.
Oupe 2.1.2	# of livelihood leaders (disaggregated by sex and age) trained in improved agriculture and livestock production technologies or skills	145 faces (men and 47 men aged 19-40 years)	N/A	143 faces (men and 47 men aged 19-40 years)	100%	
	# of beneficiaries (disaggregated by sex and age) trained by livelihood leaders in improved agriculture and livestock production technologies or skills	5,105 people (1,127 women and 2,767 men aged 19-40 years)	N/A	5,091 people (1,127 women and 2,676 men aged 19-40 years)	118%	The combined activities mobilized 5,091 people across the 29 villages, meaning each community leader (i.e. the 184 final points) trained by CSP/EFAA went on to train on average 13 others. This multiplier effect spread agricultural technology messages throughout the villages and sub-camp.
SO2	% of sampled HH (disaggregated by sex or head of household) who say they have increased access to food and other basic needs compared to the previous hungry season	100%	N/A	99%	99%	99% of those surveyed during the final evaluation said that they had increased access to food and other basic needs compared to the previous hungry season.
RI.2.1	% of sampled HHs who used transferred cash	100%	N/A	100%	100%	100% of the 5,013 HHs used cash transferred, according to CBS-PDM1 and PDM2.
	Type and quantity of goods purchased by sampled beneficiaries	N/A	N/A	62% of the cash was spent on feeding the household, 25% on health, and the remaining 13% on other expenses such as school fees and materials.	100%	The majority of products purchased for household food were mainly cereals, legumes, and grain products.
Oupe 2.1.1	# of days from donor signed agreement to cash distribution to beneficiaries	30 days	N/A	11 days from agreement 33 days from PAL	N/A	The PAL was dated 9 July; the agreement was signed on August 1, and the first distribution took place on August 12.
	% of HHs who received cash	100%	N/A	98%	98%	Due to initially double-counting 91 HHs and the departure of 1 HH from the area, the number of HHs reached was 5,013 or 98%.
	Planned # and value of cash transfers distributed to beneficiaries (disaggregated by sex and age)	\$ 310,400 for 5,105 HHs (4,195 women and 510 men), with 1 UCT per HH	N/A	\$ 308,616 for 5,013 HHs (4,097 women and 516 men), with 1 UCT per HH	118%	In addition to the comments in G11 (disaggregation by sex), the rationale for the UCT for food-related expenditure on the case of the HH. The difference between the amount planned and the amount disbursed is due to the number of HHs with larger size than expected. Based on vulnerability data which became clear during the distribution, it was decided to increase the amounts given to the larger HHs during the final distribution. Therefore, 5,429 HHs with 8-22 people received an extra 5,500 FCFA, coming to 2,400 FCFA per distribution, and 1 HHs of more than 22 received an extra 11,000 FCFA per distribution, meaning three times 28,500 FCFA.
	Planned # and value of cash transfers disbursed by beneficiaries (disaggregated by sex and age)	\$ 310,400 for 5,105 HHs (4,195 women and 510 men), with 1 UCT per HH	N/A	\$ 308,616 for 5,013 HHs (4,097 women and 516 men), with 1 UCT per HH	118%	Please see comments in G24.
	Actual # and value of cash transfers distributed to beneficiaries (disaggregated by sex and age)	\$ 310,400 for 5,105 HHs (4,195 women and 510 men), with 1 UCT per HH	N/A	\$ 308,616 for 5,013 HHs (4,097 women and 516 men), with 1 UCT per HH	118%	Please see comments in G24.
	Actual # and value of cash transfers disbursed by beneficiaries (disaggregated by sex and age)	\$ 310,400 for 5,105 HHs (4,195 women and 510 men), with 1 UCT per HH	N/A	\$ 308,616 for 5,013 HHs (4,097 women and 516 men), with 1 UCT per HH	118%	Please see comments in G24.
Oupe 2.1.2	% of received cash spent on food among sampled HH	90%	N/A	62%	62%	Post-distribution monitoring from previous CRP indicates that 90-95% of cash transfers are typically spent on food, with the rest going for medicines or health expenditures, communication, repair for income generating activities, school fees and debt reimbursement. In this instance, 62% of the cash was spent on food, and 27% of cash was spent on health care. This can be accounted for by high cost of malaria in the region during this time.
	% of received cash spent on other needs among sampled HH	10%	N/A	38%	38%	Please see above.
RI.2.2	% of HH who say they are using improved nutritional practices and/or behaviors	100%	N/A	95%	95%	95% of those surveyed during the final evaluation said that they improved nutritional practices and/or behaviors.
Oupe 2.1.2	# of beneficiary (disaggregated by sex and age) reached with behavior change communication in improved nutritional practices and/or behaviors	1,105 people (4,195 women and 510 men) aged 19-40 years	N/A	7,410 people (7,114 women and 276 men) aged 19-40 years	140%	The communication of these messages was done by the project agents through community meetings, or through leaflet radio stations in the labors-targeted communities.
RI.2.3	# of markets reviewed by project staff	9 markets	N/A	8 markets	89%	The market analysis was conducted in 8 of the 9 biggest markets in Labors's target area. The assessment concluded that markets had sufficient stock to supply the markets, and that key commodities were available. The 1 other market was not active during the winter season (project implementation period); the reason that shows down some markets is a common practice in the region.
	Retail price information on key staples in the area of the program - two weeks before the program begins, exactly during the program, and two weeks after the program ends	N/A	Price before the intervention Millet: 200 FCFA Sorghum: 270 FCFA Local rice: 300 FCFA Imported rice: 30 FCFA Beans: 300 FCFA Peanut: 600 FCFA Oil: 800 FCFA Sugar: 444 FCFA	Price after the intervention Millet: 200 FCFA Sorghum: 230 FCFA Local rice: 300 FCFA Imported rice: 35 FCFA Beans: 300 FCFA Peanut: 525 FCFA Oil: 800 FCFA Sugar: 425 FCFA	N/A	The final evaluation stipulated that the price of major staples remained relatively stable during the project intervention period.

SUCCESS STORY

Restoring Livelihoods and Fighting Hunger

Catholic Relief Services strengthens resiliency by ensuring productive assets remain in households following times of shock.



Photo by Gaoussou Togora Catholic Relief Services - Mali

Kake Mouvar, a working mother of five who participates in small trade activities, encountered difficulty feeding and clothing her children in the absence of her husband, who works as a migrant laborer. The CRS-Mali Project Likhav (meaning “a response to the pleas of vulnerable people” in Maure) distributed unconditional cash transfers for livelihoods restoration, which provided Kake with two sheep, and for food, which was used to buy food and clothing for her children.

“My family has fewer health issues and I’ve been able to vigorously resume economic activities like selling phone cards and *pate* [a delicious local snack].”

Mrs. Kake Mouvar,
Homemaker and mother of five

Restoring livelihoods following a period of food insecurity can be a long, arduous struggle for families living in the Sahel, especially in times of political insecurity. In the past 4 years, the northern areas of Mali’s Koulikoro region have experienced both. This has had devastating effects on villagers with limited options when it comes to hunger coping mechanisms. Families often resort to selling key valuable assets, like livestock, plows, and personal belongings to feed themselves in times of need, leaving them under-prepared for future shocks. In the arid circle of Nara where rainfall can be sporadic and sparse, even during the rainy season, livestock plays an important role in the local economy, providing much-needed income and nutrition to hungry families.

Kake Mouvar, a mother of five, sells prepaid telephone credit to supplement meager payments sent from abroad by her husband, who has been working as a migrant laborer for two years. She laments that such inconvenient familial arrangements are common in her village of Dalloube, in the commune of Gueniebe, stating, “In my experience, the village has seen a great exodus, which has been practically emptied of men. My husband is still gone.”

Launched in 2014, project *Likhav*, which was funded by USAID and implemented by Catholic Relief Services (CRS), targeted vulnerable villages in Nara, alleviating severe food insecurity and supporting livelihoods recovery through cash transfers and livelihood strengthening measures, which served to combat negative coping strategies such as sale of assets and migration to other areas. In fact, a Real Time Evaluation conducted by CRS indicated a decrease in migration from beneficiary villages. Additionally, targeting women favors them as decision makers, improving their leverage in key household nutrition and financial decision making.

Following trainings on key nutrition behaviors, Kake chose to use her cash transfers to purchase two sheep, food and clothing for her children, and seeds, which constitute necessary inputs in preparation for the coming rainy season. Kake says, “Thanks to USAID, we are now stronger and better capable of withstanding future challenges.”

SUCCESS STORY

A Better Rainy Season

Catholic Relief Services helps keep families together in times of food insecurity and increases household resilience.



Fada Sidibe, a textiles merchant and mother of 7, lives in a large, traditional, extended polygamous family of 12 in the village of Ziddoutoure.

Photo by Gaoussou Togora Catholic Relief Services - Mali

“The village was very busy this year because many men didn’t leave [in search of migrant labor]. They stayed with the women and children. Family fields were not abandoned.”

Mrs. Fada Sidibe,
Textiles merchant and mother of seven

Migrant labor is among the more difficult-to-bear externalities of food insecurity in north-Saharan Mali. When harvests are insufficient to last a family through the hungry season, which is usually from May through August, men leave the village in search of better livelihoods elsewhere. This often tears families apart, and it is detrimental to a family’s ability to plant and harvest during the following rainy season. Project *Likhaiv*, which was funded by USAID and implemented by Catholic Relief Services (CRS), aimed its efforts at buttressing vulnerable families’ livelihoods in the arid Nara circle in the north of Mali’s Koulikoro region. The project was launched in response to early-warning indicators triggered by vigilant early warning groups established by a joint CRS-OFDA/FFP initiative during the 2013 harvest season.

For large, traditional families, like those of Fada Sidibe, a village exodus of male labor leaves families ill-equipped to cope in the rainy season that follows since family fields are left untended while family members leave the village in search of income in urban areas. Other coping strategies in the face of food insecurity include the sale of family assets like livestock, plows, seed stock, or other valuable possessions. Such sales often leave families in a precarious situation, as without these assets, they are less capable of withstanding future shocks.

With these coping strategies in mind, CRS’ *Likhaiv* presented a series of cash distributions in vulnerable villages, accompanied by nutrition, improved agriculture, and animal husbandry trainings to strengthen families in the face of food insecurity.

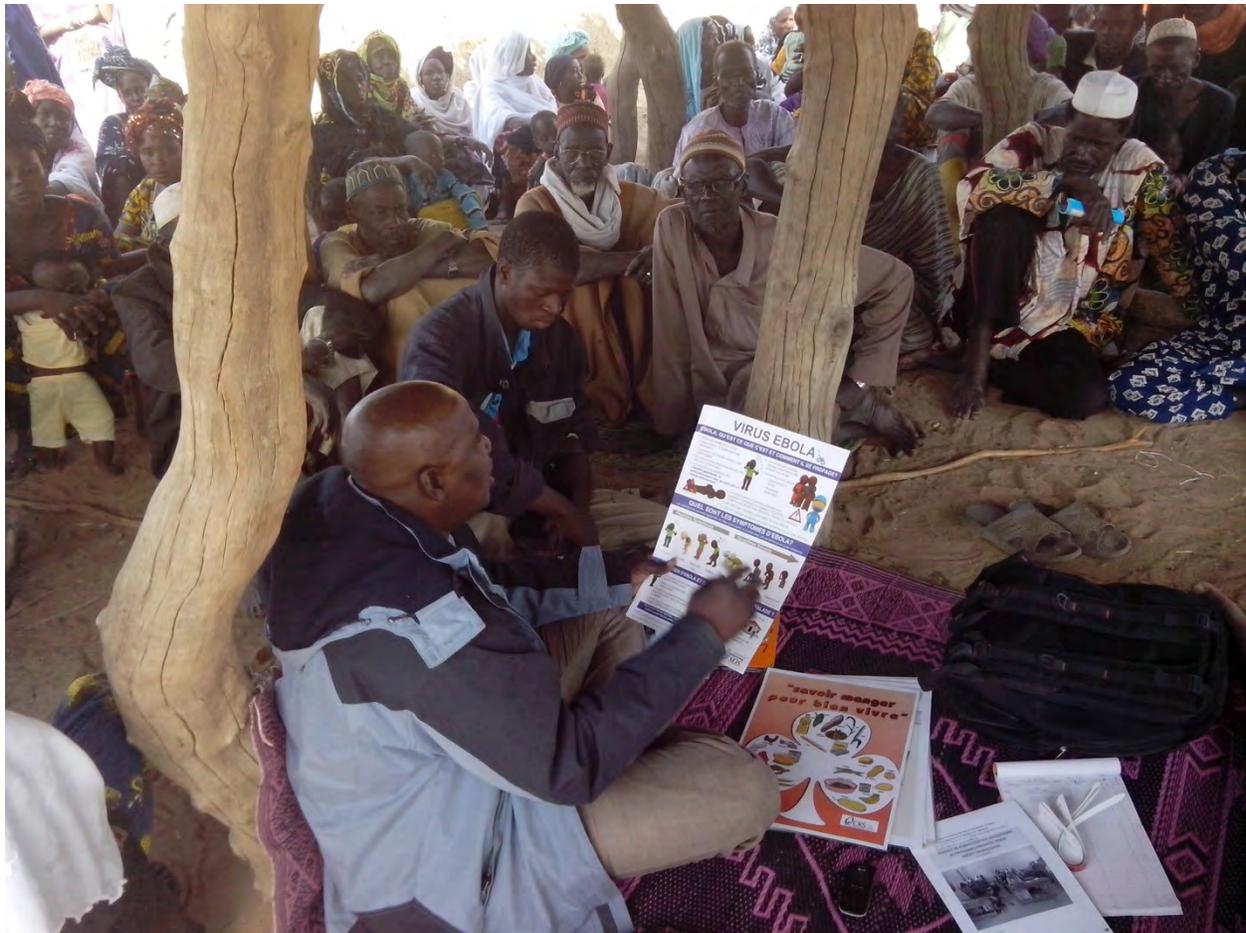
With the extra cash, Fada was able to provide much-needed medications for a seriously ill child, and because of the added food and livelihood security, she claims that the rest of the family had one of the best rainy seasons of their lives. “The village was very busy this year because the men didn’t leave [in search of migrant labor]. They were able to stay with the women and children. Family fields were not abandoned.” Mrs. Sidibe indicated she was not alone in her appreciation of the livelihoods security effort. Because of the community spirit fostered by the project, “There is a woman in the village who named her newborn child “Likhaiv!”



Focus group with women during Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) II in Dialoubé
Photo credit: Diallo, CSPEEDA



Nutrition training conducted by CSPEEDA field agent in Dialloube
Photo credit: Sidy, CSPEEDA



Sensitization on Ebola Virus Disease in Dioka
Photo credit: Cissouma, CSPEEDA



Sensitization on gender by a local leader in Dioka*
Photo credit: Cissouma, CSPEEDA

*Note: Although much of CRS' gender sensitization work centers on women, CRS also prioritizes engaging men, as it believes that long-term change for women cannot be achieved without full community support. To this end, during LIKHAIV, CRS worked with respected local male leaders to share gender sensitization messages. This photo shows a local leader speaking to a group of women in his community about how women should be involved in decision-making that affects their families, and about how women's decisions in the use of cash benefit their children's nutrition.