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# **RESILIENCE AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN THE SAHEL – ACCELERATED GROWTH (REGIS-AG) PROJECT IN NIGER AND BURKINA FASO**

## **GENDER INTEGRATION PLAN**



This work plan, submitted for review by the United States Agency for International Development, was prepared by CNFA under USAID Contract No. AID-625-C-14-00001, Resilience and Economic Growth in the Sahel – Accelerated Growth Activity in Niger and Burkina Faso.

**Resilience and Economic Growth in the Sahel – Accelerated Growth (REGIS-AG) Project in Niger and Burkina Faso**

**Gender integration plan**

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**Mr. Camilien Saint-Cyr, COR**

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## Index of Acronyms

3N	The Government of Niger's Nigeriens Nourish Nigeriens
A2N	Association Nodde Nooto
AGED	Association pour la Gestion de l'Environnement et le Développement
AGIR	Alliance Globale pour l'Initiative Resilience (Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative)
AREN	Association for Catalyzing Pastoral Development in Niger
BDS	Business Development Services
CAHW	Community Animal Health Worker
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CRUS	Conseil Régional des Unions du Sahel (Regional Council of Unions of the Sahel)
ECOWAS	The Economic Community Of West African States
EMMP	Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan
EU	European Union
GIEs	Groupements d'Intérêt Economique (Economic Interest Groups)
GoB	Government of Burkina
GoN	Government of Niger
REGIS-AG	Resilience and Economic Growth in the Sahel Accelerated Growth
REGIS-ER	Resilience and Economic Growth in the Sahel Enhanced Resilience
RISE	Resilience in the Sahel Enhanced initiative
SVPP	Services Vétérinaires Privés de Proximité (Private Veterinarian Outreach Services)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VSF	Vétérinaires sans Frontières

## Introduction

This study was conducted as part of the value chain analysis for Resilience and Economic Growth in the Sahel – Accelerated Growth (REGIS-AG), a USAID project focusing on vulnerable populations in three regions each of Niger and Burkina Faso. REGIS-AG is part of USAID’s Resilience in the Sahel Enhanced (RISE) initiative, with a focus to increase incomes and resilience of vulnerable populations in communities in three regions of Niger (Tillabéri-Sud, Maradi and Zinder) and three “départements” of Burkina Faso (Dori, Kaya, Bogandé). The objective of the study was to develop a gender integration plan for the project’s activities in three value chains, cowpeas, poultry and small ruminants. Alleviating gender-specific constraints and improving the well-being of women in these vulnerable communities is critical to the success of the REGIS-AG program and the RISE initiative.

The cowpea, small ruminants, and poultry value chains are an integral part of food security of the poor in the target regions of Niger and Burkina Faso. They are typically produced by the vulnerable smallholder farmers whose protein-poor diets they supplement. Equally importantly, they are important generators of income for the poor, due to an extensive and widespread demand for these commodities and their products in West Africa. Women are significantly involved in all three value chains in the target regions of Niger and Burkina Faso. They are important actors during the production stage but are also involved at other stages of the value chain such as processing, with involvement varying by value chain. Despite their participation in these value chains, female actors are considerably disadvantaged in terms of their resources and decision-making power in comparison to their male counterparts.

Understanding the specific constraints that act on women in the three value chains facilitate the development of interventions and approaches that will alleviate these constraints and allow for greater participation in project activities. Therefore, this report will start with an overview of gender roles and how that impacts one’s responsibilities, ability to control resources and make decisions. The analysis will then analyze the possible impact of these factors on project activities and results. Finally, the report will present a gender integration plan to address various constraints, both those that are general to all value chains and those that are value chain-specific.

### Methodology

This study was conducted as a part of the value chain assessment of the REGIS AG study. As a guideline, the study used USAID’s “Guide to Gender Integration And Analysis” (USAID, 2010) and ADS 205, “Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in USAID’s Program Cycle” (USAID 2013) documents and focused on identifying, understanding, and describing gender differences, as well as their impact on the project. Gender issues and questions were included in the interviews and stakeholder meetings conducted as a part of the value chain study. The stakeholder meetings brought together large numbers of value chain actors. Women participants in the stakeholder meetings were encouraged but unfortunately, low participation rates were observed. Value-chain focused interviews with value chain actors and stakeholder meetings were carried out in all three regions. Interviews took place both during the stakeholder meetings as well as in locations where the value chain actors work, whether in markets, processing facilities, or villages.

In addition, a questionnaire was prepared to probe into gender differences in roles and responsibilities, decision-making power, and control and access of resources. This questionnaire was used in the context of the stakeholder meetings and in other interviews with value chain actors. Finally, meetings with women’s groups were held to solicit input on the constraints that women face.

It should be noted that numbers of questionnaires completed were limited and therefore cannot be considered representative of gender relations in the target areas. However, answers given were in many

cases quite uniform and the information received was corroborated by the project's gender specialist (in Burkina Faso) or gender consultant (in Niger) and in general confirm general information on gender roles in the two target countries. Additionally, the REGIS-AG team completed an extensive desk review of available gender assessments by host country governments, implementing partners and donors in the operating countries and regions.

## Introduction

Niger, a country of 17.8 million people, has a diversity of ethnic groups who mainly derive their income from livestock and agriculture. Niger is very rich culturally with many difference and diverse ethnic groups; however, a conservative-leaning Islam acts as a unifying source of ideology, customs and beliefs (Republique du Niger, 2007). The National Gender Policy of Niger links the traditionally patriarchal society in Niger to the shared common practice of Islam, with the men as the heads of the household with greater freedom and access outside of the house and women as mothers and spouses rooted within the household. The exceptions to this patriarchal cultural system are some communities of Tuaregs and Peulh Bororo, which are matriarchal, (Republique du Niger, 2007). Although Nigerien women make important contributions to economic activities, they generally lack the status and resources to autonomously manage such activities. Women are also particularly disadvantaged with respect to education and health. While with some opportunities, Niger's extremely early age of first marriage (15.8 years for 20-49 year olds) and high birth rate presents formidable challenges for improved integration of educational and social services for Nigerien young, particularly for its women.

Niger government's National Policy for Gender (Republique du Niger, 2007) confirms that while legislative texts in the country affords women the equal rights of men under the law<sup>1</sup>, it confirms that the realities of cultural and religious customs limits the impacts of national and international policies that are more modern. Various efforts have been made to ratify a Family Code or other laws supportive of women's rights over the last forty years and each effort was met with passionate opposition from religious organizations. The policy gives an overview of the current involvement of women in economic spheres of life, including:

- Significantly lower levels of employment compared to men. Less than three out of ten positions are occupied by women and, in the formal sector, women make up only 16-17% of the public and private sector employees; in addition, women are in general less competitive and less specialized in the market place.
- In rainfed agriculture, women are producers, but typically have small fields and lack access to land through heritage. In irrigated agriculture, women are active in horticultural production. Women's lack of land is further constrained by low access to credit.
- In livestock production, ownership can be by men or women. Women are more likely to own sheep and men large ruminants, but milk production is the woman's sphere for which any revenues generated benefit the household or her.
- In fishing, men usually capture the fish, while women process it. Women's role is more of a laborer, i.e., they do not own the means of production nor do they control the income.
- Of formal enterprises, only 5% are registered by women. In terms of business, formal and informal, women tend to have smaller businesses.
- In artisanal production, 52% of entrepreneurs are women. Women and men typically focus on different types of production. For example, in production using leather women typically produce small bags and puffs.

Overall, women experience greater marginalization and challenges than their male counterparts in Niger in

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<sup>1</sup> Article 8 states, « l'égalité de tous devant la loi sans distinction de sexe, d'origine sociale, raciale, ethnique ou religieuse », 19 (Republique du Niger, 2007).

nearly all aspects of life – whether in the economic, health, education, or social spheres.

### Gender and the three study regions

The three REGIS-AG implementation regions are characterized by pervasive poverty and lack of access to education and health care. These conditions affect women more so than men as is evident from the 2010 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) in Niger (Table 1). The survey found that women are more likely to lack formal education altogether, especially in Maradi and Zinder, where 76-77% of women lack access to formal education (Institut National de la Statistique and ICF International, 2013; subsequent data in this section is this DHS). For men, this number is lower, although still very high: altogether two out of three men in the Zinder region and almost three out of five in Maradi have had no formal education. Depending on the region and gender, only one sixth to one third of the population has had some primary schooling (but have not completed it). The highest rate of completion for women is found in Tillaberi, where about a quarter of women have started, but not completed, primary school, and it is highest in Tillaberi and Maradi for men, at 31-32%. Only 17% of women in the Zinder region have started, but not completed primary school; in Maradi this is 20%. The figures for men are higher, but still very low, at 23% for Zinder and 32% for Maradi. Attendance and completion rates for other schools are low, with gender differences in some cases not evident.

Table 1. Levels of schooling in the Tillaberi, Maradi, and Zinder.

Level	Women			Men		
	Tillaberi	Maradi	Zinder	Tillaberi	Maradi	Zinder
No Formal Education	67.2	75.8	76.5	61.6	58.0	66.8
Some Primary Education	26.3	19.6	16.9	30.7	31.9	23.0
Completed Primary Education	1.2	1.4	2.1	1.2	2.9	2.0
Some Secondary Education	3.6	2.5	3.4	4.6	5.8	6.8
Completed Secondary Education	0.2	0.1	0.1	0,2	0,1	0.2
Post-secondary Education	0.1	0.0	0.1	0,9	0,5	0.7
NSP/ND	1.3	0.5	0.9	1.0	0.8	0.6

Source: Institut National de la Statistique and ICF International, 2013.

As a consequence, women’s literacy levels are very similar in all regions (9.6-10.9%) but all lower than the Niger average of 14.0%. Men’s literacy levels in Maradi (39.4%) are the same as Niger’s average and higher than Zinder (34.5%) and Tillaberi (29.2%). Disadvantages stemming from low educational levels therefore greatly affect both women and men in the three regions, but do so more for women.

Table 2 presents some of the health and social indicators for women in Niger and in the three target regions. In all three target regions, fecundity (at 7.9-8.5) is higher than on average in Niger. Approximately half of the women have their first child before they turn 18 or 19. About 30-31% have co-wives in Tillaberi and Maradi, and about 52% in Zinder. Births still take place predominantly at home, with 70-79% giving birth at home. Women have high rates of anemia in all three regions, from 42.7% in Maradi to 46.4% in Tillaberi and 50.3% in Zinder, figures that are close to Niger’s average of 45.8%. The Nigerien National Gender Policy also confirms that while women have legal rights under national laws, the status of women within their families and households is decided by customs and beliefs with little opportunity for the state to intervene (Republique du Niger, 2007).

Table 2. Health and social indicators for Niger and the three target regions.

	Average for Niger	Tillaberi	Maradi	Zinder
Fecundity (births/woman)	7.6	7.9	8.4	8.5

Median age of first child	18.5	18.9	17.9	18.0
Married, with one co-wife	30.4	24.8	42.8	27.5
Married, with two co-wives	6.9	5.6	8.8	3.6
% of births at home	69.5	70.4	72.5	79.3
Rate of anemia	45.8	46.4	42.7	50.3

Source: Institut National de la Statistique and ICF International, 2013.

Access to information continues to be mainly through social channels, for a large percentage of women in the target regions. A large portion of households and women do not have access to newspapers/magazines, TV or radio as sources for information: women without such access make up 39% in Tillaberi, 56% in Maradi, and 72% in Zinder. No more than a sixth of women have access to TV (only 7.3-14.3% watch TV at least once a week in the three regions) but a considerably larger number can access radio (57.0% in Tillaberi, 42.2% in Maradi and 25.6% in Zinder listen to radio at least once weekly). Women traditionally get information through village women's groups and the town criers in the market place.

## **Poultry Introduction**

Poultry are an important enterprise in Niger and the target regions of Tillaberi, Maradi and Zinder. For vulnerable populations, poultry like other farmed animals can be used as a type of savings account that can be sold in times of crisis or emergency. Poultry is very important to the vulnerable populations that REGIS-AG is targeting because of it is commonly cared for by women and can provide a quick influx of cash during emergencies or other stresses. Poultry also can be valuable for the sale and consumption of their eggs, providing a good source of protein and supplementary income.

According to the 2011 survey, there were 17.1 million poultry in the country. Of the total poultry in Niger, 56% are in the three target regions of the REGIS-AG project, with Tillaberi having the largest number, 4.1 million (24% of Niger's total), followed by Zinder (2.8 million) and Maradi (2.6 million). Poultry are also important for the vulnerable households and even among the most vulnerable households one typically finds some poultry. For example, in a study by Save the Children in the Dakoro department in Maradi, the very poor owned on average of 3-5 poultry, the poor, 6-7 poultry and those with medium and higher resources, 10 (Save the Children, 2009). By far, the most common poultry type in Niger are local chickens (10.4 million), followed by guinea fowls (3.7 million) and pigeons (2.1 million).

Women are significant actors in the poultry and egg value chain in Niger. Their role is mainly confined to the production stage although women are also active as food vendors and caterers. Despite this, they face significant constraints in terms of control of resources and decision-making power.

## **Roles and Responsibilities and Division of Labor**

Despite the large differences in ownership of poultry, all household members (women, men, and children) are engaged in labor related to poultry production. Women do the majority of the work in traditional poultry production and egg collection. Women are usually responsible for preparing the feeds, feeding the poultry, cleaning the coop and collecting eggs. In some of these tasks, children may assist the woman. In contrast, production related tasks that are usually considered the man's are building the coop (if any) and contacting the veterinarian.

Women have a limited role in the marketing of the poultry and eggs. Marketing is usually assured by collectors who come to the villages to buy poultry before the market day. Typically, it is the men who sell the poultry to the collectors, or who take the poultry to the markets to sell. There are very few

women who are wholesalers or retailers of poultry in the market.

In addition, there are typically no women in the input sector, selling veterinary products or feeds for poultry. Within the project zones, there are women auxiliaries in Maradi only. Women constitute almost a third of the auxiliaries in the three departments (Mayahi, Guidan Roudji, and Dakoro), where there are in total 72 women and 169 men. There are no auxiliaries in Tillaberi and as there are no private auxiliaries in Zinder. At the level of technical agents, there are three women in Zinder.

At the end product stage, grilling of chicken to be sold is generally entirely done by men while women are engaged as food vendors or as caterers.

### **Access and Control of Resources**

Men are most commonly considered owners of the poultry. According to the 2011 survey, men owned 66% of poultry, whereas women owned 18% and children, 15% (Idi and Ganda Idé, 2010). According to RGAC (2008), 48% of all poultry was considered men's, also more than children's (28%) and women's (24%). There are large differences among the regions in terms of the ownership (2001). In Tillaberi, Agadez and Diffa women own from less than half to 70% of poultry whereas in other regions men own considerably more poultry than women. The difference is largest in Niamey, where women only own about 5% of the poultry owned by men, presumably as the poultry in Niamey is more commercial and therefore considered a purview of men.

There are important differences in ownership by species of poultry (Idi and Ganda Idé, 2010). For example, guinea fowls are usually more likely to be considered property of men (68%) than children (18%) and women (14%), presumably due to its higher market value. Pigeons are considered ownership of children (82%) and then by men (13%) and women (4%).

### **Decision Making Patterns**

While women are heavily involved in the production of poultry, their role in the decision making is limited when it relates to the use of resources (veterinary services, purchase of poultry feed) or the sales of birds and eggs to collectors or in the markets. This is a common trend where women's labor is utilized in income generating activities with minimal to no decision making power regarding the financial management or sale of the product.

## **Cowpea Introduction**

Niger is the second largest producer of cowpea in Africa and the world, after Nigeria. Since cowpea can grow in harsh, semi-arid conditions its production is important in the target regions of Zinder, Maradi, and Tillaberry. It is a nutritious crop due to its protein-rich beans. Cowpea foliage and haulms are also used as fodder. Niger is the largest exporter of cowpea with Nigeria, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Benin and Cote d'Ivoire being destination markets. Cowpea is the third most important export product, after uranium and livestock products. Cowpea is included in the REGIS-AG project because of its importance for nutrition, food security and as an income earner. Supporting this industry at all stages of the value chain (production, agricultural inputs, marketing and processing) in the regions of Maradi, Zinder and Tillaberry will benefit many of the poorest and most vulnerable people in Niger.

### **Roles and Responsibilities and Division of Labor**

Women are well represented when it comes to cowpea production throughout the cowpea production areas

of Niger. Women play an important part in the preparation of the fields, planting, weeding and harvesting. They are also responsible for cleaning and pest treatment of grain prior to storage. However, the purchase and use of field chemicals belongs to the men. Women are usually the ones who thresh the cowpeas, after the plants have been pulled/cut and piled in one location. The women receive payment for their labor in cowpea product, which means that women do have control over some amount of cowpea when it comes to storage, family use and marketing. Since their fields are smaller, women have usually less cowpea than men. The division of labor described here would be quite common throughout Niger, but prominent in the regions of Tillabery, Maradi and Zinder where cowpea production is concentrated.

While both men and women are involved in cowpea trade, it is more common to find male traders and when one does find a woman trader it is more likely to be at the retail level. In contrast, in Ghana, the great majority of the cowpea traders in the country's largest cereal market, Techiman, are women. These women make frequent trips to Niger (Niamey and Maradi) to procure their cowpeas.

When it comes to value added processing of cowpea, women are not only actively involved, they are essentially controlling all of the activity. There are virtually no men involved in value added processing of cowpeas, which happens by individual women entrepreneurs or small women's groups. This value added processing involves the production of products such as deep fried beignets (kossai/kekena) and dan wake (a boiled dumpling product from cowpea) – these products are produced by individual women entrepreneurs and sold as street food. In addition we find women's groups/organizations who process cowpea into value added products, package the products and market them. Products include cowpea flour (that is purchased for household use or by kossai/kekena vendors), cowpea couscous, cowpea based weaning food, cookies, beroua and spaghetti from cowpea.

### **Access to and Control of Resources**

Men control most of the resources when it comes to cowpea production as men are traditionally the landowners. Women tend to have access to a small plot (or piece) of land – often for her household garden - and women often grow cowpea on that space. However, to carry out larger scale agricultural activities and in particular for cash activities the small-scale garden plots are not large enough. A woman would need to borrow a piece of land from landowners or from her husband. In both cases, women are not landowners, they simply hold precarious use rights on the land they use. They have no guarantee and the land can be taken away from them at any time. In general, men have control over property such as cowpea production and make the marketing decisions, such as when to sell the product. That said, it is important to note that women who are part of a development project, or have a loan from a bank often seem to have more control over decisions concerning cowpea production and marketing.

Most credit agencies will not provide credit to women because women do not meet the necessary conditions. Women have no property to serve as collateral for loans. It is important to note that there are specific institutions of credit and NGOs for women, but they are of limited benefit. These loans are not widely available and they are small loans that do not allow women to perform activities requiring large investments. Moreover, women emphasize that they face difficulties associated with relatively high interest rates, and loan periods that do not always allow the women to make the best use of the funds.

While the production of cowpea is dominated by men, value added processing of cowpea is the purview of the women. Virtually 100% of all value added cowpea processing is done by individual women entrepreneurs or women's groups. This is one stage of the value chain where women are making the decisions, doing the hard work, incurring the risks, and also reaping the profits earned. These profits are used to assist the family needs. During the stakeholder and individual meetings all women (individually and in groups) identified that they could benefit from assistance. In stakeholder meetings they were asking for training in technical areas, marketing and business planning.

## Decision Making Patterns

Women are making some, but limited decisions when it comes to the production stage of the cowpea value chain. They do have small plots of land that they control and are often growing cowpea. At harvest women thresh the cowpea and are paid for their services in cowpea. Thus, women do have cowpea (from their own plots of land and from their laboring to thresh the cowpeas) for which they make storage decisions as well as marketing decisions. The women do have some control over how that product is marketed, although that is a small amount of the household's cowpea production.

Value added processing of cowpeas is characterized by women making the business decisions. It is interesting to note that historically many of the women who are in value added processing of cowpea are divorced or widowed and they take up this entrepreneurial activity as a way of survival. Thus they have to make the business decisions – it's a matter of survival for themselves and their children. Furthermore, the entrepreneurial activity of preparing and selling street food has long been “under the radar” given their participation in the informal economy. Citizens and policymakers alike walk by the street food vendors on a daily basis, often purchasing food from them, and never stop to consider the significance of the business operations that they are part of. This “invisibility” may be the very factor that has enabled these women to have decision making power over their business operations.

## Small Ruminants

### Introduction

Small ruminants are an important enterprise in Niger for women. Goats (14.88 million in 2014) are the most common livestock species in Niger, followed by cattle and sheep. Goats and sheep are typically the only ruminant species owned by the very poor, including women, and constitute an important source of cash, meat, and milk. Within the producing household, they have an important role as a “bank” which can be sold when a need for cash emerges. Small ruminants are well adapted to the Sahelian environment, as they can sustain from diverse feed sources and can, in the case of sheep, move long distances to access pastures during the transhumance.

Women are important actors in the small ruminant value chain throughout Niger, including in the target zones of the REGIS-AG project: Tillaberi, Maradi and Zinder. Although their importance is greatest in the production phase, women are also active in food preparation and sales and in working leather.

### Roles and Responsibilities and Division of Labor

The majority of women in the three regions rear small ruminants. When the stakeholders in the three regions were asked about the prevalence of women producers, they estimated that in Maradi about 60%, in Zinder 90%, and in Tillaberi, 50% of women were estimated to produce small ruminants, rearing an average 10 animals in Maradi (6 goats, 4 sheep), five in Zinder (3 goats, 2 sheep), and 10 (6 goats, 4 sheep) in Tillaberi. Maradi participants estimated that twice as many women as men do fattening; in Zinder, they considered that there are four women to every three men doing fattening. Women are also important in milking and in milk processing.

In general, the entire household participates in the production activities related to small ruminants. When the stakeholders were asked about various production-focused activities there was generally a large spread in terms of which family member, or groupings of them, had the responsibility to do the particular job. Although the majority of the respondents (42 answers in total) fell into group that considered

particular tasks to be only men's, an important number also considered that these jobs were the responsibility of both man and women (36) or men and children (26), or all three categories, women, men and children (24). This indicates flexibility in the role models and in the sharing of work within the household. Certain jobs were considered pre-dominantly men's such as buying of feeds and giving medicines. Reproduction was, interestingly, considered a job for either women, women and men, but only in one case, for men only.

In fact, a large part of the nutrition of small ruminants is assured by women and children, unless the small ruminants are in pastures farther from homesteads or in transhumance, when they are under the control of men. It is often the women and children who collect the crop residues, and who give supplementary feeds near the homesteads. Women usually stores crop residues for the crops they have a primary focus on, whereas men may also stock, particularly for cereals.

Certain roles and responsibilities in production are more strictly gender specific. In general, decisions regarding using cash for small ruminant production are made by men such as calling the veterinarian, (although women may give traditional medicines for livestock) for any veterinary issues for which outside help is needed. It also includes decisions regarding purchases of inputs, such as feed and medicines, are far more likely to be considered roles and responsibilities of men, or men and women together – women seldom decide alone.

Women's importance in several of the subsequent stages of the value chain is less in the three regions as throughout Niger and most of West Africa. Marketing, butchering, fresh meat sales and processing of skins is considered men's work. Leather work, however, is again considered appropriate for men and women. For women, it is mainly Tuaregs who do leather work although some women from other groups can also be involved. For marketing, men have the principal, or almost exclusive, role. In Niger, as elsewhere in the Sahel, it is considered a taboo for women to go to the livestock market and therefore, women usually rely on a man, such as husband, older son, brother, or another person, to do the sales. This was also evident in the interviews where 18 respondents said this is the role of the men, whereas only two said it to be a role of women. One respondent for each category considered it a role all, of either men and children, or women and children.

In trading of small ruminants, women have only a minor role. There are very few women traders in Niger in general, including in the target zones. There are no market intermediaries who are women, as well as no women transporters. However, there is one woman livestock trader in Niamey and another in Maradi.

Women play an important role in the processing of small ruminant meat in the three target zones, but they focus only on preparing and selling foods. There are therefore no women butchers in the target zones and no women fresh meat sellers. Women do buy meat from men butchers, often on credit, to prepare and sell foods. Women can also work as piece-meal laborers in the washing of the heads for the soup. These women selling meat-based soups almost always operate independently, with minimal infrastructure, selling from a table or walking around. They almost always lack funds to invest in better equipment and greater amount of raw materials, allowing them to grow their business.

Although tanning of skins is considered a man's job, women are active in the production of artisanal products from leather. About half of the artisans in Niger are women (Government of Niger, 2008). In artisanal production based on leather, gender roles prevail, with women focusing on particular types of products, such as small bags or pillow cases, and men making shoes, saddles, and bags.

## **Access and Control of Resources**

Men control a large part of the resources needed for small ruminant production, which frequently came up in the interviews. When inquired, out of 207 responses to various questions on controlling fields, money, animals, time, participation in social and economic interest groups, education, and training within and outside of the community, 147 responses were that men control the activity alone, 34 that a woman control, and 26 that they control that together.

Interestingly, productive resources, fields, money and animals had a more equal distribution in that they could be considered under the control of each. In contrast, those interviewed considered that men had an almost exclusive control over decisions about time use, participation in social and economic groups.

As processors and sellers of meat (such as with head soup), women typically make more independent these activities take place outside of the domain of home and concern an area which is usually considered that of women only.

Throughout the stages of the small ruminant value chain women have particular problems accessing finance. Although they can benefit from traditional savings groups and in some cases, micro finance, the problem of collateral particularly touches women, as they commonly have no formal ownership rights. As men control much of the decision making which involves cash, it will be important to pay particular attention to the way in which women use the cash received.

### **Decision-making Patterns**

Although women are commonly engaged in small ruminant production, including in the commercially-oriented fattening, they often are not able to make decisions about important management decisions, such as purchasing of feed or calling a veterinarian. Women also are not directly included in negotiations over whether to sell their animal and at what price, the rearing of which has been an important investment of her time. These factors are extremely important to consider when interventions are designed to target women. Equally importantly, great attention needs to be paid to the fact that it is typically the man who decides whether a woman can participate in group activities, including meetings and trainings, whether considered social or economic. This is true for activities both within the village and outside of it.

Therefore, in interventions targeting women, men's buy-in will be key as they commonly control the resources, hold decision-making power over some of the key management decisions, and have final say over women's participation in project activities.

### **Gender Roles in the End Markets**

Women's role is very similar in the main end markets for the small ruminants coming from the target zones, with some exceptions. In the larger consumer markets in Niger, there are reportedly little to no women traders. In most areas of the coastal end market countries, such as Nigeria, Benin, Togo, and Cote d'Ivoire, there are no women livestock traders or butchers, and women's role is confined to the food preparation and sales. During Tabaski, women traders reportedly come from Benin to Maradi to buy small ruminants. Additionally, in Cote d'Ivoire and Togo, there are some women butchers of small ruminants. The area that stands out in terms of gender roles is Southwestern Nigeria where a large number of women are engaged in small ruminant trading and butchering. About a tenth of the small ruminant butchers in Ibadan are women, and about 40% of traders based in Ibadan's main small ruminant market are women. These women make frequent, typically weekly, trips together to purchase animals, commonly in Northern Nigeria. In addition, In Abeokuta of Southwestern Nigeria the majority of traders are said to be women.

### Introduction

Work with women is key to agricultural development efforts in Burkina Faso. They are disadvantaged in Burkina Faso, as evidenced by numerous indicators for health, education and social issues. Consideration of these factors will be important for the design of interventions that will result in lasting positive impact.

The National Gender Policy published by the government of Burkina Faso, like Niger, also links prevailing attitudes towards gender back to cultural and religious norms. In general, Burkinabé society is patriarchal and shows preference to males over females. Women experience fewer freedoms and greater limitations in terms of marriage, mobility, schooling, etc.

The Burkina Faso government National Gender Policy describes the various aspects of the underrepresentation of women in the work force and in the public life. They include:

- Women's participation in the formal labor force is low. Only 34% of the women (in contrast to 66% of men) are in the industrial sector and 22% of women (vs. 78% of men) are in the service sector.
- Women experience more difficulties in finding jobs or initiating self-employment, due to lack of education and training, exclusion from decision-making and role of subordination. Spouses are also often resistant to women's formal employment
- In the informal sector there are more women but they typically occupy the less remunerative activities, such as food processing, petty trading and making of clothes.
- In the rural sectors, there is a predominance of men in activities that are related to cash, while women occupy tasks that require a great deal of time.
- Women and children, especially girls, are also far more involved in domestic work.
- Despite efforts for change within Burkina Faso, including legal backing for equality, women and men are not equally represented in government. From 1959 to 2002, there was a total of 537 men and only 30 women in the Parliament. Participation of women in the local government has been stronger, and has grown more rapidly (from 9% in 1995 to 21% in 2000 and to 36% in 2006). However, only 20 of the 3521 mayors in Burkina Faso are women. There are very few women in high government posts.
- Low number of representation in national and local organizations, including professional organizations, unions, and village development organizations.
- Weak visibility and participation of women in traditional governance.

### Gender in the three study regions

The three REGIS-AG implementation regions in Burkina Faso are characterized by low levels of education and by persistent poverty. According to the 2010 Demographic and Health Survey (Institut National de la Statistique et de la Démographie and ICF International, 2012), the share of both women and men 15-49 years old who had not had any schooling was higher in each of the three study regions than in Burkina Faso as a whole (Table 3). Out of the three regions, the percentage without schooling was highest in the Sahel, followed by East. It was lowest in the Center-North for both women and men but it was in the Center-North region where the difference between men and women was highest, with 9% more women without any access to education than men. Similar results are observed for the indicator

“Uncompleted Primary” which describes the percentage of the population with some primary schooling but not completed. For the other indicator variables, for which schooling rates are in general very low, the trends are less clear.

Table 3. Levels of schooling in Burkina Faso and its Center north, East and Sahel regions.

Level	Women				Men			
	Burkina Faso	Center north	East	Sahel	Burkina Faso	Center north	East	Sahel
No schooling	69.8	78.6	82.5	87.5	59.8	69.6	77.3	83.6
Uncompleted primary	20.2	17.9	13.4	10.3	25.5	24.0	16.3	12.8
Completed primary	2.7	1.0	1.4	0.6	3.8	2.2	1.2	1.2
Uncompleted secondary	6.3	2.2	2.3	1.4	8.8	3.7	4.1	1.9
Completed secondary	0.3	0	0	0	0.6	0.3	0.1	0.1
Post-secondary	0.5	0	0	0	1.3	0.2	0.1	0.3

Source: Institut National de la Statistique et de la Démographie and ICF International, 2012.

Literacy levels in Burkina Faso are and this is especially true for women. According to the 2010 DHS, 23% of women in Burkina Faso were literate with only 6-13% in the three study regions. Men’s literacy rates were 35% nationally, and ranged from 17% in the Sahel region to 28% in the East region.

Table 4 presents some of the health and social indicators for women in Burkina Faso and the three regions. The average age of first marriage is 16-18 years in the three regions and one fifth (in Center North) to one third (in East and Sahel) of 15-19 year olds have had their first child. The average number of births for women is 6.7 for the Center North and 7.5 for the two other regions. These regions all have higher birth rates than the average for Burkina Faso (6.0) and especially so for the East and Sahel regions.

Table 4. Social and health indicators for the three study regions and Burkina Faso.

	Average for BF	Center North	East	Sahel
Fecondity (births/woman)	6.0	6.7	7.5	7.5
% of 15-19 who has had at least one child	18.8	21.2	32.3	33.4
Married, with one co-wife	29.9	31.2	38.2	30.5
Married, with two co-wives	12.3	14.1	13.3	4.1
Age of first marriage	17.8	17.9	17.2	16.1
% of births at home	33.2	29.9	48.3	56.2

Source: Institut National de la Statistique et de la Démographie and ICF International, 2012.

In the study regions, a large portion of women access information mainly through informal, social networks as 46-59% of women do not listen to radio, read newspaper or watch TV at least once weekly. Radio is the most accessible media source in all three regions, as 39-45% of women listen to the radio at

least once weekly. Women traditionally get information through village women's groups and the town criers in the market place.

## **Cowpea**

### **Introduction**

Cowpea is an important crop for Burkina Faso. It grows well in harsh, semi-arid conditions and thus is well suited for the project's target regions of Center-North, East and Sahel. It is nutritious with a high level of protein as well as other nutrients. Thus, cowpea is used for family consumption as well as for cash to meet the financial needs of the household. Cowpea is consumed all over Burkina Faso. In addition, cowpea is an important export crop for Burkina Faso, with exports going to Benin, Togo, Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire.

### **Roles and Responsibilities and Division of Labor**

Women are well represented when it comes to cowpea production throughout the production areas of Burkina Faso. Women play an important part in the preparation of the fields, planting, weeding and harvesting. They are also responsible for cleaning, pest treatment of grain prior to storage and storage of the harvested crops. The use of field chemicals is an activity that men control. In some cases threshing of the cowpeas, after the plants have been pulled or cut and piled up, is performed by the women, with women getting payment in the form of cowpea product. The division of labor described here, while common throughout Burkina, is prominent in the Center-North, East and Sahel regions where cowpea is most commonly grown.

When it comes to value added processing of cowpea, women are not only actively involved, they are essentially controlling all of the activity. There are virtually no men involved in value added processing of cowpeas, which happens by individual women entrepreneurs or small women's groups. This value added processing involves the production of products such as deep fried beignets (Samsa) and genre is done by individual women and most often sold as street food. Since cowpea, and cowpea based products, are consumed throughout Burkina, these women entrepreneurs are found throughout the country. Value added processing of cowpea into products like biscuits and cowpea flour, which is then packaged and sold is the purview of women's groups. These women's groups are concentrated in the cowpea production regions of the Center North, East and Sahel.

Both men and women are involved in cowpea trade. However, more women are recruited at the retail level. The traders at the other stages (collectors, semi-wholesalers and wholesalers) are mostly men.

### **Access to and Control of Resources**

Men control most of the resources when it comes to cowpea production. Men are the landowners and women do not inherit land in the North Central and East Regions. Traditionally women have access to a piece of land – often for her household garden, and women often grow cowpea on that space. However to carry out larger scale agricultural activities and in particular for cash activities the small-scale garden plots are not large enough. A woman would need to borrow a piece of land from landowners or from her husband. In both cases, women are not landowners, they simply hold precarious use rights on the land they use. They have no guarantee and the land can be taken away from them at any time. There is, however, a peculiarity in the Sahel region. A woman can inherit land from her father if she has no brother. However, she has no right to transmit this land to her children. At her death, her estate shall be refunded to her own paternal uncles. In addition, women who are part of a development project, or have a loan from a bank often have more control over decisions concerning cowpea production and marketing.

Most credit agencies will not provide credit to women because women do not meet the necessary conditions. Specifically, women have no property to serve as collateral for loans. While there are specific institutions of credit for women such as FAARF and NGOs, most often these are small loans that do not allow women to perform activities requiring large investments. Moreover, women emphasize that they face difficulties associated with relatively high interest rates, and loan periods that do not always allow them to make the best use of the funds. Men's decision-making power over issues involving money will also likely affect decision-making for funds obtained. While issues of land access and credit have similar characteristics throughout the whole country, those associated with cowpea are most common in the Center-North, East and Sahel regions where cowpea production is most common.

While the production of cowpea is dominated by men, value added processing of cowpea is the purview of the women. Virtually all of the value added cowpea processing is done by individual women entrepreneurs or women's groups. This is one stage of the value chain where women are making the decisions, doing the hard work, taking on the risk and also reaping the profits earned. These profits are used to assist the family needs. Individual women entrepreneurs making street food are found throughout the country, as consumption of cowpea and cowpea products is spread across the country. Women's groups processing and packaging cowpea products are found most often in the cowpea production regions of the Center North, East and Sahel.

### **Decision Making Patterns**

Women are making some, but limited decisions when it comes to the production stage of the cowpea value chain. Men have complete decision-making authority over production, storage and selling decisions for cowpea produced on all land except for the small "garden" plots that women have access to. For these small plots of land that women control they are often growing cowpea, used for home consumption and additional for sale. At harvest women can also work for others threshing cowpea and are paid for it in cowpea. Thus, women do have cowpea (from their own plots of land and from their laboring to thresh the cowpeas) to store and sell. The women do have some control over how that product is marketed, although that is a small amount of the household's cowpea production. While these decision making patterns are typical for women throughout Burkina Faso, they are especially true in the regions of Center-North, East and Sahel as those are the regions with the greatest percentage of the land devoted to cowpea.

Value added processing of cowpeas is characterized by women making the business decisions. These women's activities, part of what is known as the informal sector, are usually not counted in the official statistics. Since cowpea is consumed throughout the country the value added processing by individual women entrepreneurs (for samsa and gonre) occurs throughout the country. The value added processing and packaging of cowpea flour and other products is more common in the cowpea production areas (Center-North, East and Sahel). In these regions the women have more access to their primary input, cowpea.

## **Poultry**

### **Introduction**

Poultry are an important enterprise in the food security and economic stability of the households in the three target regions. In these regions, both chickens and guinea fowls are reared in essentially two systems. The traditional extensive system with free-ranging poultry includes both chickens and guinea fowls, but with some important differences. The guinea fowls are typically reared in even more extensive systems than chickens, during the rainy season, and for both eggs and meat, whereas chickens are commonly reared throughout the year and only for meat. A relative newcomer is a semi-intensive system for egg production.

Poultry production is particularly important for women who almost always manage the traditional poultry production. The value chain has great potential for increased benefits for women, through both higher productivity and greater involvement in the value chain.

### **Roles and Responsibilities and Division of Labor**

Women are the main gender involved in the production of traditional poultry and eggs. The respondents in the interviews confirmed this and were in almost complete agreement that preparing poultry feed, feeding the animals, giving medicine to their flocks, and collecting eggs are done by women. As with small ruminants, those jobs which involve using money can also include men. For example, about half of the respondents considered that purchasing poultry feed is either a woman's or woman's and man's job, with only 10 respondents saying that it was only man's job. As with small ruminants, the majority thought that contacting the veterinarian is a man's job. However, the respondents considered that taking of the poultry to the market could be a job for any member of the family – woman, man or child. For semi-intensive production of poultry, men and women are both involved in the production process. Due to its market orientation and higher profitability and input use, it is considered suitable for men also.

On the contrary, activities related to trading of live poultry, to processing and selling carcasses as well as activities related to the provision of extension and animal health services are almost exclusively conducted by men. These patterns are caused by social norms that emphasize women's role in the household and limit women's travel. In veterinary care, veterinarians are predominantly male with exceptions for female vaccinators trained by VSF.

### **Access and Control of Resources**

Resources for poultry production are considered to be almost exclusively under the control of the men, not women. All respondents considered that fields (on which feeds are grown) are controlled by men. Only three out of 63 respondents considered that chickens and guinea fowls are under the control of women. What is equally significant is that men also control women's use of time and thereby men have the ability to decide on whether and how a woman should use her time in poultry.

### **Decision-making Patterns**

Interviewees considered that for the majority of the decisions in poultry production, men have the decision making power. Men were considered to have the decision making power over issues related to marketing, and the majority considered that men alone can decide times and quantities sold, as well as feeds and other inputs bought. As with small ruminants, contacting a veterinarian was considered a man's job.

## **Small ruminants Introduction**

Small ruminants are key enterprises in Burkina Faso where in 2011 goats numbered 12.7 million and sheep 8.5 million (MRA, 2012) and in the three target regions of Sahel, Center North and East which together contain 37% of Burkina Faso's goats and 35% of its sheep. Small ruminants are well adapted to the three regions and their production systems while being financially accessible to the majority of poor, including women.

Women have a key role in the small ruminant value chain in these regions. They are closely involved in the production and care of animals in the extensive and semi-intensive systems. They are also important actors in fattening of small ruminants, an activity that is increasing in importance and offers good possibilities for higher incomes. Women are also engaged in preparation and selling of foods made from

small ruminants. As discussed below, their engagement is far more limited in marketing, trading, as well as in certain aspects of the processing, such as butchering. Certain groups of women, mainly Tuareg and Bella, are organized into groups and do leather work, particularly bags for jewelry and poufs.

### **Roles and Responsibilities and Division of Labor**

As in Niger, at the production level, gender roles are flexible for much of the everyday work that needs to be done. Both women and men can grow forages and cut them for animals. Women and children commonly feed the small ruminants. In the Sahel and certain other regions, pasture management is done by village men who decide grazing zones for the dry season. Children typically take care of the animals in the pastures near the homestead during the rainy season. Both women and men stock the crop residues and forages for the dry season.

Certain management tasks are considered almost entirely for men. First, men make decisions about purchase of forages. In the interviews conducted, more than two thirds responded that purchasing forages to be the role of men, whereas only four considered it to be a role of women, presumably due to the fact that men typically have control over monetary resources. Second, although traditional veterinary care is done by women, for modern veterinary care, men are expected to contact veterinarians if an animal is sick. Administering the medicines to an animal is generally considered to be a woman's job. Finally, men manage reproduction of animals. According to a woman interviewed in the region of Sahel, this is the case even if even if she herself is involved in the decision-making: "When I identify a good buck, I talk to a man (husband or parent) and he has to go to the owner to arrange mating with my female animals. It is shameful for me to go talk about these things."

Men have the exclusive role for selling animals in the target zones. In the Sahel region women do not usually enter the market. In the Center North and East, women more commonly go to the market and give their animals for the intermediary to sell with interviews confirming this pattern.

In marketing of small ruminants, women have only a minor role. There are very few women traders in Burkina Faso in general, including in the target zones. There are no market intermediaries who are women, as well as no women transporters. There are two women who trade livestock in Djibo, Sahel, one focusing on large ruminants while the other trades in small ruminants. There is also one woman trader in the Fada N'Gourma market, located in the East Region.

Women play an important role in the processing of small ruminants in the three target zones, but they focus only on preparing foods. There are therefore no women butchers in the target zones and no women meat sellers. Women do buy meat from men butchers, often on credit, to prepare and sell foods from the meat or the fifth quarter, such as the head soup or kebabs. Women can also work as piece-meal laborers in the washing of the heads for the soup. These women selling meat-based soups almost always operate independently, with minimal infrastructure, selling from a table or walking around. In Fada N'Gourma, head soup preparing women interviewed told of difficulties of becoming organized as some of them saw no benefit from it; lack of organization results in poor access to finance, affecting everyone. They almost always lack funds to invest in better equipment and greater amount of raw materials, allowing them to grow their business, from the common 4-10 heads per day that they process. Women can also sell the extra milk from small ruminants by walking around or by going to the market to sell.

### **Access and Control of Resources**

Men control the majority of the resources for small ruminant and other production. In interviews conducted for all the value chains, almost 100% of the respondents (63) said that it is the man who has control over the resources, such as land, animals, poultry, as well as time. He controls the fields from which the crop residues are removed for the small ruminants and decides when they can access the fields for grazing. The men also control the pastures and in general when the animals are in the pastures they

are under the control of the men. In contrast, when the animals are near the household, women have certain access to the products of small ruminants –such as milk which in most communities is considered to be decided by women – but often, she does not have control of the small ruminant. Men’s control of the small ruminants is shown by the fact that commonly it is considered that the man can decide the time of sale for the small ruminants, even if the animal is considered woman’s. According to a man interviewed: “My wife and property belong to me and I do not need to inform her before I sell her animal.”

Importantly, men are also seen to control women’s time, including time she would spend in social and economic groups, educational settings, or trainings in or outside of village. Women’s participation in the types of activities that are conducted by a development project are therefore principally decided by men. Widowed women can stay in the family of her former husband or move back to be with her own family; in both cases, her assets and time are controlled by the head of the family, a man. Women who have renounced their husband’s family and divorced women typically have more freedom to decide, but may also be more stigmatized.

There are, however, some differences. Women who have received credit from a project or bank seem to have more control over these resources. According to a woman interviewee: “My animals are sold according to the dates for the repayment of credit. I am alone responsible for the credit so my husband does not have control over my animals, or he would have to be responsible for the bank.” Another difference is in the Sahel, where according to the tradition, a woman’s animals should not be sold except due to force majeure and only when all of man’s animals have been sold. Woman’s herd in Sahel also constitutes her personal inheritance.

In regard to credit access, the majority of loans are not accessible for women, except for the small amounts from organizations specifically targeting women, such as NGOs and FAARF. During the interviews women emphasized the difficulties coming from high interest rates and short pay-back periods.

### **Decision-making Patterns**

Men make the majority of decisions regarding small ruminant management, although there is more women’s involvement at this level than at the level of resource control. Men decide the quantities sold, time for selling, quantities of inputs bought, purchase of feeds, and whether a veterinarian is called. Women have more decision-making power about every-day management and feeding of animals. Importantly, as discussed above, women usually are not able to decide themselves whether they participate in a meeting. According to a woman interviewed: “To go to my association’s meeting I first ask for permission from my husband. If he has work for me, I do it first or he could forbid me from going to the meeting.”

## Impact on project activities and results

### Introduction

Socially, women occupy very different spaces than men in all targets zone in Niger and Burkina Faso. In general, their access to resources and the outside world, including to markets, is more constrained and their educational level is lower (although it should be noted that also men’s average educational level is low in all target regions). Large number of children tends to tie women in the households and their social environment is further characterized by the fact that many live in households with multiple wives who frequently share in the work and responsibilities.

Women are greatly involved in the production stage in all three value chains and typically can exercise some decision making power at this stage as it relates to production practices that are not tied to resources. The greatest decision making power seems to be in the poultry value chain. However, decisions involving use or earning of money, such as calling a veterinarian, buying feeds, or marketing, are typically done by men. Very importantly, women are not commonly involved in the decisions about their time use, including participation in meetings and trainings.

These observed roles and norms can have great bearing on project activities and results, impacting them negatively or positively. In this section we will discuss those possible impacts. Given the great similarities in women’s roles and the norms across the two countries and their regions, in this section we will we will discuss all target zones together. Moreover, as many of these observed issues impact efforts in all value chains, we will first discuss those issues that impact efforts in all value chains, and only then those that are specific to a particular value chain.

### Issues applicable to all value chains

<b>Observation</b>	<b>Impact on project activities</b>	<b>Impact on anticipated results</b>
In the three regions, on average 79-88% of women and 70-84% of men have no schooling.	Training is more difficult and illiteracy reduces self-confidence and hinders many tasks, such as reading instructions for equipment or fertilizers.	Reduced efficiency of training programs due to slower pace. Reduced adoption of improved practices.
Men can generally decide about women’s time use, including participation in meetings and trainings.	Women can only participate in project meetings if men are supportive. Exceptions are women who are divorced or widowed.	Without men’s buy-in there will be low level of participation in trainings and project activities.
Women do not typically have the primary role in management of money and are dependent on men’s	Activities requiring additional household funds will only be implemented if	Without men’s buy-in, there will be low level of participation in activities.

decisions.	men agree.	
Women lack time due to their diverse responsibilities.	Women may not be able to participate in project activities.	Project results are achieved only if project activities are geared to women's needs, including shorter meetings taking place when women may have more time.
Women's credit access is even lower than men.	Without access to additional funding upgrading will not be possible.	Project results are not achieved without attention to women's credit constraints.
Credit is considered individual.	Credit for women is expected to be paid back by the woman.	Unless activities supported with credit result in financial benefits to women, they will not be able to pay back, threatening further credit to project-supported individuals.
Each woman on average has 6-7 children	Large amount of time spent on child caring may limit time of women for trainings and other project activities. Women with several young children are particularly affected.	Project trainings and activities may have fewer participants and drop-out rate may be high.
In general more than one category of family members (woman, man, children) has responsibilities in the care of animals	The labor on project beneficiary's farm or enterprise has impact on the quality of product	Husbands and children need to be aware of improved practices, or success of project interventions may be threatened.
Large number of women in the target regions do not have access to media. Women have greater access to radio than to television or printed media. Other traditional channels outside modern technology include village groups, town crier (in markets), and their spouses.	Sending radio messages will directly benefit only those who have access to radio.	Messaging only through media will not reach all women and diverse efforts, including through partners, will need to be employed. Accessing women through traditional channels such as village groups and town criers are potential entry points.

## Cowpea

<b>Observation</b>	Impact on project activities	Impact on anticipated results
<b>Production:</b>		
Although both men and women are involved in cowpea production, women's own cowpea is grown on small plots.	If not taken into account in programming, differences in management in men's and women's plots may affect implantation.	Project activities that simply promote better production practices will have a greater impact for men than women
Many women obtain additional cowpea by threshing cowpeas for others.	Women make decisions regarding consumption and marketing of larger amounts of cowpea than is evident from the size of her field.	Greater quantities of cowpea can result in greater marketing.
Women do have cowpea that they produce, albeit not in the same quantities as men, and desire to be more efficient in all aspects of production	Women are eager to learn new production, storage and marketing skills and will implement the new skills as they learn them	The impact of programming for women is high because (i) the women are starting from a very low point and so progress is very evident and (ii) they are eager and diligent about applying what they have learned
Women typically have less access to inputs than men	Lesser productivity, impacting marketing and food security.	Lower production and profitability from cowpea, unless constraints regarding inputs, including credit, are addressed.
<b>Marketing:</b>		
At the farm level the majority of cowpea is controlled by men with respect to when and where it is marketed/sold.	Marketing programming (that helps farmers learn how to more effectively market their cowpea – with respect to when and where to sell) will be dominated by the men who may feel threatened when women start to learn.	Lower number of beneficiaries and lower impact at household level.
Women are found to be involved in retail trade, but commonly not wholesale	Activities on trading will likely benefit men only.	Without specific efforts to target women, women will not

trade.		become beneficiaries.
<b>Processing:</b>		
Value added processing of cowpea is virtually all done by women either as individual entrepreneurs or as women's groups	Programming that helps these women be more efficient and more profitable will not only enhance their incomes, but also enhance the status and role of women in the cowpea value chain	The impact for the project could be large. The women entrepreneurs are often divorced or widowed and most have no formal education. They are thus some of the poorest people. Additional income they earn gets spent immediately and works towards poverty alleviation
Women involved in value added processing of cowpeas are making business decisions As entrepreneurs they are earning income from their business activities to support their family and in particular their children	Project activities focusing on this part of the value chain will naturally focus on women, as they are the main actors.	This group of women have already figured out how to be the decision makers in a male dominated environment. Programming that helps them be more successful will increase their profitably and will help them be role models for the positive outcomes of women making business decisions.

### Poultry

Observation	Impact on project activities	Impact on anticipated results
<b>Production:</b>		
Women have many responsibilities in production, particularly for animals close to homesteads	Women's involvement in project activities is key to improved profitability.	Women need to be targeted in ways that can reach them or otherwise project activities will not result in improved profitability.
Men usually decide whether veterinarian should be contacted and decide whether feed should be bought.	If men do not understand and agree about importance of veterinary care for poultry, time and resources spent by women in them may be lost.	Unless training in veterinary care for women's poultry involves men, high losses of animals and productivity result, threatening project results and interest in project activities.

## Small ruminants

Observation	Impact on project activities	Impact on anticipated results
<b>Production:</b>		
Women have many responsibilities in production, particularly for animals close to homesteads	Women's involvement in project activities is key to improved profitability.	Women need to be targeted in ways that can reach them or otherwise project activities will not result in improved profitability.
Women are already very involved in small ruminant care, including fattening which has great potential for value addition.	Numbers are there to develop effective groups for input access and marketing for women.	Large potential to reach results.
Men usually decide whether veterinarian should be contacted and decide whether feeds should be bought.	If men do not understand and agree about importance of veterinary care for small ruminants, time and resources spent by women in them may be lost.	Unless training in veterinary care for women's small ruminants involves men, high losses of animals and productivity result, threatening project results and interest in project activities.
Men commonly decide when it is time to sell an animal	Decisions by men to market too early or too late will reduce economic benefits from fattening, thereby reducing women's interest in fattening. These decisions can also affect the entire women's group when it plans to do group sales.	Reduced profitability will impact project results directly and through disinterest.
It is a taboo for women to enter and participate in activities of the livestock market in the Sahel region; also in the East and Center North, typically the men bring the animals to market	The profitability of small ruminant production is determined in a framework that is not transparent and is even less under control of women producer than under men producer.	Reduced profitability will impact project results directly and through disinterest.

Almost all traders are men	Trading outside of the livestock markets needs to be generally communal and happen in public places.	Contractual relationships more likely to work with women's groups rather than individual women.
There are women doing leather work.	Project activities focusing on this part of the value chain will naturally focus on women, as they are the main actors.	Project can help them increase their profitability and will help them be role models for others in the entire value chain, and beyond. Women's groups can be linked to export markets when they are given technical support, linked to sources of good quality tanned leather, and effective brands are developed.
Women food sellers operate individual businesses.	Project activities focusing on this part of the value chain will naturally focus on women, as they are the main actors.	Large positive impacts can result from linking women to training and credit.

## Integrating gender in the REGIS-AG activities

### Introduction

The gender integration plan identifies the areas of work, entry points, approaches and activities that can be implemented to alleviate the constraints of women to increasingly participate in the value chains and to derive greater benefits from them. It covers both general constraints and ones that are value chain specific. As presented in the section above, numerous constraints affecting women are not specific to a particular value chain but instead, they affect women’s participation and benefits from all value chains. Since a large part of the women are active in all three value chains, these value chain-independent activities can have significant impact on the efforts of women in all focal value chains, as well as other activities. Activities addressing these general constraints should therefore be integrated across the REGIS-AG activities (see immediately below). In addition, as described above, there are certain constraints that affect certain value chains; these are presented immediately below the general activities.

### All value chains

Area of work	Entry point	Approach/action	Planned activities	Responsible	Indicators
Literacy and numeracy	Improved value chain management through increased literacy	Literacy training to be included in all efforts. Allow illiterate spouses of targeted women to participate in trainings so that they see the benefits and not feel threatened. Focus on all levels of literacy training.	Conduct literacy training courses for all beneficiaries and their spouses, from beginning to more advanced.	- REGIS-AG staff and sub-contractors and consultants	Number of women in program who are able to read and write after the program
Outreach and advocacy	Marketing fairs and project activities	Communication materials and an outreach strategy targeting male participants to advocate and promote women’s active participation in the economic and project activities.	Develop and disseminate communication materials at project and partner events. Develop and disseminate outreach strategy and message to participants in	REGIS-AG staff	

			regular project activities.		
Development of women's economic interest groups (groupements d'intérêt économique ; GIEs).	Women's social and producer groups	Given the strong gender roles and women's lesser power, always develop separate economic interest groups for male and female producers of cowpea, poultry or small ruminants.	Facilitate the formation of groups, on the basis of women's social or producer groups, across the value chain in areas where women are engaged. REGIS-AG and partners will perform a joint assessment and identification mission of current groups to better understand what groups exist, how they are functioning, and best practices for improving and establishing groups.	REGIS-AG and partners	Women's groups strengthened (number) Women's groups transformed into GIEs (number)
Value Chain Fairs	Sector wide events	Participation of women in REGIS-AG hosted fairs will encourage direct linkages of female producers and processors to buyers and input suppliers to	Work with partners and government entities to organize a series of poultry, small ruminant and cowpea fairs to bring	REGIS-AG and Partners	

		facilitate their increased involvement in the professional sphere.	together producers, input suppliers, buyers, and processors.		
Business management and marketing training	Women's economic interest groups	Focus on all aspects of business, including planning, marketing, bookkeeping and accounting, organizational management	Conduct training programs for all women groups involved.	REGIS-AG and partners	Number of women trained Increased income for women Growth in business operations
Women's credit access	Credit as personal responsibility	Credit programs tied to good management that is articulated in the contracts, e.g., fattening and right sales times, input use in women's fields.	Conduct analysis of women's demands for financial services and products. Develop credit products that ensure good management without interference. Liaise with SRO Field Investment Officer for collaboration on potential solutions.	REGIS-AG and microfinance partners	
Increased Access to Land	REGIS-ER work to date on land use and access issues	Collaborate with REGIS-ER in advocating for and working with local or regional community groups and/or governments to expand women's	Activity for Year 2 is to conduct a study on laws governing land and agriculture in Burkina Faso and Niger.	REGIS-AG and partners	

		access and control over land.	Results of study will determine specific actions needed.		
Trainings and meetings	Child care limits women's participation	Large amount of time spent on child caring may limit time of women for trainings and other project activities.	Hire older women for child care in all meetings involving women. Discuss experiences on this with the VIM project and reach out to CRS for information on nurseries.	REGIS-AG and partners	
Trainings	Co-involvement of spouses, children and co-wives in various productive activities	Integrating those involved in the learning will improve management and support.	Allow others from the family to participate in trainings and/or encourage women to share learning in the family.	REGIS-AG and partners	
Limited access to media by women	Media (especially radio) and social circles as information sources	Radio is most commonly accessible media for women and should be used. As only a minority have access to radios, social and economic groups need to also become important sources for information exchange	Disseminate information through diverse means, including women's groups and radio	REGIS-AG and partners	

Association and group support	Low representation by women in diverse organizations	Sensitization, combined with leadership and gender training, for both women and men	Include gender training components in all association support and women leadership training for managers of women's groups/	REGIS-AG and partners	
Monitoring	Learning agenda	Monitoring throughout the life of project to gauge how roles change as women increase their participation in economic activities	Capture changes in gender roles in target value chains through qualitative interviews and observations from program staff.	REGIS-AG	
All project activities	Women's success and continuation depend on spouse's approval	Engagement with spouses and traditional leaders is pre-requisite for success	Conduct frequent meetings with spouses and traditional leaders to explain project activities and progress	REGIS-AG and partners	

### Cowpea

Area of work	Entry point	Approach/action	Planned activities	Responsible	Indicators
Improved production technology and practices training	Women's limited access to information	Combining finance and input access with training	Facilitation of seed and credit access	REGIS-AG and partners	Number of women trained Increased

		for best production practices	Training programs on best production practices		production of cowpea and increased income
Access to credit for processing equipment	Women's limited access to credit	Coordinate with local banks and financial institutions to develop loan products to expand women's businesses	Liaise with banks after determining desired level of credit demanded by women's processor in financial needs assessment . Link banks with project beneficiaries to expand women's access to credit.	REGIS-AG	
Processing of cowpea, especially to kossai/kekena/samsa)	These women can be even more successful with increased technical knowledge	Use of best practices for best quality product with greatest efficiency	Training workshops focused on efficient production , such as effective grinding of the cowpea	REGIS-AG and partners	Number of women trained Increased income from production and sale of Kossai/Kekena /Samsa
Processing and packaging cowpea into flour trainings	Women's groups can benefit from innovations and knowledge of best production practices	In partnership with INRAN, support women's groups move to producing	Facilitate access to hammer mills to get flour of the	REGIS-AG and partners	Number of women and women's groups trained Increased

		cowpea flour of coarse texture that will make better deep-fried beignets (kossai/kekena / samsa)	correct particle size, combined with training on how to use machine and manage operations and logistics.		income for women's groups Number of women vendors able to access improved cowpea flour for their business
Women in wholesaling	Presence of women wholesalers in other countries	Increase interest of Burkinabe and Nigerien women in wholesaling through exposure to women wholesalers	Meetings Ghanaian wholesalers in Burkina Faso and Niger	REGIS-AG and partners	Number of women trained Number of new women becoming traders
Business management and marketing training for processors and food sellers	Women's economic interest groups	Focus on all aspects of business, including planning, marketing, bookkeeping and accounting, organizational management	Conduct training programs for all women groups involved.	REGIS-AG and partners	Number of women trained Increased income for women Growth in business operations
Training on marketing and storage of cowpea	High variability in cowpea prices when combined with good storage can bring better profits	Ensure women get the information and skills so they can plan and implement physical storage and profitable sales.	Training programs focusing on (1) seasonal price changes and potential gains from storage, (2) how to	REGIS-AG and partners	Number of women trained Number of women's groups trained Volume of cowpea stored and for how long

			use PICS bags for effective storage		Increased income
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### Poultry

Area of work	Entry point	Approach/action	Planned activities	Responsible	Indicators
Veterinary care	Empowerment of women's groups through linkages	Encouraging women's groups to be involved in disease surveillance will link them with other groups and actors beyond their communities.	Train women's groups in disease surveillance, with e.g., visual cards. Enlist female SVPPs to reach female producers who cannot accept male veterinarians or vet personnel due to cultural norms.	REGIS-AG and partners	
Egg marketing	Women's groups and individuals	Encouraging women's groups and individuals to market their poultry eggs to local markets and buyers.	Develop a seasonal marketing strategy for eggs, particularly guinea fowl eggs and work with women to promote this strategy. Further, egg producers will be invited to participate and market	REGIS-AG	

			their products at poultry fairs.		
Meat processing and retailing	Individual women	Link to technical training and credit.	Trainings in hygiene and products. Development of credit products.		
All project activities	Women's success and continuation depend on spouse's approval	Engagement with spouses and traditional leaders is pre-requisite for success	Conduct frequent meetings with spouses and traditional leaders to explain project activities and progress	REGIS-AG and partners	

### Small ruminants

Area of work	Entry point	Approach/action	Planned activities	Responsible	Indicators
Market co-management	Women in leadership role	Facilitate inclusion of women in all management committee to initiate gradual change in livestock markets	Facilitate development of committee membership that is diverse and representative	REGIS-AG and stakeholders	
Marketing	Diverse marketing avenues which are not a taboo for women, as are livestock markets	Innovative traders who are interested in good quality animals and various fairs and informal market setting can facilitate sales	Develop contracts between women's groups and traders; Organize fairs and marketing events	REGIS-AG and partners	
Production management	Ensuring good management	Within economic groups, synchronize	Training on management tied with	REGIS-AG and partners	

	nt in the face of involved in care in the household	timing and type of management (e.g., fattening), especially to target high-demand seasons.	sales contracts and credit access		
Inputs	Women's role in fodder production	Facilitate more formal roles for women in feed supply through support to women and women's groups producing multi-nutritional blocks and feed mixtures	Provide technical and business training and facilitate finance access	REGIS-AG and partners	
Veterinary care	Empowerment of women's groups through linkages	Encouraging women's groups to be involved in disease surveillance will link them with other groups and actors beyond their communities.	Train women's groups in disease surveillance, with e.g., visual cards.	REGIS-AG and partners	
Meat processing and retailing	Individual women	Link to technical training and credit.	Trainings in hygiene and products. Development of credit products.		
Leather work	Women's groups	Improve quality of products and branding and link to more profitable markets	Develop business contacts. Technical support and trainings. Support development of effective brands.		

## Conclusions

The three value chains present significant opportunities for increased profitability and efficiency for all actors, with increased independence and financial decision-making for women. Women are engaged in all three value chains, particularly in production. They are closely involved in the everyday management of cowpea fields, harvest and storage, as well as poultry and small ruminant feeding and veterinary care. In many cases they have lesser control and decision-making power over decisions involving money. In general, control and decision-making power seem higher for women producing cowpeas on their own plots and women managing poultry than for small ruminants, although certain aspects of small ruminant production, such as milk, is considered women's domain of decision. Across the value chains, women are disadvantaged in marketing, although this may again be highest for small ruminant value chains where in general all producers have limited power (especially vis-à-vis market intermediaries) and where an additional constraints for women are the common notion that men control timing and sales of animals and women are not, in most places, able to enter livestock markets. In contrast, women do have active roles in selling their products made after processing. Across West Africa, women sell cowpea products, such as fried kossi, independently managing business decisions. They also make soup from small ruminant heads, and at times sell kebabs made from meat. There were no reports of women being involved in butchering or fresh meat sales in the target areas of Burkina Faso and Niger and only a few women are involved in livestock trade.

Women's participation is affected by social norms which attach much of the decision-making power and resource control to their spouses. Women are therefore in general dependent on approval of their spouse for participating in activities, meetings and trainings, as well as important decisions, especially those involving money. In the context of the target regions in Niger and Burkina, designing and implementing project activities with women therefore needs to also involve men, with a view to soliciting their support to the goals, approaches and activities. This gender integration plan proposes that involving men will be done through periodic informational meetings and by involving men in key trainings.

Women's current involvement (or, in some cases, lack of involvement) in the value chains as well as the norms and conventions governing it present opportunities for integrating gender issues in project planning in ways which enhance benefits to women from project activities, such as improved ability to make decisions, earn livelihood, and manage day-to-day life and situations. Many of the activities proposed in this gender integration plan are not value chain specific and are expected to enhance revenues and food security to women in all three value chains, and in other areas of women's lives. Several others are value-chain specific, focusing on addressing constraints to greater involvement in a particular stage of a value chain.

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