

Joint Evaluation of the Rome-based Agencies' Resilience Initiative: "Strengthening the resilience of livelihoods in protracted crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger, and Somalia" from 2017 – 2023

VOLUME I - Final Report



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Figure 1: Map of Democratic Republic of the Congo



Figure 2: Map of Niger



Figure 3: Map of Somalia

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Disclaimer

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

1. This report is based on the evaluation of the Canada/Rome-based Agencies' (RBA) Resilience Initiative "Strengthening the resilience of livelihoods in protracted crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger and Somalia" from 2017 to 2023 (RBA Resilience Initiative; Programme).¹ The Evaluation was jointly commissioned by the World Food Programme (WFP) Livelihoods, Asset Creation & Resilience Unit and managed by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

2. The RBA Resilience Initiative targets a total of 27,000 food-insecure households and communities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Republic of Niger (Niger), and the Republic of Somalia (Somalia). The Programme is meant to test the RBA Joint Conceptual Framework for Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition² that sets out how FAO, IFAD, and WFP can align food security, nutrition, livelihoods, and agriculture and livestock programming to "increase the food security and resilience of populations, especially women and children" in countries faced with protracted crises. Resilience programming and strategies by the RBA will continue and so the Evaluation has a focus on identifying conclusions and recommendations that can be useful going forward.

3. The Evaluation takes place at the end of the 5-year initiative and assesses evidence associated with results while also informing multi-year joint programming and accountability. The Evaluation was conducted by an independent evaluation team with a mixed-methods approach. This includes secondary and comparative analysis of primary and proxy level data that was identified and reported upon by the RBA. Additional qualitative evidence was captured from 30 Focus Group Discussions (FGD) totalling 382 community members and 66 interviews with key informants. This evidence was assessed for trends and key issues, as presented throughout this report.

Purpose

4. The Evaluation serves the dual and mutually reinforcing objectives of accountability and learning, with an emphasis on mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE), human rights and equity across both evaluation objectives. This includes consolidating evidence associated with outcome-level results to support accountability to the donor and to the communities reached by the Programme. The Evaluation also provides evidence-based findings to inform operational and strategic decision-making, with a specific focus on this resilience initiative's jointness and innovative elements as a multi-year approach.

5. Expected users are internal (RBA country offices, RBA regional bureaus, RBA Headquarters (HQ)) and external (Government of Canada).

Subject

6. The subject of the Evaluation is the Canada/Rome-based Agencies' (RBA) Resilience Initiative "Strengthening the resilience of livelihoods in protracted crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Niger, and Somalia." The five-year (April 2017 through March 2022) Initiative was meant to operationalize and test the RBA Joint Conceptual Framework for Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition,³ wherein FAO, IFAD, and WFP could align food security, nutrition, livelihoods, and agriculture and livestock programming to "increase the food security and resilience of populations, especially women and children" in countries faced with protracted crises. Several activities were cancelled or delayed because of increased insecurity, political events, access constraints, natural disasters (drought and locust outbreaks), as well as the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Hence, the Programme was provided with a one-year no-cost extension

¹ The terms of reference are available online [here](#).

² "Strengthening resilience for food security and nutrition A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies." FAO, IFAD, WFP; April 2015. Available [here](#).

³ "Strengthening resilience for food security and nutrition A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies." FAO, IFAD, WFP; April 2015. Available [here](#).

until 31st March 2023, and then further extended to the 31st December 2023 to complete country level activities and implement IFAD activities in Niger. However, due to a delay in the allocation of funds, the Programme has not been able to carry out these activities in Niger.⁴

7. The RBA Resilience Initiative budget was CAD\$ 50 million, equally divided between DRC, Niger, and Somalia, along with CAD\$ 2.3 million for global support.⁵

Methodology

8. The methodological approach is premised upon assessing a general theory, mainly that the combination and complementarity of RBA approaches and best practices in nutrition, livelihoods, agriculture/livestock, community engagement, and gender, increased food security and resilience, especially for the most vulnerable. This is the basis for the theory-based approach to the Evaluation.

9. The RBA Resilience Initiative included a global Performance Measurement Framework (PMF) and separate PMFs for each country that detailed activities (outputs), immediate and intermediate outcomes, and expected impact. These provided a basis for the evaluation’s approach and analytical framework. These included outcome and impact level indicators and tools that served as a primary source of information. These included standard food security proxy indicators and the FAO Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis (RIMA II) tool for impact-level results. The RIMA II includes treatment and control groups and thus provides a fair degree of certainty in relation to changes in resilience for participating communities. However, a RIMA II end line was not possible in DRC, given access constraints. The Evaluation used results from these proxy indicators *prima facie* and as based on Programme final reports. As noted in the Evaluability Assessment from the Inception Phase report, there was an opportunity to conduct secondary analysis from primary data sets, e.g., the RIMA II, FCS, rCSI, as well as comparative analysis within specific district/regions/governorates and with national trends and statistics. In the end, this was not possible as Programme data sets were not available for the Evaluation.

10. The Evaluation’s independent sources included Key Informant Interviews (KII) with RBA staff (country, regional, & HQ), partners, government officials, and others to establish factors that contributed to or propelled performance. The Evaluation also conducted Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with participating communities in all three countries to explore how their lives had changed in relation to key outcome areas and to then draw the links back to Programme activities. These FGDs proved to be an exceptionally rich source of information.

Table 1: Total number of KIIs and FGDs conducted during the Evaluation’s data collection phase

	KII	FGDs
DRC	30 (5 women; 25 men)	4 FGD with 50 community member IDPs (27 women; 23 men)
Niger	15 (4 women; 11 men)	12 FGD with 203 community members. (149 women; 59 men)
Somalia	21 (6 women; 15 men)	14 FGD with 129 community members (63 women; 66 men)

Source: Evaluation independent data collection.

11. The Evaluation had specific questions in the evaluation matrix associated with gender, social inclusion, and human rights. This includes standard indicators and guidelines set out in the System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (GEWE) (UN-SWAP)⁶ Gender equality and issues of women’s empowerment were also raised with participating communities, as described in the data collection protocols. (See Section 1.1.)

⁴ There was also a 'financial' no-cost extension from the 31st December 2023 to 31st July 2024 to complete all outstanding activities related to finance and payments, including the evaluation and the use of IFAD unspent funds. This financial extension was purely for financial expenditure to close project work, not for continuing activities at the CO level.

⁵ In the years 2018 - 2022, the CAD\$ exchange rate fluctuated between USD 0.6896 and 0.8307. Accordingly, CAD\$ 50 million was equivalent to between 34,480,000 and 41,535,000 USD, and CAD\$ 2.3 million to between 1,586,080 and 1,910,610 USD.

⁶ For an overview and guidance, visit the UN Women’s UN-SWAP website [here](#).

12. Analytical methods included contribution analysis that compared the Evaluation's independent qualitative information from KII and FGD with the results of the primary outcome and impact indicators and from some contextual analysis, including national food security trends as established by the Integrated Phase Classification/Cadre Harmonisé in each country.⁷

13. The Evaluation also used a modified version of the Qualitative Impact Assessment Protocol (QIAP) for FGD that focuses on open ended qualitative statements that allow respondents to site issues and activities that have affected them without being prompted about the specifics of the Programme. The emergent design, rather than being specific to Programme activities, meant that this could not be used as a definitive data set to link specific activities to outcome and impact level results but provided rich qualitative evidence that enabled the Evaluation to draw out how specific activities that were linked to Programme outcome and impact performance measures like the FCS, CSI, and RIMA II.

14. Thematic analysis was used to explore patterns across qualitative data from KII and FGD. This allowed the Evaluation to understand those aspects of the RBA Resilience Initiative that participants talked about frequently or in depth, and the ways in which those aspects of the RBA Resilience Initiative were connected to expected results.

15. The Evaluation included case studies for each country with specific analysis of the issues encountered in each.

Context

16. DRC, Niger, and Somalia all experience protracted crises in which a significant proportion of the population is acutely vulnerable to hunger, disease, and disruptions to livelihoods. In these situations, malnutrition is severe and almost three times more frequent than in other developing contexts.⁸

17. These conditions are likely to become more challenging due to climate change. These countries have high-risk scores in relation to the effects of climate change as per the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative (ND-GAIN) index. Niger is ranked 169th, with a score of 35.5. Somalia is ranked 178th, with a score of 33.8. The DRC is ranked 182nd with a score of 32.4.⁹ Climate change and related natural resource depletion is also related to the conflicts that have plagued these countries for decades.

18. Resilience programming has grown as a means of providing longer-term solutions to vulnerable populations in such protracted conflict and climate-related crises. This programming aims to increase the capacity of people, communities, and systems vulnerable to shocks and crises to resist, adapt, and recover. The different elements of food systems, such as nutrition, food, health, livelihood, community development, and agriculture, are linked to how people and communities build such resilience.

19. The RBA Resilience Initiative is guided by the World Food Security (CFS)-endorsed Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises (CFS-FFA)¹⁰ and the RBA's "Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition. A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies,"¹¹ was set out to provide an integrated response that capitalizes upon the RBA's core competitive advantages, experience in the three countries, and the growing prominence of resilience programming in these operating contexts.

Key Findings

Relevance

20. F1: The RBA Resilience Initiative's scope, approach, resources, and expected results were based on the RBA's comparative advantages associated with food security and nutrition and as described in the RBA's "Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition: A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and

⁷ Please visit the IPC site [here](#).

⁸ "Resilience in Protracted Crises." FAO. First page. Available [here](#).

⁹ Please visit the ND-GAIN Index [here](#).

¹⁰ "Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises." CFS, 2015. Available [here](#).

¹¹ "Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition: A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies." FAO, IFAD, WFP; April 2015. Page 2. Available [here](#).

Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies”.¹² This included understanding the needs in participating communities as based on the Agencies’ standard vulnerability assessments. This included collaboration between the Agencies at the country, regional, and HQ levels during the design phase to determine a theory of change and specific activities for each country that could achieve common outcome and impact objectives. This was underpinned by the emergence of opportunities for multi-year programming in humanitarian contexts and growing resilience research and emerging best practices available at the outset of the Programme. (Section 3.1.1.)

21. F2: The RBA Resilience Initiative was based on common institutional policies and frameworks that were specific to the RBA’s expertise and experience in the three countries. These were sufficient to ensure that the Programme was designed in ways to meet the needs of participating communities while also having an alignment with expected outcomes and impact-level results. (Section 3.1.23.1.1)

22. F3: The programme design included a gender-sensitive approach that addressed the needs, roles, and priorities of women and men while promoting women’s participation.¹³ These not only benefited women but may have created an environment conducive to greater equality and empowerment. (Section 3.1.2.)

23. F4: The RBA Resilience Initiative’s objectives, outcomes and overall strategies were aligned with the priorities and policies of participating countries. This was especially the case in Niger, which has various policies and programmes focused on food security and resilience. (Section 3.1.3.)

24. F5: FGDs in all three countries show that participating communities felt that they were adequately involved in the design phase and that it met their needs in ways that corresponded to capacities to prepare for, respond to, and recover from crises. (Section 3.1.4.)

25. F6: The Programme was participatory, especially in the design phase and with some variations in the three countries. Women and others were involved in most aspects of the Programme, and they commented favourably on it across the Evaluation’s FGDs. (Section 3.1.4.)

26. F7: The Programme was ‘gender-sensitive’¹⁴ rather than ‘gender transformative’¹⁵ meaning that, while women were involved sufficiently across activities, the specific challenges and needs women faced were not considered. While the Programme included people living with disabilities, their needs and the additional burdens and costs for their families were not consistently addressed. (Section 3.1.4.)

Coherence

27. F8: Collaboration, coordination, and complementarity between the RBA contributed to how activities were designed and implemented and thus to their intended outcome level results. The initial design, and especially the use of global and country-level PMFs, enabled the Programme to avoid duplications and to maximize RBA approaches. (Section 3.2.1.)

28. F9: Communities regularly cited how the combination of direct cash support, food assistance for assets, and school feeding had a direct bearing on the success of agropastoral development and livelihood activities, demonstrating the complementarity of these approaches and the comparative advantages of FAO and WFP. For communities, the synergies between these approaches were deemed critical to their needs. (Section 3.2.1.)

29. F10: The RBA Resilience Initiative leveraged and maximized each agency’s strengths, including resources, tools, capacities, targeting approaches, and joint activities, to address the food security, nutrition, and livelihood needs of different communities in the three countries. This included a participatory approach that resulted in activities tailored to the precise needs of these communities and that emphasized the involvement

¹² “Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition: A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies.” FAO, IFAD, WFP; April 2015. Page 2. Available [here](#).

¹³ According to the WFP Gender Policy (2022) “an intervention is gender-sensitive when it identifies, considers and aims to address the differing needs, interests and realities of men, boys, women and girls but does not address the underlying gender-based inequalities and unequal distribution of power between women and men, and girls and boys”.

¹⁴ Gender sensitive: considering the impact of policies, projects and programmes on men, women, boys and girls and trying to mitigate the negative consequences thereof.

¹⁵ “Gender transformative” refers to efforts to change gender and social norms to address inequalities in power and privilege between persons of different genders, to free all people from harmful and destructive norms.

of women. This approach has a direct correlation with resilience and may provide a foundation for related RBA programming. (Section 3.2.2.)

30. F11: Multi-sector partnerships and actions were mostly confined to the RBA, their implementing partners, and local and central government authorities. This enabled the Programme to focus on the complementary competencies and experience of the three Agencies. (Section 3.2.3.)

Effectiveness

31. F12: Despite exceptional challenges in all three country contexts, the RBA Resilience Initiative achieved nearly all planned activities and with a demonstrable relationship to expected outcomes, especially given a major push in 2021 to complete lingering activities that were delayed because of COVID-19. (Section 3.3.1.)

32. F13: The RBA Resilience Initiative adapted to a range of disruptions, challenges, and delays. This included reducing the level of cross-community knowledge sharing, training, and other group activities that required local access. It also dropped indicators that required a level of field access not possible during that time. (Section 3.3.2.)

33. F14: Remarkably, the Programme was still able to deliver nearly all planned activities, and, based on evidence from both the Programme's outcome indicators and the Evaluation's FGDs, it was able to achieve significant results. This was largely due to the efforts during the first year to not simply work together but to align business processes and to decipher how to ensure that the three Agencies' efforts were coalescing around shared outcome results. This was founded on the comprehensive design and detailed PMFs that were reported annually. (Section 3.3.2.)

Efficiency

34. F15: Overall, the Programme proved efficient in that it was able to complete all planned activities roughly on time and within budget. The capacity to deliver on time and budget was challenged in the first two years of the Programme in relation to harmonizing procurement and other business processes between FAO and WFP. This led to some delays in the Programme, even if these did not have a material effect on the final results. (Section 3.4.1.)

35. F16: Overall, annual financial reports were deployed against the plan in a timely manner, as shown in Annual Reports and corresponding financial statements. The RBA was also able to self-finance activities when there might have been delays in funding, so the effects on planning or delivery were minimal. (Section 3.4.2.)

36. F17: There may be opportunities to do financial analysis regarding the costs of activities and their potential return on investment. This could include the cost per beneficiary or cost per unit between activities and countries. (Section 3.4.2.)

Impact

37. F18: Outcome results from the three countries are positive. RIMA II results are positive in all three countries, although there is little variance between treatment and control groups in DRC and Niger, with the former relying on only a midline assessment from 2020. Somalia shows significant results overall and in relation to control groups.¹⁶ Participating communities also expressed ways in which they are better able to prepare for, withstand, and recover from crises. This was especially due to the combination of emergency cash support, water infrastructure for agriculture and livestock, and agricultural inputs and livelihood support (Section 3.5.1.)

38. F19: Food Consumption Scores across the three countries follow this trend, with positive gains overall. There were positive variances in Niger (12.8%) and Somalia (10%), in comparison with control groups at the end line. Livelihood coping strategies (L-CSI) and food-related coping strategies (rCSI) were mixed in DRC and positive in Niger (L-CSI) and Somalia (rCSI). Other indicators related to malnutrition rates and household, dietary diversity, as reported in Niger and Somalia, were also positive. (Section 3.5.1.) Participating

¹⁶ The RIMA II derives a latent measurement of resilience called a Resilience Capacity Index (RCI). The approach incorporates indicators as drivers (causes) of resilience. Technical guidance and descriptions of the RIMA II, please visit FAO [here](#). RIMA II analysis determines both the level of household resilience and the determinants of this resilience among four empirical pillars: access to basic services (ABS), assets (AST), social safety nets (SSN) and adaptive capacity (AC). These are described in this section as and where possible.

communities cited the nutritional training they received (DRC; Niger) and the diversified income from market gardens (Somalia) that were particularly important for better nutrition/consumption.

39. F20: The Programme succeeded in ensuring equal participation amongst men and women, amongst other particularly vulnerable groups, including activities that were solely for women. There is some anecdotal evidence from participating in all three countries that women's roles in the community were also strengthened and that they were more empowered to influence community and household decision making, even if overall patriarchal structures remain. (Section 3.5.1.)

40. F21: There was a range of climate resilience-related activities, either through land and forest rehabilitation and growth (Niger) or through water and other natural resource management. (Somalia). However, there were no indicators or measurements to show how or if these created greater climate change resilience as most focused on food security, nutrition, and livelihood support. Yet, these invariably included ways to counter the effects of climate change, including more efficient water catchment systems, climate resistance seed and vegetation varieties, and other techniques to conserve natural resources. (Section 3.5.2.)

Sustainability

41. F22: The RBA Resilience Initiative's approach and results hold promise. While most benefits have been eroded in DRC due to the conflict and displacement, community participants see the knowledge and skills they gained from the Programme as important. In Niger and Somalia, the Programme had a direct positive bearing on increased food security and resilience. (Section 3.6.1.)

42. F23: The Programme demonstrated that FAO and WFP (and IFAD where applicable) can deliver an integrated approach, along with local and national authorities and other partners, which combines emergency relief with longer-term livelihood, agricultural, and livestock activities that have contributed to an enriched and diversified diet and diversified sources of household income. (Section 3.6.1.)

43. F24: The varying and dynamic conditions in each of the countries make transitional planning and ultimate handover difficult. In the Rutshuru district in DRC, the conflict and displacement of participating communities have decimated Programme infrastructure and opportunities for community ownership. In Somalia, there has been significant work done to work with local and national authorities, even when challenged, and yet these authorities do not have the structures, processes, or resources to continue with the Programme alone. The communities in Somalia are poised to maintain and expand key infrastructure and activities, although even here, some ongoing support is required. Niger represents the best opportunity for a continuation given the effective use of the WFP progression strategy and the links with other national programmes. Even here, the volatile operating context makes whole-scale continuation efforts difficult. (Section 3.6.2.)

44. F25: The Agencies' collaboration was a definitive factor in the Programme's positive results. This was supported through a strong design process, comprehensive PMFs, and strong guidance from the regional and HQ offices, especially in the first two years of the Programme. This included training on processes like WFP's 3PA and the joint use of measurement tools like the RIMA II. This included the inputs and collaboration with IFAD, even if, in the end, their delivery was confined to Niger. (Section 3.6.3.)

Gender, Human Rights, Equity & Inclusion

45. F26: WFP, FAO, and IFAD share common goals in promoting gender equality and addressing issues related to women's empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition, agriculture, and rural development. All three organizations aim to systematically include a gender perspective in aspects of their work (policy development, programme implementation, monitoring, and evaluation). (Section 3.7.1.)

46. F27: Despite this strong inclusion focus, according to the gender-sensitive approach adopted by the programme, the indicators for women and PLWD also did not capture any aspect of how their participation in activities might be transformative, enabling them to have a stronger influence in their households or communities. (Section 3.7.1.)

47. F28: Overall, programme activities led to results that benefited the communities although more could have been done to meet the needs of specific groups. (Section 3.7.2.)

Conclusion

48. Nearly all output level activities were achieved, with a positive correspondence with immediate outcome level results. These also had a clear causal link with expected intermediate outcomes related to increased food security, nutrition, agriculture and livestock production, livelihoods, and natural resource management. Impact level results are positive, although there is little variance between treatment and control groups in DRC and Niger. In Somalia, the results across outcome and impact performance indicators, including the RIMA II, did show statistically significant and positive differences between participating communities and control groups. This may be due to the lack of displacement and other disruptions to the communities, as occurred in DRC and Niger, along with the exceptional ways in which FAO and WFP worked together there. It may also be due to the considerably fewer households reached with similar budgets, as described in Section 3.4.2. Despite the lack of definitive impact and outcome level results in DRC and Niger, independent evidence from this Evaluation does show specific ways in which communities in these countries demonstrate increased food security, better nutrition practices, improved and diversified livelihoods, and resilience overall.

49. Households and communities readily indicate how the Programme enabled them to address crises and to better prepare for, withstand, and recover from shocks. They regularly cited how the combination of direct cash support, food assistance for assets, school feeding, and other WFP programme approaches were critical for the success of the agropastoral development and livelihood activities largely implemented by FAO. For communities, the synergies between these approaches were deemed critical to their needs.

50. These results were due in large part to the RBA's complementary experience and expertise in relevant sectors and in each country. This is based primarily on the collaboration between FAO and WFP, given that IFAD's activities were limited to the last year in Niger. This was buttressed by a comprehensive and participatory approach to the design and to the resulting performance management frameworks that guided all aspects of the Programme, especially during the tumult associated with COVID-19 and other challenges.

51. In all three countries, the RBA successfully applied the gender-sensitive approach and achieved significant results in terms of women's participation and equal access to the initiative's activities. The country case studies highlight positive some unintended effects in terms of gender empowerment. These suggest that the resilience initiative has also created opportunities for engagement with communities in ways that bring about positive change in terms of women's empowerment. The RBA implements better balanced country-wide programme approaches with more adaptive and responsive community engagement, enabling communities to address challenges quickly while expanding upon activities that prove useful. This can provide additional insights into how and when women and others were being empowered because of Programme initiatives.

52. Future RBA resilience programming should be more focused on fewer activities, while maintaining integrated approaches amongst the three Agencies. This includes using fewer outcome level proxy indicators, like the RIMA II, while complementing these with more qualitative evidence, as in the Programme's original design. In DRC, a collaboration with UNICEF was developed in other areas than Rutshuru and convergence of actions could be quite beneficial to facilitate the design, knowledge, and training on common concepts of progress and complementarity.

53. The RBA are also poised to do much better financial analysis on the return on investment from such resilience approaches. The RBA Resilience Initiative has proven exceptionally valuable to the households and communities it reached. Yet, there was a considerable variance in the numbers of households reached, with far fewer in the case of Somalia which also had commensurately better results. This value should be quantified so that the RBA can secure future funding, especially given escalating global needs.

Lessons

54. Resilience programming in protracted humanitarian contexts should focus on enabling communities to better prepare for, withstand, and recover from shocks, which, over time should lead to less vulnerability. This should include a standard package of integrated activities that focus on emergency nutrition, nutrition practices, water infrastructure, agricultural and livestock diversification. In this, the complementarity of WFP and FAO competencies and approaches proved exceptionally valuable.
55. Coordination and the capacity to deliver integrated and sequenced activities benefit from detailed theories of change and log frames (PMFs) that are based on what mix of activities are best expected to deliver outcome level results and, subsequently, to impact.
56. Time is required in the first year of a multi-year programme like this to align business processes, decision making, and overall coordination. This includes simplifying procurement procedures as much as possible so that a programme can respond and adapt as necessary.
57. While an initial period of design and central coordination, along with guidance on best practices and leading research, is exceptionally useful, it is equally important to allow country level staff to take the lead. They are best positioned to coordinate in meaningful ways and to respond to community needs and the operating context as required.
58. There is a significant challenge in maintaining a balance between well-articulated frameworks and plans and the opportunities to be responsive and adaptive to dynamic operating contexts.
59. The ability to respond and adapt, as based on a well-articulated plan, can be strengthened further through the use of financial analysis to establish which activities are most cost effective and thus most prone for sufficient return on investment.
60. Given all of this, the primary lesson goes back to management fundamentals. The use of a well-articulated and detailed plan that is based on best practices and comparative advantages is highly useful and important but should also provide the foundation for adaptations and changes as required. Getting this balance right is fundamental to results.

Recommendations

61. **R1:** The RBA Resilience Initiatives' approach to the design and performance results frameworks should be used as a model for any future resilience programming.
62. **R2:** Having a global component to facilitate the design, knowledge, and training on common concepts, approaches, and tools should be maintained for any future RBA multicountry programming. This enabled the RBA to develop a comprehensive common approach and to establish the foundation for working together over a multi-year programme. The RBA should also include lessons and best practices workshops at least annually to improve adaptive programming and results.
63. **R3:** Future resilience programming in complicated and dynamic operating contexts should focus on a smaller set of demonstrably effective activities (nutrition, water catchment, market gardens). These should include integrated approaches associated with direct support with the appropriate transfer modality based on context and beneficiary preference. This may be in relation to the request human and final resources.
64. **R4:** Future RBA resilience programming in areas with high levels of food insecurity should use a common set of outcome and impact measurement approaches, like the use of FCS, CSI, and RIMA II, while ensuring that issues like gender and social inclusion are adequately addressed.
65. **R5:** Resilience programming in complex operating dynamics would benefit from a crisis modifier/draw down financial mechanism to address the needs of vulnerable communities facing climate shocks.
66. **R6:** Future resilience programmes should adopt a gender approach that includes proven and appropriate methods and frameworks for gender equality and women's empowerment. Gender-related results varied across the three countries and lessons learnt and best practices may be encouraged to further improve outcomes.
67. **R7:** Future resilience programming should include more consistent community engagement throughout, enabling greater adaptation to need while also facilitating how communities and other stakeholders

overcome obstacles. While the 3PA approach was used to good effect early in the Programme, especially in relation to developing priority activities, KII and evidence from the communities show that any subsequent engagement was intermittent and inconsistent and there were issues associated with conflicts, faulty infrastructure, and women's empowerment, as identified throughout the report, that were missed because of this lack of engagement.

68. **R8:** Future resilience programming should include financial analysis regarding the costs of individual and combined activities and their potential return on investment. This would be vital towards establishing which activities are best positioned to be replicated or brought to scale, thus distinguishing between those that may be effective but expensive and those that may be somewhat less effective but much more cost effective.

69. **R9:** The RBA should expand upon the Knowledge Platform on Emergencies and Resilience (KORE)¹⁷ as a way to share knowledge, practices, and insights into what works in terms of resilience programming. This may be strengthened through a dissemination and use plan, ensuring that all RBA country office and other actors are privy to such resources.

¹⁷ Please see the KORE site [here](#).

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 EVALUATION FEATURES

70. This report is part of the Evaluation of the Canada/Rome-based Agencies' (RBA) Resilience Initiative "Strengthening the resilience of livelihoods in protracted crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger and Somalia" from 2017 to 2023. (RBA Resilience Initiative; Programme). The Evaluation was jointly commissioned by the World Food Programme (WFP) Livelihoods, Asset Creation & Resilience Unit and managed by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

71. The Evaluation comes at the end of the Programme and so its scope includes its entire duration. It also serves both accountability and learning. This includes consolidating evidence associated with outcome-level results to support accountability to the donor and to the communities reached by the Programme. The Evaluation also provides evidence-based findings to inform operational and strategic decision-making.

72. Expected users of the evaluation are internal (RBA country offices, RBA regional bureaus, RBA HQs) and external (Government of Canada). These stakeholders will use the evaluation to:

- Assess and understand programme performance in supporting improved nutrition, food security and resilience for vulnerable population groups, especially women and children.
- Enable knowledge sharing among participating countries and the three RBAs on good practices and lessons for improving coherence, coordination and shared ownership of evidence-based gender-sensitive interventions, including innovative resilience programming.
- Act as an accountability and learning mechanism for Canada (as donors) and wider constituency; and
- Inform future action on humanitarian food assistance, shock-responsive food security, and the design of other joint and multi-year programmes amongst RBAs.

73. The RBAs may also wish to share the evaluation's results with other partners and actors.

74. The Evaluation team was comprised of international and country-level experts who brought together complementary expertise in food security, nutrition, agriculture, resilience, and gender, amongst other subjects, and who had varied and long-standing experience in the three countries. These experts were supported by a central administrative team that provided logistical and other support, especially during the field missions. Descriptions of the team members are included in Annex 7.9.

75. Fieldwork was conducted in all three countries, despite initial constraints and delays.

1.2 CONTEXT

76. DRC, Niger, and Somalia all experience protracted crises in which a significant proportion of the population is acutely vulnerable to hunger, disease, and disruptions to livelihoods over prolonged periods. In these situations, malnutrition is severe, long-standing and almost three times more frequent than in other contexts.¹⁸

77. The communities that participated in the Programme ("participating communities") face severe levels of food insecurity brought about by recurring conflicts and climate related crises. This implies that basic food security, especially the avoidance of acute malnutrition amongst children, must be foundational. People facing food insecurity are prone to a range of negative coping strategies and stress-based displacement ("stress migration") and these tend to create viscous cycles, increasing vulnerabilities.¹⁹

¹⁸ "Resilience in Protracted Crises." FAO. First page. Available [here](#).

¹⁹ Forced displacement in DRC has affected millions, including the Programme's participating communities. In 2022, it had over 4 million people displaced, the highest figure in more than a decade for the country and second only to Ukraine. Please see the country brief from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC), available [here](#). The IDMC also has profiles of Niger and

78. All three countries are affected by climate change. Countries with active Humanitarian Response Plans (HRP) also have high risk scores in relation to the effects of climate change as per the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative (ND-GAIN) index. Niger is ranked 169th, with a score of 35.5. Somalia is ranked 178th, with a score of 33.8. The DRC is ranked 182nd with a score of 32.4.²⁰ These countries also receive little funding for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction relative to their vulnerability to climate change.

79. In response, resilience programming has grown as a means of providing a longer-term solution to long-standing food insecurity and poor livelihood opportunities, especially for women. Such programming aims to increase the capacity of people, communities, and systems vulnerable to shocks and crises to resist, adapt, and recover. The different elements of food systems, such as nutrition, food, health, livelihood, community development and agriculture, are closely linked. Livelihood resilience aims to protect and diversify livelihoods, increase productive assets, and safeguard against negative coping strategies such as unsustainable use of natural resources or selling of assets.

80. Resilience programming in these contexts is meant to enable people to escape extreme vulnerabilities that make them heavily reliant on humanitarian or other assistance.

1.2.1 THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC)

81. DRC has experienced protracted and recurrent crises, including violence, armed conflict, human rights abuses and violations, and large-scale displacement, in particular in the east of the country. DRC is amongst the poorest countries in the world, with 62% of the population living below US\$2.15 per day.²¹

82. The protracted and recurrent crises disrupt people's livelihoods, causing even greater levels of poverty. In DRC, agriculture's contribution to the economy has declined steadily over the years, dropping from 23.6% of gross domestic product in 1960 to 8.7% in 2016.²² Most food processing is artisanal and food storage and transformation practices are often inadequate, resulting in loss of produce and nutrients.²³ Fishing remains mainly artisanal, but has great potential for supporting livelihoods, particularly for women, who perform most fish processing and commerce. Climate change is disrupting the development of agricultural systems and livelihoods in the country, particularly those dependent on rainfed agriculture and natural resources.

83. According to The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2022 report, the prevalence of undernourishment in the DRC was 39.8%. The prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the total population was 72.3%, the prevalence of stunting in children under 5 was 40.8% (2020 data), and the prevalence of anaemia in women aged 15 to 48 was reported to be 42.2% in the DRC.²⁴

84. In DRC as of December 2023, of the total 25.8 million people, approximately 3.4 million people are estimated to be in Emergency (Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 4) – a significant increase from 2.8 million in the July 2022 analysis. The number of people in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) has increased from 21.7 million to 22.4 million. 2.4 million children and 1.7 million pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls are acutely malnourished. 61% of women live below the poverty line and women are 27% more likely to experience food insecurity. Thirteen million Congolese live with disabilities, disproportionately in areas of conflict.²⁵ This is

Somalia. In Niger and Somalia, displacement has been caused by a cycle of conflict and climate change. For Niger, please see: Giulio Morello et Joelle Rizk; "Conflits, changements climatiques et rétrécissement de l'espace de mobilité au Sahel central." *Forced Migration Review*; May 2022. Available [here](#). Also see: Méryl Demuynck; "Mass Displacement and Violent Extremism in the Sahel: A Vicious Circle?" *International Centre for Counterterrorism*; August 2022. Available [here](#). In Somalia, repeated stress migration was one of the primary causes of death for Somalis during the 2011/2012 famine. Please see: Daniel Maxwell, Nisar Majid, Guhad Adan, Khalif Abdirahman, Jeeyon Janet Kim; "Facing famine: Somali experiences in the famine of 2011." *Food Policy*; Volume 65, December 2016. Available [here](#). For a review of the broad effects of migration on vulnerable communities, please see: Riyadh Al-Baldawi; "Migration-related stress and psychosomatic consequences." *International Congress Series*; Volume 1241, September 2002, Pages 271-278. Available [here](#).

²⁰ Please visit the ND-GAIN Index [here](#).

²¹ This is based on standard World Bank poverty indicator: Poverty headcount ratio at \$2.15 a day (2017 PPP) (% of population). For DRC, see World Bank overview available [here](#). For Niger, see World Bank overview available [here](#). For Somalia, see World Bank Somalia Macro Poverty Outlook available [here](#).

²² "Republic of the Congo, Poverty Assessment Report." World Bank; 2017. Available [here](#).

²³ IBID.

²⁴ "The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World" FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO; Rome 2022. Available [here](#).

²⁵ "Democratic Republic of the Congo Annual Country Report 2022." WFP; November 2022. Available [here](#).

especially the case in North Kivu, where violence and armed clashes are the main causes of displacement, generating significant humanitarian needs. More than 2.1 million people are displaced in the province of North Kivu, amounting to 36% of the total number of IDPs in the DRC. Overall, 3.87 million people are suffering in the province from acute food insecurity. Nearly 48,000 children under the age of 5 suffer from severe and acute malnutrition. Since the beginning of 2023, 19 health facilities have been attacked and 232 schools closed due to violence.²⁶

85. These crises disproportionately affect women. On the Gender Inequality Index, DRC ranks 151, out of 170 countries.²⁷ A World Bank report on women's economic empowerment in DRC concludes that while two-thirds of women are engaged in agriculture, making up more than half of the agricultural workforce, women have lower agricultural productivity than men due to a variety of factors such as less control over land and household decision making, low level of education and financial inclusion, and threats to physical security including gender-based violence.²⁸ These inequalities, exacerbated by poverty, have an impact on the food and nutrition security of men and women affected by the humanitarian crisis.

86. These issues contribute to increased displacement. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, between 2017 and 2022, 16.5 million displacements were caused in DRC by conflict, violence, and disaster, with a total of 6 million displaced in 2022.²⁹

87. DRC's National Development Plan for 2018–2022 incorporates targeted strategies for the achievement of each Sustainable Development Goal (SDG). Informed by the national zero hunger strategic review, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) identifies education and economic diversification as drivers of development, sets the aim of boosting agricultural production to strengthen the food security and economic inclusion for the most vulnerable, particularly rural women and minorities, and identifies digital transformation and gender equality as opportunities for growth. Still, DRC scores of 0.203 on the Social Institutions and Gender Index, 0.934 on the Gender Development Index, and 0.578 on the Gender Inequality Index. These scores reflect the medium to high gender inequality in DRC, which results from the discriminatory family code, limited respect for women's physical integrity, women's restricted access to political space and education and their unequal control over economic resources. The United Nations common country analysis conducted in July 2018 identified five main factors that hinder development in the DRC: an inadequately diversified economy that is excessively dependent on oil; weak institutions and management of resources; insufficient agricultural production; inadequate access to education and health services; and the negative effects of climate change on natural resource management.³⁰

88. In this context, the partners³¹ of the RBA Resilience Initiative have selected the Rutshuru district in the Province of Nord-Kivu as the target district to implement the DRC Programme activities. As part of the WFP Integrated Context Analysis (ICA), WFP and partners identified Rutshuru district as one of two geographical areas with persistently high levels of food insecurity (IPC categories 3 and 4), and chronic malnutrition and risks to natural shocks (floods and landslides). At the time of the RBA-DRC project formulation in 2016/2017, the situation in Rutshuru was seen by many actors as one with potential where the security situation was improving; as such it was a good place to reinvest. The situation was seen to be improving and ready to relaunch development activities, as part of post-conflict rehabilitation.

89. Rutshuru district is densely populated with about 1.7 million inhabitants (321 per km²). The district relies heavily on rainfed agriculture and pastoralism, with the main livelihood activities being agriculture, trading, livestock handicrafts, and fishing. Due to the high population density average landholdings are very small, varying from 0.2 to 1.0 ha per household.³² Though large landholdings do exist often by absentee landowners holding their land for grazing purposes.

²⁶ Please see "Democratic Republic of the Congo: North Kivu - Overview of the humanitarian situation (July 2023)." UNOCHA; 25 August 2023. Available [here](#).

²⁷ United Nations Development Programme. 2022. [Gender Inequality Index](#).

²⁸ World Bank. 2021. [Women's Economic Empowerment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo](#).

²⁹ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. 2023. [Global Internal Displacement Database](#).

³⁰ "Bilan commun de pays en République du Congo." Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator; 2018.

³¹ At this stage IFAD was still fully involved.

³² There are no exact data on land holding size in Rutshuru; the range provided is an estimate by FAO.

90. Thanks to its natural resources, Rutshuru is an agricultural breadbasket for the North Kivu province with surpluses being marketed to Goma city and neighbouring countries (Uganda and Rwanda).

91. Access to land represents a major challenge for smallholder farmers in DRC because land is mostly owned by male large landowners. According to the implementing partner (IP) AFCOD, there are two issues at stake: The invasion of crops by livestock owned by large cattle owners (often based in the city); and access to (underutilized) land by smallholders (in particular women) who have no access to sufficient land.

92. At the start of the programme implementation (2017), WFP and FAO contacted the local authorities of Rutshuru district to choose the areas of intervention. Three of the seven administrative groupings of the Bwisha chiefdom: Bukoma, Bueza and Kisigari groupings were selected. The choice was based on the context, agricultural potential, and risk of natural disaster (volcano eruptions, flooding, and erosion).

93. Since the time of the identification of Rutshuru as the RBA Resilience target district in 2016, the security situation has been unstable. Rutshuru district is one of the areas that was most affected by inter-ethnic conflicts and fighting between the regular army and various armed groups. From March 2022 onwards the situation further deteriorated when M23 (a rebellion group) started again attacking the area. In July 2022 M23 has taken complete hold of the district. As a result, it is estimated that about half of the local population has fled the area and has settled in neighbouring districts, including Goma city. Ever since, the situation in the district is not anymore one of development, but of humanitarian action.

94. The national and provincial governments have impeded that food assistance is provided to the population of Rutshuru because of fear that the food might fall into the hands of the rebels. Only complementary food for children under five is allowed to be distributed in the district. WFP and other humanitarian organizations still have a team in the district which consists of nationals. Since 2021, WFP has decided to reject being escorted by MONUSCO (the UN military of the peace mission in DRC) as the anti-MONUSCO spirit in the area made it increasingly difficult to operate and prefer to negotiate access to the district with the local authorities and/or rebel groups. The killing of the Italian Ambassador on the Rutshuru-Goma Road in February 2021 also contributed to this operational policy change.

95. In February 2023, the implementing NGOs partners of WFP and FAO eventually were forced to close their activities in Rutshuru before the proposed end of the project in November 2023.

1.2.2 NIGER

96. In Niger, 76% of smallholder farmers (72% of whom are women), rely on climate-resilient agriculture to meet their food needs. They face productivity constraints including desertification, soil degradation and climate shocks. Agricultural production is being outpaced by population growth. Post-harvest food losses amount to 20%. Smallholder farmers, particularly women, are disadvantaged by a lack of access to productive agricultural inputs and technologies, financial services, economic opportunities, and structured market.

97. The challenges to livelihoods are exacerbated by environmental shocks caused by climate change and unsustainable use of natural resources. Niger experience droughts and floods, leading to the loss of infrastructure and resources, displacement, and inter-communal conflicts over scarce resources. The average frequency (%) of extreme climatic events recorded per year over the period 2010-2019 is 74% for drought, 12% for floods, 11% for epidemics, 1% for pests and 2% for epizootics. Droughts are the most recurrent climate shock in RBA Resilience programme area of interventions (75% in Maradi, 79.6% Zinder). Since 2000, four severe climate-related food and nutrition crises have exacerbated Niger's vulnerability to food insecurity. Since 2000, four severe climate-related food and nutrition crises have exacerbated Niger's vulnerability to food insecurity. This has led to widespread food insecurity and malnutrition.

98. According to The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2022 report, the prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the total population was 46.7% in Niger in 2020, and the prevalence of anaemia in women aged 15 to 48 is 49.5% in 2019. This is confirmed by the Cadre Harmonisé (IPC) findings from December 2021, which report that between 2.5 and 3.3 million people were food insecure countrywide (Phase 3 to 5 as per the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification – IPC), equivalent to up to 13% of the country population. This marks the second-highest level of food insecurity recorded since the inception of the Cadre Harmonisé analysis in 2012.

99. On the Gender Inequality Index, Niger ranks 153 out of 170 countries. Gender inequalities remain a major concern in Niger, including women's limited access to basic social services such as education, health,

resource management and control and the high incidence of early marriage. Women's decision-making role, and their access to agricultural resources, capital, and information is limited. Women have unequal access and control of land, as customary laws restrict women's inheritance. These inequities, exacerbated by poverty, have an impact on the food and nutrition security of men and women affected by the humanitarian crisis.

100. The operational context in Niger has considerably evolved since 2017, with a significant deterioration in the security situation particularly in the border areas with Nigeria, Burkina Faso, and Mali. This has contributed to increased displacement. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 1.5 million internal displacements took place between 2017 and 2022, leading to a total number of 377,000 IDPs in 2022.

101. Niger's country sustainable development and inclusive growth strategy through 2035 and its economic and social development plan for 2017–2021 focus on the modernization of rural communities, the development of human capital and the private sector and demographic transition. The "Les Nigériens Nourrissent les Nigériens initiative (3N)," the 2016–2020 3N priority action plan and the 2014 Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative form a multisector, multistakeholder integrated and coordinated approach to resilience building and social protection (including nutrition) based on national capacity development, ownership, and leadership in line with the Government's decentralization policy. The national nutrition security policy for 2016–2025 and its action plan are aimed at eliminating malnutrition through a holistic approach that combines nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions.

102. The strategy adopted by the RBA Resilience Initiative in Niger, aimed at building sustainable livelihoods and resilience with a climate sensitive lens by linking vulnerability, adaptive capacity, and social protection in the context of climate change. The intervention sought to help populations exposed to the impact of climate change and environmental degradation to diversify their sources of revenue and livelihoods through the protection of assets, revenue and harvests, and improved access to markets for smallholder farmers. The programme also promoted diffusion and adoption of quality inputs (short cycle varieties adapted to climate change, including crops and varieties with nutritional qualities) and development of a sustainable inputs supply mechanism (for seeds, fertilizers, etc.) for sustainable agriculture. To achieve this goal, an integrated approach combined Farmers Field Schools with Dimitra clubs to raise social awareness, allow better decision making and income generating activities such as gardening, horticultural production and pastoral activity development while improving gender equality.

1.2.3 SOMALIA

103. Somalia remains one of the most food insecure and crisis susceptible countries in the world.³³ In the RBA Initiative period, Somalia was just recovering from severe drought conditions. In 2017, there were lower than average rains across most of Somalia during the 2018 Deyr (October-December), followed by harsh weather conditions during the dry Jilaal (January– March 2019) season and the poor performance of the Gu (April-June 2019) rains, leading to worsening drought conditions in many parts of the country. This pattern continued. This has caused widespread water shortages in most pastoral and agropastoral livelihood zones, leading to earlier-than-normal water trucking, atypical livestock movements to watering points, and declines in livestock conditions and milk production. Given this, an estimated 2.2 – 2.6 million people experienced crisis (Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 3) or emergency (IPC Phase 4) food security levels from 2019 – 2023.

104. These crises disproportionately affect women and contribute to increased displacement. Somalia had 7 million displacements between 2017 and 2023, and 3.9 million IDPs in 2022.³⁴ A FAO gender profile of agriculture and rural livelihoods in Somalia from 2021 concludes that the majority of women are self-employed and work in agriculture, but mostly in areas that require less land and capital with low profits, and only few women work in the more profitable livestock and fishing export industries.³⁵ In addition, women's decision-making role, and their access to agricultural resources, capital, and information is limited.

³³ Somalia is ranked 165th out of 170 countries on the Human Development Index and is the fifth poorest country in the world according to the World Bank.

³⁴ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. 2023. [Global Internal Displacement Database](#).

³⁵ FAO. 2021. [National gender profile of agriculture and rural livelihoods](#).

105. The Somalia National Development Plan (2020 to 2024) and the Somaliland National development Plan III (2023 – 2027) are aligned with SDGs and reflect the principles of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. However, weak statistical systems prevent an assessment of progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda. WFP, FAO, and tangentially IFAD, have contributed to developing country analysis, especially for SDG 2 (zero hunger), and in developing the Theory of Change of the Somalia United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.³⁶ Somalia hasn't agreed upon normative instruments or policies related to human rights and gender equality.

106. Climate change will continue to have significant impacts on vulnerable people in Somalia. It is expected to increase the frequency and intensity of droughts, just as has been seen during the Programme period. Droughts can result in crop failure and decreased pasture for livestock, leading to food shortages and increased competition for resources. Unpredictable and irregular rainfall can impact crop planting and harvesting seasons, affecting agricultural productivity. Higher temperatures will contribute to heat stress in crops and livestock, reducing crop yields and affecting the health and productivity of livestock, both of which are essential components of the food supply chain in Somalia.³⁷

107. Given this, the Programme was important in addressing the ways in which climate change affects communities in Somalia and yet this remains an intermediate solution. Climate change may create conditions in which the diversification of livelihoods, moving pastoralists to agropastoralism, may no longer be viable. Given that traditional pastoralist livelihoods will have been lost, this may precipitate further migration to urban centres, as has been the pattern in Somalia.³⁸

108. The RBA Resilience Initiative experienced challenges during the implementation of activities, from the repeated droughts that plagued Somalia to the COVID-19 pandemic that affected access and other issues. This resulted in a no-cost extension that extended the Programme to March 2023 and then further extended to the 31st December 2023 to complete country level activities.

109. The Programme's primary entry point was nutrition and ensuring access to food for vulnerable communities given the repeated shocks and risk of famine. This includes activities for child and maternal health. Thus, the Programme focused on drought recovery, agricultural development, the rehabilitation of water infrastructure, improved Natural Resources Management (NRM), and other activities that diversified sources of food and income, including activities like Village Savings & Loan Associations (VSLA) that encouraged household savings that could be used during a crisis. These were coupled with emergency cash transfers, vouchers, and cash for work and school feeding activities meant to prevent households and children from severe malnutrition.

110. Activities were identified, prioritized, and selected through community participatory processes that involved men and women. The participation of women in community decision making and activities, like market gardens, was central to the approach. The Programme collaborated with community leaders, local authorities, and the national government in providing technical support.

111. The activities focused on increasing income sources for producer groups by creating additional sources of savings for use during periods of shocks.

³⁶ Sustainable Development report, available [here](#).

³⁷ For a comprehensive report on this, please see: Ingrid Hartment & Ahmed J. Sugulle; "The Impact of Climate Change on Pastoral Societies of Somalia." The Heinrich Boll Foundation & the European Union; November 2009. Available [here](#).

³⁸ Peter G. Jones & Philip K. Thornton; "Croppers to livestock keepers: livelihood transitions to 2050 in Africa due to climate change." Environmental Science & Policy; Volume 12, Issue 4, June 2009, Pages 427-437. Available [here](#).

2 EVALUATION SUBJECT

2.1 OVERVIEW

112. The subject of the Evaluation is the Canada/Rome-based Agencies' (RBA) Resilience Initiative "Strengthening the resilience of livelihoods in protracted crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Niger, and Somalia." The five-year (April 2017 through March 2022) Initiative was meant to capitalize upon the RBA Joint Conceptual Framework for Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition,³⁹ wherein FAO, IFAD, and WFP could align food security, nutrition, livelihoods, and agriculture and livestock programming to "increase the food security and resilience of populations, especially women and children" in countries faced with protracted crises.

113. The RBA Resilience Initiative was developed to support joint and integrated interventions in food security, nutrition, livelihoods, sustainable agriculture and, ultimately, resilience. The expected outcomes, as defined from the outset and tracked by the Programme annually, included increased food security and resilience for 168,000 men, women, boys, and girls as members of 27,000 food insecure households in protracted and recurrent crises-affected regions from the three countries, with a specific focus on vulnerable women and children.

Table 2: RBA Resilience Initiative Reach; number of communities and households

RBA Countries	Region	District	Villages	Households
Niger	2 (Zinder & Maradi)	2 (Dogo & Chadakori)	56	12,400
DRC	1 (North Kivu)	1. (Rutshuru)	3 communalities (Bukoma, Bueza and Kisigari)	12,000
Somalia	1 (Togdheer)	2 (Burco & Odweyne)	18	2,600

Source: Evaluation independent data.

114. The Government of Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD) supported the Programme to consider, implement, and improve on good practices regarding how the RBA provides joint and integrated interventions. This included maximizing synergies in assessment, local partner consultation, and the use of multi-stakeholder platforms for planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.⁴⁰

115. The RBA Resilience Initiative budget was CAD\$ 50 million, equally divided between DRC, Niger, and Somalia, along with CAD\$ 2.3 million for global support.⁴¹

116. The RBA Resilience Initiative was due to end on 31 March 2022. However, several activities were cancelled or delayed because of increased insecurity, political events, access constraints, natural disasters (drought and locust outbreaks), as well as the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Programme was provided a one-year no-cost extension until 31st March 2023, and then further extended to 31 December 2023 to complete country-level activities. In June 2024, Niger experienced a military coup and which in turn prevented IFAD from implementing their activities under ProDAF.⁴² Following the coup, the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) placed sanctions on the flow of funds with the new government in Niger and at the time of this evaluation, the IFAD funds are still blocked by the government of Niger. Once funds are eventually returned to IFAD, they will be transferred to WFP Niger and utilized for food purchases from the Global Commodity Management Facility (GCMF) to support the Niger emergency response. To fully

³⁹ "Strengthening resilience for food security and nutrition A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies." FAO, IFAD, WFP; April 2015. Available [here](#).

⁴⁰ IBID.

⁴¹ In the years 2018 - 2022, the CAD\$ exchange fluctuated between USD 0.6896 and 0.8307. Accordingly, CAD\$ 50 million was equivalent to between 34,480,000 and 41,535,000 USD, and CAD\$ 2.3 million to between 1,586,080 and 1,910,610 USD.

⁴² ProDAF is the IFAD project related to the programme. Please visit the IFAD portal for this [here](#).

utilize these unspent balances once received and complete financial and programmatic reporting requirements, the financial end of the project was extended to the 31st of July 2025."

2.2 SCOPE AND PARTNERS

117. The RBA Resilience Initiative's ultimate objective - to increase the food security and resilience of participating communities - is based on the premise that the combination and complementarity of RBA approaches and common practices in nutrition, livelihoods, agriculture/livestock, community engagement, and GEWE, is sufficient in the three countries where communities have experienced protracted humanitarian responses and repeated climate-related shocks (crises). Resilience is central as it is meant to enable communities to better prepare for, withstand, and recover from such crises.⁴³

118. The RBA Resilience Initiative provided an integrated package of activities composed of flexible multi-sectoral, conditional, and unconditional assistance. This included (1) availability and access to a nutritious, diversified, and stable food supply; (2) productive assets for livelihoods at both household and community levels; (3) gender-sensitive nutrition outreach activities; (4) governance of common natural resources; (5) capacity development; and (6) gender mainstreaming combined with GEWE specific activities. This corresponds to integrated approaches to resilience used in other contexts.⁴⁴

119. The RBA brought complementary approaches with the aim of avoiding duplication of services to participating communities through an integrated and sequenced package of activities that aligned with expected outcomes as described in PMFs while being tailored to the communities' needs. In general, the division of activities included:

- **WFP** targets the most food-insecure people through Food Assistance for Assets interventions, providing food and/or cash transfers to cover households' immediate food needs so they can dedicate time to building assets that reduce the risk of climactic shocks and seasonal hardships. WFP Smallholder Market Access Support (SAMS) programmes connected smallholder farmers to markets, giving them the opportunity to grow their businesses and improve their lives and those of their communities, and informed the subsequent Smallholder Farmers Programme after 2016 that focuses on creating an enabling environment and developing local value chains.
- **FAO** supports farmer and pastoral field schools, along with training in climate-resilient agricultural practices, to help boost production, increase incomes, and diversify livelihoods. FAO Dimitra listeners' clubs mobilize the community, improve social cohesion and gender equality, and increase women's leadership.
- **IFAD** works to strengthen local producers' organizations, promote greater access to rural financial services, and improve the community-based governance of scarce natural resources.

120. IFAD only supported the implementation of resilience activities in Niger as it was not able to implement in Somalia given IFAD's International Financial Institution (IFI) status that relies on the government to implement activities, nor in DRC where IFAD portfolio activities were suspended for reasons beyond the Programme. Given this, in 2021, IFAD shifted all project activities and related budget to Niger. These were used to bring existing projects to scale or towards complementing activities already implemented by IFAD in Niger.

121. The Programme's Global Component provided coordination and oversight. This included identifying how agency-specific analytical tools and processes were used, along with opportunities to share knowledge and emerging best practices.

⁴³ This is based on a fundamental definition of resilience used in humanitarian contexts and used by the Rockefeller Foundation's paper on the subject that states: "Resilience is best defined as the ability to withstand, recover from, and reorganize in response to crises." Patrick Martin-Breen and J. Marty Anderies, "Resilience: A Literature Review." The Rockefeller Foundation, September 2011. Page 7. Available [here](#).

⁴⁴ For a good example, please see: "How Sahelians boost their resilience: Evidence from the ground and sky." WFP; no date. Available [here](#).

2.3 THEORY OF CHANGE

122. The Evaluation's methodology is based on a Theory of Change (ToC) included in Annex 7.2. This established causal relationships and assumptions associated with increased food security, nutrition, livelihoods, and resilience in dynamic operating contexts. This was used to inform the evaluation matrix and the sources of evidence used to answer different questions.

123. This is based on the Programme's Theory of Change, developed during the Programme's inception phase, that then informed the subsequent logical frameworks (Performance Management Frameworks (PMF)) that established the causal links between activities and immediate outcomes (outputs), intermediate outcomes (outcomes) and impact.

124. The Programme's Theory of Change and PMFs are based on the assumption that improved nutrition and food security, especially when facing severe malnutrition, enables people to better focus on improved livelihoods, which in turn will enable them to increase diversified sources of income either through labour or involvement in community organizations or through access to agricultural/livestock inputs and assets that, in turn again, may enable them to be effective members of community organizations and to maximize their position in agricultural/livestock value chains. While there are variations and different considerations made for each country, this is the basic logic. It is also assumed that these logical steps will be effective for the most vulnerable.

125. While this ToC Annex 7.2 informed the methodology, the Evaluation more closely followed those set forth in the Programme's PMFs. This allowed the Evaluation to align outcome and impact level data, as provided by the RBA, with independent qualitative information collected by the Evaluation across activities and immediate and intermediate outcomes, as included in the PMFs. The Evaluation then analysed the causality between the activities in each country and the Programme's stated outcome and impact indicators. It then compared these with independent evidence drawn from key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGD) with participating communities, and documentary and comparative evidence from other noted sources.

126. The Evaluation was not privy to the precise data sets for programme outcome and impact indicators and so it was not able to use these to establish precise causality or levels of reasonable contribution, although this should be done by the RBA going forward to establish which of these have the most potential for scaling up or replicating in these or other country contexts. In any case, there was sufficient evidence, especially from FGDs with participating communities, to establish strong indications in many instances of which activities they found most useful and that prompted the most significant changes in relation to their resilience. These are cited throughout this report. This enabled the Evaluation to not only substantiate results (accountability) but also draw conclusions, lessons, and recommendations that may serve the stated learning objectives.

2.4 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

127. The methodological approach is premised upon assessing a general theory, mainly that the combination and complementarity of RBA approaches and best practices in nutrition, livelihoods, agriculture/livestock, community engagement, and gender, increased food security and resilience, especially for the most vulnerable. This is the basis for the theory-based approach to the Evaluation.

128. To assess the theory, the Evaluation then used independent data collection methods (mixed method) to triangulate results with those from the Programme itself, amongst other tertiary sources. This included establishing a degree of contribution between what was reported from participating communities and the Programme's aims, mainly as related to food security, nutrition livelihoods, and resilience.

129. The RBA Resilience Initiative included a global Performance Measurement Framework (PMF) and separate PMFs for each country that detailed activities (outputs), immediate and intermediate outcomes, and expected impact. These provided a basis for the evaluation's approach and analytical framework. These included outcome and impact level indicators and tools that served as a primary source of information. These included standard food security proxy indicators and the FAO Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis (RIMA II) tool for impact level results. The RIMA II includes treatment and control groups and thus provides a fair degree of certainty in relation to changes in resilience for participating communities. However, a RIMA II end line was not possible in DRC given access constraints. The Evaluation used results from these proxy indicators *prima facie* and as based on Programme final reports.

130. The Evaluation used independent data collection methods to triangulate results with those from the Programme itself, amongst other tertiary sources. The Evaluation's independent sources included Key Informant Interviews (KII) with RBA staff (country, regional, & HQ), partners, government officials, and others to establish factors that contributed or propelled performance. The Evaluation also conducted Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with participating communities in all three countries to explore how their lives had changed in relation to key outcome areas and to then draw the links back to Programme activities. These FGDs proved to be an exceptionally rich source of information that provided insights into what worked particularly well in some contexts and for some communities. It also provided the basis for better understanding the proxy level indicators used by the PMF to establish outcome and impact level results.

Table 3: Total number of KIIs and FGDs conducted during the Evaluation's data collection phase

	KII	FGDs
DRC	30 (5 women; 25 men)	4 FGD with 50 community member IDPs (27 women; 23 men)
Niger	15 (4 women; 11 men)	12 FGD with 203 community members. (149 women; 59 men)
Somalia	21 (6 women; 15 men)	14 FGD with 129 community members (63 women; 66 men)

131. The Evaluation has specific questions in the evaluation matrix associated with gender, social inclusion, and human rights. This includes standard indicators and guidelines set out in the System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) (UN-SWAP)⁴⁵ Gender equality and issues of women's empowerment were also raised with participating communities, as described in the data collection protocols. (See Section 7.5.2.)

132. The inception phase included a review of all available documentation, data, and other sources related to the RBA Resilience Initiative. Of relevance were the RBA Canada Resilience Initiative annual reports from 2017 to 2021. The annual reports include the global component and country activities and PMFs. The inception phase report established that most sources were available, the most significant not available being the actual data sets from the Programme's outcome and impact proxy indicators and measurement tools, mainly the FCS, CSI, and RIMA II, amongst noted others in the different country contexts. These data sets were never provided.

133. The Evaluation included specific cohorts (women-headed households, households with children under 5, households with school-age children, pregnant and lactating women, persons living with disabilities, and persons over 65 years old) that correspond to inclusion standards. This was done in coordination with RBA country teams in preparation for field visits and FGDs with the communities. In nearly all cases, such inclusion standards were achieved. This is described in Annex 1.1.1 and in the separate country case studies.

134. The Evaluation's approach was based on the OECD – DAC criteria of relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, and impact, along with gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE), human rights, equity, and inclusion. This included the following primary questions:

Table 4: Evaluation Questions

RELEVANCE EQ 1.0: To what extent is the RBA Resilience Initiative design and implementation relevant to the needs and priorities of its targeted stakeholders across countries and at the global level?
COHERENCE EQ 2.0: What have been the synergies between the Canada - RBA Resilience Initiative and other resilience interventions / programmes of FAO, IFAD, WFP and other actors operating in the same context?
EFFECTIVENESS EQ 3.0: To what extent has the RBA Resilience Initiative achieved its intended outcomes as defined in the performance measurement frameworks?
EFFICIENCY EQ 4.0: How efficient was the partnership of the RBAs in view of implementing the joint multi-year resilience initiative and leveraging further resources?
IMPACT EQ 5.0: Did the RBA Resilience Initiative contribute to long-term intended results or unintended impacts?
SUSTAINABILITY EQ 6.0: To what extent are the benefits of the RBA Resilience Initiative sustainable?

⁴⁵ For an overview and guidance, visit the UN Women's UN-SWAP website [here](#).

GENDER, HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUITY AND INCLUSION: EQ 7.0: To what extent did the RBA Resilience Initiative take into account and contribute to gender, human rights, equity and inclusion?

135. These questions were developed into an evaluation matrix that established the number and type of sources for each question and the analysis herein includes references to these sources and their completeness/validity for final analysis. The evaluation matrix is included in Annex 7.2. The Evaluation did not make significant changes to the Evaluation questions set forth in the Tor except to add one question under effectiveness (3.2) and to split several questions to ease analysis. The full list of questions is included in Annex 7.3. These criteria were chosen as they provide pertinent and specific evidence to inform decision making, ensure accountability, and enhance learning.

136. The Evaluation included specific questions and approaches associated with GEWE, social inclusion, and human rights. This includes the standard indicators and guidelines set out in the UN-SWAP.⁴⁶ The RBA Resilience Initiative set out gender and gender equity as key crosscutting issues and has included some indicators and data in each country PMF. This included the extent to which: (i) the Programme design, implementation, and monitoring was inclusive of women, children, and other identified vulnerable groups; (ii) the Programme effectively contributed to the food security status and strengthened resilience for women, children, and other vulnerable groups. The Evaluation also analysed how gender, equity, and wider inclusion objectives were included in the design, implementation, and programme results. These were grounded in the specific operating contexts in the three countries and in the subsequent case studies developed for each. This enabled the Evaluation to provide specific analysis and recommendations for each country's programme and to align these with broader findings and conclusions in the main report. In the end, there was not sufficient evidence to assess aspects of human rights.

137. These were assessed as part of the Evaluation and yet specific evidence related to human rights was not readily available. This is due to the lack of relevant evidence from the programme itself and given the technical nature of rights-based discussions and how it may be expressed by participating communities, especially given that human rights were not specifically included in FGD protocols.

2.5 DATA COLLECTION & METHODS

138. Data collection occurred in all three countries with a mix of in-person and remote Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with participating communities. This was combined with an analysis of primary results data from the Programme that corresponded with immediate and intermediate outcome indicators. KII included standard interview protocols (Annex 1.1.) to ensure that collected qualitative data was consistent and could be validated.

Table 5: Total number of KIIs and FGDs conducted during the Evaluation's data collection phase

	KII	FGDs
DRC	30 (5 women; 25 men)	4 FGD with 50 community member IDPs (27 women; 23 men)
Niger	15 (4 women; 11 men)	12 FGD with 203 community members. (149 women; 59 men)
Somalia	21 (6 women; 15 men)	14 FGD with 129 community members (63 women; 66 men)

139. In terms of FGDs, Niger and Somalia both exceeded the target number of FGDs, which was set at 8 during the inception phase. Given the conflict and displacement in DRC, the Evaluation was only able to conduct four FGDs there, as described further below. The FGDs included men, women, persons living with disabilities, people over 65 years old, and cohorts across Programme activities. Separate FGDs were held for groups of men and women, in which other cohorts were represented. The breadth of information and insights that arose from these FGDs proved essential to the Evaluation's analysis.

140. In terms of KII, the approximate number of KII was set at 44 per country in the Inception Phase. This was an estimate based on available resources and in relation to having enough to cover all stakeholder categories. In the end, the actual number of KIIs was less, given the lists provided by each country office and the availability of different staff, which in all instances included around 20 – 25 people. In the end, the selection

⁴⁶ For an overview and guidance, visit the UN Women's UN-SWAP website [here](#).

of KII was representative of local RBA staff, UN, INGO, local partners and local and central government authorities. Qualitative evidence from these interviews was analysed according to emergent categories of analysis, e.g., similar themes or issues raised by multiple respondents.

141. The original design included the use of the Qualitative Impact Assessment Protocol (QIAP).⁴⁷ In the end, it was not possible to use the full QIAP given the requirements associated with a double-blind approach to the interviewee and subject and given how FGDs were organized in DRC and Niger. Nonetheless, the QIAP protocol was used for all FGDs, and these proved to be a rich source of varied qualitative evidence that enabled the Evaluation to draw out how specific activities that were linked to Programme outcome and impact performance measures like the FCS, CSI, and RIMA II that focus on specific aspects of food security and resilience.

142. More information about the demographics of FGDs and KIIs is available in Annexes 7.6.

2.6 DATA AVAILABILITY

143. The Evaluation is expected to use primary data from the Programme to establish causal relationships between factors such as shocks and specific activities and outcome-level results. The Programme reported on these in Annual Reports as part of the PMFs and in final reports, issued in December 2023.⁴⁸ This is what was used in the Evaluation, as subsets of data were not made available.

144. Thus, RBA Resilience Initiative outcome and impact level results, as provided in final reports, were taken *prima facie*. This is acceptable, given that these are all common indicators and measurement tools widely used amongst the RBA and other organizations working on food security and resilience. There is also no evidence that the RBA deviated from standard approaches to these, except in the delays in midlines due to COVID-19 and related access issues, and the lack of an endline in DRC given the displacement of participating communities. However, this did prevent the Evaluation from distinguishing which activities contributed the most to expected outcome results except as cited in KII and FGDs.

145. In terms of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE), the Evaluation used the UN Women Rapid Assessment Tool to Evaluate GEWE⁴⁹ and FGDs to assess aspects of GEWE and social inclusion. This complemented Programme indicators and information about women's participation.

2.7 DATA ANALYSIS

146. Programme activities (outputs) and immediate outcomes were developed at the country level, with variations given targeted populations, operating context, and the complementarity of approaches between the RBA.⁵⁰ **Error! Reference source not found.** The figure below shows the outputs/activities (immediate outcomes), outcomes (intermediate outcomes) and impact across the three countries. Each of these is numbered (1000 – 1420), according to the reference used by the RBA. This corresponds to the global and country-level PMFs, also referenced throughout the Evaluation.

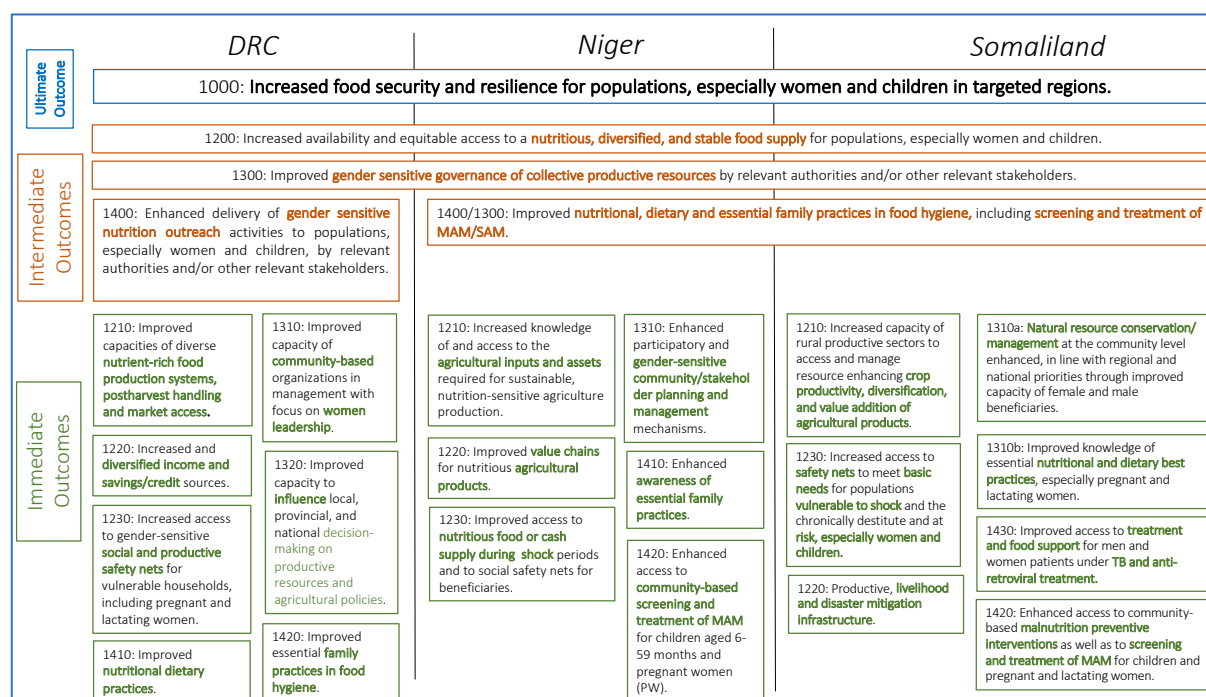
⁴⁷ For a primer on QIAP, please visit the relevant page on the Better Evaluation website [here](#).

⁴⁸ FCS and CSI are fair proxies of food security, but they often miss how households may make decisions that affect their well-being beyond caloric intake. For instance, if a household decides to forgo a protein for a family meal and uses the money instead for children or other family members' needs, this may be integral to their overall resilience. However, the rCSI and FCS would show them as being more food insecure. For some other considerations about the combined use of FCS and CSI, please see: Aleksandra Gorzycka-Sikora¹, Nancy Mock², Michelle Lacey; "Multivariate analysis of food consumption profiles in crisis settings." *PLoS ONE* 18(3): e0283627. Available [here](#).

⁴⁹ The tool and guidance are available [here](#).

⁵⁰ IFAD only directly participated in the Niger Initiative. In DRC, some issues prevented IFAD from working there. In Somalia, various constraints limited IFAD's participation.

Figure 4: Outcome map of RBA Resilience Initiative Performance Management Frameworks



Source: Developed by the evaluation team as based on RBA Resilience Initiative PMFs and Annual Reports.

147. Contribution analysis was used to test the programmatic pathways and to reduce uncertainty about specific contributions to results from outputs to impact. This was done according to the RBA Resilience Initiative’s PMFs and the implied programmatic pathways in them related to outputs, immediate outcomes, intermediate outcomes, and the ultimate outcome. This included the assessment of immediate outcomes and corresponding activities from each country (Section **Error! Reference source not found.**) and then an assessment of the intermediate outcomes and impact based on a combination of the Programme’s proxy indicators (the FAO Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis (RIMA II) tool;⁵¹ Moderate and Severe Acute Malnutrition (MAM/SAM) levels;⁵² the Food Consumption Score (FCS);⁵³ the reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI);⁵⁴ the Livelihood Coping Strategies Index (L-CSI);⁵⁵ and the Minimum Dietary Diversity scores (MDD-W; MAD)).⁵⁶ These results were compared with Integrated Phase Classification (IPC)⁵⁷ food security levels and trends, and additional evidence as noted.

148. Analytical methods included contribution analysis that compared the Evaluation’s independent qualitative information from KII and FGD with the results of the primary outcome and impact indicator and

⁵¹ The RIMA II derives a latent measurement of resilience called a Resilience Capacity Index (RCI) using a range of proxy indicators including the Food Consumption Score (FCS) and reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI). The approach also incorporates indicators as drivers (causes) of resilience. Technical guidance and descriptions of the RIMA II, please visit FAO [here](#).

⁵² For a brief on MAM/SAM, please visit the Global Health eLearning Centre [here](#).

⁵³ The Food Consumption Score (FCS) is an index developed by the World Food Programme (WFP) in 1996. The FCS aggregates household-level data on the diversity and frequency of food groups consumed over the previous seven days, which is then weighted according to the relative nutritional value of the consumed food groups. Based on this score, a household’s food consumption can be further classified into one of three categories: poor, borderline, or acceptable. For technical guidance and descriptions of the FCS, please visit WFP [here](#).

⁵⁴ The reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI) measures the stress level a household is facing when exposed to food shortage. The higher the stress, the higher is the index. It is comprised of five standard food coping strategies: 1) relying on less preferred and less expensive food, 2) borrowing food or relying on help from relatives or friends, 3) limiting portion size at meals, 4) restricting consumption by adults for small children to eat, and 5) reducing number of meals eaten in a day. For technical guidance and descriptions of the rCSI, please visit WFP [here](#).

⁵⁵ For technical guidance and descriptions of the L-CSI, please visit WFP [here](#).

⁵⁶ For technical guidance and descriptions of the MDD, please visit the International Dietary Data Expansion Project [here](#).

⁵⁷ Visit the IPC website [here](#) for more information.

from some contextual analysis, including national food security trends as established by the Integrated Phase Classification/Cadre Harmonisé in each country.⁵⁸

149. The Evaluation also used a modified version of the Qualitative Impact Assessment Protocol (QIAP) for FGD that focuses on open ended qualitative statements that allow respondents to site issues and activities that have affected them without being prompted about the specifics of the Programme. In its purest form, this would include a double-blind approach where both respondents and facilitators would not know that the interview was specifically addressing the Programme. This was not possible as the facilitator team was part of the Evaluation, and upon arrival in the communities, it was clear that community members knew the purpose of the visit. Nonetheless, the emergent characteristics of the protocol were still used, e.g. not specifying aspects of the Programme itself, thus allowing respondents to site issues related to nutrition, food production, and the roles of women. This included asking respondents what the most significant change was in their lives over the last few years and a specialized module on women's empowerment administered to women respondents only. While this provided a rich source of qualitative information, the emergent design, rather than being specific to Programme activities, meant that this information could not be used as a definitive data set to link specific activities to outcome and impact-level results. Nonetheless, this qualitative evidence does provide a fair degree of correlation between certain activities (given that some were simply not included in this analysis) and results as expressed by the communities and was linked to Programme outcome and impact performance measures like the FCS, CSI, and RIMA, II that focus on specific aspects of food security and resilience.

150. Thematic analysis was used to explore patterns across qualitative data from KII and FGD. This allowed the Evaluation to understand those aspects of the RBA Resilience Initiative that participants talked about frequently or in depth, and the ways in which those aspects of the RBA Resilience Initiative were connected to expected results.

151. The Evaluation included thematic case studies for each country with a specific analysis of the issues encountered in each.

152. While sufficient contribution between activities and intermediate outcomes was not possible to ascertain, given the lack of access to corresponding Programme data sets, there was enough evidence to establish key types of activities that should always be included in such resilience programming and ample lessons about how to plan and deliver a programme like this in complex and dynamic operating contexts.

153. In terms of accountability, the Evaluation assessed whether participating communities received support in alignment with the Programme Inception Report (October 2018) and its addendum (January 2022), and if the Programme met stated outcomes and targets by March 2023, the end of the one-year no-cost extension (which was then further extended to the 31st December 2023 to complete country level activities). As established in Section 3.3.1, the Programme was remarkably successful in this regard.

154. Triangulation for these and other sources is provided for each relevant section of the report. This includes a reference marker as to whether subsequent analysis and conclusions are based on a convergence of evidence from sources, mainly documentary (D), qualitative from affected populations (Q1), qualitative from primary actors (Q2), and quantitative/primary data (#).

155. These are summarized as being either Grey (no data), Amber (some data), or Green (sufficient data). Examples of this include:



This example shows that there is documentary evidence and qualitative data from stakeholders (both key informants and participating communities) and is sufficient while there were issues with primary data and that from target populations.



This example shows that there is no relevant documentary evidence, some issues with primary data, and yet complete and corresponding qualitative information from all stakeholders.

⁵⁸ Please visit the IPC site [here](#).

156. These findings statements are then followed by analysis, drawing examples from each country and from the Evaluation’s primary sources as cited.

2.8 LIMITATIONS

157. The following table included the limitations and mitigation measures that affected the Evaluation, including reference to specific countries.

Table 6: Implications and mitigation measures

Limitation	Implications & Mitigation Measures		
	DRC	Niger	Somalia
Access	<p>The security situation in Rutshuru meant that it could not be visited.</p> <p>Conducted larger FGDs with community representatives. This included 100 community members identified by WFP who had been displaced in and around the city of Goma. The Evaluation thus conducted four FGDs (25 representatives each). Additional time was allotted for these FGDs to accommodate the larger size, and this did not disrupt overall participation.</p> <p>Government representatives were only interviewed at the regional level (Nord-Kivu).</p> <p>Community representatives were selected by WFP from those who had been displaced around Goma. This is noted in subsequent analysis.</p>	<p>Political unrest in Niger caused a delay by several weeks.</p> <p>KII interviews were conducted remotely.</p>	<p>None</p>
Outcome level data	<p>Outcome level data from the RBA were only available for the 2017 baseline, 2019 mid-term, and partially for the 2020 and 2021 mid-terms. This was due to restrictions linked to COVID-19.</p> <p>Micro-level data was not made available. This prevented analysis of specific activities and their relationship to changes at the outcome level as based on this data.</p> <p>The security situation and displacement imply that any of the gains that were achieved by the 2021 midterm results were likely eroded.</p> <p>The Evaluation relied on the 2021 midterm results and the feedback from representative communities and other stakeholders to draw conclusions.</p>	<p>There were gaps and inconsistencies in how outcome data was presented in country-level end-line reports. Micro-level data was not made available. This prevented analysis of specific activities and their relationship to changes at the outcome level as based on this data.</p> <p>The evaluation used standard analysis and reporting methods for each indicator.</p>	
QuIP/FGDs	<p>There were constraints in using QuIP in all three countries, especially as regards the double-blind approach.</p> <p>The Evaluation kept to the standard QuIP protocol (with some modifications in the case of DRC) that explored three primary issues (changes in diet; changes in food production; changes in women’s participation) and the “most significant change” that community members cited for each.</p> <p>Community members were vocal and had a mix of perspectives that they shared, some positive and some less so (even if the overall trend across this qualitative evidence was positive). They also provide examples, un-prompted, that corresponded to Programme activities and other issues within their communities. Examples of this have been included in the report as noted.</p>		
Documentation	<p>None</p>	<p>Documentation of activities was limited.</p> <p>Findings are supported further by relevant studies and evaluations conducted by WFP, FAO and/or IFAD on related topics. These are cited throughout.</p>	<p>None</p>

2.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

158. The Evaluation conformed to the 2020 United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Ethical Guidelines. Accordingly, NSCE was responsible for safeguarding and ensuring ethics at all stages of the evaluation cycle. This included, but was not limited to, ensuring informed consent, protecting privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity of participants, ensuring cultural sensitivity, respecting the autonomy of participants, ensuring fair recruitment of participants (including women and socially excluded groups) and ensuring that the evaluation results in no harm to participants or their communities.

159. In addition to the UNEG ethical guidelines, the evaluation team adhered to the UNEG principles of 'do no harm' and its guidance on integrating human rights and gender equality in evaluations.

160. The encounters with and data gathered from respondents were kept strictly confidential. The team ensured that participants understood that their participation was voluntary (informed consent was sought from all respondents). Respondents had the opportunity to suspend an interview or opt out of specific questions for any reason they felt necessary. This did not occur in any KII or FGD. Transcribed data did not include any information that could reveal the identity of the respondent, e.g., organization, title, etc. People living with disabilities were also included in FGDs, as organized by the RBA along with other participants and given the criteria set forth by the Evaluation in organizing these. FGDs were held in places that they could access easily and that were comfortable for them and others. Specifically in Niger and Somalia, the team travelled to participating communities after introduction and agreement through FAO's and WFP's coordination with the community. In DRC, the team met with members of participating communities who had been displaced to Goma. FGDs were of reasonable size (8 – 12 people), and men and women FGDs were conducted separately in Somalia and DRC and through separate and mixed groups in Niger with a separate closing session with only women. FGDs were facilitated in ways to ensure active participation. The Evaluation found no issues in relation to the vocalicity of different cohorts within FGDs.

161. Gender sensitivity was considered during the design, planning, and implementation of the data collection. The team hired facilitators, ensuring, in each case, a gender-balanced team able to conduct the FGDs and KII in a non-gender mixed space if necessary and relevant according to the context. In each of the three countries, the UN Women Tool was conducted solely with women. In regard to the location, different mitigation measures were taken to ensure the inclusiveness of the discussion and to avoid gender and other barriers.

162. The database of collected information was shared only amongst the evaluation team members and was not provided to the RBA or any other entity. The database and all its contents will be destroyed within 3 months of the approval of the final report.

163. If a subject is disclosed or is suspected to be at risk outside of the evaluation, these issues would have been raised with the Evaluation Manager immediately and Salasan-NSCE would follow DEQAS guidelines for how such cases are addressed. No such issues emerged.

164. The evaluation ensured that all team members were independent and impartial so that they could collect and analyse data freely and develop findings and conclusions.

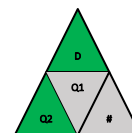
3 EVALUATION FINDINGS

165. The following sections are organized according to the evaluation criteria and questions. Some questions were merged when the analysis addressed all related issues. In some instances, there was not enough evidence to adequately respond to all aspects of the questions and corresponding indicators. This is indicated in each section.

3.1 E.Q1.0: TO WHAT EXTENT IS THE RBA RESILIENCE INITIATIVE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION RELEVANT TO THE NEEDS AND PRIORITIES OF ITS TARGETED STAKEHOLDERS ACROSS COUNTRIES AND AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL?

3.1.1 RELEVANCE TO EXPECTED RESULTS⁵⁹

Finding 1: *The RBA Resilience Initiative's scope, approach, resources, and expected results were based on the RBA's comparative advantages associated with food security and nutrition and as described in the RBA's "Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition: A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies".⁶⁰*



166. This comprehensive approach and methodology employed by the RBA Resilience Initiative included understanding the needs of participating communities based on the Agencies' standard vulnerability assessments, including collaboration between the Agencies at the country, regional, and HQ levels during the design phase to determine a theory of change and specific activities for each country that could achieve common outcomes and impact objectives.

167. The approach was underpinned by the emergence of opportunities for multi-year programming in humanitarian contexts, growing resilience research, and emerging best practices for how to address the needs of the most vulnerable in protracted humanitarian crises available at the outset of the Programme.

168. Programme activities were designed to contribute to nutritious, diversified and stable food supplies; productive resources meant to contribute to improved livelihoods; improved nutritional and dietary practices; and other training and support for healthy nutritional practices. (See

169. Figure 4.)

170. The RBA has inherent comparative advantages, based on their mandates and experience, in relation to food security. As a specialized UN agency, the RBA has combined expertise in food security, nutrition, agri-food systems, emergency relief and rural development, and comparative advantages through their international standing, global reach and credibility, partnership experience with governments and other stakeholders, and long-term field presence.

171. In DRC, Niger and Somalia, the RBA share long-term experience of working with communities, civil society, government authorities, and the private sector in developing multi-year programmes. Food security and nutrition were addressed particularly through WFP's emergency cash assistance and food assistance for assets programmes which were combined with FAO's technical support and agricultural and livestock inputs to stabilize degraded landscapes, reduce the risk of future and seasonal hardships (particularly those faced by women), improve natural regeneration and boost agricultural production and incomes. This was meant to be complemented further through IFAD's support of smallholder farmers' access to credit and to local producers' organizations. These factors provided the basis for the RBA's "Strengthening Resilience for Food

⁵⁹ As indicated in the triangulation graphic, this section is based on evidence from documentary sources and KII with relevant stakeholders. Overall, these were sufficient for noted findings.

⁶⁰ "Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition: A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies." FAO, IFAD, WFP; April 2015. Page 2. Available [here](#).

Security and Nutrition: A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies.”⁶¹

172. The RBA expected to develop an integrated approach to resilience in the three countries that leveraged their experience and comparative advantages towards a multi-year approach to resilience.⁶² This included joint planning and programming based on WFP’s Three-pronged approach (3PA) to resilience building. The 3PA enabled the RBA to create a framework for identifying, designing, coordinating, and implementing complementary projects by linking information on the trends of food security, shocks, livelihoods, and seasonality at national, sub-national and community levels. RBA staff consistently remarked that the 3PA was a useful tool, especially in how it operationalized some of the concepts and theoretical frameworks associated with resilience.

173. While the precise population groups the RBA serves in each country are somewhat different, they include people who are vulnerable to protracted humanitarian contexts, live in fragile and degraded landscapes, and are exposed to frequent shocks and stressors. It is the fragility of these landscapes that reduces productivity and increases the risk of and impacts of shocks and stressors. These population groups include smallholder farmers, pastoralist and semi-pastoralist groups, fishers, and other rural communities whose traditional livelihoods have been at threat from climate change, continued conflicts, and market instability (price increases), amongst other factors. This implied that while a diversity of cohorts was included, the overall objective remained the same for all.

174. The RBA Resilience Initiative established its approach through a joint inception phase report.⁶³ This included the scope, resources, results frameworks, and overall analysis of the country context and needs. The rationale in the report was put as follows:

The initiative aims to address the vicious circles of poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition faced by vulnerable populations, especially women and children, in some of the harshest places in the world, confronted by protracted and recurrent crises characterized by a very high level of risks related to climate variability, climate change, conflicts and insecurity, food chain threats, economic shocks and impacts of poor governance of common resources and basic services. In such contexts, a multi-year vision and strategy are required to strengthen resilience as repeated short-term humanitarian interventions are required but are not able to address the root causes of vulnerability in a sustainable manner.⁶⁴

175. The approach was ambitious, given that such integrated resilience programming was relatively nascent.⁶⁵ This novelty contributed to the decision to “pilot” different activities. Whether explicit or not, this also lent to the relevance of the approach as there was not a firmly established model for how to deliver resilience programming in these contexts and so the Programme sought to work with communities to try as many different things as possible, all while tethered to a comprehensive results framework. While this did tend to lead to a level of “over design” that made management more challenging and may have drawn

⁶¹ “Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition: A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies.” FAO, IFAD, WFP; April 2015. Page 2. Available [here](#).

⁶² For more on the relevance of resilience programming on food insecurity, please see: Béné, C., Headey, D., Haddad, L. et al. “Is resilience a useful concept in the context of food security and nutrition programmes? Some conceptual and practical considerations.” *Food Security*; 8, 123–138 (2016). Available [here](#).

⁶³ “Rome-based Agencies Resilience Initiative: Strengthening the Resilience of livelihoods in protracted crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Niger and Somalia: Inception Phase Report.” FAO, IFAD and WFP; October 2018. Available upon request.

⁶⁴ “Rome-based Agencies Resilience Initiative: Strengthening the Resilience of livelihoods in protracted crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Niger and Somalia: Inception Phase Report.” FAO, IFAD and WFP; October 2018. Available upon request. Page 3.

⁶⁵ The first study of resilience programming in humanitarian contexts was from a study of posttraumatic resilience in child soldiers in Uganda from 2010. Please see: Klasen, F., Oettingen, G., Daniels, J., Post, M., Hoyer, C., and Adam, H. “Post traumatic resilience in former Ugandan child soldiers.” *Child Development*, 81(4); 2010. Available [here](#). This was followed by a plethora of resilience programming after the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit that established the need for multi-year humanitarian response, thus opening the door to such endeavours. Visit the Agenda for Humanity site [here](#). Even before this, one of the first multi-year humanitarian programmes was the 2014 Joint Resilience Strategy in Somalia, led by FAO, UNICEF, and WFP, that followed the 2011/2012 famine, another devastating signal that longer-term programming approaches were required in such protracted humanitarian crises. A brief on the JRS is available [here](#).

resources away from other activities, like more concerted community engagement throughout implementation, this made sense at the time. Most importantly, the context in each country dictated which activities or combinations of activities were selected and based on their potential to contribute to expected outcomes.

176. The inception phase report goes on to describe the potential added value of the RBA collaboration, the guiding principles from the World Food Security (CFS)-endorsed Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises (CFS-FFA),⁶⁶ reporting, budgetary projections, and the “master logic model” that laid out the relationships between activities, immediate and intermediate outcomes, and the ultimate outcome.⁶⁷ This became the basis for the PMFs used at the global and country levels. This inception phase report thus established the needs—which were well known to the RBA and through the Humanitarian Response Plans and other needs assessments in each country — the resources, as articulated in budgets, and the results through global and country-level PMFs.

177. Outputs changed only in the fact that a few were removed because of operational issues, like access during COVID-19. The same was true of outcome and impact indicators. These were not changed significantly, although there were constraints in which data could be collected when stymieing the use of the RIMA II in DRC and causing some qualitative indicators to be dropped while maintaining the same outcomes that corresponded to the Programme’s theory of change. This included outcome indicators including FCS, rCSI, L-CSI, and MDD-W/MAD. These indicators were measured and reported upon annually and, as possible, with the RIMA II, FCS, and rCSI included in end-line assessments.

178. The Programme achieved nearly all results based on these outcome indicators and based on the feedback from the communities themselves. Food security improved, in some cases significantly. (Section 3.3.1.) There is also evidence, based on the RIMA II and other sources, including community feedback, that participating communities are more resilient. This is not without certain issues. The RIMA II did not establish significant differences between control and treatment groups in DRC and Niger, with the former restricted only to the midline. It did so in the case of Somalia. Qualitative evidence from the Evaluation, especially input from participating communities, shows that they found these activities largely relevant to improved nutrition, livelihoods, agricultural production, and other aspects of their lives that are associated with resilience.

179. Not all activities were possible, with some dropped because of access and other constraints, while a few others were seen as having less relevance to expected results as the Programme progressed. This is based on a review of how the RBA PMFs changed, year in and year out, and as explained in KII with RBA staff. In the case of DRC, this meant that ten outputs out of 35 were not achieved, mostly because of the conflict and forced displacement in the last year. In Niger, this included 6 outputs out of 34. In Somalia, this included two out of 31. While the Evaluation cannot decipher how or if these reduced outputs contributed to a decrease in overall relevance, KII does indicate that the RBA considered this in their decision-making.

180. This inception phase also determined what each RBA partner would do. FAO and WFP have complementary expertise in nutrition interventions, especially as they relate to improving the nutritional status of vulnerable and at-risk populations with a combination of training, support to the production of nutritive foods, ensuring access to fresh and nutritive food through vouchers schemes, and improving the production and post-harvest processing to meet food safety standards. These comparative advantages then informed the responsibilities that each Agency assumed in each country. IFAD’s role was envisioned as instrumental in strengthening local producers’ organizations, promoting greater access to rural financial services, and improving the community-based governance of scarce natural resources.

181. It was agreed that WFP would target the most food-insecure people through its Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) programmes. FFA provided food and/or cash-based transfers to cover households’ immediate food needs, so they could focus on restoring existing or creating new assets. This included land-based asset creation, i.e., land rehabilitation to restore its productive potential, and to reduce and mitigate the impacts of climate shocks. This is the FFA’s primary role in resilience approaches in fragile operating contexts. This worked in tandem in all three countries with FAO-supported Farmer and Pastoral Field Schools and training

⁶⁶ “Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises.” CFS, 2015. Available [here](#).

⁶⁷ “Rome-based Agencies Resilience Initiative: Strengthening the Resilience of livelihoods in protracted crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Niger and Somalia: Inception Phase Report.” FAO, IFAD and WFP; October 2018. Available upon request. Pages 16 – 23.

in climate resilient agricultural practices to increase crop yields and overall production and thus contributing to household income and diversified livelihood strategies.

182. These specific agency competencies and areas of expertise were detailed in the global and country level Performance Management Frameworks (PMF). These aligned all specific activities with expected outputs (immediate outcomes) and corresponding outcomes (intermediate outcomes) that could contribute to the expected impact. All of these and the additional experience of the agencies were meant to enable communities to better prepare for, respond to, and recover from shocks and crises.

183. Given the work to establish how each Agencies' comparative advantages and expertise would be aligned with specific outcomes and impact level results, the RBA then agreed to use the RIMA II⁶⁸ as the primary measure of impact as related to household-level resilience. Longitudinal RIMA analysis (baseline, midline, end line⁶⁹) traces changes in key determinants of resilience, including access to basic services, assets, social safety nets, overall food security, etc. While Key Informants state that much of the inherent analysis of the RIMA II was difficult to grasp, they agreed that it could provide a clear framework for measuring the agreed-upon intermediate outcomes.

184. This thus moved away from the TANGO framework of absorptive, adaptive, and transformative capacities that was cited in the RBA Conceptual Framework.⁷⁰ Instead, the RIMA II included Multiple Indicators Multiple Causes (MIMIC) to better establish which Programme activities may be contributing to results, something that is missing in the TANGO approach.⁷¹ The RIMA II thus became the primary basis for determining the linkages between Programme activities and outcome/impact level results. The results from these are presented in Section 3.5.1.

185. While the analysis above establishes that the Programme's results were relevant to expected results, given the comparative advantages of each Agency, the fact that IFAD was not able to participate in DRC and Somalia, and only limitedly in Niger, implies that these results could have been more relevant to communities' needs and to approaches to resilience. However, it is not possible to assess what effect this may have had on overall relevance in absentia.

186. Given these considerations, the RBA Resilience Initiative's design (combining food security, nutrition, livelihoods, and resilience) and its implementation (given comparative advantages and expertise amongst the RBA) also considered the needs of the vulnerable populations in the three countries through joint vulnerability assessments that included early engagement with the communities. These followed the processes set forth by the 3PA and given each agency's standard vulnerability assessment approaches. The Evaluation did not identify any issues or problems with these approaches, and FGDs did not raise issues associated with vulnerable groups in their communities that were not included.

187. Vulnerability assessments focused on rural populations who were fully dependent on agricultural or livestock and whose livelihoods were threatened by repeated climate events (droughts, floods) or conflict and displacement, as described in Section **Error! Reference source not found.** The Programme's design reached these populations through a combination of outputs that were tailored to each country's context, as described in the PMFs, all of which were expected to contribute to similar outcomes and impacts. (See Figure 4.) This was based on an analysis during the Programme's inception phase that included determining how FAO and WFP, particularly, could address needs through a combination of training, support to food production, ensuring access to nutritious food through vouchers schemes, and improving the production and post-harvest processing to meet food safety standards. This was buttressed by the multiyear design that allowed for integrated approaches and at least as intended, to build on and complement the achievements of previous years.

⁶⁸ The RIMA II derives a latent measurement of resilience called a Resilience Capacity Index (RCI) using a range of proxy indicators, including the Food Consumption Score (FCS) and reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI). The approach also incorporates indicators as drivers (causes) of resilience. Technical guidance and descriptions of the RIMA II, please visit FAO [here](#).

⁶⁹ The timing of these were disrupted because of COVID-19 and the endline was not completed in DRC given the displacement of participating communities.

⁷⁰ "Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition: A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies." FAO, IFAD, WFP; April 2015. Page 2. Available [here](#).

⁷¹ For a comparison of RIMA and TANGO, please see: Marco D'Errico & Lisa C. Smith; "Comparison of FAO and TANGO measures of household resilience and resilience capacity." FAO, February 2020. Available [here](#).

188. The RBA also drew on the growing literature and best practices associated with resilience programming in humanitarian contexts. Resilience programming accelerated in the early 2000s and then again after the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, which included a commitment to multi-year humanitarian programming.

189. In DRC, key informants cited USAID's five-year Feed the Future Strengthening Livelihoods and Resilience (SLR) implemented in the Ituri Province of Eastern Congo,⁷² the 2016-2021 WFP-FAO Joint Resilience Programme in Tanganyika designed to support smallholder farmers' value chains,⁷³ and a 2018 – 2021 World Bank urban development and resilience project in Kinshasa⁷⁴ as key when designing the Programme. Each of these provides evidence that indicates that a focus on smallholder farming and other livelihood activities is central to how communities in DRC build resilience. These thus supported this level of focus in the Programme's design.

190. Similar studies informed the Programme design in Niger. This included USAID's 2015 - 2020 Resilience in the Sahel Enhanced (RISE) initiative,⁷⁵ an ongoing WFP-integrated resilience programme,⁷⁶ a 2019 – 2023 UNICEF and WFP integrated resilience programme,⁷⁷ amongst others. The last of these prompted some consideration of whether the Programme should be extended to other partners, like UNICEF. According to key informants, the Programme provided a platform that allowed the RBA to join and collaborate with other partnerships, including with other UN agencies. While this was considered, no such partnerships came to fruition.

191. In Somalia, resilience programming accelerated after the 2011/2012 famine with the ongoing Somalia Resilience Programme (SomRep) launched in 2012,⁷⁸ the 2012 FAO, UNICEF & WFP Joint Resilience Strategy, which entered a third phase in 2021,⁷⁹ the 2013 INGO Consortium, led by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Building Resilient Communities in Somalia (BRCIS) programme,⁸⁰ and others. These were country-wide programmes mostly focused on famine prevention and included a mix of INGOs and UN organizations. While key informants cite these as relevant to the Agencies' experience, the Programme inevitably took a more localized (Somaliland) and focused (18 communities) approach that may have benefited the relevance and broader effectiveness, as described in Section 3.3.1.

3.1.2 RELEVANCE TO FRAMEWORKS, PRIORITIES, PRINCIPLES, AND POLICIES⁸¹

Finding 2: *The RBA Resilience Initiative was based on common institutional policies and frameworks that were specific to the RBA's expertise and experience in the three countries. These were sufficient to ensure that the Programme was designed in ways to meet the needs of participating communities while also having an alignment with expected outcomes and impact-level results.*



192. The RBA Resilience Initiative was based on common institutional policies and frameworks that were specific to the RBA's expertise and experience in the three countries. These were sufficient to ensure that the Programme was designed in ways that met best practices associated with how to meet the needs of

⁷² Please see USAID's brief on the SLR [here](#).

⁷³ Please see brief on this programme [here](#).

⁷⁴ Please see brief on this programme [here](#).

⁷⁵ Please see brief on this programme [here](#).

⁷⁶ The programme includes four main components: (i) food assistance for assets (FFA); (ii) school feeding; (iii) preventive and curative nutrition/health measures; and (iv) Smallholder Agriculture Market Support (SAMS). Please see the impact evaluation baseline report available [here](#).

⁷⁷ Please see brief on this programme [here](#).

⁷⁸ Visit the SomRep site [here](#).

⁷⁹ Please see brief on the initial phase of the programme [here](#).

⁸⁰ Please visit the BRCIS site [here](#).

⁸¹ As indicated in the triangulation graphic, this section is based on evidence from documentary sources and KII with relevant stakeholders. Overall, these were sufficient for noted findings. This corresponds to the evaluation sub-question: "1.3 To what extent was the design of the initiative relevant to institutional policies (RBA resilience policy frameworks) and the wider context (including international frameworks, priorities and humanitarian principles, such as Committee on World Food Security (CFS)-endorsed Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises (CFS-FFA)?"

participating communities. This included standard outcome and impact level indicators related to nutrition, food security, livelihoods, and resilience.

193. The World Food Security Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises (CFS-FFA) and the RBA's "Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition: A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies" were the primary frameworks used for the design of the Programme.

194. The CFS-FFA sets out to: "address critical manifestations and build resilience; adapt to specific challenges; and contribute to resolving underlying causes of food insecurity and undernutrition in protracted crises."⁸² This became the basis for the design of the Programme with each related immediate and intermediate outcome represented in the PMFs.

195. The RBA's "Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition: A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies"⁸³ laid out the needs for resilience and food security programming globally, along with the RBA's comparative advantages. The Programme design drew conceptually and programmatically on a publication by the United Nations Environmental Management Group (EMG) (of which the RBAs are a part) on resilience in drier ecosystems, in particular on its recommendations on enhancing inter-agency coordination, on lessons from within the UN system on connecting development and humanitarian work, and the RBA agencies' experience in disaster risk reduction.

196. The multi-year approach is also aligned with the effects of protracted humanitarian crises on vulnerable populations. As the statement from the Grand Bargain established during the World Humanitarian Summit of May 2016 states:

Multi-year planning and funding lowers administrative costs and catalyses more responsive programming, notably where humanitarian needs are protracted or recurrent and where livelihood needs, and local markets can be analysed and monitored. Multi-year planning must be based on shared analysis and understanding of needs and risks as they evolve. Collaborative planning and funding mechanisms for longer programme horizons that are incrementally funded can produce better results and minimise administrative costs for both donors and aid organisations.⁸⁴

197. This makes the Programme especially relevant to the agreements from the Grand Bargain and its expectations to meet the needs of vulnerable populations like those in DRC, Niger, and Somalia.

198. To measure impact level results, the Programme adopted RIMA II which is the favoured resilience index by FAO. The RIMA II is a specialized index that uses econometrics to derive a single measure for changes in resilience. This has been criticized as being reductive and difficult to interpret beyond the primary rating, although it is a widely used measurement instrument, especially as it is aligned with other large-data population vulnerability surveys, like the World Bank's Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS).⁸⁵

⁸² "Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises." CFS, 2015. Available [here](#).

⁸³ "Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition: A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies." FAO, IFAD, WFP; April 2015. Page 2. Available [here](#).

⁸⁴ "The Grand Bargain – A Shared Commitment to Better Serve People in Need." OCHA; 23 May 2016. Available [here](#).

⁸⁵ Please see: Prabhu Pingali, Luca Alinovi and Jacky Sutton, "Food Security in Complex Emergencies: Enhancing Food System Resilience." Disasters, Vol. 29, Issue Supplement 1; June 2005. Available [here](#). Also see, Valerie Guarnierie, in "Food aid and Livelihoods: Challenges and Opportunities in Complex Emergencies." FAO International Workshop Paper, 23 – 25 September 2003, also argues for a longer-term, livelihood-based approach to addressing food security in complex operating contexts. Available [here](#). There have been criticisms of such econometric approaches as being based on "probability thresholds" and thus a "normatively indexed capacity" that defines people as being either resilient or not resilient, rather than as a gradient. It ignores, some would argue, the complexity associated with how people's vulnerabilities ebb and wane due to different shocks/crises. For the most salient criticism of these approaches, please see: Simon Levine; "Assessing resilience: why quantification misses the point." Humanitarian Policy Group and ODI; July 2014. Available [here](#).

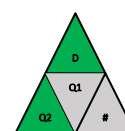
Finding 3: The programme design included a gender-sensitive approach that addressed the needs, roles, and priorities of women and men while promoting women's participation.⁸⁶ These not only benefited women but may have created an environment conducive to greater equality and empowerment.

199. This Framework lacked specific reference to GEWE. This is an oversight. As a brief that cites the roles of FAO, IFAD, and WFP across Africa states, "Gender equality considerations remain largely absent from discussions on food systems and on response and recovery despite the vital roles that women provide, worldwide, in ensuring food and nutritional security."⁸⁷

200. The Programme did include references to gender equality and gender-sensitive programming, but this was given the absence of more guidance from the Framework or CFS-FFA. In Niger, this included gender-sensitive governance in farmers organizations and households using awareness. In Niger and Somalia, gender was considered a cross-cutting issue in that women's participation in nearly all Programme activities, including several women-only activities, was ensured. In DRC, the overall and intermediate outcomes include gender issues such as improved sustainable gender-sensitive governance of collective productive resources and enhanced delivery of gender-sensitive nutrition outreach activities. Some of these references went beyond gender sensitivity. For example, literacy programmes and the promotion of women to leadership positions in their community in Niger and DRC; advocacy with local authorities and other stakeholders were also conducted in each country to improve women's participation in decision-making processes and their access to productive assets.

3.1.3 RELEVANCE TO NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIES⁸⁸

Finding 4: The RBA Resilience Initiative's objectives, outcomes and overall strategies were aligned with the priorities and policies of participating countries. This was especially the case in Niger, which has various policies and programmes focused on food security and resilience.



201. In DRC, FAO and WFP have five-year strategies and operational plans that are agreed upon with the national government. They are also part of the UN constituency, which develops an overall joint UN strategy for the country. The Agencies were also guided by the "International Sectoral Strategy for Security and Stabilization in the East of the Democratic Republic of the Congo 2013-2017," which includes a section on socio-economic recovery in relation to the deterioration in food security since 2011. This strategy indicates that social cohesion and resilience are important pillars of socio-economic recovery, and that agricultural development is one of the most important contributors to improved livelihoods in the region.⁸⁹

202. The common multi-sectoral framework is aligned with needs identified at the national level. In Niger, this includes an alignment to the needs of the decentralized technical services for agriculture, livestock, nutrition, and rural engineering, alignment with the High Commissary to the 3N Initiative "Les Nigériens Nourrissent les Nigériens" and a Comté Multisectoriel de Pilotage Stratégique (CMPS). This was created to promote multistakeholder policy dialogue on agriculture and food security and to ensure effective coordination of activities.

203. There are also links with the Family Farming Development Program (ProDAF) under the supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture, and the "Communes de Convergence" approach (C2C), a joint UN-Niger Government co-location approach that aims at creating programmatic, thematic, and geographical synergies to improve the resilience of vulnerable communities by bridging the efforts of humanitarian and

⁸⁶ According to the WFP Gender Policy (2022) "an intervention is gender-sensitive when it identifies, considers and aims to address the differing needs, interests and realities of men, boys, women and girls but does not address the underlying gender-based inequalities and unequal distribution of power between women and men, and girls and boys".

⁸⁷ Jemimah Njuki; "For a food-secure world, invest in women and girls." African Renewal; 27 September 2022. Available [here](#).

⁸⁸ As indicated in the triangulation graphic, this section is based on evidence from documentary sources and KII with relevant stakeholders. Overall, these were sufficient for noted findings. This corresponds to the evaluation sub-question: "1.4 To what extent are the RBA Resilience Initiative objectives, intended outcomes, and strategies in line with the priorities and policies of participating countries related to food security, nutrition and gender?"

⁸⁹ "DRC : Strategie Internationale de Soutien à la Sécurité et la Stabilisation pour l'Est de la RDC 2013-2017." Unité d'Appui à la Stabilisation (UAS) Stabilization Support Unit (SSU) MONUSCO. Available [here](#).

development partners. A Seasonal Livelihood Programming (SLP) was also conducted with local governments to identify several entry points according to the seasonal calendar.

204. More broadly, the Programme is informed by Niger's plan de Développement Economique et Social (PDES) 2017–2021 and the Haut-Commissaire à l'Initiative les Nigériens nourrissent les Nigériens (HC3N) initiative and its 2016–2020 action plan.⁹⁰ These are aligned with the national resilience technical working group to strengthen UN coherence on the implementation of the joint HC3N-UN Commune de Convergence approach, in which different humanitarian and development partners converge their efforts to guide resilience interventions. The joint programme aiming at Rural Women Economic Empowerment (RWEE) implemented with FAO, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) allows inclusive interventions prioritizing gender and women's empowerment. At the centre of this is WFP's "Integrated Food and Nutrition Insecurity Resilience Program" (PRRO).⁹¹ The PRRO was developed with the government to ensure national ownership and is in line with the Economic and Social Development Plan. It aims to protect those most at risk from seasonal shocks through the provision of unconditional social safety nets, improved nutrition through prevention, treatment and nutrition-sensitive activities, and through asset creation and local purchasing.

205. In Somalia, the Programme is aligned with the "Somalia Food and Water Security Strategy"⁹² that lays out the strategic framework to enable Somalia to achieve sustainable food and water security. The goal is to improve the availability of and access to adequate and safe food and water, especially for rural communities and the urban poor. The Programme meets this strategy's objectives through its focus on agriculture and livestock development, nutrition and food safety, food safety nets and emergencies, income and employment generation opportunities, emergencies and disasters management, water resources and soil management, and overall capacity building.

206. More broadly, the Programme in Somalia is aligned with the Somalia Nutrition Strategy 2020 - 2025,⁹³ wherein children between 6 - 23 months and Pregnant and Lactating Women (PLW) are intended to receive nutritious commodities. In addition, Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM), integrated with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) treatment activities, was implemented in all the 18 targeted villages as aligned with broader strategies and needs in Somalia.

207. The Programme in Somalia actively engaged line Ministries. The Ministry of Planning and National Development participated in joint monitoring and the Ministry of Water Resources Development provided support and oversight over community water infrastructure. Other Ministries actively involved included the Ministry of Agriculture & Development, the Ministry of Water & Resources Development, the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries Development, the Ministry of Employment Social Affairs and Family, and the Ministry of Environment and Rural Development.

3.1.4 RELEVANCE TO VULNERABLE PEOPLE⁹⁴

Finding 5: FGDs in all three countries show that participating communities felt that they were adequately involved in the design phase and that it met their needs in ways that corresponded to capacities to prepare for, respond to, and recover from crises.



208. The RBA Resilience Initiative's targeting and selection was based on national and independent assessments of needs and aligned with government priorities and policies. Resilience programming is also

⁹⁰ This is available from the Niger government website [here](#).

⁹¹ The PRRO is detailed at WFP's website [here](#).

⁹² "Somalia Vision 2030: Somalia Food and Water Security Strategy." Republic of Somalia; October 2011. Available [here](#).

⁹³ "Somalia Nutrition Strategy 2020 - 2025." Somalia Ministry of Health and Human Services; 2020. Available [here](#).

⁹⁴ As indicated in the triangulation graphic, this section was based on evidence from documentary sources and KII with stakeholders. For the latter some key documentation about the relevance to vulnerable peoples was missing, for instance that related to gender and social inclusion. Given that, we have included some additional evidence from FGDs with participating communities as relevant. This corresponds to the evaluation sub-question: 1.5 To what extent was the RBA Resilience Initiative in line with the needs and priorities of the most vulnerable groups (e.g., men and women, boys and girls, people living with disabilities, etc.) as final intended beneficiaries?"

aligned with the needs of communities that face repeated crises and protracted food insecurity in all three countries.

209. The RBA developed a comprehensive design that was based on core immediate and intermediate outcomes for all three countries and then a wide selection of activities that were largely designed in concert with participating communities. This includes PMFs that lay out targets and indicators globally and for each country. These included vulnerable groups, although the primary focus was on women and mothers.

210. KII and documentary evidence, including the RBA Resilience Programme inception phase report, show that every effort was made to ensure access for vulnerable women in participating communities and that there was an equal or better representation of women. Respondents in the Evaluation's FGDs did indicate that there were some complaints from women who had not been selected for activities, like market gardens in Somalia, although these issues seem minimal. Nonetheless, addressing issues and conflicts about access and participation, as described in Section 3.3.1 is an area where future programming could be improved.

Finding 6: The Programme was participatory, especially in the design phase and with some variations in the three countries. Women and others were involved in most aspects of the Programme, and they commented favourably on it across the Evaluation's FGDs.

211. In DRC, WFP and FAO involved participating communities and local authorities in developing activities. This focused on including men and women, with less distinction for persons living with disabilities. The agencies used WFP's 3PA tool for priority setting and participatory planning. For example, participating communities in FGDs raised the fact that they were actively involved in the construction of four warehouses for the cooperatives and that they consulted with local authorities to ensure that land was made available to the cooperative facilities (stores, offices, sanitary buildings, small shops, and water supplies).

212. In Niger, the Programme used a mix of tools to estimate the required resources and the expected outcomes for vulnerable populations.⁹⁵ Before launching the Programme, the three Agencies produced a country case study on RBA collaboration for resilience in Niger and agreed on a common conceptual framework for partnership and collaboration to strengthen resilience for food security.⁹⁶ In addition, WFP's 3PA tool was used to identify areas of recurring food insecurity and exposure to shocks which led to the selection of Chadakori in the Maradi region and Dogo in the Zinder region. This corresponded to data from the SMART assessment conducted in 2016 that showed high levels of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) in these areas.

213. As a representative quote from participating communities in Niger illustrates: "Awareness-raising actions carried out by the various partners operating in the village have encouraged the consideration of women, the elderly and other groups with specific needs in all activities initiated in the village. For example, during pond mowing activities, elderly people who have assets were considered in the targeting and, during the work, were represented by an active person from their household whom they designated. People with specific needs whose households do not have active people were also considered to receive support without participating in the mowing work. Women and people with specific needs were also widely taken into account in other activities such as farmer field schools, goat kits, and seed distribution."⁹⁷

214. Vulnerability, conflict, and crises affect most households in Somalia and can lead to significant levels of instability in communities.⁹⁸ Food insecurity and displacement are common, with people often moving repeatedly and, with each move, increasing their vulnerabilities.⁹⁹ Displacement was also the cause of the greatest levels of mortality during previous food security crises in Somalia.¹⁰⁰ Somalia is also experiencing

⁹⁵ "Niger Country Case Study: Collaboration for Strengthening Resilience." FAO; 2015. Available [here](#).

⁹⁶ "Collaboration for Strengthening Resilience. Niger Country Case Study." FAO, IFAD, and WFP; 2015.

⁹⁷ This quote is from a male participant in the Evaluation's FGDs in Niger. This has been translated from French and edited for clarity.

⁹⁸ Langworthy M., Vallet M., Martin S., Bower T. & Aziz T., 2016, Baseline study of the enhancing resilience and economic in Somalia programme, Save the Children Federation and Technical Assistance to NGOs International, Tucson.

⁹⁹ This is explored in Charles Lwanga-Ntale & Boniface O. Owino; "Understanding vulnerability and resilience in Somalia." Jamba: Journal of Disaster Risk Studies; Vol. 12, No. 1; 20202. Available [here](#).

¹⁰⁰ Abdihamid Warsame, Séverine Frison, Amy Gimma & Francesco Checchi; "Retrospective Analysis of Mortality in Somalia, 2014–2018: A Statistical Analysis." London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine; January 2022. Available [here](#).

severe environmental degradation, making traditional pastoralism untenable.¹⁰¹ Resilience programming in Somalia is also critical as formal social protection does not exist, largely due to a lack of government capacity to formulate policy, lead dialogue, and coordinate activities. This makes programming that combines social safety nets/emergency programming with longer-term strategies to enable communities to prepare for, withstand, and recover from shocks highly relevant to vulnerable communities across Somalia.

215. Participating communities in Somalia regularly cited the importance of combining social safety nets and emergency programming: "Cash for work and cash transfer activities have played a significant role in addressing poverty and supporting vulnerable individuals in our community. Providing financial support helps meet the immediate needs of individuals and families, allowing them to access essential resources and improve their overall well-being. Whether through temporary employment opportunities or direct cash assistance, these contribute to reducing economic hardships." Another representative quote includes: "The implementation of cash transfer and voucher card programs for food has been instrumental in supporting vulnerable households, including people with disabilities and older individuals, within my community. These initiatives have successfully tackled the problem of poor dietary choices within our families and have also provided essential assistance during times of distress or unforeseen circumstances."¹⁰²

216. Respondents to the Evaluation's FGDs in Somalia regularly commented on how the Programme had better enabled them to address crises as well, especially in relation to water catchment infrastructure, market gardens, and food production. They were also highly appreciative of the ways that these interventions, especially, enabled them to better respond to drought and to avoid displacement.

217. Given these repeated crises, community engagement is essential for understanding immediate needs and any intermediate or longer-term prospects. Given this, the RBA used Community Consultation and Action Planning (CCAP) in the 18 communities to identify activities based on seasonal calendars and community priorities. The CCAP included government authorities and local leaders. Key informants state that CCAP also guided targeting as it identified the most vulnerable groups to be prioritized. While the precise findings from the CCAP were not available to the Evaluation, key informants say that they were used to identify common crises and shocks that limited livelihood strategies and to thus prioritize activities. The Evaluation's FGDs also show that participating communities spoke highly of these early engagements and that they helped to determine needs. In DRC, targeting to include the poorer households in the RBA project was done mainly through "The Community-Based Participatory Planning" (CBPP) activity as part of the 3PA, but it was not possible to assess if that has been successful.

Finding 7: The Programme was 'gender-sensitive'¹⁰³ rather than 'gender transformative'¹⁰⁴ meaning that, while women were involved sufficiently across activities, the specific challenges and needs women faced were not considered. While the Programme included people living with disabilities, their needs and the additional burdens and costs for their families were not consistently addressed.

218. In all three countries, the RBA adopted gender-sensitive programming and moved towards addressing gender disparities that influence household vulnerability and access to, ownership of, and control over assets. This was a key aspect of the Programme that included integrated approaches (FFS, Dimitra Clubs, kitchen and market gardening, VSLAs) designed to build the capacity of rural women in vulnerable situations while promoting their access to and control over productive resources. There were also some opportunities to share knowledge and information, such as through the Dimitra Clubs or through direct outreach on local radio stations, although the effects of these were not clear to the Evaluation.

219. In Somalia, participating communities regularly cited how Programme activities increased the participation and overall empowerment of women. "The most remarkable transformation in our community can be attributed to the empowerment of women who have become independent providers for their families. Through their farms and shops, these women are directly contributing to their families' dietary practices and

¹⁰¹ "Somalia drought impact and needs assessment: synthesis report." World Bank Group; 2018. Available [here](#).

¹⁰² These quotes are from one male and one female participant in the Evaluation's FGDs in Somalia. This has been translated from Somalia and edited for clarity.

¹⁰³ Gender sensitive: considering the impact of policies, projects and programmes on men, women, boys and girls and trying to mitigate the negative consequences thereof.

¹⁰⁴ "Gender transformative" refers to efforts to change gender and social norms to address inequalities in power and privilege between persons of different genders, to free all people from harmful and destructive norms.

hygiene. The key factors contributing to this change are the capacity building and training that the women have received. They have been equipped with knowledge and skills in farming techniques and marketing strategies for their farm produce and provided with essential materials and tools to carry out their activities. This support has enabled the women to establish successful agricultural enterprises, generating income and ensuring a steady supply of nutritious food for their families. The newfound independence of these women has not only improved their own lives but has also had a positive ripple effect on the entire community, fostering economic growth and promoting healthier lifestyles."¹⁰⁵

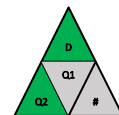
220. Similar effects were seen in Niger, as the following represents: "I am an example of women's emancipation. With the awareness-raising actions, I became interested in politics, and I joined a political party, which allowed me to apply for a political position currently, I am a municipal councillor in the commune of Dogo"¹⁰⁶

221. The Programme may have been able to go further, spending more time identifying the precise needs and priorities of women and girls that were distinct in different communities in addition to those that are known from the literature and general practice. It also may have been more systematic in how it engaged with communities and thus able to identify instances of increased GEWE.

3.2 E.Q2.0: WHAT HAVE BEEN THE SYNERGIES BETWEEN THE CANADA - RBA RESILIENCE INITIATIVE AND OTHER RESILIENCE INTERVENTIONS / PROGRAMMES OF FAO, IFAD, WFP AND OTHER ACTORS OPERATING IN THE SAME CONTEXT?

3.2.1 COHERENCE AND COORDINATION AMONGST THE RBA¹⁰⁷

***Finding 8:** Collaboration, coordination, and complimentary between the RBA contributed to how activities were designed and implemented and thus to their intended outcome level results. The initial design, and especially the use of global and country-level PMFs, enabled the Programme to avoid duplications and to maximize RBA approaches.*



222. Overall, the Programme worked effectively in partnership amongst the RBA and with their implementing partners and government counterparts. There were few other multi-sector partnerships. The three agencies have experience in strategic and operational partnerships, which has facilitated the management of activities both at the level of partner structures and at the level of beneficiary structures. This included their experience in food security, nutrition, agricultural and livestock production, livelihoods, community organizations, and approaches to enable education and health needs. While some activities of the Programme could be delivered by several agencies, the joint Programme was designed to ensure that there was no duplication in the supported communities and that instead, a comprehensive package was provided. In general, there was a division between direct emergency support, like WFP's direct cash support, including various food-for-asset approaches, and IFAD and FAO activities associated with agricultural and livestock production, including water/irrigation infrastructure, and cooperatives and VSLA. FAO and IFAD were also positioned to make links with local and central authorities, universities, and other partners. WFP's direct cash support was also somewhat discrete in that it was used in response to acute crises.

223. These different competencies and how they interlinked needed to be worked out in the first year of the Programme. As attested to in stakeholder KIIs, there was a lot of time spent, especially in the first year of the Programme, aligning the Agencies' business processes, monitoring systems, and reporting mechanisms. KIIs repeated various cases where there were delays or other problems associated with aligning these organizational processes. This led to various calls to have a dedicated person to serve as coordinator across the two or three Agencies.

¹⁰⁵ This quote is from a male participant in the Evaluation's FGDs in Somalia. This has been translated from Somalia and edited for clarity.

¹⁰⁶ This quote is from a female participant in the Evaluation's FGDs in Niger. This has been translated from French and edited for clarity.

¹⁰⁷ As indicated in the triangulation graphic, this section was based on evidence from documentary sources and KII with stakeholders. In addition to these, representative quotes and other evidence from FGDs are included.

224. However, from 2019, many of these issues—not all, but many—dissipated, and the Agencies worked effectively together, especially at the country and community levels. While this change was explored in KIIs, most cited the early work done to align such business processes and, where possible, the role of a dedicated RBA Coordinator. The use of WFP’s SCOPE to register/identify Programme participants was a useful synergy, even if this caused some delays or issues with registering all community participants, as in DRC.

225. The only other relevant factor is COVID-19 and how this affected relationships between regional, HQ, and country offices. In effect, travel restrictions created more space for country offices to get on with the work, especially with fewer guided field missions for those from abroad. There was less time and resources spent on such field missions and, possibly, less associated scrutiny overall. While people were certainly working long hours and engaged in seemingly ceaseless rounds of video conferences, the tenor of the relationship changed with, inevitably, more authority and more space provided to country offices.

Finding 9: Communities regularly cited how the combination of direct cash support, food assistance for assets, and school feeding had a direct bearing on the success of agropastoral development and livelihood activities, demonstrating the complementarity of these approaches and the comparative advantages of FAO and WFP. For communities, the synergies between these approaches were deemed critical to their needs.

226. In DRC, interviews with multiple stakeholders indicate that FAO and WFP worked closely together through their respective resilience units,¹⁰⁸ at the national level in Kinshasa, and with strong support from their respective HQs in Rome. The complementarity they developed in the design and implementation of the Programme made it possible to develop a coherent set of activities. For instance, FAO focused primarily on farmer organizations and agricultural production whereas WFP concentrated on support to post-harvesting, infrastructure, and marketing of what was produced. FAO and WFP held regular coordination meetings in Goma as well as in Kinshasa. Annual progress and final reporting were produced jointly with, as stakeholders attest, sufficient coordination between experts and operational staff in both organizations.¹⁰⁹ These annual review processes, along with the overall PMFs, ensured that duplication of efforts was minimized and that overall coherence was maintained.

227. Participating communities in FGDs were nearly unanimous in saying that they appreciated the frequency of meetings with the RBA and their partners and the time they spent working through different technical issues. This model of collaboration prompted a joint session in Rome between staff from all three countries. The collaboration with IFAD in DRC did not materialize, despite their initial involvement in Programme preparation, due to issues with the Government of DRC. IFAD’s proposed activities were taken over by the two remaining agencies, specifically as related to the VSLA. However, the absence of IFAD has limited the support to micro-finance institutions relevant to the VSLAs.

228. In Niger, interviews with multiple stakeholders indicate that WFP, FAO, and IFAD developed synergies in diagnosis, consultation, and planning processes to identify participating communities’ needs and to track changes over time across institutional, livelihood, and food/nutrition indicators. WFP’s 3PA process interweaved different levels of planning and action processes, thereby fostering collaborative engagements between the three agencies, as well as with decentralized technical services and other subnational actors. In Niger, the 3PA approach was especially effective in promoting rights holders’ participation because it was conducted by all three agencies and thus more adapted to the integrated approach promoted by the resilience initiative. Some stakeholders did say that there was a divergence in Niger in the ways in which the three Agencies measured results, including the time required for the RIMA II and the Women Empowerment in Agriculture Index. This did not have a material effect on how these tools were required, given standard survey forms and analysis, but did represent a level of resource that was not originally envisioned. Nonetheless, the Agencies worked together to complete these to standard.

229. In Somalia, there are sufficient indications that FAO and WFP worked together to provide integrated solutions. The 3PA grounded a participatory approach from inception, and yet evidence suggests that success

¹⁰⁸ One KII even called it a “joint unit” that worked together on the Programme.

¹⁰⁹ According to an FAO Kinshasa KII, one of the foundations of the good collaboration between the Agencies was the personal relationship between staff members in FAO and WFP.

in this area was due more to the ways in which country-level staff coordinated and worked together before and during the Programme.

230. Communities in all three countries regularly cited how the combination of direct cash support, food assistance for assets, school feeding, and other WFP approaches were critical for the success of the agropastoral development and livelihood activities largely implemented by FAO. For communities, the synergies between these approaches were deemed critical to their needs.

3.2.2 COHERENCE WITH THE HDP NEXUS¹¹⁰

Finding 10: *The RBA Resilience Initiative leveraged and maximized each agency's strengths, including resources, tools, capacities, targeting approaches, and joint activities, to address the food security, nutrition, and livelihood needs of different communities in the three countries.*



231. The RBA Resilience Initiative leveraged and maximized each agency's strengths, including resources, tools, capacities, targeting approaches, and joint activities (coordination) to address the food security, nutrition, and livelihood needs of different communities in the three countries. (programming). This included a participatory approach that resulted in activities tailored to the precise needs of these communities and that emphasized the involvement of women. This approach has a direct correlation with resilience and may provide a foundation for related RBA programming. This was largely enabled through multi-year financing and how the Programme used complementary approaches and joint analysis to achieve results.

232. The HDP Nexus refers to the interlinkages between humanitarian, development and peace actions. The Nexus approach aims to strengthen collaboration, coherence and complementarity between these three pillars, leveraging their comparative advantages to reduce vulnerability, strengthen risk management, and address root causes of conflict. This includes key recommendations:

- Coordination: Undertake joint analysis, identify collective outcomes, and provide resources for coordination across the nexus architecture.
- Programming: Prioritize prevention and peacebuilding, put people at the centre, ensure conflict sensitivity, align with the risk environment, and strengthen local capacities.
- Financing: Develop evidence-based financing strategies and use predictable, flexible, multi-year financing that aligns with agreed collective outcomes where appropriate.¹¹¹

233. The possibilities for HDP Nexus programming were described in the "Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition: A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies." It states:

234. The complementarities of the RBAs working together and with partners would improve food security and nutrition, supporting vulnerable people's own efforts to strengthen their resilience and development. These foundations could create the space for the development of additional FAO, IFAD and WFP initiatives. In addition, partnerships with the private sector and other stakeholders, as appropriate to the context, could focus on connecting smallholder farmers to markets, improving storage and grain reserves, and accessing insurance schemes to strengthen livelihoods and resilience.¹¹²

235. This establishes that increases in resilience could create space for additional RBA activities to strengthen livelihoods and resilience. As described in Section 3.1.1, the Programme combined emergency support with agricultural and livestock development (reflecting FAO's and WFP's comparative and complementary advantages), along with combined joint analysis at the impact level (RIMA II) that could assess how this

¹¹⁰ As indicated in the triangulation graphic, this section was based on evidence from documentary sources and KII with stakeholders. These proved sufficient for this sections' analysis.

¹¹¹ For more on the HDP Nexus, please see the OECD report on the "Humanitarian-Development-Peace-Nexus Interim Progress Review." OECD; 10 May 2022. This report is available [here](#).

¹¹² "Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition: A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies." FAO, IFAD, WFP; April 2015. Page 6. Available [here](#).

combination of activities and approaches strengthened livelihoods and resilience. This is how the Programme was thus designed. The inception phase report states:

236. Strengthening the resilience to shocks and crises of vulnerable communities and households affected by multiple and recurrent hazards requires a clear shift from business-as-usual approaches from both development and humanitarian actors. Some of the main requirements of the shift are: humanitarian and development approaches, tools and modalities need to be better combined (such as through joint analysis and shared understanding of risks and vulnerabilities); partnerships between complementary actors need to be strengthened; different sectors (i.e. food security, essential basic services, nutrition, productive livelihoods support, etc.) and levels of work (local, sub-national, national) need to be integrated much more closely than before; the possibility of shocks and crises need to be integrated into multi-year programming and planning from the design phase all along the programme cycle.¹¹³

237. At the same time, HDP Nexus programming in the three countries remains constrained by a lack of sufficient national and local systems, capacities, and resources that, as noted in a review on the subject, are critical for leadership and coordination.¹¹⁴ Governments in all three countries have been strained by decades of crisis and conflict which influenced their capacity to conduct joined-up resilience programming. While there were consistent efforts to work with local and central government authorities in all three countries, with varying levels of success, this, therefore, did not include concerted efforts to strengthen collaboration, coherence and complementarity between activities to reduce vulnerability, strengthen risk management, or address root causes of conflict. The Programme also did not include issues of conflict prevention or conflict sensitivity in programming approaches.

238. The Programme's approach was aligned with the Grand Bargain that established the need for multi-year humanitarian funding and a more coordinated response. While the Grand Bargain also provided the foundation for the HDP Nexus, its tenets are more relevant to the way the Programme developed. In fact, country contexts like these, where there are protracted crises and relatively weak government structures, were part of the impetus for these aspects of the Grand Bargain.¹¹⁵

239. The ways in which the RBA worked together also provide a model for how the coordination between direct emergency support and longer-term livestock and agricultural development can create conditions for improved coordination overall. The RBA used joint participatory approaches in the design of the Programme, leveraging WFPs 3PA approach along with other common practices. This enabled them to maximize each Agency's relative competencies and expertise in ways that were aligned with community needs. As shown in the Evaluation's FGDs, participating communities were highly favourable about how the Agencies worked with them. Similar comments were made by local and central authorities.

240. Despite the capacity of the Agencies to leverage and maximize their combined strengths toward increased food security and resilience, there remain limits to how such programming can maximize HDP Nexus efforts. In more stable contexts with stronger governments, resilience programming can create conditions for combined humanitarian action, development, and peace by addressing immediate needs, enabling people to overcome severe vulnerabilities, and thus becoming less reliant on emergency support, while simultaneously creating the conditions to make longer-term development investments. Theoretically, this could diminish conflicts over scarce and diminishing resources, thus establishing conditions that could support national and international stability and peace. Yet, the linchpin for this is a relatively stable and competent government partner and predictable and longer-term financing in activities that can establish development and peace. Indeed, the OECD HDP Nexus Interim Progress Review report includes investing in national and local capacities and systems and financing strategies that promote coordination and

¹¹³ "Rome-based Agencies Resilience Initiative: Strengthening the Resilience of livelihoods in protracted crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger and Somalia. Programme Inception Report." FAO, IFAD and WFP; Post-inception phase; October 2018. Page 4.

¹¹⁴ "The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus Interim Progress Review." OECD; 10 May 2022. Page 70. Available [here](#).

¹¹⁵ "The Grand Bargain – A Shared Commitment to Better Serve People in Need." OCHA; 23 May 2016. Available [here](#).

complementarity, as done with the RBA in this programme, as central to expanding HDP Nexus programming.¹¹⁶

3.2.3 COHERENT PARTNERSHIP¹¹⁷

Finding 11: Multi-sector partnerships and actions were mostly confined to the RBA, their implementing partners, and local and central government authorities. This enabled the Programme to focus on the complementary competencies and experience of the three Agencies



241. The RBA, and especially FAO and WFP, were able to work through a range of challenging issues associated with business process alignment, monitoring systems, staff allocation, and procurement processes so that by 2020 they could concentrate their expertise on food security, nutrition, agricultural and livestock production, livelihoods, community organizations, and approaches to enable education and health needs.

242. In general, there was a division between emergency support, like WFP's direct cash support, and FAO's expertise in agricultural and livestock production, including water/irrigation infrastructure. Yet, these were combined at the community level with effective management across the Agencies. The coordination, collaboration, and other synergies between the Agencies, especially at the country and community levels, were key to the Programme's positive results.

243. The only notable exception was from DRC. There, WFP and FAO, with German BMZ funding, implemented a similar programme with two phases in Masisi, Nyaragongo and Rutshuru districts in Nord-Kivu. Under the BMZ funding, UNICEF became an implementing partner alongside WFP and FAO.

244. This decision was based on a lesson learned from the RBA Resilience Initiative in Rutshuru that the lack of a strong UN nutrition partner was a considerable omission in the set-up of the Programme. This led to some consideration of bringing UNICEF into the RBA Resilience Initiative as a full partner, although this was ultimately abandoned in 2020 due to the various challenges associated with COVID-19.

245. Participating communities were readily able to cite which RBA actors were providing which activities, along with their corresponding implementing partners. While they did not comment on the overall competency or approach of specific actors, they did appreciate that there was a combination of activities and stated often that these were implemented successfully. For instance, a male respondent in Somalia stated: "The collaborative efforts of FAO and WFP on activities implementation such as cash transfers, cash for works opportunities, and voucher cards for food have effectively provided essential support to people, particularly older people, people with disabilities, and marginalized groups in my community. This comprehensive assistance improved all our lives."¹¹⁸

3.3 E.Q3.0: TO WHAT EXTENT HAS THE RBA RESILIENCE INITIATIVE ACHIEVED ITS INTENDED OUTCOMES AS DEFINED IN THE PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORKS?

246. This section addresses the immediate outcome and their relationships to specific activities, while section 3.5.1 examines intermediate outcomes and their relationship to the broader Programme objective. This section also provides an analysis of the key features of these activities, with more in-depth analysis provided in the Evaluation's country case studies.

¹¹⁶ "Humanitarian-Development-Peace-Nexus Interim Progress Review." OECD; 10 May 2022. A link to this section of the report is available [here](#).

¹¹⁷ As indicated in the triangulation graphic, this section was based on evidence from documentary sources, KII with stakeholders, and qualitative evidence from participating communities. For the latter, while some evidence was gleaned from FGDs, this was not sufficient to establish trends. Therefore, this aspect is treated lightly.

¹¹⁸ This quote is from a male participant in the Evaluation's FGDs in Somalia. This has been translated from Somalia and edited for clarity.

3.3.1 ACTIVITIES AND IMMEDIATE OUTCOMES¹¹⁹

Finding 12: The RBA Resilience Initiative adapted to a range of disruptions, challenges, and delays. This included reducing the level of cross-community knowledge sharing, training, and other group activities that required local access. It also dropped indicators that required a level of field access not possible during that time.



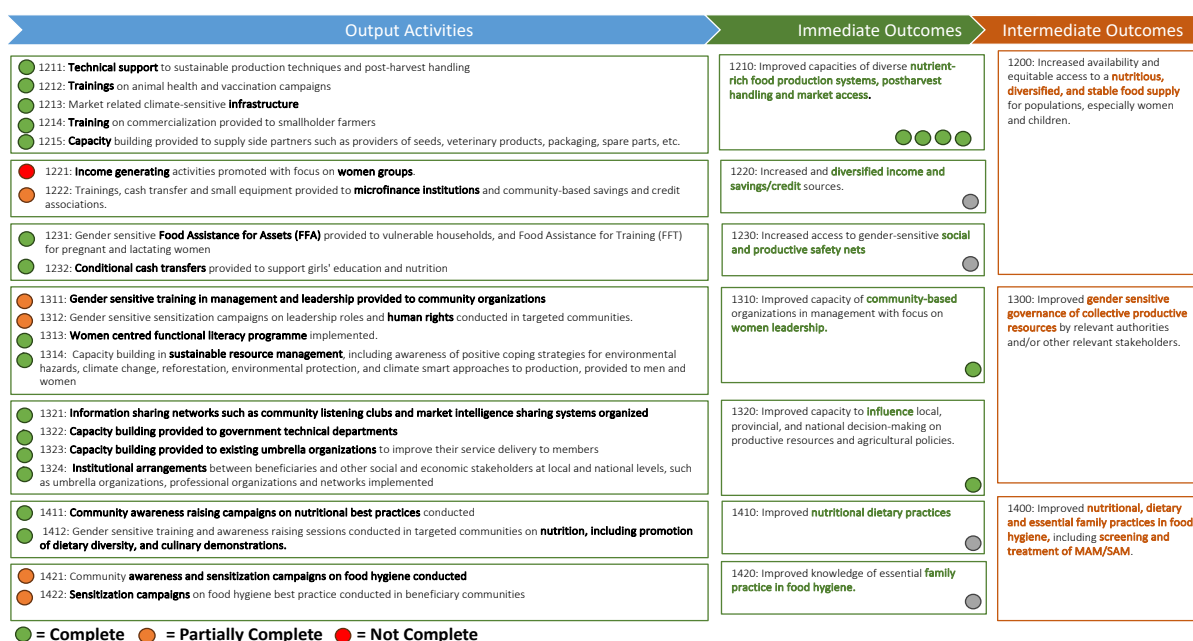
247. Despite exceptional challenges in all three country contexts, the RBA Resilience Initiative achieved nearly all planned activities and with a demonstrable relationship to expected outcomes, especially given a major push in 2021 to complete lingering activities that were delayed because of COVID-19.

DRC

248. The RBA Resilience Initiative in DRC reported that it had achieved 25 out of its 35 output level activity indicators.¹²⁰ Several of these indicators were already achieved by 2021. The conflict and subsequent displacement, along with COVID-19 restrictions, meant that the remaining activities could not be completed. The planned final endline survey to assess immediate outcome level results could not take place in 2022 due to security reasons and the displacement of the Rutshuru population.

249. Of all associated activities (with 35 indicators), the Programme met or slightly exceeded targets for 15 of them. 4 targets did not have available data at the time of the end line. For immediate outcome indicators, targets were achieved for all those for which there was available data. (Figure 5).

Figure 5: DRC Output and immediate outcome level performance



Source: DRC Final Project Close-out Report; PMF.

250. With regard to direct community participants, output targets were met for capacity building (1210), safety nets (1230), and nutritional practices (1410). Capacity building for agricultural production and marketing was cited as particularly useful during FGDs. However, support to livestock rearing through

¹¹⁹ As indicated in the triangulation graphic, this section was based on evidence from documentary sources, quantitative information as presented in the Programme's annual reports, and as based on some input from stakeholders and the communities themselves. This was limited to a certain extent as stakeholders were not able to pinpoint which activities had the most bearing on outcome level results. Community members were able to site which activities were most important to their increased resilience and which they thought were most successful. Examples of this are included throughout the section.

¹²⁰ The 21 output activities had in total 35 indicators of which 25 are reported to be achieved (see RBA Consolidated Multiyear indicator values 2023)

improved animal health (vaccination) was not noted as an achievement.¹²¹ FGD members confirmed the importance of Cash Transfers as Safety Nets and described how this had supported them during different crises. Also, knowledge about nutrition and the importance of nutrition practices was confirmed by the FGDs as useful. These were also cited as the most significant change for participating communities although this is tempered by the fact that most other gains were eroded because of the displacement these communities encountered in the last year of the Programme.

251. With regard to capacity of CBOs and the enhancement of women in leadership positions (Outcome 1310), the functional literacy training of women was cited by nearly all FGD respondents as a great success. A deliberate effort was made to enhance the participation of women in the farmer organizations, unions, and the Programme's six cooperatives. 70% of the farmer organization members were women, according to RBA reports. One out of six cooperative presidents were women, but overall leadership positions at various levels were taken up by men. RBA monitoring data indicate that the percentage of women holding a leadership position is 97% since 2019 against 77% at the start of the programme in 2017. It should be noted that these are most likely women holding the treasury positions, as this is traditionally held by women.¹²² Nevertheless, the above-mentioned efforts in literacy trainings, women access to decision making positions and leadership have a significative potential to challenge traditional gender norms.

252. Output targets on Increased and Diversified Incomes (1220) were reported not to have been met. However, this was only in quantitative terms. During the FGDs, community members cited the support to Income Generating Activities (1221 Income Generative Activities IGA) as one of the most successful activities, along with the support to the VSLA (1222). Women participating in the FGD in DRC commented that 'the promotion of Income Generating Activities (linked to VSLA and the Literacy courses) was one of the most significant changes as a result of the RBA project.¹²³ Even though both activities were successful, individual targets were not met. At the end of the literacy activity, the last 1,000 women did not receive their IGA support because of the displacement of many community participants, but 3,000 had received their contribution.

253. IFAD's long-term support to the government institution PRODAF, which was a partner in the RBA, allowed for the leveraging of this partner's strengthened capacity in the areas of the resilience initiative. For example, IFAD supported PRODAF in capitalizing upon processes to involve women and youth in activities such as farmer field schools, watershed development, and capacity-building for producers.¹²⁴ IFAD also participated in joint field monitoring and liaised with the government of Niger to promote policy dialogue, share risk analyses, and coordinate implementation with government actors.

254. Some representative statements from participants in the Evaluation's FGDs in DRC include:

- "We bundle our products at the warehouse, and from the warehouse, we do the bulk selling. After the group sale, everyone gets their share back and we put a part into the cash of our PO. We use bags to store. Some of it is for consumption at home, some for bundling. Everyone can contribute a bag. Each PO has a community field: members contribute for the rental; part of the production will be used again for production; another part is for the group's coffers." (woman)
- "We have benefited from loans to meet the needs of our households while waiting for the group sale of our agricultural products. Thanks to the loans, I paid for a plot of land in the village. The savings advantage helped us solve some problems (bereavement, illness) and it allowed us to buy a field and increase capital." (man)
- "Yes, a big change. Usually, we consume the same food without realizing that we need to diversify our diet. Now we have understood that a good diet does not depend on having a lot, but just with our food, we can prevent malnutrition because malnutrition does not only attack children but also grown-ups." (woman)

¹²¹ The direct RBA Resilience beneficiaries are not livestock keeping. The interviewed IPEL (l'Inspection de Pêche et Elevage; Government Service for Livestock and Fisheries) was the implementor of the vaccination campaign but has apparently reached out to other groups rather than the direct RBA Resilience community participants.

¹²² Both men and women consider a female treasurer a much safer person than a male one. (Source : FGD interviews)

¹²³ See DRC CCS section 4.5.1.

¹²⁴ FIDA, La participation des femmes et des jeunes aux activités du programme Niger-FIDA. Document de capitalisation (2012-2017) et

- "We participated in literacy activities. We are now able to write, speak, and manage the bottom of our households well. Income-generating activities have allowed us to be self-sufficient and we have been able to pay for our children's schooling, health care and food rations. We can also read and respond to a phone message." (woman)
- Thanks to the training we have received on the management of AGRs, we are able to manage the household fund well." (woman)¹²⁵

255. These and other quotes show the variety of activities that participating communities found valuable with indicators of how these are related to increases in resilience. Mostly, at the output level, participating communities in DRC were appreciative of all the activities they mentioned, specifying how these had improved their lives in different ways.

256. Given these considerations, the Programme was effective at the output level with nearly all activities completed. These had, as explored in the next section, direct bearing on expected outcomes and increased resilience. For example, after the volcano eruption of 2021 many people were displaced from neighbouring districts and found shelter in Rutshuru. The host families there were able to provide these displaced people support through their VSLA. At the end of 2022, most of these effects were eroded because of displacement looting and destruction by M23. This is an example of when a longer-term resilience Programme's effort can be lost because of a shock or crisis that overwhelms any gains.

257. In other resilience programmes, like the UN Joint Resilience Strategy in Somalia, such programmes have an additional crisis mechanism whereby extra direct humanitarian support can be provided to these communities to avoid severe setbacks and, particularly, displacement, which tends to eliminate community-based programming such as this. It is unclear whether such a mechanism would have been sufficient in respect to the participating communities, but it does highlight a critical difference with other resilience programmes.

Niger

258. The RBA Resilience Initiative in Niger faced a considerable drought in 2020 and ongoing conflict that disrupted activities. Despite these challenges, the Programme achieved nearly all output-level activities.

259. Of 34 outputs, the Programme achieved or overachieved in 28 of them. (Figure 6) For 1214, targets were reached for millet and sorghum because of improved seed varieties and given rainfall during the growing season. The target for cowpea was not met because of pest attacks on this crop. For 1231, school gardens were not implemented due to restrictions and changed priorities due to COVID-19. The same affected 1233 and 1314 concerning school closures and the suspension of in-person capacity building. 1314 included the target number of members in Dimitra clubs that was nearly achieved, with 9,403 members as compared with a target of 11,520 (82% achievement rate).

Figure 6: Niger output and immediate outcome level performance

¹²⁵ These quotes are from participants in the Evaluation's' FGDs in DRC. These have been translated from French and edited for clarity.

- "Adoption of food hygiene measures: use of tanks (cans, buckets, canaries) for transporting and storing water, hygiene in households, washing food before consumption, hand washing, hygienic kitchen utensils, etc." (man)
- "With the increase in production due to the adoption of farming techniques learned in the farmers' schools, the period covered by our rainfed crop production is longer, and the practice of market gardening on market garden sites and in home gardens has made it possible to extend the period for which we can have some form of income." (man)¹²⁶

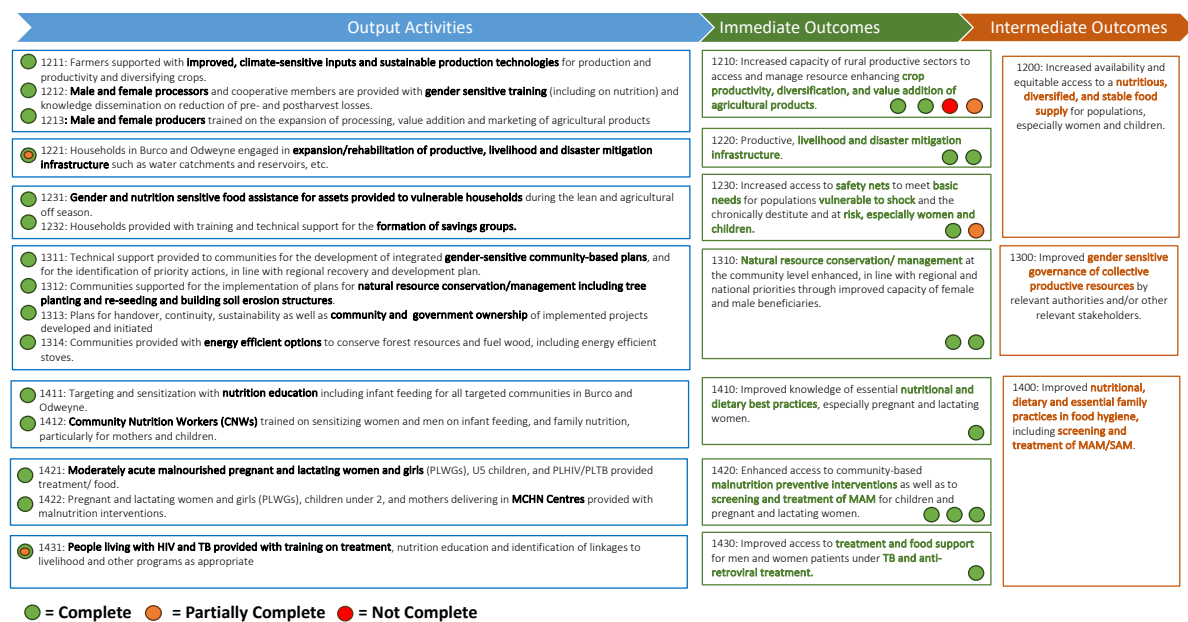
Somalia

266. The RBA Resilience Initiative in Somalia had various issues that affected output level performance. This included the 2016/2017 drought, the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020/2021, and the 2022/2023 drought. Consecutive failed rains in the years 2017, 2020, 2021, and 2022 Gu and Deyr seasons resulted in poor conditions overall. Despite these challenges, the Programme achieved nearly all output-level activities. Of 31 output indicators, the Programme achieved or overachieved in 29 of them.

267. A total of 2,600 households in 18 communities were reached with the package of activities as noted in Figure 7, with only slight variations given community-level needs assessments. This included food vouchers, agriculture, fodder inputs (tools, equipment and seeds), trainings in natural resource management, traditional agriculture and fodder production, alternative livelihood development (kitchen/market/school gardens, tree nurseries, beekeeping, and Juliflora fodder and charcoal production) and VSLAs to enhance crop productivity, diversification, and value addition of both agricultural and livestock products.

268. Figure 7 shows the relationship between output activities and expected immediate and intermediate outcomes. Despite the challenges noted above, all but two activities met or exceeded targets. 1221, related to rehabilitated infrastructure, was not met as community needs dictated the construction of new water catchment and other infrastructure rather than the rehabilitation of older infrastructure. For 1431, the HIV component was put on hold, given governmental constraints.

Figure 7: Somalia output and immediate outcome level performance



Source: *Somalia Final Project Close-out Report; PMF.*

269. At the immediate outcome level, there were seven expected outcomes along with 16 different indicators. Here too, 13 of 16 indicators were met or exceeded, with some, like direct cash support, reaching more than 800% of the original target. The three that were not met include the formation of local cooperatives, market linkages between the public and private sectors, and the number of savings groups formed. Savings groups

¹²⁶ These quotes are from participants in the Evaluation's FGDs in Niger. These have been translated from French and edited for clarity.

may represent a missed opportunity given the research that shows these to be effective towards both increased livelihoods and resilience but also for women's empowerment.¹²⁷

270. The Programme in Somalia used a standard package for the 18 participating communities, with slight variations based on livelihood types at the community level. These were also scaled up during the severe drought in 2020 and 2021 in ways that enabled the Programme to maintain previous gains and prevent displacement. This implies that it was the standard package and the RBA's collaboration (FAO, WFP, implementing partners, and government authorities) that lent to the achievement of these output-level results.

271. Some representative statements from participants in the Evaluation's FGDs in Somalia include:

- "The construction of shallow water wells has had a significant impact on the dietary habits of our community. Access to clean water has enabled community members to engage in proper food preparation and cooking practices, resulting in safer and healthier meals. As a result, the community nutrition intake has improved, reducing the risk of malnutrition and related health issues." (Woman)
- "The construction of shallow water wells has enhanced the sustainability of our community's water source by tapping into reliable underground water reserves. This ensures a consistent water supply throughout the year, even during dry periods, supporting daily needs, agricultural activities, and livestock rearing, which contribute to food security and economic stability within our community" (Man)
- "The construction of dams, water catchment systems, and berkads has greatly benefited our community by ensuring a reliable water supply for various purposes. This availability of water has had a significant impact on our livelihoods, particularly in terms of supporting livestock rearing and agricultural activities. Livestock can access sufficient water, leading to improved health and productivity. Additionally, the water resources have enabled community members to engage in farming and cultivate diverse crops, contributing to a varied and nutritious diet. The combination of water access for livestock and agricultural production has created a sustainable source of food and income for our community, enhancing our overall well-being." (Man)
- "Our community has undergone a significant transformation through the implementation of activities aimed at improving water availability and supporting the agricultural sector. As a result, there have been notable advancements in food production and accessibility, enabling our households to enjoy a wide variety of meals from our own kitchen gardens and livestock. This has had a positive impact on dietary diversity and nutrition, particularly for women and children in the community. Many households have been able to multiply and diversify their meal routines and habits, leading to improved overall well-being and healthier lifestyles. The efforts to enhance water availability and support the agricultural sector have truly made a difference in our community's food security and nutritional outcomes." (Woman)¹²⁸

272. As these illustrate, there was remarkable consistency in both the activities that community members raised as having the most direct effect as well as the ones that they deemed most significant. In relation to immediate food security (diet), market gardens were seen as the most significant overall, followed by cash transfers, beekeeping, and school feeding. Kitchen and market gardens were also seen as the most significant in relation to food production and household income. Water catchment/berkads/shallow wells were also cited as particularly important, especially during drought conditions. In relation to women's involvement and inclusion, kitchen and market gardens were cited frequently, although there was less specificity overall in comments about women's involvement. In general, community members cited the positive aspects of women's involvement but were vague as to the specific benefits of such involvement.

273. However, community members and implementing partners also described problems with seeds (wrong seasonal varieties) and with certain crops (sweet potatoes) that limited the positive effects of these activities. For FAO, they had conducted nationwide research and determined, for instance, that sweet potatoes represented a highly climate-resistant crop with large market potential. Yet, for the communities, sweet

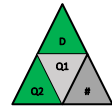
¹²⁷ Courtney Cabot Venton; "Economics of Resilience to Drought: Somalia Analysis." USAID; January 2018. Available [here](#).

¹²⁸ These quotes are from participants in the Evaluation's FGDs in Somalia. These have been translated from Somali and edited for clarity.

potatoes were unknown and could not be easily cooked without large quantities of water—a precious commodity. This limited both their use at home and as a product for the market. Seed provision was more problematic. Providing the wrong seasonal varieties meant that communities would plant the seeds (assuming they were the correct ones for their context) only to have the crops fail. The problem for FAO was that deciphering which communities required short or long-season varieties did not match their country-wide system, a system based on providing an efficient programme country-wide.

3.3.2 CAPACITY TO ADAPT

Finding 13: *The RBA Resilience Initiative adapted to a range of disruptions, challenges, and delays. This included reducing the level of cross-community knowledge sharing, training, and other group activities that required local access. It also dropped indicators that required a level of field access not possible during that time.*



274. The RBA Resilience Initiative faced considerable disruptions. Not only did it need to contend with the frequent climate and conflict-related crises that plague the three countries, but global events like COVID-19 and other massive humanitarian responses, like that in Syria and Ukraine, also affected the RBA.

275. In 2020, COVID-19 was affecting programming globally. Yet, the Programme found ways for key activities to still be implemented, with social distancing when implementing activities, including measures such as shifting asset creation from community to household works, designing the layout of community asset creation in ways that kept people sufficiently distanced from each other, holding community meetings outdoors, and the provision of soap and water for handwashing. This included guidance from WFP's Asset Creation, Livelihoods and Resilience Unit (PRO-R) on how to adapt activities and a "Practical Guide to re-start FFA (Food Assistance for Assets) activities at the Community Level during the Covid-19 Pandemic" from WFP's Regional Bureau in Dakar that explained how to adapt community works, training, and participatory planning processes.

276. The training was also adjusted by increasing the number of training courses to accommodate a reduced number of participants for social distancing. It was also decided to suspend activities associated with connecting community-based committees to share knowledge, more in-depth field research into GEWE, and the potential inclusion of UNICEF as another partner. Travel and access restrictions also led to limits on monitoring, thus causing the Programme to drop or delay the measurement of several indicators, especially as related to community engagement, community committees, and community-level training.

277. Given COVID-19 and IFAD's inability to deliver in DRC, the Programme was delayed for effectively 2 years after the pandemic. (Section 2.1) Even during this extension period, crises emerged that challenged the Programme, from a risk of famine in Somalia in 2020/2021 to the war in Ukraine and the resulting impact on commodity prices and other global events that shifted resources and attention elsewhere.

278. Despite these disruptions, challenges, and delays, the Programme accomplished nearly all activities (Section 3.3.1), and these had a direct bearing on expected outcome-level results. (Section 3.5.1) KII with stakeholders and best practices point to the exceptional level of initial coordination and planning, along with the Agencies' complementary expertise in relation to food security, nutrition, and livelihoods, amongst other subjects, as critical for this success.

Finding 14: *Remarkably, the Programme was still able to deliver nearly all planned activities, and, based on evidence from both the Programme's outcome indicators and the Evaluation's FGDs, it was able to achieve significant results. This was largely due to the efforts during the first year to not simply work together but to align business processes and to decipher how to ensure that the three Agencies' efforts were coalescing around shared outcome results. This was founded on the comprehensive design and detailed PMFs that were reported annually.*

279. Interestingly, this focused approach to delivery through the PMFs and on the activities so determined at the inception of the Programme also contributed to the lack of adaptation and change to new conditions. There were some changes. For instance, in DRC in 2017, it was recognized that agricultural input-shops were a practical solution to facilitate access to agricultural inputs by small producers, and so this was expanded upon. In Niger, it was recognized that learning and nutritional rehabilitation centres contributed to the prevention of malnutrition among children and so these modalities were strengthened. In Somalia in 2018, a planned HIV programme was cancelled in favour of increased vouchers and emergency programming, given

the lingering effects of the severe drought and famine threat from 2016. The 2020 drought in Somalia affected vegetable crop and fodder production and delayed the implementation of market gardens and tree nurseries, prompting the Programme to increase support to water catchment and reservoirs.

280. While these changes are important, there were not many identified by KII nor in Programme reports. The RBA basically adhered to the plan as best possible without major adaptations except to drop certain training activities or qualitative measures that were not possible given access and other constraints.

281. KII amongst stakeholders indicates that, even in these areas, the overriding criteria were based on which activities had the most likely chance of contributing to expected outcome-level results. This tended towards those related to nutrition, water conservation, and livelihood support that are common to the Agencies and in most food-insecure humanitarian responses. They opted to depend on what they knew and what had been proven in other contexts.

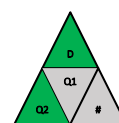
282. This seems appropriate, especially given the severe restrictions and resource constraints associated with COVID-19. Yet, it also meant that there were few opportunities to capitalize on other activities that may have been working well in different communities. Evidence from FGDs with participating communities shows that they were quite clear about which activities worked and which were less successful, with quite a degree of variance between those communities visited as part of the Evaluation. Ideally, the Programme would have been more able to draw on these local experiences and input from the communities themselves.

283. It should be noted that whereas the Niger context is highly complex and changing, it did not face the same extreme operational challenges encountered in the DRC context, where the Programme's participants were displaced during the implementation and where the project district of Rutshuru was inaccessible due to its occupation by M23 rebels from November 2022. One of the contributing factors that the RBA did not make a great effort to adjust to the new situation in Rutshuru was the fact that the RBA would formally end in March 2023, five months later. That said, it is possible to highlight internal factors that affected positively the RBA's ability to adapt. As mentioned in the CCS, the fact that all three agencies participated in the 3PA community-based participatory planning is a positive factor. Thanks to this process, the RBA was able to better grasp the changing nature of the challenges that the communities were facing and shared this understanding in coming up with common solutions (for instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic). Among the negative factors, the high level of turnover among the RBA staff produced a loss in organizational knowledge on the intervention history that might have lessened the RBA's ability to share knowledge and consequently use that knowledge to propose more fit adaptive solutions.

3.4 E.Q4.0: HOW EFFICIENT WAS THE PARTNERSHIP OF THE RBAS IN VIEW OF IMPLEMENTING THE JOINT MULTI-YEAR RESILIENCE INITIATIVE AND LEVERAGING FURTHER RESOURCES?

3.4.1 EFFICIENCY OF COLLABORATION AND OVERSIGHT¹²⁹

Finding 15: Overall, the Programme proved efficient in that it was able to complete all planned activities roughly on time and within budget. The capacity to deliver on time and budget was challenged in the first two years of the Programme in relation to harmonizing procurement and other business processes between FAO and WFP. This led to some delays in the Programme, even if these did not have a material effect on the final results.



284. DRC, Niger, and Somalia are complicated operating contexts with a range of constraints and problems that affect the efficient delivery of complicated activities. This was addressed by a design that included specific activities, as developed through participatory processes with communities, and causal links between these and expected immediate and intermediate outcomes, along with qualitative and quantitative indicators for all. This was encapsulated in the global and country-level PMFs. These were then used to deliver the Programme in each country, with annual reports that showed progress against these activities and indicators. As expressed by key informants in all three countries, these PMFs were the primary mechanisms used to

¹²⁹ As indicated in the triangulation graphic, this section is based on evidence from documentary sources and KII with relevant stakeholders. Overall, these were sufficient for noted findings.

prioritize activities, distribute tasks amongst the RBA, and keep on track through regular coordination, especially at the country level in the latter stages of the Programme.

285. The Global Component focused on training, knowledge sharing, and tools and guidance for resilience programming in each country. This also enabled country offices to maximize their comparative advantages and expertise in ways complementary to each other and with the participating communities' needs, especially in the first two years of the Programme as collaboration and coordination across the Agencies was developed.

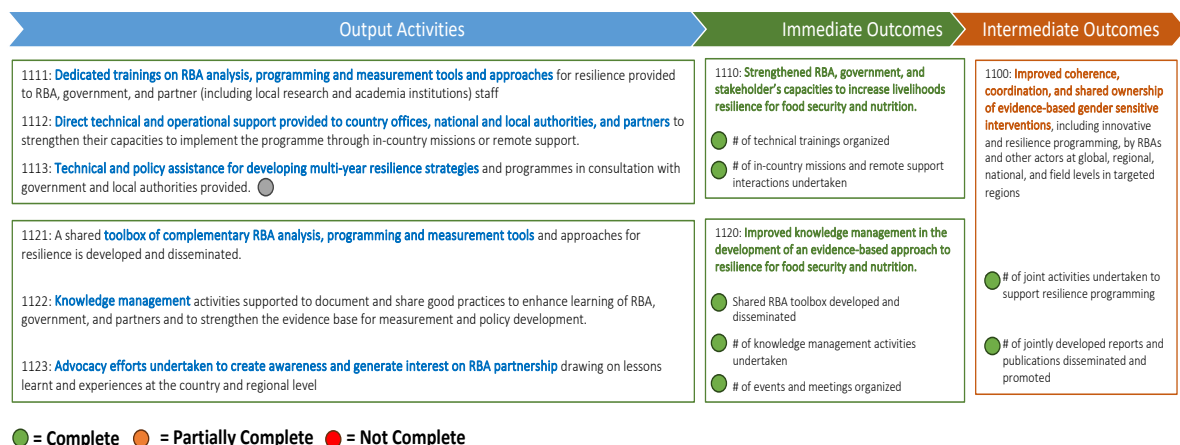
286. COVID-19 and other factors caused the Programme to request a one-year no-cost extension. This was understandable, and yet it is also exceptional that the RBA, at that point, was able to deliver nearly all results and outcome measurements by the Programme's end.

287. As described in Section 3.5.3, several factors affected the collaboration and efficiency of the RBA Resilience Initiative. These did not have a major material effect on the achievement of results. Instead, it was the access issues due to conflict and COVID-19 that caused some activities to be cancelled and prevented data collection for outcome indicators, especially in DRC. As noted, a great deal of the efficiency associated with this, especially in the RBA's capacities to adapt and change as new needs or problems emerged, was related to the Programme design and PMFs that provided a focus for the RBA during implementation.

288. Collaboration and overall efficiency were supported further through the support from regional and HQ offices. Each Agency has broad experience in relevant sectors. This expertise was especially prevalent during the design phase. There was also effective oversight and guidance provided by key HQ-level staff, as remarked upon consistently in the Evaluation's KIIs. These stakeholders noted that there was not only a useful level of expertise provided by these experts but also that they worked consistently to let country-level staff leverage their expertise and ways of working so that the Programme could be largely country-led by 2019.

289. This level of support is exemplified by the results from the Global Component PMF.

Figure 8: Global component output and outcome level performance



Source: RBA Resilience Initiative Annual Report, 2021.

290. Figure 8 shows that by 2021, the Global Component was on track to meet, had met, or had exceeded all outcome indicators.

291. These revolved around providing training and sharing knowledge on resilience and resilience-based tools, like WFP's 3PA and FAO's RIMA II, amongst others. They were tailored for each country and there were considerable efforts spent on ensuring that country-level expertise could be integrated with global approaches. Output 1113 was cancelled as it proved beyond the scope of the Programme, given that it dealt with other organizations' programmes and strategies. As described in Section 3.1.4, this was probably unnecessary from the outset, given that the Programme focused on communities that had minimal support from other international organizations.

292. Support through the Global Component also shows that, by March 2022, when the Programme was scheduled to close, nearly all these results had been achieved. This allowed the Programme to focus on country-level delivery during the one-year no-cost extension period.

293. In DRC, FAO and WFP were able to govern the implementation of the RBA Resilience Programme efficiently. There were regular coordination meetings at the regional level (by their respective offices in Goma) as well as at the national level by their Country Offices. Strong collaboration at both levels was considered one of the main assets of the Programme: WFP, with their practical advantage in operational terms, joining FAO with their agricultural knowledge, pushed the Programme to complement both humanitarian and development aspects. Stakeholders in the Evaluation's KII mentioned that there was good support from the respective headquarters in Rome.¹³⁰ A joint monitoring and reporting system certainly contributed to the efficiency of monitoring Programme results. However, the sometimes-slow process of contracting may have slowed down implementation, when NGO contracts had to be renewed annually, with final authorization also complicated.

294. In the context of implementation of a very extensive list of activities shared between the two Agencies, there have been issues of timing and synchronization. Delays, for instance, in the completion of infrastructure or the late delivery of inputs, such as the provision of seeds, had direct implications on the timely achievement of results for the first year. This did not occur in subsequent years. Enrolment of Programme participants in WFP's SCOPE was an issue as it was time-consuming and lacked a certain level of flexibility. Not all community members could be registered because they did not have the requisite forms of identification. As such, the targeting approach was contradictory to the resilience objective as the targeting of vulnerability was mainly with a household focus and not a community focus. Only registered households could, for instance, participate in the asset creation for the communities (infrastructure, reforestation).¹³¹

295. In Niger, RBA staff state that efficiency was optimized by the RBA's shared resources, tools, and skills. The RBAs were able to mobilize local resources (human, knowledge) by actively involving individuals and community-based structures. Stakeholders also commented favourably upon the coordination mechanism (the assigned project coordinator by the three agencies), established in response to a request originally formulated by the Government of Niger, which improved the organization, communication, and sequencing of activities.

296. In Somalia, there is evidence of effective coordination between FAO, WFP, and local and national government authorities. This has a direct bearing on efficiency, or more particularly, on the RBA's capacity to adapt and change to different priorities and needs. In this sense, FAO and WFP demonstrated the capacity to rebound from the issues encountered in 2020 in relation to COVID-19 and the severe drought in Somalia in 2021/2022 to ensure that output-level activities were delivered. While this pertains more to effectiveness than efficiency, the capacity of the Agencies to continue to work together and to adapt to these changing circumstances singles an effective use of resources, a hallmark of efficiency.

297. There is an inherent efficiency associated with delivering a country-wide programme. Even if this only targeted 18 communities, FAO and WFP approached this in similar ways to an entire country programme, opting for delivery channels that could be used in all locations. While this is efficient, it complicates some capacity to respond and adapt to issues that are particular to each community. These communities are not homogenous, and their needs are different and fluctuate according to different conditions

298. This was most seen in relation to market gardens. As communities stated, these were highly effective means of diversifying nutrition, providing additional household income, and empowering women. However, community members and other stakeholders described problems with seeds (wrong seasonal varieties) and with certain crops (sweet potatoes) that limited the positive effects of these activities, as described in Section 3.3.1.

3.4.2 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT¹³²

Finding 16: Overall, annual financial reports were deployed against the plan in a timely manner, as shown in the Annual Reports and corresponding financial statements. The RBA was also able to self-

¹³⁰ Sources: FAO Kinshasa, WFP Kinshasa, FAO-Rome KII interviews.

¹³¹ Source: FAO Rome KII interview.

¹³² As noted in the triangulation figure, there was sufficient evidence from some documentary sources and from key informants, but the Evaluation was not provided sufficient levels of financial data to establish efficiencies as based on unit costs or cost comparisons between activities or countries. This is noted as a conclusion and recommendation.

finance activities when there might have been delays in funding, so the effects on planning or delivery were minimal.

299. Overall, annual financial reports were deployed against the plan in a timely manner, as shown in the Annual Reports and corresponding financial statements. The RBA was also able to self-finance activities when there might have been delays in funding, so the effects on planning or delivery were minimal.



300. The original RBA Resilience Initiative budget (in CAD\$) by agency and component is included below.

Table 7: Planned budget by agency and component

Components	FAO	IFAD	WFP	Sub-total by component
DRC	7,651,414	1,880,684	6,196,359	15,728,457
Niger	5,964,896	-	9,763,561	15,728,457
Somalia	7,864,228	-	7,864,228	15,728,457
Global support	925,852	462,926	925,852	2,314,630
Sub-total by agency	22,406,390	2,343,610	24,750,000	49,500,000
1% management fee				500,000
TOTAL				50,000,000

Source: RBA Annual Reports.

301. The RBA Resilience Initiative was due to end on 31 March 2022. However, several activities were cancelled or delayed because of increased insecurity, national elections and other political events, access constraints, natural disasters (drought and locust outbreaks), as well as COVID-19 restrictions. The Initiative provided a one-year no-cost extension to complete activities and utilize unspent balances, then further extended to the 31st December 2023 to complete country level activities.

302. IFAD was not able to implement the given International Financial Institution (IFI) status that relies on government project units to implement activities and not on its own staff and/or country office/presence. Given this, original funding for IFAD was designated for the DRC, yet at the start of Programme implementation the IFAD portfolio in DRC was suspended and hence could not activate any new funding into the country. In 2021, IFAD shifted all project activities and related budget to Niger. These were meant to be used to bring existing projects to scale or towards complementing activities already implemented by IFAD in Niger.

Finding 17: *There may be opportunities to do financial analysis regarding the costs of activities and their potential return on investment. This could include the cost per beneficiary or cost per unit between activities and countries.*

303. Financial reports and their correspondence to the completion of activities demonstrate that funds were used efficiently, even when there were delays associated with COVID-19 or the reallocation of funds for IFAD in DRC to its operations in Niger.

304. Given these changes, the financial status of the Programme as of December 2021 was as follows:

Table 8: Actual expenditures as of 31 December 2021

	Previous	2021	Total* (USD)	TOTAL (CAD\$)
Staff and personnel costs	3,690,511	1,251,706	4,942,217	6,770,837
Supplies, commodities, and materials	5,978,641	1,381,202	7,539,843	10,329,585
Equipment	657,575	253,044	910,619	1,247,548
Contractual services	1,172,119	494,354	1,666,473	2,283,068
Travel	1,330,184	526,735	1,856,919	2,543,979
Transfers and Grants to Counterparts	4,961,444	4,135,178	9,096,622	12,462,372
General Operating and Other Direct Costs	1,562,112	543,513	2,105,625	2,884,706
SUBTOTALS:	19,352,586	8,585,732	28,118,318	38,522,096

Indirect programme support costs	1,401,275	647,962	2,049,237	2,807,455
SUBTOTALS:	20,753,861	9,233,694	30,167,555	41,329,550
*12 July 2022. Financial Consolidated Report on Sources and Use of the Funds for the period ending 31.12.2021.				

Source: RBA Annual Reports

305. Relevant stakeholders in the Evaluation cited no issue or challenge associated with the allocation of funds. The five-year Programme period was also, as noted in Section 3.1.1, critical for integrated programming approaches and the maximization of the RBA comparative advantages that contributed to results. The five-year funding envelope enabled proper needs assessments and design in the beginning as well as the capacity to focus on longer-term outcomes.

306. Each Annual Report included consolidated financial reports that included the source of funds, use of funds, and consolidated expenditures. In the first year, there was an under-expenditure related to a greater focus on coordination and developing the plan and PMFs—investments that enabled the Programme to have a comprehensive plan and common results that proved useful throughout the implementation period.

307. By 2018, the Programme had slightly exceeded budget forecasts (US\$ 1,287,553 against a budget of US\$ 1,181,264). This recouped budget from year 1 and focuses on staff, with approximately 96% of 2018 resources used by national and international technical and support staff. 2018 also included contractual services with various entities, including implementing partners and government counterparts.

308. In 2019, funds were deployed as forecast, with increasing amounts for supplies, commodities, and materials, along with transfers and grants to counterparts.

309. In 2020 and 2021, funds were deployed as forecast except for a reassignment of expenses in the Somalia Programme and a significant reduction of travel costs given COVID-19 restrictions. In 2020, it was also agreed to shift resources allocated to IFAD for DRC to its activities in Niger. This was also when it was jointly agreed with the donor to extend the Programme by one year.

310. These financial figures correspond to the completion of activities, as reported in annual PMFs. These figures provide a minimal foundation for return on investment and other financial analyses.

Table 9: Expenditure by agency and component in USD (2017-2021)

Components	FAO	IFAD	WFP	Sub-total by component	# of HHs Reached	Cost per HH
DRC	5,038,119.20	-	3,101,688.63	8,139,985.83	12,000.00	678.33
Niger	4,047,637.50	-	7,796,560.74	11,844,198.20	12,400.00	955.18
Somalia	4,488,715.80	-	5,234,559.50	9,723,275.30	2,600.00	3,739.72
Global support	272,216.00	113,320.00	283,269.49	668,805.49		
Sub-total by agency	13,846,688.50	113,320.00	16,416,078.36	30,376,264.80	27,000.00	1,125.05

Source: Compiled data from RBA Resilience Initiative Annual Reviews.

311. Calculating the cost per beneficiary household ignores a range of issues associated with how many people were reached when, and with which modalities/activities, let alone differences associated with what each Agency delivered, e.g. should the costs of agricultural inputs from FAO be treated, financially, the same as vouchers provided by WFP, to name but one complexity, this illustrates a stark difference between the country contexts. The costs per household in DRC are the least expensive at 678, with Niger at 955. There is then a major increase in cost per household in Somalia at 3,740.

Part of the increased cost in Somalia is due to the cost of water infrastructure (supplies, commodities, and materials), which was higher than in the other countries, as illustrated in the table below and as reported in each financial year. In 2018, the second year of the programme, it constituted 69% of Somalia's operating budget (1,455,446.46 out of 2,091,858.81.)¹³³

¹³³ "Rome-based Agencies Resilience Initiative Annual Report –Year 2" RBA; May 2019. Page 93.

312. In comparing budget figures for 2021, there are other variations that FAO costs in key areas are more expensive than WFPs, except in Somalia. This is due to the increased use of emergency cash support (vouchers, FFA) that was necessary given the severe drought in Somalia at this time.

Table 10: Expenditure by agency and cost category in USD (2021)

Cost Categories (2021 Programme Annual Review Report)	DRC						Niger						Somalia						Totals	
	FAO	% Total	WFP	% Total	Total	% Total	FAO	% Total	WFP	% Total	Total	% Total	FAO	% Total	WFP	% Total	Total	% Total	Subtotals	% Subtotals
Staff and personnel costs	252227	24%	209944	14%	462,171	18%	122402	16%	235717	11%	358,119	12%	183,870	10%	160,765	9%	344,635	10%	1,164,925	13%
Supplies, commodities, and materials	231791	22%	1094	0%	232,885	9%	274094	37%	164816	8%	438,910	15%	255,194	14%	484,438	27%	739,632	21%	1,411,427	16%
Equipment	0	0%	68560	5%	68,560	3%	33234	4%	12539	1%	45,773	2%	85,285	5%	53,424	3%	138,709	4%	253,042	3%
Contractual services	-2763	0%	60071	4%	57,308	2%	68795	9%	147540	7%	216,335	7%	198,362	11%	22,350	1%	220,712	6%	494,355	5%
Travel	38578	4%	186116	13%	224,694	9%	30582	4%	46727	2%	77,309	3%	207,930	12%	3,025	0%	210,955	6%	512,958	6%
Transfers and Grants to Counterparts	433271	41%	732261	49%	1,165,532	46%	99772	13%	1432282	66%	1,532,054	53%	451,827	26%	912,957	50%	1,364,784	38%	4,062,370	45%
General Operating and Other Direct Costs	36847	3%	129152	9%	165,999	7%	71198	10%	-26048	-1%	45,150	2%	272,281	15%	60,373	3%	332,654	9%	543,803	6%
Indirect programme support costs	69297	7%	97153	7%	166,450	7%	49005	7%	140950	7%	189,955	7%	113,732	6%	118,813	7%	232,545	6%	588,950	7%
Totals:	1,059,248		1,484,351		2,543,599		749082		2,154,523		2,903,605		1,768,481		1,816,145		3,584,626		9,031,830	

Source: Compiled data from RBA Resilience Initiative Annual Reviews.

313. While this financial analysis is not definitive, it does indicate areas that should be considered further. If the costs of water infrastructure in Somalia were considerably more expansive, and yet, as indicated in Section 3.1.4, also more relevant and effective towards improved food security, livelihoods and resilience. These costs and their implications need to be considered for any future programming.

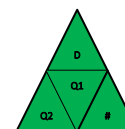
3.5 E.Q5.0: DID THE RBA RESILIENCE INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTE TO LONG-TERM INTENDED RESULTS OR UNINTENDED IMPACTS?

314. The Programme included a design and related PMFs that guided activities throughout. Despite various constraints, from local dynamics in each country to global events like COVID-19, the Programme remained focused on key outcome indicators related to food security, nutrition, livelihoods, and overall resilience.

315. The sections below include analysis from each of the countries based on their PMFs and baseline/end-line results, as available.

3.5.1 OUTCOME RESULTS

Finding 18: Outcome results from the three countries are positive. RIMA II results are positive in all three countries, although there is little variance between treatment and control groups in DRC and Niger, with the former relying on only a midline assessment from 2020. Somalia shows significant results overall and in relation to control groups.¹³⁴



Participating communities also expressed ways in which they are better able to prepare for, withstand, and recover from crises. This was especially due to the combination of emergency cash support, water infrastructure for agriculture and livestock, and agricultural inputs and livelihood support.

316. These and qualitative evidence from participating communities show that while there was no significant difference in the RIMA II between the control and treatment groups in DRC and Niger, there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate increased resilience amongst participating communities in all three countries.

317. While results overall are positive, repeated and protracted crises in each country make measuring the differences between treatment and control groups exceptionally complicated. It is also related to the nature of the proxy indicators, especially the combination of the RIMA, FCS, and CSI (livelihood and food), which are often not enough to ascertain how households are adjusting to crises. For instance, households may reduce the consumption of meat to save money for other expenses, thus affecting FCS scores and yet preventing other negative coping strategies. Or, households may sell assets, affecting the CSI, but preventing displacement, a much more dire consequence. This is addressed through the RIMA II, providing a more comprehensive assessment of the types and severity of shocks along with other proxy modules and yet the subsequent “score” has been criticized as reductive.¹³⁵

318. Indicators included in the country-level PMFs that were more qualitative in nature were dropped because of access issues related to COVID-19 and other constraints and challenges.

319. Members of participating communities were able to provide examples of how the Programme had improved their food security, nutrition, dietary practices, agricultural production, livelihoods, and overall capacity to address crises. There were also considerable differences in these factors between countries. In DRC, the leadership role of women in community-based organizations was often cited. In Niger, awareness campaigns and training in nutrition were cited along with assets and training in agriculture, thus enabling diversified and improved income sources. In Somalia, women’s market gardens and water catchment systems were seen as vital for dealing with droughts and for diversifying income sources. These and other noted activities, as attested to by the communities themselves, have enabled them to better prepare for, respond to, and recover from crises while, at the same time, challenging traditional gender roles.

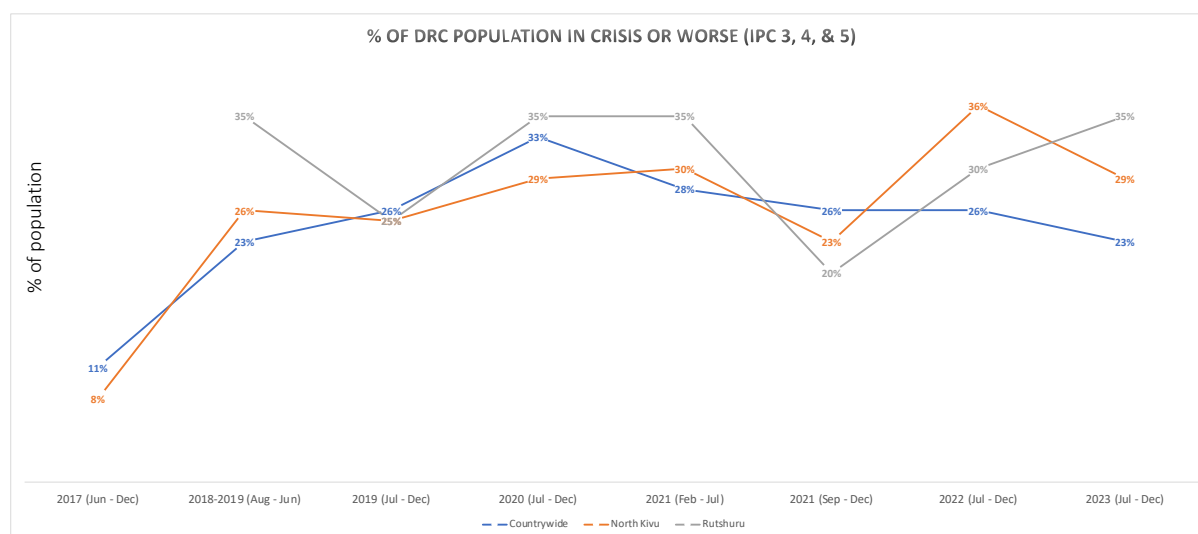
¹³⁴ The RIMA II derives a latent measurement of resilience called a Resilience Capacity Index (RCI). The approach incorporates indicators as drivers (causes) of resilience. Technical guidance and descriptions of the RIMA II, please visit [FAO here](#). RIMA II analysis determines both the level of household resilience and the determinants of this resilience among four empirical pillars: access to basic services (ABS), assets (AST), social safety nets (SSN) and adaptive capacity (AC). These are described in this section as and where possible.

¹³⁵ There have been criticisms of the RIMA’s econometric approaches as being based on “probability thresholds” and thus a “normatively indexed capacity” that defines people as being either resilient or not resilient, rather than as a gradient. It ignores, some would argue, the complexity associated with how people’s vulnerabilities ebb and wane due to different shocks/crises. For the most salient criticism of these approaches, please see: Simon Levine; “Assessing resilience: why quantification misses the point.” Humanitarian Policy Group and ODI; July 2014. Available [here](#).

DRC

320. Food insecurity across DRC and in the Programme areas of North Kivu and Rutshuru remained high throughout the Programme period. Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) levels in these areas fluctuated in national averages and then spiked in 2021, given the increase in conflict and related displacement. Rutshuru experienced numerous challenges affecting agricultural production and food security, including adverse weather conditions, crop infestations, armed conflicts, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Rutshuru is also affected by the ongoing conflict between the Force Démocratique pour la Liberation du Rwanda (FDLR), Mayi-Mayi and Nyatura. In October 2022, an offensive was launched in North Kivu by the M23 rebel group that impacted agricultural production, with armed groups looting crops and livestock, and limiting access to fields and markets. The M23's advances drove 390,000 people from their homes.¹³⁶ Figure 9 shows the percentage of the population in IPC crisis levels or worse.

Figure 9: IPC for DRC, North Kivu and Rutshuru



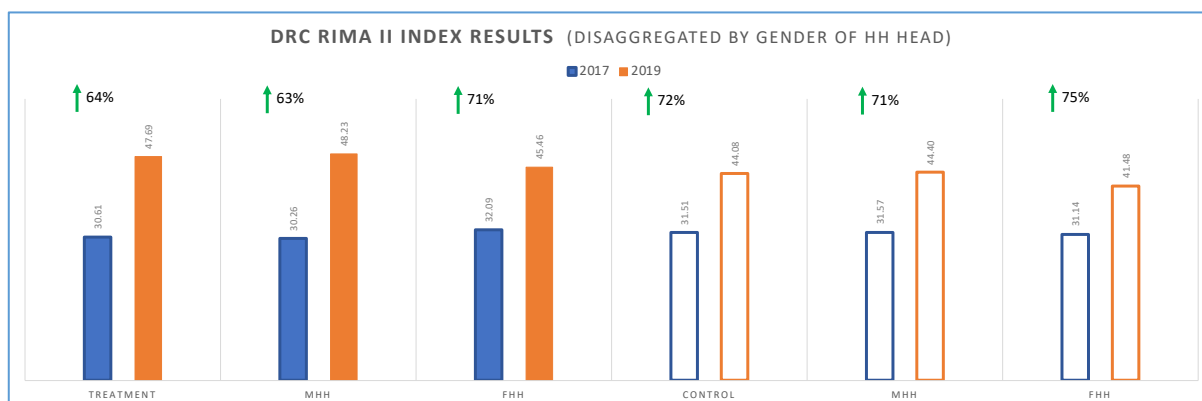
Source: IPC.

321. RIMA II¹³⁷ analysis was conducted in 2017 (baseline) and then in 2019 at Programme midterm. It shows a significant improvement for both men and women (treatment group) as well as the control group, as shown in Figure 10 below. From the qualitative assessment of intended outcomes (4.3), it can be derived that the improvement is mainly related to the Resilience Pillars of Social Safety Nets and asset creation, as well as the improvement of household adaptive capacities. Given that there were similar gains between the treatment and control groups, changes cannot be attributed to the Programme.

¹³⁶ "Democratic Republic of the Congo: North Kivu, Displacement Trends; Crisis Crisis affecting Rutshuru - Nyiragongo - Lubero." OCHA; 29 November 2022. Available [here](#).

¹³⁷ The RIMA II derives a latent measurement of resilience called a Resilience Capacity Index (RCI). The approach incorporates indicators as drivers (causes) of resilience. Technical guidance and descriptions of the RIMA II, please visit [FAO here](#).

Figure 10: DRC RIMA II (RIMA/RIC) results

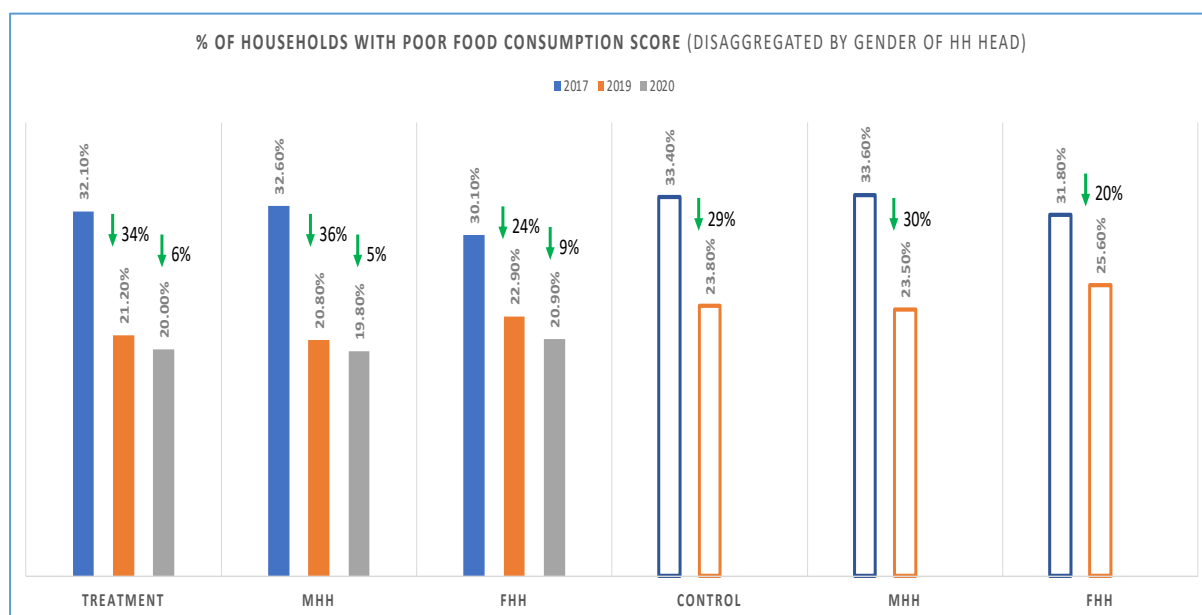


Source: DRC Final Project Close-out Report; PMF. MHH = male-headed households. FHH = female-headed households.

322. While the variance between treatment and control groups is statistically insignificant, the results in Figure 10 show slightly higher levels of resilience amongst the control group cohorts. This also shows that there were positive changes for all composite cohorts, across treatment and controls, of between 63% and 75% (green arrows). An endline survey was not conducted, although, given IPC figures reported above, any change in RIMA II analysis would be affected by these negative IPC trends overall.

323. Other intermediate results indicators for DRC included the Food Consumption Score (FCS), and Livelihood Coping Strategy Index (L-CSI). These show positive changes across cohorts as well, with total percentage change (green arrows) shown for each cohort and each observation period. (It should be noted that for L-CSI, lower scores are better as this indicates fewer negative coping strategies were used).

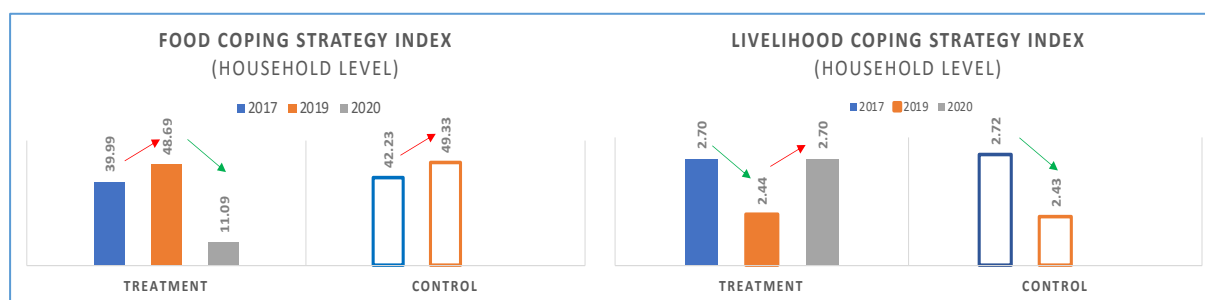
Figure 11: DRC FCS results



Source: DRC Final Project Close-out Report; PMF. MHH = male-headed households. FHH = female-headed households.

324. FCS was calculated for control and treatment groups in 2017 and 2019 with a follow-up survey of treatment groups in 2020. As with the RIMA, the variance between treatment and control groups was insignificant with slightly better results for the treatment group.

Figure 12: DRC F-CSI & L-CSI results



Source: DRC Final Project Close-out Report; PMF.

325. In terms of the rCSI, there was a slight increase in the number of negative food-related coping strategies used by both treatment and control groups. There was then a significant decline for the treatment group between 2019 and 2020¹³⁸ as the Programme increased direct cash support that, in turn, facilitated enhanced access to food.

326. In terms of the L-CSI, there was a decrease in the negative coping strategies although these changes were (statistically) insignificant. Key informants commented that “the food assistance provided through cash and the increased production through better and innovative agricultural practices enabled to reach positive results in terms of the Food Coping Strategy Index (FCSI), hence beneficiaries had no reason to resort to strategies affecting their food consumption. The same did not occur for the Livelihood Coping Strategy Index (LCSI), where they had to resort to negative livelihood coping strategies when facing shocks or stressors, for example the sale of household assets to cover medical expenses”¹³⁹.

327. From the data on the access to nutrition-rich food (Outcome 1200), it is clear that the Minimum Acceptable Diet (MAD) of children in the age from 6-23 months has substantially improved for the treatment group (from 8.47% to 25%), whereas the control group stayed significantly behind at 9.2%.¹⁴⁰ This points to the fact that nutrition practices had improved. This was confirmed by the FGD wherein the importance of good nutrition practices was mentioned, and respondents stated that this meant to decrease malnutrition levels as infants and young children were less sick.

328. Another key outcome for the DRC Programme was the leadership of women in Community Based Organizations (CBO). At the Programme’s inception, 77% of supported CBOs had women in leadership positions. This increased to 97% in the first year and remained at this level for the duration of the Programme.¹⁴¹ A few chairperson seats for Farmer Organizations and one cooperative were assumed by women. However, most positions held by women were as the treasurer, indicating that there remained some gender bias in representation across these groups. Still, key informants and FGD respondents state that most women were active in these positions.

329. These data are not adequately representative given the lack of figures for 2022. During FGD discussions, both men and women indicated levels of increased income made available through crop sales and other income generating activities, as well as through improved agricultural production. FGD participants also indicated that they had learned the importance of a balanced and diverse diet and were able to complement – if necessary – their own production through food purchases because of the increased income from (post-literacy and VSLA) income-generating activities and dedicated cash transfers (mothers of young infants and school-going girls).¹⁴² These (un)conditional cash transfers¹⁴³ varied in amount and frequency as based on WFP standard vulnerability assessments.

¹³⁸ As indicated the 2022 Endline could not be implemented; hence no data are available on these indicators after 2020.

¹³⁹ “RBA consolidated multiyear indicator values for DRC.” RBA Resilience Initiative DRC; December 2023.

¹⁴⁰ The improvement of nutrition practices is also confirmed by the data from indicator 1410 on the use of nutrition practices.

¹⁴¹ “RBA consolidated multiyear indicator values for DRC.” RBA Resilience Initiative DRC; December 2023.

¹⁴² Respondents also indicate that the situation had drastically changed after they were forced to leave the area. Due to the displacement, they either depend on their host families or food distribution in refugee camps around Goma.

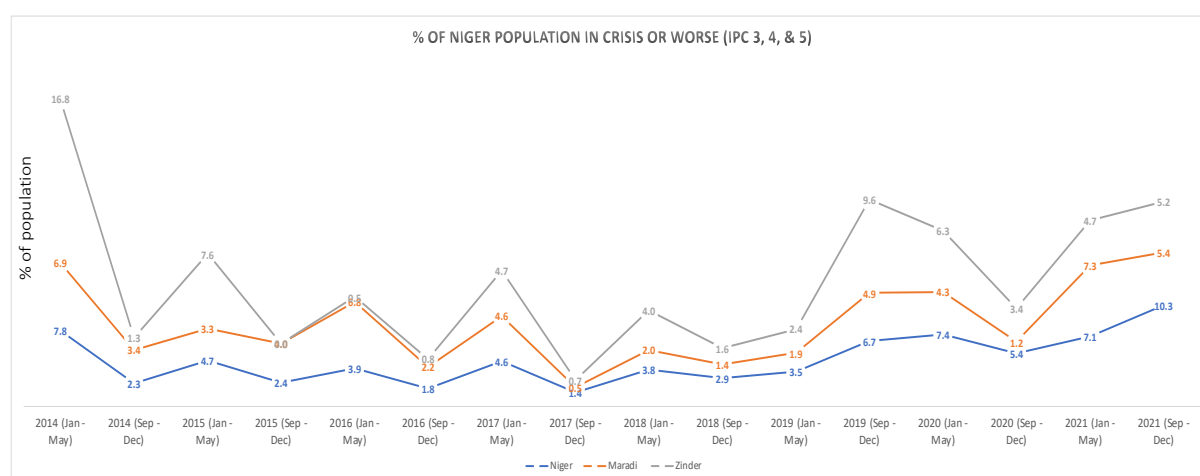
¹⁴³ Conditional transfers in the case of post-literacy transfer (upon completion of the nine-month literacy course); unconditional in the case of the targeted cash transfers (PLW and School-going girls).

330. FAO targeted the issue of landownership and access to unused land with the aim to increase agricultural production. FAO and the implementing partner AFCOD organized workshops bringing together large landowners with farmers (including women) interested in the rental of land with the goal of agreeing on a social pact. In the end, this did not materialize due to landowners' worries that their claim of the land might be affected. The occupation by M23 made further talks redundant. FAO also introduced a strategy against animal invasion which however was not always successful as a separation of zones was not possible. Rebels of M23 also brought their own animals and cleaned plots cultivated by smallholders.¹⁴⁴ These issues are explored in video testimonials in the FAO multimedia website, "Knowledge Sharing Platform on Emergencies and Resilience."¹⁴⁵

Niger

331. Food insecurity was lower in Niger, comparatively with DRC and Somalia, with the average number of people in Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) levels 3 – 5 at 4 - 10% of the population in Maradi and Zinder. IPC levels there fluctuated higher than national averages, especially after 2019.

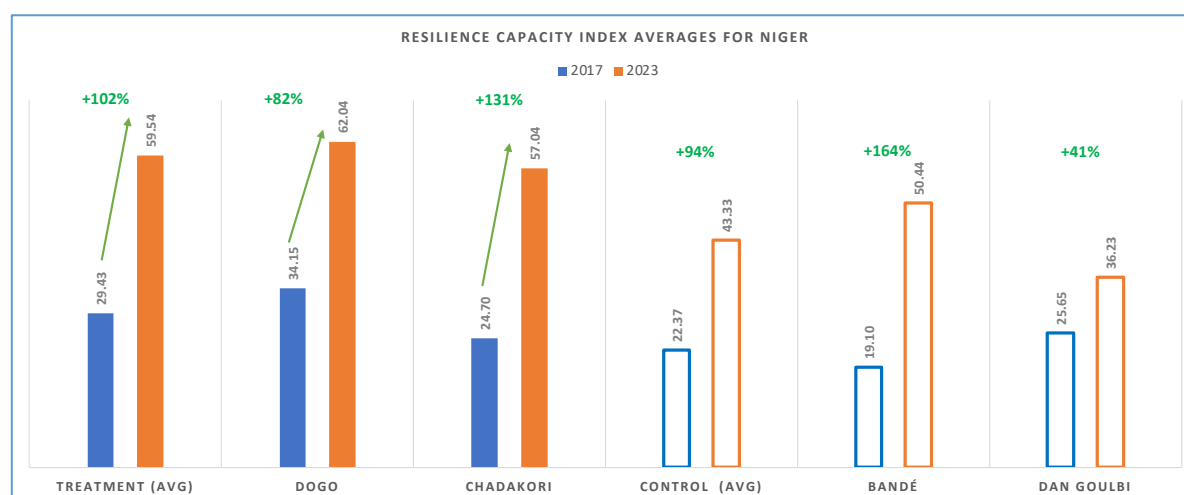
Figure 13: IPC for Niger, including Maradi & Zinder



Source: OCHA/FEWSNET.

332. The RIMA II Index stood at 29.43 for the treatment group at the baseline in 2017. By 2023, it had increased to 59.54, a 102% increase (green arrow). There was a greater increase in Chadakori (131%).

Figure 14: Niger RIMA II (RIMA/RIC) results



Source: Niger Final Project Close-out Report; PMF.

¹⁴⁴ Source: FAO Goma and AFCOD interviews 02 October 2023; and FGD Men on 3 October.

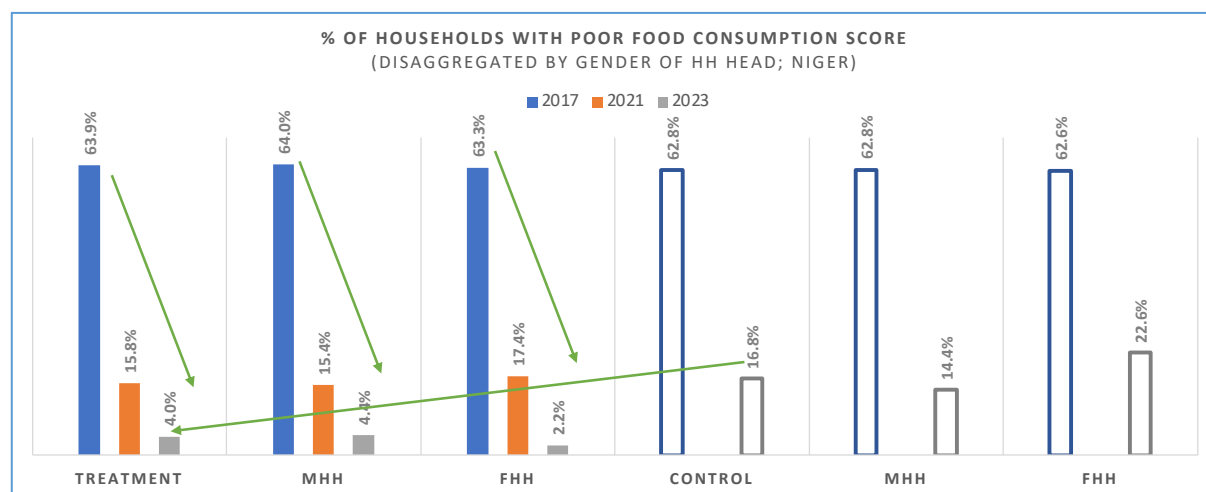
¹⁴⁵ Please visit the site [here](#).

333. While the RBA Resilience Initiative final report for Niger did not provide the statistical significance of these figures, those from the control groups show similar positive changes, signalling that the broader context affected all communities positively over the Programme period. Still, the changes noted in the treatment groups are different enough to warrant further analysis into the contributions from the Programme, as provided here.

334. According to the RBA Resilience Initiative final report, the resilience capacity index for beneficiary households showed a significant increase by the end of the project (103%). The structure of the resilience matrix of the project beneficiaries shows two evolutions in the resilience capacity of HH: an increase in the importance of the pillars related to access to basic services (ABS) but also that of adaptive capacity (AC), whose respective influences increased from 1.7% to 17.6%, and from 16.2% to 38.2% on HH RCI. On the other hand, there has been a marked decline in the effect of social safety nets (SSN) on households' resilience.

335. ABS is related to input shops, feed shops, processing units, nurseries, and community granaries. AC is related to a diversification of income coupled with improved access to agricultural activities due to the Programme's support of related infrastructure. SSN became less relevant given the inconsistency of formal and informal cash and in-kind transfers and the preference for income generated through productive assets.

Figure 15: Niger FCS results



Source: Niger Final Project Close-out Report; PMF. MHH = male-headed households. FHH = female-headed households.

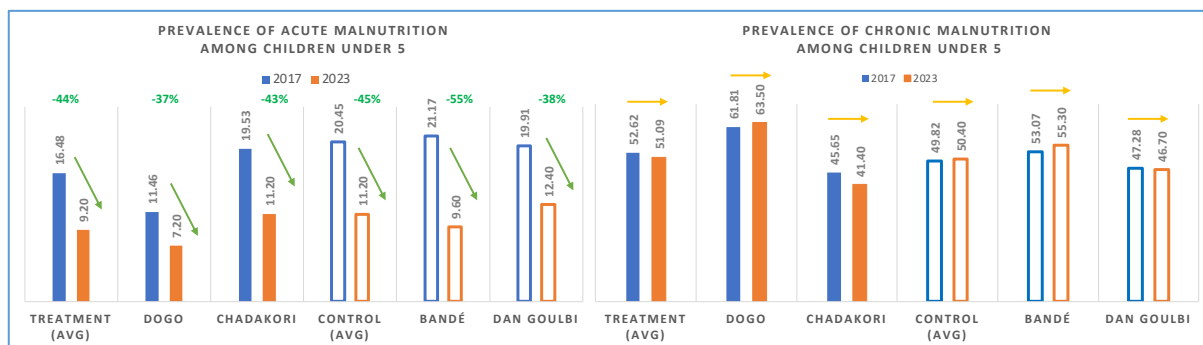
336. In terms of the Food Consumption Scores (FCS), there was a large proportion of the population in both treatment and control groups that had 'poor' FCS scores (roughly 63%). This dropped significantly across cohorts by the 2023 end line (green arrows), although it dropped more for the treatment group than for the control (4.0% for treatment; 16.8% for control). (Figure 15). The increase of RIMA results for women, slightly more positive for women, suggests that the particular attention given to women in relation to income-generating and nutrition activities and the fact that the Programme encouraged them to assume leading roles in Community Based Organizations (CBO), is positive. This was also cited during the Evaluation of FGDs, along with issues related to malnutrition and family practices.

337. As established in Programme documentation and FGDs, mothers were able to diagnose and manage moderate malnutrition and know where to go when malnutrition became severe. This, together with the regular support provided by the "Mamans lumières" (in some villages, FGD respondents mentioned weekly visits) and the cooking activities, decreased malnutrition. In addition, mothers know who to turn to or are advised by the "Mamans lumières" in case of severe malnutrition so that their children can be treated correctly (health centres). They were also able to adapt and diversify their children's diets using locally produced food. They were also able to improve food hygiene, which in turn Improved the health of children while also avoiding health expenditures. Awareness-raising campaigns have also motivated women to take part in other activities of the Programme.

338. These trends correspond to trends in acute and chronic malnutrition for children under five years old. Here, the Programme's outcome indicators related to acute and chronic malnutrition show that there was a decrease in acute malnutrition across cohorts with little to no change in chronic malnutrition. Evaluation KIs indicate that some of this is due to the constraints associated with COVID-19 and other extraordinary effects,

and yet, when comparing with control groups, changes tend to follow national patterns, which would be equally affected by such effects.

Figure 16: Niger prevalence of malnutrition amongst children under five



Source: Niger Final Project Close-out Report; PMF.

339. Trends in the Livelihood Coping Strategy Index (L-CSI) show a significant decrease in proportion of the population relying on negative coping strategies, from the 2017 baseline of 39.66% for male-headed households and 34.48% for female-headed households to 7.98% and 12.05% respectively.

340. The proportion of children aged 6-23 months consuming an acceptable diet more than doubled during project implementation. Similarly, the proportion of women of childbearing age (15-49 years) consuming the minimum dietary diversity (MDD-W) increased by 31.17%. MAM recovery rates in the targeted communes was 92% in April 2023, exceeding the 80% target, and the mortality rate was 0%. The target for the proportion of women of reproductive age consuming a minimum dietary diversity was met, reflecting improvements in the diet of women of reproductive age in terms of dietary diversity and micronutrient adequacy.

341. There were positive improvements in cereal yields. (**Error! Reference source not found.**). Additionally, millet and sorghum cropping systems were strengthened, but cowpea crops suffered from several pest attacks, as confirmed by the FGD.¹⁴⁶

Table 11: Niger crop yields in treatment municipalities

Region/crop	Millet (kg/ha)		Cowpea (kg/ha)		Sorghum (kg/ha)	
	Target	End of project	Target	End of project	Target	End of project
Dogo	600	960	500	512	500	594
Chadakori	600	1,189	450	1425	500	1425

Source: Niger Final Project Close-out Report; PMF.

342. While results overall show little variance from control groups, qualitative evidence indicates how the Programme was particularly beneficial for food security, livelihoods, and a reduction in displacement/stress migration. FGD conducted in 6 communities in Maradi and Zinder regions established a link between reduced male migration with increased production, access to income, Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR), Income Generative Activities IGA, agricultural training and livestock.

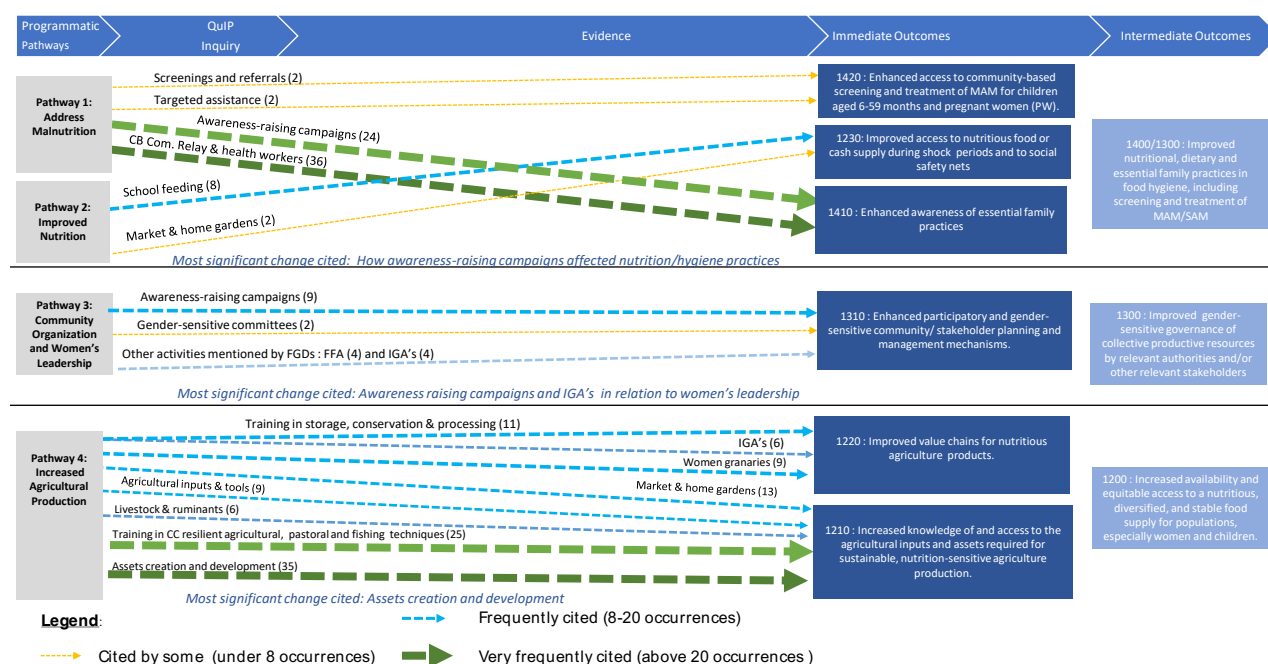
343. As Figure 17 shows,¹⁴⁷ the Evaluation sought feedback from communities in relation to the primary outcomes, mainly diet, food production, and inclusion. The graphic shows, by programmatic pathways, the number of times different respondents cite a particular activity that was provided by the Programme responsible for changes toward the ToC outcomes. Each activity thus has a figure in brackets that corresponds to the number of times it was mentioned by different respondents across all FGDs in the

¹⁴⁶ FGD in Koulbé Magama, Kouroungoussaou, Doumana, Ara (mixed FGD and women only FGD), Kerno, Bakoum, Dagougi, Angoual Alkali, and Koulbé.

¹⁴⁷ The figure shows the number of comments provided from participants in FGDs, unsolicited, about each pathway, thus showing those that were most frequently cited. It also shows the most frequent activity cited as providing the most significant change in each area.

country. The programmatic pathways refer to those from the Evaluation’s ToC. Each area also includes the most frequently cited “most significant change” from these FGDs.¹⁴⁸

Figure 17: Qualitative analysis trends in Niger, as aligned with causal links established in the Evaluation’s Theory of Change



Source: Evaluation data from FGDs in Niger (QuIP).

344. The most significant change quoted during the FGDs concerning malnutrition and improved nutrition was the knowledge gained from awareness-raising campaigns. Participants in FGD also mentioned improvements in terms of behavioural changes (food hygiene, hand washing); improved health of children and pregnant women; and the reduction of household health expenditures, amongst others. Market and home gardens and food-for-assets were also regularly cited.

345. Participants in four FGDs out of five conducted in Dogo stressed the Programme’s role in reducing male migration due to the benefits of asset creation, which provides food or income opportunities for households. This is confirmed by KII with RBA staff suggesting that migration to urban centres or neighbouring countries was significantly reduced, particularly for young people, who now prefer to stay in the community to work their land and develop income-generating activities. FGD respondents estimate that such stress migration was reduced by more than half between 2018 and 2022.

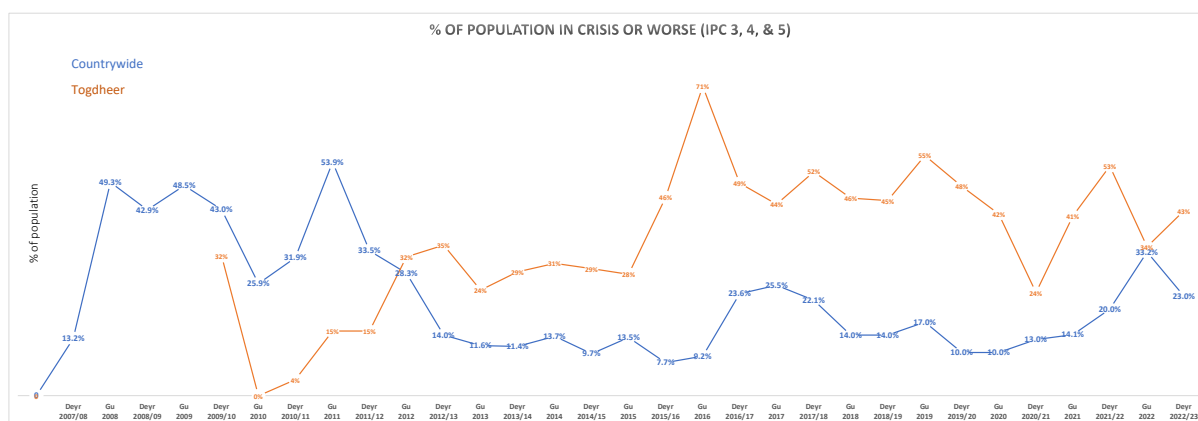
Somalia

346. Food insecurity in the Togdheer Region, in which the Burco and Odweyne districts where the Programme focused, experienced much higher rates of food insecurity in relation to the rest of the country. Figure 18 shows the percentage of the population in IPC crisis levels or worse. This shows that, from Gu 2012, these rates remained higher than the rest of the country, with some anomalies in the Gu 2016 and Deyr 2021/21.¹⁴⁹ This is further testament, as explained in Section 3.1.1 related to relevance, that the selection of these communities represented those that face the most severe food insecurity conditions.

¹⁴⁸ More detailed figures showing the causal links per pathway are included in the Niger Country Case Study.

¹⁴⁹ These figures are taken verbatim from FSNAU reports and yet the significant changes in these two seasons is likely due to a data issue rather than in actual fluctuations. FSNAU reporting did not account for these anomalies.

Figure 18: IPC for Somalia and Togdheer region



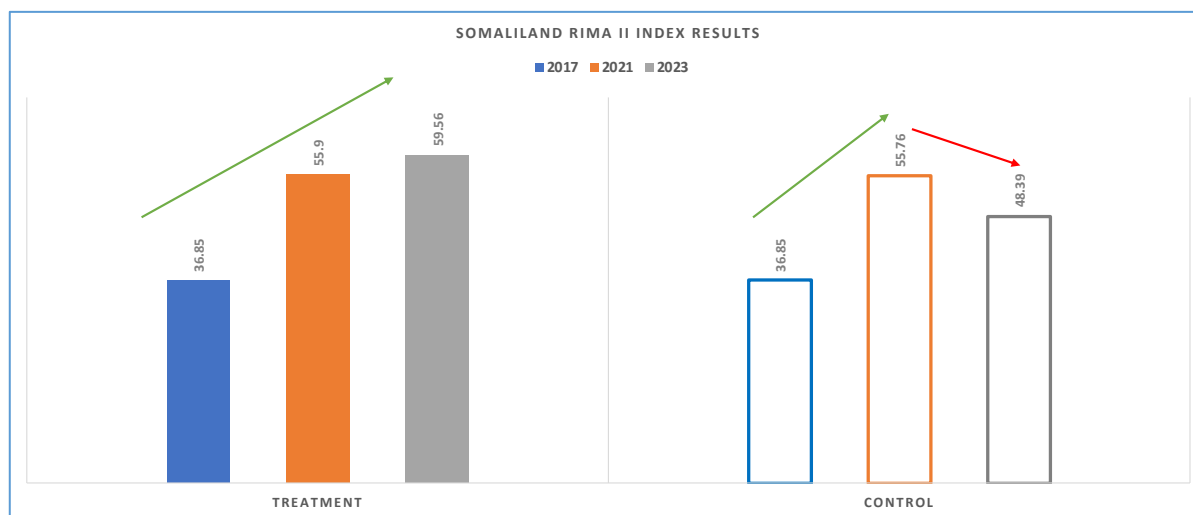
Source: Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU).

347. The RBA Resilience Initiative addressed this through a range of activities that were meant to address the immediate and longer-term needs of the most vulnerable, including women and children. As described in Section **Error! Reference source not found.** regarding immediate outcomes (activities), the RBA achieved nearly all outputs and so it was the combination of these that led to results.

348. The Programme’s RIMA II¹⁵⁰ analysis in Burco and Odeweyne shows that there was a significant difference between treatment and control groups.

349. Figure 19 shows the overall scoring for the Resilience Capacity Index (RCI), a composite score derived from the RIMA II analysis. This shows that the treatment group showed little change from the midline to the endline, despite the severe droughts that affected Togdheer and the rest of Somalia. The control group had a significant drop in the same period, from a score of 55.76 to 48.39. The RBA final report also states that this was a statistically significant difference.

Figure 19: RIMA II analysis; Somalia



Source: Somalia Final Project Close-out Report; February 2017 to December 2023. Page 33.

350. This is a remarkable result as it indicates that participating communities were able to maintain resilience levels, across a spectrum of different conditions, as included in the RIMA II, despite severe droughts and other crises experienced between the midline and endline.

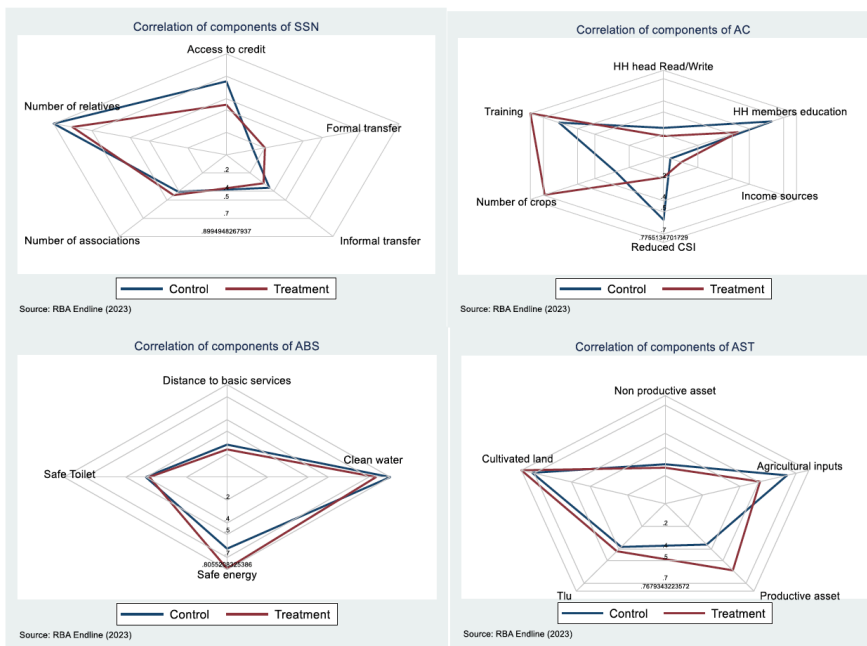
351. The RIMA II also establishes the most significant correlations between the overall RIMA II score and Social Safety Nets (SSN), Access to Basic Services (ABS), Assets (AST), and Adaptive Capacity (AC).

¹⁵⁰ The RIMA II derives a latent measurement of resilience called a Resilience Capacity Index (RCI). The approach incorporates indicators as drivers (causes) of resilience. Technical guidance and descriptions of the RIMA II, please visit [FAO here](#).

352. These demonstrate a fair degree of correlation between treatment and control groups, illustrating the importance of social networks (number of relatives), basic services, and productive assets. The greatest difference concerns adaptive capacities, especially training and the number of crops. These are aligned with RBA Resilience Initiative activities associated with training for farmers and in relation to market and kitchen gardens and apiary activities, amongst others. (Figure 20).

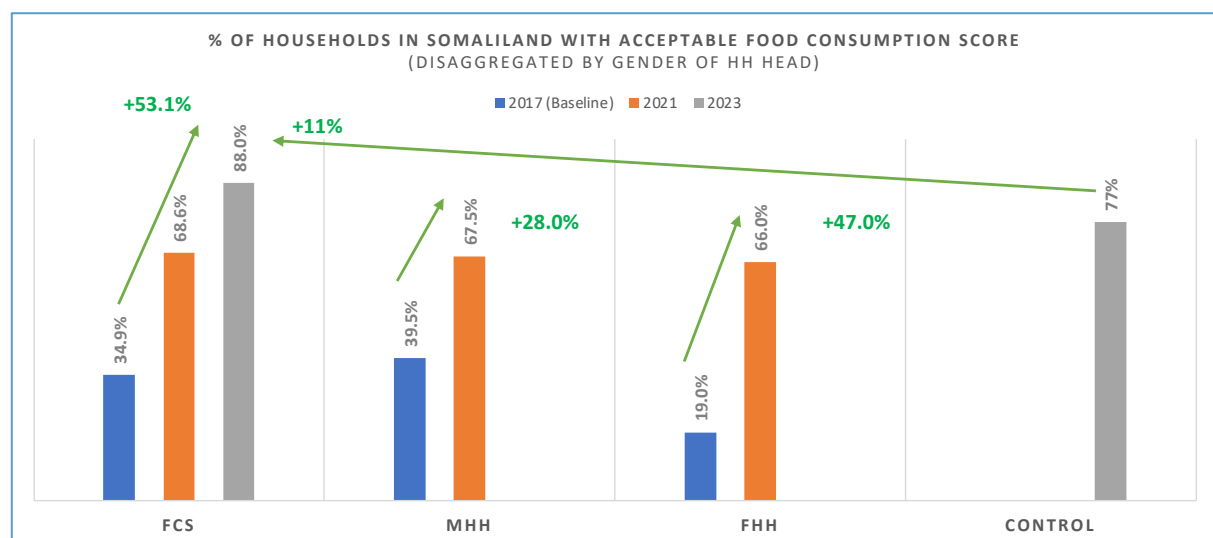
353. As described below, the links between “clean water” (ABS) through water infrastructure (catchment, berkads, and shallow wells) and the use of kitchen and market gardens (cultivated land; AST) have direct correlations with what FGD respondents stated as instrumental to changes in their nutrition, livelihoods, and overall resilience. (Figure 23).

Figure 20: RIMA II analysis of correlations between pillars; Somalia



Source: Somalia Final Project Close-out Report; February 2017 to December 2023. Page 35.

Figure 21: FCS analysis



Source: Somalia Final Project Close-out Report; February 2017 to December 2023. PMF. MHH = male-headed households. FHH = female-headed households.

Finding 19: Food Consumption Scores across the three countries follow this trend, with positive gains overall. There were positive variances in Niger (12.8%) and Somalia (10%), in comparison with control groups at the end line. Livelihood coping strategies (L-CSI) and food-related coping strategies (rCSI) were mixed in DRC and positive in Niger (L-CSI) and Somalia (rCSI). Other indicators related to malnutrition rates and household, dietary diversity, as reported in Niger and Somalia, were also positive.

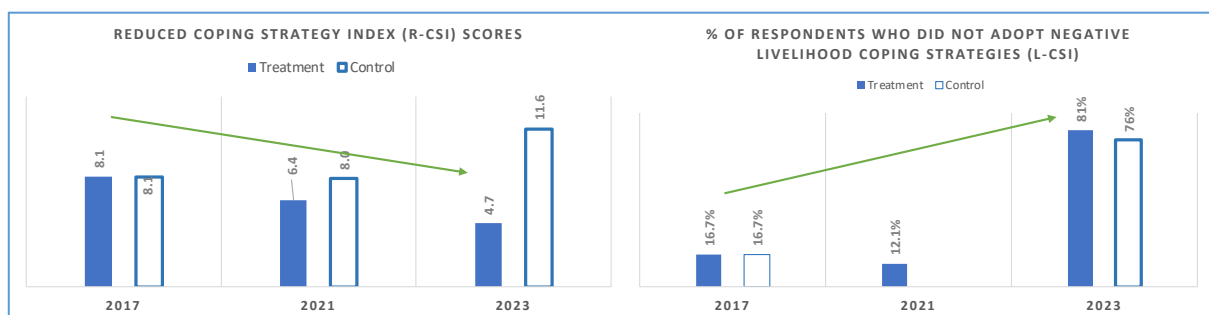
354. Participating communities cited the nutritional training they received (DRC; Niger) and the diversified income from market gardens (Somalia) that were particularly important for better nutrition/consumption.

355. FCS shows a significant improvement amongst cohorts between the baseline, midline, and endline surveys. (Figure 21). In the endline survey, 88% of the treatment group had acceptable food consumption scores, compared with 77% in the control group. This shows a 53.1% overall gain, as represented by the green arrow and text. This was reported by the RBA as a statistically significant difference and is aligned with the IPC rates in the Togdheer region reported above. One remarkable change relates to women-headed households (FHH) that went from 19% with acceptable food consumption scores at the baseline to 66% in the midline, on par with male-headed households.

356. Similarly, positive results were shown in relation to the Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS). Overall dietary diversity was higher in treatment groups (5.97) than in control groups (4.56) at the endline survey.¹⁵¹ The 2017 baseline score for both groups was 4.7, indicating that the control group stayed relatively the same. This demonstrates that participating communities had greater dietary diversity than those in control groups. There was a decline in HDDS scores for both groups from the 2021 midline survey (6.6 for the treatment group; 6.2 for the control group), likely because of the continued drought in 2021.

357. The reduced Coping Strategy Index (CSI) shows the number of negative coping strategies used by households in relation to food insecurity and shows positive results for treatment groups as well. L-CSI shows a significant increase in the number of households who did not adopt negative livelihood coping strategies, with a positive significant difference for treatment groups as compared to the control. (Figure 22). (Decreases in CSI figures are positive as they represent fewer negative coping strategies, as shown with a green arrow).

Figure 22: rCSI & L-CSI analysis



Source: Somalia Final Project Close-out Report; February 2017 to December 2023. PMF.

358. The RBA in Somalia also used the Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS) to measure the quality and variety of food consumed at the outcome level. Endline measurements for treatment groups were 5.58, which implies households consumed six diverse types of foods out of the 12 groups. This was significantly (statistically) higher than the control group that scored 4.56 at the endline.

359. The other intermediate outcomes were also met or exceeded. These concerned regular consultation meetings between the RBA and government authorities, capacity-building activities, and resource management committees. As noted throughout, government authorities consistently remarked favourably on the coordination and collaboration with FAO and WFP. As commented upon elsewhere, each of these had tangible results.

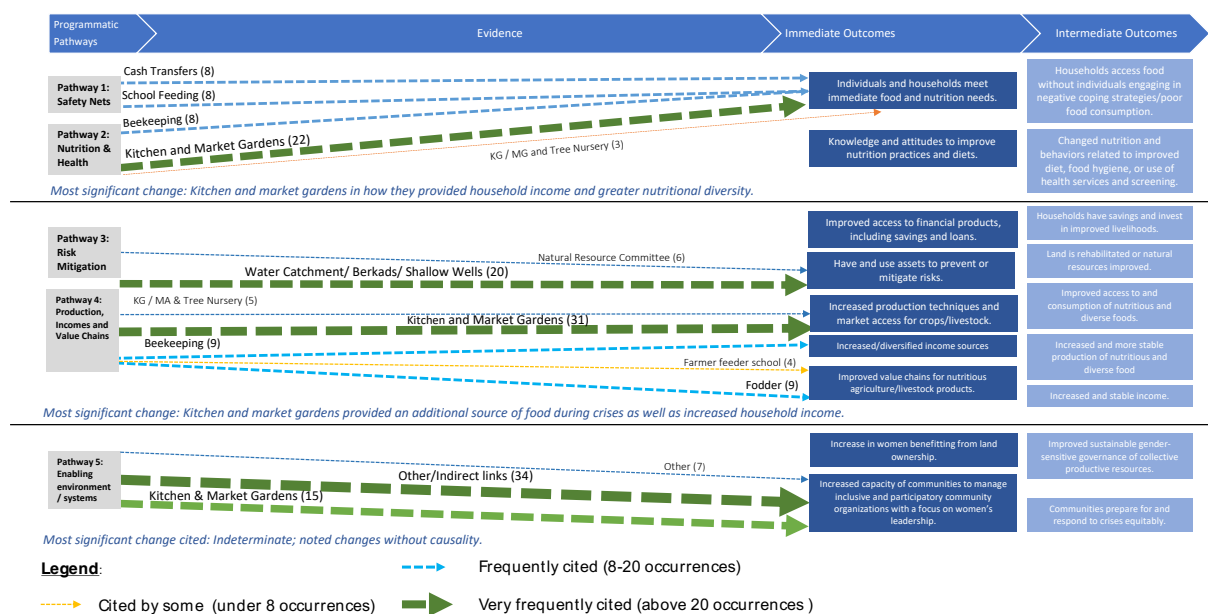
360. To achieve these levels of change, key activities on the improvement of productive assets such as water infrastructure, agriculture and fodder production, natural resource management, safety nets through FFA,

¹⁵¹ "Somalia Final Project Close-out Report; February 2017 to December 2023." RBA Resilience Initiative: Somalia; December 2023. (DRAFT) Page 29.

and nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive approaches for curative and preventive interventions, were increased (as based on PMF targets) during the last two years of the Programme. This was in line with the Somalia Nutrition Strategy 2020-2025, whereby children between 6 – 23 months and pregnant and lactating women were targeted in the prevention of malnutrition by providing specialized nutritious commodities during the first 1,000 days. In addition, Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM), integrated with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) treatment activities, was implemented in all 18 participating communities.

361. These results are confirmed through the Evaluation’s qualitative evidence from communities. As Figure 23 below shows,¹⁵² The Evaluation sought feedback from communities in relation to the primary outcomes, mainly diet, food production, and inclusion. The graphic shows by programmatic pathways, the number of times different respondents cite a particular activity that was provided by the Programme responsible of changes towards the ToC outcomes. Each activity thus has a figure in brackets that corresponds to the number of times it was mentioned by different respondents across all FGDs in the country. The programmatic pathways refer to those from the Evaluation’s ToC. Each area also includes the most frequently cited “most significant change” from these FGDs.¹⁵³

Figure 23: Qualitative analysis trends in Somalia, as aligned with causal links established in the Evaluation’s Theory of Change



Source: Evaluation data from FGDs in Somalia (QUIP).

362. There was remarkable consistency in both the activities that community members raised as having the most direct effect as well as the ones that they deemed most significant. In relation to immediate food security (diet), market gardens were seen as the most significant overall, followed by cash transfers, beekeeping, and school feeding. Kitchen and market gardens were also seen as the most significant in relation to food production and household income. Water catchment/berkads/shallow wells were also cited as particularly important, especially during drought conditions. These activities are also cited by community members in audio testimonials, including FAO’s “Knowledge Sharing Platform on Emergencies and Resilience.” In three of these, community members cite how water infrastructure was particularly important

¹⁵² The figure shows the number of comments provided from participants in FGDs, unsolicited, about each pathway, thus showing those that were most frequently cited. It also shows the most frequent activity cited as providing the most significant change in each area.

¹⁵³ More detailed figures showing the causal links per pathway are included in the Somalia Country Case Study.

given the 2020 drought. These include descriptions of the effects of the drought on livestock and how fodder was used to maintain livestock and beekeeping was used to diversify household income.¹⁵⁴

Finding 20: *The Programme succeeded in ensuring equal participation amongst men and women, amongst other particularly vulnerable groups, including activities that were solely for women. There is some anecdotal evidence from participating in all three countries that women's roles in the community were also strengthened and that they were more empowered to influence community and household decision-making, even if overall patriarchal structures remain.*

363. In relation to women's involvement and inclusion, kitchen and market gardens were cited frequently in the Evaluation's FGDs, although there was less specificity overall in comments about women's involvement. In general, community members cited the positive aspects of women's involvement but were vague as to the specific benefits of such involvement.

364. Community members regularly cited the transformative effects of these activities on their communities: "The support received by our community has brought about life-changing transformations. Through initiatives such as the school feeding programme, cash-for-work opportunities, training and capacity building, beekeeping, and the provision of necessary tools, our community has experienced historic empowerment and enlightenment. These activities have had a profound impact on our livelihoods, education, and economic well-being. As a result, we kindly request the continuation of such life-changing activities and programmes, as they have proven to be instrumental in uplifting our community and fostering sustainable development. Their continuation will ensure the ongoing empowerment and progress of our community members, enabling them to thrive and create a brighter future for generations to come."¹⁵⁵

365. This does not imply that the Programme was without fault. Not all communities in Somalia were able to implement targeted activities; there were conflicts in some about who could participate in women's market gardens, there were serious issues associated with the delivery of seasonally appropriate seeds and certain crops that lacked a clear dietary or market accessibility, and the novelty of beekeeping prevented it from being successful for many households. Yet, most of these are not surprising given the difficult operating context and the diversity of the communities. These are communities that have faced tremendous hardship and change as ways of life that have sustained them for centuries are torn asunder by climate change and geopolitical conflicts, like the capacity to bring herds to Ethiopia during lean times.¹⁵⁶ In such cases, the dynamics within communities—how different societal connections are made, including clan dynamics, the ways in which communities support one another, and the long-term effects of multiple crises—can often result in highly novel social dynamics, even in places characterized by a few discrete livelihoods or other common conditions.¹⁵⁷

366. There are two direct issues associated with the sustainability of the Programme in Somalia. The first concerns the fact that the broad, country-wide Programme approach by FAO and WFP was not adaptive enough to ensure that all the issues at the community level that had a significant effect on activity efficacy could be addressed. The Programme was participatory in that country teams consulted with the communities and prioritized different activities and approaches based on their unique needs. The Programme, as commented upon by communities and stakeholders, was also regularly engaged at the community level, whether through joint monitoring visits or other interactions—the communities had a surprising recognition of each Agency and what they did. This included ad-hoc visits by FAO and WFP, often along with local authorities and others. Yet, there were problems that could have been addressed sooner if there was a more comprehensive level of community engagement. This includes adhering to Accountability to Affected Population (AAP) standards that not only assess needs and whether activities are being completed but also

¹⁵⁴ These testimonial and additional information can be found at FAO's "Knowledge Sharing Platform on Emergencies and Resilience" site [here](#).

¹⁵⁵ This quote is from a male participant in the Evaluation's FGDs in Somalia. It has been translated from Somali and edited for clarity.

¹⁵⁶ For a summary of this, please see: A. Kassahun, H.A. Snyman, G.N. Smit; "Impact of rangeland degradation on the pastoral production systems, livelihoods and perceptions of the Somali pastoralists in Eastern Ethiopia." *Journal of Arid Environments*; Volume 72, Issue 7, 2008. Pages 1265-1281. Available [here](#).

¹⁵⁷ For an overview of this, please see: "Diversification, Flexibility and Social Connectedness. Understanding the Narratives" in Daniel Maxwell and Nisar Majid (Eds.); *Famine in Somalia: Competing Imperatives, Collective Failures, 2011-12*. Oxford University Press; 2016.

discuss the issues that these communities face in ways that surface both problems and solutions and in ways where such good practices may be shared and maximized.¹⁵⁸

367. For instance, the Evaluation identified the practice in some communities of using a guard for reservoirs and market gardens. In one case, this was done by the village elder, who also set aside some of the land around the reservoir for his own crops. In another, the women who ran the market garden hired a guard. In both cases, the reservoir and market garden were in pristine shape, whereas, in other communities, reservoirs had fallen into disrepair as community members accessed the reservoirs individually, allowing their animals to feed directly from the reservoir (thus puncturing the plastic covers) amongst other issues that made the reservoirs inoperable. The example of the conflict about which women could participate in the market garden that then led to the closing of the market garden is another example of where more direct, regular, and focused engagement could have solved the issue. The wrong variety of seeds, the contracting of tractors for tillage, the issues encountered by some around beekeeping—all of these could be rectified earlier and better through more engagement.

368. The Evaluation recognizes that this represents a resource issue, rather than a capacity issue. FAO and WFP have exhibited a good degree of community engagement throughout the Programme. As described elsewhere, the issue is to focus any future programme on key activities (water catchment, market gardens, emergency support), thus reducing the transaction costs associated with the Programme overall and facilitating more resources for community engagement. This would not only help to preserve and nurture what has been accomplished but also position the Programme for scaling up and replication in other communities,

3.5.2 CLIMATE RESILIENCE RESULTS¹⁵⁹

Finding 21: *There was a range of climate resilience-related activities, either through land and forest rehabilitation and growth (Niger) or through water and other natural resource management. (Somalia). However, there were no indicators or measurements to show how or if these created greater climate change resilience as most focused on food security, nutrition, and livelihood support. Yet, these invariably included ways to counter the effects of climate change, including more efficient water catchment systems, climate resistance seed and vegetation varieties, and other techniques to conserve natural resources.*



369. In DRC, there is no clear indication that the RBA Resilience Initiative has positively contributed to climate change resilience. In the final report, activities related to increased agricultural production are climate-smart, such as anti-erosion control through reforestation and afforestation. The report also refers to the alignment of “the activities with national strategies for climate adaptation” and sensitization campaigns.¹⁶⁰

370. In Niger, 76% of smallholder farmers (72% of whom are women) rely on weather-dependent agriculture to meet their food needs. They face productivity constraints, including desertification, soil degradation and climate shocks. Agricultural production is being outpaced by population growth. Post-harvest food losses amount to 20%. Smallholder farmers, particularly women, are disadvantaged by a lack of access to productive agricultural inputs and technologies, financial services, economic opportunities, and structured markets.

371. In response, the Programme had several climate resilience-related activities, especially in land and forest rehabilitation and growth. Approximately 78,003 trees were planted over the period 2017- 2023 to reinforce the living hedges and windbreaks around the swidden ponds or in the pastoral sites. Site management committees were also trained in silviculture and site defence. 10,245 hectares of land were restored through Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) activities, complemented with the promotion of Assisted Natural

¹⁵⁸ From the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's (IASC) principles for Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) to the commitments from the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS), there have been reams of publications that state that those who live with and through crises should be at the centre of humanitarian action. This is based on a core humanitarian principle that people have a fundamental right to dignity, to be treated with respect, and to have a say in the decisions which affect their lives. The IASC principles include: 1. Leadership/Governance; 2. Transparency; 3. Feedback and Complaints; 4. Participation; 5. Design; 6. Ownership.

¹⁵⁹ As illustrated by the triangulation figure, evidence was limited to documentary evidence and some key informants. This constrained the level of analysis possible for this section.

¹⁶⁰ “RBA Final Project Report (draft).” FAO and WFP; December 2023.

Regeneration (ANR), a technique that leverages indigenous knowledge and traditions to help trees and native vegetation grow naturally. In 2020 the Regional Centre Agrhymet and WFP conducted a study on the carbon footprint of WFP's achievement through its Food assistance for asset creation activities.

372. The report concluded that the implementation of agro-pastoral land restoration activities in Niger has significant potential for carbon sequestration and could contribute strongly to the achievement of Niger's National Determined Contribution (NDC) targets. The assessment of 48 sites of FFA activities had a carbon sequestration potential of about 4.8 million tons, which represents about 14% of the NDC1 targets¹⁶¹. According to the Programme's final report, each hectare of rehabilitated land sequestered 6 tons of CO2 equivalent per year.¹⁶² However, according to RBA staff, there were no effective indicators or other measurements to show how or if these created greater climate change resilience. In the endline survey, 91% of households interviewed indicated a positive impact of land rehabilitation on their productive capacities and the environment.

373. In FGD, the impact of the Programme in reducing male migration due to increased household food and income opportunities generated by asset creation activities was mentioned. KII suggests that migration (particularly of young people) to urban centres or neighbouring countries was reduced by more than half between 2018 and 2022. This may indicate an indirect effect of RBA's resilience activities in Niger. Indeed, the Programme has supported the diversification of livelihoods, which, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), is one of the strategies people adopt for coping with climate change.

374. Somalia is highly vulnerable to climate change, with recurrent droughts affecting agricultural productivity and livestock management. The Programme included Natural Resource Management (NRM) plans for all participating communities. These identified water rangeland and dryland forest assets that were at risk and that were thus the target of water infrastructure and catchment systems. These were also seen as highly effective by participating communities. NRM committees were supported through the Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) approach. Tree nursery sites were established in Boodhley in Burco district and in Beerato, Odweyne district. These were inspected as part of the Evaluation field mission, and the tree nurseries, particularly, were in good shape and were commented upon favourably by community members.

3.5.3 WHAT MAJOR FACTORS INFLUENCED THE ACHIEVEMENT OR NON-ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS?¹⁶³



375. As described in Sections 3.3.1 and 3.5.1 nearly all activities were achieved in each of the three countries and there is a fair correlation with expected outcomes. This is a notable success given the country-level and global challenges faced during the Programme period. The primary variables that affected the results are included below.

376. **Comparative advantages and complementarity of the RBA.** This was especially the case between FAO and WFP, given that IFAD was only fully active in Niger. The comparative advantages of IFAD may have contributed to the results in DRC and Somalia by making the ink-to-credit mechanisms and strengthening local agricultural and livestock organizations that can be used to pool resources and knowledge. In the Programme design, IFAD's importance for the support to smallholder farmers in accessing credit to enhance livelihoods to strengthen local producers' organizations, diversify income sources and promote greater access to credit and saving schemes was stressed. In Niger, IFAD's long-term support to the government institution PRODAF which was a partner in the RBA allowed for the leveraging of this partner's strengthened capacity in the areas of the resilience initiative. For example, IFAD supported PRODAF in capitalizing processes to involve women and youth in programme activities such as farmer field schools, watershed development, and capacity-building for producers.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶¹ Agrhymet and WFP. 2020. Rapport Bilan carbone sur les sites du PAM dans le cadre du FFA.

¹⁶² "Niger RBA Final Project Report (draft)." FAO and WFP; December 2023. Page 5.

¹⁶³ As illustrated by the triangulation figure, this section drew on evidence and sources from throughout the Evaluation.

¹⁶⁴ FIDA, La participation des femmes et des jeunes aux activités du programme Niger-FIDA. Document de capitalisation (2012-2017)

377. **Coordination and cooperation amongst the RBA.** This was especially true at the country and community level where there was good alignment between activities, effective ways of engaging jointly with communities, and in the ways that the Agencies responded to different needs and challenges.

378. **Comprehensive Programme design and PMFs.** Considerable time was spent on the design of the Programme, resulting in an overall design with considerable variations for each country at the activity level while consistency was maintained at the outcome and impact levels. The PMFs provided a focused way to guide the Programme, keeping it focused on food security, nutrition, and livelihood-related outcome level results, even when activities needed to be changed or dropped because of access or other issues. The combination of a country specific approach to different activities, with the capacity to adapt these as necessary, whilst being guided by common outcome and impact indicators, along with common impact measures like the RIMA II, provide a good model for any attempts at scaling-up future programming.

379. **Participating communities were supported almost wholly through the RBA Resilience Initiative.** While there was certainly other support provided to these communities by other actors during the same time, these were relatively minor. The communities were selected because of their needs and because discrete community-wide programming could be effective. This enabled greater coordination and collaboration between the RBA and their partners and government counterparts. This also enabled the RBA to adapt and change as new needs or challenges emerged.

380. **Initial community engagement.** WFP's 3PA approach and the RBA's overall expertise in community engagement was highly important in the initial design of the Programme. This enabled the country offices to determine, with community feedback, which combination of activities might work best and what was best aligned with community needs. At the same time, this likely also contributed to an "over design," with an array of proven and more innovative activities and approaches adopted in each country.

381. **Balance between country-wide programming and adaptive, community-led programming.** The resources required for managing such an activity laden approach diminished opportunities for the RBA to maximize community engagement. While this was aligned with the "pilot" nature of the Programme, it made management more difficult, with higher transaction costs overall with each activity. This was combined with the fact that FAO, IFAD, and WFP are charged with delivering country-wide programmes of considerable scale, thus necessitating national systems and approaches that are difficult to adapt and change at the community level.

382. **Climate and conflict in each country.** All three countries faced considerable shocks and crises over the programme period. This is described in Section 1 and relates to the repeated cycles of drought, flooding, displacement and related and unrelated conflict that affects the most vulnerable populations in each country.

3.6 E.Q6.0: TO WHAT EXTENT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE RBA RESILIENCE INITIATIVE SUSTAINABLE?

3.6.1 CONTINUED BENEFITS¹⁶⁵

Finding 22: The RBA Resilience Initiative's approach and results hold promise. While most benefits have been eroded in DRC due to the conflict and displacement, community participants see the knowledge and skills they gained from the Programme as important. In Niger and Somalia, the Programme had a direct positive bearing on increased food security and resilience.



383. In DRC, with the onset of the occupation by M23, the situation in the target zones of Rutshuru has drastically changed with a considerable impact on the sustainability of the Programme results. This has jeopardized the continuation of any benefits to participating communities.

384. About half of the population has fled the area, but gradually, in the course of 2023, it is estimated that about half of the IDPs have (temporarily) returned to relaunch their agricultural activities at the onset of the respective agricultural seasons.

¹⁶⁵ As illustrated by the triangulation figure, this section was informed by all sources and evidence except that there were some limited given aggregated data for outcome and impact level indicators. This data was not made available to the Evaluation.

385. Three of the cooperative warehouses have been looted and most equipment has been robbed by the M23 soldiers. Only two (or three) warehouses continue to operate, including their shops, but with very little input available in the shop. Two warehouses are now being used as offices by the rebels. In addition, many trees of the reforested area, as well as neighbouring forests, have been cut by the rebels for firewood.¹⁶⁶

386. VSLA groups have fallen apart and stopped functioning because of the displacement of the community members. Despite their success, it has been impossible to save money for small loans to group members. This demonstrates how the conditions in DRC overwhelmed the Programme and while there were notable results by the 2021 midline, these were all eroded when the communities were displaced.

387. Respondents in the Evaluation's FGDs indicate that the most important benefits they have gained, that will continue, are the literacy results of about 4,000 persons (of which about 90% were women), the knowledge about nutrition and hygiene good practices, and the acquired agricultural management practices, such as the use of improved seeds.

Finding 23: *The Programme demonstrated that FAO and WFP can deliver an integrated approach, along with local and national authorities and other partners, which combines emergency relief with longer-term livelihood, agricultural, and livestock activities that have contributed to an enriched and diversified diet and diversified sources of household income.*

388. In Niger and Somalia, there are inherent experiences associated with how the RBA worked together that can lend themselves to any future programming, and there are also specific capacity-building activities in each country that will serve any future resilience programmes. For example, in Niger, the RBA Resilience Initiative laid the groundwork for a local resilience framework. The engagement of local stakeholders, the high level of uptake in key activities such as training and capacity-building and the promotion and consolidation of community-level committees with management and operational responsibilities build local capacity to implement bottom-up resilience solutions and reduce the negative impact of political instability at the national level. Additionally, the Programme strengthens the capacity of local actors to participate in resilience-oriented coordination processes. This strengthened capacity can be deployed to support future resilience interventions.

389. In Somalia, the Programme has had a direct positive bearing on increased food security and resilience and in relation to control groups and broader IPC trends in Somalia. It has demonstrated that FAO and WFP can deliver an integrated approach, along with local and national authorities and other partners, which combines emergency relief with longer-term pastoral and agropastoral inputs that have contributed to an enriched and diversified diet and diversified sources of household income.

390. It has achieved these when other joint resilience strategies in Somalia have been less successful. The joint resilience strategy between FAO, UNICEF, and WFP in Somalia has proven to be a significant force in preventing famine but there were serious issues in how the Agencies worked together, sometimes not even working in the same communities, and how they thus combined their comparative advantages towards increased resilience.¹⁶⁷ Of course, that programme was more complicated, with aspects of education, health, and other sector approaches. Yet, the focus of the RBA Resilience Initiative in Somalia may be its strength. Focusing mostly on water infrastructure and conservation combined with agricultural and livestock development and associated household income not only met the needs of the 18 communities it served but was also quite manageable.

3.6.2 HANDOVER¹⁶⁸

Finding 24: *The varying and dynamic conditions in each of the countries make the transitional planning and ultimate handover difficult.*



¹⁶⁶ Source: WFP-Goma interview 29 Sept 2023; FAO-Goma interview 02 Oct 2023.

¹⁶⁷ LaGuardia, Dorian & Andrew Pinney; "Shocks and Hard Knocks: The Impact of Resilience Programming in Somalia." FCDO; February 2019. Available here.

¹⁶⁸ As illustrated by the triangulation figure, this section drew from documentary evidence and key informants. In this regard, this evidence was sufficient for this sections' analysis.

391. The varying and dynamic conditions in each of the countries make the transitional planning and ultimate handover difficult. In the Rutshuru district in DRC, the conflict and displacement of participating communities have decimated Programme infrastructure and opportunities for community ownership. In Somalia, there has been significant work done to work with local and national authorities, even when challenged, and yet these authorities do not have the structures, processes, or resources to continue with the Programme alone. The communities in Somalia are poised to maintain and expand key infrastructure and activities although even here, some ongoing support is required.

392. Niger represents the best opportunity for a continuation, given the effective use of the WFP progression strategy and the links with other national programmes. Even here, the volatile operating context makes whole-scale continuation efforts difficult.

393. As with other aspects of sustainability, the lack of a government counterpart or other entity that could ensure that the gains of the programme could be maintained may cause doubt about the value of the investment into such resilience programmes. Yet, this is somewhat misguided. The Programme was not meant to enable people to escape extreme vulnerabilities or to 'graduate' towards government-led development activities. It was designed to enable people and communities to better prepare for, respond to, and recover from crises and, in many cases, to escape some of the most debilitating aspects of such cycles of crises, like displacement (stress migration). In this sense, participating communities' resilience was enhanced because of the Programme.

394. In DRC, in the context of the ongoing occupation by the M23 rebels of the Rutshuru district, there was no question of handing-over of the infrastructure, equipment and other achievements to the local authorities or beneficiary cooperatives. The RBA faced major problems in adjusting the activities due to the displacement of beneficiaries. All activities were discontinued after the occupation of Rutshuru district and the displacement of beneficiaries at the end of 2022. A small portion of the displaced beneficiaries were later recognized as IDP and eligible for food assistance by WFP. WFP and FAO were also able to maintain contact with some (representatives of) beneficiaries and made attempts to make lists of beneficiaries who were still eligible for in-kind support as a result of their participation in the literacy courses (WFP) and/or payments due to cash-for-work activities (FAO). One year after the discontinuation, both organizations indicated that this was not an easy task.

395. Participants of FGDs indicated that they would have liked specific support to continue during their displacement. Some of them indicated that while displaced, they were able to plant during the agricultural season but did so without any further support from RBA partners after the end of 2022. They further indicated that they wished that FAO and WFP would make humanitarian assistance plans once they would be able to return to their homes.¹⁶⁹

396. The formal registration of the cooperatives with the Ministry of Commerce appeared to be a significantly bureaucratic procedure which had not been finalized by the end of Programme activities in 2023. Notably, the tax exemption documentation for the Cooperatives, which must be arranged at the national level, is a cumbersome exercise. Regarding the formalization of Farmer Organizations and their Unions, this was possible at the district level. WFP is still in contact with the Provincial authorities to finalize the process.

397. In Niger, the RBA Programme adopted a WFP progression strategy that seeks a gradual handover to government and communities. The aim is to phase out the Programme by shifting from the provision of food assistance to technical assistance as communities become more self-reliant and move towards a complete handover to other partners able to bring these communities to a level of sustainable development. According to WFP, Niger is still learning how best to implement this progression strategy. In addition, the operational context and challenges related to insecurity, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the post-election political unrest following the 2020 presidential elections led to additional constraints associated with the Programme's exit strategy.

398. However, synergies created with a long-standing government programme, such as the Family Farming Development Program (PRODAF) that works to ensure food and nutrition security and resilience of rural HHs in three regions of Niger, including Maradi and Zinder, ensures some level of continuity of government action beyond the life of the Programme. The RBA Resilience Initiative reinforced an already existing process since,

¹⁶⁹ This suggestion has been incorporated in the DRC-country report as a recommendation.

from PRODAF's inception, municipalities are the administrative entry point for all interventions while involving local, territorial authorities in local public-private partnerships. This is an indication that there will be some continuity going forward. According to RBA staff, non-beneficiaries have been found to replicate some of the resilience activities. Besides, WFP is launching a similar project funded by IFAD in other areas in Niger. This evidence can be considered as preparing the ground for the replication and/or scaling up of WFP, FAO and IFAD resilience practices and activities.

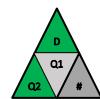
399. In Niger, the Community-based Participatory Planning (CBPP) helped to identify needs and adapt the response to specific local contexts through prioritization and community ownership of programmes. Adaptation of programme activities includes the re-prioritization of activities during the COVID-19 period, increasing the number of beneficiaries (i.e., girls receiving take-home rations), and the deprogramming of certain activities (i.e., number of children participating in nutrition training sessions). Following these programming adaptations, some output targets could be reached, others were exceeded, and others were not reached. The project also strengthened collaboration with Third Party Monitoring and state technical services for remote monitoring of activities to ensure continuity.

400. In Somalia, longstanding conflict, multiple climate-related shocks, and political instability have weakened government institutions, hindering their ability to establish, develop and enforce policies and regulatory frameworks to guide Programme priorities. Governance structures, policies, decision-making processes and consistent turnover of local and national authority staff make turnover of key competencies or Programme modalities challenging.

401. Nonetheless, the Programme's activities, especially water catchment systems (reservoirs, burkads, shallow wells, etc.), livelihood strategies, including market gardens, as well as VSLAs and other community structures, are poised to continue with additional support. Yet, the Programme in Somalia could ensure exceptionally greater opportunities for handover to local and national authorities as well as the communities themselves if it was extended.

3.6.3 INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION¹⁷⁰

Finding 25: *The Agencies' collaboration was a definitive factor in the Programme's positive results. This was supported through a strong design process, comprehensive PMFs, and strong guidance from the regional and HQ offices, especially in the first two years of the Programme. This included training on processes like WFP's 3PA and the joint use of measurement tools like the RIMA II.*



402. There is also the natural convergence between nutrition support, including school feeding and food assistance for assets programming, and FAO's varied approaches to livelihoods and pastoral/agropastoral development. This was facilitated by strong local partners, who were actively engaged with the communities throughout the Programme. There are also the communities themselves. They were of sufficient size demographically and of similar livelihoods as to be receptive to the RBA's approach.

403. Since March 2022, the Knowledge Platform on Emergencies and Resilience (KORE) in the Office of Emergencies and Resilience of FAO, in collaboration with FAO Country colleagues in DRC, Niger and Somalia and in consultation with WFP and IFAD counterparts in Niger, has coordinated knowledge sharing and learning efforts linked to the RBA initiative, including the development of country-level knowledge strategies and the identification, generation and dissemination of key Programme learnings, achievements and good practices. A web page of the KORE portal dedicated to the RBA initiative showcases country-level good practices as well as audio testimonies, photo galleries and a video on the DRC experience, mostly on land access and community-based approaches.¹⁷¹ This showcases aspects of the Programme in relation to community-based approaches, land access, livelihoods, and women and income generating opportunities. This is an exceptionally useful resource and may be used to inform future programming.

¹⁷⁰ As illustrated by the triangulation figure, this section drew from documentary evidence and key informant. In this regard, this evidence was sufficient for this sections' analysis.

¹⁷¹ Please see the KORE site [here](#).

3.6.4 WHAT OTHER MAJOR FACTORS INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY OF RESULTS?

404. The only other factors that affect the sustainability of results is that funding for multi-year programming in complex operating contexts with protracted crises is being challenged by ever-escalating needs from Gaza to Ukraine.

405. Yet, the RBA Resilience Initiative has proven that the RBA can deliver such programming better together than separately, drawing on each Agency's comparative advantages and distinct expertise in ways that have positive effects on communities' capacities to better prepare for, withstand, and recover from shocks. As recent analysis has shown, there is a good return on investment of investments in resilience programming in protracted humanitarian contexts, saving money from repeated, annualized approaches, while also enabling people to avoid greater vulnerability.¹⁷²

406. The RBA needs to expand on these arguments, demonstrating their capacity to work locally and to have much greater engagement with communities throughout programme cycles. With these, there is a very strong argument for funding such programmes.

3.7 E.Q7.0: TO WHAT EXTENT DID THE RBA RESILIENCE INITIATIVE TAKE INTO ACCOUNT AND CONTRIBUTE TO GENDER, HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUITY AND INCLUSION?

3.7.1 DESIGN¹⁷³

Finding 26: All three organizations aim to systematically include a gender perspective in aspects of their work (policy development, programme implementation, monitoring, and evaluation).



407. All three Agencies include gender equality strategies that aim to ensure that women are included equitably in programming. This enables women to participate in community forums and to have opportunities to influence decision-making on agricultural and rural development projects. It is important to note that specifics vary depending on each organization's focus and mandate.¹⁷⁴

408. Subsequently, the Programme design and associated PMFs ensured that vulnerable groups were included, along with specific indicators for their participation in relevant activities. This primarily focused on women, pregnant and lactating women (PLW), and children. Other vulnerable groups were included although the Agencies did not have adequate indicators for how the Programme might benefit them. For instance, persons living with disabilities were recipients of the Programme and were met in the Evaluations' FGDs, but activities were not sufficiently tailored for their and their families' precise needs, e.g., the additional burdens and costs of care, as they so noted in the Evaluation's FGDs.

Finding 27: Despite this strong inclusion focus, according to the gender-sensitive approach adopted by the programme, the indicators for women and PLWD also did not capture any aspect of how their participation in activities might be transformative, enabling them to have a stronger influence in their households or communities.

409. In DRC, there are indications that the RBA Resilience Initiative actively considered gender-sensitive programming and social inclusion. The design explicitly included women in the definition of immediate objectives and activities. In particular, the activities of VSLA, literacy, and nutrition targeted mostly, if not exclusively, women. One outcome indicator focused on female leadership positions in supported CBO. This was a clear effort to make it possible to differentiate the results according to gender. Under the nutrition component, two activities promoted cash transfers to PLW to enhance their food intake and dietary diversity as well as to the families of girls to enhance their school attendance.

¹⁷² Courtney Cabot Venton; "Economics of Resilience to Drought: Somalia Analysis." USAID; January 2018. Available [here](#).

¹⁷³ As illustrated by the triangulation figure, this section drew from documentary evidence and key informant. In this regard, this evidence was sufficient for this sections' analysis.

¹⁷⁴ For more information, please see the following documents. "WFP Gender Policy." WFP; 2022. Available [here](#). "Mainstreaming Gender-transformative Approaches at IFAD – Action Plan 2019-2025." IFAD; 2019. Available [here](#). "Policy on gender equality 2020-2030." FAO; 2020. Available [here](#).

410. In Niger, gender roles in farming and the difficulties faced by women during the agricultural annual calendar were identified during the Seasonal Livelihood Programming (SLP) process. The Community-Based Participatory Planning (CBPP) process encouraged women's participation while selecting community representatives. However, the participation of women in this process varies from region to region. Women represented 40% of the people participating in community-based planning tools in Dogo and 25% in Chadakori.¹⁷⁵

411. This led to including women in women-granary for food security, training in income-generation activities, value-chains improvement, food processing activities, and training on screening techniques. Women account for most participants of nutrition interventions: FFA beneficiaries (71%); Dimitra Clubs participants (63%); training in organizational structure and land management (62%); and workers trained in MUAC screenings and essential family practices and communication (55%). Girls account for more than half of school canteen participants and of children receiving MAM treatment.¹⁷⁶ Women also participated in value-chain activities and received training in agricultural techniques, although women's limited access to land may have contributed to the fact that most participants in these activities were men.

412. Besides promoting women's participation in the community committees, the Programme in Niger encouraged the creation and strengthening of more than 55 women's groups. In fact, in 2021, WFP made it mandatory for cooperating partners to ensure that village-level community feedback mechanism (CFM) committees - which are set up at the targeting stage of all activities - require that at least 50 percent of committee members be women.¹⁷⁷

413. In Somalia, women were supported and included in all activities. This included a focus on women in leadership roles in community structures, producer groups, and water catchment committees. The precise figures and level of involvement in these were not available for this report.

414. Women-headed households were identified and supported with alternative livelihood activities, particularly concerning household fruit and vegetable gardens and community-level market gardens. This improved their ability to meet basic household needs through their food production, income from sales, and combined direct cash assistance. Market garden participants, who were nearly all women, were provided support in financial management and savings, along with access to small loans during lean seasons. They were also supported with training to improve their garden yields, with particular emphasis on nutrition, preservation, and cooking demonstrations that focused on nutritional concepts and basic cooking skills for better nutritional health. Women-headed farming households were trained on good agricultural practices, including gender, nutrition, and information sharing on the reduction of pre/post-harvest losses.

415. Women and men were trained in nutrition education, including Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF), maternal nutrition, food diversity and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) behaviours. Nutrition activities were integrated into WFP school feeding interventions, thus extending the Programme reach to Community Education Committees, teachers, and school children.

416. In all three countries, there were no clear indications that the Programme addressed aspects of human rights in any explicit manner.

417. Given the strong patriarchal elements in each country, gender dynamics remained largely unchanged. Instead, women increased household income through their own employment without significantly enhanced decision-making power. In most cases. (FGDs in Somalia show that there were instances where women's decision-making power did increase, although examples of this remain anecdotal.) Research shows that the involvement of women can have a much greater effect on results when they are empowered to make decisions about design and implementation and when they have increased decision-making authority within

¹⁷⁵ "Niger Final Project Close-out Report." FAO, IFAD, and WFP; December 2023. (DRAFT).

¹⁷⁶ "Niger Final Project Close-out Report." FAO, IFAD, and WFP; December 2023. (DRAFT).

¹⁷⁷ In 2021, WFP made it mandatory for cooperating partners to ensure that village-level community feedback mechanism (CFM) committees require that at least 50 percent of the committee members be women. WFP, 2021, "Niger Annual Country Report 2021." WFP; 2021. Available [here](#). "Country Strategic Plan 2020 – 2024. WFP, 2021. Available [here](#).

the households, especially about expenses and education for children.¹⁷⁸ This suggests room for opportunity as women expressed a great deal of satisfaction about the Programme in FGDs and cited ways in which their power and authority had changed.

3.7.2 RESULTS¹⁷⁹

Finding 28: Overall, programme activities led to results that benefited the communities, although more could have been done to meet the needs of specific groups.



418. While all vulnerable groups were included in the Programme, most efforts focused on the whole community and then the needs of women, mothers, and children. This was captured especially in the design phase and in subsequent PMFs that included linkages between specific activities and immediate and intermediate outcome indicators that included women, pregnant and lactating women (PLW), and children. (Section 3.3.1.) The outcome analysis available at the time of this report did not include disaggregated data amongst these cohorts from Programme outcome-level data so this level of analysis was not possible. Nonetheless, given that many activities were for women only, and given solid trends across qualitative evidence from all three countries, women are satisfied with how the Programme included them. (See Section 3.5.1 for the trend analysis across the evaluation's FGDs.)

419. In DRC, the results of the implementation of most activities had a positive result, not only about the participation of women (equity) but also in several cases they contributed to achieving more autonomy by strengthening women's capacities (women empowerment). In relation to safety nets, women were actively involved in the cash transfers for asset creation related to road rehabilitation, reforestation, and the construction of infrastructure. Households with school-age girls were provided cash transfers for attendance. According to the FGD participants, half of the female respondents stated that they worked in asset creation or reforestation. With the money they received, they were able to provide for household expenditures, including the purchase of food items, thus contributing to increased food security.

420. The participation of women in the VSLA (Outcome 5; 90% of 3000 participants were women) was a major achievement. This assisted women in starting small income-generating activities based on the small credits provided on an individual basis. With these credits, women could start small businesses. Being able to decide upon the use of the earned income (women report that they are to inform their husbands), the IGA has positively contributed to an increase in autonomy to handle their own money.

421. In relation to nutrition and hygiene, Programme activities included women as principal caretakers of children and as being responsible for their feeding, according to societal norms. Interestingly, men were invited to attend cooking demonstrations and to join their spouses when going for ante-natal visits. Men also regularly participated in radio listening groups to learn about nutrition and good practices. It was observed from the FGD sessions that men understood the importance of a balanced diet to maintain good health, especially for infants and young children.

422. Despite representing 70% of the total membership in the Programme's community organizations, the main leadership positions – in particular at the cooperative level – were held by men, with 5 out of 6 president positions being held by them. Women were mostly confined to holding the position of treasurer.

423. The functional literacy programme contributed to women's reading, writing, and numeracy skills. Women in the Evaluation's FGDs repeatedly testified about the importance of achieving full literacy levels. (It is estimated that between 50 and 70% achieved full literacy.)¹⁸⁰ They mentioned that they became more confident in trading and going to the market when knowing how to read and make calculations. The highly transformative impact of literacy on women's lives cannot be overestimated.

424. With respect to increased agricultural production, women actively participated in Farmer Field Schools, thus learning about improved agricultural practices. However, there is no indication that any of the activities

¹⁷⁸ Amongst other sources, please see: "The Effect of Gender Equality Programming on Humanitarian Outcomes." UN Women; April 2015. Available [here](#). Megan Daigle, "Gender, Power and Principles in Humanitarian Action." ODI, March 2022. Available [here](#). Angélica Arbulú, Silvia Hidalgo, Dorian LaGuardia, Alesia O'Connor, & Ana Rodriguez; "Corporate Thematic Evaluation of UN Women's Contribution to Humanitarian Action." UN Women; 2019. Available [here](#).

¹⁷⁹ As illustrated by the triangulation figure, this section drew on evidence and sources from throughout the Evaluation.

¹⁸⁰ "DRC Final Project Close-out Report." FAO, IFAD, and WFP; December 2023. (DRAFT).

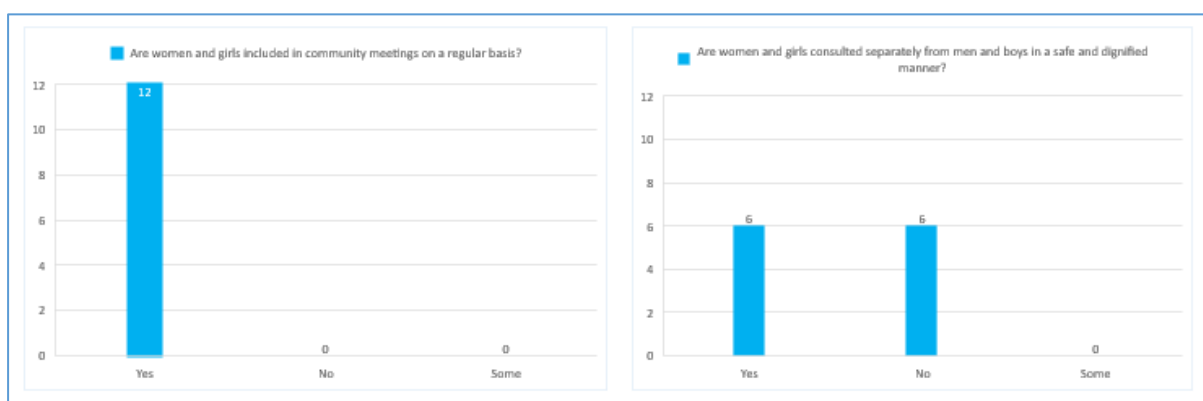
(technical support to agriculture, animal health, or seed provision) was in any particular way more beneficial to women as compared to men.

425. In Niger, the country level PMF indicates several advances in terms of gender equity, even if there was not enough evidence to conclusively assess the results in terms of the Programme’s impact on women’s leadership. Results include that the target for women’s participation in community-based planning tools was achieved, although it should be noted that this was intended primarily to maintain baseline levels. The Programme achieved outcome results related to women’s access to land and school attendance and retention rates for girls, showing a significant increase of 97.6% retention rate.¹⁸¹ Since this indicator is related to the reduction of early marriages, it is important from a GEWE perspective.

426. Qualitative data collected through the Evaluation’s use of the UN Women rapid assessment tool suggests that women and girls are very satisfied with livelihood-related training. They were regularly included in community meetings where they had some influence in decision-making. They are also satisfied with their level of influence and that their participation has been inclusive.

427. Women respondents feel safe walking alone and accessing services and safe going to distribution sites and accessing the payment methods in cash for work. Women and girls report feeling safe going to the market but in some villages, FGD conducted only with women reported that some women and girls don’t go at all. Women also report knowing where to report incidents of Gender-based Violence (GBV). When prompted to provide examples of this, they said that they go to the family and the village authorities. All of this is related to their capacities to actively participate in the Programme activities. Thus, Figure 24 shows that women were regularly consulted in community meetings and in a safe and dignified manner.

Figure 24: Results from UN women rapid assessment tool; Niger



Source: Results from UN Women rapid assessment tool; Evaluation independent data.

428. FGD in communities revealed multi-fold effects of the Programme’s resilience-integrated activity package, including benefits for women.

Table 12: Number of causal links identified by FGD between activities and programme outcomes mentioning women

Pathway	Address malnutrition & Improved nutrition		Community organization and women leadership		Increased agricultural production		Total	
	Mixed	Women-only	Mixed	Women-only	Mixed	Women-only	Mixed	Women-only
FGD								
# of causal links between activities and outcomes mentioning women	13	16	13	9	18	16	44	41
TOTAL:							85	

Source: Evaluation independent data.

429. Table 12 shows that one-third of the causal links identified through analysis of FGD respondents’ narratives on changes (linked to activities and expected outcomes) mention women. However, only 22 were

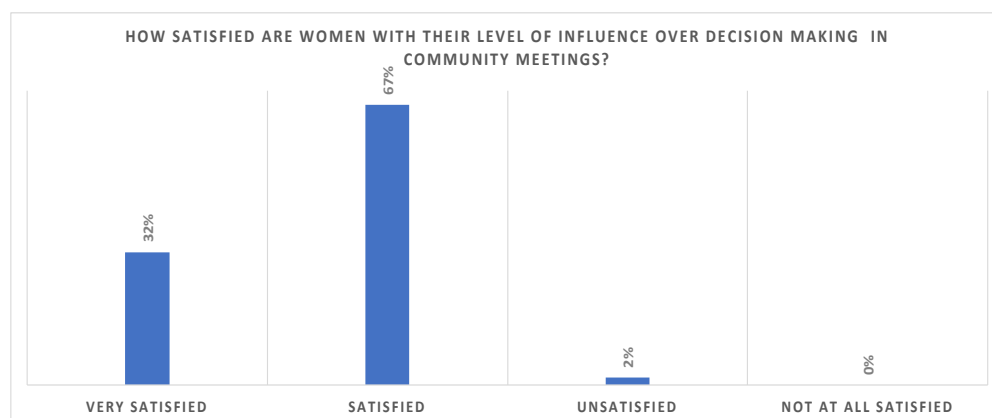
¹⁸¹ “Niger Final Project Close-out Report.” FAO, IFAD, and WFP; December 2023. (DRAFT).

clearly linked by FGD participants to the "community organization and women's leadership" pathway. Respondents identified more causal links to activity/outcome for the pathways related to nutrition (99) and for the pathways related to increasing agricultural, pastoral, and fishery production (173). This suggests that Programme participants are aware of how activities benefit women but less aware of the importance of women's participation and leadership in community organizations for food security, nutrition and resilience.

430. FAO's Dimitra Clubs, where 60 percent of the members are women, aimed to strengthen gender-sensitive planning and community management mechanisms, women's participation in programme implementation and decision-making and women's leadership through peer exchange and training. The Programme did not achieve its target concerning the number of members for both women and men. The RBA considered this as a lesson learnt because of the positive impact it had on the men and women who took part. In FGD, the Dimitra Clubs were mentioned but were not among what participants listed as the most significant for them. This, however, is not a sign that they were not effective. For instance, an audio testimonial from FAO's "Knowledge Sharing Platform on Emergencies and Resilience" describes how the Dimitra clubs enabled participants to mobilize community and often women-led decision-making.¹⁸²

431. In Somalia, the Programme bolstered the decision-making authority of different vulnerable groups by actively involving them in activities as reported in KII and in FGDs (See Section 3.5.1), including women, minorities, and marginalized communities. To ensure inclusivity, several committees were established, such as village projects, VSLA, NRM and water management committees that each ensured representation across these vulnerable groups. This led to a significant array of results.¹⁸³

Figure 25: How satisfied are women with the level of influence over decision-making in community meetings?

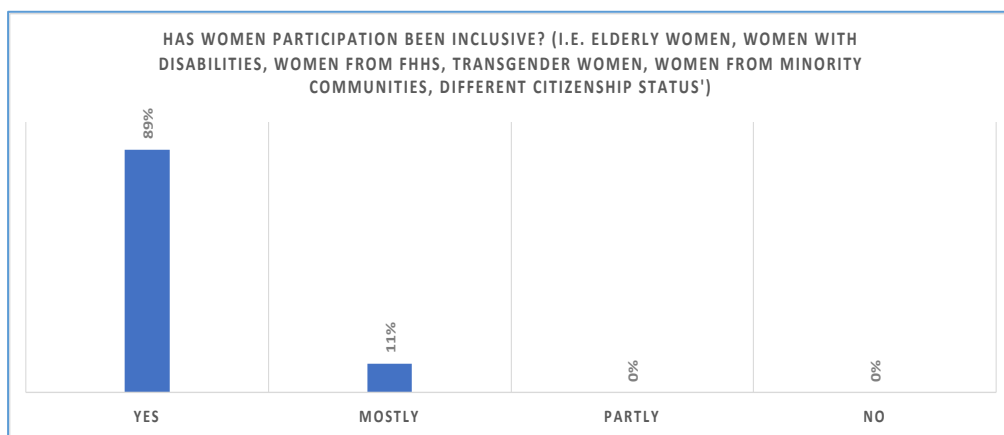


Source: Results from UN Women rapid assessment tool; Evaluation independent data.

¹⁸² Visit the FAO site [here](#).

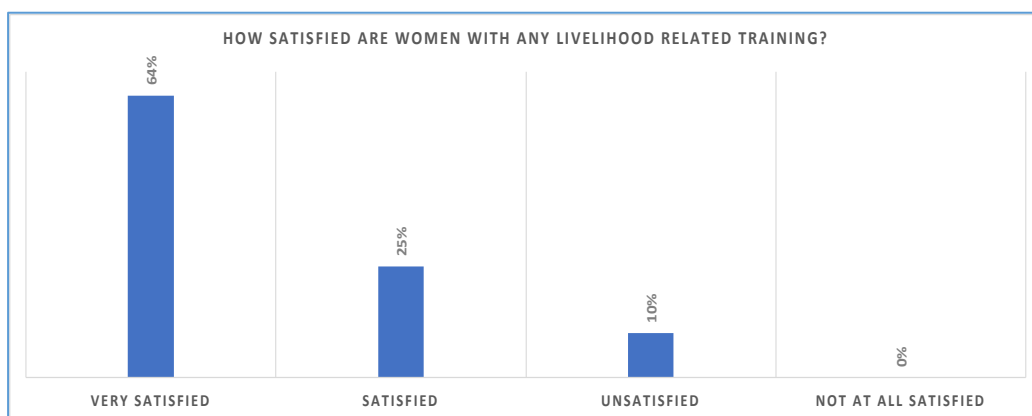
¹⁸³ "Somalia Final Project Close-out Report." FAO and WFP; December 2023. (DRAFT) PMF results table.

Figure 26: Has participation been inclusive?



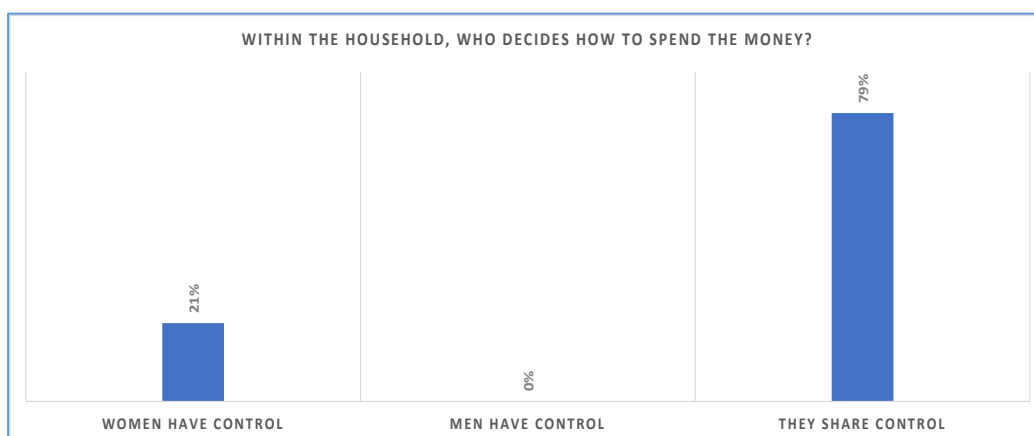
Source: Results from UN Women rapid assessment tool; Evaluation independent data.

Figure 27: How satisfied are women with livelihood training?



Source: Results from UN Women rapid assessment tool; Evaluation independent data.

Figure 28: Who decides how to spend the money?



Source: Results from UN Women rapid assessment tool; Evaluation independent data.

432. Four hundred and eleven women-headed households received Kitchen Garden support (100% of target). 263 market garden households supported; 96.19% (253) were women-headed and 3.8% (10) were men-headed households. 2,331 agro-pastoral households supported; 41% (951) were women-headed and 59% (1380) were men-headed households. 327 beekeeping households supported; 20% (68) were women-headed and 80% (259) were men-headed households. 469 fodder households supported; 22% (102) were women-headed and 78% (367) were men-headed households. 25 Prosopis fodder households were supported; 40% (10) were women-headed, and 60% (15) were men-headed households.

433. Out of the 1073 natural resource management committee households reached, 42% (454) were women-headed and 58% (619) were men-headed households; and out of the 480 cook stoves distributed, 41.25% (198) were distributed to women-headed households and 58.75% (282) were distributed to men-headed households.

434. Health facilities were expanded from four to ten, with mobile teams working in the remaining eight communities. At the end of 2022, Targeted Supplementary Feeding Program (TSFP) PLW recovery rates were at 98.1% for 2022 while default rates were at 1.9%. Non-cured rates and death were at 0%.¹⁸⁴

435. As shown through the Evaluation's use of the UN Women rapid assessment tool,¹⁸⁵ women are both satisfied with their level of inclusion (Figure 26) and in their level of influence and decision-making (**Error! Reference source not found.**). This includes ensuring that women and others were active participants in community committees during design and implementation, as well as having activities specifically designed for women, like market gardens.

436. This corresponds with Programme documentation that shows that women were regularly involved and consulted throughout the process.

437. Another significant result in Somalia concerns livelihoods and the control of household income. As in Figure 27 **Error! Reference source not found.**, women are satisfied with livelihood activities and training although some were cited as less useful, like the training for market gardens. Technically, these were satisfactory as women gained the skills to run home and market gardens, amongst other activities.

438. However, there were some complaints in FGDs about conflict resolution and community-based issues that led to the closure of one market garden, a significant failure given the centrality of these for most women. The Evaluation confirmed that women received conflict resolution training and that the basic curriculum was sufficient but that there was little to no follow-up, and it lacked some of the practicalities central to how community members worked together. As described elsewhere, this may have been better addressed through increased community engagement.

439. In terms of household income, all women respondents state that either they alone or jointly with their husbands control household income. (Figure 28). While this is somewhat culturally determined and not unusual, it masks other issues with how household income is used. For instance, several respondents complained that a significant proportion of household income was spent by men on Khat, a perennial issue in East Africa.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁴ "Somalia Final Project Close-out Report." FAO and WFP; December 2023. (DRAFT) Page 23.

¹⁸⁵ The UN Women rapid assessment tool focuses on three domains: leadership and participation, protection and safety, and economic well-being. It complements existing gender tools by providing an evaluative lens for the assessment of GEWE results. It is aligned with guidelines set out in the System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN-SWAP). For an overview and guidance, visit the UN Women's UN-SWAP website [here](#).

¹⁸⁶ Please see: Reginald Harold Green; "Khat & the Realities of Somalis: Historic, Social, Household, Political & Economic." *Review of African Political Economy*; Vol 26, No 79; pp 33 -49. Available [here](#).

4 CONCLUSIONS

440. Overall, the Programme proved highly effective and serves as a model for RBA collaboration and how to deliver integrated approaches to food security, nutrition, agriculture and livestock production, livelihoods, and resilience in protracted humanitarian contexts with high degrees of food insecurity.

441. The Programme drew upon key frameworks and policies, especially as encapsulated in the “Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition: A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies.”¹⁸⁷ This provided a basis for the subsequent design, amongst other sources. The RBA was also able to adapt the design to better correspond with the needs assessments conducted with vulnerable populations in the three countries and given the need to agree upon standard outcome and impact level indicators and measurement tools, like the use of FAO’s RIMA II. The RBA may thus reconsider the Conceptual Framework and other guidance to develop a core set of standards for measuring outcome-level performance.

442. Nearly all output level activities were achieved, with a positive correspondence with output level indicators. These also had a clear causal link with expected outcomes related to increased food security, nutrition, agriculture and livestock production, livelihoods, and natural resource management. Households and communities readily indicate how the Programme enabled them to address crises and to better prepare for, withstand, and recover from shocks. They regularly cited how the combination of direct cash support, food assistance for assets, school feeding, and other WFP approaches led to the success of the agropastoral development and livelihood activities largely implemented by FAO. For communities, the synergies between these approaches were deemed critical to their needs.

443. This is also shown in the outcome and impact level indicators where there were improvements in each of the countries. In DRC, this was based on the midline assessments as an endline was not possible given the displacement of communities there. In Niger, results across outcome performance indicators were also positive. In both DRC and Niger, there were no significant differences between the participating communities and the control groups, although the Evaluation established that there were a range of activities that enabled these communities to improve their food security, nutrition, and livelihoods. In Somalia, the results across outcome and impact performance indicators, including the RIMA II, did show statistically significant and positive differences between participating communities and control groups. This may be due to the lack of displacement and other disruptions to the communities, as occurred in DRC and Niger, along with the exceptional ways in which FAO and WFP worked together there. It may also be due to the considerably fewer households reached with similar budgets, as described in Section 3.4.2

444. All these results were due in large part to the RBA’s complementary experience and expertise in relevant sectors and in each country. This was buttressed by a comprehensive and participatory approach to the design and to the resulting performance management frameworks that guided all aspects of the Programme, especially during the access issues and delays associated with COVID-19, amongst other challenges. The RBA has also showcased aspects of the Programme in the Knowledge Platform on Emergencies and Resilience (KORE), showing country-level good practices as well as audio testimonies, photo galleries, and a video on the DRC experience.¹⁸⁸

445. While these results are positive, these protracted humanitarian contexts show that the possibility that vulnerable communities can fully escape extreme vulnerabilities and move toward more sustained, state-led development activities is unlikely. Indeed, the Evaluation determined that while the Programme adhered to aspects of the HDP Nexus that focus on coordinated and multi-year programming to address protracted emergency needs, the primary focus was on ensuring that communities and households could better prepare for, withstand, and recover from shocks and crises and thus avoid a significant increase in their vulnerabilities. This was, as based on outcome and impact indicators and the evidence from this Evaluation, largely accomplished and should be seen as a major success for these communities even if they still require additional assistance going forward. It should never be forgotten that a resilience programme like this

¹⁸⁷ “Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition: A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies.” FAO, IFAD, WFP; April 2015. Page 2. Available [here](#).

¹⁸⁸ Please see the KORE site [here](#).

prevents communities from repeated displacement, starvation, and other dire consequences, even if it does not fully develop interlinkages between humanitarian, development, and peace. Nonetheless, the Programme approach has a direct correlation with resilience and may thus provide a foundation for additional humanitarian, development, and peace programming.

446. The Programme could have been stronger in relation to empowering women and broader social inclusion, although it was effective in including women in nearly all activities. The focus on gender equity in all activities was achieved and there are signs that this enabled women to assume greater leadership positions in their communities. There is also some evidence that behaviours and attitudes towards women may have shifted, although the patriarchal dimension in these countries remains dominant. The Programme also included persons living with disabilities, although minimal attention was paid to more inclusive processes to address the needs and the additional barriers that their families face. These aspects of the Programme would have benefited from a stronger framework and outcome level measures of GEWE and social inclusion. Given that the Programme PMFs and outcome and impact measurements were so integral to results, similar components should be used in any future programming.

447. The Programme could also have better balanced country-wide approaches with more adaptive and responsive community engagement, enabling communities to address challenges quickly while expanding upon activities that proved useful. The Evaluation found that the RBA was effective at engaging communities during the inception period to establish needs and priority activities, and yet this then moved into the standard country-wide approaches for each of the Agencies that focused on meeting output level results. This may be expected given the scope of country programmes for the RBA and the procedures and systems used to achieve results and yet this diminishes opportunities to both address issues that may be affecting broader results and/or opportunities to identify emerging best practices and to share these more broadly. Indeed, the nature of the Programme and the dynamic conditions during the implementation period prevented considerations of how to scale up or replicate effective components and yet this should always be a feature of such programmes.

448. Given the opportunities associated with more adaptive and responsive community engagement and opportunities to replicate or scale up effective components, future RBA resilience programming should be more focused on a few demonstrably effective activities while maintaining integrated approaches amongst the three Agencies. This includes using fewer outcome-level proxy indicators, like the RIMA II, while complementing these with more qualitative evidence, as in the Programme's design.

449. The RBA is also poised to do a much better financial analysis of the return on investment from such resilience approaches. The RBA Resilience Initiative has proven exceptionally valuable to the households and communities it reached. This value should be quantified so that the RBA can secure future funding, especially given escalating global needs.

450. Finally, IFAD's participation was mostly limited to the latter stages of the Programme in Niger. As shown in the design, IFAD includes comparative advantages that would enhance programming like this. For the RBA to maximize this, IFAD should consider how or if it can work in protracted humanitarian contexts where government-led programmes are less possible.

5 LESSONS

451. Given the exceptional results of the Programme for participating communities and how these were based on the ways in which the RBA worked together, there are several key lessons that should be used from learning and future programming.

452. **L1:** Resilience programming in protracted humanitarian contexts should focus on enabling communities to better prepare for, withstand, and recover from shocks, understanding that this is fundamental to how they escape extreme vulnerabilities, including malnutrition and displacement that plague communities in the three countries. This should, as mostly done in the Programme, include a standard package of integrated activities that focus on emergency nutrition, nutrition practices, water infrastructure, agricultural and livestock diversification and methods to produce better yields. In this, the complementarity of WFP and FAO competencies and approaches proved exceptionally valuable.

453. **L2:** Coordination and the capacity to deliver integrated and sequenced activities benefit from detailed Theories of Change and log frames (PMFs) that are based on what mix of activities at the country level are expected to contribute to common outcome level results and, subsequently, to impact. The Programme's PMFs, in this regard, benefited from the best practices and the comparative advantages set forth in the RBA Conceptual Framework. While these limited changes and adaptations to a certain extent, it proved useful to have a focused approach in such dynamic operating contexts.¹⁸⁹

454. **L3:** HQ and regional support, including a dedicated coordinator, is especially important in the first year of a programme like this. The Programme's early design work drew upon common frameworks, policies, and leading research to ensure that these informed how activities were selected and how best to integrate the RBA approaches and comparative advantages. Time is also required in the first year of a multi-year programme like this to align business processes, decision-making, and overall coordination.

455. **L4:** While an initial period of design and central coordination, along with guidance on best practices and leading research, is exceptionally useful, it is equally important to allow country-level staff to take the lead. By 2020, the Programme was mostly led by the RBA country teams. This was also due to the restrictions associated with COVID-19. In any case, this meant the capacity of the country teams to deliver results while working with their respective implementing partners and relevant government authorities to overcome obstacles. This country-led approach was highly effective.

456. **L4:** There is a significant challenge in maintaining a balance between well-articulated frameworks and plans and the opportunities to be responsive and adaptive to dynamic operating contexts. This includes the relationship between Theories of Change and log frames and how they allow for changes in delivery, the level of community engagement during implementation, and the balance between centralized and country-led programming.

457. **L5:** While the Programme's strict adherence to the PMFs, as through annual reporting, enabled it to keep focused, especially during the tumult in each operating context and as related to COVID-19, it also did not lend itself easily to adaptations based on what was emerging from participating communities and/or because of crises that could wipe out gains, especially in DRC. A balance is required in such complicated and dynamic operating contexts.

458. This may be facilitated by additional resources, like a dedicated draw-down facility, which can be used to adapt as required. This is also important given the need to have much greater community engagement throughout a programme cycle, rather than primarily at the design stage, as done in this Programme. This would enable such programmes in such dynamic contexts to identify emerging issues, both positive and negative, and to capitalize upon those that may be replicated or scaled up and respond to those that could negatively affect results. This was especially the case in relation to examples of increased gender equality and women's empowerment that emerged in the Evaluation but that were not otherwise identified or acted upon by the Programme.

¹⁸⁹ "Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition: A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies." FAO, IFAD, WFP; April 2015. Page 2. Available [here](#).

459. **L6:** This ability to respond and adapt, as based on a well-articulated plan, can be strengthened further through the use of financial analysis to establish which activities are most cost-effective and, thus, most prone to a sufficient return on investment. Far too often, programmes may replicate an activity that has proven effective but that is wildly expensive. Proper financial analysis can thus establish which activities are not only effective but can achieve results of the greatest value.

460. Given all of this, the primary lesson goes back to management fundamentals. The use of a well-articulated and detailed plan that is based on best practices and comparative advantages is highly useful and important but should also provide the foundation for adaptations and changes as required. Getting this balance right is fundamental to results.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

461. The recommendations in the table below are based on the findings, conclusions, and lessons presented in this report. Additional recommendations are included in the Evaluation’s country case studies.

Table 13: Recommendations

Recommendation	Subject	Responsibility	Priority	Timeline
<p>Recommendation 1: The RBA Resilience Initiatives’ approach to the design and performance results frameworks should be used as a model for any future resilience programming. The design was highly participatory, both amongst the RBA and participating communities. The RBA regional and HQ staff and expertise were used to ensure adherence to best practice and common tools and facilitate country-level programming, enabling the country offices to lead the process overall. The Performance Management Frameworks included sound causal analysis between output activities and immediate and intermediate outcomes. They also included specific and measurable targets and a combination of qualitative and quantitative measures, including standard proxy indicators, throughout. This could be strengthened through the inclusion of indicators for gender equality, women’s empowerment and social inclusion.</p>	Design & results frameworks	RBA; individual Agencies	High	In time for any future resilience programme.
<p>Recommendation 2: Having a global component to facilitate the design, knowledge, and training on common concepts, approaches, and tools should be maintained for any future RBA multi-country programming. This enabled the RBA to develop a comprehensive common approach and to establish the foundation for working together over a multi-year programme. The RBA should also include lessons and best practices workshops at least annually to improve adaptive programming and results.</p>	RBA coordination	RBA	Medium	In time for any future RBA resilience programme.

<p>Recommendation 3: Future resilience programming in complicated and dynamic operating contexts should focus on a smaller set of demonstrably effective activities (nutrition, water catchment, market gardens). These should include integrated approaches associated with direct support with the appropriate transfer modality based on context and beneficiary preference. This may be in relation to the requested human and financial resources.</p>	<p>Programme Design</p>	<p>RBA; individual Agencies</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>In time for any future resilience programme.</p>
<p>Recommendation 4: Future RBA resilience programming in areas with high levels of food insecurity should use a common set of outcome and impact measurement approaches, like the use of FCS, CSI, and RIMA II, while ensuring that issues like gender and social inclusion are adequately addressed. This combination is a proven and comprehensive approach, with analytical complementarity with the World Bank's Living Standards Measurement Study approach. The RIMA II also includes modules on a range of issues that affect resilience and while these are combined in its econometric approach to arrive at a single, somewhat reductive, score of resilience, the modules can be separated out (as done by the RBA) to understand which activities had the most demonstrable effects on this resilience score. The RIMA II is also suitably aligned with the comparative experience amongst the RBA and has a needed degree of rigor not available in other approaches.</p>	<p>Design & results frameworks</p>	<p>RBA; individual Agencies</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>In time for any future resilience programme.</p>
<p>Recommendation 5: Resilience programming in complex operating dynamics would benefit from a crisis modifier/draw-down financial mechanism to address the needs of vulnerable communities facing climate</p>	<p>Operations</p>	<p>RBA; individual Agencies</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>In time for any future resilience programme.</p>

<p>shocks. This would enable the RBA to preserve gains or adapt when crises overwhelm communities, as in DRC, and to adapt and change programme priorities or modalities when new opportunities emerge or, as intended in the recommendation related to increased community engagement.</p>				
<p>Recommendation 6: Future resilience programmes should adopt a gender approach that includes proven and appropriate methods and frameworks for gender equality and women’s empowerment. Gender-related results varied across the three countries and lessons learnt and best practices may be encouraged to further improve outcomes. Community-based participatory approaches may also be reviewed to enhance gender-related issues.</p>	Design & results frameworks	RBA; individual Agencies	High	In time for any future resilience programme.
<p>Recommendation 7: Future resilience programming should include more consistent community engagement throughout, enabling greater adaptation to needs, while also facilitating how communities and other stakeholders overcome obstacles. While the 3PA approach was used to good effect early in the Programme, especially in relation to developing priority activities, KII and evidence from the communities show that any subsequent engagement was intermittent and inconsistent and there were issues associated with conflicts, faulty infrastructure, and women’s empowerment, as identified throughout the report, that were missed because of this lack of engagement.</p>	Community Engagement	RBA; individual Agencies	High	In time for any future resilience programme.
<p>Recommendation 8: Future resilience programming should include financial analysis regarding the costs of individual and combined activities and their potential return on investment. This would be vital for establishing which activities are best positioned to be replicated or</p>	Efficiency and financial analysis.	RBA; individual Agencies	Medium.	Intime for any future resilience programme.

<p>brought to scale, thus distinguishing between those that may be effective but expensive and those that may be somewhat less effective but much more cost-effective.</p>				
<p>Recommendation 9: The RBA should expand upon the Knowledge Platform on Emergencies and Resilience (KORE)¹⁹⁰ as a way to share knowledge, practices, and insights into what works in terms of resilience programming. This may be strengthened through a dissemination and use plan, ensuring that all RBA country offices and other actors are privy to such resources.</p>	<p>Knowledge Sharing</p>	<p>RBA</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

¹⁹⁰ Please see the KORE site [here](#).

7 ANNEXES

7.1 SUMMARY TERMS OF REFERENCE

462. The terms of reference were for the final activity evaluation of the Rome-based Agencies' Joint Resilience Initiative "Strengthening the resilience of livelihoods in protracted crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger and Somalia." The evaluation was commissioned by the WFP Livelihoods, Asset Creation & Resilience Unit, though managed jointly by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and World Food Programme (WFP) and covered the period from May 2017 to March 2023.

463. The terms of reference provided key information to stakeholders about the evaluation and guided the evaluation team to specify expectations during the various phases of the Evaluation.

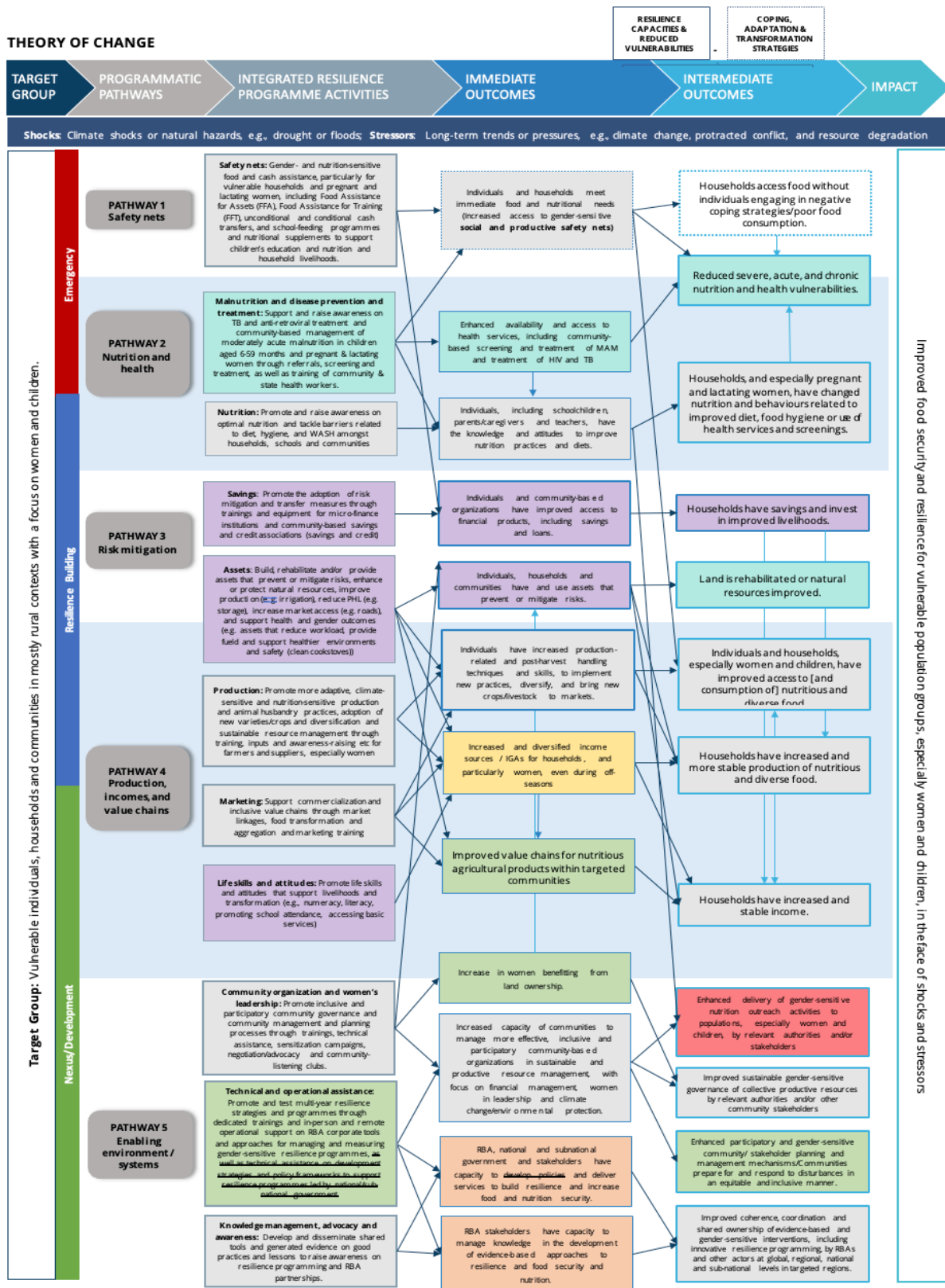
464. The full Terms of References is available as a separate Annex and online [here](#).

7.2 EVALUATION'S THEORY OF CHANGE

465. The Evaluation Theory of Change (Figure 29: Overarching RBA Resilience Initiative Theory of Change) shows the linkages between the programmatic pathways derived from country-level integrated activities and how these link with immediate and intermediate outcomes.

466. This is an extrapolation from the programme PMFs and the linkages that these purport between specific activities and expected outcomes. Some, like the treatment of malnutrition and disease, are foundational in that these need to be addressed as a precondition for other activities. Likewise, increased agricultural production is foundational for the ultimate outcome. Some, like community organization and leadership, have programmatic links with various immediate and intermediate outcomes.

Figure 29: Overarching RBA Resilience Initiative Theory of Change

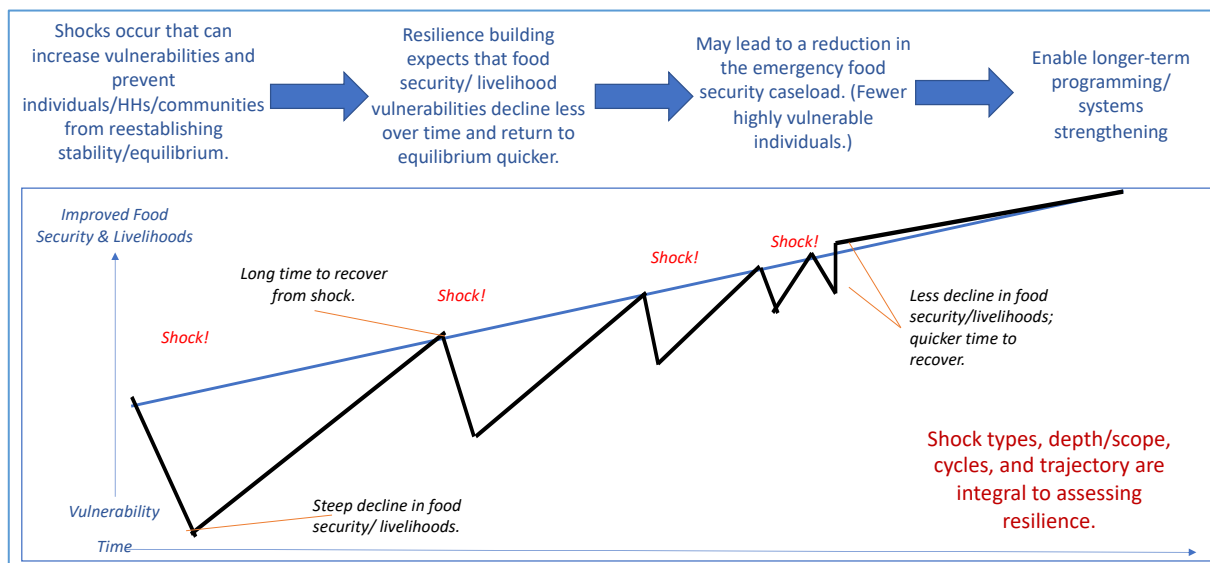


LEGEND: DRC: Red; Niger: Green; Somalia: Blue; DRC + Niger: Yellow; DRC + Somalia: Purple; Niger + Somalia: Blue green.

All three countries: no colour. Removed / revised in PMF: Orange or cross through if only part of output/outcome changed.

467. As articulated, the links between the context, programmatic pathways, immediate and intermediate outcomes are based on a range of assumptions, unknowns, and other variables beyond the control of the programme.

Figure 30: The trajectory of shocks and their relationship to increased resilience



7.2.1 ASSUMPTIONS

468. There is no clear linearity here, but it is assumed that basic needs and an absence of acute malnutrition, displacement/stress migration, or other vulnerabilities must be addressed prior to interventions that may better enable individuals, households, and communities to prepare for, withstand, and recover from shocks. Being subject to such shocks, as has been the case in all three countries in different ways and to different degrees, may prevent any gains in food security, hygiene practices, livelihoods, or agriculture and livestock production—the fundamental activities on which the programme is based.

469. Another assumption is that the programme can overcome cultural patriarchy in each country that prevents women from being an engine for community development, especially given their prominent role in household nutrition and agriculture.

470. The other general assumption is that the programme, with variations in each country, was able to maintain some progress at the outset of COVID-19. As noted, the programme was delayed, given access and other restrictions associated with the pandemic. However, it remains unclear how or if gains made prior to 2020, especially given the measurements and other midline activities completed in 2019, were not fully eroded by the time the programme became fully operational again. While this is described in Annual Reports, it is unclear how this affected expected changes for participating populations.

471. Finally, the last general assumption relates to the fact that all three agencies did not operate in all the countries, e.g., IFAD in DRC, and to the full extent, more opportunities for joint programming in DRC with more complicated coordination in Somalia. The assumption is that the configuration of agencies that did work together were able to achieve similar results to those that may have been accomplished if all three had been able to work together. This is a central aspect of the evaluation’s analysis, ascertaining what was accomplished, how, and what might have been done if the full complement of agencies had worked together.

472. There are also specific assumptions for each country.

Table 14: Assumptions associated with the Theory of Change, by country

DRC
The dynamic security situation, e.g., difficult access to certain areas, excessive rain, etc., may require adjustments and adaptations to activities to achieve expected results and these in turn may limit expected immediate and intermediate outcomes. This depends on how quickly adaptations were made and to what extent. While this constitutes a risk, the assumption is that such security and access issues were overcome in ways that did not have a deleterious effect on the programme.
Community-wide interventions in DRC are contingent upon collaboration with group leaders for the community acceptance of the activities and overall approach, as well as insights from them that could inform implementation. If this level of collaboration is not achieved, it may limit immediate goals as well as longer term outcomes. Thus, the assumption is that community leaders were collaborated with in ways that enabled immediate activities and longer-term outcomes.
It is assumed that local authorities are involved to ensure access and to ensure that there is broader support and ownership of interventions and their longer-term results. This includes the provincial inspectorate of environment and sustainable development to ensure better technical monitoring of reforestation activities, as well as the establishment of site management committees better equipped to ensure the sustainability of the activity and the involvement of the community.
Multisectoral interventions are expected to strengthen the capacity of people to prepare for, withstand, and recover from shocks. However, some shocks can be so detrimental as to eliminate any previous gains. In Rutshuru this can include indigenous, conflict and displacement, and exogenous shocks, like the volcanic eruption of May 2021. The RBA initiative responded through VSLA that allowed programme participants to buy seeds after exhausting their stocks and to help the displaced people from Goma who sought shelter in following the natural disaster.
Some interventions, like reforestation projects, may require more time than that currently covered by typical resilience projects and so the immediate effects may not be adequately captured. The assumption is that effects may be determined within the timeframe of the programme.
Regular monitoring at the output and outcome level is required to establish any definitive trends, especially given volatile operating context that leads to population displacements and movements. The assumption is that this ongoing performance analysis enables the programme to identify what's working and what is not so that sufficient adaptations may be made.
Niger
There is a basic assumption that the diversification of food consumption and the adoption of good food and nutritional practices can be sustained with high degrees of volatility in rural areas.
Given the focus on agriculture, there is an assumption that changes are climate resilient, meaning that climate change does not fully erode agricultural production, breeding, and fishing.
There is an assumption that noted livelihood activities lead to increases of income for women and men (fattening of small ruminants, small trade, sewing workshop, soap, and pasta production), given market conditions for each of these.
There is an assumption that the ongoing displacement and exodus of able-bodied persons does not prevent the implementation of stated activities.
There is an assumption that there is an increase in the schooling rate of children in connection with the school canteens and complementary activities.
There is an assumption that the learning and nutritional rehabilitation centres are able to provide consistent support towards the prevention of malnutrition among children.
There is an assumption that the increase in agricultural productivity that has been designed by the three agencies, notably the distribution of seeds, the installation of farmers' field schools, the practice of <i>zaiš</i> , the production of compost, and the training on cultivation techniques all lead to consistently higher crop yields.
There is an assumption that the cereal banks, women's granaries, and community fields, have an immediate and widespread capacity to prevent food crisis.
There is an assumption that climate change and a lack of compliance with technical standards does not lead to the immature mortality of fruit trees and home gardens.
There is an assumption that there is no diversion or elite capture related to the sale of livestock by some parents of pupils benefiting from the school herds and malfunctioning in the monitoring of some school herd management committees.

There is an assumption that local agreements can be achieved for the sustainable management of rehabilitated areas to avoid possible conflicts in the use of the restored areas.
Somalia
There is an assumption that dedicated coordination was possible given the exceptional needs in the country and WFP's and FAO's various interventions across the country. This would facilitate stronger alignment and integration of delivery of activities and timelines, while also liaising with the different levels of authorities in the implementation areas and helping strengthen coordination efforts with all stakeholders.
There is an assumption that multisectoral interventions strengthen the capacity of people to prepare for, withstand, and recover from shocks and that there are not some shocks that are so detrimental as to eliminate any previous gains.
It is assumed that the programme can sufficiently account for land tenure systems in Somalia that are not typically conducive for vulnerable community members to access land for production.
It is assumed that the programme can overcome the lack of government/communal land that can support production by cooperatives and innovative productive ventures that can be undertaken by programmes such as the RBA.
Given the plethora of initiatives and multi-stakeholder activities in Somalia around resilience, food security, livelihoods, and livestock/agriculture, it is assumed that the design still includes enough formal and informal time and resources for cross-learning and collaboration.
It is assumed that capacity building can be conducted with active participation and collaboration between project implementers-agencies/ partners, and communities.
It is assumed that capacity strengthening for relevant government ministries can be carried out for the longer-term sustainability of results and in relation to how and where activities are implemented
It is assumed that continued climate-affected issues do not affect vegetable crop and fodder production throughout the Togdheer region in ways that diminish any programme gains. This is especially relevant to the kitchen, market gardens and tree nurseries.
Somalia has experienced protracted conflict and multiple climate shocks that have eroded available technical capacities for long-term programmes like the RBA. It is unclear how deeply these have affected programme aims and the capacity of the programme to deliver as expected.
It is assumed that the lack of health facilities essential toward the support to PLWs and in relation to nutrition are maintained and thus do not dilute any programme gains.

7.3 EVALUATION QUESTIONS

473. The Evaluation did not make significant changes to the Evaluation questions set forth in the ToR except to add one question under effectiveness (3.2) and to split several questions to ease analysis.

474. The following table below includes the final evaluation questions agreed upon during the inception phase and used throughout this report.

Table 15: Evaluation Questions

RELEVANCE: EQ 1.0: To what extent is the RBA Resilience Initiative design and implementation relevant to the needs and priorities of its targeted stakeholders across countries and at the global level?	
Sub-questions	
Relevance to expected Results	1.1. To what extent were the RBA Resilience Initiative's scope, estimation of required resources and expected results and results frameworks based on the analysis of available data, needs, risks, or capacity assessments? To what extent were they realistic and relevant?
	1.2 To what extent did the joint programme design process contribute to the RBA Resilience Initiative's relevance, coherence, efficiency, and effectiveness?
Relevance to frameworks, priorities, principles, and policies.	1.3 To what extent was the design of the initiative relevant to institutional policies (RBA resilience policy frameworks) and the wider context (including international frameworks, priorities and humanitarian principles, such as Committee on World Food Security (CFS)-endorsed Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises (CFS-FFA)?
	1.4 To what extent are the RBA Resilience Initiative objectives, intended outcomes, and strategies in line with the priorities and policies of participating countries related to food security, nutrition and gender?
Relevance to Vulnerable Groups	1.5 To what extent was the RBA Resilience Initiative in line with the needs and priorities of the most vulnerable groups (e.g., men and women, boys and girls, people living with disabilities, etc.) as final intended beneficiaries?
	1.6 How does the RBA Resilience Initiative create an enabling environment for the most vulnerable groups to benefit?
COHERENCE EQ 2.0: What have been the synergies between the Canada - RBA Resilience Initiative and other resilience interventions / programmes of FAO, IFAD, WFP and other actors operating in the same context?	
Sub-questions	
Coherence with RBA	2.1 To what extent were synergies, alignment and complementarity achieved between the different activities implemented by the RBAs?
	2.2 What added value has been generated through these synergies, if any?
Coherence with Nexus	2.3 How did the RBA Resilience Initiative leverage and maximize each agency's strengths, including resources, tools, capacities, targeting approach and suite of activities, for addressing the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus in targeted countries?
	2.4 To what extent was the RBA intervention coherent with the programmatic objectives and policies of other actors operating within the same context on the HDP Nexus, including other UN Agencies, international, national and local non-governmental organizations and different levels of government?
Partnerships	2.5 To what extent and how were multi-sector partnerships and actions appropriately and effectively leveraged for overall joint programme coherence and effectiveness?
EFFECTIVENESS EQ 3.0: To what extent has the RBA Resilience Initiative achieved its intended outcomes as defined in the performance measurement frameworks?	
Sub-questions	
Activities & Outputs (Immediate outcomes)	3.1 To what extent were the expected results of the RBA Resilience Initiative accomplished, likely to be accomplished, and/or maintained given ongoing or sudden crises? Specifically:
	3.2 To what extent did RBA Resilience Initiative activities increase target populations' capacities to prepare for, respond to, and recover from shocks/crises?
Programme Adaptations	3.3 To what extent were the RBAs able to adapt the implementation of the programme to the COVID-19 context, climate-change related crises, the ripple effects on food security related to the war in Ukraine, and other context-specific crises over the five years to ensure/enable delivery of intended results?
Variables	3.4 What major factors influenced the achievement or non-achievement of results?

Unintended consequences	3.5 What are the unintended (positive or negative) consequences of the RBA Resilience Initiative (if any)?
EFFICIENCY EQ 4.0: How efficient was the partnership of the RBAs in view of implementing the joint multi-year resilience initiative and leveraging further resources?	
Sub-questions	
Efficiency of Governance & Oversight	4.1 Which factors facilitated or hindered the collaboration and efficiency of the RBA Resilience Initiative, including an assessment of the governance and management of the programme through its global component, the steering committee, etc.?
Contributions to Coherence	4.2 Which synergies and linkages contributed to the global outcome of improved coherence, coordination and shared ownership of evidence-based, gender-sensitive and innovative resilience programme, and what lessons and good practices can be drawn?
	4.3 To what extent does the RBA Resilience Initiative represent a link to and point of leverage for other food security and resilience efforts operating in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus?
Financial Management	4.4 To what extent were funds deployed against plan by activity and RBA in a timely manner? How did five-year funding/annualized funding envelopes affect planning and/or the efficiency of activities?
IMPACT EQ 5.0: Did the RBA Resilience Initiative contribute to long-term intended results or unintended impacts?	
Sub-questions	
Food Security & Nutrition	5.1 To what extent did the combined effect of the different components of the RBA Resilience Initiative contribute to improving the nutrition and food security of vulnerable population groups, especially women and children, in targeted regions?
Nexus	5.3 To what extent did the RBA Resilience Initiative contribute to results on the HDP Nexus, including conflict mitigation, social cohesion, and other possible peace outcomes?
Climate Change	5.4 Where climate change is a major destabilizing force, to what extent did the RBA Resilience Initiative contribute to results on climate resilience?
SUSTAINABILITY EQ 6.0: To what extent are the benefits of the RBA Resilience Initiative sustainable?	
Sub-questions	
Continued Benefits	6.1 To what extent is it likely that the benefits of the RBA Resilience Initiative at the national, regional and global level will continue after its implementation ceases?
Handover	6.2 To what extent did the programme design and implementation support transition planning and handover to local actors, including government institutions, community structures and other partners?
Replicate/ scale up	6.3 To what extent has the programme been able to promote replication and/or up-scaling of successful practices?
Interagency Collaboration	6.4 To what extent are the synergies and pathways for collaboration created through the RBA Resilience Initiative between the RBAs likely to persist after its completion?
Other	6.5 What other major factors influence sustainability of results?
Gender, Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion: EQ 7.0: To what extent did the RBA Resilience Initiative take into account and contribute to gender, human rights, equity and inclusion?	

Sub-questions	
Design	7.1 To what extent was the RBA Resilience Initiative design, implementation, monitoring and transition planning sensitive to gender, human rights, equity, and inclusion?
Results	7.2 What are the concrete and differential results of the programme in terms of gender equality, women's empowerment, equity, inclusion of persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups?

7.2 EVALUATION MATRIX

475. The following evaluation matrix was the basis for data collection and analysis. This conforms with the DEQAS guidance in that it is organized according to sub-questions, indicators, data collection methods, main sources of data/information, data analysis methods/triangulation, and data availability/reliability. Some of these have been divided to indicate actors, sampling approaches, and primary and secondary data/information. It also includes data analysis and triangulation techniques.

476. The evaluation matrix is also available as a separate Annex.

Evaluation Question				Criteria
EQ 1 – To what extent is the RBA Resilience Initiative design and implementation relevant to the needs and priorities of its targeted stakeholders across countries and at the global level?				RELEVANCE
Sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sources of data/information	Data analysis methods/ triangulation
1.1. To what extent were the RBA Resilience Initiative's scope, estimation of required resources and expected results and results frameworks based on the analysis of available data, needs, risks, or capacity assessments? To what extent were they realistic and relevant?	Primary: Number, type, and scope of results informed by analysis of data, needs, risks, and capacity. Secondary: Number, type, and scope of examples where analysis proved highly relevant to demonstrable results	KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured)	Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), HQ Staff (RBA) Primary: RBA Resilience Initiative PFA Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual), RBA Country Reports, Comparative (secondary)	Thematic Comparative Qualitative Data Trend Analysis
1.2 To what extent did the joint programme design process contribute to the RBA Resilience Initiative's relevance, coherence, efficiency, and effectiveness?	Primary: Demonstrable links between design and evaluation criteria, including changes in design/approach over programme cycle. Secondary: Trends in perceptions of design, post-facto/across actors.	KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured)	Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), HQ Staff (RBA), Government of Canada Primary: RBA Resilience Initiative PFA Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual), RBA Country Reports, Comparative (secondary)	Narrative/ Qualitative Data Trend Analysis Thematic Comparative

<p>1.3 To what extent was the design of the initiative relevant to institutional policies (RBA resilience policy frameworks) and the wider context (including international frameworks, priorities, and humanitarian principles, such as Committee on World Food Security (CFS)-endorsed Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises (CFS-FFA)?</p>	<p>Primary: # and type of linkages between design and international frameworks, priorities, and humanitarian principles. Secondary: Level of adherence between design and international frameworks, priorities, and humanitarian principles.</p>	<p>KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured)</p>	<p>Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), HQ Staff (RBA), Government of Canada Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual), RBA Country Reports, RBA Country Plans, Comparative (secondary)</p>	<p>Narrative/ Qualitative Data Trend Analysis Comparative</p>
<p>1.4 To what extent are the RBA Resilience Initiative objectives, intended outcomes, and strategies in line with the priorities and policies of participating countries related to food security, nutrition, and gender?</p>	<p># and type of substantive links with national priorities and/or policies.</p>	<p>KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured)</p>	<p>Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), Local Authorities (Gov't), Central Authorities (Gov't) Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual), RBA Country Reports, Reports from Relevant Authorities</p>	<p>Narrative Comparative</p>
<p>1.5 To what extent was the RBA Resilience Initiative in line with the needs and priorities of the most vulnerable groups (e.g. men and women, boys and girls, people living with disabilities, etc.) as final intended beneficiaries?</p>	<p># and type of substantive links between specific activities and broader needs/vulnerability assessments.</p>	<p>KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured) General Population: F2F Interviews, QuIP (Modified), Most Significant Change</p>	<p>Cohorts/Target Population(s): Men, Women, Women Head of HHs, HHs with children under 5, HHs with school age children, PLW, PLWD, Persons over 65 years old Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), HQ Staff (RBA), Local Authorities (Gov't) Primary: RBA Resilience Initiative PFA, Vulnerability/needs assessments, (RBA/VAM/mVAM), Vulnerability/needs assessments (HNO/UNSDG/JSP) Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual), RBA Country Reports, RBA Country Plans</p>	<p>Thematic Contribution</p>
			<p>Cohorts/Target Population(s): Men, Women, Women Head of HHs, HHs with children under 5, HHs with school age children, PLW, PLWD, Persons over 65 years old, Community Committees, Farmer Groups/Unions, VSLA/SHGs/Cooperatives (Women</p>	

			led), CBOs (General), Emergency Aid Recipients (cash)	
1.6 How does the RBA Resilience Initiative create an enabling environment for the most vulnerable groups to benefit?	# of people in vulnerable groups across cohorts that were able to 'graduate' from one level of activity to another, e.g., from emergency nutritional support to resilient building to developmental programming (See ToC.)	KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured) General Population: QuIP (Modified)	Cohorts/Target Population(s): Men, Women, Women Head of HHs, HHs with children under 5, HHs with school age children, PLW, PLWD, Persons over 65 years old, Community Committees, Farmer Groups/Unions, VSLA/SHGs/Cooperatives (Women led), CBOs (General), Emergency Aid Recipients (cash) Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), HQ Staff (RBA), Local Authorities (Gov't) Primary: RBA Resilience Initiative PFA Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual), RBA Country Reports	Narrative/ Qualitative Data Trend Analysis Thematic
EQ2 - What have been the synergies between the Canada - RBA Resilience Initiative and other resilience interventions / programmes of FAO, IFAD, WFP, and other actors operating in the same context?				COHERENCE
Sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sources of data/information	Data analysis methods/ triangulation
2.1 To what extent were synergies, alignment and complementarity achieved between the different activities implemented by the RBAs?	# and type of synergies, alignment and complementarity that had a discernible effect on immediate or intermediate outcomes.	KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured)	Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA) Primary: RBA Resilience Initiative PFA Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual), RBA Country Reports, RBA Country Plans	Narrative/ Qualitative Data Trend Analysis Thematic
2.2 What added value has been generated through these synergies, if any?	Level, scalability, replicability, or other aspects of demonstrable value (efficiency, effectiveness, equity) created. Links to sustainability.	KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured)	Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA) Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual), RBA Country Reports	Narrative/ Qualitative Data Trend Analysis Thematic
2.3 How did the RBA Resilience Initiative leverage and maximize each agency's strengths, including	Demonstrable RBA comparative advantages in relation to how	KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured)	Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), HQ Staff (RBA) Primary: RBA Resilience Initiative PFA	Narrative/ Qualitative Data Trend Analysis

resources, tools, capacities, targeting approach and suite of activities, for addressing the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus in targeted countries?	vulnerable populations improved position along HDP Nexus trajectory.		Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual), RBA Country Reports, RBA Country Plans	
2.4 To what extent was the RBA Initiative coherent with the programmatic objectives and policies of other actors operating within the same context on the HDP Nexus, including other UN Agencies, international, national, and local non-governmental organizations, and different levels of government?	Demonstrable RBA comparative advantages in relation to other actors working toward improvements for vulnerable populations along HDP nexus trajectory.	KII: F2F Interviews(semi-structured)	Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), HQ Staff (RBA), Government of Canada Primary: RBA Resilience Initiative PFA Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual), RBA Country Reports, RBA Country Plans	Narrative/ Qualitative Data Trend Analysis
2.5 To what extent and how were multi-sector partnerships and actions appropriately and effectively leveraged for overall joint programme coherence and effectiveness?	Primary: # and type of partnerships (coherence) Secondary: # of examples of how specific partnerships contributed to effectiveness.	KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured)	Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), HQ Staff (RBA), UN Partners/UNCT, INGO Partners, Local NGO Partners, Local Authorities (Gov't), Central Authorities (Gov't) Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual), RBA Country Reports, RBA Country Plans, Comparative (secondary)	Narrative/ Qualitative Data Trend Analysis Thematic Comparative
EQ3 - To what extent has the RBA Resilience Initiative achieved its intended outcomes as defined in the performance measurement frameworks?				EFFECTIVENESS
Sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sources of data/information	Data analysis methods/ triangulation
3.1 To what extent were the expected results of the RBA Resilience Initiative accomplished, likely to be accomplished, and/or maintained given ongoing or sudden crises? Specifically: • To what extent did the programme increase availability and equitable access to a nutritious, diversified, climate resilient, and stable food supply for populations, especially women and children, in targeted regions? • To what extent did the programme improve the gender-sensitive governance of common	Primary: # of activities in PFAs (country & global) completed to time and expected quality. (Using indicators, targets, and achievements from PFAs/Annual Reports. Rate of change (+/-) in MAM rates amongst affected target populations, by cohort and taking seasonal variations into account. Changes in comparative country/district/governorate MAM/SAM rates. Changes in relevant proxy indicators for nutrition (RIMA, FCS, CSI, HDDS/MDD-w, MAD), by cohort and	KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured) General population: QuIP (modified), Direct Observation	Cohorts: Men, Women, Women Head of HHs, HHs with children under 5, HHs with school age children, PLW, PLWD, Persons over 65 years old, Community Committees, Farmer Groups/Unions, VSLA/SHGs/Cooperatives (Women led), CBOs (General), Training participants, Emergency Aid Recipients (cash) Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), Local Authorities (Gov't) Primary: RBA Resilience Initiative PFA, MAM/SAM rates, Proxy data (RIMA, FCS, CSI, HDDS/MDD-w, MAD), Survey Data, Participant	Thematic Contribution Trend Analysis

<p>productive resources by relevant authorities and/or other relevant stakeholders in targeted regions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent did the programme improve essential family practices in nutrition, diet, and food hygiene, including screening and treatment of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) in targeted regions? 	<p>taking seasonal variations into account. Changes in comparative country/district/governorate FCS, CSI, HDDS, IPC or other nutrition indicators at country level. # and type of improvements in gender sensitive governance of productive resources.</p> <p>Secondary: Examples of changes in nutrition, diet, and food hygiene amongst cohorts and how this is linked to programme activities. Examples of how women influenced decision making in relation to productive resources.</p>		<p>demographic data (CBO, VSLA, Cooperative, et. a.), Media (photos, recordings, etc.) Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual), RBA Country Reports, RBA Country Plans, Comparative (secondary), Comparative (primary, e.g. FCS, CSI, HDDS, RIMA from SAME country contexts), IPC Food Security Data & Trends, Media</p>	
<p>3.2 To what extent did RBA Resilience Initiative activities increase target populations' capacities to prepare for, respond to, and recover from shocks/crises?</p>	<p>Examples of how target populations site the relationship between specific activities and their ability to prepare for, respond to, and resources from different shocks (using RIMA shock categories.)</p>	<p>KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured) General Population: QuIP (modified), Direct Observation</p>	<p>Cohorts: Men, Women, Women Head of HHs, HHs with children under 5, HHs with school age children, PLW, PLWD, Persons over 65 years old, Community Committees, Farmer Groups/Unions, VSLA/SHGs/Cooperatives (Women led), CBOs (General), Training participants, Emergency Aid Recipients (cash) Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Local Authorities (Gov't) Primary: RBA Resilience Initiative PFA, MAM/SAM rates, Proxy data (RIMA, FCS, CSI, HDDS/MDD-w, MAD), Survey Data, Participant demographic data (CBO, VSLA, Cooperative, et. a.), Media (photos, recordings, etc.) Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual)</p>	<p>Thematic Contribution Trend Analysis</p>
<p>3.3 To what extent were the RBAs able to adapt the implementation of the programme to the COVID-19 context, climate-change related crises, the ripple effects on food</p>	<p>Primary: #, type and timing of adaptations/changes and how these affected activity level results and, in turn, immediate and intermediate outcomes.</p>	<p>KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured)</p>	<p>Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), HQ Staff (RBA) Primary: RBA Resilience Initiative PFA Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual)</p>	<p>Narrative/ Qualitative Data Trend Analysis</p>

security related to the war in Ukraine, and other context-specific crises over the five years to ensure/enable delivery of intended results?	Secondary: Level and type of data and analysis that influenced adaptations/changes.			
3.4 What major factors influenced the achievement or non-achievement of results?	#, type, scope, and effect of major factors.	KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured) General Population: QuIP (modified), Most Significant Change, Direct Observation	Cohorts: Men, Women, Women Head of HHs, HHs with children under 5, HHs with school age children, PLW, PLWD, Persons over 65 years old, Community Committees, Farmer Groups/Unions, VSLA/SHGs/Cooperatives (Women led), CBOs (General). Training participants. Emergency Aid Recipients (cash) Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), HQ Staff (RBA), UN Partners/UNCT, INGO Partners, Local NGO Partners, Local Authorities (Gov't), Central Authorities (Gov't), Other Primary: RBA Resilience Initiative PFA Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual) RBA Country Reports RBA Country Plans Comparative (secondary) Comparative (primary, e.g. FCS, CSI, HDDS, RIMA from other country contexts), media	Narrative/ Qualitative Data Trend Analysis Thematic
3.5 What are the unintended (positive or negative) consequences of the RBA Resilience Initiative (if any)?	#, type and scope of unintended consequences.	KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured) General Population: QuIP (modified), Direct Observation	Cohorts: Men, Women, Women Head of HHs, HHs with children under 5, HHs with school age children, PLW, PLWD, Persons over 65 years old, Community Committees, Farmer Groups/Unions, VSLA/SHGs/Cooperatives (Women led), CBOs (General) Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), HQ Staff (RBA), UN Partners/UNCT, INGO Partners, Local NGO Partners, Local Authorities (Gov't), Central Authorities (Gov't)	Narrative/ Qualitative Data Trend Analysis Thematic

			Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual), RBA Country Reports, RBA Country Plans	
EQ4 - How efficient was the partnership of the RBAs in view of implementing the joint multi-year resilience initiative and leveraging further resources?				EFFICIENCY
Sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sources of data/information	Data analysis methods/ triangulation
4.1 Which factors facilitated or hindered the collaboration and efficiency of the RBA Resilience Initiative, including an assessment of the governance and management of the programme through its global component, the steering committee, etc.?	Primary: # and type of factors that affected the speed of implementation and their relationship to overall efficiency (time to convert inputs into outputs). Secondary: Relationship between noted factors and governance and management of programme. Examples of what was accomplished through collaboration that would have taken longer/not been possible if working as single entities.	KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured)	Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), HQ Staff (RBA), Government of Canada Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual), RBA Country Reports, RBA Country Plans, Comparative (secondary)	Narrative/ Qualitative Data Trend Analysis Comparative
4.2 Which synergies and linkages contributed to the global outcome of improved coherence, coordination, and shared ownership of evidence-based, gender-sensitive and innovative resilience programme, and what lessons and good practices can be drawn?	# and type of examples of how specific evidence, knowledge, and insights that contributed to global coherence and coordination.		Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), HQ Staff (RBA), UN Partners/UNCT, INGO Partners	Narrative/ Qualitative Data Trend Analysis
4.3 To what extent does the RBA Resilience Initiative represent a link to and point of leverage for other food security and resilience efforts operating in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus?	# and type of examples that have either potential or realized programmatic links to food security and resilience programming.	KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured)	Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), HQ Staff (RBA), UN Partners/UNCT, INGO Partners Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual), Examples from	Narrative/ Qualitative Data Trend Analysis

			related food security and resilience reports.	
4.4 To what extent were funds deployed against plan by activity and RBA in a timely manner? How did five-year funding/annualized funding envelopes affect planning and/or the efficiency of activities?	Primary: # of times funding was delayed according to plan. Secondary: # and type of material effects from changes in funding cycles	KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured)	Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), HQ Staff (RBA), Government of Canada Primary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual) Secondary: F2F Interviews (semi-structured)	Narrative/ Qualitative Data Trend Analysis
EQ5 - Did the RBA Resilience Initiative contribute to long-term intended results or unintended impacts?				IMPACT
Sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sources of data/information	Data analysis methods/triangulation
5.1 To what extent did the combined effect of the different components of the RBA Resilience Initiative contribute to improving the nutrition and food security of vulnerable population groups, especially women and children, in targeted regions?	Primary: # of activities in PFAs (country & global) completed to time and expected quality. (Using indicators, targets, and achievements from PFAs/Annual Reports. Rate of change (+/-) in MAM rates amongst affected target populations, by cohort and taking seasonal variations into account. Changes in comparative country/district/governorate MAM/SAM rates. Changes in relevant proxy indicators for nutrition (RIMA, FCS, CSI, HDDS/MDD-w, MAD), by cohort and taking seasonal variations into account. Changes in comparative country/district/governorate FCS, CSI, HDDS, IPC or other nutrition indicators at country level. # and type of improvements in gender sensitive governance of productive resources. Secondary: Qualitative changes noted by target populations and in direct relation to activities.	KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured) General Population: QuIP (modified), Most Significant Change, Direct Observation	Cohorts: Men, Women, Women Head of HHs, HHs with children under 5, HHs with school age children, PLW, PLWD, Persons over 65 years old, Community Committees, Farmer Groups/Unions, VSLA/SHGs/Cooperatives (Women led), CBOs (General), Training participants, Emergency Aid Recipients (cash) Actors: Local Staff (RBA) Primary: RBA Resilience Initiative PFA, MAM/SAM rates, Proxy data (RIMA, FCS, CSI, HDDS/MDD-w, MAD), Participant demographic data (CBO, VSLA, Cooperative, et. a.) Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual), RBA Country Reports, RBA Country Plans, Comparative (secondary), Comparative (primary, e.g. FCS, CSI, HDDS, RIMA from SAME country contexts), IPC Food Security Data & Trends, Media	Thematic Contribution Trend Analysis

5.2 To what extent did the RBA Resilience Initiative contribute to results on the HDP Nexus, including conflict mitigation, social cohesion, and other possible peace outcomes?	# and type of examples.	KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured)	Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA) Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual), RBA Country Reports, Comparative (secondary)	Narrative/ Qualitative Data Trend Analysis Thematic
5.3 Where climate change is a major destabilizing force, to what extent did the RBA Resilience Initiative contribute to results on climate resilience?	# and type of examples.	KII: F2F Interviews(semi-structured)	Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), HQ Staff (RBA) Primary: Other Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual), RBA Country Reports, Comparative (secondary)	Thematic
EQ6 - To what extent are the benefits of the RBA Resilience Initiative sustainable?				SUSTAINABILITY
Sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sources of data/information	Data analysis methods/ triangulation
6.1 To what extent is it likely that the benefits of the RBA Resilience Initiative at the national, regional, and global level will continue after its implementation ceases?	Primary: # of intermediate outcomes achieved. Percentage of change/changes in level (emergency, resilient building, development) of changes in key nutrition, livelihood, and GEWE indicators. Secondary: Ki analysis of sustainability of achieved outcomes.	KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured) General Population: QulP (modified)	Cohorts: Men, Women, Women Head of HHs, HHs with children under 5, HHs with school age children, PLW, PLWD, Persons over 65 years old, Community Committees, Farmer Groups/Unions, VSLA/SHGs/Cooperatives (Women led), CBOs (General), Training participants, Emergency Aid Recipients (cash) Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), HQ Staff (RBA), Government of Canada Primary: RBA Resilience Initiative PFA, Proxy data (RIMA, FCS, CSI, HDDS/MDD-w, MAD) Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual)	Narrative/ Qualitative Data Trend Analysis Thematic Contribution
6.2 To what extent did the programme design and implementation support transition planning and handover to local actors, including government institutions, community structures and other partners?	Primary: Qualitative perception trends from KIIs. Secondary: Programmatic plans/designs that have incorporated lessons/practices from RBA Resilience Initiative	KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured)	Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), Local Authorities (Gov't), Central Authorities (Gov't) Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual), RBA Country Reports, RBA Country Plans, Comparative (secondary)	Narrative/ Qualitative Data Trend Analysis Thematic
6.3 To what extent has the programme been able to promote replication and/or up-scaling of successful practices?	# and type of activities that have been scaled-up # and type of activities that have been scaled-up/replicated or will be	KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured)	Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), UN Partners/UNCT, INGO Partners, Local NGO Partners, Local	Narrative/ Qualitative Data Trend Analysis

	scaled-up replicated by non-RBA actors		Authorities (Gov't), Central Authorities (Gov't) Secondary: RBA Country Reports, Comparative (secondary)	
6.4 To what extent are the synergies and pathways for collaboration created through the RBA Resilience Initiative between the RBAs likely to persist after its completion?	Qualitative perceptions from RBA KIIs.	KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured)	Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), HQ Staff (RBA) Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual), RBA Country Reports, Comparative (secondary)	Narrative/ Qualitative Data Trend Analysis
6.5 What other major factors influence sustainability of results?	#, type and scope as determined in all evaluative analysis.	KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured) General Population: QuIP (modified), Most Significant Change	Cohorts: Men, Women, Women Head of HHs, HHs with children under 5, HHs with school age children, PLW, PLWD, Persons over 65 years old, Community Committees, Farmer Groups/Unions, VSLA/SHGs/Cooperatives (Women led), CBOs (General), Training participants, Emergency Aid Recipients (cash) Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), HQ Staff (RBA), Government of Canada, UN Partners/UNCT, INGO Partners, Local NGO Partners, Local Authorities (Gov't), Central Authorities (Gov't) Primary: RBA Resilience Initiative PFA Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual), RBA Country Reports, RBA Country Plans, Comparative (secondary), Comparative (primary, e.g., FCS, CSI, HDDS, RIMA from SAME country contexts). IPC Food Security Data & Trends, Media	Narrative/ Qualitative Data Trend Analysis Thematic
EQ7 - To what extent did the RBA Resilience Initiative take into account and contribute to gender, human rights, equity and inclusion?				GENDER, HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUITY & INCLUSION
Sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sources of data/information	Data analysis methods/ triangulation

<p>7.1 To what extent was the RBA Resilience Initiative design, implementation, monitoring and transition planning sensitive to gender, human rights, equity, and inclusion?</p>	<p>Primary: # of examples that exemplify gender sensitive approaches (standard), human rights, equity, and inclusion. Secondary: Examples of how monitoring/data related to gender, human rights, equity, and inclusion led to changes/improvements in activity effectiveness.</p>	<p>KII: F2F Interviews (semi-structured)</p>	<p>Cohorts: Men, Women, Women Head of HHS, HHS with children under 5, HHS with school age children, PLW, PLWD, Persons over 65 years old, Community Committees, Farmer Groups/Unions, VSLA/SHGs/Cooperatives (Women led), CBOs (General) Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), HQ Staff (RBA), UN Partners/UNCT, INGO Partners, Local NGO Partners, Local Authorities (Gov't), Central Authorities (Gov't) Primary: RBA Resilience Initiative PFA, Survey Data Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual), RBA Country Reports, Comparative (secondary)</p>	<p>Narrative/ Qualitative Data Trend Analysis Thematic</p>
<p>7.2 What are the concrete and differential results of the programme in terms of gender equality, women's empowerment, equity, inclusion of persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups?</p>	<p>Primary: # and type of examples of how GEWE was promoted/created/maintained and how this contributed to demonstrable outcome level results. Secondary: # and type of examples of how equity and social inclusion contributed to demonstrable outcome level results.</p>	<p>KII: F2F Interviews(semi-structured) General Population: QuIP (modified), Most Significant Change</p>	<p>Cohorts: Men, Women, Women Head of HHS, HHS with children under 5, HHS with school age children, PLW, PLWD, Persons over 65 years old, Community Committees, Farmer Groups/Unions, VSLA/SHGs/Cooperatives (Women led), CBOs (General), Training participants, Emergency Aid Recipients (cash) Actors: Local Staff (RBA), Regional Staff (RBA), HQ Staff (RBA), UN Partners/UNCT, INGO Partners, Local NGO Partners, Local Authorities (Gov't), Central Authorities (Gov't) Primary: RBA Resilience Initiative PFA, IASC Gender with Age Marker (GAM), UN Women rapid assessment tool to evaluate GEWE results in humanitarian contexts Secondary: RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual), RBA Country Reports, Comparative (secondary)</p>	<p>Narrative/ Qualitative Data Trend Analysis Thematic UN Women assessment tool scoring</p>

7.4 DETAILED METHODOLOGY

7.4.1 EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT

477. The inception phase reviewed all available documentation, data, and other sources related to the RBA Resilience Initiative. Of relevance were the RBA Canada Resilience Initiative annual reports from 2017 to 2021. The annual reports include the global component and country activities and PMFs.

478. This is not an impact evaluation that would typically include experimental or quasi-experimental designs with baseline/endpoint data collection amongst cohorts. While the RIMA II could serve these aims, this is beyond the scope of this evaluation.¹⁹¹ Instead, and as described in the evaluation matrix, impact questions are assessed according to the RBA Resilience Initiative data sets, mainly changes in MAM rates; changes in FCS, rCSI, and HDDS; the results of the RIMA II index; and qualitative examples from cohort populations.

479. In terms of efficiency, evaluation questions focus on improved information, knowledge, and systems. They also include a question related to funding patterns. They do not include specific references to economic and timely delivery or how inputs were converted into outputs.¹⁹² This is appropriate as this requires specialized financial assessments and a range of supporting financial information to assess.

480. There is an opportunity to conduct secondary analysis from primary data sets, e.g., the RIMA II, as well as comparative analysis within specific districts/regions/governorates and with national trends and statistics. MAM/SAM, FCS, rCSI, and HDDS are common nutrition and food security proxy indicators across actors in the three countries. This may further establish results while soliciting additional insights into programmatic/casual pathways. For instance, if the evaluation identifies a specific sequence of activities that contributed to results that target populations say improved their food security and resilience, then these can be compared with trends in primary and proxy level data to establish their prominence in relation to the general population.

481. This RBA Resilience Initiative PMFs and corresponding evidence and data also lack consistent ways to measure GEWE. Given this, the evaluation proposes using the UN Women Rapid Assessment Tool to Evaluate GEWE¹⁹³ that assesses leadership and participation, protection and safety, and economic well-being. This is aligned with the RBA Resilience Initiative's approach and outcomes.

482. The Evaluation has also proposed more extensive FGDs with population groups to explore these and other issues, as described in the Evaluation Matrix. This has resulted in the proposed reduction in the number of FGDs with target populations from 16 to 12 for each country, given the breadth and time proposed for these.

Relevance: No critical issues given that most primary evidence is documentary and from key informants. Subjective inputs from key informants addressed through qualitative data trend analysis.

Coherence: No critical issues given that all primary evidence is documentary and from key informants. Subjectivity addressed through qualitative data trend analysis.

Effectiveness: Dependent upon availability of latest results data; may need to rely on district/regional comparative data and non-probability samples of population. Need sufficient coverage across cohorts.

Efficiency: No critical issues given that all primary evidence is documentary and from key informants. Subjectivity addressed through qualitative data trend analysis.

Impact: Not an impact evaluation. Reliant on RBA Resilience Initiative data sets. If not available, will use district/regional data and qualitative data.

Sustainability: Dependent upon adequate samples/coverage across cohorts (actors and general population). Contingent upon availability of latest results data; may need to rely on district/regional comparative data and non-probability samples of population.

Gender, human rights, equity, and inclusion: Dependent upon adequate samples/coverage across cohorts (actors and general population).

Specific data availability and data reliability issues are described for each evaluation question in the Evaluation Matrix.

¹⁹¹ This conforms to impact evaluation standards. Please see: Pamies-Sumner, S. "Development Impact Evaluations: State of Play and New Challenges.", AFD, 2015. Available [here](#). It also aligns with WFP's "Impact Evaluation Strategy: 2019 - 2026" that sets out the need for a counterfactual, amongst other requirements. This strategy is available [here](#).

¹⁹² OECD DAC guidance defines efficiency as: "The extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way. 'Economic' is the conversion of inputs (funds, expertise, natural resources, time, etc.) into outputs, outcomes, and impacts, in the most cost-effective way possible, as compared to feasible alternatives in the context. 'Timely' delivery is within the intended timeframe, or a timeframe reasonably adjusted to the demands of the evolving context. This may include assessing operational efficiency (how well the intervention was managed). Please see guidance [here](#).

¹⁹³ The tool and guidance are available [here](#).

483. The other challenge is the need for an ample number of direct actors for KIIs and people from specific target population cohorts to establish qualitative trends. This is important to avoid a minimum number of such interviews that could then be deemed anecdotal. Qualitative data can be conditioned by overt biases (prejudices about people or organizations) and covert/hidden biases (recall capacity, performance anxieties, time of day/day of week, etc.). This applies to key informants as much as to respondents from the general population. In fact, community perceptions are a vital source so long as sufficient samples across cohorts are achieved. This is addressed through qualitative data analysis.

484. To ensure that adequate samples are thus achieved for this, the evaluation proposes working closely with the RBA country offices to organize these, including the provision of adequate samples/lists of key informants and from participants in the Initiative.

7.4.2 SOURCES OF EVIDENCE & TRIANGULATION

485. The methodological approach is premised upon assessing the general theory, mainly that the combination and complementarity of RBA approaches and best practices in nutrition, livelihoods, agriculture/livestock, community engagement, and GEWE, increased food security and resilience, especially for the most vulnerable.

486. This includes a mix of sources.

487. The RBA Resilience Initiative results are likely derived from a complex interaction of multiple activities influenced by contributions from various partners and complex operational dynamics. For this reason, the perspectives of an array of stakeholders are critical to consider, especially amongst the vulnerable populations the Initiative has sought to serve.

488. These stakeholders were interviewed through either semi-structured interviews and/or specialized data collection methods. These will provide a rich set of qualitative data that were be assessed for trends, anomalies, or highly nuanced insights about specific RBA activities and their relationship to immediate outcomes. These also serve as comparative data sets, e.g., comparing the perspective of RBA staff with that of the populations the Initiative served.

489. While this qualitative evidence informed links between inputs and outcomes, there is a wealth of primary and proxy data that was used to assess results at the intermediate outcome level. The RBA Resilience Initiative data sets were taken *prima facie*, while being compared with similar data sets at the district, regional, and national levels, along with IPC/Cadre Harmonisé data.

490. Contribution analysis and GEWE analysis will explicitly link the qualitative and quantitative data above with the RBA Resilience Initiative PMFs and the Theory of Change to assess results. This was central to determining the programmatic pathways that have the most direct and clear relationship with expected immediate and intermediate outcomes.

7.4.3 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

491. Data collection methods are described in the table below. These provide a mix of approaches and sources that correspond with the issues noted in the ToC. They also abide by best practices while being common and tested enough to be viable in the three-country contexts. Each of these is aligned with specific evaluation questions in the evaluation matrix. These are described further in the next sections.

Table 16: Evaluation sources, data collection methods, and sampling

Cohorts (Participant Populations)	Sources				
	Data Collection Methods	Sample	Actors	Data Collection Methods	Sample
Men Women Women Head of HHs Mothers/ care takers of children Under Five HHs with children under 5 HHs with school age children PLW PLWD Persons over 65 years old Community Committees Farmer Groups/Unions VSLA/SHGs/Cooperatives (Women led) CBOs (General) Training participants Emergency Aid Recipients (cash)	Focus group discussions (QuIP modified) Most Significant Change	Systematic Purposive Representative (cohort) Non-probability Simple random Stratified Random	Local Staff (RBA) Regional Staff (RBA) HQ Staff (RBA) UN Partners/UNCT INGO Partners Local NGO Partners Local Authorities (Gov't) Central Authorities (Gov't)	F2F Interviews (semi-structured)	Purposive Representative (actor)
Cohort groups will be sampled according to the proposed sampling frame (Section 3.12). Noted data collection methods apply to all cohorts.					
Primary Evidence			Secondary Evidence		
RBA Resilience Initiative PFA MAM/SAM rates amongst participating populations Comparative MAM/SAM rates in relevant district/regional/governorate/national levels IPC Food Security Data & Trends (district/regional/governorate/national) Proxy data (RIMA, FCS, CSI, HDDS/MDD-w, MAD) Participant demographic data (standard and amongst CBO, VSLA, Cooperatives, et. al.) Vulnerability/needs assessments (RBA/VAM/mVAM) IASC Gender with Age Marker (GAM) UN Women rapid assessment tool to evaluate GEWE results in humanitarian contexts			RBA Resilience Initiative Reports (Annual) RBA Country Reports & Strategies Comparative (secondary) Vulnerability/needs assessments (HNO/UNSDG/JSP) Comparative (primary, e.g. FCS, CSI, HDDS, RIMA from SAME country contexts) Media		

492. These sources are divided into participant populations, primary actors, and primary and secondary documentary evidence.

493. Data collection approaches, as described throughout this section, abide by UN-SWAP¹⁹⁴ standards including how data collection and analysis methods integrate gender considerations and ensure that data is disaggregated by gender.

7.4.4 PRIMARY EVIDENCE

494. Effectiveness and impact, amongst other evaluation criteria, will require an analysis of primary and secondary data and information. This includes specific data sets provided from the RBA Resilience Initiative. These were compared with similar data sets and time series from national or local data sets, as available and relevant.

495. The Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) food security data and MAM/SAM rates for each country¹⁹⁵ will also be used as a comparative of overall food security. For instance, if the target population's food security is rated differently from that of broader IPC/Cadre Harmonisé data, this was used as a comparative.

496. The UN Women rapid assessment tool to evaluate GEWE results in humanitarian contexts was also used to establish key indicators of gender sensitivity and GEWE.

¹⁹⁴ For an overview and guidance, visit the UN Women's UN-SWAP website [here](#).

¹⁹⁵ In Niger, the Cadre Harmonisé is used in place of the IPC.

7.4.5 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

497. Semi-structured interviews were the primary data collection method for primary actors. These include standard interview protocols to ensure that collected qualitative data are consistent and can be validated. These protocols include reference to, and often the same wording as, specific evaluation questions.

498. The protocols are designed to adhere as closely to the evaluation questions as possible, using these verbatim as the basis for the protocols. These questions were adapted/re-phrased to ensure that respondents are best positioned to respond. This includes choosing those questions most relevant to their experience. This was part of the training on the protocols and the experience of the field team.

499. While the protocols contain standardized questions, the evaluation recognizes the need for exploratory discussion. The interviews are approached as fully participatory, providing ample opportunities for people to raise the issues that they deem most important and that may go beyond formal questions. There were no significant deviations from these protocols.

500. Evaluation team members, who all have experience in conducting such interviews, go through a session of testing/adapting/learning/changing for each of the protocols. This ensures a common approach and interpretation of the questions, how to remain impartial and constructive during interviews, and how to record standard response data in protocol forms.

501. Qualitative evidence from these interviews was analysed according to emergent categories of analysis, e.g., similar themes or issues raised by multiple respondents, and through an initial qualitative to quantitative analysis.

7.4.6 QUALITATIVE DATA

502. Qualitative data is based on summaries of what people said, using verbatim statements as relevant and possible. These are organized according to the protocol and standards/coding.

503. Qualitative data is based on the perceptions of respondents at the time of the interviews. This implies that their responses may be influenced by what is going on at the time of the interview and may draw more heavily on examples from the recent past.

504. Qualitative evidence is inherently messy. Sometimes people say things that are seemingly unrelated to the question. These are included from time to time and coded according to the context and the overall interview. Some data points are repeated when multiple respondents state the same thing and when they apply to different evaluation questions.

505. Qualitative data from interviews can be conditioned by overt biases (prejudices about people or organizations) and covert/hidden biases, e.g., recall capacity, performance anxieties (direct or indirect), time of day/day of week, etc. This is considered through analysis from KIIs, ensuring that there are common themes or trends from respondents and that interviewers are not affected by their own overt and covert biases.

506. Qualitative data points are ranked according to standards (change explicitly attributed to project activities; stories/narrative confirming mechanism related to RBA expected intermediate and immediate outcomes; changes attributed to any other variable that are not related to specific RBA Initiative activities or as referenced in the PMFs and/or Theory of Change; changes not attributable to any specific cause. The original interviewer does the first categorization and then the Team Leader reviews this. Reasonable people could arrive at different rankings. However, they do reflect the insights of the evaluation team who conducted the interviews and thus the general intent of each respondent.

507. Contextual analysis was conducted to identify common themes and subjects and linkages to drivers of change are used to further indicate trends. This evidence is then compared with that from other sources and then further assessed through documentary and subject matter expertise. Findings are based on an examination of all these data sets and their strength, or the correspondence between data sets.

7.4.7 DIRECT OBSERVATION

508. The evaluation includes on-site visits with country teams. This included no operational sites in Rutshuru territory & North Kivu province (DRC) given the displacement there and that FGDs were conducted in Goma. 1 site was included in Dogo and 1 in Chadakori during the Niger field work. Multiple sites, focusing on water

catchment and market gardens, amongst other installations, were visited at each of the 8 site visits in Somalia. The final field briefing in Somalia included short videos from these site visits.

509. These helped situate the Evaluation more directly in the RBA's Initiative's activities and to further the team's understanding of the complex environment in which it was implemented.

7.4.8 TRAINING

510. Given the centrality of the field level data collection, especially in relation to the modified QuIP, the evaluation team went through a series of trainings to ensure that these are used consistently and according to expected specifications. This is particularly important given the high degree of flexibility and adaptability that was required for each country's context, with some interviews being conducted in person with other remotes.

511. Given this, the evaluation team had a training session amongst the three countries to establish guiding principles, process, data collection, ethics, and other standard features for all the protocols. Having commonality about the principles is critical as this establishes the key types of information that need to be established, the links to specific evaluation questions and issues in the evaluation matrix, and how such information/data needs to be captured to establish valid evidence, especially for the QuIP. These same guiding principles were then reinforced in specific country team training.

512. The country team training includes the national team members and other staff recruited to conduct the FGDs. These include an overview of the approach, principles, process, data collection, ethical considerations, issues associated with respondent report and comfort, and other strategies to ensure that any and all respondents are comfortable with the purpose and process of the discussion. This was then followed by a step-by-step walk through of the protocols, including the stated tips and guidance, and what types of responses may be expected at each step. This was conducted in English, French and/or Swahili along with translated protocols. Where this would result in some modifications or changes to the protocols, the EMT would be notified, and their guidance and approval sought.

513. This was followed by role plays, wherein the team members interviewed one another with the protocols, answering as if a typical respondent. This included breaks to identify what's working and what's not, along with tips and strategies associated with how to elicit the most useful and frank responses from diverse respondents. As above, this also may necessitate some changes. If so, the EMT is notified, and their guidance and approval sought.

514. Finally, after the first day of using the protocols, the team assembled to discuss what worked and address any issues that may have emerged. If substantive changes were required, the EMT was notified, and their guidance and approval sought.

7.4.9 SAMPLING

515. Sampling was mostly purposive/representative, with non-probability samples amongst participating populations. Simple or stratified random sampling was used for the selection of people in FGDs.

516. This depends on having sufficient lists of internal and external stakeholders for all sampling approaches.

517. The table below shows the proposed number of FGDs and KIIs across cohorts. This applies to each country, given that site visits are currently possible throughout. This includes UN-SWAP¹⁹⁶ standards, including the diversity of stakeholders affected by the intervention, particularly the most vulnerable.

¹⁹⁶ For an overview and guidance, visit the UN Women's UN-SWAP website [here](#).

Table 17: Indicative sampling across cohorts

QuIP FGDs (General Population)	QuIP FGDs (RB Initiative Groups)	Semi-Structured Interviews	
12 participants each/8 per country	12 participants each/4 per country	Approximately 44 Per Country	
4 men/8 women	Gender balanced and representative members of RBA groups, including but not limited to:	Local Staff (RBA)	18
2 Women Headed HHs (MIN)		UN Partners/UNCT	6
2 HHs with children under 5 (MIN)	Community Committees Farmer Groups/Unions VSLA/SHGs/Cooperatives (Women led) CBOs (General)	INGO Partners	6
2 HHs with school age children (MIN)		Local NGO Partners	6
2 PLW (MIN)	Training participants Emergency Aid Recipients (cash)	Local Authorities (Gov't)	4
2 PLWD (MIN)		Central Authorities (Gov't)	4
2 People over 65 years old (MIN)		Semi-Structured Interviews	
		Other	
		Regional Staff (RBA)	4
		HQ Staff (RBA)	4

518. This indicative sampling was developed further in coordination with the country offices to ensure that there is representation across relevant cohorts as well as more direct reference to key stakeholders in each country. For instance, it is recognized the IFAD has not participated in DRC and so there may be fewer local staff in this instance. There also may be some additional consideration about specific projects or activities and how this corresponds to different population cohorts. The evaluation team worked with country offices to determine if the evaluation used gender or gender disaggregated groups. This was what was indicated in programme designs.

7.4.10 DATA ANALYSIS

519. Each evaluation question includes reference to sources, cohorts, data collection methods, and data analysis methods. These correspond to the proposed indicators (primary and secondary) included for each question. This includes an assessment of data availability and reliability.

7.4.11 PRIMARY DATA

520. The Evaluation includes the analysis of a range of primary data, especially as related to nutrition/food security data (MAM/SAM, IPC/Cadre Harmonisé) and proxy data (RIMA II, FCS, CSI, HDDS/MDD-w, MAD). The results of these data sets were taken *prima facie*. This means that the primary raw data is not required; the Evaluation used the analysed/summarized data and results from the RBA. This includes issues identified in the inception phase about the timing and feasibility of the RIMA in Niger and delays in Somalia and DRC.

521. The IPC/Cadre Harmonisé food security data, MAM/SAM rates, and recovery, cure, and default rates for each country was used as a comparative of overall food security. For instance, if the target population's food security is rated differently from that of broader IPC/Cadre Harmonisé data, this provided a critical comparative.

7.4.12 CONTRIBUTION ANALYSIS

522. Contribution analysis determines possible contribution to results across programmatic pathways, e.g., the RBA Resilience Initiative PMFs, and when there are not definitive baseline/end-line surveys or when the context is highly dynamic. Contribution analysis involves testing the programmatic pathways and reducing uncertainty about specific contributions to results from outputs to impact. This was done according to the RBA Resilience Initiative's PMFs and the implied programmatic pathways in them related to outputs, immediate outcomes, intermediate outcomes, and the ultimate outcome. (

523. Contribution analysis requires a diverse set of cohorts, tools, and data sets that can be analysed individually, comparatively, and holistically. The Evaluation collected data from various cohorts and used different tools to see why the expected results occurred (or not) and what the main enabling/hindering factors were.

524. This included an assessment of how different data sets (MAM/SAM) or proxy indicators (RIMA II, FCS, rCSI, HDS, etc.) converge around a specific result along programmatic pathways. All data collection tools and analytics were used as part of contribution analysis.

7.4.13 UN WOMEN RAPID ASSESSMENT TOOL TO EVALUATE GEWE¹⁹⁷

525. This rapid assessment tool focuses on three domains: leadership and participation, protection and safety, and economic well-being.

526. It complements existing gender tools by providing an evaluative lens for the assessment of GEWE results. Its added value lies in its capability to measure economic well-being and leadership and participation aspects of the RBA Resilience Initiative. It is also aligned with guidelines set out in the System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN-SWAP).¹⁹⁸

527. The tool consists of a dashboard and questionnaire together with a guidance note that allows the evaluation to assess whether an RBA Resilience Initiative activity is gender-negative, gender-blind, gender-sensitive, gender-responsive, or gender-transformative.

528. The Evaluation used the tool *pro-forma*, e.g., in answering the different questions as based on the evaluation's general analysis, and through the direct questions to actors and the general population.

7.4.14 THEMATIC ANALYSIS

529. Thematic analysis was used to explore patterns across qualitative data from participants. All textual data contained in a theme tells a story about that theme and is somehow related, representing different dimensions of a phenomenon.

530. Thematic analysis allowed the Evaluation to understand those aspects of the RBA Resilience Initiative that participants talked about frequently or in depth, and the ways in which those aspects of the RBA Resilience Initiative were connected to expected results.

531. This included thematic case studies for each country with specific analysis of the issues encountered in each.

7.4.15 DATA SYNTHESIS & TRIANGULATION

532. This included ensuring that each data set was as complete as possible, e.g., appropriate sample size and representation, no significant gaps, contradictions, or other peculiarities, and that the evidentiary trends contributed to answering all evaluation questions. This was the case in most instances and identified when this was not possible in the main body of the report.

¹⁹⁷ The tool and guidance are available [here](#).

¹⁹⁸ For an overview and guidance, visit the UN Women's UN-SWAP website [here](#).

7.5 DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

7.5.1 ACTORS

533. This protocol is designed for all noted RBA Resilience Initiative staff (country, regional, HQ), the Government of Canada, and RBA Partners (UN, local and international NGOs). Some questions, as indicated are only for specific cohorts. A separate survey is used for government and local authorities.

534. The purpose of these interviews is to gain insights into how the RBA Resilience Initiative was implemented in the different country contexts, the operational constraints and opportunities, examples of how the RBA Resilience Initiative contributed to more effective programming and policy changes, and lessons and insights for how to lessons and learning going forward.

535. These protocols were translated into French and tested by the team.

Title:

Gender:

Time in Post:

Sector:

Country:

Time/Date:

Section 1: Informed Consent (To be read aloud.)

"The overall purpose of this evaluation is to assess the Joint Evaluation of the Rome-based Agencies' resilience initiative "Strengthening the resilience of livelihoods in protracted crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Niger, and Somalia" from 2017 to 2023. While your participation will have no direct bearing on the provision of actual goods and services, your insights and comments are important for establishing what's worked, what could be different, and, combined with feedback from other respondents, for establishing trends across respondents from across the region.

"We never quote anyone or provide other direct attribution in any report, presentation, or any other materials, without the prior written consent of the person(s) involved. We cannot absolutely guarantee confidentiality as one may draw correlations from the evaluation to different people. We are required to report any abuse or severe neglect.

"Your participation is voluntary, and you are welcome to respond or not respond to any question or to end the interview at any time. We accept any decision along these lines; it will have no penalty or loss for you. Your participation or non-participation will have no effect on current or future employment.

"We expect the entire interview to take no more than 1 hour.

"If you have any questions about the evaluation, please contact _____, RBA Evaluation Manager at _____."

Section 2: Respondent Questions and Role

Would you like to make any comments, or do you have any questions before we begin?

1. Please describe your role and the primary aspects of your work that relate to the RBA Resilience Initiative.

Section 3: Most Significant Change

Considering your involvement in the programme, what is the most significant change you would attribute to programme activities? Please describe this. (most significant change)

Section 4: Qualitative Evidence

As a primary means for collecting qualitative evidence, the evaluation team will ask questions aligned with the evaluation criteria levels of all relevant stakeholders. We do this to examine patterns across different groups of respondents rather than being overly biased by the responses of any single respondent.

*In practice, the interview will **ask only the primary evaluation question, referring to sub-set questions as relevant to the respondent. THIS INCLUDES ADAPTING THE PHRASING TO ACCOMMODATE DIFFERENT RESPONDENTS. Specific cohorts are included in the evaluation matrix. Reference is made to original evaluation questions through the figure that corresponds to the evaluation matrix, e.g., 1.0, 2.0, etc.***

Specific examples will be elicited as often as possible.

As noted in the evaluation matrix, some questions are meant to be exploratory and/or to solicit examples of specific programmatic pathways and/or best or emerging practices.

2. **Relevance: To what extent is the RBA Resilience Initiative relevant? (1.0)**

- To what extent were the RBA Resilience Initiative's scope, estimation of required resources and expected results and results frameworks based on the analysis of available data, needs, risks, or capacity assessments? To what extent were they realistic and relevant? (1.1)
- To what extent did the joint programme design process contribute to the RBA Resilience Initiative's relevance, coherence, efficiency, and effectiveness? (1.2)
- To what extent was the design of the initiative relevant to institutional policies (RBA resilience policy frameworks) and the wider context (including international frameworks, priorities, and humanitarian principles, such as Committee on World Food Security (CFS)-endorsed Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises (CFS-FFA)? (1.3)
- To what extent are the RBA Resilience Initiative objectives, intended outcomes, and strategies in line with the priorities and policies of participating countries related to food security, nutrition, and gender? (1.4)
- To what extent was the RBA Resilience Initiative in line with the needs and priorities of the most vulnerable groups (e.g. men and women, boys and girls, people living with disabilities, etc.) as final intended beneficiaries? (1.5)
- How does the RBA Resilience Initiative create an enabling environment for the most vulnerable groups to benefit? (1.6)

3. **Coherence: How have FAO, WFP and/or IFAD worked together to achieve the RBA Resilience Initiatives objectives? (2.0)**

- To what extent were synergies, alignment and complementarity achieved between the different activities implemented by the RBAs? (2.1)
- What added value has been generated through these synergies, if any? (2.2)
- How did the RBA Resilience Initiative leverage and maximize each agency's strengths, including resources, tools, capacities, targeting approach and suite of activities, for addressing the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus in targeted countries? (2.3)
- To what extent was the RBA Resilience Initiative coherent with the programmatic objectives and policies of other actors operating within the same context on the HDP Nexus, including other UN Agencies, international, national, and local non-governmental organizations, and different levels of government? (2.4)
- To what extent and how were multi-sector partnerships and actions appropriately and effectively leveraged for overall joint programme coherence and effectiveness? (2.5)

Effectiveness

4. **What major factors influenced the achievement or non-achievement of results? (3.4)**

5. **Efficiency: How efficient was the RBA? How efficient was it for FAO, WFP and/or IFAD to work together? (4.0)**

- Which factors facilitated or hindered the collaboration and efficiency of the RBA Resilience Initiative, including an assessment of the governance and management of the programme through its global component, the steering committee, etc.? (4.1)
- Which synergies and linkages contributed to improved coherence, coordination, and shared ownership of evidence-based, gender-sensitive and innovative resilience programme, and what lessons and good practices can be drawn? (4.2)
- To what extent does the RBA Resilience Initiative represent a link to and point of leverage for other food security and resilience efforts operating in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus? (4.3)
- To what extent were funds deployed against plan by activity and RBA in a timely manner? How did five-year funding/annualized funding envelopes affect planning and/or the efficiency of activities? (4.4)

6. **Impact: Did the RBA Resilience Initiative contribute to long-term resilience for participating populations? (5.0)**

- To what extent did the combined effect of the different components of the RBA Resilience Initiative contribute to improving the nutrition and food security of vulnerable population groups, especially women and children, in targeted regions? (5.1)
- To what extent did the RBA Resilience Initiative contribute to results on the HDP Nexus, including conflict mitigation, social cohesion, and other possible peace outcomes? (5.2)
- Where climate change is a major destabilizing force, to what extent did the RBA Resilience Initiative contribute to results on climate resilience? (5.3)

7. **Sustainability: To what extent are the benefits of the RBA Resilience Initiative sustainable? (6.0)**

- To what extent is it likely that the benefits of the RBA Resilience Initiative at the national, regional, and global level will continue after its implementation ceases? (6.1)
- To what extent did the programme design and implementation support transition planning and handover to local actors, including government institutions, community structures and other partners? (6.2)
- To what extent has the programme been able to promote replication and/or up-scaling of successful practices? (6.3)
- To what extent are the synergies and pathways for collaboration created through the RBA Resilience Initiative between the RBAs likely to persist after its completion? (6.4)
- What other major factors influence sustainability of results? (6.5)

8. **Gender, human rights, equity, and inclusion: How does the RBA Resilience Initiative consider gender, human rights, equity, and inclusion? (7.0)**

- To what extent was the RBA Resilience Initiative design, implementation, monitoring and transition planning sensitive to gender, human rights, equity, and inclusion? (7.1)
- What are the concrete and differential results of the programme in terms of gender equality, women's empowerment, equity, inclusion of persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups? (7.2)

Section 5: Closing

Is there anything we haven't discussed that you expected we would discuss? Any other points you'd like to raise?

What are your expectations for this evaluation?

Do you have questions you would like to ask me?

Follow-up on any documentation or evidentiary sources that could be helpful for evaluation.

Describe process: Once the data and collection phase are completed, we will hold an informal workshop where the team presents what it has learned and asks partners to provide feedback and clarification.

Thank you.

Please make a note of any significant deviation from the questions or protocol. These will be considered and noted in the analysis phase if they constitute any deviation that may affect overall analysis.

7.5.2 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION PROTOCOLS

Section 1: Informed Consent

To be read aloud and provided in writing to all FGD participants. FGD participants are then invited to sign the informed consent as they see appropriate.

This may entail some questions from respondents that should be addressed although without referring to the RBA Resilience Initiative. May include reference to primary actors, citing, for instance FAO, UNICEF, WFP, UNFPA or others that may be familiar to respondents.

"We are conducting an evaluation of how people such as yourself address nutrition, food security, employment/income, and other related issues, especially in the face of different crises and emergencies that may affect you, your family, and your communities.

The overall purpose of this evaluation is to assess how different activities have supported your nutrition, food security, livelihoods, and resilience. Resilience is defined as your capacity to prepare for, withstand, and recover from crises and emergencies. We will discuss what resilience may mean to you in more detail.

The purpose of this discussion is to understand what works well and what could be different about different levels of international and local support, including how you and your community may work together to respond to crises and emergencies. We are seeking your insights and specific examples as a core set of information about what works and what could be different. We are conducting 16 such focus group discussions in your region.

While your participation will have no direct bearing on the provision of actual goods and services, your insights and comments are important for establishing what's worked, what could be different.

"We never quote anyone or provide other direct attribution in any report, presentation, or any other materials, without the prior written consent of the person(s) involved. We cannot absolutely guarantee confidentiality as one may draw correlations from the evaluation to different people. We are required to report any abuse or severe neglect.

"Your participation is voluntary, and you are welcome to respond or not respond to any question or to leave the discussion at any time. We accept any decision along these lines; it will have no penalty or loss for you. Your participation or non-participation will have no effect on current or future employment.

"We expect the entire interview to take no more than 90-minutes.

"Do you have any questions?"

"Are you willing to give your consent to continue?"

Ask people to provide verbal consent. If some people do not provide consent, thank them very much and give them time to leave comfortably.

Section 2: Facilitated Discussions

Time	Subject
10 min	<p>Purpose, Process, Outputs & Outcomes/Introductions</p> <p><i>Facilitator to describe the purpose, process, outputs, and outcomes for workshop. This includes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Purpose: To get a much better understanding of how you and your community address issues related to nutrition, food security, employment/income, and other related issues. This includes how you, your family, and your community prepare for crises or emergencies, how you then respond, and what factors enable you to recover from such crises/emergencies. This is how we broadly define resilience.</p> <p>The insights, perspectives, experiences, of everyone involved will be important.</p> <p>Do you have any questions or comments about these issues?</p> <p><i>Respondents may need time to describe their needs, the conditions in their communities, and how critical support is to them. Let them take as much time as necessary to describe these things, without commenting or interjecting. Do take notes about key issues like the type of shocks they may have experienced or things that help them most. Be aware of any social dynamics that may be affecting some respondents, like the dominance of particular respondents, especially if they are men or other people who may have an undue social influence on other respondents. In these cases, you may want to divide the group into two (men and women, for instance), asking each group to discuss an issue amongst themselves and to then come back into plenary. The most important thing is to make sure that people are comfortable and free to discuss the issues as they see fit. This first open-ended question is meant to support this.</i></p> <p>Process: Facilitated discussions that enable you all to talk with each other as much as to answer questions from the facilitators. This will include open and frank discussions—room for you to discuss what is most relevant important to the issues at hand.</p>

	<p><i>One facilitator will guide the discussions and keep people to time. The other facilitator will capture main ideas, points, statements, agreements, disagreements, or anything else of note. They will share what they have recorded/written down at the end of each session.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Outputs: Will be the notes from the facilitator that they captured during discussion and that everyone confirms at the end of each session. These will not include anyone's name or anything else. The important thing is to capture the most important and relevant issues related to the workshops' subjects. <p>These will then be included in a report with the hope of capturing common issues or trends related to what's working, what could be different, and what is most important in thinking about how people become safe and secure in their new homes and communities. This final report will be shared with you as well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Outcomes: A much better understanding of how you and your community address issues related to nutrition, food security, employment/income, and other related issues and how these enable you to better prepare for, respond to, and recover from crises/emergencies. <p><i>Facilitator should take time to explain these in detail, covering all points/issues described above, and then asking people if they have any questions or comments.</i></p> <p><i>This can then be followed by introductions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Describe yourself. - Share anything else about yourself or your family that you think is important to know.
20 min	<p>Nutritional, dietary, and essential family practices in food hygiene, including screening and treatment of MAM/SAM. (Intermediate Outcome 1400/1300)</p> <p>Purpose: This first session will invite you to discuss dietary, nutritional and food hygiene practices.</p> <p><i>The facilitator needs to be open to the full breadth of how people may define/discuss this, from what people eat, to where they get their food, to what has facilitated changes associated with these. It is the latter that may have a direct bearing on the RBA Resilience Initiative. Let the participants decide how/where to take this conversation.</i></p> <p>1. How has your diet changed in the last year?</p> <p><i>Could provide some definition of this for people to consider but it is important for them to think about this in their own terms. May include food calendars or other recall methods to facilitate how people recall their diet and how it may have changed.</i></p> <p><i>Choose from the following based on immediate and intermediate outcomes relevant for the country context and population group.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What do you do or try to do to ensure that your family can eat as nutritious meals as possible? (immediate outcome 1410) - Have you made any changes in relation to good food hygiene or other ways to prevent sickness from poor dietary practices? (immediate outcome 1420 & 1410) - What else do you do or try to do to prevent poor nutrition? (immediate outcome 1420) - Do you know where to go if you are worried that your children are not getting enough food or are sick? If yes, please describe. (immediate outcome 1420 and 1430) - What type of support have you received, like direct cash support, to address nutritional issues for you and your family? How did this help? Did it come at the right time? If not, why not? (immediate outcome 1230) <p><i>Ask the following of all respondents:</i></p> <p>2. Considering the discussion above, what is the most significant change in your nutrition and dietary practices over the last six months to a year? (most significant change)</p> <p>Outputs: Facilitator should capture key issues/statements/agreements/disagreements. Recite these back to group at end and amend/change/add to list as necessary.</p>
20 min	<p>Increased availability and equitable access to a nutritious, diversified, and stable food supply for populations, especially women and children. (Intermediate Outcome 1200)</p> <p>Purpose: This second session will invite you to discuss how you and your community have increased access to food, either through agriculture, livestock, or other activities. This may also be related to how you may have increased your family income.</p>

	<p><i>The facilitator needs to be open to the full breadth of how people may define/discuss this, from what people eat, to where they get their food, to what has facilitated changes associated with these. It is the latter that may have a direct bearing on the RBA Resilience Initiative. Let the participants decide how/where to take this conversation.</i></p> <p>3. What have you done or engaged/participated in during the last few years that has enabled you or your community to produce more food? This may include food production, postharvest handling of food, or better access to markets, amongst other things. (immediate outcome 1210; 1220)</p> <p><i>Choose from the following based on immediate and intermediate outcomes relevant for the country context and population or group.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What has your community done or engaged/participated to better manage crop productivity, diversification, and value addition of agricultural products? (immediate outcome 1210) - What new or improved agricultural inputs and assets have you used for production? (immediate outcome 1210) - What have you done to improve the value chains for nutritious agricultural products? (immediate outcome 1220) <p><i>Ask the following of all respondents:</i></p> <p>4. Considering the discussion above, what is the most significant change in how you or your community has increased availability and equitable access to a nutritious, diversified, and stable food supply? (most significant change)</p> <p>Outputs: Facilitator should capture key issues/statements/agreements/disagreements. Recite these back to group at end and amend/change/add to list as necessary.</p>
20 min	<p>Improved gender sensitive governance of collective productive resources by relevant authorities and/or other relevant stakeholders. (Intermediate Outcome 1300)</p> <p>Purpose: This second session will invite you to discuss how different groups, especially women, people living with disabilities, people over 65 years old, or other especially vulnerable groups have participated in any of the activities already discussed.</p> <p>5. What have you done or engaged/participated in during in the last few years either as a group or individually to improve the way women and other groups benefit from these or other activities? (immediate outcome 1310)</p> <p>6. Considering the discussion above, what is the most significant change in how you or your community has involved women in nutrition, food security, livelihoods, or food production? (most significant change)</p> <p>Outputs: Facilitator should capture key issues/statements/agreements/disagreements. Recite these back to group at end and amend/change/add to list as necessary.</p>
10 min	<p>UN Women Rapid Response Tool</p> <p><i>Ask women respondents to join you for a few minutes for some specific questions. Make sure they are comfortable doing so.</i></p> <p><i>Then ask the following questions, asking them to raise their hands per each response variable. Record their responses.</i></p> <p>Leadership & Participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are women and girls included in community meetings on a regular basis? (yes/no/some)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are women and girls consulted separately from men and boys in a safe and dignified manner? (yes/no/some) - How satisfied are women with their level of influence over decision making in community meetings? (Very Satisfied/Satisfied/Unsatisfied/Not at all satisfied) - Has women participation been inclusive? (i.e. elderly women, women with disabilities, women from FHHs, transgender women, women from minority communities, different citizenship status?) (Yes/Mostly/Partly/No/Not Rated) - How much influence do women feel they have in contributing to decision making? (A lot/Some/None at all) <p>Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women report feeling safe walking alone. (Yes/Mostly/Partly/No/Not Rated) - Women report feeling safe accessing services. (Yes/Mostly/Partly/No/Not Rated) - Women know how and where to report GBV or other issues? (Yes/No) <p>Economic Well Being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How satisfied are women with any livelihood related training? (Very satisfied/Satisfied/Unsatisfied/Very unsatisfied) - How safe do women and girls feel going to the market? (Very safe/Mostly safe/Unsafe) - How safe do women feel going to distribution sites? (Very safe/Mostly safe/Unsafe) - Do women feel safe accessing financial institutions? (Very safe/Mostly safe/Unsafe) - Do women feel safe accessing the payment method in cash for work programmes or cash grants? (Very safe/Mostly safe/Unsafe) - Within the household, who decides how to spend the money? (Women have control/Men have control/ They share control.) <p><i>Thank them for these responses.</i></p>
5 min	<p>Closing</p> <p><i>Thank everyone for the time and participation.</i></p> <p><i>Remind everyone of overall workshop purpose, outputs, and outcomes, from the first session.</i></p> <p><i>Answer any questions.</i></p>

Please make a note of any significant deviation from the questions or protocol. These will be considered and noted in the analysis phase if they constitute any deviation that may affect overall analysis.

7.6.2 FIELDWORK ACTIVITIES

542. The following sections include the descriptions of the fieldwork activities conducted by the Evaluation.

DRC

543. The DRC field mission took place from 27 September till 10 October with main activities taking place from 29 September till 06 October in Goma, capital of Nord Kivu region. In addition, the national offices of WFP and FAO were visited in the week thereafter (9 and 10 October) with further follow-up (at distance) key informant interviews being held in the weeks thereafter to complement findings. The field mission was implemented by an international evaluation expert, a national consultant and a national FGD facilitator (two male and one female)

544. The main objective of the field mission was twofold: 1) to interview main key stakeholders of WFP and FAO at national and sub-office level in Goma (capital of Nord-Kivu region) and 2) to hold Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with programme beneficiaries. The methodology of these two activities was based on a commonly agreed set of interview guides for the different groups of interviewees (See RBA Resilience Joint Evaluation Inception Report Annex 6 Data Collection Tools)

545. The field mission encountered a substantial number of limitations. First, the security situation in Rutshuru district did not permit the mission to visit the district and to interview beneficiaries according to the methodology planned (by use of the QuIP methodology). As an alternative approach, through WFP, a set of 100+ former beneficiaries were identified who had installed in and around the city of Goma with host families or in IDP camps. Out of the list of 100+ WFP was able to identify - together with some local leaders - four groups to be included in the FGD, sub-divided into four FGDs: FGD 1: 11 men; FGD 2: 13 women; FGD 3: 12 Youth; and FGD 4: 14 young mothers. These four FGDs were held in Goma, at the premises of one of the implementing NGO partners.

546. A second main limitation was also related to the security situation. The endline data collection did not take place because of these security issues that prevented access to RBA programme sites and the displacement of RBA beneficiaries. As a result, quantitative monitoring data are only available for the 2017 baseline, 2019 mid-term and (partially) for the 2020 and 2021 mid-terms. No further data collection could be done beyond that time.

547. Government staff were only interviewed at regional level (Nord-Kivu). The Agriculture and Livestock services were interviewed in Goma, but mainly as implementing services. At the national level, no authorities were interviewed as they were not directly involved. The local authorities of Rutshuru district could not be interviewed as they were not present in Goma at the time of the field mission.

548. Since the QuIP methodology could not be applied, an alternative set of questions were developed to serve as a guide during the FGD interviews. These were assessing the participation and effectiveness of the various programme components as implemented. As a result of the limited number of beneficiaries interviewed and the non-application of the QuIP methodology the assessment of attribution of changes to the RBA programme could not be done as detailed and generalized as expected. As such the evidence to link the implementation of individual activities to immediate outcomes and intermediate outcomes is therefore based on a qualitative assessment of beneficiary observations made during the FGD interviews.

549. An overview of the number and category of persons met during the field mission is presented in the following table:

Table 21: Overview of persons interviewed during DRC data collection phase

WFP and FAO staff		
HQ FAO Rome	2	On-line
National WFP/ FAO	8	Kinshasa/ on-line
Regional WFP/ FAO	12	Goma
NGO - implementing partners		
WFP	5 NGOs	Goma
FAO	5 NGOs	Goma
Nord Kivu Government implementing partner		

FAO	2 Goma
Focus Groups	Goma
Men	11
Women	14
Youth	12
Young mothers	13

550. A final brief was given in Goma to the regional (sub-office) staff of WFP-Nord Kivu and FAO-Nord Kivu on Thursday 05th of October.

551. Given the above fact that the implementation RBA Resilience programme In the DRC was cut short at the end of 2022 because of the occupation of the Rutshuru district by rebels, the main limitation of the analysis is the lack of the 2022 endline survey data. Therefore, the quantitative assessment of results is limited to the period 2017-2019 (and in some cases 2020). As a result, the main appreciation of results, outcomes and impacts are based on the FGD beneficiary interviews, complemented by the KII interviews of FAO, WFP and implementing partner interviews and further supported by the provided documentation.

Niger

552. A significant episode of political unrest in Niger prior to the data collection mission created uncertainty about the accessibility of the program's intervention areas. To mitigate this limitation, data collection was delayed by several weeks and interviews were conducted remotely.

553. This, prior to the data collection mission, the evaluation team met remotely with RBA national and subregional staff to refine data collection choices (selections of sites to visit, categories of beneficiaries to include in FGD and stakeholders to interviewed) and to coordinate the mission logistics.

554. Two members of the evaluation team (National expert and FGD facilitator) spent ten days conducting field work in selected sites within the Programme's implementation areas (the regions of Dogo and Chadakori). Field mission progress was monitored through several meetings organized during the field work between the field work evaluation team, the lead evaluator, and the national and subregional staff of WFP, FAO, and IFAD.

555. As identified with WFP, FAO and IFAD staff, the evaluation team was able to visit six locations of relevance to the Programme: Kouroungoussa, Doumana Ara, Kermo, Bakoum, Daboudji and Agoual Alkali.

556. 12 Focus groups discussions (FGD) were conducted aiming the following demographics characteristics:

Table 22: Beneficiaries FGD characteristics

General population FG composition	RBA Initiative groups FG composition
4 men/8 women (minimum des femmes)	Community committees Farmers/fishermen groups/unions
2 female headed Household (HH) (MIN)	Village Savings and Credit Associations (VSLAs)/Self-Help Groups (SHGs) SHGs/Cooperatives (women-led)
2 HH with children < 5 years (MIN) (including HH beneficiaries of nutrition activities.	Community organizations (CBO; general)
2 HH with school-age children (MIN) (including households that benefited from school feeding activities)	Training participants
2 Pregnant and lactating women/girls (PLW) (MIN) (including households having benefited from community nutrition activities if relevant)	Emergency aid recipients (cash)
2 People with disabilities (MIN)	Relais et maman lumière FARN beneficiaries (community nutrition)
2 People over 65 years old (MIN)	Community committees Farmers/fishermen groups/unions
Women's groups benefiting from IGAs	MMD/Women Grenier (GFS) groups
	Foyer d'Apprentissage et de Réhabilitation Nutritionnelle (FARN) (Learning and nutritional rehabilitation centre)

557. Among the 12 FDG conducted 7 FGD were conducted with a mixed gender group and 5 only with women. The team met 203 beneficiaries including 149 women and 59 men.

Somalia

558. The data collection phase for Somalia included a 2-week field mission to conduct data collection on the RBA Resilience Initiative activities there. This was carried out from 6 – 15 November 2023. The field mission included the Evaluation Team Leader and two national experts.

559. The field mission was designed to collect primary data and information from stakeholders (KIIs) and from the communities in Odweyne and Burco districts, Togdheer Region, Somalia. This included site visits to 7 of the 18 communities to which the Programme was delivered. Communities included a mix of those with highly effective and less effective modalities, as determined by the RBA and validated during the field mission.

560. 14 focus group discussions (FGD) were conducted, exceeding the target of 8 per country as established in the Inception Phase Report. This included 129 participants (66 men & 63 women), including 33 people over 65 years old (20 men; 13 women) and 18 persons living with disabilities (8 men; 10 women.) All participants were from households with children under five or in school aged children. Community committees, farmer groups, training participants, and people who received emergency aid were also represented.

561. This thus constitutes a good and fair representation of Programme participants and communities.

562. The field mission included Key Informant Interviews (KII) with RBA staff, staff from implementing partners, and representatives of national and local governmental authorities. This included 23 KIIs in total, with 9 from national and local governmental authorities, 5 from FAO, 5 from WFP, and 4 from implementing partners. These were combined with KIIs from the inception phase that included RBA related staff from FAO and WFP headquarter offices. These provided a range of perspectives and clarification on key aspects of the Programme.

563. A meeting was conducted with FAO and WFP staff on the last day of the field mission wherein general findings were presented and discussed, including the clarification of key issues that arose during the field visits. A presentation from this country briefing is available upon request.

564. As described in the inception phase report, primary qualitative evidence was derived from Key Informant Interviews (KII; please see list in other Annex) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with community members who had benefitted from the programme.

565. For the latter, the intention was to use the Qualitative Impact Protocol (QulP) that, typically, would include a double-blind approach to the survey. This was not possible from inception as the national experts used for this would invariably know about the programme and its activities, even if this was kept to a minimum. (Please see Inception Phase report included as a separate Annex.) However, it was clear upon visiting communities that they knew that the evaluation team members were there to inquire about the RBA Resilience Initiative. This was inevitable because they were contacted by RBA Resilience Initiative partners to organize FGDs and there were very few other programmes occurring in their communities.

566. Nonetheless, the evaluation team kept to the standard protocol that explored three primary issues (changes in diet; change in food production; changes in women's participation) and the "most significant change" that community members cited for each. Community members were very vol and had a mix of perspectives that they shared, some positive and some less so (even if the overall trend across this qualitative evidence was positive). They also provide examples, un-prompted, that corresponded to Programme activities and other issues within their communities.

567. The diversity of villages, with a mix of participants in the FGDs (representation from women, people living with disabilities, and those over 65 years old); a mix of agro-pastoralists and pastoralists, and the different project activities provided a good mix, if not wholly representative given that only 7 communities were visited. Table 23 below shows the communities, programme activities (including those that were physically inspected), and the demographic data from FGDs.

568. Findings are tempered (thankfully!) to the most recent rainy season. October and November 2023 had significantly above-average drier rainfall in the regions, breaking the historic five season (2020 – 2023) drought.¹⁹⁹ Thus, communities were faring better than in the past. This may have affected their responses, although they still cited various aspects of the very hard times over the last few years. It may have also had

¹⁹⁹ Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit – Somalia. Please visit the FSNAU site [here](#).

a direct effect on some activities, like the maintenance of reservoirs as these were less necessary than during periods of drought although, even here, this was only the case in two of the seven communities visited.

Table 23: Demographic and other information from the 7 communities (14 FGDs) conducted as part of the Somalia field visit

Ceel	Xuma,	Odweyene	(8	November	2023)
- FGD #1: 10 men (ages 20 - 83; 3 over 65 years old; 2 respondents persons living with disabilities)					
- FGD #2: 12 women (4 over 65 years old; 1 PLWD)					
Kitchen and Market Gardens					X
Water catchment committee					X
Farmer Field School					
Fodder					X
Beekeeping					
NRM committee					X
Beerato,	Odweyene	(8	November	2023)	
- FGD #3: 10 men (4 over 65; 1 PLWD)					
- FGD #4: 9 women (2 over 65; 1 PLWD)					
Water catchment committee include berkad					x
Farmer Field School					
Prosopis Fodder					x
Galooley,	Odweyene	(9	November	2023)	
- FGD #5: 10 men (5 over 65; 1 PLWD)					
- FGD #6: 7 Women (2 over 65; 1 PLWD)					
Kitchen and Market Gardens					x
Water catchment committee					x
Fodder					
NRM committee					
Boodhley,	Burao	(11	November	2023)	
FGD #7: 9 men (3 over 65; 2 PLWD)					
FGD #8: 10 women (2 over 65; 2 PLWD)					
KG/MG and Tree nursery;					x
Water catchment committee including berkad					x
Farmer Field School					
Fodder					
Beekeeping					
NRM committee					
Harada,	Burao	(12	November	2023)	
FGD #9: 12 men (2 over 65; 2 PLWD)					
FGD #10: 10 women (1 over 65; 2 PLWD)					
Kitchen Garden					
Shallow wells					x
Mother child centre					
Warcimraan,	Burao	(13	November	2023)	
FGD #9: 8 men (2 over 65; 1 PLWD)					
FGD #10: 7 women (1 over 65; 1 PLWD)					
Kitchen, Market and School Gardens					x
Water Catchment committee and berkad					x
Mother child centre					
Beekeeping					
NRM committee					
SBCC school feeding program					
Naqdabijo,	Burao	(13	November	2023)	
FGD #9: 7 men (1 over 65; 1 PLWD)					
FGD #10: 8 women (1 over 65; 2 PLWD)					
Kitchen Garden					x
Water Catchment					x
Fodder					
Beekeeping					
NRM committee					

569. The raw data from these FGDs are available as a separate Annex.

570. In 6 of the 7 villages, community members were positive about the project and could site various ways it enabled them to respond to the poor rains/crises over the last few years. In Naq dabijo, the project had not completed water catchments or community gardens. This community also lacked a school.

571. Given this, the qualitative data from these FGDs is valid for discerning the most relevant Programme activities related to changes in resilience (as defined for this evaluation) and the most significant changes across the three areas of inquiry.

7.7 FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, & RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Conclusions	Findings
<p>1. The RBA Resilience Initiatives’ approach to the design and performance results frameworks should be used as a model for any future resilience programming. The design was highly participatory, both amongst the RBA and participating communities. The RBA regional and HQ staff and expertise were used to ensure adherence to best practice and common tools and facilitate country-level programming, enabling the country offices to lead the process overall. The Performance Management Frameworks included sound causal analysis between output activities and immediate and intermediate outcomes. They also included specific and measurable targets and a combination of qualitative and quantitative measures, including standard proxy indicators, throughout. This could be strengthened through the inclusion of indicators for gender equality, women’s empowerment, and social inclusion.</p>	<p>Paragraphs 451, 454.</p>	<p>Section 3.1.1. Section 3.1.2.3.1.1 Section 3.2.1.</p>
<p>2. Having a global component to facilitate the design, knowledge, and training on common concepts, approaches, and tools should be maintained for any future RBA multicountry programming. This enabled the RBA to develop a comprehensive common approach and to establish the foundation for working together over a multi-year programme. The RBA should also include lessons and best practices workshops at least annually to improve adaptive programming and results.</p>	<p>Paragraph 451.</p>	<p>Section 3.1.2.</p>
<p>3. Future resilience programming in complicated and dynamic operating contexts should focus on a smaller set of demonstrably effective activities (nutrition, water catchment, market gardens). These should include integrated approaches associated with direct cash support, food security, nutrition, and livelihoods.</p>	<p>Paragraph 458.</p>	<p>Section 3.2.1. Section 3.3.1. Section 3.3.2.</p>
<p>4. Future RBA resilience programming in areas with high levels of food insecurity should use a common set of outcome and impact measurement approaches, like the use of FCS, CSI, and RIMA II, while ensuring that issues like gender and social inclusion are adequately addressed. This combination is a proven and comprehensive approach, with analytical complementarity with the World Bank’s Living Standards Measurement Study approach. The RIMA II also includes modules on a range of issues that affect resilience and while these are combined in its econometric approach to arrive at a single, somewhat reductive, score of resilience, the modules can be separated out (as done by the RBA) to understand which activities had the most demonstrable effects on this resilience score. The RIMA II is also suitably aligned with the comparative experience amongst the RBA and has a needed degree of rigor not available in other approaches.</p>	<p>Paragraph 451.</p>	<p>Section 3.2.1. Section 3.3.1. Section 3.3.2.</p>
<p>5. Resilience programming in complex operating dynamics would benefit from a crisis modifier/draw-down financial mechanism to address the needs of vulnerable communities facing climate shocks. This would enable the RBA to preserve gains or adapt when crises overwhelm communities, as in DRC, and</p>	<p>Paragraph 459.</p>	<p>Section 3.4.1. Section 3.4.2.</p>

to adapt and change programme priorities or modalities when new opportunities emerge or, as intended in the recommendation related to increased community engagement.		
Recommendation 6: Future resilience programmes should adopt a gender approach that includes proven and appropriate methods and frameworks for gender equality and women’s empowerment. Gender-related results varied across the three countries and lessons learnt and best practices may be encouraged to further improve outcomes. Community-based participatory approaches may also be reviewed to enhance gender-related issues.	Paragraph 456.	Section 3.1.2.3.1.1 Section 3.1.4.3.1.1 Section 3.7.1.
7. Future resilience programming should include more consistent community engagement throughout, enabling greater adaptation to needs while also facilitating how communities and other stakeholders overcome obstacles. While the 3PA approach was used to good effect early in the Programme, especially in relation to developing priority activities, KII and evidence from the communities show that any subsequent engagement was intermittent and inconsistent and there were issues associated with conflicts, faulty infrastructure, and women’s empowerment, as identified throughout the report, that were missed because of this lack of engagement.	Paragraph 457.	Section 3.5.3.3.1.1
8. Future resilience programming should include financial analysis regarding the costs of individual and combined activities and their potential return on investment. This would be vital for establishing which activities are best positioned to be replicated or brought to scale, thus distinguishing between those that may be effective but expensive and those that may be less effective but much more cost-effective.	Paragraph 459.	Section 3.4.2.
9. The RBA should expand upon the Knowledge Platform on Emergencies and Resilience (KORE)²⁰⁰ to share knowledge, practices, and insights into what works in terms of resilience programming. This may be strengthened through a dissemination and use plan, ensuring that all RBA country office and other actors are privy to such resources.	Paragraph 454.	Section 3.6.3.

²⁰⁰ Please see the KORE site [here](#).

7.8 LISTS OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

572. The following people were interviewed as part of the data collection phase.

Table 24: List of stakeholders interviewed as part of the data collection phase

Key informant Organization	Country	# of Respondents	Women
FAO Rome	DRC	2	1
WFP Kinshasa	DRC	4	3
FAO Kinshasa	DRC	3	1
WFP Kivu/Goma	DRC	6	3
FAO Nord Kivu	DRC	3	0
WFP Implementing Partners	DRC	5	1
FAO Implementing Partners	DRC	7	2
TOTALS:		30	11
FAO Niger	Niger	6	1
WFP Niger	Niger	5	2
IFAD Niger	Niger	1	0
RBA Implementing Partners	Niger	3	1
TOTALS:		15	4
FAO Somalia	Somalia	5	2
WFP Somalia	Somalia	5	2
Government partners	Somalia	9	0
RBA Implementing Partners	Somalia	2	0
TOTALS:		21	4

7.9 EVALUATION TEAM

7.9.1 DORIAN LAGUARDIA – TEAM LEADER

573. Mr. LaGuardia has over 28 years of experience in humanitarian action and development cooperation and has a track record of 17 years of experience in evaluation. He has 9 years of experience in Somalia as Evaluation Team Leader, Senior M&E Expert, and Emergency Response Manager, and he has worked in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (WFP).

574. As Emergency Response Manager, he managed a sophisticated third-party monitoring programme for UK Aid's £160 million investment to prevent famine during the 2017 food security crisis/emergency and conducted remote data collection for cash transfers across Somalia.

575. Mr. LaGuardia was also the team leader for an impact evaluation of UK Aid's 4-year Multi-Year Humanitarian & Resilience Programme in Somalia, gauging longitudinal changes in food security and resilience through a baseline/midline/endline 2,600 household survey that included the RIMA II and TANGO methodologies along with additional modules on social capital exchange, shocks, and social network analysis. This programme included joint resilience approaches through a UN Joint Resilience Strategy (FAO, WFP & UNICEF) and an NGO consortium led by NRC (BRCiS).

576. Dorian subsequently became team leader for FCDO's next Somalia Humanitarian & Resilience Programme (SHARP) from 2018 – 2022.

577. Given this, he has deep experience in food security, livelihoods, resilience, Somalia, and complex evaluations.

7.9.2 KAREN BAHR - SENIOR EVALUATOR

578. Ms. Bahr has over 20 years of experience as a researcher and as evaluator in aid and development projects with specific expertise in gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) and resilience, with particular focus on evaluations related to food security, nutrition, and humanitarian interventions.

579. Ms. Bahr has an extensive track record in Niger and has completed assignments for clients such as the World Food Programme (WFP), IFAD, Red Cross, CARE International, Save the Children, Oxfam, and the Belgian Ministry of International Cooperation.

580. She was Team Leader/ Senior Evaluator for WFP's "Boosting Rural and Urban Economy in Times of Crisis and Beyond in Nicaragua" Midterm Review. She was also team member for the evaluation of WFP's Support for Enhanced Resilience, undertaking field work in Lebanon, Malawi, and Guatemala (2018). She was a team member for the Strategic Evaluation of WFP's Gender Policy, undertaking fieldwork in Mauritania (2019). She has also worked with WFP in Malawi on the Final Evaluation of Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (2014-2017) which spread across food security, nutrition, and gender.

7.9.3 BERT LOF - SENIOR EVALUATOR

581. Mr. Lof has over 35 years' experience as agronomist/food and nutrition security specialist with extensive knowledge in the fields of evaluation, food security, nutrition, and sustainable agriculture, amongst other subjects.

582. Amongst other experience, he has worked with WFP and UNICEF in Niger and Mali on livelihood resilience and how this corresponds with the humanitarian and development Nexus. He was the team leader for an evaluation of the EU-funded PROMOVE – Nutrição in Mozambique that was designed to improve the nutritional status of children and pregnant and lactating women and that was implemented by UNICEF, ANSA/SUN Civil Society Platform and INS, including the improvement of Nutritional Governance at national, provincial and district levels. He was the team leader for the WFP Country Strategic Plan in Benin.

7.9.4 HAMIDOU GUERO – NATIONAL EXPERT (SENIOR LEVEL)

583. Mr. Guero has 13 years evaluation experience in multiple food security, nutrition, and resilience projects within crisis-related contexts. In partnership with the Government of Niger, he conducted the Evaluation of the Programme of Cooperation Niger-UNICEF (2019-2021), assessing nutrition, food security, and disaster management.

584. Within the nexus of food security, resilience, and agriculture, he was the national consultant in 2022 for the multi-country evaluation of the project “Strengthening the resilience of cross-border pastoral and agropastoral population in priority areas in the Sahel”, funded through the FAO-EU Partnership Programme under the Global Network Against Food Crisis.

585. Holding a MA in Rural Development (2004), two Diploma’s in Tropical Agronomy (2002), and Agricultural Engineering (1995) with specialization in Crop Production, he has proven knowledge in the related fields. Another example thereof is his role as national consultant for the Evaluation of the FAO-funded project “Integrating climate resilience into agricultural and pastoral production for food security in vulnerable areas through the farmers field school approach” in 2020.

7.9.5 AIMÉ MPUTU – NATIONAL EXPERT (INTERMEDIATE LEVEL)

586. Ms. Mputu has 8 years of experience in Development Cooperation with WFP, UNICEF, WHO, UNDP, WB, Humanity & Inclusion (Handicap International), AfDB, and USAID. She has an extensive track record in conducting assignments in protracted crisis contexts in DRC, including consultancy in Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration activities, with a special focus on affected populations such as PWDs, women, and children affected by armed conflict.

587. She conducted semi-structured interviews for the WFP-funded project “Revue Stratégique sur la Faim Zéro en RDC” that addressed food security, resilience, and livelihoods.

588. Her attention to humanitarian principles and issues of social inclusion is exemplified in her work for the Consortium Femme Plus (Femmes des médias pour la justice au Congo, Comité National Femme et Développement, Centre d’études sur la justice et la resolution, Nouvelle société civile congolaise), representing prestigious national institutions dedicated to GEWE. She evaluated the implementation in DRC of “Women’s Economic Empowerment in the Changing World of Work.”

7.9.6 FADUMO YUSUF - NATIONAL EXPERT (INTERMEDIATE LEVEL)

589. Mrs. Yussuf is an expert in data collection and data analysis on Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV). Since 2015, she holds the position of SGBV Manager at the Attorney General Office in Somalia. She has conducted evaluation baseline studies, complex survey design and facilitation/enumeration, analysis of the Theory of Change and results framework, development of performance/impact indicators, and reporting. She has honed these skills especially in her role at the Attorney General Office. There, she supervises M&E programmes and quality standards.

590. As Senior SGBV Programme Coordinator at Benadir Regional Administration, her scope of work target survivors of GBV for which she assessed and analysed protections risks and enhanced access to protection services by means of mapping. Cultural sensitivity was one of the principles she evaluated for the implementation of projects. Within her role as coordinator, she has professionally collaborated with UNHCR and UN-Habitat to enhance outreach.

7.9.7 ZOHRA MERABET – QUALITY ASSURANCE

591. Dr. Zohra Merabet is the founder and executive director of North South Consultants Exchange, registered in Egypt since 1988. She obtained her Ph.D. in Management and Organizational Leadership from the University of Phoenix, Arizona, in 2010.

592. Dr Merabet has over 30 years of experience in Monitoring and Evaluation, Identification, Design, Management and Monitoring of Development Cooperation projects and programmes in the Middle East and Africa and has worked with various international agencies in the Middle East and Africa, including the WFP, FAO, UNDP, UNICEF, World Bank, Islamic Development Bank, GIZ, African Development Bank, European Union, SFD, UNIFEM, MCA and ILO.

593. As Executive Director of NSCE and as Senior Advisor/Back- stopper or Team Leader of a number of multi-disciplinary research, evaluation, studies, training, and economic development missions, she has developed institutional, organizational and managerial skills as well as policy formulation in large-scale projects. In addition, she has accumulated solid knowledge of cross-cutting integration of women, youth, and rural community participation and has 20 years of professional experience as gender specialist.

594. Specific roles and tasks are included in the table below.

Table 25: Evaluation team members' roles and tasks.

Team member	Primary role	Specific tasks within the evaluation
Dorian LaGuardia	Team Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guiding, managing, and representing the evaluation team. - Leading the evaluation missions (especially in Somalia) - Leadership in defining the evaluation approach, and supervising data collection. - Leadership in drafting and revising evaluation deliverables. - Conduct remote data collection. - Conduct data collection in Somalia together with national expert. - Carry out the qualitative data analysis for Somalia. - Review, compare and integrate the senior international experts' country results and reports in the draft overall report. - Lead the communication with the RBA's offices in Somalia.
Karen Bahr	Senior Evaluator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contribute to evaluation approach, methodology, inception report. - Gender equality and women empowerment (GEWE) expert - Manage the communication with RBA's offices in Niger. - Conduct tasks related to data collection in Niger with national expert. - Carry out data analysis and country draft report. - Contribute to the evaluation report. - Support team leader in drafting and revising evaluation deliverables.
Bert Lof	Senior Evaluator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contribute to evaluation approach, methodology, inception report. - Manage communication with the RBA's offices in DRC. - Conduct tasks related to data collection in DRC with national experts. - Carry out data analysis and country draft report. - Contribute to the evaluation report. - Support team leader in drafting and revising evaluation deliverables.
Hamidou Guero	National Expert – senior level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contribute to the methodology in their area of expertise based on a document review. - Conduct field work. - Participate in team meetings and meetings with stakeholders. - Contribute to the drafting and revision of the evaluation products. - Contribute to the understanding of the local context.
Aimé Mputu	National Expert – intermediate level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contribute to the methodology in their area of expertise based on a document review. - Conduct field work. - Participate in team meetings and meetings with stakeholders. - Contribute to the drafting and revision of the evaluation products in their technical areas. - Contribute to the understanding of the local context
Fadumo Yussuf	National Expert – intermediate level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contribute to methodology in their area of expertise. - Conduct field work. - Participate in team meetings and meetings with stakeholders. - Contribute to the drafting and revision of the evaluation products in their technical areas. - Contribute to the understanding of the local context.
Zohra Merabet	Quality Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Input in the design of the research instrument, analysis of findings, and reporting. - Quality control on assignment deliverables. - Participate in the debriefing sessions, initial team meetings. - Ensure that the Assessment of Evaluability and the Evaluation are conducted in accordance with UNEG Norms and Standards. - Provide support to evaluation team and manage back-office support (logistics, report production etc.) - Review all deliverables before submission to WFP. - Liaise with Evaluation Team Leader and team members. - Assure adherence to humanitarian principles and protection issues

595. This team was supported by the NSCE team who provided research assistance, translation services, and facilitated planning and logistics for field missions.

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596. A full contingent of documents was reviewed as provided by the RBA. These are included in a separate share drive.

597. Documents referenced in this report include the following.

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7.11 ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

3PA: Three-Pronged Approach	IFAD: International Fund for Agricultural Development
AAP: Accountability to Affected Populations	INS: Institute of National Statistics
AFCOD: Association of Concessionaires Farmers for Development	IOM: International Organization for Migration
ALNAP: Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action	IP: Implementing Partner
APF: Agropastoral Field Schools	IPC: Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
BRCiS: Building Resilient Communities in Somalia	IYCF: Infant and Young Child Feeding
C2C: Communes de Convergence.	KII: Key Informant Interviews
CBAP: Community-Based Action Planning	KM: Knowledge management
CBI: Cash-Based Interventions	LCSI: Livelihood Coping Strategies Index
CBO: Community Based Organization	M&E: Monitoring and Evaluation
CFS: The Committee on World Food Security	MAD: Minimum Acceptable Diet for children 6-23 months old
CH: Cadre Harmonisé	MAM: Moderate Acute Malnutrition
CNW: Community Nutrition Worker	MCHN: Maternal Child Health Nutrition
CSI: Coping Strategy Index	MDD-w: Minimum Dietary Diversity Score for Women
DEQAS: Decentralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System	MESAF: Ministry of Employment Social Affairs and Family
DRC: Democratic Republic of the Congo	MIN: Minimum
EB: Executive Board	MoAD: Ministry of Agriculture Development
EFFP: Essential Family Practices	MoLFD: Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries Development,
FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization	MoERD: Ministry of Environment and Rural Development
FCDO: The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office	MoNP&D: Ministry of National Planning and Development
FCS: Food Consumption Score	MoWRD: Ministry of Water Resources Development
FFA: Food Assistance for Assets	MUAC: Mid Upper Arm Circumference
FFS: Farmer Field School	NGO: Non-Governmental Organization
FFT: Food Assistance for Training	NRC: Norwegian Refugee Council
FGD: Focus Group Discussions	NRM: Natural Resource Management
FO: Farmer Organization	NSCE: North-South Consultants Exchange
FSNAU: Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit	ODK: Open Data Kit
GAM: Global Acute Malnutrition	OECD DAC: The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee
GAP: Good Agricultural Practices	OEV: Office of Evaluation
GBV: Gender Based Violence	P4P: Purchase for Progress
GEWE: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment	PLW: Pregnant and Lactating Women and Girls
HEA: Household Economy Approach	PLWGs: Pregnant and Lactating Women and Girls
HH: Household	PMF: Performance Measurement Framework
HHDS: Household Dietary Diversity Score	QAS: Quality Assurance Specialist
HPA: Health Poverty Action	QuIP: Qualitative Impact Assessment Protocol
HQ: Headquarters	
ICA: Integrated Context Analysis	
IDP: Internally Displace People	

RBA: Rome-Based Agencies
rCSI: Reduced Coping Strategy Index
RIMA: Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis
SAM: Severe Acute Malnutrition
SHG: Self-help Group
SHARP: Somalia Humanitarian & Resilience Programme
SIDA: The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SAMS: Smallholder Market Access Support
SWALIM: Somalia Water and Land information Management
TANGO: Technical Assistance to NGOs International
TB: Tuberculosis
ToC: Theory of Change
ToR: Terms of Reference

ToT: Training of Trainers
UK: United Kingdom
UN: United Nations
UNCDF: UN Capital Development Fund
UNCT: UN Country Team
UNEG: United Nations Evaluation Group
UNHCR: The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund
UNRWA: United Nations Relief and Works Agency
VSLA: Village Savings and Loan Association
WFP: World Food Programme
WHO: World Health Organisation
WINGS: WFP Information Network and Global Systems
WSC: Water and soil conservation

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