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Resilience in the Sahel Enhanced (RISE) II Technical Approach Working Paper

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Purpose of this document: This working paper is meant to provide information on the strategic and technical approach USAID intends to use for RISE II. USAID retains the right to change its strategic or technical approach at any time without notification. This paper is a reference document that contains useful information for applicants seeking funding under RISE II, as well as for others who wish to partner with USAID, or better understand USAID’s approach. It is not a solicitation document. Organizations interested in obtaining funding from USAID are advised to monitor Grants.gov: <https://www.grants.gov/> and FedBizOpps.gov: <https://www.fbo.gov/> for funding opportunities.

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Cover Photo: Woman carries her baby across the harsh landscape of Tillabéri, Niger. Credit: Patrick Smith, USAID

I. Program rationale and USG strategic priorities

The Sahel today is marked by food insecurity, persistent poverty, corrupt governance, high population growth rates, and recurrent climate shocks that often drive vulnerable communities into crisis, conflict, and frequently make them vulnerable to violent extremism. These are challenges that cross international borders and require long time horizons to effect change. Yet, in the midst of these negative trends, there are positive signs and opportunities to build on as countries and communities work to improve their own resilience. USAID has a regional approach designed to address these intertwined problems sets. The Resilience in the Sahel Enhanced (RISE) program is a key pillar of that approach that also includes strategic layering and sequencing of life-saving humanitarian assistance, and separate activities designed to reduce vulnerability to conflict and extremism.

The RISE program was conceived in 2012 as a response to a historical pattern of severe droughts, including the 2011-12 droughts in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel. In 2011-2012 more than 18 million people across the Sahel were in need of humanitarian assistance, including 8.4 million in Niger and Burkina Faso alone. USAID and the wider development community recognized that the pattern of repeated crises over decades occurred because local populations lack the means to manage the risks they face and recover when a shock occurs. Their vulnerability is multidimensional, encompassing poor health and nutrition status, extreme poverty, illiteracy, extended annual lean seasons, indebtedness, gender inequality, degraded natural resources and low agricultural productivity, and governance failures. Recurring stresses and shocks include shared shocks (such as droughts, floods, animal and crop pests and diseases, price and market shocks), household-specific shocks (sickness, death, divorce), and ongoing stressors (such as limited and erratic rainfall, low soil fertility, rapid population growth) that continuously undermine development gains despite ongoing development assistance.

Shocks and stressors in the Sahel will become even more severe in the future. Climate projections indicate that rainfall will become more intense, unpredictable, and less frequent, that changes to global weather patterns will have large impacts on the frequency and intensity of major droughts, and that average temperatures in the Sahel will increase. Added to this are rapid population growth, a youth bulge, and increased conflict and instability.

In the absence of a sustained and coordinated effort to address the underlying causes of chronic vulnerability and to build resilience in the face of shocks and stressors, malnutrition and child mortality remain high even in non-crisis years. In Burkina Faso, 15.5% of children are wasted, and 34.6% are stunted. In Niger it is worse, with 18% wasted and 43.9% stunted. Similarly, mortality of children under five is high in Burkina Faso at 129 per 1000 live births and 127 per 1000 in Niger.¹ One reason for these poor health outcomes is that in the face of shocks or cumulative stresses, households are forced to sell productive assets or become indebted, creating a downward spiral that leaves them more vulnerable and less able to take advantage of the next opportunity to climb out of poverty and up the economic ladder. Chronic poverty and ill-health results in a large number of people in need of external humanitarian assistance during drought episodes.

¹ Data are from the Demographic and Health Surveys in Niger (2012) and Burkina Faso (2010).

Chronic vulnerability also constrains economic growth. This is most evident in terms of productive losses during drought episodes, but applies equally to unattained potential; a risky environment decreases incentives and willingness to make investments necessary to boost economic growth. In turn, constrained economic growth further limits the ability of individuals, households, communities, countries and systems to effectively mitigate, adapt to and recover from shocks and stresses. The result is a macro-level equivalent of the downward spiral described above.

Lack of economic opportunity, conflict over diminishing resources, and ineffective and corrupt local governance fuel many of the grievances that can make local populations more receptive and vulnerable to recruitment by extremist groups active in the region. Historical local conflicts can be exacerbated, and governments increasingly seen as part of the problem, rather than supportive of solutions.

The international community's response to this situation has often involved large humanitarian actions. Collectively, donors spent over \$1 billion in humanitarian assistance in the Sahel in 2012 with the USG alone spending over \$400 million. This assistance saved lives and livelihoods but did not adequately address chronic vulnerability at the root of repeated crises. Resilience programming, by contrast, is designed to build local capacities that reduce vulnerabilities and can reduce the need for humanitarian assistance. For example, a DFID-funded study found that over a 20-year period in Kenya, every \$1 spent on disaster resilience resulted in \$2.90 saved in the form of reduced humanitarian spending.²

However, resilience programming is also different from traditional development programming. Over the last fifty years, countries in the Sahel received hundreds of millions of dollars in traditional development assistance. This assistance resulted in improvements in well-being, but failed to systematically and effectively address the reality of recurrent shocks in the region. Research on poverty backsliding shows that a large percentage of households, having been temporarily lifted out of poverty, fall back into poverty when faced with a personal or communal shock. Households in the Sahel face a very high level of repeated shocks, the cumulative effect of which is to undermine development gains.

In addition to the humanitarian, developmental, and budgetary benefits of resilience investments in the Sahel, investing in resilience supports efforts to counter violent extremism (CVE), a USG national security priority. Resilience investments respond to common grievances, such as lack of government services and poor economic opportunities, and address common drivers of instability, such as local conflicts and shock-related population displacements. While resilience investments are not targeted to specific geographies where violent extremist organizations (VEOs) are currently active,

Defining resilience: USAID's 2012 Policy and Programming Guidance on Building Resilience to Recurrent Crisis defines resilience as "the ability of people, households, communities, countries, and systems to mitigate, adapt to, and recover from shocks and stresses in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth." In short, resilience is the ability to manage adversity and change without compromising future well-being. As this suggests, resilience is a necessary condition—or set of capacities—for reducing and ultimately eliminating poverty, hunger, malnutrition, and humanitarian assistance needs in the complex risk environments in which USAID works and in which poor and chronically vulnerable people live. For more information on USAID's resilience work, visit: <https://www.usaid.gov/resilience>.

² DFID (2012) Economics of Early Response and Resilience: Emerging Lessons from Kenya and Ethiopia

and may not explicitly target the populations most vulnerable to recruitment, they are “CVE-relevant” because they occur in geographies that neighbor or buffer active VEO zones. They will also be aggressively sequenced and strongly coordinated with CVE activities so that USAID resilience programs will address grievances and drivers in these neighboring areas, reducing the vulnerability of those populations to recruitment, making it harder for VEOs to expand their reach.

The RISE program is also USAID’s primary contribution to the USG Global Food Security Strategy (GFSS). Niger was recently named as one of twelve GFSS target countries. Burkina Faso has been selected as a GFSS aligned country. The GFSS Niger Country Plan, a requirement for all target countries, highlights building resilience as the basis for agriculture-led economic growth. RISE II contributes to underlying resilience using a package of investments that align GFSS funding in the agriculture sector with complementary funding in health and governance. RISE II also builds the foundation for agricultural growth by strengthening market systems in targeted value chains, including enhancing access to finance and the policy enabling environment.

Resilience investments are also in-line with USAID’s priority of building self-reliance in the countries and populations we serve. Resilience investments build capacities of individuals, communities, and systems to learn, adapt, and transform in response to challenges and opportunities. Doing this requires putting local communities in the driver’s seat of their own development. This is a long-term process, particularly in the challenging Sahelian context, but USAID’s approach to resilience under RISE is focused on building agency and capability to solve local problems and pursue local visions of a better future.

II. Lessons learned from phase one of RISE

During the first phase of RISE, USAID sought to address chronic vulnerability in the Sahel by strategically layering, sequencing and coordinating USAID and other humanitarian and resilience-building investments, with the goal to “increase the resilience of chronically vulnerable people, households, communities and systems in targeted agro-pastoral and marginal agriculture livelihood zones in Niger and Burkina Faso.”³ RISE began implementation with a set of activities including five already on-going Food for Peace (FFP) development activities, a multi-sectoral resilience activity, a value chain activity, and a learning activity.⁴ Additional smaller activities, such as loan guarantees and public-private partnerships, were added later. In case of a shock, RISE activities included crisis modifiers to allow early actions, followed by coordination with humanitarian response activities as needed. However, because no widespread shock occurred in the RISE geographic zone, the integration of humanitarian and development assistance did not occur. Over the life of RISE, USAID

³<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1860/Sahel%20JPC%20Strategy%20Presentation.pdf>

⁴ RISE core activities include: “Livelihoods, Agriculture and Health Interventions in Action” (LAHIA) implemented by a Save the Children International-led consortium; “Sawki” implemented by a Mercy Corps-led consortium; “Program for Support to Household Food Security” (PASAM-TAI) implemented by a CRS-led consortium; “Families Achieving Sustainable Outcomes” (FASO) implemented by a CRS-led consortium; “Victoire sur la Malnutrition” (ViM) implemented by an ACDI/VOCA-led consortium; “Resilience and Economic Growth in the Sahel – Enhanced Resilience” (REGIS-ER) implemented by an NCBA/CLUSA-led consortium; “Resilience and Economic Growth in the Sahel – Accelerated Growth” (REGIS-AG) implemented by a CNFA-led consortium; and “Sahel Resilience Learning” (SAREL) implemented by The Mitchell Group.

and its implementing partners conducted project evaluations, baseline surveys, a mid-term assessment, sectoral assessments, learning events, and regular monitoring with the participation of the Government of Burkina Faso (GoBF) and the Government of Niger (GoN). Selected cross-cutting lessons from RISE include:

- Communities and partner governments express a strong desire for improved water access, health services, enhanced agriculture, and access to finance. In addition, USAID's analysis of underlying drivers of vulnerability in the Sahel suggest that water scarcity, high birth rates, early marriage, low literacy rates, the extended lean season, migration, lack of secure land access, and the large youth population should receive elevated attention under RISE II.
- While the Sahel has not experienced a major drought since RISE programming began in 2013, localized shocks have occurred regularly. According to the RISE midline survey conducted in 2016, 96% of households experienced a shock in the previous year. Households were unable to recover from 49% of these shocks, and another 31% recovered somewhat but were still worse off than before. Strikingly, households reported that shocks like death or illness had the strongest impact. USAID and other donors have not responded adequately to localized shocks including those that affect only an individual family, nor built community capacity for response and recovery. RISE II will include a comprehensive approach to risk management and shock response - one that builds local capacities to prepare for, respond to, and recover from shocks and stresses while also including in each mechanism an intrinsic capacity to respond to cases of severe but localized shocks.
- Many of the largest challenges, such as population growth, safely managed sanitation, and women's empowerment have fundamental behavioral components that need to be addressed directly in a culturally-sensitive manner. Women's roles and leadership in these issues is critical, requiring a greater focus on enhancing their capabilities and encouraging supportive attitudes and actions by men.
- USAID and its partners identified the need for greater engagement on governance and with state institutions to build sustainability of results. Specific needs that emerged were building local capacity to manage and coordinate donor support, enhancing local capability to learn and adapt, building functional linkages between local and higher levels of government, and enhancing resource mobilization and transparent expenditures to address locally-identified development priorities.
- To address the multi-dimensional nature of resilience, RISE intervened in a wide diversity of sectors, but this sometimes came at the cost of technical depth, operational results, and systemic changes. To complement integrated community development activities, USAID needs sector interventions in health services provision, comprehensive water management and water service delivery, risk management, government institutional performance, and markets and finance. Under RISE II, USAID partners will use systems analysis to identify catalytic interventions that deliver sustainable improvements in the functioning of these targeted systems.
- USAID's implementation of layering, sequencing, and coordination was often inefficient because it lacked clear direction and targeting. However, effective collaboration did occur, resulting in broader uptake of conservation farming, vulnerable women bringing livestock to markets, restored pasture land, and improved hygiene and nutrition practices through social and

behavior change interventions. Successful collaborations were often between partners that had complementary strengths and mandates. This approach will be pursued more systematically under RISE II by selecting implementing partners that have specific expertise to address gaps in RISE, clarifying division of labor and identifying “nodes of collaboration” – intervention areas that require partner collaboration to achieve a higher goal. For example, given the centrality of communes in local governance and service delivery, multiple partners will have to collaborate closely in their support of communes to make sure gaps are covered and messages are consistent.

RISE II takes into account these and other lessons learned. Some of the major adjustments include:

- Emphasizing local ownership of development while building transformational capacities and supporting culturally sensitive behavior change;
- Giving governance a greater focus as both a pillar objective and a cross-cutting factor relevant to all sectors;
- Elevating water security to its own intermediate result (IR) in recognition of the centrality of water to the Sahel;
- Implementing a comprehensive risk management approach;
- Raising the agency of women and youth to its own objective;
- Pursuing a higher level of technical rigor and systems strengthening from local to national levels;
- Doing collaboration smarter with targeted areas for joint action.

III. Relationship to host country and other donor programs

A. Burkina Faso

The Government of Burkina Faso (GoBF) is working to reinforce resilience in agrosilvopastoral zones by developing various strategies and policies, under the leadership of the *Secrétariat Exécutif du Conseil National de Sécurité Alimentaire (SE-CNSA)*, responsible for the oversight of the implementation of food and nutrition security policy and action plans and the *Secrétariat Permanent pour la Coordination des Politiques Sectorielles Agricoles (SP-CPSA)* - responsible for creating, monitoring and evaluating rural sector policy and programs under the leadership of the Ministry of Agriculture and Hydraulic (MAAH). The GoBF also supports professional producers’ groups by supplying seeds, fertilizers and agricultural equipment, but this is still insufficient and lacks the sustainability a market solution would provide. In order to harmonize the *Partenaires Techniques et Financiers’* (PTFs, hereafter referred to as “donors”) interventions, the GoBF has long-standing consultative frameworks at the national, regional, provincial and municipal levels, but these frameworks are not very functional and communication between the GoBF and donors remains very weak, particularly at the central level. A Strategic Objective Grant Agreement (SOAG) between USAID and the GoBF (through the MAAH) exists, but these communication and cooperation challenges still need to be addressed to improve the collaboration between the GoBF and USAID funded programs. USAID, in its role as Chef de File (donor lead) of both the health (2017-2018) and the agrosilvopastoral production (2016-2017) donor groups, is improving communication, including working alongside relevant government ministries to incorporate donor results in their central monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for inclusion in the *Plan National*

de Développement Economique et Social (PNDES) and creating a donor intervention map with the assistance of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) that would eventually be transferred to the MAAH for updates and management.

USAID in partnership with the *Comité Permanent Inter-états de Lutte Contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel* (Permanent Inter-State Committee for the Fight against Drought in the Sahel, or CILSS), supported the creation of Burkina Faso's *Priorités Résiliences Pays*⁵ (Country Resilience Priorities, or PRPs) under the *Alliance globale pour la résilience - Sahel et Afrique de l'Ouest* (Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative – Sahel and West Africa, or AGIR) which were validated nationally in October 2015. USG diplomatic engagement with the GoBF encouraged the adoption of the PRPs by the Council of Ministers in March 2016, and the transfer of responsibility for their implementation, as outlined in the document itself, from the SP-CPSA to the SE-CNSA in January 2017. USAID intends to provide capacity building support to the SE-CNSA.

USAID, through RISE, supported the development of the second Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) National Agricultural Investment Plan, referred to by the GoBF as the *Plan National du Secteur Rural II* (PNSR II, or the Second National Rural Sector Plan 2016-2020). The GoBF's multi-ministry PNSR II will see an estimated 12-13 percent of the country's national budget invested in agriculture and food security until 2020, incorporate the AGIR PRPs to ensure the country's most vulnerable people are included in the investments under the PNSR II, and that the program is more equitable to women than its previous five-year program. USAID also provided technical assistance as donor lead of the Health PTFs to update the *Plan National du Développement Sanitaire* (PNDS, or the National Health Development Plan 2011-2020). USAID will support the GoBF's recent *Programme d'Urgence au Sahel* (PUS, or Sahel Emergency Plan). RISE II will synchronize its activities with the above plans, programs and policies, and will improve communication with the GoBF and harmonize and report on high-level indicators.

B. Niger

The GoN established a High Commission for a Presidential Initiative, *Nigériens feed Nigériens*, or HC3N, to coordinate national and donor development programming in food security and nutrition. The High Commissioner holds the rank of minister and reports directly to the President. HC3N is supported by a series of action plans to accelerate results, which prioritize improvements in water access, agricultural production, and resilience. Under the 3N Initiative, access to water is the government of Niger's highest priority for food security as it is both the greatest constraint to macroeconomic growth and the most pressing daily concern of the rural population. The GoN's second priority for food security is reclamation of degraded lands. However, Niger's budgetary priorities remain focused on security, and public funds on education and social welfare have been diverted to national and Presidential security. Still, a significant amount of GoN funding does go to the food security budget, and in the past five years, the GoN has contributed 3% of its own national budget to food security spending.

⁵ http://www.sahelresilience.net/sarel/system/files_force/PRP-AGIR-BF_Version_finale_d%C3%A9f.pdf?download=1

In recent years, Niger has made the fight against all forms of malnutrition a top State priority. In 2016, Niger launched its first multi-sectoral nutrition policy, the National Multi-sectoral Nutrition Security Policy (PSNP) with a budget line for nutrition in order to track spending. Niger also has the National Agricultural Investment Plan and the regionally-reviewed *Priorites Resilience Pays*, or PRP. However, most Government of Niger technicians feel that the President's Cultural Renaissance Plan and the National Plan for Economic and Social Development (PNDES) are the plans that are the most important, and the ones that Ministers feel themselves accountable for supporting. For further details on Niger and its donor context, look for the forthcoming Global Food Security Strategy Niger Country Plan that will be posted publicly by USAID.

IV. Project description and technical approach

A. Geographic zone of influence

USAID reviewed options for the geographic zone of RISE II taking into account the following criteria (in no particular order):

- 1) Host government priorities
- 2) Level of need (historic humanitarian caseload, prevalence of poverty, chronic malnutrition, total population)
- 3) Potential for agricultural-led growth (agricultural surplus)
- 4) Opportunities for regional economic integration (market linkages)
- 5) U.S. Government resources and interagency priorities (historic USG investment, anticipated non-RISE USG investments, historical other donor investment, anticipated other donor investment)
- 6) Security (violent extremist vulnerability, access, and security)
- 7) USAID learning about achieving development outcomes

This analysis largely reconfirmed the initial selection of the RISE zone, with the difference that some areas of the original zone (Tillabéri in Niger, Sahel in Burkina Faso) face increased levels of conflict and insecurity and thus would be challenging environments to implement resilience activities. In addition, USAID and its implementers have learned from experience that it is important to further concentrate their resources geographically to achieve maximum impact. For these reasons the RISE II zone is similar to the first RISE zone, but with a smaller area. In Niger, the zone of influence encompasses the Maradi region and the entire Zinder region except the northernmost desert communes. In Burkina Faso, the zone of influence is a selected group of communes of the northern Centre Nord region. However, USAID anticipates investing in livelihoods and governance activities in insecure zones such as Tillabéri and Sahel under the umbrella of preventing and countering violent extremism. Further, RISE II activities will be designed to be flexible and allow adjustments to implementation modalities and/or geography in response to changing situations on the ground, U.S. Government priorities, resource availability, and other challenges or opportunities.

The primary beneficiaries are rural populations, while recognizing that rural-urban linkages are vital to rural prosperity, requiring investment in urban/peri-urban areas on aspects related to markets, customer/consumer demand, and service delivery. In addition, RISE II also must work at the national level to inform policy and strengthen the capacity of government counterparts, critical to the long-term sustainability of USAID investments and to the promotion of self-reliance.

B. Funding sources, mechanisms, and management

Core RISE II investments will be implemented through USAID's Sahel Regional Office (SRO), which also includes Food for Peace development investments. The SRO includes offices in Senegal, Niger, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, and Chad. USAID/West Africa programs will also contribute to RISE II results, particularly in terms of enhancing regional institutions and processes. In addition, USAID will actively seek synergies with USAID/Washington funded activities and with humanitarian assistance activities in response to shocks and stresses to ensure an optimally layered, coordinated, and holistic USAID approach.

RISE II investments include Food for Peace Development Food Security Assistance (DFSA) awards and support to the World Food Program and UNICEF, as well as development assistance activities. In this document, non-FFP development assistance activities managed by SRO are referred to as "SRO activities." USAID anticipates that funding in agriculture, water and sanitation, economic growth, governance, maternal and child health, family planning, and nutrition will contribute to RISE II. If funds are available, USAID will also program basic education activities under RISE II.

DFSA awards will focus on activities that will have the most impact on food and nutrition security through interventions at the household, community, and commune levels. DFSA implementers may also propose activities at higher levels consistent with their own theories of change. Other RISE II investments will focus on complementary activities at the community, commune, regional, and national levels. It is likely that DFSAs will be mobilized prior to most other RISE II activities, allowing time for targeting, assessments, and consultations. During the first year of startup, as other RISE II activities are finalized, partners may need to adjust their design to better integrate and coordinate with those activities.

Mechanisms to implement RISE II must allow for significant country-level autonomy so that approaches can be tailored to local contexts and decisions can be made at local levels. At the same time, because RISE II is a regional, multi-country program, a certain level of harmonization of approaches will be required. USAID will work with implementing partners to find the correct balance between these two considerations.

RISE II implementation modalities will be designed to allow flexibility in response to projected or emerging shocks through flexible implementation mechanisms and an adaptive management approach underpinned by systematic and regular exchanges of information. A well-designed system for early action in response to a sudden shock will enable local actors to mobilize people and resources quickly to avoid escalation of a shock to the level of humanitarian crisis.

Security considerations: Certain areas of Niger and Burkina Faso are within the estimated areas of operation of violent extremist organizations (VEOs), some at least loosely associated with larger international movements like Al Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb and Da'esh (ISIS). The presence of these organizations potentially presents operational challenges, related to both the security of USAID staff and implementers and the ultimate disposition of certain forms of U.S. Government assistance. To date, SRO has no information to suggest that the operation of VEOs in the region have significantly impacted the delivery of U.S. assistance or posed imminent threat to USAID or implementer staff. However, the extent and geography of VEO activity in the region are highly variable and could at some point impair USAID's operations or the achievement of RISE II objectives.

In neighboring regions, where the operation of groups like Boko Haram have posed a more immediate challenge to U.S. Government development and humanitarian operations, USAID has developed criteria and procedures for managing the risk of diversion of U.S. assistance to VEOs. As RISE II activities are developed and implemented, USAID will follow a similar process of identifying higher-risk activities or locations where more intensive oversight, or other mitigation measures, may be required.

Journey to self-reliance: RISE II will emphasize working with local partners as sub-grantees and sub-contractors, directly funding local organizations where practicable. USAID will also seek to strengthen local actors, be they private sector, non-profit, governmental, or community-based so that the development impacts initiated by USAID support can continue after USAID-support ends. USAID will strengthen partner government capacities and explore the possibilities for direct government to government support. USAID seeks partnerships with other donors in order to harmonize approaches, share lessons learned, and implement collaboratively or jointly where it adds value.

C. Project goal, outcomes, results framework, and operational principles

Goal and expected outcomes

The goal of RISE II is that “**Chronically vulnerable populations in Burkina Faso and Niger, supported by resilient systems, effectively manage shocks and stresses and pursue sustainable pathways out of poverty.**” The RISE II goal statement reflects USAID's key priorities – that vulnerable populations and individuals need to be the actors in their own development, that supportive systems (social, ecologic, economic, governmental) are essential to their success, that shocks and stressors are central contextual factors that must be explicitly addressed, and that our success will be measured by the extent to which these communities are able to sustainably progress to a higher level of well-being.

The RISE II goal is transformational, seeking to enhance individual, household, community, and institutional capacities to sustain and improve well-being in a dynamic environment of changing challenges and opportunities. RISE II seeks to contribute to absorptive, adaptive, and transformative resilience capacities and will measure the extent to which those capacities are enhanced over the life of RISE II. However, to enhance results, RISE II will provide extra attention to those aspects of the resilience capacities that have been shown by research and experience to be particularly crucial to

sustained resilience in the face of shocks and stresses. Under RISE II, these aspects are termed transformative outcomes. All USAID activities should contribute to these outcomes.

- **Enhanced community leadership of local development**
- **Enhanced social capital through strengthened ties of mutual assistance among people**
- **Enhanced capacity to learn and adapt among beneficiaries, local partners, and partner governments**

USAID will measure impacts at the population level in the RISE II zone to determine how the collective effort is contributing to the goal and transformative outcomes. Illustrative indicators include:

- **Prevalence of stunted children under five years**
- **Prevalence of wasted children under five years**
- **Global acute malnutrition rate**
- **Depth of poverty**
- **Resilience capacity index**
- **Number of people in need of humanitarian food assistance in areas/populations subject to recurrent crises**
- **TBD: Household hunger measure**
- **TBD: governance indicator**

Results framework

The RISE II results framework includes five objectives that USAID hypothesizes are necessary and sufficient to achieve the RISE II goal.

Objective 1: Enhance social and ecological risk management systems. Well-functioning ecological systems provide and regulate the water essential for human health, keep landscapes productive for agricultural and pastoral livelihoods, and in doing so reduce risks of natural resource-based conflicts and climatic shocks. Social systems are equally important, creating a safety net of mutual help. Formal risk management approaches complement these supportive systems by providing information to manage risk, practices to reduce risks, and modalities to respond quickly to reduce impact and facilitate recovery.

Objective 2: Increase and sustain economic well-being. Improved livelihoods, including profitable diversification, are essential for households to escape poverty. Individuals and households achieve this when they have individual capacity, access to resources, and opportunities to engage in inclusive, growing markets.

Objective 3: Improve health, family planning, and nutrition outcomes. Health and nutritional security are central to human well-being and reduce the risk of disease or death that can plunge a household back into poverty. Access to voluntary family planning reduces fertility rates and slows population growth, improving health outcomes for women and children, reducing pressures on natural resources and government services, and enhancing the ability of households to escape poverty.

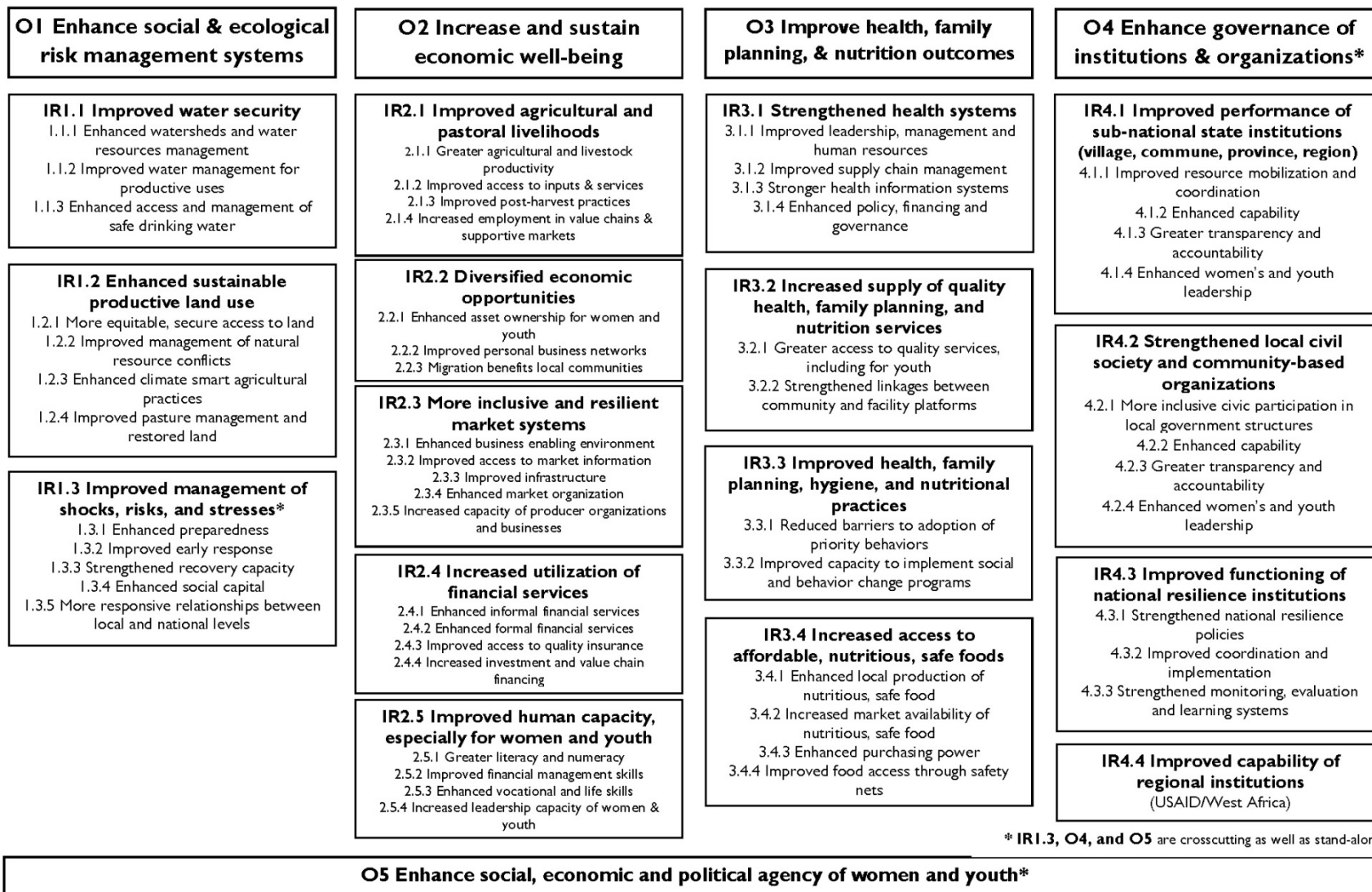
Objective 4: Enhance governance of institutions and organizations. Effective governance at local and national levels supports the sustained achievement of the other objectives by helping state and civil society institutions become more transparent, accountable, and effective at delivering services. Improved governance empowers communities to lead their own development, resulting in local solutions to felt needs.

Objective 5: Enhance social, economic, and political agency of women and youth. USAID puts a particular emphasis on enhancing the agency of women and youth because they are often in a worse position compared to adult men (and girls worse-off than adult women), and yet can have an outsize impact on the well-being of others. Building their capacities, promoting their leadership and inclusion, and increasing their access to and control over productive resources will lead to reduced risk, enhanced livelihoods, improved health outcomes, and more representative governance.



RISE II RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Goal: Chronically vulnerable populations in Burkina Faso and Niger, supported by resilient systems, effectively manage shocks and stresses and pursue sustainable pathways out of poverty.



* IRI.3, O4, and O5 are crosscutting as well as stand-alone

Operational principles

To achieve its expected results, RISE II has the following operational principles that must be applied by all partners:

- **Community-led development** – Through dialogue, support communities to develop and implement priority actions that address core challenges and opportunities
- **Systems strengthening** - Analyze and seek to strengthen formal and informal systems that build resilience and improve well-being
- **Inclusive targeting** - Support the poorest households by responding to their specific needs, enhancing their aspirations, and strengthening their ability to access resources and services to pursue pathways out of poverty
- **Collaboration for collective impact** - Seek active collaboration among RISE II implementers, host country governments, community leaders, the private sector, civil society, USG agencies and partners, international agencies, and donors to collectively benefit chronically vulnerable populations

Community-led development: USAID intends that communities should be part of the development process, identifying priorities, strategies, and resources to respond to locally-felt needs and aspirations. Using processes of dialogue, women, youth, and men explore their collective challenges and opportunities, identify and implement actions, evaluate their effectiveness, and iteratively adapt their approach as they search for greater effectiveness. The process should build motivation and actions toward achieving a locally-owned, culturally-relevant vision of a moderate, peaceful, prosperous, and equitable society. This operational principle, reformulated in more general terms as “locally-led development” should also be extended to higher levels of governance, encompassing commune and inter-village relationships, and regional and national leadership and actions. The narrative for Objective 4 further explains USAID’s approach to enhancing governance and institutional performance.

Systems strengthening: Vulnerable populations need well-functioning systems, be they social, ecological, economic, governmental, or political to support them as they work toward their own development goals. If systems are resilient to shocks and if system actors have the capacity to learn and adjust in response to opportunities or challenges, the systems will help sustain development impacts over the longer term. Enhancing systems requires a facilitation approach, where USAID acts from outside the system to stimulate change and build capacities. This should result in self-driven actions by system actors that continue to occur after USAID support ends.

Inclusive targeting: RISE II seeks to primarily benefit rural populations, with a special emphasis on the most vulnerable, women, and youth. In many cases, achieving results for the poorest or vulnerable requires a community-wide or system-wide approach that recognizes the interdependencies among community members, between producers and buyers, rural and

urban, etc. Inclusiveness means that the poor, vulnerable, women, and youth must ultimately benefit and have enhanced agency and engagement in decisions affecting their lives.

Collaboration for collective impact: USAID recognizes that RISE II is pursuing a challenging goal in a difficult environment. Making progress toward this goal requires a collaborative approach among USAID partners, guided by the common transformative outcomes, results framework, and operational principles. One reason collaboration is necessary is because resilience is a multi-sector concept and the RISE II results framework strategically combines interventions from many different disciplines. RISE II is a team effort, in which each partner has its respective responsibilities and strengths. Each RISE II objective has one or more strategic approaches that identify how partners complement each other as well as the places where they will need to interact, requiring close coordination and joint planning. During the first year of implementation, USAID will facilitate a process to clarify these joint strategies, the respective responsibilities, and the “nodes of collaboration.” The objective narratives below provide initial indications of this division of responsibilities.

Because USAID seeks to mainstream learning and adaptation in RISE II, USAID and its partners will establish a joint learning agenda and agree on shared indicators and other measures to ensure their results are additive and comparable. USAID will actively engage host country counterparts to better align USAID indicators with host government measures. USAID may develop shared data systems to which all partners are expected to contribute. Our efforts to implement, learn, and adapt will need to be collective efforts, not just among USAID and its implementing partners, but also together with host government counterparts, local communities, and the wider development community.

USAID will develop an efficient RISE II management process that brings partners together on a regular basis to learn from each other, assess progress toward higher level RISE II results, and agree on strategic approaches to reach jointly-defined goals. Increasingly, the RISE II community will strive for a common agenda that informs joint actions as well as individual partner work plans and strategic approaches.

D. Objective narratives

The following objective narratives describe the technical approach under each objective. Each narrative includes a brief rationale, a development hypothesis, a description of the overall strategic approach, brief discussions of how cross-cutting issues of “women and youth”, “governance,” and “risk management” will be addressed within that objective, and explanations of each intermediate result (IR). The discussions of cross-cutting issues are meant to complement the respective objective narratives on risk management (Obj. 1), governance (Obj. 4), and women and youth (Obj. 5) by showing how those issues will be addressed in a manner specific to each objective. Finally, each objective narrative ends with brief explanations of the expected contributions of different USAID programs and other donor and government efforts, and areas/issues on which they will need to collaborate. This final discussion describes how USAID expects the RISE II principle of “collaboration for collective impact” to be expressed under each objective. The division of responsibilities and nodes of collaboration will be

validated, expanded and adjusted by USAID and its partners during the implementation process through collaborative, adaptive management.

Objective 1: Enhance social and ecological risk management systems

Rationale

The prevailing context of vulnerability in the RISE II zone shows populations unable to effectively manage ubiquitous shocks and stresses. The most pressing day-to-day need and the greatest constraint to macroeconomic growth is access to water. Lack of water and poor drinking water quality contribute to malnutrition and disease, and pose a limiting constraint to agricultural and livestock production. Unsustainable natural resource use, desertification and intense population pressures exacerbate water resource scarcity while also propelling degradation of agricultural and pasture land. Grazing lands compete with agriculture parcels, and both are challenged by low soil fertility and insufficient water resources to meet all users' needs. This fuels natural resource-based conflicts, loss of livelihoods, and food insecurity.

Climate variability and change, including cyclical droughts and flooding, increasingly variable rainfall, higher average temperatures, pest and disease outbreaks, and currency and price fluctuations worsen this already challenging context. Households often face both covariate shocks, like extreme weather events, and idiosyncratic shocks, like a death in the family or divorce. The combination or sequencing of multiple shocks creates a downward spiral of increasing vulnerability. The RISE baseline showed that 92% of households in the RISE zone experienced a shock in a 5-year span and 75% did not recover to the same pre-shock level. Individuals, households, communities, and communes rely on external support or response systems when internal coping strategies exceed their capacity, but extant local early warning systems rarely result in adequate response from commune or national response structures. This leaves local communities disillusioned, isolated, and increasingly sensitive to localized shocks and stresses. Local response capacities and social capital are eroded over time or constrained by an overwhelming portfolio of need.

Development Hypothesis

To address the challenges of shocks and stresses in the RISE II zone, USAID hypothesizes that:

IF ecological systems are restored and sustainably managed to enhance ecosystem services that reduce risks and impacts of water scarcity, flood, and other natural hazards, and

If access to water and land is improved, especially for women, youth, marginalized, and

If social capital, i.e. social systems of mutual support, are enhanced, and

IF chronically vulnerable people can benefit from and participate in enhanced risk management approaches that address covariate and idiosyncratic shocks,

THEN chronically vulnerable people in Burkina Faso and Niger will be better able to manage risks and prepare for, respond to, and recover from shocks and stresses.

Technical Approach

Overall strategy

USAID's approach to risk management in the Sahel involves building a foundation of improved management of natural resources, including provision of clean water services and secure access to productive land for household and economic activities. USAID will moderate the impacts of climatic shocks by improving natural resource management (land, water, trees, soils, grasslands) and agricultural management such that the ecological systems are healthier and the human management of those resources is more effective, resulting in more consistent and sustainable provision of human benefits (e.g. drinking water, crop yields, natural products, flood control) even in times of water scarcity, intensive rainfall, or heat waves. Conceptual frameworks that describe this approach include ecosystem-based adaptation (see text box), green infrastructure for natural resources, and climate smart agricultural systems. Because lack of access to water is a central risk in the Sahel, USAID will employ a water security⁶ improvement approach that enhances reliable water access, ensures adequate water availability, and addresses threats to water supply such as uncertain or inadequate rainfall (see text box). Strengthening governance of land and water is essential to the success of all these efforts and will also assist in reducing the risk of natural resource based conflicts.

Social support systems are also central to risk management. USAID will enhance social cohesion and mutual support, such that community members and neighboring communities are able and willing to help out when households face idiosyncratic shocks like a death in the family, or common shocks like a flood. USAID's interventions to build household capabilities, assets, incomes, and access to formal and informal finance (Obj. 2) will strengthen individual household resilience and their ability to help others. Interventions to

Ecosystem-based adaptation: provides flexible and cost-effective approaches that enhance resilience through improved management and conservation of ecosystems. A nature-based method for climate change adaptation, it can reduce the vulnerability of societies and economies to extreme events. EbA can offer cost savings compared with other approaches, as well as additional benefits such as provision of wild foods, carbon sequestration and biodiversity conservation. <https://www.climatelinks.org/resources/ecosystem-based-adaptation-and-water-security>

Water security improvement: focuses on a few commonly shared principles: (a) **access** to an appropriate quantity and quality of water to ensure human security in all its dimensions (physical, economic, social, political) and for multiple sectors (domestic, agricultural, industrial); (b) **ecological sustainability** of the resource over time at the appropriate geographic scale, i.e., watershed/river basin/aquifer; and (c) **management of water-related risks** under current and future socioeconomic and climate scenarios. WSI approaches include collaborative planning and implementation, combining gray and green infrastructure, awareness raising and behavior change campaigns, data-informed resource management, and policy improvements. For an example see https://www.swpwater.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/20171116_Winrock_SWP_Toolkit-1.pdf

⁶ The United Nations defines water security as “the capacity of a population to safeguard sustainable access to adequate quantities of acceptable quality water for sustaining livelihoods, human well-being, and socio-economic development, for ensuring protection against water-borne pollution and water-related disasters, and for preserving ecosystems in a climate of peace and political stability” (UN-Water 2014).

strengthen health services and increase access to food (Obj. 3) will also reduce the number, intensity, and impacts of idiosyncratic and common household shocks.

USAID will enhance existing formal resilience systems through risk management approaches that identify actions to reduce vulnerabilities, provide early warnings of shocks, respond to shocks to protect lives and livelihoods, and assist in recovery after a shock. USAID will coordinate access to multi-hazard early warning and climate information services across all sectors, ensuring that products meet the needs of local actors. USAID will also enhance the functionality of national early warning systems, strengthening responsive linkages between national, sub-national, and local levels. In addition, all USAID activities will be required to have a flexible shock-responsive contingency plan that identifies risk reducing and early response actions. Where appropriate, activities will also include a crisis modifier.

Cross-cutting thematic areas

Women and youth: Shocks and stresses often have a disproportionate impact on women and youth. For example, water scarcity is inherently a burden for women and girls, who collect water, manage household health, and often grow nutritious foods. USAID will use gender and social analyses to ensure water provision is equitable, risk management addresses the specific needs of men, women, girls and boys, and land is managed so that women and youth have secure access. Women are also commonly faced with unique and complex challenges that prevent their reliable access to productive land for their chosen use and benefit. USAID will promote women and youth as leaders and active participants in decision making about community and household allocation of resources and responses to shocks and stresses. USAID will pursue innovative solutions to improve women's land access and rights. Evidence shows that women who own land are significantly more likely to have the final say in household decisions, a measure of empowerment, and an additional reinforcement of household resilience. Similarly, children of mothers who own land are significantly less likely to be severely underweight (Allendorf, 2007). Additional research shows that if women had the same access to resources for agricultural production as men, they could increase yields on their farms by 20 to 30 percent, resulting in cascading additional benefits to families, communities, and national economies (Espinoza, 2014)

Governance: Governance is central to all aspects of risk management, from improving management of natural resources, to identifying risks and monitoring shocks, to deciding on and implementing a response. Enhancing ecological resilience requires balancing multiple uses and users, an inherent governance function. USAID may support resource planning, conflict management, and user group decision making capacity. Some governance interventions, such as support for water service delivery, may require working at a higher system level to enhance policies, regulations, incentives and capacities of government, private sector, and communities. USAID's commitment to inclusive, responsive, and transparent governance also implies that citizens will be engaged as partners in these efforts.

Intermediate result (IR) descriptions

IR1.1 Improved water security

Water scarcity is a critical issue affecting the Sahel. Physical scarcity combined with a lack of water resources management and weak water governance and provisioning systems means that vulnerable communities, often in rural areas, lack access to reliable sources of water to meet basic domestic and livelihood needs, leaving them more vulnerable to the risks of uncertain or inadequate rainfall and unhygienic surface water. RISE II will employ a water security improvement approach to enable communities, communes, and other relevant institutions to ensure sustainable access to water through better management of water supply and demand. Improved water services and sustainably managed groundwater extraction will ensure water is used efficiently to meet present-day and long-term needs. USAID will work at the watershed level to monitor and restore ecosystems services such as flood and storm-water management, enhanced ground water recharge, and longer-lasting seasonal water bodies. USAID will also help communities and local governments better manage water for productive uses such as crop irrigation, livestock watering, food processing, or manufacturing. USAID will also improve access to sustainable, safe drinking water through new and rehabilitated infrastructure in accordance with policies of the governments of Niger and Burkina Faso on drinking water service delivery and private sector operations and maintenance (O&M). An inclusive, stakeholder-driven approach to analyzing, prioritizing, and managing threats to water security will be particularly important to ensure equitable access to limited water resources, to reduce conflict, and to address the needs of women and the most vulnerable, including the semi-or non-sedentary affected populations.

IRI.2 Enhanced sustainable productive land use

Because of population growth and climatic trends, much of the land in the RISE II zone is degraded and hotly contested as a key resource supporting local livelihoods. When land is more fertile it helps to moderate the impacts of inconsistent rainfall and drought because it increases soil water retention. RISE II will support locally-developed gender-sensitive plans and actions to restore productivity and enhance equitable access to land resources by the most vulnerable, with a particular emphasis on secure access by women and youth. USAID will encourage innovative approaches to enhancing women's access to land, including addressing issues of time poverty and control that affect their ability to invest in agricultural activities. Under RISE, significant successes have been achieved in helping groups of women access and improve degraded lands so it can be used for profitable off-season production. Access to productive assets, such as land, is a resilience capacity that assists households recover from shocks. Local conventions that outline land use and governance arrangements will be a keystone intervention in RISE II. USAID expects that the next generation of local conventions, if designed and implemented well, will reduce conflicts over natural resources and land access and use, assist in watershed and water use management, identify high potential areas for land restoration investments, and support development planning and public administration. The long-term success of local conventions and arrangements for secure land access will depend on close coordination with relevant government and traditional authorities. In fact, USAID's vision is that local conventions will be formally adopted and promoted by the governments of Niger and Burkina Faso. Under RISE II, community-level land management will be complemented by promotion of climate-smart agricultural and pastoral practices that enhance yields, reduce susceptibility to fluctuations in rainfall, and restore watershed functionality. Sustainability and natural spread of these practices is a goal of RISE II, thus the profitability, usefulness and ease of farmer and herder implementation will be critical. USAID will support land and pasture

restoration, through improved pasture management and asset creation activities. USAID intends that communities and local governments will increasingly make their own contributions to these efforts as they see their value.

IRI.3 Improved management of shocks, risks, and stresses

The water and productive landscapes approaches described above include ecosystem-based adaptation actions that restore supportive ecological functions and help manage and reduce the impacts of shocks and stresses like rainfall variability, floods, drought, heatwaves, and crop diseases and pests. However, covariate and idiosyncratic shocks and stresses will still occur. Individuals, local communities and governments need to be capable of managing risks and responding quickly and robustly to shocks. USAID will build this capability by increasing access to multi-hazard early warning and climate information services, helping local actors use that information to make decisions, and strengthening linkages between national, sub-national, and local levels to encourage two-way flow of information and mobilization of resources. USAID will support preparedness, early response, and recovery capacities, systems, and policies at all relevant geographic levels, with a particular focus on local and sub-national levels. USAID will promote village, commune and regional contingency planning; social capital strengthening within and between communities to enhance collective responses; and local capacity to respond and recover. USAID will also directly work to manage the risks of idiosyncratic shocks, such as illness, death or divorce, by enhancing household assets, diversifying income, strengthening health services, and building social capital. USAID will facilitate the use of inclusive, equitable approaches that take into account the differential needs of the poor, ethnic groups, individuals with disabilities, and men, women, boys and girls. Achieving this may involve supporting inclusive consultative decision-making processes, tools and methods accessible to illiterate individuals or different language groups, and leadership capacity strengthening. In partnership with donors, civil society and host governments, USAID will strengthen existing institutions and systems rather than create parallel structures. All RISE II partners will implement a shock-responsive approach in which they develop sector- and location-specific contingency plans that use timely early warning and climate services to inform actions that reduce risks, protect lives and livelihoods, and facilitate a transition to humanitarian assistance if needed.

Partner roles and nodes of collaboration

DFSAs and other community-level activities: Consider integrated approaches that address the complex environmental challenges of the Sahel, including the increasingly dry and variable climate and the need for productive land and increased yields. In partnership with communities and local government, improve natural resource and land governance, water security and water resource management, and provision of safe drinking water. Deliver a package of technical assistance and behavior change activities to help address vulnerabilities to shocks and stresses, and work on the systemic changes needed to enhance household capacities to cope and recover from shocks and stresses. Implement a response strategy for dealing with predictable shocks relevant to the proposed target area(s) and livelihood groups. Partners may identify and pursue other interventions based on their theory of change.

SRO activities: Improve water security through investments in watershed management and provision of water for household and productive use. Strengthen water governance systems

and water provision through engaging and building the capacity of government and private sector actors. Support local conventions and enhance secure access to land. Prepare specialized technical analyses such as water resources planning, geospatial suitability mapping for landscape restoration practices, and multi-hazard early warning indicator tracking systems. Coordinate and refine climate and early warning information and facilitate its availability and usefulness to households, communities, and government structures. Strengthen national early warning and disaster response systems.

Other USG/USAID: In Niger, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) is carrying out water resources analyses that include many RISE II communities, and is partnering with the World Bank to support pastoral corridors and climate smart agriculture in many RISE II regions. USAID/West Africa's support to build CILSS's leadership and organizational capacity will benefit its implementing agency, AGRHYMET, which provides meteorological and food security-related information services to the region.

Nodes of collaboration: USAID implementing partners will need to coordinate and collaborate on water resources management, including watershed restoration, and provision of water for productive and household use; engagement with communes on local conventions and land use planning; increasing secure access to land; provision of climate information services to local communities; and coordination of shock response approaches and contingency planning. To facilitate the emergence of best practices, reduce redundancy, and promote coherence, SRO activities will strategically connect actors from national to local levels (including other USAID partners) to coordinate efforts on watershed and groundwater mapping, climate information services, and early warning systems. USAID anticipates that DFSAs and other FFP investments will take the lead on engagement with local officials and communities in communes where they are active, and SRO partners will assist with provision of advanced analyses and fill gaps in assistance. In other communes, SRO partners would be the lead interlocutor and on-the-ground implementer.

Objective 2: Increase and sustain economic well-being

Rationale

The poor state of economic well-being among households and communities in the RISE II zone is characterized by low and unstable incomes; food insecurity; poor health and malnutrition, the failure to protect, accumulate, and leverage livelihood assets; and a compromised ability to adapt to, and recover from, shocks and longer-term stresses. Driven and exacerbated by population pressure and increasing climate variability and change, a number of factors have contributed to this poverty: declining availability of arable land, a lack of secure access to land, limited access to financial services, limited intensification of crop and livestock production, a lack of access to remunerative markets, a dearth of off- and on-farm livelihood alternatives, and poor physical market infrastructure. Cross-cutting these structural issues is weak human capacity, especially of women and youth, in the form of very low literacy and numeracy rates, weak financial literacy, lack of vocational and life skills, low leadership capacity or opportunity, and sometimes low positive aspirations for a better life.

Despite these challenges, there are economic opportunities in the RISE II zone and strengths upon which to build. For example, Niger is famous for its sheep and specialty goats. The Maradi red goat is highly valued for its supple but strong skin, ideal for high end leather products. The many varieties of sheep are prized for their meat in West African countries, especially during the annual Tabaski holidays. Burkina Faso is famous for the flavor and quality of its poultry. Burkina Faso and Niger also have strong traditions of migration, providing a release valve for the growing population and generating remittances for rural areas. Under RISE II, USAID will pursue an integrated and comprehensive approach that addresses the challenges and builds on local strengths to sustainably enhance economic well-being.

Development Hypothesis

To enhance the economic well-being of populations in the RISE II zone, USAID hypothesizes that:

IF the poor, women, and youth have increased human capacity, access to resources, and supportive business relationships, such that they have marketable products or skills, and

IF market systems are structured efficiently, provide the poor, women and youth greater access and higher prices, and are resilient to shocks and flexible to respond to new opportunities, and

IF finance becomes more available to market actors and market actors increase their own business capacity, and

IF the poor, women, and youth are connected to and supported as they respond to market opportunities,

THEN pastoral, agricultural, and other diverse livelihoods of the poor will become more profitable and economic well-being among rural populations in the RISE zone will be increased and sustained.

Technical Approach

Overall strategy

Under RISE II, USAID will implement a strategy to 1) enhance the capabilities of the poor, especially women and youth, to select and succeed in more profitable livelihoods, 2) expand the opportunities available to them to engage in markets, and 3) facilitate their initial entry into those markets. Capability enhancing activities will focus on their ability to enhance livelihood profitability through increased human capacity, access to finance and productive assets, formation into economic groups, and business networking. USAID will conduct market assessments, coaching, capacity enhancement, resource transfers, and group formation as necessary to help beneficiaries pursue the most promising livelihood opportunities. Opportunity expanding activities will focus on strengthening markets so they are efficient, resilient and inclusive; professionalizing economic groups and businesses; developing and extending formal financial, input, and technical services to RISE II communities; and enhancing the business environment through improved policy implementation, enhanced transparency, and reduced corruption.

RISE II will strengthen three market systems - small ruminants, poultry, and rural foods – as well as supportive markets like finance, animal feed, veterinary services, and business development services. Given diversity in interests and capabilities among individuals, a beneficiary may request and receive USAID assistance for a livelihood not linked to these targeted markets. The rural food market system is a new addition to RISE, intended to enhance the availability of affordable, safe and nutritious food in RISE II communities in support of the RISE II objective of improved nutrition outcomes through increased food access (IR3.4) and Objective 3 more generally. In addition to the targeted market systems, USAID may support other locally-relevant value chains and economic diversification opportunities like trades (carpenter, electrician), retailing, services, natural resource products, and migration.

Cross-cutting thematic areas

Women and Youth: USAID will put a special emphasis on enhancing women’s and youth agency, strengthening their aspirations, skills, and leadership capacities and opportunities in business and in their communities. USAID will provide support to youth entrepreneurs and enhance the access of women to markets. USAID-supported market systems - poultry, small ruminants, and rural food – are all markets systems in which women currently engage and that are well-suited for expanding women’s participation. These markets are also attractive to youth in that they offer opportunities for value addition, and can generate relatively quick, tangible returns.

Governance: The market systems development approach is largely about self-governance – bringing market actors together with each other, and with government, to improve the environment for mutually profitable business transactions. USAID’s approach will seek to enhance transparency, trust, and representativeness of the market systems, while strengthening the capability of market actors to engage in market governance.

Risk Management: Economic activities are highly impacted by climate, price, and security-related shocks and stresses. USAID will promote risk management practices, such as climate-smart agriculture, insurance, household livelihood diversification, and animal health services. USAID will also support the provision of climate and market information to market actors, allowing them to anticipate and plan for shocks, and find alternative, more profitable markets. USAID will partner with government and the private sector to develop early-action plans, such as livestock destocking, and economic recovery mechanisms, such as vouchers to enhance consumer demand.

IR descriptions

IR2.1 Improved agricultural and pastoral livelihoods

USAID will work with farmers, herders, and local communities to help them evaluate and choose locally-adapted, climate-smart production practices to enhance agricultural and pastoral livelihoods through increased yields, sustainably intensified production, and reduction in post-harvest loss. USAID will also enhance access to affordable inputs and services, such as improved seeds and quality fertilizers, animal feed, private veterinary services, and agricultural advice. Given the context of limited government capacity and funding, USAID will prioritize

service and input delivery models that are private sector or community/group based, while engaging relevant government technical services to ensure compliance with regulations and policies and share lessons learned. Improved post-harvest practices that reduce wastage, improve safety, maintain quality, and add value will be supported, often in combination with financial services. USAID will promote increased employment in agriculture, livestock and rural food market systems, such as jobs in processing, trading, marketing, input supply, and transportation. These opportunities will be particularly supported for women and youth.

IR2.2 Diversified economic opportunities

Households and individuals in the Sahel already seek to diversify their livelihoods but are often challenged by the limited diversity of opportunities in the overall economies of Burkina Faso and Niger. USAID will support households, women, and youth to pursue their chosen diversification strategies by identifying market opportunities, providing them with a productive asset or cash grant, building their capacities (see IR2.5), and helping them gain a supportive professional network and business contacts. Participant selection could be through a wealth-ranking process to identify the poorest, or through a competitive process to identify the most viable rural entrepreneurs. One source of diversification, local migration, is a fact of life in these communities, but it can be unsafe or unprofitable. USAID will enhance the benefits of local migration for rural populations by helping the family left behind cope better, improving remittance fund transfers (see IR2.4), and enhancing the human capacity of youth so that if they do migrate they will be able to obtain better paying jobs and be more likely to send funds back to their villages.

IR2.3 More inclusive and resilient market systems

A facilitative markets systems development approach will be used to enhance efficiency, competitiveness, and inclusiveness of the small ruminant, poultry, and rural food market systems. Interventions will be nutrition-sensitive and enhance food safety. By improving the structure and organization of the markets to increase redundancy, flexibility and networks of business relationships, system resilience to external shocks will be enhanced. To support these transactions, USAID will also enhance access to and consumption of market information by market actors, especially the rural poor, illiterate community members, and women. USAID may invest in limited market related infrastructure, but will primarily seek to partner with host governments and other donors to encourage infrastructure enhancement in the RISE II zone. Similarly, USAID may invest in targeted business enabling environment efforts in partnership with other donors. Finally, USAID will support entry into beneficial market relationships by producers and other economic groups, especially women and youth.

IR2.4 Increased utilization of financial services

Lack of access to finance is repeatedly cited as a key constraint to profitable livelihoods for both men and women. USAID will support informal financial services through community-based savings and lending groups. USAID will also facilitate formal financial institution service provision and effective use in the RISE zone. Given that unmanaged risk is a major barrier to agricultural investment, USAID will pilot agricultural and/or livestock insurance and work with partners in Niger and Burkina Faso to ensure that insurance products are high-quality, of value, safe, and affordable for populations in the RISE II zone. Finally, through public-private partnerships, USAID will stimulate private investment in the RISE II zone, particularly in the

targeted market systems. Finance interventions will be intimately tied to livelihoods and market system development activities to maximize uptake and impact.

IR2.5 Improved human capacity, especially for women and youth

Communities in the RISE zone have very low levels of education, especially women and girls. USAID will enhance functional literacy and numeracy of women and youth, build their financial management skills, develop vocational and life skills, and strengthen their leadership capacity and opportunities. This capacity building will be accompanied by interventions to enhance positive aspirations for a successful life.

USAID may engage in improving the safety of schools for girls, promoting girls' attendance, and strengthening educational quality. Messaging to mothers and fathers on the importance of keeping girls in school can be added to other Social and Behavior Change interventions. More broadly, USAID understands the importance of education to achieving the RISE II goal and, if education funding is realized, USAID will target investments in the RISE zone as a long-term way to improve human capacity.

Partner roles and nodes of collaboration

DFSAs and any other community-level activities: Enhance capabilities, assets and agency of extremely poor, chronically vulnerable, and moderately poor individuals and households to implement and sustain positive changes in income and food security. Approaches will include specific targeting of women and youth. This may include access to informal finance. Strengthen and diversify livelihood opportunities, considering opportunities linked to off-farm income and value chain development. Consider addressing constraints from low literacy and numeracy. Partners may identify and pursue other interventions based on their theory of change.

SRO activities: Professionalizing producer groups and entrepreneurs; strengthening market linkages and structures; assisting financial institutions on product development, business strategies, and outreach to consumers; strengthening private veterinary services networks; providing business development services for buyers, processors, traders, and input suppliers; stimulating private investment; enhancing production of livestock and poultry to meet market requirements; and targeted policy or institutional reform. SRO will engage and benefit women, youth and marginalized peoples in all its activities as it builds inclusive and accessible market systems, and enhances the capacities of women and youth to participate in them.

Other USG/USAID: USAID/West Africa leads regional seeds, fertilizer and trade policy. MCC leads on fertilizer policy reform in Niger and will support livestock and pastoralist livelihoods and infrastructure. USDA investments and USAID's Innovation Labs for agricultural and food security research may be coordinated with RISE II.

Other donor and government initiatives: World Bank PRAPS program and other donors support pastoralists, agricultural development, and access to finance. USAID will continue to coordinate closely with host governments, at all levels, to reinforce the importance of resilience and to make programs and policies effective to this end.

Nodes of collaboration: RISE II partners will likely need to collaborate in the following areas: building women's and youth leadership and capacity, supporting producer group capacity and market access; enhancing agricultural and pastoral yields; strengthening post-harvest storage and processing to add value and ensure food safety; improving access to finance and inputs by producer groups; stimulating investment through public-private partnerships; strengthening food market systems, and reforming policies and policy implementation.

Objective 3: Improve health, family planning and nutrition outcomes

Rationale

Improved health, family planning and nutrition outcomes are essential to reducing stressors, managing shocks and enabling chronically vulnerable populations to pursue sustainable pathways out of poverty. However, the health systems in these countries are unable to deliver quality health services. Moreover, the people of Burkina Faso and Niger are not optimally engaged in the management of their own health and lack access to safe, nutritious, affordable food. As a result, the populations in these countries continue to suffer from high rates of infectious diseases and preventable child and maternal deaths. Diseases, such as malaria, can reduce prime age labor productivity (and even lead to death) which in turn can negatively impact household resilience. High rates of population growth place additional strain on households and an increasingly fragile environment. The modern contraceptive prevalence rate among married women is low, especially in Niger, and both countries have a high unmet need for family planning, which presents an opportunity to address the high levels of fertility. However, social norms favor large family size and encourage child and early marriage.

Development Hypothesis

To improve health, family planning, and nutrition outcomes, USAID hypothesizes that:

IF key elements of the health systems are strengthened, and

IF the supply of quality services is increased, and

IF healthy behaviors are adopted, and

IF access to safe, nutritious, affordable foods is increased,

THEN health, nutrition and family planning outcomes in the zones of intervention in Burkina Faso and Niger will improve, which will in turn contribute to more sustainable pathways out of poverty.

Technical Approach

Overall strategy

RISE II aims to enhance ownership, capacity and partnerships at all levels from individuals to national governments to achieve sustained improvements in health, family planning, and nutrition outcomes in the RISE II zone. USAID will do this by demonstrating and piloting high impact practices in the RISE II zone in partnership with communities, local government, and

technical services. USAID's engagement on national health systems strengthening will focus on the long-term sustainability of health services delivery in the RISE II zone, including through policy and institutional reforms. Using action research on social and behavior change (SBC) interventions, USAID and its partners will tailor the approaches to local contexts, and build the evidence base for wider adoption of effective SBC, including incorporation in national policies and scale-up by the development community. To complement behavior change around good nutritional practices, USAID will pilot an integrated, market-based and gender-sensitive approach to ensuring local access to nutritious, safe and affordable foods. USAID will complement field activities with its own technical and policy engagement in the donor community and will build strong government-to-government relationships.

USAID will seek to improve the health, family planning, and nutrition status of the following populations:

- Women of reproductive age, with special focus on periods of adolescence, pregnancy, post-partum, and lactation; and
- Children under five, with special focus on the first 1,000 days and newborn period.

Achieving results for the targeted populations will require engagement with men and women, including but not limited to key influencers and traditional and religious leaders, in order to foster community-wide commitment and actions, as well as improvements to intra-household decision making and gender relations and dynamics.

Cross-cutting thematic areas

Women and youth: USAID will emphasize women's agency in addressing barriers to health, family planning, water sanitation and hygiene (WASH), and nutrition activities. RISE II will also seek to address provider behaviors towards women, which can also deter care seeking behaviors. Youth, which comprise the majority of the population in Burkina Faso and Niger, are not a homogeneous group. Health and nutrition programs should specifically address the needs of adolescent girls, while also promoting more supportive behaviors by adolescent boys. Under RISE II, USAID will seek to address the barriers to care, further segmenting this population and addressing the key gateway behaviors that prevent them from accessing health, family planning, WASH and nutrition services and adopting healthier behaviors.

Governance: USAID will seek to strengthen governance of the health sector, working at both the national and sub-national levels in Burkina Faso and Niger. Under RISE II, USAID will seek to improve oversight and accountability and strengthen the linkages with communities which will help to reinforce management of the health sector. USAID implementing partners must align programs with, and support, national health systems.

Risk management: Many of the disease burdens experienced are climate sensitive, exacerbated by floods, droughts, and increasing temperatures. Food availability and quality will likely decrease, impacting nutrition. Stresses and shocks can exacerbate gender norms, reducing women's and children's access to food and health services, and increasing risk of abuse and early marriage. USAID hypothesizes that with a strengthened and resilient health system, Niger and Burkina Faso will be better able to mitigate and respond to the health challenges posed by

climate risk. For example, health systems with stronger immunization programs and stronger disease surveillance systems are more capable of responding to epidemics, such as a cholera outbreak. Behavior change interventions can help to reduce self-defeating or harmful coping strategies that increase malnutrition or ill-health, and improve the ability of women and girls to lead healthy and safe lives. Climate-smart agricultural, food processing, and trade practices can increase the resilience of food supplies to shocks and stresses.

IR descriptions

IR 3.1: Strengthened health systems

RISE II investments in health systems strengthening will address key constraints that impede access to quality health, family planning and nutrition services. These constraints include lack of health clinic staffing in remote areas, poor quality of care, limited access to medical supplies, and inadequate health data collection and reporting systems. These efforts will be tailored to address the specific needs and priorities of the Ministries of Health (MOH) in Burkina Faso and Niger. At the national level, USAID will focus on supporting the development and implementation of key policies where gaps exist and strengthening vital institutional structures. Within the RISE II zones of intervention, USAID will work comprehensively at the regional, district and community levels to demonstrate successful and scalable approaches. These efforts will coordinate closely with Objective 4, focusing on strengthening leadership and management, including budget formulation and resource allocation, addressing health workforce issues, improving pharmaceutical supply chain management and improving the quality, timeliness and accuracy of data collection and reporting and the capacity to utilize data for decision-making.

IR3.2: Increased supply of quality health, family planning and nutrition services

Much of the maternal and child mortality in Niger and Burkina Faso is preventable with appropriate preventive and curative care; however, insufficient, inequitable access to health facilities and poor quality of care significantly impede progress toward achievement of improved health outcomes. RISE II activities will focus on linkages by addressing critical gaps between the community and health facilities to improve access to Maternal and Child Health/Nutrition/Family Planning (MCH/N/FP) services. Emphasis will be placed on addressing the immediate and proximate barriers to delivering quality services, including provider behavior, and ensuring the provision of high impact practices and other priority services. A country-specific approach will be required, taking into account the divergent national contexts surrounding health service provision. USAID will support health facilities to provide an integrated package of MCH/FP/N services, especially at first-line health facilities and through associated outreach staff, and strengthen referral linkages between health centers and first line referral facilities. Health facility based interventions will be complemented by community-level nutrition screening and referral, community-based management of acute malnutrition (CMAM), and integrated community case management (iCCM) of child illness in line with government policies to reinforce the community continuum-of-care. In the area of family planning, USAID will continue a successful model of mobile outreach services, with an emphasis on providing long-acting and reversible FP methods. Activities will collaborate with and leverage interventions under Objective 4, especially IR4.1 and IR4.2, to strengthen the role of communities and other local governance structures in the provision and oversight of quality health services.

IR 3.3: Improved health, family planning, hygiene and nutritional practices

To achieve enhanced health, family planning, hygiene and nutrition outcomes, individuals and communities have to practice improved behaviors. USAID will implement an overarching gender-sensitive Social and Behavior Change (SBC) strategy that (1) delivers high quality SBC programming in the RISE II zone, and (2) strengthens the MOH systems to provide technical leadership and oversight of SBC efforts in Burkina Faso and Niger. SBC interventions will focus on determinants that most directly influence individual behavior, incorporating fine-grained audience segmentation and targeting and a range of communication channels. SBC interventions will address both individual and social or communal barriers to uptake of improved behaviors. SBC will also address community-wide behaviors, such as achievement of Open Defecation Free certification. USAID will address “gateway behaviors” that offer potential to impact outcomes in one or more health areas. Such behaviors include couples’ communication; healthcare provider behavior(s) in counseling and treating clients; parent-child communication; and health information-seeking. USAID will also explore non-communication-based approaches to behavior change, such as behavioral “nudges.” Behavioral interventions to improve hygiene practices under this IR will be complemented by IR 1.4 which supports provision of safe drinking water, and by IR 2.2 that may support entrepreneurs interested in providing low-cost aspirational options for household sanitation products. USAID partners will likely implement WASH components in an integrated manner that combines physical access, governance, and improved behaviors.

IR 3.4: Increased access to affordable, nutritious, safe foods

Many households in the zones of intervention lack access to adequate safe and nutritious food. For most households, on-farm crop production and at-home food production represent an important opportunity to improve diets. In addition, most households also depend on markets to supply a significant proportion of their diet. Under RISE II, USAID partners will identify local nutritional deficiencies in target populations, taking into account seasonal variability, and use a food systems approach to identify a basket of interventions that can increase local production and market availability of safe, nutritious foods. USAID will also work to increase the purchasing power of malnourished households, addressing not simply the absolute value of household income, but also reliability and stability of income, cash flow, assets, savings, financial and risk management services, and the cycle of debt. USAID will reinforce formal and informal social protection systems and safety nets within the zones of intervention to address the needs of the most vulnerable households. IR 3.4 is built on results achieved under Objectives 1 and 2 which aim to sustainably enhance agricultural productivity and food market system functioning, improve household incomes, and build risk management and social support capacities. In fact, IR 3.4 provides a type of lens and organizing principle to better target Objective 1 and 2 interventions to achieve food security outcomes.

Partner roles and nodes of collaboration

DFSAs and any other community-level activities: Lead individual, household, and community engagement on social and behavior change, adapting and creating tools through a technical . Support local production and local market access to nutritious, safe and affordable foods. Enhance purchasing power and social support of

vulnerable households and individuals. Partners may identify and pursue other interventions based on their theory of change.

SRO activities: In partnership with DFSAs, develop and test SBC tools and approaches segmented to different target audiences, and support their approval and scale-up by partner government technical services. Lead health systems strengthening and policy reform or implementation support. Health systems work will likely be implemented region-wide, including in areas where DFSAs are not active – in this case SRO may engage in limited direct community-level SBC interventions. Lead engagement in national market provision of safe, affordable, and nutritious foods to the RISE II zone.

Other USAID/USG: RISE II will leverage and coordinate with the President’s Malaria Initiative (PMI), which recently expanded to include Niger as a focus country and increased its investments in Burkina Faso. Other USAID investments include the Amplify-FP program, a successor to the Agir-PF activity, and Health Policy Plus (HP+) program which assists the MOH in Burkina Faso and Niger to implement important new policies, including a law on the legal age for marriage in Niger, funded through the USAID/West Africa Regional Health Office. In Niger, the Participatory Responsive Governance-Principal Activity (PRG-PA)'s three priority sectors for improved governance are health, education, and security. Within health, PRG-PA is currently focused on improving human resource systems to include the placement and oversight of healthcare workers. RISE II will also include USAID’s support to the World Food Program for prevention and treatment of moderate acute malnutrition and to UNICEF for treatment of severe acute malnutrition.

Other donor and government initiatives: Implementing partners under RISE II will work closely with the Ministries of Health (MOHs) in Burkina Faso and Niger, engaging the public health system at the community, sub-regional, and regional levels to support and strengthen the capacity of the MOHs to manage and provide gender-sensitive services to their populations. USAID will coordinate and leverage other donor investments, including GAVI and the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM) which provide significant support to the governments of Burkina Faso and Niger, and other agencies including UNFPA, WHO, and The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. USAID will also seek synergies with programs that develop and strengthen formal safety nets.

Nodes of collaboration: Partners will need to work closely on development and testing of (or refinement of existing) SBC tools and approaches so they are locally-relevant, but also officially recognized and scaled up by government health and nutrition services. The community health workers, because they are the link between community and government health services, may require joint strategies to build their capacities. Similarly, community engagement in oversight of health services delivery is an area that interfaces between community and health systems interventions. Given the focus of Food for Peace partners including UNICEF in nutrition, they should work jointly with SRO partners to strengthen health clinic assessment and response capacity to nutrition deficiencies, through means including health clinic educational and diagnostic tools, staff technical capacity, and access to nutritional supplements. Multiple partners will be engaged in WASH infrastructure, governance and behaviors, requiring joint

planning. Critically, all RISE II programs will need to speak with one voice and support appropriate awareness raising activities regarding policy reform and implementation.

Objective 4: Enhance governance of institutions and organizations

Rationale

Effective governance of institutions and organizations is a key cross-cutting component of RISE II because it affects the delivery of services, access to resources, and coordination of activities that promote progress in technical sectors. Strengthening governance is essential to the sustainability of USAID's development outcomes and to achieving the RISE II transformative outcome of enhanced community leadership of local development. Experience under RISE has shown that there are substantial weaknesses in performance of state and civil society institutions. State institutions in Burkina Faso and Niger struggle to deliver on their mandates, hampered by lack of technical capacity and resources and sometimes driven by rent-seeking or political patronage concerns. These challenges are found from national to local levels, and are often accompanied by poor communication linkages between levels of government. Decentralization, which was meant to provide a mechanism for more effective, locally driven development, has thus far resulted in transfer of some responsibilities without any significant transfer of financial resources or technical expertise. As a result, populations receive limited government services and have few opportunities to interact meaningfully with the public sector.

Exacerbating this fundamental weakness of state institutions, civil society is nascent: in Burkina Faso it has been characterized largely by mass movements that coalesce periodically around salient public issues of injustice, which forces a political crisis to affect policy change, only to dissolve again into disunited factions once the crisis has passed. In Niger, civil society is more extensively organized and consists mostly of NGOs that focus on promoting social issues and professional associations, and are more formalized but still lack resources and capacity to operate with more than volunteers. At the subnational levels, participation in organized CSOs is particularly infrequent beyond user groups and informal associations, and in both the administrative and the political spheres engagement is rare. In both countries, access to resources at the local level is hampered, in part, because civil society lacks a coherent voice and the resources to effectively and constructively engage the state.

The combination of poor governance and weak CSO capacity thus routinely create layers of grievance and alienation that not only negatively impact service delivery and accountability, but ultimately can lead to instability, conflict, and fuel extremism.

Development Hypothesis

To improve governance and strengthen institutional performance, USAID hypothesizes that:

IF subnational public sector institutions have improved capability and appropriate incentives, and

IF civil society is strengthened in order to hold the state accountable through inclusive multi-stakeholder forums, and

IF national resilience institutions are better able to carry out key resilience functions and national policies are supportive,

THEN, governance of institutions will be enhanced.

Technical Approach

Overall strategy

In USAID programming terms, integrating governance across the portfolio means efforts to engage practices and principles that underpin democratic and well-performing governance systems, namely: Participation, Inclusion, Transparency and Accountability (PITA). Under RISE II, USAID will promote PITA practices and principles in all organizations it supports, from water user committees to national resilience bodies.

USAID will also integrate governance through promotion of iterative adaptation to solve locally identified problems or take advantage of opportunities. The usefulness of iterative adaptation to build institutional functionality is based on the observation that members of most public institutions have a high degree of autonomy in decision making. In other words, while organizations may appear to be rule bound, employees can exercise independence through passive resistance or unproductive behaviors. Interventions that rely on capacity building through training often have minimal impact on performance. In addition, dynamic political, social and economic contexts can make it challenging to apply “best practices” to organizational management and achieve predictable results. In contrast, iterative adaptation encourages identification of actions that will improve performance as defined by the stakeholders themselves, building local ownership, accountability, and improved incentives for change. Constant learning through experimentation allows lessons to be immediately incorporated into management discussions and implementation to be modified. The Overseas Development Institute and others have outlined a methodology titled “problem driven iterative adaptation” as one way to achieve these results.⁷ Appreciative inquiry is another approach to accomplish similar goals. Iterative adaptive approaches should be integrated into all relevant USAID activities, working at community, local government, and national government levels, as a way to strengthen institutional and organizational performance. They can also be targeted to policy formulation and reform efforts and to system enhancement efforts. The approach is central to implementing the RISE II operational principle of “community-led development” and the broader concept of “locally-led development.”

Cross-cutting thematic areas

Women and youth: Governance is strengthened by the inclusion of women and youth, because their perspectives and actions are essential to successful development efforts. This means not only helping women and youth feel comfortable engaging, but also working with men and older

⁷ Andrews, Pritchett, and Woolcock (2012), *Escaping Capability Traps through Problem-Driven Iterative Adaptation (PDIA)*: Faculty Research Working Paper Series. Center for Global Development, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard.

participants to help them recognize the value in youth and female engagement and create welcoming environments and facilitative processes. USAID will also provide additional capacity building for women and youth leadership, recognizing that they require encouragement and support to reach their potential.

Risk management: Effectively managing risks involves an important governance component whereby communities, organizations, and governments collectively identify stresses and potential shocks and come to agreement on actions to reduce those stresses and prepare for and respond to the shocks. USAID will help facilitate these dialogues and the resulting decisions so they are inclusive, participative, transparent, and accountable.

IR descriptions

IR4.1: Improved performance of subnational state institutions (village, commune, province, region)

RISE II will engage at the subnational level to improve the capacity of state institutions in three areas: revenue generation/resource mobilization; budget formulation (in conjunction with activities that engage citizens and civil society); and allocation of resources. Not only will these interventions strengthen the use of domestic resources, they will also give local governments tools to better manage donor interventions and projects in their areas. These interventions will be carried out with two key principles as central to engagement: 1) inclusive consultative processes, including women, youth and traditionally excluded populations, to identify where the problems or opportunities lie in a given commune and to determine potential actions to address those challenges or opportunities, and 2) openness and transparency of the engagement processes – both with the public sector and with citizens and civil society organizations. This approach will encourage a customized and locally-driven process, with local commitment to the solutions while ensuring that information is available for stakeholders to monitor progress and hold each other accountable. Success at this level will help achieve results under all RISE II objectives, such as equitable and secure access to land, management of conflicts over natural resources, providing access to agricultural services, improved coordination in times of disaster, and support for construction of infrastructure.

IR4.2: Strengthened local civil society and community-based organizations

Enhancing good governance capacities within community-based organizations is important because they are often the first line implementers of actions to build local resilience and manage local conflicts. Many organizations exist in the RISE II intervention zone such as Village Development Councils/Committees, agricultural products traders, producer organizations, water user associations, and management committees for irrigation and gardening infrastructure. These groups must have more agency and a developed and enhanced voice, as a result of more and better capability, to engage in dialogue with local government to identify areas for partnership around shared goals. In addition, these organized local groups should be able to monitor public sector service provision and hold the state accountable for fulfilling its responsibilities. Greater transparency of budget processes, sought under IR4.1 will support the goals of this result. USAID's work with civil society transcends local communities. USAID will support networks, federations, unions, and other bodies that organize civil society to engage on regional and national levels to influence policy, obtain economies of scale in markets, and provide mutual support and learning. USAID also intends to put a special focus on enhancing

women's and youth engagement in civil society organizations, both by supporting their own groups and by helping them gain greater influence in mixed organizations.

IR4.3: Improved functioning of national resilience institutions

Burkina Faso and Niger each have established institutions that are responsible for managing resilience strengthening in their country. Their responsibilities consist of setting policy on roles of national stakeholders such as line agencies, coordinating the activities of these stakeholders, interfacing with donors and regional resilience-focused organizations, and monitoring the results. These bodies, 3N in Niger, and SE-CNSA in Burkina Faso, struggle to carry out these responsibilities because of politicization of resources, battles over control of offices and staff within the agencies, and a lack of personnel. These agencies would benefit from USAID support in the areas of policy reform, coordination and communication, and monitoring and evaluation. USAID interventions must contribute to greater sustainability of the institutions and improved capability to lead resilience efforts in the RISE zone. To be successful in this endeavor, USAID must engage and advocate with Burkinabe and Nigerien leadership, even at the highest levels, in order to leverage the existing political economy and promote change.

IR4.4: Improved capability of regional institutions

This IR represents work that the technical team sees as complementary to RISE II, but that is being supported by USAID/West Africa through partnerships with CILSS, CORAF/WECARD, ECOWAS, and WAEMU.⁸ These partnerships strengthen the capacity of regional institutions to build inter-governmental consensus and regional policies in support of country-level actions. RISE II programs, particularly policy interventions, need to coordinate with regional efforts and reinforce national commitments to regional standards. This is important particularly in areas of trade, where greater coherence with regional standards can facilitate access to markets.

Partner roles and nodes of collaboration

DFSAs and any other community-level activities: enhance functionality of village development committees and other community-based organizations through iterative adaptive problem-solving or similar approaches to local development planning and implementation, promote application of PITA principles in community-based organizations, involve commune and national government agents in technical activities, build the capacity of women and youth to be leaders in their communities, and implement other governance interventions consistent with their theory of change.

SRO activities: Support commune capacity to engage in planning; strengthen accountability, transparency, inclusion, and participation in commune governments; support commune government in iterative adaptive problem-solving or appreciative inquiry processes; enhance transparent resource mobilization and utilization by communes; enhance functionality of sectoral ministries in support of service provision in the RISE II zone; support sectoral policy

⁸ CILSS (*Comité permanent inter-etats de lutte contre la sécheresse dans le Sahel*); CORAF/WECARD (*Conseil ouest et centre africain pour la recherche et le développement agricoles / West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development*); ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States); WAEMU (West African Economic and Monetary Union).

development and implementation; build capacity of national resilience institutions; develop leadership capacity of the most promising women and youth.

Other USAID/USG: In Niger, USAID's Participatory Responsive Governance-Principal Activity (PRG-PA) is engaged in policy work at the national level on health, education, and gender, and at the local level in improving commune governance. RISE II partners will need to partner as relevant with PRG-PA and share lessons learned on policy reform and local governance.

Other donor and government initiatives: In Niger, USAID is has a leadership role in the new Good active in DRG including the EU, Germany, Switzerland, UNDP, France, Luxemburg, and Denmark. In Burkina Faso, UNDP provides support for administrative reform and decentralization while EU supports the strengthening of the National Assembly, civil society organizations, security sector reforms, trans-border security and decentralization. GIZ has decentralization and local governance programs as do the Swiss Cooperation and the World Bank.

Nodes of collaboration: The interface with commune governments and support to build their capability will need to be carefully managed among partners to avoid overloading or confusing local officials. Sectoral policy reform will need to be coordinated so that all USAID partners, and other donors, speak with one voice when engaging the government. In cases where the DFSAs are working with the same civil society organization as an SRO activity, this support will need to be specified and differentiated, or one USAID partner will need to take complete responsibility for the group to avoid confusion or duplication. USAID partners will also need to develop and be responsible for communications with local governments and to support transfer of that information to higher levels of government. Lastly, USAID programs will include host country high-level indicators to measure USAID achievements within the host countries' development programs.

Objective 5: Enhance social, economic and political agency of women and youth

Rationale

Under RISE II, USAID will strengthen the agency and capabilities of women, men, girls, and boys to improve their own well-being and contribute to the well-being of their households, communities, and countries. USAID has a special focus on women and youth because they experience shocks and stresses in different ways, and use differing coping strategies, often constrained by gender norms and generational dynamics. RISE II goals cannot be achieved without tackling the deep-rooted gender and generational inequalities, inequities, behaviors and cultural norms which influence vulnerability in Burkina Faso and Niger. As in the rest of Africa, youth constitute a majority of the population in both countries. In Burkina Faso and Niger, close to 50% of the population is under 15 years of age and 60% is under 20. The un- and underemployment that youth in both countries face leaves them vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremist organizations and drives them to labor migration as a key livelihood strategy. Women and girls have a much lower level of school attendance and literacy than men and boys, suffer from high rates of child and early marriage, have little control over family size, and have poor access to and control over productive resources.

Existing national and regional policies to empower young people and women to participate in the development agenda in a meaningful way are so far unsuccessful. Youth in general do not feel included enough in their respective government's plans and policies and they feel that their differentiated concerns are not addressed by the national and local government. In addition, opportunities to engage youth and women in local governance and participate in politics and decision-making are limited. The Burkinabe and Nigerien governments have passed policies and laws to counter gender discrimination. In practice these formal codes are often disregarded in favor of customary law, which often discriminates against women in important realms like property ownership and decision-making power within the household.

Development Hypothesis

To enhance the agency of women and youth, USAID hypothesizes that:

IF women and youth have access to high quality educational, health, and livelihood development opportunities and services that meet their needs, and

If they are empowered to engage meaningfully in civil society and with government institutions to have their needs addressed,

THEN the social, economic, and political agency of women and youth will be enhanced and their vulnerability to shocks and stresses will be reduced.

Technical Approach

Overall Strategy

Empowering women and youth and responding to their particular needs and opportunities is woven throughout the results framework, as highlighted in the "Women and Youth" cross-cutting sections under each objective. Every activity design will include specific requirements, actions, and indicators to ensure that women and youth are meaningfully engaged and benefit from RISE II.

In addition to sector-specific interventions on women and youth, USAID will mainstream approaches that focus on young people and women as positive change agents in their communities. Every activity under RISE II should engage youth and women in ways that enhance their ability to shape their own lives and the development of their communities. Approaches that engage youth and women in community problem-solving and create leadership opportunities for youth and women will be encouraged. RISE II activities will be attuned to the different experiences of men and women of different ages, and value and build on the different types of knowledge these groups have to offer. Lessons learned from RISE and other donors on gender equality and youth integration in Niger and Burkina Faso should be considered for scale-up, whenever appropriate.

Additionally, USAID encourages Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) tools to guide the participation of youth and women. For example, Community Youth Mapping was used by FFP to understand the local food system and then use mapping results to initiate intergenerational

dialogue and spark community-wide problem-solving for a more food secure future. Such maps also identify opportunities for local entrepreneurs and businesses to provide needed services that improve access to and availability of good food.

Targeting

In Burkina Faso and in Niger the national youth policy and the African Youth Charter (AYC) define youth as those between 15 – 35 years of age. However, since RISE II aims to address unhealthy gender norms such as early marriage/early pregnancy, the 10- to 14-year-old adolescent age range, which has historically not been targeted by USAID programming, will be intentionally targeted, in addition to those included in the AYC definition of youth. This is also in line with USAID’s Youth in Development policy⁹. Understanding the target youth, their drivers and their influencers should be the first step for youth and gender-focused programming under RISE II.

As youth and other marginalized communities comprise complex and heterogeneous populations with different characteristics that influence their needs and vulnerabilities, the following criteria should be explored to disaggregate for targeting purposes:

- Age: differentiate youth by age brackets
- Gender: young women and young men face specific issues
- Life stage: unmarried, married, parenting
- Disabilities: hearing, vision, mobility impaired, learning disabilities.
- Health status: malnourished youth, young anemic mothers.
- Education level: schooling status (in or out of school); educated and uneducated youth
- Employment status: employed, unemployed and underemployed youth.
- Ethnicity: membership in ethnic or tribal groups, especially those who are traditionally marginalized

Operational guidance

To ensure robust engagement on women’s and youth issues, all RISE II partners should:

- Identify high level program objectives for enhancing women’s and youth agency and for ensuring women and youth benefit from activities. Set indicators and targets to track progress toward those goals.

⁹ USAID youth policy encourages engaging a broader cohort of 10 to 29-years old in youth programming. <https://www.usaid.gov/policy/youth>

- Conduct field-based gender and youth analyses prior to implementing their first year work plan to ensure local specificities are taken into account.
- Increase their organizational capacity to advance and measure gender and youth equality and empowerment by training staff, disaggregating all person-level and key performance indicators by sex and age, and hiring senior gender and youth advisors.
- Promoting women and youth in leadership positions in project activities, providing targeted capacity building, and engaging to create supportive enabling environments.
- Engaging traditional and religious leaders to support normative changes in the community.
- Supporting messaging on literacy and school attendance by girls in all activities, and implementing literacy directly when appropriate to the program.
- Use approaches that encourage dialogue between husbands and wives, men and women, boys and girls to support women's and girls' well-being and empowerment at home, in relationships, and in communities and organizations.
- Address adolescents and their concerns directly and specifically.
- Promote youth volunteerism and opportunities for internships.

Partner roles and nodes of collaboration

DFSAs and any other community-level activities: DFSAs will complete gender analyses and participatory planning processes in order to differentiate the needs of women, men, boys and girls, and tailor their interventions; establish mechanisms for their effective participation in community-based organizations and decision-making bodies; undertake SBC activities on gender and age norms that exacerbate food and nutrition insecurity; and improve women's access and control over resources. Partners may identify and pursue other interventions based on their theory of change.

SRO activities: SRO activities will complete gender analyses; increase women's access to productive resources like land, water, and finance; actively engage women in natural resource and risk management systems; ensure that health and market access programs benefit women and meet their needs; and promote passage and implementation of gender-sensitive policies, such as the recent Girls Protection decree in Niger.

Other USAID/USG: USAID will leverage its resources to support local grassroots youth-led and women's organizations by partnering with the private sector through mechanisms such as the Development Credit Authority and Global Development Alliances. In Burkina Faso, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is implementing a McGovern-Dole Food for Education school nutrition program that focuses heavily on girls' mentorship, to keep girls in school all the way to/through high school by pairing them with an older girl in high school. RISE partners have not collaborated with this program due to lack of opportunities to overlap, but USAID will look at efforts to maximize the benefits of this program to pass this example to other areas not covered by USDA. Where it's possible to collaborate with other USG programs, such as

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educational programs run out of Embassy Ouagadougou's Public Diplomacy Section, USAID will do so.

Other donor and government initiatives: With USG assistance and after many years of effort, the government of Niger adopted a girls' protection decree in 2017 that includes a mandate for girls' primary school attendance. USAID will continue to support the GoN as it implements this decree. Burkina Faso is close to passing a school feeding policy, under development since 2005, and USAID will assist the U.S. Ambassador in seeing this to completion, thereby increasing food security and school attendance.

Nodes of collaboration: Coordination between RISE implementing partners is necessary since those organizations will interact directly with women, men, girls and boys and will need to tackle gender and generational inequalities from different angles. Such collaboration is expected to accelerate the pace of change by bringing together staff and organizations with diverse skills, experiences, and resources to coordinate efforts. Joint gender analyses and research studies, staff training, and shared resource materials will increase efficiency and facilitate shared learning. USAID strongly encourages the reinforcement of the collaboration between RISE partners and the decentralized offices of the GoBF and GoN to enhance sustainability of RISE II resilience activities.