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"Capitalization" of Lessons Learned from the USAID-Funded
Agriculture and Natural Resources Project in The Gambia

Recommendations for Enhancing Linkages
and Refining the NGO/Private Sector Grants Program

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Consultant Report

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Summary

The ASDG II policy objectives and approaches are well suited to USAID/Niger's Strategic Objective 3, and are designed to be results-oriented. Likewise, the NGO/Private Sector sub-component of the Program offers the team and A.I.D. unique opportunities for having a direct and immediate impact on the livelihoods of rural Nigeriens, through the Grants Program.

Instead of looking to change the ASDG II approach, a greater attention to management is the key for achieving targets. This means providing tools and mechanisms through which people can better manage their time, funds and results are monitored, information is shared, and perhaps most importantly, stakeholder interests are addressed and coordinated.

This report highlights a series of recommendations made to the ASDG II team during a consultancy conducted from June 14 - July 4, 1995. Drawing from experience gained during implementation of the USAID/Gambia Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Project, recommendations are intended to refine certain elements of the ASDG II approach, whereby facilitating the achievement of results. The assignment was focused on two aspects of the ASDG II program: how the linkages between the various ASDG II components can be strengthened and more closely tied to A.I.D. strategic plan, and refining the NGO/Private Sector Grants Program to ensure broad participation in the program.

Natural resource management policy reform requires input from several sectors, commitment to a long-term objective, and a clear yet flexible plan of action. Actions must be coordinated across government ministries, within bureaucratic levels of authority, and must extend beyond the administrative center out to the village and district level. The number of actors involved requires that efforts are managed strategically, taking into account the incentives, relationships, and technical constraints which will lead to the intended results.

Strengthening Linkages

ASDG II is working with and promoting inter-ministerial entities such as the Cellule de Gestion des Ressources Naturelle (C/GRN) to enhance coordination and linkages. Along with technical support services currently provided to the Government of Niger (GON), adjustments in management structures, communications vehicles, and institutional connections can improve the linkages to enhance the outcome.

Recommendations include:

- Improve ASDG II delegation and coordination of responsibilities through creation of a Deputy Chief of Party position, clearly defining the role of the ASDG II National Coordinator, and by conducting routine weekly team meetings.
- Improve communications with partners by sharing weekly activities with A.I.D., C/GRN and the ASDG II National Coordinator.
- Reduce number of overlapping and duplicative committee structures relating to ASDG

- II and combine meetings with Strategic Objective and Results Package Teams.
- Improve the two-way flow of information through monitoring and evaluation efforts, encouraging M&E efforts to be integral to the policy decision making process rather than exclusively for impact reporting purposes.
- Encourage both GON and NGO "hypothesis testing" perspective through the Grants Supervisory Committee and the C/GRN.

Re-examining Conditions Precedent (CP)

With the anticipation of modifications to the GARI (Gestion d'Administration et Reform Institutional) or institutional conditions precedent, there are only minor issues with the ASDG II conditions precedent (CP). In large part, these problems can be addressed by better managing the CP portfolio and by increasing the communication between the partners regarding progress and achievement of established targets.

Recommendations include:

- Formal instructions need to be provided to GON in order to adequately respond to the A.I.D. response to the request for Tranche II A.
- Divide Tranche III into two sub-tranches, and split the existing CP concerning the completion and adoption of the national NRM policy strategy into two actions: III A, completion of the strategy; III B, adoption of the strategy.
- In place of the GARI component conditions for Tranches III and IV, substitute CPs relating to establishment of a national Environmental Information System.
- Revise NGO and associations CPs in Tranche III and IV, to reflect the desired improvement of dialogue and cooperation between GON and NGO, and to remove the requirement to continue to modify the legislation since GON has already recognized and legalized NGOs and associations.
- General conditions need to be more closely monitored and supported, so that when technical conditions are met the disbursements can be made.

Accomplishing Synergy through a Geographic Focus

Increasing the flow of information coming from field interventions, and better coordinating existing data will help to realize the synergies of A.I.D. initiatives, as well as other donor and national programs. With a desire to encourage the Nigerien people to more actively participate in their development, rather than using a top-down approach, ASDG II efforts are encouraging communities to choose for themselves how they wish to participate in NRM efforts. The NGO grants program is designed to facilitate grant giving to a wide range of customers, not just well established NGOs. Therefore, it is not advisable to limit the geographic focus of ASDG II efforts but rather to seek greater information flow between initiatives.

NGO/Private Sector Grants Program

The NGO/Private Sector sub-component of ASDG II was designed to increase, improve

the effectiveness of, and expand the range of NGO and community based organizations' participation in the natural resource management sector. The establishment of the grants program is well underway, as the Supervisory Committee, composed of GON, NGO, and A.I.D. representatives, is expected momentarily, the basic parameters of the program have been established, and numerous NGOs have expressed interest in the Program. Based on the assessment of NGOs operating in Niger, the Grants Management Unit (GMU) can anticipate receiving a number of fundable proposals from qualified NGOs. At the same time, they should also expect a number of proposals which do not meet the qualifications either in design or institutional qualifications. Furthermore, community based organizations which do not have representation in Niamey should be encouraged to participate in the grants program. This strategies should allow the Grants Management Unit (GMU) to effectively and efficiently manage the grant requests while also providing support to NGOs to increase their capacity to work in the natural resource management (NRM) sector.

Recommendations include:

- Diversify grants program into two categories, small grants and NGO grants. Small grants should be primarily targeted to community based organizations (CBOs) and should be directed at the introduction of new NRM technology. Within the NGO grant program, establish boundaries to encourage inexperienced NGOs to target smaller field interventions requiring less management experience. At the same time, NGOs with extensive NRM field implementation experience can be encouraged to submit proposals at a higher level, and also include a more complex range of field activities.
- Prepare two different proposal guidelines, corresponding to the Small Grants Program and the NGO Grants Program. Those groups requesting small grants should be instructed to use an application form to facilitate proposal development, while potential NGO grantees would be required to submit formal proposals.
- NGOs with little experience in submitting proposals should be provided with additional materials, such as a proposal development workbook, to assist them in preparing a proposal. In the process, groups requiring additional support may be identified for training to increase their program development and NRM field implementation skills.
- Financial and administrative requirements should be commensurate with funding levels and "risk" factors. Financial risks are present at all levels, and appropriate measures should be taken to assess the financial integrity of all groups requesting funds. That said, community based groups may not have sophisticated financial monitoring systems, and they should not be required to establish such systems. The Small Grants Program should have straight-forward reporting formats, and also provide supplementary training to these groups in the principles of financial management and accounting. By diversifying the approach to awarding grants, the NGO/Private Sector Grants Program can increase the likelihood of reaching community based organizations, which are the primary target for assistance despite the financial risks involved.

- The GMU and the Supervisory Committee need to be committed to "discovery" and have a spirit of testing hypotheses for community based natural resource management. Placement of the grants program within the larger results context should be routinely emphasized. Lessons learned must then be fed back into the national NRM policy strategy.

1. Scope of Work

The Scope of Work was divided into two areas: the overall ASDG II Program, and the NGO/Private Sector Grants Program. While separated into two tasks, there was considerable overlap between the two elements of the SOW and this theme of linkages is reiterated throughout the recommendations.

1.1 Overall ASDG II Program

- Inform the ASDG II/IRG project staff and partners about the ANR/Gambia experience from the standpoint of the linkages between community-based activities supported by small grants, the policy reform agenda, and the overall program objectives. Recommend ways of strengthening these linkages within ASDG II.
- Examine the remaining conditions precedent within the context of USAID/Niger's new results-based framework and the ASDG II mid-term evaluation and recommend ways of reformulating them.
- Examine the issue of geographic focus for the ASDG II program, particularly within the context of USAID/Niger's request that the NGO Private Sector sub-component and the programming of Non-Project Assistance (NPA) funding for GON investment budget maximize impact and be synergistic with other elements of the Mission's portfolio. Recommend ways of incorporating the Mission's request into the selection process of the Supervisory Committee and the programming process for NPA funds.

1.2 NGO/Private Sector Sub-component

- Make a presentation to the Grants Management Unit and interested partners, especially the Supervisory Committee (provided that it has been established by that time), about the ANR/Gambia's experience in administering a small grants program. Make recommendations, based on the discussions after the presentation, on the administration of the ASDG II small grants program. Include input on how to publicize the NGO/Private Sector sub-component (i.e. assist in the formulation of an information dissemination strategy for launching the program), using a collaborative approach, involving all stakeholders (e.g. GMU, GON, NGOs, and USAID)
- Review the Guide de Requête and recommend ways of improving the document
- Review the ASDG II manuals on accounting and administrative procedures for grantees and recommend ways of improving the two documents

1.3 Deliverables

Prepare a report with a series of recommendations on each of the aforementioned tasks.

2. Summary of Activities

The consultancy covered the period from June 14 - July 4, 1995. Issues and opportunities were discussed at length with the ASDG II team members. Meetings were held with GON counterparts and USAID staff to ensure that stakeholder and partner interests were being considered when developing recommendations.

2.1 Overall ASDG II Program

Reviewed ASDG II program and project papers, USAID strategic planning and results package documentation, mid-term evaluation, revision of GARI position, and historical records of policy reform and conditions precedent achievements.

Looked at overall organizational structure of ASDG II Project. Reviewed the draft organizational chart, with an eye to improving linkages between project components, managing dual responsibilities on the part of the Chief of Party and other staff, and organizing work between two work sites (C/GRN and ASDG II Project Office).

In a series of informal meetings with Project staff, shared experience from ANR/Gambia, highlighting linkages between community based activities and national policy reform. Reviewed project organizational structures as well as governmental institutions charged with drawing connections between policy and local level actions.

Met with the Socio-economist, Mr. Djibo Garba, at the C/GRN to discuss the C/GRN role in coordinating community based natural resource management activities and promoting collaboration between GON and NGOs in NRM.

Attended the first SO3 result team "A" meeting where the concept of focusing on results and operating as partners was shared with GON officials.

2.2 NGO/Private Sector Sub-Component

Reviewed relevant documentation, in particular the "Guide de Requête", financial management and administrative manual, and materials developed for the Supervisory Committee. After reviewing and making comments on these documents, reviewed revised versions and made further suggestions.

Met with Mme. Capo, Head of the NGO/Association Service, Department of Regional Development (DDR/SONG) of the Ministry of Finance and Planning (MF/P), to review the topics to be covered at the formal presentation to the Supervisory committee members, met with GAP Permanent Secretary, M. Ayindé Guillaume to review proposed structuring of grants program.

Shared ideas with the NGO Grants Administrator, Organizational Advisor, and Training/Program Advisor and reviewed the objectives of the grant program and developed ways of increasing the likelihood of achieving the intended results.

Made a presentation to the provisional Supervisory Committee. While the institutional positions have been approved for the committee, the individual members have not yet formally been selected. Each of the identified organizations were contacted and invited to the presentation. Of the nine organizations on the Committee, seven sent delegates. The presentation focused on the structure of the Gambia Grants Administration Committee, the mechanics of the grant selection process, and special items were raised for consideration by the Supervisory Committee. See Annex A for a copy of the presentation and list of meeting participants.

3. Overall ASDG II Program: Recommendations for Strengthening Linkages

Even though the ASDG II Program was designed well over five years ago, the approach, concept and objectives clearly fit into the new A.I.D. strategic plan for the period 1995 - 2002. The policy reforms called for under ASDG II are directly related to promoting democratization, empowerment of communities, and facilitating partnerships. While there have been delays in the disbursement of funds to the GON, and a realization that the intended results for the institutional and management component of the program were not going to be met due to the complexities of the bureaucratic changes (see the ASDG II Mid-term evaluation and IRG concept paper for revision of the institutional component), all in all, ASDG II is well placed to support the Strategic Objective 03 and to play an active role in producing results.

Although a formal action has not been taken to extend the project completion date beyond December 31, 1995, all assurances were given by A.I.D. that this action will be taken and it is anticipated that ASDG II will be extended until December 1998. With this in mind, the following recommendations are made to support additional strengthening of the effort.

3.1 Exploring Linkages at all Levels

As a country experimental lab (CEL) for USAID's re-engineering initiative, USAID/Niamey is in the forefront of shifting from a project orientation to a results-focused approach. In this position as a CEL, USAID/Niamey and the ASDG II team have a significant opportunity to explore mechanisms to make this new approach operational. The question of linkages is largely a management issue. It is essential that managers identify those elements which are within their control, acknowledge those which are out of their control, and seek to maximize those actions over which they can have influence. Being aware of the vested interests of stakeholders will allow people to organize activities to achieve results rather than responding to events after the fact. Strategically used management tools can assist in adapting to a changing environment and strengthen important linkages.

3.1.1 Encouraging Linkages Within the ASDG II Team

Operational linkages within the IRG team should be strengthened. While the technical

advisors communicate effectively, due to busy schedules and a focus on immediate work responsibilities, the connections are not being drawn between the components as well as they could or should be. Recommendations for accomplishing this are:

- The organizational structure of the IRG team currently reflects that the integration of ASDG II components falls on the shoulders of the Chief of Party. Due to the fact that the Chief of Party also serves as the NRM Policy Advisor, it is imperative that he spend a considerable amount of time at the C/GRN as well as other GON agencies. The Gambia ANR Project designated a Deputy Chief of Party to share in meeting the administrative and management responsibilities, and to assist in reinforcing the coordination of project components. Officially naming a Deputy Chief of Party should assist the COP in making the linkages between policy and community level actions. While it would not require adding an additional person to the team, it would require, as with the COP, that another person take on a dual technical and management role. Given the length of assignments, and the technical area involved, the position most suited for this dual responsibility is the Grants Administrator. It should be stressed that the atmosphere of partnership and teamwork which currently permeates ASDG II should continue. Naming of a Deputy Chief of Party is not intended to create a hierarchical and rigid management style, but rather to make a more direct linkage between the program components.
- The ASDG II National Coordinator's roles and responsibilities should be spelled out and coordinated with the Chief of Party and Deputy Chief of Party. The addition of this national position should assist in improving the management of the Program. As a GON official, the National Coordinator will be able to facilitate actions within the GON and maintain momentum for the activities. The comparative advantage of the different actors should be sought in order to increase the management efficiency of the team.
- Management tools, such as staff meetings and weekly minutes, should be used more regularly to encourage closer integration between activities. The IRG team have been holding meetings, but not as routinely as they could. At weekly staff meetings, team members should be encouraged to share the events of the week, discuss accomplishments, raise issues which need resolution, and inform other team members of upcoming meetings. The meeting notes should be brief and to the point. It is important that the notes are recorded and circulated so that all members of the team are aware of the activities of the other advisors. The notes from one meeting will then become the agenda for the next meeting, thereby avoiding the need for multiple documentation. While the IRG team has done a good of sharing information with its implementation partners, sharing the weekly minutes with partners such as A.I.D. and GON counterparts, namely the National Coordinator for ASDG II, will increase the awareness and facilitate the linkages between components. This is an attempt to increase the information flow and maintain open channels of communication. In The Gambia, these minutes served as a management tool within the Project, informed the partnership of current activities, without requiring the Team to produce specialized reports for either A.I.D. or government counterparts.

3.1.2 Clarifying Linkages with Strategic Objective 3

While there has been a modification of the conceptual framework for ASDG II with the re-engineering of USAID, as well as changes from the GON side, the basic premise behind ASDG II still remains intact and valid. There is a clear logic between program components, linking the policy and community based activities, as well as tying in the information and management issues. Upon reviewing the strategic plan and results packages, an effective mechanism for strengthening the linkages between the ASDG II program and the results package teams would be to integrate a quarterly review process for both ASDG II and the results package team.

- Quarterly Results Package Reviews. One quickly recognizes that accomplishing Strategic Objective 3 requires that a number of actors work together. In order to coordinate the stakeholders and maintain open and constructive dialogue, there needs to be a semi-formal mechanism in place for discussion. As was done in The Gambia, quarterly performance reviews proved to be an effective way to bring together all key stakeholders to discuss accomplishments, issues, and plan activities for the next quarter. The meetings were attended by the USAID Program Officer, relevant IRG/ANR Project staff, key government counterparts, and any other actors considered critical to meeting the objectives. A similar quarterly review could be instituted to combine the Results Package Team (RPT) sessions or the Strategic Objective 3 meetings with the ASDG II quarterly reviews. At each meeting, stakeholders could highlight progress in obtaining results, discuss problems encountered, and plan out activities for the next quarter. In The Gambia, the objective of the meeting was to gain feedback from the partners, and to identify and agree upon actions for the next quarter. In the event that a party did not meet the target agreed upon at previous quarterly review, the delay was recorded and targets were re-established. It was imperative that the appropriate person responsible be held accountable, rather than have another party be used as the excuse for inaction. This process of regular monitoring of progress facilitated the linkages between the components as well as the linkages between the stakeholders in the Program. Notes from quarterly reviews were finalized and submitted as a quarterly report.
- Reduce the number of committees currently convened under the auspices of ASDG II. There are a number of officially constituted and convened committees both within the GON and A.I.D. which all serve the purpose of reviewing ASDG II's progress. Given that the Strategic Objective 3 is the overarching framework for all work done under ASDG II it is recommended that a single committee/meeting structure be established with joint A.I.D., IRG, and GON membership. This committee would bring the actors together, reduce the number of meetings, and improve the flow of information between the partners.
- Keep track of progress in satisfying ASDG II Conditions Precedent. In addition to monitoring the progress towards results, a critical step in maintaining progress towards achieving results is making sure that the budgetary support is released to GON. In addition to the technical aspect, ASDG II has a number of general conditions and

activities required for the release of funding to the GON. With the number of conditions precedent involved in the ASDG II Program Agreement, it would be useful to monitor the progress of the CPs on a quarterly basis. By tracking this progress on a quarterly basis, there can be negotiations for assistance, and a clear delegation of responsibility. See Annex B for a draft matrix for tracking conditions precedent.

3.1.3 Increasing Linkages Through Monitoring and Evaluation

Another area where linkages are critical is monitoring and evaluation. The tendency in monitoring and evaluation is to leave it until the end of an activity, and then going out and measuring the impact in order to transmit the outcome back to the project. ASDG II redesign for the institutional component addresses this need to link monitoring and evaluation into every aspect of the effort. As outlined in the *Monitoring and Evaluation of NRM Interventions in Niger: Strategy and Workplan for ASDG II*, by Philip DeCosse, the first task identified is to improve the impact monitoring of NGO and Community Based Organizations (CBO) activities. Following this methodology, it is essential that information gained from field level activities are fed into the national NRM information system in order to effectively influence policy formulation. The relational data base being developed by the Grants Administrator will also facilitate this linkage by providing both spatial and non-spatial data associated with field interventions funded by the NGO/Private Sector component of ASDG II. Upon placement of the NRIM Advisor, the Grants Administrator and the NRIM Advisor should work closely together to link this Grants Management Unit (GMU) data base into the national data base already established under the earlier ASDG II efforts (MAG/EL NRM project listing, etc.).

The linkages must, however, go beyond the creation of data bases. The information generated must be integrated into the policy formulation and decision making processes. With the addition of the Natural Resources Information Management (NRIM) component to the ASDG II effort, there will be considerable opportunities to support linkages between various GON technical and interministerial coordinating bodies, donor projects, and field initiatives. A number of issues will need to be addressed during implementation of the information management component, such as what are the incentives for using this data and what is the nature and level of GON commitment which is necessary in order for information management to become self sustaining within the GON.

3.1.4 Establishing the Institutional Connection between NGO/Private Sector Grant Fund and the National NRM Strategy

The notion of hypothesis testing at the local level to feed into policy reform needs to be a prominent feature of the NGO Grants Program. The Supervisory Committee, with support from the Grants Management Unit, needs to realize the importance of taking a learning approach when reviewing proposals and evaluating the results of field initiatives. They need to be encouraged to consider how proposals fit into the broader policy context.

Grants which are directly linked to new policy reforms will provide critical input for testing policy assumptions. The policy reform may be necessary in order for the community to take responsibility initially, but it is unclear whether it is sufficient for the community to

maintain responsibility and to properly manage the resource.

- One way to encourage this linkage would be to assign a number of points in the proposal rating system related to the proposal's linkage to policy issues. For example, initiatives which propose to connect into decentralization or Rural Code initiatives would receive points for addressing and promoting policy linkages. Another example would relate to community forest management schemes as measured under Result 3.1. By funding a number of grants which seek to establish community forestry management schemes, the policy and institutional requirements for promoting community forestry management schemes can be investigated and expanded.
- The NGO Grants Supervisory Committee has been formally convened in order to oversee the NGO/Private Sector Grants Program within the context of the ASDG II Program. However, in order to promote the conceptual linkage and monitoring of community based natural resource management (CBNRM) beyond the boundaries of a project framework, the GON should be encouraged to establish a CBNRM focal point. The mandate and interministerial constitution of the C/GRN makes it an appropriate home for such a focal point. The C/GRN has already initiated a number of CBNRM activities in along these lines, and should be encouraged to do more in this area.¹ The C/GRN focal point would stay in close contact with DDR, Groupement des Aides Privées (GAP), DPRO/GER, and other agencies supporting the emergence of community-based development institutions. Once the Supervisory Committee is officially convened, the C/GRN could also be invited to participate on the Committee as a "standing or permanent" observer. This may encourage the C/GRN to become more active in promoting developments in this area.

3.2 Assessment of Existing Conditions Precedent

Drawing from the ANR/Grant experience, where ASDG II has over fifty policy performance conditions, ANR had only eleven. ANR conditions precedent provided a general sketch of the anticipated development of natural resource policies. With only 11 conditions precedent all program stakeholders knew the expected outcome of the program, but there was adequate room to explore alternative courses of action. Another difference between the ANR Program and ASDG II was that, upon meeting conditions precedent, funds would be released to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs specifically for debt repayment. It was believed that through reducing the debt servicing burden, adequate funds would be freed up and channeled into budgetary support for the agriculture and natural resource sectors. After releasing US \$ 4 million to the Government of The Gambia (GOTG), there was no indication that budgetary support was increased to the two relevant ministries, Agriculture and Natural Resources. In fact, the annual budgets of these two ministries were reduced instead of increased. An area of shared experience is that the host country has difficulty in meeting the "letter of the law" concerning conditions precedent. What the host country government

¹ In December 1994, the C/GRN hosted a meeting to share lessons learned and experiences from Africare efforts in Gouré with other NGOs and GON agencies. See Compte-Rendu de Réunion sur le Projet GRN Gouré-Africare.

assumes is acceptable for meeting the requirement for the disbursement of funds, may not be acceptable to A.I.D. After a few rounds of going back and forth, the host country government throws up its hands and tells the advisors to prepare the documentation, since they might have a better chance at "getting it right."

Assuming a number of changes in the Institutional component, the ASDG II conditions precedent are not unreasonable, although they are numerous. For the NRM policies, the CPs reflect the general flow and direction of NRM policy development and are considered to be appropriate conditions for performance in this area. As highlighted in the Mid-term evaluation and reflected in the current redesign of the GARI component, the conditions precedent for the institutional component were considered to be difficult to achieve and may not have had a significant field-level impact. The NGO policy related conditions have in large part been met ahead of schedule, however the wording of the related CPs causes some confusion. With the exception of the institutional component, the remaining CPs may require only minor modifications. However, improvements are necessary in the areas of monitoring progress and more open dialogue between the partners.

3.2.1 Completion of Tranche II A

In December 1994/January 1995 the GON transmitted documentation to A.I.D. regarding the satisfaction of CPs for Tranche II A. In June 1995, A.I.D. provided a written response to the GON which reflected the need to place the policy progress under II A in the context of the overall program objective, highlighting a "continuum of action" specifically related to benchmarks in Tranche III. Rather than just release funds after a policy revision has been made, the intention of ASDG II CPs was to recognize progress through the achievement of intermediate targets as specified in the "Action Plan" adopted as a CP for Tranche I B. However, the official A.I.D. response did not reflect the Action Plan agreed to between A.I.D. and the GON. Furthermore, since it has been agreed to by all parties that a redesign of the Institutional (GARI) component of the project is necessary, Tranche II A or B releases should not be tied to accomplishment of a condition precedent which will be eliminated.

In view of the letter sent by A.I.D. in June 1995, the GON request to release Tranche II A must be resubmitted. However, with the pending revision of the Tranche III, there must be clear instructions on how to proceed.

- A.I.D. needs to inform the GON on how to proceed regarding meeting of Tranche II A, II B, and ultimately III and IV. This should be done through a PIL or other official notification. This notification will need to indicate which CPs are being removed and/or modified in all subsequent tranches, and how the GON should report on conditions in light of the deletion of related conditions in future tranches. Given that one element of each Tranche release is the plan of action for meeting the next tranche, without knowing what is in the next tranche, GON will not be able to submit an acceptable request for the release of II A.

In the following section, conditions precedent are reviewed for the various components. It is assumed that conditions precedent for Tranches II A and B will remain unchanged given

that the GON has already been working on meeting these conditions. Recommendations therefore reflect changes to Tranches III and IV.

3.2.2 NRM Policy Conditions Precedent

The GON has been making strategic decisions regarding its desire to maintain ownership of the development process for a national NRM strategy and program. A number of donor initiatives are supporting the development of the strategy and all are aware of the need to allow the GON to take the lead. While significant progress has been made, a number of steps remain to follow through with this strategy.

- In order to maintain the momentum on this initiative, it would be beneficial to split the Tranche III conditions precedent into two components. Included in Tranche III A would be the condition that the "GON completed the national NRM policy strategy and program." Tranche III B would then refer to the "adoption of the national NRM policy strategy by decree." Based on the experience to date of processing of decrees, it would be unlikely that the strategy would be both completed and adopted within one year from now.

All other NRM policy conditions are critical elements in reaching the strategic objective of sustained adoption of management practices improving the conservation and productive use of Niger's forests, fields, waters, and pastures. Additional progress is evident in the areas addressed by conditionalities in Tranches III and IV, namely decentralization, the rural code, and the changing role of the forester in promoting community based natural resource management.

3.2.3 Institutional Conditions Precedent

As noted in the mid-term evaluation, the activities associated with the GARI position, and the accompanying conditions precedent were unrealistic given the complexity of the institutional problems within the MAG/EL. Significant progress has been made in redefining the position. As proposed, new activities will address information gaps and developing systems to integrate information into national policy making, as well as to improve local level field implementation. Assuming that this position is approved, it would be effective to have a condition precedent which relates to ensuring that the GON makes a commitment to maintaining and using this data.

- It would be useful to have a condition precedent which establishes the institutional base for information generated and collected under ASDG II as well as other donor and GON initiatives. Such an information system would also facilitate the flow of information between local level government and non-governmental bodies. In the proposed Tranche III B, the following could be added:

"Progress towards developing a national environmental and natural resources information system, under the auspices of the C/GRN." It is important that such a system be supported by a unit which has relative autonomy and is charged with

coordination. This information system should be decentralized rather than centralized, coordinated rather than controlled, and be accessible to anyone rather than characterized by limited or closed access. This information system would provide performance measures for R.3.2. by providing increased access to technical information to producers, as well as input for R.3.4 and R.3.5 as information available through the Environmental Information System (EIS) will improve the NRM plan and strategy by providing more information.

For Tranche IV, the following conditions precedent could be added to ensure that the system is instituted and being used: "An Environmental and Natural Resources Information System is functioning and supports information requests from a wide range of interests."

To more accurately reflect the thrust of this activity, it would be better to rename this category Information and Monitoring Systems.

3.2.4 NGO Policy Conditions Precedent

In the case of Tranche II B, it is anticipated that the two conditions precedent regarding NGOs, could be met without much delay. However, it may be effective to revise the wording of these conditions to be more in line with the current situation and to reflect the intended purpose for the conditions. For example, the condition in Tranche II B (Program Agreement 4.2.A.2.e) stipulates that a GON-NGO round table meeting is held and an action plan is issued for the implementation of the recommendations resulting from the meeting. In Tranche IV (Program Agreement 4.2.C.2.d) another round table is to be held and an action plan formulated for implementation of the recommendations. It seems that the CPs are promoting discussion of the issues, and action plans are being developed, but there is no condition precedent for actually implementing the recommendations.

In another case, five CPs (Program Agreement 4.1.G.4.a., 4.2.A.2.f. (1), 4.2.B.2.d., 4.2.B.2.e., and 4.2.C.2.e.) call for the review of legislation and previous reforms with respect to NGOs and rural associations, and the establishment of any new conditionalities required to maintain progress achieved to date in this area. By all reports, significant progress has been made since the ASDG II program was designed in 1989-90 in modifying the legislation to allow NGOs and associations to operate in rural areas.² While the intention of the conditionalities in this area clearly is to promote a process of liberalization for non-governmental organizations, the conditionalities as currently worded do not effectively encourage such a process. At present they serve as a check-list of something to do, but it is not leading to anything which wouldn't be achieved through other means.

- All conditions precedent in Tranches III and IV relating to NGOs and rural associations should be eliminated and replaced with one condition in Tranche III and one in Tranche

²See materials from Kollo workshop on the Emergence of NGOs in Niger, including summary reports by Catherine Sagui and Souleymane Aboubacar for information on recent developments in NGO legislation.

IV, which call for "Demonstrated progress in improving the relationship between GON and NGOs and rural associations including cooperatives and credit unions." Given that the general conditions precedent require a review and assurance that there has been no backsliding on previous reforms, these conditions in the NGO/association section are redundant.

3.2.5 General Conditions Precedent

In each tranche, there are a series of conditions which stipulate activities to be implemented prior to disbursement. By and large these conditions are identical at each tranche, yet there continues to be difficulties in meeting these conditions precedent. Because these conditions are essentially financial and administrative in nature and require close coordination of activities between MF/P and A.I.D., the IRG Technical Advisors are not in a good position to advise or promote the accomplishment of these items. Based on the 8% deduction from each Tranche for the Local Currency Trust Fund, and the roles and responsibilities spelled out by the Amplified Program Document, monitoring and accomplishing these conditions is shared between A.I.D. and the GON. In order to facilitate achievement of these CPs, a person needs to be designated within A.I.D. and made responsible and accountable for tracking progress and promoting accomplishment in order to release funds. While it is not A.I.D.'s responsibility to resolve these conditions for the GON, these are fairly routine items which A.I.D. staff should be able to facilitate on a regular basis in the spirit of partnership. Open channels of communication and regular and constructive discussion of these points could lead to the GON's meeting of the requirements, and thereby reducing the GON's frustration over the process of not knowing what will or won't be accepted by A.I.D. for disbursement.

Another area which seems to be causing delays and/or diverting the efforts of the IRG Team away from technical support is in the agreement between the parties (A.I.D. and GON), assigning the "priorities assigned to the uses of such operating and investment budget support in support of the purposes and the objectives of the Program." Just as guidelines are being developed for NGO proposals, a standard format could be developed for proposals. In conversations with the ASDG II IRG Project Director, Mr. Juan Sève, his review of requests reflected a need for a standard format for proposals, so that requests contain the necessary level of information and appropriate elements to support the request. In Sève's review of proposals, he developed an effective standard for reviewing proposals. However, the process would be facilitated with the articulation and adoption by the GON and A.I.D. of a standard format for requests.

- Develop proposal guidelines for budgetary support and investment plans. Present a brief training program to the technical departments within MAG/EL, MH&E, and MF/P, which are the three ministries identified for receiving budgetary support.

3.3 Supporting Synergy Through a Geographic Focus

Up until now, the ASDG II Program has focused primarily on national level policy reforms and support to GON institutions. As the ASDG II NGO/Private Sector Program

prepares to review grants, and as future tranche disbursements will involve GON investments in the rural areas, the matter of a geographic focus becomes a point of consideration. Several factors should be addressed in this regard.

As the A.I.D. country strategy plan states, "the foremost principle guiding development of this statement is that the fate of Niger should and will be determined by its own people".³ The concept of empowering communities and listening to customers, falls in line with the approach of encouraging communities and intermediary organizations to come forth with their ideas for NRM interventions. In The Gambia, the ANR Program was regularly encouraged to focus efforts in one geographic area. While there are compelling reasons for having a geographic focus for an activity, in the long-run, certain customers will be excluded because they fall outside the geographic area selected. It is highly preferable to encourage a bottom-up approach, whereby communities are empowered to self-select themselves for participation, rather than the program pre-selecting targeted areas for intervention.

It is clear that by focussing efforts, the synergies of various development efforts would be maximized. The country strategy goes on to highlight that the Mission will seek out *wherever possible* the complementarities and synergies between health and population, the environment, democracy, economic growth and humanitarian assistance. USAID/Niger has highlighted access to credit as a key element required for successful and sustainable field interventions, and one which should be considered in the overall selection of field activities.

One clear way to promote synergies among A.I.D. efforts is through effective information systems. A number of initiatives have been undertaken through ASDG II to identify the existing NRM interventions in Niger and to build on those efforts. For example, ASDG II has worked with the C/GRN and others to support informal meetings, networks, and information exchanges among NRM donors, projects, and technical staff to share experiences on different technical subjects and project activities throughout the country. Much of this information has been included in a database of NRM projects and has recently been entered into a geographical information system (GIS) to illustrate where projects are overlapping, and which areas of the country are not presently being served. Continuing in this vein, World Resources Institute is integrating digitized video data into the GIS framework which will be overlaid on the existing project information. At this point, the project intervention information goes to the arrondissement level and not the village level. However, with the commencement of the NGO Grants Program, information will be provided down to the village level. Furthermore, the monitoring and evaluation system will be providing significant amounts of data which can be integrated into this tracking system. Similar types of data from other A.I.D. programs can be included in this system to see the impact of the various sector approaches.

It is beyond the ASDG II technical scope to ensure that synergies with other sectors are identified and promoted, since they are not abreast of all A.I.D. programs (nor should they be encouraged to be since they have a "full-plate" as key actors for achieving the SO3 results). However, the A.I.D. representative to the NGO/Private Sector Supervisory Committee will

³ Proposed Country Strategy Plan, USAID/Niamey, March 1995, Pg. 11.

be in a unique position to identify possible synergies when reviewing grant proposals. The Grant Supervisory Committee can be made aware of the synergies which exist. Building on synergies with other A.I.D. efforts however, should not be a selection criteria. Since the intended result of the grants program is widespread adoption of NRM practices, the grants should be selected based upon their potential for achieving results for this objective, and not to seek to build on complementarities and synergies. That said, when opportunities arise (and there is no doubt that they will), they should be actively pursued.

4. NGO/Private Sector Grant Program

In line with promoting decentralized and participatory development, the NGO/Private Sector component is directed at providing financial and technical support through non-governmental organization to improve natural resource management among rural resource users in Niger. In comparison to the limited pool of potential NGO grantees in The Gambia, Niger has a sizeable number of potential grantees. However, as in The Gambia, many of these groups have little field level institutional experience and they will require additional support to increase their effectiveness in promoting and transferring improved NRM technologies. The following recommendations are made with the intention of building on the lessons learned in The Gambia and thereby expediting field activities which will have a direct impact on rural producers.

4.1 Tailoring the Grants Program to Fit Existing Capacity

Reviews which have been conducted in Niger⁴ indicate that there are a number of NGOs which have the capacity to develop suitable project proposals and to carry out the NRM field activities while accounting for funds and monitoring results. However, it is also clear that there are many "post box" NGOs, which exist on paper and have never implemented a field project. At the community level, there may be groups which are organized and motivated to try new NRM technologies, but they require financing to embark on such efforts. With these various types of organizations existing in Niger, it is worthwhile to diversify the approach in order to tailor the grants program to meet the different levels of these groups.

- Rather than designing one program which tries to meet the needs of all potential types of grantees, develop a set of programs which are specifically tailored to the different levels. The different programs should have established boundaries relating to grant size, type of interventions, and reporting requirements. Since the GMU has already established the broad outlines of the program, it should be easy to adjust the requirements for each program.

In effect, it is recommended that the NGO/Private Sector Grants Program be divided into two separate programs. A Small Grants Program directed to community based organizations (CBOs) and emerging NGOs, and an NGO Grants Program which is designed

⁴ Recent reviews of NGO capacity in Niger include, Projet Energie II study, UNDP proposed NGO Support and Community Initiatives Project documentation, Development Innovations and Networks (IREN) recommendations paper on Nigerien NGOs, and Solidarité Canada Sahel (SCS) materials.

for operational NGOs, whether or not they have extensive experience in NRM. For a brief summary of the proposed grants program, see Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of NGO/Private Sector Grants Program

Title	CBOs and Emerging NGOs	NGO Grants	
		Small NGOs with Limited Experience	Large NGOs with Proven NRM experience
Qualifications	Organizations with foundations in the community; Organization must show interest in NRM technologies	Organization may be based outside of the community, however they must have some field implementation track record. May be national or international NGOs	Organizations which have operated in the NRM sector for more than 2 years, and have been operating for more than 5 years. May be international or national NGOs.
Types of Activities	Direct and focused field interventions which will directly improve the management and productivity of natural resources	Direct and focused activities which will have a direct NRM impact as well as strengthening the skills of the NGO	Integrated NRM Programs, with comprehensive community NRM planning and management objectives
Funding Limits	up to 10 mil CFA	up to 30 mil CFA	up to 250 mil CFA
Project Duration	no longer than 6 months - given that NRM is by nature a long-term activity, initial activities should be limited to 6 months, with the ability to build on initial grants with subsequent efforts (i.e 2nd phase).	no longer than 12 months	no longer than 24 months
Institutional Strengthening Efforts	Grantees are eligible for basic skills training related to NRM technologies, as well as basic organizational (i.e. financial management) provided by the GMU or some other specified training provider.	Grantees are eligible for skills training in NRM technologies, and financial and administrative management systems within the context of a NRM intervention. Proposals will not be considered for institutional support per se, but may be considered within the context of a NRM field initiative.	It is assumed that Grantees have sufficient institutional capacity and will not require significant institutional strengthening. However, may be provided for NRM skills training, environmental education, and other special topics.
NGO Partnerships	Not applicable due to the small size of funding	Inexperienced NGOs are encouraged to partner with more experienced NGOs, however funds will be made available for direct grants with inexperienced NGOs as well.	Established NGOs and PVOs are encouraged to team with small, national NGOs to provide "mentoring" role, however it is not required for access to large grants.
Proposal Format	Small Grant Program Application Form	Proposal Guidelines provide instructions for submitting request. For additional assistance in preparing a request, contact the GMU.	Proposal Guidelines outline instructions for submitting requests.
Items Excluded for Funding	Vehicles, Office Equipment	Vehicles, Office Equipment	Extremely limited funds for vehicles and office equipment

4.1.1 Small Grants Program

- Focus on the introduction of a single or limited number of NRM technologies.
- Limited funding is recommended. Funding levels should be able to cover the basic costs of introducing the technology. For example, a community may want to try planting hedge rows. Rather than start out with a project to teach the entire village, start with a limited group. Funding of the activity would just cover the costs of materials, organization of activities, training, and other activities related to supporting the adoption of the NRM practice. Funding level should not exceed 10,000,000 CFA (roughly US \$20,000).
- Encourage the community to take ownership of the funds and the activity. If possible, integrate support mechanisms (i.e. Peace Corps volunteers, or Volontaires du Progrès) to provide oversight of the activity, while still maintaining the sense of ownership among the community. In addition to introducing a new NRM technology and having an impact on the resource base, the program also seeks to allow groups which have not formally managed funds before to develop some management capacity.
- Reporting requirements of the grant should be commensurate with the funding level. For a small amount of money, neither the grantee nor the GMU should have to spend significant amounts of time in reporting. By developing basic control systems for including financial, progress, and impact reporting, the program can be managed efficiently and results achieved in the short-term.
- Use local networks where possible to verify the sincerity of applicants, monitor progress, and make linkages to other activities.
- Accompanying program support should include training for CBOs and exchange visits. These funds however should not be included in a grant to the CBO, rather integrated into the GMU organizational support function.
- Other Factors: Seek to integrate these small grants where possible into other initiatives. For example, if there is a credit, cooperative, or rural code initiative, seek to tie into these efforts, so as to make the connection between the NRM interventions being implemented through the small grants program, and the broader policy context. This does not necessarily, and most likely will not, require additional funding, it is merely placing the grant activities in the context of the larger, national strategy. It is likely that after one small grant is successfully completed by a community, the CBO would submit a request for additional grants. Given the long-term nature of NRM interventions, linking of grants is a good way to encourage communities to continue to expand their NRM skills. However, caution should be exercised so as not to create expectations of funding by guaranteeing funding up front.
- The GMU and Supervisory Committee will maintain a proportional balance of funds available for the Small Grants Program. It is important to reserve a certain level of funding for the Small Grants Program so as to avoid the accessible funds being obligated to a few large NGO grants.

4.1.2 NGO Grants Program

It is recognized that the well established NGOs will be better able to respond to the request for proposals than the local NGOs. This is due to their experience in developing proposals as well as their record of project implementation. While Strategic Objective 3 is directly related to improving NRM practices, it is also necessary to increase the number of intermediary organizations specializing in NRM in order to support the strategic objective over the long-term. Therefore, local NGOs should be supported when possible but in the context of NRM field interventions. In order to address these two levels of NGOs, it is recommended that the NGO Grants Program be separated into two levels: A few large Grants would be granted to NGOs with NRM experience and proven track record of managing grant funds, and more medium size grants would be awarded to newly established NGOs or NGOs without NRM experience. In essence, NGOs will be eligible for funding which corresponds with their experience level.

Given that access to funding for the Grants Fund is dependent upon the GON's successful completion of conditions precedent for Tranche releases, the GMU and Supervisory Committee must monitor the proportional distribution of grants between the small, medium and large size grants. It is clear from initial proposals (See Annex D) submitted to the GMU, there are several NGOs requesting in excess of US \$500,000. Awarding a number of large grants early on could 1) obligate all of the current balance in the fund, with no guarantee when the next tranche will be released, and 2) the overall fund could be obligated before the ASDG II program is over, leaving the GMU in a position of closing down before the rest of the program. Once the Supervisory Committee is fully functioning, a quota system should be discussed and provisions established to monitor this proportional balance between funding levels.

For an NGO with little to no experience, the GMU should not fund a complex project which requires highly technical skills transfer, training of communities, accounting for large budgets and/or goods and services. It is best to work with this type of organization with a basic level of funding, and focus on NRM field interventions. In The Gambia, we noted that smaller NGOs were by far the most presumptuous when requesting funding for salaries, housing, vehicles, office equipment, etc.

- Suggested funding levels for NGO Grants: For well established NGOs (national or international) with proven experience in NRM: Up to 250 million CFA (roughly US \$500,000). For newly formed NGOs (national or international) with no experience in NRM, no paid project staff, and limited project management experience: Up to 30,000,000 CFA (roughly US \$60,000)

Note: In The Gambia, the small grants program was limited to US \$5,000, and inexperienced NGOs were limited to this amount as well. In part, this was due to the fact that the grant funds were solely the responsibility of the Contractor, and as such, IRG would be held accountable for all funds. With this added element of risk, it was determined that \$5,000 was

sufficient to introduce NRM technologies, and in the event that funds could not be accounted for, the exposure was limited. This amount would have inevitably been increased with experience in managing this amount. Figures in this case are significantly higher based on a number of factors. There are several NGOs which have managed large budgets and would therefore be able to manage these size grants. Furthermore, the costs estimated for basic NRM interventions in Niger are higher due to such factors as average well depth. However, it should be stressed that larger budgets will not necessarily result in better projects, and the GMU and Supervisory Committee are advised that in many cases, NRM projects do not require significant inputs, but rather effective guidance in community planning processes and environmental education. If all NRM projects require large amounts of funding, the chances of sustainability are going to be very low.

4.2 Proposal Guidelines

- Develop two separate proposal guidelines to accompany the two different grant programs.

The Small Grants Program. Guidelines should be brief and direct and in should include an application form. Since the amount of funding is at a low level, the documentation required for receiving grants should not be too complicated. Also, given that one of the key purposes of this type of grant is to encourage participation by groups who are generally not included in grant programs and who have a direct interest in success of the field activities, the grant proposal process should not be intimidating. The form should lead the requestor through the process of identifying the need, the target beneficiaries, the implementation tasks, timing of the initiative, and budget requirements. The instructions should be in simple and straight-forward language.

NGO Proposal Guidelines (Guide de Requêtes). Significant work has already been done on establishing these guidelines drawing on the experience and documentation used for the ASDG I and other grants programs including the GON procedures for the national NGO grant program and the PVO Co-Financing Project sponsored by USAID/Mali. Only minor modifications should be made to this document in order to explain the two funding levels, and other support features of the program. In the introduction to the guide, preferably after the emphasis is made on the NRM experience, it should be spelled out that even though some NGOs may not have experience in NRM, and furthermore have relatively little field experience, the NGO/Private Sector fund will accept proposal requests from these groups. However, funding for such groups will be limited to the established range, and proposed project activities still must focus on NRM. The existing guide spells out the critical elements to include in a proposal. However, some inexperienced groups may have difficulty following this guide given their lack of exposure to preparing proposals. For such groups, they should be encouraged to contact the GMU for additional guidance on how to prepare a proposal for the Program. In this way, the GMU is not pre-judging which NGOs are capable of producing a comprehensive and well organized proposal and those who aren't. By clearly stating that NGOs can get additional guidance, it is hoped that these newly formed, and less experienced

NGOs will self-select themselves for the smaller NGO grants. In the event that an NGO submits a proposal for a large NGO grant, and yet they clearly do not have the requisite experience, this group can be directed to reapply for a smaller NGO grant, or in some cases, the CBO/Small Grant Program. For NGOs which don't have NRM experience, if they establish that they can implement such a program or they are "partnering" with an experienced NGO, such a proposal should be considered.

4.3 Support to Inexperienced NGOs in the Proposal Process

- Develop a proposal development workbook for those NGOs which request assistance in proposal development.

The workbook would lead the potential requestor through the process of preparing a proposal. It should include all of the elements necessary to develop a fundable proposal under the NGO/Private Sector Program. The workbook would present a series of questions which prompts the potential grantee to think through the critical elements of the proposal. For example, they would be prompted to think about their proposed program and how it will impact on the natural resource base. It would also show them how to link their requested budget directly to the proposed project intervention. With this workbook, those organizations that need assistance can receive additional guidance, but at the same time, it does not become the responsibility of the GMU to write a proposal for these groups. The workbook should be easy to follow and will provide a suggested presentation format. Even in the event that the NGO's proposal is not fundable under this program, the GMU has provided a resource to the NGO which will be applicable for other programs as well. Along these same lines, a listing of other grant programs should be developed and made available to these groups so in the event they do not receive funding under the NGO/Private Sector Grants Program, they can contact other programs. The objective of this workbook is to provide additional support to NGOs which are just getting off the ground, while at the same time, allowing the GMU to effectively manage the numerous requests which will be received by the Unit.

4.4 Program Brochure

- Develop a brochure to announce the Grants Program and provide basic information regarding the structure and contact information

In no more than three pages, the brochure should highlight the program background, describe the two types of grant funds available, give examples of fundable activities, and define who is eligible to participate, and who to contact for more information. The brochure should be distributed widely, so that you see it "*everywhere*." Certain locations should be designated as dissemination points, such as the DDR, GAP, and USAID. Other institutions such as the University of Niamey, organizations such as Peace Corps and AFVP which have volunteers in the field, other donor projects, embassies, research institutions, etc., could be encouraged to post the brochure on notice boards. Special attention should also be made to disseminate this brochure to women's associations and NGOs.

4.5 Dissemination Strategy for the Grants Program

In May 1995, the GMU hosted an informational meeting for NGOs to introduce the NGO/Private Sector Grants Program and highlight the overall objectives of the initiative (See Annex E for summary of this meeting). Building on this initial briefing and expanding on the formal structure of the program, a series of steps should be taken to "formally launch" the program.

Once the specific elements of the Grants Program have been formally accepted by the Supervisory Committee, the program should be announced through a number of vehicles. A wide range of stakeholders should be brought into the process at the early stages, and they should be given responsibility for promoting and fostering a positive response to the Program. The following steps are recommended:

A. Workshop to Launch the Grants Program

Call a general meeting for key stakeholders, including representatives from the C/GRN and other GON technical departments, GAP, USAID, other key individuals from NGOs and other organizations. The objective of this meeting is to present the various aspects of the program to the group. It is imperative that the program be clearly defined and the procedures explained. Having members of the Supervisory Committee present different parts of the program would be an effective way to building national ownership of the program.

At this meeting, complete information on the two grant programs should be available, including the Small Grants Program application form and guidelines, as well as the NGO Grants Program guidelines and reporting forms. At this meeting, a formal presentation should be made on the proposal submission, review, and award/rejection process. This presentation should cover training and other GMU support features associated with the grants and place the Grants Program in the overall ASDG II and Strategic Objective framework.

Given that the representatives of this workshop will primarily be representatives from Niamey, this would be a good opportunity to have the attendees participate in defining the outreach component of the program. By working in small groups, participants could define strategies for disseminating information on the program in rural areas. This kind of teamwork could establish a network which could last throughout the initiative. After the workshop, GMU would review the recommendations emerging from the workshop and develop an action plan to be approved by the Supervisory Committee.

B. Mass media / Newspaper, Radio and Television Coverage

The workshop could be reported on in the local newspaper(s), radio and television. This would serve to disseminate information on the Program to a broader audience.

C. Targeted Dissemination Efforts for Groups Based out of Niamey

In addition to the workshop, the GMU should also develop some strategies for the different level programs. For CBOs, target information dissemination to field personnel who have first hand experience with these groups, i.e. Peace Corps Volunteers, *Volontaires du Progrès*, other field level projects, i.e. health/education/micro-enterprise projects. Other project representatives may know of groups who are interested in NRM, but their project doesn't address that sector. Share application with local level institutions, including traditional and governmental structures. Tap into the decentralization mechanisms, i.e. if there is a rural code committee in a region, make sure they understand the objectives of the program and application forms. Women's groups should be identified and encouraged to apply.

Given that you are targeting field based groups and there may a limited capacity to read and write French, it will be good to have the materials translated into local languages. Obviously if you produce the materials in local languages, you need to have GMU staff who can read the proposals, or have the proposals translated into French.

D. Specific Meeting with NGOs

Initially a general mailing should be sent out to all NGOs who have been identified as being involved in NRM (see the report prepared under ASDG II, *Repertoire des Organisations Non Gouvernementales Au Niger*, 1994). As a follow-up to the May 1995 meeting of NGOs organized by the GMU, a broad range of NGOs should be invited to a general meeting to present NGO grant program and field questions from the NGOs. The distinction between the two types of programs (medium and large grants) should be made explicit, as should the evaluation procedures. Included in the evaluation procedures should be a description of the types of financial assessments which will be carried out to determine the financial integrity of the organization. Describing a typical grant would be helpful - develop a short case history to give examples of the types of organizations involved, the types of projects, the procedures to follow, etc. The intention of this workshop is to point the different NGOs in the right direction so that less time will be spent on saying no to proposals and more time can be spent implementing activities in the field.

E. Coordinate with Other Grant Programs

A preliminary review of different grant programs has already been developed through DDR and GAP. This effort should be fortified and a manual produced which provides critical information on the various grant programs. The manual can be used by the GMU, DDR, GAP, and other grant program managers. In the event that a group submits a proposal which is not qualified under this program, they can be directed to another grant program which is better suited to their proposed activity. This type of coordination should be promoted through DDR and GAP so as to encourage continued collaboration between these two agencies.

4.6 Functioning of the Supervisory Committee

As highlighted in the presentation to the Supervisory Committee (see Annex A), the role of the Supervisory Committee for the NGO/Private Sector Fund is critical to the effectiveness and cohesiveness of the Grants Program. As recommended in the *ASDG II Training Needs Assessment Draft Report* (May 1995) by Felipe Tejada, a team building and training session should be held with the GMU and the Supervisory Committee as soon as possible after the Committee has been formally convened and membership assignments finalized. In addition to coming to agreement on the process of technical review and the selection project activities, this training session should also address issues such as conflict resolution, communication techniques, and more broad interactive exercises to develop a shared understanding of the grants program, the focus of a "results-oriented approach", and building of a team spirit.

This type of team spirit is necessary because regular and consistent participation by members is important. Most committee members serve on other boards and committees, and as such, their schedules are very tight. If there are going to be alternates named to the committee, they must have the full endorsement of their sponsor to take decisions and fully participate in the review process. A constantly changing membership will reduce the productivity of the committee.

Questions were raised at the presentation regarding the role of the Committee in monitoring and evaluation. It was stressed that while the GMU is responsible and equipped to provide financial, progress, and impact monitoring services, the Committee should be encouraged to periodically visit project sites, meet with Grantees, and discuss with rural producers. This will greatly increase the likelihood that the Supervisory Committee will perceive the grants program as a hypothesis testing exercise and they will seek to expand the concept of community based natural resource management. If the Committee is only interested in who gets the money, and not in what impact has resulted from the interventions, then the selection of future grants will not have the benefit of learning from past experience.

4.7 Selection and Review of Proposals

One of the first actions of the Supervisory Committee will be to agree on the review and selection process. Prior meetings and background documents have established that the GMU will be the Secretariat to the Supervisory Committee and GMU will prepare a preliminary analysis of proposals. A grant summary will be developed for each proposal which is considered a potentially fundable grant. The following are a few comments on this process.

- Using a numeric scoring system provides a solid basis for evaluating proposals. Evaluation criteria should address the extent to which the proposed activity fits with Program objectives, the requestor has experience in carrying out this type of experience, and the community/customer will participate in the effort. During the team planning exercise with the Supervisory Committee, this scoring protocol should be reviewed in order to provide the GMU with the authority to score proposals prior to Committee review.
- In addition to the basic evaluation criteria listed above, additional points should be awarded for special attributes. For example, extra points would be awarded for proposals which attempt to coordinate with policy reform efforts (such as decentralization or rural code), or coordinate efforts with other national or donor programs. Extra points can be gained by linking into other efforts. A proposal should not, however, be penalized for not doing this. The more "hoops" that you create for NGOs to jump through, the more difficult it will be to award grants.
- Independent technical review is important in order to ensure that the NRM technologies are being correctly applied in the specific situation, and that new technologies are being promoted when available, and that past experience is being taken into account. This technical review should ideally be included as part of the preliminary review process. Relevant government technical departments can be asked to review the relevant sections of the proposal. Reviews should be done with minimum delays and should provide a statement as to the soundness of the approach or suggest ways to improve the proposed intervention. In some cases, NGOs may have direct experience with a similar type of intervention and they might be able to comment on the viability of the proposed approach given their experience. In The Gambia, in initial discussions with government staff who would be called upon to provide technical review expressed varying levels of willingness to fulfill this function. Some people felt that they would need to be compensated for conducting technical reviews of ANR grant proposals while others considered that technical review fell in line with their routine work responsibilities. The incentives issue will have to be considered when deciding how to ensure the soundness of a proposal.
- In addition to technical review, an institutional and performance review for potential grantees should also be conducted. A number of international and national NGOs have

been working in Niger in the area of NRM, and the impacts of their efforts may have mixed results. As a part of the review process, funding agency references must be checked, formal evaluations reviewed if they exist, and if possible, field visits to past projects should be conducted to verify the impact of their approach and interventions. While it is clear that in some cases exogenous factors may have prevented the maximum impact to be realized, a basic evaluation of the performance of the NGO should be considered during the selection process.

- The financial integrity of the organization should be evaluated during the review process. Similar in purpose to an audit, a number of procedures should be established to determine the sophistication of existing financial accounting systems. The Grants Accountant should examine: prior record of accountability, reference checks with other grant programs, physical examination of financial records and verification of bank accounts. While in certain cases a formal audit may be called for prior to award, this option should be used judiciously, as it could potentially lead to serious delays in the review and selection process.
- Some proposals will be submitted to the GMU for review which, after evaluation, will be considered ineligible or non-responsive. The GMU data base should track all proposals submitted to the GMU and any information regarding the approval/rejection, and any follow-up actions taken. This information should be printed out and circulated at each Supervisory Committee meeting.

4.8 Financial Monitoring and Administration Procedures Manual

Like the Guide de Requête, a solid document has been prepared for monitoring and administering the grant funds. This document clearly spells out the critical elements required for NGO financial accounting of grant funds. It effectively leads the reader through the appropriate roles and responsibilities for staff within an organization. Based on this format, this manual could easily be used as the foundation for a training course on NGO financial accounting. Overall the document was considered to be effective and only a few suggestions were made to improve the document. These suggestions included:

- The manual, currently in the form of an official handbook, needs an introduction, and instructions on how to use the manual. One essential element of this "how to use" section, is a statement that for those NGOs which have pre-established and fully functioning systems, they need not follow these procedures step by step, however a comparable system, with no less financial and asset control, is required by the Program. Similarly, information contained in the manual regarding reporting requirements to be submitted to the GMU by the grantee should be reiterated on a one page chart which could be used by the grantee to track their deliverables to the GMU.
- For the Small Grants Program, a separate and significantly condensed, manual should be developed. Two basic financial reporting forms have been designed which will be

included in this manual. Like the application form for the Small Grants Program, the financial requirements need to be commensurate with the level of funding. If a group is managing a very small amount of funding, they cannot be expected, nor encouraged, to have a paid accountant. Since the funds are primarily to facilitate the implementation of a field level intervention or introduction of a NRM technology, the financial monitoring and accountability should be suited to this. There should be an element of flexibility in this system. For example, there may be a case where it is easier and more effective for the GMU to directly purchase goods and deliver them to the community if there is a sense that accounting for the funds will be a problem. In other cases, the community based group may be well organized and managing these funds would be a critical step in building their capacity and confidence in this area. Each case will need to be determined on its own strengths, but the GMU financial accounting procedures should identify the critical elements essential to the management of the project, and then define different ways to achieve this end and still work with these village based and newly emerging groups.

- **Procurement of Services.** For training activities in particular, it is envisioned that rather than disbursing traditional grants, it would be more efficient to contract a training provider for a specific service. In this way, funds would be disbursed based on agreed upon benchmarks, and the financial monitoring obligations are reduced. Training activities will be limited in time and have clear deliverables. It is recommended that for training activities organized by the GMU, fixed price contracts be negotiated. Initial budget reviews must be rigorous to ensure a fair price for the contract. In other cases, training will be included under a large NGO proposal, and the NGO is responsible for monitoring the training and the expenses associated with the training. Service contracts should be used to the extent possible by the GMU so as to minimize the financial tracking requirements, whereby allowing more attention to be paid to monitoring of field grants which will require significant monitoring.

Other points were covered during the review of the financial and administrative manual, however they reflected only minor adjustments to specific items in the manual, and will not be covered here.

4.9 Monitoring and Evaluation

Following on the Monitoring and Evaluation plan outlined in DeCosse's report (May 1995), it is essential to have baseline data in order to adequately assess the impact of grant interventions. The program outlined in the M&E Workplan is an effective way of ensuring that the necessary data is collected and this data will serve multiple purposes.

- For the Small Grants Program, a brief and focused questionnaire should be prepared to assess the baseline situation before the project. Then a follow-up questionnaire will be completed after the intervention. With such limited funding, you don't want to get caught up in requiring the community based organization, or newly emerging NGO to

develop and implement a monitoring and evaluation plan. The M&E Specialist in the GMU can assist communities to complete these questionnaires, and train the community in data collection, recording and basic analysis, whereby encouraging the community to evaluate the impact of interventions themselves.

- The NRM "Toolkit", as recommended in the ASDG II Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy and Workplan, should be developed as soon as possible. Even the most qualified NGOs in The Gambia had limited capacity in collecting NRM relevant data. Most NGOs were able to collect production data, but did not have measures for biophysical impacts or changes. These toolkits will be an essential part of the NGO grant package after approval. In order to have baseline data collected on all grants, the toolkits must be developed within the next two-three months. If monitoring is delayed until after grants get started, it will be difficult to introduce it later.
- The GMU is designing a relational data base which will incorporate organizational, personnel, and grant specific data, including financial transactions, and equipment inventory. This data base can be expanded to include impact data, both quantitative and qualitative, as well as NGO training and support information.

4.10 Institutional Strengthening

Building capacity of NGOs is an important element for ensuring the sustainability of efforts in the natural resources sector. It is not, however, the primary objective of the NGO/Private Sector Grant Fund. Therefore, all efforts to strengthen the institutional capacity of NGOs under the grant fund should be done within the context of a NRM intervention. That said, institutional strengthening may take a number of different forms. For some groups, training sessions may be identified by the GMU for financial accounting and management techniques. For others, a specific NRM technology may be the subject of a training. In another context, exchange visits where one community group is taken to witness the efforts of another group would also constitute institutional strengthening. For large grants, training, exchange visits, and publicity campaigns may be included directly in their grant. An experienced NGOs may partner with a less experienced NGO to provide a mentoring relationship to strengthen the capacity of the smaller NGO. The GMU should monitor grantee skills levels and identify the best way to train the identified groups, either through private training providers, GMU staff, or other institutions such as GAP or other NGOs with sufficient training capacity.

June 23, 1995

Presentation to the ASDG II
NGO/Private Sector Grant Fund
Supervisory Committee
and
the Grants Management Unit

by
Jo Anne Yeager Sallah

Program Background

The goal of the Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Project was to increase rural incomes by increasing incomes from crop, livestock, and forest products. The purpose, which was to achieve sustainable increases in the value of production on land under improved resource management practices, was to be achieved through two sub-purposes: to establish a policy and regulatory environment that was conducive to the adoption of improved natural resource management practices, and; to further the adoption of improved resource technologies. The project was designed to link community-level experience with national policy formulation for improved natural resources management. This linkage between the local level actions and national policy was to be achieved in large part through the development of Community Resources Management Agreements (CRMA). CRMAs were envisioned as formal agreements between the Gambia government and a community, in which the government would authorize shared control over a natural resource, such as a forest or rangeland, previously controlled exclusively by the government of the Gambia. Specifically, the agreement would spell out the control, management, and use rights of a particular common land area.

The similarities between the ANR Program in The Gambia and the ASDG II program are many. Like ANR, the policy component of ASDG II focuses on establishing policy conditions which promote improved natural resource use. The institutional component of ASDG II seeks to strengthen the institutional and human resource base for implementing natural resource management interventions. As such, the NGO/Private Sector fund supports field level activities which will provide feedback to policy reform efforts.

Today, I'd like to share with you some of my experiences in coordinating the NGO grants fund in The Gambia. I will specifically address the elements of the grant selection process. I will limit my presentation to this area for now, and if you have other areas of interest, please feel free to raise them after the presentation.

Grants Administration Committee

In December 1993 a core group of government representatives, who each had a technical responsibility for overseeing the development of community resource management within their ministries, was brought together to form the Grants Administration Committee (GAC). The group was composed of representatives from the Ministries of Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Local Government and Lands, as well as the USAID Project Manager and the ANR Grants Administrator. The GAC considered including an NGO representative on the committee. However due to the limited number of eligible NGOs in The Gambia, we felt that it would give undue advantage to one NGO if they were included on the Committee. Likewise, The Association of NGOs (TANGO) did not have a staff person who could be assigned to the Committee. Therefore it was decided that the GAC would be limited to five voting members so as to encourage and ensure active participation.

Initially the group felt that a broader institution, the Agriculture and Natural Resource Working Group, co-chaired by the National Environment Agency and the Ministry of Natural Resources, should provide a conceptual framework for promoting community-based resource management in The Gambia, and that the GAC should function primarily as the administrative body to disburse funds to NGOs. However, it became apparent that the larger, more loosely grouped ANR Working Group did not have the same action orientation as the GAC. Therefore, the GAC members found themselves becoming more involved in the conceptual and policy ramifications of community resource management. While this role was not originally envisioned for the GAC, this proved to be a positive development, as the GAC members became effective communicators and advocates of community participation in long-term natural resource management planning.

In the Gambia, the funds were a part of the USAID Program but were not a part of the Sector Grant to the Government, as they are here in Niger. 1.8 million dollars were available through the grant fund, and the funds were intended to support field level activities, specifically to be utilized by NGOs and community based organizations. The funds were transferred from USAID to the institutional contractor, not the government. So unlike in ASDG II, the funds were not officially transferred to the government. With three of the five GAC members coming from Government, Government had the ability to influence grant selection. However, because the institutional contractor had direct access and responsibility for the funds, the Grants Administrator was a voting member and had an exclusive right of veto. All grants had to be approved by USAID as well. Clearly here in Niger, the funds are the responsibility of the Government and the Grants Management Unit, and specifically the Grants Administrator, facilitates the monitoring and control of those funds.

The GAC held regular monthly meetings. In the event that there were proposals to review, we met twice a month. Observers were welcomed to the meetings, notably, government officials who managed related programs. In order to promote participation and active involvement in the GAC, the position of chairman rotated monthly among the members. In addition to leading the discussions for each meeting, the chairman was also responsible for providing meeting space. Given that NRM is cross sectoral in nature, it was important that GAC members became aware of the various issues confronted by the various ministries. By

sharing the responsibility for leadership among the members, we were able to foster a strong team spirit and all members were sensitive to the technical and institutional demands of the other members. As the ANR Grants Administrator, I served as the Secretary to the committee. I prepared all materials for committee approval and prepared minutes of all meetings. A majority decision was required for all actions. In the event that one of the members couldn't make a planned meeting, a substitute was to be sent, and that substitute should be fully prepared to discuss issues at the meeting. Because the committee was small, we were able to keep in constant contact with each other, so even if someone couldn't make a meeting, we had discussed the issues on the phone prior to the meeting. The members of the GAC did not receive remuneration for their participation. This was made clear from the onset. Given that the grant fund was a part of the Government of The Gambia's strategy for improving the environment, and given that their ministries had selected them to serve on the Committee, this was clearly a part of their normal work requirements and they therefore did not receive any extra payment for their participation.

Prior to each meeting, all members received a package of materials, and each member was expected to have reviewed the materials prior to the meeting. During the first two meetings the ground rules of the GAC were established. These included the terms of reference for the committee, the roles and responsibilities of Committee members, and standard operating principles for the Committee. This included the decision to have committee members periodically travel to the field to meet with farmers and to observe NGO field activities. An agenda was prepared before every meeting, which included a specified time for starting and finishing the meeting. In the event that there was a special topic, a separate meeting would be called, rather than allowing the special topic to dominate the routine business of the committee.

Grant Selection and Proposal Process

We started receiving proposals in March 1994. In the first months of receiving proposals, we decided to allow the NGOs to submit proposals using their own formats. By reviewing these "rough" proposals, we were able to get a realistic feel for NGO capacity in The Gambia to submit suitable proposals. This process allowed us to open up a dialogue with NGOs that were interested in the ANR Program.

The first proposals varied widely in regards to the presentation of information, the suitability of proposed activities, and budget size. Proposals ranged from highly professional submissions to 1 page hand written requests. It was clear from these initial submissions that the international NGOs clearly had an advantage based on proposal presentation. Of the three international NGOs which submitted proposals, all three required substantial modifications in scope and budget. Had we funded these initial requests, we would have obligated the entire fund within the six months of the project. On the other hand, we received several proposals from national NGOs which ranged from a one page letter requesting funds, to a more formalized proposal, which didn't include much more information than the one page letter. The national NGOs had problems in relating their proposed projects to their proposed budgets. It was clear from these proposals that the local NGOs were searching for funds primarily for salaries and office equipment, and there was little attention paid to the specific NRM program.

We concluded that while these first proposals had elements of what would be considered a fundable proposal, none of them fit what we needed. Sensing that we could spend the entire fund on NGO support and never have an impact at the field level, we started to investigate working with community based organizations. After several trips up-country, we discovered that there were a number of women's groups and village based groups that needed assistance on a small scale and that these activities could easily be linked to NRM. Several community groups expressed frustration over NGOs promising to help them and then the NGOs would not come back to the village for several years.

In order to find a fit between the size of the organization and the grant program, we develop two funds: a CRMA Grant Fund which was open to established and experiences national and international NGOs who sought to promote a long-term natural resource management perspective in a village, either by establishing a CRMA or some kind of participatory natural resource planning activity for a community. NGOs would need to have demonstrated experience in NRM and proven management systems in place to account for the funds and implement the activities.

Groups which did not meet these requirements were directed to the Small Grants Program. The Small Grants Program was less demanding in terms of reporting requirements, both financial and impact, and funding level was limited to approximately \$5,000 (or 2,500,000 CFA). A simple application form was developed which allowed a community to be directly involved in making the request. It was envisioned that Peace Corp Volunteers and other international and national volunteers would assist the community based organization or newly formed NGO to oversee the funds, however the responsibility was ultimately the CBOs or the emerging NGOs. We sought to empower these smaller groups and to allow them to gain experience in managing a project, while learning a new natural resource management technology, and having a field level impact.

We distributed the Small Grants Application form at the end of May 1994, and within one month we had received 12 proposals. We also had three proposals for CRMA grants which looked very promising.

Unfortunately, the military coup of July 22, 1994 ended all USAID programming in The Gambia, and so we were not able to disburse the funds. The GAC was scheduled to make a final decision on the proposals the day after the coup. However, we never formally met after the coup per U.S. regulations.

Considerations

I'd like to highlight a few elements which I believe are important to consider when reviewing proposals:

1. One needs to be aware of the rural work calendar. The reality for many NRM technologies is that they are limited by the crop calendar. Men and women's labor is in peak demand

during planting and harvesting of crops and therefore they are less able to work on special projects during this time. When proposals are being submitted, some NGOs take this scheduling into account and they will allow adequate time for the review process. If the proposal is not approved within a certain time frame, the intervention may have to wait for another 9-12 months. If deadlines are set for the submission of proposals, they must allow adequate time to review and decide on proposals to fit into the labor cycles in the villages. This timing is especially important for community based groups.

2. The role of women in projects needs to be addressed. In many projects, women are listed as participants and beneficiaries, but rarely as the decision makers. In many parts of the Sahel, a woman's day revolves around her access to natural resources, for example fire wood, water, etc. Women are very aware of environmental problems which face them and grant projects should seek to build on their environmental awareness and support women's organizations. Women should be considered leaders of projects and not just beneficiaries.

3. Consistency and fairness should prevail when reviewing proposals. Reviews should be as objective as possible. At the same time however, there needs to be room to allow for exogenous factors which are not easily measured. When discussing proposals, individual responses should be as specific and constructive as possible. Detailed comments provide a basis for discussion among group members and allow for a clear understanding of whether or not amendments can improve the proposal, or if it does not merit funding, or if the requesting institution may be a candidate for training.

4. Independent technical review is critical in order to test the soundness of the approach and to ensure that the project fits into established government policy. For example, if an NGO is proposing to initiate a livestock management program, and they will be providing vaccinations free of charge, and the government policy calls for "cost-recovery" of animal vaccinations, then the NGO may be creating a long-term problem by conflicting with established government policy.

5. Recognize that most institutions, particularly indigenous NGOs have an established level of institutional capacity and the mere presence of a new grant fund will not spontaneously increase their capacity. There will be a need to provide support to increase NGO capacity to design, implement, and monitor programs. One way to ensure the Program can fit into the reality is to define the grant program broadly enough to as to allow a match between local needs, institutional capacity, and the ultimate funding objective. It is helpful to diversify the grant program options, and establish specialized programs with clear boundaries suited to the various types of potential grantees. The goal is to realize field activities which have an impact on the natural resource base. If very few organizations can meet the requirements of the fund, you'll end up either giving out only a few grants or giving a few large grants to a few qualified NGOs and private sector groups.

6. Build on on-going, related efforts. If other programs are working in similar technical areas, try to join forces. Some ASDG II grants may compliment other activities in the same region. Building on other efforts will allow projects to learn from each other and to maximize impact.

7. Encourage the use of existing or emerging local level networks - As an example, in The Gambia, monthly meetings were held at the district level which brought together all technical departments in the district, all NGOs and other development workers, in addition to elders and religious leaders. At these meetings, each entity shared their experiences, identified problem areas, and asked for assistance where necessary. This district level network served as a clearing house for all development activities in the District, and allowed for improved communications between government and NGOs. The grants program may be able to use such networks to disseminate information about the program. Furthermore, once field activities are up and running, participation in this type of network can promote the sustainability of efforts as well as give recognition to emerging organizations.

I will conclude my comments with that and if you have questions or comments, we can continue the discussion. Thank you.

Linkages between ASDG II and Strategic Objective 3

Strategic Objective 3: Sustained widespread adoption of management practices improving the conservation and productive use of Niger's forest, fields, waters and pastures	
Adoption of improved NRM practices by gender	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Small Grants Program will reach communities (customers) directly. Grants will focus on introduction of NRM technologies and special attention will be paid to women's access to funding given their special relationship and daily interaction with the natural resource base. 2) NGO/Medium and Large Grants use NGOs as intermediaries to support customer needs and spread the adoption of NRM practices
Result 3.1: Niger's rural producers, men and women, gain greater control over their productive environment	
Community institutions are registered and actively managing natural resources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Through the Small Grants Program, introducing community institutions to improved NRM practices 2) Through the NRM policy reform, addressing the legal foundations for NGO, rural associations, and community associations involvement and responsibility for NRM. This will facilitate the registration and formal recognition of these groups in NRM. 3) Support to community institutions through training and NGO grants will advance their technical capacity in NRM as well as their organizational capacity to maintain the effort after the grants program is over.
Community Forestry Management Schemes are adopted and implemented	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) NGO Grants to work with communities to sensitize and organize customers on the need for and technical tasks associated with community forestry management. 2) NRM Policy component to provide advise and support for continued development of decentralization policy, code rurale, and the role of the forester in Niger. This policy foundation is critical for ensuring that community forestry schemes will have a legal foundation and will not dissolve after financial support to the community has been depleted.
Intermediary organizations specializing in NRM are registered with GON and implementing NRM activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) NGO Grants to strengthen NGO skills to implement NRM interventions. By splitting the grant program into various funding levels, the opportunity increases to provide funding for a wide range of intermediary organizations. By supporting more intermediary organizations, more rural customers can be reached. 2) NGO Policy reforms focus on regulations which facilitate registration of NGOs and rural associations. The grants program encourages groups to register, but does not require that a group be registered with the GON to receive funding.
Awareness of new legislation by gender	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) NRM rural code policy reforms include district committees and awareness campaigns. 2) NGO training program to include modules on interpretation of the rural code and techniques for conducting effective awareness raising campaigns in environmental education and land tenure issues.

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Result 3.2: Increased producer access to technical information	
Knowledge of technical information	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) NGO Grants Program to extend technical knowledge of NRM technologies 2) NRIM to collect information through grants program, surveys and videography to develop data base for national inventory. This data base is designed for use at national, regional, and local levels. 3) NGO grants will include dissemination and publicity campaigns to spread information on technologies and increase knowledge of environmental issues.
Awareness of new NRM technologies	NGO awareness and publicity campaigns will provide information to customers and will encourage exchange visits between communities, to broaden the awareness of NRM technologies.
Result 3.3: Increased capital available for communities and individuals to invest in NRM practices	
National NRM project financing levels	In the short-term the NGO grants will provide increased funding for communities and individuals to invest in NRM practices. The availability of funds is contingent upon the GON meeting conditions precedent.
Access to funding	By splitting the grant fund into different categories, increase access to funding by different groups. In this way a greater number of customers can be served and empowered.
Result 3.4: National capacity to promote and sustain results 1, 2, and 3 is improved	
Implementation of a national scale short-term impacts monitoring system	Monitoring and evaluation system being developed for NGO and Small grants program focuses on a "toolkit" to ensure that the monitoring system is implemented without needs for extensive training on methodology and theory, the toolkit is flexible, so to adapt to the needs of the customer and intermediary organization, and this information will be fed into the national information system.
National NRM Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) NRM policy advisor providing support to GON in support of achieving this result. Working to integrate numerous national plans and structures, whereby creating synergy among the plans and increasing the impact of the national plan. 2) NRIM advisor to support information system which will provide input for improved policy formulation as well as making linkages to community level through easy access to information. 3) NGO grants to provide pilot sites to test the effectiveness of national NRM policies and find ways to incorporate a decentralized and participatory approach to national level NRM policy formulation and implementation.

Summary of NPA Activity - Technical Conditions

(Current Date)

DRAFT - NOT FOR CIRCULATION

Pro Ag Citation	Tranche	Original Text	Proposed Modifications/ Discussion	Person(s) Responsible	Status/Update
Natural Resource Management Component					
4.2.A.1.a	II A	Demonstrated progress in the development of a national NRM policy and overall program			
4.2.A.1.b	II	Demonstrated progress in achieving the objectives of the Rural Code Project, including the incorporation of the approved principal recommendations from the LTC/GON and UM/GON studies into the Rural Code			
4.2.A.1.c	II	Completed the study on decentralization of NRM specified in Section 4.1.F.4 of the Agreement and adopted the principal recommendations of such study			
4.2.A.1.d	II	Completed the study on forestry agent field experience specified in Section 4.1.F.5 of the Agreement and adopted the principal recommendations of such study.			
4.2.B.1.a	III	Completed and adopted the national NRM policy strategy and program	Proposed: Split CP into two activities. IIIA - Complete national NRM policy strategy; IIIB - GON has adopted national NRM policy strategy program		
4.2.B.1.b	III	Demonstrated additional progress in the implementation of the revised Rural Code			

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4.2.B.1.c	III	Demonstrated progress in the implementation of the GON's decentralization policy; specifically, implemented the previously adopted recommendations of the study on decentralization of NRM responsibilities as described in Section 4.1.F.4 of the Agreement			
4.2.B.1.d	III	Implemented the previously adopted recommendations of the study on forestry agent field experience as described in Section 4.1.F.5 of the Agreement			
4.2.C.1.a	IV	Demonstrated progress in the implementation of the national NRM policy and program			
4.2.C.1.b	IV	Demonstrated additional progress in the implementation and application of the revised Rural Code			
4.2.C.1.c	IV	Demonstrated additional progress in the implementation of the GON decentralization policy; specifically, demonstrated progress in the implementation of the recommendations of the study on NRM decentralization as described in Section 4.1.F.4.			
4.2.C.1.d	IV	Demonstrated additional progress in the implementation and application of adopted recommendations of the study on forestry agent field experience.			
Institutional Component					
4.2.A.2.a	II	Developed and made a commitment to implement an action plan for the installation of systems for sectoral and regional information and coordination of development activities in the MAL			

of

4.2.A.2.b	II	Established an information system on personnel, equipment and infrastructure in MAL.			
4.2.A.2.c	II	Implemented the study specified in Section 4.1.G.2 of the Agreement on the human potential and personnel assignment policy of the MAL.			
4.2.A.2.d	II	Held the workshop on management by objectives specified in Section 4.1.G.3			
		Delete -- Tranche III elements pertaining to Institutional Policies	Proposed - Delete all tranche III and IV references to institutional component; replace with Information Systems component, to include in Tranche IIIB - Progress in establishing EIS system in C/GRN, Tranche IV - Establishment of an EIS in C/GRN.		
NGO/Rural Associations Component					
4.2.A.2.e	II B	Held a GON-NGO roundtable meeting with respect to NGOs and issues an action plan for the implementation of the recommendations made at such meeting	Planning underway for roundtable to be held in September (?) 1995.		
4.2.A.2.f (1)	II	Complete a review of the status of policy reforms accomplished under the ASDG I program and, following a review of action taken with respect to Tranche I, agreed with A.I.D. on the establishment of any new conditionality required to maintain progress achieved to date in development of economically viable cooperative movement and rural credit union systems.			

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4.2.A.2.f (2)	II	Agreed to contribute the FCFA equivalent of US\$ 1 million from Trance II to a bank guarantee fund for cooperatives operated under the Rural Organizations Development Project 683-0260 being implemented by CLUSA			
4.2.A.2.f (3)	II	Agreed that the Guarantee Fund can continue to function after the completion of the ASDG II Program as long as management systems are in place and operating which meet normal banking standards.			
4.2.B.2.d	III	With respect to NGOs, made revisions and/or changes in regulatory texts as specified in Section 4.1.G.4 to provide specific permission for NGOs to operate in Niger and serve in community development roles in rural areas, with direct contacts with <i>community organizations</i> .	Proposed: Demonstrated progress in GON/NGO collaborative ventures		
4.2.B.2.e	III	With respect to rural associations, completed a review of the status of policy reforms accomplished previously and, following a review of actions taken with respect to Tranche II, agreed with AID on the establishment of any new conditionality required to date in development of economically viable cooperative union systems.	Proposed: Delete CP, since CP 4.2.B.6 requires that no reversals have been made.		
4.2.C.2.d	IV	With respect to NGOs, held a second NGO-GON roundtable meeting and formulated an action plan for the implementation of the recommendations at such a meeting.	Proposed: Continued demonstrated progress towards improving GON/NGO relationships		

4.2.C.2.e	IV	With respect to rural associations: a review of the status of policy reforms accomplished previously and, following a review of actions taken with respect to Tranche III, agreed with AID on the establishment of any new conditionality required to maintain progress achieved to date in the development of economically viable cooperative movement and rural credit union systems.			
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Summary of ASDG II Conditions Precedent - General Conditions (Current Date)

DRAFT - NOT FOR CIRCULATION

General Conditions				
Pro Ag Citation	Tranche	Text	Person(s) Responsible	Status
4.2.A.3	II A	Reached agreement with AID, in writing, as to (1) the percentage apportionment of Tranche II funds (less the 8% of these funds will be deposited in the Local Currency Trust Fund Account) among (a) the NGO/Private Sector Funds and (b) the GON operating budget and investment budget, and (2) the share of the NGO/Private Sector Fund to be reserved for the private sector (including cooperatives), and the priorities assigned to the uses of such operating and investment budget support in support of the purposes and objectives of the Program.		
4.2.A.4 (a)	II	Given instructions to the BCEAO: (a) to transfer 8% of the proceeds from the Tranche II resource transfer to the Local Currency Account		
4.2.A.4 (b)	II	Given instructions to the BCEAO: (b) to deposit the FCFA equivalent of US \$ 1 million to the Guarantee Fund		
4.2.A.4 (c)	II	Given instructions to the BCEAO: (c) to deposit agree upon amounts to the NGO/Private Sector Fund Account and to the Special Grantee Accounts for the GON operating budget and investment support programs		
4.2.A.5	II	Submitted to AID, in form and substance acceptable to AID, financial and activity reports (as described in subsections (b) and (c), respectively of Article 2.A.3 of the Amplified Program Description) relating to Tranche I describing in summary form the level of financing accorded to each of the various elements of the Program, including, but not limited to, information on the governmental institutions supports by the local currency funds disbursed under Tranche I allocated to the operating budget to support the purposes and objectives of the Program.		
4.2.A.6	II	The Grantee has not discontinued, reversed or otherwise impeded any action it has taken in satisfaction of any conditions precedent under the ASDG I program or in satisfaction of any of the conditions precedent under Tranche I of the present Grant.		

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4.2.A.7	II	Reached Agreement with AID in writing on the specific terms of a plan for implementation of specific actions and policy changes proposed to be achieved (and the specific measure of performance to monitor the extent of their achievement) prior to the disbursement of Tranche III of US \$ under the Grant.		
4.2.B.3	III	Reached agreement with AID, in writing, as to (1) the percentage apportionment of Tranche II funds (less the 8% of these funds will be deposited in the Local Currency Trust Fund Account) among (a) the NGO/Private Sector Funds and (b) the GON operating budget and investment budget, and (2) the share of the NGO/Private Sector Fund to be reserved for the private sector (including cooperatives), and the priorities assigned to the uses of such operating and investment budget support in support of the purposes and objectives of the Program.		
4.2.B.4 (a)	III	Given instructions to the BCEAO: (a) to transfer 8% of the proceeds from the Tranche III resource transfer to the Local Currency Trust Fund Account before any other transfers are made		
4.2.B.4 (b)	III	Given instructions to the BCEAO: (b) to deposit agree upon amounts to the NGO/Private Sector Fund Account and to the Special Grantee Accounts for the GON operating budget and investment support programs		
4.2.B.5	III	Submitted to AID, in form and substance acceptable to AID, financial and activity reports (as described in subsections (b) and (c), respectively of Article 2.A.3 of the Amplified Program Description) relating to Tranche II describing in summary form the level of financing accorded to each of the various elements of the Program, including, but not limited to, information on the governmental institutions supports by the local currency funds disbursed under Tranche II allocated to the operating budget and a description of the activities (including programs, projects, etc.) undertaken with such local currency funds allocated to the investment budget to support the purposes and objectives of the Program.		
4.2.B.6	III	The Grantee has not discontinued, reversed or otherwise impeded any action it has taken in satisfaction of any conditions precedent under the ASDG I program or in satisfaction of any of the conditions precedent under Tranche I or Tranche II of the present Grant.		

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4.2.B.7	III	Reached Agreement with AID in writing on the specific terms of a plan for implementation of specific actions and policy changes proposed to be achieved (and the specific measure of performance to monitor the extent of their achievement) prior to the disbursement of the fourth increment of US \$ under the Grant.		
4.2.C.3	IV	Reached agreement with AID, in writing, as to (1) the percentage apportionment of Tranche II funds (less the 8% of these funds will be deposited in the Local Currency Trust Fund Account) among (a) the NGO/Private Sector Funds and (b) the GON operating budget and investment budget, and (2) the share of the NGO/Private Sector Fund to be reserved for the private sector (including cooperatives), and the priorities assigned to the uses of such operating and investment budget support in support of the purposes and objectives of the Program.		
4.2.C.4 (a)	IV	Given instructions to the BCEAO: (a) to transfer 8% of the proceeds from the Tranche III resource transfer to the Local Currency Trust Fund Account before any other transfers are made		
4.2.C.4 (b)	IV	Given instructions to the BCEAO: (b) to deposit agree upon amounts to the NGO/Private Sector Fund Account and to the Special Grantee Accounts for the GON operating budget and investment support programs		
4.2.C.5	IV	Submitted to AID, in form and substance acceptable to AID, financial and activity reports (as described in subsections (b) and (c), respectively of Article 2.A.3 of the Amplified Program Description) relating to Tranche III describing in summary form the level of financing accorded to each of the various elements of the Program, including, but not limited to, information on the governmental institutions supports by the local currency funds disbursed under Tranche II allocated to the operating budget and a description of the activities (including programs, projects, etc.) undertaken with such local currency funds allocated to the investment budget to support the purposes and objectives of the Program.		
4.2.C.6	IV	The Grantee has not discontinued, reversed or otherwise impeded any action it has taken in satisfaction of any conditions precedent under the ASDG I program or in satisfaction of any of the conditions precedent under Tranche I, II, or III of the present Grant.		

ÉTAT DES REQUÊTES DE FINANCEMENT

ONG/OP	Sphère d'activités	Date Soumission	Titre du Projet	Lieu	Durée	Montant (FCFA)	Observations
ACA/Niger et Action Consulting Association/US	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - appui institutionnel - formation en gestion et en développement organisationnel auprès des PME et des ONG 	27/10/94 (de l'USAID)	"NGO + Small enterprise development through the institutional strengthening of ACA/Niger"	Niamey	5 ans	1.442.902 dollars US	Le document est en langue anglaise
JEMED (Jeunesse en Mission Entraide et Développement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - élevage, puits digues pour régénération de sols, alphabétisation, formation 	30/01/95 (SDSA II)	Projet Amidinine, Phase 2 : un projet du développement des ressources naturelles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arrond. d'Abalak(Dép. de Tahoua) - Arrond. de Tchirozérine (Département d'Agadez) 	3 ans	210.072.000	Un financement a été approuvé par SDSA I, mais non reçu à cause des problèmes de sécurité dans la zone d'intervention
Niger Consult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - formation (de base, alphabétisation, santé, échanges) - appui aux activités productrices (végétales et animales) - mise en valeur et conservation du milieu - activités d'accompagnement 	24/03/95 (de l'USAID)	Projet d'Aménagement de terroirs - Dallol Bosso Sud • Phase de prolongation	Arrondissement du Boboye (Département de Dosso)	8 mois (01 avril au 31 déc. 95)	113.225.826	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Niger Consult est un bureau d'études - La phase 1 a été financée par SDSA I - L'ONVPE est le pendant ONG qui intervient également dans le Dallol-Bosso (Nord) - Cette requête est la 3ème version à être acheminée à l'USAID (déc. 94, fév. 95 & mars 95)
ONDPH (Organisation Nigérienne pour le Développement à la base du Potentiel Humain)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - renforcement des organisations paysannes - production agro-sylvo-pastorale - conservation des ressources naturelles (forêts, lutte contre l'érosion - actions sociales 	04/01/95 (de l'USAID)	Projet gestion des ressources naturelles "Approche Aménagement des Terroirs" Tamou - Gueladjo arrondissement de Say	Tamou - Gueladjo arrondissement de Say	3 ans	472.948.402	Une proposition pour la phase II du projet Nigéro-Canadien qui a pris fin en décembre 1994

ÉTAT DES REQUÊTES DE FINANCEMENT

ONG/OP	Sphère d'activités	Date Soumission	Titre du Projet	Lieu	Durée	Montant (FCFA)	Observations
ANADER (Association Nationale d'Aide, d'Appui et d'Assistance aux Actions de Développement Rural)	- étude - séminaires - appui institutionnel	07/12/94 (SDSA II)	Etude sur l'opportunité de création d'une structure privée de commercialisation et transformation des produits agricoles (mil, maïs, niébé, arachide)	Niamey Maradi Zinder	3 mois	33.860.265	
Coopérative TAPI-Anfani (Coopérative des Technologies Alternatives de Productions Intégrées)	a) GRN	28/12/94 (SDSA II via la DEP)	a) Gestion des Ressources Naturelles et Protection de l'environnement	Canton de Hamdallaye	1.5 mois	3.058.125	
	b) Production des semences sélectionnées (mil et niébé)	"	b) Production des semences sélectionnées et cultures attelée	"	-Achat d'intrants ponctuel)	5.828.200	
	c) culture attelée	"	c) culture attelée	"	-Achats et activités ponctuels	11.156.000	
	d) culture fruitière et maraîchère	"	d) Production fruitière et maraîchère	"	(achats ponctuels)	6.206.000	
	e) Embouche bovine	"	e) Embouche bovine	"	1 an	80.000	
	f) Production laitière	"	f) Production laitière	"	1 an	11.688.000	
	g) Aviculture	"	g) Aviculture	"	6 mois	13.696.000	
	h) Alphabétisation fonctionnelle et auto-gestion coopérative	"	h) Alphabétisation fonctionnelle et auto-gestion coopérative	"		1.417.000	
						<u>53.129.325</u>	
COSV (Comité de Coordination des Organisations pour le Service Volontaire)	a) production et commercialisation agricoles; appui aux activités économiques et sociales	09/01/95 (SDSA II)	Intervention de Développement Rural dans le canton de Tamou, deuxième phase	Arrondissement de Say, sous-Préfecture de Tillabery	3 ans	500.000.000	Le projet est la continuation d'une phase précédente, exécuté entre 1993 et 1995
	b) production et commercialisation agricole		Intervention de Développement Rural dans le canton de Tamou	Canton de Tamou (Arrond. Say)	5 ans	113.572.200	

ÉTAT DES REQUÊTES DE FINANCEMENT

ONG/OP	Sphère d'activités	Date Soumission	Titre du Projet	Lieu	Durée	Montant (FCFA)	Observations
ONG Ecologica	Organisation d'un atelier et mise en place d'un réseau africain	22/01/95 (SDSA II)	Atelier international de lancement du réseau africain sur la pollution plastique	Niamey	2 ans	141.775.000	L'atelier a déjà eu lieu
CECI	Formation et développement de compétences professionnelles et institutionnelles	19/05/95	Appui à l'émergence d'ONG/Organismes privés en GRN	??	2,5 ans	750.000.000	Ce projet vise à appuyer simultanément six (6) ONG/OP opérant ou disposés à opérer en GRN
Village Chimekedal	Projet de maraîchage sur 3 Ha	29/05/95	Projet maraîchage de Chimekedal	Arrondissement de Tchintabaradem	Une saison	5.773.000	Projet transmis via le PAIPCE