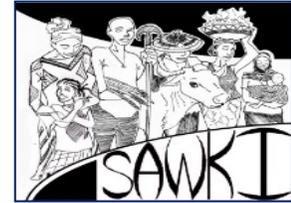




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**FY17 Q1 Quarterly Report**

**October-December 2016**

**Niger Development Food Aid Program “Sawki”**

*2012-2017*



*Preparation for culinary demonstration in Angoul Gao*



*Borehole construction in Karazome village*

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## I. Executive Summary

Mercy Corps and Helen Keller International are implementing a five-year (2012-2017) Development Food Assistance Program (DFAP) entitled “*Sawki*” funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Food for Peace (FFP). Now in its fifth implementation year, the program is designed to respond to the food security needs of more than 92,092 beneficiaries in Maradi and Zinder regions, two of the most food insecure regions of Niger. Within these regions, *Sawki* is targeting 62 villages based on criteria of social vulnerability, economic opportunities and agro-pastoral linkages and aims to reduce food insecurity and malnutrition through two interrelated strategic objectives:

- SO1: Reduce chronic malnutrition among pregnant and lactating women and children under five with an emphasis on children under two.
- SO2: Increase the local availability of and households’ access to nutritious food by diversifying agricultural productivity, rural households’ income and increasing resilience to shocks

During the reporting period, the program progressed towards achieving its objectives. As the program has entered in its fifth year of implementation, emphasis was placed on sustaining the best practices promoted within targeted communities. Under SO1, the program continued its efforts in promoting appropriate nutrition practices during a child’s first 1,000 days, with essential nutrition actions and behavior change being facilitated by lead mothers and community nutrition volunteers. These communication efforts were reinforced to ensure a wider adoption of the best practices promoted by the program. The “*Mu da Kanmu* (Change for Ourselves)” approach continued with home visits in which families were sensitized on appropriate nutritional behaviors, hygiene and other socioeconomic issues. The program continued to deliver messages on essential nutrition actions and behavior change through community structures including women’s care groups, husband schools, and Safe Spaces, while promoting health and nutrition and access to family planning among girls and women. *Sawki* also continued to promote the consumption of nutrient-rich foods and animal products, as well as child growth monitoring.

Activities under SO2 also advanced as planned. They included the evaluation of farmer field schools (FFS) to assess productivity and yields during the 2016 agricultural season. Unfortunately, the evaluation in Zinder revealed that yields were below the average level of supported FFS. This is due to the rainfall deficit during the agricultural season, which negatively impacted production. In Maradi, however, the results were quite satisfactory. The program implemented sensitization sessions on production and utilization of local, nutritious foodstuffs of animal and plant origin (milk, meat, eggs, and diversified vegetables). This activity was reinforced through cooking demonstrations under SO1. The program supported women’s groups in Maradi and Zinder in setting up vegetable gardening sites. These women organized to acquire seeds to produce orange fleshed sweet potato on most of these sites. The completion of six drip irrigation systems is underway and the construction of 120 garden wells in Zinder and four garden boreholes in Maradi advanced as planned and will be completed next quarter.

The program also organized sensitization caravans on animal feeding, herd management, stock conservation, composting and assisted natural regeneration in target communities. It continued its monitoring of livestock interventions and delivered technical assistance to herdsman via pastoral schools where they were coached on herd management practices, including feeding, animal deworming, vaccination, hygiene and animal healthcare. Furthermore, animal health workers trained and equipped by the program continued to provide veterinary services to livestock farmers under the guidance of private veterinary officers at the department level. The program also continues to integrate cross-cutting gender activities across the two strategic objectives.

In December, the program team participated in training on the Integration of Resilience into the Design of Smallholder Farming Systems. Two agents from the government agricultural services attended this training as well as 20 farmers from Maradi. The main objectives of the training were to: 1) emphasize the importance of water and soil quality in the resilience of small farming systems; 2) to enable program staff and farmers to identify specific environmental factors that impact agricultural systems; 3) to understand the concept of resilience and how to incorporate agricultural techniques that can increase the resilience of small farms to shocks and stresses; and 4) to have a solid understanding of the capacity of farms to climate change. The training lasted five days: two days of classroom instruction and three days in the field for demonstrations and tests. The program team who attended found the training very useful and held a workshop in Zinder to share the training experiences with the other Sawki staff members and farmers.

Finally, while Sawki's CoP position has been vacant during the quarter, it will be filled early next quarter.

### **Key activities achieved under SO1 (Health/Nutrition) this quarter:**

#### **Promoting appropriate nutrition practices during a child's first 1,000 days:**

- Held 336 meetings (led by community health promoters and lead mothers), focusing on the themes of reproductive health and behavior change. Men within husband schools were engaged to support their wives in the adoption of promoted practices.
- 10,794 adolescent girls benefitted from awareness raising sessions on family planning, early and forced marriage, as well as on essential nutrition and health actions.
- Community volunteers employed the "Mu da Kanmu" approach to conduct home visits in order to promote ownership of project activities by community members across the two regions. Volunteers performed 1,618 home visits with 14,256 participants. The awareness-raising visits led to the construction of 56 latrines, 217 tippy taps and 142 community sanitation sessions.
- Child Growth Monitoring:
  - Of the 12,363 children screened as part of child growth monitoring, 1,344 children (10.87%) were classified as moderately malnourished and were referred to health centers.
  - Out of 6,451 children weighed, only 1,174 (18.20%) were under-weight as compared to an average of 52% (2016 SMART "Standardized Monitoring & Assessment of Relief Transitions" survey) regionwide. This shows a decline in the malnutrition rate among children in targeted communities due to sensitization campaigns on Essential Nutrition Actions (ENA) through the Mu da Kanmu approach and the consumption of locally-available nutrient-rich foods and animal products.

### **Key activities achieved under SO2 (Agriculture/Livelihoods) this quarter:**

- Held 199 sensitization sessions on production and utilization of local, nutritious foodstuffs of animal and plant origin (milk, meat, eggs, and diversified vegetables), which reached over 5,821 people of which 2,297 were men and 3,524 women (activity reinforced through cooking demonstrations under SO1).
- Set up 30 sites (24 in Zinder and 6 in Maradi) for vegetable gardens where women organized to acquire seeds to produce orange fleshed sweet potato (OFSP) on 25 of these sites. A total of 114 producers planted OFSP in their own gardens.
- WASH: The construction of six drip irrigation systems (three completed) is underway. The construction of 120 garden wells (47 completed) in Zinder and 4 garden boreholes in Maradi has advanced as planned and will be completed next quarter.
- In Zinder, the program evaluated 44 farmers field schools. The results were not satisfactory as the yields varied from 0 to 1390 kg/ha for millet and 0 to 620 kg/ha for cowpeas. The expected yields

were: 516kg/ha to 1,440 kg/ha for millet; and 92kg/ha to 620 kg/ha for cowpea using the technologies promoted by Sawki. The rainfall deficit during the agricultural season negatively affected production. However, in Maradi, the results were quite satisfactory as the yields varied from 1000 kg/ha to 1950 kg/ha using the promoted technologies compared to yields of 330 kg/ha to 733 kg/ha using the traditional technologies.

- In Maradi, 26 villages started food conservation activities with storage of 8,200 kg of millet and 150kg of nuts. In Zinder, participants mobilized 5,267 kg of millet and 285 kg of cowpeas. These stocks will be sold to generate cash that will enable farmers to purchase agricultural inputs (fertilizers) to enhance crop productivity during the coming rainy season.
- Livestock Value Chain Coordinators (LVCC) supported by the program field agents held sensitization sessions in pastoral field schools with 3,660 participants. Themes included: animal feeding, animal deworming, vaccination, and hygiene.
- The program organized two sensitization caravans in Maradi. Themes included: animal feeding, herd management, stock conservation, composting and assisted natural regeneration. 1,260 people were reached, of which 702 were men and 558 were women in nine villages. Radio messages (180 broadcasts in total) focused on the use of improved seeds, animal deworming, and pest management.
- Continued monitoring of cattle: Beneficiaries sold 224 head of cattle, generating a total amount of 1,258,000 CFAF (\$2,500 USD). These proceeds helped purchase food, drugs and other priority household needs.
- Animal health workers provided services to livestock farmers and treated 3,545 cattle and 3,168 poultry this quarter under the guidance of private veterinary officers at the department level. On average, each reached 50 clients and earned 23,000 CFAF (\$46 USD) during the quarter.

#### **Crosscutting Gender activities achieved during the reporting quarter include:**

- Continued to provide counselling and guidance to adolescent girls in Safe Spaces through a network of 190 mentors. The current focus is on increasing the awareness of the importance of education, avoiding both early marriage and teenage pregnancy, the importance of hygiene, etc.
- In addition, the program provided professional vocational skills in order to enhance the economic empowerment of 3,100 adolescent girls. Skills included: sewing; embroidery and knitting; production of traditional incense and henna; production of soaps, creams and other cosmetics; and food processing of cowpeas, millet, milk and peanuts.
- Continued to work with these adolescent girls in 36 literacy centers to enable them to acquire literacy and numeracy skills.

## **II. Program Activities and Progress against Targets**

### **Coordination**

Sawki continues to build collaborative relationships between consortium partners to improve outcomes. The Program Management Unit (PMU), comprised of senior Sawki staff from Mercy Corps and Helen Keller International (HKI) based in Maradi and Zinder, participate in programmatic and administrative meetings. Quarterly and ad-hoc coordination meetings bring together all Sawki staff with partners representing the Ministries of Agriculture, Public Health, and Planning and INRAN. Finally, program or consortium representatives regularly attend relevant cluster meetings, including the Nutrition Cluster meetings at the regional and national level organized by the Department of Nutrition and UNICEF. Coordination meetings are also held with RISE partners including REGIS-ER and REGIS-AG at the field community levels and national levels so as to identify synergies, share experiences/approaches, and to avoid duplications of efforts. During this quarter, a collaboration workshop was held in Ouagadougou

where RISE and REGO (Regional Economic Growth Office) partners discussed the opportunities and needs for collaboration and developed priority actions for collaboration to enhance resilience impacts in Niger and Burkina Faso. Following the MoU signed with REGIS-AG during the last quarter of FY 2016, Sawki and REGIS-AG developed a joint work plan this quarter. The work plan includes activities to build the capacity of value chain actors in business marketing and the facilitation of linkages between different actors at local and regional levels and in regional markets in our common areas of intervention. Sawki has also signed a MoU with REGIS-ER in collaboration with the University of California Berkeley (OASIS project) to pursue ethnographic studies of adolescent girls to better understand the impact of our programs on behavior change as part of Safe Spaces activities. To ensure the improved delivery of family planning services and products to program beneficiaries, Sawki met and discussed areas of collaboration and intervention strategies with three USAID-funded family planning organizations: Marie Stopes International, Pathfinder and Population Services International.

During this quarter, the technical consultative group under Strengthening Partnerships, Results and Innovations in Nutrition Globally (SPRING) met in Zinder to discuss the results, lessons learned and challenges of the completed second phase. In addition, the Sawki program and other RISE partners held a national coordination meeting in Niamey with SPRING and Digital Green in which all partners discussed areas of collaboration and a letter of collaboration for a third phase. This third phase will focus on scaling up the community video approach in 246 villages to enhance community dissemination of nutritional messages in the regions of Maradi and Zinder. Mercy Corps also continues to build partnerships and leverage resources with the private sector to support the program's objectives, such as with the Orange Foundation and Nike Foundation (SAFE Schools) to complement the implementation of *Sawki* activities in program target areas.

#### **SO1: Chronic malnutrition among pregnant and lactating women & children under five is reduced**

- Continued meetings (led by community health promoters and lead mothers), focusing on the themes of reproductive health and behavior change. Men within husband schools were engaged to support their wives in the adoption of promoted practices.
- Adolescent girls benefitted from awareness raising sessions on family planning, early and forced marriage, as well as on essential nutrition and health actions.
- Community volunteers employed the "Mu da Kanmu" approach to conduct home visits in order to promote ownership of project activities by community members across the two regions.
- Continued child growth monitoring: Out of 12,363 children screened, 1,344 children (10.87%) were classified as moderately malnourished and were referred to health centers. Out of 6,451 children weighed, only 1,174 (18.20%) were under-weight.

### Program achievements during this reporting period (SO1)

Health and nutrition program activities continued in all 62 villages during this reporting period. The key achievements under SO1 during this quarter are summarized in the table below:

Description of Activities	Progress Against Targets (quantitative information, disaggregated by sex where applicable)			Narrative
	Annual Targeted	Reached this quarter	Cumulative reached to-date	
<b>Regular meetings</b>				
Consortium coordination meetings in the field (weekly)	72	20	20	These meetings were useful and helped the teams to exchange on activity implementation and challenges and to ensure synergy.
Participation in Nutrition Cluster Meetings	9	3	3	Three meetings were held and allowed the program team to have a better understanding of nutrition and health activities being implemented in both regions. Participant organizations are encouraged to include their activities in district work plans.
Activity planning and supervision with government technical services	18	6	6	Visits were conducted with the staff of technical services as way of gradually transferring responsibilities.
Quarterly meetings with field implementation partners.	3	1	1	The meeting focused on monitoring and completion of the construction of Wash infrastructure.
SO1 team bimonthly meetings	3	1	1	The team held a meeting to discuss program achievements and challenges and to plan for next quarter
Meetings with other DFAPs	4	0	0	Meetings will start next quarter
Bi-annual meetings by the program with community leaders in each region	4	1	1	Program staff met with community leaders to discuss their role and responsibilities in sustaining program achievements during the development of a program exit strategy.
Participation in consultative meetings at department level	9	0	0	These meetings have not yet occurred.
<b>IR 1.1: Appropriate nutrition practices during a child's first 1,000 days adopted by pregnant women, mothers and caretakers</b>				
<i>A 1.1.1: Promote ENA practices and healthy timing and spacing of pregnancies through district health staff, community health promoters, Care Groups, Lead Mothers, Men's Groups, community sensitization events and radio messaging.</i>				
Capacity building of health agents on behavior change communications and identification of locally appropriate solutions via "Mu da Kanmu" approach	62	0	0	The activity will start next quarter.
Monthly meetings on "Mu da Kanmu" and behavior change by community health promoters / field agents with Lead Mothers	648	216	216	
Exchanges between community groups (husband schools, Lead Mothers, Health	9	3	3	These exchanges revealed that husbands are more and more involved in monitoring and

Promoters, mentors) on Mu da Kanmu approach				promoting good behavior change practices in the communities.
Thematic discussions on health and nutrition in husband schools	1,116	336	336	Themes included essential nutrition /health actions, preventive measures against common childhood illnesses, hygiene and community cleanliness.
Monthly health visits by Care Units using "Muda Kanmu"	14,050	1,618	1,618	These visits focus on the self-assessment of participants and ensure the sustainability of behavior change and best practices promoted by the program.
Awareness-raising days and community recognition after Moringa competition	62	0	0	This activity will start at the beginning of the second quarter.
Provide rations for Lead Mothers and health promoters every six months	854	0	0	This activity will start at the beginning of the second quarter.
Monitoring of community granaries in Zinder	264	66	66	Monitoring occurred in 22 villages in Zinder.
Monthly radio broadcasts of messages focusing on the ENA-FP-WASH through local community radio stations.	1,485	1,020	1,020	Key themes included: ENA, Hygiene, FP
Awareness raising discussions through radio broadcasts	372	45	45	The 15 listening groups in Maradi are very active and conducted awareness raising discussions on mother and child health
Follow up visits by health staff (nurses) every month for support, to answer questions, reinforce key ENA messages with community promoters, leader mothers, girls, husband schools	20	4	4	Four visits conducted in Zinder.
Follow up visits by DRSP staff every semester	2	0	0	This activity will start during the second quarter.
<i>A 1.1.2: Provide supplementary feeding to pregnant and lactating women and children under 2.</i>				
Food distributions for pregnant and lactating women and children under 2	9,836	2,646	2,646	First distribution done.
Food Distribution monitoring reports: Feedback after each food distribution (Commodity, SO1, M&E)	6	2	2	Feedback was provided after food distribution. Over the quarter, diarrhea cases were reported in three villages after distribution of CSB+ food commodities. Program staff conducted a thorough investigation and requested a lab analysis to determine the quality of the CSB+ and took appropriate measures to stop the distribution of this CSB+.

<i>*A 1.1.3: Train HHs on the preparation and consumption of nutrient-rich foods and animal products</i>				
Cooking demonstrations at distribution sites	372	62	62	Cooking demonstrations with CSB+ were done at all distribution sites in the 62 villages.
<i>A 1.1.4: Rehabilitate/construct wells in communities</i>				
Rehabilitation of boreholes	9	0	0	Rehabilitation will be completed in the second quarter.
Monitoring visits of the construction of boreholes carried out by staff from the hydraulic department, jointly with program staff	8	4	4	Hydraulic services conducted monitoring visits to provide technical advice on infrastructure.
Rehabilitation of water wells	13	0	0	Construction was 98% completed by the end of the quarter.
Equipment of boreholes	12	0	0	Equipment of boreholes was 90% completed by the end of the quarter.
<i>A 1.1.5: Establish and train gender-balanced water committees at each water point</i>				
Follow up and coach water-user committees (includes defining management roles and responsibilities, water use payment system, etc.)	66	0	0	Refresher training is scheduled for the second quarter to reinforce water-user committees on their role in water point management.
<i>A 1.1.6: Identify, market and provide subsidies for cost-efficient individual solutions to improve water quality</i>				
Monthly sessions on water purification conducted by water management committees	594	0	0	The process of acquiring aquatabs is underway. Negotiations with the supplier to ensure continued supply of aquatabs to targeted communities have been delayed as the supplier was not available
Monitoring the monthly supply of aquatabs at community level	12	0	0	The process of acquiring aquatabs is underway.
Organization of an animation day at community level in order to explain and promote the importance of aquatabs in water purification (social marketing for aquatab promotion in partnership with HP who are community-level providers of Aquatabs)	62	0	0	This activity will start in the second quarter.
Negotiation with Aminas Sutura to ensure continued supply of aquatabs to distribution points.	4	1	1	Program staff held a meeting with ANIMAS team to discuss the supply of aquatabs to distribution points.
<i>A 1.1.7: Implement Community Led Total Sanitation approach</i>				
Monthly mobilization sessions on hygiene (cleanliness, hand washing and use of latrines) conducted by community actors.	558	142	142	Cleanliness sessions that gathered together different members from different communities focusing on hand washing and hygiene.

Number of communities certified open defecation-free (ODF)	3	0	0	This activity is planned for next quarter.
WASH School: Install 3 handwashing devices/units in each school (55)	165	36	36	Twelve schools in Zinder have received each three handwashing facilities. The acquisition of hand washing facilities for Maradi is underway.
WASH School: Construct latrines in 20 schools (1 block of 2 latrines per school)	20	0	0	The process of constructing latrines in schools, 10 in Maradi and 10 in Zinder, has started. By the end of the quarter, construction was 55% complete.
Conduct monthly mobilization sessions organized for children and conducted by teachers and program staff	434	0	0	The delay in starting the school year in both regions has delayed the implementation of this activity. Arrangements have been made to start in January.
WASH Health: Install 3 handwashing devices/system at each integrated health center and 2 devices at health units (21 IHC et 19 HU)	101	46	46	The hand washing facilities have been delivered in 10 integrated health centers and 8 health units in Zinder. The purchase is underway for the acquisition of handwashing facilities for Maradi. They will be delivered during the second quarter.
WASH Health: Construct latrines in 20 health centers (1 block of 2 latrines)	20	0	0	The process of constructing the latrines has started, 10 in Maradi and 10 in Zinder. By the end of the quarter, construction was 55% complete.
Construction of boreholes in integrated health centers	10	0	0	The process of constructing the boreholes, five in Maradi and five in Zinder, has started. By the end of the quarter, construction was 40% complete.
<i>A 1.2.1: Sensitize communities on delayed child birth and the health and economic benefits of girls' education through influential male and female community members</i>				
Mobilize "bright spots" among religious and community leaders	NA	NA	NA	
<i>A 1.2.2: Establish/strengthen Safe Spaces (Weekly Discussion Groups for adolescent girls on ENA practices and life skills)</i>				
Site visits for Safe Spaces by health promoters	648	216	216	
Regular site visits for girls by field workers/health promoters	558	186	186	The themes covered included: reproductive health, early marriage, hygiene, girls' education, and the role of men and women in communities.
<i>A 1.2.3: Promote family planning and contraceptives through trained peer educators and communication campaigns</i>				
Monthly sensitization sessions on FP by health promoters	648	216	216	Health promoters and lead mothers attended the sessions. The themes covered in group discussions included: Birth spacing, use of health services, and the benefits of birth spacing for the household economy.
Monthly sensitization sessions on FP by	7,020	2,128	2,128	Lead mothers were encouraged to increase the number of meetings held per month so as to

lead mothers				reach the annual target.
Monthly sensitization sessions on FP by mentors	558	186	186	Each village mentor discussed with adolescents about the benefits of delaying the first pregnancy until age 18. A total of 10,794 adolescent girls participated in these sessions.
Monthly sensitization sessions by community-based distributors of contraceptive products	180	51	51	In Zinder, awareness raising sessions were held by community-based distributors.
<i>A 1.2.4: Advocate the MOH and UNFPA to strengthen supply management of family planning supplies</i>				
Meetings held with GON and UNFPA to strengthen and advocate for regular supply of contraceptives	4	0	0	Program staff held meetings with PSI, MSI and Pathfinder to discuss collaboration and intervention strategies.
<b>IR 1.3: Counseling and care appropriately provided by health centers and other community actors</b>				
<i>A 1.3.2: Coordinate the training and facilitation of health center and health post staff to provide Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI) services.</i>				
Support integrated health centers and health units with child delivery room kits and other logistics	40	18	18	A ceremony was held in Zinder to hand the kits over to the health districts. The same process is underway in Maradi and will be completed over the next quarter.
Fences constructed at IHCs	8	0	0	The procurement process has been completed and the construction firm selected. The activity will start early in the next quarter.
Annual Integrated Supervision of the National level (MoH and SO1 staff) for Districts covered	2	0	0	This activity is planned for next quarter.
<i>A 1.3.3: Coordinate the training and facilitation of health center and health post staff to provide IMCI services</i>				
Support MOH in organizing regular, monthly outreach visits (growth monitoring and promotion, nutritional counseling, EPI, family planning)	648	0	0	It has been challenging to get the reports of these outreach visits. The program team is in discussion with the integrated health centers to get their respective reports and compile them
<i>A 1.3.4: Establish an active screening and referral system for malnutrition at the community level</i>				
Organize monthly <u>community meetings</u> with all mothers and children under 5 for MUAC screening	558	150	150	A total of 12,363 children were weighed during the quarter, of which 1,344 were considered moderately malnourished. These children were referred to health centers.
Monitoring visits carried out by program staff for children referred to health facilities	558	186	186	
Sessions of child growth monitoring 6-36 months	558	146	146	6,451 children were weighed this quarter, of which 1,367 were considered underweight.

## **SO1:**

### **Description and Analysis of Results**

#### **IR 1.1: Appropriate nutrition practices during a child's first 1,000 days adopted by pregnant women, mothers and caretakers**

During this quarter, the program focused on communication and awareness raising activities for continued wider adaption of good nutritional practices and behavior change. Various topics were addressed during awareness sessions and included: support and care during pregnancy; prevention of childhood diseases with referral to health centers; exclusive breastfeeding; techniques of care and feeding for sick or healthy children; the negatives of child marriage; the importance of girls' education; workload reduction for women in the household; and the importance of birth spacing, etc.

The Mu da Kanmu ("we change by ourselves") approach which is a cornerstone for sustainability, was at the center of discussions during the quarter. Through care units, women made household visits to their peers to monitor the performance of each family with respect to different nutritional and health practices promoted by the group, and to congratulate and encourage their peers, while discussing weaknesses/constraints and appropriate solutions. In total, 1,618 home visits were conducted with the participation of 14,256 community members. These visits paid off as they helped raise communities' awareness on the importance of using latrines and adopting good hygiene practices. As a result, the communities built 56 latrines, 217 tippy taps and held 142 community cleanliness sessions. Husband school members showed continued commitment and support in promoting health and nutrition messages in their communities.

Regarding WASH activities, the program has made good progress with regard to the construction and rehabilitation of water infrastructure in communities, schools and health centers. Providing communities with water points enables them to observe the good hygiene practices promoted by the program. Sawki has also started the process of ensuring the continued supply of aquatabs for an effective purification of water by targeted communities.

#### **IR 1.2. Appropriate nutrition practices and healthy timing of first pregnancy adopted by adolescent girls and their partners.**

During the reporting period, adolescent girls and husband schools continued to receive regular follow-up visits from health promoters, field agents and partner staff. The visits promote continued functioning of these groups and the sustainability of their activities. Discussions centered on the importance of girls' education, prevention of early marriage, proper birth spacing, and the roles and responsibilities of men and women at the household and community levels. A total of 10,794 adolescent girls participated in these sensitization sessions. Husband schools have been committed to supporting communities for a wide adoption of reproduction health best practices. During the quarter, they held 336 meetings to disseminate behavior change messages on family planning, early marriage, ENA, Essential Health Actions (EHA) and hygiene within their respective communities.

#### **IR 1.3 Counseling and care appropriately provided by health centers and other community actors.**

Out of 12,363 children screened for malnutrition, 1,344 (10.87%) were classified as moderately malnourished, and field agents monitored the progress and recovery of these children at health centers in the project's areas of intervention. During the third quarter of 2016, out of 13,758 children screened for malnutrition, 790 were classified as moderately malnourished, while 256 children were classified as severely malnourished. Out of a total of 6,451 children weighed, 1,174 were classified as under-weight, which represents 18.20% of the total.

**SO2: Increase the local availability of and households' access to nutritious food by diversifying agricultural productivity, rural households' income and increasing resilience to shocks**

During this reporting period, the following activities were implemented in support of the agriculture and livelihoods strategic objective (SO2):

- Continued sensitization sessions on production and utilization of local, nutritious foodstuffs of animal and plant origin (milk, meat, eggs, and diversified vegetables);
- Setting up new vegetable garden sites where women organized to acquire seeds to produce orange fleshed sweet potato and other vegetables;
- Evaluation of farmer field schools;
- Construction of six drip irrigation systems, 120 garden wells in Zinder and four garden boreholes in Maradi;
- Continued sensitization sessions in pastoral field schools on animal feeding, animal deworming, vaccination, and hygiene;
- Organization of awareness raising caravans. Themes included: animal feeding, herd management, stock conservation, composting and assisted natural regeneration. Radio messages (180 broadcast) focused on the use of improved seeds, animal deworming, and pest management;
- Continued monitoring of the activities of the Livestock Value Chain Coordinators (LVCC), including recordkeeping, feeding, treatment and care of improved red goats and improved male Balami sheep;
- Follow-up and technical assistance to pastoral schools.

## Program achievements (SO2) during this reporting period

The key program achievements under SO2 during the reporting period are outlined under each intermediate result in the table below:

Description of Activities	Progress Against Targets (quantitative information, disaggregated by sex where applicable)			Narrative
	Targeted	Reached this quarter	Cumulative reached	
<b>IR 2.1: Household consumption of diversified nutritious food increased from agricultural and pastoral production</b>				
<b>A 2.1.1.1 Sensitize community (including men) on value of nutrient-rich production and importance of access to land</b>				
A.2.1.1.1.1 Sensitize community on the utilization of local food stuffs (animal and vegetables)	372	179	179	179 sensitization sessions held, reaching 5,821 people of which 2,297 were men and 3,524 were women.
A.2.1.1.1.2. Organize advocacy sessions for women's access to land.	6	12	12	12 Advocacy sessions were held altogether, in 7 villages in Zinder and 5 in Maradi.
<b>A 2.1.1.2 Establish Demonstration Farms (2.1.1) (n=champs)</b>				
A 2.1.1.2.1 Provide support, in fertilizers and gardening materials, to vegetable producers on newly installed sites (drip irrigation)	630	0	0	Purchasing process is underway.
A 2.1.1.2.2. Ensure that vegetable garden coordinators supervise the newly installed sites	42	30	30	30 new sites were installed and follow up visits conducted by site coordinators.
<b>A 2.1.1.3 Distribution and multiplication of orange-fleshed sweet potato</b>				
A 2.1.1.3.1 Continue the conservation and dissemination of orange fleshed sweet potato cuttings at gardening sites	42	25	25	30 sites out of 44 have been established during the quarter. Multiplication of orange flesh sweet potato vines is being carried out on 25 sites out of 30. 114 farmers replicated these vines on their personal plots. On the other 5 sites, other vegetables are produced.
<b>A 2.1.1.6 Village Garden Coordinator training by master trainers</b>				
A 2.1.1.6.1 Training of garden producers on vegetable	120	0	0	The training will be held as soon as the drip irrigation systems are installed.

production techniques				
A 2.1.1.6.1 Supervision of garden producers of newly installed sites by the Government technical services	60	20	20	20 supervision visits were conducted on 5 vegetable garden sites in Maradi.
<b>A 2.1.4: Facilitate the rehabilitation/construction and maintenance of gardening wells and rainwater harvesting techniques</b>				
<b>A 2.1.4.1 Establishment of gardening wells user committees and maintenance plans</b>				
A 2.1.4.1 Organize and structure vegetable garden producers in associations to ensure good governance and sustainability of activities	70	0	0	The activity will start next quarter.
<b>A 2.1.4.2 Rehabilitation or construction of gardening wells and rainwater harvesting techniques</b>				
A 2.1.4.2.1 Construction of garden wells and mobilization of communities	120	47	47	The construction is underway and 47 garden wells have already been completed.
A 2.1.4.2.2 Construction of boreholes and ensure information/mobilization of communities	60	3	3	Three boreholes out of four have been completed. The analysis of tender documents for 56 boreholes is underway.
A 2.1.4.2.3 Identification of sites and construction of garden wells	50	0	0	The procurement process has been launched and the analysis of tender documents is underway.
A 2.1.4.2.4 Identification of sites, construction of boreholes and social mobilization	30	0	0	A feasibility study has been conducted on five sites that have been undertaken to help make informed decision with regard to the characteristics of the sites.
A2.1.4.2.5 Equipment of existing boreholes, information and mobilization	2	0	0	The SOW of the feasibility study is being developed.
A2.1.4.2.6 Installation of Drip Irrigation and system of water purification	6	3	3	The drip irrigation has been installed on three sites and the water purification system on one site.
<b>IR2.2 Land and Livestock productivity increased at household and community levels</b>				
<i>A 2.2.1. Provide crop, livestock and soil conservation technical assistance</i>				

A 2.2.1.1 Follow up visits to vegetable garden producers on composting by the program technical officers	310	29	29	29 compost pits were established on eight sites, of which five are in Maradi and three in Zinder.
A 2.2.1.2 Ensure that community structures (LVCC) supervise pastoral field schools for the adoption of promoted technologies	558	261	261	With support from program field agents, LVCC held 261 animation sessions in pastoral field schools. Themes included: animal feeding, demonstration of Urea blocs, vaccination, deworming, hygiene. 785 people participated in Maradi and 2,875 in Zinder.
A 2.2.1.3 Follow up visits on pastoral field schools by government technical staff	108	0	0	This activity will start next quarter.
<b>A 2.2.1.1 Contract with INRAN to enhance farm productivity</b>				
A 2.2.1.1.1 Contract with INRAN for farmer fields schools	2	0	0	No new contract will be signed with INRAN as an external study will be conducted to identify and document the best practices of the FFS approach in order to sustain them.
A 2.2.1.1.2. Conduct a study to identify, document and share the FFS' best practices	1	0	0	The study will start next quarter.
<b>A 2.2.1.2 Establish learning plots on volunteer farmers' land</b>				
A 2.2.1.2.1 Follow up visits to FFS to conduct an evaluation and collect data on productivity of the agricultural season	68	67	67	In Zinder, 44 FFS were evaluated. The results were not satisfactory due to the rainfall deficit of the season. Yields varied from 0 to 1390 kg/ha for millet and from 0 to 620 kg/ha for cowpeas. The expected yields when using promoted technologies are as follows: for Millet, 516kg/ha to 1,440 kg/ha and for cowpea, it is from 92kg/ha to 620kg/ha.  In Maradi where 23 FFS were evaluated, the results were quite satisfactory. Yields varied from 800 kg/ha to 1,858 kg/ha for millet, and 235kg/ha to 1,240kg/ha for cowpea
A 2.2.1.2.2 Follow up visits on extension producers 'plots to collect data on productivity and yields	358	368	368	In Zinder, 225 producers out of 238 have been monitored during the 2016 agricultural season. 61.12 ha of cowpeas and 65.26 ha of millet have been planted yielding an average of 201.63Kg/Ha for cowpeas and 408.02 Kg/Ha for millet.  In Maradi, 143 farmers (78 men and 27 women) have been monitored, of which 38 (30 men and 8 women)

				<p>mobilized stock for input acquisition.</p> <p>Yields for millet: 0 to 600 kg/ha for 56% of producers; and over 600 kg/ha for 44% of producers</p> <p>Yields for cowpea: 0-400kg/ha for 99% of producers; and over 600 kg/ha for 1% of them</p>
A 2.2.1.2.3 Ensure supervision of FFS' students	13	6	6	
<b>A 2.2.2.1 Development of Social Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) to improve animal feeding and herd management</b>				
A 2.2.2.1.1 Organize sensitization caravans on animal feeding, herd management, use of enabling technologies in agriculture	4	2	2	The two caravans were organized in Maradi. Themes included: animal feeding, herd management, stock conservation, composting and assisted natural regeneration. 1,260 people were reached in 9 villages, of which 702 were men and 558 were women.
A 2.2.2.1.1 Organization of radio messages on animal feeding, herd management, use of enabling technologies in agriculture	12	4	4	Radio messages focusing on the use of improved seeds, animal deworming, and pest management were broadcasted. A total of 180 broadcasts were conducted.
A 2.2.2.1.3 Sensitization of producers on food conservation techniques	62	50	50	50 sensitization sessions were held and 1,963 people, of which 1,089 were men and 874 women, were reached. Themes included: cowpea conservation using PICs bags and conservation of green straw for animals.
<b>A 2.2.2.5 Livestock value chain coordinators will train 15 herders or animal owners</b>				
A 2.2.2.5.3 Support in inputs for training in pastoral schools	135	0	0	The activity will start next quarter.
<b>A 2.2.2.6 Training for para-vets at GoN veterinarian training (10 days)</b>				
A 2.2.2.6.1 Refresher training of para-vets	39	26	26	In Zinder, Sawki provided refresher training to 26 para-vets and nine new ones have been trained outside of its intervention zones in collaboration with REGIS-AG and the private veterinary service newly installed in Mirriah. The training modules included: vaccination. Mirriah, Guidan Roumji and Dakoro para-vets are now members of veterinary network thanks to the collaboration with REGIS-AG. The refresher training for para-vets in Maradi has not started yet.
A 2.2.2.6.2 Follow up visits to collect data on para-vet's performance and their	468	117	117	The program conducted 117 follow up visits to 38 para-vets in targeted villages. Visits revealed that 3,545 cattle and 3,168 poultry have been treated. 1,881 people solicited the services of these par-vets during the quarter.

contribution to animal health				They made 873,675 CFAF in total.
A 2.2.2.6.3 Follow up visits to collect data on women vaccinators' performance and their contribution to animal health	532	132	132	The program conducted 132 follow up visits to 44 women vaccinators and provided each with 400 doses of vaccines. The proceeds will serve as working capital for these vaccinators. Two vaccinators have treated 236 poultry.
<b>A 2.2.2.8 Assist in accessing credit and other financial services (organizing farmer groups into a network and linkage to financial services provider)</b>				
A 2.2.2.8.1 Refresher training for village agents on VSLA group supervision/coaching techniques	30	0	0	The activity will start in quarter two.
A 2.2.2.8.2. Village agent equipment	30	0	0	
A2.2.2.8.3 Follow up visits to VSLA groups by village agents and program staff to assess their capacity in activity management	2,700	675	675	675 follow up visits have been performed in 225 VSLA groups (345 in Zinder and 330 in Maradi) i.e. 3 follow up visits per group. 4,511 members (189 men and 4,322 women) belong to the groups. They had a saving of 12,373,910 CFAF (\$24,748) i.e. an average of 54,995 CFAF (\$110) per VSLA group. 6,507,400 CFAF (\$13,015) of credits were allocated to 1,032 members i.e. 6,305 CFAF (\$13) per member and 6,668,750 CFAF (\$13,338) remained in their saving account.
A 2.2.2.8.4 Monitoring extension agents and strengthening their capacity so they can provide effective support to VSLA groups	360	78	78	All extension agents have been monitored at least once during the reporting period.
<b>A 2.2.3.1 Identification of seed multipliers per region</b>				
A 2.2.3.1.1 Monitoring seeds multiplication community sites	12	12	12	Out of the 12 seed multiplication seeds, 6 have not harvested due to the drought that delayed the seedling planting and also due to the deficit of rainfall
A 2.2.3.1.2 Support certification of seeds produced on seeds multiplication community sites	12	0	0	The activity will start in quarter two.
<b>A 2.2.3.9 Support producers for scale up of FFS techniques</b>				
A 2.2.3.9.1 support to the construction of local warehouses for harvested agricultural products	18	18	18	18 communities who showed the most commitment to mobilizing and stocking harvests were prioritized for warehouse construction subsidy support. Community members have mobilized materials for construction of six storage sites in Maradi and 12 in Zinder. The construction has been completed during the reporting

				period.
A 2.2.3.9.2 Follow up visits to ensure that communities have adhered to the process of mobilizing input acquisition stocks	310	186	186	186 follow up visits have been conducted. In Maradi, 26 villages started stock mobilization including 164 bags of 50kg of millet and 3 bags of nuts. In Zinder, 5,267 kg of millet and 285 kg of cowpeas were made mobilized.
<b>A 2.2.3.11 Subsidy to cover 50% of price of 3 goats</b>				
A 2.2.3.11.1 Conduct visits in communities to monitor the livestock provided by Sawki to ensure effective care and management and assess the impact on beneficiaries' resilience	744	186	186	Monitoring visits conducted by the program field agents and LVCC revealed the following: in Zinder, 93 goat births of which 43 were females. 12 goats died and 2 were sold. 407 goats were dewormed. 99 male-goats and 30 balami were alive. However, 2 male-goats died and 4 balami were sold and are being replaced.  In Maradi, 609 goats, 22 balami and 51 male-goats were recorded.
A 2.2.3.11.2 Conduct quarterly inventory on the progress of the livestock provided by Sawki	248	62	62	The inventory system put in place enabled the program to record: 1,526 goats and 150 male-goats
A 2.2.3.11.3 Follow up visits conducted to ensure that Habbanaye succession plan is followed and respected by communities	744	186	186	The habbanayé committees along with the LVCC and program field agents conducted an inventory that showed that 2,978 goats out of 3,100 distributed were recorded. Some of the goats were sold and some of them died.  The communities are exploring the way of replacing the dead goats. They wanted to use the savings from their subscriptions to replace them.
<b>IR 2.3. Household incomes increased</b>				
<b>A 2.3.1: Identify key value chains &amp; develop buyer/seller relationships</b>				
A 2.3.1.1 Provide support for the implementation of multi-nutrient blocks and urea blocks for marketing	96	9	9	In Maradi, the Kalgon Arzika farmer group performed 2 types of production: 2 for the multi-nutrient block with proceeds of 16,000 CFAF (\$32) and one production of 35 blocks for 14,000 CFAF (\$28)  In Zinder, 4 farmer groups out of 5 have been trained and equipped. They haven't started production yet.
<b>A 2.3.2: Train farmers in financial &amp; business management</b>				
A 2.3.2.1 Training of community groups on financial management and business plan development	117	0	0	The activity will start in quarter two.
A 2.3.2.2 Link community groups to micro-finance institutions and input suppliers	8	0	0	The linkage with micro finance institutions has been done. The linkage with input suppliers will be done during the next quarter.

A 2.3.2.3 Attend fairs organized in the program areas of intervention	4	0	0	No fairs have been organized so far.
<b>Cross- cutting IR: Household and community resilience to shocks improved through community development and good governance</b>				
<b>A/CCA 1.2: Train EWS committees in data collection for climate-related disasters:</b>				
A 1.2.1 Strengthen village development committee (VDC) capacity on their role and responsibility and their response to shocks	868	182	182	In 13 villages in Maradi, the capacity of 182 members of VDC has been strengthened on their roles and responsibilities. This activity has been performed during the development of village contingency plans.
A 1.2.1 Development of village contingency plans	60	13	13	13 village contingency plans have been developed.
<b>Coordination Meetings</b>				
Planning meetings	24	6	6	6 monthly meetings were held, 3 in Maradi and 3 in Zinder to discuss activity progress and planning for next month.
Food security cluster	6	2	2	Participation in 2 food security cluster meetings in Zinder.
Joint supervision	2	0	0	
Meeting at communal level	8	1	1	The program team attended a meeting held by a commune in Zinder.

## **SO2: Description of Activities and Analysis of the results**

### **IR 2.1: Household consumption of diversified nutritious food increased from agricultural and pastoral production**

During the quarter, the program pursued sensitization sessions on production and utilization of local, nutritious foodstuffs of animal and plant origin (milk, meat, eggs, and diversified vegetables). 179 sessions were held which reached 5,821 people, including 2,297 men and 3,524 women (activity reinforced through cooking demonstrations under SO1). The program supported women's groups in Maradi and Zinder in setting up vegetable gardening sites. These women organized to acquire seeds to produce orange fleshed sweet potato on 25 of these sites. A total of 30 sites were set up with 114 farmers who replicated the production of orange fleshed sweet potato on their own gardens. The completion of six drip irrigation systems is underway. The construction of 120 garden wells in Zinder and four garden boreholes on the drip irrigation sites in Maradi advanced as planned and will be completed next quarter.

### **IR 2.2: Land and Livestock productivity increased at household and community levels**

In Zinder, the program carried out the evaluation of 44 farmers field schools (FFS). The outcome of the evaluation revealed that yields were not satisfactory as the yields varied from 0 to 1390 kg/ha for millet and 0 to 620 kg/ha for cowpeas. The expected yields when using promoted technologies are as follows: for Millet, 516kg/ha to 1,440 kg/ha and for cowpea, from 92kg/ha to 620kg/ha. The rainfall deficit during the agricultural season has negatively impacted the productivity. However, in Maradi, the results were quite satisfactory: Out of the 23 FFS evaluated, the yields for millet varied from 800 kg/ha to 1,858 kg/ha; for cowpea, from 235kg/ha to 1,240kg/ha when using the promoted technologies.

The program organized two caravans in Maradi. Themes included: animal feeding, herd management, stock conservation, composting and assisted natural regeneration. 1,260 people were reached of which 702 were men and 558 were women in nine villages. Radio messages (180 broadcasts) focused on the use of improved seeds, animal deworming, pest management.

**Construction of community grain stores:** Eighteen communities who showed the most commitment to mobilizing and stocking harvests were prioritized for warehouse construction subsidy support. Community members have mobilized materials for construction of six storage sites in Maradi and 12 in Zinder. The construction has been completed during the reporting period.

**Mobilization of stock for the purchase of agricultural inputs:** Farmers from 26 villages started stock mobilization including 8,200 kg of harvested millet and 150 kg of harvested nuts in Maradi. In Zinder, 5,267 kg of harvested millet and 285 kg of harvested cowpeas were mobilized. These stocks will be sold to generate cash that will enable farmers to purchase agricultural inputs (fertilizers) to enhance crop productivity during the coming rainy season.

**Pastoral Schools and Livestock program:** With support from the program field agents, LVCC held animation sessions in pastoral field schools. Themes included: animal feeding, demonstration of Urea blocs, vaccination, deworming, and hygiene. 785 people were involved in Maradi and 2,875 in Zinder. The monitoring of livestock interventions (including the groups' adherence to established bye-laws, animal husbandry practices and the increase of numbers goats through reproduction) continued during the reporting period.

Sawki continued the monitoring of cattle, sheep and goats. During the reporting period, 395 kids were reported in the households which benefited from the initial distributions. At the same time, it has been observed that 224 goats were sold by beneficiaries and generated a total amount of 1,258,000 CFAF (\$2,500 USD). These proceeds helped purchase food, drugs and other priority household needs.

Animal health workers provided services to livestock farmers and treated 3,545 cattle, sheep and goats and 3,168 poultry under the guidance of private veterinary officers at the department level. Each of them received an average of 50 clients and gained an estimated income of 23,000 CFAF (\$46 USD) during the quarter.

### **IR 2.3: Household incomes increased**

**Organizational and Financial capacity of VSLAs:** The program continued monitoring visits of VSLA groups. Thus far, 675 visits have been performed in 225 VSLA groups (composed of 4,511 members, including 189 men and 4,322 women) to ensure that their governing regulations are well understood and respected by a minimum threshold of at least 80% of their members. Monitoring further showed that members are mobilizing savings and have saved in total 12,373,910 CFAF (\$24,748 USD) i.e. an average of 54,995 CFAF (\$110 USD) per VSLA group. The VSLA groups have also extended credits to members with 6,507,400 CFAF (\$13,015 USD) of credits allocated to 1,032 members with an average loan size of 6,305 CFAF (\$13 USD) per member. A total of 6,668,750 CFAF (\$13,338 USD) remained in their saving account. Members of VSLAs have gained a positive experience by mobilizing savings that have assisted members of these women's groups in initiating income-generating activities or providing social safety nets for their families. The collaboration of VSLA members has brought positive changes to communities, including promoting harmony and social cohesion and improving access to small loans that are otherwise difficult to access for women.

***Cross-Cutting Theme: Household and community resilience to shocks improved through community development and good governance***

Reinforcing Community-Based Early Warning Systems (EWS) – The Sawki team continued to monitor and support Community Early Warning and Response to Emergencies (SCAP-RU) systems and community contingency plans in its zones of intervention. Thirteen village contingency plans have been developed during the reporting period. Sawki engages VDCs to play a leading role in planning and taking responsibility for the implementation of the contingency plans. In 13 villages in Maradi, the capacity of 182 members of VDC has been strengthened on their roles and responsibilities and on risk mitigation practices to improve their resilience and ability to adapt to climatic change. Sawki supports EWS at the local level placing more emphasis on local preparedness and response to emergencies.

#### **IV. Gender**

During the reporting period, Mercy Corps set up a Gender working group. The purpose of this group is to contribute to the implementation of Mercy Corps Gender Strategy and to ensure that Mercy Corps program portfolio in Niger is gender-sensitive. This working group will greatly support the Sawki program team in ensuring that gender is well integrated in all aspects of the program.

The program achieved the following gender activities during the quarter:

**Safe Space Mentoring:** During the reporting period, Safe Spaces mentors conducted 700 discussion sessions with adolescent girls. Themes included: early marriage, education, equality principles among men and women, and the use of health centers. It should be noted that most mentors are illiterate and cannot read and write. The program encourages them to attend literacy programs and plans to develop training kits and tools in local language to help them to be more effective.

**Literacy for Adolescent girls:** The program continued to aid 1,080 adolescents in gaining literacy and numeracy skills across 36 literacy centers (10 in Maradi and 26 in Zinder). During the reporting period, the animators of the center (36 in total) were trained on the use of the newly developed curriculum and training tools. The classes will start over the next quarter.

**Vocational training for adolescent girls - Post-training monitoring:** In order to enhance the economic capacity of adolescent girls, the program contracted with six local NGOs/enterprises to organize professional trainings for 3,100 beneficiaries who participated in one of five modules: sewing; embroidery and knitting; production of traditional incense and henna; production of soaps; production of creams and other cosmetics; and processing of cowpeas, millet, milk and peanuts. After completion of the trainings, the adolescents used their newly acquired skills in establishing and managing small businesses of their choice and responding to market demand.

During the reporting period, the program team organized post-training supervisions to assess the adolescent girls' progress in setting up the income-generating activities (IGA). Three supervisions were conducted in targeted villages and revealed that some of the girls have started IGA. However, most of them lack start-up materials and equipment. The program team discussed the issue with the training organizations who agreed to support the girls and help them have access to these start up materials. Safe Space mentors will continue to provide counselling and guidance to the girls on the usual topics.

**Reducing women's workloads:** During the quarter, the program carried out follow-up visits for technical assistance to the women groups that benefited from grain mills, peanut oil extractors, stalk-threshers, and rickshaws. This support has helped group members to reduce their workloads and save time that can now be used to participate in VSLAs, farming, and other activities supported by Sawki. The

program continued to coach members of the committees of these groups on the management of income generating activities and on their roles and responsibilities in ensuring that equipment and machines are maintained and function properly.

**Husband schools:** The program team conducted follow-up visits in 124 husband schools (62 for youth and 62 for adults). Thus, 1,116 members benefitted of coaching sessions on their roles and responsibilities within the communities and on equity and equality principles among men and women. The themes for discussion included the reduction of women's workload, prevention of early or forced marriage, and the use of health centers.

## **V. Monitoring & Evaluation**

Several activities were conducted, including: The 2016 annual survey for the preparation of the annual report, the data quality assurance conducted by USAID team, field monitoring of program activities, monitoring food commodity distribution, and others.

The M&E team developed the survey questionnaires that have been reviewed and validated by the program team. The survey reached 778 households and 1,572 beneficiaries. The collected data served to calculate the indicator level and update the IPTT table for FY 2016.

During the reporting period, the program team received a visit from the USAID/Dakar M&E team. The purpose of the visit was to conduct data quality assessment for the Sawki program. First, the USAID team reviewed the Sawki monitoring and evaluation system and then assessed the quality of data collected with regard to six main indicators. They commended the Sawki team for the quality of the performance monitoring system which includes the theory of change, the IPTT, the logical framework, and a comprehensive data quality control systems. Furthermore, they found the physical and electronic filing system well organized. However, they recommended that Sawki place more emphasis on qualitative data collection to better assess the impact of the program given that we are approaching its end. They also made the following recommendations:

- Some of the indicators should be revised using the PIRS
- The IPTT includes many blank cells. The team should use ND when data is not available
- Some targets should be revised
- FY 2017 targets should be provided in the IPTT

The revised indicators and IPTT have already been submitted to USAID/Dakar team.

**RISING Research II:** This is a continuation of the research initiatives on Sawki's adolescent Safe Spaces conducted by Mercy Corps in partnership with Population Council. The second phase of RISING research will start in February 2017 and will focus on the mentors experience; the Safe Space participants' experience; the experience of parents/husbands/family members of Safe Space; and the experiences of non-participants. During this reporting period, Sawki program staff, together with an HQ consultant, developed the RISING research phase II work plan.

**Video production on program achievements:** During the reporting period, the technical consultative group under Strengthening Partnerships, Results and Innovations in Nutrition Globally (SPRING) met in Zinder to discuss the results, lessons learned and challenges of the completed second phase. In addition, the Sawki program and other RISE partners held a national coordination meeting in Niamey with Spring

and Digital green in which all partners discussed areas of collaboration and a letter of collaboration for a third phase. This third phase will focus on scaling up the community video approach in 246 villages to enhance community dissemination of nutritional messages in the regions of Maradi and Zinder.

## **VI. Commodity Management**

### **Commodities distributed during the quarter**

#### **A. Total Metric Tons & Beneficiaries per Component**

Component	Month 1		Month 2		Month 3		Totals	
	Kilograms	Bens	Kilograms	Bens	Kilograms	Bens	Kilograms	Bens
Pregnant mothers	80.000	5	0.000	0	0.000	0	80.000	5
Lactating mothers	272.000	17	0.000	0	0.000	0	272.000	17
Children 6-24	43,888.000	2,743	0.000	0	0.000	0	43,888.000	2,743
Lead Mothers	39,100.000	782	0.000	0	0.000	0	39,100.000	782
Promoters	3,550.000	71	0.000	0	0.000	0	3,550.000	71
Adolescents	76,454.950	3,059	0.000	0	0.000	0	76,454.950	3,059
Mentors	4,725.000	189	0.000	0	0.000	0	4,725.000	189
FFA Men	5,125.820	454	0.000	0	0.000	0	5,125.820	454
FFA Women	1,455.653	126	0.000	0	0.000	0	1,455.653	126
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>174,651.423</b>	<b>7,446</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>174,651.423</b>	<b>7,446</b>

## **B. Warehouse Summary**

### **Physical Inventory**

<b>Location / Commodities</b>	<b>CSB(MT)</b>	<b>BULGUR(MT)</b>	<b>YELLOW SPLIT PEAS(MT)</b>	<b>OIL(MT)</b>	<b>TOTALS(MT )</b>
<b>Physical Inventory Warehouse</b>	<b>147.643</b>	<b>112.833</b>	<b>52.694</b>	<b>6.649</b>	<b>319.819</b>
<b>Closing Balance Distribution Sites</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>147.643</b>	<b>112.833</b>	<b>52.694</b>	<b>6.649</b>	<b>319.819</b>

In November, diarrhea cases were reported in three villages after distribution of CSB+ food commodity. Program staff conducted a thorough investigation and requested a lab analysis to determine the quality of the CSB+ and took appropriate measures to recall the distributed food and stop its distribution. No other cases have been reported since. Further lab analysis is underway and discussions with USAID/FFP before next steps are decided.

### **VII. Development of a Comprehensive Program Exit Strategy**

In late November 2016, the program team held a workshop with key stakeholders to develop a comprehensive exit strategy along with an action plan per strategic objective and the program component. The team discussed specific responsibilities and activities that could be handed over to local, regional partners and communities as well as the resources, capacity and motivation required to sustain the gains achieved over the program's years of implementation. We also discussed the constraints and threats that might prevent these actors from taking full responsibility for the identified activities and actions.

During FY17, the program team started a gradual phase out and transfer of responsibilities to communities so that they take ownership of program successes in conformity with the designed sustainability and exist strategy matrix. Furthermore, the program is working on a one year no-cost extension request including specific activities that will allow the program to consolidate gains achieved over the program's four years of implementation.

### **VIII. Challenges and Constraints**

The main challenge during the fifth year of the program is to ensure the sustainability of the program achievements. The program is working closely with key stakeholders to overcome this challenge. The following are some recurrent challenges of the program:

- Slow pace of community structures in taking ownership and independently implementing the activities initiated by the Sawki program. Actions: Increase awareness and intensive coaching of committees to assume their roles and responsibilities in owning development activities. Also, organizing learning/exchange tours for members to share experiences on management of program activities.
- Low adoption of latrine construction and use by communities to improve hygiene practices. The Sawki program will continue to sensitize communities on the use of latrines and the effect of open defecation on their health. In addition, low-cost models of latrines are being identified in communities and promoted for wider adoption.