goods during the lean season ... now that WFP is intervening in my village I was even able to buy a goat recently" (Dargué).

8. Synergies and complementarities with other partners throughout the project cycle are important to increase the impact of the intervention.

On several sites WFP joins its intervention with FAO and Prodfaf, the latter currently funded by IFAD. FAO and IFAD bring a strong added value on the technical aspects and provides inputs, like in Dan Tata and Dogo. The formalisation of these joint interventions allowed for interesting complementary and the employment of the same implementing partners facilitated the coordination. This is appreciated by the beneficiaries and had a positive impact.

Recommendations and way forward

Many socio-anthropological factors are influencing the results of WFP interventions. These should be further analysed and considered in the project planning phase. In light of this and considering that WFP is aiming towards an exit strategy, a more systematic socio-anthropological monitoring of WFP’s intervention is essential.

The way communities perceive their future once WFP support will come to an end, changes from site to site. Pastoral site like Azanag are quite pessimistic, in contrast to a more reassuring view in Alakkaye, Dan Tata or Dargué. WFP should now identify a set of interventions more adapted to each context to prepare the communities and ensure the sustainability of the achievements. Within that framework, certain points should be retained:

1. Ensure the systematic use of participative community diagnosis and planning methods and the integration of the priorities in the planning, moving beyond land reculturation and development. Ensure that needs of the pastoral community and of women are taken into account, keeping an open mind on other opportunities such as the milk value chain;

2. Increase the support to community-based structures (villagers organisation, parents associations, youth and women) in order to strengthen sustainability;

3. Strengthen the involvement of the government technical services and ensure that partnerships are created between these technical services and WFP implementing partners;

4. Strengthen the exit strategies placing additional attention to the solution to climate hazards: knowledge of climate information services, climate insurances, improved seeds;

5. Strengthen the identification and management of the complementary activities by ensuring that their role goes beyond the activity itself, with the improvement of nutrition and behavioural change for the pupils and communities. Strong management mechanism should be in place;

6. Strengthen the exit strategies considering the issue of land property rights, for example for the recuperated pastoral sites, but also other sites where the extension of the contracts might be questioned;

7. Ensure advocacy for funding on other priorities that are currently not covered and support the poor that are now out of poverty to build sustainable livelihoods assets by ensuring their integration in formal economy.

Overview of the study approach

The collaboration between WFP and the Laboratory for the Study and Research on Social Dynamics and Local Development (LASDEL), began in 2015, with an analysis on one of WFP’s intervention sites. In 2016, it was extended to four other sites. The objective of this collaboration is to undertake a socio-anthropological research, mostly with a qualitative approach, to strengthen the analysis on the changes in WFP intervention area and to identify success and failure factors. The research is focused on communities’ and targets households’ perceptions of changes and on the analysis of the proofs of these changes. A focus is placed on the social construction and representations of changes as perceived by the communities. In order to ensure some level of representativeness, five sites with different typologies and characteristics were selected.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Sites</th>
<th>Participatory planning (CBPP)</th>
<th>Site characteristics</th>
<th>WFP package</th>
<th>Strategic partnerships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Azanag site, in the Tassara commune (Tahoua)</td>
<td>No CBPP</td>
<td>Pastoralist</td>
<td>Assets creation (food), nutrition, school feeding and its complementary activities</td>
<td>UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dan Tata site, in the Dogo commune (Zinder)</td>
<td>No CBPP</td>
<td>Agriculture and fish farming</td>
<td>Asset creation (cash), nutrition</td>
<td>FAO/IFAD/UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Karkara site, in the Alakkaye commune (Tahoua)</td>
<td>CBPP</td>
<td>Silvo-pastoral</td>
<td>Asset creation (cash) with watershed/ infrastructure works. In nutrition, school feeding and its complementary activities</td>
<td>FAO/UNICEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dary site, in the Tondoki/Windi commune (Tillabery)</td>
<td>CBPP</td>
<td>Silvo-pastoral</td>
<td>Assets creation (food) with watershed/ infrastructure works, nutrition</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dargué site, in Chadakori commune (Maradi)</td>
<td>CBPP</td>
<td>Silvo-pastoral</td>
<td>Assets creation (food), nutrition, school feeding and its complementary activities</td>
<td>FAO/IFAD/UNICEF</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

LASDEL
The Laboratory for the Study and Research on Social Dynamics and Local Development (LASDEL) is a research laboratory established in 2001 in Niger and Benin. It is specialised in social science and proposes empiric-based qualitative studies. LASDEL covers empirical quality research on both scientific and social topics and the dialogue with the involved stakeholders, but it also facilitates exchanges and work of PhD students and researchers from African and western countries.

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Analysis of the sociological factors and determinants

1. Involvement and ownership of local, traditional and state authorities as well as technical services is an important factor

The personal involvement of municipal officials and traditional authorities explains the relative success of the land recuperation and pond deepening activities in several sites. Issues, like land property and usage rights, remain very linked to customs and traditions. In Dan Tata for example, the active role of the Sultan on land issues proved catalytic. Beyond the political engagements, the collaboration with the government technical work represents an important factor in terms of ownership uptake. On some sites, the lack of formal agreements and accountability between WFP’s implementing NGOs and the community has frigidised this local ownership and leadership.

2. Community mobilisation throughout all the phases of the project cycle is an essential factor contributing to ownership and success

The participation in the Community-Based Participatory Planning (CBPP) of all the different social classes provided a strong base for ownership and involvement and ensured an adequate response to the community needs.

The fact that some community dynamics were already in place is a key success factor that allowed WFP intervention to further support them: This is the case of Karkara and Dargué where the intervention relied on already existing initiatives. Indeed in these communities, thanks to the income generated from the fodder production, very poor initiated cereals banks. Another example is the important role played by the Parents Associations in the school feeding intervention. Without participatory planning or effective community engagement, the sustainability of results is uncertain, as shown in sites like Azanag.

3. WFP’s support to secure access to land for the very poor is an important success factor

Land rights is a key issue in Niger. The support provided by WFP to secure medium-term (about 5 years for plateau lands and 10 years for gardening plots) provided an incentive and motivation to the very poor to invest in the assets. However, the very poor have a limited understanding of the contents of the agreements between them and the landowners. The sites are mostly characterised by collective agreements, which may partly explain it. For instance, in Allakaye, they did not know whether their contracts will be renewed or not.

Concerning the shared community lands, the management of the resources (mostly fodder) by the Management Committees was successful on certain sites, namely Allakaye and Dargué. Where these Management Committees or other

management mechanisms did not exist, like in Azanag, the activities faced several problems. In this context, the relationship between herders and farmers is also particularly difficult, mainly due to the principle of unlimited livestock access to land. “We recuperated the land, but then we do not have control over the recuperated resources”, say the very poor.

4. Pre-existing social structures in the communities played a role in the success of the intervention

In the agro-silvo-pastoral settings, the very poor tend to invest in agricultural-based livelihood strategies. Therefore they are interested in engaging in land development and recuperation activities. However, this is more difficult in certain pastoral areas, such as Tassara, where the informal economy provides most of the livelihoods opportunities. Very poor are mostly engaged in fraudulent activities or in driving trucks from Azanag to Algeria. Education and works in the field are not valorised by these communities and are not perceived as mean to social mobility, which questions the sustainability of the intervention. “If WFP support comes to an end, 90% of pupils will drop out from the school in Azanag”.

5. The impacts on women empowerment are strengthened

On the site where men tend to migrate most, such as Allakaye and Dargué, women found themselves playing roles that traditionally belonged to men, such as farming the land. This also led to increased decisional power. This was strengthened by the contracts on land-usage for women. An improvement in women economic empowerment can be observed in Dan Tata and Tondiwindi, particularly where women began to organise themselves and created social structures.

However, there are differences from one site to another. In some instances, like Dan Tata and Dargué, women tend not to engage in works considered physically hard, but they are the main workforce for activities such as trees nurseries. In Tassara, women empowerment is limited by social customs, such as girls’ school drop-out for early marriages, women confinement and lack of organisation among them.

Thanks to the school feeding complementary activities and the unconditional cash transfer collected by women, their workload reduced, and they engaged in other activities, such as health, education and community life. For instance, women employed most of their times in domestic chores, water collection andgrounding millets to feed their families or collecting wild fruits and vegetables. The intervention freed up considerably their time.

6. Different impacts on and from migration

There is a correlation between migration and WFP interventions on the sites visited, except the

pastoral site of Tassara. Youth feel that they now have alternatives to migration. “Since WFP began its intervention, youths are no long migrating, they stay and they work during the dry season”, a very poor community member in Dan Tata. “Before youngsters of very poor household were forced to migrate to gain some income. When WFP is intervening here, migration reduced during the dry season, they are now staying and working in the fields”, another very poor from Dargué. These changes were experienced by both men and women.

7. The support to very poor household stabilises them and facilitates their socio-economic reintegration

Very poor household now feel integrated in their own communities. They report a reduction in the gap between very poor, poor and wealthy. For instance in Dan Tata and Dargué beneficiaries are saying “before WFP intervention, it was very rare to see very poor households eating rice, only people with means would eat it”. Improvements were seen on the sites of Dargué and Dan Tata: “two or three meals per day”, “meat consumption”, “preparation of porridge with milk”.

The intervention also fostered the reintegration of very poor in the social life, having them participate in the solidarity dynamic: “my neighbour was not as lucky as me. I share with him” (Dan Tata).

Additionally thanks to the access to land, they are now part of the economic life through their production. The transfer not only improves the stability, but also encourages people to invest in assets. Karkara and Dan Tata are examples of that, with very poor purchasing small livestock “thanks to WFP and the activities that it implements in my village I now have four goats”. The increase in productivity is perceived as a considerable gain: “before I was producing 30 sheaves a millets, now I am producing between 70 and 80” (Dargué).

Very poor are also resorting to less negative coping strategies (...) before I was used to sell my