

MALI

RAPID ASSESMENT

Assistance project for pastoral and agro-pastoral households confronted with the cumulative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the lean period and insecurity



IFAD'S COVID-19 RESPONSE

RURAL POOR STIMULUS FACILITY (RPSF)

FACILITY'S PILLARS



Inputs
& basic assets



Targeted
funds



Access
to markets



Digital
services

Assistance project for pastoral and agro-pastoral households confronted with the cumulative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the lean period and insecurity (Mali) ¹

Launched in April 2020, the Rural Poor Stimulus Facility (RPSF) is IFAD's multi-donor response to COVID-19. With the overall objective of providing agile support to poor rural producers affected by key immediate challenges posed due to COVID-19, it seeks to improve the resilience of rural livelihoods in the context of the crisis by ensuring timely access to inputs, information, markets and liquidity. The West and Central Africa regional assistance project for pastoral and agro-pastoral households confronted with the cumulative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the lean period and insecurity (PAS2P) is part of the 20% of the projects chosen to undergo a rapid assessment to report against Tier 1 'development result' indicators in the RPSF Results Measurement Framework.

Project activities

The WCA regional project covered Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal, with a total budget of US\$ 2.44 million. It was implemented by the Billital Maroobé Network (RBM), a non-profit transnational pastoral organization established in West and Central Africa. RPSF 1 provided support to households directly, while RPSF 2 benefitted focal points and stakeholders of FOs trained or involved in policy dialogue activities.

The overall objective of the project is to sustainably strengthen the livelihoods and resilience of pastoral and agro-pastoral households facing the negative effects of the pastoral lean season, recurrent insecurity and the coronavirus pandemic.

The project focused on two components. For component one, the project worked in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, which were the three countries hardest hit by the cumulative crises, and targeted cross-border areas and areas hosting internally displaced persons. Here, the project predominantly provided tailored support packages supported 9,200 households. The project distributed livestock (cattle, sheeps, goats), 2,400 tonnes of animal feed between contributions from IFAD and RBM, and seeds (vegetable, millet, fodders). It also organized a vaccination campaign.

For component two, the project reached 170,500 people through a variety of activities. It focused on data collection to feed into the RBM digital platform, which provides monitoring for the impacts of COVID-19 on the group, and offered trainings and technical support for digital monitoring. It also used digital means such as SMS (with technical support from ORANGE) and radio for transhumant herders awareness on areas such as regulatory measures and their movements. It also organized a pastoral hackathon to support innovation to support relevant challenges, selecting 5 projects.

To implement, RBM put in place memorandums of understanding with nine national pastoral organizations: CRUS-Burkina Faso, RECOPA-Burkina Faso, TASSAGHT-Mali, AREN-Niger, GNAF-Mauritania, BILMPAN-Nigeria, ADENA-Senegal, COPAFIB-Chad and PAEP-Togo. The latter ensured the implementation of project activities in its various

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areas of intervention. Project activities were implemented in the eight, covering 35 regions, 84 municipalities and more than 345 localities.

The project directly supported almost 180,000 people, nearly half women and a majority of 60 per cent young.

Rapid assessment methodology

Self-reported information on Tier 1 'development results' indicators was collected from a representative sample of 400 beneficiary households in Mali supported by RPSF 1, of which 12.5 percent are headed by women and 7.5 percent are headed by youth (aged less than 35 years). Details of each indicator were asked with the aim of capturing the potential contribution effect from i) COVID-19 and ii) the RPSF project. Interviews were conducted between the last week of July 2022 and mid-August 2022 using a Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI) survey.

Key results ²

Contribution effect of COVID-19

- Around 8 out of 10 households reported losses due to COVID-19 on production, market sales, total income, resilience and number of meals consumed. A lower proportion of households also reported losses on the number of assets owned (6 out of 10 households).
- Households headed by a youth member were more affected by the pandemic, compared to those headed by adults, since they report more often being affected on production, number of meals consumed, resilience and number of assets owned. Contrary to this, households headed by women reported less often a sharp decline in terms of production and total income, compared to those headed by men.

Contribution effect of RPSF

- Indicators of interest shown substantial improvements after the implementation of the RPSF project, with around 9 out of 10 households reporting to maintain or improve production, sales, income, number of meals consumed and resilience. However, the project seems to only have benefited half of households on the number of assets owned.
- There is a significant level of heterogeneity by sex and age of the household head. A smaller share of households headed by women, compared to men, reported benefits on production. Those headed by youth experienced mixed results, reporting less often to maintain or improve resilience, but more often benefits on production.

Lessons learned

² The rapid assessment does not consider a control group; thus, results are only indicative of potential contribution effects.

- Based on the findings, future programs should consider i) mechanisms that allow for benefits on production and sales to translate into improvements on resilience and asset accumulation; and ii) additional support for women and youth headed households.

Figure 1: Percentage of households that experienced a loss in each Tier I indicator due to COVID

Figure 2: Percentage of households that were able to maintain or improve each Tier I indicator after RPSF

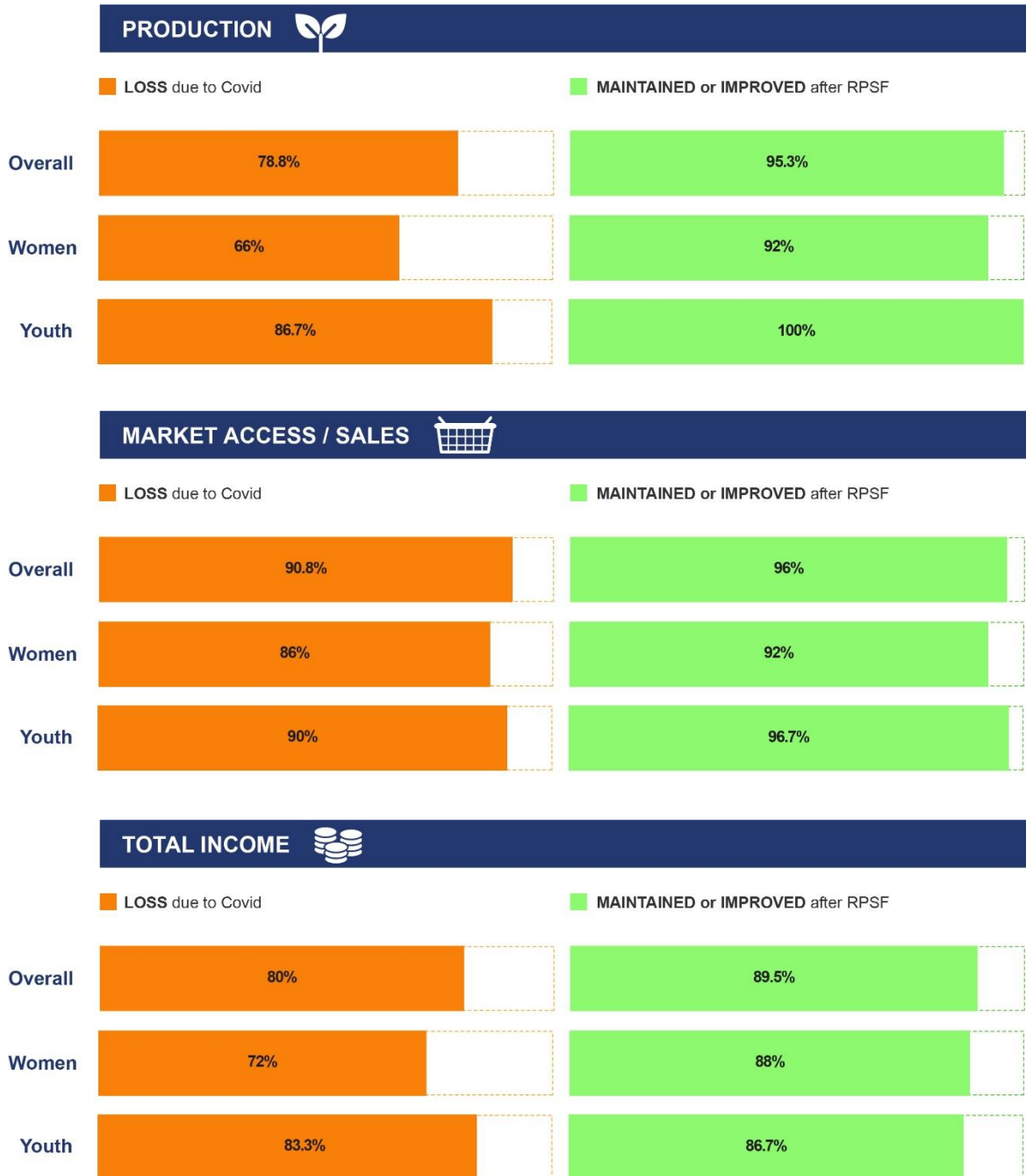


Figure 1: Percentage of households that experienced a loss in each Tier I indicator due to COVID

Figure 2: Percentage of households that were able to maintain or improve each Tier I indicator after RPSF



NOTE: RPSF activities were rolled out starting in April 2021.

Two separate questions were asked for each indicator. The first question asked what happened to each Tier 1 indicator between June 2020 and June 2021: i) a total loss; ii) reduced; iii) stayed the same; or iv) increased. The orange bar shows the percentage of households that responded i) or ii) to this question, that is, those which experienced a total loss or reduction in the indicator. The second question asked what happened to each Tier 1 indicator since June 2021: i) reduced further; ii) stayed the same; iii) increased but still below the level before COVID-19; iv) returned to level before COVID-19; or v) increased above the level before COVID-19. The green bar shows the percentage of households that responded ii), iii) iv) or v) to this question, that is, those which maintained or improved each indicator since the start of RPSF.

Acknowledgements: IFAD's Programme Management Department (PMD), RBM and Mali country team.



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