



EVALUATION SUMMARY

FINAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF THE TRANSITION INITIATIVES FOR STABILIZATION PROJECT (TIS): 2011-2016

Evaluation Purpose and Rationale

Project Background

USAID’s TIS project was a five year, US\$ 102.8 million project. Its goal was to increase stability in Somalia through targeted interventions that foster good governance and economic recovery and reduce the appeal of extremism in the focus settlements..

TIS activities were designed to contribute to achieving the goal and objectives of the USAID/KEA/Somalia Office. TIS had three objectives:

- *Objective 1:* Increase confidence in all levels of governance through the delivery of targeted, strategic interventions that improve service delivery;
- *Objective 2:* Support collaboration between government, the private sector, and civil society;
- *Objective 3:* Increase dialogue on peace, recovery and development in Somalia.

| Number of Grants by Objective by IP | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-----|-------|-----|
| Objective | IOM | | DAI | |
| 1 | 238 | 73% | 397 | 79% |
| 2 | 71 | 22% | 35 | 7% |
| 3 | 15 | 5% | 72 | 14% |
| # of grants | 324 | | 504 | |
| Grants Total | \$27m | | \$26m | |

Source: TIS Grant Database as of February 1, 2016. Note: the numbers presented in this graph do not represent the final number of grants or disbursements.

Implementing Partners (IPs): International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Development Alternatives Inc. (DAI)

Evaluator: International Business and Technical Consultants, Inc. (IBTCI)

Evaluation Period: October 2015 – April 2016

The main purpose of this final evaluation was to assess the extent to which USAID’s stabilization activities in Somalia have met the project goal to increase stability in Somalia through targeted interventions that foster good governance and economic recovery and reduce the appeal of extremism in the communities in which the activities were undertaken. Another purpose of this evaluation was to learn lessons about conducting stabilization activities in Somalia to improve future programming. The evaluation was designed to provide comprehensive answers to five key questions: 1) To what extent have TIS/DAI and TIS/IOM achieved their objectives? Did the type of approach used have an independent effect on the achievement of TIS objectives? 2) To what extent has the project contributed to the goal and/or to the achievement of USAID objectives? Were any TIS approaches especially effective in contributing to stability or to the achievement of USAID objectives? 3) To what extent did the process modeled by TIS become institutionalized, and did physical structures constructed by TIS continue to be used by communities? 4) How successful was the project in addressing gender equity and empowerment issues, such as increasing the inclusion of women in community-level decision-making, promoting representation of women’s issues, enabling women to advocate for themselves and take action, and ensuring both men and women benefit from the activity? 5) To what extent were Community Planning Sessions (CPS) effective in producing decisions that were inclusive, consensus-based and reflective of community priorities?

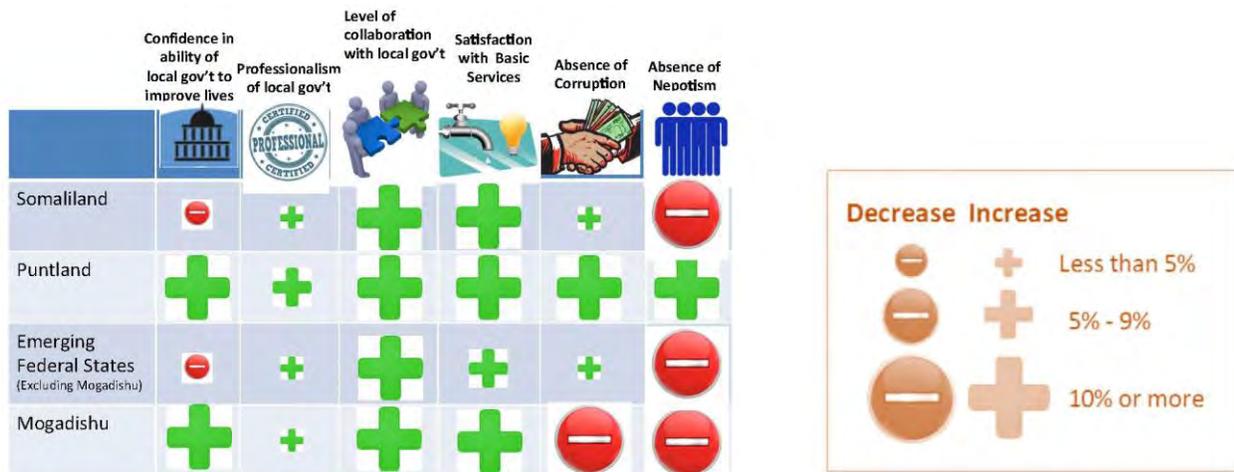
Evaluation Methodology

Methodology: The evaluation integrated a mixed-method approach to data collection and analysis in a two-phase implementation plan. Phase I involved a thorough desk review of activity data and documents generated by the TIS project, particularly records in a grants database maintained by both implementing partners. Phase I entailed in-depth qualitative interviews. An output of Phase I was the development of a categorization framework for types of TIS approaches that shaped the design of primary data collection. *Limitations:* Security-related issues prevented access to nine settlements. In order to compensate for the inability to collect data in those nine settlements, the households that had been targeted in those settlements were distributed equally to the remaining settlements. The omitted communities were not necessarily less stable than the surveyed communities. There were 87 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) rather than the planned target of 90.

Key Findings

- TIS's innovative essence was the consultative and participatory process that brought communities (civil society and business people), local administration and central government together to discuss and identify the community's priority needs.
- TIS proved to be a strong catalyst in encouraging greater engagement between communities and government. This is corroborated by the findings from the household level survey, the FGDs and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs).
- In TIS settlements people are now more involved than before in decisions that improve their lives. Local administration listens more to people's views and is more responsive.
- TIS contributed significantly toward increasing collaboration between local government and stakeholders.
- However, this increased collaboration with local administration has not yet generated increased confidence in all regions.
- The impact of TIS has been at the district level where it helped increase confidence in the ability of local administration to improve lives, particularly in Puntland and Mogadishu.
- TIS contributed to an improvement in the local government's level of professionalism and satisfaction with basic services. This increased people's confidence in local government in TIS settlements.

Percentage Change in Citizen Perceptions of Local Government from 2014-2016



Three aspects of collaboration were analyzed at the local government level:

- The extent to which people living in the settlement felt they had a say in decisions that improve their lives;
- The extent to which local government listens to people's views;
- The extent to which local government is responsive to people's views.

Between 2014 and 2016 there has been a significant increase in all four geographic areas in the percentage of respondents who feel that

- They now have a greater say in decision-making;
- Local government listens more to people's views; and
- Local government is now more responsive to people's views.

In summary, in Somaliland, Puntland and Mogadishu, respondents believe there is now greater collaboration with local government in terms of people's participation in decisions, the extent to which local administration listens to them, and the responsiveness of local government. In Somaliland, the percentage of respondents who believe there is now greater collaboration has increased. However, there has been a decline in the percentage of respondents who strongly agree that this is the case.

TIS facilitated dialogue on peace and recovery was a strong catalyst in encouraging greater engagement between communities and government. TIS-supported community infrastructure has been a key enabler of peace and development. Peace committees and peace meetings that TIS supported and facilitated served as forums for discussion of issues and for preventing and/or

resolving conflicts within communities. TIS-supported dialogue activities brought diverse sectors of the community together and contributed to social integration and economic recovery.

Although local Peace Committees existed in settlements before TIS, for many people TIS is associated with the Peace Committees. TIS took advantage of their existence and built upon their organizational structure. Members of Peace Committees were often also community leaders. When TIS created Community Development Committees (CDCs) as part of its consultative, participatory process, many of the Peace Committee members also participated in the CDCs. TIS's support of Dispute Resolution Centers is also credited with having contributed to peace. Projects funded by TIS were started in a consultative manner and this may have encouraged the government to embrace more consultative approaches to dealing with matters of peace, security and development.

Community Use of TIS Physical Structures

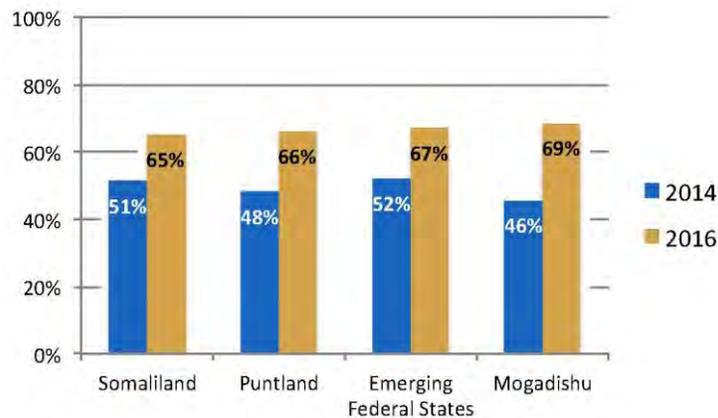
Most of the physical structures built by TIS continue to be put to good use, are used as intended, and are equitably accessible. TIS infrastructures are perceived to be public facilities under the custody of government, with the government having the primary responsibility for protecting and maintaining them. In general, FGD participants spoke positively of the contribution TIS infrastructure has made to the improvement of living conditions in their respective settlements. Notwithstanding the overall positive view of TIS physical structures, the following issues were reported and/or observed:

- Ownership: some TIS structures were reported as privately owned, rather than government owned;
- Incompleteness: at the time of the FGDs, a number of TIS structures had not yet been completed;
- Location/inaccessibility: there were cases where the TIS structure was built in a location that women did not consider to be safe;
- Size: some FGD participants considered the TIS structures to be too small;
- Quality: a number of quality-related issues were reported.

Contribution to Increasing Stability

To analyze TIS's contribution to increasing stability in Somalia, the evaluation team designed a Stability Index based on seven characteristics of stability defined by USAID for the purpose of this evaluation. Using a comparative approach to compare 2016 household survey data with existing 2014 data, it was found that the Stability Index rose significantly in all four geographic areas.

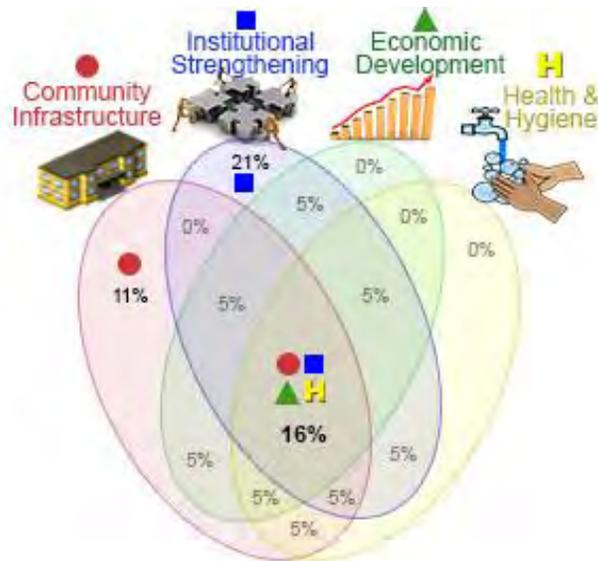
Stability Index in TIS Settlements: 2014 and 2016



Were Any TIS Approaches Especially Effective in Contributing to Stability or to the Achievements of USAID Objectives?

Statistical analysis was used to identify the blend of TIS sector and sub-sector grants that resulted in the highest rating on the Stability Index. The evaluation team identified the communities with the “top 20” highest Stability Index score and the blend of grants that had been provided to each of those communities. Next, the most common patterns of grant mixes in those “top 20” grants were identified. As the figure below depicts, 60 percent of the settlements with the highest Stability Index score received a bundle of grants that included community infrastructure, institutional strengthening and economic development, plus a wide variety of other grant types. Fifty-five percent of settlements in the “top 20” received grants in the following sectors: community infrastructure, institutional strengthening, economic development, and health and hygiene.

GRANT BUNDLES WITH HIGHEST STABILITY INDEX



As an additional avenue of exploration, econometric analysis (beta regression analysis) was conducted to determine whether there was any significant statistical evidence that settlements with projects in certain sub-sectors have a higher rating on the Stability Index. The findings suggest that settlements ranked significantly higher on the Stability Indexes when they received grants in one or more of the following sectors:

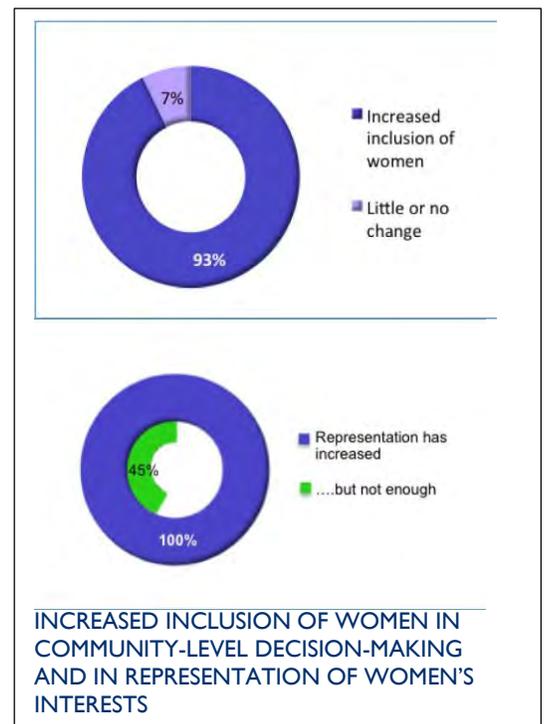
- Economic Development/Livelihoods
- Institutional Strengthening
- Roads
- Political Process
- Service Delivery

Institutionalization of the TIS Process

Based on KIIs with Somali government officials, the evaluation team found that TIS processes have been or will be adopted by important entities and actors such as the National Tender Board (Somaliland), the Banadir Regional Administration, the Galmudug Interim Administration, and some districts supported by TIS. TIS processes are embodied in the recently introduced Wadajir National Framework for Local Governance. In addition, local communities like the TIS approach and have started challenging other agencies (NGOs and UN) to work like TIS with grassroots consultation.

TIS Success at Addressing Gender Issues

- Through the process of gender inclusive, community-based consultation, TIS has contributed to increasing the role of women in community-level decision-making.
- Female focus group participants say they do not feel confined to their homes anymore and are now able to go out and work. Participants said they felt empowered as a result of participating in the TIS-supported CPS and skills trainings.
- Women said they have created a culture of self-mobilization. After receiving training from TIS, they started to take on more initiatives. Thanks to TIS trainings on governance, women are playing a more active role in local politics.



- Women FGD participants said that the increased participation of women in economic activities has raised their status, as they are now better able to access and control economic resources.
- TIS economic/livelihood training and grants, markets and street lighting increased the economic activity of women, earning them more respect as well as income.
- According to FGD participants and Key Informants, there has been increased respect and support for women's interests, both at the community and government levels.
- TIS directly contributed to a change in the way that communities perceive women, thanks to the inclusive policy that encouraged women's participation in CPS and Peace Committees.

Effectiveness of Community Planning Sessions

- According to FGD participants, most CPS were both representative and effective in producing decisions that were inclusive and reflective of community priorities.
- The projects (grants) prioritized by the communities were the ones implemented under TIS that contributed to support for and ownership of those projects by local government and the community.
- Multi-stakeholder involvement in CPS was hailed as one of the strengths of the TIS approach.
- In some areas in Puntland and Somaliland a majority of youth FGD participants felt they were not represented. A minority of participants also said that they considered the choice of representatives in CPS was not always inclusive.
- Most focus group participants felt that TIS projects reflected community priorities, as did most respondents of the household survey in Puntland. On average, 87% of household survey respondents said that TIS community planning sessions were effective in selecting projects that reflect priorities in the settlement.

Recommendations

The recommendations are intended to be action-oriented, practical and specific, with defined responsibility for the action.

1. Include a strategic communication component and strategic communication activities in each grant:

In a stabilization project that, through its projects and processes aims to strengthen confidence in the local government's capacity to improve people's lives, a comprehensive strategic communication plan for the project as a whole as well as for each grant is essential. This plan should define how to use publicity to get more representative participation on the CDCs. It should also communicate to the general population the message that the local government has brought funds to the community, has successfully implemented projects, and has done so through a collaborative process of community consultation in which activities were prioritized. Projects similar to TIS should include a strategic communication plan within each grant, to communicate to the community stakeholders before, during, and on completion of activities. This would also build government capacity for constituent communication after the project is complete through the training of government officials.

2. Project Oversight Committees:

Project Oversight Committees (POCs) were not included in DAI and IOM activities until 2013, when IOM began using them. POCs are important, especially for infrastructure projects. A committee, whose members live within walking distance of the infrastructure, is needed to monitor the project's implementation. The committee should include at least one member of civil society, at least one member of the stabilization project team and at least one member of government. At least three members of the committee should be able to walk to the site on a daily basis, eliminating the need for transportation and per diem costs. With proper training, local committee members would provide the best "eyes and ears" possible because they would have been involved in the planning session, and would know the required design of the project. POCs can also provide the latest security information. IPs can call and ask a POC member to check quantities, take photographs and verify if the contractor is on site. To ensure proper conditions for the POC's success, it is important to provide an orientation on the POC's role for all stakeholders, including the contractor, government, and community. In an ideal scenario, the POC's government representative would report to the local administration on a daily basis, the civil society representative would report to the community, and the TIS representative would report to TIS.

3. Better supervision and engineering oversight is required during implementation of infrastructure projects.

- The POCs' role at the community level should be strengthened and institutionalized. POCs should be provided with adequate training to allow adequate monitoring of projects. The contractor and the community must properly understand the POC's role.
- International engineers should be brought on board to provide management/quality control oversight of infrastructure activities. This would help ensure that international engineering standards are adhered to and help streamline the design approval and tendering process. At least one international expert should be hired to play an oversight role with respect to local engineers. International oversight should, however, respect the principles of local ownership and the use of Somali engineers, Somali engineering companies, and Somali/Kenyan engineers for project implementation.

4. A sustainability plan, including ex-post monitoring should be prepared and implemented for infrastructure projects

A sustainability plan should be prepared for each project. The POCs' role should be expanded to include monitoring the maintenance of infrastructure and the correct utilization of infrastructure after implementation.

5. Budgeting: Individual settlements should not be assigned fixed, up-front amount funding. Fixed budgets limit flexibility and encourage micro-management (i.e., scrutinizing every small expense) by the POCs. Under TIS, additional community meetings were required to decide how to use any leftover funds, causing delays that thwarted the intention of "quick impact" grants. Budgeting should not be a feature of the community prioritization process. Instead, following the community prioritization meetings, budgets should be prepared and projects should be prioritized based on available funding. The community should get the deliverable (be it infrastructure, goods or services), not the money. The dollar amount should be shared at the community-contracting phase to enable the POCs to assess value for money of tenders. However, it is not necessary to start a community planning session with the commitment of a certain dollar amount for the whole community¹.

6. Develop a Master Development Plan at the Settlement Level. Instead of doing a one-off CPS, a more efficient and sustainable approach would be to assist each beneficiary settlement to develop a multi-year Master Development Plan, using the TIS process and creating a steering committee comprising local government, TIS, other development partners, civil society and the private sector².

7. Diversify beneficiaries: Under TIS, the Mayor or District Commissioner (DC) was named as the beneficiary and signatory in almost all settlements, placing a great deal of authority and power in one individual's hands. There were cases in which the Mayor or DC became the gatekeeper, creating an impasse that could have been avoided had there been more than one grantee. For instance, the beneficiary of a Maternal and Child Health Center could be the director of the center, and the school principal could be the beneficiary of a school infrastructure project. This diversification of beneficiaries could be done in a way that preserves the local administration's role in bringing the project to the community. In this way each project contributes to improving collaboration with and inspires confidence in local government³.

¹ TIS+ has already moved away from this approach and is just giving indicative examples of types of projects other communities have prioritized.

² This idea has been incorporated into TIS+.

³ TIS+ is also planning to adopt this approach to provide greater accountability. The Mayor/DC will still be aware, and in some cases will be a grantee, but not in all cases.