

START
NETWORK

ARC REPLICA PAY-OUT
SENEGAL 2020
INTERNAL EVALUATION

DECEMBER 2020

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

African Risk Capacity (ARC) is a pioneering initiative working with African Governments to transform climate risk management across Sub-Saharan Africa. ARC Sets standards for disaster risk management by providing early warning systems, contingency planning and climate finance across the continent. It aims to improve the predictability and speed at which responses to natural disasters are implemented, through proactive risk management. Participating African Governments pay premiums to receive pay-outs for early responses for pre-agreed contingency plans.

In 2017, Start Network and the World Food Programme sought to expand this approach through the ARC Replica programme, using the same African Risk View (ARV) model and response thresholds selected by the governments with which they partnered. The Start Network initially implemented ARC-Replica in Senegal. The objectives were to further expand the coverage of ARC, while giving the opportunities to test new financing tools for civil society (especially insurance), and ultimately the uptake of ARC. This initiative has been supported by the German Development Bank (KfW) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development.

HOW DOES ARC REPLICA WORK?



In November 2019, a drought was detected through the ARV model, triggering the first pay-out from ARC to a non-Governmental entity, and the largest ever early action investment received by civil society. The Start Network received \$10.6m, replicating the \$12.5m received by the Government of Senegal. ARC Replica assistance was then provided across communities in seven regions, by six Start Network member agencies: Action Contre La Faim (ACF), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Oxfam, Plan International (PI), Save the Children (SCI) and World Vision (WV). They provided unconditional cash transfers, fortified flour and carried out awareness raising around hygiene and nutrition, between April and September 2020. This took place in the context of the COVID-19 outbreak in Senegal, which caused significant and unexpected difficulties both for implementing agencies and the communities with whom they work.

The evaluation reviews the impact of this pay-out on the Start Network members who received the funding and on communities reached through the actions which followed. A mixed method approach was taken, including data collection from implementing agencies, Government stakeholders and three rounds of randomised, representative telephone-based surveys from recipient communities. As coverage of the assistance was high, it was not possible to survey a control group. Instead, surveys were conducted in June, July and August, to look at changes in the recipient community over time, the full sample size combining the three months was 2,555.

RESULTS

WHAT WAS THE IMPACT OF THE REPLICA PAY-OUT AT THE HOUSEHOLD LEVEL? WAS HARM AND LOSS AVOIDED?

In Senegal, the lean season is typically from June to August, though some households participating in in-depth interviews reported entering lean season as early as March. Drought conditions can lead to significant hardship, especially during the lean season. This includes reduced access to quality food, temporary migration and debt, which force vulnerable households to engage in negative coping strategies such as skipping meals, selling productive assets, or removing children from schools.

The ARC-Replica pay-out implementation was scheduled to happen in three phases between March and September, coinciding with run-up to lean season. During this time, households are usually storing grain, taking out loans or buying food on credit, market gardening or selling small ruminants, to ready themselves for the season ahead.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic added significant complexity. Distributions were slightly delayed due to a country-wide travel ban, resulting in an implementation period of April – September, after Start Network members had obtained authorisations from the Government. At the household level, reductions in remittances, combined with movement restrictions and market closures meant that households experienced increased vulnerability earlier.

The Senegal seasonal calendar, combined with household survey data showing March and April as the popular months to receive support for the lean season, suggest that the original project start of March was appropriately timed. With needs occurring earlier and the project starting later, the key project impact was helping families manage their existing food insecurity, rather than just supporting preparedness measures for an impending drought period.

HOUSEHOLD LEVEL IMPACT



- In the first round of surveys, in June, 86% of households reported that they received the cash early enough to help prepare for the lean season



- 85% of households reported improving the quality or quantity of food they were accessing during the project period.



- Support provided through ARC-Replica enabled the most vulnerable to access food continuously. In each of the three months of independent monitoring, households reported that at least 99% of children under 5 had eaten 2 or more meals per day. Similarly, over the three surveys, respondents reported that at least 98% of pregnant or lactating women had been accessing at least two meals per day.



- Twelve negative coping strategies were measured over time in the independent monitoring. This showed 10% reductions or more in households: selling grain or fodder, sending children under 18 to work and having men accept high-risk, degrading or exploitative work.



- The largest reduction in harmful coping strategies was in households going a whole day without eating, which reduced by 19% over the project period. While these results are positive, they cannot be fully attributed to the project, for example, in some areas the Government provided COVID-19 related support in the same places as ARC-Replica distributions.

The findings provide some evidence that the intervention successfully limited possible harm caused by the drought conditions, by supporting families to maintain access to food and reduce some negative coping strategies. This was despite the additional vulnerability created by the COVID-19 induced crisis. Further effects are difficult to ascertain, due to the overlapping of other forms of assistance and lack of control group.

IMPACT OF CONTINGENCY PLANNING

Contingency plans are a prerequisite to buying an ARC-Replica insurance policy. This enables ARC-Replica partners to plan ahead of drought, in coordination with each other and the Government. The aim is to ensure that the implementation channels are in place, to allow for the financing to translate into faster and more effective action.

Eight out of the ten implementing agency staff interviewed before project implementation indicated that the contingency planning process resulted in a reduced start up time. The pay-out was announced in December, with activities including recruitment starting in January and targeting in February.

The intended distribution start date was March, which had been identified as the key window of opportunity to support communities through drought, as it coincides with the run up to the lean season. As such, the start-up time was fixed during the contingency planning process. The start of distributions eventually changed after movement restrictions were imposed, which was external to any programme management processes. This is in line with ARC Replicas emphasis on timeliness over earliness.

A key impact of the contingency planning process identified by implementing staff was on coordination between agencies. Coordination in ARC Replica was ambitious, with six agencies operating over seven regions. Throughout the pre, mid and post implementation interviews, a majority of agencies rated coordination with other NGOs as either somewhat or much better. Coordination took place geographically and thematically, with each agency leading in different regions and on different technical areas. For example, Plan International leading on nutrition, Save the Children on targeting, World Vision on Communications and MEAL, CRS on cash transfers, and Oxfam leading on cash transfers, water, sanitation and hygiene, and safeguarding. Alongside this, agencies also aligned monitoring and evaluation tools where possible, though this was identified as an area for improvement in the case of a future intervention.



With nutrition, there are some NGOs that have much more experience. In terms of compliance, there are others who are further ahead. In light of this range of experiences, we can complement each other to strengthen the response

MEMBER AGENCY RESPONDENT, PRE-IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEW

Importantly, community level data shows the project designed through the contingency planning process was highly relevant to community requirements. The independent monitoring survey showed that an estimated 74% of the cash distributed was spent on food, while also contributing to debt repayment and health alongside other key needs. The fortified flour was also rated as good or very good by 99% of independent monitoring survey participants and proved effective in supporting the nutrition of vulnerable household members. 100% of survey respondents answering the question on how flour was used said some went to children under five and 67% said some went to pregnant or lactating women.

Finally, while activities were chosen in advance of the pay out, the planning was sufficiently adaptable to integrate changes to enable COVID-19 secure programming, for example by reducing the number of rounds of distributions from two to three and replacing in person awareness raising with printed instructions.

The evidence suggests that the pre-planned nature of the intervention would have resulted in timely distributions had COVID-19 not delayed project implementation. It also resulted in enhanced coordination between the NGO implementing partners, who self-reported a positive impact on the programme. The programme activities were also deemed effective by the community through independent monitoring indicating that the original contingency plans were appropriate.

THE VALUE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SENEGAL PARTNERSHIP WITH ARC REPLICA PARTNERS

As ARC Replica was designed to increase and leverage the coverage of ARC, a Government led drought initiative, coordination with the Government of Senegal was key. At the National level, both member agencies and Government respondents rated coordination with one another as better than in other drought responses. This appeared to drop off slightly in the final of the three rounds of interviews, though ongoing consultation was appreciated



It must be recognised that there was a lot of meetings, consultations, and discussions. Despite COVID-19, we managed to carry on with video conferencing. We used all the tools available in order to continue working together

SENEGALESE GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER. MID-IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEW

Coordination with the Government at the local level was also overall rated well by relevant stakeholders. This was identified as a key enabler for Start Network member agencies ability to continue operating, in the midst of a National wide travel ban which required individual exceptions.



ARC Replica has involved the administrative authorities much better than most projects...that's what allowed us to work while everyone else was blocked. We were able to get authorisation to move around, which allowed to carry out our project activities.

MEMBER AGENCY RESPONDENT. POST-IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEW

An external audit of the Senegal Payout Process conducted by Kimetrica identified several further potential capacities that the Start Network brings to the ARC partnership with the Government of Senegal. These include the inclusion of gender in targeting and distribution, recognising Start Network members agencies inclusion of gender in needs assessment, targeting and monitoring and evaluation. They also include development of joint methodologies monitoring and evaluation, maintaining open contracts with suppliers to speed procurement and use of post-distribution survey to assess beneficiary satisfaction.¹

The collaboration between Government and Start Network was rated to be more effective than in other comparable drought responses, and coordination with administrative authorities allowed for assistance to be delivered even when other non-governmental entities were unable to operate.

¹ Kimetrica (2020):p.60. African Risk Capacity Process Audit Final Report: 2019 Senegal Payout

FINAL REFLECTIONS

ARC Replica succeeded in mobilising civil society in Senegal to complement and extend timely Government support to communities at risk of the impact of severe drought. This demonstrated the added value of this partnership and the positive contribution of the Start Network.

The contingency planning process identified an initial window of opportunity in March to support communities to ready themselves for the lean season, which was not met due to exceptional circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, Start Network members adopted an agile and proactive approach, continuously reassessing the relevance of the window of opportunity to make sure the new parameters and context changes were considered in the intervention timing and activities.

The ARC Replica mechanism as an approach to enabling timely, coordinated drought action was shown to work effectively in enabling vulnerable communities to maintain their food supplies in difficult conditions. The unexpected externality of COVID-19 and its impact both on the operational environment and communities suggests that future risk financing mechanisms, or that analyses which underpin them, potentially need to be more adaptable to compound or unexpected risks. However, the fact that the project continued despite COVID-19 is testament to the flexibility and adaptability of the ARC mechanism and of the capacity of the Start Network to successfully support the promotion and improvement of the Disaster Risk Financing systems in extreme conditions and challenging environment.

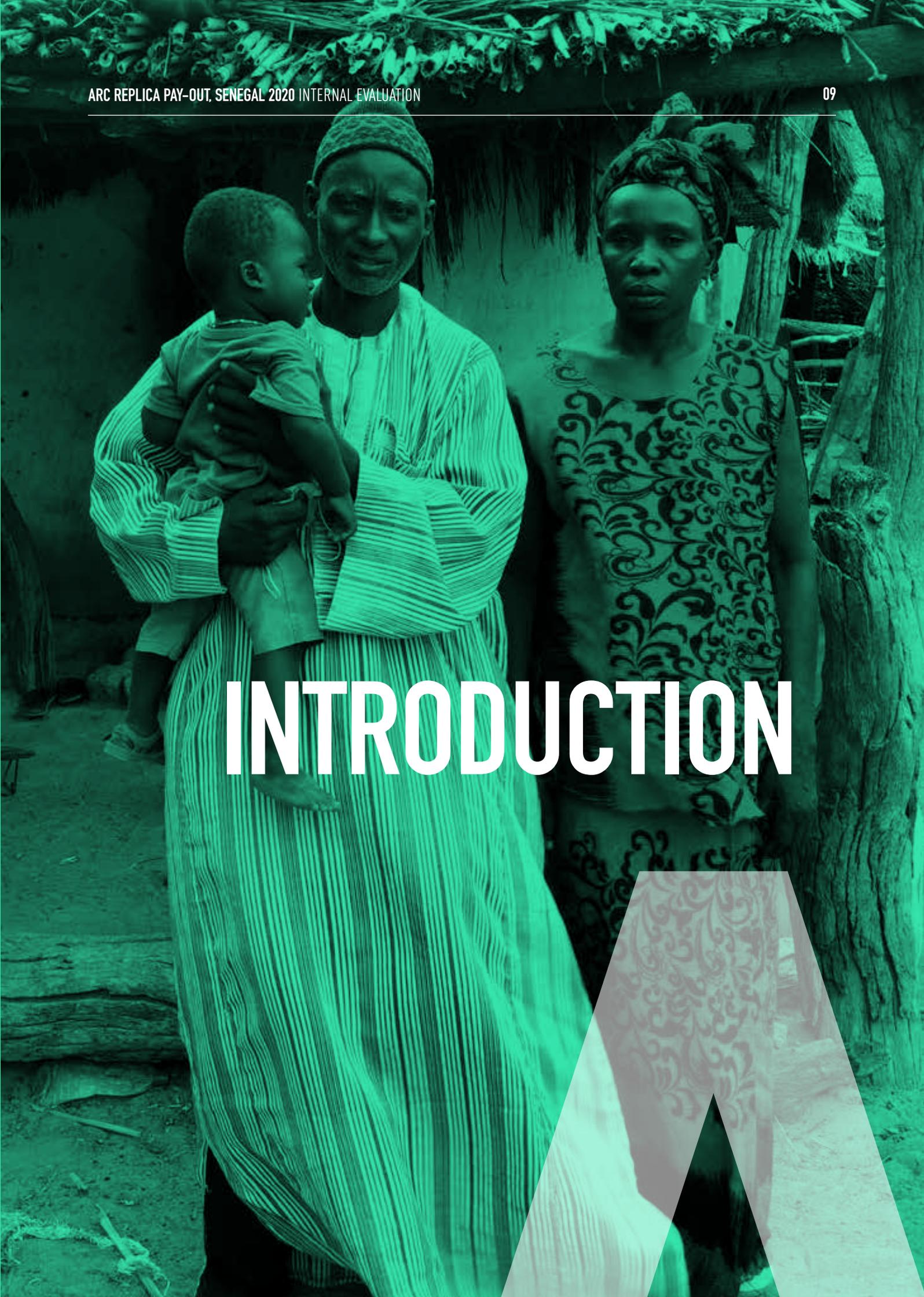
RECOMMENDATIONS

- 01** **Timeliness rather than speed** or 'being early' should be a key indicator for the effectiveness of a DRF system. This should be measured by assessing the preparedness or coping measures the distribution enabled at the community level. Insurance-based approaches can facilitate earlier access to finance, taking advantage of pre-identified windows of opportunity to support vulnerable communities to take action against avoidable harm and loss. Data on seasonal livelihoods activities as well as community consultation should be primary in informing the appropriate timing of this assistance.
- 02** **Leverage the pre-arranged nature of risk financing**, to allow for more effective collaboration and coordination in advance of crises. ARC-Replica has shown how initiatives such as ARC can provide a highly practical and concrete framework for collaboration in advance of crisis events. This could be extended further, supporting accountable planning and coordination among key stakeholders, including ensuring participation from local responders and at-risk communities.
- 03** **Embed single hazard insurance policies within wider risk management strategies.** The compounding effects of drought and COVID-19 created a unique crisis that would have been challenging to model in advance. It is vital that systems are able to flex to the complexities of crisis. This can be achieved by complementing insurance-based approaches with other forms of flexible contingency financing, and by using flexible programming modalities such as cash that can adjust to changing needs on the ground.
- 04** **Gather further data on the impact of macro-level risk finance schemes at the community level.** This study moves away from measuring the impact of disaster-risk-finance schemes simply through volumes of funds distributed, towards measurable changes at the community level. Further detailed investigation, ideally involving control groups, should become a common feature of risk finance pay-outs of this scale, allowing us to build a more holistic picture of what works.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ARC	African Risk Capacity
ACF	Action contre la Faim / Action Against Hunger
ARV	Africa Risk View
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CSA	Commissariat à la Sécurité Alimentaire / Food Security Commission
FIP	Final Implementation Plan
GoS	Government of Senegal
HDDS	Household Dietary Diversity Score
IM	Independent Monitoring
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability & Learning
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PDM	Post-Distribution Monitoring
PI	Plan International
RNU	Registre National Unique / National Single Registry
SCI	Save the Children International
WV	World Vision



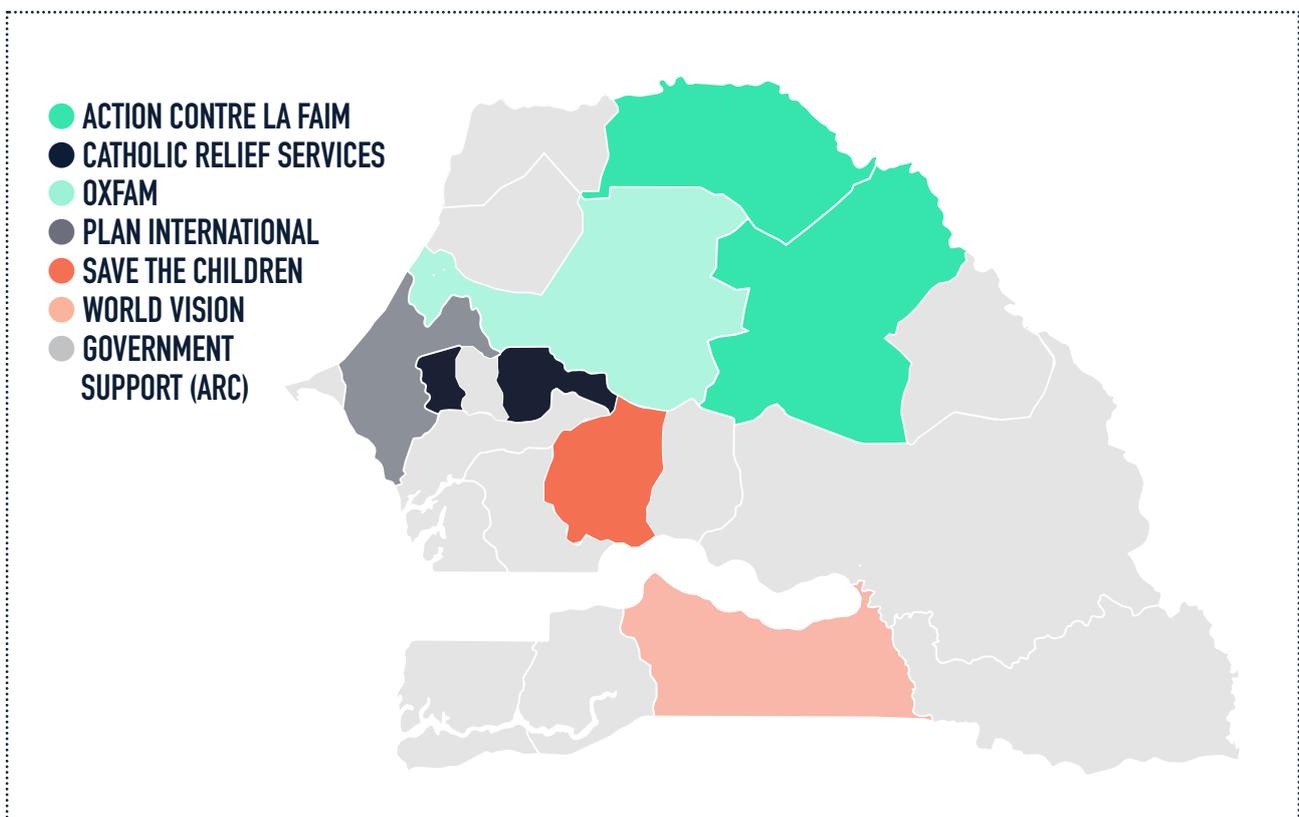


INTRODUCTION

ARC REPLICA

African Risk Capacity (ARC) is a pioneering initiative working with African governments to transform climate risk management across Sub-Saharan Africa. As a specialised agency of the African Union, ARC sets standards for disaster risk management by providing early warning systems, contingency planning, and climate finance across the continent. It aims to improve the predictability and speed at which responses to natural disasters are implemented through proactive risk management instead of reactive disaster response. Participating African governments pay premiums and receive pay-outs for pre-approved contingency plans.

In 2017, Start Network and the World Food Programme sought to expand this approach through the ARC Replica programme, using the same Africa Risk View (ARV) model¹ and response thresholds selected by the governments with which they partnered. The objectives of this work were to further expand the coverage of ARC, to test the new financing tools for civil society (especially insurance), and ultimately to increase the uptake of ARC across the continent. This points to the beginning of a significant shift in disaster risk management. Parametric insurance – where pay-outs are made using pre-defined thresholds rather than reimbursing for losses – opens the door to communities receiving rapid support when impacts from droughts and other natural disasters look likely, enabling them to take measures to protect their families and assets. Although parametric insurance is commonly used by NGOs in the context of micro-insurance schemes, the novel element offered by ARC Replica is the opportunity for government parametric insurance schemes to be partnered with NGOs as insured entities themselves. This collaboration not only provides the opportunity to expand the number of affected people supported through the pay-outs but also encourages coordination between humanitarian actors and the government to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the response.



¹ ARV software is a satellite weather surveillance software owned by ARC that uses satellite remote sensing linked to crop models and prior levels of food insecurity to estimate the impact of drought on vulnerable populations, as well as the associated response costs

2020 PAY-OUT: SENEGAL

During the 2019 agricultural season in Senegal, ARV estimated that up to 970,000 people would be affected by a predicted drought during the 2020 lean season (June-August). This triggered ARC insurance pay-outs on policies held by the Government of Senegal (GoS) and Start Network, as their ARC Replica partner. The policies totalled \$23.1 million; Start Network received \$10.6m, replicating the \$12.5m received by the GoS. The pay-out to Start Network represents the largest ever early action pay-out to civil society. ARC Replica assistance was provided across communities in seven different regions by six Start Network member organisations: Action contre la Faim (ACF), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Oxfam, Plan International (PI), Save the Children (SCI), and World Vision (WV).

When the implementation was first planned, assistance provided by all six member agencies was to include:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>01 Three unconditional cash transfers, undertaken at monthly intervals between April and June</p> | <p>02 Nutritional activities, including distributions of fortified flour to households with children 6-59 months old, pregnant women, or nursing women</p> | <p>03 Various awareness-raising activities around hygiene; nutrition; and the use of distributed cash and fortified flour</p> |
|---|---|--|

A distribution period of April-June 2020 had been chosen in the hope of supporting over 25,000 households to protect their livelihoods (including prevention of asset loss) and food security through the lean season. Due to favourable exchange rates, the Start Network was ultimately able to expand the number of direct beneficiaries from approximately 203,000 to more than 220,000.

COVID-19 MODIFICATIONS

Senegal's first COVID-19 case was confirmed on 2 March 2020, making Senegal the second Sub-Saharan country to report confirmed cases. By 23 March, the GoS had declared a state of emergency and placed restrictions on movement and public gathering. This necessitated some key changes in the ARC Replica programming, including:

DELAYED TIMELINES:

The GoS suspended all activities throughout the country, and even emergency response activities like ARC Replica needed to first obtain authorisation before being able to resume. Although all Start Network NGOs were able to obtain appropriate permissions, the first distributions started in May 2020 instead of April 2020.

SHIFTS IN ACTIVITY TYPE:

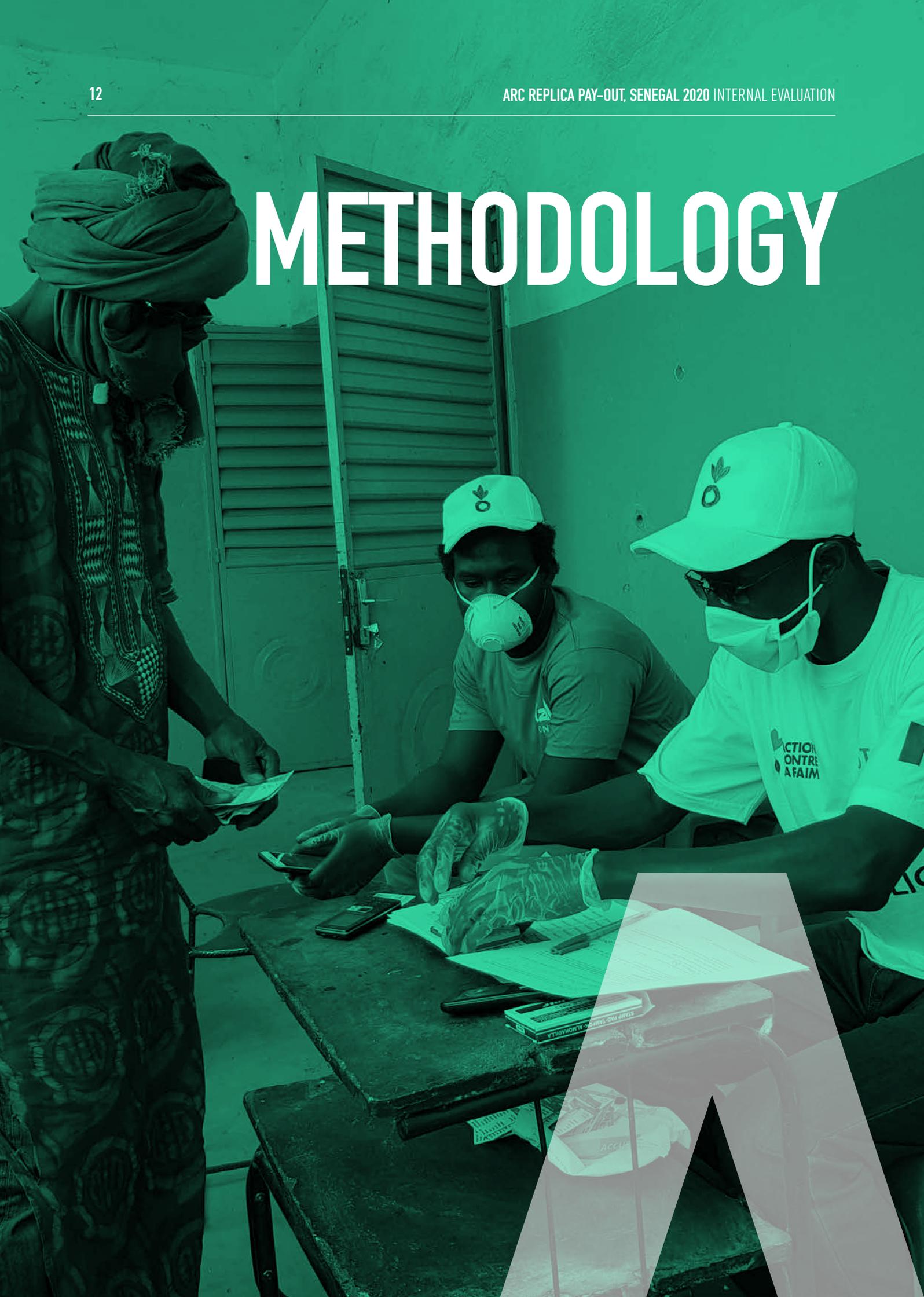
In-person awareness-raising sessions were generally replaced by print and radio campaigns, and due to challenges with procurement, some agencies exchanged fortified flour for alternative in-kind nutritional support or additional cash.

COMBINED DISTRIBUTIONS:

All six agencies decided to combine distribution rounds (two rounds instead of three) to limit person-to-person exposure and ensure support was received before the peak of lean season.

Additionally, some agencies chose to also distribute hygiene kits and COVID-19 messaging was included in associated awareness-raising campaigns.

METHODOLOGY



EVALUATION APPROACH

The primary objective of this internal evaluation, which has been led by the Start Network's Evidence & Learning team, is to assess the extent to which the 2020 ARC Replica pay-out in Senegal was able to contribute to the protection of livelihoods (including prevention of asset loss) and food security for vulnerable households during the lean season. The evaluation also looks at the wider effect of contingency planning and coordination processes associated with the project. In the absence of a robust counterfactual, this evaluation has an overarching theory-based design, using both quantitative and qualitative methods to assess the effect of the pay-out through its causal pathways of supporting timely and effective action to drought, and towards influencing how agencies plan for and respond to drought.

Primary data collection for this evaluation included a range of qualitative and quantitative methods and engaged representatives from implementing agencies and the Senegalese government as well as supported households. Data regarding their experience of the drought and any potential effects of support provided was collected from supported households across all seven regions covered by the ARC Replica pay-out. Additionally, data was collected in non-supported communities across Senegal in order provide specific and timely contextual information about the experience of drought for the evaluation and other learning pieces associated with the 2020 ARC Replica pay-out in Senegal.

EVALUATION FOCUS AREAS

Although a wide range of research questions were explored through the various data collection exercises detailed below, this evaluation will focus on a few key areas thought to provide the best overview of the project's successes and challenges.

CONTINGENCY PLANNING



- Did implementing members feel that contingency planning improved the timeliness of their intervention and/or how prepared they were to respond to the drought this year?
- How many implementing members followed their contingency plans? How many adapted them based on new findings, even prior to COVID-19?
 - What changes were then made in response to COVID-19?

COORDINATION



- How did coordination between Start Network implementing members compare to previous drought responses?
 - What were the strengths and challenges of coordination between implementing partners during the ARC Replica project?
- How did coordination between Start Network implementing members and the Senegalese national government compare to previous drought responses?
 - What were the strengths and challenges of coordination between implementing partners and the national government during the ARC Replica project?
- How did coordination between Start Network implementing members and regional/local government actors compared to previous drought responses?
 - What were the strengths and challenges of coordination between implementing partners and local/regional government actors during the ARC Replica project?

TIMELINESS AND ANTICIPATION

- How do households usually prepare for the lean season?
 - Was the type of support provided by ARC Replica relevant to the activities households engage in to anticipate or generate income during the lean?



- When do households usually prepare for the lean season?
 - Was the original ARC Replica distribution schedule appropriate for supporting households to anticipate potential negative impacts of the lean season on their food security and livelihoods?
- Was the ARC Replica support still able to help households anticipate challenges associated with an extreme lean season after the distribution schedule shifted due to COVID-19?

RELEVANCE OF SUPPORT

- Was the quantity, quality, and type of support provided by ARC Replica relevant to the needs of supported households?



EFFECTIVENESS OF SUPPORT

- Did the support provided through ARC Replica help stabilise household food security, livelihoods, and assets during the lean season?
 - How did household food security – both in terms of the number of meals eaten and dietary diversity – change over the lean season (June-August)?
 - Was the support provided by ARC Replica able to prevent households from having to use negative coping strategies in order buy food? How did reliance on these strategies change over the lean season (June-August)?



CHALLENGES/LIMITATIONS OF EVALUATION

Some key challenges/limitations of this evaluation worth acknowledging are:

PHONE-BASED DATA COLLECTION:



Due to COVID-19, nearly all primary data collection for this evaluation was done over the phone in order to protect both enumerators and respondents. As a result, post-distribution monitoring (PDM) and independent monitoring (IM) instruments – for example – were shortened and relied on closed-response questions. Although household interviews (also phone-based) were added to the evaluation in order to capture in-depth narratives from supported households, the information collected may not have been as rich or nuanced as data collected in-person might have been.

SAMPLING REPRESENT- ATIVENESS:



Although every attempt was made to produce a random and representative sample for all data collected as part of this evaluation, especially with community data, there were inevitably some limitations in achieving ideal representativeness. Reliance on remote modalities is also relevant to this, as in some geographical areas respondents were less likely to have a mobile phone. It is also expected that households without access to a mobile phone – who therefore would be excluded from phone-based surveys and interviews – would be comparatively worse off than those who do have access to a mobile phone.

LACK OF RELEVANT COUNTERFACTUAL:



As previously mentioned, there is not a relevant, robust counterfactual to the ARC Replica support. During the research design phase, it was determined that the high level of coverage across both ARC and ARC Replica supported regions would make it too difficult to establish and track an accurate control group. Moreover, the substantial cost and time requirements, both with regard to development and implementation, associated with a randomised control trial or similar experimental evaluation model were too high. The unprecedented effects of COVID-19 (many of which will be discussed later in this report) also mean that any comparison between this year's intervention and interventions during previous years would have limited utility.

As such, it is challenging to conclusively attribute any change – particularly at the household level – to the ARC Replica project specifically, entirely or in part. This is exacerbated by the fact that the government's COVID-19 response fund targeted some of the same communities, and even some of the same households, for in-kind support during a similar time to when ARC Replica distributions took place.

PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION

A number of primary data collection exercises were undertaken by the Start Network as well as the implementing agencies in order to support this evaluation as well as subsequent in-depth learning exercises related to the pay-out in Senegal.

01 SENTINEL SITE REMOTE MONITORING

The sentinel site check-in process provides independent information from the field on the status of 22 communities across Senegal both before, during, and after the lean season. These were undertaken through monthly phone calls with community contact points (one in each community), which focussed on agriculture, health, and food security during the preceding month.

Data collected by: Start Network's in-country MEAL Coordinator

SENTINEL SITE SAMPLE

MONTH	# OF CHECK-INS
MARCH-APRIL	22
MAY	22
JUNE	22
JULY	17
AUGUST	22
SEPTEMBER	22
TOTAL	127

INDEPENDENT MONITORING SAMPLE

REGION	R1	R2	R3	TOTAL
DIOURBEL	141	110	110	361
KAFFRINE	151	115	115	381
KOLDA	0	192	190	382
LOUGA	136	102	103	241
MATAM	135	106	105	346
SAINT-LOUIS	144	110	110	364
THIÈS	159	111	110	380
TOTAL	866	846	843	2555

02 INDEPENDENT MONITORING (IM)

IM consisted of three rounds (June, July, and August) of phone-based surveys undertaken with a randomised, representative sample of supported households from each of the seven regions where ARC Replica provided support. The IM survey focussed on household-level effects of the drought as well as what effects the Start Network distributions might have made to mitigate negative outcomes with food security and livelihoods.

Data collected by: Jokolante (Third-Party Provider)

03 IN-DEPTH HOUSEHOLD INTERVIEWS

32 in-depth household case studies – engaging two unique households in each of the 16 departments in which the Start Network distributed cash and flour – were undertaken during September 2020. The narratives collected through these 32 phone-based interviews provide qualitative data about the household-level effects of the drought as well as on what effects the Start Network distributions might have had on mitigating negative outcomes in relation to food security and livelihoods.

Data collected by: Jokolante (Third-Party Provider)

HOUSEHOLD INTERVIEW SAMPLE

REGION	TOTAL
DIOURBEL	4
KAFFRINE	6
KOLDA	6
LOUGA	4
MATAM	4
SAINT-LOUIS	2
THIÈS	6
TOTAL	32

04 MARKET SURVEY

The market survey tool recorded the prices of staple food and agricultural items at markets in the communities where support has been provided. It also recorded the availability of these items (abundant, scarce, unavailable, etc.). The scheduling, sampling, and implementation of these surveys was determined by the individual implementing agencies.

Data collected by: Implementing Agencies

MARKET SURVEY (Survey Periods)					
REGION	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST
KAFFRINE			✓		
KOLDA			✓		
LOUGA		✓		✓	
MATAM					✓
SAINT-LOUIS					✓
THIÈS	✓	✓		✓	

05 MEMBER AGENCY & GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEWS

These semi-structured interviews collected data from in-country stakeholders regarding their experiences of the pay-out and project implementation as well as identifying key challenges and lessons learned from the process of providing assistance. Pre-implementation interviews occurred during the planning process and sought to capture expectations with regard to process, performance, and challenges moving forward. The mid-implementation and post-implementation interviews were more reflective, asking about what actually happened as well as looking at lessons learnt and recommendations for future activities.

Data collected by: Start Network's in-country MEAL Coordinator (pre- and mid-implementation) and External Consultant (post-implementation)

IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEW SAMPLE		
PERIOD	TYPE	TOTAL
PRE-IMPLEMENTATION	MEMBER AGENCY	12
	GOVERNMENT	6
MID-IMPLEMENTATION	MEMBER AGENCY	16
	GOVERNMENT	7
POST-IMPLEMENTATION	MEMBER AGENCY	16
	GOVERNMENT	10
TOTAL	MEMBER AGENCY	44
	GOVERNMENT	23

06 POST-DISTRIBUTION MONITORING (PDM)

PDM collected feedback from a sample of supported households regarding the assistance they received. Although two co-designed sample instruments (one for in-person data collection and one for phone-based data collection) were shared by the Start Network, the final content of each instrument as well as the sampling and data collection schedule for this exercise was determined by the individual agencies. Two rounds of PDM data (R1 and R2) were collected by each organisation.

Data collected by: Implementing Agencies

POST-DISTRIBUTION MONITORING SAMPLE

REGION	R1	R2	TOTAL
DIOURBEL	120	120	240
KAFFRINE	125	125	250
KOLDA	50	119	169
LOUGA	132	115	247
MATAM	114	140	254
SAINT-LOUIS	120	123	243
THIÈS	362	200	562
TOTAL	1023	942	1965

COVERAGE DATABASE SAMPLE

REGION	TOTAL
DIOURBEL	5791
KAFFRINE	3726
KOLDA	3345
LOUGA	3015
MATAM	4148
SAINT-LOUIS	3440
THIÈS	5332
TOTAL	28797

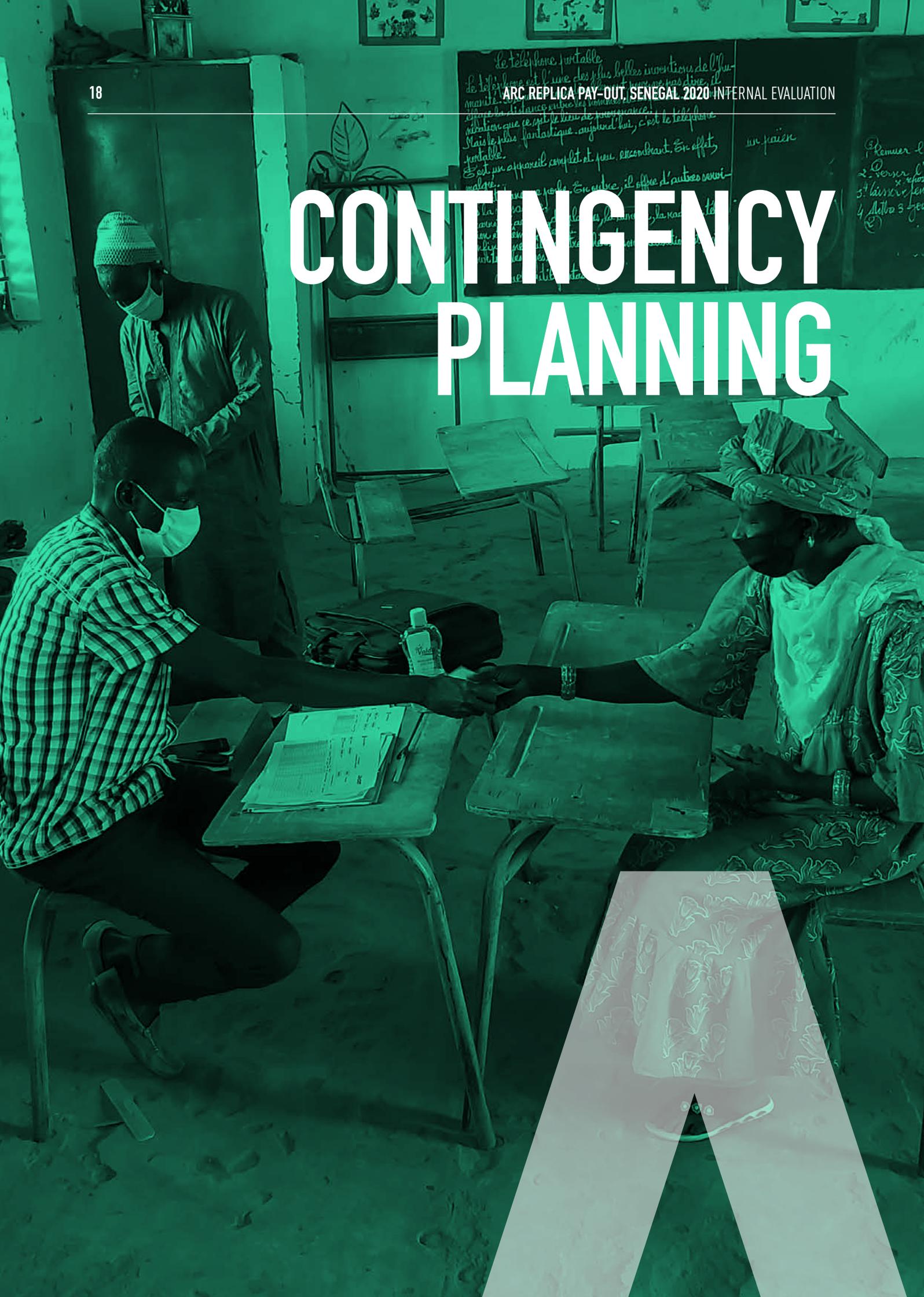
07 AGENCY REPORT FORM (COVERAGE DATABASE)

This short instrument includes key household-level demographic and livelihood data for each household receiving support through the ARC Replica pay-out. This data was collected during the targeting phase of the project (January – April 2020).

Data collected by: Implementing Agencies

A more detailed sampling breakdown can be found in **Annex A**.

CONTINGENCY PLANNING



One requirement of ARC is that any government or civil society partner must have a contingency plan (also called an operational plan) in place ahead of an insurance policy purchase. This enables countries and their Replica partners – including the Start Network – to plan ahead in a coordinated way about what would be done with a pay-out if a drought (or other covered natural disaster) were to be predicted. The contingency plan being finalised and approved is a condition of policy purchase, as is the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the relevant government, ARC Replica partner, and ARC. The MOU must outline ways of working as well as clarifying the relationship between the three parties in advance of any risk season.

In the case of the 2020 Senegal pay-out, Start Network’s ARC Replica operational plan was designed to complement the ARC operational plan developed by the GoS to the point that once it had been approved, the Start Network’s operational plan was annexed in the government’s own plan. The activities Start Network agreed to carry out as ARC Replica partner were designed to complement those planned by the government in order to avoid any duplication of activities, geographic regions, or beneficiaries covered by the GoS. Once a possible pay-out was announced in September 2019, the GoS and Start Network began to develop Final Implementation Plans (FIPs), building from these original contingency plans. This meant that given the current projection of the drought season ahead, both the GoS and Start Network member agencies could make finer, more detailed plans with up-to-date information released by ARC just ahead of the pay-out. These FIPs required approval by the ARC board before finalisation.

10 member agency respondents – including representatives from all six implementing agencies – who participated in the pre-implementation interviews reported that they had either been involved in the contingency planning process at their organisation in the build-up to the pay-out or had sufficient knowledge about that process to provide information about it. These respondents were asked a series of questions relating to contingency planning for ARC Replica at their organisation.

EFFECT ON TIMELINESS AND PREPAREDNESS

MAIN FINDING

MOST PRE-IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEW RESPONDENTS FELT THAT THE CONTINGENCY PLANS HELPED IMPROVE THEIR ORGANISATION’S TIMELINESS AND PREPAREDNESS FOR THE ARC REPLICA PROJECT. HOWEVER, CONCERNS WERE RAISED ABOUT THE LENGTH OF THE PREPARATION AND PLANNING PERIOD COMPARED TO THE SHORT DURATION OF THE ACTUAL INTERVENTION

A key consideration with regard to the contingency planning aspect of ARC Replica is whether this process improved the timeliness and preparedness of the implementing agencies. In other words, did the contingency planning process (1) help them respond more quickly once the pay-out was announced and/or (2) result in them being ready for the intervention. Generally, timeliness and preparedness are closely linked with the ARC Replica project’s focus on anticipatory humanitarian response.

Out of a sample of 10 relevant pre-implementation respondents, eight indicated that they felt the contingency plans had helped improve the timeliness of their organisation’s response. Many of their responses recognise the importance of contingency planning in relation to the early action aspect of the pay-out:



There are populations that have been identified as in crisis during the lean season, starting from June. We must respond before the lean season arrives in order to allow households to maintain their livelihoods during the crisis period. Our contingency planning has made it possible for us to respond on time to help them do this.

MEMBER AGENCY RESPONDENT - PRE-IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEWS

These eight respondents were asked to specify where timeliness was improved and were provided five potential programme areas to choose from:

IF YOU FEEL THAT CONTINGENCY PLANNING HAS IMPROVED THE TIMELINESS OF THE RESPONSE YOUR ORGANISATION COULD PROVIDE, IN WHAT AREAS? (Multiple Responses Permitted)

PROGRAMME AREA	# OF RESPONDENTS (N=8)
PROCUREMENT AND CASH READINESS	5
STAFFING/ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	5
IMPLEMENTATION COORDINATION	7
TARGETING	6
ACTIVITY SELECTION/PROGRAMME DESIGN	5

Their responses suggest that respondents felt improvements in timeliness were felt across multiple relevant programme areas.

However, two of the 10 respondents (from two different implementing agencies) indicated that they felt the contingency planning process did not improve the timeliness of their organisation's response. One of these respondents indicated that this was because their organisation had worked in emergency food assistance for a number of years; as such, their processes were already in place and tested through experience. The remaining respondent felt that contingency planning for ARC Replica was much slower than their usual operations:



Preliminary planning activities lasted a long time – between October 2019 and January 2020. This is a really long time to focus on preparation. As an organisation, we often respond within 48 hours for certain kinds of crises. However, with ARC Replica this has taken more than 3 months.

MEMBER AGENCY RESPONDENT - PRE-IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEWS

Importantly, the preliminary planning exercises the respondent is referring to occurred prior to the disbursement of pay-out funds in December 2019. As such, although this process may have taken longer than a typical humanitarian response, the development of contingency plans did not create delays in the period between when the money was received and when targeting began. Although it represents a minority opinion in the context of the pre-implementation interviews, this concern that the preparation and planning period for the pay-out was too lengthy given how short the actual intervention was has been raised by other stakeholders throughout the project period.

Relatedly, all but one respondent reported that they felt contingency planning helped their organisation be better prepared for the response:



Contingency planning allowed us to identify on a macro level the activities that could take place and in which areas as well as the number of people who might be affected and when. From there, we developed a plan taking all of those elements into account for implementing a response.

MEMBER AGENCY RESPONDENT - PRE-IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEWS

For some of the member agencies, the contingency planning exercise also appears to have supported organisational capacity building. One respondent noted that prior to ARC Replica, their organisation had a more general preparedness plan, but did not have a drought-specific one. However, as a result of ARC Replica they have a drought-specific plan to build from in the future. Another noted that they found working with the other member agencies useful in terms of developing their organisation's contingency plan.

The only respondent reporting that the contingency planning process did not improve their organisation's preparedness – the same respondent who indicated that it did not improve their organisation's timeliness – said that this was because their organisation had a lot of previous experience with this kind of response.

IMPLEMENTATION AND/OR ADAPTATION OF CONTINGENCY PLANS

MAIN FINDING

PRIOR TO COVID-19, HALF THE IMPLEMENTING ORGANISATIONS ADAPTED THEIR CONTINGENCY PLANS, MOSTLY A RESULT OF NEW FINDINGS REGARDING THE EFFECTS OF THE DROUGHT AND/OR CHANGES IN BUDGET. COVID-19 ALSO NECESSITATED ADJUSTMENTS IN PROJECT TIMELINESS AND ACTIVITIES.

Most of the pre-implementation interviews took place before national emergency measures were put in place in Senegal to address COVID-19. Implementing a large-scale cash and flour distribution in the face of COVID-19 required substantial project adaptation, as addressed in the introduction to this evaluation.

However, even before COVID-19 adjustments, six respondents (representing three of the member agencies) reported that their organisations had adapted their contingency plans in response to new findings. One of the most commonly given reasons for why these changes were made was a shift in intervention area or the identification of a new intervention area:



These changes are linked to the ARC Replica guidelines...the ARV software had originally targeted Fatick, but when the harmonised framework was produced, we saw that Fatick was not included as one of the priority areas. As such, we needed to adjust our intervention area and chose to take Kolda instead.

MEMBER AGENCY RESPONDENT - PRE-IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEWS

Budget adjustments were also mentioned by a couple of respondents as rationales for adaptation.

COORDINATION



One of the objectives of ARC Replica as a programme is to improve the quality of coordination in comparison to previous drought responses. Coordination is also one area where the design of the Start Network's ARC Replica pay-out in Senegal was most ambitious. Six different member agencies – ACF, CRS, Oxfam, PI, SCI, and WV – coordinated to provide support across seven regions. Start Network and these member agencies also coordinated with government at national, regional, and local levels as well as with local implementing partners.

With regard to the coordination systems put in place for the project, all of Start Network's ARC-funded interventions were managed by a Start Network coordinator based in-country, who reported to the Start Network secretariat in London. The Start Network coordinator ran weekly coordination meetings with the project managers from each implementing agency, which became bi-weekly as the project came to a close. Regular coordination meetings were also held between Start Network's in-country MEAL coordinator and the MEAL officers associated with each of the six implementing agencies. Additionally, a Communications Coordinator (sitting in World Vision) was appointed early on to facilitate this area of coordination across the project.

Reporting was also a complex aspect of the ARC Replica pay-out in Senegal. Reports with input from all six implementing agencies were submitted to ARC on a monthly basis. This required close coordination between the Start Network team (both in Dakar and in London) and member agencies. The Start Network team reviewed reports for each of the six agencies at the end of every month before consolidating them into a single report for submission to ARC.

Given how crucial coordination was to the success or failure of this project, member agency and government representatives participating in pre-implementation, mid-implementation, and post-implementation interviews were asked a series of questions regarding different aspects of coordination relevant to the response.

COORDINATION BETWEEN START NETWORK AGENCIES

MAIN FINDING

INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION WAS IDENTIFIED AS A KEY STRENGTH OF THE ARC REPLICA PROJECT, IN PARTICULAR DUE TO COMPLEMENTARITY ACROSS THE PARTNERS' EXPERIENCE AS WELL AS ALIGNMENT OF MEAL TOOLS. HOWEVER, MEETING FATIGUE WAS ACKNOWLEDGED AS A CHALLENGE.

Overall, inter-agency coordination between the six implementing members was identified as a strength of the pay-out, despite the risks inherent with so many different stakeholders involved:

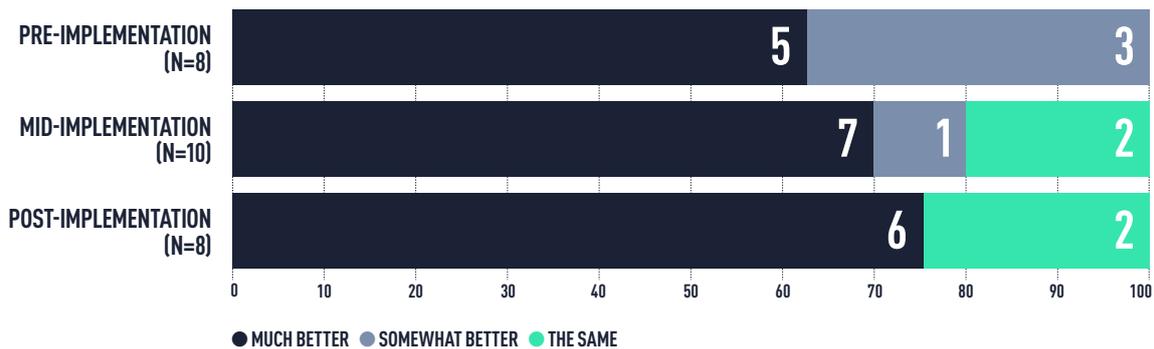


We don't usually work in such a large consortium – six international NGO partners is a lot. And this is something that made people wary about the feasibility of such an intervention. However, we think ARC Replica has proved that it can work.

MEMBER AGENCY RESPONDENT - PRE-IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEWS

Stakeholder interview respondents consistently indicated that their organisation’s coordination with other NGOs had been at least comparable to previous years, with most indicating that it was better:

AS COMPARED TO PREVIOUS YEARS, HOW HAS YOUR ORGANISATION’S COORDINATION WITH OTHER NGOS (including Start Network partners) BEEN IN RELATION TO THE DROUGHT RESPONSE?



Respondents reporting ‘the same’ indicated that this was due to their organisation already having effective coordination with other NGOs. Although the question was open for discussions about collaboration with NGOs beyond the six Start Network partners, responses to the follow-up question ‘why is this the case?’ focussed almost exclusively on the relationship between ACF, CRS, Oxfam, PI, SCI, and WV.

During the implementation interviews, a few themes consistently emerged in terms of the strengths and challenges of inter-agency coordination for the ARC Replica response.

STRENGTH **COMPLEMENTARITY**

Member agency respondents identified complementarity between member agencies – in terms of technical expertise and geographic experience – as a strength of coordination between the ARC Replica partners. In terms of technical expertise, each of the six implementing agencies acted as lead or co-lead for specific topics on the basis of their experience.

- **ACTION CONTRE LA FAIM:** NUTRITION
- **CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES:** CASH TRANSFERS, GENDER/SAFEGUARDING
- **PLAN INTERNATIONAL:** NUTRITION
- **OXFAM:** CASH TRANSFERS, WASH, GENDER/SAFEGUARDING
- **SAVE THE CHILDREN:** TARGETING
- **WORLD VISION:** COMMUNICATIONS

Respondents reported that this was a strength of working together on an intervention rather than running six smaller interventions independently:



With nutrition, there are some NGOs that have much more experience. In terms of compliance, there are others who were much further ahead. In light of this range of experiences, we can complement each other to strengthen the response.

MEMBER AGENCY RESPONDENT - PRE-IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEWS

Similarly, the specific geographic areas where each organisation worked were determined based on where each had previous experience and existing relationships with local communities:



One of the strongest points [regarding coordination] is the choice of organisations. For example, ACF is experienced in the north and CRS has a presence in the south and centre. Each NGO mapped out its preferred area and we worked with this information. In other words, everyone knows their area of intervention well, and this has helped with implementation.

MEMBER AGENCY RESPONDENT - POST-IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEW

Intentionally drawing on the experience of each implementing member was seen by these stakeholders to have strengthened the response and added value to coordination more generally between the agencies.

STRENGTH

ALIGNMENT OF TOOLS AND REPORTING

Another coordination strength identified by member agency respondents, is alignment on tools and reporting:



One of the strongest points has been alignment. MEAL in particular has been really aligned throughout all the planning. For the alignment of tools, I think that everyone has given it their all – at least with regard to complementarity.”

MEMBER AGENCY RESPONDENT - POST-IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEW

In-country member agency stakeholders as well as Start Network staff based in Dakar and London invested substantial effort into building standardised tools and processes for MEAL and reporting, although the final tools and systems for MEAL were not fully aligned across agencies. For example, each agency used the data collection and management systems preferred by their organisation on other projects and there was variation in the final data collection tools used in the field. However, given the short timeframe of the intervention – and given that most tools and processes had to be re-worked mid-project in response to COVID-19 – the level of alignment in MEAL achieved across six different NGO partners was impressive.

When asked during the post-implementation interview process what adjustments could improve inter-agency coordination in the event of another ARC Replica pay-out in Senegal, several respondents stated that they thought tools and reporting could be even more closely aligned through shared systems, including data collection and processing platforms.

CHALLENGE VOLUME OF MEETINGS

Although respondents were overall positive about inter-agency communication during the planning and implementation periods, the number of meetings was highlighted as an issue. As one respondent put it:

There were a lot of meetings. It allowed us to have shared tools and approaches, but also there were too many meetings...with other meetings held throughout the project, every week you have to deal with communications, projects, and MEAL – and you also have to meet with the people in charge.

MEMBER AGENCY RESPONDENT - POST-IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEW

And when asked what could be improved if there were future ARC Replica pay-outs in Senegal, another respondent indicated:

Maybe we won't have to waste any more time with developing tools and could really reduce the number of meetings. I really had an issue with the number of meetings. There have been so many meetings...I am much more interested in going to the field than sitting in these meetings...Why not do exchange visits instead, so the different partners can see how everyone else is working in the field?

MEMBER AGENCY RESPONDENT - POST-IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEW

The second quote links challenges with the volume of meetings to the previously identified strength of alignment of tools and reporting. Even without close coordination regarding key tools and reporting, it follows that effective coordination across six different implementing agencies might necessitate frequent meetings. However, these and other experiences expressed by interviewees suggest that more might have been done to reduce the burden of meetings on individual stakeholders.

The second quote also draws attention to another factor that likely influenced a sense of meeting fatigue. As a result of COVID-19, a range of coordination activities and learning opportunities all needed to be conducted online. As such, while a typical project might include a mix of in-person and online meetings as well as field visits, this was not possible for the ARC Replica pay-out this year. However, ensuring a diversity of formats with coordination engagements during any future interventions could help stakeholders avoid feeling overburdened with meetings.

COORDINATION BETWEEN START NETWORK AGENCIES AND NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

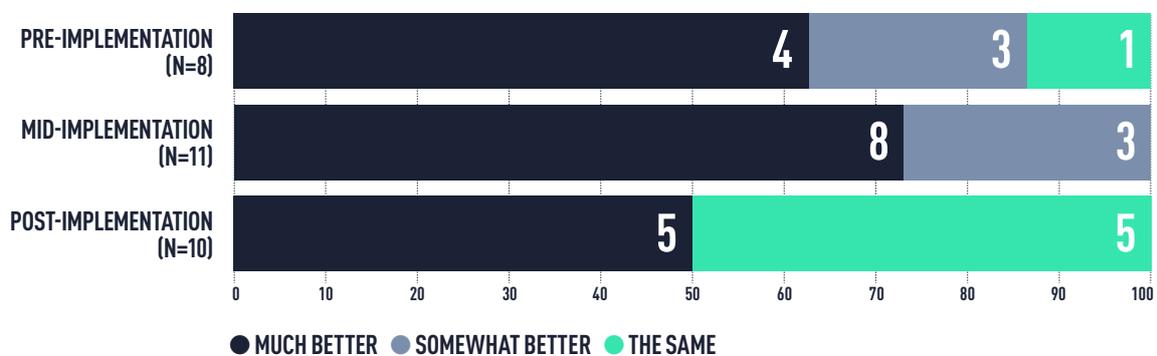


OVERALL, GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDERS FELT POSITIVE ABOUT COORDINATION ON THE DROUGHT RESPONSE WITH START NETWORK MEMBERS, DESPITE SOME APPREHENSION REGARDING THE START NETWORK STARTING DISTRIBUTIONS BEFORE THE GOVERNMENT OF SENEGAL

Given that the ARC Replica pay-out was designed to be complementary to the Senegalese government’s ARC pay-out, effective coordination with the national government was even more important with the ARC Replica intervention than it might have been with drought response projects in previous years.

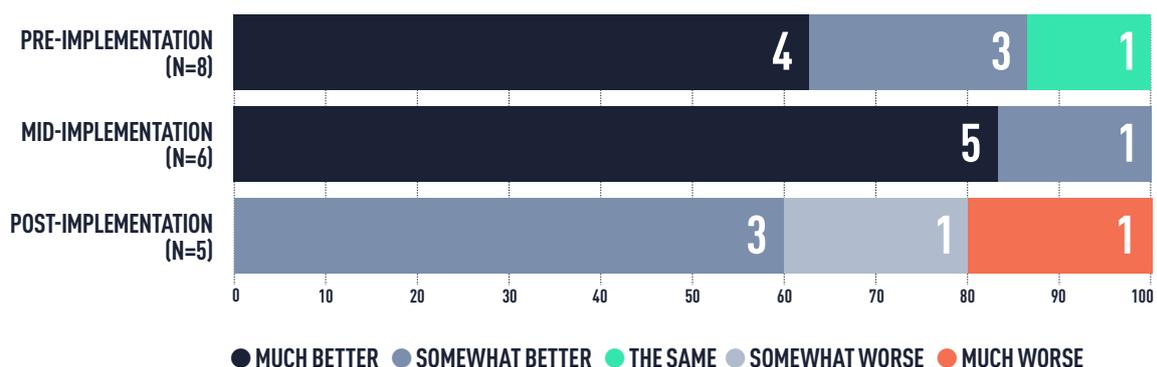
Both government and member agency stakeholders engaged through implementation interviews were asked about their perception of coordination between the ARC Replica implementing agencies and national government, particularly in comparison to previous years’ drought responses.

AS COMPARED TO PREVIOUS YEARS, HOW HAS YOUR ORGANISATION’S COORDINATION WITH THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT BEEN IN RELATION TO THE DROUGHT RESPONSE? (Member Agency Respondents)



As with inter-agency coordination, all member agency respondents reported that the coordination with the government was at least as good as in previous years, with most indicating that it had improved.

AS COMPARED TO WORK WITH NGOS DURING PREVIOUS YEARS, HOW HAS YOUR COORDINATION WITH THE START NETWORK BEEN IN RELATION TO THE DROUGHT RESPONSE THIS YEAR?(Government Respondents)



Although government respondents engaged during pre- and mid-implementation interviews similarly reported that coordination was as good – if not better – than in previous years, the perceptions of government stakeholders was more mixed during the post-implementation interviews.

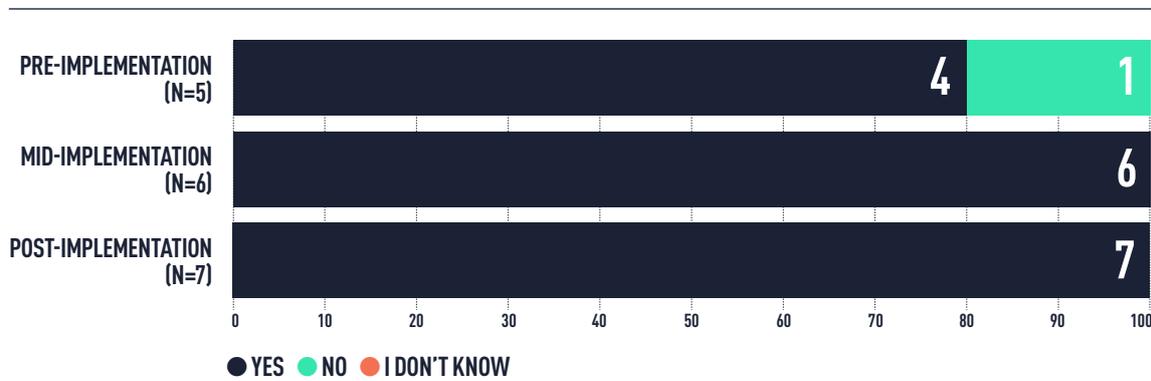
Coordination between the national government and Start Network member agencies was assessed as improved over previous years by both government and implementing agency stakeholders. However, more challenges were identified with this area of coordination than were noted in relation to inter-agency coordination.

STRENGTH CONSULTATION

Overall, government stakeholders reported feeling positive about the level of consultation between themselves and the ARC Replica agencies. Throughout the implementation interviews, only one government stakeholder reported they felt the government had not been sufficiently consulted and informed about the ARC Replica intervention.

Overall, these and other questions suggest that government respondents felt they had been kept up to date about how the ARC Replica pay-out was progressing, particularly in comparison to responses during previous years.

HAS THE GOVERNMENT BEEN SUFFICIENTLY CONSULTED AND INFORMED ABOUT THE START NETWORK'S ARC REPLICA PROJECT? (Government Respondents)



This year, a lot of regular follow-ups and meetings have been held, whereas in past years, the meetings were infrequent. This is an improvement because we are being given regular information on the implementation of activities. Everyone is informed about what each other is doing.

SENEGALESE GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER – MID-IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEW

Some government respondents also drew attention to this improved coordination happening despite the challenges associated with COVID-19:



It must be recognised that there was a lot of meetings, consultations, and discussions. Despite COVID-19, we managed to carry on with video conferencing. We used all the tools available in order to continue working together.

SENEGALESE GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER – MID-IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEW

A couple of member agency respondents even indicated that COVID-19 had facilitated stronger coordination between their agencies and the GoS because of the requirements to gain permission from the government to work in targeted areas.



However, the key challenge identified in relation to coordination between the GoS and member agencies is also linked to communication. Some officials felt that while initially ARC-Replica partners were working well with Government agencies, alignment became more difficult after activities and timelines shifted due to COVID-19:



The state wanted simultaneous distributions. It didn't want to have distributions in some departments before distributions had started in other departments. So it was quite complicated – the NGOs had already made commitments and couldn't wait any longer.

MEMBER AGENCY RESPONDENT - POST-IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEW

Although complications related to COVID-19 likely exacerbated communication challenges, issues related to alignment of distributions pre-dated the pandemic. Although both the GoS and Start Network received their funds from ARC by mid-December 2019, bureaucratic hurdles resulted in cascading delays for both community targeting and project implementation on the GoS side. The Start Network member agencies chose to move forward in line with their FIP – the 'commitments' mentioned in the quote above – rather than wait to distribute in alignment with the government response.

In addition to this, a couple of respondents expressed that they would have liked better alignment between the GoS and Start Network on MEAL, particularly for data collected through the ARC Replica project to be better aligned with food security and livelihood data regularly collected by GoS agencies.

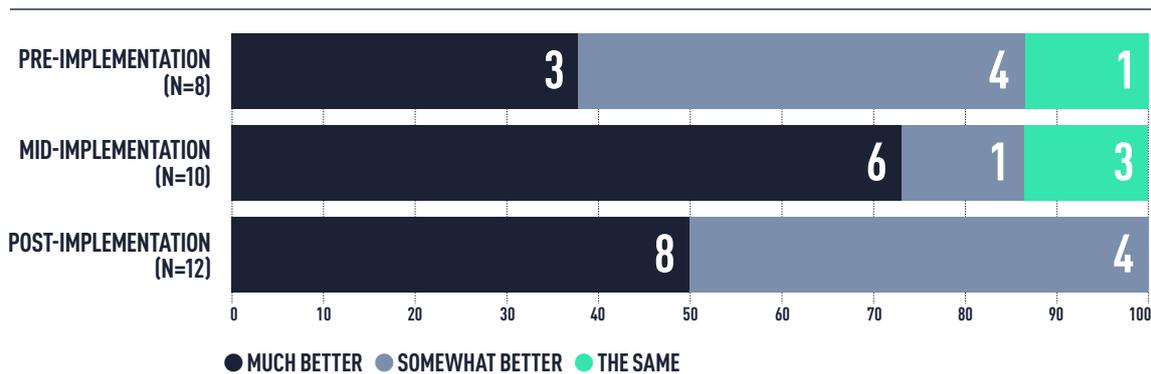
COORDINATION BETWEEN START NETWORK AGENCIES AND REGIONAL/LOCAL GOVERNMENT



MEMBER AGENCIES REPORTED SOME CHALLENGES NAVIGATING THE POLITICS OF COMMUNITY TARGETING. HOWEVER, THEY FELT THEY WERE ABLE TO FACILITATE EFFECTIVE COORDINATION WITH REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDERS BY USING A PARTICIPATORY APPROACH & BUILDING ON EXISTING RELATIONSHIPS.

The final areas of coordination addressed through the implementation interviews was coordination between Start Network implementing agencies and regional or local government officials in the areas where they were providing assistance.

AS COMPARED TO PREVIOUS YEARS, HOW HAS YOUR ORGANISATION'S COORDINATION WITH LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENT BEEN IN RELATION TO THE DROUGHT RESPONSE? (Member Agency Respondents)



These responses suggest that agency respondents felt positively about coordination between their organisations and local or regional government actors. As in the case of inter-agency coordination and coordination with the national government, all respondents reporting ‘the same’ indicated that this was due to existing relationships with local and regional government actors being very positive.



PARTICIPATORY APPROACH

Member agency respondents reported that they felt one of the strengths of this year’s response over previous years with regard to coordination was how involved local and regional government actors were in project planning and implementation:



ARC Replica has involved the administrative authorities much better than most projects...that’s what allowed us to work while everyone else was blocked. We were able to get authorisation to move around, which allowed us to carry out our project activities.

MEMBER AGENCY RESPONDENT - POST-IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEW

This quote draws attention to one of the unexpected effects of COVID-19 on the ARC Replica pay-out; namely, that member agencies needed to coordinate perhaps even more closely the government than they might have done otherwise in order to start distributions.

Another member agency respondent drew attention to the specific benefits of ensuring local and regional government actors were involved at each stage of the project:



Regional and local authorities and services were involved in all key stages of the response implementation. The strengths of this collaboration have been: authorities having a better understanding of the objectives and approach of the response; better mobilisation of various stakeholders; and support in choosing intervention areas.

MEMBER AGENCY RESPONDENT - POST-IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEW

The ARC Replica project's success in this area may be attributable to a strength previously discussed in relation to inter-agency coordination: regional experience and expertise. Since many of the agencies were distributing in areas where they already had a presence, they were able to build on existing relationships and reputations with local and regional stakeholders. This regional coordination was done intentionally as part of the contingency planning process in order to leverage local experience and avoid overlaps in support provided.



POLITICS

Several implementation interview respondents mentioned a challenge of coordination with regional and local government actors that was particularly relevant during the targeting phase:



At the very beginning, we had some challenges related to the beneficiary targeting criteria because all of the local communities wanted to be supported by the project. No one wanted their commune or their village to get left behind...Fortunately, with the help of the department-level government, everything went well in the end. When the first distributions went forward, they then appreciated that the targeting exercise had been good.

MEMBER AGENCY RESPONDENT - POST-IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEW

It is thought that the data-driven approach to targeting taken by Start Network member agencies – which started with the National Single Registry (RNU) maintained by the GoS and included household-level verification – helped de-politicise the targeting process. However, one respondent provided a suggestion regarding how this challenge could be further mitigated during any future, similar interventions:



If another pay-out were to take place in Senegal in the future, multi-level meetings should be held including all levels of government in order to ensure alignment, that all stakeholders have the same level of understanding about the intervention – and the same level of understanding about targeting. If we did this, stakeholders who want to bring in their political intentions would not be able to do so... under scrutiny from different levels of government, I think we would better guarantee a status quo of transparency.

MEMBER AGENCY RESPONDENT - POST-IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEW

Other than this issue during the targeting phase, member agency stakeholders generally reported that coordination between their organisations and local/regional government actors was not only positive but crucial to the success of the project given the constraints created by COVID-19.

TIMELINESS AND ANTICIPATION



The focus of the ARC Replica model is on anticipatory action to prevent damage that might otherwise be caused by drought. Supported households engaged through the IM and PDM surveys as well as through household interviews were asked a number of questions about (1) whether the ARC Replica support was available at a time relevant to their lean season preparation needs and (2) whether support had anticipated any negative, drought-related impacts on their household food security and livelihood. Since COVID-19 resulted in 2020 being atypical in a number of respects, they were also asked about how and when their household has prepared for and managed during the lean season during previous years.

PREPARATION FOR THE LEAN SEASON

MAIN FINDING

COMMON STRATEGIES USED BY HOUSEHOLDS TO PREPARE FOR THE LEAN SEASON INCLUDE TAKING OUT LOANS OR BUYING FOOD ON CREDIT; SELLING LIVESTOCK; AND A RANGE OF NON-AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES. THE PAY-OUT'S FOCUS ON CASH DISTRIBUTIONS AND FORTIFIED FLOUR ARE CONSISTENT WITH SUPPORTING THESE PREPARATION ACTIVITIES, THEREBY ENSURING HOUSEHOLDS ARE IN THE BEST POSITION POSSIBLE TO ANTICIPATE NEGATIVE DROUGHT IMPACTS.



LEAN SEASON defined as when their grain stores and other prepared resources become depleted

Using an open response question to capture a range of possible activities, IM survey respondents were asked to describe what their households typically do to prepare for the lean season. The **key activities** identified by respondents across all targeted regions were:



- **STORING HARVESTED GRAIN FOLLOWING WINTER HARVEST**
- **MARKET GARDENING**
- **TAKING OUT LOANS OR BUYING FOOD ON CREDIT²**
- **SELLING LIVESTOCK**
- **NON-AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES** (ex: selling firewood, masonry, trade)

These preparation activities were also consistently identified by in-depth household interview respondents.

While ARC Replica could conceivably support with increasing the amount of grain harvested with in-kind or cash support for seeds and fertiliser, ultimately this would not actually anticipate the effects of the drought triggering the pay-out. Furthermore, market gardening is water-intensive and currently can only be practiced in certain regions of Senegal. Supporting market gardening as a preparation measure more broadly would require investment in water infrastructure outside the scope of a short-term project like ARC Replica.

ARC Replica is better positioned to support vulnerable households to reduce reliance on strategies like selling livestock and taking out loans to cover basic needs while supporting non-agricultural activities. The pay-out's focus on cash distributions and fortified flour to support vulnerable households does therefore appear consistent with anticipating the likely needs of those supported.

² This is typically done with the expectation that they will be able to pay off these loans using income or products from their subsequent harvest

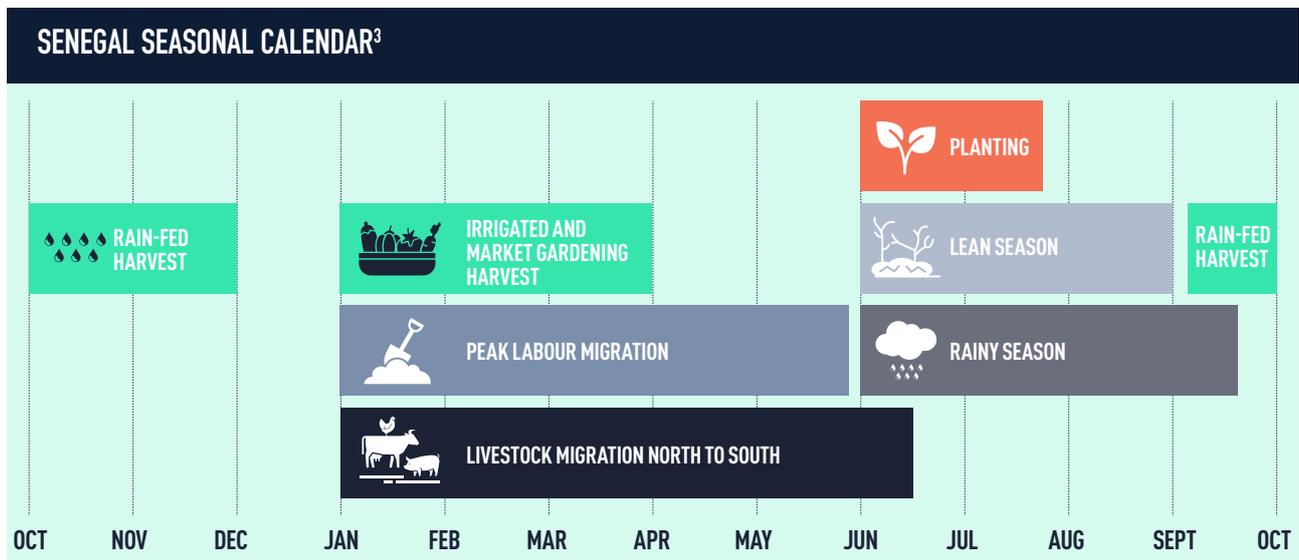
TIMELINESS



THE SELECTED SUPPORT WINDOW GENERALLY ALIGNS WITH WHEN HOUSEHOLDS PREPARE FOR THE LEAN SEASON, ALTHOUGH AN EARLIER WINDOW MAY BE PREFERABLE. HOWEVER, THERE ARE EXCEPTIONS: SOME HOUSEHOLDS ENTER THE LEAN SEASON BEFORE APRIL, WHILE OTHERS FACE THE MOST RISK DURING AUGUST-SEPTEMBER.

NORMAL TIMING FOR LEAN SEASON PREPARATION

The type of support provided – namely, cash and fortified flour – appears consistent with supporting households to anticipate challenges associated with a severe lean season. However, timing is also key to the success of the ARC Replica intervention enabling households to prepare for the lean season.



Although there is some regional variation (with both the seasonal calendar and with common coping strategies), the key activities highlighted in the previous section fit into the more general seasonal calendar.



³ <https://fews.net/file/87831>

As both timelines above suggest, it is challenging to draw a distinction between lean season preparation strategies and normal economic activities, whether agricultural and non-agricultural. Particularly for less well-off households that are limited in terms the size of the harvest they can produce – due to limited access to arable land or a lack of good quality inputs, for example – it is more accurate to say that different types of work are used at different times of year to meet a household’s basic needs. Drought years simply make non-agricultural income sources particularly important as late or inconsistent rains can negatively affect harvest size. Furthermore, some of these activities – particularly selling livestock and buying food on credit or taking out informal loans – are used by households not only as planned preparation strategies but also as food security coping strategies, especially later in the lean season as grain reserves become exhausted.

The key activities that the ARC Replica project could meaningfully effect – in terms of reducing reliance on livestock sales and taking out loans/buying food on credit as well as supporting non-agricultural activities – take place between January-June. As such, the April-June support window selected for the 2020 pay-out in Senegal does broadly match with when households prepare for the lean season, but it is possible that support beginning even earlier – coinciding with the end of the rain-fed harvest during December/January (see Senegal Seasonal Calendar above) – would have been preferable in terms of anticipating food security and livelihood challenges associated with drought. However, this evaluation is unable to explore that point further, as COVID-19 restrictions on movement and gatherings of people resulted in the distributions shifting from April-June to May-September.

NORMAL LEAN SEASON TIMINGS

In looking at the timeliness of support provided, it is also important to look not only at the theoretical periods and seasons outlined above, but also at the lived experience of supported households. For example, one key finding that emerged from the household interviews is that different households have different perceptions on when they are in the lean season. Specifically, two trends emerged from the household interviews:

01 SOME HOUSEHOLDS CONSIDER THEMSELVES TO BE IN THE LEAN SEASON FAR EARLIER THAN THE EXPECTED JUNE-AUGUST PERIOD

41%

13 OUT OF 32 HOUSEHOLD INTERVIEW RESPONDENTS REPORTED THAT THEIR HOUSEHOLD REACHED THE LEAN SEASON DURING APRIL OR EVEN EARLIER.



Our lean season begins in March and continues through to July. During this period, it is difficult for us to meet our food needs because our grain stocks are running out and our other income is not sufficient to fill the gap. To prepare for this period, we often resort to going into debt. We borrow money from close neighbours who are better off than us and at other times we buy food on credit through the local shopkeeper.

RESPONDENT IN MATAM DEPARTMENT

The incidence of households reporting that their lean season starts prior to June is important in relation to the intended use of ARC Replica support. If vulnerable households – who may be farming less land and/or relying on lower-quality agricultural inputs due to price constraints – experience a poor rainy season and harvest, the resources they have (both grain and other sources of income) may be exhausted before the months generally understood to be the lean season.

02 OTHER HOUSEHOLDS CONSIDER THEMSELVES TO BE IN THE LEAN SEASON SOMEWHAT LATER, DURING AUGUST-SEPTEMBER.

38%

12 OF THE 32 HOUSEHOLD INTERVIEW RESPONDENTS INDICATED THAT THEIR HOUSEHOLD'S LEAN SEASON DOES NOT EVEN START UNTIL AUGUST OR SEPTEMBER.

An additional 9 (28%) also reported that – although their lean season started prior to August – it typically did not end until September at the earliest.

Particularly for households that depend on non-agricultural income like trade or construction work to supplement their stored grain and/or income produced from selling agricultural products, the most challenging part of the year from a food security perspective may not even begin until after the rainy season has started:



Our household reaches the lean season between August and September. During this period, we cannot be far from the fields, so all out other income-generating activities are practically blocked.

RESPONDENT IN BAMBÉY DEPARTMENT

If grain stores from the previous harvest have been exhausted and households were unable to save sufficient income through other sources to sustain themselves until crops can be harvested, this could be the most challenging period of the year with regard to food security for some households.

IMPACT OF COVID-19

MAIN
FINDING

COVID-19 DISRUPTED NOT ONLY THE ORIGINAL ARC REPLICA DISTRIBUTION SCHEDULE, BUT ALSO THE PRIMARY STRATEGIES USED BY HOUSEHOLDS TO PREPARE FOR THE LEAN SEASON.

Restrictions on travel and gatherings as part of the GoS response to COVID-19 in Senegal started in late March 2020 and continued until May/June, after which time some social distancing measures were still in place. The impact of these restrictions on typical preparation for the lean season was substantial.

The closure of *loumas* (weekly markets) in particular was cited by a number of household interview respondents as particularly detrimental to household income, as this prevented households from being able to sell market garden produce, livestock, or items from skilled or unskilled non-agricultural labour (ex: shoes, baskets, firewood).



Some measures taken by the authorities prevented us from undertaking our usual non-agricultural activities, namely trade. We usually buy products like cow's milk or vegetables to resell at the markets, but the measures – such as closing the large markets and limiting travel – prevented us from carrying out these activities. As such, suddenly we struggled to find income to meet our needs.

RESPONDENT IN RANÉROU DEPARTMENT

Households who depend on remittances from relatives working in other parts of the country or abroad also found their income strategies affected:



COVID-19 has had a huge impact on our income. First of all, there was an impact on the money transfer income that our household receives because the family member who sends it has had enormous difficulties in doing so – their income-generating activities have been impacted by the pandemic. Consequently, during the state of emergency, our household found it difficult to provide for our needs.

RESPONDENT IN MATAM DEPARTMENT

Even as COVID-19 delayed the distribution of ARC Replica support, it also resulted in some of the most common strategies used by vulnerable households to generate income before and during the lean season being blocked during a crucial period. This unique combination of factors makes it challenging to speak more broadly about whether or not the original distribution window of April-June would have had an anticipatory effect in terms of household-level food security. However, data collected from supported households through the IM and PDM surveys as well as in-depth household interviews make it possible to assess the timeliness of the response in relation to the specific context of 2020.

Additional contextual information regarding the impact of COVID-19 and the lean season on food security and livelihoods for households across Senegal can be found in Annex B.

TIMELINESS & ANTICIPATION – COVID-19 MODIFICATIONS

**MAIN
FINDING**

LIKELY DUE TO THE EFFECTS OF COVID-19, THE ARC REPLICA SUPPORT HELPED HOUSEHOLDS TO MANAGE THEIR FOOD SECURITY RATHER THAN SPECIFICALLY HAVING AN ANTICIPATORY EFFECT AHEAD OF DROUGHT-RELATED CHALLENGES.

Due to delays linked to COVID-19, distributions did not start until May 2020. However, instead of choosing to distribute three monthly rounds of support – which had been the initial plan when distributions were scheduled to start in April – they were condensed to two distributions, with the second and final distribution including two months' worth of support. Most distributions were finalised by August 2020.

In order to establish whether or not these delayed distributions helped households anticipate negative effects of the drought on food security and livelihoods, IM survey respondents were asked about how their household used the support they received.

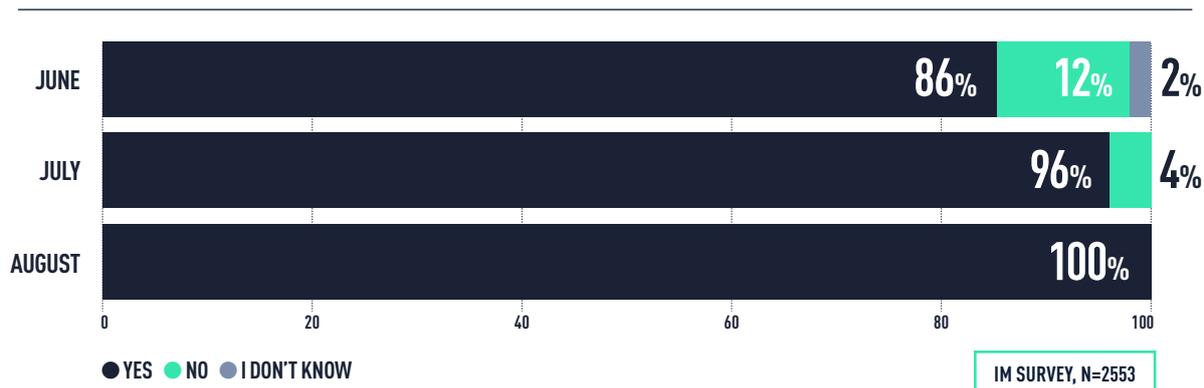
The five most common responses given regarding the use of cash suggest that the money was primarily used to cover immediate needs and to repay debt accrued during previous months.



When asked the same question regarding changes made due to having received fortified flour, respondents also reported short-term uses, mainly focussed on how the flour allowed children and nursing women in their household to eat better during that month.

IM survey respondents were also asked more directly about whether or not the support they received was early enough to help them prepare for the lean season:

DID YOU RECEIVE THE MONEY EARLY ENOUGH TO HELP YOUR HOUSEHOLD PREPARE FOR THE LEAN SEASON?



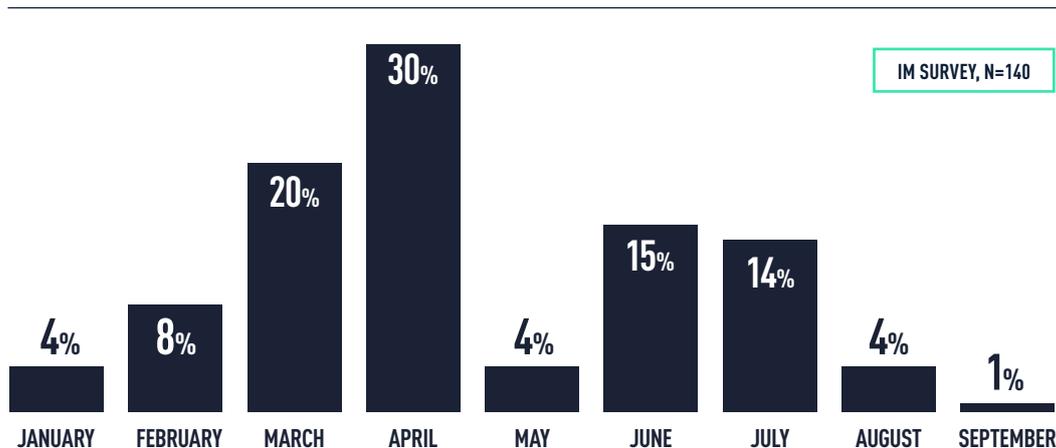
Overall, respondents reported that they received the money early enough to help their household prepare for the lean season. These results corroborate the finding that many vulnerable households do not prepare for the lean season so much as rely on several different agricultural and/or non-agricultural income-generating activities, depending on the season.

Many of the activities vulnerable households rely on to maintain food security following the end of the water-fed harvest until the start of planting season had been blocked or limited by COVID-19 restrictions. The fact that some respondents used the cash received to repay debts (as well as some additional indicators that will be discussed in subsequent sections) suggests that while ARC Replica helped supported households manage food security through the lean season, it did not anticipate or prevent drought-related challenges.

IM respondents who indicated that they did not receive the support early enough to help their household prepare for the lean season were asked when they would have preferred to receive the support.

Their responses suggest that the original distribution period (starting in April) would have been appropriate for the preparation needs of supported households. However, it also provides evidence that starting the distributions a bit earlier may have been preferable.

WHEN WOULD YOU HAVE PREFERRED TO RECEIVE THE SUPPORT?



The spike around June-July may also speak to interviewees who indicated they consider their household's lean season to be a bit later than the expected timeline.

Although the ARC Replica support does not appear to have anticipated food security and livelihood challenges associated with the drought, it does appear to have been timely in terms of reaching households at a time when they had significant need. With many income-generating activities being blocked during March-May due to COVID-19 and non-agricultural activities reducing during July-September, the support may have provided a stabilising bridge until harvest time:



The money received was very useful insofar as we didn't have any other source of income at the time we received the first distribution. Our food stores had been exhausted – without this support, we would have had to borrow money or possibly sell the remainder of our livestock at low prices.

RESPONDENT IN VÉLINGARA DEPARTMENT

Other coping strategies households indicated they would have had to use if not for the ARC Replica support included: taking out loans or buying food on credit; taking on odd jobs or day labour; and begging. The use of negative coping strategies will be addressed in greater detail in the 'Effectiveness of Support' section below.

RELEVANCE OF SUPPORT



In addition to understanding whether the type and timing of support was appropriate for households preparing for and managing the effects of the lean season, it is important to assess whether the specific support provided was relevant to supported households. As such, questions were included in the IM and PDM surveys as well as the household interviews to ascertain whether the quantity, quality, and type of support provided was relevant to supported households.

This report will address the following areas:

01 QUANTITY

QUANTITY OF CASH DISTRIBUTED

02 QUALITY

APPROPRIATENESS OF SELECTED CASH DISTRIBUTION MECHANISM AND QUALITY OF FORTIFIED FLOUR

03 TYPE OF SUPPORT

RELEVANCE OF BOTH CASH AND FORTIFIED FLOUR

01 QUANTITY OF CASH

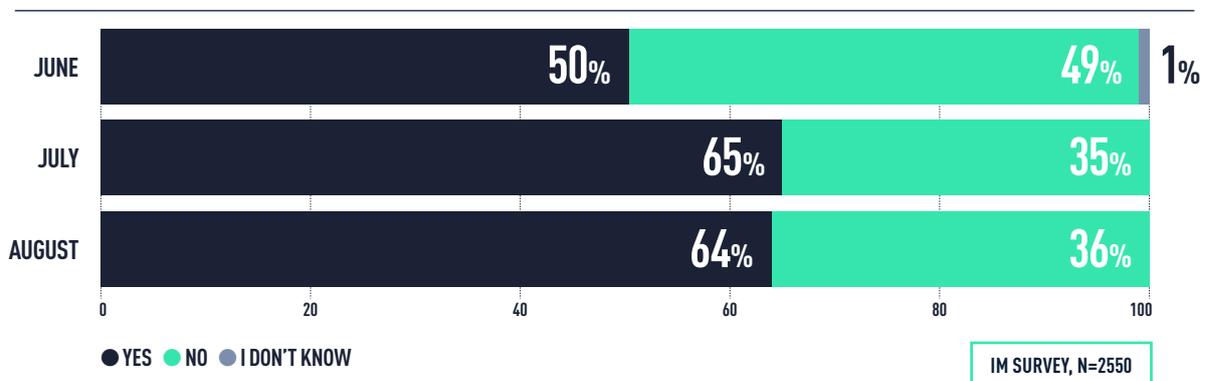


MOST RESPONDENTS REPORTED THAT THE AMOUNT OF CASH RECEIVED WAS INSUFFICIENT TO MEET THEIR HOUSEHOLD'S BASIC NEEDS, EVEN JUST FOR A FEW WEEKS.

Supported households received a total of 5,000FCFA (\$9 USD) per household member for up to eight household members per distribution. As such, the most a household could receive was 40,000FCFA (\$72 USD) per monthly distribution or 120,000FCFA (\$216 USD) in total.⁴

Overall, beneficiary perceptions with regard to whether or not the support received was sufficient to meet their basic needs were mixed. This trend varied somewhat between regions; however, the overall trend was reflected by both IM and PDM data.

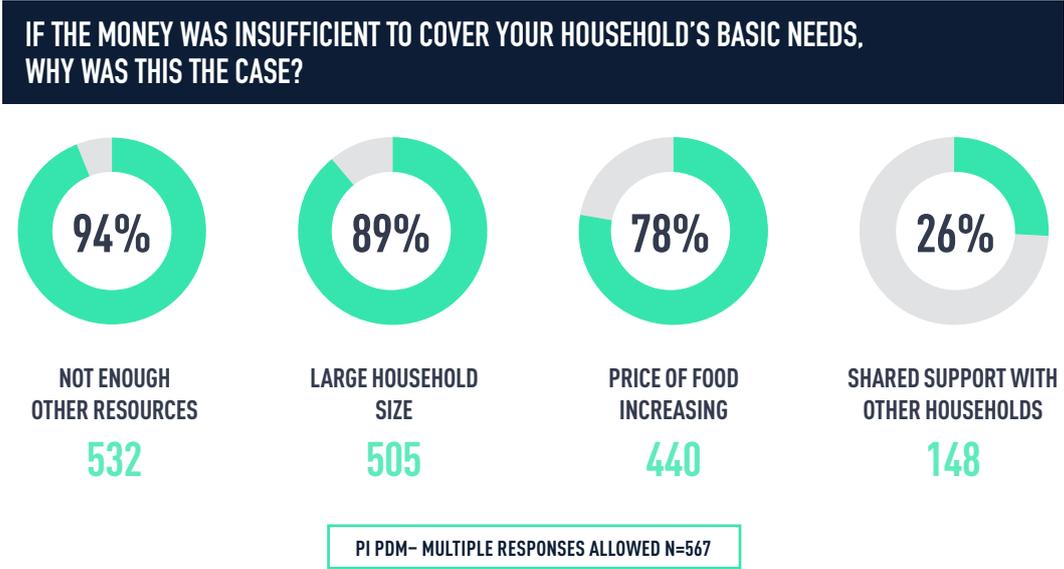
IS THE MONEY YOU RECEIVED SUFFICIENT TO COVER THE BASIC NEEDS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD THIS MONTH?



⁴ In some cases, the amount received per distribution was slightly higher to account for fortified flour no longer being distributed

Given the previously discussed challenges that COVID-19 created surrounding typical sources of household income, it is likely that the lower sufficiency reported during June is related to households already needing to recover from food security deficits. This is supported by data elsewhere in the IM survey that indicates the average household spent 8% of the cash they received on debt repayment.

During PDM, PI asked a follow-up question to respondents who indicated that the amount they received was insufficient in order to determine which factors (from a short-list) might have affected this:

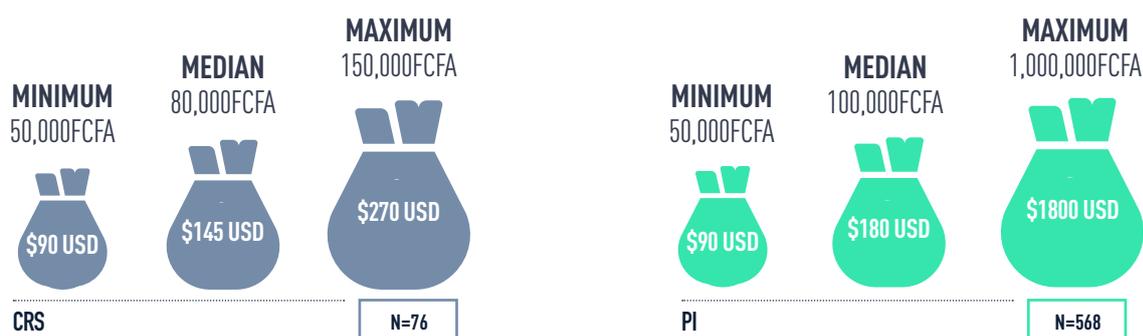


These results suggest that households in PI-supported departments – and perhaps more widely – faced multiple challenges to making the quantity of cash received cover all of their household’s basic needs in a given month. A more in-depth discussion of food prices and market conditions can be found in **Annex C**.

Household interviews were conducted during September, one month after the final rounds of IM and PDM. While included households unanimously indicated that the support they received had been useful for their household, 30 out of 32 interviewees (94%) reported it was insufficient to meet their household’s needs.

In their PDM, both CRS and PI asked respondents who indicated the amount of cash they received was insufficient to indicate how much would have been enough to meet those needs:

HOW MUCH (PER DISTRIBUTION) WOULD HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENT TO MEET YOUR HOUSEHOLD'S BASIC NEEDS?



When asked the same question, household interview respondents reported similar – but higher – figures:



Although this assistance was very useful in supporting us with our basic expenses – particularly those related to food – it was not really enough to meet all of our needs. We estimate that if we had received 120,000FCFA per month, we could have covered all of our needs.

RESPONDENT IN KÉBÉMER DEPARTMENT

The 80,000-120,000FCFA (\$145-\$217 USD) per month range households predicted would be sufficient to meet their needs is two to three times larger than the maximum of 40,000FCFA (\$72 USD) they might have received. Narratives provided by interview respondents support this estimation that the quantity of support provided was insufficient to cover basic needs:



The assistance was mostly spent on food needs. There wasn't enough money to spend on medical needs, even though there were some family members (two children) who had malaria and the flu. In order to cover these costs, we had to borrow money from an extended family member.

RESPONDENT IN MATAM DEPARTMENT

Another theme that emerged from the household interviews was that while many households were happy with the amount of support they received per distribution, they may have benefitted from a couple additional months' worth of support:



Having received 40,000FCFA per month for three months (a total of 120,000FCFA), we estimate that an additional two months of distributions could have been enough to meet our food needs for the rest of the year. Although the money we did receive was very useful to support our basic needs, especially in relation to food, on the other hand it was really not enough to meet all our needs.

RESPONDENT IN RANÉROU DEPARTMENT

This data suggests that additional cash support, perhaps over a longer period, would have had a larger effect on food security for supported households. Based on some of the feedback provided by household interview respondents, is also possible that households would have had the capacity to focus on longer-term preparation activities – like buying food to store for later use or even buying seeds and fertilisers to increase their next harvest – if they had received more cash support. However, without a relevant counterfactual, there is no way to evidence this further.

02 QUALITY

MAIN FINDING

NEARLY A FIFTH OF HOUSEHOLDS REPORTED CONCERNS RELATING TO HEALTH/SANITATION (LIKELY RELATED TO COVID-19) WHEN RECEIVING CASH IN-PERSON FROM AN NGO DISTRIBUTION SITE OR TRANSFER AGENT.

QUALITY OF DISTRIBUTIONS – CASH:

Although quality of distributed items cannot be as easily assessed with cash transfers as with in-kind support, one key quality-related issue regarding cash in terms of relevance – particularly given concerns related to COVID-19 – is how well the distribution process was managed.

Only 10% (250) of IM respondents reported that they received support via electronic transfer, a deposit into their bank account, or it being delivered to their home by the NGO. The remaining 90% (2300) of respondents needed to either visit an NGO distribution site or go to a local transfer agent to receive the cash component of their support. These respondents were asked to identify any challenges they might have faced receiving their cash. The five challenges most frequently identified were as follows:

DID YOU (OR THE PERSON WHO COLLECTED THE MONEY) EXPERIENCE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING DIFFICULTIES DURING DISTRIBUTION?



IM SURVEY – MULTIPLE RESPONSES PERMITTED N=2300

Unfortunately, the closed nature of the IM tool meant that follow-up questions could not be asked to ascertain the specifics of these challenges. However, the data suggests two potential issues with the distributions.

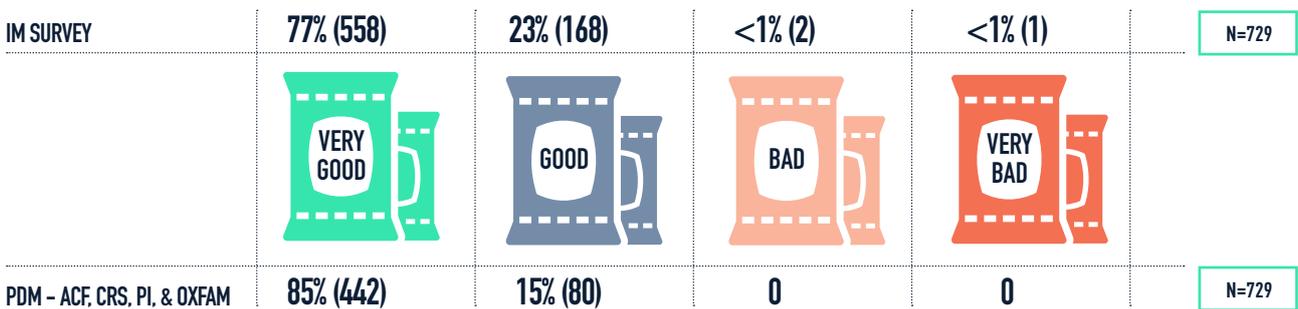
Firstly, the percentage of respondents indicating that they either waited for and/or travelled for more than one hour suggests that distributions were a considerable time burden for some supported households. 19% of respondents expressing concern regarding 'site health/sanitation' suggests that there may have been discomfort around in-person distributions given the pandemic. Although there are challenges associated with digital cash transfer methods, it is possible that more widespread use of electronic transfers and/or bank deposits could have alleviated some of the identified difficulties faced by supported households.

MAIN FINDING

THE DISTRIBUTED FORTIFIED FLOUR APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN HIGH-QUALITY

IM survey respondents as well as PDM survey respondents in areas supported by ACF, CRS, PI, and Oxfam were asked specifically about the quality of the flour they received.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE QUALITY OF THE FLOUR YOU RECEIVED?



Across both the IM and PDM surveys, >99% of respondents indicated that the quality of flour was either ‘very good’ or ‘good’. As such, there does not appear to have been any substantial issues with the quality of the fortified flour distributed.

03 TYPE OF SUPPORT

MAIN FINDING

THE DATA SUGGESTS THAT THE CASH DISTRIBUTIONS WERE HIGHLY RELEVANT TO THE NEEDS OF TARGETED HOUSEHOLDS, AND THE MONEY RECEIVED WAS SPENT ALMOST ENTIRELY ON BASIC NEEDS LIKE FOOD AND HEALTHCARE.

The IM and PDM surveys, as well as the household interviews, included questions intended to assess whether the type of support – namely cash and fortified flour – were relevant to the needs of supported households.

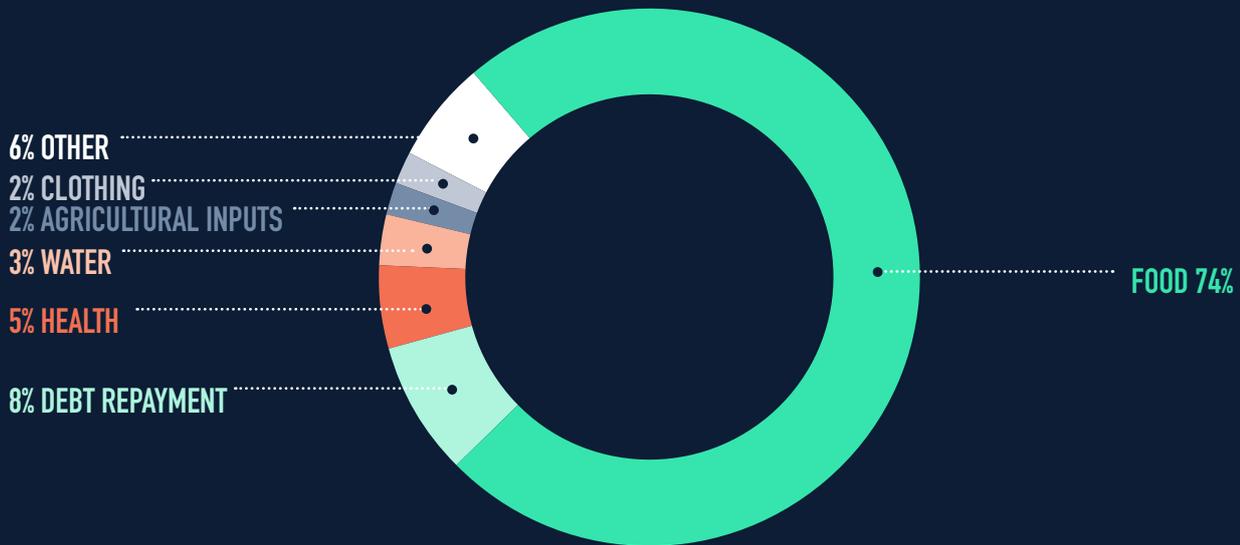
RELEVANCE OF CASH MODALITY:

IM survey respondents were asked to indicate how much of the cash they received was spent on the following areas:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">  ● FOOD  ● WATER  ● HEALTH (SERVICES AND MEDICATION) ● EDUCATION/TUITION FEES ● DEBT REPAYMENT ● TRANSPORT ● RENT AND/OR HOUSING EXPENSES | <ul style="list-style-type: none">  ● LIVESTOCK AND/OR AGRICULTURAL INPUTS ● HOUSEHOLD ITEMS ● FIREWOOD AND/OR FUEL  ● CLOTHING AND/OR SHOES ● SAVED AND/OR KEPT  ● FESTIVALS, FUNERALS, AND/OR WEDDINGS ● OTHER |
|--|--|

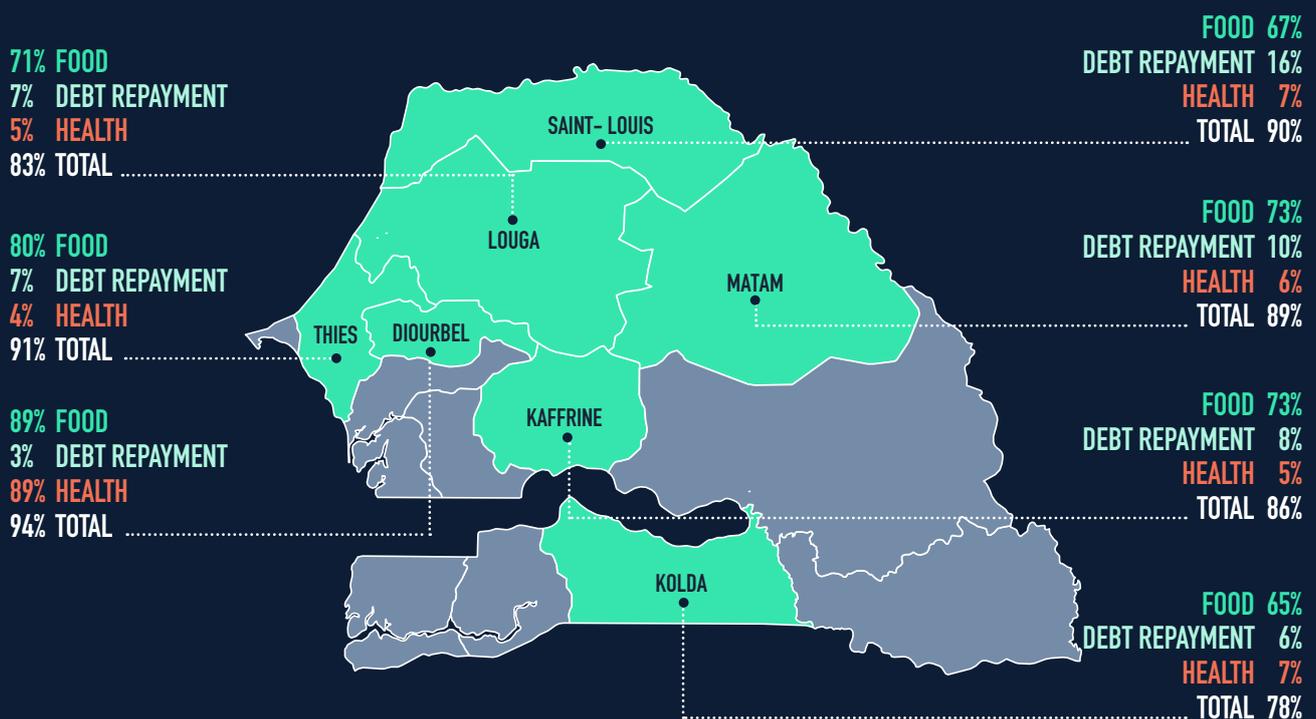
AVERAGE GOODS AND SERVICES BASKET

IM SURVEY, N=2555



AVERAGE % OF CASH RECEIVED SPENT BY SUPPORTED HOUSEHOLDS ON FOOD, DEBT REPAYMENT, AND HEALTH

IM SURVEY, N=2555



Data from the agency PDM surveys reflect the same trend in terms of most funds being spent on addressing very basic household needs (food and health) or repaying debt accumulated prior to receiving support. This is also consistent with narratives emerging from the household interviews:

The assistance we received from World Vision was used to purchase food as well as to cover other small expenses, including medical care and the purchase of household items. Two of our children were sick, and the money was used to cover their medical expenses (i.e. prescriptions and consultation costs). Although we didn't have much of an issue with livestock disease this year, we also paid 6,000FCFA (\$11) to vaccinate our livestock.

RESPONDENT IN VÉLINGARA DEPARTMENT

One trend that emerged from the household interviews was that the first distribution was primarily spent on buying food and repaying debt that the household had accumulated buying food, medical care, or other goods and services earlier during the year. However, subsequent distributions were spent on a wider variety of items. In many cases, the second cash distribution coincided with Tabaski (Eid al-Adha), so some respondents reported that they used a portion of the cash to purchase a sheep or goat to eat as well as clothing – particularly children's clothing – for the festive period.

MAIN FINDING THE DATA SUGGESTS THAT FORTIFIED FLOUR WAS ALSO HIGHLY RELEVANT TO THE NEEDS OF TARGETED HOUSEHOLDS. HOWEVER, SOME PDM DATA SUGGESTS THAT ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF SUPPORT MIGHT HAVE BEEN PREFERRED.

HOW DID YOU USE THE FLOUR YOU RECEIVED?



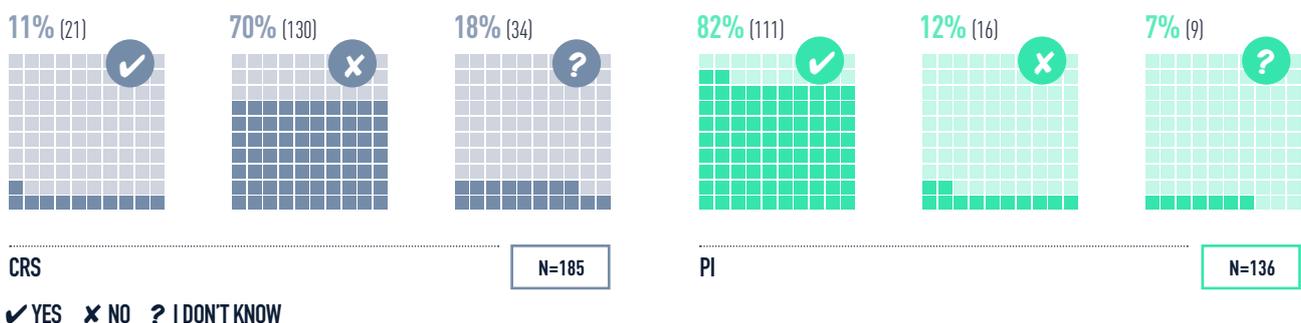
IM survey respondents were asked if they thought the fortified flour they received had been useful for their household, and >99% of those who had received fortified flour indicated 'yes'. These respondents were also asked about how their household used the fortified flour they received as part of the ARC Replica project.

The purpose of distributing fortified flour was to support nutrition for children 6-59 months old as well as pregnant and lactating women. As such, these results suggest that the support was used as intended as well as being considered useful.

However, the PI and CRS PDM surveys provide some additional insight that may be applicable across the project more generally.

When those who indicated 'yes' were asked what kind of support they would prefer, the most common responses for CRS respondents was in-kind distributions, while PI respondents indicated they would prefer food vouchers, in-kind distributions, or fodder/livestock feed.

WOULD YOU PREFER A DIFFERENT TYPE OF SUPPORT THAN FORTIFIED FLOUR? CRS & PI PDM SURVEYS



EFFECTIVENESS OF SUPPORT



Questions were included in the IM and PDM surveys, as well as the household interview tool, to assess how well the support provided through ARC Replica stabilised household food security and livelihoods. These questions looked at food security – both in terms of the number of meals eaten and in terms of household dietary diversity – as well as the use of negative coping strategies associated with food security and livelihoods.

FOOD SECURITY



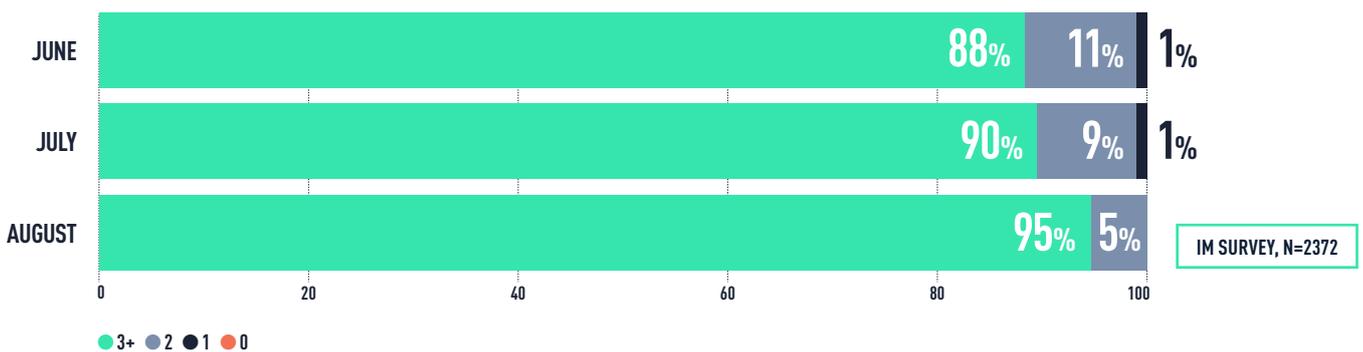
NEARLY ALL HOUSEHOLDS ENGAGED THROUGH THE IM SURVEY WERE ABLE TO ENSURE CHILDREN UNDER 5 AS WELL AS PREGNANT AND NURSING WOMEN ATE 2+ MEALS PER DAY ACROSS THE LEAN SEASON. HOWEVER, ANY EFFECTS OF DISTRIBUTIONS ON DIETARY DIVERSITY WERE SHORT-LIVED; MOST HOUSEHOLDS RELY ON SIMPLE MEALS CONSISTING PRIMARILY OF GRAINS AND LEGUMES.

Household-level data collection included questions on both (1) the number of meals eaten per day and (2) how many and what types of food were consumed by households after receiving support.

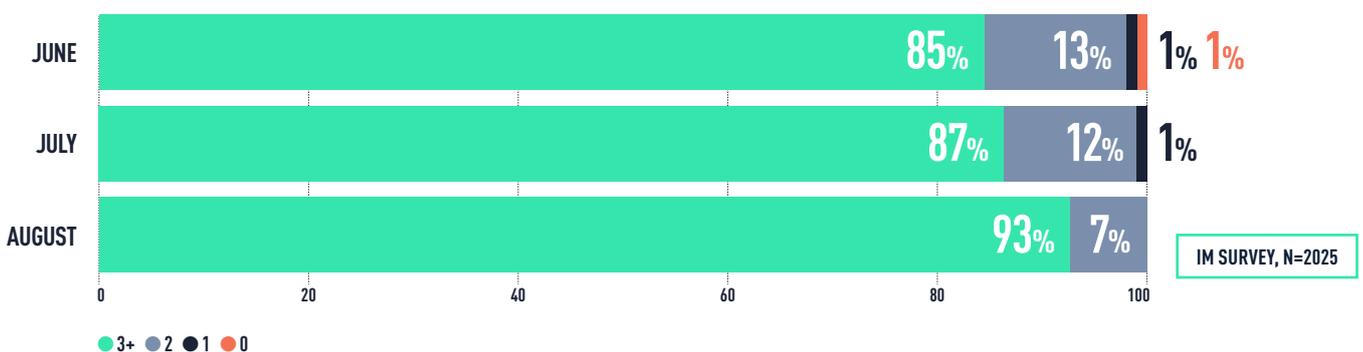
NUMBER OF MEALS CONSUMED:

Given the focus of the ARC Replica’s nutritional support on pregnant women, nursing women, and children under 5 years old, PDM and IM questions focussed on the number of meals eaten by these specific groups. This approach also helped mitigate avoid potential challenges associated with Ramadan, as these groups would not typically participate in fasting:

HOW MANY MEALS WERE EATEN BY CHILDREN UNDER 5 YEARS OLD IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD YESTERDAY?



HOW MANY MEALS WERE EATEN BY PREGNANT/NURSING WOMEN IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD YESTERDAY?



These results are broadly corroborated by PDM findings from all six implementing agencies.

Given that in most cases the August IM survey took place 3-4 weeks after the final distribution of cash and fortified flour, these results suggest that food security – in terms of the number of meals consumed – was consistent across the lean season for children, pregnant women, and nursing women. Even if households struggled to meet basic needs in other areas, the nutrition of these vulnerable groups was prioritised.

However, it is not possible to conclusively attribute stability in the number of meals consumed to ARC Replica. This is due to the lack of a relevant counterfactual as well as to the GoS distributing in-kind support in response to COVID-19 during approximately the same time period. Some households received support from both ARC Replica and the government's COVID-19 fund. Furthermore, although external data suggests that as early as April 2020, at the national level, a higher percentage of households were skipping meals than during previous years at that same time,⁵ robust data about how many meals per day were eaten in supported households specifically prior to receiving the ARC Replica support is not available.

However, we do know (as will be discussed in relation to negative coping strategies) that skipping meals is a common coping strategy when food and funds to purchase food are not available:



At one point, we had run out of food and it was very difficult for us to find additional income to meet our needs. As a result, we sometimes had to go a whole day without eating a meal; this happened twice before we received support. We skip meals so often, it doesn't even feel worth mentioning it.

RESPONDENT IN PODOR DEPARTMENT

DIVERSITY OF FOOD CONSUMED:

IM respondents were asked 'In the past 24 hours, which of the following food groups did you or a member of your household eat?' and provided a list of the following options:



- **CEREALS** (MILLET, SORGHUM, CORN, RICE, FLOUR, ETC.)
- **ROOTS AND TUBERS** (POTATOES, CASSAVA, ETC.)
- **VEGETABLES** (TOMATOES, CARROTS, OKRA, ETC.)
- **FRUIT** (BANANA, MANGO, WATERMELON, ETC.)
- **MEAT AND OFFAL** (BEEF, MUTTON, CHICKEN, ETC.)
- **FISH OR SEAFOOD**
- **LEGUMES** (COWPEAS, LENTILS, PEANUTS, ETC.)
- **DAIRY PRODUCTS** (MILK, YOGURT, CHEESE, ETC.)
- **OIL, FAT, AND BUTTER**
- **SUGAR** (SUGAR OR HONEY)
- **OTHER FOOD** (CONDIMENTS, ETC.)

This allows for the calculation of a Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS), which reflects household access to a variety of foods. HDDS is thought to provide a measure of the quality of a household's diet, with the logic being that a higher HDDS represents a more diverse – and therefore more healthy – diet. Each of the 11 categories above is worth one point, so a HDDS can be between 0-11.

⁵ <https://www.cgdev.org/blog/five-findings-new-phone-survey-senegal>

AVERAGE HDDS				
REGION	ROUND 1 JUNE	ROUND 2 JULY	ROUND 3 AUGUST	INCREASE JUNE TO AUG.
DIOURBEL	4.0	4.2	3.8	-0.2
KAFFRINE	2.7	3.7	3.3	0.5
KOLDA	-	5.0	4.7	-0.3 ⁶
LOUGA	4.1	4.9	4.7	0.6
MATAM	3.7	4.5	4.3	0.6
SAINT-LOUIS	4.3	4.3	4.1	-0.2
THIÈS	4.0	4.1	4.5	0.5
OVERALL	3.8	4.5	4.2	0.4

IM SURVEY, N=2555

Given that the top potential HDDS score is 11, the average HDDS across all supported regions in June, July, and August is low. Most supported households depend on meals made up of only grains (mostly rice and millet), legumes (mostly peanuts), sugar, and fats/oils. There is also substantial variation in average HDDS by region throughout the assessed period.

The largest increase in average HDDS occurs between the June and July IM rounds, with average HDDS decreasing again in all but one region between July and August. For the most part, final cash distributions took place in July, and Round 3 of the IM survey did not start until mid-August. This seems to suggest that while households could afford to buy higher quality food immediately following distributions, distributions did not have any longer-term effects – even until the next harvest – on dietary diversity.

USE OF NEGATIVE COPING STRATEGIES

MAIN FINDING

WHILE THE DISTRIBUTIONS MAY HAVE PREVENTED MANY HOUSEHOLDS FROM HAVING TO RESORT TO MORE EXTREME NEGATIVE COPING STRATEGIES, THEIR STABILISING EFFECT IN TERMS OF THE USE OF NEGATIVE COPING STRATEGIES MORE GENERALLY WAS LIMITED AND SHORT-TERM.

The household-level support provided by the ARC Replica pay-out hoped to help households stabilise their livelihoods, assets, and food security before potentially harmful food security mitigation strategies were implemented. To assess performance in this area, IM survey respondents were asked if they had used one or more of a series of negative coping strategies to get food or money to buy food within the last 30 days.

⁶ Comparison with July data rather than June data as no data was collected from Kolda during the first round of IM

Out of the 13 strategies outlined, the five below provide the most representative narrative in relation to supported households' reliance on negative coping strategies across the lean season. A full list of these strategies and frequency of use across by IM respondents can be found in **Annex D** at the end of this report.

IN THE PAST 30 DAYS, HAS YOUR HOUSEHOLD DONE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING TO GET FOOD OR MONEY TO BUY FOOD?

IM SURVEY, N=2555	ROUND 1	ROUND 2	ROUND 3	REDUCTION
	JUNE N=866	JULY N=846	AUGUST N=843	JUNE TO AUG.
Has your household reduced the number of meals consumed in a day?	41% (356)	38% (321)	41% (458)	0%
Did you buy food on credit or borrow money to buy food?	60% (518)	54% (456)	59% (496)	1%
Have children under the age of 18 worked to provide household resources?	18% (152)	9% (75)	5% (46)	13%
Did your household go a whole day without eating?	21% (181)	11% (90)	2% (20)	19%
Did one or more men in the household accept high-risk, socially degrading jobs or exploitative jobs?	18% (160)	12% (99)	8% (65)	10%

The Round 1 data is particularly important in terms of negative coping strategies, as the timing of the IM surveys relative to the first round of distributions means the 30-day period specified includes time before households received ARC Replica support. The most widespread coping strategies identified during Round 1 were:

1. **BUYING FOOD ON CREDIT OR BORROWING MONEY TO BUY FOOD (60%)**
2. **REDUCING THE NUMBER OF MEALS EATEN IN A DAY/SKIPPING MEALS (41%)**
3. **GOING A WHOLE DAY WITHOUT EATING (21%)**

Although there was substantial variation by region, overall 82% of Round 1 respondents reported that they had used at least one of the 13 negative coping strategies outlined in Annex D during the preceding 30 days:

% REPORTING THEIR HOUSEHOLD USED 1+ COPING STRATEGY DURING THE LAST 30 DAYS				
REGION	ROUND 1	ROUND 2	ROUND 3	Δ R1 TO R3
	N=866	N=846	N=843	
DIORBEL	71% (100)	48% (53)	48% (53)	23%
KAFFRINE	79% (120)	64% (74)	72% (83)	7%
KOLDA	N/A	86% (165)	89% (168)	3%
LOUGA	88% (119)	82% (84)	90% (93)	2%
MATAM	99% (133)	91% (96)	85% (89)	14%
SAINT LOUIS	99% (142)	93% (102)	94% (103)	5%
THIÈS	59% (94)	56% (62)	69% (76)	10%
GRAND TOTAL	82% (708)	75% (636)	79% (665)	3%

IM SURVEY, N=2555

This suggests that in terms of the anticipatory goal of ARC Replica – at least in terms of reaching households before they needed to use negative coping strategies – was unsuccessful. However, this was expected given the impacts of COVID-19 on the distribution timeline and household preparation strategies.

Although the support was not received early enough to prevent households from needing to use negative coping strategies, with the exception of skipping meals, there was a reduction in the percentage of respondents who reported using each negative coping strategy between June and August. Given that this period is thought to represent the height of the lean season, this is a very positive finding. However, again, it is impossible to conclusively attribute, either in part or whole, this change to the ARC Replica support.

That said, three areas where there was substantial change between June and August could be related to the cash and fortified flour provided through ARC Replica:

- 1. DID YOUR HOUSEHOLD GO A WHOLE DAY WITHOUT EATING? (19% REDUCTION)**
- 2. HAVE CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 18 WORKED TO PROVIDE HOUSEHOLD RESOURCES? (13% REDUCTION)**
- 3. DID ONE OR MORE MEN IN THE HOUSEHOLD ACCEPT HIGH-RISK, SOCIALLY DEGRADING JOBS OR EXPLOITATIVE JOBS? (10% REDUCTION)**

However, looking at the two most common strategies identified during June – skipping meals (41% of Round 1 respondents) and buying food on credit/borrowing money (60% of Round 1 respondents) – reveals considerable limitations in this area. In August, 41% of respondents reported having skipped meals in the past 30 days – representing no net change from June – and 59% of respondents reported buying food on credit/borrowing money to buy food – representing only a 1% net change from June.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Referring back to the focus areas outlined at the beginning of this evaluation, some key takeaways from this report are as follows:

CONTINGENCY PLANNING



- Most member agency stakeholders engaged through pre-implementation interviews felt that contingency plans helped the timeliness and preparedness of their organisation on the ARC Replica project.
- However, some felt that the contingency planning process was too long for such a short-term project and moved too slowly for an emergency response project, although the contingency planning process took place before the pay-out and therefore did not delay targeting or implementation.

COORDINATION



- With six implementing agencies as well as the Senegalese government's complementary ARC pay-out, coordination is one of the areas where ARC Replica was most ambitious. Data collected from both member agency and government stakeholders during implementation interviews indicates that coordination was viewed positively in comparison to previous drought responses.
- Regular meetings between stakeholders from the six member agencies were seen as important to ensuring effective communication about project progress. However, as a result of COVID-19, online meetings were the main point of contact between agencies and opportunities for in-person meetings or field visits were limited, and some respondents reported experiencing meeting fatigue.
- Although coordination between Start Network members and both national and regional local government actors was viewed positively, administrative delays with the government's ARC pay-out resulted in the Start Network beginning project implementation earlier than the GoS. Member agencies also reported some challenges navigating the politics of community targeting; however, they felt that they were able to facilitate effective coordination with regional and local government.

TIMELINESS & ANTICIPATION



- During a more typical drought-affected year, the modality and timing of support originally planned for this year's ARC Replica intervention generally would have been appropriate for helping households prepare for and manage the challenges associated with a harsh lean season. However, it is possible that an earlier intervention window might have been preferable for anticipating food security and livelihood challenges.
- However, COVID-19 blocked many activities used to prepare for the lean season and delayed ARC Replica distributions. Likely due to this, the ARC Replica supported helped households to manage their food security rather than specifically helping them to prepare in advance of drought-related challenges.

RELEVANCE OF SUPPORT



- Household-level data suggest that the types of support provided – namely, cash and fortified flour – were relevant to targeted households and were primarily used to meet basic household needs like food and healthcare. However, many IM, PDM, and household interview respondents felt that the quantity of cash distributed was not enough to meet all of their household's basic needs across the expected time period.

EFFECTIVENESS OF SUPPORT



- The IM data shows that the support did not reach most households early enough to prevent them from having to use negative coping strategies – including those that might affect future productivity – to ensure that they had enough food to survive. However, it also shows that the support did provide short-term improvements in food security, including substantial short-term improvements in dietary diversity and reliance on certain negative coping strategies.
- Support reached households at a particularly challenging period and was able to improve their food security during that time, although it was unable to anticipate these challenges and seems unlikely to have continued providing a comparable level of support through until crops were harvested in October.

RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR FUTURE INTERVENTIONS

The implications of COVID-19 on project implementation, household food security, and income mean that there are limitations to using the 2020 pay-out in Senegal as a case study for future crisis anticipation and risk financing projects. Despite this, a few key lessons learned may be useful in the design and delivery of future work:

- 01** **Timeliness rather than speed** or 'being early' should be a key indicator for the effectiveness of a DRF system. This should be measured by assessing the preparedness or coping measures the distribution enabled at the community level. Insurance-based approaches can facilitate earlier access to finance, taking advantage of pre-identified windows of opportunity to support vulnerable communities to take action against avoidable harm and loss. Data on seasonal livelihoods activities as well as community consultation should be primary in informing the appropriate timing of this assistance.
- 02** **Leverage the pre-arranged nature of risk financing**, to allow for more effective collaboration and coordination in advance of crises. ARC-Replica has shown how initiatives such as ARC can provide a highly practical and concrete framework for collaboration in advance of crisis events. This could be extended further, supporting accountable planning and coordination among key stakeholders, including ensuring participation from local responders and at-risk communities.
- 03** **Embed single hazard insurance policies within wider risk management strategies.** The compounding effects of drought and COVID-19 created a unique crisis that would have been challenging to model in advance. It is vital that systems are able to flex to the complexities of crisis. This can be achieved by complementing insurance-based approaches with other forms of flexible contingency financing, and by using flexible programming modalities such as cash that can adjust to changing needs on the ground.
- 04** **Gather further data on the impact of macro-level risk finance schemes at the community level.** This study moves away from measuring the impact of disaster-risk-finance schemes simply through volumes of funds distributed, towards measurable changes at the community level. Further detailed investigation, ideally involving control groups, should become a common feature of risk finance pay-outs of this scale, allowing us to build a more holistic picture of what works.
- 05** **Develop standardised MEAL tools and systems** to share with implementing partners in order to reduce the number of coordination meetings required while also supporting greater alignment of MEAL across the intervention
- 06** **Consider the added value of organising consortia with mixed experiences** to support learning by doing – rather than more traditional capacity-building support – for smaller organisations or consortium members with less experience in humanitarian response. Member agency stakeholders reported appreciating the complementarity of experiences represented by the implementing members and saw this project as an opportunity for their own organisation to learn.
- 07** **Ensure that coordination with the government is maintained throughout both the planning and implementation process**, particularly with projects like ARC Replica that include complementary response with the national government.
- 08** **Build thorough market analysis into project planning**, including consideration of how the anticipated drought (or other disaster) might affect the price and availability of staple goods, and **ensure flexibility is built into funding mechanisms and operational plans** to enable adaptation in response to unexpected market changes
- 09** **Collect additional data about how households prepare for and manage the lean season**, paying particular attention to variations from the typical timeline and experience that might disproportionately affect vulnerable households. Building a stronger evidence base regarding food security, livelihoods, and the use of negative coping strategies during non-drought years would help in both developing effective interventions and in addressing the impact of support provided.
- 10** **Look into expanding low or no-contact transfer mechanisms for cash-based distribution.** In countries where financial technology uptake and access are high, this could be a good way to deliver assistance whilst maintaining social distancing measures.
- 11** **Consider the added benefit of in-kind support like fortified flour in areas with functional markets**, given the additional costs of associated procurement and distribution over cash alternatives – particularly when social distancing might be required

ANNEXES



ANNEX A: DETAILED SAMPLING

SENTINEL SITE REMOTE MONITORING

MONTHLY CHECK-IN CALLS COMPLETED

REGION	VILLAGE	ROUND 1	ROUND 2	ROUND 3	ROUND 4	ROUND 5	ROUND 6
		MARCH-APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER
FATICK	COP COUPE THIABÉ SANOU	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
KAFFRINE	SEGRÉ GATTA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
KAOLACK	DAROU KHOUDOSSV	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
KOLDA	KOURTIDIANE NDIAYLA	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
LOUGA	DJABAL KANÈNE 2 KEUR ALLÉ MARAME DJOUMANAME ANTENNE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
MATAM	ADJA GOUDOUDÉ DIOBBÉ SARÉ LIOU THIAFALY	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SAINT-LOUIS	DIABA LONGUÉ TOROBÉ	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
SÉDHIU	NDIAMA SARÉ DEMBA THIOUNE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
TAMBACOUNDA	LABOYA LORDEJI TENKOTO TIVAOUANE OUMAR DIAW	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
TOTAL		22	22	22	17	22	22

INDEPENDENT MONITORING (IM)

UNIQUE HOUSEHOLDS ENGAGED					
REGION	DEPARTMENT	ROUND 1	ROUND 2	ROUND 3	TOTAL
		JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	
DIOURBEL	BAMBEY MBACKÉ	30	30	30	90
		111	80	80	271
MATAM	MATAM RANÉROU	90	75	75	240
		45	31	30	106
SAINT-LOUIS	PODOR	144	110	110	364
LOUGA	KÉBÉMER LINGUÈRE	86	67	68	221
		50	35	35	120
THIÈS	MBOUR THIÈS TIVAOUANE	34	30	30	94
		75	46	45	166
		50	35	35	120
KAFFRINE	BIRKILANE KAFFRINE MALEM HODAR	20	20	20	60
		108	75	75	258
		23	20	20	63
KOLDA	KOLDA MÉDINA YORO FOULA VÉLINGARA	0	20	10	30
		0	53	47	100
		0	119	133	252
TOTAL		866	846	843	2555

IN-DEPTH HOUSEHOLD INTERVIEWS

UNIQUE HOUSEHOLDS ENGAGED					
REGION	DEPARTMENT	TOTAL	REGION	DEPARTMENT	TOTAL
DIOURBEL	BAMBEY MBACKÉ	2	THIÈS	MBOUR THIÈS TIVAOUANE	2
		2			2
MATAM	MATAM RANÉROU	2			KAFFRINE
		2	2		
SAINT-LOUIS	PODOR	2	KOLDA	KOLDA MÉDINA YORO FOULA VÉLINGARA	2
LOUGA	KÉBÉMER LINGUÈRE	2			2
		2			2
TOTAL					32

Please Note: Some respondents took part in 2 or 3 rounds of interviews (ex: both the pre- and mid-implementation interviews), but the per-round totals represent unique respondents

STAKEHOLDER IMPLEMENTATION INTERVIEWS

MEMBER AGENCY RESPONDENTS				GOVERNMENT RESPONDENTS			
AGENCY	IMPLEMENTATION			AREA OF WORK	IMPLEMENTATION		
	PRE-	MID-	POST		PRE-	MID-	POST
ACTION CONTRE LA FAIM	3	2	2	FOOD SECURITY	3	4	5
CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICE	2	2	1	AGRICULTURE/LIVESTOCK	1	1	1
OXFAM	2	3	4	HEALTH/NUTRITION	1	1	1
PLAN INTERNATIONAL	2	4	3	REGIONAL AUTHORITY	-	-	2
SAVE THE CHILDREN	1	2	2	RNU	1	1	1
WORLD VISION	2	3	4				
TOTAL	12	16	16	TOTAL	6	7	10

AGENCY POST-DISTRIBUTION MONITORING

UNIQUE HOUSEHOLDS ENGAGED					
NGO	REGION	DEPARTMENT	ROUND 1	ROUND 2	TOTAL
			JUNE OR JULY	JULY OR AUGUST	
CRS	DIOURBEL	BAMBEY THIABÉ SANOU	30	30	60
			90	90	180
ACF	MATAM	MATAM	80	111	191
	SAINT-LOUIS	RANÉROU PODOR	34 120	29 123	63 243
OXFAM	LOUGA	KÉBÉMER LINGUÈRE	86	76	162
			46	39	85
PLAN	THIÈS	MBOUR	95	40	135
		THIÈS	190	118	308
		TIVAOUANE	172	42	214
SCI	KAFFRINE	BIRKILANE	20	20	40
		KAFFRINE	85	85	170
		MALEM HODAR	20	20	40
WVS	KOLDA	KOLDA	7	7	14
		MÉDINA YORO FOULA	43	42	85
		VÉLINGARA	0	70	70
TOTAL			1118	942	2060

AGENCY REPORT FORM (COVERAGE DATABASE)

UNIQUE HOUSEHOLDS ENGAGED		
REGION	DEPARTMENT	TOTAL
DIOURBEL	BAMBEY	1519
	MBACKÉ	4272
KAFFRINE	BIRKILANE	513
	KAFFRINE	2687
	MALEM HODAR	526
KOLDA	KOLDA	100
	MÉDINA YORO FOULA	906
	VÉLINGARA	2339
LOUGA	KÉBÉMÉR	1963
	LINGUÈRE	1052
MATAM	MATAM	3059
	RANÉROU	1089
SAINT-LOUIS	PODOR	3440
THIÈS	MBOUR	1226
	THIÈS	2462
	TIVAOUANE	1644

ANNEX B: SENTINEL SITE SUMMARY

Sentinel site check-ins were undertaken with 22 community contacts across Senegal at monthly intervals. These check-ins provided rich information regarding the food security and livelihoods of households across Senegal between March/April and September 2020. Some of the key findings relevant to this evaluation that emerged from the sentinel site check-ins include:

KEY FINDING

LIVESTOCK MALNUTRITION WAS IDENTIFIED AS A SUBSTANTIAL CHALLENGE DURING THE MARCH–JUNE PERIOD. HOWEVER, AFTER THE RAINY SEASON STARTED IN JUNE, LIVESTOCK BEGAN RETURNING TO A NORMAL WEIGHT.

Reports from check-in respondents suggest that livestock malnutrition was most critical in May and June with a majority of respondents reporting cases in their community. Both targeted villages in Sédhiou and the villages on the border Matam and Louga (Djabal, Djoumaname Antenne, Thiafaly and Adja) seem to have been most affected.



Our animals are affected by hunger and thirst. There is not enough grass for them to eat, and when it comes to water, we must pay to access it. The animals also feel the challenging situation we are all going through.

RESPONDENT IN DJOUMANAME ANTENNE, LOUGA REGION (MARCH 2020)

However, by July reports of livestock malnutrition declined significantly, and in August no respondents reported it as a challenge facing their community. By July, grasslands had grown back enough for animals to begin grazing, relieving pressure for households, both in terms of time and money:



The animals can now roam around the grazing areas to find food. Complementary feed for animals is expensive...especially for a rancher who has a lot of animals to feed, it is not easy to find enough money to pay for animal feed.

RESPONDENT IN DAROU KHOUDOSS, THIÈS REGION (JUNE 2020)

Beyond nutrition, some respondents reported incidences of common livestock health challenges like ticks, split hooves, and skin diseases. However, after May only a couple of cases of livestock mortality resulting from illness or disease were reported. By July-August, respondents reported being better able to afford support from a veterinarian to vaccinate their livestock and treat any livestock illness.

**KEY
FINDING****REPORTS OF MALNUTRITION PEAKED IN JUNE BUT DECREASED SIGNIFICANTLY AFTER THE FIRST DISTRIBUTION OF GOVERNMENT SUPPORT. HOWEVER, ONCE HOUSEHOLD STOCKS OF FOOD AID HAD BEEN DEPLETED, CASES ROSE AGAIN.**

Reports of malnutrition peaked during May with three-quarters of respondents reporting cases in their household or community. However, by June only half of respondents reported challenges in this area. This significant decrease is likely attributable to government distributions, which started in mid-May. However, reports of malnutrition increased again in August after stocks of government food aid were depleted.



There are cases of malnutrition in the village. Its presence in children is explained by the fact that their parents lack means to provide for them.

RESPONDENT IN TIVAOUANE OUMAR DIAW, TAMBACOUNDA REGION (AUGUST 2020)

According to sentinel site respondents, women and children were the most susceptible to malnutrition and related health issues. During March/April-June, respondents were concerned that breastfeeding mothers had become so malnourished they could no longer produce milk for their children:



Food security is beginning to be threatened. Hunger is increasingly affecting people. Women are the most affected. When they give birth, they suffer because they are weak.

RESPONDENT IN KOURTIDIANE, KOLDA REGION (MAY 2020)

Respondents in the regions of Kolda and Tambacounda – both located in the south of Senegal – were most like to report hunger and malnutrition, particularly among women and children.


 KEY
FINDING

MARKET CLOSURES AND HIGH PRICES OF FOOD PUT PRESSURE ON HOUSEHOLDS DURING MARCH/APRIL–JUNE. BY AUGUST, FOOD WAS WIDELY AVAILABLE AT THE MARKETS SO LONG AS HOUSEHOLDS COULD AFFORD IT.

Increased food prices were identified as a problem across the entire monitoring period (March/April–September). Food prices initially rose due to COVID-19 restrictions that resulted in market closures as well as restrictions on both internal and transborder travel. By July, markets had reopened, but many respondents reported high prices and low availability of common food items due to the upcoming Tabaski (Eid al-Adha) festivities.

However, check-in respondents generally reported that they were able to get most of the food they needed if they had sufficient money. From March/April–June, as a result of market closures, respondents reported needing to travel further distances to obtain staple food items. This proved a problem for some respondents, who struggled to afford this travel:



To buy food products, we go to Thilogne. With border closures and limitations on travel between regions, transport costs have increased significantly. Previously, we paid 1500F to go and return. Currently, we pay 4000F to go there and come back.

RESPONDENT IN SARÉ LIOU, MATAM REGION (MAY 2020)

The combination of high food prices, lack of money, and market closures resulted in households experiencing reduced dietary diversity across the monitoring period. Households reported to be relying on simple, less preferred foodstuff – such as rice – over preferred items:



Eating habits have changed. We used to eat millet and peanut dishes, but our children only know rice. This is one of the reasons they are malnourished: rice does not provide them with a good diet.

RESPONDENT IN DJABAL, LOUGA REGION (MAY 2020)

The comparatively poor nutritional value of rice and other common substitutes for preferred food items was a common concern raised throughout the monitoring period, particularly in relation to nutrition for children and pregnant or nursing women.

KEY
FINDING

COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS SUBSTANTIALLY AFFECTED HOUSEHOLD INCOME, REDUCING REMITTANCE AMOUNTS AND RESTRICTING OPPORTUNITIES FOR LIVESTOCK SALES – AMONG OTHER EFFECTS. HOWEVER, LIVESTOCK SALES BEGAN RECOVERING WHEN MARKETS REOPENED.

Many households in rural areas of Senegal are reliant on remittances from family members working in other parts of Senegal or internationally. However, sentinel site respondents noted that COVID-19 restrictions had oftentimes affected the livelihoods of those who usually sent money back home, reducing remittances and thereby negatively impacting income for some vulnerable households:



Even households that rely on remittances from loved ones based in Europe are struggling this year; they have received almost nothing for a while now due to COVID-19.

RESPONDENT IN SARÉ LIOU, MATAM REGION (MAY 2020)

From March/April through to September, many respondents reported feeling pressure to sell productive assets, including livestock, to meet their household's basic needs. However, market closures through March-May generally restricted capacity to sell livestock. This meant that even if households needed to resort to selling livestock, they either had to accept extremely low selling prices or were unable to find buyers.

By June, when many of the markets had reopened, livestock prices had decreased significantly due to poor livestock health as well as to a dearth of potential customers as a result of depressed incomes and a general lack of purchasing power in many communities:



At the moment, we have difficulties selling animals not only because they are malnourished but because finding customers has become increasingly difficult...with the closing of the markets, livestock sales have slowed down or even stopped

RESPONDENT IN DJABAL, LOUGA REGION (APRIL 2020)

Livestock sales did eventually improve, in part helped by demand for sheep and goats for Tabaski in late June. By August, respondents reported markets were functioning normally and livestock had gained enough weight to be worth selling.

ANNEX C: STATUS OF MARKETS

Market surveys as well as monthly sentinel site checks conducted for this evaluation have provided valuable information regarding the condition of local markets starting immediately after COVID-19 restrictions were put in place by the GoS (March 2020) through until the end of the ARC Replica implementation period (August 2020). Additional secondary data from the WFP – mainly the quarterly Market Monitor and a April 2020 rapid needs assessment in Senegal⁷ - and market system reports shared by the GoS Food Security Commission (CSA) also provide valuable insight into national-level market conditions across the same period.

Summary: the prices of staple food items were somewhat elevated during early 2020 (January-March) due to smaller harvests due to the same poor rainy season that resulted in the ARC Replica pay-out. However, prices were further elevated by April 2020 as a result of restrictions put in place to limit the spread of COVID-19. Although prices were no longer substantially increasing by June-July 2020, they had not returned to normal levels. While specific price spikes and availability challenges were identified by implementing agencies' market surveys during the ARC Replica distribution period, these appear to be related to expected, seasonal trends rather than localised market distortion as a result of ARC Replica programming.

MARKETS BEFORE COVID-19

Even before COVID-19, markets were affected by low availability of staple goods like millet, rice, and peanuts as a result of the delayed and inconsistent 2019 rainy season. The impact of low availability on the price staple goods is evident when comparing price changes for two staple grains, millet and rice, which represent approximately 38% of calories consumed in the average Senegalese diet:

FEBRUARY 2020: YEAR-ON-YEAR PRICE CHANGE, COMPARED TO 2019

REGION	MILLET	RICE
DIOURBEL	15%	4%
KAFFRINE	25%	0%
KOLDA	13%	1%
LOUGA	27%	0%
MATAM	11%	6%
SAINT-LOUIS	14%	6%
THIÈS	30%	14%
SENEGAL OVERALL	15%	4%

Source: WFP

Both rice and millet were more expensive at the national level than during February 2019; the price of millet was particularly high. At the regional level, the year-on-year price change was generally within +/- 5% of the national average. However, millet price changes were particularly sharp in Kaffrine and Louga; Thiès experienced price increases for both grains that were substantially sharper than the national average.

⁷ WFP and Commissariat à la Sécurité Alimentaire (CSA), Evaluation Rapide des Marchés, April 2020

Sentinel site respondents noted that increasing prices for millet as well as other grains and legumes like cowpeas, maize, and peanuts – not only this year, but as a longer-term trend – has resulted rice becoming a larger proportion of household diets. They suggested that rice was generally a less-preferred option and expressed concerns about the implications an increasing lack of dietary diversity might have on nutrition, particularly for children and pregnant or nursing women. That said, the data above shows that while rice might be comparatively less expensive, prices had increased as compared to February 2019.

EFFECTS OF COVID-19

Measures taken by the GoS to limit the spread of COVID-19 – particularly restricting operating hours of markets (or closing some completely) and limiting transport across international borders – negatively impacted the price and availability of staple goods during the second quarter (April-June) of 2020.

The prices of millet and rice were both higher in April 2020 than they were during April 2019; moreover, the seasonally-adjusted quarterly price change was high – even in relation to the comparatively high prices reported in February 2020:

APRIL 2020: QUARTERLY CHANGE, SEASONALLY ADJUSTED

REGION	MILLET	RICE
DIOURBEL	16%	10%
KAFFRINE	34%	-2%
KOLDA	16%	8%
LOUGA	10%	10%
MATAM	20%	12%
SAINT-LOUIS	8%	3%
THIÈS	-5%	10%
SENEGAL OVERALL	10%	8%

Source: WFP

During April 2020, all 22 sentinel site respondents reported that food prices had increased in their local markets; this is consistent not only with the WFP data cited above, but also with market data provided by the CSA during the same period. During the April sentinel site check-ins, the most commonly cited items with increased prices were rice, millet, oil, sugar, bread, cowpeas, and maize.

Border closures exacerbated challenges with food prices. Households in communities near Senegal's borders often cross over into Mauritania or The Gambia to buy food items at cheaper prices. However, border closures necessitated that these households substitute cheaper foreign products with more expensive, domestic alternatives. Furthermore, data from the sentinel site check-ins also suggest that by May, food scarcity was also becoming

an issue. Specifically, preferred staple goods like millet and corn were less available, so households had to rely even more heavily on rice, which was widely available but expensive.

DISTRIBUTION PERIOD (MAY-JULY) AND LEAN SEASON (JUNE-AUGUST)

In July 2020, prices for millet and rice remained high in comparison to the same time period in 2019.

JULY 2020: YEAR-ON-YEAR PRICE CHANGE, COMPARED TO 2019

REGION	MILLET	RICE
DIOURBEL	17%	9%
KAFFRINE	20%	0%
KOLDA	13%	16%
LOUGA	20%	14%
MATAM	14%	6%
SAINT-LOUIS	23%	6%
THIÈS	24%	2%
SENEGAL OVERALL	20%	7%

Source: WFP

JULY 2020: QUARTERLY CHANGE, SEASONALLY ADJUSTED

REGION	MILLET	RICE
DIOURBEL	-2%	-2%
KAFFRINE	-7%	-4%
KOLDA	-4%	-1%
LOUGA	1%	0%
MATAM	-8%	-8%
SAINT-LOUIS	5%	-2%
THIÈS	9%	-16%
SENEGAL OVERALL	3%	-3%

Source: WFP

While millet price increases in regions with ARC Replica-supported departments were more-or-less in line with the national trend, the prices of rice in Kolda and Louga were elevated at a substantially higher rate compared to the national average.

At both the national level and in regions where ARC Replica support was distributed, rice prices were lower in July than they were in April, apart from in the Louga region, where the rice had remained stable. Millet prices were still increasing at the national level – although only by 3% from April – but they had started to decrease from April in four of the seven regions where Start Network member agencies provided support. Reductions in the price of rice may be at least partially attributable to reduced local demand as a result of GoS COVID-19 support distributions including bags of rice.

During the same time period, sentinel site respondents reported the prices for key food items like rice, oil, sugar, corn, flour, and millet remained high. However, prices do seem to have been less volatile than they were immediately after COVID-19 restrictions were put in place; they were generally not increasing though had not yet returned to pre-COVID-19 levels.

Market surveys undertaken by the implementing agencies corroborate findings about elevated prices both before and during the ARC Replica implementation period. These market surveys sought to assess whether there was any localised market distortion that might be attributable to ARC Replica distributions. This was a fairly complex issue; in addition to the lingering effects of COVID-19 restrictions, the GoS distributed in-kind COVID-19 relief at a similar time and in many of the same communities as ARC Replica. However, although

prices were high during the distribution period, initial analysis indicates that the distribution of cash through ARC Replica did not substantially affect the price or availability of staple goods.

A report put together by Oxfam as part of their market survey process indicates that there were no substantial price increases between May-July 2020 in the areas where they worked – namely, the Kébémér and Linguère departments in the Louga region – apart from a temporary price increase during the period prior to Tabaski (Eid al-Adha). Findings from the other agencies' market reports as well as sentinel site check-ins suggest that this expected price increase was experienced throughout Senegal.

Even outside of preparation for Tabaski, the prices for some goods remained high across the ARC Replica distribution period. However, market reports from both Oxfam and World Vision suggest that this is related to normal, seasonal factors rather than to any market distortion linked to ARC Replica distributions:



Products whose prices have increased include millet, maize, sorghum, peanuts, straw, cowpeas, onions, and potatoes. For these products, the further into the lean season it is, the rarer they become on the market. This is why traders tend to increase these prices, because demand can be higher than supply

WORLD VISION REPORT

Sentinel site respondents across Senegal also reported similar scarcity with food items like millet, peanuts, and cowpeas during June and July; they attributed this to the fact that planting season was approaching and therefore demand for these specific items had increased correspondingly.

ANNEX D: USE OF COPING STRATEGIES (IM SURVEY)

IN THE PAST 30 DAYS, HAS YOUR HOUSEHOLD DONE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING TO GET FOOD OR MONEY TO BUY FOOD?

(IM SURVEY, N=2555)

	ROUND 1 JUNE	ROUND 2 JULY	ROUND 3 AUGUST	REDUCTION JUNE-AUGUST
HAS YOUR HOUSEHOLD REDUCED THE NUMBER OF MEALS CONSUMED IN A DAY?	41% (356)	38% (321)	41% (348)	0%
DID YOU BUY FOOD ON CREDIT OR BORROW MONEY TO BUY FOOD?	60% (518)	54% (456)	59% (496)	1%
HAVE YOU SENT MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD TO BEG?	9% (74)	7% (61)	6% (50)	3%
DID YOU HAVE TO SELL HOUSEHOLD GOODS LIKE FURNITURE OR APPLIANCES?	7% (62)	4% (34)	1% (11)	6%
HAVE YOU SOLD STORED GRAIN OR FODDER?	20% (177)	10% (85)	6% (52)	14%
HAVE CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 18 WORKED TO PROVIDE HOUSEHOLD RESOURCES?	18% (152)	9% (75)	5% (46)	13%
HAVE YOU SOLD PRODUCTIVE ASSETS SUCH AS AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT OR MEANS OF TRANSPORT (car, cart, motorcycle, bicycle, etc.)?	9% (79)	5% (40)	4% (34)	5%
DID YOUR HOUSEHOLD GO A WHOLE DAY WITHOUT EATING?	21% (181)	11% (90)	2% (20)	19%
DID ONE OR MORE MEN IN THE HOUSEHOLD ACCEPT HIGH-RISK, SOCIALLY DEGRADING JOBS OR EXPLOITATIVE JOBS?	18% (160)	12% (99)	8% (65)	10%
DID ONE OR MORE WOMEN IN THE HOUSEHOLD ACCEPT HIGH-RISK, SOCIALLY DEGRADING JOBS OR EXPLOITATIVE JOBS?	9% (75)	6% (51)	4% (33)	5%
HAVE CHILDREN UNDER 18 DROPPED OUT OF SCHOOL WORK OR SAVE ON SCHOOL FEES?	7% (63)	4% (36)	2% (20)	5%
DID A GIRL IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD UNDER THE AGE OF 18 GET MARRIED?	8% (72)	7% (62)	3% (25)	5%



START NETWORK

Start Network is made up of more than 40 aid agencies across five continents, ranging from large international organisations to national NGOs. Together, our aim is to transform humanitarian action through innovation, fast funding, early action, and localisation.

We're tackling what we believe are the biggest systemic problems that the sector faces - problems including slow and reactive funding, centralised decision-making, and an aversion to change, means that people affected by crises around the world, do not receive the best help fast enough, and needless suffering results.

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ACTED ACTION AGAINST HUNGER ACTIONAID ALIMA AGE INTERNATIONAL AFEDEM ARAB RENAISSANCE
FOR DEMOCRACY & DEVELOPMENT AFPDE BRIGHT STAR DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY BALOCHISTAN CADENA
CAFOD CARE INTERNATIONAL CARITAS BANGLADESH CARITAS GOMA CARITAS INDIA CARITAS SRI LANKA
CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES CHRISTIAN AID COMMUNITY WORLD SERVICE-ASIA CONCERN WORLDWIDE
CORDAID DOCTORS OF THE WORLD DORCAS AID GOAL HANDS HELP FOUNDATION HUMANITY & INCLUSION
IDEA INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL CORPS ISLAMIC RELIEF MERCY CORPS MIDEFEHOPS ASBL MINES
ADVISORY GROUP MUSLIM AID NEADS OXFAM PARC PLAN INTERNATIONAL PRO-VIDA QATAR CHARITY
RELIEF INTERNATIONAL SAVE THE CHILDREN SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL SEEDS TEARFUND TRÓCAIRE
WAR CHILD WELTHUNGERHILFE WORLD JEWISH RELIEF WORLD VISION YUGANTER