REQUEST FOR: CEO ENDORSEMENT

PROJECT TYPE: FULL-SIZED PROJECT
TYPE OF TRUST FUND: LDCF

PART I: PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title:	**Integrating climate resilience into agricultural and pastoral production for food security in vulnerable rural areas through the Farmers Field School approach**		
Country(ies):	Niger	**GEF Project ID:**	4702
GEF Agency(ies):	FAO	**GEF Agency Project ID:**	613837
Other Executing Partner(s):	Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Ministry of Livestock (MoL)	**Submission Date:**	July 22, 2014
GEF Focal Area (s):	Climate Change	**Project Duration (months):**	48
Name of parent program (if applicable): • For SFM/REDD+ ☐ • For SGP ☐ • For PPP ☐	N/A	**Project Agency Fee:**	380,000

A. FOCAL AREA STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

Focal Area Objectives	Expected FA Outcomes	Expected FA Outputs	Trust Fund	Indicative Grant Amount ($)	Indicative Co-Financing ($)
CCA-1	Outcome 1.1: Mainstreamed adaptation in broader development frameworks at country level and in target vulnerable areas	Output 1.1.1: Adaptation measures and necessary budget allocations included in policies, plans, and programs of the Ministries of Agriculture, Environment and Animal Productions in the framework of CNEDD's mandate and SPCR's Programme	LDCF	200,000	1,800,000
CCA-2	Outcome 2.2: Strengthened adaptive capacity to reduce risks to climate-induced economic losses	Output 2.2.1: Adaptive capacity of an expanding network of Farmer's Field Schools (FFS) strengthened to rapidly respond to extreme weather events and climate variability	LDCF	2,266,000	6,760,000
		Output 2.2.2: At least 20,000 farmers, agropastoralists and herders covered by adequate risk reduction measures through a minimum of 1000 FFS integrating CCA strategies and practices reach			
CCA-3	Outcome 3.1: Successful demonstration, deployment,	Output 3.1.1: FFS participants integrate a growing number of	LDCF	920,000	3,038,871

	and transfer of relevant adaptation technology in targeted areas	relevant adaptation technologies such as stress-resistant cultivars and varieties, soil conservation and water management, and tree/crops/fodder integration (menu to be developped during PPG)			
CCA-3	Outcome 3.2: Enhanced enabling environment to support adaptation-related technology transfer	Output 3.2.2: the expansion of FFS-based CCA processes are backed by specific rural extension policies and frameworks developed and adopted by rural development line ministries	LDCF	200,000	2,000,000
		Sub-Total		3,586,000	13,598,871
		Project management cost[1]		214,000	360,000
		Total project costs		**3,800,000**	**13,958,871**

B. PROJECT FRAMEWORK

Project Objective: To enhance the capacity of Niger's agricultural and pastoral sectors to cope with climate change, by mainstreaming Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) practices and strategies into on-going agricultural development policies and programmes.

Project Component	Grant Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	Grant Amount ($)	Confirmed Co-financing ($)
1. Introducing improved climate-resilient agro-pastoral practices	TA	1. An "operational enabling environment" is created for promoting adoption of CCA practices and technologies through creation of partnerships, execution and analysis of baseline surveys and compilation and pilot-testing of existing and proposed new technologies and methods. *LDCF AMAT indicator 3.2.2: Strengthened capacity of project managers and stakeholders to transfer tested and selected appropriate adaptation technologies and tools: Score 2. Moderate Capacity achieved (75%). 25% female*	1.1 15 intervention sites and 15 partner-communities identified, 6 partnerships established and 10 awareness-raising campaigns undertaken related to the Project.	LDCF	157,100	0
			1.2 Tools for socio-economic and community self-assessment surveys selected and surveys undertaken in 15 municipalities.	LDCF	311,240	1,069,110
			1.3 Piloting on-farm tests of initial catalogue of crop varieties and farm/pastoralist practices in 15 municipalities.	LDCF	240,960	2,728,000
			1.4 5 regional databases and catalogues developed or updated including region-specific plant and animal genetic resources and potential	LDCF	189,300	1,000,000

[1] GEF will finance management cost that is solely linked to GEF financing of the project.

			best practices for climate resilient agriculture.			
Sub-total C1				**LDCF**	**898,600**	**4,797,110**
2. Capacity building and promotion of improved agricultural practices through agro-pastoral Field Schools	Inv	2. Increased ecological, economic and social resilience of at least three production systems in 15 Municipalities in two agro-ecological zones, through the adoption of improved, Field School-based CCA strategies, practices and a broader choice of adapted genetic material, leveraged/scaled up through interactions with PAC-CR and other partner programs. *10% of the cropped surface of the municipalities supported by partner's programmes (40,000 ha) integrate the approved CCA strategies, practices and adapted genetic materials* *LDCF AMAT 3.1.1 and 3.1.1.2: 100% of targeted groups (1,000 Field Schools/ 20,000 Households) are adopting at least 2 types of new technologies (25% female / 75% male)*	2.1 Curricula for FFS, PFS and DFF training of 300 facilitators revised in light of CCA and other cross-cutting themes, such as gender and nutrition	LDCF	84,300	43,813
			2.2 10 FFS/PFS/DFF Master Trainers and 300 Facilitators trained based on CCA curricula	LDCF	333,700	500,000
			2.3 14,000 farmers and herders (70% of target group) trained and implementing new/adapted practices	LDCF	1,268,100	2,500,000
			2.4 Development and adoption of participatory decision-support tools for Climate Change analysis to reduce risks for farmers/herders and communities	LDCF	250,200	532,340
			2.5 5 Producer Organizations (POs) strengthened on CCA practices	LDCF	127,000	1,500,000
			2.6 Local Adaption Investment Fund (LAIF) established in 5 regions (operational and financially sustainable)		110,000	1,100,000
Sub-total C2				**LDCF**	**2,173,300**	**6,176,153**
3. mainstreaming climate change resilient agro-pastoral and agricultural systems into sectoral policies and into local development	TA	3.1. Increased institutional capacities and cross-sector coordination to the mainstream CCA strategies into policies, programs and planning of the agro-sylvo-pastoral sectors *LDCF AMAT Indicator 2.2.1: 15 targeted Municipalities, 4 Government Ministries and 1 Research*	3.1 Development of policy briefs based on analyses of resilience.	LDCF	98,500	36,864
			3.2 Reinforced institutional capacities of 15 municipalities, 4 government ministries and 1 research institution for mainstreaming of CCA into programmes and policies based on the FFS approach.	LDCF	114,300	2,148,744

		Institution have increased adaptive capacity to reduce risks and respond to climate variability.	3.3 1 National and 15 Municipal investment plans on FFS-based CCA developed for programmes and policies related to agricultural and pastoral sectors	LDCF	81,100	0
Sub-total C3				**LDCF**	**293,900**	**2,185,608**
4. Project monitoring and evaluation	TA	4. Project implementation based on results based management and application of project lessons learned in future operations facilitated	4.1 System for systematic collection of field-based data to monitor project outcome indicators made operational	LDCF	30,700	100,000
			4.2 Midterm and final evaluation conducted		110,700	0
			4.3 Communications strategy developed		78,800	340,000
Sub-total C4				**LDCF**	**220,200**	**440,000**
			Sub-Total		**3,586,000**	**13,598,871**
			Project management Cost	LDCF	**214,000**	**360,000**
			Total project costs[4]	LDCF	**3,800,000**	**13,958,871**

C. SOURCES OF CONFIRMED CO-FINANCING FOR THE PROJECT BY SOURCE AND BY NAME ($)

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier (source)	Type of Co-financing	Co-financing Amount ($)
National Government	Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)	Grant	9,729,084
European Commission	European Commission	Grant	3,000,000
GEF Agency	FAO	Grant	1,149,787
Research Centre	CNRA	Grant	80,000
Total Co-financing			**13,958,871**

D. TRUST FUND RESOURCES REQUESTED BY AGENCY, FOCAL, AREA AND COUNTRY[1]

GEF Agency	Type of Trust Funds	Focal Area	Country Name/ Global	(in $)		
				Project amount (a)	Agency Fee (b)	Total c=a+b
FAO	LDCF	Climate Change	Niger	3,800,000	380,000	4,180,000
Total Grant Resources						4,180,000

1 In case of a single focal area, single country, single GEF Agency project, and single trust fund project, no need to provide information for this table. PMC amount from Table B should be included proportionately to the focal area amount in this table.

F. CONSULTANTS WORKING FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPONENTS:

Component	Grant Amount ($)	Co-financing ($)	Project Total ($)
Local consultants	817,000	0	817,000
International consultants	176,800	0	176,800

PART II: PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

A. DESCRIBE ANY CHANGES IN ALIGNMENT WITH THE PROJECT DESIGN OF THE ORIGINAL PIF

No significant changes have been made with regards to the project design of the original PIF. However, although the project's overall outcomes are well in line with the PIF, some changes were made during the PPG phase to the arrangement of outcomes and outputs in order to better reflect the problem that needs to be addressed and how opportunities will be exploited during the project implementation. Further the baseline scenario has been updated and strengthened and co-financing sources have been adjusted accordingly.

The following modifications were made during the PPG phase:

- The Outcome 1.1 in the PIF: "*Increased resilience of at least three productions systems in two agro-ecosystems through the adoption of improved CCA strategies, practices and a broader choice of adapted genetic material, in at least 15 municipalities assisted by PAC-CR and other partner programs (surface and yields at least maintained in assisted farmers' groups*" was re-arranged to be Outcome 2 in the project document. The PPG problem analysis revealed the need of creating an "operational enabling environment" in order to exploit opportunities to pilot-test existing technologies and establish partnerships with a large range of partner projects.
- The outputs A, B, C, D and E in the PIF have all been slightly re-arranged and synthesized into four main outputs to better reflect the changes made to Outcome 1.
- The Output 2.B in the PIF: "*300 FFS facilitators trained in climate change adaptation and ecosystem* resilience strategies and practices support CCA in 1,000 FFS", has been divided into two separate outputs in the project document (namely Output 2.2 and 2.3), as to distinguish training activities involving FS facilitators and farmer/herders.
- The Output 2.C in the PIF: "At least 100 FFS leaders aware/informed of options for CCA practices through FFS and farmer-to-farmer exchanges" has been reformulated to specifically target Producer Organizations, and rearranged to be Output 2.5 in the project document.
- The Outputs 3.A (" *Knowledge and understanding off CC-induced threats obtained from a growing network of FFS are incorporated into broader assessments conducted under PAC-CR and FAO-WFP emergency assistance platforms*") and 3.B ("*Agricultural policy/capacity assessment – gaps and opportunities for mainstreaming FFS- based climate change adaptation into the rural development sector policies*") have been merged into one single output in the project document (Output 3.1) as many output specific activities appeared to overlap. Likewise, Outputs 3.C (" *Mechanisms strengthened for cross- sector coordination in the implementation and monitoring of FFS-based outreach strategies for CCA*") and 3.D (" *Good operational practices and lessons learned for enhanced adaptation to climate risk of the agricultural sector are developed, disseminated and replicated at national level in support to sound CCA policy making and programming*") in the PIF, were merged into Output 3.2 in the Project Document as they shared similar activities.
- Moreover, based on the PPG assessment the baseline scenario and co-financing contributions have been updated and adjusted (see below and Section A.4), and the additional reasoning has been aligned and reinforced accordingly (see Section A.5). Subsequently the total co-financing has changed from the level anticipated in the PIF. This is detailed in the following table and further illustrated in Section A.4.

Partner	Co-financing (USD$) as stated in PIF	Actual Co-Financing (USD$)
MoA	300,000	9,729,085
SDR Secretariat	5,450,000	0
EU Delegation	0	3,000,000
CNRA	0	80,000
FAO	9,450,000	1,149,787

Totals	**15,200,000**	**13,958,871**

- Although the level of co-financing has decreased, the co-financing ratio has remained high at about 1:4.
- The level of co-financing from the MoA has greatly increased from $ 300,000 anticipated in the PIF to $ 9,729,085. This illustrates the MoA's increased interest in adopting climate change adaptation practices and also in scaling up the FS approach.
- The FAO's direct co-financing is less than anticipated. This is because at the time of the PIF the main projects considered in the baseline were FAO-led FFS and input provision projects. These baseline projects were under implementation and scheduled to be completed in 2012-2013. The baseline scenario has been reformulated and now describes the expected 2014-2019 situation. The co-financing structure is described in detail in the Project Document Section 4.3 (financial planning by component and by co-financier).
- Moreover, the Government of Niger has increased its commitment to the project, mobilising additional resources through government institutions such as the CNRA that will support Project Component 1.
- Finally, the project has mobilized co-financing from the European Delegation in Niger, especially in support of capacity building through agro-pastoral Field Schools (Project Component 2).
- Based on the detailed analysis undertaken during the PPG, the allocation of co-financing across the components has been slightly modified due to the change in the level of co-financing and as per changes made in the arrangement of outcomes and outputs. The details are provided in the following Table:

Component	PIF Co-financing (USD$)	Actual Co-financing (USD$)	Note
Component 1	5,000,000	4,797,110	Grant amount/Co-financing ratio remained as in PIF:1:5
Component 2	6,200,000	6,176,153	Grant amount/Co-financing ratio remained as in PIF: 1:3
Component 3	3,200,000	2,185,608	Grant amount/Co-financing ratio as remained as in PIF: 1:7
Component 4	440,000	440,000	No change registered

- The indicative Project Management Costs (PIF) were elaborated on in detail during the project preparation phase. They now reflect the project's PMC needs based on an analysis of the project's duration and the current (and anticipated) situation in Niger, in view of activities needed to be carried out. It is expected that the administrative expenditures are higher due to more complex procurement requirements in view of Niger's infrastructural and institutional set-up. This should ensure the timely acquisition of all required goods, works and services, avoiding delays in the project's overall implementation. Additionally the project will support the harmonization of the FFS/PFS curricula into the MoA's and the MoL's on-going projects and programmes which implies a higher management effort. For these reasons the Management Costs have been raised from 5% to 6%.

A.1 National strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions, if applicable, i.e. NAPAS, NAPs, NBSAPs, national communications, TNAs, NCSA, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE, Biennial Update Reports, etc.

N/A

A.2 GEF focal area and/or fund(s) strategies, eligibility criteria and priorities

N/A

A.3 The GEF Agency's comparative advantage

N/A

A.4 The baseline project and the problem it seeks to address

The problem analysis provided in the PIF has further been developed, and substantially deepened and adjusted during project preparation. Moreover, at the time of the PIF most of the baseline projects were under implementation and scheduled to be completed in 2012-2013. During project preparation, the baseline scenario has been reformulated to describe the expected 2014-2019 situation.

Section 1.2 of the Project Document provides a detailed description of the situation with regards to agro-pastoralism in Niger, and of climate related impacts and threats to agro-pastoralists as follows:

Problems and issues to be addressed

Non climate-driven problems such as; a) unsuited agricultural management practices (regarding crop and variety selection, water and soil management, and rangeland management), b) increasing population pressures that lead to expansion of agriculture areas into fragile ecosystems, c) increasing competition between herders and agriculturalists, and d) a lack in capital investment and positive incentives for sustainable rural development, are likely to be greatly aggravated by climate change. Adaptation of the agricultural sector is therefore not an end in itself but a means to address the development objectives of Niger. The country will have to adapt agricultural and pastoral systems to a hotter and likely drier future, and react to the risk of decreasing yields and the degradation of natural resource-bases (e.g. soils, biodiversity). A mix of technical solutions (such as more diverse sets of crop varieties to minimize risks, different planting patterns and a better integration between the crops, livestock and tree elements of small holders' production systems), as well as the necessity of institutional solutions to support the rural communities in an integrated way. In Niger there are traditional and improved sets of varieties of sorghum, millet, groundnuts, cowpeas and other crops that are grown to minimize losses caused by climate variability. However, without LDCF intervention, the adoption by farmers and pastoralists will remain limited.

The Strategic Programme for Climate Resilience (SPCR) indicates that: "The Government of Niger and its development partners have invested more than US $ 400 million over the last 3 decades in programmes promoting sustainable land management and other activities aimed at rehabilitating fragile lands. Overall, more than 50 programmes have incorporated activities related to Sustainable Land Management (SLM) such as the promotion of conservation measures for water collection and surface water, tree planting and other measures to rehabilitate lands, etc. Reported results of such investments include increased vegetation, reduced erosion, rehabilitation and greater utilization of degraded lands, improved agricultural yields, increased forage for herds, greater availability of water, improved food security and well-being for vulnerable groups, and the reduction of poverty, among other things[2]". While it is recognized that Niger has over the course of the past decades gained considerable experience in land recuperation for agro-sylvo-pastoral production, it is also noted that coverage has been limited and focused in areas of more favorable agro-climatic conditions and market access. Less than 8% of villages in Niger, and particularly those in the regions of Dosso, Tillabery and Tahoua have participated in the major SLWM programmes. It is also recognized that "these projects and programmes have already brought together a critical mass of experiences on adaptation to climate change" and that it is now imperative "to scale them up and use them as part of a massive effort of environmental restoration"[3].

The NAPA's follow-up to date has been to focus on creating basic institutional and awareness conditions for better addressing CCA issues, and on generating localized field experiences in eight of the most vulnerable communities, one in each of Niger's regions. Parallel to that, the FAO along with partners such as the World Food Program (WFP), Bioversity International and others have also recurrently supported the Niger Government in coping with repeated food crises, and is interested in supporting a shift from a reactive to a more proactive approach linking food security, disaster risk management (DRM) and CCA.

Policy framework and Baseline projects

2 Strategic Programme for Climate Resilience, SPCR/Niger, 2010
3 Ibidem

Over the past decade, the Government of Niger has developed an array of policies, strategies, programmes, plans and projects to support rural development and address natural resource related challenges in rural areas. The first Strategy for Development and Poverty Reduction (Stratégie pour un Développement accéléré et pour la réduction de la Pauvreté - SDRP) established in 2002 and revised in 2007 for the period 2008-2012 aimed at reducing half the incidences of national poverty and decreasing rural poverty from 66% (in 2002) to 55% (in 2015). The strategic objectives were translated into five successive mid-term Plans for Social and Economic Development (Plan de Développement Economique et Social – PSED) to integrate the SDRP and action plans from all the government departments.

The Plan for Social and Economic Development (PSED) 2012-2015 is the framework for state intervention in concert with its development partners. The Initiative "Nigeriens feed Nigeriens" (I3N) launched in May 2011 and officially announced in March 2012, replaced the Rural Development Strategy (RDS), which was the declaration of the Strategy for Development and Poverty Reduction (SDRP) in the agricultural sector since 2003. The I3N is also the translation of the National Strategy for Food and Nutrition Security, running with a similar horizon to the Strategy for Sustainable Development and Inclusive Growth - 2035 (SDDCI). The I3N Initiative aims to achieve food and nutritional security through improving the productivity of food crops, the development of small-scale irrigation and small livestock, and proving support for coping mechanisms. It focuses on five strategic areas:

(i) Growth and diversification of agro-sylvo-pastoral production and fisheries
(ii) Valuation and marketing of agro-sylvo-pastoral products
(iii) Improved resilience of Nigeriens to food crises and disasters
(iv) Improvement of nutritional status
(v) Creating a supportive environment

By 2015, the I3N should result in a 41% increase in gross food production (from 3.55 million tons of food produced in 2011 to 5 million tons expected in 2015), including an increase of 40% and 45% of meat and milk production respectively.

Included in the framework of the I3N is the Strategic Programme for Climate Resilience (SPCR), highlighting the recent shift from a "development without adaptation" to a "development with adaptation" scenario. The SPCR includes the WB-sponsored Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience (Programme Pilote pour la Résilience Climatique - PPCR), and the Community Action Project for Climate Resilience (Actions Communautaires pour la Résilience Climatique – PAC-RC).

The PPCR and PAC-RC aim at supporting the current process of incorporating climate resilience into development strategies and plans, in order to scale up and strengthen lessons learned from programmes and projects by supporting existing participatory processes for knowledge exchange, and by pilot testing and scaling up improved climate-resilient agro-pastoral practices.
Within the SPCR the CNEDD/National Technical Commission on Climate Change and Variability (CTNCVC) has been established. However, the latter does not appear to have the means and weight necessary to influence relevant policy-making processes at the moment.

Despite these significant past and ongoing initiatives, a vast number of programmes and projects particularly in the agriculture and livestock sector are still falling short of incorporating the special needs to effectively address the adverse effects of climate change. This is aggravated by a limited coordination among programmes/projects, a weak regulatory environment, as well as the limited knowledge about and sharing of CCA best practice approaches. The table below illustrates the baseline projects that will also provide co-financing to the project.

Project title and description:	Lead Agency	Funding source and duration	Co-financing US $	Co-financing support to Project
Small Hydropower Project for Food Security in the Dosso, Maradi, Zinder and Tahoua Regions (PPHSA -IESAII) The objective of the project is to	Directorate General of Agriculture / FAO	2014 - 2019 10,9M USD: Spain	1,149,787 Source: FAO	The project will support Component 1 – and specifically Output 1.2 and Output 1.3.

"contribute to the strengthening of national capacities for food production, supply, and resilience to food crises and natural disasters", and more specifically, to improve the food security and climate resilience of the most vulnerable populations in the rural and peri-urban regions of Dosso, Maradi, Tahoua and Zinder. Sustainable income, diet, and nutrition improvements to be achieved in target groups through intensification, diversification, and valorisation of agricultural production, as well as stakeholders' capacity building.		AECID		The FAO project will also support other project components and the project management.
Agricultural Productivity Programme in West Africa (PPAAO/WAAPP) The overall project objective is to generate and disseminate proven technologies in priority areas identified by Niger, in accordance with the priorities defined by West and Central Africa for the Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF) Council. These priorities relate to the agro-sylvo-pastoral sector, among which livestock sectors selected for the National Specialization Centre.	Ministry of Agriculture	2011-2016 31,2 M USD: IDA, World Bank	80,000 Source: CNRA	The project will support Component 1 – and specifically Output 1.3
Project to Support the Rural Development Sector (PADSR) The overall objective of the Project is to contribute to food security by promoting sustainable agricultural development and improving rural populations' access to economic opportunities. More specifically, the objective is to create favorable conditions for producers or producer organizations from 31 municipalities of the Dosso and Zinder regions to develop their productive activities, while ensuring sustainable resource management, as to guarantee food security over the long term. The project will also improve quality and coverage of inclusive rural financial services tailored to the needs of poor in a cleaner and more secure environment.	Ministry of Agriculture	2012-2016 21,4 M USD: European Union	3,000,000 source: EU	The project will contribute to support Component 1 and Component 2 - Output 2.3 and Output 2.6, in particular in relation to microcredit, market and "warrantee" activities.
Project for the Mobilization and Valorization of Water Resources (PROMOVARE) The objective of PROMOVARE is to achieve water management for different uses with a view to adapt to climate change impacts. PROMOVARE aims at increasing and intensifying irrigated and recession cropping by; a) valorizing and developing water resources, b) promoting the development of new irrigation techniques, enabling better adaptation to climate change, c) implementing a series	Ministry of Agriculture/ Directorate of Rural Engineering	2012-2017 13,9M USD	9,729,084 Source: Ministry of Agriculture	The project will support: Component 1 - Output 1.3, Output 1.4 Component 2 - Output 2.2, Output 2.3, Output 2.4 and Output 2.5 Component 3 - Output 3.2: in particular in relation to the involvement of POs into the Consultative Platform.

of actions to improve the living conditions of the beneficiaries, and d) improving water resource monitoring. More specifically, the baseline of PROMOVARE on which the LDCF project will build upon consists of outputs related to support measures and capacity building focused on Producer Organizations (POs). Cereal banks, the selection and popularization of resilient seeds and the strengthening of POs will be the main baseline activities related to the LDCF project.				

The proposed project will also build on the work of the African Centre of Meteorological Application for Development (ACMAD) and AGRYMET on meteorology and on climate modelling, forecasting and prediction. However, these projects will not provide co-financing. La Direction Nationale de la Météorologie and other national stakeholders are collaborating closely with ACMAD and AGRYMET, and this collaboration will continue throughout the project in order to facilitate the flow of accurate information for developing Output 2.5: "Weather forecasting decision-support tools for farmers are developed".

Remaining barriers and problems to be addressed by the project

The above mentioned programmes and projects represent a real opportunity to make substantial improvements towards sustainable rural development in Niger, in particular for the large number of rural people engaged in integrated livestock/cropping/forestry activities. However, these programmes and projects face several common challenges that undermine their effectiveness and limit their impact as they fail to provide an adequate analysis of climate variability and climate change, and do not identify appropriate adaptation measures.

The effects of CC on rural sectors are exacerbated because of limited knowledge and capacity for adaptation, and there is a need to build capacity in adopting drought-resilient agro-sylvo-pastoral practices to counter the adverse effects of climate variability. Non-climate-driven problems such as unsuited agricultural management practices (regarding crop and variety selection, water and soil management, and rangeland management), increasing population pressures leading to expansion of agriculture into fragile ecosystems, and increasing competition between herders and agriculturalists, as well as lack of capital investment and positive incentives for sustainable rural development, are likely to be greatly aggravated by CC.

Despite the fact that climatic variability has been considered in rural development policies, programs and field activities, farmers and agro pastoralists are now subject to increased risks and will have to adapt their agricultural and pastoral systems to a hotter and likely drier future and react to the risk of decreasing yields and degradation of the natural resource bases (soils, biodiversity).

A mix of technical solutions (such as more diverse sets of crop varieties to minimize risks, different planting patterns and a better integration between the crop, livestock and tree elements of smallholders' productions systems), as well as institutional solutions, are necessary to support the rural communities, in an integrated way.

The following challenges were assessed through the PPG-financed studies:

1. Insufficient knowledge and absence of a consolidated capacity to cope with CC-threats: Farmers and pastoralists need to strengthen their competence related to technologies, tools and practices for increasing the resilience to CC. Moreover, despite recent investment in developing the hydro-meteorological network, the availability of reliable, timely, pertinent information on weather forecasts is insufficient and rarely useful for farmer-herders' decision making.

The *livestock sub-sector* is characterized by a strong competition for the use of natural resources. This has already led to outbreaks of tensions in some places. There is a scarcity of the necessary factors of production – caused by the combined effects of climate variability and high population pressures. Climate-related challenges – in the form of drought and heat – lead to the emergence of animal diseases, through weakness in nutrition and shortages of water. These challenges to the livestock sub-sector, as well as unsuited soil and crop management practices, such as uncontrolled grazing, lead directly to economic losses - primarily related to the exit of capital, reduced productivity and increased production costs on farms. This has major consequences for the resilience of poor households in rural areas.

Likewise, recent advances and development in the *agriculture sector* in Niger are in danger of being lost or reversed by climate change. This most notably relates to the high spatio-temporal variability in rainfall that causes pockets of drought in the rainy season, as well as heavy rains and floods in other areas, along with a probable overall, average shortening of the rainy season. Moreover, as temperatures continue to increase, some vulnerable animal and plant species are expected to disappear or become less productive. The frequency and intensity of wind and sand storms may increase. These climate change impacts are expected to contribute to extensive damage of crops and undermine productivity. Moreover, the limited adapted genetic material risks to exacerbate this difficult context.

2. Weak consideration of traditional knowledge and local practices related to coping with CC: Although both farmers and pastoralists developed a good knowledge and experience to counteract CC-threats, they remain fragmented and not sufficiently valorized. Lack of appropriate tools and approaches based on participatory approaches and/or self-assessments of climate resilience of farmers and pastoralists capable to identify basic needs and monitoring local CCA practices.

3. Public institutions lack information regarding measures for increasing the resilience to CC, with the consequent weakness of sector policies and programmes for improving farmers and pastoralists' livelihoods. Weak application of national policies and programmes aimed at increasing farmers and pastoralists' capacity to adapt to CC is due to the poor awareness of policy makers and institutional staff on CCA measures, and related tools and best practices to be mainstreamed into these policies and programmes.

4. The prevalence of sectoral approaches as opposed to cross-sectoral and integrated approaches: The programmes and projects listed in Table 1 in the project document address rural challenges mostly through a single-sector approach. They categorize natural resource users as either 'farmers', or 'pastoralists' or 'forest users'. In reality, the vast majority of natural resource users in Niger do all three and are therefore "agro-sylvo-pastoralists", and this is an increasing trend. Individuals and communities engage in a complex and diverse, but inter-related set of activities to exploit the range of natural resources at their disposal in order to meet nutrition and livelihood needs. In fact, this adoption of integrated agro-sylvo-pastoralist systems by rural people in Niger has been over time a response to climate variability. In recognition of the integrated nature of the livelihoods of resource users, support programmes should be more integrated.

5. Concrete mechanisms for the formulation of CCA-sensitive sectoral and cross-sectoral policies and of consultation platforms for the definition of agriculture policies on CC are absent. Despite the existing CNEDD/National Technical Commission on Climate Change and Variability (CTNCVC), it does not appear to have the means and weight necessary to influence relevant policy-making processes.

6. Two other very important challenges to increase the livelihood and resilience to CC are:
   - Lack of financial resources. Access to micro-credit remains a challenge for many rural people across Niger, especially those who are predominantly involved in livestock rearing, transformation and commercialisation, having a negative effect on rural household revenue and nutrition. Difficulties include limited access to diverse food, low added-value, lack of processing facilities and infrastructure, insufficient technical and management capacities of producer groups, lack of information on markets, hence marketing

plans that do not take into account the demands of the market.

- The role of Producer Organizations (PO) remains weak. POs need to be strengthened on several levels to be useful for farmers-herders. They are fragile in relation to the capacity on manage efficiently post-harvest processes such as storage of seed and crop product, transportation and linkages to market, as well as management of microcredit and other economic activities. POs representation in the institutions and involvement in decision-making processes and policies is also weak and needs to be strengthened.

In conclusion, the main challenges and barriers related to CC identified within the above described context are: a) insufficient information and awareness of CCA methodology, best practices and strategy among institutions, producers and consumers, b) lack of attention to traditional knowledge and local practices related to coping with CC, c) the need to build capacity in adopting drought-resilient agro-sylvo-pastoral practices to counter the adverse effects of climate variability, d) weakness of policies and programmes aimed at confronting CC in key sectors such as agriculture, pastoral and food security and promoting multi-sectoral policies and programmes, and e) the need for technology, and methods to tackle the impact that climate change has on crops and animal breeding as relevant to food security.

A.5 Additional cost reasoning and associated adaptation benefits

The additional cost reasoning has been further developed and detailed in the Project Document Section 1.2 as follows:

Additional reasoning

To address the above mentioned barriers and achieve adaptation benefits, the additional costs financed by LDCF will allow boosting the adoption of agricultural tools and practices, expanding the scope of the FFS approach, increase capacity building, and support policies and programs to shift from a reactive response towards a pro-active preparedness approach to climate events. Farmers will gain the ability to understand and adapt to climate change impacts through FFS. Once verified and tested how this model works best, and when the required human resources and institutional capacities for up-scaling have been reinforced, the FFS-based CCA will be mainstreamed into national policies through the LDCF Project by strengthening the CTNCVC and scaled-up by SPCR and other I3N programmes.

With the additional financing from the LDCF, the proposed project will expand the scope of the activities carried out in the country related to increase resilience of the agricultural sector to climatic changes and contribute to decrease the vulnerability of small-farmers and pastoralists who depend on agriculture. The intervention measures that this project will provide include; (i) piloting of climate resilient improved agricultural practices that better manage risk through increasing crop variation and pastoral diversity, through linking to a growing network of institutional partnerships, (ii) provision of tools and training for 20,000 farmers and agro-pastoralists to improve their adaptive capacity to adapt to climate change, (iii) complementing ongoing and planned projects and programs by developing decision making tools for farmers and by developing extension curricula for climate change adaptation, and (iv) mainstreaming climate change into agriculture policies and programs. The project marks a shift from earlier NAPA follow-up initiatives (focused on very localized pilot projects in the most vulnerable communities) by choosing to implement an up-scaling / mainstreaming strategy based on a recognized, cost-efficient and expanding training and extension approach building on the Farmers Field Schools (FFS), Pastoral Field Schools and Diversity Field Forum (DFF) concepts. While capitalizing on the results on the early NAPA implementation initiatives, the proposed LCDF project will work through the establishment of partnerships with on-going initiatives for incorporating the Field School-CCA approach in existing program frameworks such as the I3N and associated projects, thus contributing to fill the gap in terms of required increased adaptive capacity of the agricultural sector for food security. Furthermore, the EU-funded CoOPequity Project (2012 – 2015) will support gender sensitive and inclusive processes in the preparation of relevant institutional frameworks. The adaptation scenario will allow for both the expansion of the Field School approach and the integration of CCA considerations and practices in Field School curricula. The Adaptation scenario will lead to a more coherent intervention which will include the following production systems mentioned in I3N's priority programs:

(i) Dry-cereals and pastures: The major effort will be put on expanding Field Schools for more climate resilient and sustainable production of dry cereals and better integrating the crops / livestock / tree components of production systems which are particularly exposed to climate variability.

(ii) Irrigated rice: The Field Schools will focus on a sustainable Integrated Production and Pest Management (IPPM)-based intensification strategy, including water management and climate variability mitigation

practices, in support to existing and on-going investment in rice perimeters, particularly along the Niger valley.

(iii) Vegetable production: The Field Schools will focus on soil and water management practices (including incorporation of organic matter, increased water retention, cultivars selection, better distribution in time of production cycles leading to higher earnings), allowing for increased income generation for vulnerable producers, in particular women groups.

The specific additional value of the proposed LDCF project is three-fold. The LDCF funding will allow for: (i) the development of Field Schools-based CC adaptation models using on-going FFS projects as baseline; (ii) a first level of up-scaling of the developed and tested Field School-CCA models into co-financing projects; and (iii) the mainstreaming of the approach /models through the I3N projects as well as the SPCR by providing CCA curricula and tools (such as SHARP) for farmers and setting up a Consultation Platform within the CNEDD/National Technical Commission on Climate Change and Variability (CTNCVC) to oversee the development of coherent and well-coordinated extension approaches.

Adaptation Benefits

The LDCF project is expected to generate the following adaptation benefits; (i) Increased knowledge and understanding of CC-induced threats generated by other initiatives (PPCR and PAC-RC) are channeled in an effective and efficient manner trough an expanding network of Field Schools, (ii) Resilient varieties and cultivars and sound CCA practices are adopted in dry crop cereals and livestock-based production systems (surfaces/40,000 hectares and yields are at least maintained in two agro-ecosystems strategic natural assets), (iii) 20,000 farmers and agro pastoralists adopt improved climate resilient practices through Field School training, (iv) concrete adaptive capacity at farmers and herders level is strengthened through a growing network of at least 1,000 Field Schools fully integrating CCA strategies and practices, (v) Field School-based CCA initiatives are supported by a CCA Local Adaptation Fund, contributing to eliminate financing bottle necks in the adaptation pathways, (vi) 15 targeted Municipalities, 4 Government Ministries and 1 Research Institution have increased adaptive capacity to reduce risks and respond to climate variability, (vii) climate change adaptation strategies mainstreamed into agricultural sector policies, programs and planning based on "lessons learned", and (viii) effective and recurrent mechanisms are in place for cross-sector coordination in the implementation of Field School-based outreach strategies for CCA.

The adaptation activities will particularly focus on the diversification of agricultural systems, including introducing agro-forestry elements and promote increased adoption of improved practices related to soil, seed (varietal diversity and selection related to climate variability), water and pest management together resulting in improved ecological resilience. Community training on marketing will help seek out new sources of economic growth (resulting in economic resilience and improved nutrition). When scaled up, these changes will result in reduced vulnerability to external shocks (socio-economic conditions, natural disasters) and in improved livelihoods. A component of the project will promote mainstreaming of climate-resilient policies in local, provincial and national policy bodies.

The Project will directly support at least 20,000 herder-farmers to develop and implement new approaches, practices and varieties/cultivar that increase climate resilience. The project will also contribute directly to organizational strengthening of these communities – leading indirectly to improvements in terms of gender, nutrition, access to and use of agro-meteorological information and access to credit and market. As a result 20,000 families, therefore approximately 120,000 individuals, will benefit from increased resilience to climate change.

Moreover, the project will directly contribute to improved natural resource management practices over approximately 40,000 hectares by supporting; a) extensively grazed and semi-intensively grazed rangelands,b) agricultural land used for the cultivation of crops for human consumption (rice, millet, cow-pea, peanut and vegetables) and crops for animal feed, c) naturally assisted regeneration of highly degraded rangelands - thereby decreasing the pressure on land (while contributing to globally significant sustainable land management) and increasing the supporting environment for biodiversity, and d) the protection and sustainable use of Diversity Field Flora – thereby protecting globally significant species and varieties.

It is expected that the project will indirectly have the following replication and multiplier effects:

- By supporting the establishment of a dynamic network of Field Schools, the project will indirectly influence the extension system in use across Niger. Notably, it is expected that, as a result of these interventions, the agricultural and livestock local and national interventions will; (i) better integrate climate change adaptation, thereby contributing greatly to overall adaptation across the agriculture sector, and (ii) lead to the adoption of a more integrated ecosystem approach, as opposed to focusing on individual crops. This will lead to improved land management, reduced land degradation and likely to the conservation of some species and unique varieties.
- By empowering Field Schools, and by supporting diffusion to neighboring communities, the project will indirectly influence the implementation of many rural development projects, particularly in the agriculture sector. This should have a strong multiplier effect in terms of increasing resilience to climate change and climate variability. Although no specific indicators in terms of impact on people/per/ha are available, these processes will be monitored.

A.6 Risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved, and measures that address these risks

The risk analysis has been further detailed during project preparation and mitigation measures have been included in the project design as follows:

Risk Description	Risk level	Mitigation Measure
Limited partnership-building constraints project implementation	M	The project includes many activities to develop partnerships, including participatory assessments, workshops, multi-stakeholder consultations, awareness raising (Outcome 1) and joint institutional activities on mainstreaming FFS into policies and programmes (Outcome 3). Project activities will mainly take place at the local/community level, involving local stakeholders and local institutions. Specific cooperation agreements and letters of understanding, detailing responsibilities and defining joint work plans will be endorsed by implementing partners.
Seed shortages owing to climate variability shock, prolonged droughts, and/ or pest and disease outbreaks with risk of project crop/grassland failure	M	Pest and disease outbreaks related to climate variability may cause crop/grassland failure. The project will address this risk by supporting the implementation of CCA measures, as well as building community-level field observation capacities to monitor and reduce seed multiplication failures, particularly with specialized seed multiplying farmers through DFF approach.
Worsening security crisis in the country or in the neighbouring countries (e.g. Nigeria and Mali) leads to insecurity and/or to a greater influx of migratory herds and/or displaced populations	M	Increased influx of migratory herds may increase pressures on rangelands and lead to conflicts in some of the project areas. The same may occur in case of increased pressure due to increased movements of the displaced population to Niger's northern or southern borders. Conflict sensitive programming will be mainstreamed into the PFS to address natural resource management and sharing of natural resources. Efforts will be made with all stakeholders to establish secure mobility corridors and pasture belts as to reduce the impact on natural resources within protected areas. The situation will be monitored. If necessary, emergency/contingency plans will be developed by the project stakeholders, including the FAO and the responsible ministries. Coordination mechanisms will

		be established from the outset with similar projects in Mali and north Nigeria's federal states, to facilitate communications.
Lack of participation by direct beneficiaries.	L	Farmers and herders may be hesitant to participate in project activities. This risk is considered low, as Field Schools are widely distributed and well-grounded in the territory. Awareness raising campaigns and workshops on CC negative impacts will be conducted involving local institutions and local stakeholders. The Field School bottom-up approach will stimulate local participation. Direct adaptation benefits will increase and stimulate the participation of the project's direct beneficiaries.
Certain project interventions (e.g. provision of agro-meteorological information) are not implemented on a financially sustainable basis.	L	Accurate agro-meteorological information is expensive to produce. Moreover, it is often prepared in a top-down, supply driven manner and not adapted to needs of key users. The project will seek collaboration with key national actors, such the National Directorate of Meteorology, ACMAD and Agrhymet Centres who will be fully involved in project activities and will receive specific training sessions on integration of climate information into Field Schools and dissemination, and use of climate information. Activities will include cost-efficient methodologies of gathering meteorological information such as; gathering indigenous/local knowledge and perception of rainfall patterns, understanding the causes and consequences of climate change through Rain calendars).
Local institutions are slow to agree on project initiatives.	L/VL	Local departments may hesitate to participate due to the innovative nature of the project and/or the need to cooperate with a broad range of partners. Specific cooperation agreements and letters of understanding detailing responsibilities and defining joint work plans will be endorsed by implementing partners

A.7 Coordination with other relevant GEF financed initiatives

The FAO and the Government of Niger will work in close collaboration with the executing agencies of other projects to identify opportunities and facilitate mechanisms to achieve synergies with relevant GEF-supported projects. These efforts will be facilitated through; (i) informal communication between the GEF Agencies, and (ii) exchanging lessons learned, sharing data and technical expertise and tools, and dissemination materials between projects. To ensure that existing opportunities from coordination and collaboration between different initiatives are realized, negotiations will be undertaken during PY1 and MoUs will be established with local authorities and programme/projects implementing agencies defining joint work plans and responsibilities. In particular the project should seek coordination and exchange with the following institutions and initiatives:

- **Community Action Programme Phase 3 (PAC 3)**. Executed by the Ministry of Planning, PAC 3 supports the decentralization process initiated during the previous phases within the context of current political, institutional, social and economic changes. Specifically, PAC3 Component 1: "Strengthening the leadership of local governments in local development (through cross-cutting initiatives intended to improve governance and build the capacities of all local stakeholders)" will synergize with Output 1.1 of the present project (activity related to awareness-raising of partner institutions). PAC3 Component 2: "Promoting the adoption and use of sustainable natural resource management practices and techniques, and combining them with general measures that would create jobs and improve local livelihoods" will collaborate with Output 2.5 of the proposed project (activities related to strengthening market strategies, commercialization and transformation of food products and capacity building of farmers-herders to access micro-credit facilities). PAC3 Component 3: "Speeding up a long-term

process of national ownership by national institutions" will cooperate with Outputs 3.1 and 3.2 of the proposed project (activities related to the development of policy briefs based on analyses of resilience and the reinforcement of institutional capacities).

- **Disaster Risk Management and Urban Development Project**. Executed by the Ministry of Planning, the project objective is to improve the country's resilience to natural hazards through; 1) selected disaster risk management interventions in targeted project sites, and 2) strengthening of the government's capacity to respond promptly and effectively to an eligible crisis or emergency. Coordination of activities could benefit the present project for the sharing of analytic information on CC related historical data and participatory decision-support tools to reduce risks for farmer/herder communities (Output 2.4 of present project).

- **Scaling up Community-Based Adaptation (CBA) in Niger.** Executed by the UNDP, the project aims to strengthen the responsiveness and adaptive capacity of administrative/technical support services at the commune-level to enable generation of a critical mass of climate resilient communities and achieve more climate resilient economies in Maradi region. The coordination with the UNDP project could benefit activities of the present project for; (i) providing members and technical workers of regional and municipal councils, extension services (agriculture, environment, and water and livestock), NGOs and CBOs active in the Maradi region, with the necessary tools for mainstreaming climate change into development plans and into the management and planning of socio-economic activities (coordination with Output 1.2 of present project related to tools for socio-economic and community self-assessment surveys), (ii) the development of the communication strategy/system to provide municipal council members, extension services and community organizations (CBOs and NGOs) with relevant climate information and agro and hydrometeorological advisories (coordination with Output 1.2 of the present project related to the development of a communication strategy and the Community Listeners' Clubs), (iii) the development of municipal development plans and annual budgets for vulnerable municipalities will be reviewed and updated to integrate CCA practices (coordination with Output 2.6 of the present project in relation to activities on promotion to improve agricultural practices through agro-pastoral Field Schools), and (iv) sharing of master trainers, facilitators and of CCA-related FFS curricula.

Moreover, the project will coordinate with other on-going LDCF projects in neighbouring countries such as Mali, Burkina Faso and Senegal (in PPG phase). Coordination with these projects will involve; (i) sharing of good practices, (ii) production of CCA-oriented FFS/PFS/DFF training material, iii) sharing of methodologies and techniques to institutionalize the FFS approach, and iv) sharing of Master Trainers and Facilitators. Specifically for the latter, the present project could share already trained Master Trainers with neighbouring countries.

B. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION NOT ADDRESSED AT PIF STAGE:

B.1. Describe how the stakeholders will be engaged in project implementation

The project will be technically executed by the Government of Niger represented by the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), the Ministry of Livestock (MoL), the Ministry of Environment, Urban Sanitation, and Sustainable Development (MEUSSD), and the Ministry of Planning, Land Management and Community Development (MPLMCD). In addition fifteen municipalities in the five regions of Tahoua, Maradi and Zinder (Sahelian agro-climatic Zone) and Tillabery and Dosso (Soudano-Sahelian Zone) will participate in the project implementation together with local NGOs operating in the targeted municipalities. As requested by the government of Niger, the FAO will act as GEF implementing agency and also be responsible for the financial and administrative execution of the project in close cooperation with the MoA and the other project partners.

The MA will be the lead government counterpart and the main Project Executing Partner directly responsible for technical implementation of all project activities, as well as day-to-day monitoring. The Minister of Agriculture or his representative will chair the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and annual project review and planning meetings. The

FAO will sign a Government Cooperation Project (GCP) Agreement with the MoA and will provide procurement and contracting services to the project using FAO rules and procedures. In addition the FAO will provide financial management services of LDCF resources, as well as supervision and technical guidance for the overall implementation process.

The MoA's participation will be primarily through its associated institutions such as the; Directorate of Planning and Studies (DPS), National Directorate of Agriculture (DNA), National Institute of Agronomic Research in Niger (INRA), and the Directorate for Plant Protection (DPV). The DPS will provide support in identifying possible partnerships to be established under project Component 1. The DNA will support the identification of vulnerable households in the project target areas, as well as the establishment of revolving funds under project Component 2; INRA will support the dissemination of techniques to improve climate resilience in agricultural and pastoral production and will provide updated scientific and technological information. The DPV will contribute to improving the agricultural productivity through plant protection, providing support and advice to farms and rural institutions on plant protection, as well as ensure the adaptation of innovations and technologies to the needs of farms at a local level and ensure the translation and dissemination of modern techniques of plant protection through appropriate channels.

The MoL will provide technical support in all project activities related to the livestock sector and Pastoral Field Schools through its associated institutions such as; the Directorate of Planning and Studies (DPS) that will share its own coordination and planning, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. The Directorate of the Promotion of Livestock Organizations (DPLO) that will provide data related to pastoral resources, evaluation of pastoral resources and monitoring of transhumance. The General Directorate of Production and Animal Industries (GDP) will provide support in trainings and PFS related to strengthening of value chains. GDPAI will also support PFS by mainstreaming in training material/curricula lessons learnt from the "Breeder leader".

The MEUSSD will provide technical support in all project activities related to natural resources management and sustainable development. This includes supporting the institutionalization of the Field School approach in national extension programmes and facilitating the development of climate change adaptation projects.

The MPLMCD will provide support in establishing the coordination mechanism with project related projects and programmes.

The NDM will provide agro meteorological data and will coordinate the processing and dissemination of agro meteorological information towards the achievement of Output 2.5.

At the district/regional level, the regional directorates of agriculture (RDA) and regional directorates of livestock (DDL) will be the institutional focal points for the project from MoA and MoL. Both institutions will designate a focal point in each region among internal staff. Institutional Focal Points will provide important links to other initiatives in the region and will provide technical support to project field activities and will participate in field supervision missions. These institutional focal points, attached to regional directorates, will be provided by the government as in-kind co-financing. Other in-kind co-financing will include one vehicle per target region (5 vehicles in total) and office space. The technical staff will in turn benefit from specific capacity building activities.

At the municipal level, the 15 municipalities will each provide office space and technical support from their staff. Each municipality will designate a focal point among internal staff.

In addition, the project will achieve a number of key outputs through letters of agreements (LoAs) that will be elaborated and signed between the FAO and collaborating partners (service providers). The LoAs will be administratively managed by the Budget Holder (FAO representative in Niger). Funds received by the service providers under a LoA will be used to execute the project activities in conformity with the FAO's rules and procedures.

Moreover, partnerships with executing agencies of other projects local authorities, NGOs, CSOs and CBOs will be defined and established through partnership agreements defining shared workplans and responsibilities (for more details see answer to USA's comment # 6 in Annex B).

B. 2. Describe the socioeconomic benefits to be delivered by the project at the national and local levels, including consideration of gender dimensions, and how these will support the achievement of global environment benefits (GEF Trust Fund/NPIF) or adaptation benefits (LDCF/SCCF):

The socio-economic benefits have been broadly detailed at the PIF stage. The project will deliver socio-economic benefits through a participatory (bottom up/gender sensitive) planning approach by; i) ensuring resilient agricultural production, and allowing rural populations to adapt and expand their traditional knowledge base and practices to CC impacts to prevent climate- induced economic losses, ii) reducing social tensions between agriculturalists, agro-pastoralists, herders and other NR users through a better integration of crop and livestock production systems and tree components of production systems, iii) strengthening micro-finance mechanisms and linkages to market and supporting local communities to access local Municipalities Development Plans and national development financial resources, and iv) reducing the impacts of climate change on the most vulnerable groups, including rural women, notably through measures to enhance the climate-resilience of vegetable production. Since poor rural women have both production and reproduction roles – by collecting water and wood, raising small animals, laboring land for family subsistence and cash crops such as vegetable plots, and bearing children- they are the most affected by CC.

The adaptation needs will be mainstreamed into local production systems, with a special emphasis on food security and production diversification. Best practices will be disseminated through the methodology of the Field School which has proven to be very well rooted in the territory. The Field School methodology employs a 'bottom up' approach, which aims at empowering local communities by increasing their ability to participate in economic activities and to take ownership over their natural resources. The project will ensure social sustainability by empowering direct beneficiaries to influence the planning and prioritization processes at municipal level as small-scale farmers and herders will be fully involved in the formulation and execution of Community Action Plans and Municipal Development Plans. Moreover, the project respects and strengthens existing decision-making processes at all levels and will work in and with local languages, using appropriate communication channels, as required. These aspects should ensure that, although the project introduces new approaches and technologies, they do not lead to social dis-function or to negative social impacts. On the contrary, they are designed to strengthen social capital, providing a good basis for social sustainability.

Rural population knowing and applying good management practices will help reduce land degradation and prevent competitive pressures on natural resources and risks of desertification (indirect global environment benefits). The project will also reduce their vulnerability and enhance their adaptive capacity to prevent climate-induced economic loses (direct adaptation benefit).

The direct socio-economic benefits and improved local livelihood of local communities will be achieved by: strengthening Producer Organizations organizational capacity, developing micro-credit mechanisms ensuring farmers-herders to access micro-credit facilities, reinforcing market strategies, commercialization and transformation of food products (Output 2.5).

Families will also benefit from the improved, more diverse diet, based on nutritious foods, with the potential for positive effects on health and nutritional status. The selection of varieties resilient to climate change and extreme weather events will help increase local community adaptation to climate change.

The project will support gender equality and gender mainstreaming at the institutional and community level in several different ways. Data will be disaggregated by gender to monitor differentiated project impacts. The Socio-Economic and Gender Analysis (SEAGA4) tool will be tested in Output 1.2 and shared with institutions to be mainstreamed in policies and programmes (Outputs 3.1 and 3.2). The SEAGA focuses on understanding gender roles, responsibilities and relations, and how they are managed in different communities. The approach also analyses the influence exerted on economic and social opportunities by factors such as age, ethnicity and religion all of which are fundamental in understanding livelihood strategies. The SEAGA helps identify asymmetries of power within households and structures

4 SEAGA. Socio-economic and Gender Analysis Programme, FAO, 2001. The SEAGA Field Level Handbook is written for development agents who work directly with local communities in developing countries. It is intended for outsiders such as extensionists, government and Non-government field workers, and private- and public-sector development consultants, and for insiders such as community organisers and leaders of local groups and institutions.

of power. This includes institutions and how they influence people's capacity to play an active role in development, ensuring that their voices are heard. The objective of SEAGA's approach is to systematically incorporate gender analysis in working processes with field agents and field farmer facilitators.

In addition, the project will ensure that all training material will include a gender dimension. The preparation of training material and the training of Master Trainers and Facilitators have modules focused on women and the women's role. Outputs 2.3 to 2.6 cover the provision of technologies, and the market inclusion for various community activities with the aim of increasing revenue and increasing food security, notably for women.

The community based action plans to be prepared under Output 2.3 will have women components and will have gender issues mainstreamed throughout. The DFF activities (Output 2.3) will apply a gender-sensitive perspective as knowledge held exclusively by women or men that may vary between crops or even between different landraces within a species. Because of the gendered nature of local knowledge, collecting data from both men and women, and keeping it in disaggregated format, is of central importance in the management of species, especially in terms of selection, harvesting and processing. The attention to gender will take into account that women often have different knowledge and preferences in terms of crops than men, and women play a key role in seed selection, seed storage, the use of wild plants for food, and the sustainable use of plant diversity.

Among the project adaptation benefits, the above socioeconomic benefits will support the achievement of the following; (i) resilient varieties and cultivars and sound CCA practices are adopted in dry crop cereals and livestock-based production systems (surfaces/40,000 hectares and yields are at least maintained in two agro-ecosystems strategic natural assets), (ii) 20,000 farmers and agro pastoralists adopt improved climate resilient practices through Field School training, (iii) concrete adaptive capacity at farmers and herders' level is strengthened through a growing network of at least 1,000 Field Schools fully integrating CCA strategies and practices, and (iv) Field School-based CCA initiatives are supported by a CCA Local Adaptation Fund, contributing to eliminate financing bottle necks in the adaptation pathways.

B.3 Explain how cost-effectiveness is reflected in the project design:

Cost effectiveness is a concept that is built-in to the programmatic strategy of the GEF/LDCF. The GEF/LDCF finances the 'additional costs' of achieving climate change adaptation, meaning the activities of the partners in the baseline cover most of the basic development and agro-pastoral issues. For this project, this means that the FAO/GEF/LDCF project builds on top of a large baseline of agriculture, food security and livestock-raising projects. With a baseline and co-financing of approximately $14 million, the FAO/GEF/LDCF costs are approximately 20% of the entire Project costs. That means, for every $1 invested, FAO/GEF/LDCF gains almost $5 of impact.

Cost-effectiveness is also at the heart of FAO's strategy to supporting rural development in sub-Saharan African countries such as Niger. The proposed project design is expected to be highly cost-effective since it builds on existing Farmers Field Schools' structures that are already operational across Niger, and on ongoing activities with similar objectives and synergies with existing programmes.

The proposed project also builds directly upon previous collaborations between the FAO and Niger on FFS. Since 2005, the FAO has been supporting FFS in Niger and has created a core capacity of technical expertise and experience. This includes legal and technical capacity in the government, as well as the cadre of FFS experts that have worked on previous FAO projects. By building on these past initiatives, the project capitalizes from FAO's past experience.

Moreover, the FFS approach in itself has demonstrated its cost-effectiveness in many contexts, including in Niger. It is a demonstrated cost-effective manner to deliver high quality technical advice to a large number of communities. Notably, under Outcome 2 of this project, for approximately $2 million of FAO/GEF/LDCF funds, direct benefits will reach a minimum of 20,000 farmer-herders. This is about $100 per farmer-herder.

A critical way to achieving this cost-effectiveness with FFS is through collaboration with local partners. The FAO will channel funds from the project to local authorities and NGOs that are already active in similar activities in the project intervention area. Hence, there will be few start-up costs and few costs related to the mobilization of expertise from outside the region or country.

Several alternative designs and approaches were considered for cost-effectiveness during project design. These alternatives included focusing on providing more hardware, or on focusing all capacity development efforts on national government agencies, or by installing new meteorological stations, or by FAO directly providing extension services to farmer-herders. Ultimately, it was decided that these approaches would not have as much impact per input, hence the selected focus of transforming agriculture and livestock-raising through the Field School approach was selected. This approach underlies Outcome 2.

The project also intends to minimize the use of international consultants where national expertise is available. This will reduce the travel costs and the costs of consultancy fees. Notwithstanding, where international expertise is unique or exceptionally credible, it will be utilized.

C. DESCRIBE THE BUDGETED M&E PLAN

Monitoring and evaluation of progress in achieving project results and objectives will be done based on the targets and indicators established in the Project Results Framework (Appendix 1 and described in Sections 2.4 and 2.5). The project Monitoring and Evaluation Plan has been budgeted at USD 220,000 (see table in Section 4.5). Monitoring and evaluation activities will follow the FAO and GEF monitoring and evaluation policies and guidelines. Supported by Component 4 the project monitoring and evaluation system will also facilitate learning and mainstreaming of project outcomes and lessons learned.

Indicators and information sources

To monitor project outputs and outcomes, including contributions to adaptation benefits specific indicators have been established in the Project Results Framework (see Appendix 1). The framework's indicators and means of verification will be applied to monitor both project performance and impact. Following the FAO's monitoring procedures and progress reporting formats, data collected will be of sufficient detail to be able to track specific outputs and outcomes and flag project risks early on. Output target indicators will be monitored on a six-monthly basis and outcome target indicators will be monitored on an annual basis if possible or as part of the mid-term and final evaluations. The project output and outcome indicators have been designed to monitor on-the-ground impacts and progress in building and consolidating capacities for improved climate-resilient agro-pastoral practices both at the municipal institutional level as at the level of local farmers and communities.

On-the-ground impact indicators will track:

The level of adoption by farmers and herders of sound CCA practices, resilient varieties and cultivars –percentage of cropped surface integrate CCA strategies, practices and adapted genetic materials; number of hectares covered and percentage of targeted groups adopting at least two of the following types of new technologies (disaggregated by gender); a) climate resilient crop varieties (drought or flood resistant), b) agronomic practices for flood and drought management in crop production systems (soil conservation and agro-forestry practices), c) resilience evaluation tools, d) weather-forecast decision-support tools. The baseline and target for these indicators are established in the Project Results Framework under Component 2.

The institutional strengthening and capacity building process indicators will capture:

Levels of created awareness: The capacity of project managers and stakeholders to transfer tested and selected appropriate adaptation technologies and tools, the number of FFS/PFS/DFF established, the number of farmers/pastoralists trained and implementing new/adapted practices, the number of targeted municipalities, and the number of government ministries and number of research institutions with an increased adaptive capacity to reduce risks and respond to climate variability.

Level of mainstreaming of climate change adaption in sector policies and local development frameworks: The number of climate change adaptation strategies mainstreamed into agricultural sector policies, programs and planning based on

lessons learned, number of national and municipal investment plans on FFS-based CCA developed for programmes and policies related to agricultural and pastoral sectors.

The main sources of information to support the M&E programme will be; (i) participatory progress monitoring and workshops with beneficiaries, (ii) on-site monitoring of FFS/DFF/PFS training and activities, (iii) PPRs prepared by the NPC, (iv) consultants' reports, (v) participants training tests and evaluations, (vi) mid-term and post project impact and evaluation studies completed by independent consultants, (vii) financial reports and budget revisions, (viii) PIR prepared by the LTO supported by the BH and the NPC, (ix) FAO supervision mission reports, and (x) impact assessment.

The Reporting Schedule is detailed in Section 4.5 (project document).

Evaluations:

An independent mid-term evaluation will be undertaken after two years of project implementation (or at the point where 50% expenditures has been reached). The review will determine progress being made towards achievement of objectives, outcomes, and outputs, and will identify corrective actions if necessary. It will, inter alia:

- review the effectiveness, efficiency and timeliness of project implementation
- analyse the effectiveness of implementation and partnership arrangements
- identify issues requiring decisions and remedial actions
- identify lessons learned about project design, implementation and management;
- highlight technical achievements and lessons learned
- propose any mid-course corrections and/or adjustments to the implementation strategy as necessary.

An independent Final Evaluation (FE) will be carried out three months prior to the terminal review meeting of the project partners. The FE will identify the project impacts and sustainability of project results and the degree of achievement of long-term results. This evaluation would also have the purpose of indicating future actions needed to expand on the existing project in subsequent phases, mainstream and up-scale its products and practices, and disseminate information to management authorities responsible for the management of other project partners.

Some critical issues to be evaluated in the midterm and final evaluations will be; (i) institutional adoption and support for the new approaches introduced by the project, (ii) the functioning and effectiveness of the FFS/PFS/DFF and CLC network and of the inter-institutional coordination mechanism in developing and implementing integrated planning in support of farmer-herder communities, (iii) the level of capacities and involvement of local staff in terms of improved management effectiveness and land management plan implementation capability, and (iv) the level of involvement of farmers and herders in project activities and commitment to follow-up.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Final Evaluation team (one international and one national consultant) will be prepared in close consultation with the NPC, the FAO BH, LTO/LTU and GEF Coordination Unit, and under the ultimate responsibility of the FAO Office of Evaluation, in accordance with the FAO evaluation procedures and taking into consideration the evolving guidance from the GEF Independent Evaluation Office. The ToR and the report will be discussed with, and commented upon by the project partners.

Independently, an <u>impact assessment</u> will consider technical, social and political domains, by focusing on farmers' technical capabilities and educational, social and political capabilities, as well as on effectiveness of the social learning process.
Aspects to be included within the *technical* domain will be; more sustainable production, improved crop management, experimentation skills, innovation, improved livelihoods, ability to deal with risks and opportunities, yield increase, more cost-effective production, risk reduction, and improved marketability of produce.
Aspects to be included within *social* domain will be; group building, collaboration between farmers, communication skills, farmer associations, problem solving skills, community agenda setting, farmer study groups, formation of networks, and farmer-to-farmer extension.

Aspects to be included within the *political* domain will be; farmer-extension linkages, negotiating skills, stronger access to service providers, an improved leverage position, and educational skills.

Monitoring and evaluation plan summary

The table below provides a summary of the main M&E reports, responsible parties and timeframe.

Type of M&E Activity	Responsible Parties	Time-frame	Estimated costs (USD)
Inception Workshop (IW)	PCU, supported by the LTO, BH, and	Within three months of project start up	8,000
Surveys to determine AMAT baseline values	PCU and service providers	Within three months of project start up	Covered under costs of 2.1
Project Inception Report	PCU, LTO, BH, and NPC	No later than one month post IW.	5,000
Field based impact monitoring	PCU, MoA and other relevant agencies – including regional and provincial - to participate.	Periodically - to be determined at inception workshop.	70,000
Supervision visits and rating of progress in PPRs and PIRs	LTO, other participating units and PCU	Annual or as required	The visits of the LTO and the GCU will be paid by GEF agency fee. The visits of the NPC and Technical Assistants will be paid from the project travel budget.
Project Progress Reports	PCU, with inputs from MoA, PSC members and other partners	Semi-annual	Completed by NPC and Technical Assistants
Project Implementation Review report	PCU supported by the LTO and cleared and submitted by the PCU to the GEF Secretariat	Annual	Paid by GEF agency fee
AMAT	PCU supported by the LTO	Project start-up, mid-term and project end.	-
Co-financing Reports	PCU, FAO Niger	Annual	Covered by NPC and National Technical Assistants salaries.
Technical reports	PCU, LTO & Participating Units	As appropriate	-
Mid-term Evaluation	External Consultant, FAO Office for Evaluation in consultation with the project team including the PCU and other partners	At mid-point of project implementation	40,000 for independent consultants and associated costs. In addition the agency fee will pay for expenditures of FAO staff time and travel
Final evaluation	External Consultant, FAO independent evaluation unit in consultation with the project team including the PCU and other partners	At the end of project implementation	40,000 for external, independent consultants and associated costs. In addition the agency fee will pay for expenditures of FAO staff time and travel

Type of M&E Activity	Responsible Parties	Time-frame	Estimated costs (USD)
Terminal Report	NPC, LTO, TCSR Report Unit	At least two months before the end date of the Execution Agreement	Covered by NPC and National Technical Assistants salaries. LTO's involvement is covered by the fee.
Best practices publication	PCU, LTO & Participating Units	Between the second and last year	15,000 for publication preparation and printing
Auditing	External Unit, PCU	Annual	12,000
Impact Assessment	External Consultant and PCU	At the beginning and the end of the project	30,000 for external consultant assessment
Total Budget			**220,000**

PART III: APPROVAL/ENDORSEMENT BY GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT(S) AND GEF AGENCY(IES)

A. RECORD OF ENDORSEMENT OF GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT(S) ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT(S): (Please attach the Operational Focal Point endorsement letter(s) with this template. For SGP, use this OFP endorsement letter).

NAME	POSITION	MINISTRY	DATE *(Month, day, year)*
Boubaca sanda	General Director	MEUSSD	DECEMBER, 8, 2011

B. GEF AGENCY(IES) CERTIFICATION

This request has been prepared in accordance with GEF/LDCF/SCCF policies and procedures and meets the GEF/LDCF/SCCF criteria for project identification and preparation.					
Agency Coordinator, Agency name	**Signature**	**Date *(Month, day, year)***	**Project Contact Person**	**Telephone**	**Email Address**
Gustavo Merino Director Investment Centre Division Technical Cooperation Department FAO Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00153, Rome, Italy TCI-Director@fao.org		July 22, 2014	William Settle, Project Manager, Plan Production and Protection Division, FAO Rome	+39 06 5705 6039	William.Settle@fao.org
Jeff Griffin Environment Officer Officer-in-Charge, daily matters GEF Unit Email: Jeffrey.Griffin@fao.org Tel: +3906 5705 55680					

ANNEX A:PROJECT RESULTS FRAMEWORK (either copy and paste the framework from the agency document, or provide reference to the page in the project document where the framework could be found)

Please see Appendix 1 of the FAO GEF Project Document.

ANNEX B: RESPONSES TO PROJECT REVIEWS (from GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies, and Responses to Comments from Council at work program inclusion and the Convention Secretariat and STAP at PIF).

Secretariat comment at PIF – Nr. 16 - The socio-economic benefits and the targeting principles of the proposed project should be more clearly described by CEO Endorsement.

Please refer to section B.2 above.

Secretariat comment at PIF – Nr. 17: Is public participation, including CSOs and indigenous people, taken into consideration, their role identified and addressed properly? Comment: A more detailed stakeholder analysis and stakeholder consultations should further be undertaken by CEO Endorsement.

Please refer to response # 6 to USA's Comments and to Prodoc Sections 1.4.

Public participation, including indigenous people, as well as participation of very poor and less-educated families, and more remote villages, will all be ensured by a M&E system which includes a specific focus on marginalized/vulnerable groups, and by the different tools tested and adopted through the project Output 1.2; (i) RAAKS (Rapid Appraisal of Agricultural Knowledge Systems), (ii) the "Climate-Proofing" tool, (iii) SHARP (Self-evaluation and Holistic Assessment of climate Resilience of farmers and Pastoralists), (iv) TOP-SECAC, and (v) SEAGA (Socioeconomic and Gender Analysis), IGETI (Improving Gender Equality in Territorial Issues).

USA's Comments:

ANNEX B: RESPONSES TO PROJECT REVIEWS (from GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies, and Responses to Comments from Council at work program inclusion and the Convention Secretariat and STAP at PIF).

USA's Comment's:

Comment # 1: *We ask the Agency to provide more information regarding the effectiveness of the current FFS program and how the additional activities funded by the LDCF will increase its effectiveness. The PIF notes that "climatic variability has always been considered in rural development policies, programs, and field activities" though farmers and agro-pastoralists now face increased risk (page 7). Given that, what climate-change-adaptation-oriented techniques are already included in the existing FFS? If there are some of those techniques in place, how effective has the delivery of those techniques or technology been?*

The FAO and other partners have been supporting the FFS approach in West Africa since 1996, particularly beginning with a series of regional projects starting in 2001. The FS approach has proven to be a highly successful approach that continues to elicit growing demand by countries and donors. Due also to the relevant support from the FAO, FFS has been integrated into the national extension systems in several West African countries, including Niger. Collectively, this offers a vast source of knowledge and expertise to which the proposed project will be fully linked. Outcomes from the FAO/FFS – Integrated Production and Pest Management (IPPM) programme in Niger, running since 2009 include up to 50% saving of high quality seeds, 50% reduction in chemical fertilizer use, a substantial increases in the use of organic fertilizer and "soft" alternatives to highly hazardous pesticides, 50 to 100% reduction in use of highly hazardous pesticides, improved conservation of products coming from IPM crops, up to 30% increase in average yield of IPM crops, and up to 27% increase in average producer income.
Moreover, FFS programs in Niger have supported the adoption of traditional and improved sets of varieties of sorghum, millet, groundnuts, cowpea, and others that are grown to minimize the risk of crop loss to climate variability. However, the lack of an adequate outreach platform has limited their adoption by farmers and pastoralists at a significant scale. Furthermore, existing FFS curricula don't take into consideration the adaptation practices to be implemented for dealing with CC threats.

The interventions' measures that this project will provide include complementing ongoing and planned projects and programs by developing extension curricula for climate change adaptation. This is expected to lead to a more coherent intervention which will include the following production systems mentioned in the Rural Development Strategy (SDR)'s priority programs:

(i) Dry-cereals and pastures: the major effort will be put on expanding FFS for more climate resilient and sustainable production of dry cereals and better integrating the crops, livestock, tree components of production systems which are particularly exposed to climate variability.

(ii) Irrigated rice: The FFS will focus on a sustainable intensification FFS-based integrated crop management system (GIPD) for an irrigated rice and vegetable production strategy, including water management and climate variability mitigation practices, in support of existing and on-going investment in rice perimeters, particularly along the Niger valley.

(iii) Vegetable production: The FFS will focus on soil and water management practices (including incorporation of organic matter, increased water retention, cultivars selection, better distribution in time of production cycles, leading to higher earnings), allowing for increased income generation for vulnerable producers, in particular women groups.

The specific additional value of the proposed LDCF project is two-fold. The LDCF funding will allow for; (i) the development of FFS-based CC adaptation models using on-going FFS projects as baseline, and (ii) a first level of up-scaling of the developed and tested FFS-CCA models into co-financing projects.

Project Component 2 (see details in Prodoc Section 2.5) and specifically Output 2.1 aims at revising curricula for FFS, PFS and DFF training of facilitators and Master Trainers (Trainers of Facilitators) in light of CCA and other cross-cutting themes, such as gender, nutrition, agroforestry, seed multiplication and conservation, marketing and livestock management. Farmers will be provided with increased options for addressing a wide variety of CC concerns through local-context appropriate adaptation measures. The CCA curricula will cover a range of integrated crop/livestock/agro-forestry systems including; (i) geographically restricted, high-infrastructure systems like irrigated rice (in the context of extreme weather events such as flooding), (ii) moderately dispersed, high-input systems like market garden systems, (iii) geographically widely dispersed, low-intensity rain fed-cereal systems (millet-sorghum-cowpea), and (iv) livestock-raising systems with crop cultivation limited mainly for animal feed. Moreover the project will support experimentation with adapting existing and new practices such as; rehabilitation of grassland species through use of local species and improved local[5] cultivars (with high palatability and productivity) and community guardianship over grassland and bush land species in rehabilitated areas over a two-year period, establishment of local community seed banks[6] and multiplication and dissemination of selected seeds. Separate cross-cutting themes for gender and nutrition will be included in all curricula, and through the new joint activities deriving from Field Schools being integrated with Community Listeners' Clubs (CLC). A nutrition-sensitive approach will be introduced into the curricula with the aim of reducing nutritional vulnerability by building basic, pragmatic awareness of the basics on diet and nutrition and how a "win-win-win" scenario of diversifying cropping systems can simultaneously build ecological, economic and nutritional resilience (example: leguminous cover-crops that improve soil fertility, provide produce for local sale and help provide for improved nutrition). The contents will, in part, be based on previous experience on nutrition in FFS developed in other African countries, including Kenya and Malawi.

Moreover, project Output 2.3 (see details in Prodoc Section 2.5) aims at developing participatory decision-support tools for Climate Change analysis to reduce risks for farmers/herders and communities disseminated through Farmer Field Schools. These activities will improve the quality of agro-meteorological information, at various scales for time and space, for farmers and pastoralists. The agro-meteo data will be tailored to their local needs to enable better understanding of climate variability and climate change in their region and highlight levels of risk, thereby improving their ability to make effective decisions for agricultural risk management. With the support of the national and regional meteorological (NDM - climate information's producers) and agricultural (DGPV -agricultural extension staff) services,

[5] Local = seeds obtained from local farmers/herders who use traditional collection and preservation systems

[6] seed banks overseen by a local community will demonstrate a low-cost, sustainable way for conserving seeds of locally available species;

and through an iterative process to maximize benefit for all, suitable weather and climate information will be used to develop a "most-likely scenario" with local communities, showing what kind of climate trends are likely to emerge and how they might affect livelihoods in the short, medium and long-term future. The analysis can feed into the participatory and capacity assessment approaches, and can be used as a basis for CCA planning by communities. Community (farmers, pastoralists) feedback may well reveal climate factors that were not understood by the national services.

Comment # 2: *Municipalities may have limited budgets, it is possible that they may not be able to afford to contract technical assistance needed to continue this program once LDCF funding is no longer available, and sustainability of the project is an acknowledged risk. We therefore request that the Agency expand on what plans are in place to ensure the continuation of the climate adaptation education beyond the time line of the proposal. We also request more clarity on the sustainability of the baseline programs.*

The present project will ensure the continuation of the climate adaptation education beyond the conclusion of the intervention and the sustainability of the baseline programs through the Project Output 3.3 "National investment plan on FFS-based CCA developed for programmes and policies related to agricultural and pastoral sectors".
The national investment plan will detail operational mechanisms, duties and responsibilities and criteria for ensuring the sustainability of the investment plan over time. A plan will be drafted both for ongoing programmes related to the agricultural and livestock sector (50 % of which will be revised to include CCA) and for future programmes (100% of which will include CCA).An important aspect of the plan, described in the project document, is its specific focus on the interconnections between national and municipal levels, which will ensure that all of the 15 targeted municipalities will be covered by the action plan deriving from the investment plan.

Comment # 3: *We note the importance of building understanding of the value of changing practices to incorporate adaptation strategies. Engaging users in the development of the program can be critical for achieving this objective. What plans are in place to ensure that farmers are engaged in shaping the program and how will the Agency additionally work with the farmers to ensure they successfully implement the practices learned through FFS?*

The FFS approach in itself is the main guarantee that farmers will implement the practices learned. As described in the Project Document, at the core of the FFS approach lies a participatory process involving groups of farmers who become actively engaged in testing and experimenting adaptive solutions to changing environments and markets, with a view towards sustainable intensification and land restoration. The FFS are "grass-roots labs" in which farmers build and expand their knowledge bases, evaluate technical options, and in that process become better equipped to adapt to changing conditions.
Evaluative evidence (e.g. the recent SCCF evaluation done by the GEF Evaluation Office) very strongly shows that systems that lend reiterative support for the implementation of continuously evolving CCA practices are among the most powerful approaches to building long-term adaptive capacity. For decades to come, dealing with uncertainty and an ever-changing information base is likely to represent the single biggest challenge for CCA activities. Structures facilitating continuous adaptive actions based on real time context-specific information, such as FFS, with its integration of CC with simultaneous implementation and continuous improvement (i.e. the "grassroots lab") are among the very few existing and well-established systems that can provide this added value, thus giving the FAO a unique advantage.

Engagement of farmers and pastoralists in shaping the program is ensured by basing project activities on farmers' FFS community action plans, an activity under project Output 2.3. The plans will set out FFS targets, planned activities, and resource needs in line with farmers' perceived priorities. They will be linked to existing Commune Development Plans (CPD), whenever they exist.

The use of a resilience self-assessment tool, as outlined in project Output 1.2, will further strengthen farmers' engagement in program shaping and successful implementation of learned practices. The SHARP (Self-evaluation and Holistic Assessment of climate Resilience of farmers and Pastoralists) tool will be employed throughout the entire

project, in particular as an early diagnostic sample to establish baselines and track system change over time as a participatory tool for use during the course of season-long FFS training to help guide training content along lines of participant priorities; and to help participant households determine priorities for longer-term actions and investments.

Comment # 4: *We request that the Agency provide more information about how women will be included in the benefits of this project. This could include what efforts are already in place to ensure that women participate in FFS programs and what will be added to ensure that their needs are reflected in the new curriculum and that they have access to the expanded FFS resources.*

Please refer to Section B.2.

Moreover, specific gender-disaggregated indicators for monitoring women's involvement and benefits have been included in the project:

1. 100% of targeted groups (1,000 Field Schools/ 20,000 Households) are adopting at least two of the following types of new technologies (disaggregated by gender – 25% female and 75% male); a) climate resilient crop varieties (drought or flood resistant), b) agronomic practices for flood and drought management in crop production systems (soil conservation and agro-forestry practices), c) resilience evaluation tools, and d) weather-forecast decision-support tools.
2. 10 highly qualified trainers fully capable of training facilitators on all aspects of FFS, PFS, CLC and DFF are established. At least three of the trainers are women.
3. 300 facilitators of which at least 30% receive training are women.

Comment # 5: *We ask that the Agency describe how it will work with organizations like ACMAD and AGRYHMET to characterize climate risks to inform when adaptation strategies should be applied.*

The project Output 2.4 is entirely devoted to this issue.

The proposed project will build on the work of ACMAD and AGRYMET on meteorology and on climate modelling, forecasting, and prediction. The National Direction of Meteorology (Direction Nationale de la Météorologie) and other national stakeholders will continue collaborating with ACMAD and AGRYMET throughout the project in order to facilitate the flow of accurate information for developing the project Output 2.4 "Development of participatory decision-support tools for Climate Change analysis to reduce risks for farmers/herders and communities ".

This output will improve the quality of agro-meteorological information available to farmers and pastoralists at various scales in time and space. The agro-meteo data will be tailored to agro-pastoralists' local needs to enable better understanding of climate variability and climate change in their region and highlight risk levels, thereby improving their decision-making ability in terms of agricultural risk management.

With the support of the national and regional meteorological (NDM - climate information's producers) and agricultural (DGPV -agricultural extension staff) services, relevant weather and climate information will be used to develop a "most-likely scenario" with local communities, illustrating likely trends in future climate as well as potential livelihood impacts in the short, medium and long term. The analysis can feed into the participatory and capacity assessment activities, and can be used as a basis for CCA planning by communities. Community (farmers, pastoralists) feedback may be able to reveal an understanding of climate factors not previously accounted for by national services.

Specific training sessions will be organized before the starting, during and before the end of a cropping season by multi-institutional teams consisting of NDM, and MoA local meteorological service staff, and Field Schools master trainers and facilitators. Agro-meteorological data collection, archiving, processing and analysis capacity will be achieved mainly by NDM, ACMAD and AGHYMET units which use the large Meteorological Network of Niger.

Comment # 6: *We recommend that the Agency expand on how it will engage other donors and civil society organizations and consider how this project will fit into the recently-formed AGIR Sahel partnership.*

Potential donors, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) that will be involved in project activities have been identified during the PPG phase. However during PY1, additional partners interested in participating to project implementation will be identified. A diagnostic of ongoing projects/activities implemented in the project area of intervention will be conducted and partnerships will be further defined.
Partnership agreements will be defined and signed with project coordinators, authorities, NGOs, CSOs, and CBOs defining joint work-plans, roles and responsibilities. The five project Regional Assistants and fifteen Institutional Focal points, attached to regional directorates will provide significant support to develop partnerships and agreements.

In addition, the project will achieve a number of key outputs through letters of agreements (LoAs) to be established between the FAO and collaborating partners (service providers).

Special emphasis will be placed on developing partnerships with the relevant public/private regional development agencies or "channels" – support agencies, farmers' organizations and women's groups, some of which are already involved in FFS. Grassroot CSO/NGOs have been identified and their specific roles will be defined to ensure their direct involvement during the implementation phase.

CSOs and CBOs with whom a collaboration was already established during the PPG phase, and which will be confirmed partners in the project include; Producer Organizations in the five project regions, local NGOs (such as VIE Kande Ni Bayra),[7], local associations such as, the Association of Seed Producers in Niger (APPSN), the Association for the re-dynamization of Livestock in Niger (AREN), l'Union Koda Naka, L'Union Mada Ben, the Association FUGPN-Mooriben, the Federation of Farmers Unions of Niger (FUGPN-Mooriben), and the Platform of Peasants of Niger (PFPN).

The proposed project will support the Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative (AGIR), with particular focus on its third and fourth pillars; a) sustainable agricultural food productivity and incomes of vulnerable households, and improve their access to food, and b) strengthening governance for food and nutritional security. The FAO is already collaborating with AGIR in Niger, and it will reinforce this collaboration through the LDCF project, especially by:

1. Establishing a resilience analysis unit based in CILSS
2. Supporting Niger in the formulation process/ dialogue to fine-tune country resilience priorities, for instance contributing with resilience data collected using the SHARP tool
3. Integrating nutrition dimension and livestock considerations in these plans
4. Developing good practices from lessons learned

7 A Letter of Agreement with local NGO Vie Kande Nie Bayra was finalized and as of January 2014, the testing of joint CLC/FFS is on-going in 50 CLC in the Say and Tillabery regions.

ANNEX C: STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT PREPARATION ACTIVITIES AND THE USE OF FUNDS[8]

A. PROVIDE DETAILED FUNDING AMOUNT OF THE PPG ACTIVITIES FINANCING STATUS IN THE TABLE BELOW:

PPG Grant Approved at PIF: $ 50,000.00				
Project Preparation Activities Implemented	***GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF Amount ($)*** **GCP/ELS/015/SCCF**			
	Budgeted Amount	***Amount Committed***	***Amount Spent To date***	***Balance Remaining***
5011 Salaries Professional	3,000.00	3,000.00	0.00	3,000.00
5012 Salaries General Service	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5013 Consultants	30,700.00	18,000.00	11,000.00	7,000.00
5014 Contracts	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5021 Travel	9,000.00	19,000.00	19,589.12	-589.12
5023 Training	7,300.00	10,000.00	10,874.67	-874.67
5028 General Operating Expenses	0.00	0.00	522.23	-522.23
Total	**50,000.00**	**50,000.00**	**41,986.02**	8013.98[9]

8 If at CEO Endorsement, the PPG activities have not been completed and there is a balance of unspent funds, Agencies can continue undertaking the activities up to one year of project start. No later than one year from start of project implementation, Agencies should report this table to the GEF Secretariat on the completion of PPG activities and the amount spent for activities.

9 The remaining balance has been committed for the recruitment of consultants that will assist the project task force in the mapping of project sites and in establishing project partnerships.