The Sahel Belt is characterized by a unique rainy season that determines the availability of the two main pastoral resources: water and pasture. Erratic rainfall makes their accessibility neither stable nor predictable. During the last fifty years, Sahelian rain deficits and droughts have impacted millions of people, in particular the pastoral and transhumant communities. To reduce their vulnerability to recurring crises, pastoral communities need access to reliable information on climate, water and pasture.

In this environment, the use of Geographic Information System (GIS) tools and Remote Sensing (RS) are critical inputs in monitoring pastoral resources. Action Contre la Faim (ACF) and its partners have progressively developed an innovative pastoral surveillance and early warning system at national and regional levels.

**CONTEXT**

**PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

1. **DEVELOPMENT OF TOOLS AND METHODOLOGY**
   - Development of indicators and methodology for field data collection.
   - Refinement of Remote Sensing tools.
   - Development of partnerships with local organizations.

2. **FIELD TESTS AND INITIAL DATA COLLECTION**
   - Field Tests in Niger and Mali.
   - Partnerships with national state actors.
   - Participatory Vulnerability & Capacity Assessments in Niger and Mali.
   - Participatory mapping of livestock movements.

3. **CAPACITY BUILDING OF NATIONAL ACTORS**
   - Integration of field data collection systems into national early warning systems.
   - Training of national actors in field surveillance and remote sensing.

4. **DIRECT DIFFUSION TO PASTORAL COMMUNITIES**
   - Pilot roll-out of pastoral call-centre with Orange.
   - Scale-up of information services to pastoral communities.
   - Time: March 2016 - December 2017.
ACF EWS prevents humanitarian, food and nutrition crises in Sahelian pastoral areas through the provision of timely and reliable drought risk information to local, national and international stakeholders. This applied research project will provide a more precise analysis of pastoral surveillance, especially by reinforcing social and anthropological considerations, rarely taken up by the current system. With technical support and training from ACF, the Malian EWS conducts its own remote-sensing analyses of biomass and water. The EWS of Niger is directly implicated in monitoring livestock movement for the pilot project. ACF works with National EWS to ensure that the surveillance components are nationally owned and sustainable. By the end of the project, they will be fully capable of running national pastoral surveillance and monitoring programs.

ACF is also engaged in an initiative to provide the information directly through a call center operated by Orange in Northern Mali. The initiative, in consortium with SNV, HSS, RBM and IER seeks to create a Public Private Partnership model to disseminate data in a sustainable, scaleable fashion.

**CONTACT**

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