



HABBANAYÉ:

APPLYING A TRADITIONAL PRACTICE
FOR A MORE RESILIENT FUTURE IN THE SAHEL



Lutheran World Relief
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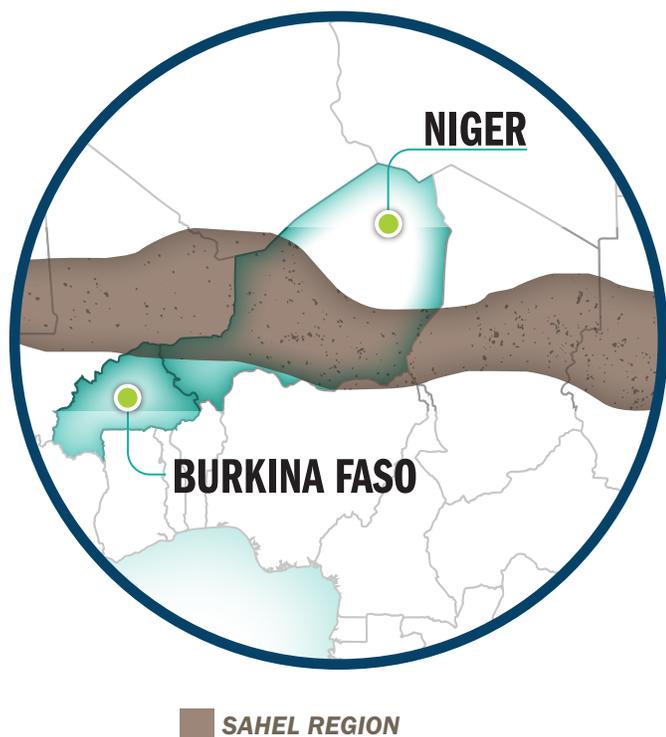


THE SAHEL REGION OF AFRICA hosts a rich and diverse group of cultures and languages. Rural communities, which make up approximately 70 percent of the region's population (Ickowicz et al 2012), traditionally support themselves through a combination of pastoralist and agricultural activities. The landscapes of this region can be harsh with some areas receiving as little as 150mm of annual rainfall, but historically, communities could rely on relatively regular cycles of dry and wet seasons. However, since the 1970s, rainfall has become increasingly erratic resulting in longer and more severe droughts (Ibid). When droughts occur in rapid succession or over several growing periods (such as 2004-5, 2009, and 2011-2), communities' traditional survival practices for coping with poor harvests have proven insufficient. In addition to – and sometimes in relation to – climate shocks, political instability in the region, global food price spikes, and armed conflicts are additional challenges to communities' ability to access enough food.

Individual households react to these shocks in a variety of ways. In times of greater stability, many families sent individuals to work in Libya or Nigeria, in hopes that remittances would be able to provide enough savings to weather difficult periods. Current instability in these regions, including Northern Mali, has led some individuals to take greater risks and attempt to cross the Mediterranean for work in Europe. In other cases, families sell treasured possessions or livestock. In the worst years, households suffer from hunger and malnutrition.

Communities in the Sahel are actively seeking ways to buffer themselves from the worst of these shocks. Lutheran World Relief (LWR) worked with individual communities to identify, improve, and share agricultural and animal husbandry practices that contribute to increased resilience¹ in the face of these shocks. One such practice is habbanayé, which helps the most-vulnerable households increase their assets.

In an effort to share what LWR and its partners have learned about implementing habbanayé and working with women's savings groups, this report summarizes LWR's field experience and lessons learned.



¹ For LWR, resilience refers to the capacity of a system (e.g. a community) to absorb the impacts of shocks and stressors, to adapt to change, and to potentially transform, in a manner that enables the achievement of development results (e.g. sustainable livelihoods, well-being, poverty alleviation). C Béné, R. Wood, A. Newsham, M. Davies. *et.al.* "Resilience: New Utopia or New Tyranny?" in IDS Working Paper v. 2012, No. 405. USAID (2012) 'Building Resilience to Recurrent Crisis', USAID Policy and Program Guidance, <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/USAIDResiliencePolicyGuidanceDocument.pdf>) You can learn more about LWR's work on resilience at programs.lwr.org/resilience.

HABBANAYÉ

The Fulani pastoralists in West Africa, particularly in Niger, have a traditional practice called habbanayé, in which wealthier households loan a few female ruminants (such as cows, sheep, or goats) to a poorer friend or family member who keeps the offspring of the borrowed animals as a way to build their own stock. This practice is also known to exist among other pastoral peoples in the region (Manvell and Abdoularimou, 2005). The practice was chosen by UNESCO's Harmony List in 2006 as an "emblematic cultural practice for sustainable development" (UNESCO, 2006).

This practice has been adapted by several International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) working in the region to support pastoral and agro-pastoralist communities in the aftermath of a series of droughts and other crises. In 1984, CARE used the practice to respond to a serious drought in which many farmers lost all their assets. In the series of droughts since 2000, the practice has been incorporated in projects implemented by a number of organizations, including CARE, Oxfam, CIRÉ, Caritas, and Lutheran World Relief (CIRE 2008, Manvell and Abdoularimou 2006, Caritas 2011 and Lesahel n.d). With slight variations in implementation, the over-arching premise is to give female animals to especially vulnerable women to help build their animal stocks. The women typically receive adult female animals, purchased

specifically for the project, who then produce offspring. Once weaned, the young remain with the recipient while the mother is transferred to another recipient. In LWR's approach, the practice is typically governed through a local women's group, established, supported, and monitored by a local partner organization. LWR has applied this approach in Fulani and other targeted pastoralist and sedentary communities.

This calendar shows a typical year's seasonal changes in the Sahel. In pastoral communities, able-bodied men usually travel north with cattle to pasture when the first rains arrive. In especially dry years, they travel further and earlier in the year in search of grasslands (which sometimes puts them in conflict with sedentary farmers). While they are gone, the rest of the household stays to tend crops and look after small ruminants (sheep or goats). The bulk of this work falls to women, which is why the habbanayé approach focuses on women. Small ruminants "form a 'drought contingency fund' for poor women" (LEGS, 234). If households run out of cereals, they sell off small ruminants to purchase cereals in local markets (Ickowicz et al).

AGROCULTURAL/PASTORALIST SEASONAL CALENDAR IN WEST AFRICA

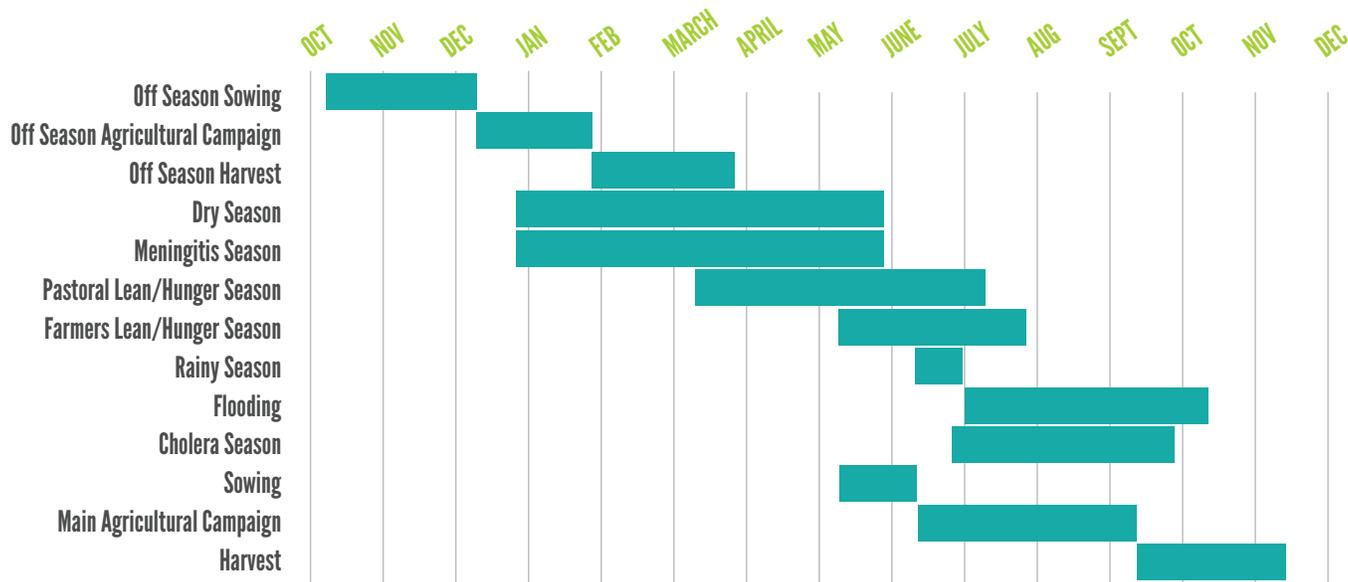


Figure 1 Adapted from OCHA 2014 and OCHA 2015

HOW HABBANAYÉ WORKS

NANNY, A FEMALE GOAT OR SHEEP, SHOWS HOW THE HABBANAYÉ PROJECT WORKS.



MARKET

Nanny begins her journey when she is purchased by the Habbanayé Solidarity Group at the local market.



FIRST PARTICIPANT



The First Habbanayé participant feeds and cares for Nanny. Nanny has offspring, and she stays with them until they are weaned. Nanny's offspring stay with the first participant....



SECOND PARTICIPANT

The Second Habbanayé participant feeds and cares for Nanny. Nanny has offspring, and she stays with them until they are weaned. Nanny's offspring stay with the second participant....



....and Nanny moves to the Second Habbanayé Participant.



....and Nanny moves to the Third Habbanayé Participant.



THIRD PARTICIPANT



HISTORY OF HABBANAYÉ AT LWR

Shocks in the Sahel have been increasingly frequent and severe in the past decade. Droughts in 2005, 2008, 2010 and 2012 affected crop yields, driving up market prices for grains, reducing the ability of households to care for livestock, and leaving many households food insecure. Other sources of instability that exacerbate the strain on communities include armed conflict, disease and loss of remittances from relatives who have returned from war-torn countries like Libya. In this context, LWR worked with local partners to identify and refine contextually-appropriate interventions ensuring the greatest impact. Habbanayé is an example of an existing local practice where LWR was able to increase the program scale and resulting number of beneficiaries.

Table 1 demonstrates LWR's use of habbanayé in four West African projects. Each program focused on strengthening farmers' cooperatives and improving farmers' agricultural and livestock production practices in at least one of the three West African countries where LWR works, Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. Habbanayé was incorporated to support vulnerable women, as identified by their peers, in order to build their assets.

Habbanayé was introduced to LWR during the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation-funded project addressing the 2004/2005 drought, called **Appui à la Rehabilitation des Systèmes de vie Pastoraux** (ARVIP). A local partner organization in Niger as well as a LWR staff member promoted the practice, citing success of the practice by CARE Niger. Together with this local partner (Contribution à l'Education de Base), LWR learned how to develop, manage, and adapt the tradition of habbanayé to a broad set of stakeholders in the aftermath of a crisis.

COUNTRY, REGION	NIGER, DAKORO	NIGER, TAHOUA	NIGER, TAHOUA	BURKINA FASO, EST
DATES	2005-2008	2010-2013	2014-2016	2013-2016
PARTNER	Contribution a l'Education de Base (CEB)	Union Hadin Kai (UHK)	Union Nazari	Federation des Diema Tin Tua (FDTT)
DONOR	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation	Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance, USAID	Margaret A. Cargill Foundation
FULL NAME	Appui a la rehabilitation des Systems de vie Pastoraux (ARVIP)	Intervention d'Urgence Face a la Crise Alimentaire au Niger: Etablissement des Bases d'une Agriculture Durable (ADOUNA)	Linking Early Recovery to Resilience	Resilience Plus: Community-led Food Crisis Recovery in the Sahel (CORE)
NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	605	1,744	135*	74*
MEMBERSHIP FEE FOR ANIMAL INSURANCE	Yes - 3000 CFA per animal	Yes - 1500-2000 CFA per animal	Yes - 1500-2000 CFA per animal	Not initially; see "Lessons" below
MEMBERSHIP FEE FOR OTHER COSTS	no; instead the women sold males for cash	yes; loans for other income-generating activities	Determined by local group	no
VACCINATIONS AND CARE SUPPORTED BY	Veterinaires Sans Frontieres	Identified by partner	Niger Ministry of Livestock	Government and private veterinarians
VETERINARY CARE TRAINING	no	Yes, by partner organization	Yes, by government	Community volunteers
RESULTS	17% decrease in sheep ownership per household at end of project	105% increase in animal ownership per participant at end of project	no animals lost as of first distribution	at mid-term, 251% increase in household goat ownership
FEED WAREHOUSES	yes	yes	no	no, but there are small barns to store forage

Table 1: LWR projects that have incorporated habbanaye

*As of first round of distribution

In ARVIP, the practice was used in only one district of Niger (Dakoro), but it has since been introduced and adapted to programming in another region of Niger (Tahoua), and in the Est region of Burkina Faso.

The next project in the region that incorporated habbanayé was called **Intervention d'Urgence Face à la Crise Alimentaire au Niger: Établissement des Bases d'une Agriculture Durable** (internally called ADOUNA, for the region in which it was implemented), and was also supported by the Gates Foundation. The local implementing partner in this project was the Union Hadin Kai (UHK), which like many LWR partners, is an umbrella organization for farmers' cooperatives. UHK supports each village- or district-level cooperative in a geographic area to improve farming techniques, increase yields, improve post-harvest production, provide storage facilities, and collectively negotiate with vendors for better prices for member farmers. Over the course of its partnership with LWR, UHK's capacity increased considerably and it has become a sought-after partner and advisor for the Niger Ministry of Agriculture. Through this project, the communities saw a **105 percent increase** in the number of small ruminants per vulnerable household, from 1.8 animals to 3.7 animals per woman.

In 2015, two projects are currently using habbanayé as an intervention. One is the USAID Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)-funded **Linking Early Recovery to Resilience** project in Tahoua, Niger. The other project is **Resilience Plus: Community-Led Food Crisis Recovery in the Sahel (CORE)**, funded by the Margaret A. Cargill Foundation, which is being implemented simultaneously in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger.

LWR'S APPROACH TO HABBANAYÉ IN THE CORE PROJECT

LWR's experience with habbanayé has repeatedly been identified by project participants as a highly useful and welcome intervention, both for its near-term provision of livestock and its long-term group formation aspects. At the conclusion of the ARVIP project, women stated that one of the benefits of participating in the intervention was that their husbands respected them more (Cekan and Hlaibi 2008). At the conclusion of ADOUNA, 87 percent of habbanayé households attributed their increased milk consumption to their participation in the program (Guero 2013). A quarter of habbanayé participants called the experience a path out of poverty, and 18 percent said it increased their standing in their communities (Ibid). The formation and support to Habbanayé Solidarity Groups (HSG) had practical and social benefits in that it proved to members that the women were able to mobilize considerable funds and successfully manage small loans to members. By the end of the ADOUNA project, HSGs had collectively raised 2,511,000 CFA (approximately 50,000 USD).

The HSGs are similar to (and in some communities build on existing) women's savings groups, which are "self-managed community-based groups that provide their members access to basic financial services" and are increasingly common in Africa as a way to "respond directly to the unmet financial services needs of the remote and rural poor" (Lee, 2010: 1). The groups provide services like secure savings, a source for small loans, and basic insurance for members. They typically exist for a limited amount of time, after which they pay back each contributing woman her initial payment and any earnings (ibid). The HSGs, like other savings groups, determine whether and what type of other (non-habbanayé) loans they will make. In some cases, the groups determine that only revenue-producing loans will be made while others have determined to make funds available in certain emergency or celebratory situations.

The HSGs in the CORE project have come to serve as an insurance fund for the group, by holding each woman's payment collectively in order to insure the health of habbanayé animals. For example, if an animal becomes sick, the woman caring for it can request to use some of the group's fund to pay for veterinary services. If an animal dies through no fault of the recipient, the group can elect to purchase a replacement. The fact that participants must pay into the insurance fund in order to receive an animal incentivizes them to care for the animals, as someone whose animal dies as a result of neglect must



pay for a replacement animal out-of-pocket. It also inspires the women who were selected to receive an animal in a future rotation to support and encourage the first recipient to take good care of the animal.

In the CORE project, as in all projects that have incorporated habbanayé, LWR staff and partners used participatory methods with participating communities to determine the parameters of the habbanayé experience. These include which animals (sheep or goats) were most appropriate for the context; how many animals a recipient could best care for; what criteria ought to be used to determine a woman's level of vulnerability and therefore participation in habbanayé; and ultimately which women in the village should participate.

The Burkinabe habbanayé solidarity groups in the CORE project chose to provide three goats to each recipient, two females and one male. Each habbanayé recipient kept the two females long enough for them to give birth and wean their young before passing the mothers to the next recipient. Since distribution of the animals occurred during the dry season, recipients were given kits, which included commercial feed for the animals to sustain them until the rainy season when foraging opportunities would return. Recipients keep all the young born to their habbanayé animals to build their own herds (See Figure 2). Male goats, which are more difficult to care for than females, are shared among participants rather than distributed like the females. Since the project began, each mother goat produced an average of 1.4 offspring, so participants typically have at

least two offspring of their own to help them build their own herd. The HSGs determine when a mother goat is ready to go to the next habbanayé recipient and many of them choose to wait until each woman has three to four weaned young of her own. As of the mid-term evaluation, herd size among habbanayé project participants had increased from 1.12 in December 2013 to 3.93 in December 2014 (LWR 2015).

LWR includes capacity-building with good-governance training to farmers' cooperatives, which is consistent with its accompaniment approach. In this situation, the Fédération des Diema Tin Tua² (FDTT) in Burkina Faso provided a series of management trainings to HSG leaders on transparent leadership, democratic processes, and financial accountability. Each HSG elects leaders and keeps regular records. In addition to the management training, the partner arranged for government and private veterinary technical experts to train community volunteers in para-veterinary services and gave basic training to all habbanayé recipients.

Partnering with government veterinary extension agents has proven to be a valuable relationship. Ministry officials have learned of these groups through their extension agencies and community visits. This government engagement is important not only for the success of the CORE project, but also to foster local ownership and sustainability of the practice. Habbanayé within HSGs provides an approach that the government can potentially adopt and implement in other parts of the region or country.

² The name translates roughly to Federation of Unions to Support Self-Sufficiency



LEARNING AND IMPROVING IMPLEMENTATION OF HABBANAYÉ

For the CORE project, LWR staff recognized that many of the challenges faced by vulnerable women in Dakoro and Tahoua districts of Niger were also present in the Est region of Burkina Faso. While the traditional practice of habbanayé existed among some of the Burkinabe communities, it had not been incorporated formally into any INGO interventions among these communities. The LWR West Africa regional team brought together all the staff and partners at the beginning of the CORE project in order to facilitate learning between groups, with a special focus on facilitating dialogue between UHK, and the Burkinabe partner FDTT, to share lessons and provide insight into managing habbanayé through the HSG model. FDTT solicited feedback from community members before beginning to set up the HSGs and posed questions from the community to UHK representatives. In addition to dialogue, the Burkinabe partner also benefitted from a detailed manual developed cooperatively between the two partners. The manual captures the rules and systems needed to successfully implement habbanayé in a democratic way (See Figure 3). The two partners have continued to work together on additional problems that have arisen since the learning event.

THE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT HABBANAYÉ:

- 1 IDENTIFY RECIPIENTS**
Identify the most vulnerable households using community-defined criteria. In this case, LWR and partner staff apply the Household Economic Assessment (HEA)³ approach to set objective criteria for various income levels and targeting the poorest in order to create tiers of recipients (first tier most vulnerable, second tier next most vulnerable, etc.).
- 2 CHOOSE ANIMAL TYPE**
Choose animal species based on input from communities and resource availability of project.
- 3 PROJECT SCOPE**
Based on the average local market cost of chosen species, project geography and scope, and total project funds available for the habbanayé component of the project, determine how many total recipients can receive habbanayé animals.
- 4 FACILITATE COMMITTEES**
Facilitate formation or reinforcement of elected women-led management committees in each village where animal distributions are to take place;
- 5 GOVERNANCE TRAINING**
Train management committee leaders on governance and management;
- 6 DETERMINE REQUIRED CONTRIBUTION**
Work with these leaders to determine the minimum beneficiary contribution for animal health/replacement and the number of male animals (if needed);
- 7 PURCHASE ANIMALS**
Purchase animals in bulk in coordination with committee leaders;
- 8 PROVIDE INITIAL VETERINARY CARE**
Vaccinate, tag and de-worm the animals;
- 9 DISTRIBUTE ANIMALS**
Distribute female animals to first-round beneficiaries by drawing lots with the tag numbers;
- 10 CARE TRAINING**
Train recipients on proper care of animals
- 11 FOLLOW-UP**
Follow-up by project animators with habbanayé management committees to ensure that norms related to replacement of lost animals and care of the herds are respected and that the animals are passed on to other beneficiaries as planned

Figure 3

³For more information on the Household Economic Assessment, see <http://www.heawebsite.org/about-household-economy-approach>

Beyond describing the steps to create and maintain a habbanayé group, the manual also provides template forms to assist the groups through each step, such as a list of all beneficiaries by tier chosen by each HSG and templates to document price negotiations and the process for animal selection.

One challenge faced by some HSGs was the storage and conservation of animal feed. Once the women collected forage and made hay, they had no way to protect it from pests, birds, sun, or rain. Through the women's groups, the communities have worked together to build small storage facilities, called fénils. The structures are built by the members of the groups from local materials and some of the group's membership fees are used to purchase tin roofs and doors with locks, along with additional LWR funding. Members share responsibility for maintaining the fénils. Approximately 400 USD worth of work and materials are donated by the women for each fénil. As of September 2015, ten of these structures have been constructed.



INTERVENTIONS THAT SUPPORT EFFECTIVE HABBANAYÉ

LWR applied habbanayé in emergency recovery, resilience, and food security projects together with other interventions to support proper animal husbandry as well as improved practices for growing food for human consumption.

FEED WAREHOUSES AND STORAGE

Based on the experience of earlier projects, LWR's West African projects include the creation of animal feed warehouses for commercially produced animal feed in habbanayé communities, which is necessary when no forage is available. Women are encouraged to use the warehouses to store commercial feed for their habbanayé animals. The creation of these warehouses allows HSGs to buy in bulk when prices are low, then store feed to meet the needs of agro-pastoralists throughout the year. Approximately 37 percent of women participating in habbanayé used these warehouses to procure feed for their animals in the ADOUNA project. In the CORE project, women were additionally trained to store and save the best wild species for goat forage in fénils.

VETERINARY CARE AND VACCINATIONS

Healthy animals are required for the continued success of the habbanayé experience. LWR partners contract with veterinarians to help with selection of habbanayé animals. (Failure to do so led to the unintentional selection of frail animals that could not survive the journey from market to community.) Along with inspecting animals for signs of disease or weakness, these contracted veterinarians administer vaccines and other preventative medicine to ensure habbanayé animals are fit and capable of reproduction. As outlined above, an additional benefit of paying into the HSGs is access to a pool of funds to treat any animal showing signs of disease or injury. Basic animal husbandry practices are outlined as the animals are distributed to recipients.

NUTRITION

One way the habbanayé animals successfully impact local communities is through improved household nutrition with a production of milk supply. In the ADOUNA project, nearly all project participants reported that they consumed milk produced by their habbanayé animals, and 17 percent reported that they were able to sell some excess milk (Guero 2013). The

milk supply amount varies based on the species chosen for the intervention, but several INGOs have found that households participating in habbanayé consume more milk after they receive their animals and are able to sell some in their communities (Burns and Suji 2008, Marvell and Abdoularimou 2006, CIRE 2008). More generally, this practice has the potential to contribute to greater availability of household calories, either as meat for consumption, milk consumption (depending on species selected), or the sale of the animal for cash, in order to increase caloric intake from purchased grains.

FATTENING

In the CORE project, fattening approaches (embouche) are part of the programming in Niger and Mali. In a manner similar to the habbanayé approach, relatively vulnerable women in each community are provided a certain number of animals and training on best practices as to what to feed the animals and how to market them ahead of major festivals (such as Christmas and the Eid holidays), when demand is highest.

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization, together with the National Institute of Agronomic Research of Niger, has developed animal feed blocks that combine animal feed typically grown by communities (such as millet stock) with a vegetable binding agent, minerals and salts to enrich the feed available to livestock, particularly during the hungry season. The partner implementing the current food security project in Niger, Union Hadin Kai, has recently developed a production unit for these blocks (ERCU 2011). In addition to these blocks, some communities in LWR's CORE project also practice intercropping grains with legumes. Legumes fix nitrogen in the soil and improve soil quality and their residues are fed to animals as a protein source.

In Burkina Faso, habbanayé participants incorporated fattening and selling males into their process as they keep and use the females in accordance with habbanayé practice. With the money earned from the sale of the male(s), the habbanayé recipient can purchase a younger male for the next habbanayé recipient. The remaining profit is shared between the HSG (30%) and the woman who fattened the male (70%).

The lessons learned over the course of these projects have been applied to subsequent LWR habbanayé interventions and are summarized in the Table 2.

CHALLENGE	RESPONSE	LESSON
During the dry season, vulnerable households were not able to provide sufficient food to their animals since no forage was available.	In addition to the animal, habbanayé recipients are given a kit of feed that lasts throughout the dry season. Animal feed warehouses are also incorporated into project design to provide an emergency supply of commercial feed.	In designing a project with live animals, their food source needs to be considered not only at the time of distribution, but throughout the harvest/forage cycle.
Government agencies provide extension services on animal husbandry in all the countries where LWR works, and habbanayé recipients need such training.	LWR and partners arranged for extension services to be part of the project.	Engaging local and national governments can simultaneously solve immediate needs within the project and provide an opportunity for governments to learn about and continue the practice beyond the project.
In the fattening component of the CORE project in Mali, community members decided to purchase animals from a distant market because they were more affordable. During transport to the communities, many animals died or became weak. (While not technically a challenge faced in habbanayé, the lessons are still applicable.)	The implementing partner, Union Tamani, leveraged a funding source intended to purchase animal feed, reapplying that funding to cattle fattening. With money from the repayment and interest from the cattle fattening, the Union gave each participant enough money to purchase her own replacement animals.	(1) Engaging communities from the beginning and incorporating their input provides incentive for them to own problems that arise and find their own solutions. (2) In the long run, purchasing animals locally is likely to be less expensive than transporting animals from a distant market, even if prices are lower at that market.
Community members feared their animals would be taken from them at the end of the project.	The team convened community members to assure them the offspring would not be taken from them and to determine together with members what to do with the mother animals.	Projects need to clearly communicate how the process works— from beginning to end— at the start of the project
Communities in the ARVIP project wanted to raise sheep instead of goats, as originally planned in the project design.	The number of animals distributed to each recipient was lowered to accommodate this change, as sheep were more expensive to purchase than goats.	Communities' perceptions of different livestock are an important component of what animal is most suitable to their context.
Male sheep and goats are difficult and expensive to care for. They are more rambunctious than females and difficult to keep in a pen.	Community members found their own solutions to this problem, including selling and sharing male animals to reduce their overall costs and upkeep.	Fewer males than females can be purchased from the outset and then be sold once female animals are impregnated. The profit from their sale can be applied to the purchase of a new ram when the next sets of households receive their animals. Males fetch a higher price when the embouche (fattening) technique is applied.
There was no HSG insurance fund as part of the CORE project design, so women whose animals got sick or died had no fund from which to get support besides their own resources (and therefore had little incentive to care for the animal). This resulted in especially vulnerable women losing not only the animal they were given but also the investment they had already put into the animal's feed. It also meant that the HSG had to determine how to procure a replacement for the next beneficiary.	HSGs will require a very small contribution from each habbanayé beneficiary (approximately 2 USD), in order to have funds from which to cover unexpected challenges. Women unable to pay that amount at the beginning will develop a payment plan with their HSG. The HSGs will determine collectively whether or not the animal's illness or death could have been avoided by the recipient.	Paying into a fund helps incentivize recipients to care for their animals and provides insurance against unexpected costs. Because the purpose of habbanayé is to support the most vulnerable, the payment must be low enough and flexible enough to accommodate their constraints.

Table 2



HABBANAYÉ AS A TOOL TO INCREASE RESILIENCE

LWR sees habbanayé as one tool among many that can support rural West African communities as they face challenges to secure access to food. In concert with other practices, LWR has increased households' herds, providing them a way to buffer against serious droughts and other shocks. Depending on local customs and the animals chosen, milk production also provides additional household benefits. Habbanayé can also contribute to the improvement of the status of women within their households and communities. When the most vulnerable members of a community are more food secure, the entire community benefits.

There are several ways in which habbanayé can be linked to building a community's resilience to stressors such as food insecurity. As the preceding examples show, habbanayé contributes to strengthen the local level capital. Habbanayé also improves the availability and use of economic resources, and also helps to tighten the social networks of trust and collaboration that constitute the social capital of agro-pastoralist communities. In addition to livelihood capitals, habbanayé can contribute to the ability of local groups to self-organize, be more flexible in their response to shocks, and absorb the impacts and recover more effectively from long periods or drought and food scarcity.

LWR hopes this report will contribute to the community of farmers' cooperatives, local organizations, INGOs, academics and others interested in learning how to improve resilience in the Sahel.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

LWR's West Africa Regional Office and Niger and Burkina Faso Country Offices provided the motivation, content and source materials for this publication. They shared their experiences and graciously contributed time and energy. They include Mathurin Compaoré, Jacques Hlaibi, Issa Konda, Nana Aminata Touré Sidibe, Abdelah Ben Mobrouk, and Dr. Evariste Karangwa.

Additionally, several people provided further content, feedback and technical support to improve the document, including Christie Getman, Paul Miller, Dr. Angelica V. Ospina, Chelsie Miller, Lauren Bauer, Greg Kresslein, Alexis Bierman, Keila Barcelo, Wesley Laytham, Caroline Vassighi, and Bijou Kuzimbu.



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