



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

NCBA CLUSA
The National Cooperative Business Association • CLUSA International

- Resilience and Economic Growth in the Sahel -

Enhanced Resilience

REPUBLIC of NIGER and BURKINA FASO

Cooperative Agreement No. 625-A-14-00001

REGIS-ER

Quarterly Report

1 JANUARY - 31 MARCH 2014

May 2014

Bldv Mali Béro, 73 Rue Issa Béri

B.P. 12 909 NIAMEY

Tel.: (227) 20 35 16 48

Table of contents

Acronyms and abbreviations	1
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
INTRODUCTION.....	5
1. SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS COMPONENT	6
General considerations.....	6
Analysis of reference values and progress toward indicator targets.....	6
IR 1.1 Diversified economic opportunities	6
<i>Training of producers in business development services and value added concepts.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Expand the CBSP program and services available for agriculture</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Development of animal feed, watering, and fattening enterprises.....</i>	<i>7</i>
IR 1.2 Intensified production and marketing.....	7
<i>Assist producer organizations in becoming more functional.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Biological reclamation of degraded lands (BDL).....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Improved farming technologies</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Irrigation strategy for REGIS-ER.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Training in edible legume production</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Conservation agriculture.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Home gardens and BDL sites transformed to moringa gardens.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Better land management through payment for environmental services.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Sensitize populations on climate change adaptation</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Improved seed production.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Production of native and grafted fruit trees</i>	<i>11</i>
IR 1.3 Better access to financial services.....	11
<i>Training in functional business literacy and numeracy.....</i>	<i>11</i>
2. Governance and Natural Resource Management Component.....	12
General considerations.....	12
Analysis of reference values and progress toward indicator targets.....	12
<i>IR 2.1. Strengthened natural resource management.....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>IR 2.2. Strengthened management of risks and catastrophes.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>IR 2.3. Strengthened conflict management.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>IR 2.4. Strengthened government and regional capacity and coordination</i>	<i>13</i>

TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

3. Health and Nutrition Component	14
General considerations.....	14
Analysis of reference values and progress toward indicator targets.....	14
<i>IR 3.1. Improved access to potable water</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>IR 3.2. Improved health and nutrition practices.....</i>	<i>14</i>
4. Crosscutting activities	16
Coordination and management	16
Grant fund	16
Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, and Analysis	16
Training and Communication	17
Gender	17
Environment	18
Difficulties and proposed solutions.....	18

Acronyms and abbreviations

English	French	Meaning
POAS	POAS	<i>Plan d'occupation et d'affectation des sols</i> (Land use plan)
-	CCA	<i>Cellule Crise Alimentaire</i> (Niger Government Food Crisis Response Unit)
3N	3N	Initiative du GoN Nigériens Nourrissent les Nigériens
A2N	A2N	Africa 2000 Network
ADROC	ADROC	Action pour la Dynamisation et Renforcement des Organisations Communautaires
AGRHYMET	AGRHYMET	Centre Agro-Hydrologique Météorologique
AMG	AMG	African Market Garden (<i>Jardin Potager African</i>)
APOR	APOR	Actions pour la Promotion des Organisations Rurales
APS	APS	Business Development Services
AREN	AREN	Association pour la Redynamisation de l'Elevage au Niger
Arziki	Arziki	USAID Niger Food Security Project <i>qui a pris fin le 31 mars 2014</i>
BDL	BDL	Bio-Reclamation of Degraded Lands (<i>Récupération biologique des terres dégradées</i>)
C4D	C4D	<i>Communication pour le Développement</i> (Communication for Development)
CA	CA	Agriculture de conservation (<i>Conservation Agriculture</i>)
CB	BC	Banque Céréalière (<i>Cereal Bank</i>)
CBO	CBO	Community-based Organization
CBSP	APS	Agent Prestataire de Services (<i>Community-based Solution Provider CBSP</i>)
CCA	ACC	Adaptation au Changement Climatique (<i>Climate Change Adaptation</i>)
CLTS	ATPC	<i>Assainissement total piloté par la communauté</i> (Community-Led Total Sanitation)
COFOB/ COFOCOM	COFOB/ COFOCOM	<i>Commission Foncière de Base</i> (Village-level Land Titling Agency) <i>Commission Foncière de la Commune</i> (Commune-level Land Titling Agency)
COGEHA	COGEHA	<i>Comité Local de Gestion Hygiène et Assainissement</i> (Hygiene and Sanitation Committee)
CRWT	TPC	<i>Terrasse en pierre suivant les contours</i> (Contour Rock Wall Terrace)
CSA	CSA	Agriculture adaptée au climat (<i>Climate Smart Agriculture</i>)
CSB	CP	Cordon pierreux (<i>Contour Stone Bund</i>)
DEAR	DEAR	<i>Méthode de comptabilité transparente</i> (Double Entry Accounting Register)
ER	ER	Résilience rehaussée (<i>Enhanced Resiliency</i>)
EWS	SAP	<i>Système d'Alerte Précoce</i> (Early Warning System)
FBLT	AFA	<i>Alphabétisation fonctionnelle d'affaires</i> (Functional Business Literacy Training)
FFP	FFP	Food For Peace (USAID-funded food program)
FMNR	RNA	<i>Régénération Naturelle Assistée</i> (Farmer-Managed Natural Regeneration FMNR)
FP	PF	<i>Planification familial</i> (Family Planning)
GAP	GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GENOVICO	GENOVICO	<i>Gestion Non-Violent des Conflits</i> (Non-Violent Conflict Resolution)
GNRM, H/GNRM	GGRN, R/GGRN	<i>Responsable/Gouvernance et Gestion des Ressources Naturelles</i> ((Head of/Governance and Natural Resource Management component), REGIS-ER
GoBF	GoBF	<i>Gouvernement du Burkina Faso</i> (Government of Burkina Faso)
GoN	GoN	<i>Gouvernement du Niger</i> (Government of Niger)
HH	Ménage	<i>Ménage</i> (Household)
HN, H/HN	SN, R/SN	<i>(Responsable/) Composante Santé/Nutrition et WASH</i> (Head of/ Health/Nutrition and WASH component), REGIS-ER
ICRISAT	ICRISAT	International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics

English	French	Meaning
ICT	TIC	Technologies d'Information et de Communication (information and communication technology)
INRAN	INRAN	Institut National de la Recherche Agricole au Niger
IR	IR	Intermediate Result, as used in USAID's causal model - results framework for its projects (<i>Résultat Intermédiaire, utilisé dans le cadre de résultats utilisé par l'USAID dans ses projets</i>)
LPS	S/EP	Spécialiste en Élevage/Pastoralisme (Livestock / Pastoralism Specialist)
MAG	MAG	Ministère de l'Agriculture
MFI	IMF	Micro-finance Institution (<i>Institution de Micro-Finance</i>)
MHE	MHE	Ministère d'Hydrologique et de l'Environnement
MIS	SIM	Système d'Information pour la Gestion (Management Information System)
MSI	MSI	Marie Stopes International
MtM	MtM	Mother to Mother (<i>Mère à mère</i>)
NCBA CLUSA	NCBA CLUSA	The National Cooperative Business Association/ Cooperative League of USA
OIM	OIM	Office Internationale des Migrants (Office of International Migration)
OSP	OSP	Orange Sweet Potato (<i>Patate à chair orange</i>)
PfP	PfP	Payment for Performance (<i>Paiement selon performance</i>)
PHH	PHH	Post Harvest Handling (<i>Traitement post-récolte</i>)
PMP	PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan (<i>Plan-tableau pour suivre la performance</i>)
PO	OP	Organisation des producteurs (Producers' Organization)
PS	PS	Private Sector (<i>secteur privé</i>)
PTA	PTA	Plan de travail annuel (Annual Workplan)
QC	CQ	Contrôle de la qualité (Quality Control)
RC	RC	Réseau californien (California Irrigation System)
RECA	RECA	Réseau des Chambres d'Agriculture du Niger (Network of Niger Granges)
REGIS-AG	REGIS-AG	Resilience and Economic Growth in the Sahel – Accelerated Growth
REGIS-ER	REGIS-ER	Resilience and Economic Growth in the Sahel – Enhanced Resilience
RISE	RISE	Resilience in the Sahel Enhanced
S/AGT	S/AGT	Spécialiste en technologie agricole (Agricultural Technology Specialist)
SAREL	SAREL	Programme Recherche et Compréhension (Sahel Research and Learning)
SBCC	CCCS	Communication pour le changement social et de comportement (<i>social behavior change communication</i>)
SHELADIA	SHELADIA	Cabinet spécialisant en irrigation et suivi/évaluation basé aux E-U- partenaire REGIS-ER (Irrigation/ M&E company based in USA-REGIS-ER partner)
SICR KOKARI	SICR KOKARI	Service d'Intermédiation en Crédit Rural (Local Rural Credit Service)
SLC, H/SLC	BED, R/BED	Responsable/composante Bien-Être Durable (Head of/Sustainable Livelihoods component) , REGIS-ER
SWC	CES/DRS	Conservation des eaux et des sols/Défense et Restauration des sols (Soil and Water Conservation activities)
TA	AT	Assistance technique (Technical Assistance)
TOT	TOT	Training of Trainers (<i>Formation des formateurs</i>)
URC	URC	University Research Company
VA	AV	Animateur villageois (Village Animator)
WASA	EAA	Eau et Assainissement Afrique (Water and Sanitation Africa)
WASH	EHA	Eau Hygiène Assainissement (Water Sanitation and Hygiene)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the first full quarter of REGIS-ER implementation, activities carried out in Niger and Burkina Faso focused on recruitment, meeting with GON and GOBF authorities, FFP partners and subcontractors; rental and furnishing of country-level and regional-level offices; procurement; and transitioning field activities in Tillabéri South from Arziki to REGIS-ER. Five regional team members and ten facilitators were hired to continue activities in the four communes of Tagazar, Tondikandia, Imanan, and Filingué.

REGIS-ER's strategy is to continue and expand successful activities initiated under Arziki and other West Africa projects including USAID|Wula Nafaa, USAID|Yaajeende, and the Moringa Project. In the first few months of operation, complementary field activities are being developed in USAID|REGIS-ER's agriculture, governance, and health and nutrition components.

In the non-capital regions where the Project is working, three agents were sent to Maradi, two to Zinder, and two to Tillabéri North by the end of March. These initial teams facilitated the selection of communes for intervention and prepared for the arrival of facilitators and regional teams. Intervention zones have been finalized for four work zones in Niger (Tillabéri-Nord, Tillabéri-Sud, Maradi, Zinder) that cover seven departments (Tillabéri, Balléyara, Filingué, Guidan Roudji, Dakoro, Magaria, Mirriah) and ten communes: Sakoira, Kourteye, Tagazar, Tondikandia, Imanan, Filingué, Guidan Roudji, Sabon Machi, Bandé, and Droum.

In Burkina Faso, the Program identified a candidate for the Program Representative whose CV has been approved by USAID. The Ouagadougou office has been rented since the beginning of the quarter, and the processes of renting three regional offices and selecting intervention communes in the target regions of Burkina began in February. The final selections of six communes in three regions are:

- Dori and its two communes, Seytenga and Titabé in the Sahel Region;
- Kaya and its two communes, Barsalgho and Namissigma, in the North Central Region;
- and Bogandé's communes of Manni and Gayeri in the Eastern Region.

Management, administrative and financial procedures are being set up by support missions carried out by the Chief of Party, the Deputy Chief of Party, and the Director of Finance and Administration. The Deputy Chief of Party has been acting as interim Program Representative in the Ouagadougou office since February while awaiting the arrival of the new REGIS-ER Burkina Program Representative. The process of hiring the rest of the regional and field teams will finish in early May. All regional staff participated in an orientation to the Project and its strategy held in Niamey in March.

A summary of the Project's technical achievements are described by component as follows.

Sustainable Livelihoods (SLC)

The activities of the Sustainable Livelihoods Component focused on selecting key products for processing during the 2013-2014 fiscal year: moringa, dolique, okra, cabbage, and onion.

A profile was developed to solicit Community-Based Solution Providers or CBSP. 71 village animators (VA) applied and were evaluated for their potential to become CBSP in the Tillabéri-Sud work zone. This includes 25 individuals from Tondikandia, 11 from Tagazar, 14 from Filingué, and 21 from Imanan.

During the quarter, five irrigation system models were identified as appropriate to the Project's goals: oasis garden, piped irrigation, California system, modified California system, and fenced market garden plots. Seed procurement for rain-fed and irrigated agriculture is underway for 2014.

Governance and Natural Resource Management (GNRMC)

The component spent the first quarter contacting Niamey partners, collecting support documentation on vulnerability, and initiating local convention activity in the commune of Tondikandia.

A draft guide on the steps to develop a local convention was developed by a consultant, and Regional team members were trained in the steps. Steering committees are being set up for the communes of Tondikandia and Damana, and four geospatial thematic maps will be produced with assistance from USGS.

A guide for farmer-managed natural regeneration was developed and given to the regional teams to use for implementation of NRM activities. FMNR is programmed for sites in Balléyara/Tondikandia, Agou, Toumboram Atta, Bangario, Sansani Tabla, and Sourgou Koira/ Kandoum. Preparations for training and refresher courses are in progress.

Agreements to collaborate with Red Cross (to facilitate existing modules for disaster training in Niger) and GENOVICO (to participate in conflict resolution activities) are being finalized.

Health /Nutrition and WASH

The quarter was dedicated to hiring and training staff at all levels. An initial training on improving quality of health services was given in January. Partners and organizations were contacted during the quarter so that all parties could become familiar with the Project.

SPRING conducted an assessment of the status of its stakeholders between November 2013 and January 2014 under REGIS-ER. Results from this assessment will help the component to refine its intervention strategy. An operational strategy for implementing the PTA and a plan for communications for social behavior change are being drawn up.

INTRODUCTION

The initiative “Resilience in the Sahel Enhanced (RISE)” is a United States Government (USG) initiative with a goal of building resilience in vulnerable populations of the Sahel region of Africa. To reach its goal, RISE assures the coordination and synergy between new investments such as SAREL, or Sahel Research and Learning; REGIS-AG, or Resilience and Economic Growth in the Sahel - Accelerated Growth; and REGIS-ER, or Resilience and Economic Growth in the Sahel - Enhanced Resilience. At the end of five years, the RISE initiative and its focus programs will reach two million vulnerable beneficiaries through improved resilience systems.

The main objectives of USAID | REGIS-ER are to build food security by strengthening the four pillars, which are food availability (through greater productivity); accessibility (to better products; services, and information); utilization (of food resources and clean water); and stability (through good governance over food and natural resources, and mitigation of climate change and disasters). A key element of the Program is nutrition-led agriculture.

REGIS-ER will assist producers to earn revenues from activities other than subsistence farming, such as market gardening and state-of-the art irrigation. Target populations will be assisted in better climate change adaptation and will be trained in recovery after major disasters. Nutrition will be improved through moringa, selected crops, home-based gardens, and market gardens, with a focus on family nutrition and children under five years old.

The intervention strategy is based on a close collaboration with partners in the target zones. REGIS-ER will begin its work in the same communes or villages where partners are already working. USAID’s Food For Peace (FFP) partners have already been working for some time in the two countries covered by REGIS-ER; this includes Save the Children, Mercy Corps, CRS, and others.

USAID | REGIS-ER started up in November, 2013. Since that time, the management team and the key staff have been building the components, hiring and orienting initial activities in the office and the field.

REGIS-ER is working in four areas of Niger: two in the Tillabéri Region, one in the Maradi Region, and one in the Zinder Region. In Burkina Faso, the Project is working in the Sahel Region (Dori Department), the North Central Region (Kaya Department), and the Eastern Region (Bogande Department). The Program is integrated with national resilience and food security initiatives in Burkina Faso and Niger. In Niger, it is the 3N initiative (Nigeriens Nourishing Nigeriens); in Burkina it is the National Rural Sector Program.

The USAID | REGIS-ER consortium is led by NCBA CLUSA in collaboration with University Research Company (URC), Dimagi, Inc., and Sheladia, as well as seven local organizations: AREN, APOR, ADROC, MWANGAZA, EAA, A2N, and KOKARI.

1. SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS COMPONENT

General considerations

The origin of the Sustainable Livelihoods Component's (SLC) name is "Increased and Sustainable Economic Well-being", the first result in REGIS-ER's results framework.

The goal of SLC is to provide producers at all levels with means to attain resilience and food security in the face of recurring climate events. The component works mostly to strengthen two pillars of food security: availability through greater productivity, and access to better services, information, and products. Herders and crop producers will gain the skills needed to use new, proven technologies so that they can diversify and intensify production, which will lead to better nutrition, increased revenues, and the potential for accumulating household assets. At the same time, financial services will be provided, as will business-related training.

The technologies in the program that will improve productivity include access to bio-fortified tested seed; expansion of conservation agriculture; climate change adaptation technologies; water harvesting; soil erosion reduction; agroforestry; and farmer-managed natural regeneration. These technologies are included in the nutrition-led agriculture approach as practiced in Senegal through USAID|Yaajeende.

In the SLC, a goal is to make sure that women are in the forefront of beneficiaries and participate in all the activities, especially in terms of access to plots of land for food production following a legal process. This is one of the precepts of the biological reclamation of degraded lands or BDL.

Analysis of reference values and progress toward indicator targets

RESULT 1: Increased and Sustainable Economic Well-being

Indicator	Program performance : 2013-2014						
	Quarter				Current fiscal year		
IR 1.2: Intensified production and marketing	1	2	3	4	Cumulative value	Target yr 1	% target yr 1
1.2.5. Number of people who received short term training in agriculture productivity and food security in the agric sector thanks to assistance from the USG	-	1153			1153	40 000	2.9%
proportion who were women		1044			1044		
1.2.10. Number of vulnerable households who benefit directly from USG interventions	-	1153			1153		

Comment: 40 women delegates from the 20 BDL sites were trained; they in turn trained 719 other women in vegetable production. 36 other producers, of whom six are women, and three agricultural technical service agents were trained in Balléyara in hot season vegetable production. 16 producers were also trained in conservation agriculture in March. 339 persons, of whom 279 are women, were trained in CCA concepts.

Counting each person trained as representing one household, we presume that 1,153 households benefited directly from USG interventions.

IR 1.1 Diversified economic opportunities

Training of producers in business development services and value added concepts

Key products selected for processing in the first fiscal year (2013-2014) are moringa, dolique, okra, cabbage, and onion.

The head of SLC and the agriculture specialist developed, revised, and corrected the technical manual for training in moringa in Niger.

Expand the CBSP program and services available for agriculture

A profile for Community-based Solution Providers (CBSP) was developed. 71 village animators applied and were evaluated as potential CBSP for Tillabéri-Sud. They will cover four communes as follows: 25 AV from Tondikandia, 11 from Tagazar, 14 from Filingué, and 21 from Imanan.

Development of animal feed, watering, and fattening enterprises

In the livestock domain, a strategy for implementing habbanaye¹ for impoverished women was developed by the livestock specialist. Technical modules on animal production and health are being drawn up, covering habbanaye, fattening, making fodder, and training livestock auxiliaries. The livestock specialist has already worked with regional personnel in Tillabéri-Sud to select 18 villages for this activity.

The plan is to identify the most vulnerable 288 women for habbanaye. Next quarter, the activity will be expanded to other regions.

IR 1.2 Intensified production and marketing

Assist producer organizations in becoming more functional

During the quarter, REGIS-ER focused on training in functional literacy in Tillabéri-Sud. The target population was women who belong to vegetable producer groups in BDL and Africa Market Gardens (AMG). The details on this activity are under IR 1.3 below. Men who work in market gardens received the same functional business literacy training.

Biological reclamation of degraded lands (BDL)

The transition of Arziki activities into REGIS-ER included training women in vegetable production during the cool dry season on 20 irrigated BDL sites in Tillabéri-Sud. Arziki had trained 20 women delegates from the groups at the BDL and AMG sites in December, 2013. In all, 40 women and seven girls were trained.



Girl carrying water for market garden - Gao Tawaye BDL (2/ 2014)

As soon as the field team was set up in the regional office at Balléyara for Tillabéri-Sud in January 2014, the facilitators and technicians provided improved seed in small amounts, then trained women who carried out further training on gardening in BDL sites.

The training passed on by 40 women delegates resulted in 719 women being trained; they are active in vegetable production in Tillabéri-Sud. Vegetables produced for home consumption and sales are tomatoes, cabbage, lettuce, eggplant, onions, carrots, watermelon, and cowpeas. Irrigated and fenced BDL sites represent the first opportunity for landless women to produce vegetables.

¹ **Habbanaye:** This is a gift of three goats given to each impoverished woman in the form of a loan during 15 months. The goats are provided the services of a breeder male, one per group of four beneficiaries. After 15 months, each woman with 3 new kids will give them to another benefiting woman identified in advance, as long as they are at least 6 months old. At the end of the cycle, the rams will be collected and made available to the new beneficiaries. It is a process that requires good coordination.

Improved farming technologies

REGIS-ER's Tillabéri-Sud team is composed of 22 people. They were trained in the use of two types of quality inspection sheets: one for BDL, California irrigation, and market garden sites; and one for the delivery and monitoring of moringa plants at BDL sites.

During a workshop held in Niamey in February, 22 staff members (of whom four are women) were trained in how to transplant and maintain moringa plants.

36 additional producers, of whom six are women, and three local agricultural technical services agents (2 district heads and one departmental head), were trained in improved hot season garden production in Balléyara. The participants received kits with the following seeds in them: heat-resistant tomatoes; Konni variety of okra; Maya lettuce; heat-resistant Oxylus cabbage; hibiscus; carrots; and eggplant. With these kits, the beneficiaries repeated the training in their own villages.

An estimate of seed and inputs needed for the rainy season, the dry season, and production on BDL sites was drawn up and submitted to USAID.

Irrigation strategy for REGIS-ER

Five model irrigation sites were identified with help from Sheladia's irrigation consultant, using five irrigation models:

- (1) The oasis garden: uses manual or solar pump technology and cement basins to distribute water
- (2) Hose irrigation: uses a gas-powered pump and pipes to distribute water to basins in sandy soils
- (3) California system: same technology as used by the Arziki Project for clay soils
- (4) Modified California system: up to 1km away from the Niger River (solar pump technology and California system)
- (5) Standard fence and well market garden plot (fenced and irrigated BDL)

The irrigation strategies for Tillabéri-Sud and Tillabéri-Nord were also developed during the quarter. Tillabéri South (with proximity to markets and excellent asphalt road) has potential to produce vegetables (especially moringa) throughout the year. Irrigation activities will focus on the Dallol Bosso (high water table) where cement-lined wells (women's irrigation) and boreholes (men and youth) are all good choices. Chinese gasoline pump technology and water distribution using flexible hoses will continue, and solar pumps will be tested.

In Tillabéri-Nord, the Niger River is under-utilized. Farmers produce during the rainy season and while the river is receding from the banks. However, after February/March, irrigated agriculture tends to completely cease, with exceptions such as manioc and hot pepper that resist drought and need less water. Moringa is rarely irrigated, and is thus less productive. A REGIS-ER strategy is to use solar pump technology to pump and transport water to protected sites that are far from the river, where agroforestry species and moringa are intercropped with annual vegetables. Lower-cost Chinese pumping systems can be tested to support women's groups who produce moringa and vegetables.

Training in edible legume production

The SLC team identified edible legumes and included them in the request for inputs made to USAID-Senegal in March 2014. For the 2013-2014 fiscal year, the accent was placed on growing dolique (*Dolichos lablab*).

This legume has two main uses - for animal and human consumption. It grows in multiple systems: in association with staple crops, in floodplain agriculture, and in irrigated sites. The plan for Tillabéri-Sud is to



Women learn to mulch tomato plants with millet straw (Balleyara, 2/2014)

continue to introduce dolique as an irrigated crop, since the water table is not deep. For Tillabéri-Nord, dolique will be introduced as a floodplain crop along the river, where soils contain more clay, are more fertile, and require less watering.

The zone will need partial subsidies for producers so that they can construct traditional fences around dolique fields to keep animals out.

A strategy for Maradi and Zinder is yet to be worked out. For Burkina Faso, dolique will be a floodplain or irrigated crop.

Conservation agriculture

REGIS-ER hired a conservation agriculture (CA) consultant from Senegal to conduct a series of trainings in Niger. Sixteen producers were trained in March 2014 in Tillabéri-Sud. The same training will be conducted in Zinder, Maradi, and Tillabéri-Nord in April. Likewise, in Burkina Faso, the Program is working with INERA to develop training sessions in CA.

CA has several components, of which the following are planned for REGIS-ER's strategy:

- Promotion of crops with high yields that are highly resistant to drought, such as HPK millet, ISV 128 cowpea, and Malisor sorghum
- A recommendation to leave crop residues in the fields after harvest²
- Use of zaï pits to harvest water and hold organic fertilizer (for 2014, each farmer having received training in CA will plant a 100 m² parcel with zaï or else will have the field plowed with the ripper instead of using traditional plowing methods)
- Promotion of the best tree types to go with fields: in the Sahel, the gao tree (*Faidherbia albida*) is the best one for rain-fed agriculture fields. It can be grown using farmer-managed natural regeneration or FMNR, by seed in nursery beds with out-planting, and by direct seeding in zaï pits, as it is sometimes practiced in Burkina Faso, in July. In all cases, for the first two to three years, the young seedlings must be protected from wandering livestock.
- A new technology being proposed by REGIS-ER is planting live fences or barriers using *Leptadenia hastata*.



Leptadenia hastata grown in the household concession - Bonkoukou, Filingué - Tillab.Sud



Dramatically positive effects of Gao tree on millet production in the rainy season - Filingue 9/2013

Leptadenia is planted along the contour every 10 meters. Live fences work well to reduce wind erosion; the plant adds mulch to the soil, and only donkeys eat the leaves. If the leaves are prepared, they provide good nutrition.³

² This is a difficult task in Niger, considering the customs. Farmers must be convinced that it is profitable to apply mulch after having sown millet. REGIS-ER will set up demonstration sites for mulching with six farmers during the coming rainy season.

³ Fresh leaves from *Leptadenia hastata* contain, for each 100 g: water 81 g; energy 54 kcal; protein 4.9 g; fats 0.2 g; carbohydrate 11 g; fiber 4.7 g; Ca 417 mg; P 94 mg; Fe 5.4 mg; vitamin A 4915 mg; thiamine 0.25 mg, riboflavin 0.35 mg, niacine 1.9 mg, ascorbic acid 78 mg (Leung, W.-T.W., Busson, F. & Jardin, C., 1968).

Home gardens and BDL sites transformed to moringa gardens

In 2014, REGIS-ER is introducing moringa and baobab as garden plants in concessions to improve household nutrition. To carry this out, the Program will help establish tree nurseries to generate seedlings. They will be maintained and managed by the private sector or producer organizations and possibly on currently irrigated BDL sites. Trees planted in concessions will need protection from animals.

Moringa is the main plant grown in BDL sites that are being converted into moringa gardens. A manual was produced this quarter to help producers set up their sites. A checklist is being used along with the manual to improve garden sites in Tillabéri-Sud where women have received 25 seedlings already.

Better land management through payment for environmental services

Four communities in Tillabéri-Sud (Sourgo Koira, Gabda Fandou, Loki Damana, Sansane Tabla) carried out climate change adaptation activities this quarter, including contour terraces and stone bunds. REGIS-ER's approach is based on a system set up by the Arziki Project for payment based on performance for ravine control, water harvesting, and long-term land-on-loan registered documents.

The quarter was REGIS-ER's first for payment based on performance in Tillabéri-Sud. Four villages are seriously threatened by ravines and floods that have already destroyed rainy season crops and placed homes and other infrastructure in danger.

The table below shows length data converted into the total number of hectares covered by water and soil conservation structures.



Correctly built Contour Rock Wall Terraces (CRWTs) at Gabda Fandou, Tillabéri South, March 2014. These terraces, built on slopes of the escarpments, significantly retard run off, stop gullyng, and improve aquifer recharge.

ACTIVITIES	Sourgo koira		Gabdou Fandou		Loki Damana		Sansani Tabla		Total	
	m	ha	m	ha	m	ha	m	ha	m	ha
Bunds	2,004	10.02	6,131	30.66	10,361	51.80	1,200	6	19,696	98.48
CRWT	450	0.69	365	0.56	300	0.46	200	0.31	1,315	2.02
Total in ha		10.71		31.22		52.27		6.31		100.50

NB - m = meters, which are converted to a hectare equivalent as a function of the distance between lines and the steepness of the slope. The conversion varies between one hectare per 200 m of bunds (lines 50 m apart, slope at 1%) and one hectare per 900 m of bunds (lines 10 m apart, slope at 45%).

Sensitize populations on climate change adaptation

All of the 339 villagers involved in building water harvest and ravine control structures, including 279 women, were trained in the basic principles of climate change adaptation.



Women construct contour stone bunds at Sourgo Koira Village, Tillabéri South, Feb. 2014. These previously landless women now have land where they will plant hardy vegetables. The bunds harvest water in significant quantities.

Improved seed production

The SLC team identified the best improved seeds to be ordered for USAID approval in March 2014. The seeds of millet, sorghum, groundnut, cowpea, pigeon peas, dolique, and manioc will be used on demonstration plots covering 181 hectares.

To promote fruit tree production, the target species for seed purchase are *Moringa oleifera*, *Moringa stenopetala*, *Adansonia digitata*, *Ziziphus spina-christi*, *Citrus volkamerinia*, and *Mangifera indica*.

Production of native and grafted fruit trees

REGIS-ER is in the process of completing the installation of six fruit tree nurseries at the homes of community-based solution providers (CBSP) in Tillabéri-Sud. The Program has ordered all fruit tree varieties recommended by ICRISAT for the nurseries in Liboré and Sadoré (mango, lemon, Pomme du Sahel). This gives nursery operators access to “mother trees” that will supply grafts for future trees to be sold. The plan is to duplicate the model in Tillabéri-Sud across all work zones of the Project. 36 new nursery managers and 20 women from selected BDL and AMG sites will be trained and supplied with kits to set up their units.

IR 1.3 Better access to financial services

Training in functional business literacy and numeracy

The SLC team identified best practices and related topics for training in functional business literacy. The target themes are agriculture, moringa growing, and adaptation to climate change. Information that is developed will be shared with cluster teams at the regional level so that each member will become familiar with the specific content of the training and can transfer the knowledge to REGIS-ER beneficiaries.

A simplified manual on accounting using double-entry records was developed and translated into French. The targets are the CBSP who will be trained during the next quarter.

2. Governance and Natural Resource Management Component

General considerations

To address the third pillar of food security, stability in governance, REGIS-ER will create the conditions necessary to establish a partnership between local authorities, civil society organizations, natural resource management groups, producer organizations, the local private sector, and the media. Governance activities will focus on the local level as it builds capacity in decentralized decision making, planning, administration, and monitoring, while creating vertical and horizontal integration paths. A series of local plans (natural resource, disaster risk, and conflict management) will be integrated into local development strategies and action plans. The plans will be matriculated with existing systems at the province or department level within regions.

During the quarter, component team members attended training for the Tillabéri-Sud regional team in the steps required to elaborate a local convention at the commune level. Other activities include selecting FMNR sites, identifying plant production sites, evaluating tree seedling needs, and the beginning of the first local convention pilot exercise in Tondikandia in Niger.

Analysis of reference values and progress toward indicator targets

RESULT 2: Governance and Institutions strengthened

Indicator	Program performance : 2013-2014						
	Quarter				Current fiscal year		
	1	2	3	4	Cumulative value	Target yr 1	% target yr 1
IR 2.1: Strengthened natural resource management							
2.1.3. Number of hectares under improved technologies or management practices REFERENCE : 0	-	100.5			100.5	[to be decided]	[to be decided]

Comment: 100.5 ha corresponds to the area covered by anti-erosion structures (stone bunds and terraces) built in four villages of Tillabéri-Sud: Sansane Tabla, Loki Damana, Gabdou Fandou, Sourgo Koira. When local conventions cover commune areas, these will enter into the calculation. Targets for this indicator are still being finalized.

The quarter was dedicated to setting up the core team, contacting partners, planning priority actions for start-up, developing tools and methodologies, and building capacity of regional teams to take on governance activities. Field activities will be more fully underway in the coming quarter.

IR 2.1. Strengthened natural resource management

In the context of developing the local convention and land use map, the Project set up a steering committee for the commune of Tondikandia in Tillabéri-Sud, Niger. A manual containing steps that will be taken was developed; two consultants are assisting the component with the pilot sites.

A guide for farmer-managed natural regeneration (FMNR) was also drawn up and made available to the regional teams to implement NRM activities.

The Project teams carried out diagnostics to estimate the number of trees and the training needs at work sites.

At the end of the process, six sites were selected for FMNR: Balléyara /Tondikandia Agou, Tomboram Atta, Bangario, Sansani Tabla, and Sourgou Koira/Kandoum.

Four geospatial maps are being developed by the USGS specialist working with the USAID-Dakar Joint Planning Cell. The maps will be drawn up for Tondikandia and Guidan Roudji communes.

IR 2.2. Strengthened management of risks and catastrophes

The national level disaster prevention unit and food security crisis units (CCA, Red Cross/Niger, and OIM) were contacted this quarter.

A Memorandum of Understanding is being developed Red Cross so that REGIS-ER can take advantage of existing training modules for Niger. Next quarter, the same will be done for Burkina Faso.

IR 2.3. Strengthened conflict management

As part of working with existing conflict management structures, the team contacted the Permanent Secretary of the Rural Code and GENOVICO network representatives. It was decided that GENOVICO will assist REGIS-ER in the training of commissions and committees at the commune level who work with conflict management issues. A Memorandum of Understanding to bring this to fruition is in progress.

In addition, the team has held meetings with Permanent Secretary of the Rural Code in Niamey that has just published the latest edition of a handbook on how to prevent and manage the most common conflicts regarding the use of natural resources in Niger.

IR 2.4. Strengthened government and regional capacity and coordination

Eight common themes and related target groups were identified in the context of the national strategy for building capacity in the communes of Niger. The Project will adopt a similar approach in the next quarter.

3. Health and Nutrition Component

General considerations

With a goal of improving vital issues in health, nutrition, potable water, and hygiene - particularly among the most vulnerable populations - the Health/Nutrition Component of REGIS-ER (HNC) will undertake a range of innovations to improve public awareness of health, nutrition, and WASH. Activities will be integrated with REGIS-ER's nutrition-oriented agriculture program, and will use social behavior change communications that address attitudes and habits of the target populations.

In response to the third food security pillar, the Project will promote the rational use of food, diet diversification, access to new fortified food varieties, better access to health services, and better access to potable water, while it builds capacity of communities in meeting their own health needs.

The HN will also focus on Social Behavior Change Communications (SBCC) and improving the quality of health services. Target populations are mainly children less than five years old, breastfeeding and pregnant mothers, and women and girls who are the most vulnerable. In addition, the HN will work closely with its local partner EAA to install potable water systems and address hygiene issues such as improved latrines and hand washing. The component will target the women's groups in moringa gardens and BDL sites that will be used as training centers for Mother-to-Mother programs and SBCC.

Analysis of reference values and progress toward indicator targets

The quarter concentrated on personnel recruitment and orientation, contacting partners, and developing an overall action plan and a strategy for SBCC.

The Health/Nutrition Component organized training in health services improvement in Niamey in February. 22 team members were trained, including the specialists and coordinating staff who work in Tillabéri-Sud; seven women are among this group.

HN is analyzing and completing a landscaping evaluation done by SPRING between November 2013 and January 2014. The study was sponsored by REGIS-ER to refine its intervention strategy.

An SBCC workshop was organized by URC and SPRING consultants for March 10-21 in Niamey. Eight members of the HN Component participated from Niger and Burkina Faso, including two women.

IR 3.1. Improved access to potable water

The field teams are carrying out assessments in all participating villages regarding the availability of potable water.

IR 3.2. Improved health and nutrition practices

At the beginning of March 2014, members of the HN team met the Social Marketing Association of Niger (Animas-Sutura) at their Niamey headquarters. The meeting was a chance to brainstorm collaboration between structures in family planning, hygiene, sanitation, and using the media as a communications channel.

A series of meetings and a mission to Balléyara were carried out with the representative from Marie Stopes International/Niger. Collaborating with MSI will lead to setting up a grant agreement to implement REGIS-ER family planning activities in target areas, using the expertise of MSI.

SPRING undertook an assessment of the status of partners' interventions in SBCC between November 2013 and January 2014. Reviewing this evaluation is a way for HN to develop its SBCC strategy and identify organizations with whom to collaborate in order to reach the Project targets. The component will use the results to start additional assessments as needed to complete information on target areas.

A training on SBCC was held by a URC consultant in Niamey in March. It brought together the teams from Niger and Burkina. The two teams began putting the SBCC strategy and action plan together.

Community-led total sanitation (CLTS)

Twenty-nine household latrines were constructed between February and March 2014 in Balléyara Department in Tillabéri-Sud, following the identification of sites prioritized by Arziki. These latrines are used by approximately 363 people that will eventually be counted among vulnerable populations benefiting from the Project and captured in the proportion of households benefiting from improved sanitation facilities during the baseline and follow-up studies.

The Project is still developing the best approach for CLTS, considering the sensitive nature of the process in certain locales.

4. Crosscutting activities

Coordination and management

The main activities in both Niger and Burkina Faso centered on recruiting and installing personnel, and renting and equipping the main and regional offices. The processes of acquiring vehicles and office materials such as computers and furniture are underway.

The Administrative and Financial procedural manual was finished and presented for implementation to the REGIS-ER teams in both countries.

The methodology and criteria for selection of communes and villages for intervention was completed. A strategic approach for the program was presented to teams so that it could be harmonized in both places. The REGIS-ER approach was also presented by slideshow and brochures to 3N, USAID, field and office staff, as well as other partners over the course of the quarter.

The selection of intervention areas has been completed in both countries. In Niger, there are four work zones: the regions of Maradi and Zinder, and two sites in Tillabéri (North and South). Seven Departments cover these zones: Tillabéri, Balléyara, Filingué, Guidan Roundji, Dakoro, Magaria, and Mirriah. Within the Departments, we are working in 10 communes: Sakoiria, Kourteye, Tagazar, Tondikandia, Imanan, Filingué, Guidan Roundji, Sabon Machi, Bandé, and Droum.

In Burkina Faso, three regions and six communes within them were selected: the Sahel Region (with Dori as the capital, including two communes: Seytenga and Titabé); the North Central Region (with Kaya as the capital, including two communes: Barsalgho and Namissigma); and the Eastern Region (with Bogandé as the capital, and two communes: Manni and Gayeri). The Project identified a Project Representative for Ouagadougou whose CV was approved by USAID.

The Project will begin the process of selecting villages and establishing a database on them during the coming quarter. The results will lead to refining REGIS-ER's strategy and making operational action plans. In the meantime, the annual workplan (PTA) was approved by USAID.

Grant fund

A manual of procedures, guidelines, and criteria was completed and the initial requests have begun to be made. Using orientation workshops and training of trainers, REGIS-ER personnel and its NGO partners have learned the procedures to obtain a grant and how to produce a financial report.

Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, and Analysis

The quarter concentrated on integrating USAID comments into the Monitoring and Evaluation plan and the Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP), and developing data collection tools for certain indicators, with much assistance from Sheladia technical consultants. These tools, as conceived, were sent on to Dimagi staff so that they can begin developing the appropriate applications.

Also in February 2014, Dimagi staff oriented and did a first training exercise with the REGIS-ER ICT specialist using a typical Dimagi application, CommCareHQ, with an internet platform, and CommCare Mobile, for telephones.

In the coming quarter, the Monitoring and Evaluation system will be set up in earnest, and active data collection will begin. The strategy is to begin with the classic paper-and-spreadsheet-based system, and to progressively adopt the new technology.

Next quarter, a collaborative working relationship will begin with SAREL, the structure in charge of our baseline, mid-term, and final studies.

Measures have been taken for better performance measurements through proper collaboration with SAREL and other partners, as well as a good mix of responsibilities in the PMP as it is being updated and edited.

Training and Communication

Training modules were developed by the training subcomponent for regional and field teams in collaboration with each component of REGIS-ER.

During the period, other training activities were carried out with involvement of the training and communications subcomponent:

- On January 22, a team-building exercise was held for 34 staff including eight women, facilitated by Papa Sène from NCBA CLUSA headquarters.
- January 15 to 17, a workshop was held to orient regional and field teams in Niamey, with 19 participants including seven women.
- Training of trainers in the Project's approach and ways to do diagnostics in the villages was held in Niamey from February 19 to 21; 37 staff participated, of whom four are women. This meeting brought staff from the two countries together.
- Training of trainers within the regional teams was held for Tillabéri, Maradi, and Zinder staff from March 24 to 27 in Niamey with 28 participants, including four women.

After these workshops, the trainers carried out their own training in their regions for facilitators throughout Niger. Next quarter, the same will happen in the Burkina Faso regions.

Other technical training modules will be developed by components according to their field needs. The training component itself will work with FFP and other partners to find existing modules that suit the needs of REGIS-ER.

In terms of communications activities, REGIS-ER participated in the Niger Agriculture, Hydraulic, and Livestock Rearing Fair Sahel 2014 at the Palais du 29 Juillet in Niamey, March 6 to 9. Four staff from REGIS-ER attended, including one woman.

Gender

In terms of integrating gender into its program, REGIS-ER has been striving to hire qualified women for several important positions such as communications, social behavior change communications, and field agents. Two women joined the team for communications in February and March; and out of 10 facilitators in Tillabéri-Sud, six are women. In Tillabéri-Nord, two out of 10 facilitators are women. Out of five field agents recruited by AREN, three were women; but they unfortunately had to resign because of family reasons -- the job took them too far from children and spouse.

- In the **SLC**, women and girls are sought for training for irrigated BDL sites, with a goal of giving them skills to produce vegetables together with moringa.
- **GNRMC** held meetings to establish steering committees in Damana and Filingué, where women make up three of the 26 members.
- In the **HNC**, a slideshow adapted from our partners was given by our SBCC specialist to our staff in Niamey and in the field. The presentation was informative about the challenges that women must face in the domains of education, family health, and material needs of the household. Field personnel can thus plan their interactions with women using greater awareness and in ways that respond to and may mitigate these challenges.
- For **Monitoring and Evaluation**, the strategy of breaking down data by gender has been maintained at all levels, and is accompanied by continual reminders to personnel that they must take gender into consideration when they report and produce documents.

Environment

The REGIS-ER Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan was approved by USAID in February. An amendment is being drawn up for activities not covered in the original Initial Environmental Examination: fitted stone dams and small-scale irrigation activities.

In the GNRMC, training and sensitization has been ongoing for local conventions; the phase of elaborating the actual land use plan has not yet been undertaken. Dispositions for water and soil conservation works, usage rights, and conflict prevention will be taken during June workshops that are planned to elaborate a draft document.

The SLC has overseen water capture and erosion control structures being built in the context of adaptation to climate change and preparedness for unforeseen drought. Improved seed has been ordered for the coming rainy season; they will be appropriate for a low-water, early-maturing regime. Training modules have been developed and reflect a priority placed on use of natural/biological pest control and soil fertility management. Checklists for soil and water conservation work remain to be refined, and a plan for water quality testing for irrigation zones is in the process of being drawn up.

Difficulties and proposed solutions

The major constraint that was felt this quarter was the lack of enough vehicles for field work. Four-wheel-drive vehicles and motorcycles are due to arrive in May.

In the meantime, the Project may rent vehicles or use those of partners working with REGIS-ER. Also, coordination of field trips will remain a key solution until Project vehicles arrive.