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RESILIENCE AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
IN THE SAHEL -
ENHANCED RESILIENCE (REGIS-ER)

HABBANAYE

BUILDING LIVESTOCK ASSETS
TO STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY
RESILIENCE TO NATURAL
AND ECONOMIC SHOCKS



HABBANAYE

A FLAGSHIP ACTIVITY FOR BUILDING RESILIENCE

In this region of the Sahel, people face recurrent shocks due to poverty and climate change. The situation is exacerbated by conflict, and deteriorating security which causes a sharp increase in humanitarian needs, putting more families at risk of acute food and nutritional insecurity.

HABBANAYE HAS PROVEN TO BE A VERY EFFECTIVE MEANS OF ENHANCING RESILIENCE IN THE SAHEL

Habbanaye is a traditional Fulani system of solidarity that consists of building (or rebuilding) productive capital in animal assets for needy members of a community. Typically, a female animal is temporarily entrusted to the beneficiary

The Resilience and Economic Growth in the Sahel – Enhanced Resilience (REGIS-ER) is a seven-year activity (2013-21) of the RISE portfolio, supported by USAID. It aimed to increase the resilience of chronically vulnerable populations in marginal agro-pastoral areas in Burkina Faso and Niger by strengthening livelihoods, governance and the health and nutritional status of communities. From November 2013 to November 2018, REGIS-ER worked in six regions, 25 municipalities, reaching 570 villages across the RISE zone of intervention in Burkina Faso and Niger. From October 2019, the project entered cost-extension phase, concentrating on eight municipalities in three regions of Burkina Faso and Niger.

and after one or more reproductive cycles, it is returned to its owner and the offspring are reared by the beneficiary to provide milk and meat for the household or, in the event of a shock, a source of income to meet family needs.

Building on this existing practice, REGIS-ER adopted habbanaye as a key activity, introducing some variations to the traditional system, to target and build assets among vulnerable – usually female-headed – households. Based on its technical assessment, the project initially focused exclusively on goats, which are highly valued because they are robust and fecund.

Communities identified the most vulnerable women in their midst as beneficiaries who would receive one male and three female goats and animal feed (for a three month period), as well as training in raising goats and animal health services provided by private sector veterinarians and their networks. The recipients of the animals transfer the same number of offspring to other beneficiaries to keep the cycle of asset growth going. Any additional offspring remain with the recipient to help her grow her herd and personal wealth.

Then in 2016, REGIS-ER introduced a major change to its targeting approach. In order to increase integration of the project components (in this case Livelihoods and Health-Nutrition) and activities, REGIS-ER made the members of its Mother-to-Mother groups the priority target group of the habbanaye activity. The project also added poultry habbanaye, which is suited for women





who are homebound, and which offers a quicker reproductive cycle.

The most important innovation occurred in early 2019, when the project increased the responsibilities of local authorities and civil society organizations, entrusting them with the management of habbanaye activities, in accordance with REGIS-ER's sustainability strategy. This has built strong local ownership within the commune and its communities and created a sustainable model.

Habbanaye improves the nutritional status of children who have access to milk and protein from meat and eggs. And households have assets or a source of income to deal with shocks — whether drought, economic difficulties (for example, those related to COVID-19) or personal ones (such as a sick family member) — and recover more quickly. In addition, habbanaye “facilitates inclusive

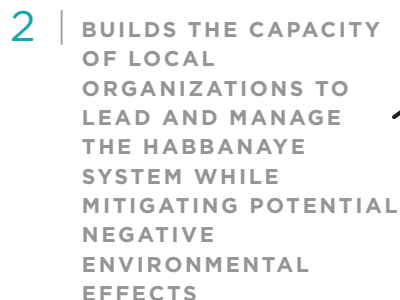
[economic] growth” (per USAID’s definition of resilience) and social inclusion of marginalized people (women and youth). This is an example of how REGIS-ER addresses the root causes of chronic vulnerability through nutrition-led agriculture, livestock rearing, income generation, and improved health and nutrition.

To improve the feeding and fattening processes, REGIS-ER has provided services and advice on best practices, particularly through the network of community-based solution providers which it created. These last-mile veterinary agents connect farmers with animal health services, as well as facilitate links to animal feed suppliers.

Habbanaye helps communities prepare for and recover from chronic or sporadic shocks such as those described above, breaking the cycle of humanitarian crisis and response.

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEME

A HABBANAYE PROJECT



SELL IN TIMES OF SHOCK OR STRESS



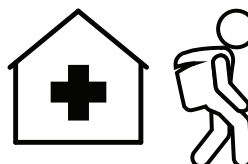
BUY LIVESTOCK



CONSUME FOR ADDED NUTRITION



PAY FOR HOUSING



SELL TO PAY FOR SCHOOL FEES, HEALTHCARE OR OTHER ESSENTIALS

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

HABBANAYE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

REGIS-ER makes ownership by the communities and communes the centerpiece of its interventions. The project's sustainability strategy focused on establishing a sustainable system managed by the commune-level Citizen Working Group (CWG) and Municipal Council and by community-level organizations – the Local Development Committees [CLDs] in Niger and Village Development Councils [CVDs] in Burkina Faso. In April 2018, REGIS-ER brought together the mayors of the (then) six communes of concentration in each country (12 in all) and each group identified habbanaye as an activity with a high potential to ensure resilience of households, a viewpoint shared and expressed earlier in other forums by numerous communities. Shortly thereafter, the 12 municipalities began the process of developing their own Commune Resilience Plans, all of which featured the consolidation and scaling up of habbanaye as one of their nine “successful [resilience] activities”.

Since late 2018, REGIS-ER has been building the capacity of habbanaye committees and CLDs/CVDs in villages and the CWGs and Municipal Councils through a series of training and coaching sessions. The project also put in place tools for stakeholders to enable them to take ownership of the habbanaye activity. Actually, the habbanaye management committees and local institutions have already assumed full responsibility for managing and monitoring habbanaye operations not only in the villages of intervention, but in villages throughout their respective communes. The role of the local institutions involves the ongoing transfer of small livestock to new beneficiaries and the scaling-up of habbanaye into new communities.

REGIS-ER has developed a habbanaye monitoring tool using Excel for CWGs to monitor animal placements and transfers, which provides a real-time situation by village. The tool, accompanied

by training, coaching and a habbanaye guide, was provided to CWGs to facilitate the implementation of the activity in collaboration with the CLDs/CVDs which oversee the village monitoring committees.

Within a community, the village monitoring committee is responsible for organizing the transfer of animal assets, under the supervision of the CLD/CVD, from the selection of beneficiaries to the monitoring of animal health through the planning of the next round of transfers. The habbanaye activity is now entirely co-managed by the Municipal Councils, CWGs, CLDs/CVDs, and the village monitoring committees to the point that external stakeholders such as the REGIS-ER team are only informed when everything is ready.

This locally managed system of habbanaye went into full effect on October 1, 2019 in the eight communes of intervention. Over the first six months of implementation of this sustainable model, the aforementioned local actors in the eight communes placed 864 goats with 216 beneficiaries and transferred 739 goats to 226 others. The overall, life-of-project results achieved by REGIS-ER in its entire zone of intervention (initially 25

BEST PRACTICES OF LOCAL INSTITUTIONS INVOLVED IN HABBANAYE

- The habbanaye monitoring committees regularly request the services of animal health care agents on behalf of habbanaye beneficiaries.
- Funds were set up at the initiative of the Habbanaye monitoring committees and beneficiaries to cover any losses suffered during the placement of the animals.
- Some village monitoring committees advise — or in some cases require — that animals be vaccinated before they are transferred.

communes in the two countries) through March 31, 2020 are impressive and exceed the project's initial targets; more than 76,000 goats have been placed or transferred to over 20,000 beneficiaries.

REGIS-ER implements its habbanaye operation in compliance with the project Environmental Mitigation & Monitoring Plan (EMMP). The EMMP measures taken include concrete actions to prevent environmental degradation. Communities and beneficiaries invest in feed for the animals they received and collaborate with the communes and other partners to recover and restore degraded pasturelands (through revegetation). Other initiatives include making of salt licks/licking blocks, the production of hyacinth beans and cowpea using recessional agriculture, and the treatment of straw with urea.

“WE, THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, WANT TO SUSTAIN AND SCALE-UP THIS ACTIVITY... WE’RE IN AN AREA WHERE LIVESTOCK IS THE MAIN LIVELIHOOD AND THIS ACTIVITY HAS BOTH A CULTURAL AND AN ECONOMIC DIMENSION. ANYBODY, EVEN THE MOST VULNERABLE PEOPLE, CAN SUCCESSFULLY PARTICIPATE IN HABBANAYE. AS MAYOR OF THE COMMUNE OF SEBBA, I HAVE PERSONALLY OBSERVED THAT HABBANAYÉ HAS PRODUCED POSITIVE RESULTS.”

—HAMA AMIROU LY,
MAYOR OF THE COMMUNE
OF SEBBA

SUCCESS STORY

BEST PRACTICES FOR RESILIENCE, NOW A REALITY: THE CASE OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF SEBBA IN BURKINA FASO

The local authorities of the rural municipality of Sebba in the Sahel (Dori) region of Burkina Faso are taking ownership of a resilience practice scaled up by REGIS-ER, marking a key step towards the sustainability of the activities.

In 2019, REGIS-ER helped the Sebba municipal council develop its commune resilience plan. The municipal council selected habbanaye as one of the main activities to be consolidated and scaled up in order to strengthen the resilience of its citizens. The practice contributes to building the livestock assets of individual households and the community as a whole provides equal opportunities, strengthens social cohesion and reinforces the principles of good local governance.

As part of this activity in Sebba, animals were placed in all 18 villages in the municipality in the presence of the commune's Citizen Working Group. Another NGO-implemented resilience project (“RESA”) that intervenes in the commune allocated a total of 7,700,000 FCFA (around \$13,000). The Municipal Council persuaded RESA to adopt a sustainable habbanaye operation piloted by the commune instead of simply giving small ruminants to beneficiaries. Seventy-seven new households across the 18 villages each received one male and four female goats during livestock placements.

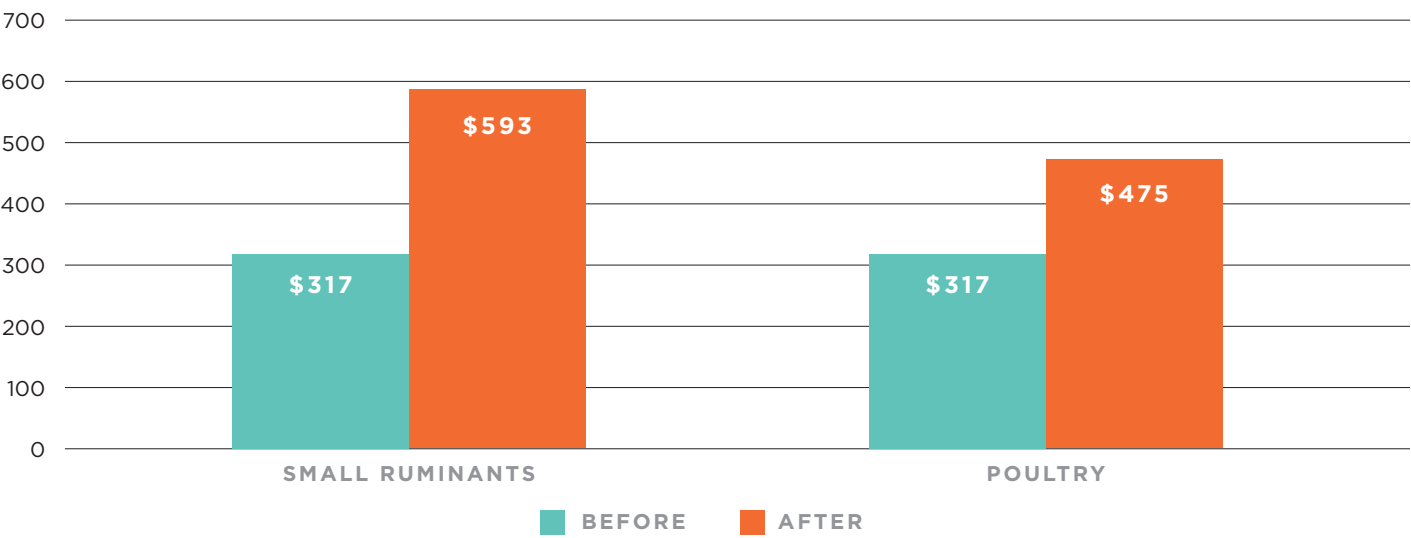
Community members unanimously welcomed this initiative. Habbanaye helps build resilience not only by creating household capital, but also by improving the nutritional status of children, who gain access to nutritious animal-source foods, such as goat's milk. The livestock is also a form of savings. When families face hardship, they can easily and quickly recover by selling a few animals.

The success of the municipal council in influencing RESA's intervention (adoption of the REGIS-ER model) has strengthened its determination to carry through with the rest of the commune resilience plan in order to achieve maximum and long-lasting impact. Building on this success, the municipality is now actively working on identifying partners who are willing to align with its Commune Resilience Plan.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

USAID INTERVENTIONS: BENEFICIARY INCOME CHANGE (LIVESTOCK)

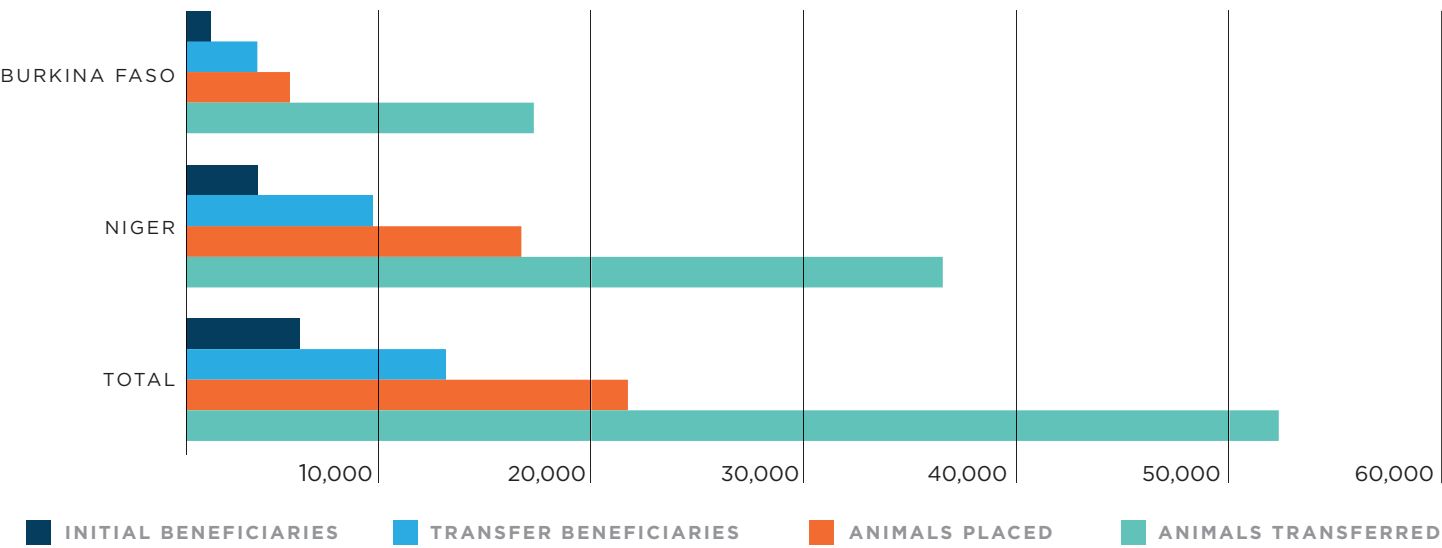
(POVERTY THRESHOLD: \$1.90/DAY, \$694/YEAR)



ACHIEVEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

- Thanks to support from REGIS-ER-Municipal Councils, Local Development Committees and Citizen Working Groups are overwhelmingly taking ownership of the Habbanaye practice in the project intervention areas.
- A total of 23,139 goats were placed with 5,905 first generation beneficiaries (individuals).
- These initial placements resulted in 53,435 transfers to another 14,106 beneficiaries.

HABBANAYE ACTIVITY IMPACT IN NIGER AND BURKINA FASO





1775 Eye Street, NW | 8th Floor | Washington, DC 20006
202.638.6222 | ncbaclusa.coop