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# A “Formative” Evaluation of FASO and ViM Projects’ Extension for Greater Alignment with USAID RISE Initiative Resilience Framework

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## Glossary and Acronyms

<b>AGRODIA</b>	Association des Grossistes et Détaillants d’Intrants Agricoles
<b>AID</b>	Agency for International Development
<b>APIL</b>	Action pour la Promotion des Initiatives Locales
<b>ARR</b>	Annual Results Report
<b>ATT</b>	Association Tin Tua
<b>BCC</b>	Behavioral Change Communications
<b>BDL</b>	Bio reclamation of Degraded Lands
<b>BMS</b>	Breast Milk Substitute
<b>CAWT</b>	Conservation Agriculture with Trees
<b>CBDB</b>	Coalition Burkinabè pour les Droits de la Femme
<b>CBHA</b>	Community-Based Health Agent
<b>CCM</b>	Community Case Management
<b>CDF</b>	Community Development Fund
<b>CEP</b>	Certificat d’Etude Primaire
<b>CG</b>	Care Groups
<b>CGSB</b>	Community Giant Score Board
<b>CHA</b>	Community Health Agent
<b>CLTS</b>	Community-Led Total Sanitation
<b>CMAM</b>	Community Management of Acute Malnutrition
<b>CMHN</b>	Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition
<b>CRS</b>	Catholic Relief Services
<b>DAP</b>	Development Assistance Program
<b>DIP</b>	Detailed Implementation Plan
<b>DPASA</b>	Direction Provinciale de l’Agriculture et de la Sécurité Alimentaire
<b>DRASA</b>	Direction Régionale de l’Agriculture et de la Sécurité Alimentaire
<b>EBF</b>	Exclusive Breast Feeding
<b>EGSSAA</b>	Environmental Guidelines for Small-Scale Activities in Africa
<b>ENA</b>	Essential Nutrition Actions
<b>FaaFB</b>	Farming as a Family Business
<b>FACOM</b>	Facilitateur Communautaire
<b>FASO</b>	Families Achieving Sustainable Outcomes
<b>FFP</b>	Office of Food for Peace
<b>FY</b>	Fiscal Year
<b>GMP</b>	Growth Monitoring and Promotion
<b>GoBF</b>	Government of Burkina Faso
<b>GRAINE</b>	Groupe d’Accompagnement à l’Investissement et à l’Epargne
<b>GRET</b>	Groupe de Recherche et d’Echange Technologiques
<b>GT</b>	Groupe de Travail
<b>HA</b>	Hectare
<b>HDI</b>	Human Development Index
<b>HDR</b>	Human Development Report
<b>HH</b>	Households
<b>HKI</b>	Helen Keller International
<b>HQ</b>	Headquarter

<b>ICT</b>	Information Communication Technology
<b>ICT4D</b>	Information Communication Technology for Development
<b>IGA</b>	Income Generating Activity
<b>INERA</b>	Institute for Environment and Agricultural Research
<b>IPTT</b>	Indicator Performance Tracking Table
<b>IR</b>	Intermediate Result
<b>IY</b>	Implementation Year
<b>IYCF</b>	Infant and Young Children Feeding
<b>LG</b>	Local Governance
<b>LIP</b>	Local Implementation Partner
<b>LM</b>	Leader Mother
<b>LOA</b>	Life of Activity
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MA</b>	Mothers' Association
<b>MAD</b>	Minimum Acceptable Diet
<b>MDGs</b>	Millennium Development Goals
<b>MCH</b>	Maternal and Child Health
<b>MCHN</b>	Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition
<b>MEL</b>	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
<b>MLA</b>	Mother Leader Animatrice
<b>MFI</b>	Microfinance Institution
<b>MoA</b>	Ministry of Agriculture
<b>MoH</b>	Ministry of Health
<b>MPWR</b>	Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Gender
<b>MT</b>	Metric Tons
<b>MTE</b>	Mid-Term Evaluation
<b>MTZ</b>	Monetization
<b>MYAP</b>	Multi-Year Assistance Program
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>OCADES</b>	Organisation Catholique pour le Développement et la Solidarité
<b>PAFR</b>	Plan d'Action pour la Filière du Riz
<b>PHAST</b>	Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation
<b>P4P</b>	Purchase for Progress
<b>PLW</b>	Pregnant and Lactating Women
<b>PM2A</b>	Preventing Malnutrition in children Under Two Approach
<b>PDQ</b>	Partnership Defined Quality
<b>PICS</b>	Pursue Improved Crops Storage
<b>PRP</b>	Projet Riz Pluvial
<b>PTA</b>	Parent Teachers Association
<b>RTA</b>	Regional Technical Advisor
<b>PSP</b>	Private Service Provider
<b>REGIS-AG</b>	Resilience and Economic Growth in the Sahel-Accelerated Growth
<b>REGIS-ER</b>	Resilience and Economic Growth in the Sahel-Enhance Resilience
<b>RISE</b>	Resilience in the Sahel Enhanced
<b>RPG</b>	Rice producer groups
<b>SAM</b>	Severe Acute Malnutrition

<b>SBS</b>	Social Behavior Change
<b>SC</b>	Save the Children
<b>SILC</b>	Savings and Internal Lending Communities
<b>SLEAC</b>	Simplified Lot Quality Assurance Sampling Evaluation of Access and Coverage
<b>SMART</b>	Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions
<b>SMILER</b>	Simple Measurement of Indicators for Learning and Evidence based Reporting
<b>SNS</b>	Service National des Semences
<b>SO</b>	Strategic Objective
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>USD</b>	United States Dollar
<b>USG</b>	United States Government
<b>VDC</b>	Village Development Committee
<b>ViM</b>	Victory against Malnutrition
<b>VHCN</b>	Village Health and Nutrition Committee
<b>VVV</b>	Village Volunteer Vaccinator
<b>WASH</b>	Water Sanitation and Hygiene
<b>WEAI</b>	Women Empowerment in Agricultural Index
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Program
<b>WUA</b>	Water Users' Association
<b>ZATA</b>	Zone d'Appui Technique Agricole
<b>ZATE</b>	Zone d'Appui Technique d'Elevage

## **Executive Summary**

### **Applying a “resilience lens” to FASO and ViM: Challenges and Achievements**

Applying the “resilience” lens to new and existing programs, USAID/FFP plans to extend FASO and ViM programs to create the conditions for greater linkage and layering with the USAID RISE Initiative. In addition to assessing the relevance of activities to be extended and the effectiveness of program strategies, this “formative” evaluation was implemented to provide guidance regarding mechanisms to better align the extension phase to a USAID Resilience Framework.

The evaluation focused upon the collection of multiple types of qualitative data, using participatory approaches that included group discussions, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions. During the evaluation, external evaluators--such as the team leader and representatives from USAID and Food for Peace Burkina--also collected a considerable amount of qualitative data using the same methods highlighted above.

Rural households in the program areas (Komandjari, Gnagna, Namentenga, Samentenga and Bam) face formidable challenges in meeting basic needs and participating in a civil society structure that supports their livelihoods. Among the main challenges are: food insecurity, insufficient food production, malnutrition, insufficient infrastructure to encourage exchange and trade, and limited income-earning opportunities that would enable households to invest in their livelihoods and the future of their children.

A significant part of FASO and ViM’s activities are focused on the most vulnerable communes of the intervention areas, where these conditions are amplified by frequent droughts and other shocks. A key observation came from this formative evaluation: Without investment in good governance, human capital and infrastructure, the livelihood situation reverts to a steady state system, whereby the vast majority of the population ekes out a living without potential for gain. FASO and ViM are currently addressing many of the root causes of food insecurity in the region through interventions in agriculture, livestock, health, nutrition, governance and infrastructure.

USAID’s RISE (Resilience in the Sahel Enhanced) initiative was introduced in March 2015 and focuses on five-year goals for targeted livelihood zones in Niger and Burkina Faso. Its key foci are to reduce global acute malnutrition from 15% to 10%, to reduce depth of poverty and prevalence of severely/moderately hungry households by 20%, to increase income from small ruminants, poultry and cowpeas by 50% and to reduce by several hundred thousand those people needing humanitarian assistance during a drought of the magnitude occurring in 2012. As shown in Annex E, the three main goals of USAID’s RISE initiative are to increase sustainable economic wellbeing, to strengthen institutions and governance and to improve health and nutrition. These three objectives are similar to the strategic objectives of the FASO and ViM programs, but the RISE objectives envisage a more ambitious role for long-term resilience and sustainability.

### **Joint activities that contribute significantly to resilience for food and nutrition security**

A number of activities that are supported jointly by FASO and ViM have significantly contributed to greater community resilience. These include irrigated vegetable gardens, improved and adapted seeds, improvement of soil fertility through expansion of the Zaï system (multiple post holes filled with fertility enhancing materials), post-harvest use of triple lined air tight bags, concentration on crops with high returns to producer (high value-chain crops), use of SILC credit systems and Warrantage: putting part of harvest in community locked storage in return for a loan (thus allowing that part to be sold when prices are higher and it is possible to both pay back loan plus interest, and make a profit).

As a result of FASO and ViM's work, most household members now wash their hands with clean water and soap during critical moments such as before and after eating, after using latrines, before feeding and bathing the babies, and prior to cooking. Today in CLTS targeted villages the number of households that have hygiene facilities at home is progressively increasing (mainly latrines). For women in surveyed communities, the first step out of poverty and towards resilience begins with clean water. Without easy access to potable water in many villages, many of these hygiene recommendations have been difficult to implement, yet they are absolutely critical to child health and nutrition.

### **KEY FINDINGS FOR FASO PROGRAM**

Among all the interventions of FASO's program, the impact of agriculture/livelihood, health and nutrition activities--including WASH, appear to be among the strongest, especially in terms of improving the lives of women and children.

**Improved livelihoods/Agriculture:** FASO made remarkable progress in positively impacting food production and the generation of revenues for more than 80,000 directly vulnerable beneficiaries, 58% of whom are women, in the health districts of Boulsa, Manni and Gayeri. The adoption of climate-smart technologies (Zaï, adapted seed varieties, the improvement of lowland and degraded land) enabled program beneficiaries to harvest during years of drought when others not applying these technologies failed to do so. With an improvement of the average yield from 1.2MT/ha before the program to 3.7MT/ha, this represents an estimated total production of 2,347 MT of paddy per year by FASO's direct beneficiaries. The emphasis on value chains in the selection of crops and the promotion of proven climate adaptive technologies have been combined with the facilitation of access to credit to significantly improve livelihoods in the targeted communities.

Another key achievement is that members of 771 Savings Internal Lending Communities (SILC), primarily women, mobilized a total \$488,890 with a total interest generated of \$113,000. Women also contributed to a social fund of more than \$42,500 to support each other during crises. And in addition to SILC, the linking of program beneficiaries to microfinance institutions (MFI) has enabled producers to access \$95,000 worth of credit, including \$48,698 for 19 rice producers groups with a more than 82% reimbursement rate.

### Challenges:

Geographic access to agricultural inputs and financial access to small equipment limit the ability of the program to maximize impact and the potential for adoption of the proven technologies. The organizational capacity of the producers' groups hinders their ability to effectively address these challenges. The market gardening groups experience frequent breakdowns of water pumps due inadequate preventive maintenance and the unavailability of locally qualified technicians. Land security is another dimension that needs careful consideration in the negotiations around land improvement initiatives and market gardens. In addition, low levels of literacy continue to limit the full participation of beneficiaries, particularly women.

### Specific Recommendations for improving livelihoods/Agriculture

In addition to the reinforcement of the business development capacity of the various producers groups, FASO should:

1. Reinforce and extend best practices and proven technologies to additional beneficiaries. These include support to value-chain crops, dry season market gardening, poultry, Zai, improved access to water, and post-harvest techniques.
2. Promote functional literacy, building on the existing model, among farmers in coordination with other stakeholders.
3. Make use of SILC groups and Care groups for the dissemination of integrated best practices in the use of climate-adapted seed and nutrition messages.
4. Prioritize Care group members for poultry activities and market gardening.
5. Reinforce the geographic access to inputs and small equipment for beneficiaries.

**Adoption of best Health and Nutrition Practices through Care Groups:** The focus group discussions and key informant interviews point to a strong consensus among beneficiaries that nutrition and hygiene promotion activities are having a positive impact on the adoption of best health and nutrition practices in program areas.

The FASO program registered an improvement over the baseline data of 22% for the exclusive breastfeeding; 14% for prenatal visits; 63% for postnatal visits and 30% for professionally assisted childbirths. An analysis of regional differences show that the Care Group model used in Gayeri and Boulsa health districts is producing greater results than the traditional BCC methods being used in Manni health district. The health district of Boulsa ranks as the highest as measured by the average annual growth in the value of these indicators compared to the overall program average suggesting that the success of the Care Group model depends more on the effectiveness of the approach as a behavior change communication strategy or the excellence in implementation than on technical nutrition competencies of the organization or staff implementing the program.

Challenges and opportunities: The Care Group model presents other advantages, including high coverage, inclusiveness in the selection of beneficiaries, the use of interpersonal communication, and the reliance on Mother Leaders and promoters who are endogenous resources, thereby contributing to the sustainability of the approach. However, the limited capacity of the Mother Leaders and promoters in group facilitation techniques, the fatigue of volunteerism, and the inadequate familiarity of the health district personnel with the approach are a few constraints to overcome in order to take full advantage of the potential of the Care Group model.

As shown in Annex D, one of the key lessons learned from the analysis clearly indicates that the districts where the Care Group model was used consistently exhibited greater improvement than the district where the program relied on mass communications. Since the Care Groups were implemented by two different partner organizations, it seems that the selection of the approach itself is more significant than the technical competence of the implementing partner.

Specific Recommendations for best Health and Nutrition Practices:

1. FASO should consider introducing the Care Group model in Manni health district in the commune of Thion or Coala, as REGIS-ER will be implementing the Mother to Mother (MtM) approach in the commune of Manni.
2. FASO needs to focus on the reinforcement of Mother Leaders' skills in group facilitation through the systematic protocol developed in the fourth year of the program, and use the time freed up by the discontinuation of food distribution during the extension period for closer monitoring and supervision by the animators.
3. As a source of motivation, prioritize the Mother Leaders and the promoters when selecting candidates to participate in other program activities such as literacy training, agriculture, membership in SILC groups and exchange visits.
4. With the gradual phase-in of REGIS-ER in Gayéri health district and the similarities between their MtM and the Care Group model, FASO should consider a leaner management model whereby one partner implements more than one component, building on the successes in Boulsa health district. This could potentially foster increased "Collaboration, Learning and Adapting" (the CLA approach built into the USAID Resilience conceptual framework) and contribute to greater integration in the field.
5. Joint advocacy by FASO, ViM and REGIS-ER is needed to incorporate the Care Group type of model into the national strategy for scaling up of Infant and Young Child Feeding.

**Support for improved water supply, sanitation and hygiene through CLTS:**

FASO has greatly contributed to the improvement of mother and child health through WASH activities that increase access to potable water and improved hygiene across the intervention zone. The construction of 15 new boreholes, and the rehabilitation of 40 existing ones that meet

the standards of Environmental Guidelines for Small-Scale Activities in Africa (EGSSAA), helped improve the access to potable water for 16,500 individuals in 55 villages.

The focused efforts on the implementation of the Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach has successfully led to the construction of 600 latrines (versus a target of 330) in 36 villages without any subsidies from the FASO program in FY14, after one year of implementation. Ten of these 36 villages (28%) have already constructed a latrine for every household in the community, with the goal of reaching the End-of-Open Air Defecation (EOAD). The percentage of homes having a latrine has increased from 8% of the population in the target area in 2012 to 18.3% in 2014. The percentage of households using improved latrines has increased from 34.5% in 2012 to 49.6% in 2014.

Specific recommendations for improved water supply, sanitation and hygiene: The following recommendations made in order to assure the improved quality and quantity of potable water in FASO intervention areas:

1. Continue the construction of new boreholes and rehabilitation of existing boreholes.
2. Establish a system for water treatment at water-use points for wells and surface water.
3. The training and retraining of Water Use Associations and local water pump repairmen.
4. Extend the implementation of CLTS strategy to new areas in coordination with REGIS ER and other stakeholders and include construction of public latrines for villages to reach EOAD status.
5. In coordination with REGIS ER and other actors, including Government, introduce a partial subsidy to support and accompany the construction of slabs and latrines to accelerate the process of reaching the End-of-Open Air Defecation in the targeted villages.

**Promoting Good Governance:** Governance came out as a cross cutting issue for both programs and deserves special attention during the extension period. FASO's achievements to date are promising and should be reinforced. The technical support and facilitation in 100 pilot villages has helped to raise awareness and recognition of VDCs. In all, 666 men and 270 women VDC members have been trained in roles and responsibilities while being provided with essential management tools. The inclusive and participatory approach involving municipalities and local populations contributed to the VDCs becoming more geographically and socially diverse and representative of the community with the number of women VDC members increasing from 15.53% to 29.14%. The support to the seven municipalities for the renewal of VDC has increased women's representation rate in leadership positions from 1.20% to 14.18%. The VDCs have played a critical role in negotiating more than 650 hectares of lowland allocated to FASO beneficiaries for agricultural production, in addition to helping parents' and mothers' associations to implement their action plans. The VDCs in Foutouri, Bartiebougou, Kalitaghin and Nagbingou showed exceptional leadership in mobilizing financial contributions of more than \$14,000 to support their community development projects.

Challenges: Communal development plans are not appropriated by local populations, and the municipal councils remain inadequately involved in the monitoring and supervision of VDCs. The councils are often perceived as political bodies, hampering collaboration efforts. The VDCs remain dominated by men and low levels of literacy prevent full participation and effective action, particularly by women. Given inadequate accountability and coordination with the community members and other local structures, the VDCs continue to struggle with limited participation in fundraising and concerted action plans. WUAs face similar challenges, including difficulty mobilizing user contributions, poor record keeping, poor coordination with municipal authorities and insufficient numbers of qualified technicians available for repairs.

While market access remains their primary hurdle, RPGs share with market garden site management committees difficulties in acquiring inputs and maintaining investments (i.e. dikes, motor pumps). The members of both groups and the TMC understand their roles and responsibilities, but have yet to use the management tools in a systematic and confident manner, suggesting a need for further training. VPEA continue to experience difficulties conserving vaccines as many people still do not routinely vaccinate their poultry.

With the recent changes in the country political context, the municipalities are currently led by special delegations that hold limited responsibility toward communities. These changes could potentially slow down collaboration during the transition period until a new government is elected in October 2015.

### **Specific recommendations for improving good governance:**

The following recommendations are offered to improve governance: the internal governance of the community structures and their linkages with the local governments, and to support resilience:

1. Until the election of new counselors scheduled for 2016, FASO should take into consideration this transitory phase and focus its support to municipalities and on activities to be continued, with careful assessment of capacities of leaders to deliver negotiated services.
2. Increase support for municipalities in the monitoring and support of VDC initiatives, including their renewal processes and literacy trainings, and strengthen the collaboration between WUAs and the municipal authorities for the implementation of rural water system reform.
3. Strengthen internal governance, including accountability within community-based organizations supported by FASO.

4. Facilitate and support the emergence of a network of qualified and well-equipped local private service providers, including VPEA, and repairers of boreholes and motor pumps to improve the quality of their service delivery and maximize business profitability.
5. Establish a competitive innovation fund to strengthen municipalities' service delivery capacity.
6. Support farmers' groups with the World Food Programme's Purchase for Progress (P4P) in order to improve access to markets for cowpeas and rice.
7. Strengthen the organizational capacity for market access in coordination with REGIS-AG.

**Opportunities for alignment with other RISE and non-RISE initiatives:** The geographic overlap between FASO, REGIS-ER and REGIS-AG and the similarities in their approaches (despite the differences in the labeling), offers unique opportunities not only for integration, but for collaborating, learning and adapting with RISE partners and other programs. The emerging core group of local seed farmers, including poultry producers in the zones, could be linked up with REGIS-AG for support in business development skills, and PM2A warehouses could be used for warrantage activities during the extension phase (in the absence of food distribution and cross-fertilization among model farmers). Public-private partnerships should be reinforced with the presence of AGRODIA, INERA, MFIs, the technical departments of agriculture, water resources and food security through networking and joint advocacy.

The following present opportunities for collaboration to help sustained improvement in the access to potable water and in the improvement of hygiene and sanitation practices in the target villages: the presence of new actors providing water quality improvement services (i.e. Aquatabs, ANTENNA Baobab for bleach production), the establishment of model villages with 100% of households having latrines, Care Groups in place which can share hygiene and sanitation messages, and the existence of potential partners such as WA-WASH, DGRE, DGAEU, the communes and agents from the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Food Security.

## **KEY FINDINGS FOR ViM PROGRAM**

The changes that ViM brought about by a host of interventions range from promotion of breastfeeding, improved seeds, poultry and small ruminant production, and of empowering women through training programs.

FFS training introduced sustainable water and soil conservation techniques to 10,408 targeted producers, including stony bund, "half-moon," Zaï, and the use of organic manure to minimize the use of chemical fertilizers. ViM provided agricultural production kits to 229 cowpea and sorghum producers and to 82 onion and tomato producers.

PGs received training on improved farming methods and use of new technologies through FFS and demonstration plots. The trainings were supplemented with technical follow up and introduced improved inputs and small tools to enhance productivity and increase food

production. The total number of registered members within these PGs receiving support is 16,985 individuals. Women beneficiaries represent 11,934 of the total, or 70.26 percent. Of the 600 PGs supported by ViM, 305 are producing cowpea, 57 sorghum, 97 onion, 5 tomato, 117 small ruminants, and 19 are raising poultry. Most PGs will continue to operate as a group while building on and sustaining their growth after the project ends.

Although improved governance was not part of ViM SOs, there was a concerted effort by ViM to ensure more local government involvement. The capacity, resources, and interest of local government officials varied greatly, and frequent transfers made efforts to ensure locally sustainable government support difficult. Close partnership between ViM, FASO and REGIS ER could contribute to increased governance in their respective zones of intervention.

A related challenge perceived concerns the need to develop locally adapted seed varieties, rather than relying exclusively on central production facilities from different ecological zones.

**Increasing and diversifying agricultural production:** ViM increased and diversified agriculture production in six different value chains by working at the community level through its LIPs to support 600 producer groups (PGs). Farmer negotiation capacities should be potentially reinforced by RISE programs. This would require that ViM and RISE partners work together on developing a local governance capacity that will build links with the market and increase farmers' bargaining power. Opportunities for increasing the income levels of the most vulnerable households include:

1. Supporting vegetable production (e.g. construction of wells, animal traction for pulling irrigation water, improved seeds).
2. Improving the value of agricultural and livestock products (e.g., processing, conservation) as well as the marketing chains.
3. Strengthening of micro-credit and training women's groups
4. Securing land rights for the most vulnerable.

**ViM achievements in Health and Nutrition:** Partnership Defined Quality (PDQ), in an effort to improve the health care of beneficiaries, was piloted at two health centers in the targeted regions through ViM's support of the local Ministry of Health (MoH). Essential health services--including prenatal care, vaccinations, and supplemental vitamins—were provided to local community health clinics.

ViM has been implementing Listening Post activities since June 2013 in order to help improve BF's current early warning system, which lacks timely and technically sound data collection and nutritional analysis. ViM collected child nutritional status information (weight and MUAC), and hygiene and sanitation information, and then combined it with food and livestock price data obtained from the Ministry of Agriculture, and was thus able to provide monthly reports on community nutrition in implementation areas.

Working with a total of 42 groups, ViM designed and developed two CLTS/WASH committees, where, using the CLTS approach to Open-Defecation-Free status and other hygiene activities, 425 CLTS committee members taught villagers about hand washing station construction, use and maintenance, and the importance of family latrines. The result has been improved sanitation, measured at 146% of target levels.

### **ViM activities to continue through the extension period**

- 1) Improve lowland gardening and prepare market gardening irrigated perimeters with equipment and storage facilities. New sites should be identified and selected through participatory processes involving the staff from both ministries of agriculture and water resources. Feasibility studies covering land issues, community motivation, water availability, environmental impact, adequate crops (including production and marketing), should be conducted to inform decision-making and technical approaches.
- 2) However, lowland and irrigated areas where organized and well-motivated producers, who are without land conflict (to be confirmed and checked through assessment), should be given high priority. ViM should be in touch with REGIS and potentially with other projects for synergy. A general meeting comprising the beneficiaries, the CVDs, the local mayors, the DRASA, the LIPs and ViM to work together to set up the management committees that will benefit from targeted capacity strengthening activities. Through its gender strategy, ViM should increase women's access to plots.
- 3) Poultry: The extension should continue with the sensitization campaigns on vaccination protocols to ensure improved health care, housing, and feeding. As poultry production increases, producers' respect for the vaccination protocol will result in a higher demand for poultry, which should, in turn, favor the sustainability of VVV activity. The project should organize sensitization campaigns concerning the poultry vaccination protocol through radio broadcasting. This should be also implemented by the LIPs' staff in collaboration with the Ministry of Animal Resources staff. ViM should work with REGIS to seek extension of this activity to more beneficiaries through the extension and after ViM closure.
- 4) **Support non-farm employment and microenterprise opportunities.** The existing small grants management manual defines three funding sources: applicant contribution, ViM subsidy and the involvement of a micro finance institution. Given that this small grants initiative is critical to the producers, and given the key role that ViM is playing throughout the process, it is essential to develop a strategy for the provision of continuous support to the producers. It is also essential to involve REGIS in order to ensure follow-up: ViM should hold consultation meetings with REGIS, share tools and discuss potential co-funding of the micro project, and then plan for continuation after ViM closure.
- 5) Fodder production promotion for livestock and dairy production should be discontinued and transferred to REGIS-ER.

### **CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES**

**Gender:** Enhancing resilience requires a dual focus on the productive side and the rights for women to revenues and resources. And it also must involve issues of leadership and voice.

Women are involved in all FASO and ViM activities and programs. Each program has demonstrated commitment to continue targeting poor and vulnerable women precisely because they are the least empowered. The evaluation team lauds the effort of current projects in promoting gender awareness within its organizational culture and programming.

Market gardens highlight an important issue for both ownership of resources, income and resilience. Land owning families often welcome the development of market gardens on land of little current value, but once the gardens generate significant revenues the heads of the land owning families (usually men) are tempted to reassert their traditional ownership rights and claims on income from those lands. This is an issue that is easily neglected and needs to be adequately addressed up front before investments are made. Because these market gardens invariably are made on lands that fall under the jurisdiction of local leadership, they must also be involved in and committed to any decisions.

Members from the regional directorate of MPFG in Kaya have become regular participants at ViM workshops and provide ViM with needed guidance to ensure that gender is fully integrated in all project activities. CBDF trained 31 LIPs' field officers on 'Leadership of women in rural areas' and 'Communication in the family in Burkina Faso.' Trained LIP officers were able to reach 5,441 producers through sensitization sessions on issues centered on women's participation in management and activities of groups and communication within the household in Burkina Faso.

Women's Savings Groups are a key component of most, if not all, of ViM and RISE activities, which require reliable access to credit to be sustainable. ViM initiated work with senior officials of Caisse Populaire, a private microfinance institution based in Ouagadougou (and with a field office in Kaya,) to develop WSGs in the targeted communes. Proposals are being considered by Caisse Populaire and ACDI/VOCA to implement the project, and it is hoped that there will soon be a contract for collaboration.

#### Key recommendations:

1. ViM and REGIS should work together to create more income-generating opportunities in and around the home for women. This will allow women to contribute cash to the household when the husband is unemployed, helping to improve their status and increasing their decision-making power.
2. Programs should include adolescent girls as well as boys in gender awareness activities. Changes in social norms and attitudes often evolve slowly and can take decades, even generations. Adults may be less receptive to modifying cultural norms, or may be unable to challenge their social environment without severe consequences. Development organizations will continue to confront the issue of how to create an enabling environment that includes sensitization of extended family and stakeholders to the need to support women. Including adolescents in gender awareness activities can facilitate their ability to more critically examine

the advantages and disadvantages of certain social and cultural norms and help bring about positive changes among future generations. In addition, children can often influence their parents' outlook and help introduce new ideas that the household, especially the women, might otherwise not be exposed to. Needless to say, it is as important to include male youth as it is to include the future heads of household.

**Aligning FASO and ViM with REGIS ER and REGIS AG projects:** There are great opportunities for the new FFP programs to scale up the successful technologies and practices in support of the resilience goals, and for REGIS programs to intensify such practices. And there are real opportunities for cross-fertilization between programs. The extension of the programs is likely to have a larger impact if: a) the components are better integrated; b) if there is a greater focus on targeting the poorest households in agriculture and livelihood interventions; c) if underlying obstacles to improved sanitation and hygiene are addressed, e) if warrantage programs are harmonized and f) if disaster risk reduction is focused at the household and community level. The following sections discuss the key cross cutting issues.

### **PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS PERTAINING TO BOTH PROGRAMS**

- 1) In order to build resilient communities, a comprehensive approach is needed that combines risk reduction activities (infrastructure, appropriate seeds and tools, livestock protection activities, etc.), early warning and disaster response, and livelihood recovery. Take the time to build consensus: Develop dialogue and accountability mechanisms between key local actors, such as government, customary institutions, civil society associations, and the private sector.
- 2) The extension phase of the programs should focus on interventions that will contribute to the pursuit of good governance, which needs to be a high priority strategy involving the building of both formal and informal institutions and relationships and implemented at the state, community and household levels. However, the community level is a particularly critical level at which to build resilience. The most vulnerable must be helped, in particular, by communities and institutions such as VDCs, PTAs, and WUAs.
- 3) Although some cultural, social and economic constraints do remain, FASO and ViM must intensify their efforts to increase the leadership role that women play in their professional lives and in their communities.
- 4) Extension activities should focus on reducing village and household vulnerability to natural shocks through increased community preparedness and improved organizational response capacity. The exposure to natural hazards such as droughts, floods, and diseases in the program areas is one of the key factors contributing to household susceptibility to food and livelihood insecurity. By focusing on strategies that increase institutional capacity in disaster preparedness, village engagement in disaster preparedness and awareness should increase (as already planned in REGIS-ER).
- 5) Rice production in Burkina Faso, while not aligned with REGIS-ER, should be revisited, as rice is now a highly valued crop in the project area. Both rice and moringa should be revisited.

- 6) Integrate adult literacy training of male and female members in self-managed structures is one of the capacity strengthening activities upon which the program must put great emphasis.

Overall, the team found the two programs to be effective and successful, with well-organized management systems. This is an especially noteworthy accomplishment given the extremely difficult working conditions in Burkina Faso over the last two to three years. There is, however, room for improvement in any program. There exist cross cutting themes that, if properly addressed, will make the extension of the programs more successful. Many of the evaluators' observations had previously been made by program staff and discussed in several planning meetings and documents prior to this evaluation. Following the priority recommendations will facilitate the integration of both FASO and ViM projects with the RISE initiative for improved sustainability and, thereby, long term resilience. In poor areas of the Sahel, resilience requires integration of good governance, capacity building and productive activities at the institutional, community and national level. The poor are unable to be resilient standing alone.

## I. Introduction and Background

Applying the “resilience” lens to new and existing programs, USAID/FFP plans to extend FASO and ViM programs to create the conditions for a greater linkage and layering with the USAID RISE Initiative. In addition to assessing the relevance of the activities to be extended and the effectiveness of program strategies, this “formative” evaluation will provide guidance regarding mechanisms to better align the extension phase to USAID Resilience Framework. The FASO program builds upon past achievements realized in USAID/FFP previous DAPs in Burkina Faso, which focused on reducing vulnerability and improving food security in the intervention zones.

Rural households in the program areas (Komandjari, Gnagna, Namentenga, Samentenga) face formidable challenges in meeting basic needs and participating in a civil society structure that supports their livelihoods. Among the main challenges are: food insecurity, insufficient food production, malnutrition, insufficient infrastructure to encourage exchange and trade, and limited income-earning opportunities that would enable households to invest in their livelihoods and the future of their children.

A significant part of FASO and ViM’s activities are focused on the most vulnerable communes of the intervention areas, where these conditions are amplified by frequent droughts and other shocks. These weather events significantly impact agricultural production, health and infrastructure. Without investment in good governance, human capital and infrastructure, the livelihood situation reverts to a steady state system whereby the vast majority of the population ekes out a living without potential for gain. FASO and ViM are **currently** addressing many of the root causes of food insecurity in the region through interventions in agriculture, livestock, health, nutrition, governance and infrastructure. The programs are effective, reaching out to households that often do not have access to even the most basic services.

### Objectives

This formative evaluation is primarily a qualitative study that seeks to gain a fundamental understanding of how the two programs are being implemented, how their implementation track can result in their intended changes among households and institutional participants (CBO, VCDs, RPGs), and to offer recommendations to improve project performance during the extension phase.

The specific objectives of the Evaluation are as follows:

- Identify promising activities and strategies and adjust existing program strategies according to USAID resilience objectives and maximize the impact of FASO and ViM projects in light of the RISE results framework.
- Review the cross cutting areas that these programs have incorporated, including gender, community participation, and environment.

- Provide recommendations to update and strengthen the current phase-out and sustainability strategies, including effective collaboration with GoBF bodies and other stakeholders in the projects' areas to ensure greater and lasting impact.
- Analyze the USAID RISE initiative, in general, and the REGIS-ER and REGIS-AG strategies **in specific**, and to identify the relevant activities to be extended by FASO and ViM.
- Propose the **mechanisms** and strategies for a successful layering, sequencing and integration of these activities.

To determine if the above objectives have been met, the evaluation focused on several key issues and questions:

1. What is the effectiveness of the enhanced linkages between targeted communities and government and non-government agriculture extension and health and nutrition services? What are the results--tangible and intangible--of these enhanced linkages? How does the community perceive the quality, frequency, effectiveness, and sustainability of these services? What key lessons and best practices are learned in relation to the programs' strategies in establishing linkages, and how should these inform future FFP programming in Burkina Faso?
2. How did FASO and ViM coordinate and harmonize their activities with other USG, donors, GOBF projects and local government structures to create complementarities and synergies? What key lessons learned and best practices related to coordination should inform future FFP programming in Burkina Faso?
3. What is the likelihood of sustaining the outcomes produced by FASO and ViM programs, and how effective and realistic are plans to ensure supply of goods and services necessary to sustain them? What has been done to ensure that the most vulnerable households can access these services and goods at the conclusion of FASO and ViM programs? What program activities could have benefitted from further support to increase sustainability? Are there additional activities that could contribute to reinforce the farmer's resilience? Which program activities should be dropped, and why? Are there specific activities that can be phased over to government support? What synergies could be built upon or reinforced (**for example, with USAID, and ongoing**) and RISE initiative, and how?
4. How effective have the sector integration strategies used by FASO and ViM been? Were there further opportunities for integrating program components that could have resulted in greater food security and nutrition impacts?

### **Formative Evaluation Methodology**

This evaluation employs a multi-method, iterative approach to assessment. Starting with the scope of work, the evaluation team addressed each component of the project in relation to USAID RISE initiative and the pyramid of stakeholders for each component. First the team consulted the abundance of related reports and documents produced by FASO, ViM, and other organizations to frame the relevant issues. A presentation by each component coordinator and other staff provided crucial background information and their respective expectations from the evaluation. The objectives stated in the Scope of Work were distilled into a set of critical questions, and interview topic outlines were prepared for the fieldwork

phase. The fieldwork activities applied a range of qualitative tools including key informant interviews, focus group discussions, community discussions, process analysis, and other participatory assessments techniques. At the end of each site visit, a “restitution” meeting was held with staff to explain the preliminary findings and to elicit early feedback. The analysis and interpretation of the results was largely under the control of external evaluators, with much assistance provided by FASO and ViM’s staff.

FASO and ViM’s staff contributed significantly to the evaluation, and did so in an open and transparent manner. Staff made themselves available to group discussions, assisted in data collection, and accompanied consultants on field trips. Staff also participated in discussions of preliminary results and had the opportunity to contribute their own observations, questions and comments.

Sites visited	Commune	Province	Region	Program
<b>Zorkoum</b>	KAYA	Sanmatenga	Centre Nord	VIM
<b>Pissila</b>	Pissila	Sanmatenga	Centre Nord	VIM
<b>Dem</b>	Kaya	Sanmatenga	Centre Nord	VIM
<b>Fanka</b>	Kaya	Sanmatenga	Centre Nord	VIM
<b>Poulalle</b>	Pissila	Sanmatenga	Centre Nord	VIM
<b>Guiendbila</b>	Bassarlogho	Sanmatenga	Centre Nord	VIM
<b>Nare</b>	Tougouri	Namentenga	Centre Nord	FASO
<b>Tafogo</b>	Tougouri	Namentenga	Centre Nord	FASO
<b>Dakiri</b>	Manni	Gnagna	East	FASO
<b>Nagbingou</b>	Manni	Gnagna	East	FASO
<b>Manni</b>	Manni	Gnagna	East	FASO
<b>Oue</b>	Gayeri	Komondjari	East	FASO

The next section of the report documents the observations of the evaluation team relative to the outputs produced by the two programs, the lessons learned, and the promising practices that made a difference.

## **II. Common Findings: FASO and ViM Programs**

The targeted communes exhibit a wide variety of mixed production systems that are usually anchored by farming but typically involve agricultural and nonagricultural work. Systems of market exchange are equally varied, although petty trade in agricultural goods anchors commercial activity. The principal income sources were own-account farming, livestock-raising, and commerce. Clearly both local production and exchange systems interpenetrate one another and are enmeshed in much wider systems: regional, national, and global. The degree of interpenetration depends on a village’s agro-ecological characteristics, local traditions, resource endowments, and other socioeconomic and political attributes of households.

FASO, ViM and their partners in Burkina Faso have made considerable progress in meeting the majority of their objectives, involving numerous positive impacts on the lives and livelihoods of participants--including health and nutrition status. A summary of the most

important achievements of FASO and ViM can be broken down in terms of the USAID RISE initiative Development objectives:

1. Increasing and sustaining economic wellbeing by strengthening dominant livelihoods;
2. Strengthening institutions and governance; and
3. Improving health and nutrition status.

USAID's RISE (Resilience in the Sahel Enhanced) initiative was introduced in March 2015 and focuses on five-year goals for targeted livelihood zones in Niger and Burkina Faso. As shown in Annex E, the three overall objectives are to increase sustainable economic well being, to strengthen institutions and governance and to improve health and nutrition.

### **A. Resilience in Agriculture and livestock production in the two programs**

This section explores potential opportunities and challenges that have been identified in the FASO and ViM areas of intervention.

Households throughout the regions surveyed experienced many economic shocks. Awareness of shocks households are facing and their adaptive capacity to deal with those shocks are critical factors in any vulnerability analysis. Overall six specific shocks were frequently discussed by focus group participants. Beginning with the most common, the top shocks that were listed are:

- ✓ Loss of crops and livestock due to drought
- ✓ Loss of livestock due to illness
- ✓ Increase in food prices
- ✓ Increase in cost of inputs

The focus of activities under FASO and ViM's strategies is the rehabilitation and expansion of the farm and livestock sectors. The intermediate results under this goal are intended to restore basic production and to increase productivity with participant's expanded marketing capacities.

### **Challenges and opportunities**

Farming: Farming still anchors most of the zone's livelihood systems, but usually features three or four secondary occupations, such as commerce, livestock raising, craftwork, and traditional gold mining. Agricultural land varies from flat, moist, loamy or clayey soils to sharply sloped, rocky and dry soils. Most landholdings are small, composed of dispersed plots and heavily exploited, even though their size and quality differ considerably between and within agroecological zones. Under prevailing cropping and livestock-raising techniques, these variations in the characteristics of land are associated with significant variations in farm production, as well as in vegetative cover used to fodder animals. Popularizing water harvesting and soil conservation techniques can increase the productive potential agriculture.

Access to water; quality of land; and improved seeds, tools and equipment influence a household's capacity to produce, the productivity of its labor, and the direct costs of

production. Any lack of these critical elements is a major constraint on agricultural production.

Own-account farming is employed by most of the households, who devote most of their labor forces to farming. According to focus group discussions, own-account farming also generates the largest average share of total annual household income. Consequently even farm households derived the bulk of their income from “secondary occupations.” This finding reflects the fact that farming in the project areas has a dual orientation (as is the case elsewhere in Burkina Faso): subsistence, or direct consumption, and market exchange. In other words, most peasant households neither produce all that they consume, nor consume all that they produce. Rain-fed agriculture predominates and the main crops are sorghum, millet, cowpea, rice, sesame, and peanut.

Farming is risky, and dependence on erratic rainfall, as has now been the case for two decades, increases risk. Irrigated agriculture, though less directly vulnerable to risks associated with erratic rainfall than rain-fed agriculture, is subject to water management problems and other uncertainties, in part because existing irrigation infrastructure is limited, or because farmers don’t have the knowledge and resources to install appropriate irrigation systems.

### **Livestock: challenges and opportunities**

Animals are an important source of dietary protein. Sales of animals or their products supplement household income, and animals transport people and goods. Most significant of all, animals store value generated by farming, and, to a lesser extent, by other forms of production and market exchange. Thus livestock-raising was an important livelihood strategy for most of the targeted communities, the majority of which owned their animals. For livestock owners, animals constitute an asset base that can be liquidated when unforeseen and unpredictable difficulties arise. In addition, animals provide animal products, and represent an “asset in the making (in terms of off-spring).” Small ruminants and chicken were the most common animal among the most vulnerable households, including women and women headed households. Acquisition and maintenance costs, the scarcity of water and feed, and animal epidemics serve to limit herd size for any household.

With the exception of chicken, households seldom consume their animals. Instead, most tend to reserve high-value animals for sale when scarce cash is needed. Access to larger animals—cattle, donkeys, mules, and horses—may serve as an indicator of more resilient livelihood strategies. In regard to vulnerability, however, the absence of livestock is a strong indicator of food insecurity. Households without any animals are, indeed, among the poorest of the poor.

Program activities to improve livestock production and management were greatly appreciated by beneficiaries, since most households in the targeted regions managed livestock.

The agricultural and livestock technologies and practices promoted by the two programs are well established and adapted to the environment and locations where they were applied; for example, the promotion of improved seeds, the contribution of organic manure, the making of water harvesting catchments, the seed planting density, crop thinning methods, use of bio-pesticides on vegetable crops, cutting and storage of hay, the promotion of multi-nutrient lick blocks, the use of salt licks and livestock deworming medications, and assisted natural regeneration. Overall the programs achieved, or was close to achieving, the LOA targets. Thirty-three thousand, three hundred seventy-five households have sustainably improved

their agricultural production in FASO project areas, and the average yield of sorghum per farmer has increased by 24% in the ViM zones (IPTT Table).

Regardless of the indicator results and their interpretation, most of the households practicing agriculture reported that they have directly benefited from program activities.

### **Common activities that contributed most to resilience.**

This section explores the key activities that promote resilience one by one even though resilience requires integration of these activities.

#### **1) Community vegetable Irrigated gardens**

Community vegetable gardening is an innovative system for irrigated vegetable production, and a valuable option in a region that is highly dependent on subsistence rain-fed cropping. Recently the local demand for vegetables (for example, tomatoes, onions, okra, hot peppers), coupled with demand from urban and semi-urban areas, has grown dramatically. The programs organized the gardens on a community basis--for example, with women's groups, which share the costs of inputs as well as the responsibility for managing water and fertilizer supplies, obtaining extension advice and combating pests and diseases. These community vegetable gardens also facilitate the intensive training and technical backstopping that farmers need early on in adopting the market garden system. Improved locally adapted varieties of onions, okra, tomato and other vegetables resulting from their work are spreading rapidly in the project areas where they are contributing to improvement of incomes and nutrition. For example, market gardens have allowed community members to access fresh vegetable for the first time, during the dry season in some of the FASO areas in Gayeri health district.

In addition, the establishment of irrigated gardens reduces out-migration from the villages for work and demonstrates that villagers will stay in the village if work opportunities exist. In areas with shallow water tables, the installation of irrigation perimeters using motor pumps and improved water harvesting techniques has greatly increased garden production.

#### **2) Improved seeds, organic manure and tools.**

In order to reestablish farm production, the programs implemented subsidized distribution of improved seeds targeting vulnerable households (early maturing seeds of sorghum, cowpeas, and a variety of vegetables, which are better adapted to climate change as they maximize the utilization of the erratic rains).

The establishment of agricultural-input shops in most communes were used especially to support market gardening in key project areas. Farmers were trained in crop fertilization techniques--both mineral and organic, to increase their yields.

#### **3) The zaï and other soil & water conservation systems:**

These sustainable land and water management interventions provide a window of opportunity for farmers to improve crop performance in the context of a harsh and changing climate. Both projects promoted Zaï techniques that proved very successful.

To promote conservation agriculture activities, 76 demonstration plots were established by FASO in Gayeri, Manni and Boulsa districts. Farmers' days were also organized, enabling promotion of climate smart agriculture techniques such as *Zai*, which was then adopted by 35% of program beneficiaries.

According to farmers, the future seems brighter if a farmer adopts this technique. A total of 10,789 women farmers have been supported by FASO with food aid to improve the productivity of more than 5,800 hectares of degraded land. Following on from a 50% or greater improvement in yields (e.g. baseline of 130 kg vs 2013 of 200 kg of cowpeas) through use of the *Zai* technique in FY13, 829.25 hectares were rehabilitated without food aid support by 1,663 farmers including 870 women.

Their crops are doing better than they were before. They are harvesting higher yields and are able to feed their households so as to attract more farmers to the new farming technology, which help to increase food production and ensure food security in the region. The *Zai* pits have a diameter of 15 to 30 cm. and a depth of 10 to 15 cm. to collect rainfall and runoff. This means that more water infiltrates, so that water will be available to plant roots. Farmers put a handful of organic matter in each pit (ranging from about 300 gram per pit). *Zai* technology also reactivates biological activities in the soil and eventually leads to an improvement in soil structure, which then leads to less desertification. Other effective soil and water conservation techniques used by the two programs include half-moons, Natural Assisted Regeneration, and conservation agriculture.

#### 4) **Post-harvest techniques and PICS bags**

FASO and ViM have promoted the use of the PICS bags, which enable cowpea producers (often women) to lose less of their crop to pests and to obtain higher prices by selling later in the year when prices rise.

According to key informant interviews, post-harvest losses were very high (35%) before, but with the introduction of new post harvest techniques such as the « triple-lined air-tight sacks » for cowpea, the loss is now close to zero. This is one of the most successful interventions introduced by the programs. In addition this intervention prevented farmers from using chemical pesticides for cowpea conservation.

#### 5) **Promoting high value-chain crops**

Smallholders in the project zones need high value-chain crops such cowpeas, sesame, and **PDCO-orange flesh sweet potatoes; the latter of which is rich in vitamin A, but not often used for market sale.** These crops will generate high value from mostly manual labor on a small land area. Rice and moringa are high value-chain crops, they return well to the producer, but they are not supported specifically in the RISE initiative. FASO has supported the establishment of 537 hectares of rice.

#### 6) **SILC as a means for access to credit for various IGA**

Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC) are helping women in the project areas develop basic skills in financial management. The FASO program supported Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC) activities organized in 777 groups. The “Caisse Populaire” agreed to partner with ViM to facilitate the creation of savings programs for women.

Women participating in SILC are also learning the importance of saving and meaningful investment. SILCs have significantly increased human assets by helping women achieve skills in numeracy and bookkeeping, and in **promoting (already existing) women's solidarity** in supporting the poorest members of the community.

### 7) Warrantage

Warrantage is an ingenious financing scheme that significantly contributes to resiliency. In addition to pests, weeds and climate change effects, households in the program zones are also penalized by often having to sell their produce immediately after harvest — when everyone else is selling and prices are lowest. In return for the loan, the farmers leave part of their production in a locked warehouse with keys held by their group, MFI, and the financial institution.

As part of its approach to facilitate producer access to formal credit, ViM is linking interested PGs to financial institutions operating in ViM intervention areas through the “warrantage” system. The recently introduced warrantage and poultry training and distribution by FASO to increase and diversify beneficiaries' revenues have been producing positive results

This credit gives the smallholders the means to buy essential inputs for the next planting and to hold on to the product until the lean season, when food stocks start to run low and prices climb. This short-term loan is also used for the payment of children's school fees.

At that point farmers can redeem their production from the warehouse, sell their crop, repay their loan and pocket the difference. Using part of the credit to finance other income-generating activities, many farmers managed to repay the loans even before selling their crop. If done properly (dependent upon the availability of clean warehouses and good storage conditions), warrantage allows farmers to grow more food and increase their income. **This would also benefit from being linked with microfinance institutions.** The FASO Program is currently using the warehouse built to store Title II commodities to better implement the warrantage approach in the intervention area. There is an urgent need to harmonize warrantage strategies between programs including with the RISE program.

### 8) Circumventing Middlemen

Most of the smallholders are vulnerable to having their margins squeezed by middlemen, especially when bulky, perishable fresh produce needs to be sold. But farmers are now teaming up to face the market together, gaining greater clout. Farmer associations supported by the program are now protecting the interests of the poor. Onion sellers in Pissila in ViM intervention area are collaborating to prevent price competition within their neighboring market stalls.

## B. Improving Health and Nutrition Status: What worked best

There is strong consensus among beneficiaries that FASO and ViM's nutrition and hygiene promotion activities are having a positive influence in the fourteen targeted communes (10 for FASO and 4 for ViM). This is one of the most successful activities of the programs. The observed rates of adoption by beneficiaries suggest a high rate of achievement of the performance indicators by the end of the projects.

### Challenges and opportunities

Among the constraints cited in the field, the soil texture and quality in some sites remain challenging to the construction of latrines. Cases were cited in villages located in the central north where the predominant sandy soils made it very difficult to construct pit latrines with reasonable depth or stability. In other cases, shallow soils with rocky underpinning made it difficult to dig pit latrines of sufficient depth. In other cases, the weakness of vulnerable group members (e.g. the sick or elderly) and the lack of tools such as pick axes for digging and cement and iron for slab construction limited latrine coverage. Nevertheless, overall there was an enthusiastic response to establishing household primary sanitary facilities, particularly in the villages targeted by the CLTS sensitization activities.

### **Achievements & key activities contributing to resilience**

#### What worked best?

The following sections highlight the key interventions that successfully promoted resilience and should be pursued in the extension phase.

1. **CLTS:** Most household members now wash their hands with clean water and soap during critical moments such as before and after eating., after using latrines, before feeding and bathing the babies, and prior to cooking. Today, in CLTS targeted villages the number of households that have hygiene facilities at home is progressively increasing (mainly latrines). Nutrition and hygiene trainings include instructions on the construction of hygiene facilities, as well as guidelines for the maintenance of safe food and water and a clean household environment. In addition, the trainings helped beneficiary households to make informed decisions on nutritious foods for themselves and their younger children. For women in surveyed communities, the first step out of poverty and towards resilience begins with clean water.

ViM promoted the CLTS approach in their villages by mobilizing the communities to attain open-defecation-free status as well as other essential hygiene actions within the communities. In total, 425 CLTS committee members have sensitized households on the importance of family latrine and hand washing station construction, use, and maintenance leading to a large increase in the number of households with access to an improved sanitation facility as a result (146 percent of target).

Most of the hygiene and sanitation promotion activities carried out by FASO centered on the implementation of CLTS activities in the 10 communes. During FY 2014, FASO has implemented CLTS approach in 36 villages (36 communities) and formed and trained 36 CLTS hygienist committees, bringing the total to 109% the target (33 villages). In these villages 72 masons (2 per village) were selected to be in slabs and latrines construction, using the Sanplat type that is the lowest cost for communities that respects the EGSSA standards. They promoted the CLTS approach in their villages by mobilizing the communities to attain open-defecation-free status as well as other essential hygiene actions within the communities. In total, 432 CLTS committee members were trained in sensitizing households to the importance of the family latrine and its use and maintenance, and as the property of the household, leading to a large increase in the number of households with access to an improved sanitation facility as a result. FASO's Annual survey results showed that 49.6% of

beneficiaries in the three health districts were using an improved latrine that is a testament to the efficacy of the CLTS approach and the success of sensitization in the communities.

**2. Care groups:** The Care groups model contributed to an increase in the demand and utilization of health services for health prevention and promotion and for curative care (e.g. prenatal care, assisted delivery, post natal care, child immunization, child growth monitoring, early breastfeeding, exclusive breastfeeding, and complementary feeding for children from 6 months).

“The Care Group”: A successful Model that can be aligned with the RISE Initiative: The Care Group model allows both growth monitoring and complementary feeding behaviors to be promoted in the same context. Within this model, the children screened as “moderately malnourished” and “severely malnourished” will be referred out of the community to Integrated Health Centers (CSI) for more intensive treatment. Mothers who participated in child feeding training sessions had higher rates of exclusive breastfeeding of children 0-6 months, and introduced complementary foods after six months (later than households that did not receive training). Overall, the nutritional status of children was improved. Mothers who were interviewed said that prior to enrolling in the care group regular meeting/talking session programs were held. The advantage/differentiator of Care Groups is the individualized home visit to each participating family. Mothers are increasingly using better hygiene practices, such as washing hands at the appropriate moments, keeping houses clean, and using latrines (if available) to avoid the spread of disease. This has also been clearly pointed out by the husbands during the community meetings in the field. Screening, referral and treatment of malnourished children at the community level have contributed to the fight against child malnutrition.

**3. Increased utilization of key health and nutrition services:** It is early to look for the impact of activities whose repercussions are generally more perceptible in the long term. Nevertheless, it may be acknowledged, for example, that the means provided by programs enabled some health centers to carry out advanced treatment activities to a larger population. New knowledge of the health staff in terms of Integrated Management of Childhood Illness (IMCI), quality assurance and supervision techniques are among the many assets that are attributable to current programs that have improved household access to primary health care.

**4. Behavior-change communication (BCC):** Behavior-change communication (BCC ) in terms of health /nutrition is the major strategy used in this field. Through Care groups, Village Development Committees or VDC, support groups for maternal breastfeeding. The weaknesses pointed out by the beneficiaries include: illiteracy of women, and a lack of or distant healthcare centers for managing the malnutrition cases that cannot be dealt with at the community level, the lack of health centers in some villages (or long distance between health center and communities), and the geographical barriers to access to health services during the rainy season. It can be said that some efforts were made by the programs to enable people’s access to primary health care. The focus was mainly on health promotion (education for health, healthy and balanced diet, pre-natal consultations, assisted deliveries, vaccination, drinking water and basic sanitation measure) and on treatment (home-based diarrhea management).

**5. Access to potable water :** a precondition for the success of health strategies Without easy access to potable water in many villages, many of these hygiene recommendations have been difficult to implement yet they are critical to child health and nutrition. Both FASO and ViM participated in the regular meeting of the IYCF (Infant and

Young Children Feeding) subgroup of the nutrition thematic group under UNICEF/Burkina Faso. This forum brought stakeholders together to discuss health policy and advocacy initiatives of the MoH.

**6. Increased Consumption of diversified foods:** Farmer groups were trained on how to better utilize what they already have for improved nutrition. Market gardens were adopted by all households visited and are becoming an integral part of improved household nutrition, providing a variety of fresh vegetables for the family.

A major success story of the two programs involves the women's gardens, which are an integral component not only of agriculture, but of the environmental health and nutrition components. In some cases, the primary reason for not cultivating a garden was lack of water, suggesting that if the water issue was resolved and input supplies were improved, almost all garden plots would be utilized. It is interesting to note what garden products are being used for which purposes: approximately, one third of the vegetables produced are consumed in the household and the rest are sold or given to friends and neighbors. According to key-informant interviews, in the district of Gayeri vegetable gardening for women was introduced by FASO.

This represents a significant change. Previously most households with gardens tried to market most of their harvest, and little was consumed in the households. That almost one-third of the household's vegetables are now consumed in the household may be the result of the extensive nutrition training that has been provided by these programs.

In addition, cooking demonstrations of improved flour using locally available food (cereal, cowpea, and peanut) have greatly contributed to the prevention of child malnutrition.

### **C. Capacity Building and Good Governance:**

As the RISE framework and the FASO SOs suggest, good governance and institutional capacity building are fundamental to long term improvements in productivity, access and empowerment. The extension phase must focus on building institutions that empower people and provide transparent and responsive governance. Bad institutions can have negative impacts that are difficult to eradicate as entitlements take precedence over justice and economic productivity. Project staff must be on the lookout for bad governance both as it empowers elites and disempowers others. While projects that simply attempt to replace existing systems of governance are likely to fail they can, with the leverage of investments, influence governance in a positive way. This is an area where significant improvements can be made during the extension phase. Both ViM and FASO did attempt to improve governance but with mixed results. If project staff fully understand the importance and delicacy of improving governance they can make progress without incurring major resistance through careful training and education that focuses on social cohesion and social insurance as well as transparency and responsiveness. Each of these areas may need to be addressed at the funding as well as policy levels perhaps applied to the VDC, PTA and WUA. Some good governance issues are beyond the responsibility of ViM or FASO for they are part of national level governance.

### Challenges and opportunities

Decentralization can offer an institutional framework for building climate resilient livelihoods and economies in the selected communities. Local management of natural resources, through a hierarchy of institutions linking very localized community-based organizations with higher level institutions at cross- community and/or local government levels, are important elements in maintaining the resilience of social-ecological systems. Centralized state agencies working in the region do not always have the resources, reach or skills necessary to be effective across all communities and ecosystems in these highly heterogeneous and differentiated contexts. Furthermore, local governments with discretionary decision-making powers over financial resources needed, and accountability to their constituents, are better able than centralized systems to respond in a flexible, timely and appropriate manner to this highly variable and heterogeneous environment.

Accountable local governments that are responsive to people's priorities can engage them in decision-making processes in relation to planning and resource management. This is key for goods in the public domain central to local livelihoods and key to the economy (e.g. water, rangelands, forests, market gardens and market information). They can also harness local adaptive knowledge and experience to support livelihood production strategies designed to exploit or lessen the risk of climate variability, and provide services tailored to the local context that complement and reinforce livelihoods and the local economy—for example, mobile veterinary care. By providing services that are useful to and appreciated by local people, local governments can create the conditions for sustained citizen engagement, including the willingness to pay taxes, thereby further reinforcing the autonomy and downward accountability of local government.

Unfortunately, in practice, as this evaluation has shown in the field, very few democratic local governments have been empowered, e.g. given discretionary authority over land and natural resources, adequate and appropriate technical support and equipment, or sufficient financial resources, to represent and engage local citizens in the management of resources in the public domain. Key to policy reform, decentralization tends to be a top-down process controlled by central actors—even if prompted by urban-based civil society groups and opposition political parties demanding a radical redefinition of the relationship between the State and its citizens. Shifting the balance of power from the state to citizens is thus a key objective of decentralization, but in practice it is a major and on-going challenge to achieve.

Special attention is required to ensure equitable participation by all citizens, including those marginalized by enduring power relations that are often enshrined in longstanding customary and/or religious practice, and/or deep-rooted prejudice, for example, against women, vulnerable or marginalized groups, migrants, youth, and so forth. These groups, lacking options and assets, are likely to be more vulnerable to extreme climate events. The situation is further complicated by the degree of differentiation that often exists within these groups, especially in terms of wealth or political affiliation, which affects their readiness and capacity to act in solidarity. High levels of illiteracy impedes active participation in decision-making processes. Building the capacity of the more politically, socially and economically excluded to participate in and appropriate the process of decentralization is a complex and slow process, one that has to be driven from within society if lasting change is to be achieved. It involves these groups not only acquiring information about their rights and roles in a democratic society, but also changing theirs' and others' attitudes and behavior.

Establishing greater climate resilience now and in future programs will need to be grounded within global governance issues, including water and land shortage, private investment in commercial agriculture, and population increase. These long-term political/economic trends need to be considered by policy makers alongside the true evidence of long-term environmental / climatic trends. Investors must no longer follow misguided attempts to ‘stabilize’ environmental conditions, but must work holistically and flexibly with the unpredictability of the environment, and turn it into an asset for the target beneficiaries.

Of course, efforts at increasing climate resilience are best implemented through localized systems of governance— decentralized local government, customary natural resource management mechanisms etc., as such systems are better able to respond flexibly and in time to climatic variability, and are also often more accountable to resource users. More specifically, investments need to target those parts of communities that are particularly vulnerable (women, youth, and migrants, for example), strengthening their assets and rights through improvements in water and land tenure, information provision, and services such as health and education that are truly viable and accessible. The chronic imbalance of power and resources for many communities noted during this evaluation necessitates a strong commitment to social protection. Mechanisms need to simultaneously address poverty (lack of resources), vulnerability (uninsured risk) and marginalization (lack of voice).

Endogenous political processes hold out the greatest hope of success, since climate resilience, like every other facet of development, will ultimately depend on the capacity of citizens to hold their governments and other actors to account.

#### Recommendations for strengthening capacity building and governance

- 1) **Choose to work directly with democratic local authorities at all levels:** Build governance at the level of CVDs, communes and farmers’ groups. Consider the use of local development funds to strengthen financial autonomy.
- 2) **Build citizenship:** Build citizenship and the capacity of local people to hold government and other institutions that govern them to account. Target under-privileged and marginal groups (women and youth) to redress entrenched inequality.
- 3) **Consider the use of local development funds to strengthen financial autonomy:** Local governments that we surveyed have very limited financial autonomy, with most being dependent on central government and other external actors. This undermines their autonomy and ability to undertake flexible planning. It is important that we promote transparency and accountability--downwards, horizontally and upwards.
- 4) **Secure land rights:** Secure land rights as part of increasing resilience and access for women and youth, as land tenure insecurity undermines efforts to increase agricultural productivity, and therefore strongly impacts climate resilience.
- 5) **Conflict prevention is highly recommended:** When identifying rules of access, or resolving disagreements over the use of natural resources, involvement of all users is of fundamental importance. Leaders of mobile pastoral communities are hard to identify and even harder to get together in one place. The fact that users are further differentiated along lines of gender, income, power and age adds to the challenge. Multiple exchanges will be needed between the many people at community and local government levels before any

action can be taken at all. Most importantly, since the future lies in these gardens, we must be sure that the land tenure for lowland and market gardening be well negotiated.

**6) Facilitate the emergence of a new rural economy:** To promote resiliency in the rural areas, current and future programs must facilitate the emergence of a new rural economy created and maintained by organized groups composed primarily of rural women and youth. In conjunction with the prevalent, traditional powers, these two groups are the driving forces in the villages, and if supported in their efforts, and recognized in their rights by FASO and ViM. The aim is to focus on organizational capacity and internal management groups that consist mainly of rural women. Investing in the education of women and girls will be necessary. Therefore current and future programs must partner with relevant stakeholders (national and international) to promote gender equality and the global empowerment of women and youth.

**7) Information Sharing and greater Accountability:** There is often a problem with information flow within local communities. Though important decisions are regularly made, few people are aware of them or fully understand them. Worse, informal information channels often spawn rumors and misinformation. Project staff tend to be over dependent upon established communication lines. It is unrealistic to simply think that information given to community leaders automatically filters down the official communication chain. Information management (retention) is often viewed as a part of leadership. More effort is needed to monitor the actual content of information passed around a community once it moves beyond local leadership. Breakdowns in communication are the source of many problems in the implementation of community-based programs.

FASO and ViM are holding regular steering committee meetings that involve various stakeholders, such as provincial High Commissioners or provincial directors. This point was confirmed during a meeting at Gayeri and needs to be maintained and reinforced. Many problems associated with inadequate sharing of information are also closely related to poor accountability of community leadership. The degree to which this breakdown in communication is intentional or not may be debatable (several argue that it is an effort by some leaders to avoid public accountability); but regardless of the reasons, the lack of dependable information remains a problem for transparent management. Therefore FASO and ViM need to work for increased transparency at all levels.

**8) Partner Relationships:** Three general recommendations came out of this problem analysis. The first were related to improving current practices, especially in regards to the sharing of information within the community. The second were concerned with policy implications pertaining to project sponsored "incentives." The third were proposals related to coordinated action among stakeholders, particularly concerning the problem areas of conflicting approaches, community ownership, and partner relationships.

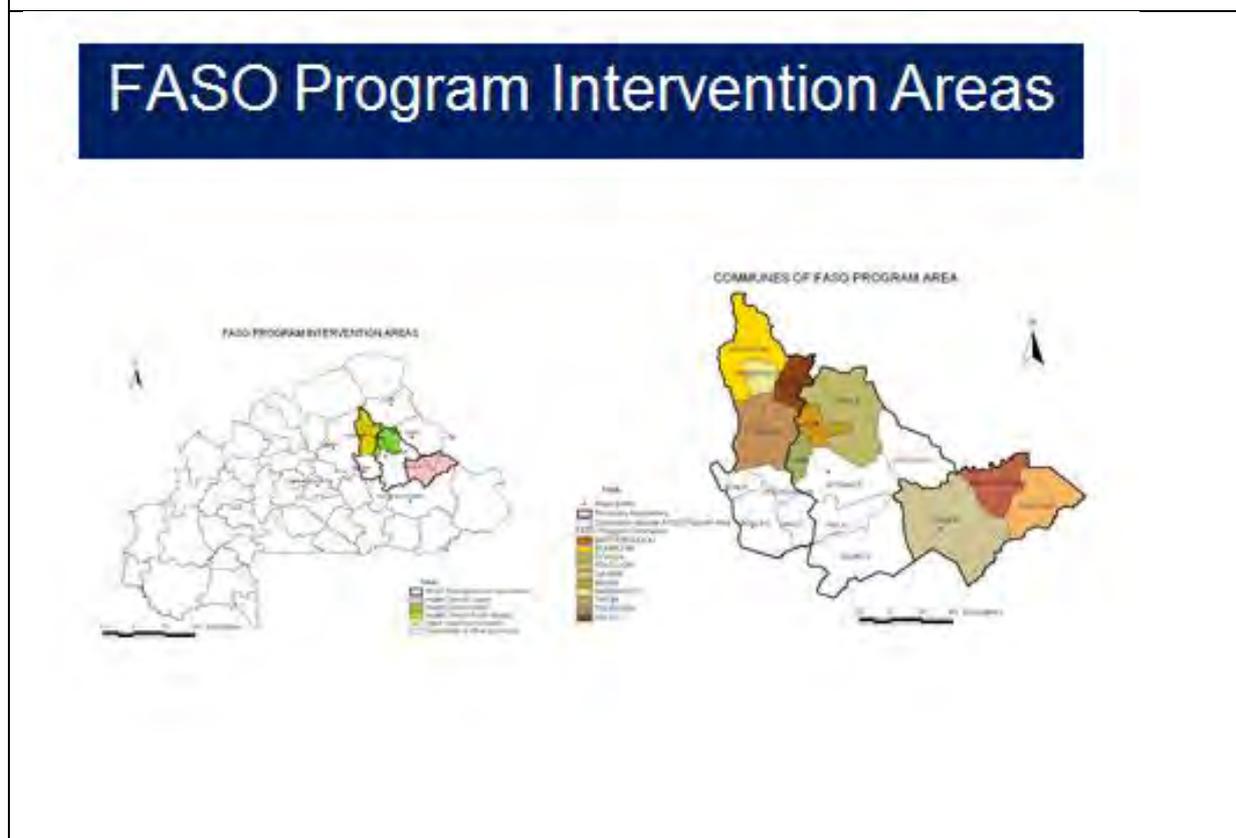
**9) Incentives and limits of voluntarism:** Problems with promoting resilient activities through voluntary efforts were discussed at length by evaluation participants. Most community residents are poor and need to spend the majority of their time securing their livelihoods, too few people are burdened with a disproportionate amount of community work, and community service prevents these people from earning an adequate income. In the current program environment, with its emphasis on sustained economic growth, "nobody does something for nothing." The introduction of "incentives" seems a logical reaction to these problems. Yet, if the perspective of self-reliance or community-based development and effective integration are

to be taken seriously, any potential incentives need to be approached and initiated in a sustainable manner. The key problem is that incentives are usually sought from external agencies or projects with resources that will immediately evaporate once a project has been completed. This leaves a community with the same unresolved issues of voluntarism and appropriate incentives for sustainable development. Innovative and culturally sensitive approaches to incentives need to be explored, such as the Personal Service Provider (PSP) approach used by FASO and REGIS-ER and the SILC approach that group people around common economic interest. The degree of social insurance in a community correlates inversely with the level of risk individual initiative incurs: the greater the social support the less dangerous new individual initiatives are. Thus, for the poor, over individualizing incentives brings the risk of decreasing social insurance as invidious comparisons take root and this makes incentives less effective.

### **III. Top Specific Findings: FASO Program**

CRS leads a consortium that includes Hellen Keller International (HKI), GRET, OCADES-Kaya, and Association TIN TUA. HKI implements the PM2A component in Gayéri, OCADES-Kaya implements both PM2A and the agriculture/livelihood components in Boulsa, GRET implements BCC activities and supports the production and dissemination of fortified supplemental food in Manni, and TIN TUA implements the agriculture/livelihood component in Manni and Gayéri health districts. In addition to the general management of the consortium, CRS directly led the implementation of the governance and the education component of the program. CRS engaged technical support partners, including INERA, African Conservation Tillage Initiative, AfriqueVerte, Rural Development Institute (Landesa) to benefit from their unique technical expertise in their respective fields. FASO closely worked and received technical support from various technical departments of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security throughout the implementation of the program

Figure 1: FASO Program Intervention Areas



Among all the interventions of FASO program, the impact of agriculture/livelihood, health and nutrition activities, including WASH appear to be among the strongest, especially in terms of improving the lives of women and children.

#### **A. Agricultural and livestock management**

##### **Challenges and achievements**

FASO made remarkable progress in positively impacting food production and the generation of revenues for more than 80,000 directly vulnerable beneficiaries, 58% of whom are women, in the health districts of Boulsa, Manni and Gayeri. The production of sesame and rice increased by 45%. Women participating in market gardening earned an average income of \$116 per beneficiary, whereas those participating in warrantage and rice parboiling activities earned an average income of \$161 and \$134, respectively, over a four-month period.

These results were made possible through the diversification of agricultural production and livelihoods opportunities, income generating activities and sustainable natural resource management. The choice of value chains and the promotion of proven climate adaptive technologies have been combined with the facilitation of access to credit.

A total of 637 hectares of lowland have been improved and allocated to 3,692 rice producers of which 1,146 are women. With an improvement of the average yield from 1.2MT/ha before the program to 3.7MT/ha, this represents an estimated total production of 2,347 MT of paddy per year by the FASO direct beneficiaries.

With the technical support and provision of tool kits women participants have improved more than 5,800 hectares of degraded land using the Zaï technique and registered a 116% improvement in yields. Working with INERA, more than 43,000 partially subsidized coupons were made available to producers to access seed varieties adapted to climate change, more than 28,600 vouchers to access triple lined bags for prolonged pesticide free storage of cowpeas, and more than 3,400 vines of vitamin A rich, orange flesh, sweet potatoes.

The members of 771 Savings Internal Lending Communities (SILC), primarily women, mobilized a total \$488,890 with a total interest generated of \$113,000. They contributed to a social fund of more than \$42,500 to support each other during crises.

In addition to SILC, the linking of program beneficiaries to microfinance institutions (MFI) has enabled producers to access \$95,000 worth of credit, including \$48,698 for 19 rice producers groups with a more than 82% reimbursement rate; \$31,512 to six warrantage groups enabling them to store 131 MT of their production; and \$15,572 in working capital for 22 parboiler women groups.

The focus discussions and key interviews during the formative evaluation conducted in March 2015 confirmed the positive impact of the FASO program on the lives of beneficiaries. The adoption of climate-smart technologies (Zaï, adapted seed varieties, the improvement of lowland and degraded land) enabled program beneficiaries to harvest during years of drought when others not applying these technologies failed to do so.

A few challenges remain to be addressed to reinforce the outcomes and sustain their impact on program beneficiaries. The geographic access to agricultural inputs (seed, triple line bags, fertilizers, medicine for livestock) due to the lack of emerging local seed producers or input suppliers limits the ability of the program to maximize its impact. The choices of technical options not adapted to the local landscape have compelled rice producers in some areas to abandon their plots due to the washing away of secondary dikes. The insufficient access to small equipment limits the potential for the adoption of the proven technologies.

In addition to the technical factors, the organizational capacity of the producers' groups hinders their ability to problem solve effectively. The governance dimension came out clearly during the formative evaluation. The market gardening groups experience frequent breakdowns of water pumps due to inadequate preventive maintenance and the unavailability of locally qualified technicians. Land security is another dimension, which needs careful consideration in the arrangements around land improvement initiatives. Low levels of literacy limit the full participation of beneficiaries, particularly women, and inhibit the reinforcement of accountability within the various groups supported by the program.

The geographic overlap between FASO, REGIS-ER and REGIS-AG and the similarities in the approaches, albeit the differences in the labeling, offers unique opportunities not only for integration, but also for collaborating, learning and adapting among these RISE partners and with other programs. The emerging core group of local seed farmers, including poultry producers in the zones could be linked up with REGIS-AG for support in business

development skills, PM2A warehouses could be used for warrantage activities during the extension phase, in the absence of food distribution, and cross-fertilization among model farmers could be easily facilitated. Public-private partnerships could be reinforced with the presence of AGRODIA, INERA, MFIs, or the technical departments of agriculture, water resources and food security through networking and joint advocacy.

### **Recommendations:**

In addition to the reinforcement of the business development capacity of the various producers groups FASO to consider:

- 1) Reinforce and extend best practices and proven technologies to additional beneficiaries. These include support to dual purpose value chains, dry season market gardening, poultry, Zaï, access to water for productive activities, post-harvest techniques.
- 2) Promote peer education, building on the existing model farmers in coordination with other stakeholders.
- 3) Make use of SILC groups and Care Groups for the dissemination of integrated best practices in the use of climate adapted seed, nutrition messages.
- 4) Prioritize Care group members for poultry activities and market gardening.
- 5) Reinforce the geographic access to inputs for beneficiaries.

## **B. Adoption of best Health and Nutrition Practices through Care Groups**

### **Challenges and achievements**

The second strategic objective of FASO is to improve the health and nutrition status of mothers and children. This objective is achieved through various strategies, including that of Preventing Malnutrition of Children under the Age of Two (PM2A) to improve the nutritional wellbeing of mothers and children, as well as promoting good practices aimed at reducing maternal and infant mortality. The program is implemented in the health districts of Manni, Gayéri and the northern part of Boulsa. The program used a combination of approaches to implement the behavior change strategy. In the districts of Boulsa and Gayéri, the program used the Care Group model including PM2A, in partnership with OCADES Kaya and Helen Keller International, while in Manni district the program employed other behavior change communication approaches including mass behavior change communication (BCC) methods in partnership with GRET.

The information gathered through observations, focus group discussions and key informant interviews point to a strong consensus among beneficiaries that nutrition and hygiene promotion activities are having a positive impact on the adoption of best health and nutrition practices in program areas. The analysis of four key behavior change related indicators confirms these field observations. The FASO program registered an improvement over the

baseline data of 22% for the exclusive breastfeeding; 14% for prenatal visits; 63% for postnatal visits and 30% for professionally assisted childbirths. An analysis of regional differences show that the Care Group model used in Gayeri and Boulsa health districts is producing greater results than the traditional BCC methods being used in Manni health district. With the exception of prenatal consultations, the adoption rates for other behaviors such as exclusive breastfeeding, minimum acceptable diet and intake of diversified food for pregnant and lactating women were higher in Boulsa and Gayéri health districts than in Manni health district. Between the PM2A zones, the health district of Boulsa ranks as the highest, as measured by the average annual growth in the value of these indicators compared to the overall program average, even though the Care Group started in Boulsa six months after its start-up in Gayeri. This suggests that the success of the Care Group model depends more on the effectiveness of the approach as a behavior change communication strategy and on the excellence in implementation than on technical nutrition competencies of the organization or staff implementing the program. It is also of note that the implementing partner in Boulsa health district was also implementing the agriculture/livelihood components of the program, creating an opportunity for a more integrated approach to implementation.

The Care Group model presents other advantages, including high coverage, inclusiveness in the selection of beneficiaries, the use of interpersonal communication, and the building on Leader Mothers and promoters who are endogenous resources, thereby contributing to the sustainability of the approach. However, there are a few constraints to overcome in order to fully take advantage of the potential of the Care Group model. These include the limited capacity of Leader Mothers and promoters in group facilitation techniques, the fatigue of volunteerism, and the inadequate familiarity of the health district personnel with the approach whose success directly contributes to increasing the number of referrals they receive through the community-based screening.

As shown in Annex D, FASO used a mixed-method approach to implement the behavior change strategy. The program used the Care Group model (including PM2A) in the districts of Boulsa and Gayéri (in partnership with OCADES Kaya and HKI), while the program employed mass communication methods in partnership with GRET in Manni district.

A detailed analysis (see Annex D) was done on four key performance indicators to identify differences between the intervention areas using different behavior change communication strategies. Taking into account the four indicators used, Boulsa's health district ranks the highest, above the overall average rate of increase of the program. The health district of Boulsa recorded the best performance in terms of implementing the program's activities associated with behavior change communication for the adoption of mother and child health and nutrition best practices, followed by Gayéri, and then Manni. Key lessons are contained in the fact that analysis clearly indicated that the districts where the Care Group model was used consistently exhibited greater improvement than the district where the program relied on mass communications. Since the Care Groups were implemented by two different partner organizations, it is apparent that the selection of the approach itself is more significant than the technical competence of the implementing partner.

## **Recommendations**

- 1) FASO to consider introducing the Care Group model in Manni health district in the commune of Thion or Coala, as REGIS-ER will be implementing the Mother to Mother (MtM) approach in the commune of Manni.
- 2) FASO to focus on the reinforcement of Leader Mothers' skills in group facilitation through the systematic protocol developed in the fourth year of the program and use the time freed up by the discontinuation of food distribution during the extension period for closer monitoring and supervision by the animators.
- 3) As a source of motivation, prioritize the Leader Mothers and the promoters when selecting candidates to participate in other program activities such as literacy training, agriculture, membership in SILC groups and exchanges visits.
- 4) With the gradual phase-in of REGIS-ER in Gayéri health district and the similarities between their MtM and the Care Group model, FASO will consider a leaner management model whereby one partner implements more than one component, building on the successes in Boulsa health district. This could potentially foster increased "Collaboration, Learning and Adapting" – the CLA approach built into the USAID Resilience conceptual framework - and contribute to greater integration in the field.
- 5) Joint advocacy by FASO, ViM and REGIS-ER to incorporate the Care Group type of model into the national strategy for scaling up of Infant and Young Child Feeding.

## **Support improved water supply, sanitation and hygiene through CLTS**

In four years, the FASO Program has contributed greatly to the improvement of mother and child health through WASH activities that have increased access to potable water and improved hygiene across the intervention zone. To date, the project has constructed 15 new boreholes and rehabilitated 40 existing boreholes to meet the standards of Environmental Guidelines for Small-Scale Activities in Africa (EGSSAA). These water infrastructures helped improve the access to potable water for 16,500 individuals in 55 villages. They also permitted improvements in hygiene and the development of new income generating activities such as tree nurseries, brick-making, and vegetable gardens.

The focused efforts on the implementation of the Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) Approach has successfully led to the construction of 600 latrines (versus a target of 330) in 36 villages without any subsidies from the FASO program in FY14. 10 of these 36 villages (28%) have already constructed a latrine for every household in the community, with the goal of reaching the End-of-open air defecation (EOAD). Through this work, the percentage of homes having a latrine has increased from 8% of the population in the target area in 2012 to 18.3% in 2014. In addition, the percentage of households using improved latrines has increased from 34.5% in 2012 to 49.6% in 2014. The percentage of latrines constructed in the FASO intervention zone following the EGSSAA standards increased from 7.1% in 2012 to 15.6% in 2014.

The focus discussions and key interviews during the formative evaluation conducted in March 2015 highlighted areas for continued improvement. Recent changes in the operating environment will help sustained improvement in the access to potable water and in the improvement of hygiene and sanitation practices in the target villages. These changes include the emergence of new actors providing water quality improvement services (i.e. Aquatabs, ANTENNA Baobab for bleach production), the establishment of model villages with 100% of households having latrines, Care Groups in place which can share hygiene and sanitation messages, and the existence of potential partners such as West Africa-Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene program (WA-WASH), the General Directorate for Water Resources (DGRE), General Directorate of Sanitation (DGAEU), the communes and agents from the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Food Security.

### **Recommendations:**

The following recommendations are being made in order to assure the improved quality and quantity of potable water in FASO intervention areas:

1. Continue the construction of new boreholes and rehabilitation of existing boreholes.
2. Establish a system for water treatment at water-use points (wells and surface water).
3. The training and retraining of Water Use Associations and local water pump repairmen.
4. Extend the implementation of CLTS strategy to new areas in coordination with REGIS ER and other stakeholders and include construction of public latrines for concerned villages to reach EOAD status.
5. In coordination with REGIS ER and other actors, including the Government, introduce a partial subsidy to support and accompany the construction of slabs and latrines to accelerate the process of reaching the End-of-open air defecation in the targeted villages.

## **C. Promoting Good Governance**

### **Challenges and achievements**

Since its inception, the FASO program has focused on a number of aspects of local governance through the support of village development committees (VDCs), municipalities, water users' associations (WUAs), rice producer groups (RPGs), rice parboiler groups, tool management committees (TMCs), market gardening site management committees and village poultry extension agents (VPEAs).

Through financial and technical support, FASO's work in 100 pilot villages has helped to raise awareness and recognition of VDCs. In all, 666 men and 270 women VDC members have been trained in roles and responsibilities while being provided with essential management tools. By taking an inclusive and participatory approach involving municipalities and local populations, the VDCs have become more geographically and socially diverse and representative of the community with the number of women VDC members increasing from 15.53% to 29.14%. In addition, among the key posts of President, Secretary and Treasurer, women have increased their representation from 1.20% to 14.18%.

The VDCs have played a critical role in the negotiation of more than 650 hectares of lowland allocated to FASO beneficiaries for agricultural production in addition to helping parents' and mothers' associations to implement their own action plans. They contributed to food collection for school canteens, tree planting in schools, and community mobilization around literacy sessions. The VDCs in Foutouri, Bartiebougou, Kalitaghin and Nagbingou showed exceptional leadership in mobilizing financial contributions of more than \$14,000 to support their community development projects.

Technical and financial support of municipalities in the renewal of VDC has improved women's representation rate within the leadership positions and overall geographically. The involvement of municipalities in the monitoring committees of the FASO program helped to raise the profile and more easily address practical concerns related to, for example, arbitration on the choice of drilling sites, negotiating the allocation of land for market gardening, and infrastructure for lowland improvement. With the recent changes in the country political context, the municipalities are currently led by special delegation with limited responsibility toward communities. These changes could potentially slow down the collaboration during the transition period till a new government is elected in October 2015.

Locally, WUAs have been trained in roles and responsibilities. VPEAs are in place and accessible while an identification process has been initiated to identify further agents in the intervention zone.

While much has been accomplished, there still remain a number of areas for improvement. Communal development plans are not appropriated by local populations, with the municipal councils remaining inadequately involved in the monitoring and supervision of VDCs. The councils are often perceived as political bodies, hampering collaboration efforts. The VDCs remain dominated by men and low levels of literacy prevent full participation and effective action. The VDCs continue to struggle with fundraising and developing action plans, with inadequate accountability and coordination with the community members and other local structures.

WUAs face a number of similar challenges, including difficulty mobilizing user contributions, poor record keeping, a lack of coordination with municipal authorities and insufficient numbers of qualified technicians available for repairs.

VPEA continue to experience difficulties conserving vaccines as many people still do not routinely vaccinate their poultry. When specific campaigns are not under way it remains difficult for VPEAs to maintain profits.

For the RPGs, market access remains the primary hurdle. They also encounter organizational difficulties in the acquisition of inputs, with both RPGs and market garden site management committees having difficulty maintaining investments (i.e. dikes, motor pumps). While the RPG, the market gardening site management committees and the TMC know their roles and responsibilities they are not yet confident in the systematic use of management tools suggesting a need for further training.

## **Recommendations**

The following general recommendations are offered to improve internal governance of the community structures and their linkages with the local governments in support resilience activities:

1. Until the election of new counselors scheduled for 2016, FASO should take into consideration this transitory phase and focus its support to municipalities and on activities to be continued, with careful assessment of capacities of leaders to deliver negotiated services.
2. Increase support for municipalities in the monitoring and support of VDC initiatives, including their renewal processes and literacy trainings, and strengthen the collaboration between WUAs and the municipal authorities for the implementation of rural water system reform.
3. Strengthen internal governance, including accountability within community-based organizations supported by FASO.
4. Facilitate and support the emergence of a network of qualified and well-equipped local private service providers, including VPEA, and repairers of boreholes and motor pumps to improve the quality of their service delivery and maximize business profitability.
5. Establish a competitive innovation fund to strengthen municipalities' service delivery capacity.
6. Support farmers' groups with the World Food Programme's Purchase for Progress (P4P) in order to improve access to markets for cowpeas and rice.
7. Strengthen the organizational capacity for market access in coordination with REGIS-AG.

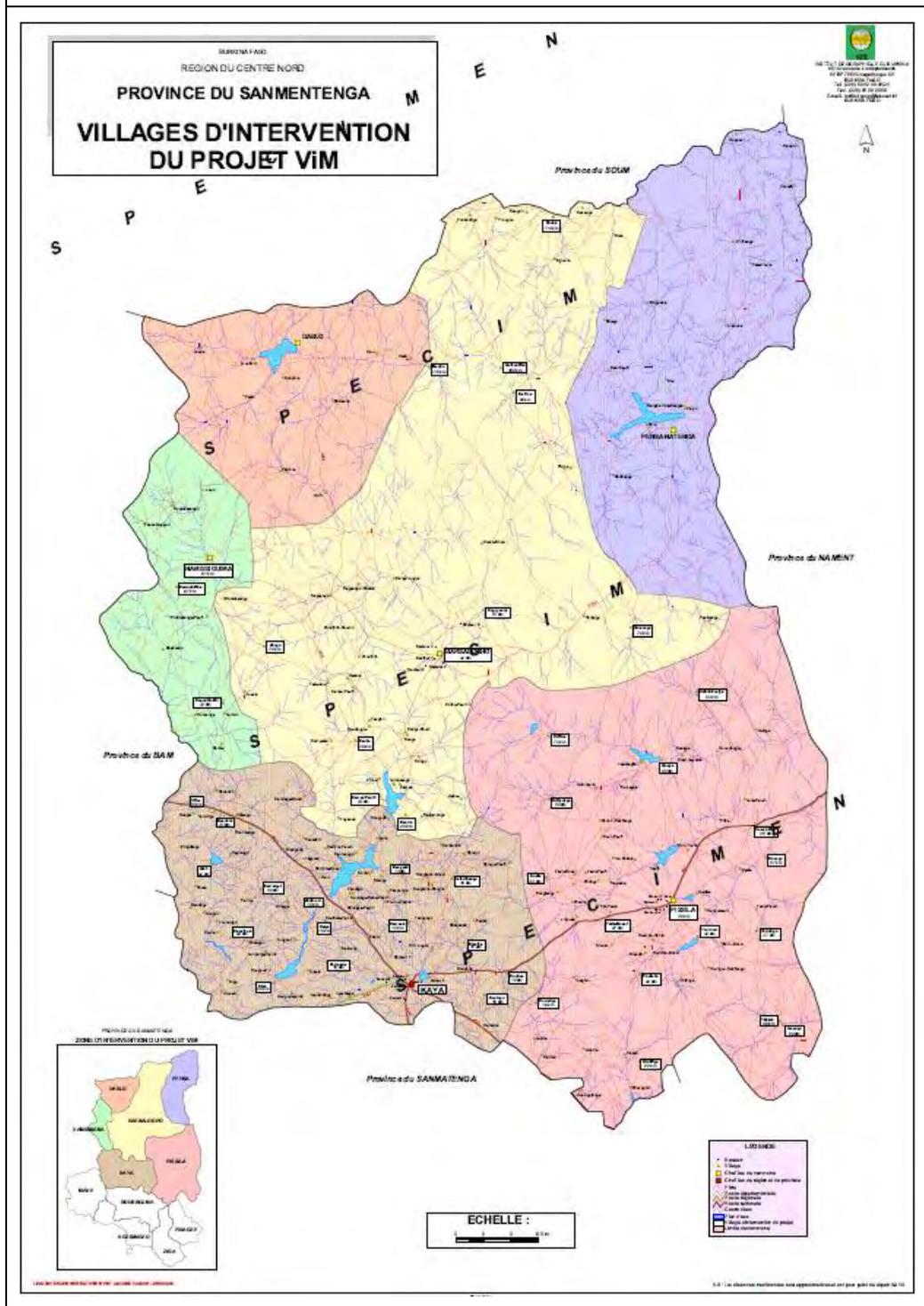
## **IV. Top Specific Findings: ViM Program**

In 2011 the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), as part of its Multi-Year Assistance Program, funded ACDI/VOCA's project, Victory Against Malnutrition (ViM). Since that time, ViM has been focusing its efforts on reducing food security among some the most vulnerable and isolated rural groups in Burkina Faso—the Sanmatenga Province in the central- northern region. ACDI/VOCA (Fig 1), working in conjunction with The Netherlands Development Organization (SNV) and Save the Children and three local partners, or LIPs, it operates in Barsalogo, Namissiguima, Kaya, and Pissila communes.

The changes that ViM brought about by a host of interventions, range from promotion of breastfeeding, promotion of improved seeds, promotion of poultry and small ruminants production, to empowering women through training programs. In general, the more involved a household was in the program, the better off it has become in terms of food security, equality of power between female and male household members, and the nutritional status of

young children. ViM is a successful program that has achieved most of its targets and made some impressive gains in all three SOs.

Figure 2: ViM Program Intervention Areas



Activities and their results are designed around three integrated Strategic Objectives (SO):

**SO 1:** Increased and diversified agricultural production

**SO 2:** Improved household incomes

**SO 3:** Reduced chronic malnutrition among children under 5 years of age and pregnant and lactating women (PLW)

## **A. Increasing and diversifying agricultural production**

The IRs under this SO were to be achieved utilizing a wide range of interventions that supported agro-pastoral livelihoods and income diversification in the targeted communities. Lead farmers are chosen between the most dynamic farmers to receive special support in order to support the other farmers.

### **Challenges and achievements**

Farming practices aimed at overcoming food insecurity and improving rural livelihoods included:

- Farmer Field Schools (FFS), demonstration herds, agricultural fairs, input vouchers and community awareness to bolster producer productivity, use of appropriate techniques. ViM increased and diversify agriculture production in six different value chains by working at the community level through its LIPs to support 600 producer groups (PGs). The number of PGs supported by each LIP below is broken out by commune: ‘Action pour la Promotion des Initiatives Locales’ (APIL), 191 PGs in Pissila; Alliance Technique d’Assistance au Développement (ATAD), 212 PGs in Kaya; and Association Zood Nooma pour le Développement (AZND), 197 PGs in Barsalogho and Namissiguima.
- The impact of the seeds and tools distributions was excellent. The quantities of improved seed distributed to individual producers by ViM included 349.51 kg of onion (Damani variety) and 1,875 kg of tomato (Petomech variety). Additionally, 227.17 MT of NPK fertilizers, 14.96 MT of Urea fertilizers, and 347.85 liters of TITAN 25 EC pesticide were distributed in FY 14.
- Trainings in Farming as a Family Business (FaaFB): ViM producer training includes budget planning, finance, and account operation; crop selection and management risk; community savings; and negotiation and contracting techniques. Training modules were designed to cover:
  - Notions and concepts of FaaFB;
  - Crop selection and management of risks in the FaaFB approach;
  - Planning a budget, production financing and establishing an operating account;
  - Community savings technique;

With changing weather and rainfall patterns affecting agricultural productions, FFS training also introduced sustainable water and soil conservation techniques to 10,408 targeted producers, including stony bund, “half-moon,” Zaï, and the use of organic manure to minimize the use of chemical fertilizers.. ViM provided agricultural production kits to 229 cowpea and sorghum producers and 82 onion and tomato producers.

Eighteen Group Producers growing onions produced a total of 542,337 kg of onions on approximately 24 ha of land. This resulted in an average yield of 22,597 kg per ha, or 22.5 MT per ha against a target of 19 MT per ha. Preliminary cowpea data collected from FFS

suggests an average yield of 924 kg/ha, which is 8.7% greater than the baseline average yield of 850 kg/ha.

PGs received training on improved farming methods and use of new technologies through FFS and demonstration plots. The trainings were supplemented with technical follow up and introduced improved inputs and small tools to enhance productivity and increase food production. The total number of registered members within these PGs receiving support is 16,985 individuals. Women beneficiaries represent 11,934 of the total or 70.26 percent. Of the 600 PGs supported by ViM, 305 are producing cowpea, 57 sorghum, 97 onion, 5 tomato, 117 small ruminants, and 19 raising poultry. Most PGs will continue to operate as a group, while building on and sustaining their growth after the project ends.

## Recommendations

**Link producers to government and private sector input suppliers through a voucher program:** ViM intensified the implementation of its voucher program in order to facilitate targeted farmer access to quality production inputs within the value chains promoted. ViM was able to engage the services of both government agencies and private sector suppliers, including the Association des Grossistes et Distributeurs d’Intrants Agricoles (AGRODIA), to mobilize the participation of wholesalers and retailers (agro-dealers) to supply agricultural inputs in multiple agricultural fairs.

COMMUNE	ONION			TOMATO			TOTAL
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	
KAYA	251	581	832	-	33	33	865
PISSILA	106	191	297	-	-	-	297
BARSALOGHO	205	353	558	7	28	35	593
TOTAL	562	1,125	1,687	7	61	68	1,755

Vouchers exchanged with local suppliers and retailers for the market gardening inputs shown in Table 3 above, including seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and small gardening tools, took place in October 2013 in FY 14. Inputs were delivered through a total of six fairs conducted in Kaya, Pissila, and Barsalogho. A total of 1,755 onion and tomato producers, of which 1,186 are women, received these vital inputs.

Prior to each fair, producers received training on the use of production inputs through FFS and demonstration plots directed at cowpea, sorghum, onion and tomato production. A similar approach was also used with producers of small ruminants and poultry to purchase livestock inputs and medicines, and vaccinate their animals to ensure animal health. The results and data presented below highlight some of the targeted achievements.

ViM was particularly able to establish strong relationships between the project beneficiary producers and some major buyers including Société d’Exportation et de Commercialisation

des Produits Agricoles (SECOPA), a large nation wide private agricultural products exporter outside of Burkina, and the World Food Program project named Purchase for Progress (P4P).

### Key Livestock Interventions

COMMUNE	BENEFICIARIES			SMALL RUMINANTS		
	Men	Women	Total	Sheeps	Goats	Total
KAYA	187	449	636	2,405	1,554	<b>3,959</b>
PISSILA	187	345	532	1,797	1,735	<b>3,532</b>
BARSALOGHO	85	314	399	2,095	1,724	<b>3,819</b>
NAMISSIGUIMA	36	59	95	384	266	<b>650</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>1,167</b>	<b>1,662</b>	<b>6 681</b>	<b>5,279</b>	<b>11,960</b>

COMMUNE	BENEFICIARIES			SMALL RUMINANTS			Total
	Men	Women	Total	Chicken	Guinea Fowl	Other	
KAYA	8	27	35	309	92	12	413
PISSILA	17	32	49	712	67	20	799
BARSALOGHO	18	27	45	1,524	114	87	1,725
NAMISSIGUIMA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>2,545</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>2,937</b>

ViM successfully vaccinated 11,960 small ruminants out of a target of 16,553, or 72.25 percent. ViM also successfully vaccinated 2,937 fowl out of a target of 3,098, or 95.02 percent. As a sustainable approach to vaccinating animals, ViM trained 50 VVVs on poultry vaccination during the campaign. VVVs are under the supervision of government extension workers within DRRAH and are expected to develop their vaccination efforts to and meet the demand from the farmers as the demand for vaccination services increases.

These animals collectively belong to 2,066 distinct beneficiaries, including 1,899 small ruminant farmers from 74 supported PGs, and 167 poultry farmers from 10 supported PGs. The production of poultry offer opportunities for most vulnerable households and women. There is a high demand for poultry in local and regional markets.

While the linkage between farmers and venders should be reinforced, this is not enough. Many agro-dealers are not on board with project goals and see their role as a higher money making opportunity.

Improved governance was not part of ViM SOs. Ensure more local government involvement. It is acknowledged that this is easier said than done. The capacity, resources, and interest of local government officials vary greatly, and frequent transfers make efforts to ensure locally sustainable government support difficult. Close partnership between ViM, FASO and Regis could contribute to increased governance in their respective zones of intervention. An additional related challenge is to develop locally adapted seed varieties rather than relying exclusively on a central production facilities from a different ecozone.

Other recommendations in this topic include:

- Extending important health and nutrition practices: effective messaging, intensification of mother care group activities at the household level.
- incorporating gender strategies to increase women’s participation and leadership across all activities while improving local environmental awareness to strengthen sustainability
- Improving the technical, organizational, and management functions of the various PGs is essential to sustaining member involvement and development as a group. Support is directed at defining member roles and responsibilities and the election of group leaders
- Reinforce the Linkage between the producers and government and private sector input suppliers

## **B. Improved Household Income**

### **Challenges and achievements**

The key activities that appear to have contributed most significantly to resilience include market vegetable gardens, improved soil fertility enhancements, a focus on high value-chain production only some of which was specifically supported by the project activities) and greater education and both improved nutrition and social solidarity, in part achieved through that education.

Table 6 shows where Cowpea producers sold approximately 71.9 MT of their crop for a value of 22,126,200 FCFA (or \$44,000) in FY 14.

<b>COMMUNE</b>	<b>DISTRIBUTION (MT)</b>	<b>SALES (FCFA)</b>
<b>KAYA</b>	28	8,630,000
<b>PISSILA</b>	30	9,600,000
<b>BARSALOGHO</b>	13.9	3,896,200
<b>NAMISSIGUIMA</b>	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>71.9</b>	<b>22,126,200</b>

ViM anticipates further success in sales next year. For example, SECOPA is planning to buy more than 1,000 MT of cowpea in FY 2015.

***However, market forces alone do not guarantee the interest and participation of the private sector.*** Before entrepreneurs will take the risks required to energize the sector, they first need to know that the market is viable and this is more of a social than individual decision.

### **Recommendations**

Farmer negotiation capacities could be potentially reinforced by RISE programs if ViM and RISE partners work together on developing local governance capacity that will build links with the market and increase farmers' bargaining power.

Based on the program staff's experiences they believe that the best opportunities for increasing the income levels of the most vulnerable households are by:

- Supporting vegetable production (e.g. construction of wells, animal traction for pulling irrigation water, improved seeds)
- Improving the value of agricultural and livestock products (e.g., processing, conservation) as well as the marketing chains
- Securing land rights for the most vulnerable.
- Capitalize on Women's Savings Groups and provide more leadership training for women

### **C. Reduced chronic malnutrition**

Save the Children (SC) is a sub-recipient to ACDI/VOCA and is chiefly responsible for the implementation of ViM SO3 activities

**Community mobilization and mass communication messaging:** Working closely with Village Health and Nutrition Committees (VHNCs), Food Management Committees (FMCs), and Care Groups, ViM Health and Nutrition Promoters staff held monthly meetings in 199 villages to develop health and nutritional interventions and routine registration of new beneficiaries.

**Social Behavior Change through Mother Leader Animatrices:** In order to implement the Care Group model, ViM employs a network of MLAs who receive regular training by project health and nutrition promoters. By the end of FY 2014, there were 134 active ViM care groups that offered bimonthly educational sessions.

**Quality Health Services:** Partnership Defined Quality (PDQ); in an effort to improve the care of beneficiaries, PDQ was piloted at two health centers in the targeted regions through ViM's support of the local Ministry of Health (MoH). Essential health services--including prenatal care, vaccinations, and supplemental vitamins—were provided to local community health clinics.

ViM has been implementing Listening Post activities since June 2013 in order to help improve BF's current early warning system, which lacks timely and technically sound data collection and nutritional analysis. ViM collected child nutritional status information (weight and MUAC), and hygiene and sanitation information, and then combined it with food and livestock price data obtained from the Ministry of Agriculture, and was thus able to provide monthly reports on community nutrition in implementation areas.

**Hygiene and Sanitation:** Working with a total of 42 groups, ViM designed and developed two CLTS/WASH committees, where, using the CLTS approach to open-defecation-free status and other hygiene activities, 425 CLTS committee members taught villagers about hand washing station construction, use and maintenance, and the importance of family latrines. The result has been improved sanitation reaching 146% of target.

#### **D. Scaling up successful practices in support of the resilience goals**

##### **Activities to continue through the extension of vim**

1. Improve lowland **gardening** and prepare market gardening irrigated perimeters with equipment and storage facilities. New sites should be identified and selected through participatory processes involving the staff from both ministries of agriculture and water resources. Feasibility studies covering land issues, community motivation, water availability, environmental impact, adequate crops (including production and marketing), will be conducted to inform decision-making, **including technical approaches.**

2. However, lowland and irrigated areas with organized and well-motivated producers, who are without land conflict (to be confirmed and checked through assessment), will be given high priority. ViM will be in touch with REGIS and potentially with other projects for synergy. A general meeting comprising the beneficiaries, the CVDs, the local mayors, the DRASA, the LIPs and ViM will work together to set up the management committees that will benefit from targeted capacity strengthening activities. Through its gender strategy, ViM will advocate to increase women's access to plots.

3. Poultry: The extension should continue with the sensitization campaigns on vaccination protocols to ensure improved health care, housing, and feeding. As poultry production increases, producers' respect for the vaccination protocol will result in a **higher demand for poultry** that will, in turn, favor the sustainability of the **VVV activity**. The project should organize sensitization campaigns concerning the poultry vaccination protocol through radio broadcasting. This will be also implemented by the LIPs' staff in collaboration with the Ministry of Animal Resources staff. ViM will work with REGIS to seek extension of this activity to more beneficiaries through the extension, and also after ViM closure. It is recommended that the dairy and fodder production for livestock be discontinued and transferred to REGIS-ER.

**4. Support non-farm employment and microenterprise opportunities.** The existing small grants management manual defines three funding sources: applicant contribution, ViM subsidy and the involvement of a micro finance institution. Given that this small grants initiative is critical to the producers, and given the key role that ViM is playing throughout the process, it is essential to develop a strategy for the provision of continuous support to the producers. It is essential to involve REGIS in order to ensure follow-up. ViM will hold consultation meetings with REGIS, share tools and discuss potential co-funding of the micro project, and then plan for continuation after ViM closure.

## **Alignment with REGIS ER / REGIS AG**

### **1. Governance: Provide institutional support and capacity strengthening to unions:**

During the extension ViM will implement added training programs to strengthen the capacity of **farmers'** unions and help them to become sustainable, independent rural institutions. ViM will additionally focus on facilitating linkages and relationships between the farmer unions, and buyers, input suppliers, and commercial credit providers. It is crucial that the unions build relationships with these private sector actors to ensure long-term viability. ViM will also link these unions with partner projects, such as REGIS ER/AG who will continue to work with them beyond the life of the project.

**2. Support local improved seeds producers:** Through the extension period, the awareness as well as the confidence of the farmers in relation to the new seed varieties will be significantly increased through the demonstration sites where the local seed varieties will be compared to new varieties. This will result in the most suitable varieties for the area selected by the farmers being multiplied by local seed farmers. This should be implemented in collaboration with INERA and the ministry of Agriculture and Food Security seed experts, as well as with the **Union of Seed Producers**. The project will also link the seed producers to the "Caisse Populaire" to facilitate access to credit. These seed producers will also be linked to REGIS-ER for follow up or **further activity development** over the end of ViM.

### **3. Support producer groups in establishing storage and conservation**

**facilities/infrastructures:** During the extension of ViM, the site identification will be facilitated by the use of GIS software, deemed appropriate to determine the number of storage units required per village area. This will include the identification of existing warehouses and their working status, recommendations for rehabilitation, and need for additional construction. The project will contribute financially to rehabilitation and new construction. The beneficiaries will be requested to contribute in-kind by providing manual labor, local materials, and a moderate financial contribution, depending on the type of facility. ViM will collaborate with REGIS to improve the ratio **to one storage facility per 3 villages.**

**4. Support producers in warrantage system implementation:** During the extension, ViM will identify the existing warehouses and their level of disrepair, choosing those that can be rehabilitated and supporting building additional facilities where there is no storage space. The project will contribute financially both to rehabilitation and new construction. The beneficiaries will be asked to contribute to local labor, local materials, and a financial contribution depending on the type of infrastructure. In addition, the project will work with the "Caisse Populaire" and other microfinance institutions to smooth the way for the warrantage credit system. The project will also consider potential areas of collaboration with the REGIS projects.

**5. Support in providing producer group members with production and post-harvest tools and materials:** During the extension period, producers will be equipped individually, depending on their category, through a subsidy, including a strong contribution from the beneficiaries (50% of agricultural tools/equipment cost). This is necessary to allow farmers to apply the conservation agriculture methods taught by the project, which require a minimum of appropriate tools for application. Farmers will be linked to appropriate local materials,

vendors, and artisans for further tools needed and for maintenance. This could be done jointly with REGIS ER and continued by REGIS ER after the closure of ViM.

**6. Support the establishment of Savings and Lending Groups:** During the extension of ViM, in order to facilitate and accelerate the process of improving access to loans, the project will favor existing women's groups and women in mixed groups. The project will take advantage of the formal and legal existence of those structures that are already working together. Focus will also be given to care groups' mother leader animators and members in order to ensure sustainability of the care group after the closure of ViM. In addition, the project will work closely with REGIS to define potential areas of collaboration and then follow up after ViM closure.

**7. Construct and Rehabilitate Existing Water and Sanitation Facilities:** During household visits by WASH committees and FFP/USAID field visits, the majority of the population expressed the need to have safe water. During the extension period, this activity will be implemented in synergy with REGIS ER and will consist of:

- Public Latrines constructed and rehabilitated;
- Construction and rehabilitation of boreholes for drinking water in villages, with primary schools and Primary Health centers prioritized;
- Training of local artisans in the maintenance of boreholes; and
- Governance of water and water sources.

**Alignment with RISE:** During the extension of ViM this alignment will consist of pursuing and intensifying the following areas of intervention throughout the targeted zone:

- Promotion of sustainable production methods in agriculture and livestock production for lasting productivity;
- Promotion of production diversification to reduce risks;
- Promotion of non-farm microenterprises to provide additional income to farmers, and to reduce risk and increase farmers' resilience to shocks;
- Lowland improvement and small scale irrigation promotion to allow improved diversification, increased income, and improved nutrition;
- Integration of health and nutrition education with production activities;
- Improvement of governance of all local development actors, including farmers groups and unions in particular.

## **V. Cross-cutting issues**

### **A. Gender**

The five domains on which the WEAI focuses attention are production, resources, income, leadership and time. Data collected provide us insight into most of these areas but do not allow a full calculation of the index. Enhancing resilience requires a dual focus on the productive side and the rights to revenues and resources but this has to also involve issues of leadership and voice. Long term rights and status have to receive respect even as new efforts to empower the poor and women are implemented if they are to have any chance of success. This will be most easily achieved if growth is possible so that the new system does not meet immediate resistance from those in power. The programs reviewed all showed improvements in yields that must be seen as necessary for any durable increases in women's empowerment.

#### **FASO and ViM gender activities**

Women are involved in all FASO and ViM activities and the programs. Each program has demonstrated commitment to continue targeting poor and vulnerable women in their approaches precisely because they are the least empowered. The evaluation team lauds the effort of current projects in promoting gender awareness within its organizational culture and programming.

Market gardens highlight an important issue for both ownership of resources, income and resilience. Land owning families often welcome the development of market gardens on land of little current value but once the gardens generate significant revenues the heads of the land owning families, usually men, are tempted to reassert their traditional ownership rights and claims on income from those lands. This is an issue that is easily neglected and needs to be adequately addressed up front before investments are made. Because these market gardens invariably are made on lands that fall under the jurisdiction of local leadership they must also be involved in and committed to any decisions. FASO's entire strategy in the implementation of zai activities is based on gender considerations. Women are traditionally allocated the less fertile land, including degraded land. FASO supports to women with tools and technical assistance to improve the fertility of their allocated land working around the social norms that are more difficult to change within the project life time.

In all, 88% of the total membership (26,282) of the SILC groups supported by FASO are women. A negotiated rate of a minimum of 25% of the plots to be allocated to women was a precondition for the investment in the lowland infrastructure for rice production. The rice parboiling groups supported by the program are 100% women. 58% of the beneficiaries of the agriculture sectors are women among which a minimum of 7% are heads of households.

#### **ViM's Gender Strategy and the Ministry for the Promotion of Women's Rights (MPWR)**

ViM has been working closely with the Ministry for the Promotion of Women's Rights (MPWR) to implement its gender strategy.

Members from the regional directorate of MPFG in Kaya have become regular participants at ViM workshops and provide ViM with needed guidance to ensure that gender is fully integrated in all project activities. CBDF trained 31 LIPs' field officers on 'Leadership of women in rural areas' and

‘Communication in the family in Burkina Faso’. Trained LIP officers were able to reach 5,441 producers through sensitization sessions on issues centered on women’s participation in management and activities of groups and communication within the household in Burkina Faso

Women’s Savings Groups (ViM) and SILC groups (FASO) are a key component of most, if not all, of ViM, FASO and RISE activities, which require reliable access to credit to be sustainable. ViM initiated work with senior officials of Caisse Populaire, a private microfinance institution based in Ouagadougou (and with a field office in Kaya,) to develop WSGs in the targeted communes. Proposals are being considered by Caisse Populaire and ACDI/VOCA to implement the project, and it is hoped that there will soon be a contract for collaboration.

***Create more income-generating opportunities for women.*** ViM and REGIS should work together to create more income-generating opportunities in and around the home for women. This will allow women to contribute cash to the household when the husband is unemployed, helping to improve their status and increasing their decision-making power.

Programs should include adolescent girls as well as boys in ***gender awareness activities***. Changes in social norms and attitudes often evolve slowly and can take decades, or generations. Adults may be less receptive to modifying cultural norms, or may be unable to challenge their social environment without severe consequences. Development organizations will continue to confront the issue of how to create an enabling environment that includes sensitization of extended family and stakeholders to support women. Including adolescents in gender awareness activities can facilitate their ability to more critically examine the advantages and disadvantages of certain social and cultural norms and help bring about positive changes among future generations. In addition, children can often influence their parents’ outlook and help introduce new ideas to which the household, especially the women, might otherwise not be exposed. Needless to say, it is as important to include male youth as they may be future heads of household.

### **Securing land Tenure Rights: Especially for Women**

In both FASO and ViM’s areas of interventions, growing pressures on land are the result of demographic change, increased climatic variability and soil degradation—making land scarce where it was formerly plentiful. In many parts of Burkina Faso, customary tenure systems have been eroded by socioeconomic changes, and widespread tenure insecurity is now a major source of conflict. Land tenure insecurity undermines efforts to increase agricultural productivity and therefore strongly impacts climate resilience. The stakes are high, and developing accessible, effective and sustainable ways to secure local land rights and manage competition among multiple interests must be a central component of current and future rural development strategies in Burkina Faso. At the same time, any land tenure intervention must fully recognize the complexities of the social relations at stake: programs that fail to do this may not be addressing the underlying causes of tenure problems, and may even exacerbate or re-ignite latent tensions.

Even in some of the gardens that are being used by women, farmed land is not often owned by the women. Given the importance of these vegetable gardens in promoting improved productivity, food security and resilience, this issue needs to be addressed. A specific recommendation would be improved transparency in land negotiations: ViM and FASO should create more discussion around this.

### **Barriers to Women’s empowerment**

The FASO results of a barrier analysis by FASO program in the three health districts focusing on exclusive breastfeeding, timely introduction of complementary feeding, consumption of enriched porridge for children aged 6 -11 months, minimum acceptable diet for children 6-11 months and dietary diversity among pregnant women, breastfeeding mother and children aged 0-23 months showed that 91% of husbands, 67% of mothers in-law, 46% of fathers in-law and 36% of co-wives supported the behavior targeted. These can be considered as the key influencers in behavior change. The general perception of religion and culture as key determinants in creating barriers to adopting behaviors was not supported by the findings of the barrier analysis. There was only a small variance between active and passive participants with regards to perceived positive and negative consequences on such behaviors. Based on the results, the FASO should adjust its behavior change strategy to focus on priority and influential groups during the extension period.

## **B. Program Sustainability**

The evaluation team has compiled a set of priorities and recommendations to improve program sustainability:

- Address the issue of water quality and availability for both agricultural, livestock and domestic use. Current and future programs should promote the development of small-scale irrigation schemes and occasional micro-dam construction in order to increase agricultural productivity by reducing rainfall dependence in the drought prone food deficit regions. The programs should also provide training on water treatment for safe human consumption.
- Emphasize the necessary integration of health, agriculture, livestock and education activities related to the projects' and communities' strategic goal of achieving resilience.

## **C. Capacity-building for resilience during the extension period**

The importance of capacity building is widely acknowledged but often poorly defined. It is our view that capacity building needs to incorporate:

- A shared vision for long-term goals;
- An upgrading of skills in monitoring and evaluation, including project analysis, design of indicators and reporting systems, socioeconomic data collection, and information management;
- Improvement in procedures for creating functional systems that seek out and use information for decisions making; and
- Strengthening organizations to develop skilled staff in appropriate positions, where they are accountable for their actions.

One of the central goals in capacity building is to increase the capacity for beneficiary communities to continue and expand project activities after the cessation of the program period. Most community members believe that their groups will continue to function at the end of the two program periods. It is important that programs are defined as such from the onset of the projects—ongoing, owned by the community, and sustainable—dependent of exogenous project departures. It is significant that neighboring villages and small farm holder

associations have begun collaborating with one other: This is an area that could be greatly expanded during the extension phase.

#### **D. Suggested Changes for a greater alignment, integration and sustainability**

The extension of the program is likely to have a larger impact if: a) the components are better integrated; b) if there is a greater focus on targeting the poorest households in agriculture and livelihood interventions; c) if underlying obstacles to improved sanitation and hygiene are addressed, e) if warrantage programs are harmonized and f) if disaster risk reduction is focused on the household and community level.

The following sections discuss the key cross cutting issues requiring changes for greater alignment, integration and sustainability.

**1. Rehabilitation of existing water infrastructures:** For agricultural and livestock production, limited availability and access to water is the single most significant constraint to food and livelihood security in the communities targeted by FASO and ViM.

Current and future programs should promote a variety of irrigation activities utilizing several techniques, such as local dams including the “Bouli,” water harvesting techniques, and drip irrigation. These are characterized as small-scale in nature, low maintenance in design, environmentally friendly or neutral in impact, with the potential to significantly increase food production as well as incomes, and reduce malnutrition and improve livestock conditions.

This was not part of ViM’s original project design, but program beneficiaries repeatedly insisted that rehabilitation of existing water infrastructure needs to be considered a priority. One recommendation would be to improve water-harvesting techniques, for example, during ViM’s extension phase, and in collaboration with other partners who might have resources to invest in this important sector.

The program has successfully rehabilitated existing water infrastructures (boreholes primarily for human consumption and market gardening) but more needs to be done if we are to promote resilient agriculture in the region. These structures are generally utilized to harvest rainwater for the subsequent irrigation of several hectares of cropland. There are numerous sites in the targeted zones of the project where the introduction of these structures is realistic. Lessons learned from other programs indicate that for these structures to be durable, they need to be well designed and meet exacting technical specifications. Due to the relatively high cost per structure, partnership with other organizations should be encouraged.

**2. Improved Water Management Techniques in Low Land:** This production system contributes significantly to the overall wellbeing of households in the project areas. The FASO program reinforced 67.7 Ha of low lands in FY13 by constructing dikes with stones while adding a simple water control system ( PAFR Technique). The FASO program further reinforced an additional 15Ha previously constructed with PRP techniques.

The rice crops that have been harvested have produced substantial food and income benefits to participants. An adamant old man-SAWADOGO in Taffogo, in fact, insisted that improved management techniques of his lowland parcel fields *significantly* contributed to guaranteeing food security for his household. Participants thought that many lowland farms

will continue to be cultivated. But water management knowledge and practice in traditional lowland seems to be limited, for the most part. Most farmers believe that swamps should be targeted primarily for rice production, but it is possible to use the lowland to irrigate vegetable crops during the dry season. This last option was strongly noted by community members, who requested the digging of wells by the communities.

**3. Regional Stability and Security Issues in the East:** The surveyed communes are some of the poorest in the country. They face simultaneously the challenges of extreme poverty, the effects of climate change, frequent food crises, rapid population growth, fragile governance, unresolved internal tensions and the risk of violent vandalism and illicit trafficking, especially in FASO intervention areas located in the eastern part of the country. (These points were noted by community members.) Unfortunately, FASO will need to advocate for concentration of most of its activities in the more secure zones. Due to the security problems in the most needy areas, FASO had to pull out temporarily from some villages.

Security problems reported by community members are cross-border and closely intertwined. Only a regional, integrated and holistic strategy will enable us to make progress on any of these specific problems. A reinforced security and law enforcement capacity must go hand-in-hand with more robust public institutions and more accountable governments, capable of providing basic development services to the populations and of appeasing internal tensions. Development processes, promotion of good governance, and improvement of the security situation need to be carried out in appropriate sequence and in a coordinated manner in order to create sustainable stability in the region.

To ensure ownership, coherence, and long-term impact, future programs must build on and support the existing political and operational initiatives for security and development in the most vulnerable regions that tend to be the least insecure, both at national and regional levels, and take account of other planned initiatives of the international community.

## **VI. Recommendations and Lessons Learned**

### **A. Priority Recommendations**

Overall, the team found the programs to be effective and successful, with well-organized management systems. This is an especially noteworthy accomplishment given the extremely difficult working conditions in Burkina Faso over the last two to three years. There is, however, room for improvement in any program. There exist cross-cutting themes that, if properly addressed, will make the extension of the programs more successful. Many of our suggestions have been noted previously by program staff:

- 1) A comprehensive approach to building resilient communities is needed. This should be one that combines risk reduction activities (infrastructure, appropriate seeds and tools, livestock protection activities, etc.), early warning and disaster response, and livelihood recovery. It is important to take the time to build consensus: Develop dialogue and accountability mechanisms between key local actors (e.g. government, customary institutions, civil society associations, private sector).

- 2) The extension phase of the program should focus on interventions that will contribute to the pursuit of good governance, which needs to be a high priority strategy involving the building of both formal and informal institutions and relationships, implemented at the state, community and household levels. However the community level is a critical level at which to build resilience. The most vulnerable must be helped, in particular, by the communities and institutions such as VDCs, PTAs, and WUAs.
- 3) Although some cultural, social and economic constraints do remain, FASO and ViM must intensify their efforts to increase the leadership role that women play in their professional lives and communities. Women need to be given leadership roles in community development programs and in the education of their children.
- 4) Extension activities should focus on reducing village and household vulnerability to natural shocks through increased community preparedness and improved organizational response capacity. The exposure to natural hazards such as droughts, floods, and diseases in the program areas is one of the key factors contributing to household susceptibility to food and livelihood insecurity.
- 5) Integrate adult literacy training of male and female members as part of self-management structures. To improve the capacity of villages to respond more effectively to natural hazards, activities should also focus on establishing well-trained committees of emergency responders and on improving linkages and coordination between key stakeholders involved in disaster preparedness.

## **B. Other Conclusions and Additional Recommendations**

- 1) Limited Availability and access to Water: Rain-fed agriculture is dominant throughout the targeted communes. Farming that depends on rainfall bears increased risk as rainfall becomes more erratic, which has been the case in Burkina Faso for decades. In order to increase the profitability of agriculture in these areas, the programs must improve water availability to farmers. Respondents repeatedly told the evaluation team that water management was a fundamental problem, noting the strong relationship between the availability of water (through either rainfall or irrigation) and the productivity of their land. As noted by one women farmer, “The lack of availability of water for our agricultural needs, the livestock, and for household needs constitutes a great problem for us.” Steps should be taken to incorporate water-related activities and training into the extension phase of the two programs. This should include facilitating market gardening, low land improvement, conservation agriculture, and Zai techniques all of which address optimum utilization of the scarce water. Water harvesting need to be enhanced and supported. Both programs are addressing some of these issues and should continue to focus on them during the extension period.

Communities need to foster partnerships with key stakeholders to manage and build water infrastructure. There is very limited access to quality potable water for

household consumption in the majority of rural areas, where the lack of potable water often results in increased incidence of diarrhea and other water-borne illnesses. These illnesses can decrease the productivity of working individuals and contribute to malnutrition among children and pregnant and lactating women. This justifies the ongoing support to the provision of potable water and recommendation to add water treatment.

- 2) There is an urgent need to improve the capacity of the current Monitoring and Evaluation Unit and to pay close attention to the provision of management information, both in support of goal implementation and to feed back into the design of new initiatives under changing environments and circumstances. The program has established extensive M&E systems that monitor production of outputs; the next step is to expand the system so that it can effectively monitor quality of outputs, adding GIS tools.
- 3) The Program is doing a good job of developing behavior change strategies, targeting specific messages and utilizing multiple communication channels. More rapid and complete behavioral change can be achieved by using methodologies that are more interactive and reflective, ensuring that educational messages are understood and internalized.
- 4) Enhancement of improved poultry and small ruminant capacities can effectively promote resilience. Most of the most vulnerable households rely on these resources as their most important sources of resilience.
- 5) Encouragement of locally adapted seed production including decentralized sites of improved seed production. Future programs should address this issue, because it is directly tied to resilience.
- 6) The project should carry out animal vaccination campaigns: The project should work closely with both DRRAH (Direction Régionale des Ressources Animales et Halieutiques) and DPRAH (Direction Provinciale des Ressources Animales et Halieutiques) to organize and carry out regular animal vaccination campaigns.

### **C. Lessons Learned**

In general, FASO, ViM and their partners in Burkina Faso have made considerable progress in meeting the majority of their stated objectives. Throughout the evaluation it was evident that the two programs have had numerous positive impacts on the lives and livelihoods of participants. All focus groups reported positive changes in living conditions since the beginning of the project.

Both programs have successfully increased community awareness regarding the importance of proper food hygiene behaviors, improved farming practices--including post-harvest

handling and storage techniques, and recognize the need to improve nutrition. The program has also been successful at promoting the formation and management of farmers' savings and loan groups.

One of the key lessons learned in the project is the importance of a sense of community solidarity, group spirit and mutual assistance. Through the project people have increased their trust and willingness to engage in program group activities and productive community-driven initiatives. There is a growing sense of ownership. Group activities such as saving groups (SILC), vegetable gardening and post-harvest handling have made a significant difference in the project areas. Importantly, participants feel that they are gaining the tools to take charge of their own development activities.

Beneficiaries have been exposed to many new techniques--in agriculture, livestock, nutrition, hygiene and management--that may have lasting effects in improving quality of life beyond the life of the project.

The status of women is progressively changing as a result of the high level of women's participation in farmer saving and SILC groups, as well as in agricultural and livestock production through the two projects. There has also been great effort made to have women holding decision-making positions on the Village Development Councils. One woman commented on the collective spirit engendered among women saying, "Now we get together to make decisions." Women's visibility and leadership has increased in some areas through their engagement with the project and their participation in project activities. Women see saving groups as an effective and sustainable tool that enhance capacity to withstand shocks. SILC and Saving Groups are successful interventions for increasing resilience that RISE initiative and its partners should build on for future programming in Burkina Faso.

The evaluation found that insufficient access to water--in particular, for consumption, and for agricultural and livestock production is the single most significant constraint to promoting resilient livelihoods and improved health outcomes in the targeted rural communities. This evaluation suggests that while the small size of landholdings could potentially be a constraint on agricultural production, land is a necessary asset for resilience, so land tenure issues need to be negotiated and long-term arrangements made to protect the rights of vulnerable households. Tenure arrangements are often critical for households in their pursuit of resilient livelihood strategies. Achievement can be measured through long-term shared prosperity and social inclusion of the most vulnerable. A more detailed investigation of local tenure arrangements will enable current and future programs to gauge how different forms of ownership and tenancy affect investment, productivity, and the physical environment.

## VII. Annexes

### A. Final schedule of the field work on faso and vim formative evaluation

Date	Time	Location	Team 1 Team lead with general management /partnership and agriculture focus & local governance	Team 2 With health focus
<b>March 7</b>	PM	Ouagadougou	Arrival of Dr. BARO pick up at the Airport by Hotel Splendid	
<b>March 8</b>	PM	Ouagadougou	Arrival of Camilien Saint-Cyr	
<b>March 9</b>	9:00-14:00	CRS office	<p>Preliminary Meeting of Consultant, USAID Sahel, USAID/FFP Burkina, CoPs of FASO and VIM and a Representative from REGIS ER.</p> <p>Agenda items include introduction, clarification of expectations, discussion of methodology and review/amendment of draft timeline, discussion of the outline of the report, confirmation of key documents that maybe missing etc.</p>	
<b>Tuesday March 10</b>	10:15-16:30	CRS Office in Ouagadougou	Evaluation Start-up Workshop for all members of the evaluation teams and representatives from partners from FASO, VIM and REGIS ER present in Ouagadougou.	
	Inclusive of lunch break 16:30-18:00		Travel to Kaya	
<b>Wednesday March 11</b>	8:00 – 9:00	Kaya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recap of the work of March 10</li> </ul>	
	9 :00 – 9 :30	Kaya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint courtesy visit to the Governor of Centre North Region</li> </ul>	
	9 :30 – 10 :30	Kaya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with Regional Director of Agriculture, Water Resources and Food Security</li> <li>Meeting with the Regional Director of Animal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with the Regional Director of Health</li> <li>Meeting with the District Medical Officer</li> </ul>

Date	Time	Location	Team 1 Team lead with general management /partnership and agriculture focus & local governance	Team 2 With health focus
			Resources • <b>NB. LMeetings at the regional level in Centre North cover ViM and FASO</b>	
	10 :30 – 13 :00	Zorkoum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit to Zorkoum</li> <li>• Visit of irrigated perimeter of Zorkoum 1&amp;2</li> <li>• Focus group discussion with women groups of Zorkoum1</li> <li>• Interview of the Water User Association and visit of members of the group of producers around lake Dem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus group discussion with Care group</li> <li>• Focus group discussion with CLTS comittee (Dem 2km from Zorkoum)</li> <li>• Visit of a primary school latrine and discussion with the school health club.</li> </ul>
	13h00 – 14h00	Kaya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel back to Kaya</li> <li>• Lunch</li> </ul>	
	16h30 – 17h30	Kaya	Debriefing	
<b>Thursday March 12</b>	8h30-9h00	Pissila	Visite de courtoisie à la délégation spéciale de Pissila	
	9h-14h00	Pissila	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit of onion production plot at Ouidlao 10km from Pissila</li> <li>• Focus group discussion with onion producers group Buud-Nooma of Pissila</li> <li>• Focus group discussion with district level Union of cow pea producers Sougri-Nooma (Pissila)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with the village health and nutrition committee of Firka, 15km from Pissila.</li> <li>• Meeting with the CLTS committee at Poulalle</li> <li>• Focus group discussion with the Care Group and the health and nutrition committee at Poulalle</li> </ul>
	9h00 –	Guiendbila	Travel to Guiendbila and Woskossogho FANKA	

Date	Time	Location	Team 1 Team lead with general management /partnership and agriculture focus & local governance	Team 2 With health focus	
	10h00	Woskossogho			
	10h00 – 14h00		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit of a demonstration site of improved poultry in Fanka and focus group discussion with poultry group <b>Neb-la-Taaba</b> of Woskossogho/Fanka (15km from Guiendbila)</li> <li>• Focus group discussion with the poultry group <b>Neb-Noomade</b> Woskossogho/Fanka</li> <li>• Focus group discussion with <b>Nategwende</b> women group of cow pea producers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview of the PDQ implementing team at Guiendbila health center (45km from Barsalogho)</li> <li>• Meeting with the commodity management and food distribution committee (Guiendbila)</li> <li>• Focus group discussion with the Care Group -Guiendbila</li> </ul>	
	14h00 – 17h00	Kaya	Return to Kaya		
	17h30 – 18h30	Kaya	Débriefing		
<b>Friday March 13</b>	7:00-8:00 AM	Trip to Tougouri	Trip to Tougouri		
	8 AM to 9 AM	Tougouri FASO office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with Program FASO field staff (Tougouri sub office)</li> </ul>		
	9AM-9.30	Tougouri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with the Tougouri commune officials</li> <li>• Meeting with DPARHASA, with DPRA</li> </ul> Trip to Taafoogo	Trip to Taafoogo	
	9.30 - 16.00	Taffogo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lowland reinforced (Taafoogo)</li> <li>• Meeting with DPARHASA on site</li> <li>• Trip to Naaré /</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Care group (Taafoogo)</li> <li>• Score board (Taafoogo)</li> <li>• Latrines /CLTS at Dafunkumdouko ( 7km de Taffogo)</li> </ul>	

Date	Time	Location	Team 1	Team 2
			Team lead with general management /partnership and agriculture focus & local governance	With health focus
	11.30 - 15.30	Nare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poultry activity in Nare</li> <li>Meeting with DPRA on site (30 minutes)</li> <li>Meeting with CVD, AUE at Naare</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trip to Tougouri</li> <li>Meeting Health District head at Program FASO office /Tougouri</li> </ul>
			Lunch and return to Kaya	
	16 :00 - 17.30	KAYA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Débriefing</li> <li>Meeting with VIM staff ( partial)</li> </ul>	
	17:45- 18:30	FASO Round 1 Debriefing		
		KAYA	Night at Pacific Hotel	

Date	Time	Location	Team 1	Team 2
Saturday March 14	7 :00- 9 :00	Manni	Trip to Dakiri, Nagbingou and	
	9 :00 to 12 :00	Dakiri Groupe 1	Introduction meeting with beneficiaries and communities leaders <b>Agric Focus group :</b> Market Gardening site and rice parboiling <i>Governance will join agric focus and look for this aspect with market gardening and parboiling group</i>	<b>Manni</b> Health group will visit UP Manni and discus with management members  Groupe 3
		Nagbingou Group 2	<b>Nagbingou</b> Introduction meeting with beneficiaries and communities leaders <b>Agric focus group :</b> NRM: Zai 1/2 moon <i>Governance will join agric focus and look for this aspect with tool management comitee</i>	

Date	Time	Location	Team 1	Team 2
	12:00-14:00	Trip back Kaya		
	15:30-17:30	Kaya OCADES	<b>Reunion avec staff OCADES and VIM staff</b>	
	17:30-18:30	FASO Round 2 Debriefing		
Date	Time	Location	Activity	
<b>Sunday March 15</b>	10:00-14:00	Trip Kaya - Fada REST @ FADA ( 11 decembre)		
<b>Monday March 16</b>	7.30 -- 9.30	Gayeri	Trip to Gayeri ( with Security Escort)	
	9:30 - 10:00	Gayeri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with District High Commissioner :Gayeri</li> </ul>	
			<b>USAID+Dr Baro+CoPs+ REGIS ER+ATT+HKI</b> <b>Agric team +ATT CTA</b> Meeting with DPARHASA/ Gayeri DPRA	<b>Health team+HKI CTA</b> Meeting with Health District Head (Gayeri)
	10:00-12:00	Salle de réunion DPAHSA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with Program FASO field staff HKI &amp; ATT (Gayeri)</li> </ul> <b>Evaluation team (Dr Baro+USAID+ViM+FASO+REGIS ER)</b>	
	12:00 - 12:30	Gayeri	SNACK and trip to OUE (10 Km de Gayeri)	
	12:30to 15.30	Oue	Introduction meeting with beneficiaries	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Model sesame</li> <li>Meeting with VDC, WUA</li> <li>Producers</li> <li>SILC group and PSP</li> <li>Care group</li> </ul>				
15.30 - 17:00	Gayeri /FADA	Trip back to FADA (Night at Fada Auberge 11 Decembre)		
Tuesday March 17	ATT meeting room	Team meeting ( synthèse)		
Wednesday March 18	8.30 - 11:30	FADA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with DREP</li> <li>Meeting with DR Agric</li> <li>Meeting with ATT D.E</li> </ul> <b>COPs+ FASO Coordo+ Dr Baro +USAID+REGIS ER</b>	
	11:30-	FASO Round 3 Debriefing (all) <b>ATT meeting room</b>		

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	12:30		
	12:30-13:30	FADA	Lunch snack
	13:30	FADA /OUAG A	Trip back to Ouagadougou
<b>Date</b>	<b>Durée allouée</b>	<b>Lieu de l'activité</b>	<b>Activities</b>
<b>Thursday March 19</b>	<b>14 :00- 16 :00</b>	<b>USAID</b>	
<b>Friday March 20</b>	<b>10 :00- 13 :00</b>	<b>CRS</b>	<b>General Debrief with FASO, ViM and REGIS ER consortiums' members</b>
<b>Saturday March 21</b>			<b>Departure of Consultant to the US</b>

## B. Groups met during sites visits

Sites visited	Commune	Program	Type of Group & activities performed
Zorkoum	KAYA	VIM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General meeting with community members</li> <li>• Visit of irrigated perimeter of Zorkoum 1&amp;2</li> <li>• Focus group discussion with women groups of Zorkoum1</li> <li>• Focus group discussion with Care group (Zorkoum)</li> <li>• Focus group discussion with CLTS committee (Dem 2km from Zorkoum)</li> </ul>
Pissila	Pissila	VIM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit of onion production plot at Ouidlao 10km from Pissila</li> <li>• Focus group discussion with onion producers group Buud-Nooma of Pissila</li> <li>• Focus group discussion with district level Union of cow pea producers Sougri- Nooma (Pissila)</li> </ul>
Dem	Kaya	VIM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview of the Water User Association and visit of members of the group of producers around lake Dem</li> <li>• Visit of a primary school latrine and discussion with the school health club.</li> </ul>
Fanka	Kaya	VIM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit of a demonstration site of improved poultry in Fanka and focus group discussion with poultry group <b>Neb-la-Taaba</b> of Woskossogho/Fanka (15km from Guiendbila)</li> <li>• Focus group discussion with the poultry group <b>Neb-Noomade</b> Woskossogho/Fanka</li> <li>• Focus group discussion with <b>Nategwende</b> women group of cow pea producers.</li> </ul>
Poulalle	Pissila	VIM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with the village health and nutrition committee of Firka, 15km from Pissila.</li> <li>• Meeting with the CLTS committee at Poulalle</li> <li>• Focus group discussion with the Care Group and the health and nutrition committee at Poulalle</li> </ul>
Guiendbila	Bassargho	VIM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview of the PDQ implementing team at Guiendbila health center (45km from Barsalogo)</li> <li>• Meeting with the commodity management and</li> </ul>

Sites visited	Commune	Program	Type of Group & activities performed
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>food distribution committee</li> <li>• Focus group discussion with the Care Group</li> </ul>
Nare	Tougouri	FASO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community meeting</li> <li>• Visit of Poultry activity and discussion with beneficiaries</li> <li>• Meeting with members of VDC, Water Users Association (WUA), and PTA</li> </ul>
Taafoogo	Tougouri	FASO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community meeting in the presence of community leaders</li> <li>• Visit reinforced Lowland reinforced and discussion with beneficiaries</li> <li>• Focus group discussion with Care group</li> <li>• Visit Score board (Taafoogo)</li> <li>• Community meeting and focus group discussion on Latrines /CLTS at Dafunkumdouko ( 7km from Taafoogo)</li> </ul>
Dakiri	Manni	FASO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community meeting</li> <li>• Visit of the market gardening and focus discussion with the management committee</li> <li>• Interview of randomly selected beneficiary of the market gardening group</li> <li>• Interview of the land owner</li> <li>• Focus group discussion with women rice parboiling group</li> </ul>
Nagbingou	Manni	FASO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction meeting with beneficiaries and communities leaders</li> <li>• Agric focus group :NRM: Zai 1/2 moon</li> <li>• Focus group discussion with tool management committee</li> </ul>
Manni	Manni	FASO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with members of fortified flour production unit</li> <li>• Discussion with GRET staff</li> </ul>
Oue	Gayeri	FASO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction meeting with beneficiaries</li> <li>• Focus group discussion with : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Seseme model producer</li> <li>✓ VDC, WUA</li> <li>✓ Rice Producers</li> <li>✓ SILC group and Private Service Provider (PSP)</li> <li>✓ Care group members</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
OUAGADOUGOU		RISE partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preliminary Meeting of Consultant with representatives from USAID Sahel, USAID/FFP Burkina, CoPs of FASO and VIM and a Representative from REGIS ER</li> </ul>

Sites visited	Commune	Program	Type of Group & activities performed
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debrief with Susan Fine, USAID Regional Director and James Parys, USAID Burkina Representative</li> <li>• General Debrief with FASO, ViM and REGIS ER consortiums' members</li> </ul>
KAYA			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with FASO and VIM field Staff (from OCADES Kaya, ATAD, Save the Children)</li> </ul>
GAYERI			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting District Commissioner, DPAH, DPRA, DPENA, DPEDD, MCD</li> <li>• Meeting with FASO Program Staff from HKI, Tin Tua and REGIS ER field staff</li> </ul>

## D. Comparative Analysis of the Effectiveness of Behavior Change

### COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF BEHAVIOR CHANGE COMMUNICATION METHODS FOR THE ADOPTION OF BEST MOTHER AND CHILDREN HEALTH AND NUTRITION PRACTICES

#### I. Analysis of achievement levels

One of the objectives of the FASO program is to improve the health and nutrition status of mothers and children. The contribution of the program to attain this objective is implemented through various strategies, including Preventing Malnutrition of Children under the Age of Two (PM2A) to improve the nutritional wellbeing of mothers and children, and promoting good practices aimed at reducing maternal and infant mortality. The program is implemented in the health districts of Manni, Gayéri and the northern part of Boulsa. The program used a combination of approaches to implement the behavior change strategy. In the districts of Boulsa and Gayéri, the program used the Care Group model including PM2A, in partnership with OCADES Kaya and HKI respectively, while in Manni district, the program employed mass communication methods in partnership with GRET.

An analysis was done on four key performance indicators to identify any differences between the intervention areas using different behavior change communication strategies. The following indicators were chosen for the analysis:

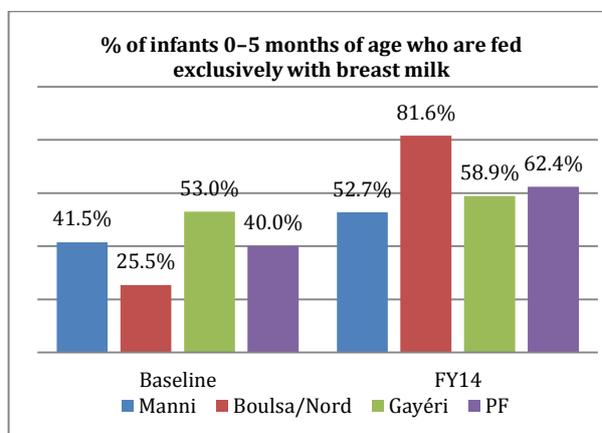
- 2.1.1 % of infants 0–5 months of age who are fed exclusively with breast milk (FFP);
- 2.1.5 % of mothers of children age 0-23 months who had four antenatal visits when they were pregnant with the youngest child;
- 2.1.6 % of mothers of children 0-23 months who had a postnatal visit within 45 days of delivery;
- 2.2.2 % of mothers of targeted children 0-23 months who gave birth in the health center.

These indicators were chosen because they are related to behavior; they contribute to the reduction of malnutrition and are less sensitive to the issue of food availability in the area.

The first part of the analysis is based on a simple comparison of the reference values (baseline 2010) and those from the 2014 fiscal year.

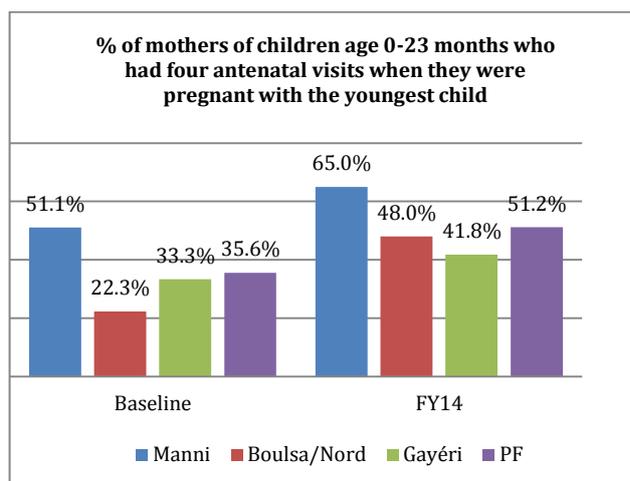
#### 1. % of infants 0–5 months of age who are fed exclusively with breast milk

It has been established that this key indicator contributes to the reduction of malnutrition by 13 percent. At the program FASO (PF) level the value of this indicator has increased by 22% over the baseline value. The Boulsa health district made the most significant contribution to this improvement, albeit from the lowest baseline value. The district of Gayéri recorded a slightly higher end level than Manni, but had the lowest rate of improvement when compared to the other districts.



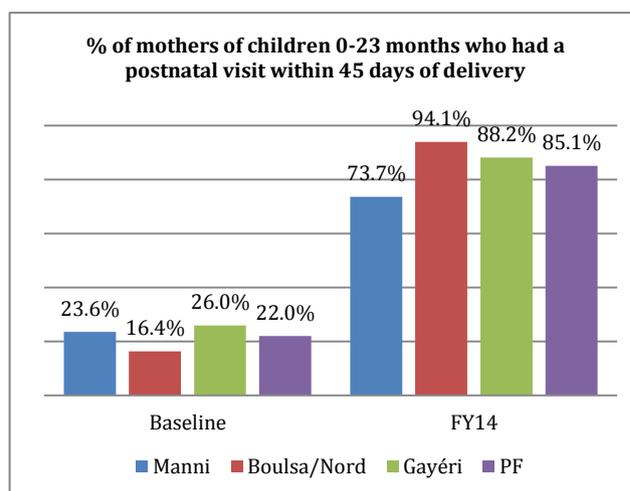
**2. % of mothers of children age 0-23 months who had four antenatal visits when they were pregnant with the youngest child**

Like the previous indicator, there are an increasing number of women completing at least four prenatal visits before delivering. The percentage of visits increased from 35.6% at baseline to 51.2% percent by the fourth year of the project. The district of Manni has the highest numbers in both the baseline and in fiscal year 2014. However, the district with the most improvement is the north of Boulsa with an increase of about 26 percent.



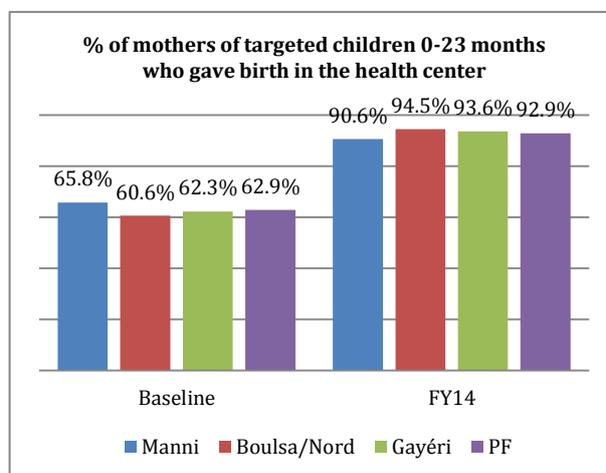
**3. % of mothers of children 0-23 months who had a postnatal visit within 45 days of delivery**

The indicator on the postnatal visits has had significant improvement since the program began, with more than 80 percent of women following the practice against 22 percent at baseline. The districts of northern Boulsa and Gayéri have the highest values, with rates over 85 percent.



**4. % of mothers of targeted children 0-23 months who gave birth in the health center**

Like the previous indicator, there is a 30 percent change in the indicator values from the baseline study to the fourth year. However, there is no significant difference between districts both in the reference values and the FY2014 values.



In conclusion, the program’s activities have improved the level of each of the four indicators described above. The health district of Boulsa had the most significant improvement compared to the other districts. The health district of Gayéri generally had higher levels than the district of Manni.

## II. Comparative review of performance

To measure the performance of districts in the program areas, an analysis of the average annual growth rate of the same indicators was done, starting with the baseline values and ending with the values from the FY14 annual survey. These rates were compared to the program’s average rates in constructing a rating system.

The rate of increase between the years is computed by the following formula:

$$t_n = \frac{(I_{n+1} - I_n)}{I_n}$$

$t_n$  The rate of increase compared to year n

$I_n$  and  $I_{n+1}$  The respective values of indicators for years n and n+1

However, this analysis is sensitive to the baseline data as it does not take into account the indicator level of a year but the changes that have been made in the intervention area. Thus, the districts that have a higher level in the baseline data compared to the other areas will have to make a larger effort to have the same rate.

To classify the areas of intervention, the following rating system was created:

- ✓ 3 points for the district with the highest rate of improvement, where this rate is also above the average rate of improvement for the FASO program overall;
- ✓ 2 points for the district with a rate of improvement that is higher than the FASO program overall, but is not the highest rate;
- ✓ 1 point for the district with the second-highest rate of improvement, where this rate is lower than the FASO program’s overall rate of improvement;
- ✓ 0 points for the district with the lowest rate of improvement.

The results are shown in the table below:

	2.1.1 % of infants 0–5 months of age who are fed exclusively with breast milk (FFP)	2.1.5 % of mothers of children age 0-23 months who had four antenatal visits when they were pregnant with the youngest child	2.1.6 % of mothers of children 0-23 months who had a postnatal visit within 45 days of delivery	2.2.2 % of mothers of targeted children 0-23 months who gave birth in the health center
Manni	7.6%	8.0%	85.0%	11.8%
Boulsa/Nord	36.2%	49.7%	115.8%	18.4%
Gayéri	7.8%	15.4%	68.1%	16.6%
PF	12.9%	16.7%	86.0%	15.5%

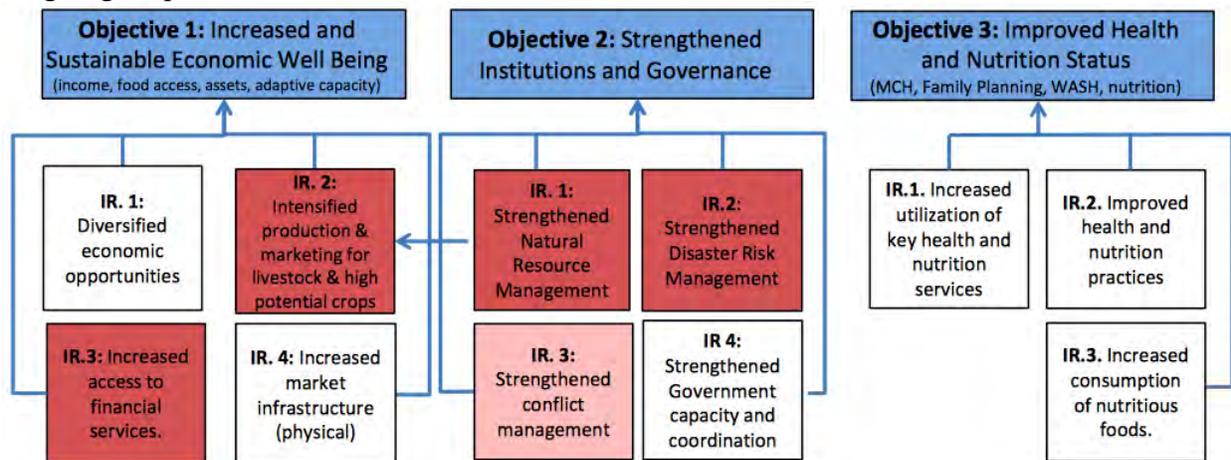
Score : Manni=1 ; Boulsa=12 ; Gayéri=4

On the four indicators used, the health district of Boulsa ranks the highest and is above the overall average rate of increase of the program. Thus, in terms of implementing the program’s activities associated with the behavior change communication for the adoption of mother and child health and nutrition best practices, the health district of Boulsa district recorded the best performance, followed by Gayéri, with Manni coming in third. The overall results clearly

indicate that the districts where the Care Group model was used showed consistently greater improvement than the district where the program relied on mass communications. Since the Care Groups were implemented by two different partner organizations, this suggests that the selection of the approach itself is more significant than the technical competence of the implementing partner.

## E. Aligning Outputs within the Resilience Framework

Aligning outputs within the Resilience Framework



These three objectives are similar to the strategic objectives of the FASO and ViM programs but the RISE objectives seem to envisage a more ambitious role for long-term resilience or sustainability. In the table we can see that the market and production improvements listed in Objective 1 are clearly seen as supported by aspects of Objective 2 such as institutional improvements in resource management, risk management, conflict management and government capacity. Resilience improvements will also be assessed in part by improved health and nutrition status that are presented as sustainable through development of improved practices, changed consumption and appropriate services.

**F. Select Photos showing examples of Achievements**



Tomatoes Production (ViM)



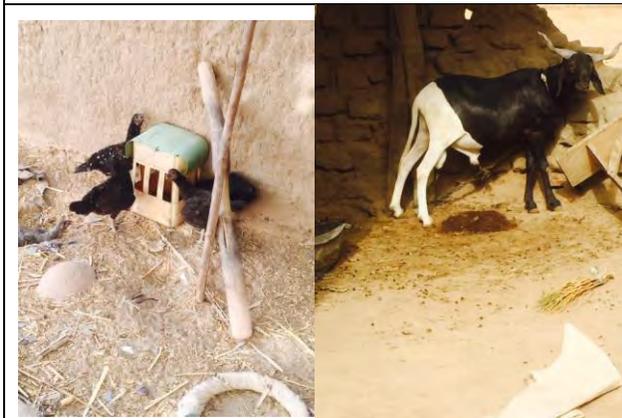
Zai in Tin Tua Manni (FASO)



Successful intercropping (FASO)



Care Group in Action (FASO)



Livestock Production (ViM)



Harvest from FFS of cowpea

## G. References

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- USAID July 2014 joint assessment reports by FFP/Burkina and FFP West Africa Regional Offices with the purpose of extending both FASO and VIM programs to integrate with the RISE initiative
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- REGIS-AG proposal, annual work plans and reports
- RISE Comparative analysis of RISE partners presentations of January 29, 2015
- RISE framework and strategies
- SAREL proposals, annual work plans and reports
- VIM Results Framework/Logframes and implementation strategies
- VIM Mid Term evaluation report
- VIM Status report on the implementation of the Mid Term evaluation
- VIM Proposed strategies and activities for the extension period submitted to FFP in 2014