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PROGRESS REPORT: PROJECT N° DRU 2/85

REPUBLIC OF NIGER

TANOUT EMERGENCY FOOD-FOR-WORK

FEEDING/INTERMEDIATE SUPPORT

JANUARY 1, 1986 - MARCH 31, 1986

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PROGRESS REPORT DRU 2/85
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I. PROJECT BACKGROUND

A contract was signed January 26, 1985 between Africare and USAID whereby Africare accepted a grant (N° DRU 2/85) of Two Hundred Twenty-Two Thousand Eight Hundred Fifty-One United States dollars (\$222,851) from the Agency for International Development to provide support for a program of Emergency Food-for-Work feeding/Intermediate Support in the Tanout region of the Zinder Department (Niger).

The Protocole d'Accord for this Project was signed in February 1985 between Africare and the Government of Niger (N° DR/85MP/DDR/MR) to assist the government in providing emergency support to the severely drought affected population resettled around the Eghade mares. The Project provides food to the displaced families to prevent deterioration of their nutritional condition, with the participants working for the food received by assisting in the construction of wells, warehouses and reservoirs, by cultivating the land, and by assisting each other in the recovery efforts.

Due largely to this grant, the will and determination of the Nigerien people, the cooperation of the host government agencies (Prefet, Sous-Prefet, Services of Animation, Agriculture, water & Forestry), the participants themselves and the International PVO, CARE, a major catastrophe was averted. The Project began moving slowly into recovery activities.

Originally funded for 10 months (February - October 1985), Africare requested and was granted an extension using unspent funds. Meanwhile, a proposal was developed by the government agencies, with inputs from the participants, Africare and USAID/Niger to expand aspects of the existing Project to include other needy areas in the arrondissement and to add components which would help speed the recovery process. Unfortunately, limited funds under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, could not support all of the proposed activities. Those components which were

either eliminated or drastically reduced include: the small eleavage component, semi-permanent housing construction, a rudimentary communication system, a detailed zonal study, and administration/logistic support. Nevertheless, on March 17, 1986 an amendment to Grant Agreement 2/85, signed by USAID and Africare, increased the Grant by the sum of Eight Hundred and Fifty Thousand United States dollars (\$850,000) and extended the Project Activities Completion date to March 31, 1987. The Amendment increased the total funding available for this Grant to \$1,072, 851 to provide continued support for a program of recovery and rehabilitation.

The last report submitted February 1986 covered the progress between August 1, 1985 and December 31, 1985. This report covers the activities of the Project between January 1, 1986 and March 31, 1986.

II. STATUS OF PROJECT AT BEGINNING OF PRESENT REPORTING PERIOD

- A. 214 tons of sorghum had been distributed between August and December of 1985. Additionally, 4 tons of powdered milk, 7 tons of vegetable oil and 5 tons of sugar had been distributed to the residents of Eghade mares.
- B. Gardening tools and seeds were purchased and distributed at the mares during the last reporting period. "Contre-Saison" gardening activities also began during this period.
- C. One of the mares had dried up, with three still having sufficient water to last for three months.
- D. The outbreak of malaria subsided toward the end of the last reporting period.
- E. A "soup kitchen" was installed by CARE International at Eghade mares because a study showed that approximately 43% of the children showed signs and symptoms of moderate malnutrition.

III. PROGRESS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS DURING THE PRESENT REPORTING PERIOD (January 1, 1986 - March 31, 1986)

- A. 91 families, previously living at Eghade Elekou were transferred to Moctar, a mare just northeast of Eghade Rafik, where there is still an abundance of water (The mare at Elekou was completely dry by mid-January). They began immediately to prepare their parcels and begin contre-saison gardening.
- B. Two drinking water wells were dug to the mis-en-eau level at Rafik (18 meters and 19 meters, respectively). Two have also been completed to the mis-en-eau level at Bikaro (21 meters and 30 meters, respectively). AT Moctar, digging began at two well sites the third week in March.
- C. 400 new families, many of them related to families already settled at Eghade, began arriving around Christmas time. Apparently they had fled to Nigeria during the drought where they found work occasionally and somehow managed to survive. At the end of the harvest season last fall, however, work opportunities largely ceased, and they returned north. An inspection tour of mares running north and east of INTabinot (Intabinot, Whayya, Afanou, Tendi, Wurzulay, and Shineke) was made. Many of these mares had water, but those which did also had fairly large populations of people already settled there doing gardening on their own. Thus, to bring in new people and give them food in return for their gardening while the original people did not receive any, seemed to be unfair and asking for problems. After consultation with the Sous-Prefet and the Agriculture Extension Agent, it was decided to settle the new families around Tadeni, which is not far from the other sites at Eghade. There was still room for 19 families at Moctar. Therefore 379 were relocated to Tadeni and 19 to Moctar.
- D. Negotiations began to rent two OPVN trucks to facilitate food delivery to Eghade mares as the CARE truck alone was unable to meet the requirements. The two rented

trucks will be able to deliver 150 tons each, of food per month between April and June for a total of 750 tons delivered before the heavy rains begin. Meanwhile, the CARE truck will continue it's food deliveries so that, if all goes well, by mid-June we will have caught up on our food deliveries (we are now one month behind), plus have enough food stocked in the warehouses at the mares to last through the rainy season. If there is any delay in having the food deliveries made directly to all of the sites at the mares, it has been decided to make the deliveries to Tchintaborak (in the Agadez Department) as before, and rent donkeys and camels to transport the food from that point. The possibility of providing donkey carts to the mare sites, not only to facilitate food deliveries but also to be used for some medical evacuations will be investigated.

- E. Because of the fear of a meningitis epidemic (there were 30 deaths reported at Intabanout, some 30 kilometers from Eghade) a mobile health team was dispatched by the DDS in Zinder to again vaccinate against meningitis. By mid February, the health situation seemed stable. Only two deaths due to meningitis were reported. There has been no conclusive diagnosis as to the rash of 18 children deaths at Eghade over a two-week period in January 1986.

IV. ANALYSIS OF CONSTRAINTS/PROBLEMS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Twelve sacks of sorghum turned out to have been filled with sorghum chaff, rather than grain. All twelve sacks were unmarked (as to point of origin), so there was no way of tracing it. Twelve sacks among a few thousand isn't too bad, however. Also, out of the 580 4-litre bottles of oil delivered, 20 were either empty or half-empty. Again, this doesn't represent a serious loss.
- B. The food distribution for the month of February was done on a family-by-family basis with names and amounts received being recorded. However, it was distributed on a "merit" basis. Those who were judged, by the agriculture

agent at Eghade, to have poorly worked garden sites were given only have ration. On the other hand, those judged to have exceptionally well-worked plots were given double ration, and those with satisfactory plots were given normal rations. This action had been discussed with the residents during January, therefore if we had not carried it out, they would have thought that we were bluffing. On the whole, this system worked well. There were surprisingly few complaints came from those who had their rations reduced, and those who did complain did so so loudly and obnoxiously that there was little doubt they deserved the reduction. A few, mostly older women, explained that they had only one family member to help them. After investigation, their full ration was restored. It will be interesting to see the effect this action has on the quality of gardening at Eghade.

- C. The mare at Ciminti dried up early in March leaving produce on the vine and greatly shortening the garden season there. The cement-lined wells which had been constructed at Ciminti are not sufficient for number of plots. Also, as stated in a previous report, we were not satisfied with the placement of the wells, by OFEDES, with little consideration of irrigation needs. We are seeking the advice of an Irrigation Specialist and awaiting the arrival of the Agriculture Engineer or Agronomist. This problem should be resolved by the next contre-saison campaign.
- D. The CARE International truck, which has been delivering food to Eghade, suffered a serious mechanical breakdown the first week of March and had not been repaired by the end of March (waiting for parts to arrive). The DRU office of USAID/Niger was contacted and gave permission to rent a private carrier to make a delivery of 50 tons.
- E. Some of the residents of the mares are slowly returning to an economic basis. At the Sous-Prefet's suggestion, the President of the Tanout Marketing Cooperative talked with the residents of Eghade about the possibility of

marketing some of their garden produce at the Tanout or Zinder markets. The residents were very open to this idea, and it was decided to begin with dried tomatoes and potatoes, both because of the quantity of these produced at Eghade and the ease with which they can be transported and stored. The first truck-load that went to Zinder was very successful. This could spark the formation of a marketing Cooperative at Eghade itself. The problem is that there is not yet enough working capital to launch an effort on a large enough scale to be economically profitable to the cooperative. One solution is to ask the Sous-Prefecture or the Project to advance the coop a million CFA as a revolving account or, alternatively, to request assistance from the Africare Regional Office in Dakar, under their Matching Grant Project.

- F. Because of the depth of the wells at Eghade (between 15 and 30 meters) the LWR method of well-digging, which does not require machinery for the mis-en-eau but can be used only to a depth of 12 meters, could not be used. So, a truck with a derrick and possibly a pump to empty the well of water must be hired for this job. The cheapest estimate received thus far is 250.000 F/CFA per well (this was from a private contractor; OFEDES is twice as expensive). This means that just for the 12 drinking water wells soon to be completed at Eghade, the cost for the mis-en-eau will be 3 million CFA - which will wreck havoc with our budget. There are a number of European and Canadian organizations in the Zinder area, both profit and non-profit, which are involved in water projects. They will be approached to see if we can't negotiate something less expensive. Talks have already been held with the AFVP office in Niamey. Their price is right, but they cannot accept less than a two-year contract.
- G. While awaiting a funding decision from Washington, it had been suggested that the population base be increased. The area just across the line in the Agadez Department was suggested. This was first discussed with the Sous-Prefet

of Tanout who voiced no objection, then with the Services of Plan and Water & Forestry in Agadez who were enthusiastic. Their only concern was that a person be assigned, by the Project to live and work in the area to "protect" their interests. Africare sees no serious problems with this addition, given the fact that tools, seeds, etc. are already being shared by the relatives and friends from Eghade. During our visit to the Agadez Department in January, we asked several individuals along the border and as far away as Ingall where they had gotten the seeds or binettes. The honest response was "Eghade". This means a closer following needs to be made as to how the materials are being guarded or used. Also, the route for the food deliveries to the Eghade mares often use the Agadez route because of better road conditions and during the time when the mares were inundated from heavy rains, food was stored in Aderbissinat or Tchintaborik until the camel or donkey caravan transported them to the mares. This will add a total of 356 families (2,492 persons) under the Food-for-Work project for 4 months. The Program Monitor and the Agriculture Engineer will live at Aderbissinat. The areas identified, by the local officials as being in need of assistance are:

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| . Aderbissinat (56 families) | . Ekanawan (40 families) |
| . Guermawan (50 families) | . Efenates (20 families) |
| . Agadai (20 families) | . Tchintaborak (170 families) |

V. SUMMARY OF PROJECT STATUS AT END OF REPORTING PERIOD

The 400 new families settled around the Tadeni and Mochtar mares have started on work projects. The idea of water-catchment areas (demi-dunes) will be reviewed for possible installation at these two mares.

Food deliveries are being made to the residents of the mares. Deliveries have not yet started in the remote villages of Tanout.

Negotiations are ongoing for mis-en-eau of the drinking wells so that the work can be done in May before the rains begin.

VI. PROJECTED ACTIVITIES FOR THE COMING REPORTING PERIOD

- A. Sign an Amendment to the Protocole d'Accord to include the specified Agadez areas.
- B. Hire the Program Monitor, Agriculture Engineer or Agronomist and a second Agriculture Extension Agent for the Project.
- C. Continue with food deliveries to the Eghade mares and begin deliveries to the Agadez group and to the "Remote" Tanout villages once the distribution sites have been identified.
- D. When the Sous-Prefet returns to Tanout mid-April, a decision will have to be made as to Africare's distribution of food, for four months to the "remote" villages. We were originally given the number of 56 abandoned or partially abandoned villages to assist, with no specific names. According to a booklet called EVALUATION DE LA CAMPAGNE AGRICOLE 1985 published by the Ag Service in Zinder, the number of nomads and villagers still experiencing a food shortage in the Tanout area is as follows:
 - nomads: 47,990 (two groupements of Toureg/Bouzou and one of Fulani. This represents the total population of nomads in the arrondissement, all of whom, according to the S/P and the Adjoint should be considered to be suffering a food shortage).
 - villagers: 28,913 (out of a total of 141,781 villagers, this represents a percentage just over 20%).
 - total: The total, then, of both nomads and villagers to be served by food deliveries to "remote" Tanout villages would be 57,685, or just over 30% of the total population of 189,771 in the Arrondissement.
 - villages: The number of villages served, those shown to have a shortfall of food, would be 134 out of a total of 458 villages in the Arrondisse-

ment, yielding a percentage of 29%. Added to these, of course, would be the three groupements of nomads mentioned above. To serve these villages and groupements, several distribution points must be selected to which the affected population could reach on a monthly basis. Any distribution points selected should take into consideration the availability and condition of roads.

- transportation: The total food to be distributed over the four month period, to the remote villages, is 1,692 MT of grain and 172 MT of powdered milk. The monthly food distribution to the population should take place between May and August, the months when food stocks will be at their lowest. This is also the rainy season when transportation can become extremely difficult.

Assuming that we will be using trucks capable of carrying 10 tons at a time, and that the food will be picked up from the Zinder OPVN, six trucks, beside the Project truck, would be needed with each truck delivering a minimum of 70 tons per month during the four month period, barring no major mechanical problems as have been experienced in the past.

- E. Resolve the issues of mis-en-eau, the drinking wells and improve the irrigation schemes for the garden sites.