QUARTERLY REPORT
1 April – 30 June 2013
Taiz Emergency Food Program

Country Contact:	Headquarters Contact:	Project Summary:
Ali Eltayed **Country Director** **Hadda Madina, St #21, Villa #5** **Sana'a, Yemen** **Telephone: +967 1-411.626** **Email:** aeltayeb@ye.mercycorps.org	**Dalia Emara** Senior Program Officer 1730 Rhode Island Ave NW #809 Washington, DC, 20036 Telephone: + 1 2+2 469 8476 Email: demara@dc.mercycorps.org	**Award Number:** AID-FFP-G12-00027 **Start Date:** 1 April 2012 **End Date:** 31 August 2013 **Report Date:** 30 June 2013 **Total Award:** $4,780,900

1. Program Overview

The Taiz Emergency Food Program (TEFP) was initially designed to be implemented over a period of eleven months (1st April 2012- 29th February 2013) in four districts targeting 7,200 households. However, the project currently operates in the three districts of Al Mokha, Mawza and Dhubab after pulling out of Al Wazi'iyha district due to insecurity. The project is providing eight months of food commodities to vulnerable households through a voucher system in the three districts. The three districts are amongst the areas identified as having high nutritional gaps as a result of the political and economic shocks in Yemen.

Project Objectives and Results

The main objective of the project is to increase food security for 8,965 households (62,755) individuals) in Dhubab, Al Waziiyah, Al Mokha and Mawza Districts of Taiz Governorate, Yemen through eight months of targeted emergency food rations during the political transition. 1,500 beneficiaries will receive two months additional food ration, and hence benefit from 10 months of food.

The project has three main expected results:

Result 1.1: 8,965 HHs identified that meet the vulnerability and food insecurity criteria
Result 1.2: 8,965 HHs redeem 8 months of commodity vouchers
Result 1.3: 8,965 HHs have increased household food availability

2. Performance Summary

Summary of Quarterly Progress Report

General overview

During this reporting period a number of key project activities were undertaken and significant progress made. Beneficiaries during this quarter received vouchers for the months of April and May 2013 respectively. Furthermore, a second three month no-cost extension was approved by USAID/FFP during the reporting quarter. As a result, additional 1,500 most vulnerable households will be targeted to receive two months of food vouchers. The selection and registration of the 1,500 most vulnerable households will be done in collaboration with community members, leaders, and facilitators.

During the quarter, the TEFP/FFP staffs and community members, including youths, elders, and students participated in a cleaning up campaign in Mokha town, Mokha District. Hygiene promotion and nutrition messages were delivered to beneficiaries during the April and May distribution at each distribution center.

At the same time, the TEFP/FFP continued the monitoring of beneficiaries, vendors and market prices of commodities in the food basket. Analysis of household monitoring in the three districts for the months of April and May 2013 indicated that 99% of households received 8 months of food commodities.

The data collection, which was administered in April and May respectively and covered 368 households, indicated that 16% of respondents constituted women household heads while 84% constituted men household heads.

Results:

Result 1.1: 8,965 Households identified that meet the vulnerability and food insecurity criteria

Activity 1.1: Identify and target vulnerable households based on established criteria

As, the project approaching its end, the project is no longer registering additional beneficiaries. Rather, nearly all households completed their eighth cycle of distribution. Nevertheless, few households did not complete eight cycles of food commodities distribution because they replaced households who initially received during the first few cycles and later moved out of the project area.

Result 1.2: 8,965 households redeem 8 months of commodity vouchers

Activity1.2: Establish commodity voucher mechanism

During the quarter, beneficiaries received two months of food commodity distribution as indicated in the table below:

Month	# Households	Total beneficiaries
April 2013	8,009	56,063
May 2013	2,017	14,119

During the quarter, all households have completed eight cycles of food distribution as planned by the project. The project was short 2 households as per the final planned target of 8,965 households.
The below table illustrate the months and cycles of distribution from June 2012 to May 2013. Distributions that did not take place on time were carried out retroactively.

Months	Total Households	Breakdown of households per district			N0 of households completing 8 cycles	On time/retrospective
		Dhubab	Mawza	Mokha		
June 2012	262	262	0	0	0	On time
July 2012	958	958	0	0	0	Retro (Aug.)
August 2012	6953	958	2163	3832	0	Retro (Sep 2012)
September 2012	6953	958	2163	3832	0	On time
October 2012	8962	1564	2669	4729	0	Retro (Dec 2012)
November 2012	8962	1564	2669	4729	0	Retro (Dec 2012)
December 2012	8962	1564	2669	4729	9 non-traceable absentee HHs	Retro (Jan 2013)
January 2013	8953	1555	2669	4729	250 HHs completed	Retro (Jan 2013)
February 2013	8703	1305	2669	4729	696 HHs completed	On time
March 2013	8007	609	2669	4729		On time
April 2013	8009	611	2669	4729	5,992 completed and 2 re-admitted	On time
May 2013	2017	611	507	899	2017 completed	On time

Activity 1.3: ***Implement commodity distribution to vulnerable households through voucher mechanism***

During this reporting quarter, two rounds of distributions were accomplished. The food commodities received per household per month included wheat flour (25kg); rice (7 kg); beans (24 cans of 410 grams); and vegetable oil (1.8 liters). The beans are produced and canned in Yemen while the wheat flour is milled and fortified in Yemen but the grains imported from the United States of America.

Analysis of household monitoring in the three districts for the months of April and May 2013 indicated that 99% of households received 8 months of food commodities. The data collection, which was administered in April and May respectively and covered 368 households, indicated that 16% of respondents constituted women household heads while 84% constituted men household heads. The analysis also indicated that 99% of respondents were informed of the time and place of voucher distribution, while 1% said they were not informed of the time and place of voucher distribution.

The analysis further indicated that 100% of the respondents knew the commodities they had purchased, the quantities, and packaging. 99% of respondents knew the names of vendors, while 1% did not know the names of vendors; 100% of respondents said they did not face any problems while they purchasing the food and were neither asked by anyone to pay extra fee for the voucher transaction; 100% of the respondents informed Mercy Corps that they did not share the food commodities they received; and 100% beneficiaries had visited market just one time to shop through vouchers. The April and May analysis indicated this time that food commodities lasted with fewer of the beneficiaries for 30 days. 4.6% indicated that their food commodities lasted for 30 days. 26% of respondents said the food lasted for 16 days, while 2% of respondents said their food lasted for only four days.

According to the Sex and Age Disaggregated Data (SADD), the average household size is 8. The household monitoring data analyses indicated that 2% of respondents had a household size of three (3) persons; 2.7% had a household size of four (4) persons; 5% with household size of five (5) persons; 9.7% with household size of six (6) persons; 15% with household size of seven (7) persons; 19.5% with household size of 8 (persons); and the remainder 46.1% had more than eight (eight) household size. It is likely that the larger the household size, the less number of days the food commodities lasted.

Result 1.3: 8,965 Households have increased household food availability

No further assessment has been conducted on the increased household food availability. However, the research results on the Local Regional Procurement Research gave detailed information on increased food availability. Focus group discussions held with community members during the LRP research indicated that the food security situation has greatly improved since TEFP/FFP commenced the food distribution in the districts. They said TEFP/FFP has increased their access to food. "*Even if I am not successful in getting contract, I know for sure that I will get food at the end of the month*", said one participant of the FGD. The project has reduced numbers of children withdrawn from school and increased retention at school. The participants also mentioned that they have seen reduction in the prevalence of mal nutrition amongst children. "*If FFP had not been present in our community, the malnutrition rate would have been so high"* said one community leader. According to the beneficiaries, the intervention has promoted dietary diversification at household level. For some households, savings from cash previously directed to purchasing staple is now used to purchase milk, sugar and vegetables for household consumption. Similarly, some households are also using this cash savings to meet medical, education, and other needs for their households.

Activity 1.4: Monitor market impact in origin and distribution markets
The FFP project collected market prices for the four commodities in the food basket. However, the data analysis showed no change and the market price situation for commodities in the food basket remained the same as the fourth Quarter.

Activity 1.5: Monitor and document local food procurement approaches
The TEFP/FFP vendor team carries out regular monitoring of exchange of vouchers for food commodities between beneficiaries and vendors. Irregularities in the exchange process have been very low. During the quarter no vendor nor beneficiaries were observed exchanging vouchers for items not listed in the food basket. Also, no vendor was observed or reported receiving money to exchange the vouchers for food commodities.

Coordination
At the national level, Mercy Corps is represented at the Food Security and Agriculture Meetings regularly held in Sana'a. Mercy Corps also submits regular monthly reports to the Food Security and Agriculture sector and participates in food security sector planning meetings. Mercy Corps is also a member of cash/market based programming (CTP) forum held in Sana'a each month. In Taiz, Mercy Corps is a member of the nutrition and health cluster. Additionally, a coordination mechanism exists between UNICEF, WFP and Mercy Corps to promote complementarities and avoid duplication of activities.

Challenges and Lessons Learned
Challenges for the team were easing out as the team gains more confidence, acceptance, and cooperation from the communities. The project during the period did not experience any serious challenges, except that beneficiaries have continually appealed for the extension of the project.

Conclusion
The TEFP/FFP project has not only increased people's security to food but also to basic services. Households are directing cash to basic services since they are no longer purchasing most of their food. According to children and parents, students are no longer withdrawn from school to work for money or food. Households feel secure because their men are not leaving them alone to travel for weeks in search for jobs. However, as the project gradually phases out some vulnerable households might be compelled to revert to negative coping strategies. Finally, in July a success story was published on the Global Mercy Corps website about the benefits of the food vouchers.

Link: ***Food vouchers do more than alleviate hunger:*** http://www.mercycorps.org/articles/yemen/food-vouchers-do-more-alleviate-hunger