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**THE SAHEL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

**ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS**

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## I. OVERVIEW: The Sahel Development Program in 1985

### A. Background

The Sahel Development Program (SDP) was created as a means to deliver a unique program of assistance to eight countries in Sub-Saharan Africa which share special development problems related to recurrent drought and associated environmental issues, e.g., desertification. These countries (the Sahel) include seven countries bordering on the Sahara desert--The Gambia, Mauritania, Senegal, Mali, Niger, Chad and Burkina Faso--and Cape Verde, which has similar economic and ecological problems.

By all standard social and economic measures, the Sahelian countries are among the world's poorest. They have low per capita incomes, life expectancies, and literacy rates, as well as a paucity of the technicians and managers required to facilitate economic development.

### B. Summary of FY 1985 Activities

The United States, through A.I.D., provided \$103 million in economic development assistance to the Sahel in 1985 under the SDP. In addition, food aid valued at \$265 million, including almost \$187 million of emergency food assistance, and Economic Support Funds (ESF) totaling \$43 million were made available to the countries of the Sahel.

The predominant factor influencing the SDP during FY 1985 was the continuation of the serious drought in the Sahel which began in 1983. The drought abated in the late summer and early fall of 1985, and the August through October harvest in the Sahel was very good. Throughout most of the year, however, shortfalls in food production and the social and economic disruptions related to the drought required the SDP's management team to devote the major portion of its attention to assuring that relief and recovery measures were provided promptly and effectively. Significantly, despite three consecutive years of a drought which was more severe than that in 1968-1974, and the severe economic and human setback for the Sahelian countries it engendered, the countries of the Sahel were able to avert the famine and loss of life which occurred in other parts of drought-stricken Africa. This positive factor, in an otherwise bleak situation, involved an intensive collaborative effort by the international donor community, the Sahel's neighboring West African states, and the Sahelian countries themselves to move food and relief supplies to the needy and, thus, save lives and help to preserve the fabric of Sahelian society. A contributing factor to this outcome was the skills and infrastructure built up in the Sahel with donor assistance since the previous drought.

With the end of the drought in late FY 1985 and the ensuing good harvest, A.I.D. ended the emergency phase of its drought program and initiated a drought recovery phase. Recovery programs will help to restore the livelihoods of Sahelians and put them on a self-sustaining basis by re-establishing food production systems and establishing linkages to a longer-term development strategy.

Concomitant with 1985's primary focus on drought, A.I.D. continued to implement its long-term development strategy in the Sahel. This strategy, revised in late FY 1984, provides an overall framework for the SDP. It emphasizes priority sectors and aligns SDP resources to more efficiently and effectively meet the economic development needs of the countries of the Sahel. The primary sectors of involvement are: food production, including dryland, irrigated agriculture, forestry, livestock, and agricultural research; economic policy reform, including improved financial management and the strengthening of private sector institutions; family health care, including population and family planning activities; manpower development, with emphasis on technical and managerial training; and basic infrastructure and its maintenance. Private and voluntary organizations are being supported widely as vehicles through which to implement specific projects in many of these sectors.

A.I.D. also devoted a significant portion of its resources in FY 1985 to adjusting individual country development strategies to more accurately reflect the overall SDP planning framework. This has enabled country programs to pursue longer-term development priorities and emphasize activities in key sectors. As a result, the number of project activities has declined and project portfolios have been consolidated into more coherent and internally consistent programs. The assistance approach in each individual Sahelian country has been adapted to reflect ongoing economic conditions, the relative size of the resources available, and longer-term development goals. As these country programs evolve, A.I.D. is also developing a management style that reflects the realities of the difficult Sahelian economic development environment.

A.I.D. has a well defined economic development assistance strategy for the countries of the Sahel which identifies common themes and relative priorities. It is based upon a realistic assessment of the financial situations of individual Sahelian countries, the impact of drought, and the individual pace of development of these countries. This strategy is an outgrowth of A.I.D.'s experience in the Sahel over the last decade. It is based upon a deeper understanding of the ingredients required for a dynamic and workable program in the Sahel. Importantly, it is a strategy that allows continuing flexible evolution as A.I.D. gains additional experience and knowledge about the Sahel.

## II. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND REGIONAL COORDINATION

### A. Donor Assistance and Coordination

Total international donor Official Development Assistance (ODA) to the Sahel amounted to approximately \$1.92 billion in 1984, the most recent year for which figures are available. This level surpasses the \$1.90 billion provided in 1981--the previous single year record for donor assistance. Donor assistance at this level, however, is only a peak year in the continuation of the extraordinary levels of economic development assistance provided to the countries of the Sahel--more than \$15 billion has been provided in the last 15 years.

The record level in 1984 reflects the requirements for food aid during the height of the 1983-1985 African drought. Approximately twenty percent of total ODA flows to the Sahel were in the form of emergency food aid. Given the continued requirement for famine relief during the first nine months of 1985, ODA levels in 1985 are believed to have followed the pattern of 1984.

The years for peak flows of ODA to the Sahelian countries have been characterized by extraordinary events, e.g., drought, famine, or assistance to major dams or other unusually large development activities. Examples include the multi-year commitments made to the Senegal River Basin program in 1981, and the drought emergency in 1984. On the average, however, when measured on a net per capita basis, annual ODA flows to the countries of the Sahel are declining. This pattern of decline is particularly significant when measured in monetary units of constant value. If the population of the Sahel continues to grow at the present level--almost three percent per annum--and if debt service remains only at the current level, ODA to the Sahel will have to double in the next ten years in order to maintain net per capita assistance at the 1984 level.

Donor coordination is playing an increasingly important role in effecting economic development in the Sahel. The 1983-1985 drought emergency required donors to cooperate closely and reach satisfactory agreement with the governments of the Sahelian states on a wide range of policy and operational issues.

The magnitude of the ODA flows and the size of the donor community contribute to the importance of the coordination process. A relatively large number of donors--governments, international agencies, and private voluntary entities--participate in the economic development programs of the Sahel, including donors who have special economic and commercial ties with the Sahelian states. This factor, combined with the relative weakness of Sahelian planning capabilities, adds weight to the need for formal coordination mechanisms.

Coordination in the Sahelian context has helped to reduce duplication and competition for activities, served to modify potential recurrent cost and personnel pressures on Sahelian governments, and helped keep donors from working at cross purposes, particularly in the area of economic policy reform.

During 1985, A.I.D. encouraged the formation of donor coordination mechanisms and participated in the deliberations of such groups. Senegal and Mauritania are the only Sahelian countries to have established Consultative Groups (CG). They have done so under the auspices of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. These CGs provide a forum where donors can meet to discuss policy issues on a country-specific basis. In 1985, A.I.D. participated in the first CG meeting on Mauritania, which focussed on plans for economic recovery and Mauritania's external debt situation.

A.I.D. also participated in the 1985 Round Table meetings on Chad and Mali sponsored by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The UNDP Round Table mechanism provides an opportunity for donors to rationalize their activities within a specific country, to avoid duplication of effort, and to call attention to common donor issues.

#### B. The Club du Sahel in 1985

The Club du Sahel (Club) is an international organization composed of bilateral and multilateral donors, plus the Sahel countries themselves. The Club is based in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in Paris, and its primary function is to liaise with the members of the CILSS--a French acronym for an organization formed by the countries of the Sahel to coordinate economic development assistance to the area. Since its formation in 1976, the Club has commissioned many technical and policy studies which have helped to sensitize Sahelian and donor governments to development issues. The Club has provided a forum for a frank exchange of ideas and concerns about the economic development problems of the Sahel. The SDP provides financial assistance to both the Club and the CILSS.

In 1985, the Club was actively involved in donor coordination and strategy planning for the provision of drought and famine relief assistance. Through formation and sponsorship of a Network for the Prevention of Food Crises, the Club fostered a series of consultative meetings concerned with information sharing and drought strategy planning. This mechanism provided a forum for discussion of such issues as the operational validity of early warning system technologies, logistic and transport issues, triangular barter arrangements, grain storage, and the allocation of food stocks. These planning sessions and the opportunity they provided for an exchange of information among donors and Sahelian governments facilitated the implementation of the emergency program and the movement of emergency food shipments.

### C. Perspective on Regional Institutions

There are many similarities between the economies and the development problems of the countries of the Sahel. This has encouraged a tendency among many donors, including the United States, to approach the implementation of economic development assistance programs from a regional perspective. Thus, the SDP blends a range of regional and country specific activities when dealing with functional problems which require comprehensive planning and implementation in a regional context, e.g., river basin planning. Increasingly, however, experience has shown that the success of such development initiatives increases in direct relationship to the extent that the implementing elements are negotiated directly and bilaterally with the host countries in which they take place. A.I.D.'s experience over the last decade has shown that many of the problems of the Sahel are homogeneous, although they are best addressed on a country-specific and project specific basis. Thus, one of the guiding principles of the SDP is to "think regionally, while negotiating bilaterally".

In 1985, A.I.D. carefully reviewed its approach to assisting regional institutions and modified its guidelines for supporting them. SDP support will be provided only to those regional organizations which make positive contributions to the development process and have demonstrated that they can make an impact on the decision making and program implementation of economic development assistance activities in the Sahel. One of the major indications of their ability to do this will be the extent to which Sahelian member countries are willing to provide them with adequate financial and human resources.

### III. THE RESPONSE TO THE SAHELIAN DROUGHT

#### A. Overview

The Sahel was plagued with drought for three successive harvests following the harvest of the 1982 crop year. A vast international relief effort responded to this situation, and the United States, principally through A.I.D., was in the forefront of this assistance exercise. In FY 1984, the United States supplied almost \$45 million of emergency food aid to the countries of the Sahel. In FY 1985 the amount of emergency food aid assistance reached \$186.9 million. This amounted to over 363,000 metric tons of emergency food. An additional 650,000 metric tons of food aid to these drought-stricken countries was provided by other donors--especially the European Economic Community. It is estimated that about \$23 million of emergency food aid will be provided in FY 1986.

In 1985, the Sahelian countries most severely affected by drought-induced famine were Mali, Niger, Chad, Burkina Faso, and Mauritania, and the largest proportion of the food aid was provided to them. The country allocations were based upon multi-donor assessments of cereals shortfalls and the size of "at risk" populations. Senegal and The Gambia required minimal amounts of emergency food aid, as did the chronically food deficit Cape Verde Islands.

Drought is undeniably a terrible catastrophe, and even more so in countries where the livelihood of approximately 90 percent of the residents is dependent upon either dryland, subsistence agriculture, or nomadic livestock production. Nevertheless, during the Sahel drought of 1983-1985 there was no mass famine or accelerated death rate among the Sahelians. The mitigation of the famine effects of the drought is directly related to the timely movement of emergency relief supplies to West African ports, and from there into the land locked countries of the Sahel. The movement of food commodities in this manner was the result of a coordinated effort by the donors--including Private and Voluntary Organizations, the West African states neighboring the Sahel, and the governments of the Sahelian countries.

#### B. The Emergency Program in Retrospect

The significance and severity of the most recent drought in the Sahel can best be measured by comparing the shortfalls in food production with those occurring during the extended drought of 1968-1974. The absolute amount of cereals produced was approximately the same during both drought periods. However, this low level of production had to provide for a population that had increased by over thirty percent. Thus, the per capita food shortages were much more severe during the 1983-1985 drought. Similarly, larger quantities of food had to be

provided and distributed to a larger "at risk" population. The costs of this effort were, accordingly, greater, and the logistics of the distribution were more complex. The close coordination between the donors, the West African states, and the Sahelian governments was the key to the success of this effort.

### 1. Drought Preparedness

Actions taken prior to the onset of the 1983-1985 drought were instrumental in helping to mitigate its severity. Over the years, both donor and Sahelian governments had become sensitive to the need to prepare for the likelihood of intermittent drought in the Sahel. As early as 1982, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) had sponsored multi-donor missions to assess the prospects for food production in order to provide an early warning of the potential onset of famine. In addition, donors had been working with Sahelian governments to improve the management and physical storage facilities of national grain agencies. Thus, these agencies were much better prepared to meet the needs generated by the drought and, by 1985, had demonstrated an ability to manage, store, and distribute emergency grain stocks. Moreover, the Sahelian governments, under the leadership of the CILSS, had developed a sensitivity to the social and economic effects of drought on the region, and had better organized themselves to deal with drought relief efforts.

### 2. Program Implementation

The improved implementation of drought emergency programs, as compared to those provided during 1968-1974, played a large part in mitigating the suffering of victims during the most recent drought. These improvements consisted of several major steps: (a) the gaps between local food production and food aid requirements were determined at an early stage for each Sahelian country; (b) large quantities of perishable commodities were moved rather rapidly to and through West African ports; (c) tariff rates were adjusted by certain of the countries as an inducement to indigenous private sector truckers to promptly evacuate relief commodities from the ports; (d) similarly, innovative and intensive use of railroads markedly improved throughput, especially from the ports; and (e) prepositioning of food supplies assured rapid distribution, in spite of the early onslaught of rains in 1985. Timely and rapid delivery of relief supplies, and their efficient distribution, were the critical elements in the emergency program.

### 3. Transport Network

Over the last decade, substantial improvements have been made in the transport infrastructure of the Sahel. Major arterial

routes have been improved, as have port facilities in Senegal and the Sahel's neighboring West African coastal states.

In Chad, a bridge was constructed in 1985 to provide access to Chad from Cameroon as the result of a multi-donor effort led by the United Nations to overcome a mutually perceived transportation constraint. This link in the road network was significant because Cameroon served as the principal point for the entry of emergency food and supplies to Chad.

Along these same lines, but in a more unique undertaking, the United States Department of Defense established, maintained, and operated a truck ferry which transported emergency food to people in a remote region of Mali. The operation was carried out during several crucial months of the emergency food delivery program.

#### 4. Logistics of Food Delivery

One of the very visible, and difficult to resolve, social consequences of drought is the displacement of nomadic herders and sedentary farmers forced to leave the marginal rainfall areas. Drought causes vast movements of people and animals, as they seek water and grazing. These displaced persons, particularly after they dispose of their livestock, tend to congregate in spontaneous refugee camps, or, in the most difficult cases, add to the floating populations of towns and cities. Drought displaced populations are a serious problem for Sahelian governments because they are so difficult to resettle when the drought is over.

During the recent drought, Sahelian countries made a conscious effort to reduce the number of drought refugees by improving the logistics of internal food distribution, i.e., they improved their ability to move food and other relief supplies into the drought stricken areas to those who might otherwise have been forced to move. In particular, logistic improvements included the transport of grain supplies from central and regional stock locations to secondary rural distribution points. This involved additional trucking requirements, which were met by contracting with private sector interests. In Burkina Faso and Mali, in a successful alternative to government sources, bonuses were paid to private trucking firms for grain transport services.

#### 5. Triangular Barter Arrangements

The movement of food from the U.S. and Europe to the ports of West Africa, and then onward to the landlocked Sahelian capitals, is a costly venture, in terms of both time and money. In the recent drought, A.I.D. and other donors arranged triangular barter agreements with some of the grain surplus West African states in order to expedite deliveries of emergency food

and reduce the cost of these resources. Essentially, grain was shipped by donors to the West African coastal states. In turn, the West African countries shipped surplus stocks of coarse grains into the Sahel.

An example of such an arrangement is one A.I.D. negotiated with Ghana. A.I.D. shipped 12,000 metric tons of rice to Ghana. In exchange, Ghana shipped 15,000 metric tons of corn: 10,000 metric tons to Mali and 5,000 metric tons to Burkina Faso. This arrangement permitted food relief deliveries to be made more quickly, as well as widened the participation of the countries of the West African community in the drought relief effort in the Sahel.

### C. Focus on Recovery

Rainfall in the Sahel during the 1985 crop year was sufficient to allow food production at near normal levels. Chad, in particular, experienced a good harvest in 1985. As a consequence, the food aid program for FY 1986 is programmed at a much smaller level. It is anticipated that P.L. 480 Title II programs for the Sahel will be valued at approximately \$20 million. Emergency food aid is anticipated to be about \$23 million. This situation will permit the resources of the SDP to be used to pursue longer-term development objectives in the Sahel, including drought recovery objectives.

#### 1. The Recovery Program

A.I.D. has a drought recovery program for providing medium-term assistance to the countries of the Sahel, a program to help them bridge the gap between the dislocations engendered by the recent drought crisis and the transition to more normal conditions. The drought crisis has brought about serious social and economic disruptions in the Sahel. In marginal rainfall areas in the north, entire regions have been abandoned by refugees streaming southward in pursuit of food and water. In these areas, much of the local infrastructure has deteriorated; water systems, roads, and dwellings require extensive renovation before they can be used effectively. In more productive areas, on-farm grain stocks are depleted, and farmers are short of seeds for planting.

In this immediate post-drought environment, a period of adjustment is required to enable rural economies to become stabilized, and for life to return to normal levels of productive activity.

#### 2. The Juxtaposition of Relief and Recovery Programs

The distinction drawn between relief and recovery programs is, largely, one of timing. A.I.D. drought relief programs are concerned with saving lives threatened by immediate or impending

famine through the speediest, most reliable, and economic means. Relief programs are concerned with meeting the immediate basic human requirements of the victims of disaster for food, potable water, and medical supplies.

Recovery programs are intended to restore the livelihoods of those affected by disaster, and to put them back on a self-sustaining basis. In most instances, recovery projects focussed upon the provision of water pumps and the rebuilding of water catchment systems in order to restore community water supplies. Recovery activities also emphasized rehabilitation of existing infrastructure and the re-establishment of food production systems.

### 3. Recovery Programs

In 1985, recovery programs were initiated in Chad, Niger, and Senegal. Post-drought recovery activities emphasized programs to resettle drought refugees; the rehabilitation of infrastructure, e.g., rural road maintenance and well construction; and food production activities, including seed distribution and farmer training programs.

In Senegal, A.I.D. participated in a joint donor program which provided 650 metric tons of cowpea seeds (black-eyed peas) to farmers in the drought stricken groundnut zone, as well as the country's northern areas. Over 30,000 hectares were planted in a tested variety of cowpea. Total yield was estimated at 70,000 metric tons. This recovery project provided an early harvest where drought had been the most severe. In many areas, the cowpea crop was reported to be the only locally produced food available during the early part of the 1985 harvest season.

In Chad, A.I.D. participated in a multi-donor recovery activity to distribute 120 metric tons of rice seed. The results of the project, which were closely monitored, showed that Chadian farmers were able to produce 2,400 metric tons of rice in the first growing season after the end of the drought.

Post-drought recovery plans in Niger focussed on the re-establishment of productive activities in two marginal rainfall zones which have mixed sedentary and nomadic populations. In order to expedite resettlement of these areas, PVOs implemented medium-term recovery programs to rehabilitate village infrastructure and provide seeds and tools to farming groups.

### D. PVO Activities in Drought and Recovery

In every Sahelian country, PVOs have made outstanding contributions to A.I.D.'s drought emergency program. PVOs have contributed human and technical resources to the saving of

Sahelian lives and the re-establishment of productive activities. PVOs were also very active during the drought emergency; they took on much of the arduous responsibility associated with the distribution of food to the drought victims. In the post-drought recovery stage, PVOs have initiated projects to restore food production.

Representative examples of the outstanding work carried out by the PVOs in 1985 include the following.

--In Mauritania, CARE managed the transport of more than 48,000 metric tons of A.I.D. and other donor-provided food from Nouakchott to regional distribution centers. Through its secondary transport system, CARE moved food to more than 5,000 drop off points. The CARE program was a critical link between donors and Mauritania's 'at risk' population.

--In Mali, the World Vision Relief Organization received, and distributed with its own trucking fleet, 10,000 metric tons of Ghanaian corn to drought stricken populations in the second and seventh regions of Mali.

--Also in Mali, AFRICARE operated a small-scale pilot irrigation project in the Timbouctou region to permit food production to continue throughout the drought. This small irrigated perimeter project provided visible evidence to local farmers of the value of participating in cooperative irrigation schemes.

--In Niger, Lutheran World Relief initiated a recovery project to assist five villages recovering from drought in the Tahoua region. This cooperative development project concentrates on shallow well construction and the reconstitution of small livestock herds.

#### IV. THE BASE FOR LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT

Despite the large, drought induced requirement for humanitarian assistance in the Sahel over the past three years, A.I.D. has continued to strengthen its longer-term economic development assistance programs in the Sahelian countries. The intensity and duration of the 1983-1985 drought generated competing demands upon external donor aid flows to the Sahel, as well as upon Sahelian indigenous resources. A.I.D., like other donors and the Sahelian countries themselves, diverted some of its development resources to drought relief and post-drought rehabilitation. These resource tradeoffs are an inevitable consequence of an emergency situation, but A.I.D. continues to believe that a strong development base is the first line of defense against drought. Thus, the principal objective of the SDP strategy is to promote sustained, long-term development within the Sahel.

##### A. The Evolution of the SDP

##### 1. The Alignment of Country Programs With Long-Term SDP Strategy

The SDP has evolved in response to A.I.D.'s perception of the long-range, critical needs of the Sahelian countries. In 1983 and 1984, A.I.D. carried out in-depth assessments of the SDP to evaluate its policies, programs, and technical and management capabilities. Out of these evaluations, A.I.D. developed a revised program emphasizing key development sectors--one which maximizes the returns from limited assistance resources and uses A.I.D.'s technical and management capacities most effectively.

In order to effect this key sector emphasis, A.I.D. has fine tuned country program strategies and integrated these with the long-term regional development strategy. The target sectors in individual Sahelian countries are designed to make the best use of the totality of assistance resources available. Each country program has an expressly stated set of objectives, which define A.I.D.'s goals and provide a reference point for limiting and focussing the construction of project portfolios to implement the designated strategy.

Two reasons account for the decision to limit the number and sector coverage of discrete project activities in the Sahelian countries. This approach enhances the formation of a concentrated program focussed on the highest, mutually agreeable development priorities. In addition, it recognizes and mitigates the strain placed upon the limited administrative and technical service systems of Sahelian country governments, i.e., it helps prevent the overburdening of host country planning, financial, and administrative services with a plethora of diverse project activities.

Between FY 1984 and FY 1985, the number of discrete SDP project activities was reduced by twenty percent, although the number of individual country projects has been reduced by as much as fifty percent in some countries, e.g., Senegal.

As the sectoral range of activities is narrowed, it becomes possible to increase the amount of resources provided to a smaller number of higher priority projects. Thus, A.I.D. has been able to focus its resources and achieve a more concentrated program in the Sahel.

Further, as the country programs evolve there are discernible shifts in the sector emphases of the SDP. Traditionally, the food production sector has absorbed about one third of the SDP's resource flows, and other sectors have received significantly lesser proportionate shares. Recently, however, the relative importance attached to economic policy reform has caused this sector to reach a par with food production in the assignment of resources within the overall financial structure of the SDP.

## 2. The SDP in a Regional Context

A.I.D.'s long-term commitment to the economic development of the Sahel recognizes that the SDP, if it is to be successful, must be integrated into the broader concerns of the greater West Africa region. In 1985, A.I.D. began to explore in greater detail the dependency relationships between the Sahelian and Coastal West African states. One element of this exercise will be the initiation in 1986 of a joint CILSS/Club du Sahel study of the development dynamics of inter-regional relationships, and their implications for long-term development in the Sahel.

The concept of the Sahel as an integral element of a greater West Africa region is based upon a number of significant factors. The Sahel includes four landlocked countries, has a poorly developed system of internal markets, and limited scope for intra-regional trade expansion. In addition, the area is extremely vulnerable to external economic factors, subject to widely variable rainfall, and excessively dependent on imports for basic needs, e.g., food, capital, and human skills.

Conversely, the coastal West African states--particularly the Ivory Coast, Nigeria, and Cameroon--are much more developed than the Sahelian countries. By comparison, they are rich in physical, human, and capital resources, and the Sahel is heavily dependent upon them for access to the outside world. Further, it is believed that the economic development of the countries of the Sahel is directly related to the economic growth of the coastal West African states upon which they are so dependent. Thus, development in the Sahel must not be viewed in isolation, but rather in the context of the greater economic and geographic region of which the Sahelian countries form a part.

## B. The Program Emphasis

A.I.D.'s country development programs in the Sahel continued to change in 1985 to more closely approximate the SDP's priority sector emphases, which were developed during a rigorous review in 1984. Thus, activities are becoming more concentrated in: food production, including dryland and irrigated agriculture, forestry, and livestock and agronomic research; economic policy reform, including increased support for private sector markets and institutions; family health care; manpower training; and infrastructure maintenance. A.I.D. has defined a long-term strategy in each of these priority sectors, and has identified appropriate approaches to meet sector goals.

### 1. Food Production

Although food production in the Sahel decreased drastically during the recent drought, the food production sector continues to be the centerpiece of the economic programs of the Sahelian countries. The most important objective of the CILSS remains the achievement of greater food security. Despite the excellent harvest of 1985, on-farm grain stocks are depleted in the aftermath of the drought. Once again Sahelian farmers must rebuild their grain stock holdings, the traditional buffer against erratic weather conditions.

The SDP's long-term food production strategy emphasizes both dryland and irrigated agriculture. These production activities are supported by interventions in agricultural research to develop and disseminate appropriate technology to small farmers, particularly for the production of coarse grains.

The overwhelming dependence of Sahelian farmers upon low yield, dryland agriculture leaves them with little margin for food security in the face of poor weather conditions. Investments in irrigated agriculture are designed to exploit the region's river resources and provide a long-range defense against drought. Through the SDP, A.I.D. has provided assistance for irrigation research, disease control in areas where irrigation infrastructure is being developed, access roads in irrigation districts, and the resettlement of villages dislocated by large-scale irrigation infrastructure.

Because of the predominance of dryland agriculture in the Sahel, priority in agricultural food crop research has been given to developing high-yielding, drought resistant strains of millet and sorghum, the most commonly grown dry land food grains. A.I.D. has also revised its long-term strategy for dryland agriculture in recognition of its natural linkages and interdependencies with livestock production and forestry. A.I.D. views dryland food production as an element within an overall land use and farm management system.

In 1985, A.I.D. initiated an innovative farming systems research and extension project in Mali which seeks to place new technology within the reach of the small farmer. This approach recognizes the extreme complexity of Sahelian farming systems, and is sensitive to their many micro-ecological zones and diverse cropping patterns. This wide range of diversity also requires location specific research.

In Mali, the farming systems approach will be used as a means to formalize adaptive practices in a community setting. To do this, the efforts of agricultural specialists from several disciplines will be combined with those of farmers in the community. This working relationship will accelerate dissemination of new technology, including the conduct of research on local farm fields, under real farm conditions, and by collaborating farmers. Some of these farmers will work with the researchers to adapt the new technology to local conditions, while others will be given the opportunity to learn by observation. The farming systems research project in Mali supports A.I.D.'s basic strategy of forging an effective link between agricultural research and small farmers in the Sahel.

## 2. Policy Reform

The economic policy environment in the Sahel is a critical element in all elements of the development process, but particularly in the food production sector. A.I.D. believes that policy reforms can provide production incentives for small farmers, as well as improve the flow of investment into activities that will lead to increased food production. To stimulate such reforms in the Sahel, and particularly in Niger, Senegal, and Mali, A.I.D. is providing non-project assistance, i.e., ESF, P.L. 480, and SDP sector grants.

As a consequence of this emphasis over the past two years, the proportion of total SDP assistance devoted to policy reform has risen substantially. This emphasis acknowledges that the success of food production programs is contingent upon the existence of an appropriate policy environment, including appropriate marketing and price policies.

The Club du Sahel has provided a unique forum for continuing the dialogue on policy issues. In part this is because a policy-oriented environment now exists among the governments of the Sahelian countries. It has facilitated policy improvements in a number of instances. Another reason is that the IMF, the World Bank, other donors, and A.I.D. increasingly have included a broad range of policy conditions in the various program and project agreements being negotiated with the Sahelian countries. As a consequence, the policy reform process has begun to produce desirable results and the Sahelian governments have come to recognize that long-term development depends upon a restructuring of economic institutions and policies.

Policy dialogue on country specific issues is an integral part of A.I.D.'s country programs in the Sahel. In 1985, A.I.D. assisted with an in-depth review of private sector policies and institutions in Burkina Faso. This highly successful endeavor, which was carried out under the auspices of the Chamber of Commerce of Burkina Faso, drew a high level (and positive) response from the Burkina Faso Government.

In Niger, policy reform efforts focussed on reducing agricultural input subsidies so that budgetary resources might be allocated to more productive purposes.

In Senegal, the policy reform agenda covered changes in the ownership structure of grain marketing and agricultural input distributing institutions, increases in cereal prices, and actions to scale down the bureaucracy of the public sector. Policy revisions have included elimination of the fertilizer subsidy, changes in the distribution methods of agricultural inputs, and reductions in the number of state rural development agencies.

An Economic Policy and Reform Program initiative was negotiated in Mali in 1985. It will help improve the budgetary situation of Mali's public sector. A.I.D. has provided \$18 million in ESF, which will be disbursed over a three-year period in order to encourage fiscal reform. This program will affect a number of chronically deficit-producing state enterprises and an excessively large civil service bureaucracy. Some of these enterprises will be closed, and others will be sold to private sector interests. The government will reduce the size of its work force by limiting the entry of new employees, by providing incentives for early retirement, and by setting up a loan fund for retirees who wish to start a business in the private sector. In addition, the government has embarked upon an austerity program to reduce government expenditures and restructured the tax system to make its base broader and its application more equitable. Hopefully, this program will reduce the strain on the public budget, which previously had been unable to provide the amount of Malian funds available to support A.I.D. program activities.

As part of a related structural adjustment program, the Malian Government has changed its food subsidy policy in order to raise farm gate prices to farmers. As the potential for agricultural development in Mali is considered to be quite good, this policy change is expected to help increase food production.

### 3. The Private Sector's Role in Development

A major element of A.I.D.'s policy reform program in the Sahel is the special emphasis placed upon the creation of an environment in which private sector institutions and markets can

function in a responsible manner. The severe financial and human resource constraints in the Sahel require that these countries explore all alternatives and options to increase the pace and effectiveness of development. Increased reliance upon the private sector and its considerable resources provides just such a promising alternative. The potential resources of the private sector include local capital and skills not always available to governments, as well as financial institutions' resources and the possibility of attracting private external capital. Of course, an environment conducive to investment in productive enterprise, including a stable business climate, is key to the mobilization of private sector resources.

In 1985, A.I.D. carried out an extensive review of its country programs in the Sahel to determine if additional steps could be taken to bring the resources of the private sector into the development process. Interventions were also carried out to sensitize the private sector, and Sahelian Governments, to the benefits of mutual cooperation. The SDP will finance research to identify private sector interests which can benefit from increased opportunity, as well as to identify roles it can play in the development process. In a subsequent follow-on phase of this process, A.I.D. will promote dialogue between private sector interests and Sahelian governments as a first step in the cooperation process.

#### 4. Family Health Care

Public health care and voluntary family planning programs are emphasized within all A.I.D. country programs in the Sahel. These programs also have strong linkages with food production programs, i.e., there is a direct correlation between health status and farmer productivity. Population growth also affects the demand side of the food requirements/production equation.

Public health activities are focussed upon rural primary health care and the reduction of infant mortality. The goal of voluntary family planning programs is to reduce population pressure upon the Sahel's limited arable land and water resources. Since 1960, the total population of the Sahel has doubled to 35 million, a growth rate of almost three percent per year. Food production, however, has failed to keep pace with the Sahel's population increases.

In 1985, a number of the Sahelian states publicly acknowledged the seriousness of the population problem. Statements by high government officials supportive of family planning activities were made in Niger, Senegal and Mauritania, and A.I.D. bilateral family planning activities were initiated in several Sahelian countries for the first time, e.g., Burkina Faso. In addition, the population growth issue was addressed at the November 1985 meeting of the Club du Sahel in Milan, Italy. The final

communique of this conference requested the Secretariats of the CILSS and Club du Sahel to study the implication of demographic issues upon the economic development prospects of the Sahel.

Through a regional family planning initiatives project, SDP resources helped to sensitize Sahelian health ministries to the need for voluntary family planning programs. Projects to disseminate voluntary family planning information have been successfully started in Niger, Mali, and Senegal. This activity maintains an ongoing dialogue on family planning issues between A.I.D. and Sahelian governments, and helps to underscore the need to balance the rates of population and economic growth.

During the recent drought emergency, rural health activities focussed upon control of communicable diseases to prevent the intensified spread of disease often associated with shortages of food and water. In Mauritania, A.I.D. carried out an extensive program to immunize mothers and their children against communicable diseases.

In Mali, A.I.D. participated in a multi-donor program to control a potential cholera epidemic. This program retrained workers country wide and improved the reporting system for disease outbreaks.

In Senegal, a rural primary health care project in the Fatick and Kaolak regions rehabilitated a health care facility and trained health workers in basic health practices and hygiene. The project trained 750 community health workers, 178 midwives, and 40 sanitation workers, and extended primary health care to rural areas having no previous public health care facilities. A novel feature of this project was the provision of motorized bicycles to visiting nurses. Motorized transport improved the visitation rate into rural areas significantly.

#### 4. Training Activities

An increasing number of Sahelians are being trained through A.I.D.'s participant training programs. This trend reflects A.I.D.'s view that development resources devoted to activities in the training sector are highly effective.

Participant training programs included under the SDP stress training in technical areas, particularly agriculture, and management/administration. These skills are scarce in the Sahel, but critical for the long-term growth prospects of Sahelian economies.

In 1985, A.I.D. evaluated its SDP training activities, and determined that it needed to expand the training opportunities for women, as well as increase the number of trainees from the private sector. In addition, third country and undergraduate training will receive greater emphasis.

One measure of the effectiveness of A.I.D. training activities is the number of former trainees now assigned policy and decision-making roles in Sahelian governments. The 1985 training program evaluation determined that the number of such individuals is growing. In Mauritania, four participant trainees hold leadership positions in the Department of Agriculture, while another holds a high post in the private banking sector.

In Chad, fifty-one participants have been trained over the previous three years through A.I.D. programs, including thirteen in the United States. An additional forty-eight Chadians were trained in third countries.

In addition to the training opportunities provided under human resources development projects, many Sahelians receive training as part of specific A.I.D. bilateral programs and projects. An outstanding example is the agricultural training program carried out in concert with the International Crop Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT). In Mali, six agricultural scientists have earned graduate degrees through the ICRISAT program. In addition, ICRISAT has provided advanced technical training to forty-five Malian agricultural specialists.

## 6. Infrastructure and Maintenance

A.I.D. has begun to carry out selected infrastructural development and maintenance activities in the Sahel. Previously, the SDP gave higher priority to other development sectors and, largely, relinquished the infrastructure sector to other donors.

The 1984 revision of the development strategy for the Sahel, indicated that this sector is critical to agricultural development. Therefore, A.I.D. is now assisting selected infrastructure and maintenance activities in support of food production strategies. Investments in rural access roads, for example, increase production opportunities by opening up new markets, and encourage the geographic spread of development by bringing goods and services to rural consumers.

The SDP also focusses on improving the capacity of Sahelian governments to maintain infrastructure and facilities. Transport infrastructure, in particular, requires regular maintenance and upkeep, if constant access is to be maintained to rural farm areas in order to meet the requirements of the Sahel's developing agricultural sector.

Maintenance of existing infrastructure is a difficult problem in the Sahel for both budgetary and technical reasons. The rigors of a very difficult climate, which make maintenance expensive, and the poor financial condition of Sahelian governments, has

contributed to poor infrastructure maintenance in the area. Limited technical capacities, a lack of equipment, and the lack of financing to exploit natural resource maintenance opportunities are also constraints, e.g. Chad imports gravel for road maintenance because it lacks the equipment and technical ability to crush local rock deposits.

In 1985, A.I.D. initiated a project to strengthen Chad's capacity to carry out regular road maintenance. The project will reinstitute the regular maintenance of Chad's deteriorating road system and reconstruct a major arterial route in an agricultural production area. The project will enable the Public Works Authority (PWA) to maintain over 1,600 kilometers of road per year. In addition, the PWA will be able to rehabilitate sixty-three kilometers of road in an important agricultural zone. This will have a very positive effect on food production in the area.

Both bilateral and multilateral donors have responded to Chad's need for improved road transport, and this has made the coordination of donor activities an important issue in the infrastructure development sector. Such technical issues as standards and specifications for road construction require coordination, hopefully through an agreement on construction standards.

## V. TOWARD BETTER FINANCIAL AND PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

### A. Financial Management

In 1981, Congress enacted Section 121 (d) of the Foreign Assistance Act, which requires a determination by the A.I.D. Administrator that the countries of the Sahel have adequate accounting systems to control A.I.D. assistance funds made available to them. In response to Section 121 (d), A.I.D. has implemented a project to improve financial management as part of the SDP. The Sahel Regional Financial Management Project (SRFMP), and the host country review process, are the main instruments A.I.D. employs for improving the financial management of disbursements of SDP resources to Sahelian host countries.

In 1982, A.I.D. authorized the SRFMP to systematically develop improvements in financial management in each Sahelian country. Under this project, over 450 Sahelians have been trained in financial management skills, and a number of Sahelian institutions have adopted improved program accounting methods. The first phase of this project has been extended to June, 1986, and a second phase will follow immediately. The follow-on activity will emphasize the institutionalization of improved financial management methods within a broad range of Sahelian organizations and training programs, as well as train additional local managers. It will assist both governmental and private sector institutions.

### 2. Audit Reports

In 1985, the status of audit reports issued for SDP activities improved substantially. The number of audit recommendations declined, and seriousness of their nature diminished. This is a significant departure from the situation which existed during the early 1980s, when audit reports contained multiple recommendations, often involving the inability to account for SDP funds.

The most recent audit reports have focussed upon the refinement of project implementation, emphasizing the need for increased coordination with Sahelian government institutions. All recommendations have been closed for those projects with the most severe problems, e.g., Mils Mopti in Mali.

Since 1982, there has been a significant improvement in the financial administration of SDP activities. The tone of recent audits bears this out; there have been fewer critical audits, and it has been possible to close out recommendations promptly.

Table A

Total Annual Rainfall in the Sahel Countries  
(in millimeters)

<u>Country</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>
Burkina Faso	698	611	537	689
Chad	na	na	159	354
Gambia	731	603	663	962
Mali	545	na	609	722
Mauritania	124	71	29	142
Niger	298	354	292	395
Senegal	570	397	235	516

Source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Table B

Sahel Cereals Production  
(000s of metric tons)

<u>Country</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>
Burkina Faso	843	1175	1000	1100	1300
Cape Verde	13	4	3	3	3
Chad	507	460	500	315	650
Gambia	80	110	45	87	134
Mali	79	974	880	715	1170
Mauritania	34	20	15	20	60
Niger	803	1452	1431	780	1830
Senegal	624	780	515	660	1270
Total	<u>3613</u>	<u>4975</u>	<u>4389</u>	<u>3680</u>	<u>6500</u>
Population (millions)	25.4	32.6	33.7	34.1	35.7
Per Capita Production (kilograms)	138	153	130	108	179

Source: Estimates by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization

Table C

P.L. 480 Title II Food Aid Country Summaries  
((\$000))

<u>Country</u>	<u>FY 1984</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>FY 1985</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>FY 1986</u> <u>Estimate</u>	<u>FY 1987</u> <u>Projection</u>
Burkina Faso	13,790	16,621	6,154	6,806
Cape Verde	3,234	734	1,360	1,710
Chad	2,717	8,161	1,255	1,002
Gambia	3,265	2,599	832	3,143
Mali	6,524	16,181	5,078	1,400
Mauritania	7,146	6,902	2,004	4,370
Niger	800	19,904	-	-
Senegal	12,676	6,661	3,343	2,831
Total	<u>50,153</u>	<u>77,763</u>	<u>20,056</u>	<u>21,262</u>

Source: A.I.D., 1987 Congressional Presentation  
(Data do not include emergency food aid, ocean freight costs, or World Food Program allocations.)

Table D

U.S. Emergency Food Aid to the Sahel in FYs 1984 to 1986

<u>Country</u>	<u>(\$000)</u>		
	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1986 (est.)</u>
Burkina Faso	9,363	19,575	
Cape Verde	1,068	595	1,390
Chad	5,446	38,484	
Gambia	3,076	2,456	
Mali	4,672	32,313	12,568
Mauritania	7,354	23,030	70
Niger	66,391	9,118	
Senegal	13,269	4,051	
Total	<u>44,249</u>	<u>186,895</u>	<u>23,146</u>

Source: A.I.D. Bureau for Africa

\* Emergency food aid, including Section 416 programs, represents assistance provided in support of drought activities. It is distinguished from regular food programs, which are designed to support ongoing multi-lateral, PVO, Food for Work, and Maternal Child Health programs. Values include ocean freight costs.

Table E

Selected Economic Indicators for the Sahelian Countries

Country	Per Capita GNP in \$U.S. 19(*)	Average Annual Per Capita GNP Growth 1965-19(*)	Trade Balance (\$U.S. millions) 19( *	External Public Debt as % of GNP 19( *
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(\*) The applicable year is cited with each item of data.

Burkina Faso	180 (83)	1.4 (83)	-155.0 (82)	65 (83)
Cape Verde	320 (83)	n.a.	n.a.	136 (83)
Chad	79 (82)	n.a.	-21.0 (83)	76 (82)
Gambia	290 (83)	1.4 (83)	-79.0 (81)	125 (83)
Mali	160 (83)	1.2 (83)	-68.0 (83)	89 (83)
Mauritania	480 (83)	0.3 (83)	-63.0 (83)	237 (83)
Niger	240 (83)	-1.2 (83)	-69.0 (82)	71 (83)
Senegal	440 (83)	-0.5 (83)	-313.0 (83)	88 (83)

Source: A.I.D., FY 1987 Congressional Presentation, Economic and Social Data

Table F

Sahel Development Program: FYs 1978-1986  
(\$000)

Country	FY 1978	FY 1979	FY 1980	FY 1981	FY 1982	FY 1983	FY 1984	FY 1985	FY 1986	TOTAL
<b>Burkina Faso</b>										
SDP	2500	8386	9210	14122	11203	270	40	2790	5291	53812
ESF										
<b>Cape Verde</b>										
SDP	700	2457	3100	3084	3450	2210	389	2000	2587	19977
ESF										
<b>Chad</b>										
SDP	7700	2450	163			2000	3500	9075	4000	28888
ESF							3000	5000	9519	17519
<b>Gambia</b>										
SDP	952	4175	4680	5572	1219	3899	3737	4581	4000	32815
ESF										

<b>Mali</b>										
SDP	6375	16100	15500	14454	9611	9822	11200	10458	9000	102520
ESF								18000		18000
<b>Mauritania</b>										
SDP	4470	6058	2742	8500	6307	5146	3390	9362	3000	48975
ESF										
<b>Niger</b>										
SDP	5465	9511	9488	13655	12982	16000	19612	21000	16000	123713
ESF						5000	5000	5000	4373	19373
<b>Senegal</b>										
SDP	5300	10682	9963	14800	16200	14058	22885	22104	19285	135277
ESF						5000	10000	15000	11484	41484
<b>Sahel Regional</b>										
SDP	16385	15334	21632	21382	32853	31596	40255	22934	21595	223966
ESF										
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>49847</b>	<b>75153</b>	<b>76478</b>	<b>95569</b>	<b>93825</b>	<b>95001</b>	<b>123008</b>	<b>147304</b>	<b>110134</b>	<b>866319</b>