

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 II - Case Studies



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Country Case Study: Democratic Republic of the Congo



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Disclaimer

The views presented in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Rome Based Agencies or any other organization involved in the subject of this evaluation. They are solely of the authors.



Figure 1: Map of Democratic Republic of the Congo

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1 Introduction

1. This case study provides evidence and analysis concerning the Canada/Rome-based Agencies' (RBA) Resilience Initiative "Strengthening the Resilience of Livelihoods in Protracted Crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Republic of Niger (Niger), and Somalia (Somaliland)" (RBA Resilience Initiative; Initiative) in the DRC.¹ This case study is meant to provide information specific to how the RBA Resilience Initiative was conducted in the DRC and any conclusions or recommendations may not apply to the other countries or to the Initiative overall.
2. The RBA Resilience Initiative targets food insecure households (HH) in protracted and recurrent crises-affected regions of the DRC, Niger, and Somalia with a focus on vulnerable women and children. The five-year (April 2017 through March 2022) Initiative meant to capitalize upon the RBA Joint Conceptual Framework for Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition,² wherein the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the World Food Programme (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.
3. The decentralized evaluation of which this case study is part took place at the end of the 5-year RBA Resilience Initiative. While the evaluation will be important for consolidating evidence for accountability to the donor, the RBAs also consider the evaluation critical to informing multi-year joint programming and accountability to the people being served.
4. Expected users of the evaluation are internal (RBA country offices, RBA regional bureaus, RBA headquarters (HQ)) and external (Government of Canada). The RBAs may also wish to share the evaluation's results with other partners and actors.

¹ <https://www.wfp.org/publications/joint-evaluation-rome-based-agencies-resilience-initiative-strengthening-resilience>.

² FAO, IFAD, & WFP. 2015. Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition. A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000062320/download/#:~:text=The%20RBA%20conceptual%20framework%20for,adaptive%20capacity%3B%20and%20transformative%20capacity>.

2 Overview of RBA Resilience Initiative Context in DRC

5. The DRC experiences protracted and recurrent crises, including violence, armed conflict, human rights abuses and violations, and large-scale displacement. These issues are particularly detrimental to the most vulnerable, including women and children and those who have faced repeated displacement. DRC is also amongst the poorest countries in the world. According to the World Bank, 62 percent of the population in DRC, live below 2.15 USD per day (2017 data).³

6. 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 percent of gross domestic product in 1960 to 8.7 percent in 2016.⁴ Most food processing is artisanal and food storage and transformation practices are often inadequate, resulting in loss of produce and nutrients.⁵ 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.

7. This has led to widespread food insecurity and malnutrition. According to The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2022 report, the prevalence of undernourishment in the total population of DRC was 39.8 percent. The prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the total population was 72.3 percent, the prevalence of stunting in children under 5 was 40.8 percent (2020 data), and the prevalence of anaemia in women aged 15 to 48 was reported to be 42.2 percent in the DRC.⁶

8. In 2023 in DRC, of the total 25.8 million people, approximately 3.4 million people were estimated to be in a state of 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: 1) 2.4 million children and 1.7 million pregnant and lactating women and girls (PLWG) are acutely malnourished; 2) 61 percent of women live below the poverty line; and 3) women are 27 percent more likely to experience food insecurity. Nearly 13 million Congolese live with disabilities, disproportionately in areas of conflict.⁷ This situation is found more specifically in Nord-Kivu, where violence and armed clashes are the main causes of displacement, generating significant humanitarian needs. More than 2.1 million people are forcibly displaced in the province of Nord-Kivu, amounting to 36 percent of the total number of internally displaced people (IDP) 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.⁸

9. These crises affect disproportionately women. On the Gender Inequality Index, DRC ranks 151, out of 170 countries.⁹ 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

³ This is based on the standard World Bank poverty indicator.

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/drc/overview#:~:text=DRC%20is%20among%20the%20five.in%20SSA%20lives%20in%20DRC>.

⁴ World Bank. 2017. Republic of the Congo, Poverty Assessment Report. <https://doi.org/10.1596/28302>.

⁵ IBID.

⁶ FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, & WHO. 2022. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World. Rome.

<https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en?details=cc0639en>.

⁷ WFP. 2022. Democratic Republic of the Congo Annual Country Report. <https://www.wfp.org/operations/cd02-democratic-republic-congo-country-strategic-plan-2021-2024#:~:text=Through%20this%20country%20strategic%20plan.support%20peace%20and%20development%20outcomes>.

⁸ UNOCHA. 2023. Democratic Republic of the Congo: North Kivu - Overview of the Humanitarian Situation.

⁹ United Nations Development Programme. 2022. Gender Inequality Index.

land and HH-level decision making, low levels of education, limited financial inclusion, and threats to physical security including gender-based violence (GBV).¹⁰ These inequities, exacerbated by poverty, have an impact on the food and nutrition security of men and women affected by humanitarian crises.

10. 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 IDPs in 2022.¹¹

11. DRC's National Development Plan (NDP) for 2018–2022 incorporates targeted strategies for the achievement of each Sustainable Development Goal (SDG). Informed by the national zero hunger strategic review, the NDP 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 discriminatory family law, limited respect for women's physical integrity, women's restricted access to political space and education, and women's 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: 1) an inadequately diversified economy that is excessively dependent on oil; 2) weak institutions and management of resources; 3) insufficient agricultural production; 4) inadequate access to education and health services; and 5) the negative effects of climate change on natural resource management (NRM).¹²

2.1 Nord-Kivu

12. In this context, the partners¹³ in 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 identified Rutshuru district as one of two geographical areas with the highest level of food insecurity (IPC categories 3 and 4), chronic malnutrition, and risks to natural shocks (floods and landslides). At the time of the RBA-DRC project formulation in 2016/2017, many actors anticipated relaunching development activities as a part of post-conflict rehabilitation in Rutshuru, as the security situation was seen as potentially improving.

13. Rutshuru district is densely populated with about 1.7 million inhabitants (321 per km).² 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 small, varying from 0.5 to 1.0 ha per HH. Though large landholdings do exist, these are often owned by absentee landowners holding their land for grazing purposes.

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

15. At the start of programme implementation in 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 for natural disaster (flooding and erosion).

16. The situation in Nord-Kivu is very dynamic situation. 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 most affected by inter-ethnic conflicts and fighting between the regular army and various armed groups. The situation further deteriorated in March 2022, when the militia group M23 attacked the area. In July 2022, M23 took complete hold of the district. As a result, it is estimated that about half of the

¹⁰ World Bank. 2021. Women's Economic Empowerment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

¹¹ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. 2023. Global Internal Displacement Database.

¹² UNDP. 2018. Bilan commun de pays en République du Congo. Office of the United Nations Résident Coordinateur.

¹³ At this stage IFAD was still fully involved.

local population fled and settled in neighbouring districts, including Goma city. Since then, the situation in the district requires humanitarian action rather than development.

17. The national and provincial governments have impeded provision of food assistance to the population of Rutshuru due to fears that the food might fall into the hands of the rebels. Only complementary food for children under 5 is allowed to be distributed in the district. WFP and other humanitarian organizations still have teams in the district, consisting of nationals. In 2021, WFP made the decision to negotiate access to the district with the local authorities and/or rebel groups, rather than be escorted by UN peacekeepers (United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO)). The anti-MONUSCO spirit in the area made it increasingly difficult to operate.

18. In February 2023, well before the proposed end-of-project in November 2023, WFP and FAO implementing partners were forced to shut down activities in Rutshuru.

2.2 RBA Resilience Initiative

19. Aiming to address people's vulnerabilities before, during, and after crises, the international community's response is guided by the concept of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus. This approach integrates the provision of emergency assistance in response to the humanitarian needs of millions of vulnerable people, development-oriented activities aimed at helping vulnerable populations in becoming independent of assistance and better able to withstand future shocks, and peacebuilding efforts to strengthen social cohesion and peaceful communities.

20. Resilience building aims to address the vulnerabilities underlying humanitarian crises while showing a way to sustainably achieve development goals in highly fragile contexts affected by recurrent shocks and crises. The aim is 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 intricately linked. Livelihood resilience aims to protect and diversify livelihoods, increase productive assets, safeguard against negative coping strategies such as unsustainable use of natural resources or selling of assets.

21. To achieve the SDGs, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls for close coordination among different elements of the United Nations system. In response, the RBAs outlined their collaboration in supporting countries to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda, with special emphasis on SDG 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. In the latest Sustainable Development Report, DRC faces major challenges with SDG scores stagnating or increasing less than 50 percent of the required rate.¹⁴

¹⁴ Sustainable Development Report. <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles/congo-dem-rep>.

3 Methodology, Process & Limitations

3.1 Methodology

22. This DRC case study was guided by the overarching evaluation methodology set out for the RBA Resilience Initiative. (Please refer to the evaluation's Inception Phase Report.) A mixed methods approach was used, centred around in-depth community engagement and proxy indicator review. The evaluation was required to answer seven Evaluation Questions, with 31 associated sub-questions, as set out in the Inception Phase Report. The evaluation uses evaluation criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact (contribution), sustainability, and gender, human rights, equity, and inclusion.

23. The main objective of the field mission was twofold: 1) to interview key actors of WFP and FAO at the national and sub-office level in Goma (capital of Nord-Kivu province) and 2) to hold FGDs 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).

3.2 Limitations

24. The field mission encountered a substantial number of limitations. The security situation in Rutshuru district prevented the mission from visiting and from conducting interviews with beneficiaries according to the planned methodology (using the Qualitative Impact Assessment Protocol (QuIP)). As an alternative approach, a set of 100+ former beneficiaries currently living in and around the city of Goma (with host families or in IDP camps) were identified. With the support of local leaders, beneficiaries were sub-divided into four groupings for the purpose of 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 non-governmental organizations (NGO) partners.

25. A second limitation also related to the security situation. Endline data collection did not take place due to security issues preventing access to RBA Resilience Initiative programme sites and the displacement of beneficiaries. As a result, quantitative monitoring data are only available for the 2017 baseline, 2019 midterm, and (partially) for the 2020 and 2021 midterm monitoring surveys. No further data collection could be done beyond that time.

26. Government staff were only interviewed at the regional level (Nord-Kivu). The agriculture and livestock services – subcontracted by FAO – were interviewed in Goma. At the national level, authorities were not 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.

27. Since QuIP methodology could not be applied, an alternative set of questions was developed to guide FGDs. These questions assessed participation and effectiveness of various programme components as implemented. As a result of the limited number of beneficiaries interviewed and the non-application of QuIP methodology, assessment of attribution of changes to the RBA Resilience Initiative could not be completed as expected. Instead, evidence linking implementation of individual activities to immediate and intermediate outcomes is based on qualitative assessment of beneficiary observations made in FGDs.

28. Given that the implementation of the RBA Resilience Initiative in 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 was limited to the period 2017-2019 (and on a few indicators to 2020 and 2021). As a result, the main appreciation of results, outcomes, and impacts are based on FGDs with beneficiaries, complemented by key informant interviews (KII) with FAO, WFP and implementing partners, and further supported by the provided documentation.

3.3 Process

29. An overview of the number and category of persons met during the field mission is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Overview of persons interviewed

| WFP and FAO staff | Number | Place |
|--|---------------|--------------------|
| 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 | |

30. A final brief was given in Goma to the regional (sub-office) staff of WFP Nord-Kivu and FAO Nord-Kivu on Thursday, 5 October.

4 Findings

4.1 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? (EQ 1.0)

4.1.1 Relevance to vulnerable groups

31. The RBA Resilience Initiative has been implemented in three sections of the Bwisha chiefdom in Rutshuru district targeting a total of 12,000 HHs (or 60,000 persons). In Rutshuru, family plots for agriculture or integrated agriculture-animal husbandry are small, varying from 0.25 hectare on the top of the mountains (high altitudes), to 0.5-1 hectare on the slopes of the mountains and at the bottom of the valleys. Rutshuru has extensive pasture grounds which are often owned by absentee landowners and not accessible to the local population. As a result, access to fertile plots is very difficult, in particular for women. The rural population near forest areas, such as Virunga National Park, make a living by charcoal fabrication and the production of timber.

32. Most rural populations in Rutshuru produce staple foods for home consumption. The main source of income for farm HHs is petty trade (34 percent), daily farm work (29 percent), and sale of farm produce (21 percent). Surplus is sold in local markets or in Goma. Despite the occupation of M23, there are 'transit markets' (ex. Kibamba town) where food and other merchandise are exchanged between Rutshuru and Goma. In Rutshuru, IDPs and population density result in high market prices for food crops.

33. In the FAO/WFP 2018 baseline, most of the population was identified as vulnerable in terms of food security: 47.5 percent were food insecure (14.3 percent severely food insecure), and 33.2 percent were at the limit (based on Food Consumption Score (FCS)). In Rutshuru, main crops are beans (45.7 percent), potatoes (22.7 percent), maize (18.5 percent), and sorghum (11.2 percent). Potatoes are the main source of income from markets. For nutrition security, 69.5 percent have insufficient intake of Vitamin A, 70 percent have insufficient intake of protein, and 100 percent have deficient intake of iron-rich food.

34. The vulnerability of the population clearly emerges from the baseline data. In addition, the structural situation of armed conflict, high land pressure, risk of erosion, high food prices, etc. limit the opportunities to secure availability and access to diverse sources of food. In this context, the RBA Resilience Initiative Theory of Change (ToC) as reconstructed for the Nord-Kivu programme clearly addresses many of the needs of the population (see ToC in Annex 6.3). The activities, expected outputs, and immediate outcomes of the RBA Resilience Initiative are highly relevant to respond to the needs and vulnerabilities of the target population in Rutshuru. The persistent situation of insecurity is also reflected in the design of the Initiative by the inclusion of a social cohesion approach (e.g., Dimitra Clubs).

35. During the start-up phase, WFP and FAO made deliberate efforts to include targeted beneficiaries – as well as local authorities – in the planning of activities. To this extent, in 2017/2018, WFP and FAO utilized their Community-Based Participatory Planning (CBPP) tool for priority-setting and participatory planning. For instance, with regard to the construction of four warehouses for the cooperatives, the population has been actively involved in the site selection. Negotiations with local authorities resulted in provision of land where the facilities (store, offices, sanitary building, small shop, and water supply) were to be built.

4.1.2 Relevance to expected results

36. Overall and intermediate objectives of the RBA Resilience Initiative in the DRC are presented below.

Overall Objective: Increased food security and resilience for populations, especially women and children in targeted regions.

Intermediate objectives:

1200: Increased availability and access to a nutritious, diversified, and stable food supply.

1300: Improved sustainable gender sensitive governance of collective productive resources by relevant authorities and/or other relevant stakeholders.

1400: Enhanced delivery of gender sensitive nutrition outreach activities.

37. These objectives have been translated into a set of main activities (see Figure 2 below) and a set of relevant indicators of success (including targets) have been defined (see Performance Management Framework (PMF)).

38. The main activities of the RBA Resilience Initiative in the DRC relate to five Programmatic Pathways:

1. Social safety nets through cash assistance for community assets through the participation in the construction of four cooperative warehouses, two markets, rural road rehabilitation of 25 km, and reforestation of 110 ha.
2. Increased/diversified income through post-harvest management and marketing of agricultural produce; and income-generating activities (IGA) through village savings and loan associations (VSLA).
3. Improved nutrition, hygiene, and dietary diversity practices through awareness-raising and sensitization.
4. Enhancement of community mobilization and social cohesion through actions such as Dimitra Clubs and the structure of farmer organizations (FO). Literacy classes for adults, mainly female, together with the promotion of IGAs upon completion of the literacy course.
5. Increased agricultural production including livestock by means of Farmer Field Schools (FFS), distribution of animals, vaccination campaigns, etc.

39. Overall, activities intend to be gender sensitive in order to enhance women's access to collective productive resources and community decision-making bodies.

40. The expected results of the main activities are clearly contributing to the achievement of the overall objective as well as the intermediate objectives. Regarding the objective of increased food security, the various dimensions – availability, access, diversity – are clearly addressed. In terms of resilience to overcome shocks, the set of main activities intend to address various factors that may ultimately contribute to resilience, including improved agricultural production and the promotion of opportunities to enter IGAs, including the processing and marketing of agricultural surpluses, and the creation of social safety nets through Cash for Assets (CFA). The nutrition and hygiene component are clearly focusing on the enhancement of good nutrition practices and dietary diversity and activities clearly contribute to the participation of women (including pregnant and lactating women (PLW)) in all aspects of the programme.

41. To measure achievement of activities and intermediate objectives, about 100 output and outcome indicators have been formulated. These indicators and their targets are mostly relevant, clearly defined and realistic; however, this is not always the case. A substantial number of the set of indicators (about 20 percent of all indicators) were already reached (or close to being reached) in the first year of RBA Resilience Initiative programme implementation (2019), which makes the definition and/or target setting of these indicators questionable. For example, the programme data for Output 1211: “#HHs which have access to nutrition-rich crops through the project”, indicates that 12,947 HHs have access (out of a target of 12,950 HHs). This number is based on the assertion that “tools and improved seeds have been made available through the shops”.¹⁵ This is a very broad interpretation of access and the indicator does not specify whether HHs have purchased nutrition-rich crops. Another example of poor definition and target setting relates to Immediate Outcome 1310: “percentage of supported CBOs who have women in leadership positions”. The baseline value was 77 percent (in 2017) and the achievement was 97 percent in 2019. In many FOs it appeared that the treasurer is often a woman as she is trusted by the members. Again, the indicator has not been defined to realistically measure progress on women's empowerment.

¹⁵ Source: RBA Multiyear Indicator Values DRC – xls-sheet; and the corresponding comment explaining the value of the target.

4.1.3 Relevance to frameworks, priorities, principles, and policies

42. It is difficult to assess what specific frameworks, priorities, principles, or policies have guided the design of the RBA Resilience Initiative in the DRC. One guiding policy mentioned is the joint government/United Nations strategy document, International Sectoral Strategy Security and Stabilization in the East of Democratic Republic of the Congo 2013-2017. This strategy includes a chapter on socio-economic recovery of the region which indicates that food security has deteriorated in eastern DRC since 2011. It further indicates that social cohesion and resilience are important pillars of socio-economic recovery and that agricultural development is one of the important contributors to improved livelihoods in the region.¹⁶

43. Both FAO and WFP have based their design of activities on several approaches that they have developed and used previously, including in the DRC. Notably: 1) WFP Purchase for Progress (P4P) approach (now called Smallholder Market Access Support (SAMS)) to purchase food from local producers who have received support for production and marketing. Furthermore, WFP has made use of the SCOPE tool¹⁷ to identify and register potential beneficiaries, and their PCP tool to identify priorities and to enhance community participation; and 2) FAO FFS, VSLA, and Dimitra Club approaches that they have developed and applied in many countries. The latter activities had a strong alignment with FAO resilience priorities at the global level, e.g., the Resilience Fund (*Caisse de Resilience*) as part of the VSLA promotion activity (three boxes).¹⁸

44. There is substantial evidence from KIIs that FAO and WFP worked closely together through their respective resilience units¹⁹ 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 RBA Resilience Initiative made it possible to develop a coherent set of activities to achieve the programme objectives. For instance, the focus of FAO was mostly on FOs and agricultural production, whereas WFP concentrated on the support to post-harvesting, infrastructure, and marketing what was produced. FAO and WFP worked closely together during the implementation period by holding regular coordination meetings in Goma and Kinshasa. Annual progress and final reporting were conducted together.²⁰

45. Both FAO and WFP have a five-year strategy and operational plan which is agreed upon with the national government of DRC. In addition, they are part of the United Nations Country Team which develops a joint United Nations strategy, the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). WFP and FAO also actively contribute to the annual United Nations Humanitarian Response Plans which address humanitarian assistance to the country.

4.2 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? (EQ 2.0)

4.2.1 Coherence with RBA

46. Programme staff from the three RBA Resilience Initiative countries (Niger, Somalia, and DRC) met in Rome to discuss how to replicate the approach to collaboration used in DRC. However, as this approach

¹⁶ Monusco. DRC Stratégie Internationale de Soutien à la Sécurité et la Stabilisation pour l'Est de la RDC 2013-2017. <https://monusco.unmissions.org/en/stabilization-strategy-issss>.

¹⁷ WFP SCOPE is the WFP's beneficiary cloud-based digital information and transfer management platform.

¹⁸ Source: FAO-DRC former Resilience Coordinator.

¹⁹ One KII even called it a "joint unit" working closely together.

²⁰ Sources: KIIs with FAO Rome, FAO Kinshasa, and WFP Kinshasa.

was due to context specific factors in the DRC, it appeared not possible to replicate in Niger and Somalia.²¹ An exchange visit to Niger on Dimitra Clubs has been organized between the three countries.²²

47. The collaboration with IFAD did not materialize despite their initial involvement in programme preparation due to issues with the government of the DRC at that time. Before the start of the implementation of activities, IFAD had to withdraw from the partnership. Their prospected activities were taken over by the two remaining agencies, e.g., FAO took on support for creation of VSLAs.²³ The absence of IFAD in the consortium impacted the intended support to micro-finance organizations and their possible collaboration with the VSLAs.

4.2.2 Coherence with Nexus

48. The RBA Resilience Initiative was carefully designed based on previous WFP and FAO experiences and expertise in linking development activities with emergencies in a post-conflict setting. The Food for Assets (FFA) programme made it possible to address food security needs through cash transfers in a region that has experienced more than 20 years of conflict and food insecurity.

49. The WFP component focused on improvement of food and nutrition security (FNS). Their approach was largely based on SAMS (previously P4P) to support smallholder agricultural production and link farmers to agricultural commodity markets in order to improve access to nutrient-rich food. WFP included their own purchase of commodities for food distribution in the province for the school feeding programme. In addition, WFP was charged with the task of improving nutritional status and beneficiary awareness. However, a direct link to the health sector on nutrition and hygiene was missing in the design.

50. The FAO component focused on increasing agricultural production. In doing so, FAO added several activities related to community organization, reforestation, and the reduction of social conflict.

51. One of the risks initially identified in DRC was that armed conflict and the presence of armed groups could generate increasing insecurity and massive displacement of the local population (which eventually happened in 2022). During the design of the RBA Resilience Initiative – in 2016/2017 – WFP and FAO assumed that the Rutshuru area had potential to recover from earlier shocks (occupation in 2010 and 2011) and was accessible from Goma. This assumption was correct until 2022.²⁴ In order to assure access to the area of Rutshuru, WFP had already changed its strategy and was conducting travel in the region without UN military support. In many cases, NGOs also had staff from the area. The Rwandan genocide of 1994 (and Rwandan refugee crisis in Goma (1994-1996)) has had ongoing impact on the Rutshuru district (and Nord-Kivu generally) and both WFP and FAO paid substantial attention to supporting peacebuilding between the main ethnic groups. The FAO Dimitra Clubs focused on enhancing social cohesion and collaboration between ethnic groups (see para 88 below). This was also the case for the cash-for-work activities (road rehabilitation and forest planting; see below). In the context of Rutshuru, it was obvious that the HDP Nexus was – at least implicitly – a guiding approach for the RBA programme and that FAO and WFP recognized the need to support reconciliation and social cohesion, with the intention to go beyond simply providing humanitarian assistance (as has been a pattern since 1994).

4.2.3 Coherent partnerships

52. Due coherent collaboration between FAO and WFP, the RBA Resilience Initiative has emerged as a platform for donors to finance similar approaches for implementation of an HDP Nexus in eastern DRC.

53. In 2018, with funding from the German Ministry for Development Cooperation (BMZ), WFP and FAO designed a similar two-phased programme in Nord-Kivu (Masisi, Nyaragongo, and Rutshuru districts) with UNICEF as an implementing partner. This decision was based on a lesson learned from the RBA Resilience Initiative in Rutshuru (i.e., that the lack of a strong United Nations nutrition partner was a considerable omission in the set-up of the RBA Resilience Initiative). To some extent, Kinshasa and Goma staff of WFP

²¹ According to FAO Kinshasa KII (former staff) one of the foundations of the good collaboration between the agencies was the personal relationship between FAO and WFP staff members.

²² Source: FAO Rome KII.

²³ Source: FAO-Rome. Results on VSLA are being reported in para 81-84.

²⁴ In 2021, however, the Italian ambassador was killed in an ambush along the main Goma-Rutshuru road.

and FAO were involved in the implementation of both programmes, hence lessons learned could be easily implemented and synergies created (i.e., monitoring indicators or joint field monitoring).

54. At one point, Sweden was interested in creating a Trust Fund with a focus on eastern DRC for the joint resilience unit of FAO and WFP. However, this did not materialize.²⁵

4.3 Expected Results

4.3.1 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? (EQ 3.1)

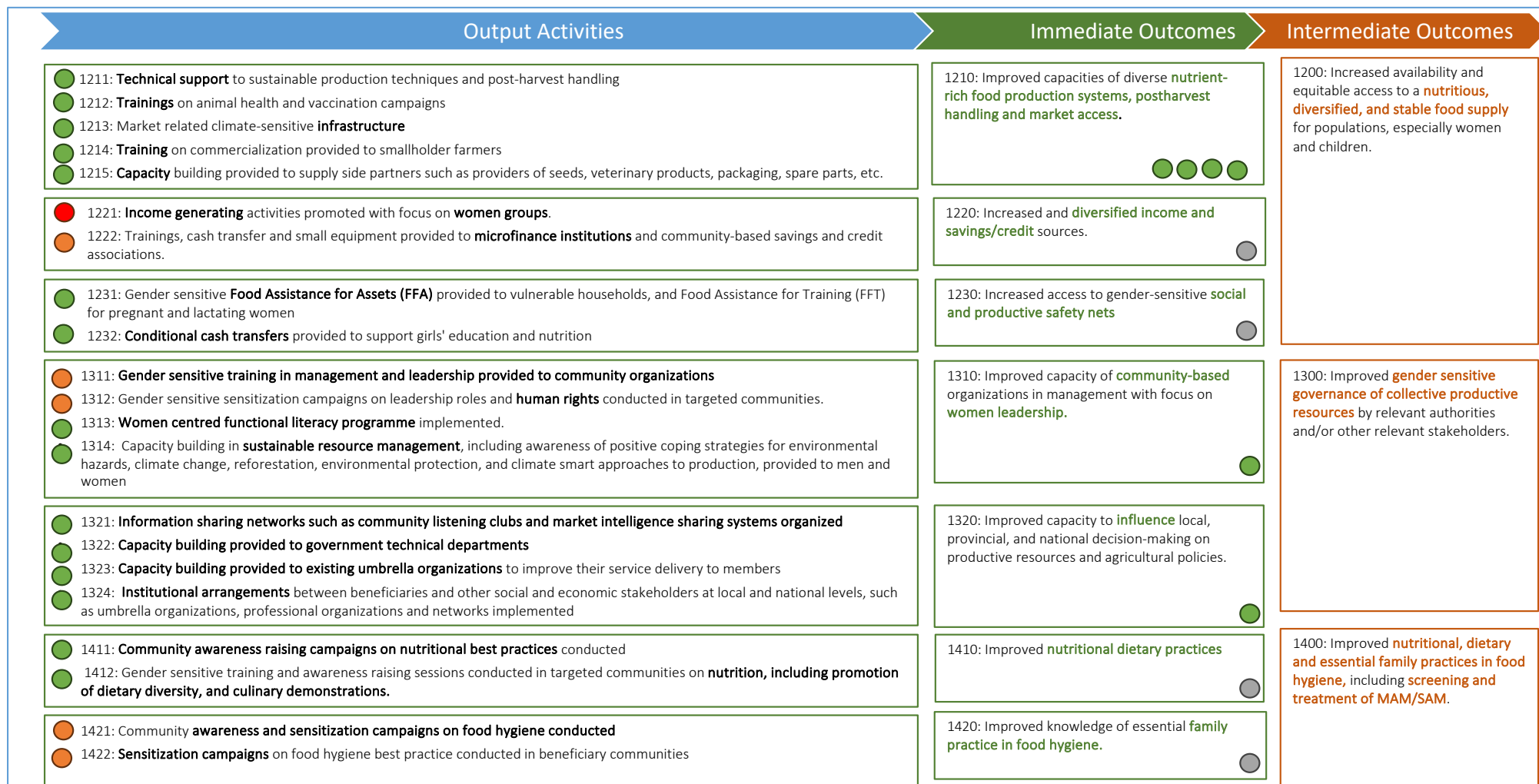
55. The RBA Resilience Initiative in DRC reported that it had achieved 25 out of its 35 output-level activity indicators.²⁶ Several of these indicators were already achieved in 2021. However, because the programme was disrupted by conflict and subsequent displacement in the last two years, along with COVID-19 restrictions, many of the intended activities could not be completed. Besides, the planned final endline survey to assess immediate outcome level results could not take place in 2022 due to lack of security in the region and the displacement of the Rutshuru population.

56. Of 21 output activities (with 35 indicators being monitored), the programme met – or slightly exceeded – targets for 15 indicators. Four targets did not have available data at the time of the endline. For immediate outcome indicators, targets were achieved for all those for which there was available data. (see Figure 2 below).

²⁵ Source: FAO Kinshasa (former staff).

²⁶ The 21 output activities had in total 35 indicators of which 25 are reported to be achieved (see RBA Consolidated Multiyear Indicator Values 2023).

Figure 2: DRC output and immediate outcome level performance



SOURCE: DRC Final Project Close-out Report; PM

57. Regarding direct beneficiaries, targets of the immediate outcomes were particularly met for 1210 Improved Capacities, 1230 Safety Nets through Cash Transfers, and 1410 Improved Nutrition Practices. Capacity enhancement of agricultural production and marketing was confirmed during the FGDs, however the support to livestock rearing through improved animal health (vaccination) was not mentioned as an achievement.²⁷ FGD members confirmed the importance of cash transfers as safety nets and recognized the realization of the transfers. The enhancement of knowledge about nutrition and the importance of nutrition practices was confirmed by the FGDs.

58. Regarding capacity of community-based organizations (CBO) and the enhancement of gender equity (women in leadership positions) and women's empowerment (Outcome 1310), in particular the functional literacy training of women was a great success as well as the training and awareness-raising on sustainable resource management. Quite clearly, the FGDs confirmed that the targets for improved hygiene (1420) were not met.

59. A deliberate effort was made to enhance the participation of women in FOs, unions, and the six cooperatives supported by the programme. As a result, 70 percent of FO members were women, according to RBA reports. However, it should be noted that only one out of six cooperative presidents were a woman. The remaining leadership positions at various levels of the organizations were held by men. RBA Resilience Initiative monitoring data indicate that the percentage of women holding a leadership position is 97 percent since 2019 against 77 percent at the start of the programme in 2017. It should be noted that these results may refer to the increased participation of women in the organization board as treasurers, a position traditionally held by women.

60. The targets of immediate outcome activities on Increased and Diversified Incomes (1220) were reported not to have been met. However, this was only in quantitative terms. During the FGDs, the support to IGA (1221 IGA) by women was considered to be one of the very successful activities, as well as the support to the VSLA (1222). Despite the fact that both activities were a great success, the individual targets were not met due to external reasons. At the end of the literacy activity, the last 1,000 participating women did not receive their IGA support since they were displaced and could not be reached. A total of 3,000 participating women received their contribution prior to the time of their displacement.

61. RBA partners encountered major problems adjusting activities after displacement of beneficiaries. Beneficiaries were dispersed to different places (but mostly to the town of Goma), with some beneficiaries (a small portion) being recognized as IDPs eligible for food assistance by WFP. WFP and FAO were able to maintain contact with some (representatives of) beneficiaries.

62. All activities were discontinued after the occupation of Rutshuru district and the displacement of beneficiaries at the end of 2022. However, WFP and FAO indicated that they 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 to make payments due for cash-for-work activities (FAO). One year after activities were discontinued both organizations indicated that it appeared very difficult to effectuate those payments. FGD participants indicated that they would like support to be continued during their displacement. Some of them reported that they managed to plant crops in their new location, during the agricultural season without any further support from RBA-partners after the end of 2022. They also mentioned that they would like FAO and WFP to resume humanitarian assistance programming once they can return to their homes.²⁸

4.3.2 To what extent has the RBA Resilience Initiative achieved its intended outcomes as defined in the performance measurement frameworks? (EQ 3.0)

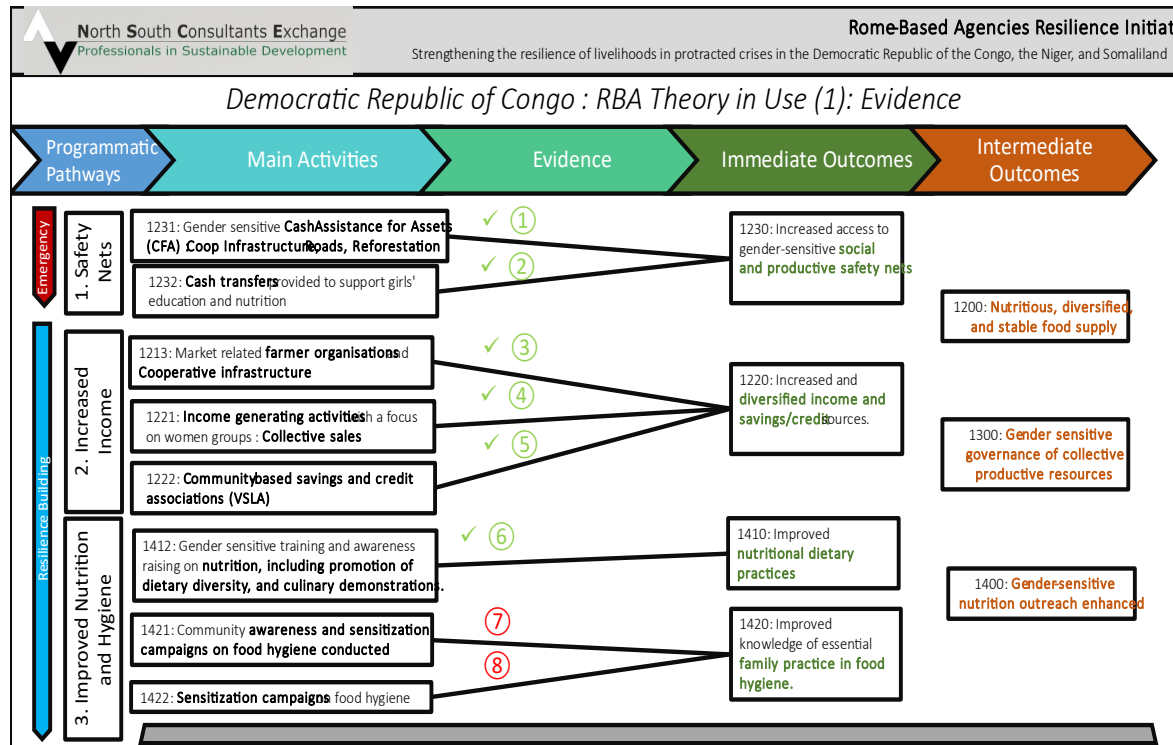
63. At the start of the programme, WFP registered 12,947 (target 12,500) HHs in the SCOPE system. These were the prime beneficiaries of the RBA Resilience Initiative. The full targeting and registration process took almost a full year (2017-2018). As a result, most activities started towards the end of 2018 and in the beginning of 2019.

²⁷ Apparently, the direct RBA Resilience Initiative beneficiaries do not keep livestock. In an interview, the IPEL (Inspection de Pêche et Elevage; Government Service for Livestock and Fisheries) reported implementing the vaccination campaign, but has apparently reached out to other groups than the direct RBA Resilience Initiative beneficiaries.

²⁸ Source: FGD (Men) and FGD (Women).

64. Figure 3 below provides an overview of the main activities as implemented during the period 2019-2022 and the causal links of evidence of their contribution to the achievements of the immediate outcomes. The numbers refer to the text below where the indication of the programme contribution is presented aggregated for each of the five RBA Programmatic Pathways.

Figure 3: RBA theory in use and the causal linkages of evidence Pathways 1-3



Green dot = positive evidence; Red dot = no conclusive evidence

4.3.1.1 Pathway 1: Safety Nets

65. **1) Cash Assistance for Assets:** The RBA programme has substantially contributed cash assistance to HHs for building assets: 1) building four storage infrastructures for four out of six cooperatives²⁹ which provided services to members; 2) rehabilitation of two rural roads (a total of about 26 km); 3) reforestation of about 110 ha of a hill prone to erosion; and 4) two markets. In total more than 3,500 HHs have benefited, receiving 3 USD per day (or USD 66 per month).

66. According to the output indicator, 3,220 people³⁰ worked in FFA activities (payment in cash), of which 2,500 worked as part of the road rehabilitation in 2022. During the four FGDs, 31 of 50 participants (62 percent) indicated that they had participated in FFA activities, half of which were women. Beneficiaries pointed to a range of benefits for the community, indicating that the road construction had significantly improved access to the cooperative warehouses and that traders have started to arrive in their villages to purchase agricultural produce.³¹ The transport price to reach the nearest marketplaces has halved. Moreover, they testified that it had become much easier to evacuate sick people to the nearest hospital. At the individual level, they mentioned that the cash received assisted them to pay for HH expenses, such as school fees or health costs, but also for the purchase of food items. Similarly, FGD participants (4 out of 11 men) indicate the usefulness of the reforestation activity. According to them, the reforested hill was prone to erosion and there was high risk of a mud slide impacting nearby village.

²⁹ Two warehouses were already constructed under an earlier (Belgian) project.

³⁰ Unfortunately, no disaggregation by sex is available.

³¹ According to WFP, traders would also come from Uganda (source: WFP road engineer).

67. About one quarter of the overall beneficiaries participated in FFA activities and both communities and individual HHs could point at benefits, suggesting a positive impact of cash assistance to increase access to social and productive safety nets. FGD testimonies about women's participation in the activity may indicate that implementation of the activity had a gender-sensitive³² approach.

68. One main challenge is that 1,000 beneficiaries who participated on the road construction (WFP) and beneficiaries who worked on the reforestation activity (FAO) have not been paid all the money they are owed. This is the result of the rapid displacement that occurred when the M23 attacks started. WFP claims that it is very difficult to trace the beneficiaries who have left the area and have settled elsewhere. FAO indicates that they have finalized the list of beneficiaries and are planning to make the final payments once the list has been completed and approved. Another challenge is that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, construction of the last cooperative warehouse and market were delayed till 2021 and had barely started functioning when the M23 attacked the area mid-2022.

69. **2) Cash transfers to support girls' education:** A total of 100 vulnerable girls³³ received USD 30 per month for a total period of nine months to pay for school fees. The money was transferred to parents and could be used as needed. In a KII, one implementing NGO³⁴ stated that the activity was successful since there was zero school drop-out among beneficiary girls. There was no access to quantitative data to verify this statement. The activity was completed in 2021 and not continued despite positive outcome.³⁵ Members of FGDs did not comment on this activity, other than noting that they were aware of assistance.

4.3.1.2 Pathway 2: Increased Income

70. **3) Cooperative organization and infrastructure:** Organization of programme beneficiaries into groups (FOs, unions, and cooperatives) was the main entry point of the programme. As indicated above, four warehouses³⁶ and accompanying infrastructure to be managed by the cooperatives, as well as two markets, have been constructed with the support of the RBA Resilience Initiative. The purpose of the warehouses is to provide cooperatives with a place to collect, dry, store, and sell agricultural produce whilst minimizing post-harvest losses (see also Outcome 4). The marketplaces were supposed to be managed by the local authorities. WFP and FAO have split the responsibilities (including the funding) for the specific infrastructure. To develop capacities to manage the cooperatives, training was given in management of assets and infrastructure, accounting and business plan development, as well as post-harvest handling for the six agricultural cooperatives. Exchange visits to Rwanda and Burundi furthermore assisted the leaders to get acquainted with the achievements of cooperative organizations in these countries. In two cooperatives, additional mills have been installed for milling of grains. Tricycles (approximately 24) were distributed for transport of commodities to the central warehouses. However, these broke down after a very short period of operation: "they were of very poor quality".³⁷

71. One challenge observed with the programme approach of centering most activities around FOs, is that this prevented inhabitants who were not registered in SCOPE to join the programme at a later stage. While there are obvious reasons for maintaining this rigid approach (planned number of beneficiaries was 12,500), this made it difficult to include more vulnerable people. At the start of the project there was ambiguity among potential beneficiaries about the purpose of the project. One key informant mentioned that at the start of the programme, community members thought that it would be "another emergency programme".³⁸ As a consequence, some community members declined to be registered as a beneficiary.

³² WFP road engineer claims that about 60 percent of beneficiaries were women.

³³ The monitoring data (output 1232) only indicates the number of girls having received the assistance, but does not indicate the corresponding achievement of school retention.

³⁴ BIFERD interview (30 September 2023). Unfortunately, there are no quantitative data available to verify the statement.

³⁵ The exact reason why the activity was discontinued is not known. One NGO indicated that there was a budget constraint.

³⁶ At the start of the programme in 2018, two warehouses had already been constructed in the context of an earlier Belgian development project. These warehouses have served as an example for the design of the other warehouses of 2300 tonnes capacity.

³⁷ Sources: FAO, WFP. 2023. RBA Resilience final project report, draft. FGD (Men). October 2023.

³⁸ Source: FAO Goma.

72. **4) IGA:** Linked to the construction of the warehouses, farmers were encouraged to organize for collective sales. Farmers were invited to organize into FOs (220 FOs established), FO unions (71 unions created), and six cooperatives. Through this chain of organizations, farmers were able to collectively approach traders and negotiate prices. Up to 2022, the cooperatives were able to sell around 1,514 metric tons (MT) to regional and local buyers. Additionally, the cooperatives were able to deliver 3,133 MT of maize and beans to WFP for the school feeding programme in Nord-Kivu.³⁹

73. Participants of FGDs indicated that there was potential in collective sales given the high demand for food in Goma town and the good prices they were able to get (it was mentioned that prices doubled from 50 USD to 100 USD per bag). Storage of maize and beans for one to two months made a big difference. However, the pathway was cut short because of the occupation by M23 of the area, and the looting of cooperatives. The two remaining operational cooperatives are still active, but producing very little.⁴⁰

74. Main challenges reported were the delay in payments by WFP for the food delivered (sometimes months after delivery due to bureaucratic procedures) and the lack of support from the government in providing tax exemption for the cooperatives. Another challenge mentioned by the FGD of women was that once the grains had been delivered to the cooperative, in case of need, they could not be retrieved.

75. **5) Community-based VSLA:** This activity was attractive to women participating in FOs. In 2020, about 45 percent of all FOs had a VSLA, with 90 percent of participants being women (an estimated 3,000 people were involved in approximately 100 VSLAs). One innovation was the introduction of a 'blue coffer' (*Caisse bleue*), a money box to save money for setting-up group activities to generate income.⁴¹ VSLA participants indicated FAO promised support, but this did not happen. It is unclear if the blue coffer has been effective and operational.⁴² Participants of the FGD with women indicated that VSLAs allowed them to obtain credit to start an IGA. Examples include purchase of a pig, cow, or a goat for rearing and selling; purchase of a small track of land; and petty trade activities.⁴³

76. Small IGAs clearly indicated a certain level of autonomy for women to handle their own money and make decisions about expenditures, though the women mentioned that they inform their husbands about their income and expenditures. Overall, the women considered the possibility of starting an IGA through the VSLA as an important activity, but unfortunately the VSLAs stopped operating after they fled to Goma.

77. Main challenges that were mentioned were the non-delivery of conditional transfer of breeding animals such as goats by FAO for the VSLAs (only 11 percent received). Furthermore, the full target of 50 percent has not been reached due to the late identification of an appropriate NGO to support the establishment of VSLAs and the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

78. Overall, the Income Generation Pathway has been successful. Male beneficiaries indicate the success of collective sales through the cooperatives, whereas female beneficiaries point to VSLAs as a main entry point for income generation, as well as its contribution to financial independence.

4.3.1.3 Pathway 3: Improved Nutrition and Hygiene practices

79. **6) Nutrition:** Two WFP partners have implemented a wide range of nutrition and hygiene related activities to promote good practices. The activity also included the cash transfer of 100 USD to 500 PLW in order to improve their diet. Moreover, about 3,000 families were sensitized on good nutrition practices, whereas children were screened on acute malnutrition and if needed referred to a health clinic. Additionally, men were sensitized and encouraged to attend cooking demonstrations and to attend prenatal visits; 124 infant and young children feeding (IYCF) groups were established for pregnant women and mothers of infants or young children to learn about good nutrition practices; and 88 listening groups have been formed to learn from radio broadcasts about nutrition. Figure 4 below presents the changes observed in adoption of improved nutrition practices for the period 2017-2019.

³⁹ Sources: FAO, WFP. 2023. RBA Resilience final project report, draft. RBA Multiyear indicator values DRC (Outcome indicator 1220).

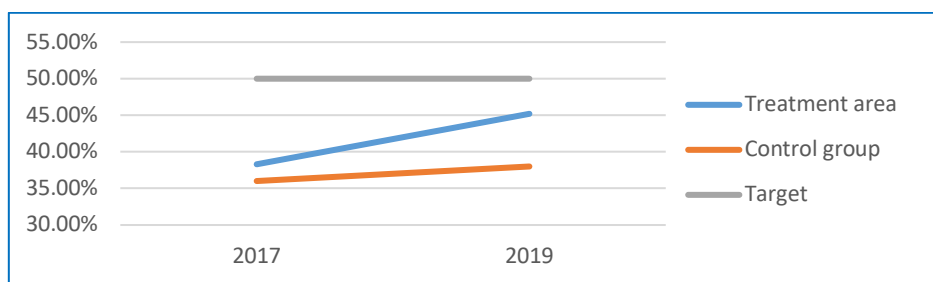
⁴⁰ Source: FAO, WFP. 2023. RBA Resilience final project report, draft. FGD (Men). 2 October 2023.

⁴¹ Source: Interview CIPSOPA. 2 October 2023.

⁴² Source : FGD (Men). 2 October 2023.

⁴³ Source: FAO, WFP. 2023. RBA Resilience final project report, draft. FGD (Women). 3 October 2023.

Figure 4: Beneficiary HHs who adopted improved nutritional dietary practices



Source: RBA multiyear indicator values DRC (Immediate Outcome 1410)

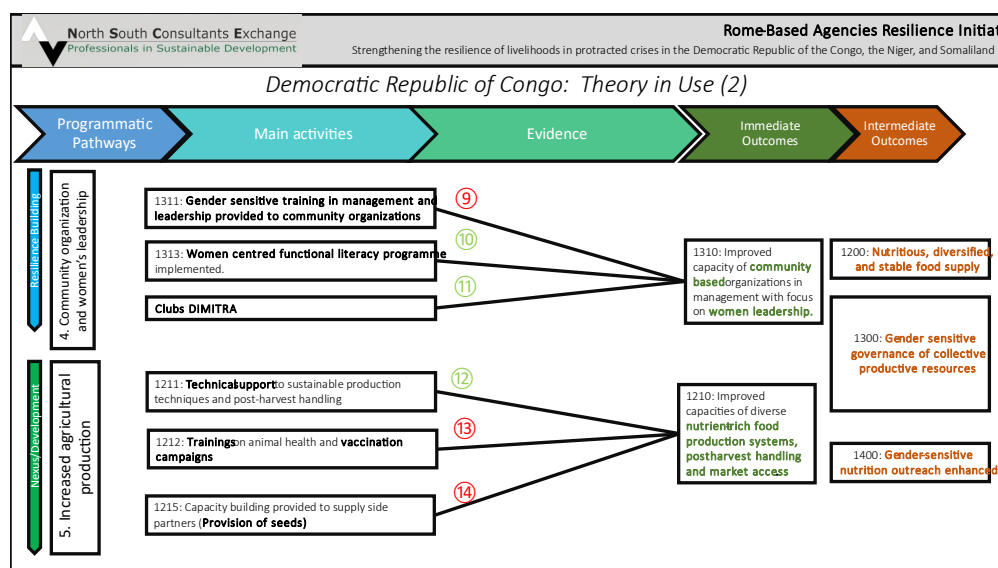
80. Although considerable improvement has been observed, the lack of 2022 endline data makes it difficult to assess progress in quantitative terms over a longer period. Nevertheless, the FGDs indicate positive changes in terms of awareness of the importance of a balanced diet and good nutritional practices for infants and young children based on cooking demonstrations. They also mentioned the radio programmes that men attended to learn about the importance of good nutrition practices and how to prepare porridge for young children. It was indicated that malnutrition levels had diminished substantially: “Now six months may pass without going to the clinic with one of the children”⁴⁴

81. One of the main challenges, however, was that WFP nutrition tools (e.g., image box) were not aligned with the one used by the health centre and their affiliated health animation cells. Together with the lack of a formal link to the health authorities, this created some mistrust.

82. **7) and 8) Hygiene:** Good hygiene practices were rarely mentioned (e.g., hand washing was mentioned once during FGD interviews). No sensitization campaign on food hygiene was mentioned, despite the fact that RBA Resilience Initiative monitoring records indicate that three campaigns were conducted.⁴⁵

83. The results of the Improved Nutrition and Hygiene Practices Pathway (see Figure 4 above) appear to have contributed to a better understanding of the importance of nutrition-rich food and a balanced, diverse diet, but very little with respect to good hygiene practices.

Figure 5: RBA theory in use and the causal linkages of evidence Pathways 4-5



⁴⁴ FAO, WFP. 2023. RBA Resilience final project report, draft. FGD (Men; Women). 03 October 2023.

⁴⁵ FAO, WFP. 2023. RBA Resilience final project report, draft. FGD (Men; Women; Youth; Young mothers). RBA Multiyear Indicator Values DRC (Outputs 1421 and 1422).

Green dot = positive evidence; Red dot = no conclusive evidence

4.3.1.4 Pathway 4: Community organization and women's leadership

84. **9) Gender training for management and leadership:** A deliberate effort has been made to enhance the participation of women in FOs, unions and the six cooperatives. It is recorded that about 70 percent of the FO members are women. One out of the six cooperative presidents is said to be a woman, but overall, the leadership positions at the various levels are mainly taken up by men. Of the 50 FGD participants, their positions were recorded as such: 7 of 11 men were 'president' of cooperatives or a VSLA, and 3 of 12 youth participants (all male) had a leadership position. None of the women nor young mothers indicated that they were in a leadership position.⁴⁶

85. The RBA monitoring data indicate that the percentage of women holding a leadership position is 97 percent since 2019 against 77 percent at the start of the programme in 2017. It should be noted that these are most likely women holding the treasury position as this position is traditionally held by women.⁴⁷

86. Overall, it can be stated that the participation of women in the CBOs is good, but their role in leadership positions is rather marginal despite active attention by the programme.

87. **10) Functional literacy programme:** About 3,860 people (of which 90 percent are women) have participated in the literacy programme. This is well above the initial target of literacy for 1,000 beneficiaries. According to the FAO and WFP RBA Final Report (draft), just over 50 percent of the participants have achieved literacy in reading and writing and 53 percent in calculations.⁴⁸ Women who completed the literacy cycle were provided with a kit for off-farm IGAs worth USD 100. These kits were in-kind, in accordance with the wish of the individual beneficiary. The women who already have received this kit, have mostly used it for developing IGAs. However, about half of the women attending literacy classes have not yet received their kit, mainly due to the onset of the occupation by M23.

88. The FGD participants⁴⁹ indicated that they were very satisfied with the results of the literacy classes. In a relatively short period (about 6 months) they were able to become literate. Many (including elderly women) claimed that they never had had the chance to go to school and learn reading, writing, and calculating. Many testify that with the acquired calculation skills and the IGA kits they were able to start small IGAs (see also Outcome 4 above), but also participate more actively in the VSLA. Participants regret that the last course could not be finalized. They also indicate that there are many more who are interested in attending.⁵⁰

89. The combination of literacy classes and the IGA kit of USD 100 has appeared to be very stimulating for women to become literate and to start small businesses.

90. **11) Dimitra Clubs:** Through one of the FAO implementing partners about 150 Dimitra Clubs have been established to improve the capacity of community organizations for the sustainable management of collective resources. This approach is part of the FAO strategy to enhance the social empowerment agenda. In Rutshuru, each club consists of about 25 members who are invited to identify specific problems and try to find solutions. An exchange visit to Niger has been organized to learn from their experience. Dimitra Clubs bring different ethnic groups together in Rutshuru, thus contributing to the peace pillar and focusing on sources of tension. FGD participants were positive about the approach of the clubs, as one participant said: "we have learned to work for ourselves". Actions that were mentioned include: work on cleaning the marketplace or maintenance and repair of roads. One aspect specifically mentioned was the resolution of local conflicts between ethnicities, thus contributing to social cohesion.

⁴⁶ Source: FGD registration forms. 3 and 4 October 2023.

⁴⁷ Source: RBA Multiyear Indicator Values DRC (Outcome 1310); CIPSOPA KII interview.

⁴⁸ One of the implementing NGOs claims that literacy levels achieved are 71.6 percent for reading and 76.6 percent for writing (source: LOFEPACO interview 30 September 2023).

⁴⁹ Of the participants, 2 men and 8 women; 4 male youth and 9 young mothers (or 46 percent) have participated in the literacy courses.

⁵⁰ Source: FAO, WFP. 2023. RBA Resilience Final Project Report, draft. FGDs (Men; Women; Youth; Young mothers). 3 and 4 October 2023.

91. According to the FAO team, there were several challenges related to Dimitra Clubs. The process is time-consuming and rather costly and needs very experienced facilitators who know how to bring people together to discuss (real) priorities. As a result, the Dimitra Club approach is difficult to scale.⁵¹

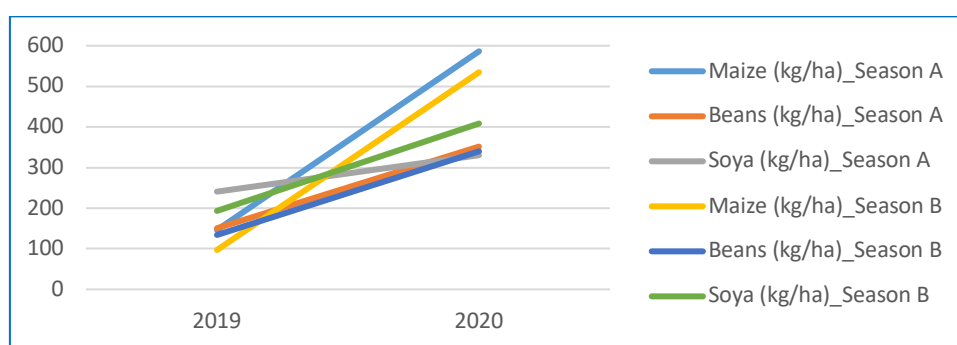
92. Overall, Pathway 4 of Community Organization and Women’s Empowerment appears to be a successful approach to enhance resilience through developing activities that are specifically targeting women and their role in the communities. The approach of directly addressing female literacy and enhancement of their business capacities appeared to be relevant and satisfactory as the activity addressed a main barrier for women to actively participate in their communities: low literacy levels.

93. In terms of social cohesion, the various activities of this pathway, as well as the organization of the RBA Resilience Initiative beneficiaries into FOs (Pathway 2), significantly contributed to closer collaboration between members of different ethnic backgrounds; which is beneficial since ethnicity has been the cause of many conflicts in eastern DRC since the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

4.3.1.5 Pathway 5: Increased Agricultural Production

94. **12) Technical support to sustainable production:** The RBA Resilience Initiative has made a substantial effort to improve agricultural production. The following figure shows that for the two years that monitoring data are available, progress in yields has been substantial from 2019 to 2020.⁵²

Figure 6: Percentage of variation of production of targeted nutrition-rich foods: maize, beans, soybeans



Source: RBA multiyear indicator values DRC (Immediate Outcome 1210)

95. FO members learned improved techniques and practices in farming through FFS. In close collaboration with the provincial agricultural service (about 30 technicians), facilitators were trained and supervised. Through field demonstrations and observations, improved techniques (such as seed selection, proper sowing density, appropriate staking period, frequent weeding, etc.) were introduced and adopted by many farmers. It is claimed that farm HHs have expanded their cultivated land from around 0,2-0,4 ha to 0,57 ha because of the success of the improved practices. Technical support was also given to vegetable production in the lower-altitude marshes of the area. FAO states that on average, participating HHs were able to produce 663.7 kg on an average of 2.8 hectares of marsh lands. FGD participants indeed confirmed that through the agricultural trainings and FFS demonstrations they were able to increase their production.⁵³

96. One other activity to increase agricultural production was the component to enhance access to unused land. Access to land represents a major challenge for smallholders because land is mostly owned by large male landowners. Through the programme, owners of large tracks of land (often absentee cattle keepers) were linked to farmers (including women) interested in land rental. Several workshops were organized by an FAO implementing partner to facilitate bilateral agreements and to come to a social pact on land. Share cropping arrangements between land owners and smallholder farmers were created. Initially three agreements were signed in three chiefdoms (*chefferies*) regarding access (indicating the

⁵¹ Source: FAO former CO staff member.

⁵² It should be noted that 2019 was a relative bad agricultural year due to the perseverance of drought, in particular in season A.

⁵³ Source: FAO, WFP. 2023. RBA Resilience Final Project Report, draft. FGD (Men).

rental conditions).⁵⁴ In the end this did not materialize as landowners were afraid that the use of their land over several seasons would allow renters to make a claim on the land. Additionally, the start of the occupation by M23 made further talks redundant for the time being.⁵⁵ Consequently, the last two planned workshops could not take place and land owners have fled to Goma.

97. One of the challenges which was addressed as part of the negotiations between landlords and farmers was the invasion of cropped fields by livestock. The intention of the negotiations was to move towards zoning of grazing and agricultural lands. One idea was to create barriers to protect invasion by animals, which was estimated to cost about USD 100,000; FAO was not able to finance this. As an alternative, FAO introduced a 'Strategy against animal invasion' but this was not always successful as a separation of zones was not possible (even GIS experts contributed to zoning efforts).

98. **13) Animal health and vaccination:** The RBA Resilience Initiative monitoring indicates that two-thirds of FOs were trained on animal health and almost 100,000 animals have been vaccinated (2019-2021).⁵⁶

99. There is little evidence that this activity has had a major impact on livestock production. During FGDs, none of the participants mentioned the training or vaccination as a result of the programme. It appears that the vaccination campaign was extended to all animals in the zone, not just for the RBA programme beneficiaries to be more effective. However, few beneficiary HHs have larger livestock. As a result, it is quite likely that the herd-keeping pastoralists with substantial numbers of cattle have mainly benefited. At a later stage, small livestock and poultry were included. FAO was supposed to distribute small livestock such as guinea pigs or rabbits, but FGD participants indicated that despite the promises made they had never received these animals. According to FAO this was mainly due to the lack of suitable stock.⁵⁷

100. **14) Provision of seeds:** Right from the start of the programme, the members of the farmer groups received batches of seed, farming tools, and other inputs to be sold through the six cooperative shops. However, FGD participants indicated that these were poor quality seeds that were not adapted to the high altitudes of the Rutshuru hills close to the Virunga National Park.⁵⁸ An additional activity promoted by the FAO was the local multiplication of good quality seeds. FAO has organized four multiplier groups in Rutshuru. Seed inspection and certification was done by the official government organization. However, the basic seeds arrived very late, and at the end of 2022 not all cooperatives had received the seeds for multiplication. During the first season in 2022, about 70 tons of seed were produced and partially sold through local agricultural fairs. The second season production (March 2023) was stolen by the rebels.⁵⁹

4.4 How efficient was the partnership of the RBAs in view of implementing the joint multi-year Resilience Initiative and leveraging further resources? (EQ 4.0)

4.4.1 Efficiency of governance and oversight

101. FAO and WFP have been able to govern the implementation of the RBA Resilience Initiative in a relatively efficient way. There have been regular coordination meetings at the regional level (by their respective offices in Goma) as well 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. Several times it was mentioned that there was a good

⁵⁴ FGD (Men) indicated : « Seulement un individu peut louer mais un OP non. Les concessionnaires ne veulent pas louer de la terre comme ils ont peur de louer aux OPs pour une longue durée. La FAO a organisé un atelier avec des concessionnaires sur les modalités de location. Les participants de l'atelier n'ont pas pu formuler un compromis. Il n'y pas de contrats signés. La solution suggérée par le FGD est d'établir un 'contrat saisonnier ».

⁵⁵ Source: Association of Concessionaires Farmers for Development (AFCOD) interview. 2 October 2023.

⁵⁶ Source: RBA Multiyear Indicator Values DRC (Output 1212): March 2019 6, 744 respectively. December 2021, 92,971 animals.

⁵⁷ Source: FAO, WFP. 2023. RBA Resilience Final Project Report, draft.

⁵⁸ Source FAO, WFP. 2023. RBA Resilience Final Project Report, draft. FGD (Men).

⁵⁹ Source: FAO Goma staff interview. 4 October 2023.

support from the respective headquarters in Rome.⁶⁰ A joint monitoring and reporting system certainly contributed to the efficiency of programme results measurement.

102. Based on the division of tasks, each of the agencies was responsible for tendering, contracting, and supervision of the NGO partners responsible for the implementation of most of the activities in the communities. Many of the NGOs had already worked together with the agencies and knew the area. This contributed to a level of trust. Joint monitoring visits by FAO and WFP to supervise the implementation of activities further contributed to the trust and understanding of the difficult conditions of implementation. However, the lengthy process of contracting may have slowed down implementation, since NGO contracts had to be renewed every year and authorization had to be given by the country offices (or higher up).

103. One of the outstanding features of the collaboration was the flexibility of the project implementation. Whereas the PMF was clearly defined and agreed around 2018, at a later stage new targets and even new activities were incorporated. For instance, the original target of providing literacy courses to 1,000 beneficiaries was quadrupled as a response to the overwhelming interest of (mainly female) beneficiaries to take part in the activity. Likewise, new activities were introduced during the programme, such as the reforestation of 110 ha of eroded land (safety net), the effort to enhance access to unused land, as well as the introduction of Dimitra Clubs. All these activities had not been planned for by WFP or FAO and were responding directly to felt needs of the beneficiaries.

104. On the other hand, it was observed that WFP and FAO encountered considerable problems when faced with necessity to switch from development mode to humanitarian mode after the displacement from Rutshuru of most of the beneficiaries. Of course, beneficiaries who registered as refugees in camps were eligible for support similar to any other IDP. Nonetheless, during the FGD meetings, the participants clearly indicated that the relationship built up between Rutshuru inhabitants and WFP and FAO was one of trust. They expected that as RBA Resilience Initiative beneficiaries there would be more additional attention to their needs and to their wish to prepare for resumption of (certain) activities once they could return to their homes. Some of the beneficiaries who temporarily returned to their communities to till the land indicated that they would have liked assistance to obtain seeds and other inputs as they had lost most of the necessary items to produce.

105. 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 seeds, had direct implications on the timely achievement of results. Issues to ensure that there is a constant synergy between the two agencies have been reported: later – since 2020/2021 – coordination between the agencies became less, mainly due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

106. Lastly, enrolment of beneficiaries and their registration in SCOPE was an issue as it was time-consuming and appeared later on to be less flexible. As earlier indicated, not all community members could become a member. Either they did not want to register in the beginning due to other expectations about the programme or they were too late to register, e.g., to participate in the FFS, VSLA, or literacy activities. This had to some extent negative effects on the relationship between the project implementors and potential beneficiaries. As such, the targeting approach was contradictory to the resilience objective as the targeting on vulnerability was mainly with a HH focus and not a community focus. Only registered HHs could, for instance, participate in the asset creation for the communities (infrastructure, reforestation).⁶¹

⁶⁰ Sources: FAO Kinshasa, WFP Kinshasa, FAO-Rome KIL.

⁶¹ Source: FAO Rome KIL.

4.5 Did the RBA Resilience Initiative contribute to long-term intended results or unintended impacts? (EQ 5.0)

107. The DRC project included design and related PMF to guide activities throughout the implementation period. Despite various constraints e.g., occupation of the Rutshuru district (and consequently the displacement of most beneficiaries) and COVID-19 pandemic, the project remained focused on key outcome indicators related to food and nutrition security, livelihoods, and overall resilience.

108. The evaluation question related to long-term results (or impacts) has been addressed in two ways:

109. The examination of the Most Significant Changes as observed by the FGD participants.

110. The presentation of the survey results with regard to the ultimate and intermediate outcomes for which data were available.

4.5.1 Most Significant Change

111. According to the participants of two FGDs, the following were the most significant changes as a result of the RBA Resilience Initiative.

Most Significant Change

FGD Men

- The organization of FOs, unions, and cooperatives to be able to collectively sell produce and establish the prices (instead of being dependent on the traders fixing the price).
- The training to diversify agricultural production to enhance HH dietary diversity and to reduce malnutrition in families.
- Improvement of conservation for selling produce in the warehouses.
- How to select good seeds for storing for the next planting season.

FGD Women

- The promotion of IGAs (linked to VSLA and the literacy courses).
- The empowerment of women; now men must consult their wives to create consensus on HH expenditure.
- Improvement of how to manage money; now it is possible to hire a piece of land with savings.
- The possibility to transport more easily produce to the market and warehouses; instead of carrying the heavy load on their heads.
- The improvement of social cohesion between the different ethnicities thanks to the sensibilisation in that respect. Now they are working hand-in-hand together in the FOs and during the road construction. Leadership positions can be taken by any without looking at an individual's ethnic background.

112. FGDs on Most Significant Changes clearly point at and relate to the RBA Resilience Initiative's activities. They also reflect the broadness of the implemented activities. However, some elements are missing e.g., cash transfers (for mothers and schoolgirls), livestock production, and provision of seeds.

4.5.2 Survey results

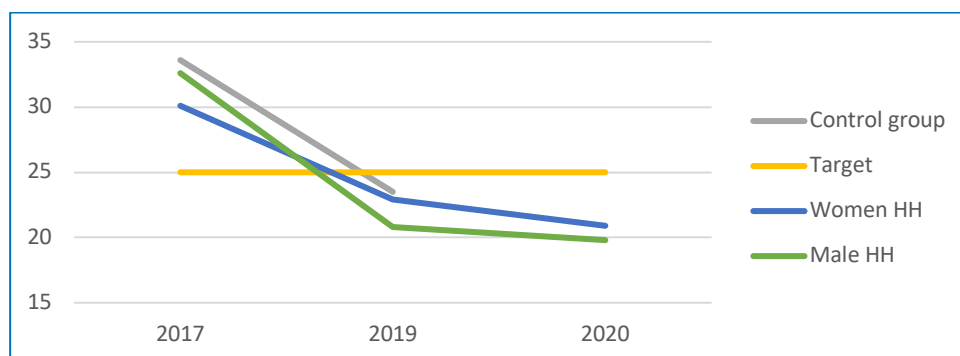
4.5.2.1 Food security and nutrition

113. The impact at HH level in terms of food security and nutrition has been measured through several indicators including FCS, Food and Livelihood Coping Strategies and Minimum Acceptable Diet (MAD) for children.⁶² Figure 7 presents the FCS for men, women, and control group. The FCS clearly points at an

⁶² Due to insecurity as occurred in the district, the planned 2022 endline survey could not be implemented. For that reason, only the 2017 baseline and 2019 midterm data are available. For a few indicators, 2020 monitoring data is available as well. The minimum dietary diversity score for women (MDD-W) indicator was not measured at all.

improvement of diet diversity below the target of 25 points of poor FCS, indicating a better consumption of diverse foods.⁶³

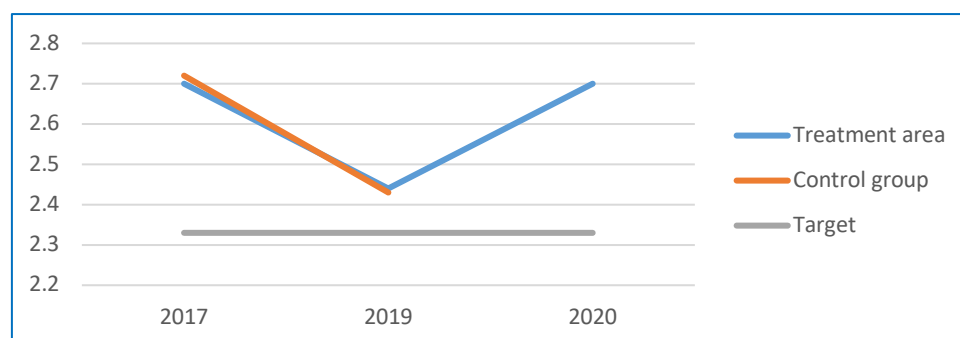
Figure 7: Percentage of HHs with poor FCS (and disaggregated for male headed HH and female headed HHs)



Source: RBA multiyear indicator values DRC

114. According to the information provided, this is mainly due to a drop in agricultural yields and agricultural production in season B of 2019 due to the anomalies recorded in rainfall in production areas.⁶⁴ Likewise, the livelihood CSI deteriorated in 2020 (CSI score 2.7) after an initial improvement in 2019 (2.44) as compared to the baseline in 2017 (2.7); see Figure 8 below. In addition, the monitoring data also point at progress regarding income diversification (based on the participation index used): from 2.0 in 2017 to 2.6 in 2020.⁶⁵

Figure 8: Livelihood Coping Strategy Index (LCSi) (HH level)



Source: RBA multiyear indicator values DRC

115. These data may to some extent not be representative for the whole RBA Resilience Initiative period as activities have been largely continued until the end of 2022, and some even until February 2023. During the FGD discussions, both men and women pointed at the increased income that was available through crop sales, cash transfers and IGAs, as well as the improved agricultural production to diversify the availability of food.⁶⁶ FGD participants 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 increased incomes.⁶⁷ One unintended effect of the central storage of food by individual HHs

⁶³ The usual FCS cut-off is poor consumption 0-21 points; borderline 21.5-35 points; and acceptable 35 and above.

⁶⁴ Source: RBA Multiyear Indicator Values: Outcome indicator 1200.

⁶⁵ Source: RBA Multiyear Indicator Values: Immediate Outcome indicator 1220.

⁶⁶ See results for Immediate Outcomes 1, 4, 5, 6, 12 and 15.

⁶⁷ The beneficiaries also indicate that the situation has drastically changed after they were forced to leave the area. Now they either depend on their host families or food distribution in the refugee camps around Goma.

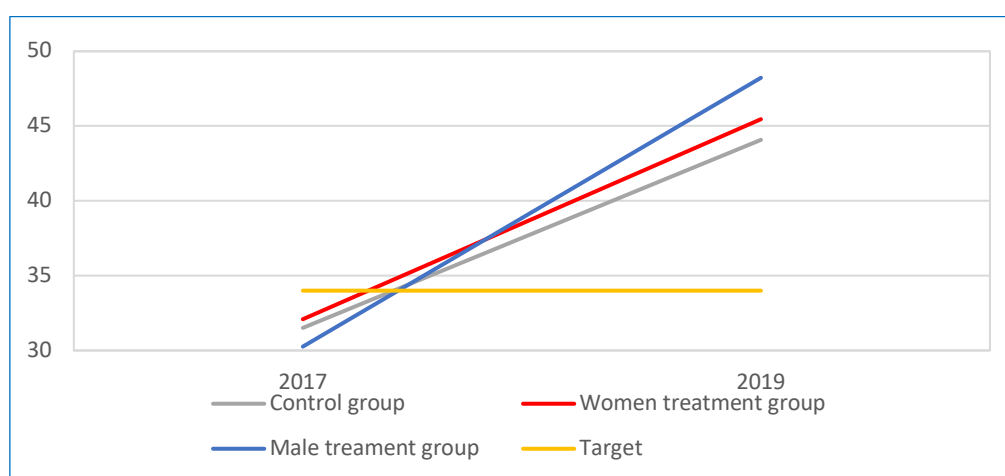
was that women complained that they lost access to the stored food in case they needed it for HH consumption. This issue had not been solved by the cooperative leadership.⁶⁸

116. Overall, based on the ex-post qualitative assessment of the FGD interviews, it can be concluded that the RBA Resilience Initiative had a positive impact on the food and nutrition security situation.

4.5.2.2 Resilience

117. When assessing the level of resilience of the population in the Rutshuru district, the figure below clearly indicates an improvement – as measured through the Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis Index (RIMA). This is the case for both men and women (treatment group) as well as the control group. 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 creation of Assets (see Outcomes 1 and 3), as well as the improvement of the adaptive capacity of HHs (see Outcomes 5, 10 and 12)

Figure 9: Resilience index (RIMA/RIC) - disaggregated by gender



Source: RBA multiyear indicator values DRC

118. Again, the lack of the endline survey – which was to be held in 2022 – makes the interpretation of the above presented data problematic. However, the qualitative assessment of the three pathways as presented in 4.3 convincingly points at a positive contribution of the RBA Resilience Initiative to Improved Incomes (Outcomes 4 and 5), Improved Nutrition and Diet Diversity (Outcome 6), Enhanced Community Organization, Social Cohesion (Outcomes 3 and 11) and to Women’s Empowerment (Outcomes 5 and 10).

4.5.2.3 Climate change

119. There is no clear indication that the RBA Resilience Initiative has positively contributed to climate change resilience. In the final report, there are claims that the activities related to increased agricultural production are climate-smart, such as anti-erosion control through reforestation and afforestation. The report mainly refers to the alignment of “the activities with national strategies for climate adaptation....” and sensitization campaigns.⁶⁹ However, most of the activities relate to environmental protection similar to activities that have been introduced in the highlands of Central Africa for many decades.

4.6 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? (EQ 5.1)

120. Food insecurity across the DRC and in the programme areas of Kivu-Nord and Rutshuru remained high throughout the programme period. IPC levels in these areas fluctuated in national averages and then

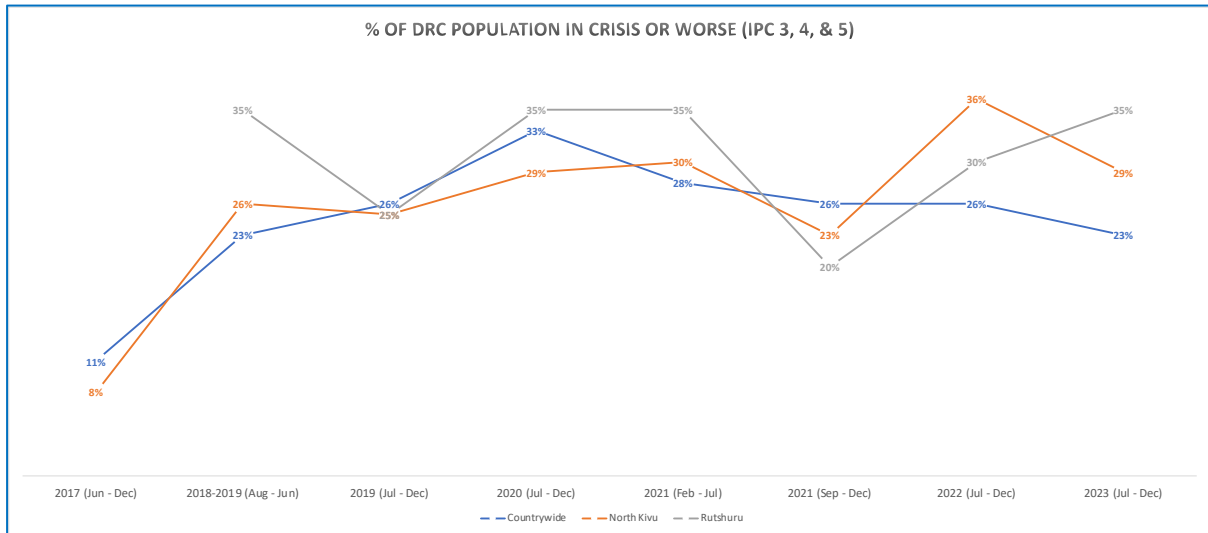
⁶⁸ Source: FAO, WFP. 2023. RBA Resilience Final Project Report, draft. FGD (Women). 3 October 2023.

⁶⁹ FAO, WFP. 2023. RBA Resilience Final Project Report, draft.

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 conflict, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Rutshuru is also affected by the ongoing conflict.

121. Figure 10 shows the percentage of the population in IPC crisis levels or worse.

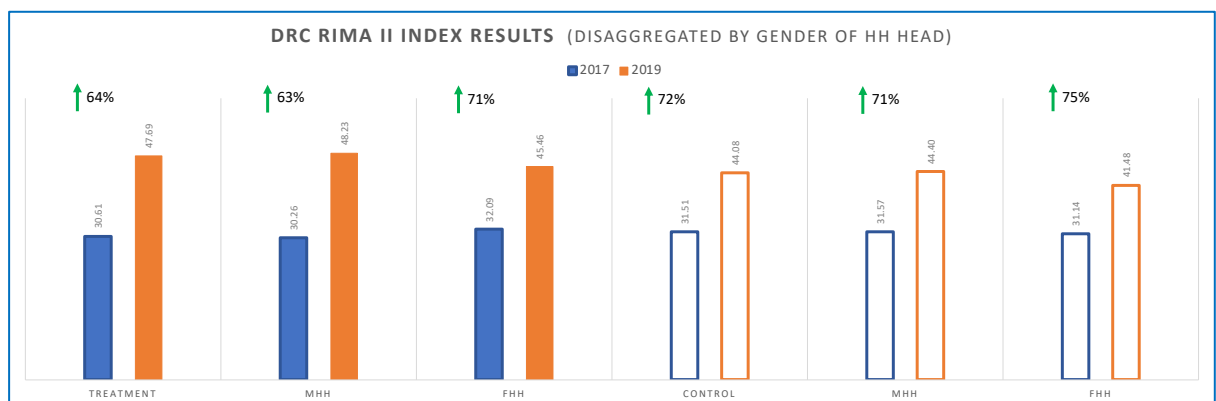
Figure 10: IPC for DRC, Nord-Kivu, and Rutshuru



Source: IPC data

122. The RIMA II analysis was conducted in 2017 (baseline) and then in 2019 at programme midterm. This shows a significant improvement for both men and women (treatment group) as well as the control group as shown in Figure 11 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, Income Generation and Asset Creation, as well as the improvement of HH adaptive capacities through the literacy courses. Access to basic services was limited to improving feeder roads (26 km) and access to agricultural markets through the creation of six cooperatives. Other basic services such as water or education were not part of the RBA Resilience Initiative strategy.

Figure 11: DRC RIMA II (RIMA/RIC) results

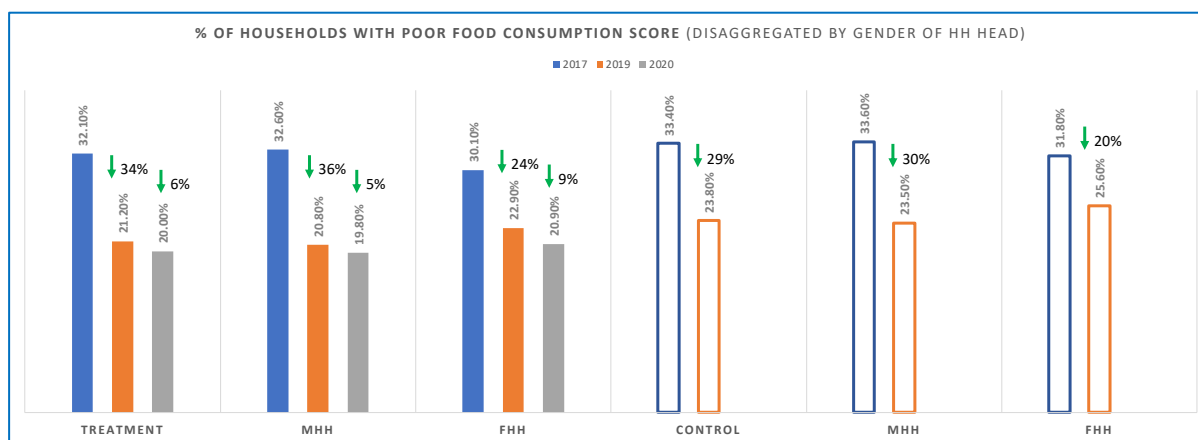


Source: DRC Final Project Close-out Report; PMF

123. While the variance between treatment and control groups is statistically insignificant, the results as presented in Figure 10 show slightly higher levels of resilience amongst the control group cohorts. It is unfortunate that 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.

124. Other intermediate results indicators for DRC included the FCS, and LCSi.

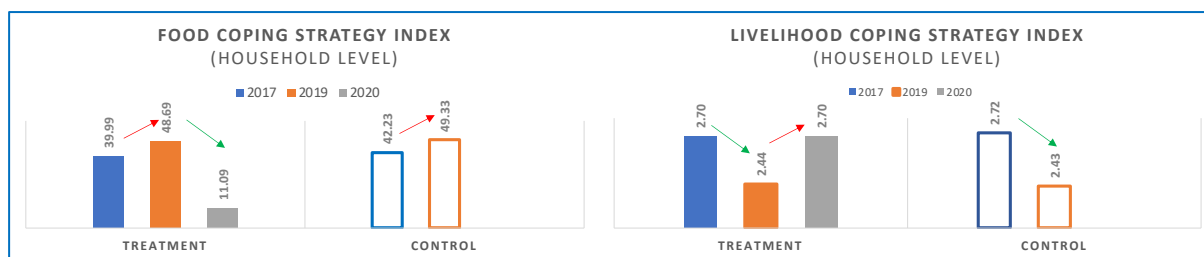
Figure 12: DRC FCS results



Source: DRC Final Project Close-out Report; PMF, 2023

125. 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 13: DRC Food Coping Strategy index (F-CSI) and LCSi results



Source: DRC Final Project Close-out Report; PMF, 2023

126. In terms of the Reduced Coping Strategy Index (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 2020⁷⁰ as the programme increased direct cash support that, in turn, facilitated enhanced access to food. In terms of the LCSi, there was a decrease in the negative coping strategies although these changes were (statistically) insignificant. WFP 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 FCSI, hence beneficiaries had no reason to resort to strategies affecting their food consumption. The same did not occur for the LCSi, where they had to resort to negative livelihood coping strategies when facing shocks or stressors, for example the sale of HH assets to cover medical expenses”⁷¹

127. From the data on the access to nutrition-rich food (Outcome 1200), it is clear that the MAD of children ages 6-23 months has substantially improved for the treatment group (from 8.47 percent to 25 percent), whereas the control group stayed significantly behind at 9.2 percent.⁷² This points at the fact that nutrition practices have greatly improved, which was also confirmed by FGDs. During FGDs, the importance of good

⁷⁰ As indicated, the 2022 endline could not be implemented; hence no data are available on these indicators after 2020.

⁷¹ RBA Resilience Initiative DRC. RBA Consolidated Multiyear Indicator Values for DRC. December 2023.

⁷² The improvement of nutrition practices is also confirmed by the data from indicator 1410 on the use of nutrition practices.

nutrition practices was mentioned and it was indicated that malnutrition levels had diminished substantially as infants and young children were less sick.

128. Another key outcome for the DRC programme was the leadership of women in CBOs. At the programme's inception, 77 percent of supported CBOs had women in leadership positions. This increased to 97 percent in the first year and remained at this level for the duration of the programme.⁷³

129. These data are not adequately representative given the lack of figures for 2022. During FGDs, both men and women indicated increased income that was available through crop sales and other IGAs, as well as improved agricultural production. FGD participants 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 increased income as a result of post-literacy and VSLA IGAs and dedicated cash transfers (mothers of young infants and school-going girls).⁷⁴

4.7 To what extent are the benefits of the RBA Resilience Initiative sustainable? (EQ 6.0)

4.7.1 Continued benefits

130. Since 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 achievements. This external factor has to a large extent jeopardized the continuation of the RBA Resilience Initiative results and their impact on the targeted communities and their inhabitants.

131. Initially, about half of the population fled the area. 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.

132. 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 inputs 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.⁷⁵

133. The VSLA groups have stopped functioning because of the displacement of community members. Despite their success, it has been impossible to continue gathering and saving money for the small loans to groups members.

134. Beneficiaries indicate that the most important benefits they have gained and can continue to use are: improved literacy of about 4,000 persons (of which about 90 percent women), knowledge about nutrition and hygiene good practices, and acquired agricultural management practices such as the use of improved seeds.

4.7.2 Handover

135. In the context of the on-going 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. Four out of the six cooperative buildings have been looted by the M23 rebels and destroyed. The two remaining cooperatives cannot be accessed by most of the population as they have fled the district. One cooperative is reported to be occupied by M23 rebels and the cooperative is being used as a base. Furthermore, the planted forests (for erosion control) have been cut down by the rebels for firewood.

⁷³ RBA Consolidated Multiyear Indicator Values for DRC. RBA Resilience Initiative DRC. December 2023.

⁷⁴ Respondents also indicate that the situation had drastically changed after they were forced to leave the area. Due to displacement, they either depend on their host families or food distribution in refugee camps around Goma.

⁷⁵ Source: WFP Goma interview. 29 September 2023. FAO Goma interview. 2 October 2023.

136. The formal registration of the cooperatives with the Ministry of Commerce appeared to be a very bureaucratic procedure which was not finalized by the end of the programme activities in 2023. Notably the tax exemption documentation for the cooperatives which has to be arranged at the national level is a very cumbersome exercise. Regarding the formalization of FOs and their unions, this was possible at district level. WFP is still in contact with the provincial authorities to finalize the process.

4.7.3 Replicate scale up

137. Interestingly, the RBA Resilience Initiative approach has been replicated in two areas in eastern DRC based on the WFP/FAO resilience approach as jointly developed by WFP and FAO (and initially with IFAD) for the RBA Canada programme. Apparently, this was a very interesting approach for donors who wanted to invest in the HDP Nexus in the context of war-torn eastern DRC. This shows that convergence of actions by United Nations agencies can be quite beneficial as long as major issues such as joint planning, appropriate timing of activities, regular communication, and timely monitoring of progress and complementarity are sufficiently addressed in the course of the project cycle.

138. 1) With German BMZ funding of € 120 million, three United Nations agencies: WFP, FAO, and UNICEF are working together to strengthen the livelihoods of vulnerable communities and HHs – particularly female heads of HHs – in selected areas in Nord-Kivu and Sud-Kivu by helping them gain improved market access while diversifying their incomes. The overall focus of the Initiative is to promote more resilient communities with greater gender equality and more social cohesion. They are targeting to reach out to 800,000 persons.⁷⁶ The inclusion of UNICEF was based on the earlier experience of the RBA Canada programme. It was assessed that the nutrition component missed structural support to health centres to address the issue of malnutrition.⁷⁷

139. 2) With funding from Sweden and Norway, FAO and WFP have implemented an integrated programme to build community resilience and strengthen agricultural value chains in the Tanganyika region in the period 2016-2021. Also, this programme has many similarities and learnings from RBA Canada.⁷⁸

4.7.4 Interagency collaboration

140. As indicated earlier, the WFP and FAO collaborated well from the beginning of the programme. This was based on the shared Resilience Unit of three staff in WFP and three staff in FAO who were closely working together on the basis of the shared RBA Resilience strategy which translated into an agreed programme for eastern DRC, with several donors expressing their interest to fund, amongst them Canada.

4.7.5 Other

141. During the FGDs, beneficiaries were quite articulate about their wish that the RBA Resilience Initiative would resume its activities once they were able to return.

142. Members of the FGDs indicated that they felt a little lost after they had to leave their area and settle with host families in Goma or in refugee camps. Final payments for their FFA work were still not made and 2000 IGA kits were still not distributed to beneficiaries who had finalized their literacy course. They made an appeal to WFP and FAO to make an effort to respond to the “promises” made.

143. Moreover, the specific wishes for the resumption of programme activities mentioned are:

144. FGD Men:

- Restart of agricultural activities by providing good quality seeds adapted to the high altitude.
- Support to the marketing of agricultural produce.
- Finalization of the formalization of the cooperatives (documentation).
- Opening up of the FOs to new beneficiaries and of new registrations in SCOPE.

⁷⁶ WFP, FAO & UNICEF. Strengthening the Socio-economic Resilience of Smallholder Farmers and Vulnerable Populations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

⁷⁷ Source: WFP RBA Canada Focal Point. Interview 29 September.

⁷⁸ WFP, FAO. 2021. Building Resilient Livelihoods in Tanganyika, DRC.

145. FGD Women:

- Restart of agricultural activities (provision of seeds) and of petty trade.
- Support to be able to rent land for agriculture.
- Once production has resumed, they are ready to participate in literacy courses, VSLA for saving and credit provision, and nutrition activities.

146. From these activities that beneficiaries would like to see resumed once they have returned, it clearly appears that they have a keen interest in many of the RBA Resilience Initiative activities. This largely confirms the relevance and effectiveness of these RBA components.

4.8 To what extent did the RBA Resilience Initiative take into account and contribute to gender, human rights, equity, and inclusion? (EQ 7.0)

4.8.1 Design

147. There are ample indications that the RBA Resilience Initiative very actively took into account gender aspects. The design of the RBA Resilience Initiative explicitly included women in the definition of immediate objectives and activities. In particular, the activities of VSLA, literacy, and nutrition were very much – if not exclusively – targeting women. Under the nutrition component, two activities were promoting cash transfers to PLW to enhance their food intake and diversity, as well as to the families of girls to enhance their school attendance.

148. The programme further tried to be transformative in some activities addressing gender equity. From the start of the programme, activities actively promoted the participation of women in IGAs, as well as their involvement in leadership positions in CBOs.

149. Implementing agencies made a deliberate effort to differentiate the monitoring of outcomes and outputs according to gender (ex. one outcome indicator focused on female leadership positions in supported CBOs). This was a clear effort to make it possible to differentiate the results according to gender.

150. No clear indications were observed that the RBA Resilience Initiative addressed explicitly the aspects of human rights and inclusion.

4.8.2 Results

151. As earlier described (in 4.3 Effectiveness) the various pathways and their main activities to a large extent addressed gender equity and women's empowerment. The results of the implementation of the majority of activities had a positive result, not only with regard to the participation of women in RBA Resilience Initiative activities (equity), but also in a number of cases they contributed to achieving more autonomy by strengthening women's capacities (women's empowerment).

152. Under Pathway 1 Safety Nets, women were actively involved in the Cash Transfers for Asset creation (Outcome 1: Road rehabilitation, reforestation, construction of infrastructure) and girls were targeted for cash transfers to attend schools (Outcome 2). According to the FGD participants, half of the women present worked in asset creation or reforestation. With the money they received they were able to cater for HH expenditures including the purchase of food items, thus contributing to increased food security.

153. Under Pathway 2, the participation of women in VSLAs (Outcome 5; 90 percent of 3,000 participants were women) was a major achievement. VSLAs provided small amounts of credit to women to start businesses (trade, agriculture, etc.). While women report that they do inform their husbands about use of money, having some control of earned income has positively contributed to an increase of autonomy.

154. Pathway 3 (Nutrition and Hygiene) largely targeted to women as principal caretakers of children and being responsible for the feeding according to societal norms. Interestingly, men were invited to attend cooking demonstrations and also to join their spouses when going for ante-natal visits to the health centres. Men also regularly participated in radio listening groups to learn about nutrition good practices. It was observed from the FGD sessions that men understood the importance of a balanced diet in order maintain good health, in particular of infants and young children.

155. Under Pathway 4 (Community Organization and Women's Leadership), despite representing 70 percent of total membership, the main leadership positions – at 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 of the CBO boards. The functional literacy programme (Outcome 10) contributed to women (also the elderly) learning how to write, read, and calculate. Women testified about the importance for them of achieving full literacy levels (it is estimated that between 50 and 70 percent achieved full literacy). They mentioned that they became more confident in trading and going to the market knowing how to read and make calculations. This transformative impact of the literacy programme on women's lives cannot be overestimated.

156. With respect to Pathway 5 (Increased Agricultural Production), women actively participated in the FFS learning about improved agricultural practices. However, there is no indication that any of the activities (technical support to agriculture, animal health, or seed provision) was of any particular way more beneficial to women as compared to men.

157. FGD members (both men and women) mentioned that they have learned how to respond in cases of violence against women. The FOs play a role in passing on this information to women.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ Source : FGD (Men), 2 October 2023 and FGD (Women), 3 October 2023.

5 Conclusions

158. The conclusions related to the seven main Evaluation Questions are the following:

159. **1. Relevance (EQ 1):** The RBA Resilience Initiative was very relevant to address the vulnerability of the communities of Rutshuru district in Nord-Kivu in a context of chronic food insecurity, poor dietary habits, and high levels of malnutrition, all exacerbated by armed conflict and other structural negative factors (land pressure, environmental deterioration, low levels of social cohesion, male dominance in HH and community decision-making, etc.). The ToC clearly addresses many of these issues.

160. **2. Coherence (EQ 2):** The RBAs have been able to develop a coherent and complementary programme both in design as well as during implementation. The RBA Resilience Initiative components were based on a good number of previous experiences to develop a programme combining HDP-building actions. The joint approach to resilience building for eastern DRC attracted substantial attention from other donors willing to build partnerships for further implementation in other areas in eastern DRC affected by protracted crisis and conflict.

161. **3. Effectiveness (EQ 3):** Overall, the RBA Resilience Initiative – targeting 12,500 HHs in Rutshuru district (Nord-Kivu) was able to achieve most of its intended outcomes. Analysis indicates that there is considerable evidence that 9 of the 14 intended outcomes have been achieved. This is in particular the case for:

- The creation of safety nets through Cash for Assets (Pathway 1).
- Increased income opportunities through FOs and collective sales of produced food and through income-generation opportunities as a result of voluntary savings and credit (Pathway 2).
- Successful enhancement of good nutrition practices and diet diversity, but less so for hygiene practices (Pathway 3).
- Positive outcomes were recorded with regards to the Functional Literacy Programme and to the enhancement of the social empowerment of communities through Dimitra Clubs. Supporting women to take up leadership roles in the CBOs was less successful (Pathway 4).
- The development-oriented actions to increase agricultural production were observed to be successful for the promotion of sustainable production techniques and improved production. No evidence was obtained with regard to the results on animal health and only partially on improved seed provision through community seed multiplication.

162. **4. Efficiency (EQ 4):** The collaboration and synergy between implementing agencies (FAO and WFP) were mostly impressive. Cooperation between staff responsible for resilience was reported to be good at all levels, with good back-up support from the respective HQs. The joint planning, monitoring, supervision, and reporting are relevant indications of the joint effort. However, there have been issues of timing and synchronization of activities which to some extent have slowed down the implementation process.

163. Focus on targeting, registration, and inclusion of HHs as programme beneficiaries – and exclusion of those who were not registered – was reported to have negative effect on programme implementation.

164. The monitoring of progress as reported in the multi-year indicator values was in many cases not contributing to improved understanding of progress as a good part of indicators had questionable definitions or easy targets that were already met in year 1 or 2 of implementation.

165. The relatively slow administrative procedures around sub-contracting of NGOs for the implementation of specific programme activities (both WFP and FAO) have not contributed to an efficient implementation of activities. The delayed renewal of contracts, sometimes after nearly one year of implementation is a cumbersome process for the NGOs. One of their concerns is losing experienced staff who move on in times of uncertainty about renewal of contracts. Besides, the implementing NGOs have

a rather limited overview of the overall implementation of the RBA Resilience Initiative as they are only focusing on the contractual tasks they were assigned to.

166. **5. Impact (EQ 5):** There is clear evidence from the testimonies of the participants that the RBA Resilience Initiative has a clear impact on their food and nutrition situation and they indicate that it has contributed to improved resilience to shocks. However, there is no indication that the programme has positively contributed to climate resilience. Due to the abrupt ending of the programme because of displacement of many beneficiaries, no final quantitative assessment has been made to underpin the observed significant changes. Besides, many of the positive outcomes and impacts on the lives of many beneficiaries have been lost due to occupation by rebels, associated violence, and the displacement of many inhabitants.

167. **6. Sustainability (EQ 6):** As a result of the occupation and associated violence since 2022, the sustainability of most results has been jeopardized. Many beneficiaries of the programme now being IDPs, have lost the opportunity to access the benefits of the programme. Some indications exist that the knowledge capacities acquired with respect to good nutrition practices and the writing, reading and calculation skills gained through the literacy courses still have a positive effect on women's lives.

168. In terms of replication/scale-up, the resilience approach as developed by FAO and WFP has attracted the interest of other international donors. The programme has been replicated in two other zones of eastern DRC, in Nord-Kivu and Sud-Kivu, as well as Tanganyika provinces.

169. **7. Gender equity, human rights, and inclusion (EQ 7):** The RBA Resilience Initiative successfully implemented a gender-sensitive approach across the programme cycle and, to some extent, it has addressed gender equity and women's empowerment, mostly with a positive result. This has been successful not only with regard to the participation of women in RBA Resilience Initiative activities (equity), but the programme has also contributed women's autonomy by strengthening women's capacities and decision-making power (women's empowerment). Women, however, have not been able to take up more leadership positions in CBOs. The programme has given little or no attention to human rights or inclusion.

5.1 Recommendations

170. **R1:** Consider integrating strategies and approaches that can help to work with beneficiaries that were displaced. It is very important to maintain some level of contact with former beneficiaries as this is very important for (moral) support. Activities that could be continued are support to literacy, IGAs, VSLAs, and the provision of improved and adapted seeds as HHS still make efforts to grow crops during the rainy seasons.

171. In the context where the RBA Resilience Initiative abruptly came to an end at the end of 2022, the main recommendation to the implementing agencies – as well as to Canada – is to prepare for a rapid resumption of programme activities once the programme beneficiaries are able to return to their homes in Rutshuru. This could be done by making a contingency plan for support before even the possibility to return home has appeared. Part of the preparations should be to consult those that are displaced in Goma to discuss their priorities in terms of recovery from the shock of conflict and displacement. Inclusion of new beneficiaries from the communities where the RBA Resilience Initiative has been operational could be considered in order to be more inclusive.

172. **R2:** A second recommendation is related to the backlog in payments for work done as part of the FFA activities. There are more than 1,000 beneficiaries who are still awaiting payments. Another group of almost 2,000 women is still awaiting the disbursement of the IGA kits as part of their completion of the literacy course. FAO and WFP are recommended to make efforts to find as many beneficiaries as possible to pay out the outstanding benefits.

173. **R3:** A third recommendation is to learn from the lessons from similar resilience programmes as implemented by FAO and WFP in eastern DRC (BMZ and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)) and revise the programme approach accordingly (e.g., inclusion of UNICEF for the nutrition component; and possible youth employment).

174. **R4:** With regard to gender, it is recommended to ensure that women are well represented in FOs, if necessary, through a quota (a minimum of 50 percent of the seats in the FO leadership). Moreover, specific

follow-up trainings (or exchange of experience) for women who have participated in the literacy courses and VSLA could be provided as a form of further strengthening of capacities.

6 Annexes

6.1 Summary Terms of Reference (ToR)

175. The full ToR is available as a separate annex and on-line [here](#).

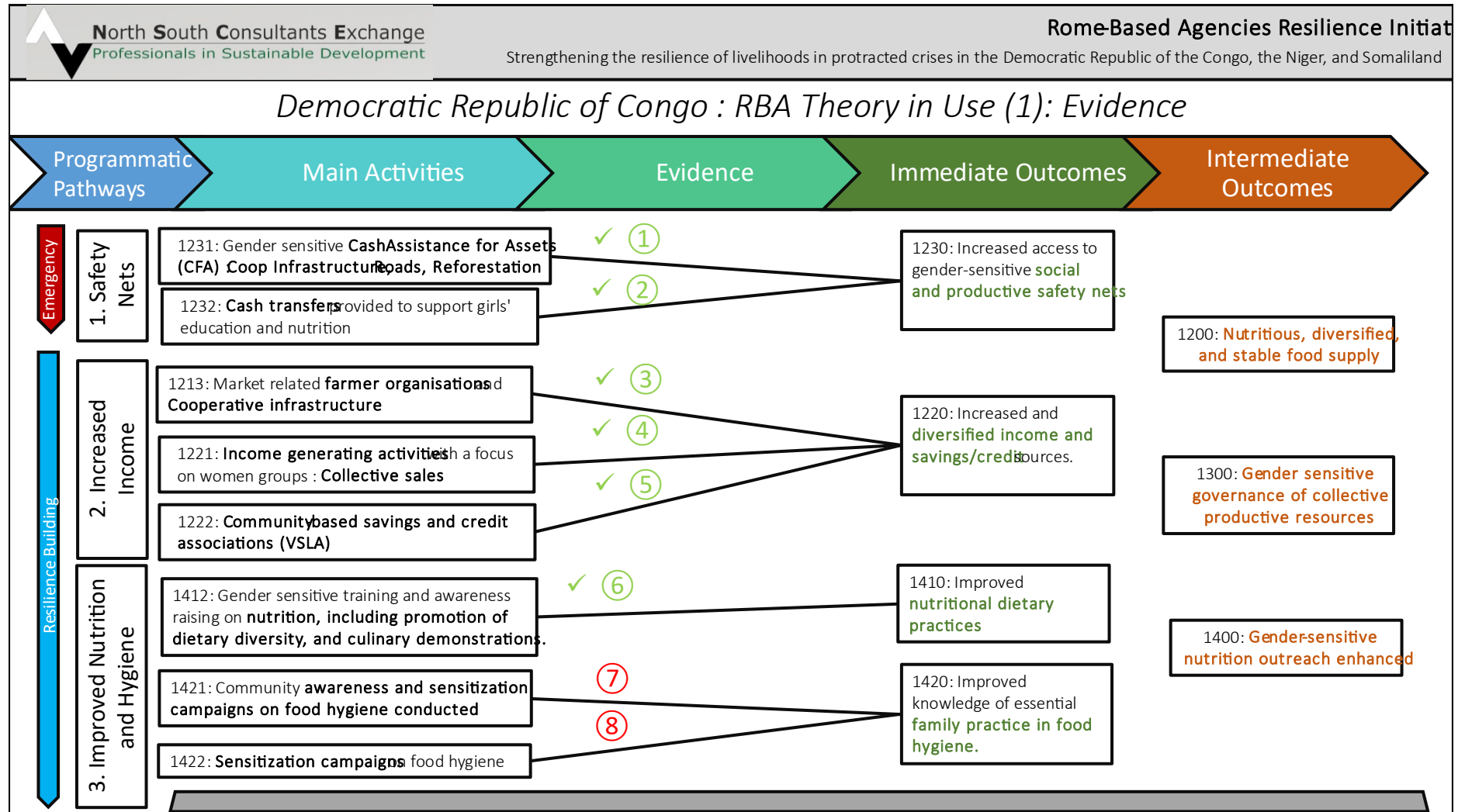
6.2 List of people interviewed

The following cohorts and numbers were interviewed as part of the data collection phase.

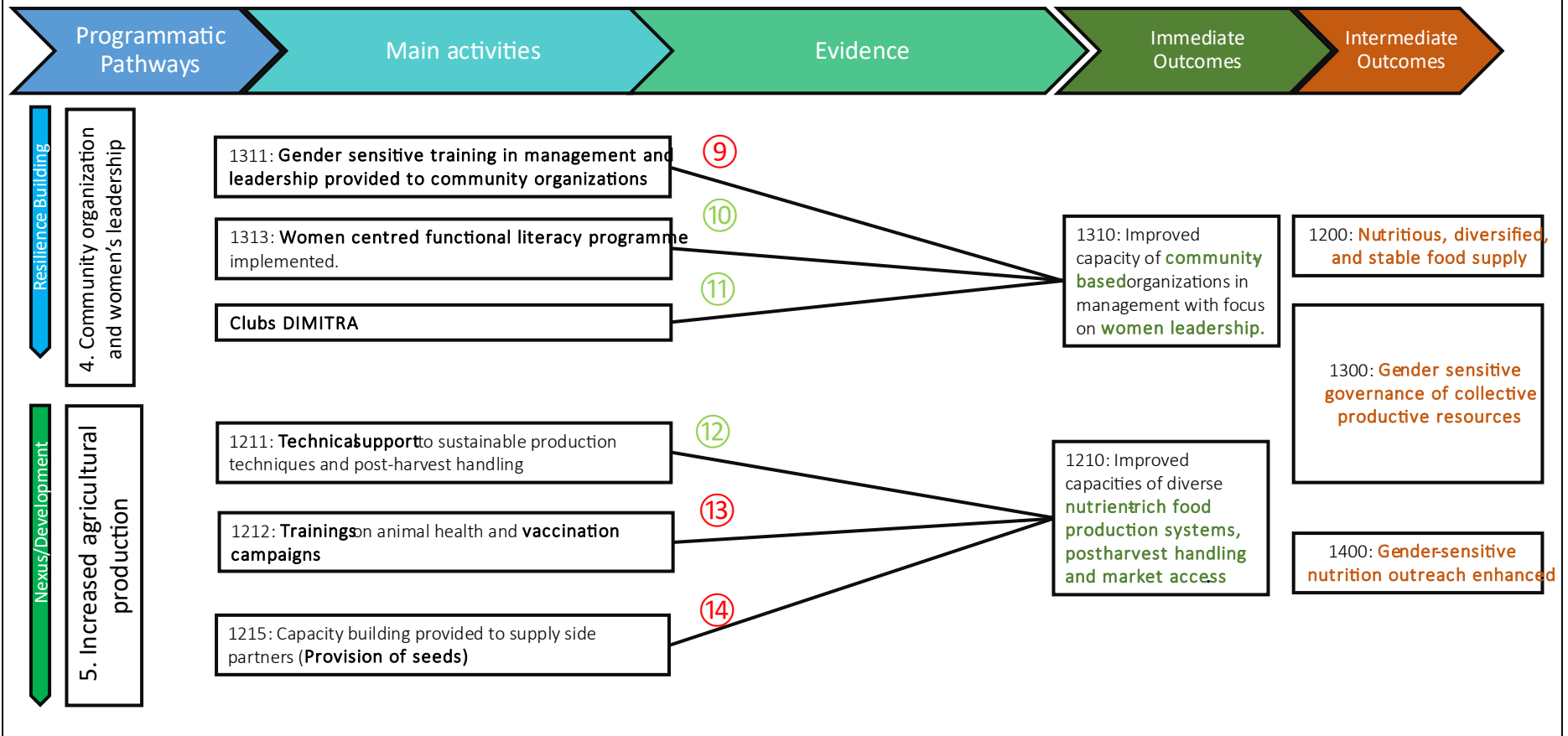
Table 2: List of stakeholders interviewed as part of the data collection phase

| 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 |

6.3 Evidentiary linkages



Democratic Republic of Congo: Theory in Use (2)



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180. A full contingent of documents was reviewed as provided by the RBA. These are included in a separate share drive.

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6.7 Abbreviations and acronyms

AFCOD: Association of Concessionaires Farmers for Development

ALNAP: Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action

BMZ: German Ministry of Development Cooperation

CBO: Community-Based Organization

CBPP: Community-Based Participatory Planning

CFA: Cash for Assets

CSI: Coping Strategy Index

DEQAS: Decentralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System

DRC: Democratic Republic of the Congo

FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization

FCS: Food Consumption Score

FCSi: Food Coping Strategy index

FFA: Food Assistance for Assets

FFS: Farmer Field School

FGD: Focus Group Discussion

FNS: Food and Nutrition Security

FO: Farmer Organization

GAM: Global Acute Malnutrition

GBV: Gender-Based Violence

GEWE: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

FCSi: Food Coping Strategy index

HH: Household

HDDS: Household Dietary Diversity Score

HDP: Humanitarian-Development-Peace

HQ: Headquarters

ICA: Integrated Context Analysis

IDP: Internally Displaced People

IFAD: International Fund for Agricultural Development

IGA: Income Generating Activity

IPC: Integrated Food Security Phase Classification

IPEL: Inspection de Pêche et Elevage (Government Service for Livestock and Fisheries)

IYCF: Infant and Young Child Feeding

KII: Key Informant Interview

LCSi: Livelihood Coping Strategies Index

M&E: Monitoring and Evaluation

MAD: Minimum Acceptable Diet for children 6-23 months old

MDD-w: Minimum Dietary Diversity Score for Women

MONUSCO: United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

MT: Metric Ton

NDP: National Development Plan

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

NRC: Norwegian Refugee Council

NRM: Natural Resource Management

OECD-DAC: The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee

P4P: Purchase for Progress

PLW: Pregnant and Lactating Women

PLWG: Pregnant and Lactating Women and Girls

PMF: Performance Measurement Framework

QAS: Quality Assurance Specialist

QuIP: Qualitative Impact Assessment Protocol

RBA: Rome-Based Agencies

rCSI: Reduced Coping Strategy Index

RIMA: Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis

SAMS: Smallholder Market Access Support

SDG: Sustainable Development Goal

SIDA: The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

ToC: Theory of Change

ToR: Terms of Reference

UN: United Nations

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

UNSDCF: the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework

VSLA: Village Savings and Loan Association

WFP: World Food Programme

WHO: World Health Organization

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

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Disclaimer

The views presented in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Rome Based Agencies or any other organization involved in the subject of this evaluation. They are solely by the authors.



Figure 1: Map of Niger

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Disclaimer

The opinions expressed in this report are those of the evaluation team, and do not necessarily reflect those of WFP or FAO. Responsibility for the opinions expressed in this report rests solely with the authors. Publication of this document does not imply endorsement by FAO or WFP of the opinions expressed.

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1 Introduction

1. This case study provides evidence and analysis concerning the Canada/Rome-based Agencies' (RBA) Resilience Initiative "Strengthening the resilience of livelihoods in protracted crises in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Republic of Niger (Niger), and the Republic of Somalia (Somalia)" (RBA Resilience Initiative; Initiative).¹ This case study is meant to provide information specific to how the RBA Resilience Initiative was conducted in Niger and the conclusions and recommendations presented here may not apply to the other countries or to the Initiative overall.

2. The RBA Resilience Initiative targets food-insecure households (HH) in protracted and recurrent crises-affected regions of the DRC, Niger, and Somalia with a focus on vulnerable women and children. The five-year Initiative (April 2017 through December 2023) meant to capitalize upon the RBA Joint Conceptual Framework for Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition,² wherein the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the World Food Programme (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.

3. The decentralized evaluation of which this case study is part takes place at the end of the 5-year Initiative. While the evaluation will be important for consolidating evidence for accountability to the donor, the RBAs also consider the evaluation critical to informing multi-year joint programming and accountability to the people being served. 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.

4. Expected users of the evaluation are internal (RBA country offices, RBA regional bureaus, RBA Headquarters (HQs)) and external (Government of Canada). The RBAs may also wish to share the evaluation's results with other partners and actors.

¹ The Terms of Reference (ToR) is available in Annex 1 and online [here](#).

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

2 Overview of Country and RBA Resilience Initiative Context

5. In Niger, 76 percent of smallholder farmers (72 percent of whom are women), rely on climate-sensitive 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 percent. Smallholder farmers, particularly women, are disadvantaged by a lack of access to productive agricultural inputs and technologies, financial services, economic opportunities, and structured markets.

6. The challenges to livelihoods are exacerbated by environmental shocks caused by climate change and unsustainable use of natural resources. Niger experiences 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 percent for drought, 12 percent for floods, 11 percent for epidemics, 1 percent for pests, and 2 percent for epizootics. Droughts are the most recurrent climate shock in RBA Resilience Initiative areas of intervention (75 percent in Maradi, 79.6 percent Zinder). 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.

7. According to the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2022 report³ the prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the total population was 46.7 percent in Niger in 2020, and the prevalence of anaemia in women aged 15-48 is 49.5 percent in 2019. This is confirmed by the Cadre Harmonisé findings, which reported that between 2.5 and 3.3 million people are currently food insecure countrywide (Phase 3 to 5 as per the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC)), equivalent to up to 13 percent of the country population. This marks the second-highest level of food insecurity recorded since the inception of the Cadre Harmonisé analysis in 2012.

8. These crises disproportionately affect women. 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 roles in decision making, 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 humanitarian crises.

9. These issues contribute 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 internally displaced people (IDPs) in 2022.

10. Niger's 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 Nigeriens Nourishing Nigeriens (3N) Initiative, 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 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.

11. 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 (AC), and social protection in the context of climate change. The intervention sought to help populations

³ IFAD & al. 2022. State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2022. Available [here](#).

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 improve 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 Farmer Field Schools (FFS) with Dimitra Clubs to raise social awareness, and support better decision making and income generating activities (IGA) such as gardening, horticultural production, and pastoral activity development while improving gender equality.

3 Methodology, Process, and Limitations

3.1 Methodology

12. This case study was guided by the overarching evaluation methodology set out for the RBA Resilience Initiative. (For further details, please refer to the Evaluation Inception Phase Report.)

13. A mixed methods approach was used, centred around in-depth community engagement and proxy indicator review. The evaluation is required to answer seven Evaluation Questions, with 31 associated sub-questions, as set out in the Evaluation Inception Phase Report (Annex 7.5, Table 6). This case study presents the related main findings in the context of Niger. The evaluation uses the evaluation criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact (contribution), sustainability, and gender, human rights, equity, and inclusion.

3.2 Process

14. Prior to the data collection mission, the evaluation team met remotely with RBA national and subregional staff to refine data collection choices (selection of sites to visit, categories of beneficiaries to include in focus group discussions (FGD), and stakeholders to interview) and to coordinate the mission logistics.

15. Two members of the evaluation team (national expert and FGD facilitator) spent ten days conducting fieldwork 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 fieldwork between the fieldwork evaluation team, the lead evaluator, and the national and subregional staff of WFP, FAO, and IFAD.

16. As identified with WFP, FAO, and IFAD staff the evaluation team was able to visit six locations of relevance to the programme’s outcomes (Kouroungoussa, Doumana Ara, Kermo, Bakoum, Daboudji, and Agoual Alkali)

17. Twelve FGDs were conducted following the guidance of beneficiary characteristics presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1: FGD beneficiary characteristics

| General population FGD composition | RBA Initiative FGD composition |
|--|--|
| Four men and eight women (at minimum (MIN)) | Community committees, farmers, fishermen groups, unions |
| Two female-headed HHs (MIN) | Village savings and loan associations (VSLA), self-help groups (SHG), cooperatives (women-led) |
| Two HHs with children < 5 years (MIN) (including HH beneficiaries of nutrition activities) | Community-based organizations (CBO), general |
| Two HHs with school-age children (MIN) (including HHs that benefited from school feeding activities) | Training participants |
| Two pregnant and lactating women/girls (PLWG) (MIN) (including HHs having benefited from community nutrition activities if relevant) | Emergency aid recipients (cash) |
| Two persons with disabilities (MIN) | <i>Mamans Lumiere</i> , learning and nutritional rehabilitation centre (FARN) beneficiaries |
| Two people over 65 years old (MIN) | Community committees, farmers, fishermen groups, unions |
| Women’s groups benefiting from IGAs | MMD, women’s granaries (GFS) |
| | FARN |

18. Among the 12 FGDs conducted, 7 FGDs were conducted with a mixed gender group and 5 FGDs with women only. The team met 203 beneficiaries including 144 women and 59 men. With some minor variations due to the availability of beneficiaries, characteristics of the actual focus group participants corresponded as planned to these categories. See the Table 2 below for geographic distribution.

Table 2: Focus groups – Niger. Geographic distribution

| Site | # of participants | Women | Men |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-------|-----|
| Kouroungoussaou / Maradi | 15 | 9 | 6 |
| Doumana Ara / Maradi | 15 | 10 | 5 |
| Doumana Ara / Maradi | 12 | 12 | |
| Kermo / Maradi | 15 | 10 | 5 |
| Bakoum / Zinder | 12 | 12 | |
| Bakoum / Zinder | 16 | 9 | 7 |
| Bakoum / Zinder | 12 | 12 | |
| Dagougi / Zinder | 26 | 18 | 8 |
| Angoual Alkali / Zinder | 15 | 15 | |
| Angoual Alkali / Zinder | 20 | 13 | 7 |
| Koublé Magema / Zinder | 15 | 15 | |
| Koublé Magema / Zinder | 27 | 11 | 16 |

3.3 Limitations

19. A significant episode of political unrest in Niger prior to the data collection mission created uncertainty about the accessibility of the programme's intervention areas. To mitigate this, data collection was delayed by several weeks and several interviews were conducted remotely.

20. The RBAs experienced high turnover of project staff during the implementation of the programme. This limited the evaluators' access to key informants with knowledge of the intervention's history. However, the evaluation team was able to interview some older staff when the Initiative was able to provide their contact information.

21. Documentation on programmes was limited. Consequently, evidence was collected mainly through interviews. The mitigation strategy included using multiple data such as existing records or reports providing a comprehensive understanding of the programme's activities and outcomes. Engaging with stakeholders, programme participants, and staff members allowed the evaluation team to access qualitative data offering valuable insights into the programme's operations, challenges, and successes. Findings were supported by available relevant studies and evaluations conducted by WFP, FAO, and IFAD in related topics, in the same areas and in the same timeframe. Finally, findings were validated by cross-referencing data from multiple sources and methods (triangulation). This helped enhance the reliability and credibility of the evaluation findings, even in the absence of extensive documentation.

22. Limited availability of RBA Resilience Initiative staff and implementing partners during the data collection process. Scheduling data collection activities at times that were least disruptive to staff workload and working together with the RBA Resilience Initiative national coordinator, helped identify windows of availability. Data collection was planned accordingly. When necessary, virtual interviews were scheduled to gather information remotely and at the convenience of staff members.

4 Findings

23. This section looks at the performance of the RBA Resilience Initiative at the output/activity level and its contribution to the immediate and intermediate outcomes, following the programme's Performance Measurement Framework (PMF).

4.1 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? (EQ 1.0)

4.1.1 Relevance to vulnerable groups

24. Resilience programmes are particularly relevant in Niger due to a combination of factors that contribute to the vulnerability of its population. While the majority of the country's population relies on agriculture, pastoralism, and livestock for their livelihoods, chronic food insecurity is exacerbated by climate shocks, including droughts and desertification, limited arable land and water, and environmental degradation. High poverty rates, limited infrastructure, conflict, and security concerns exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and disrupt livelihoods, especially for women and children.

25. The RBA Resilience Initiative focused its interventions on 10 sites covering 56 villages in two communes: 26 villages in Chadakori in the Maradi region and 30 villages in Dogo in the Zinder region. Activities targeted 8,645 very poor HHs most at risk of food insecurity and malnutrition in the intervention sites (60,515 individual beneficiaries). Both communes experience land degradation and hydro-meteorological hazards. Aridification caused by lack of rainfall exposes soil to water and wind erosion. These challenges have had a negative impact on food and nutrition security by impacting soil fertility and productivity.⁴

26. The RBA Resilience Initiative design relied on lessons learned and on a mix of tools developed by each individual agency or as part of a joint effort.

27. To estimate resource requirements and expected outcomes in the intervention areas, the RBA Resilience Initiative drew on lessons learned and analyses of programmes conducted by each agency prior to and during the implementation period, as well as on previous joint WFP, FAO, and IFAD initiatives conducted in the country.⁵ In addition, in 2015 the three agencies had agreed on a common conceptual framework for partnership and collaboration to strengthen resilience for food security in the country. This framework drew, *inter alia*, on the experiences of each of the UN agencies and was illustrated in a specific case study.⁶ RBA informants cited these as important sources for the design of the RBA Resilience Initiative.

28. During the first year of the project, the RBA Resilience Initiative team proceeded to plan context-specific activities based on community needs using WFP's Three-Pronged Approach (3PA) tool as the starting point for design and implementation. This programming approach comprised three stages at three different levels.

29. The Integrated Context Analysis (ICA) was conducted in 2017 at the national level to identify the areas of recurring food insecurity, risk, and exposure to shocks and to define programmatic strategies. Based on the ICA, two communes with high levels of exposure to shocks and food insecurity were selected: Chadakori in the Maradi region and Dogo in the Zinder region. According to

⁴ WFP, FAO & IFAD. 2023. Rome-based Agencies' Programme to Strengthen the Resilience of Livelihoods in a Protracted Crisis Context. Niger Final Project Close-out Report (Draft).

⁵ See for instance FAO. 2015. Resilience Analysis in Niger 2011. Analyzing Resilience for Better Targeting and Action. N°3; IFAD. 2019. Fostering Sustainability and Resilience for Food Security in Niger. Good Practice Briefs 2019; WFP. 2018. Scaling Up for Resilient Individuals, Communities, and Systems in the Sahel Operational Reference Note; WFP. 2021. Scaling-up Resilience in the Sahel: A Story of People, Partnerships and Practice; and WFP, FAO & IFAD. 2016. RBA Collaboration in Niger, Knowledge SERIES - Policy and Practice Briefs.

⁶ See WFP, FAO & IFAD. 2015. Collaboration for Strengthening Resilience. Country Case Study. Niger and FAO, IFAD & WFP. 2015. Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition: A Rome-based Agencies' Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership.

the RBAs' annual report, focus areas were chosen in order to build on previous efforts by FAO and WFP to implement Purchase for Progress (P4P) activities in the territory over the past five years. Data from the SMART assessment conducted in 2016 reported a high level of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) in selected areas.⁷

30. The Seasonal Livelihood Programming (SLP) was conducted with local governments to identify several entry points according to the seasonal calendar to define what activities need to be undertaken and in which months. The SLP was used as a basis for identifying partners, advocacy to align activities (or fill programmatic gaps) in different sectors, and identify areas of intervention.

31. Community-based participatory planning (CBPP) was conducted with the communities of each intervention site as well as with key stakeholders to prioritize activities. Women, men, and youth representatives were included in these consultations.⁸

32. The analysis was completed with a Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis (RIMA) exercise conducted in July 2018 in two stages; a descriptive analysis estimating HH resilience capacity index and a causality analysis to establish the main determinants of food security and the impact of shocks on HH resilience and food security.⁹

33. The RBA Resilience Initiative is anchored in the "Communes de Convergence" (C2C) approach, a joint UN-Government of Niger 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 development partners.¹⁰ In Niger, the RBA resilience initiative scaled-up C2C by implementing an integrated package of activities operationalized by the three agencies and their partners in the framework of a common programme. Moreover, the programme formulated outputs which are complimentary to the work that FAO, IFAD, and WFP are implementing in the country.

34. One RBA staff member noted in a key informant interview (KII): "As part of the programme, beneficiaries now have access to water points free of invasive plants and have better access to water for agriculture. This has led to an increase in agricultural land and more fishing. Training and IGAs have increased production capacity and HH incomes. This has added value for both food security and nutrition, and the status of women. In this programme, everything is connected".

4.1.2 Relevance to expected results

35. The overall and intermediate objectives of the RBA Resilience Initiative in Niger are presented below.

| |
|--|
| <p>Overall Objective:</p> <p>Increased food security and resilience for populations, especially women and children in targeted regions.</p> |
| <p>Intermediate objectives</p> <p>1200: Increased availability and access to a nutritious, diversified, and stable food supply</p> <p>1300: Improved sustainable gender-sensitive governance of collective productive resources by relevant authorities and/or other relevant stakeholders</p> <p>1400: Enhanced delivery of gender-sensitive nutrition outreach activities</p> |

⁷ WFP, FAO & IFAD. 2018. Rome-based Agencies' Resilience Initiative Strengthening the Resilience of Livelihoods in Protracted Crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger and Somalia.

⁸ WFP, FAO & IFAD. 2018. Rome-based Agencies' Resilience Initiative Strengthening the Resilience of Livelihoods in Protracted Crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger and Somalia.

⁹ FAO. 2018. Rapport de l'enquête de référence dans le cadre de l'évaluation d'impact du Programme de renforcement de la résilience des moyens de subsistance dans un contexte de crise, projet ABR mis en œuvre au Niger.

¹⁰ WFP, FAO & IFAD. 2016. RBA Collaboration in Niger, Knowledge SERIES - Policy and Practice Briefs.

36. These objectives were translated into a set of main activities (see the Theory of Change (ToC) Niger) and a set of relevant indicators of success including targets were defined (see PMF).

37. The main activities of the RBA Resilience Initiative in Niger were related to four programmatic pathways:

38. **Address malnutrition and improve malnutrition screening (1 & 2):** community-based management of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) in children aged 6-23 months; community-based screening of malnutrition and referrals for children aged 6-59 months; food assistance and nutritious supplements for children aged 6-23 months throughout the lean season; school feeding programmes; capacity building on nutrition provided to school students and teachers; elaboration and implementation of communication plans for essential family practices (EFP); awareness raising campaigns and capacity building on locally available foods; advisory support to community and state health workers and awareness raising campaigns on gaps in nutritious intake in specific seasons.

39. **Community organization and women's leadership (3):** development of gender-sensitive planning tools; operationalization of gender-sensitive management committees; negotiation on land tenure; support in organizational structure, land management, Dimitra Clubs, etc.; gender-sensitive capacity building for relevant authorities.

40. **Increased agricultural production (4):** unconditional and conditional cash/food transfers coupled with technical support; gender-sensitive trainings on agricultural techniques, nutrition, etc.; distribution of agricultural inputs and tools; promotion of climate resilient agricultural practices, etc. (See Section 5.7 for an explanation of development of the gender-sensitive approach).

41. Activities were designed to address various factors that are important to improve resilience and food security and are designed to be gender sensitive to encourage participation of women, enhance their access to productive assets and tools, and participate in community decision making processes.

42. The programme ensured that its activities were relevant to achieving its intended results by deriving them directly from its logic model and by measuring progress along the hypothesized causal pathways. This demonstrates the programme's relevance to results by showing a logical, measurable path from inputs to intended outcomes.

4.1.3 Relevance to frameworks, priorities, principles, and policies

43. The RBA Resilience Initiative is aligned with the Government of Niger's main policies on resilience, nutrition, food security, and gender. Policies include the Economic and Social Development Plan; the "Integrated Food and Nutrition Insecurity Resilience Programme" (Pro-Resilience Programme (2019-2021)); the 3N Initiative and its action plan; the Niger National Gender Policy, etc.

44. The Government of Niger has established the overall resilience coordination mechanism and a platform for sharing experiences and information. A Comité Multisectoriel de Pilotage Stratégique (CMPS) has been created for each axis of the 3N Initiative to promote multistakeholder policy dialogue on agriculture and food security and ensure effective coordination of activities with all partners. The implementation of the RBA Resilience Initiative is based on this common multi-sectoral framework and is aligned with the needs identified at the national level.

45. The operations of the RBA Resilience Initiative in Niger are in line with RBA's partnership with decentralized technical services (agriculture, livestock, nutrition, rural engineering, and the High Commissioner to the 3N Initiative). They also contribute to achieving the objectives pursued by the Family Farming Development Programme (PRODAF) under the supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG/EL).

46. Finally, it is worth noting that the RBA Resilience Initiative established a solid working relationship with regional and local technical services at the field level, which ensured the alignment of programme activities to national priorities.

4.2 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? (EQ 2.0)

4.2.1 Coherence with RBA

47. WFP, FAO, and IFAD shared information and developed synergies in the diagnosis, consultation, and planning processes to identify beneficiaries' needs, and develop a common results and impact framework and a country-specific monitoring system to track changes over time in key institutional, livelihood, and food/nutrition indicators with a gender-sensitive approach. Collaboration occurred during the whole programme cycle.
48. WFP implemented activities in the areas of asset creation (Food Assistance for Assets (FFA)), nutrition interventions such as nutritional supplements for children and pregnant and lactating women (PLW), malnutrition prevention, school feeding, market access for farmers, development of specific tools (drought forecasting), etc.
49. FAO implemented activities in the areas of seed and livestock inputs distribution, market gardens equipment, purchase of goats, FFS, nutritional sensitization, IGAs, Dimitra Clubs, etc.
50. IFAD supported implementation of activities in the areas of infrastructure (storehouses), market gardens, women's granaries, training and support for access to natural resources (ANR), *Zai*, and climate information services.
51. The agencies jointly conducted trainings, planning, programming, and assessment missions.
52. The 3PA processes fostered collaborative engagement between the three agencies, as well as with decentralized technical services and other subnational actors. This enhanced the complementarity of the programme activities and components.
53. However, according to interviews with RBA staff involved in monitoring and evaluation (M&E), greater efforts are still needed to coordinate the monitoring processes of the three agencies, lightening time-consuming indicators such as the Women Empowerment in Agriculture Index and to avoid "each one monitoring only its own activities"¹¹ There is also a particular need to follow up with implementation partners to ensure that data collection is more in line with the integrated nature of the programme. This has been addressed through the definition of common strategic priorities, the joint recruitment of a single programme coordinator, the use of shared expertise to support the intervention at all stages, and the sharing of knowledge, resources, and tools to enable each agency to learn from the others.

4.2.2 Coherence with Nexus

54. In Niger the RBA Resilience Initiative integrated approach ensured that immediate relief efforts do not undermine long-term development goals and vice versa. The RBA Resilience Initiative bridges humanitarian and development efforts by promoting sustainable food security solutions to reduce humanitarian needs over time.
55. The implementation of the 3PA tools helps in identifying priority areas and appropriate responses, fostering coordination and community ownership (see Section 5.1.1).
56. The programme strengthened the resilience of HHs by increasing AC through diversified sources of income and infrastructure development. In addition, by promoting sustainable land management and mutual support, community activities have improved social cohesion and solidarity.¹²

4.2.3 Coherent partnerships

57. The RBA Resilience Initiative platform enables collaboration with other partnerships (national governments, farmer and rural women's groups and organizations, other United Nations (UN) agencies such as United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UN Women, research partners). RBA

¹¹ KII with RBA staff in Niger.

¹² WFP, FAO & IFAD. 2023. Rome-based Agencies' Programme to Strengthen the Resilience of Livelihoods in a Protracted Crisis Context. Niger Final Project Close-out Report (Draft).

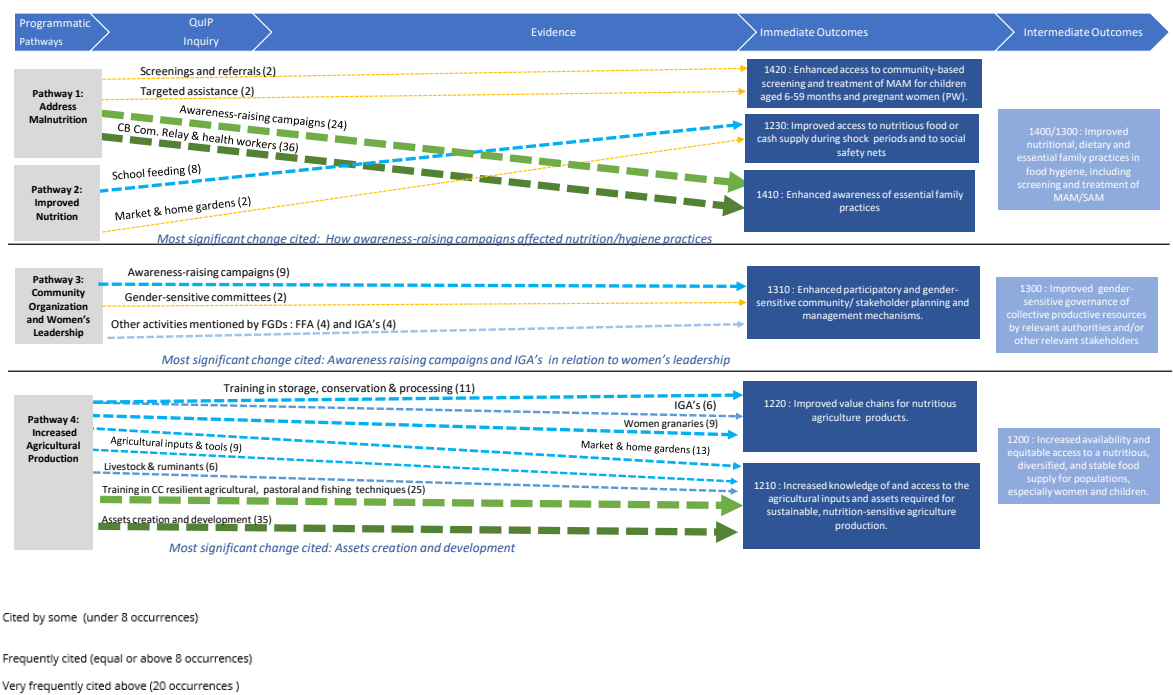
- “Our diet changed thanks to the consumption of market garden products produced in market garden sites and home gardens and with the mowing of ponds which frees up space for fishing. These were made possible with the support of the RBA, the support provided to fishermen with fishing equipment and training on fishing techniques and the protection of fishery resources”.
- “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”.
- “The relays do door-to-door screening on a weekly basis and by neighbourhood. Each relay takes care of the children (up to 20 per ward for follow-up). If a child is sick, we go to the relay woman directly. If the child suffers from malaria, he is treated by the community relay (a kit is available on site). If it is moderate malnutrition, he is put on porridge treatment and if the case is serious, he is referred to the CSI”.

62. There was noticeable 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 increased agricultural production, training in climate change resilient agricultural, pastoral, and fishing techniques was among the most significant changes cited by FGD participants. Awareness raising campaigns were identified as the most significant in relation to enhanced participatory and gender-sensitive community/stakeholder planning and management mechanisms. Screening and referral were frequently cited in relation to achieving enhanced access to community-based screening and treatment of MAM.

4.3.2 To what extent has the RBA Resilience Initiative achieved its intended outcomes as defined in the PMF? (EQ 3.0)

63. As described in Section 4.3.1, the evaluation team conducted qualitative FGDs with communities to determine how activities contributed to changes in the programmatic pathways, as described in Section 4.3. The frequency of activities identified by communities in relation to each programmatic pathway is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Qualitative analysis trends in Niger, as aligned with causal links established in the evaluation’s ToC.



Source: FGD Qualitative Impact Protocol (QuIP) Analysis

64. Pathway 1 and 2: Address malnutrition and improve nutrition:

65. To address malnutrition, the RBA Resilience Initiative carried out a series of activities to improve the targeted beneficiaries' nutritional, dietary, and EFP in food hygiene, including screening and treatment of MAM or severe acute malnutrition (SAM) (Intermediate outcome 1400). Awareness sessions on EFP, health, nutrition and locally available micro-nutrient-rich food, malnutrition prevention, and culinary techniques were conducted by community relays. The RBA Resilience Initiative also mobilized these community relays and other key local stakeholders such as *Mamans Lumieres*, health agents, and other local groups such as the learning and nutritional rehabilitation centres (FARN) to support the management and prevention of malnutrition for children aged 6-59 months in the community. The RBA Resilience Initiative also provided an integrated nutrition package for children aged 6-23 months and PLW, and nutritious meals were provided for primary school children. The RBA Resilience Initiative mitigated the impact of the lean season on food security by providing nutritious supplements to children aged 6-23 months of targeted HHs during the lean season and by assisting the communities where FFA activities were implemented for three months. Through school-feeding activities, the RBA Resilience Initiative contributed significantly to the improvement of school retention and attendance rates, linking nutrition and education achievements. According to the joint PMFs, all these activities met or exceeded their goals.

66. At the Intermediate outcome level (1400), the programme exceeded its goal of screening 100 percent of beneficiaries for MAM/SAM, reaching 115 percent in Dogo and 103 percent in Chadakori. Data on the proportion of beneficiaries adopting EFP were not available at the time of the evaluation fieldwork. However, the evaluators found consistent qualitative evidence suggesting that the programme was successful in improving the knowledge of both women and men on essential nutrition and family practices. Key informants cited the adoption of nutritious culinary recipes, use of impregnated mosquito nets, attendance at health centres, prenatal and postnatal consultations, exclusive breastfeeding, etc. among these practices.¹³ Participants in all FGDs conducted by the evaluation particularly emphasized the support they received from local structures, such as *Mamans Lumière*s and FARNs. These structures were strengthened by the RBA Resilience Initiative to improve the participants' nutritional status and conduct awareness-raising campaigns.

67. The number of people receiving MAM treatment was lower than the initial target in Dogo where malnutrition and need for treatment due to the food crisis of 2022 increased.¹⁴ The RBA Resilience Initiative should further investigate why this was particularly the case for girls (80 percent of girls received MAM treatment against a target of 85 percent, while 84 percent of boys received treatment against a target of 85 percent).

68. Specific contributions of the RBA Resilience Initiative to improved nutrition, diet, and EFP in the target communities can be identified from the qualitative evidence collected by the evaluators during the FGDs:

69. a. Reinforced local expertise in nutrition prevention, management, and treatment. The strengthened nutrition knowledge of Dimitra Club leaders, community relays, health workers, market garden beneficiaries, FFS, and producer organization representatives cascaded down to beneficiaries through sensitization and awareness-raising activities.¹⁵ Participants of FGDs conducted in seven communities repeatedly stated that thanks to the project activities, mothers can diagnose and manage moderate malnutrition and know where to go when malnutrition is severe; how to adapt and diversify their children's diets; and have improved food hygiene at the HH level which leads to improved child health and avoids health expenditures. The adoption of EFP was directly linked by FGD participants to the reduction of malnutrition cases in the communities along with other indirect results such as better cohesion among couples.

70. b. Increased uptake of low-cost locally produced food coupled with the adoption of better cooking practices. By the end of the programme, a third of all beneficiaries have applied the nutrition-

¹³ KIIs with NGO implementing partners.

¹⁴ WFP, FAO & IFAD. 2023. Rome-based Agencies' Programme to Strengthen the Resilience of Livelihoods in a Protracted Crisis Context. Niger Final Project Close-out Report (Draft).

¹⁵ KIIs with RBA staff, NGO implementing partners, and FGDs in seven communities visited by the evaluators.

sensitive practices and knowledge acquired through the programme.¹⁶ FGDs in seven communities clearly indicated that the project activities helped them to increase food production from their home and market gardens, and at the same time increased their awareness of the nutritional qualities of locally produced food, especially through cooking courses.

71. c. Diet diversification as a result of improved access to nutritious food or cash supply including during the lean season. Improved access to nutritious food and cash during the lean season was a recurrent theme among FGD participants. According to RBA staff in Niger, after three years of receiving livelihood support, HHs began to see their food security start to improve. As stated by a participant in one FGD: "Before, we only gave children porridge made from millet and sorghum, but now we've mastered the art of preparing improved porridges enriched with locally-produced ingredients such as moringa, groundnut cake, oil, and other market garden produce grown on the market garden sites or in the home gardens."

72. Pathway 3: Improved gender-sensitive governance of common productive resources.

73. The RBA Resilience Initiative established management and land committees as well as specific committees for women and young people to promote and reinforce community organization in targeted areas. The programme also provided technical assistance for the development of gender-sensitive community-based planning tools and gender-sensitive technical capacity building to relevant authorities and undertook land negotiations for targeted HHs. These activities aimed to improve gender-sensitive governance of common productive resources by relevant authorities and/or relevant stakeholders.

74. At the immediate outcome level, the programme efforts to enhance participatory and gender-sensitive community/stakeholder planning and management mechanisms (Immediate outcome 1310) were successful. The RBA Resilience Initiative supported the development of 'resilience committees', that were put in place in all of the 56 villages targeted by the project to coordinate assets and programme activities. These committees were composed of men and women (45 percent) who met monthly to discuss challenges encountered in programme implementation and to propose solutions, using participatory planning tools. Targets related to women in management were also successful due to the significant involvement of women's groups in the activity designed to contribute to this outcome. Women and men were trained on management and technical tools and participated in awareness-raising sessions challenging negative gender-related norms and stereotypes. The project also facilitated the creation of more than 300 grassroots producer organizations and 3 inclusive trade unions with women presiding over mixed union cooperatives.

75. At the intermediate outcome level, the PMF shows that the Initiative organized joint capacity development activities to improve sustainable gender-sensitive governance of collective productive resources by relevant authorities and/or other relevant stakeholders (Intermediate outcome 1300). However, data concerning the proportion of food assistance decision making entities (committees, boards, teams) is not provided in the programme's final report. Nevertheless, the Initiative's contribution to this outcome is suggested by the following qualitative information:

76. a. FAO established 300 Dimitra Clubs in 66 villages in the Maradi and Zinder regions. Sixty percent of the members are women. While the programme did not achieve output targets concerning the number of Dimitra Club members for both women and men, the Initiative identified this activity as a good practice because of its positive impact on the men and women who took part. According to the Initiative, other good practices included gender-sensitive planning and community management mechanisms; women's participation in programme implementation and decision making; and strengthening of women's leadership through Dimitra Clubs. Dimitra Clubs facilitated peer exchange and training; enabled women and youth to learn about the issues at stake in proposed activities; and strengthened women's capacity for analysis, synthesis, and public speaking.¹⁷

¹⁶ WFP, FAO & IFAD. 2023. Rome-based Agencies' Programme to Strengthen the Resilience of Livelihoods in Protracted Crisis Context. Niger Final Project Close-out Report (Draft).

¹⁷ FAO. 2024. Gender-Sensitive Income-Generating Activities in the Niger. Resilience Good Practice. Available [here](#).

77. b. Land committees were coordinated with communal authorities to support land negotiation on behalf of the beneficiaries. Seventy-three land loan deeds were signed in the intervention areas, enabling very poor HHs, including 1,257 vulnerable women, to access rehabilitated land as a loan, free of charge, for a period of 5 to 10 years, to be used for community fields or market gardens.

78. c. In KILs, informants stressed that women have been strongly involved in the decision making structures established at the community level, and that this has allowed them to gain experience as part of management committees to monitor programme activities, asset management, and infrastructure management. Access to credit also seems to have been facilitated.¹⁸

79. Pathway 4: Availability and access to a nutritious food supply.

80. The activities implemented in this area included conditional food/cash transfers; training in agricultural techniques; distribution of inputs/tools; promotion of climate-resilient agricultural activities; capacity building in agricultural and pastoral products conservation, processing, and marketing; etc.

81. At the immediate outcome level, the programme successfully increased knowledge and access to agricultural inputs and assets (Immediate outcome 1210). According to the programme documents, 10,245 ha of land were restored during the programme implementation period through FFA activities involving 1,771 HHs (71 percent of which are female-headed). FGDs showed that beneficiaries particularly valued asset development activities such as half-moon, zaïis, and pond dredging as well as assisted natural regeneration activities. The number of school gardens established and the number of children participating in training were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the rainy season, and off-season harvest targets were not met due to pest attacks. Although the evaluation team was unable to access the PMF data concerning value chain indicators, the RBA Resilience Initiative documents suggest that the programme contributed to improvement of value chains (Immediate outcome 1220). Eighty-seven percent of 1,589 HHs who benefited from IGAs invested funds to create capital. Sixty percent of beneficiaries who increased capital started generating profit and 36 percent were able to establish saving funds.

82. At the intermediate outcome level, the programme shows a good performance concerning the intermediate results of the programme (Intermediate outcome 1200). The Initiative's PMF revealed positive effects on both the improvement of crop yields and the mastery of the technological package. By 2022-2023, improvements in cereal yields were observed as follows:

Table 3: RBA Resilience Initiative in Niger. Obtained agricultural production

| 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: RBA PMF, 2023

83. Additionally, millet and sorghum cropping systems were strengthened, but cowpea crops suffered from several pest attacks, as confirmed by the FGD.¹⁹ Targets concerning children aged 6-23 months consuming an acceptable diet were not achieved, however, the proportion more than doubled during project implementation. Similarly, the proportion of women of childbearing age (15-49 years) consuming the minimum dietary diversity for women (MDD-W) increased significantly from 31.17 percent in 2018 to 80.2 percent in 2023.²⁰

¹⁸ KILs with NGO implementing partners.

¹⁹ FGDs in Koublé Magama, Kouroungoussaou, Doumana, Ara (mixed FGD and women only FGD), Kerno, Bakoum, Dagougi, Angoual Alkali, and Koublé.

²⁰ WFP, FAO & IFAD. 2023. Rome-based Agencies' Programme to Strengthen the Resilience of Livelihoods in Protracted Crisis Context. Niger Final Project Close-out Report (Draft).

84. Trends in the Livelihood Coping Strategy Index (CSI) show a significant decrease in emergency strategies, from a baseline of 39.66 percent for male-headed HHs and 34.48 percent for female-headed HHs to 7.98 percent and 12.05 percent respectively. This suggests improvements in terms of livelihoods and resilience to shocks under the RBA Resilience Initiative. However, it should be observed that the <10 percent target for female-headed HHs was not achieved.

85. The target for the proportion of women of reproductive age consuming a MDD-W was met, reflecting improvements in the diet of beneficiary women of reproductive age in terms of dietary diversity and micronutrient adequacy. The achievement of the food-based reduced CSI Indicates that the hardship faced by HHs due to a shortage of food in targeted communities was reduced as expected.

86. Women were specifically targeted with small ruminant kits, support for women-run granaries for food security, technical assistance, and capacity building in topics such as sustainable conservation, transformation, and marketing of agricultural products. Female-headed HHs were able to access food stocks at lower prices, preventing the negative effects of the lean season while improving their livelihood.¹⁸ While the RBA Resilience Initiative adopted a gender-sensitive approach and the high-level of prioritization indicates that the RBAs intended their integrated resilience package to be geared towards gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE), the Niger final report does not provide enough end-of-project evidence to assess if and how women's agency and inclusion were improved by the activities aiming to improve the availability and access to food supply. It seems important to properly identify potential changes. Existing studies¹⁹ conducted in Niger show that women's participation in activities such as FFA, for example, is not necessarily a sign of gender transformation or women's empowerment.²¹

87. Awareness-raising activities facilitated participation of women in activities related to agricultural production (ex. fields run by women, home gardens, learning agricultural techniques).²²

88. The above findings are confirmed by qualitative evidence obtained from communities. FGD participants confirmed that programme activities helped them increase food availability through:

89. **a. Increased availability of locally produced diversified food.** Both men and women who participated in FGDs in all communities visited by the evaluators reported improved soil fertility and protection of sowing areas, better access to tools, fishing ponds, small ruminants, adoption of new agricultural techniques such as zai, composting, and use of improved varieties. They linked all of these with increased food production in fields, home gardens, and market gardens.

90. **b. Increased cash availability or reduced HH cash needs.** According to the FGDs, men and women were able to engage in "cash for assets" activities and women have acquired skills to run IGAs and to add value to agricultural products. These activities allowed HHs to generate income, which was used to buy food or to cover other HH expenses that were previously covered by selling HH produced food. The reduction in displacement/stress migration was cited by FGDs conducted in six communities in the Maradi and Zinder regions establishing a link between reduced male migration with increased production, access to income, ANR, IGAs, agricultural training, and livestock.

4.4 How efficient was the partnership of the RBAs in view of implementing the joint multi-year Resilience Initiative and leveraging further resources? (EQ 4.)

91. While this question is addressed in more detail in the main report, some observations can be formulated regarding the efficiency of the Niger RBA Resilience Initiative.

92. Team members from the three agencies reported that the dedicated coordination mechanism, established in response to a request originally formulated by the Government of Niger, was

²¹ WFP. 2017. The Potential of Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) to Empower Women and Improve Women's Nutrition: A Five Case Study (including Niger).

²² FGDs in three communities.

instrumental in improving the overall coordination of the programme in terms of organization, communication, and sequenced and mutually reinforcing activities.

93. Efficiency was optimized by the Initiative’s ability to share resources, tools, and skills and mobilize local resources (human resources and knowledge) throughout the programme by actively involving individual beneficiaries and community-based structures in the implementation of activities.

94. Nevertheless, community feedback and the programme adaptive management approach provided the necessary flexibility to respond to changing circumstances.

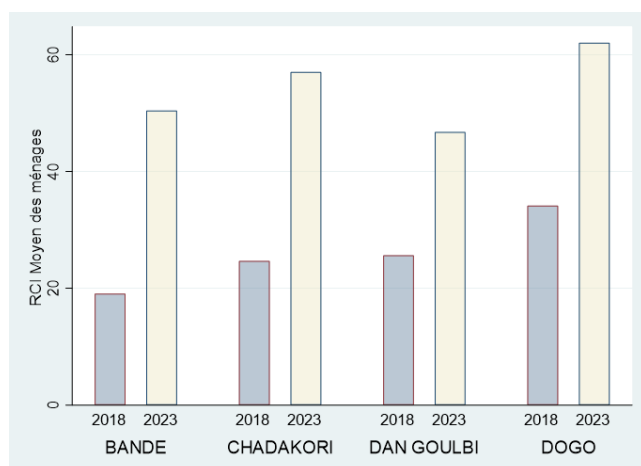
4.5 Did the RBA Resilience Initiative contribute to long-term intended results or unintended impacts? (EQ 5.0)

95. For the Niger case study, the quantitative and qualitative data analyzed by the evaluation team lead to key findings on the achievements of the RBA Resilience Initiative in terms of increased food security and resilience of the target population. These findings suggest that the programme was successful in achieving its outcome (increased food security and resilience of the population, especially women and children in the target regions). The programme has significantly contributed to improving food security, the poor food consumption score (FCS) dropped to 4 percent in 2022-2023.

96. The RBA Resilience Initiative measured HH resilience to food insecurity using FAO’s RIMA methodological tool. RIMA quantitatively determines both the level of HH resilience and the determinants of this resilience among four empirical pillars identified in the framework of this methodology: access to basic services (ABS), assets (AST), social safety nets (SSN) and AC.

97. Per the programme’s data final report preliminary analysis, the Resilience Capacity Index (RCI) for beneficiary HHs stood at 29.6 at the start of its implementation in 2018. This significantly increased by 2023, where it stood at 59.6, corresponding to an absolute increase of 30 points and a relative increase of 103 percent.

Figure 4: Average HH RCI according to the data collection period and the commune



Source: RBA Niger Final Project Close-out Report (Draft), 2023

98. Figure 4 shows that the gap between the beneficiary group and the comparison group has widened over time, reflecting a specific effect in the project intervention areas. Chadakori municipality average RCI increased significantly by 131 percent over the five years of implementation.

99. Following the structure of the resilience matrix of the project, the resilience capacity of beneficiary HHs experienced two evolutions. The influence of pillars related to ABS and AC has increased from 1.7 percent to 17.6 percent, and from 16.2 percent to 38.2 percent respectively and the effect of SSNs on HH resilience has declined. The RBA Resilience Initiative reports a change in the programme beneficiaries’ resilience structure as follows:

- ABS pillar was supported by services deemed important to the community, such as input shops, feed shops, processing units, nurseries, and community granaries. Capacity building for

community workers, health workers, and farmers' organizations brought basic health services and markets closer to HHs, respectively.

- AC pillar's increased importance is explained by the project's support to vulnerable HHs in terms of diversification of sources of income through the development of individual and collective IGAs, coupled with improved access to agricultural activities thanks to new infrastructure. Alongside this, training activities strengthen HH agricultural livestock and nutrition knowledge and practices.
- AST pillar remains essential for HH resilience thanks to increased access to land or livestock.
- The importance of the SSN pillar decreased compared to other pillars. This might be explained by the low reliability of both formal and informal cash and in-kind transfers, less reliable than income generated through a wider range of productive assets.

100. The increase of women's RCI at a similar level to men's (+29 and +30 respectively) suggesting that the particular attention given to women during the implementation of income-generating and nutrition activities and the fact that the programme encouraged them to assume leading roles in grass-roots organizations were effective.

101. These results are consistent with evidence generated through WFP's resilience-specific monitoring systems suggesting that communities participating in WFP's integrated resilience programmes in five Sahel countries, including the RBA Resilience Initiative in Niger, were relatively less affected by food insecurity, and better equipped to withstand the food crisis that impacted the region, despite a deteriorated context.²³

102. The RBA Resilience Initiative's impacts in terms of reducing malnutrition are mixed. The programme contributed to reducing the prevalence of acute malnutrition among children under 5 in the two regions where the resilience programme was implemented. However, it did not encounter the same success in reducing the prevalence of chronic malnutrition, where significant regional disparities can be observed. The expected target (<50 percent) for the prevalence of chronic malnutrition among children under 5 was achieved in Chadakori, but it was not achieved in Dogo. On the contrary, chronic malnutrition increased (63.50 percent) when compared to the baseline data (61.8 percent). Hence, the expected improvements in the nutritional status of beneficiaries have not reached end-of-project targets. According to the RBA staff, this is explained by the unforeseen impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the global food crisis in Niger.

4.5.1 Qualitative evidence of the RBA Initiative impact

103. The evidence of the impact of the RBA Resilience Initiative, derived from the narrative causal statements collected directly from the project's intended beneficiaries, is graphically depicted in Figure 3. (For more detailed figures per pathway see Annex 7.3.1)

104. The most significant change cited during FGDs in terms of addressing malnutrition and improved nutrition outcomes was the prevention and reduction of malnutrition because of increased awareness in nutrition and family practices.²⁴ As noted in one FGD: *"Before we didn't know how to diagnose malnutrition, now all the women in the village know the signs of malnutrition and the measures to take to prevent or combat it."*²⁵ Participants in FGDs also mentioned improvements in terms of behavioral changes (food hygiene, hand washing); improved health of children and pregnant women, and the reduction of HH health expenditures, amongst others. It is noteworthy that, according to the FGDs in three villages, other activities such as market and home gardens and FFA activities have also contributed to these results.²⁶

²³ WFP. 2023. WFP's Resilience Programme in the Sahel Contributes to Social Cohesion and Peace Beyond Food Security. Sahel Social Cohesion Research in Burkina Faso and Niger: Summary of Findings.

²⁴ QuIP analysis conducted in seven communities in Maradi and Zinder regions.

²⁵ A participant in the FGD in Angoul Alkali.

²⁶ QuIP analysis conducted in seven communities in Maradi and Zinder regions.

105. FGD participants confirmed greater participation of women in programme activities as a consequence of awareness-raising campaigns. *“The most significant change is that women and people with disabilities are now better taken into account in all activities initiated in the village.”*²⁷ However, they were less able to link activities to an outcome in terms of community organization and women’s leadership.

106. Assets creation, asset development, and ANR were perceived as the most significant changes concerning increased agricultural production outcomes. The adoption of Zai and the NRA are associated by FGD participants with more cultivated areas, improved soil fertility, food diversity, a decrease in unemployment, and male migration. As stated by a participant during one FGD: *“Before, the production of my field barely covered my household food needs for seven months. Now, thanks to Zai, ANR and composting, my own production enables me to make ends meet for the year.”*²⁸

107. The RBA Resilience Initiative supported a range of climate resilience-related activities (land and forest rehabilitation and growth). However, according to RBA Resilience Initiative staff, there were no effective indicators or other measurements to show how or if these created greater climate change resilience. A study conducted by WFP in 2022 in collaboration with the AGRHYMET Regional Centre (ARC) suggests that the RBA Resilience Initiative activities had an impact reducing atmospheric CO₂. The study found that, on average, each hectare of land rehabilitated as part of the integrated resilience approach is estimated to sequester 6 tons of CO₂ each year. Reducing atmospheric CO₂ helps stabilize climate patterns, making weather conditions more predictable. This is crucial for agricultural planning and water resource management. FGD participants stressed that the integration of climate services, such as seasonal and daily climate forecasts, has improved their ability to make decisions on climate risk management. The installation of rain gauges and training in their use reinforce this perception. RBA Resilience Initiative staff pointed out that the FFA component led to an increase in vegetable cover and biodiversity, contributing to carbon sequestration.

108. As noted above, participants in four of the five FGDs conducted in Dogo highlighted the impact of the programme in reducing male migration due to increased HH food and income opportunities generated by asset-creation activities. Qualitative interviews conducted with the RBA Resilience Initiative staff, suggest that migration to urban centres or neighboring countries was significantly reduced, particularly for young people, who now prefer to stay in the community to work their land and develop IGAs. The RBA Resilience Initiative estimates that migration was reduced by more than half between 2018 and 2022.²⁹ This may indicate an indirect effect of the Initiative’s resilience activities in Niger. Indeed, the programme has supported the diversification of livelihoods, which, according to the IOM, is one strategy for coping with climate change.³⁰

109. The evaluation showed that there are differences between the two regions where the programme was implemented. According to KIIs with RBA Resilience Initiative staff, differences are linked to external conditions, including agro-ecological context, agricultural potential, and socio-cultural context. For example, Chadakori has mostly lateritic soil, whereas Dogo has dune soil.

4.6 To what extent are the benefits of the RBA Resilience Initiative sustainable? (EQ 6.0)

110. Assessing the sustainability of resilience programmes is inherently complex in a protracted context of multiple crises such as Niger. In a very short period, the country has experienced serious challenges including the COVID-19 pandemic, a global food crisis, and a long period of political instability. Moreover, building resilience and sustaining positive outcomes can take time, and short-term assessments may not capture the full picture. However, in conducting this case study, the evaluation team obtained evidence of how the RBA Resilience Initiative efforts in Niger are creating opportunities for the benefits of the programme to be sustained in the medium and long term.

²⁷ FGD participant.

²⁸ FGD in Kerno, Chadakori.

²⁹ WFP, FAO & IFAD. 2023. Rome-based Agencies’ Programme to Strengthen the Resilience of Livelihoods in Protracted Crisis Context. Niger Final Project Close-out Report.

³⁰ OIM. 2021. Migration, environnement et changement climatique.

4.6.1 Continued benefits

111. The qualitative data collected by the evaluation suggests that the RBA Resilience Initiative has laid the groundwork for a local resilience framework. The engagement of local stakeholders, the high level of beneficiaries' uptake in key activities such as training and capacity building; and the promotion and consolidation of community-level committees with management and operational responsibilities, builds local capacity to implement bottom-up resilience solutions and reduce the negative impact of political instability at the national level.

112. The Initiative strengthens capacity of local actors to participate in resilience-oriented coordination processes. Strengthened capacity can be deployed to support future resilience interventions.

4.6.2 Handover

113. The RBA Resilience Initiative adopts WFP's Progression Strategy, which aims for a gradual handover to communities and governments. Site management and community participatory plans developed with the support of the Initiative coupled with technical assistance are expected to contribute to a gradual phase-out of food aid as communities become more self-sufficient. This is complemented by a gradual handover to other partners who will support communities in the achievement of a level of sustainable development.³¹ However, according to WFP staff in Niger, WFP is still learning how best to implement this progressive strategy in a very challenging operational context. Some lessons learned include: i) by improving knowledge of adapted seeds and cultivation techniques, farmers become more resilient in the face of climate change. This reduces dependence on external aid and increases the capacity of communities to sustainably produce their own food ; ii) by building HH capacity and increasing resilience, communities can better cope with future crises. IGAs diversify sources of income and reduce economic vulnerability; iii) the empowerment of women and their active participation in economic and community decision making strengthens social cohesion and stimulates community development. When women are empowered, they often invest in the health, education and well-being of their families, which has a positive effect on the whole community; iv) by offering local economic opportunities, young people are less likely to migrate in search of work, which maintains human capital within the community. Social cohesion strengthened by unified community activities creates a more stable and supportive environment; and v) sustainable farming practices preserve the environment and increase agricultural productivity in the long term. By using techniques such as ANR and the addition of organic manure, farmers improve soil fertility and resilience to climatic impacts.³²

114. In addition, the Resilience Initiative has laid the necessary groundwork by integrating its resilience activities into the Government of Niger's 3N Initiative and supporting implementation through the government's decentralized structures. However, this should be seen as a contribution to a long-term process. As stated in WFP's Niger Country Strategic Plan (2020-2024), WFP's resilience activities have increasingly been implemented through the decentralized structures of the government, facilitating their gradual handover during the current and subsequent Country Strategic Plan (CSP).

115. The synergies created with a long-standing government programme such as the PRODAF, which focuses on food and nutrition security and resilience of rural HHs in several regions, including Maradi and Zinder, can ensure a level of continuity beyond the life of the programme. The Initiative reinforced a process put in place by PRODAF, in which municipalities are the administrative entry point for all interventions while involving local territorial authorities in local public-private partnerships. This indicates that there will be some continuity after the end of the programme.

4.7 To what extent did the RBA Resilience Initiative consider and contribute to gender, human rights, equity, and inclusion? (EQ 7.0)

³¹ KII with RBA staff in Niger.

³² KII with RBA staff in Niger.

4.7.1 Design

116. 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 emphasize the importance of promoting gender equality and empowering women and aim to systematically include a gender perspective in all aspects of their work (policy development, programme implementation, M&E). They have common strategies such as building the capacity of staff and partners to understand and integrate gender into project activities; acknowledging the importance of gender-specific data and research to inform decision making and policy making; and involving local communities, especially women, in decision making on agricultural and rural development projects. Specifics vary depending on each organization's focus and mandate.³³ In line with these common approaches, the Resilience Initiative has adopted the following gender-sensitive approach to contribute to women's economic empowerment:

117. Gender roles in farming and the difficulties faced by women during the agricultural calendar were identified during the SLP process. The 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 percent of the people participating in community-based planning tools in Dogo and 25 percent in Chadakori.³⁴ As explained during a KII with RBA staff *"The classic approach to CBPP exercises is to organize a general meeting, but here it was done by category to allow all beneficiaries, including women and youth, to participate"*.³⁵

118. The Initiative ensured that women were the target beneficiaries of all programme activities, specifically targeting women with interventions such as women's granaries (greniers à soudure) for food security; training in IGA; value-chain improvements; food processing activities; and training on screening techniques. Women account for the majority of beneficiaries of nutrition interventions; FFA beneficiaries (71 percent); Dimitra Club participants (63 percent); trainings in organizational structure and land management (62 percent); health workers trained in mid upper arm circumference (MUAC) screenings; and key EFP (55 percent). Girls account for more than half of school canteen beneficiaries and of children receiving MAM treatment.³⁶

119. Women 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 the majority of beneficiaries were men.

120. Besides promoting women's participation in community bodies created by the programme, the initiative encouraged the creation and strengthening of more than 55 women's groups. It is worth noting that in 2021, WFP made it mandatory for cooperating partners to require that at least 50 percent of committee members are women in village-level community feedback mechanism (CFM) committees – which are set up at the targeting stage of all activities.³⁷

121. The Initiative's PMF includes several gender-sensitive indicators at the immediate level and the intermediate outcome indicators include the women's empowerment in agriculture index.

4.7.2 Results

122. The PMF reflects several advances in terms of GEWE induced by the RBA Resilience Initiative. For example, 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

³³ For more information see WFP. 2022. Gender Policy; IFAD. 2019. Mainstreaming Gender-transformative Approaches at IFAD – Action Plan 2019-2025; and FAO. Policy on Gender Equality 2020–2030.

³⁴ WFP, FAO & IFAD. 2023. Rome-based Agencies' Programme to Strengthen the Resilience of Livelihoods in Protracted Crisis Context. Niger Final Project Close-out Report.

³⁵ KII with RBA staff.

³⁶ WFP, FAO & IFAD. 2023. Rome-based Agencies' Programme to Strengthen the Resilience of Livelihoods in Protracted Crisis Context. Niger Final Project Close-out Report (Draft).

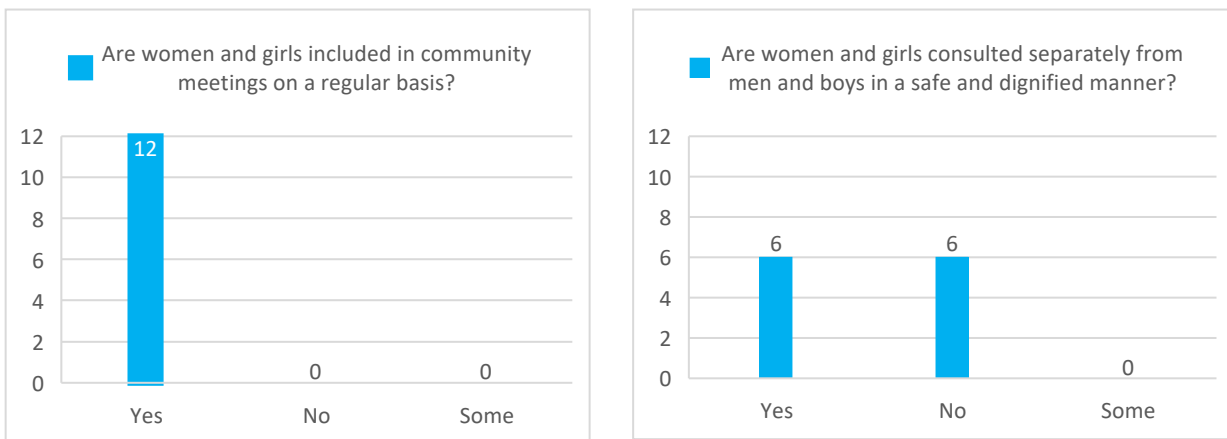
³⁷ In 2021, WFP made it mandatory for its cooperating partners to ensure that village-level community feedback mechanism (CFM) committees require that at least 50 percent of the committee members be women. WFP. 2021. Niger Annual Country Report 2021. Country Strategic Plan 2020-2024.

programme achieved important results related to women’s access to land and school attendance and retention rates for girls (showing a significant increase of 97.6 percent retention rate). Since this indicator is related to the reduction of early marriages, it is important from a GEWE perspective.

123. The evaluation team did not obtain sufficient information to conclusively assess the results in terms of the programme’s impact on women’s leadership.

124. Qualitative data collected through the UN Women rapid assessment tool suggests that women and girls are very satisfied with livelihood-related training. They are regularly included in community meetings where they have some influence in decision making. They are also satisfied with their level of influence and that their participation has been inclusive. Nevertheless, more than half of the responses indicated that they are not regularly consulted separately from men and boys. They feel completely safe walking alone and accessing services and generally safe going to distribution sites and accessing the payment methods in cash for work. Women and girls report feeling safe going to the market. However, in women-only FGDs, women reported that in some villages, women and girls do not leave their homes at all. Women also reported knowing where to report gender-based violence (GBV), saying they would report to family and village authorities. According to the respondents, household money expenditures are decided jointly by men and women.

Figure 5: FGD answers to the UN Women rapid assessment tool



Source: UN Women Rapid Assessment Tool

125. FGDs in communities revealed multifold effects of the RBA’s resilience-integrated activity package, including benefits for women. However, only one-third of the causal links identified by FGD participants between activities and programme outcomes are related to women. This suggests a limited awareness among beneficiaries of how women benefit from and participate in resilience activities.

5 Conclusions

126. **Relevance (EQ1):** The RBAs successfully mobilized tools and past experience to design an integrated joint intervention, supported by a highly participatory planning process. Beneficiaries were able to articulate their needs and priorities in terms of food security, nutrition, and resilience. The planning tools applied at the local, regional, and national levels ensured a high level of relevance to stakeholders' needs. The RBA Resilience Initiative is aligned with key Nigerian government policies on resilience, nutrition, food security, and gender.

127. **Coherence (EQ2):** The RBAs developed synergies throughout the programme design and implementation processes. The 3PA processes intertwined different levels of planning and action processes and encouraged collaborative engagement among the three agencies, as well as with decentralized technical services and other subnational actors. This resulted in greater complementarity among programme activities and components and overall programme coherence. The RBA Resilience Initiative developed a common results and impact framework and a country-specific monitoring system to track changes over time in key institutional, livelihood, and food/nutrition indicators with a gender-sensitive approach.

128. **Effectiveness (EQ3):** The RBA Resilience Initiative met or exceeded most of the targets set for the programmed immediate results in all three pillars of the intervention (nutrition, gender, and agricultural productivity). The Initiative was successful in achieving its immediate outcomes of increased access to MAM screening and awareness of essential HH practices, as well as improved access to nutritious food or cash during the lean season.

129. **Effectiveness (EQ3):** Only one third of causal links between programme activities and programme results are related to how women participate or benefit from the programme. This might limit women's capacity to exert control over critical resources for food security and resilience made available by the RBA Resilience Initiative.

130. **Efficiency (EQ4):** The adaptive management approach adopted by the RBA Resilience Initiative during programme implementation enabled them to carry out most of the programmed activities, despite the major shocks that affected Niger during the Initiative's implementation period.

131. **Impact (EQ5):** The RBA Resilience Initiative achieved significant results at the intermediate outcome level. The nutritional, dietary, and EFP in food hygiene including screening of MAM/SAM improved significantly, while FGDs revealed significant behavioral changes in these areas. The programme helped vulnerable groups improve their diets in terms of diversity and micronutrient adequacy. MAM recovery improved in the targeted communities, and mortality rates for children aged 6-23 and pregnant women were reduced to zero.

132. **Impact (EQ5):** The RBA Resilience Initiative was successful in designing an integrated gender-resilience programme. Most of the immediate and intermediate results in this area were achieved. The positive and unexpected effects observed in terms of women's empowerment suggest that future interventions could implement a progressive gender transformative approach.

133. **Impact (EQ5):** The RBA Resilience Initiative's impact on reducing malnutrition is mixed. While acute malnutrition was reduced as expected, the Initiative did not have the same success in reducing the prevalence of chronic malnutrition. There are significant differences between the two regions where the programme was implemented.

134. **Sustainability (EQ6):** Beneficiaries saw significant improvement in their access to agricultural inputs and assets, which helped to increase agricultural production and ensure access to a nutritious, diversified, and stable food supply for targeted beneficiaries. Accordingly, the beneficiaries were less prone to adopt negative coping strategies, suggesting improvements in terms of livelihoods, resilience to shocks, and reduction in hardship faced by HHs due to a shortage of food in targeted communities.

135. **Sustainability (EQ6):** The RBA Resilience Initiative made a significant contribution to intended long-term results in terms of food security and resilience. Quantitative and qualitative data analyzed by the evaluation team show that the Niger case study's most salient findings confirm the RBA Resilience Initiative's contribution to long-term outcomes in terms of increased food security and resilience for the targeted population.

136. **Gender Equity (EQ7):** Women's resilience indicators reached the same level as men. This is evidence that the special attention given to women in the implementation of income-generating and nutritional activities, and the fact that the programme encouraged them to take leadership roles in grassroots organizations, were fruitful.

137. **Gender Equity (EQ7):** The programme has also significantly impacted women's access to land and girls' school attendance and retention rates, which may help reduce early marriage.

6 Recommendations

138. **R1:** Given the relevance and success of the joint Resilience Initiative, RBAs could continue and scale up such interventions in Niger, while ensuring that adaptive management is emphasized to foster responsiveness to changing conditions. To this end, it is essential to prioritize advocacy efforts to secure long-term funding commitments; and reinforce the collaborative framework between WFP, FAO, and IFAD by enhancing joint planning and implementation. In addition, it is essential to establish regular reporting schedules to facilitate effective M&E.

139. **R2:** RBA future joint programmes in Niger could promote a progressive gender-transformative approach. This involves not just including women in activities, but also actively challenging and changing gender norms and empowering women to take on leadership roles. This progressive approach involves conducting a thorough gender analysis to understand the specific gender dynamics, roles, and power relations in target communities and planning activities that build upon each other over time and create sustainable and deep-rooted changes in communities. Among these: sensitization campaigns targeting both men and women, quotas or targets for women's participation in programme activities and decision making bodies, building women's capacities on areas that strengthen their technical skills, leadership abilities, and self-confidence (such as women's rights, financial literacy, agricultural practices, etc.) and ensuring women's representation in decision making bodies and processes related to resilience interventions.

140. **R3:** The RBA could enhance communication and awareness on the importance of women's participation and gender equality to all beneficiaries through sensitization campaigns highlighting how gender equality contributes to the success of resilience interventions. By educating communities about the positive impact of gender equality, these campaigns can challenge and change traditional perceptions and stereotypes that limit women's roles, while building women's confidence to actively participate in community decision making processes and take on leadership roles.

7.2 Annex 2: List of key informant interviews (KII)

The following cohorts and numbers were interviewed as part of the data collection phase.

Table 4: List of stakeholders interviewed as part of the data collection phase

| Key informant Organization | Country | # of Respondents | Women |
|----------------------------------|---------|------------------|-----------|
| 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 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 Somalia | Somalia | 5 | 2 |
| WFP Somalia | Somalia | 5 | 2 |
| Government partners | Somalia | 9 | 0 |
| RBA Implementing Partners | Somalia | 2 | 0 |
| TOTALS: | | 21 | 4 |

7.3 Annex 3: Evidentiary linkages

7.3.1 Qualitative Impact Protocol (QuIP) analysis

142. As described in the Inception Phase Report, primary qualitative evidence was derived from KIIs (please see list in Annex 7.2) and FGDs with community members who benefitted from the programme.

143. For the latter, the intention was to use the QuIP analysis. This would typically 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 likely inevitable because they were contacted by RBA Resilience Initiative partners to organize FGDs.

144. 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.

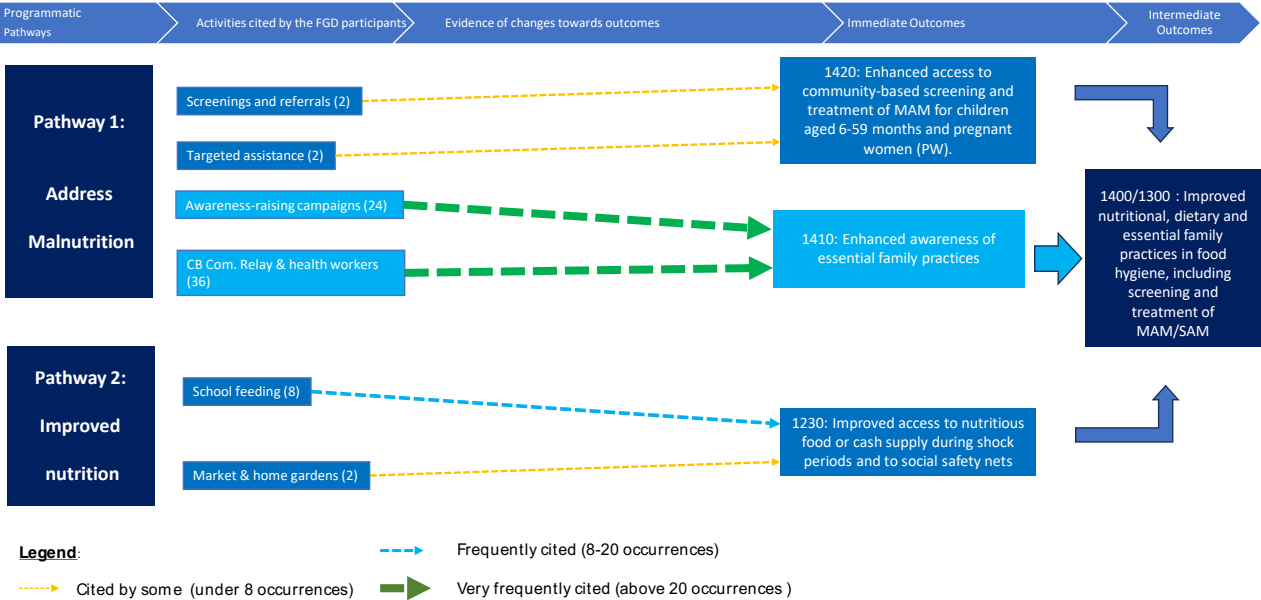
Data was entered into a database and codified to assess causal links. Regarding the ToC, qualitative analysis trends have been established in the QuIP tables (Figure 6, Figure 7, Figure 8, Figure 9).

Figure 6: Qualitative analysis trends, as aligned with causal links established in the evaluation ToC: Overview



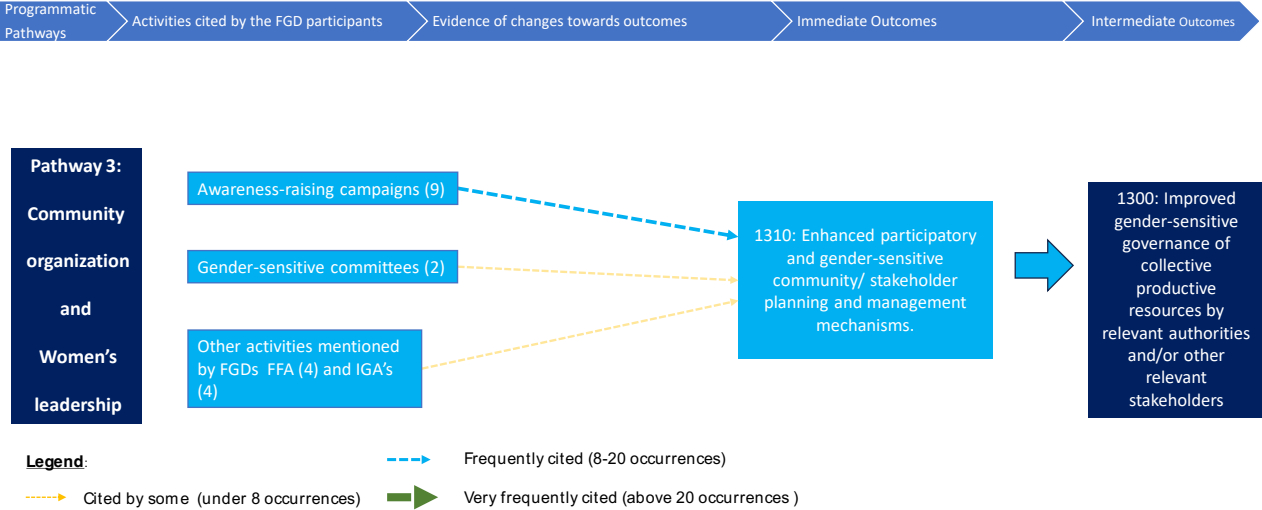
Source: Evaluation data from FGDs in Niger (QUiP).

Figure 7: Qualitative analysis trends, as aligned with causal links established in the evaluation ToC: Pathway 1 & 2



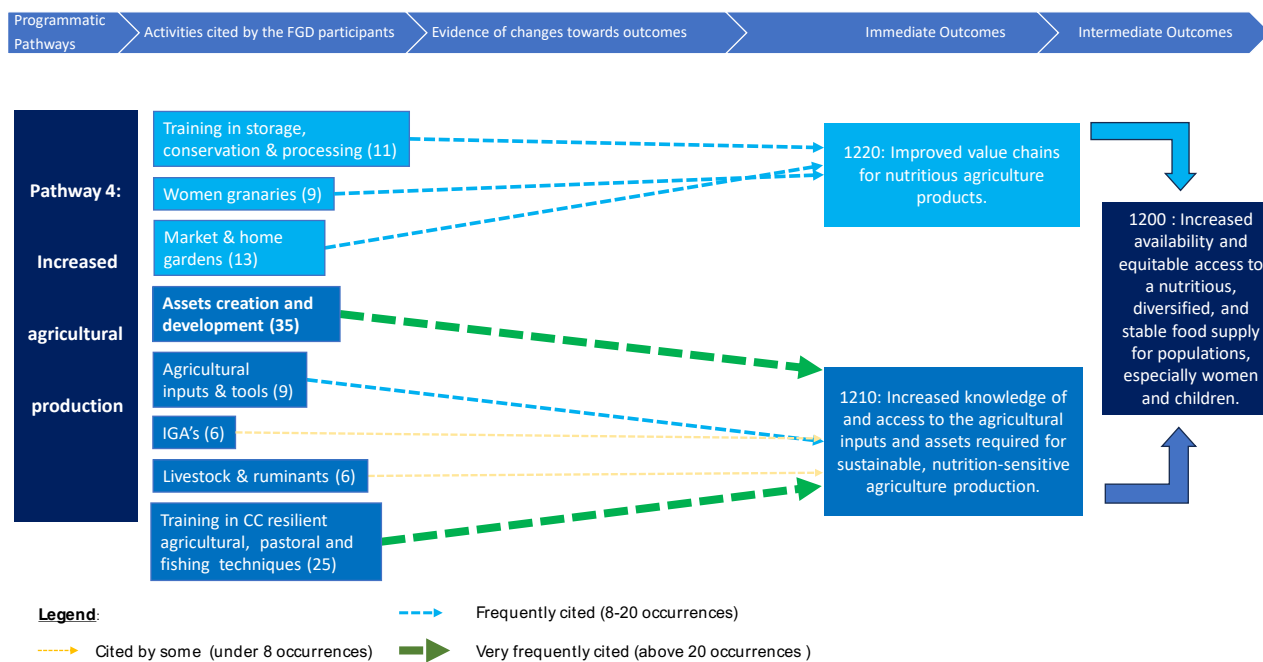
Source: Evaluation data from FGDs in Niger (QIiP)

Figure 8: Qualitative analysis trends, as aligned with causal links established in the evaluation ToC: Pathway 3



Source: Evaluation data from FGDs in Niger (QUIP)

Figure 9: Qualitative analysis trends, as aligned with causal links established in the evaluation ToC: Pathway 4



Source: Evaluation data from FGDs in Niger (QUP)

7.3.2 Adapted UN Women Rapid Assessment Tool

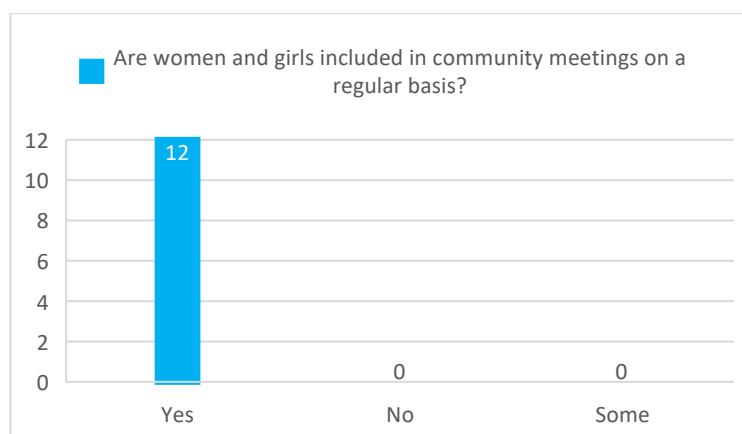
145. The UN Women rapid assessment tool focuses on three domains: leadership and participation, protection and safety, and economic well-being. It complements existing gender tools by providing an evaluative lens for the assessment of GEWE results. It is aligned with guidelines set out in the System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN-SWAP).³⁸

146. 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.

147. At each site visited by the team, the UN Women rapid assessment tool has been conducted with each FGD. The beneficiaries in FGD gathered and shared a consensual response by group to the following questions presented below. This annex presents the distribution of answers among the 12 FGDs (203 participants distributed in 7 FGDs of mixed gender and 5 FGDs with women only, including a total of 149 women and 54 men).

Leadership & Participation

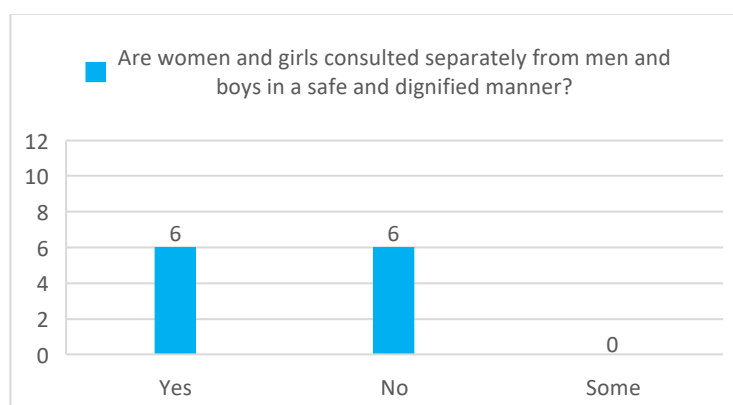
Are women and girls consulted on a regular basis?



Source: FGD (sample 12)

148. Findings: Women and girls are regularly included in community meetings.

Are women and girls consulted separately from men and boys in a safe and dignified manner?

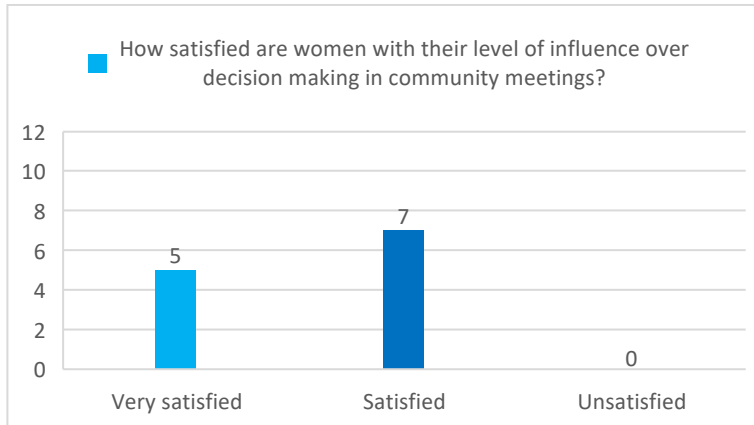


Source: FGD (sample 12)

³⁸ For an overview and guidance, visit the UN Women's UN-SWAP website [here](#).

149. Finding: 50 percent of FGD responses indicated that women and girls are not consulted separately from men and boys.

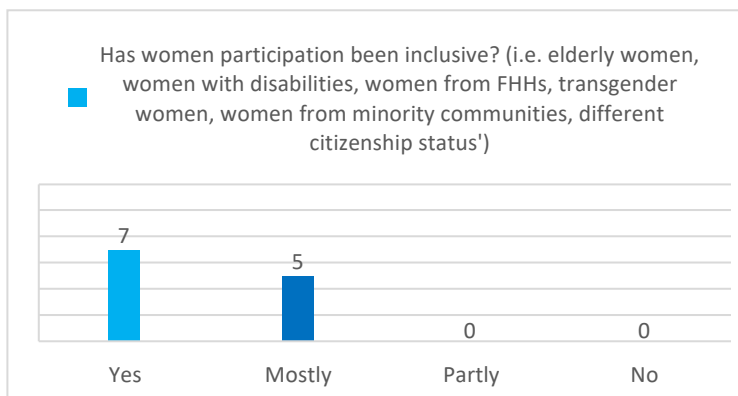
How satisfied are women with their level of influence over decision making?



Source: FGD (sample 12)

150. Findings: Over 60 percent of responses indicate that women are satisfied with their level of influence over decision making in community meetings.

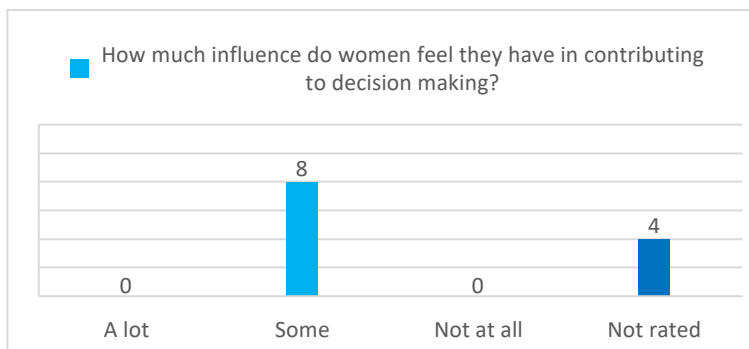
Has women's participation been inclusive? (i.e., elderly women, women with disabilities, women from female-headed HHs, transgender women, women from minority communities, different citizenship status)



Source: FGD (sample 12)

151. Findings: Over 60 percent of responses indicate that women's participation has been inclusive. However, 40 percent of women felt that participation was not completely inclusive and there remain perceived barriers.

How much influence do women feel they have in contributing to decision making?

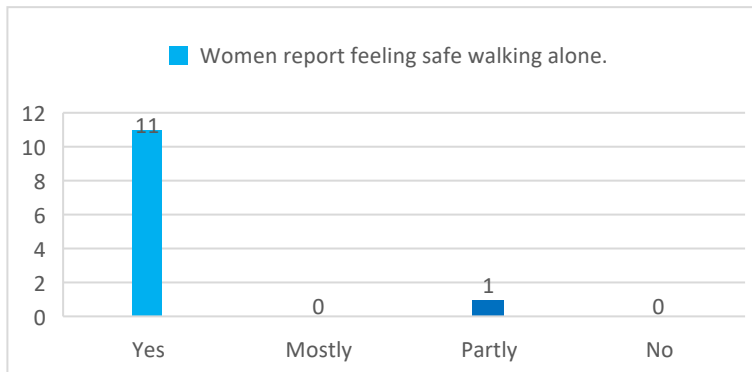


Source: FGD (sample 12)

152. Findings: Over 70 percent of responses indicate that women have some influence in contributing to decision making.

Safety

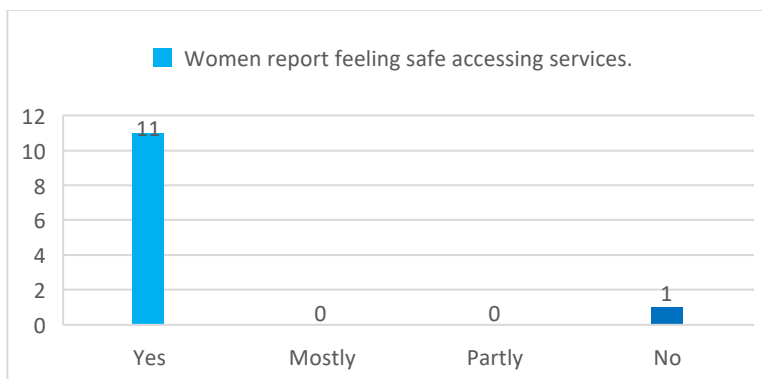
Women report feeling safe walking alone



Source: FGD (sample 12)

153. Findings: The majority of responses indicate that women feel safe walking alone.

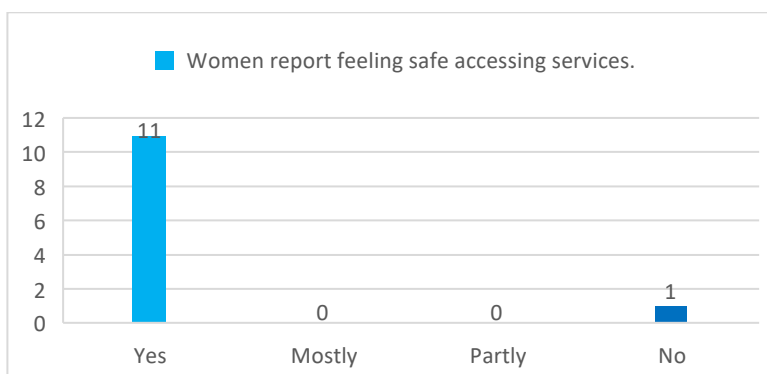
Women report feeling safe accessing services



Source: FGD (sample 12)

154. Findings: The majority of women report feeling safe accessing services.

Women know how and where to report GBV or other issues?



Source : FGD (sample 12)

155. Findings: All responses reported indicate that women know where to report GBV.

Economic Well Being

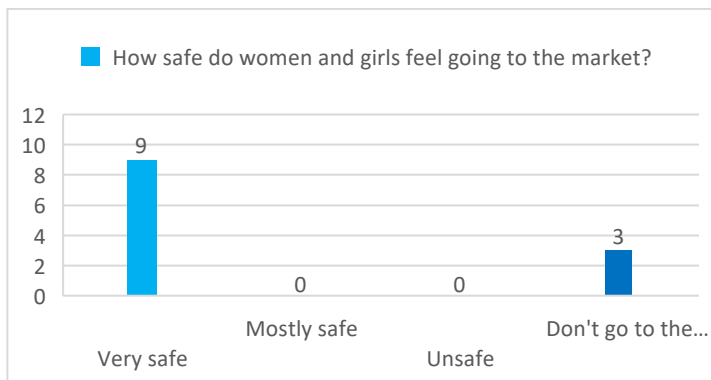
How satisfied are women with any livelihood related training?



Source: FGD (sample 12)

156. Findings: The majority of responses indicate that women are very satisfied with trainings.

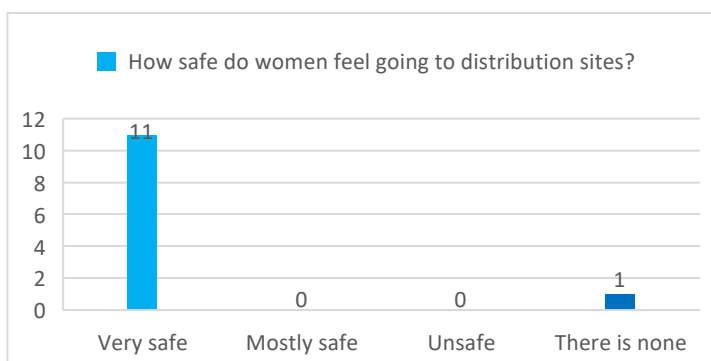
How safe do women and girls feel going to the market?



Source: FGD (sample 12)

157. Findings: In general, women and girls report feeling safe going to the market. However, in FGDs with only women, it was report that in some villages, women do not go out at all.

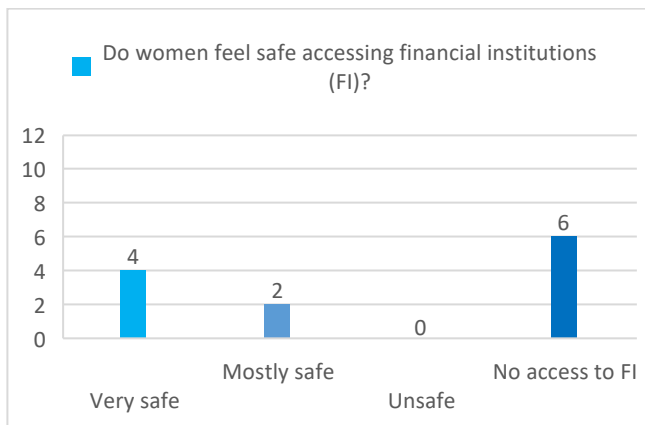
How safe do women feel going to distribution sites?



Source: FGD (sample 12)

158. Findings: All responses indicate that women and girls feel safe going to distribution sites.

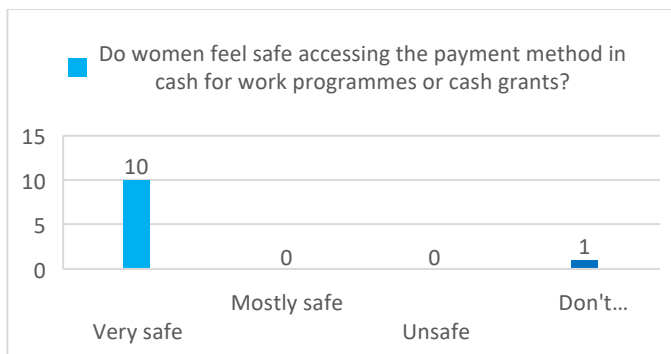
Do women feel safe accessing financial institutions?



Source: FGD (sample 12)

159. Findings: Half of focus groups reported that women do not access financial institutions, but in the cases they do, they feel very safe.

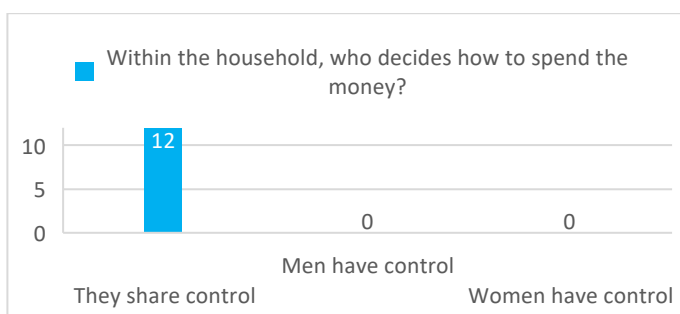
Do women feel safe accessing the payment method in cash for work programmes or cash grants?



Source: FGD (sample 12)

160. Findings: 80 percent of responses indicate that women feel very safe accessing the payment methods in cash for work

Within the HH, who decides how to spend the money?



Source: FGD (sample 12)

161. Findings: All the responses indicate that women and men decide jointly on how to spend the money.

7.6 Annex 8: Bibliography

165. A full contingent of documents was reviewed as provided by the RBA. These are included in a separate share drive.

166. Documents referenced in this report include the following.

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7.7 Annex 7: Abbreviations and acronyms

| | |
|---|--|
| 3PA: Three-Pronged Approach | IFAD: International Fund for Agricultural Development |
| ABS: Access to Basic Services | IGA: Income Generating Activity |
| AC: Adaptive Capacity | IPC: Integrated Food Security Phase Classification |
| ARC: AGRHYMET Regional Centre | KII: Key Informant Interviews |
| ALNAP: Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action | LCSI: Livelihood Coping Strategies Index |
| ANR: Access to Natural Resources | M&E: Monitoring and Evaluation |
| APF: Agropastoral Field Schools | MAD: Minimum Acceptable Diet for children 6-23 months old |
| C2C: Communes de Convergence | MAM: Moderate Acute Malnutrition |
| CBO: Community-Based Organization | MIN: Minimum |
| CBPP: Community-Based Participatory Planning | MAG/EL: Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock |
| CFM: Community Feedback Mechanism | MDD-W: Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women |
| CFS: Committee on World Food Security | MUAC: Mid Upper Arm Circumference |
| CMPS: Comité Multisectoriel de Pilotage Stratégique | 3N: Nigeriens Nourishing Nigeriens Initiative |
| CSI: Coping Strategy Index | NGO: Non-Governmental Organization |
| CSP: Country Strategic Plan | NRM: Natural Resource Management |
| DEQAS: Decentralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System | OECD DAC: The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee |
| DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo | P4P: Purchase for Progress |
| EFFP: Essential Family Practices | PLW: Pregnant and Lactating Women |
| F2F: Face to Face | PLWG: Pregnant and Lactating Women and Girls |
| FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization | PMF: Performance Measurement Framework |
| FARN: Learning and Nutritional Rehabilitation Centre | PRODAF: Family Farming Development Programme |
| FCDO: Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office | QUIP: Qualitative Impact Assessment Protocol |
| FCS: Food Consumption Score | RBA: Rome-Based Agencies |
| FFA: Food Assistance for Assets | RIMA: Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis |
| FFS: Farmer Field School | SAM: Severe Acute Malnutrition |
| FGD: Focus Group Discussion | SHG: Self-Help Group |
| FO: Farmer Organization | SLP: Seasonal Livelihood Programming |
| GAM: Global Acute Malnutrition | SSN: Social Safety Nets |
| GBV: Gender-Based Violence | ToC: Theory of Change |
| GEWE: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment | ToR: Terms of Reference |
| GFS: Women's Granaries | UN: United Nations |
| HDDS: Household Dietary Diversity Score | UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund |
| HDP: Humanitarian-Development-Peace | UN-SWAP: System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment |
| HH: Household | VSLA: Village Savings and Loan Association |
| HQ: Headquarters | WFP: World Food Programme |
| ICA: Integrated Context Analysis | WHO: World Health Organization |
| IDP: Internally Displaced Person | |

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

Country Case Study: Somalia



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22 June 2024

Disclaimer

The views presented in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Rome Based Agencies or any other organization involved in the subject of this evaluation. They are solely of the authors.



Figure 1: Map of Somalia

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Disclaimer

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1 Introduction

1. This case study provides evidence and analysis concerning the Canada/Rome-based Agencies' (RBA) Resilience Initiative "Strengthening the resilience of livelihoods in protracted crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Republic of Niger (Niger) and Somalia" (RBA Resilience Initiative; Programme) in Somalia.¹ This is meant to provide information specific to how the RBA Resilience Initiative was conducted in Somalia and conclusions presented in this report may not apply to the other countries or to the Programme overall.
2. The RBA Resilience Initiative targets food insecure households in protracted and recurrent crises-affected regions of DRC, Niger, Somalia with a focus on vulnerable women and children. The five-year Initiative (April 2017 through March 2022, with a 1-year no-cost extension to March 2023, and then further extended to 31 December 2023) meant to capitalize on the RBA Joint Conceptual Framework for Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition,² wherein the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and World Food Programme (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. IFAD was not active in the RBA Resilience Initiative in Somalia.
3. In Somalia, the Programme aimed to strengthen the resilience of targeted communities and households through improvements to food security, nutrition, livelihoods, and gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE). The approach was based on the Three-pronged Approach (3PA) where FAO and WFP worked with local and national authorities and other partners to ensure that the Programme, overall, was aligned with national priorities, policies, and community needs. This included 2,600 households in 18 villages in Odweyne and Burco districts, Somalia.
4. The decentralized evaluation, of which this case study is part, takes place at the end of the 5-year Initiative. While the evaluation will be important for consolidating evidence for accountability to the donor, the RBAs also consider the evaluation critical to informing multi-year joint programming and accountability to the people being served. 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.
5. Expected users of the evaluation and case study are internal (RBA country offices, RBA regional bureaus, RBA headquarters (HQ)) and external (Government of Canada). The RBAs may also wish to share evaluation results with other partners and actors.

¹ The Terms of Reference (ToR) is available on-line [here](#).

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

2 Overview of Country and RBA Resilience Initiative Context

6. Somalia remains one of the most food insecure and crisis susceptible countries in the world.³ In the RBA Resilience Initiative period, Somalia experienced a number of climate-related crises. In 2017, as the Programme was initiated, Somalia was beginning to recover from severe drought conditions. In 2018, most of Somalia experienced lower than average rains during the *Deyr* season (October-December), followed by harsh weather conditions during the dry *Jilaal* season (January-March 2019).⁴ Poor performance of the *Gu* rains (April-June 2019) lead to worsening drought conditions in many parts of the country. This pattern continued, causing widespread water shortages in most pastoral and agropastoral livelihood zones, leading to atypical livestock movement and declines in livestock conditions and milk production. Given this, an estimated 2.2-2.6 million people experienced crisis (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 3) or emergency (IPC Phase 4) food security levels from 2019-2023.

7. These crises disproportionately affect women and contribute to increased displacement. Overall, Somalia had 7 million internally displaced people (IDP) between 2017 and 2023, and 3.9 million IDPs in 2022 alone.⁵ An 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 lower levels of household income, and only few women work in the more profitable livestock and fishing export industries.⁶ In addition, women's decision-making role, and access to agricultural resources, capital, and information is limited.

8. The Somalia National Development Plan (2020-2024) is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and reflects the principles of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. However, weak statistical systems prevent an assessment of Somalia's progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda. WFP, FAO, and tangentially IFAD, have contributed to developing country analyses, especially for SDG 2 (zero hunger), and in developing the Theory of Change (ToC) for the Somalia United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.⁷

9. In relation to normative instruments and policies related to human rights and gender equality, Somalia has made some progress in relation to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment and Punishment (CAT), International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). These are encapsulated in the Somalia Nutrition Strategy 2020-2025,⁸ wherein children between 6-23 months and pregnant and lactating women (PLW) are intended to receive nutritious commodities.

10. Aiming to address people's vulnerabilities before, during, and after crises, the international community's response is guided by the concept of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus. This approach integrates the provision of emergency assistance in response to the humanitarian needs of millions of vulnerable people, development-oriented activities aimed at helping vulnerable populations in becoming independent of assistance and better able to withstand future shocks, and peacebuilding efforts to strengthen social cohesion and peaceful communities.

³ 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.

⁴ The *Gu* rain season starts as early as the second half of March. Precipitation intensifies in April across the country, except for the north-eastern coastline which receives the least amount of rainfall during this season. The second rainy season (*Deyr*) is characterized by a shorter duration and less amounts of precipitation in the months of October to the end of November. The El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) brings more rainfall and flooding during El Niño and droughts in La Niña years. For more on seasonal rainfalls, please see the World Bank's "Climate Change Knowledge Portal" for Somalia [here](#).

⁵ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. 2023. Global Internal Displacement Database.

⁶ FAO. 2021. National Gender Profile of Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods.

⁷ Please see the Sustainable Development Report for Somalia, available [here](#).

⁸ Somalia Ministry of Health and Human Services. 2020. Somalia Nutrition Strategy 2020-2025. Available [here](#).

11. Resilience-building aims to address the vulnerabilities underlying humanitarian crises while showing a way to sustainably achieve development goals in highly fragile contexts affected by recurrent shocks and crises. The aim is 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, livelihoods, community development and agriculture, are closely linked. Livelihoods 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.
12. The RBA Resilience Initiative in Somalia 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 to 31 December 2023.
13. The Programme focused on drought recovery, agricultural development, the rehabilitation of productive agropastoral and water infrastructure, improved Natural Resources Management (NRM), and other activities that diversified sources of food and income, including activities like village savings and 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.
14. 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.
15. The activities focused on increasing income sources for producer groups by creating additional sources of savings for use during periods of shocks.

3 Methodology, Process, and Limitations

3.1 Methodology

16. 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, gender, increased food security, and resilience, especially for the most vulnerable. This is the basis for the theory-based approach to the evaluation. This includes a mix of sources that align with the ToC along with comparative and contribution analysis across causal pathways, from specific activities to expected immediate and intermediate outcomes.

17. To assess the theory, the evaluation used independent data collection methods 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.

18. 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 and 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.

19. The evaluation’s independent sources included key informant interviews (KII) with RBA staff (country, regional, and HQ), partners, government officials, and others to establish factors that contributed to performance. The evaluation also conducted focus group discussions (FGD) with participating communities to explore how their lives changed in relation to key outcome areas and to then draw links back to Programme activities. These FGDs proved to be an exceptionally rich source of insights into what worked well. FGDs also provided the basis for better understanding the results of outcome and impact level indicators used by the Programme. (See Annex 7.6.)

Table 1: Total number of KIIs and FGDs conducted during the evaluation’s data collection phase (Please also see Table 5 in the Annexes for a further breakdown of these cohorts.)

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

20. 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, 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 Food Consumption Score (FCS), Coping Strategy Index (CSI), and RIMA II, amongst others in the different country contexts. These data sets were never provided although final RBA results included summarized indices and overall results.

21. The evaluations’ approach was based on the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development-Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) criteria of relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, and impact, along with GEWE, human rights, equity, and inclusion. These criteria were chosen as they provide pertinent and specific evidence to inform decision making, ensure accountability, and enhance learning.

22. This approach and criteria allowed the evaluation to examine the extent to which: (i) the Programme design, implementation, and monitoring has been 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 and GEWE were included in the design, implementation, and Programme results.

23. A significant complexity associated with this is the dynamic nature of resilience and the different ways that it is defined. How to increase resilience for vulnerable populations has been of interest for at least 20 years. This has led to a plethora of definitions of resilience and ways to measure it.⁹

24. The RBA Conceptual Framework uses the United Nations Office of Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) definition of resilience: “The ability of a system, community, or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions”.¹⁰ This aligns well with other approaches to resilience that include how people, households, and communities prepare for, withstand, and recover from shocks.¹¹

25. The RBA Resilience Initiative opted to use a combination of WFP’s 3PA¹² and FAO’s Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis tool (RIMA II) to design, implement, and measure results.¹³ 3PA places communities and partners at the centre of contextual analysis processes during planning and implementation. The RIMA II is a specialized index that uses econometrics to derive a single measure for changes in resilience.¹⁴ The RIMA II is particularly useful in humanitarian contexts such as Somalia, in that it assesses the type, frequency, and scope of shocks that participating populations experience.¹⁵ Given this, the evaluation used RIMA II as the basis for outcome level analysis, as presented in Section 4.5. This included a review of Programme endline results (cited in results and outcomes sections).

26. 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 System-Wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP).¹⁶ The RBA Resilience Initiative set out gender and gender equity as key crosscutting issues and have included relevant indicators and data in each country PMF.

27. 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. The evaluation will also ensure that all data it collects is disaggregated by age and gender to allow gender-sensitive analysis and identification of gaps and recommendations specific to women, men, boys, or girls.

⁹ This includes, for example, the universities of Florence, Cornell, Tulane and Tufts; Mercy Corps, Oxfam, and others; FAO, UNICEF, UNDRR, WFP, and UNDP; various departments within FCDO; the Resilience Measurement Technical Working Group under the Food Security Information Network (established by FAO, WFP, and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)); and the Interagency Resilience Learning Group, amongst others.

¹⁰ FAO, IFAD & WFP. 2015. Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition: A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies. Page 2. Available [here](#).

¹¹ For a good primer on the subject please see: Patrick Martin-Breen and J. Marty Anderies. September 2011. Resilience: A Literature Review. The Rockefeller Foundation, September 2011. Available [here](#). For a discussion of the linkages between emergency, recovery, rehabilitation, and development—the primary element of the Nexus, please see: Emma Fanning and Jessica Fullwood-Thomas. June 2019. The Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus: What Does it Mean for Multi-Mandated Organizations? Oxfam Discussion Papers. Available [here](#).

¹² This includes the Integrated Context Analysis (ICA), seasonal livelihood planning and community-based participatory planning. For more visit, the WFP 3PA website [here](#).

¹³ 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. For more, visit FAO’s RIMA guidance [here](#).

¹⁴ Please see: Prabhu Pingali, Luca Alinovi, & Jacky Sutton. June 2005. Food Security in Complex Emergencies: Enhancing Food System Resilience. *Disasters* 29(1). Available [here](#). Also see, Valerie Guarnierie. 2003. Food Aid and Livelihoods: Challenges and Opportunities in Complex Emergencies. FAO International Workshop Paper. 23-25 September 2003, which also argues for a longer-term, livelihood-based approach to addressing food security in complex operating contexts. Available [here](#).

¹⁵ RIMA II includes the following shock categories in its data collection and analysis: flood, drought, crop disease, livestock death, business failure, high food prices, high input prices, severe water shortage, crop failure, loss of land, accident, severe illness, clashes, death of main earner, inability to pay loan, displacement, storm, crop damage when stored, job loss/no salary, communal/political crisis, fire, fishing failure, loss of fishing gear, and other.

¹⁶ For an overview and guidance, visit the UN Women’s UN-SWAP website [here](#).

28. 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 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 4.3) and then an assessment of the intermediate outcomes and impact as based on a combination of the Programme's proxy indicators (the RIMA II tool); moderate and severe acute malnutrition (MAM/SAM) levels;¹⁷ the FCS;¹⁸ the reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI);¹⁹ the Livelihood Coping Strategies Index (L-CSI);²⁰ and the minimum dietary diversity for women scores (MDD-W) and minimum acceptable diet for children 6-23 months old (MAD)).²¹ These results were compared with IPC,²² food security levels and trends, and additional evidence as noted.

29. Analytical methods included contribution analysis that compared the evaluation's independent qualitative information from KIIs and FGDs with the results of primary outcome and impact indicators and from some contextual analysis, including national food security trends as established by the IPC/Cadre Harmonisé in each country.²³

30. The evaluation also used a modified version of the Qualitative Impact Assessment Protocol (QuIP) for FGDs that focuses on open ended qualitative statements that allow respondents to identify issues and activities that have affected changes for 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 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 identify 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 conducting a specialized module on women's empowerment administered to women respondents only.

31. Thematic analysis was used to explore patterns across qualitative data from KIIs and FGDs. 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.

32. The evaluation included thematic case studies for each country with specific analysis of the issues encountered in each.

33. The original conceptual framework for resilience put forward by the RBA did not include the explicit development of GEWE or gender sensitive approaches.²⁴ However, this became a feature of the RBA Resilience Initiative, with specific activities that relate to increased women's participation and empowerment.

¹⁷ For a brief on MAM/SAM, please visit the Global Health eLearning Centre [here](#).

¹⁸ The FCS is an index developed by the 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](#).

¹⁹ The 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](#).

²⁰ For technical guidance and descriptions of the L-CSI, please visit WFP [here](#).

²¹ For technical guidance and descriptions of the MDD-W, please visit the International Dietary Data Expansion Project [here](#).

²² Visit the IPC website [here](#) for more information.

²³ Please visit the IPC website [here](#).

²⁴ FAO, IFAD & WFP. April 2015. Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition: A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies. Page 4. Available [here](#).

The design is premised on the fact that women’s involvement leads to increased effectiveness which, in turn, leads to increased empowerment, further increasing effectiveness.²⁵

34. Given the lack of a standard framework or approach to GEWE, the evaluation used the UN Women Rapid Assessment Tool to evaluate GEWE results in humanitarian contexts.²⁶ The results from this were incorporated into relevant sections and used to draw correlations between the standard established in this tool and how the Programme addressed GEWE.

35. The evaluation included a human rights-based approach (HRBA). This puts people at the centre of the work as rights holders, highlighting the importance of empowerment and advocacy towards the securing of those rights. As this was not an explicit focus of the Programme in PMFs and other approaches, the evaluation relied on qualitative evidence drawn from KIIs and FGDs with participating communities, both of whom cited examples of how rights were preserved or improved.

3.2 Process

36. A primary source for this case study was a 2-week field mission to Somalia to conduct data collection on the RBA Resilience Initiative activities there. This was carried out from 6-15 November 2023. The field mission included Dorian LaGuardia, Evaluation Team Leader, Fadumo Yussuf, National Expert, and Jimale Adow Mohamed, Facilitator. Andrea Jud, Project Coordinator, provided overall planning and logistics. Their credentials and identification documents are available separately.

37. 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 in 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.

38. Fourteen FGDs were conducted, exceeding the target of eight per country as established in the Inception Phase Report. This included 129 participants (66 men and 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 5 or in school aged children. Community committees, farmer groups, training participants, and people who received emergency aid were also represented.

39. This thus constitutes a good and fair representation of participants and communities. (Please see Annex 7.6 for a list of the communities and demographic information about the FGD).

40. The field mission included KIIs 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.

Table 2: List of stakeholders interviewed as part of the data collection phase

| Key informant Organization | Country | # of Respondents | Women |
|----------------------------|---------|------------------|----------|
| FAO Somalia | Somalia | 5 | 2 |
| WFP Somalia | Somalia | 5 | 2 |
| Government partners | Somalia | 9 | 0 |
| RBA Implementing Partners | Somalia | 2 | 0 |
| TOTALS: | | 21 | 4 |

²⁵ The literature on this is vast. For a broad review, please see: Angélica Arbulú, Silvia Hidalgo, Dorian LaGuardia, Alesia O’Connor, & Ana Rodriguez. August 2019. UN Women’s Contribution to Humanitarian Action. UN Women. Available [here](#). This also relates to a recommendation in a recent WFP strategic evaluation of resilience programming: Tim Bene, Dorcas Robinson, Fatima Laanouni, Karen Bahr Caballero, Ben Murphy, & Dave Wilson. January 2019. Strategic Evaluation of WFP Support for Enhanced Resilience. WFP. Available [here](#).

²⁶ Please see the tool and guidance [here](#).

41. 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.

3.3 Limitations

42. Overall, the preliminary research during the inception phase and the country field mission did not encounter any severe limitations. As noted above, there was a requisite number of FGDs and KIs and most documentation (except the final country report) were available prior to the field mission itself. Staff from FAO and WFP were also exceptionally helpful in organizing the field mission according to established criteria.

43. FGDs with community members were meant to use the 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. 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 likely inevitable because they were contacted by RBA Resilience Initiative partners to organize FGDs and there were very few other programmes occurring in their communities.

44. Nonetheless, the evaluation team kept to the standard protocol 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. Community members were very 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.

45. Findings are tempered by most recent rainy season. October and November 2023 had above-average rainfall in the region, breaking the historic five season (2020-2023) drought.²⁷ Thus, communities were faring better than in the recent past. This may have affected their responses, although they still cited difficulties faced in the last few years. Above-average rainfall may have also had a direct effect on some activities, for example maintenance of reservoirs was less necessary than during periods of drought. However, this was the case in only two of seven communities visited.

46. Given these issues, none of the limitations negatively affect the analysis presented in this report nor will they have any adverse effects for the final analysis and report.

²⁷ Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU) – Somalia. Please visit the FSNAU website [here](#).

4 Findings

4.1 To what extent is the RBA Resilience Initiative design and implementation relevant to the needs and priorities of its targeted stakeholders? (EQ 1.0)

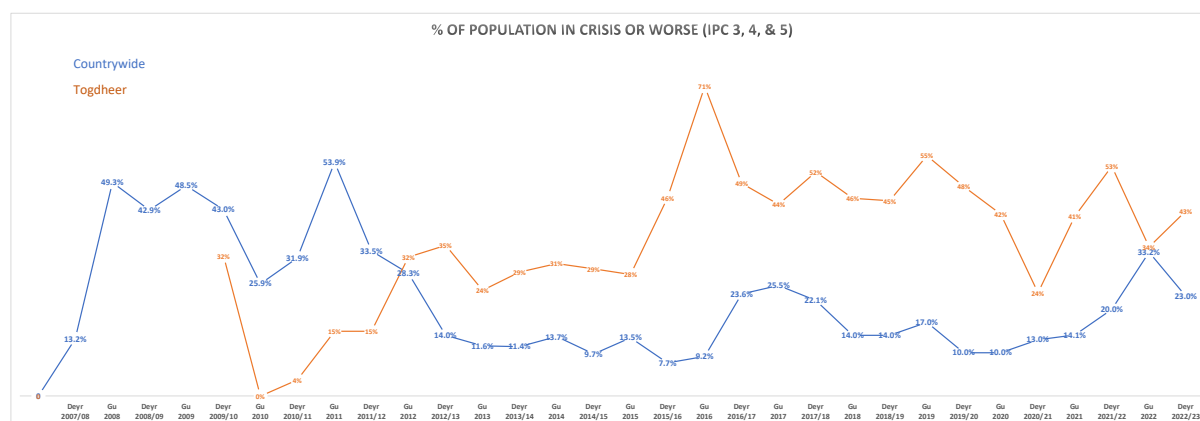
4.1.1 Relevance to vulnerable groups

47. Somalia, a region grappling with the harsh realities of climate change, political instability and economic challenges, faces a persistent threat to food security. In this context, the importance of resilience cannot be overstated. Resilience is the ability of a community to withstand shocks, adapt to changing circumstances, and recover swiftly from adverse events. For the food insecure communities in Somalia, resilience is not just a desirable quality; it is a lifeline that can help them navigate the complex web of challenges they confront.²⁸

48. The Programme focused on Burco and Odweyne districts in Togdheer Region, which have experienced much higher rates of food insecurity in relation to the rest of the country. Figure 2 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 2021/2021.²⁹

49. This makes any food security activities highly relevant to the region and especially to the rural communities in Burco and Odweyne.

Figure 2: IPC for Somalia and Togdheer region



Source: Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU)

50. The RBA Resilience Initiative addressed these fluctuations in food insecurity through a range of activities that were meant to improve the immediate and longer-term needs of the most vulnerable, including women and children. This included reaching 2,600 households in 18 communities in Burco and Odweyne. Burao and Odweyne are characterized by recurrent food insecurity and high population density. Moreover, the Togdheer region is particularly affected by land degradation and experienced a high incidence of poor growing seasons in the last five to seven years. This is supported by the food security patterns which indicate that this livelihood area experienced several consecutive drought seasons. In addition to these reasons for targeting, Burao and Odweyne districts were chosen to leverage results of previous investments made by FAO, UNICEF, and WFP as part of the Joint Resilience Strategy (JRS). This allowed FAO and WFP to build on established relationships with communities in the area since 2013, including the ongoing support to agricultural infrastructure rehabilitation. The Programme also used a seasonal livelihood programming (SLP) approach to identify the groups that were in most need and that could benefit from such resilience programming. The SLP aligned activities with seasonal needs and amongst pastoralists and agropastoralists.

²⁸ For more on the relevance of resilience programming on food insecurity, please see: Béné, C., Headey, D., Haddad, L. et al. 2016. Is Resilience a Useful Concept in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition Programmes? Some Conceptual and Practical Considerations. *Food Security* 8: 123–138. Available [here](#).

²⁹ These figures are taken verbatim from FSNAU reports and yet the significant changes in these two seasons are likely due to a data issue rather than in actual fluctuations. Unfortunately, FSNAU reporting did not account for these anomalies.

This was further underpinned by the RIMA II which included modules related to food security. This was used to establish a common and harmonized tool for the impact analysis of integrated interventions.³⁰

51. In FGDs, communities repeatedly commented upon the ways the different RBA Resilience Initiative activities enabled them to avoid the harshest choices during crises. They were, as they said frequently, able to keep their children in school, avoid stress migration, or care for the elderly and persons with disabilities. (See Annex 7.6 for descriptions of trends in this qualitative feedback.)

52. One of the most significant factors for this was the Programme’s water management that enabled communities to protect their herds, even when there were losses during droughts, and to engage in new livelihood activities, like market gardens. One of the clear indications of the relevance of the approach is that people were able to stay in their communities.

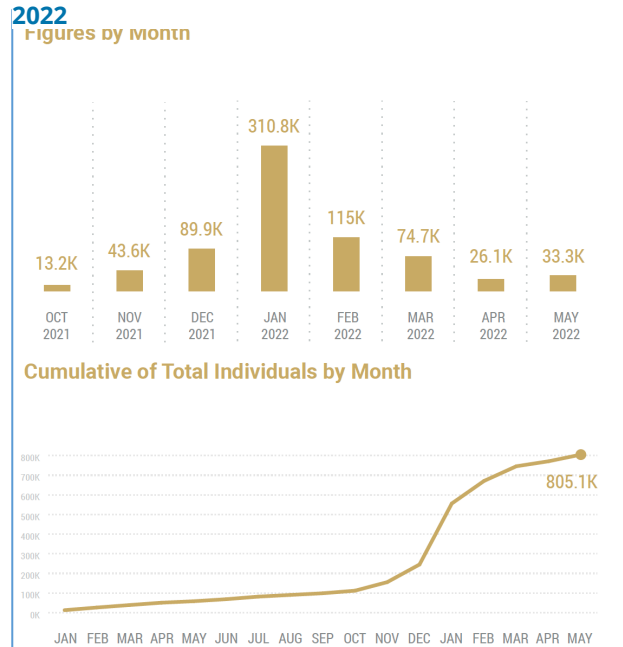
53. Stress migration is an unfortunately common consequence of the repeated crises in Somalia, with people often moving repeatedly and, with each move, increasing their vulnerabilities.³¹ This was also the case for many Somalis during the 2021/2022 severe droughts, as shown in Figure 3. Stress migration was also the cause of the greatest levels of mortality during crises in Somalia.³² In fact, many community members commented upon the fact that their communities had grown during this period as other people learned that there was greater stability and some services available in the Programme’s supported communities.

54. Resilience programming is also important in conflict prone contexts and, while Somalia has been largely peaceful over the Programme period, it still suffers from some of the consequences of conflict in the south. Vulnerability, conflict, and crises affect most households and can lead to significant levels of instability in communities.³³ For example, environmental degradation creates uncertainties about the viability of pastoralism.³⁴

55. 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 or actors engaged in social protection. 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.

56. Gender sensitive programming (if not gender transformative programming) also moves towards addressing gender disparities in the country that has over the years influenced household resilience and access to, ownership of, and control over assets. While this was a key aspect of the Programme although, as described in Section 4.7, the Programme may have been able to go further, shifting from gender sensitive programming to actual transformative programming. The foundation was there, as commented upon by women and other community members in FGDs. A gender analysis was never conducted and there were not

Figure 3: Displacement trends October 2021-May 2022



Source: OCHA. 2022. Somalia Drought Response and Famine Prevention Plan May - December 2022. OCHA. Issued June 2022. Page 6

³⁰ FAO, IFAD, & WFP. 2018. 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. Post-Inception Phase. October 2018. Page 5.

³¹ This is explored in Charles Lwanga-Ntale & Boniface O. Owino. 20202. Understanding Vulnerability and Resilience in Somalia. *Jamba: Journal of Disaster Risk Studies* 12(1). Available [here](#).

³² Abdihamid Warsame, Séverine Frison, Amy Gimma & Francesco Checchi. January 2022. Retrospective Analysis of Mortality in Somalia, 2014– 2018: A Statistical Analysis. London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Available [here](#).

³³ 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.

³⁴ World Bank Group. 2018. Somalia Drought Impact and Needs Assessment: Synthesis Report. Available [here](#).

committed gender experts advising the Programme. Women were included in most activities and, based on FGDs, their participation was meaningful in that they actively engaged in community discussions and benefitted from many of the Programme activities, especially those designed for women like home and market gardens.

57. Each of these activities proved relevant to pastoralists and agropastoralists and to the shift for many pastoralists toward more sustainable and diversified sources of income. Some, like apiculture and certain seed varieties, were not successful in all communities. This was expected as the Programme meant to pilot these activities to see which had the most positive effects and which could be brought to scale or introduced to new communities going forward.

4.1.2 *Relevance to expected results*

58. The approach of providing a range of largely proven activities, through a combination of participatory action with communities and with coordination amongst government authorities, enabled the Programme to not only ensure that expected outcomes could be achieved but that they could also test which combination of approaches and sequencing of activities could have the most effect. This was facilitated by the use of the RIMA II in measuring impact level results.

59. As described in Sections 4.3 and 4.5, outcome level proxy indicators show significant improvements in relation to food security, a reduction in negative coping strategies, and in resilience overall as measured by the RIMA II. This includes comparative analysis with control groups, especially in relation to the RIMA II. This shows that specific activities and combinations of activities were certainly relevant to these results.

60. While RIMA II analysis does provide some insights into which types of activities had the clearest correlation with different results, what is less clear is which activities, in isolation or combination, had the most effect on these results. As described in Section 5, this warrants additional research going forward. Nonetheless, the RBAs are in position now to conduct such analysis and initial results are promising.

61. This broad-based approach also created the space for FAO and WFP to leverage their core competencies towards these results. As noted below, this was partly due to a shared and comprehensive performance framework. More particularly, this was due to the natural interlinkages between emergency nutrition support (largely provided by WFP) and agropastoral development (largely provided by FAO).

4.1.3 *Relevance to frameworks, priorities, principles, and policies*

62. The Programme in Somalia benefitted from having a highly articulated performance framework that established the causal relationships between activities (outputs) and expected immediate and intermediate outcomes. KIIs reveal that this was developed in participatory way, involving country, regional and headquarter staff members as well as key partners, like local and national authorities and the communities themselves, although the latter was more aligned with prioritizing needs and activities. This performance framework became the basis for both organizing the Programme, but also in reporting on and considering different aspects of performance during the Programme period.

63. It is notable that this framework was developed in close coordination amongst the RBAs at inception, including with country, regional, and headquarter staff. This enabled country offices to adapt it to not only match the needs of the most vulnerable in each country context, but to also draw on the core competencies and country-wide Programme approach for how each agency worked in the country. Having a comprehensive framework based on a Programme level ToC was instrumental in enabling the RBAs to make changes while keeping on track towards expected outcome and impact results during various challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the severe droughts of 2020/2021. KIIs repeatedly included reference to the performance framework and how it was used to both organize the Programme and report on performance.

64. In relation to normative instruments and policies related to human rights and gender equality, Somalia has made some progress in relation to the CRC, CRPD, CAT, CERD, and the ICESCR. These are encapsulated in the Somalia Nutrition Strategy 2020-2025,³⁵ wherein children between 6-23 months and PLW are intended to receive nutritious commodities.

³⁵ Somalia Ministry of Health and Human Services. 2020. Somalia Nutrition Strategy 2020-2025. Available [here](#).

65. The Programme is also aligned with the “Somalia Food and Water Security Strategy”³⁶ 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 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.

66. More broadly, the Programme in Somalia is aligned with the Somalia Nutrition Strategy 2020-2025,³⁷ wherein children between 6-23 months and PLW are intended to receive nutritious commodities. In addition, MAM, integrated with SAM treatment activities, were implemented in all the 18 targeted villages as aligned with broader strategies and needs in Somalia. This is also aligned with the “Somaliland National Development Plan III” that included specific goals related to water, sanitation and hygiene, and health with a focus on maternal and child nutrition.³⁸

67. The Programme in Somalia actively engaged with local and national authorities. The Ministry of National Planning and Development (MoNP&D) participated in joint monitoring and the Ministry of Water Resources Development (MoWRD) provided support and oversight over community water infrastructure. Other ministries actively involved included the Ministry of Agriculture and Development (MoAD), the Ministry of Water & Resources Development, the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries Development (MoLFD), the Ministry of Employment Social Affairs and Family, and the Ministry of Environment and Rural Development (MoERD).

68. In relation to design, the RBA Resilience Initiative used the 3PA for design.³⁹ 3PA places communities and partners at the centre of contextual analysis processes to inform planning and programme development. The 3PA coincides with the agencies’ comparative advantages and overall approach.⁴⁰ KIIs referenced the 3PA as relevant to the way they organized, although it was somewhat redundant with how FAO tended to operate already.

4.2 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? (EQ 2.0)

69. In Somalia, there have been various resilience programmes over the same period. Formed in 2011, the Somali Resilience Program (SomReP) is a resilience-building consortium that works with pastoralists, agropastoralists, fisherfolk, and peri-urban host and IDP communities, and has reached over 256,000 households. It is based on the Technical Assistance to NGOs International (TANGO) approach to resilience that focuses on absorptive, adaptive, and transformative capacities.⁴¹

70. The Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO) of the United Kingdom (UK) launched a multiyear humanitarian programme that included a joint resilience strategy amongst FAO, UNICEF, and

³⁶ Republic of Somalia. October 2011. Somalia Vision 2030: Somalia Food and Water Security Strategy. Available [here](#).

³⁷ Somalia Ministry of Health and Human Services. 2020. Somalia Nutrition Strategy 2020-2025. Available [here](#).

³⁸ Ministry of Planning and National Development. Republic of Somaliland. Somaliland National Development Plan III 2023-2027. Available [here](#).

³⁹ This includes ICA, seasonal livelihood planning and community based participatory planning. For more visit, the WFP 3PA website [here](#).

⁴⁰ While the evaluation will explore this in more depth, it should be noted at the outset that 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 change due to different shocks/crises. For the most salient criticism of these approaches, please see: Simon Levine. July 2014. Assessing Resilience: Why Quantification Misses the Point. Humanitarian Policy Group & ODI. Available [here](#).

⁴¹ Please visit SomRep [here](#).

WFP.⁴² FAO, UNICEF, and WFP have also been involved in other joint resilience strategies in Somalia. This includes a joint resilience programme in the Gedo and Lower Juba regions in operation since 2018.⁴³

71. These and other programmes have similar approaches and yet the RBA Resilience Initiative is largely independent of these, especially in its focus on 18 communities in Togdheer. While there were some signs of other resilience programming in the communities visited as part of the evaluation, including UK funded programming and inputs from Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ), the RBA Resilience Initiative largely operated as the primary intervention in these communities. This led to increased coherence in the sense that communities and the RBAs were able to work together without competing initiatives or effects from other programming. This made the Programme highly coherent at the community level.

4.2.1 Coherence with RBA

72. There are sufficient indications that FAO and WFP worked together to provide integrated solutions to communities. This is based not only on KIIs that remarked on how they worked together but more so on the results themselves. The 3PA grounded this collaboration and evidence suggests that it was also due to the ways in which country level staff coordinated and worked together. The initial design phase and resulting Inception Phase Report, ToC, and PMFs focused on comprehensive activities/outputs and their links to immediate and intermediate outcomes and impact. This early planning and development served the Programme well, especially during the complicated phases of extreme drought, COVID-19, and other crises that challenged the Programme, leading to a 1-year no-cost extension.

73. There were some coordination issues in the first year and half of the Programme in Somalia. This included more time than planned (up to 12 months) to fully establish market producer groups, exacerbated by the selection process that initially drew from previous WFP participant lists of other activities that were not fully aligned with Programme principles, especially those that called for greater gender equity. This was rectified so that, by the time of the evaluation, communities did not comment upon the delays or issues. It was more of an issue raised by RBA Programme staff.

74. FAO and WFP liaised with local and national government authorities separately which caused some confusion and delays. This was remarked upon by local authorities in a KII, although they were also quick to say that this improved significantly. The one area where this lack of coordination between FAO and WFP lingered was in the lack of joint monitoring visits, that only occurred after the RIMA II midline in the last year and half of the Programme.

75. There were some concerns raised in KIIs about the lack of a dedicated coordinator for the RBA. While this may have facilitated coherence, it is just as likely that this would have led to another layer of coordination that could make things even more complicated. In 2020, COVID-19 affected access and personnel and so the request for an interagency coordinator was deprioritized. It is possible, although evidence is somewhat scant for this, that the period between 2020-2021, when COVID-19 was prevalent, led to greater country level self-sufficiency.

76. Communities regularly cited how the combination of direct cash support, food for assets, school feeding, and other WFP-centric approaches were critical for the success of the agropastoral development and livelihood activities largely implemented by FAO.

4.2.2 Coherence with Nexus

77. 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 including:

- Coordination: undertake joint analysis, identify collective outcomes, provide resources for coordination across the Nexus architecture.

⁴² LaGuardia, Dorian, & Andrew Pinney. February 2019. Shocks and Hard Knocks: The Impact of Resilience Programming in Somalia. FCDO. Available [here](#).

⁴³ For more on this, please see: FAO, UNICEF, & WFP; May 2023. Baseline Report for the Joint Resilience Action Program in Gedo Region. Available [here](#).

- Programming: prioritize prevention and peacebuilding, put people at the centre, ensure conflict sensitivity, align with the risk environment, strengthen local capacities.
- Financing: develop evidence-based financing strategies, use predictable, flexible, multi-year financing that aligns with agreed collective outcomes where appropriate.⁴⁴

78. 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:

79. 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.⁴⁵

80. This establishes that increases in resilience could create space for additional RBA activities to strengthen livelihoods and resilience. 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 combination of activities and approaches strengthened livelihoods and resilience. This is how the Programme was thus designed. The Inception Phase Report states:

81. Strengthening the resilience to shocks and crisis 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.⁴⁶

82. At the same time, HDP Nexus programming in Somalia was constrained by the lack of resources and capacities amongst government counterparts. While there were consistent efforts to work with local and central government authorities, this 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.

83. 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.⁴⁷

84. While the Programme hopes to increase communities’ resilience and reduce their reliance on emergency aid, it did not include a specific graduation scenario wherein certain households or communities could be seen as being less reliant on such emergency support. Repeated severe droughts, flooding, and

⁴⁴ For more on the HDP Nexus, please see: OECD. 10 May 2022. Humanitarian-Development-Peace-Nexus Interim Progress Review. This report is available [here](#).

⁴⁵ FAO, IFAD, & WFP. April 2015. Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition: A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies. Page 6. Available [here](#).

⁴⁶ FAO, IFAD, & WFP. October 2018. 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. Post-inception phase. Page 4.

⁴⁷ OCHA. 23 May 2016. The Grand Bargain – A Shared Commitment to Better Serve People in Need. Available [here](#).

other crises make transitions to stability (let alone peace) highly complicated. This is somewhat less dynamic in Somaliland because it has not experienced the same level of conflict as in the rest of Somalia.

85. Nonetheless, evidence, especially as related to food proxy indicators (Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS), FCS, CSI) and the results of the RIMA II illustrate that target communities were able to withstand and recover from crises better than noted control groups and more than national trends suggest. (See Section 4.3). This is a remarkable success and may indicate that the Programme could, in future iterations, strengthen interlinkages between humanitarian, development and peace, programming. This is especially possible given the noted coordination and collaboration with government authorities who, in KII, remarked favourably on this and how this was aligned with their own priorities. The linkage with government authorities is especially positive, even if they do not necessarily have the resources alone to contribute with such a Programme going forward. As authorities in KIIs attest, the Programme was aligned with local and national priorities, and they recognized the direct and longer-term benefits to communities. This was a consistent theme in discussions with them and was the basis for their requests to continue with the Programme.

86. There are some issues associated with the RBA's conceptual framework as a guiding document. It uses the UN DRR definition of resilience: "The ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions".⁴⁸ While this is most prevalent in DRR, the RBA conceptual framework goes on to use the framework of absorptive, adaptive, and transformative capacities, which is drawn verbatim from the framework developed by the TANGO in 2012, although this is not cited in the RBA document.⁴⁹ Disaster risk reduction (DRR) approaches are not as relevant to protracted crises like that in Somalia nor to where there are weak government structures and systems. Nonetheless, this aligns relatively well with other approaches to resilience that include how people, households, and communities prepare for, withstand, and recover from shocks.⁵⁰

87. The conceptual framework would be more coherent with such contexts if it was aligned with the most common definition of resilience used in humanitarian such contexts, mainly the capacity of communities and households to prepare for, withstand, and recover from shocks.⁵¹

88. The TANGO framework is used widely and is certainly a coherent and useful way to conceptualize resilience in the same contexts and yet it was not used by the Programme in its performance frameworks or measurements. It opted instead for the RIMA II, an econometric approach that is conceptually and practically different from TANGO. Both have merits and yet overall coherence was disrupted between the use of the TANGO framework in the conceptual framework and how the Programme was designed.

89. Yet, these are minor points in relation to coherence with the Nexus overall. More importantly, it is worthwhile to further establish longer-term activities that can build on the Programme's success while deepening and expanding upon partnerships with local and national authorities, along with other local partners, like the University of Burao that played a vital role in training and agricultural development.

4.2.3 Coherent partnerships

90. In KIIs, implementing partners for both WFP and FAO said that there were regular joint meetings and that they often met together at the community level to work through community participatory processes and to assess and support implementation. These were not coordinated well in the first year and a half of the Programme, often with FAO and WFP meeting separately with local and national authorities leading to some confusion and delays. This was rectified and these authorities remarked favourably upon the coordination of the agencies, especially the last year of the Programme.

91. Local government authorities also commented favourably on the engagement with FAO and WFP, stating that by and large there was good communication and efforts to align with national and local priorities.

⁴⁸ FAO, IFAD, & WFP. April 2015. Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition: A Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership among the Rome-based Agencies. Page 2. Available [here](#).

⁴⁹ TANGO measures resilience capacity based solely on drivers (causes) of resilience. An overview of the TANGO index and associated research can be found [here](#).

⁵⁰ For a good primer on the subject please see: Patrick Martin-Breen & J. Marty Anderies. September 2011. Resilience: A Literature Review. The Rockefeller Foundation. Available [here](#).

⁵¹ While the references for this have been cited throughout, one additional reference includes that of the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) available [here](#).

There were some issues, like the provision of the right seed varieties that plagued effectiveness and as described in Section 4.3, that ran up against some of the constraints associated with a country-wide programme and its associated business processes.

92. Action Aid was an implementing partner for WFP, especially in managing the cash and voucher activities and other immediate food security needs. KIIs and FGDs remarked favourably on the work done by Action Aid, especially in working with communities in how to maximize support towards longer-term benefits, like market gardens and water infrastructure, and in their participation in meetings with local and national authorities. Every local community commented favourably on Action Aid and while this may have been conditioned by the fact that the primary representative from Action Aid was present in most of these field visits, the evaluation also noted the discussions they had with community members that sought them out, the knowledge Action Aid had about the specific challenges each of these communities faced, and the overall care and attention they brought to their work. Local authorities also described Action Aid as a partner that went beyond their strict remit to span many aspects of the Programme.

93. The University of Burao was another important partner. It provided training and support in agricultural activities, especially the market gardens, while also providing an important link between activities and this local university. This included sharing knowledge from the activities with students while also incorporating new practices in the Programme. The University of Burao was particularly keen to establish a seed variety farm that could aid in production over the long term.

94. Other partners, including UNICEF, World Vision, and HAVAYOVO were not included in KIIs and so it is not possible to assess how their contributions supported the Programme.

4.3 Expected Results (EQ 3.0)

4.3.1 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? (EQ 3.1)

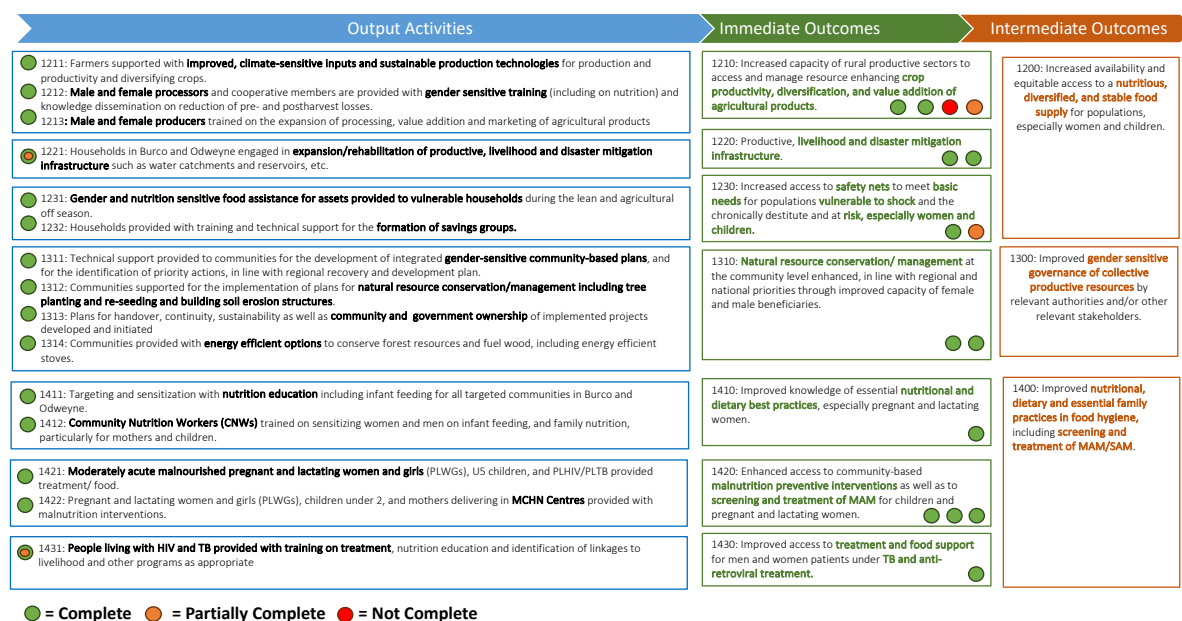
95. The RBA Resilience Initiative had various issues that affected its output/activity level performance. This included the 2016/2017 severe drought at the beginning of the Programme, the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020/2021, and the 2022/2023 drought. Consecutive failed rains in the years of 2017, 2020, 2021, and 2022 *Gu* and *Deyr* seasons, resulted in poor conditions overall. This led to a no-cost extension of one year, bringing the Programme to March 2023, and then further to December 2023. Despite these challenges, the Programme achieved nearly all output level activities. Of 31 output indicators, the Programme achieved or overachieved in 29 of them. (See Annex 7.2.)

96. While the Programme was approved in 2017, most of Somalia was facing a severe drought affecting both rural and urban populations, and with many indicators warning of a looming famine. Four seasons of lower-than-normal rainfall and harvests raised alarm with the governments, donors, and the humanitarian community, as an estimated 662,000 people had been displaced due to drought and drought-related factors between January and June 2017. Given the humanitarian situation and the duration required for consultative meetings with the government, the inception phase of the project was postponed and took place from August to September 2017. Even after the inception phase, there were issues of coordination between FAO and WFP, and amongst local and national authorities, for the first year and half of the Programme. (See Section 4.2.1.)

97. Despite these and other issues in the first two years of the Programme and as described in the preceding sections, the Programme accelerated thereafter. In the last year and half, the Programme delivered nearly all output level activities.

98. Figure 4 below shows the relationship between output activities and expected immediate and intermediate outcomes. 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 4: Somalia output and immediate outcome level performance



SOURCE: Somalia Final Project Close-out Report; PMF

99. At the immediate outcome level, there were seven expected outcomes along with 16 different indicators. Of these, 13 of 16 indicators were met or exceeded, with some like direct cash support, reaching more than 800% of the original target. The three indicators that were not met include the formation of local cooperatives, market linkages between the public and private sector, and the number of savings groups formed. While the RBA Resilience Initiative provided rationale for each of these, the first two are tangential to what was proven to address community needs and opportunities for resilience building. Savings groups may represent a missed opportunity given the research that shows these to be effective towards increased livelihoods and resilience, and for women’s empowerment.⁵²

100. 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 during 2020 and 2021 in ways that enabled the Programme to maintain previous gains and to prevent displacement. This implies that it was the standard package and the RBA’s collaboration (FAO, WFP, implementing partners, and government authorities) that lead to the achievement of these output level results.

101. 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 habit 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.” (Female FGD participant.)
- “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” (Male FGD participant.)
- “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

⁵² Courtney Cabot Venton. January 2018. Economics of Resilience to Drought: Somalia Analysis. USAID. Available [here](#).

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.” (Male FGD participant.)

- “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.” (Female FGD participant.)⁵³

102. 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.

103. These results correspond with the evaluation’s analysis, especially as concerns qualitative evidence from communities. As Figure 5 below shows,⁵⁴ the evaluation sought feedback from communities in relation to the primary outcomes, mainly diet, food production, and inclusion. The graphic shows the questions that were asked, as corresponding to the programmatic pathways, and then represents the number of times different respondents cite a particular activity that was provided by the Programme. 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, with the corresponding line’s thickness based on this frequency. The programmatic pathways refer to those from the evaluation’s Theory of Change (ToC). Each area also includes the most frequently cited “most significant change” from these FGDs. (For more detailed figures per pathway see Annex 7.7)

⁵³ These quotes are from participants in the evaluation’s FGDs in Somalia. These have been translated from Somali and edited for clarity.

⁵⁴ 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.

Figure 5: Qualitative analysis trends in Somalia, as aligned with causal links established in the evaluation's Theory of Change



Source: QuIP FGDs conducted by the evaluation

104. 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.

105. 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. These activities are also cited by community members in audio testimonials included FAO's "Knowledge Sharing Platform on Emergencies and Resilience." In three of these, community members cite how water infrastructure was particularly important 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 used to diversify household income.⁵⁵

106. 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, trainings and capacity building, beekeeping, and 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."⁵⁶

⁵⁵ These testimonial and additional information can be found at FAO's "Knowledge Sharing Platform on Emergencies and Resilience" website [here](#).

⁵⁶ This quote is from a male participant in the evaluation's FGDs in Somalia. It has been translated from Somali and edited for clarity.

107. This does not imply that the Programme was without fault. Not all communities 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.

**Figure 6: "Some of the water catchment plastic was in disrepair."
Water catchment area, Galooley**



108. There were coordination issues between FAO, WFP, and these two agencies and local and national authorities that led to confusion and delay. This was due to a lack of a clear governance structure for the Programme in the first two years, and this issue was rectified, but that took an inordinate amount of time.

109. Most of these issues are not surprising given the difficult operating context and the diversity of the communities. Communities were more diverse and complicated than 'pastoral', 'agropastoral', 'rural', or 'Somali'. 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 (ex. the ability to take herds to Ethiopia during lean times).⁵⁷ 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.⁵⁸

4.3.2 To what extent has the RBA Resilience Initiative achieved its intended outcomes as defined in the performance measurement frameworks? (EQ 3.0)

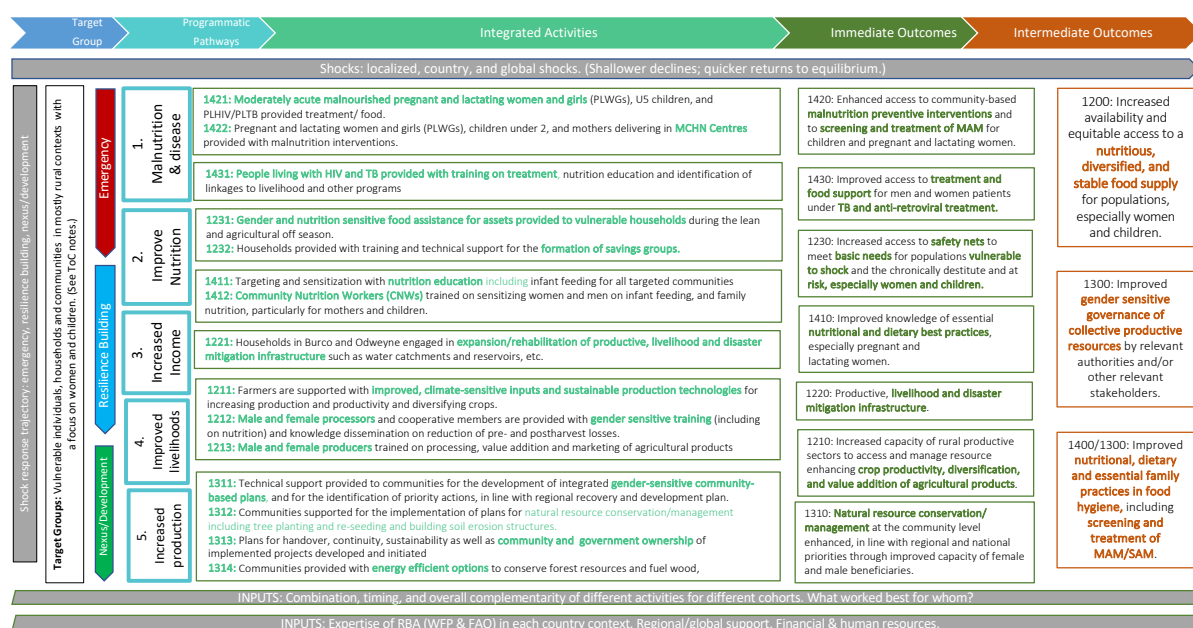
110. The following figure shows the linkages between programmatic pathways (1. malnutrition and disease; 2. improved nutrition; 3. increased income; 4. improved livelihoods; and 5. increased production) and how these correlate with the different output level activities delivered in Somalia, defined by the numerical figures (1211, 1212, 1213, 1221, 1311, 1312, 1313, 1314, 1411, 1412, 1421, 1422) that then correspond with immediate outcomes (1210, 1220, 1230, 1310, 1420, 1430) and intermediate outcomes (1200, 1300, 1400).

111. These are taken from the Programme PMF, using the same numerical correspondence and figures from these. These have been reorganized in this reconstructed ToC to better illustrate the causal pathways from outputs to expected immediate and intermediate outcomes. This includes the target populations and critical inputs which are also considered in how the Programme achieved results.

⁵⁷ For a summary of this, please see: A. Kassahun, H.A. Snyman, & G.N. Smit. 2008. Impact of Rangeland Degradation on the Pastoral Production Systems, Livelihoods and Perceptions of the Somali Pastoralists in Eastern Ethiopia." *Journal of Arid Environments* 72(7): 1265-1281. Available [here](#).

⁵⁸ For an overview of this, please see: Daniel Maxwell and Nisar Majid (Eds). 2016. Diversification, Flexibility and Social Connectedness. Understanding the Narratives. *Famine in Somalia: Competing Imperatives, Collective Failures, 2011-12*. Oxford University Press.

Figure 7: Reconstituted ToC for the RBA Programme in Somalia



112. As described in Section 4.3, qualitative FGDs were held with communities to establish how activities contributed to changes across programmatic pathways. This is summarized in Figure 5 that shows the frequency of activities cited by communities in relation to each programmatic pathway.

113. **Addressing malnutrition and disease and improving nutrition:** Food security and nutrition support was provided to children aged 6-23 months and PLW. WFP provided children aged 6-23 months and PLW with Specialized Nutritious Food (Lipid Based Nutrients Medium Quantity (LNS-MQ) and Super Cereal plus (CSB+)). Some of these services were curtailed in 2022 when WFP faced challenges with resources for nutrition treatment and prevention. The Programme also provided direct cash support through cash for assets and emergency voucher activities. Communities also cited the effectiveness of the school feeding programme where available.

114. The provision of fortified blended foods and specialized nutritious food to children under 5 years and PLW ensured that performance indicators stayed within the set SPHERE standards; (cure rate (>75%), death rate (<3%), nonresponse rate (<15%), and default rate (<15%)) throughout the project duration. In 2021, the cure rate, death rate, nonresponse rate, and default rate were at 95 percent, 0 percent, 0 percent, and 5 percent, respectively. Over the past three seasons (post *Gu* 2020, post *Gu* 2021 and post *Deyr* 2021), the global acute malnutrition (GAM) prevalence trends remained at 8.8 percent, 5.3 percent, and 8.4 percent for Burco and Odweyne, respectively.

115. Two school gardens were formed for students, parents, and staff at Koosar School, an IDP settlement area outside Burco town and Warcimraan village in Burco. The school garden provided a supplementary diet through the provision of vegetable seeds (tomatoes, onions, carrots, lettuce, and hot peppers), tools (shovel, hoes, garden rake, pickaxe, sickle, and wheelbarrows), partial perimeter fencing, and tree saplings (neem, lime, guava, moringa, and acacia). This complemented the WFP school feeding programme.

116. The Programme also introduced home vegetable gardening to produce fruits and vegetables for household consumption and diet diversification. Women were trained in perma-gardening techniques, an approach that utilizes natural systems for agricultural production, and this was paired with vegetable seeds, fruit tree saplings, and basic farm tools. Both agropastoral and pastoral villages were reached with this activity. Communities also cited the effectiveness of the school feeding programme where available, especially the ways in which cash transfers were provided in time and amounts that facilitated attendance at school. The evaluation also noted that there were schoolhouses with water facilities, latrines, and other infrastructure that were in good order. These were consistently commented upon favourably by community members.

117. **Improved livelihoods and food production:** The Programme's initiatives in this area, mostly led by FAO, aimed to improve agricultural productivity through training and resources to enhance skills, water infrastructure, herding, and water for home use. This included reservoirs, berkads, shallow wells, and other water infrastructure that was regularly cited by communities as essential for them during crises and agricultural inputs like certified seeds, farm tools, collapsible water storage tanks, and tractor hours. Some of these, like the hiring of local tractors, were contentious according to community members as some contracts were not fulfilled. These were complemented with training on sustainable agricultural production. Consecutive failed rains in 2022-2023 limited the support to traditional agriculture activities; additional climate trainings and seed inputs were provided to lead farmers to cope with the limited rainfall.

118. Traditional pastoral communities in Burco and Odweyne districts were reached with fodder production inputs and training for improved fodder production. These livestock owners received *Cenchrus ciliaris* pasture seeds, fodder processing equipment (metallic manual hay balers, sisal twine, safety gloves, hydraulic press balers, and fodder choppers) and fodder storage sheds. Capacity building focused on fodder production, conservation, and storage of harvested fodder.

119. Prosopis fodder production, an alternative fodder source, was introduced as a pilot activity in Beerato village. The processing of *prosopis juliflora* supported the control of the spread of the invasive shrub which has encroached on productive land in Beerato. This was commented upon as highly useful by community members not only because of the way the shrub reduced farmland but also because of the fire hazard associated with this shrub. Prosopis fodder production entailed forming a producer group to collect *prosopis* pods and young leaves for drying and processing into animal feed. The processed matter was then mixed with other agriculture residue and/or wheat bran to form an alternative source of animal feed. The *prosopis* fodder producer group received inputs such as fodder processing machines, gunny bags, fodder store, perimeter fence, and capacity building trainings to support the production of *prosopis* animal feed. This was seen by community members as an example of an effective innovation in that it reduced a hazard while providing a new source of animal feed.

120. Apiculture was introduced to target communities as an alternative livelihood source. Beneficiaries were selected and formed beekeeping producer groups from agropastoral and pastoral villages in both districts. The beekeeping producer groups received training in beekeeping husbandry and in the set-up of community apiaries. Beekeepers received improved hives and associated equipment and tools to improve beekeeping management and bee products such as honey, beeswax to produce soap and candles. Community members had mixed views of beekeeping, with it being successful in some instances but less so in others where community members cited a lack of sufficient knowledge and training for apiculture.

121. Capacity building trainings were provided to traditional agriculture farmers focused on good agricultural practices (GAP), Integrated Production and Pest Management (IPPM), post-harvest handling to avoid losses as well as DRR to improve their capacities during periods of drought. Knowledge sharing was encouraged through the establishment of Farmer Field Schools (FFS) in the agropastoral communities.

122. **Increased income:** The Programme supported alternative income-generating activities (IGA) to reduce vulnerability to shocks. Market garden producer groups of women from Beerato, Ceelxume, Boodhley, Burco, Galooley, Hababswayne, Warcimraan, and Boodhley established 50 by 100-meter fruit and vegetable gardens to support home consumption and household income. This included training and value chain linkages with local markets. While run by groups of approximately 35 women, with around 5 men involved in labour. These market gardens included perimeter fencing, storage sheds, water tanks, vegetable seeds (tomatoes, beetroot, onions, lettuce, okra, carrots, collard greens, cabbage, sweet peppers, chilies, spinach, watermelon, and sweet potatoes), assorted tools (shovel, hoes, garden rake, pickaxe, harvesting crates, and wheelbarrows), and tree saplings (neem, papaya, guava, lime, mango, orange, moringa, soursop, passion fruit, and pomegranate). Seven of these market gardens were inspected as part of the evaluation and in all but one case was fully operational, with all infrastructure intact.

123. **Addressing climate-related challenges:** Somalia is highly vulnerable to climate change, with recurrent droughts affecting agricultural productivity. Consultation, mapping, and planning on key natural resource conservation and management actions resulted in the development of NRM plans for the 18 target villages. The NRM plans identified water rangeland and drylands forest assets at risk and needing protection throughout the Programme period for enhanced food security. NRM groups were established and trained on natural resource conservation methods, community resource mapping, and the establishment of NRM committees in each village. Throughout the implementation period, NRM committees were strengthened

with training and inputs to establish community dry season grazing reserves through reseeded, construction of soil bunds, gully control, and reforestation and/or regeneration of degraded land through the farmer managed natural regeneration (FMNR) approach. Tree nursery sites were established in Boodhley, Burco district and Beerato, Odweyne district to provide communities with a local source of tree sapling for reforestation activities. These were inspected as part of the evaluation field mission and the tree nurseries, particularly, were in good shape and were commented upon favourably the community.

124. **Enabling environment:** As noted, the Programme was effective in including women and other especially vulnerable groups, like persons living with disabilities. While communities were less specific and clear about how these and other activities contributed to an enabling environment, they repeatedly mentioned the inclusion of women and persons with disabilities, noting that this as not only the right thing to do but also that it had led to more participation by women and others in community decision making. This was most apparent e in the management structure of the established producer groups for market gardens as well as in the common productive resources such as the water catchment committees, which allowed women to be part of the decision making of the assets.

4.3.3 Most significant change

125. The qualitative analysis graph for FGDs (Figure 5) shows what community members cited as the activities that had the most significant change in relation to these programmatic pathways. Kitchen and particularly market gardens, were cited consistently as being highly effective towards diversifying sources of income, especially during droughts. As noted, these communities were traditionally highly reliance on pastoralism, especially goats and camels. These herds can be severely affected by drought, for clear reasons, but also by economic and other crises brought on by drought and other conditions. Families are often forced to sell their herds, thus often losing an ongoing source of nutrition (milk) while suffering short term economic gain but also often at deflated prices.

Figure 8: Water catchment and market garden area; Boodhley



126. While herd depletion still occurred, the market garden provided a source of food and income that, as families repeatedly noted, got them through the lean time. Thus, they saw this activity has having a direct bearing on issues of safety nets—having additional income during crises, nutrition and health, with stress on improved nutrition not only because of the diversified source of food but because of the variety of good foods as well. For these reasons, it was also cited as related to risk mitigation and overall production.

127. Second to market gardens, and conceivably with even more direct effects on expected outcomes, were the water catchment structures and techniques. These included dams, reservoirs, shallow wells and other techniques, often with a mix of these at different communities based on need and use. When maintained well, these proved critical during droughts, serving both household and livestock needs. There were a few instances where these had fallen into disrepair, illustrating the need to have resources and training to maintain these even when they are less necessary. (See Figure 8.)

4.4 How efficient was the partnership of the RBAs in view of implementing the joint multi-year Resilience Initiative and leveraging further resources? (EQ 4.0)

4.4.1 Efficiency of governance and oversight

128. While this question will be developed more fully in the main report, there is evidence from Somalia of effective coordination between FAO, WFP, and local and national government authorities. This has a direct bearing on efficiency, or more particularly, in 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 from 2020 in relation to COVID-19 and the severe drought in Somalia in 2021/2022 to ensure that output level activities were delivered. (See Section 7.2.) While this pertains more to effectiveness than efficiency, the capacity of the Agencies to continue to work together and to adapt to these changing circumstance singles an effective use of resources, a hallmark of efficiency.

129. 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. This was difficult in the beginning of the Programme where there was not an effective coordination and communication between FAO and WFP and the Ministries, including the lack of a governance structure to guide decision making, priorities, and joint monitoring visits. This was rectified by the third year and the reverse was mostly true by the last year and half of the Programme where, post COVID-19, the Programme was led mostly by national staff in the Agencies. This period was marked by a high degree of efficiency in how output level activities were coordinated and delivered. While this proved efficient in the end, 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.

130. This was most seen in relation to market gardens. As communities represent, these were a 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. For FAO, they had conducted nation-wide research and determined, for instance, that sweet potatoes represented a highly climate resistant crop with large market potential. Yet, for the communities, sweet 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 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.

131. This implies that while certain country-wide programme processes may be efficient, they can disrupt quality and effectiveness. As described in Section 0, this could be addressed by greater community engagement balanced with a programme that focuses on fewer and more proven activities, thus reducing transaction costs to offset costs associated with increased community engagement. This would likely, given a simplified approach, increase efficiency as well.

132. Table 3 shows the expenditures by agency for each country over the duration of the Programme. While calculating the cost per beneficiary household ignores issues associated with how many people were reached when, and with which modalities/activities, this illustrates a stark difference between the country contexts. The costs per household in DRC were the least expensive at 678, with Niger at 955. The average cost per household in Somalia was 3,740.

Table 3: 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 | - | 3,101,866.63 | 8,139,985.83 | 12,000.00 | 678 |
| Niger | 4,047,637.50 | - | 7,796,560.74 | 11,844,198.20 | 12,400.00 | 955 |
| Somalia | 4,488,715.80 | - | 5,234,559.50 | 9,723,275.30 | 2,600.00 | 3,740 |
| Global support | 272,216 | 113,320 | 283,269.49 | 668,805.49 | | |
| Sub-total by agency | 13,846,688.50 | 113,320 | 16,416,256.40 | 30,376,264.80 | 27,000.00 | 1,125 |

133. Part of the increased cost in Somalia is due the cost of water infrastructure (supplies, commodities, and materials) which were 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).⁵⁹ This is due to the increased use of emergency cash support (vouchers, FFA) that were necessary given the severe drought in Somalia at this time.

Table 4: 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 | 25227 | 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 | |

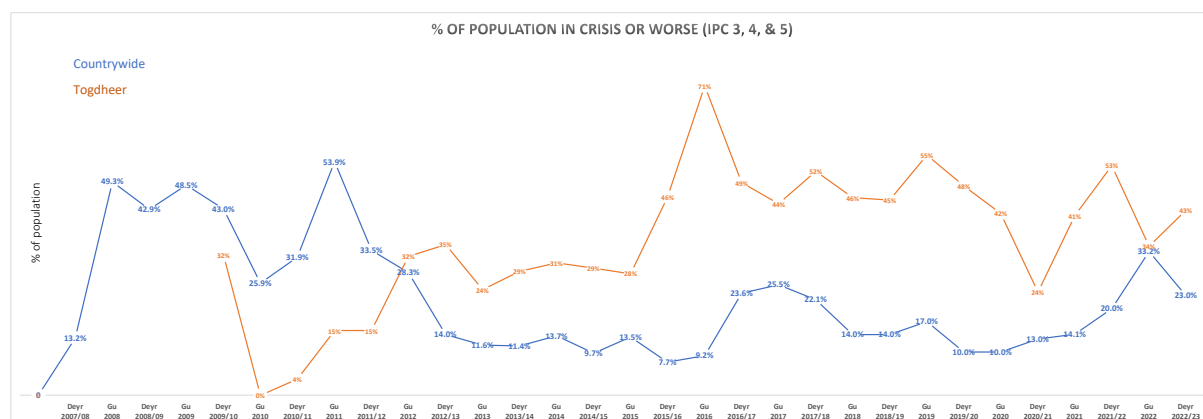
134. While this financial analysis is not definitive, it indicates areas that should be considered further. If the costs of water infrastructure in Somalia were considerably more expansive, and yet also more relevant and effective towards improved food security, livelihoods and resilience, then these costs and their implications need to be considered for any future programming.

4.5 Did the RBA Resilience Initiative contribute to long-term intended results or unintended impacts? (EQ 5.0)

4.5.1 Resilience

135. Food insecurity in Burco and Odweyne districts (Togdheer Region), where the Programme focused, experienced much higher rates of food insecurity in relation to the rest of the country. Figure 9 shows the percentage of the population in IPC crisis levels or worse. This shows that, since Gu 2012, these rates remained higher than the rest of the country with some anomalies in the Gu 2016 and Deyr 2021/2021.⁶⁰

Figure 9: IPC for Somalia and Togdheer region



⁵⁹ RBA. May 2019. Rome-based Agencies Resilience Initiative Annual Report –Year 2 Page 93.

⁶⁰ These figures are taken verbatim from FSNAU reports and yet the significant changes in these two seasons are likely due to a data issue rather than in actual fluctuations. Unfortunately, FSNAU reporting did not account for these anomalies.

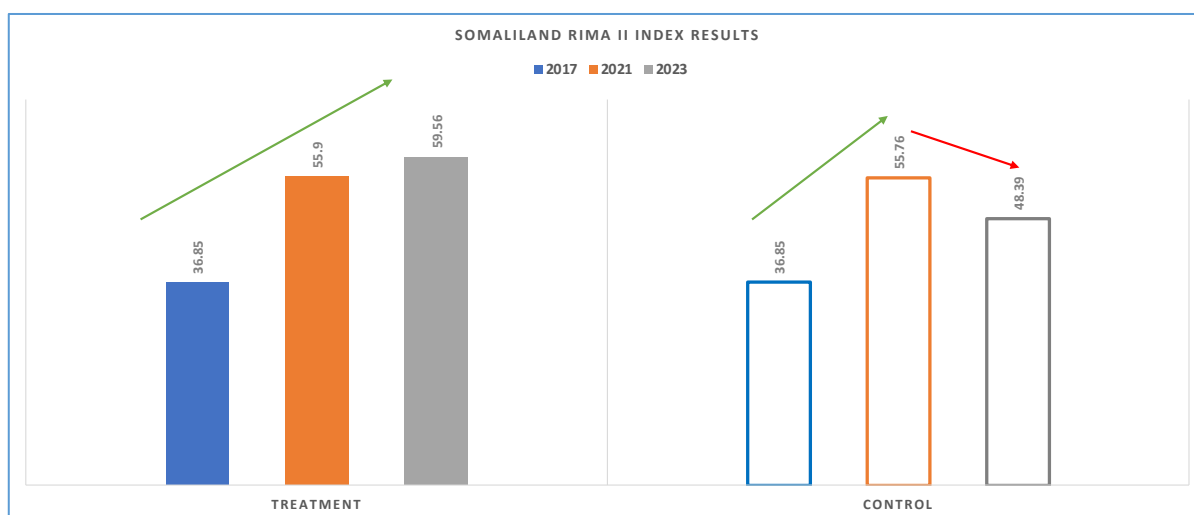
Source: FSNAU

136. 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 4.3 regarding immediate outcomes (activities), the Programme achieved nearly all outputs and it was the combination of these that contributed to results.

137. The ultimate outcome was “increased food security & resilience for populations, especially women & children in targeted regions”. The primary indicator for this was based on the RIMA II. While aspects and limitations associated with the RIMA II are described in the evaluation’s Inception Phase Report, it stands as a highly articulated and valid measurement of resilience as defined by the capacity of households to prepare for, withstand, and recover from shocks.

138. The Programme’s RIMA II analysis in Somalia shows that there was significant difference between the treatment and control groups. Figure 10 shows the overall scoring for the Resilience Capacity Index (RCI), a composite score derived from the RIMA II analysis. This also 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, unfortunately, had a significant drop in the same period. There was also, if not statistically significant, a positive improvement from the baseline for treatment groups as well.

Figure 10: RIMA II analysis; Somalia



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

139. This is a remarkable result as it indicates that Programme 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.

140. 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). 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 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 apriary activities, amongst others. (Figure 11.)

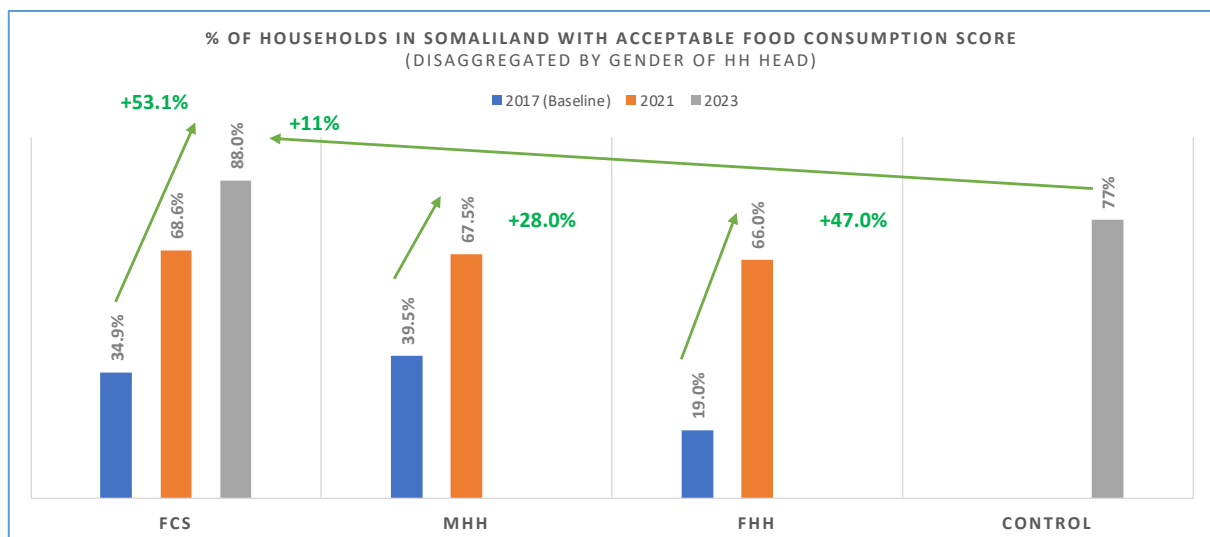
4.5.2 Food security and nutrition

141. FCS shows a significant improvement amongst cohorts between the baseline, midline, and endline surveys. (

142. Figure 12). 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 Togdheer region reported above. One remarkable change relates to female headed households (FHH) that went from 19% with an acceptable food consumption scores at the baseline to 66% in the midline, on par with male headed households.

143. Similarly positive results were shown in relation to the HDDS. Overall dietary diversity was higher in treatment groups (5.97) than in control groups (4.56) at the endline survey.⁶¹ 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 treatment group; 6.2 for control group), likely because of the continued drought in 2021.

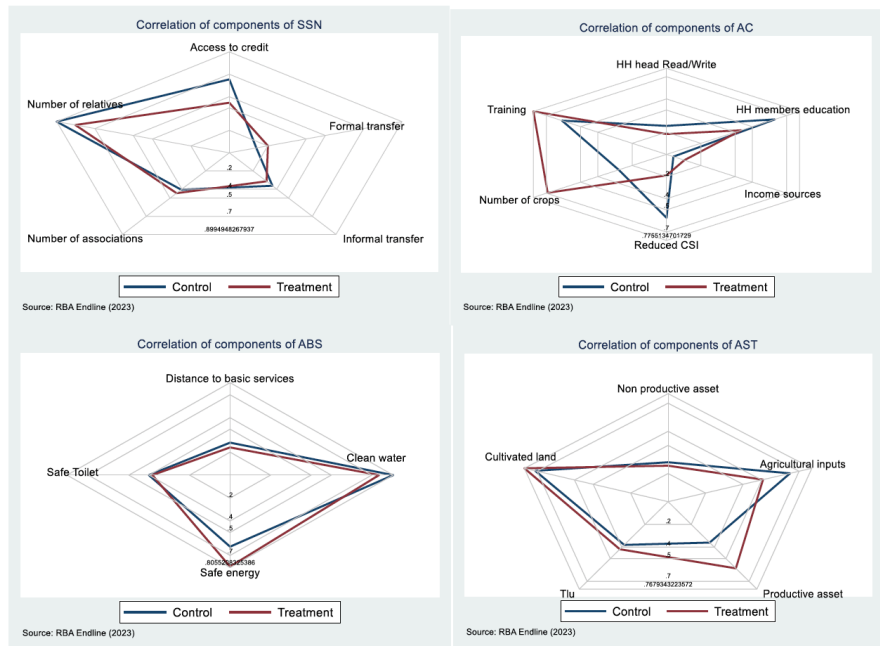
Figure 12: FCS analysis



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

⁶¹ RBA Resilience Initiative: Somalia. December 2023. Somalia Final Project Close-out Report; February 2017 to December 2023. (DRAFT). Page 29.

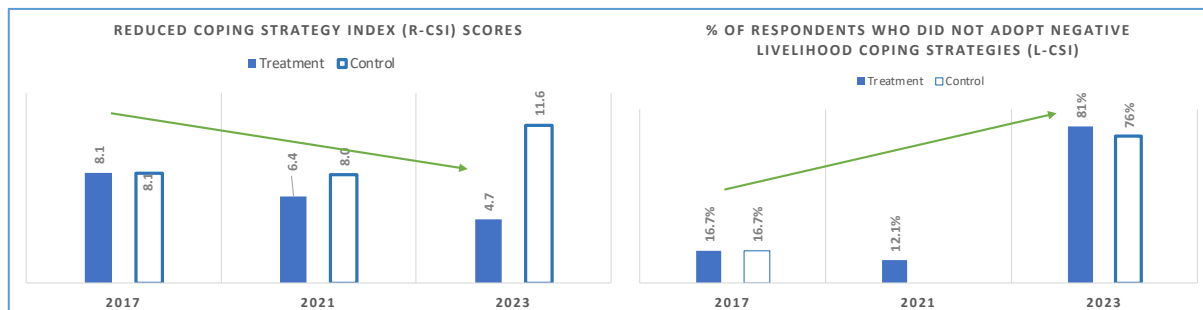
Figure 11: RIMA II analysis of correlations between pillars; Somalia



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

144. The rCSI that shows the number of negative coping strategies used by households in relation to food insecurity 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 13.) (Decreases in CSI figures is positive as it represents fewer negative coping strategies, as shown with green arrow.)

Figure 13: rCSI & L-CSI analysis



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

145. The RBA in Somalia also used the 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.

146. 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.

147. To achieve these levels of change, key activities on the improvement of productive assets such as water infrastructure, agriculture and fodder production, NRM, safety nets through FFA, 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, MAM, integrated with SAM treatment activities were implemented in all the 18 participating communities.

148. This demonstrates that the Programme enabled people to maintain resilience levels during severe periods of drought and, in comparison, to other communities facing the similar crises.

149. 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 the adaptive capacities, especially training and 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 apiry activities, amongst others.

150. The evaluation draws a further correlation between these and community feedback that focused on access to water (water catchments) and market gardens. Communities frequently cited these as having the most significant positive change in their diets and livelihoods. Communities readily cited the benefit of water catchment activities, especially reservoirs, that enabled them to have a source of water for household consumption and animal husbandry throughout droughts. The diversification of livelihoods was central to the Programme. It introduced a range of activities, from beekeeping to kitchen and market gardens that were designed to provide additional sources of food and income.

4.5.3 Climate change

151. Climate change will continue to have significant impacts on vulnerable people in Somalia. Climate change is expected to increase the frequency and intensity 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.⁶²

152. The RBA initiative in Somalia contributed to reducing the vulnerability of agropastoralists and local economies to climate and weather-related disasters. For example, the sustainable management of *Prosopis* is helping pastoralists, agropastoralists and dryland farmers adapt to climate change through the processing of drought-resistant *Prosopis* tree parts into a variety of products, including livestock feed supplements and charcoal. *Prosopis* can be defined as a multi-purpose crop. By controlling its harmful effects as an invasive species, and diversifying local incomes, communities and local economies become less vulnerable to climate-related disasters in contexts where severe drought episodes are recurrent. This was apparent in each community visited and regularly commented upon by communities as not only beneficial for the reasons cited but many also cited it as necessary given, as they described, “changes in the environment.”

153. 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 will continue to create conditions in which traditional pastoralists’ ways of living will be challenged, driving them to move toward agropastoralism livelihood strategies, as promoted in the Programme. Yet, this also means that traditional livelihood strategies, like those related to pastoralism, will be lost. This was already disrupted because of the prevention of livestock movements between Somalia and Ethiopia, wherein, in decades past, herders could move freely to alternative water sources. The repeated and more frequent droughts have simply made matters worse. The Somalia government has tried to address this through herd replenishment schemes, but these have not been able to make pastoralists whole and represent an expensive and a stop-gap measure, given climate change. Given that traditional pastoralist livelihoods will have been lost, this may precipitate further migration to urban centres, as has been the pattern in Somalia.⁶³ Given this, a much more integrated approach to climate change related programming is required. This would address the shift in livelihoods and present ways to minimize stress migration to urban centres.

⁶² For a comprehensive report on this, please see: Ingrid Hartment & Ahmed J. Sugulle. November 2009. The Impact of Climate Change on Pastoral Societies of Somalia. The Heinrich Boll Foundation & the European Union. Available [here](#).

⁶³ Peter G. Jones & Philip K. Thornton. June 2009. Croppers to Livestock Keepers: Livelihood Transitions to 2050 in Africa Due to Climate Change. *Environmental Science & Policy* 12(4): 427-437. Available [here](#).

4.6 To what extent are the benefits of the RBA Resilience Initiative sustainable? (EQ 6.0)

4.6.1 Continued benefits

154. While overall sustainability will be addressed in the global report, the approach in Somalia holds promise. It has had a direct positive bearing on a collection of outcome indicators related to 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, that 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. It has ensured that women's participation is widespread and meaningful even if efforts have not proven transformative in relation to gender equality and women's empowerment.

155. While 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. While there were serious issues in how the agencies worked together, sometimes not working in the same communities, they were able to combine comparative advantages towards increased resilience.⁶⁴ Focusing mostly on water infrastructure and conservation combined with agricultural and livestock development and household income not only met the needs of the 18 communities it served but was also quite manageable. Future iteration could focus more on this (described in Section 5).

156. The Programme was without fault. Not all communities were able to implement targeted activities; there were conflicts about who could participate in women's market gardens; 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 (more complicated than 'pastoral', 'agropastoral', 'rural', or 'Somali'). These communities have faced tremendous hardship and change as ways of life that have sustained them for centuries are impacted by climate change and geopolitical conflicts (e.g., the ability to bring herds to Ethiopia during lean times).⁶⁵ In these cases, 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 result in highly novel social dynamics, even in places characterized by a few discrete livelihoods or other common conditions.⁶⁶

157. There are two issues associated with the sustainability of the Programme. The first concerns the fact that the broad, country-wide Programme approach by FAO and WFP was not adaptive enough to address all issues at the community level that had a significant effect on activity efficacy. The Programme was participatory in that it consulted with 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. A more comprehensive level of community engagement could have addressed problems sooner. This includes adhering to Accountability to Affected Population (AAP) standards that not only assess needs and whether activities are being completed, but discuss issues that communities face and in ways where such good practices may be shared and maximized.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ LaGuardia, Dorian & Andrew Pinney. February 2019. Shocks and Hard Knocks: The Impact of Resilience Programming in Somalia. FCDO. Available [here](#).

⁶⁵ For a summary of this, please see: A. Kassahun, H.A. Snyman, & G.N. Smit. 2008. Impact of Rangeland Degradation on the Pastoral Production Systems, Livelihoods and Perceptions of the Somali Pastoralists in Eastern Ethiopia. *Journal of Arid Environments* 72(7): 1265-1281. Available [here](#).

⁶⁶ For an overview of this, please see: Daniel Maxwell & Nisar Majid (Eds.) 2016. Diversification, Flexibility and Social Connectedness. Understanding the Narratives. *Famine in Somalia: Competing Imperatives, Collective Failures, 2011-12*. Oxford University Press.

⁶⁷ 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

158. 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 the 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.

159. 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 noted. 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 thus facilitating more resources for community engagement. (See Section 4.3.)

160. 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.

4.6.2 *Interagency collaboration*

161. Interagency collaboration, especially at a country programme level, is always challenging. Coordinated and integrated programming approaches require business process alignment, from procurement to staffing to the timing of reports. RBAs are also beholden, from country to headquarters, to various intermittent demands that can challenge consistent progress on well-conceived plans. FAO and WFP are also actively contributing to national coordination mechanisms, from the humanitarian clusters to the country development plan. So, while one may assume that the three Rome-based food agencies would have ample capacity to work together, it has typically proven challenging.⁶⁸

162. This was demonstrated in two previous interagency resilience programmes in Somalia. The first was launched just after the 2012 famine as part of a recognition that multi-year programming that addressed the longer-term effects of a protracted humanitarian crisis was required. The FCDO of the UK launched a multiyear humanitarian programme that included a joint resilience strategy amongst FAO, UNICEF, and WFP. The impact evaluation of this programme shows that, while it positively affected food security, the three agencies largely delivered activities separately, often in different communities at different times.⁶⁹

163. In the case of the RBA Resilience Initiative, a lack of coordinated and integrated programming approaches was largely avoided. There were issues in the governance structure from the first year and a half, but these were mainly resolved thereafter. This was recounted in various KIIs and in the ways that the communities themselves described the Agencies. In KIIs, local and national authorities remarked that there was good collaboration with the two agencies, with regular meetings both in the field and in Hargeisa. Several of these respondents noted that the collaboration was better than in other programmes and that they felt that this enabled them to have a much more coherent and government aligned approach. KIIs with staff from FAO and WFP cited some of the challenges and limitations associated with the partnership, detailing issues of resources and business process alignment, and yet these were often coupled with explanations of how they overcame challenges. There were still signs of some jockeying for position and competition and yet these were minimal.

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.

⁶⁸ For a recent evaluation on the subject, please see: Stephen Turner. October 2021. Joint Evaluation of Collaboration Among the United Nations Rome-Based Agencies. FAO, IFAD, & WFP. Available [here](#).

⁶⁹ LaGuardia, Dorian & Andrew Pinney. February 2019. Shocks and Hard Knocks: The Impact of Resilience Programming in Somalia. FCDO. Available [here](#).

164. It is difficult to ascertain what, precisely, contributed to this successful interagency collaboration. This was partly due to a comprehensive performance framework that guided activities and how results were measured. (See Section 4.2.1.) There is also the natural convergence between emergency nutrition support, including school feeding and food for assets programming, and FAO's varied approaches to livelihoods and pastoral/agropastoral development. This was facilitated by strong local partners, including ActionAid and the University of Burao, who were actively engaged with the communities over the duration of the Programme. There are also the communities themselves. They were of sufficient size demographically and of similar livelihoods as to be receptive to the dual approach of FAO and WFP.

4.7 To what extent did the RBA Resilience Initiative take into account and contribute to gender, human rights, equity and inclusion? (EQ 7.0)

4.7.1 Design

165. The main report will address issues associated with human rights, equity, and inclusion. This case study focuses on issues related to gender.

166. The Programme was effective in involving women and other particularly vulnerable groups (people over 65; persons living with disabilities).

167. 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.

168. Kitchen and market gardens were particularly relevant towards the increased availability and equitable access to nutritious, diversified, and stable food supply, especially for women and children. The establishment of women-led user groups and village savings groups also strengthened their access to training and productive resources. The production of vegetables, and processing of prosopis into charcoal and fodder, also

allowed women to diversify household income sources and strengthen their resilience.⁷⁰ These and other activities, contributed to establishing sustainable sources of income for women, thus improving their economic power and contributing to representation in decision-making processes. As described below and

⁷⁰ For more, please refer to the Innovative agriculture, livestock, and natural resource management in Somalia: Gender-sensitive Approaches Promoted by the Rome-based Agencies Resilience Initiative” brief on the FAO KORE - Knowledge sharing platform on Emergencies and Resilience website. Available [here](#).

Figure 14: “How satisfied are women with their level of influence over decision making in community meetings?” Results from UN Women rapid assessment tool

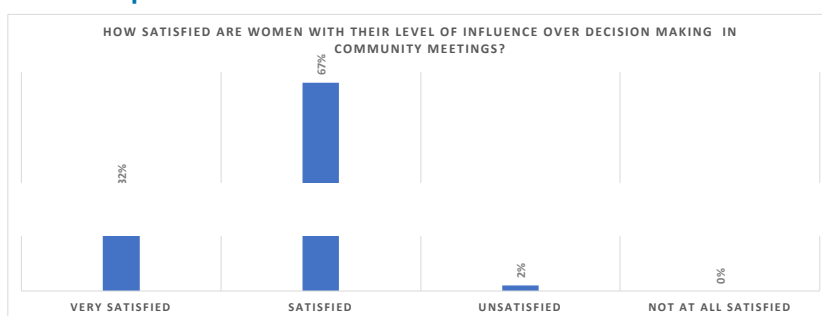


Figure 15: “Has women’s participation been inclusive?” Results from UN Women rapid assessment tool.

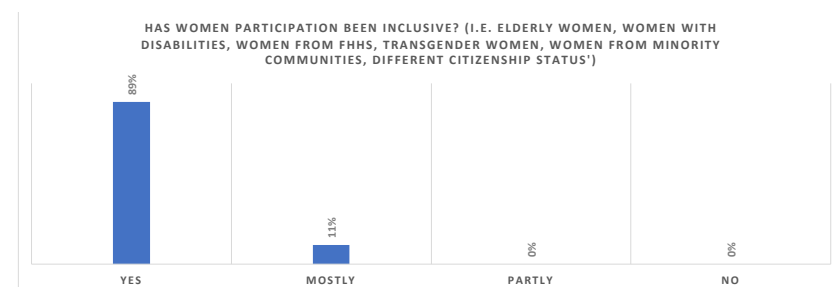
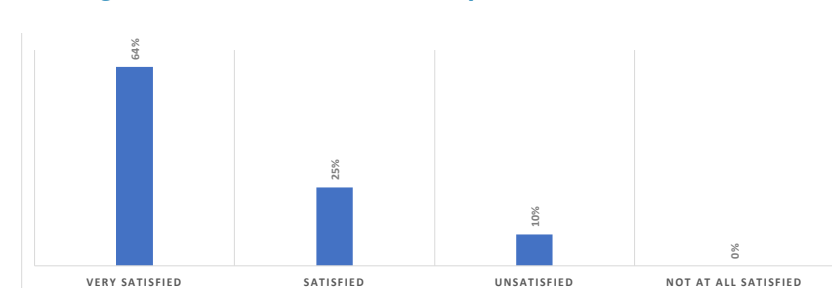
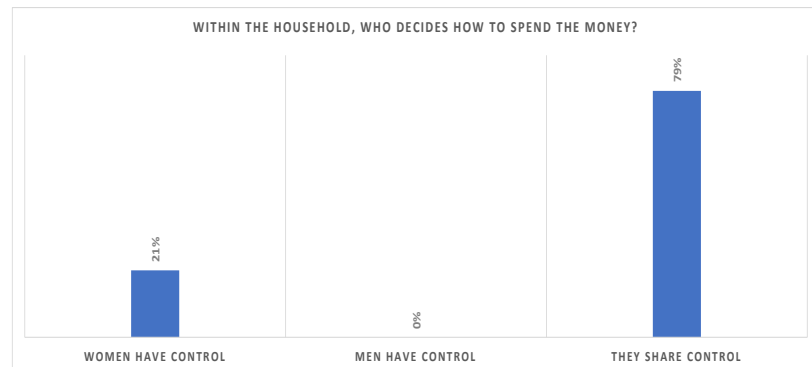


Figure 16: “How satisfied are women with any livelihood related training?” Results from UN Women rapid assessment tool



in other sections, community members often remarked on how the Programme contributed to women's empowerment even if this was not an explicit part of the design.

Figure 17: "Within the household, who decides how to spend the money?" Results from UN Women rapid assessment tool



4.7.2 Results

169. As shown through the UN Women rapid assessment tool,⁷¹ women are both satisfied with their level of inclusion (Figure 15) and in their level of influence and decision making (Figure 17).

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

171. Another significant result concerns livelihood and the control of household income. As in Figure 14, women are generally 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. However, there were some complaints 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.

172. 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.

173. In terms of household income, all women respondents state that either they alone or jointly with their husbands control household income. 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.⁷²

174. Given the situation of women and their role in food security, the Programme may have been able to do more than simply include women. Somali women are disadvantaged compared to men on all socio-economic and human development indicators. Social norms and power structures impact the lives and opportunities available to women. The physical and psychological integrity of women and girls is not ensured. Early marriage is pervasive throughout the country, with 45 percent of women aged 20 to 24 married before the age of 18.⁷³ Addressing gender inequalities is critical towards maximizing impact and socioeconomic activities meant to build resilience.

175. Given these issues, it is imperative that GEWE, not simply gender sensitive programming, is streamlined across any resilience programme. This requires a better understanding of the different barriers faced by men, women, boys, and girls in accessing services, economic resources, and political opportunities but also to leverage their contribution to the ways in which their households and communities prepare for, withstand, and recover from crises.

5 Conclusions

⁷¹ 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](#).

⁷² Please see: Reginald Harold Green. n.d. *Khat & the Realities of Somalis: Historic, Social, Household, Political & Economic*. *Review of African Political Economy* 26(79): 33 -49. Available [here](#).

⁷³ For a review on this issue, please see: Bahja Ali Mohamud. 25 June 2020. *To End child Marriage, Somali Mindsets Must Change*. World Bank Blogs. Available [here](#).

176. Overall, the RBA Resilience Initiative has shown to be effective in addressing the food security and resilience amongst the most vulnerable in 18 communities in Togdheer Region, Somalia. The Programme achieved nearly all output level activities, despite access and other issues associated with COVID-19 and given the one-year no cost extension. These correspond with significant achievements in immediate and intermediate outcomes where the Programme met or exceeded nearly all indicators, including standard proxy indicators related to food security (HDDS, FCS, rCSI) and resilience (RIMA II). FCS and RIMA II analysis include comparison between treatment and control groups wherein there are also significant positive differences for the treatment groups across indicators. RIMA II was also used to assess activities after the baseline and midline surveys although this did not result in significant changes to activities as determined in the PMFs from the inception phase.

177. These are significant results given the operating context in Somalia, particularly in Togdheer, which has experienced far worse food insecurity than in the rest of the country. Somalia was just recovering from severe drought conditions in 2017 when the Programme started and there were consecutive failed rains from 2020 to early 2023. This caused widespread water shortages in most pastoral and agropastoral livelihood zones, leading to atypical livestock movements and declines in livestock conditions and milk production. Given this, an estimated 2.2-2.6 million people experienced crisis (IPC Phase 3) or emergency (IPC Phase 4) food security levels from 2019-2023. Yet, the food security and RIMA II analysis shows that the target communities were better able to prepare for, withstand, and recover from these crises when compared to comparative populations.

178. Communities consistently cited water infrastructure (reservoirs, berkads, shallow wells) and market gardens as the most helpful interventions in terms of food security, diet diversification, and increased household income. These formed a core set of interventions that both enabled them to better maintain livestock while diversifying agricultural activities and sources of household income. These were complemented by a range of community-based activities, from beekeeping and fodder production to school gardens. Communities also commented upon the critical aspects of direct cash support of various types during crises.

179. **Partners, including local and national authorities, commented favourably on the effectiveness of the Programme.** They cited the fact that it was aligned well with governmental priorities and the needs of rural populations. They also stated that there was regular coordination with FAO and WFP that included planning, monitoring, and problem solving. This may have been facilitated by a Project Steering Committee to bolster national and local authorities' leadership/ownership towards the sustainability of the project activities.

180. What is clear is that communities' resilience increased, especially in relation to food security, prevention of stress migration/displacement, and in terms of diversified income sources and the engagement of women. All of these combine to provide resilience, even if it is less clear how powerful that resilience is in relation to the frequency or scope of different shocks and crises.

181. **Programme activities were not successful in all cases.** There were **some reservoirs that had fallen into disrepair** while others, especially those that had active guards, were in pristine shape. There were disputes about who could participate in market gardens, leading to the closure of one such market garden entirely. There were some minor conflicts associated with the payment of tractor services. There were also problems in some communities that prevented the implementation of most activities.

182. The most significant issue concerned the **provision of the right seasonal varieties of seeds** for home and market gardens. Many communities complained that they were given the wrong seasonal variety and that this led to failed crops. This is problematic as an entire growing season was lost. This was recognized by FAO, particularly, and was often the result of problems in the national procurement of seeds and with getting the right seeds to the right communities at the right time. In one case, a market garden closed due to conflict amongst community members about who could participate. This may have been mitigated against if the Programme included more conflict sensitive approaches and if it included conflict sensitivity as part of its trainings. The University of Burao, that provided all trainings for market gardens, stated that conflict resolution was not part of its curriculum. Conflict sensitivity should be included for any future training and programming.

183. There was a **significant effort to ensure that all Programme activities were gender sensitive.** This included providing activities specifically for women (like market gardens) and ensuring that women and

other vulnerable groups were included in community committees and decision making. **Community members remarked favourably and consistently about this, using language that epitomized the aspirations of an inclusive approach. Yet, it is unclear how much this may have led to increased gender equality or women's empowerment.** While community members were effusive about participation, they were less able to cite tangible benefits associated with women's participation. Interestingly, all women participants in FGDs stated that either they alone or, with their husbands, controlled household finances; none of them stated that their husbands alone controlled household finances. Women also stated that they had decision making authority in various forums and that they felt safe accessing services. Yet, these align with traditional Somali gender dynamics and do not necessarily signal any transformative effects of the Initiative. In fact, women complained that while they made more money because of the RBA Resilience Initiative, men still took a proportion of household income and spent it on *Khat*. Of course, the Programme was not designed to have been transformative in terms of GEWE and yet there is ample evidence from Somalia and beyond that empowering women supports better results in terms of food security and other issues.

184. **The Programme involved collaboration with multiple market actors along different value chains.** Market garden groups add value to existing production (vegetables under drip irrigation) and the processing and sale of vegetables allow women's groups to market and sell production collectively in higher value markets, thus generating additional income. The management of *Prosopis* enabled local groups, focusing on women and youth, to establish a range of commercial activities – from pod collection and milling to charcoal and feed production – that are profitable and self-sustaining. This further promoted linkages between local entrepreneurs and upstream market actors.

185. Overall, the combination of activities and the coordination between FAO, WFP, and local and national government authorities contributed to demonstrable and very possibly sustainable results. This, of course, is related to the technical and managerial expertise that the RBA bring to bear in any country context and yet the capacity to deliver what was, by all accounts, a fully integrated programme that met the needs of pastoralist and agropastoral communities in one of the most food insecure regions in Somalia, is remarkable. The fact that this contributed to resilience, as measured in the RIMA II and as described by the communities themselves, bodes exceptionally well for how this Programme may be brought forward.

186. The primary lesson concerns the fact that **when the RBA work together, they can deliver a programme that is of significantly more value than if they delivered alone.** This was supported by a comprehensive performance framework and regular reporting but also in the flexibility and adaptability of the Somalia country offices. These go hand-in-hand. Having a comprehensive plan and regular reporting enables changes that are still aligned with expected results. This goes to the support and leadership that was provided from agency headquarters, and other issue that will be addressed in the main report.

6 Recommendations

187. **The RIMA II and related analysis is critical and should be central to any future programming.** Using this standard impact level resilience measures coupled with standard outcome level food proxies (FCS, CSI) enabled the Programme to track how specific activities contributed to results. The RIMA II provided a good way to correlate activities, or baskets of similar activities, with outcome level change. **By using these tools, such programmes can not only measure outcome and impact but do so throughout implementation to promote positive and effective changes throughout. This will enable programmes to reach and possibly exceed original outcome level targets.**

188. Given these results, **future programme iterations could consider graduation rates** and other ways in which the Programme has enabled communities to be less reliant on emergency aid. This is especially possible given the noted coordination and collaboration with government authorities who, in KIIs, remarked favourably on this and how this was aligned with their own priorities.

189. There is an opportunity to **strengthen community engagement** throughout the process. Community members and local partners were vocal about what worked, what they preferred, and how these issues increased their capacities to prepare for, withstand, and recover from crises. This could be addressed by greater community engagement balanced with a programme that focuses on fewer and more proven activities, thus reducing transaction costs.

190. There is a clear advantage to focusing on water catchment and other water conservation techniques and as combined with nutrition diversification and livelihood activities, like market gardens. The ways in which the Programme used emergency support in terms of cash and vouchers also ensured that these other activities could be brought to fruition. These activities—water catchment and management; market gardens, and agricultural activities like that related to climate-resistant prosopis fodder as a climate-resistant production—could be combined into a seasonally-sensitive package that could be replicated for many more communities in Somalia. These core activities could provide the basis for a larger programme.

191. There are opportunities to engage with communities in ways that provide positive changes in gender equality and women's empowerment. The programme may also wish to focus on key activities that have proven effective, thus simplifying and focusing the programme overall (reducing transactional and other costs) and thus freeing up resources to increase community engagement.

192. Future resilience programming should include financial analysis regarding the costs of individual 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. This is especially relevant given the higher cost per household for Somalia as compared to costs from DRC and Niger.

193. The RBA should expand upon the Knowledge Platform on Emergencies and Resilience (KORE)⁷⁴ 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.

⁷⁴ Please see the KORE website [here](#).

7 Annexes

7.1 Summary ToR

194. The terms of reference were for the final activity evaluation of the RBAs' Joint Resilience Initiative "Strengthening the resilience of livelihoods in protracted crisis in the DRC, Niger, and Somalia." The evaluation was commissioned by the WFP Livelihoods, Asset Creation & Resilience Unit, though managed jointly by the FAO, IFAD, and WFP and covered the period from May 2017 to March 2022.

195. The ToR provided key information to stakeholders about the evaluation and guided the evaluation team to specify expectations during the various phases of the evaluation.

196. The full ToR is available as a separate annex and on-line [here](#).

7.2 Output level results

197. The following table shows the achievement levels for all outputs from the Programme in Somalia. These are taken verbatim from the RBA Resilience Initiative final report (Somalia Final Project Close-out Report February 2017 to December 2023) from Somalia and accompanying log frame.

| Indicator | Target | Actual | Achievement |
|---|---|---|-------------|
| Output 1211: Farmers are supported with improved, climate-sensitive inputs and sustainable production technologies for increasing production and productivity and diversifying crops. | | | |
| # of people engaged in diversification activities (disaggregated by sex). | 1,300 HH | 3,378 HH | 259% |
| # of households receiving quality agricultural inputs, services and/or training on good agricultural practices (sex disaggregated). | 198. 2,186 HH | 199. 2,804 HH | 200. 128% |
| # of households participating in training. | 201. 1,300 HH | 202. 1,489 HH | 203. 115% |
| # of agricultural production systems (Introduced at HH level). | At least 2 agricultural production systems | 2 agricultural production systems | 100% |
| Output 1212: Male and female processors and cooperative members are provided with gender-sensitive training (including on nutrition) and knowledge dissemination on reduction of pre- and post-harvest losses. | | | |
| # of households trained on good agronomic practices with particular focus on pest and disease control, post-harvest loss reduction, preservation, and storage of crop produce (sex disaggregated). | 500 lead farmers trained. | 204. 743 lead farmers trained. | 149% |
| Output 1213: Male and female producers trained on the expansion of processing, value addition and marketing of agricultural products. | | | |
| # of households trained in value addition (sex disaggregated). | 205. 120 HHs (lead farmers) trained per year in vegetable processing and value addition | 206. 822 HH | 207. 685% |
| # of local productive sector stakeholders trained on rural commercialization. | 300 HH per year (3 years) supported in rural commercialization (8 groups in total) | 635 HH 208. | 212% |
| Output 1221: Households in Burco and Odweyne engaged in expansion/rehabilitation of productive, livelihood and disaster mitigation infrastructure such as water catchments and reservoirs, etc. | | | |
| # of households benefitting from the infrastructure rehabilitated. | 3,640 HH | 2600 HH | 71% |
| % of population in targeted communities benefitted from Assets created/rehabilitated (Asset Benefit Indicator). | 80% | 100% | 125% |
| Output 1231: Gender and nutrition sensitive food assistance for assets (FFA) provided to vulnerable households during the lean and agricultural off season. | | | |
| # of households supported with FFA, home garden kits and training (sex disaggregated). | 300 HH participating per year | 473 HH | 158% |
| Output 1232: Households provided with training and technical support for the formation of savings groups. | | | |
| # of new savings groups formed. | 18 | 18 | 100% |
| Output 1311: Technical support provided to communities in Burco and Odweyne for the development of integrated gender-sensitive community-based plans, and for the identification of priority actions, in line with regional recovery and development plan. | | | |
| % of communities that have priority projects identified preceded by community based participatory planning. | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Output 1312: Communities supported for the implementation of plans for natural resource conservation/management including tree planting and re-seeding and building soil erosion structures | | | |
| # of community-based management bodies established. | 1 CBPP body established per village | 18 management bodies established in each village. | 100% |

| | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| # of villages which have natural resource management (NRM) plan developed and implemented. | 4 villages. | 18 villages. | 450% |
| Output 1313: Plans for handover, continuity, sustainability as well as community and government ownership of implemented projects developed and initiated. | | | |
| % of community projects and assets that have been created/rehabilitated and benefitting the community are handed over. | 80% | 100% | 125% |
| # of community members and representatives of local authorities trained for asset maintenance (sex disaggregated). | 200 | 554 | 277% |
| # of asset maintenance agreements signed. | 1 per cluster | 33 across 7 clusters | ACHIEVED |
| Output 1314: Communities provided with energy efficient options to conserve forest resources and fuel wood, including energy efficient stoves, | | | |
| # of households trained on SAFE (sex disaggregated). | 500 HH trained per year | 1,080 HH | 216% |
| # of Charcoal Producers Association (CPA) established (# of men and women members) | 2 CPAs groups established | 2 CPAs groups established | 100% |
| # of HH receiving efficient cooking stoves (sex disaggregated). | 500 HH per cluster | 1,080 HH | 216% |
| # of Artisans trained on manufacture and repair of efficient cook stoves (disaggregated by sex). | 40 artisans | 76 artisans | 190% |
| # of villages receiving briquette manufacture machines and training. | 2 villages | 2 villages | 100% |
| # of efficient charcoal production kilns provided and to which village. | 2 villages | 2 villages | 100% |
| Output 1411: Targeting and sensitization with nutrition education (including infant feeding) for all targeted communities in Burco and Odweyne. | | | |
| # of women and men trained and sensitized on Nutrition including infant and young child feeding (IYCF). | 20,000 | 45,897 | 229% |
| Output 1412: Community Nutrition Workers (CNWs) trained on sensitizing women and men on infant feeding, and family nutrition, particularly for mothers and children. | | | |
| CNWs trained on Nutrition and IYCF as TOTs in Odweyne and Burco. | 36 | 40 | 111% |
| Output 1421: Moderately acute malnourished pregnant and lactating women and girls (PLWGs), U5 children, and PLHIV/PLTB provided with treatment and food supplements. | | | |
| # of U5 children and PLWGs reached with food supplements under TSF programme. | 10,000 Under-5s 3,800 PLW | U5- 25,689 PLWs- 6,275 | 257% 165% |
| # of PLHIV and PLTB reached with food by Prescription programme. | 600 | 600 | 100% |
| Output 1422: Pregnant and lactating women and girls (PLWG), children under 2, and mothers delivering in maternal child health nutrition (MCHN) centres provided with malnutrition preventative interventions. | | | |
| # of U2 children and PLWGs reached through MCHN programme. | 10,000 Under-2s 10,000 PLW | U2- 13,500 PLWs- 10521 | 135% 105% |
| # of women reached through MCHN delivery annually. | 400 women | 1,063 | 266% |
| Output 1431: People living with HIV and TB provided with training on treatment, nutrition education and identification of linkages to livelihood and other programs as appropriate | | | |
| # of people living with TB and/or HIV trained and sensitized on treatment options, nutrition education and livelihood. | 600 patients | 470 | Only the TB part was achieved while HIV was on hold. |
| # of HHs with PLTB and PLHIV people enrolled in livelihoods, through referral system. | 150 HHs | 220 HHs | 147% |

7.4 Outcome level results

209. The following table shows the achievement levels for all outcomes (intermediate, immediate, and ultimate) from the Programme in Somalia. These are taken verbatim from the RBA Resilience Initiative final report (Somalia Final Project Close-out Report February 2017 to December 2023) from Somalia and accompanying logframe.

| Indicator | Target | Actual | Achievement |
|--|---|---|---|
| Ultimate Outcome: Increased food security and resilience for populations, especially women and children in targeted regions. | | | |
| Resilience Index (RIMA)/RCI (disaggregated by sex). | Overall: 36.85 MHH: 38.10 FHH: 34.25 | Overall: 59.9 MHH: 58.1 FHH: 58.9 | Overall: +23.05 MHH: +20.0 FHH: +24.65 |
| Intermediate Outcome 1100: Improved coherence, coordination, and shared ownership of evidence-based gender sensitive interventions, including innovative and resilience programming, by RBAs and other actors at global, regional, national, and field levels in Burco and Odweyne districts. | | | |
| # of regular coordination meetings. | 30 | 36 per year | 120% |
| Intermediate Outcome 1200: Increased availability and access to a nutritious, diversified, and stable food supply for populations, especially women and children in Burco and Odweyne districts. | | | |
| Household with acceptable food consumption score (FCS). | FCS ≥ 80% households with acceptable Food Consumption Score | 88% | 110% |
| Diet diversity score (individual). | 4 (Baseline) 25% increase Food Security Assessment Reports | 76% | 304% |
| Household Diet Diversity Score. | 4.7 (Baseline) | 5.97 (endline) | 27% increase |
| Food Coping Strategy Index (rCSI). | 8.1 (Baseline) | 4.7 (endline) 25% decrease | 58% decrease |
| Livelihood Coping Strategy (Household using emergency coping strategy). | 16.70% | 81% | |
| Intermediate Outcome 1300: Improved gender sensitive governance of common productive resources by relevant authorities and/or other relevant stakeholders in Burco and Odweyne districts. | | | |
| # of joint capacity development activities organized at country and field level. | 3 | 5 | 167% |
| % of Resource management committees registered with at least 30% women participants effectively controlling access and maintenance of resources. | 80% | 80% | 100% |
| % of communities with Resource Management Agreements. | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Intermediate Outcome 1400: Improved nutritional, dietary and essential family practices in food hygiene, including treatment and monitoring of MAM, in Burco and Odweyne districts. | | | |
| Prevalence of acute malnutrition among children under 5 (weight-for-height as percent). | GAM rate reduced by 10% | 8.85% | 89% |
| Prevalence of acute malnutrition among pregnant and lactating women (mid-upper arm circumference). | Malnutrition of PLW, measured by MUAC, reduced to less than 10% | 11.60% | 94% |
| % of beneficiaries who have adopted at least 3 good nutrition practices leading to better nutritional status (disaggregated by gender). | 70% of beneficiaries who have adopted at least three good practices | Women: 88,1% Men: 83,8% Total = 84,6% | 126% |

| | | | |
|---|--|---|-----------------|
| Intermediate Outcome 1100: Improved coherence, coordination, and shared ownership of evidence-based gender sensitive interventions, including innovative and resilience programming, by RBAs and other actors at global, regional, national, and field levels in in Burco and Odweyne districts. | | | |
| # of households supported with FFA, home garden kits and training (sex disaggregated). | 300 HH participating per year | 473 HH | 158% |
| Immediate Outcome 1210: Increased capacity of rural productive sectors in Burco and Odweyne districts to access and manage resources enhancing crop productivity, diversification, and value addition of agricultural products. | | | |
| # of people adopting new technologies (disaggregated by type of the activity and sex). | 1,300 HH | 3,387 HH | 261% |
| # of agricultural production systems Introduced at HH level. | At least 2 agricultural production systems for the programme | 2 | 100% |
| # of local cooperatives established and supported. | 2 new cooperatives established, operational and supported | 0 | 0% |
| # of market linkages introduced between public & private sector. | 1 per targeted village | 10 | 56% |
| Immediate Outcome 1220: Productive, livelihood and disaster mitigation infrastructure in Burco and Odweyne districts. | | | |
| # of households benefitting from the infrastructure rehabilitated by type of infrastructure. | 5,200 HH | 2,600 | 50% |
| % of population in targeted communities benefitted from assets created/rehabilitated (Asset Benefit Indicator). | 80% | 100% | 125% |
| Immediate Outcome 1230: Increased access to safety nets to meet basic needs for populations vulnerable to shock and the chronically destitute and at risk, especially women and children in Burco and Odweyne districts. | | | |
| # of communities and households receiving cash-based intervention (CBI). | 300 HH | 2,600 HH | 867% |
| # of group saving established. | 2 groups per village (36) | 18 savings groups established | 50% |
| Immediate Outcome 1310: Natural resource conservation/management at the community level enhanced in Burco and Odweyne districts, in line with regional and national priorities through improved capacity of female and male beneficiaries. | | | |
| % of communities with Natural resource management plans. | 80% | 100% | 125% |
| Areas protected, rehabilitated, afforested (hectares - HA). | 20 HA per district - rehabilitated, protected, reforested | 1,800 HA rehabilitated, protected through FMNR approach | ACHIEVED |
| Immediate Outcome 1410: Improved knowledge of essential nutritional and dietary best practices for beneficiaries in Burco and Odweyne districts, especially pregnant and lactating women. | | | |
| # of trained HHs recalling 3 nutritional practices. | 70% of trained HHs | 100% | 143% |
| Immediate Outcome 1420: Enhanced access to community-based malnutrition preventive interventions as well as to screening and treatment of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) for children and pregnant and lactating women within targeted communities in Burco and Odweyne districts. | | | |
| # of accessible health facilities, providing malnutrition preventative and treatment interventions. | 70% of trained HHs | 100% | 143% |
| TSFP PLW recovery rates. | More than 75% | 98.10% | 131% |
| TSFP U5 PLW recovery rates. | More than 75% | 97.50% | 130% |
| Immediate Outcome 1430: Improved access to treatment and food support for men and women patients under TB and anti-retroviral treatment in Burco and Odweyne districts. | | | |
| # of TB/HIV Comprehensive Care Centres (CCC) supported | 2 Centres supported | 2 Centres supported | 100% |

7.5 List of people interviewed

210. The following cohorts and numbers were interviewed as part of the data collection phase. Cohorts and interviews from the DRC and Niger are included in the main report.

| Key informant Organization | Country | # of Respondents | Women |
|----------------------------------|---------|------------------|----------|
| FAO Somalia | Somalia | 5 | 2 |
| WFP Somalia | Somalia | 5 | 2 |
| Government partners | Somalia | 9 | 0 |
| RBA Implementing Partners | Somalia | 2 | 0 |
| TOTALS: | | 21 | 4 |

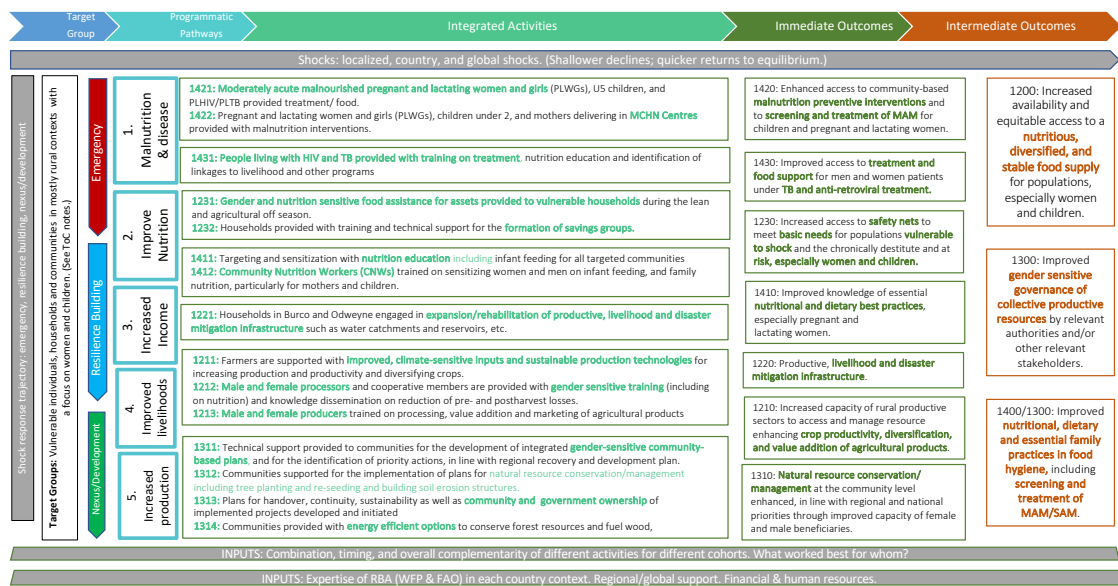
Table 5: List of stakeholders interviewed as part of the data collection phase

7.6 Evidentiary Linkages

211. The following figure shows the linkages between programmatic pathways (1. malnutrition and disease; 2. improved nutrition; 3. increased income; 4. improved livelihoods; and 5. increased production) and how these correlate with the different output level activities delivered in Somalia, defined by the numerical figures (1211, 1212, 1213, 1221, 1311, 1312, 1313, 1314, 1411, 1412, 1421, & 1422) that then correspond with immediate outcomes (1210, 1220, 1230, 1310, 1420, 1430) and intermediate outcomes (1200, 1300, 1400).

212. These are taken from the Programme PMFs, using the same numerical correspondence and figures from these. These have been reorganized in this reconstructed ToC to better illustrate the causal pathways from outputs to expected immediate and intermediate outcomes. This includes the target populations and critical inputs which are also considered in how the Programme achieved results.

Figure 18: Reconstituted ToC for the RBA Programme in Somalia



7.7 Qualitative evidence

213. As described in the Inception Phase Report, primary qualitative evidence was derived from KIIs (Please see list in 7.5.) and FGDs with community members who had benefitted from the Programme. (See Annex 7.7.)

214. For the latter, the intention was to use the QuIP 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. 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 likely inevitable because they were contacted by RBA Resilience Initiative partners to organize FGDs and there were very few other programmes occurring in their communities.

215. 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 shared many perspectives, 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.

216. The diversity of villages, with a mix of participants in the FGDs (representation from women, persons living with disabilities, and those over 65 years old); a mix of agropastoralists and pastoralists, and the different project activities provided a good mix, if not wholly representative given that only seven

communities were visited. Table 6 below shows the communities, Programme activities (including those that were physically inspected), and the demographic data from FGDs.

217. Findings are somewhat tempered by the most recent rainy season. October and November 2023 had significantly above-average rainfall, breaking the historic five season (2020-2023) drought.⁷⁵ 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 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 6: Demographic and other information from the seven 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 (PLWD)) | |
| - FGD #2: 12 women (4 over 65 years old; 1 person living with a disability) | |
| <i>Kitchen and Market Gardens</i> | X |
| <i>Water catchment committee</i> | X |
| <i>Farmer Field School</i> | |
| <i>Fodder</i> | X |
| <i>Beekeeping</i> | |
| <i>NRM committee</i> | X |
| Beerato, Odweyene (8 November 2023) | |
| - FGD #3: 10 men (4 over 65; 1 person living with disability) | |
| - FGD #4: 9 women (2 over 65; 1 person living with disability) | |
| <i>Water catchment committee include berkad</i> | x |
| <i>Farmer Field School</i> | |
| <i>Prosopis Fodder</i> | x |
| Galooley, Odweyene (9 November 2023) | |
| - FGD #5: 10 men (5 over 65; 1 person living with disability) | |
| - FGD #6: 7 Women (2 over 65; 1 person living with disability) | |
| <i>Kitchen and Market Gardens</i> | x |
| <i>Water catchment committee</i> | x |
| <i>Fodder</i> | |
| <i>NRM committee</i> | |
| Boodhley, Burao (11 November 2023) | |
| FGD #7: 9 men (3 over 65; 2 persons living with disability) | |
| FGD #8: 10 women (2 over 65; 2 person living with disability) | |
| <i>KG/MG and Tree nursery;</i> | x |
| <i>Water catchment committee including berkad</i> | x |
| <i>Farmer Field School</i> | |
| <i>Fodder</i> | |
| <i>Beekeeping</i> | |
| <i>NRM committee</i> | |
| Harada, Burao (12 November 2023) | |
| FGD #9: 12 men (2 over 65; 2 persons living with disability) | |
| FGD #10: 10 women (1 over 65; 2 persons living with disability) | |
| <i>Kitchen Garden</i> | |
| <i>Shallow wells</i> | x |
| <i>Mother child centre</i> | |
| Warcimraan, Burao (13 November 2023) | |
| FGD #9: 8 men (2 over 65; 1 person living with disability) | |
| FGD #10: 7 women (1 over 65; 1 person living with disability) | |
| <i>Kitchen, Market and School Gardens</i> | x |
| <i>Water Catchment committee and berkad</i> | x |
| <i>Mother child centre</i> | |
| <i>Beekeeping</i> | |
| <i>NRM committee</i> | |
| <i>SBCC school feeding programme</i> | |

⁷⁵ Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit – Somalia. Please visit the FSNAU website [here](#).

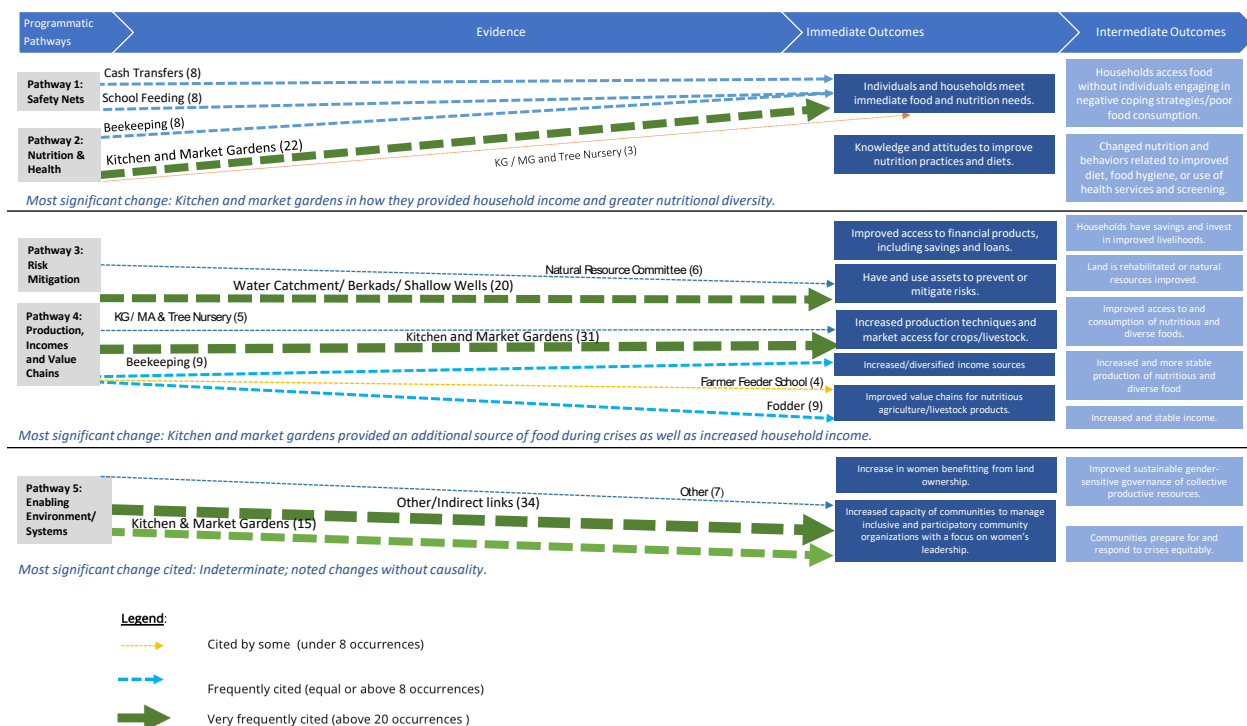
| | |
|--|---|
| Naq dabijo, Burao (13 November 2023) | |
| FGD #9: 7 men (1 over 65; 1 person living with disability) | |
| FGD #10: 8 women (1 over 65; 2 persons living with disability) | |
| Kitchen Garden | x |
| Water Catchment | x |
| Fodder | |
| Beekeeping | |
| NRM committee | |

218. In 6 of the 7 villages, community members were positive about the project and could cite 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 catchment or community gardens. This community also lacked a school.

219. 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.

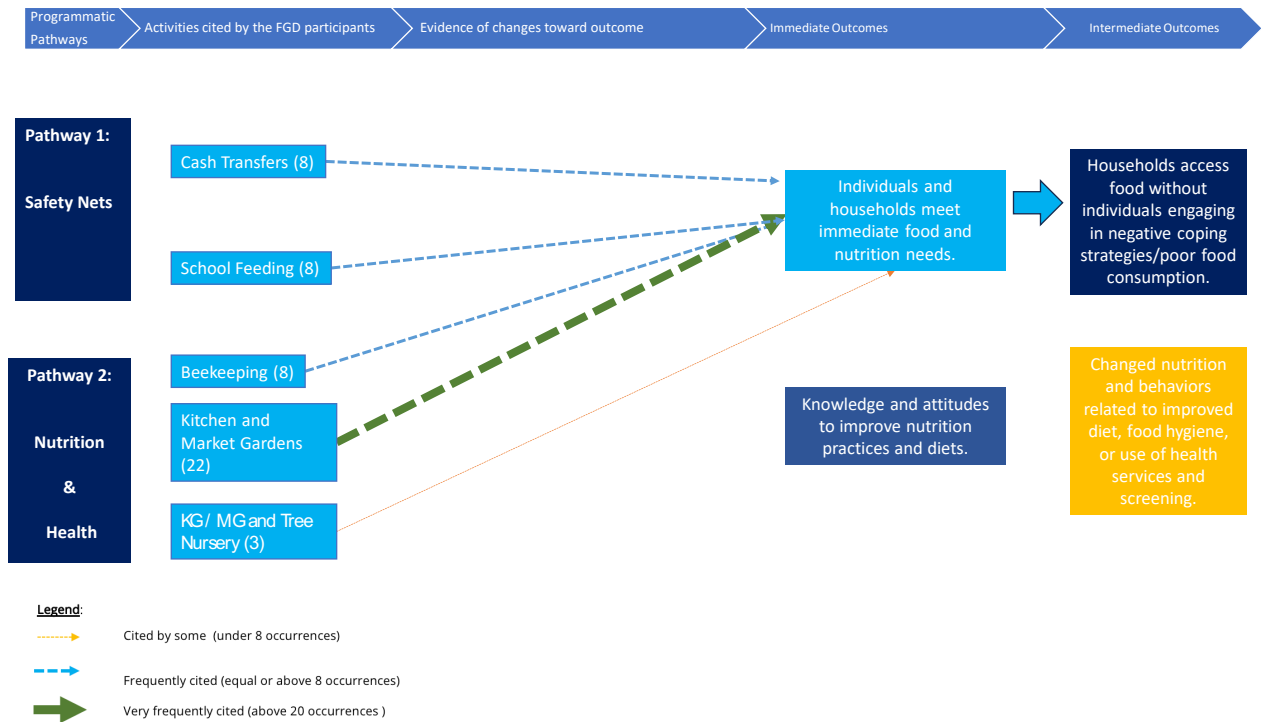
220. Figure 20 below shows the trends across this qualitative feedback, while Figure 20, Figure 21 and Figure 22 show it in more detail according to the pathways.

Figure 19: Qualitative analysis trends in Somalia, as aligned with causal links established in the evaluation’s Theory of Change: Overview



Source: QuIP FGDs conducted by the evaluation

Figure 20: Qualitative analysis trends in Somalia, as aligned with causal links established in the evaluation's Theory of Change: Pathway 1 & 2

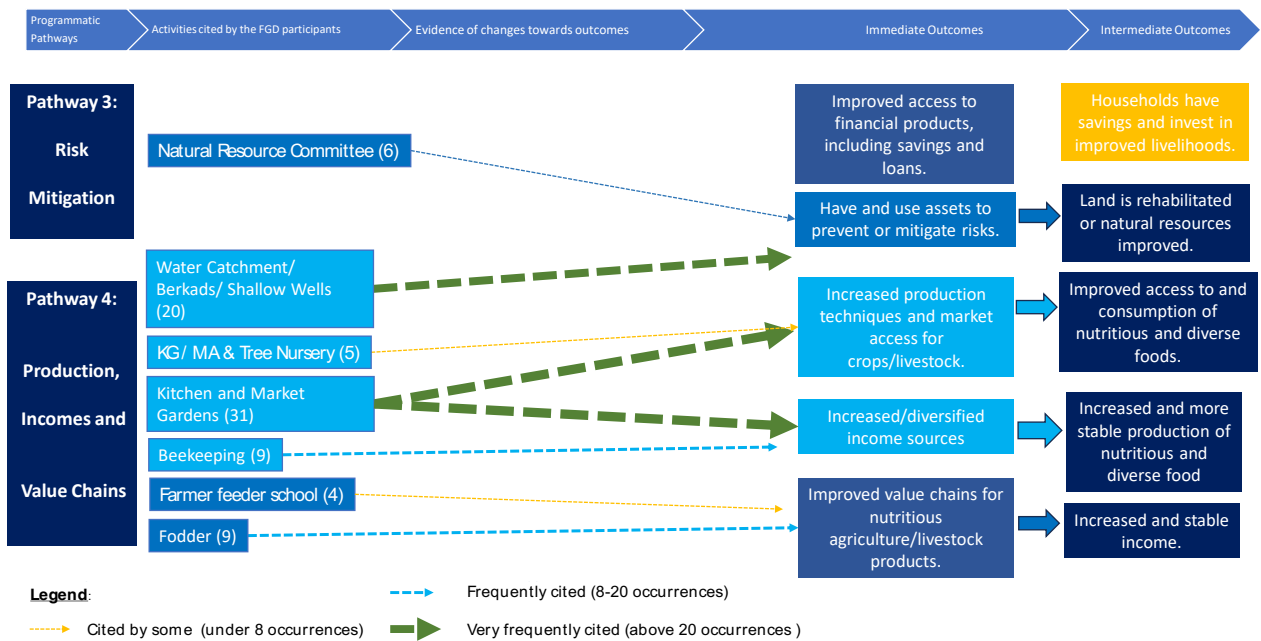


Source: QuIP FGDs conducted by the evaluation

221. As this shows, in relation to **changes in diet**, the most frequently cited activity was the kitchen and market gardens. These were described as not only providing a varied and nutritious source of additional food but also as beneficial for household income and women's empowerment. Beekeeping was also cited as providing another food source and source of income although there were some issues cited with beekeeping overall, as described below. Cash transfer and the school feeding programme was also regularly cited as particularly important during lean times, enabling families to avoid severe malnutrition.

222. Community members also cited their reliance on animals (goats and camels) for most of their diet, from milk to meat. At some level, the Programme sought to complement this reliance on pastoralism by introducing agriculture through the kitchen and market gardens and beekeeping. While diversifying not only their diet and sources of income, this also inevitably shifts communities towards agropastoralism, a different form of livelihood than that which had sustained them for generations.

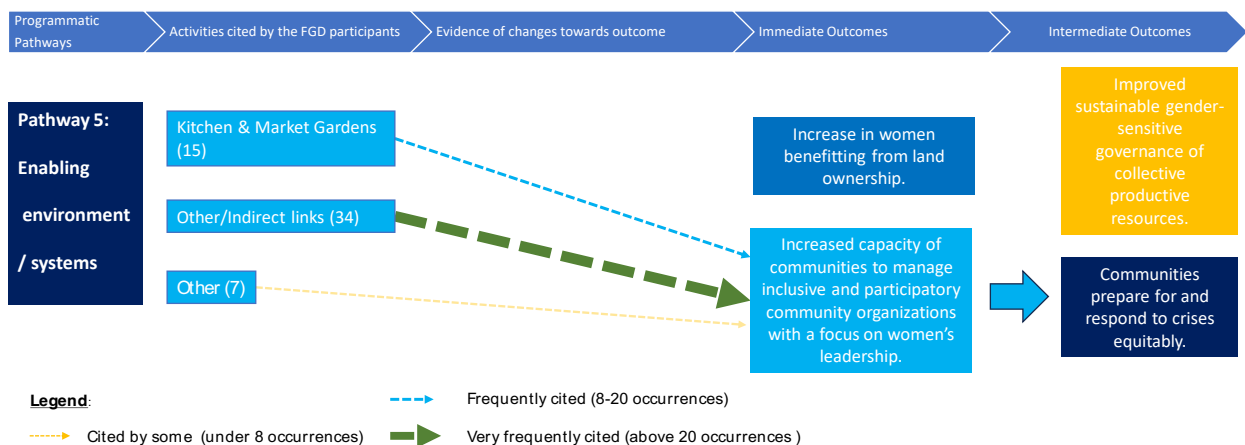
Figure 21: Qualitative analysis trends in Somalia, as aligned with causal links established in the evaluation's Theory of Change: Pathway 3 & 4



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

223. In relation to **food production and risk mitigation**, kitchen and market gardens were the most frequently cited activity followed by water management activities (catchment, reservoirs, berkads, and shallow wells). In Ceel Xume, the community members had unfettered access to the reservoir; some had individual pumps. This caused the plastic around the reservoir to be damaged and was in a state of disrepair. In Boodhley, there was an active village leader who paid for a guard from the water committee to oversee the reservoir and adjoining market garden. As a way of ensuring benefits to both the community and the village leader, he used some of the land around the reservoir for his own crops. In Naq dabijio, there was also a guard for the reservoir and market garden that was paid by the women who tended the market garden. In both these cases, there were no visible tears or gaps in the plastic and the overall facility was in a good state of repair.

Figure 22: Qualitative analysis trends in Somalia, as aligned with causal links established in the Evaluation's Theory of Change. Pathway 5



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

224. While conflict resolution was part of training, some communities still argued about who was entitled to services. In one case, this led to the abandonment of the community garden (Beerato). By design the market gardens were meant to be tended by groups of 40 women and, in this instance, more women wanted to participate. This led to the decision to close the market garden entirely. In fact, it lay fallow upon the evaluation team's visit.

225. Community members complained about getting seeds that did not grow or germinated late/at the wrong time in the growing season. There were also issues with varieties, e.g., sweet potatoes (did not sell) and watermelons (did not grow). This was also raised in KIIs. The evaluation did confirm that seed packages are tested (germination) and packages are labelled and yet, issues were still common. Community members noted that they lost a whole season when this happened.

226. Beekeeping had mixed reactions from community members. It required sufficient training and materials to bring to fruition and some community members said that it simply did not work in their case. They also noted that beekeeping was almost entirely for men.

227. Community members had mixed opinions of the training. Some made special note that it only included women, which was not actually helpful to women as men did not fully grasp their burgeoning roles and responsibilities in market gardens and other activities. They were also not sure that the training was relevant to their community and livelihoods, like the somewhat abstract approach to conflict resolution that, as in the case of Beerato, did not enable them to overcome actual conflicts.

228. In relation to the **enabling environment and systems**, kitchen and market gardens were often cited as positive in enabling new courses of income for women and their households. However, most comments were mixed and tended to cite the mere participation of women and others (persons living with disabilities; people over 65) in activities as positive. Community members often cited the *esprit de corps* that came from increased participation amongst different cohorts, but actual examples of how this changed women's and other group's roles in the communities were scant. In fact, one issue that arose frequently were women's complaints that, while they had new sources of income, men confiscated income and then used it for *Khat*.

229. In relation to overall **coherence**, community members, again unsolicited, raised examples of how FAO and WFP worked together, from cash for work/school feeding, to water catchment and market gardens. This was confirmed in KIIs, especially with ministry representatives (MoLFD; MoAD; MoERD) that cited various positive examples of how they had coordinated with FAO, WFP, and implementing partners, especially ActionAid.

7.7.1 UN Women Rapid Assessment Tool

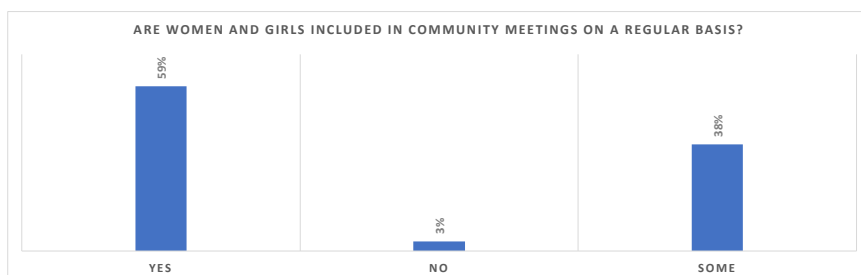
230. The UN Women Rapid Assessment Tool focuses on three domains: leadership and participation, protection and safety, and economic well-being. It complements existing gender tools by providing an evaluative lens for the assessment of GEWE results and is aligned with guidelines set out in UN-SWAP.⁷⁶

231. 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.

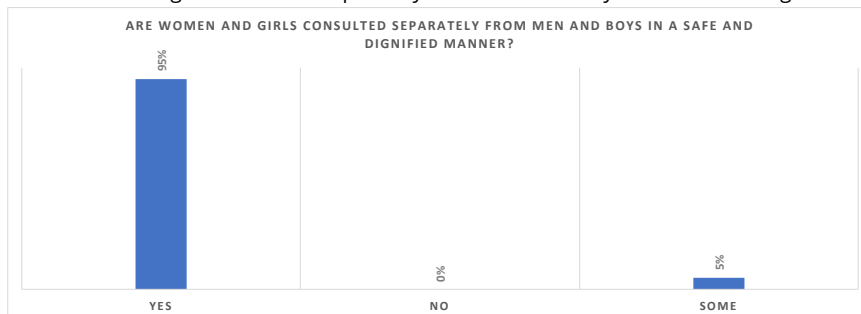
232. Of the 58 women that were asked to complete the survey, some did not answer all questions. Some either stated that they did not have information or an opinion on the subject or chose not to answer for different reasons. This only occurred in a few instances. This is shown in the raw data sets.

Leadership & Participation

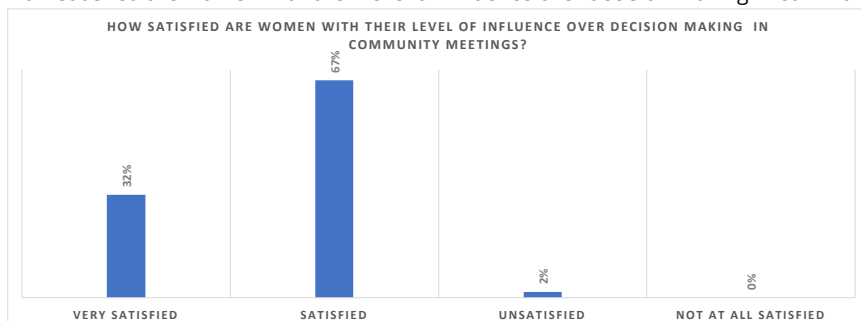
Are women and girls included in community meetings on a regular basis?



Are women and girls consulted separately from men and boys in a safe and dignified manner?

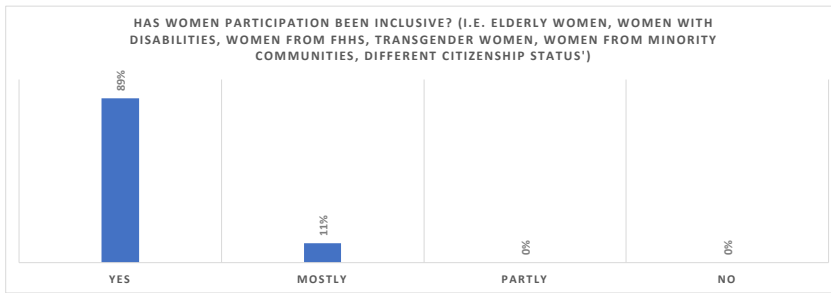


How satisfied are women with their level of influence over decision making in community meetings?

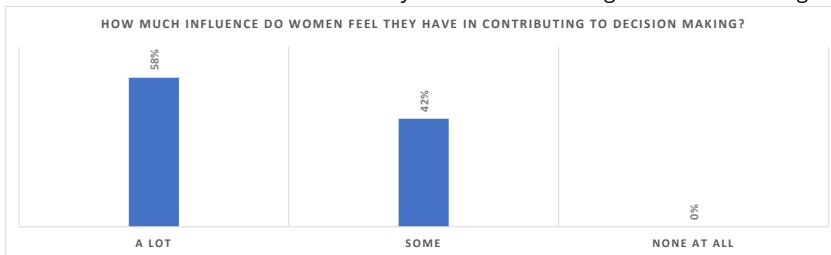


⁷⁶ For an overview and guidance, visit the UN Women's UN-SWAP website [here](#).

Has women's participation been inclusive? (i.e., elderly women, women with disabilities, women from FHHs, transgender women, women from minority communities, different citizenship status)



How much influence do women feel they have in contributing to decision making?

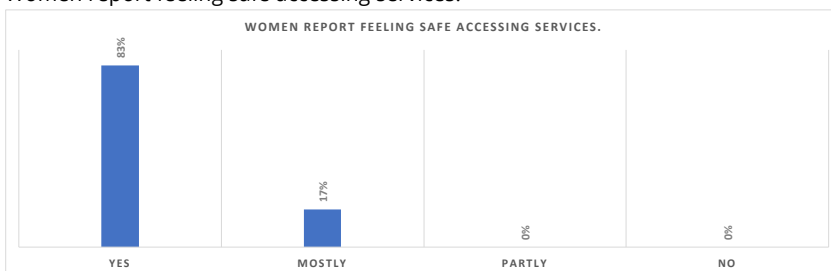


Safety

Women report feeling safe walking alone.



Women report feeling safe accessing services.

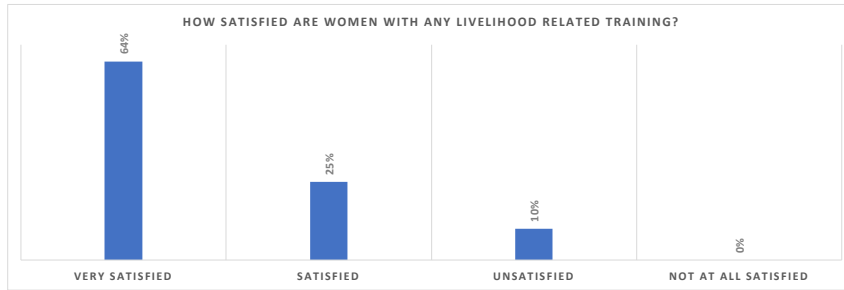


Women know how and where to report gender-based violence (GBV) or other issues?

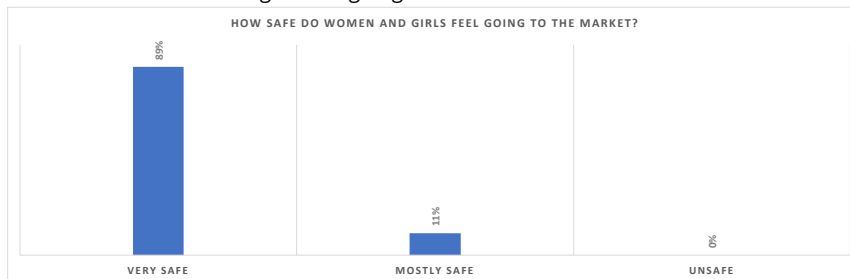


Economic Well Being

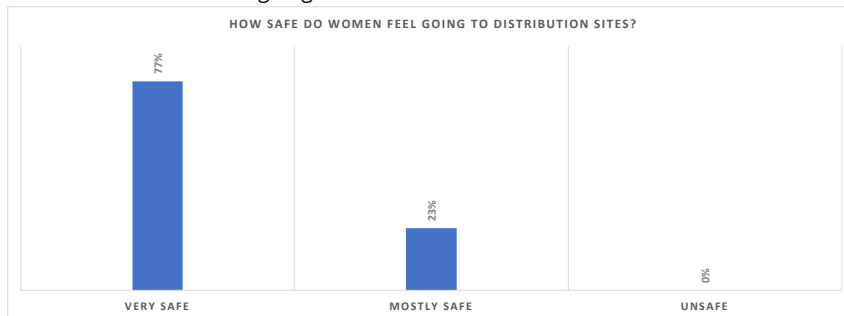
How satisfied are women with any livelihood related training?



How safe do women and girls feel going to the market?



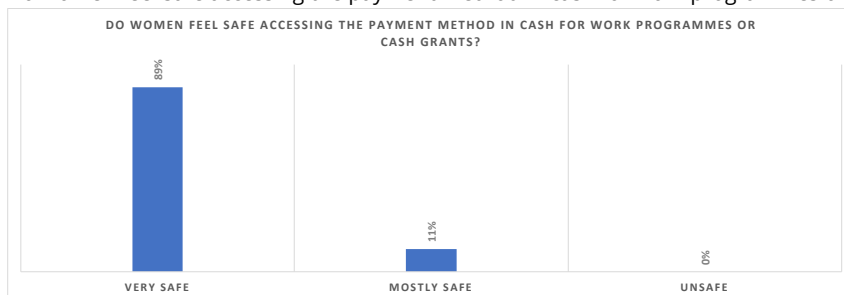
How safe do women feel going to distribution sites?



Do women feel safe accessing financial institutions?



Do women feel safe accessing the payment method in cash for work programmes or cash grants?



Within the household, who decides how to spend the money?



7.9 Bibliography

234. A full contingent of documents was reviewed as provided by the RBA. These are included in a separate share drive.

235. Documents referenced in this report include the following.

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7.10 Abbreviations and acronyms

| | |
|---|--|
| AAP: Accountability to Affected Populations | GIZ: The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH |
| ABS: Access to Basic Services | HH: Household |
| AC: Adaptive Capacity | HDSD: Household Dietary Diversity Score |
| AST: Assets | HDP: Humanitarian-Development-Peace |
| CAT: Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment and Punishment | HQ: Headquarters |
| CBI: Cash-Based Interventions | HRBA: Human Rights-Based Approach |
| CCC: Comprehensive Care Centres | ICA: Integrated Context Analysis |
| CERD: International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination | ICESR: International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights |
| CFS: World Food Security | IDP: Internally Displace People |
| CNW: Community Nutrition Worker | IFAD: International Fund for Agricultural Development |
| CPA: Charcoal Producers Association | IFPRI: International Food Policy Research Institute |
| CRC: Convention on the Rights of the Child | IGA: Income Generating Activity |
| CRPD: Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities | IPC: Integrated Food Security Phase Classification |
| CSB+: Super Cereal Plus | IPPM: Integrated Production and Pest Management |
| CSI: Coping Strategy Index | IYCF: Infant and Young Child Feeding |
| DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo | JRS: Joint Resilience Strategy |
| DRR: Disaster Risk Reduction | KII: Key Informant Interview |
| FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization | KORE: Knowledge Platform on Emergencies and Resilience |
| FCDO: The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office | L-CSI: Livelihood Coping Strategies Index |
| FCS: Food Consumption Score | LNS-MQ: Lipid Based Nutrients Medium Quantity |
| FFA: Food Assistance for Assets | MAD: Minimum Acceptable Diet for children 6-23 months old |
| FFS: Farmer Field School | MAM: Moderate Acute Malnutrition |
| FGD: Focus Group Discussion | MCHN: Maternal Child Health Nutrition |
| FHH: Female Headed Household | MDD-W: Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women |
| FMNR: Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration | MHH: Male Headed Household |
| FSNAU: Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit | MoAD: Ministry of Agriculture Development |
| GAM: Global Acute Malnutrition | MoERD: Ministry of Environment and Rural Development |
| GAP: Good Agricultural Practices | MoLFD: Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries Development |
| GBV: Gender-Based Violence | |
| GEWE: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment | |

MoNP&D: Ministry of National Planning and Development

MoWRD: Ministry of Water Resources Development

MUAC: Mid Upper Arm Circumference

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

NRM: Natural Resource Management

OECD-DAC: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development-Development Assistance Committee

3PA: Three-pronged Approach

PLHIV: People Living with HIV

PLTB: People Living with TB

PLW: Pregnant and Lactating Women

PLWG: Pregnant and Lactating Women and Girls

PMF: Performance Measurement Framework

QuIP: Qualitative Impact Protocol

RBA: Rome-Based Agencies

rCSI: Reduced Coping Strategy Index

RIMA: Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis

SAM: Severe Acute Malnutrition

SDG: Sustainable Development Goals

SLP: Seasonal Livelihood Programming

SomReP: Somali Resilience Program

SSN: Social Safety Nets

TANGO: Technical Assistance to NGOs International

TB: Tuberculosis

ToC: Theory of Change

ToR: Terms of Reference

UK: United Kingdom

UN: United Nations

UNDRR: UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

UN-SWAP: UN System-Wide Action Plan

VSLA: Village Savings and Loan Association

WFP: World Food Programme

WHO: World Health Organization

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