



Emergency Response and Livelihood Recovery for Drought Affected Communities in North Eastern Kenya

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Mercy Corps' Busbus Child Friendly Center, photo by Ibrahim Sirat,,Field Assistant

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In response to the humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa, Mercy Corps has been implementing the Emergency Response and Livelihood Recovery Program in Wajir District of Northeastern Kenya with support from the USAID Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance. The OFDA program was heavily invested in water provision through water trucking and fuel subsidies to mechanized water points as water access was the biggest threat to families in the region. Hence this reduced the level of intervention in economic recovery and market systems. The program was successful in restoring Wajir community resilience through delivery of the following key projects:

1. Unconditional cash transfer of Kshs3000 per household per month for three months for 2,000 households (which comes to 12,000 individuals given an average of six members per household). This ensured that beneficiary households restored their capacity to purchase within local markets or pay debts, eventually rejuvenating local market credit systems;
2. Cash-for-work (temporary employment) incentives for construction of 10 community latrines. This ensured affected villages have improved hygiene and sanitation infrastructure and also that the local economy is boosted through cash injection;
3. Ten (10) communities received water storage tanks of 10,000 liter capacity. These are communities that did not have water storage facilities and hence could not benefit from water trucking done by government and humanitarian agencies;
4. Water distributed to 31 locations serving 290,664 beneficiaries and 154,320 livestock with 11,974,000 liters over three months during the drought. This investment in water trucking was made within a pool of other donor funds. Water was the heaviest burden for most households during the drought.
5. Subsidized fuel distributed to 15 boreholes to increase water supply to 22,620 beneficiaries and 154,320 livestock over three months during the drought;
6. Hygiene kits including 200 jerry cans, 200 water drawing cups and 200 bar soaps distributed to 200 households, and a bottle of chlorine distributed to 48 households, in 20 locations with water pans;
7. Hygiene promotion campaigns delivered in 18 locations reaching 65,445 people;
8. GBV trainings were conducted in 6 sites and 150 different groups were trained on response and prevention;
9. Two Child-friendly centers (CFCs) Constructed with close collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Services and community leaders in Busbus and Bililburbur. These CFCs were equipped with writing materials, seventeen 3 sitter desks, and playing materials were contributed by the communities.

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

Sector 1: Economic Recovery and Market Systems			
Beneficiaries targeted	13,662	Beneficiaries reached	12,170(89%)
Total budget	\$218,475	Total budget spent	\$215,257
Budget spent	\$ 215,257	Budget balance	\$ 3,218

Sub sector 1: Economic Asset Restoration			
Indicator		Baseline	Progress
Number of people assisted through economic asset restoration activities (Target beneficiaries: 13,662)		Target beneficiaries: 13,662	12,170 (89%)
Total USD amount channeled into the local economy		0	\$215,257
Sub sector 2: Temporary Employment			
Indicator		Baseline	Progress
Number of people employed through Cash-for-Work (CFW) activities		0	170
Average USD amount per person earned through the Cash-for-Work (CFW) activities		0	\$77.25
Number and percent of women employed through Cash-for-Work (CFW) activities		0	62 (43.4%)
Sector 2: Water and Sanitation			
Beneficiaries targeted		80,500	Beneficiaries reached 91,101 (113%)
Total budget		\$ 47,418	Total budget spent \$ 37,258
Budget spent this quarter		\$ 37,258	Budget balance \$ 10,160
Sub sector 1: Water Supply			
Indicator		Baseline	Progress
Number and percent of household water supplies with 0 coliform bacteria per 100ml		0	106 (100%)
Average water usage of target population in liters per person per day prior to and after interventions		3.3 liters / per person / day	10 liters / per person / day
Number and percent of water points with measurable chlorine residual exceeding 0.2 mg/L		N/A	78 (73%)
Sub sector 2: Hygiene promotion and behavior change			
Indicator		Baseline	Progress
Percent of target population demonstrating good hand-washing practices		16%	13,843 (89%)
Percent of target population demonstrating correct water usage and storage		37%	13,229 (85%)
Number and percent of clean water points functioning three months after completion		5 boreholes	106 shallow wells, 10 boreholes, 4 water pans
Sector 3: Protection			
Beneficiaries targeted		16,000	Beneficiaries reached 5,613(35%)
Total budget		\$ 31,760	Total budget spent \$19,310
Budget spent this quarter		\$ 19,310	Budget balance \$ 12,450

Sub sector 1: Gender-based Violence (GBV) Prevention and Response		
Indicator	Baseline	Progress
Number and percent of community members who can report at least two negative effects of GBV on their community	N/A	15,732 (60%)
Number and percent of target population reporting increased access to Gender-based Violence (GBV) services	N/A	16,082 (20%)
Number of males sensitized in Gender-based Violence (GBV) issues	N/A	7,167
Sub sector 2: Psychosocial services		
Indicator	Baseline	Progress to date
Number and percent of target population participating in psychosocial activities	3,182 (2%)	13,678 (78%) reached through GBV trainings and Wajir Community Radio
Number and percent of beneficiaries reporting improved capacity to carry out productive family/ community roles/responsibilities	N/A	16,082(92%)
Number and percent of beneficiaries reporting improvement in their feeling of well-being or ability to cope	N/A	13,635 (78%)

SECTOR SUMMARY

Sector 1: Economic Recovery and Market Systems:

Sub-sector 1.1: Economic Asset Development

To enable targeted households to have improved access to income and essential infrastructure,

1. Activity 1: Unconditional cash transfer:

A total of 2,000 households (which comes to 12,000 individuals given an average of six members per household) each received an amount of KES 3,000 for 3 months totaling 180,000 USD to enable them to purchase food and essential commodities. The implementation of the unconditional cash transfer to the beneficiaries involved:

- a. Sharing of the program with the stakeholders and the local district steering group and identification of the beneficiary location in consultation with local authorities and other NGOs with similar cash transfer programming
- b. Beneficiary selection using a pre-developed selection criteria in collaboration with local relief committees. Beneficiaries' verification was conducted through focus group discussion and sampled individual household interviews.
- c. Baseline household assessment of the sampled number of beneficiary households and local traders and business that the beneficiaries utilize.
- d. Monthly cash distribution through locally based money transfer system (Hawalla) with the direct supervision of Mercy Corps staff.
- e. Post distribution monitoring of the household cash utilization and usage

The cash transfer to the beneficiaries was implemented through a contracted Hawalla (KAAH General Company Limited). Using a payment list provided by Mercy Corps, the Hawalla staff

paid the money directly to the beneficiaries after verification of the beneficiary's identity by Mercy Corps staff and local community elders.

Impact

About 88% of beneficiaries of the cash transfer program used the cash to buy essential household food and non-food commodities. This was critical in preventing further malnutrition of children. Sixty percent (60%) of the beneficiaries who were indebted to local traders in the market were able to repay their debts as confirmed through interviews with traders. This further restored local market credit systems hence traders were able to replenish their stock. A post-distribution monitoring assessment reported that 65% of the beneficiaries spent less than an hour to reach cash distribution points. It took an average of 30 minutes for each beneficiary to get their cash. This was due to the lengthy process of verification of beneficiaries. Mercy Corps has joined a community of practice coordinated by Norwegian Refugee Council and WFP to identify better, faster and more efficient ways to administer cash transfers. A majority of beneficiaries (about 90%) were satisfied with the direct cash transfer system as opposed to food vouchers.

Sub-sector 1.2 Temporary Employments

2. Activity 1: Provision of temporary employment through cash for work:

In Ibrahim Urey Village, the 5 toilets constructed are currently serving 175 households. In Wajirbor 10 toilets were constructed through cash for work using 10 skilled and 80 unskilled laborers. Constructions in Urey and Wajirbor were done by a total of 140 individuals from different families on a daily cash incentive arrangement earning each of them Kshs. 10,000 for a month under temporary employment.

Impact

Construction of toilets has presented the community with an opportunity to improve their hygiene, reducing the risk of diseases that could have been previously experienced for lack of toilets. Cash-for-work beneficiaries were also able to buy essential household commodities and pay off debts to local traders.



Some of the toilets constructed in Wajir Bor community through cash-for-work

In addition, a 30 km market access road was cleared by 30 persons through cash-for-work. Of the beneficiaries, 13 were female heads of households and 17 were male heads of household. They were selected using a criteria developed and agreed with their community during the mobilization.

Sector 2: Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Sub-sector 2.1 Water Supply

Activity 1: Supply of clean drinking water through water vouchers

Through leverage from private funding in addition to the OFDA grant, a total of 11,974,000 liters of water were delivered to 290,664 beneficiaries in 31 critically water insecure locations allowing pastoralists to access water and 154,320 livestock with 11,974,000 liters over three months during the drought; for 3 months. The priority locations for water trucking were sites without any permanent water usually settled by pastoralists who lost their livestock to drought (pastoral drop outs). The costs of drinking water for the beneficiaries dropped Ksh 50 to between Ksh. 0 to Ksh. 2¹.

Activity 2: Fuel subsidies:

Mercy Corps provided a total of 22,620 liters of fuel subsidies to 15 mechanized boreholes that serve both humans and livestock. Utilization of the fuel subsidy at the borehole allowed both the pastoralists and population at the settlements to access free drinking water while the costs of watering animals was subsidized (50% subsidy for sheep and goats, 80% for cattle and 67% for camels). This reduced the strain that was further imposed on households by the drought.

Activity 3: Provision of generators and other spare parts:

With Hadado borehole having been repaired by Islamic relief and Machesa community having rehabilitated their borehole facility, Mercy Corps scaled up fuel subsidies to reduce effects of the severe emergency situation. The only borehole equipping done during the period was provision of storage tanks.

Activity 4: Rehabilitation or construction of water storage facilities:

Mercy Corps delivered ten (10) water storage tanks (10,000 liter capacities) to communities in Wajir West and South with no suitable alternative water storage. These facilities were used to store water trucked into the target communities by both NGOs and government.

Following Mercy Corps' water points rehabilitation needs assessment of the boreholes, shallow wells and surface water pans and their management in the two districts, with additional funding from other sources, a total of 5 dams (Lolokuta North, Tulatula, Boa, Boji Eyrib and Boji Yale) have been de-silted and fenced through Cash for Work. The depths of these water harvesting and storage structures have been increased up to an additional average capacity of 1,000,000 liters each.

¹ In some few sites, the committee was charging Ksh 2 to cover the costs of distribution and ensuring the maintenance of the facilities.



a) Dam de-silting and deepening at Tulatula



b) De-silting at Lolkuta South community water pan

In addition, 106 shallow wells (Shantabag, Ganyule, Kukale, Griftu) were de-silted, fenced and chlorinated. The shallow wells have increased the capacity of water harvested in the 4 locations. Each of these shallow wells was treated through chlorination and the existing Water Users Associations trained on water hygiene and sanitation (PHAST and CHAST).

Activity 5: Water quality testing and chlorination:

Water testing was done both at household and at water point sites. This was accompanied by regulated distribution of chlorine for water treatment after training.

Shallow wells were chlorinated at water point level. It was not possible to chlorinate surface water pans due to high turbidity. The WASH team encouraged beneficiaries to continue with household chlorination using the market available chlorine brands such as PUR and Aquaguard.

The challenge was inaccessibility of market chlorine by most of the rural people as well as the affordability of the routine chlorination of drinking water.

Sub Sector 2.2: Hygiene Promotion and Water User Association Training

Activity 1: Hygiene promotion:

Community hygiene education training and campaign activities were carried out in 20 sites in the two districts. Target communities were reached with hygiene promotion messages, with 65,445 individuals benefitting from the hygiene activities. Moreover, there has been distribution of hygiene and sanitation kits.

Activity 2: Water User Associations Training:

Mercy Corp's WASH team conducted water user association training for eleven (11) locations in Wajir south and Wajir West. A total of 110 members were trained on water management. The training was conducted at the community level. The content of the training included the

following: equal representation, gender awareness, accountability, empowerment of water users, and simple book keeping, water user association leadership composition and responsibilities, roles and common problems associated with WUA's, hygiene, sanitation and by-laws. The WUAs were further encouraged to register with the Ministry of Social services to legalize their existence and access the government's continual support.



WUA training in progress



group discussion during WUA trainings

Sector 3: Protection

Sub-Sector 3.1: Gender Based Violence (GBV) prevention and response

Activity 1: Establish and support GBV committees at grassroots

The ministry of social services was included as a partner in the protection sub-program implementation. The ministry provided a high level technical team that guided the activities on protection.

At the community level, Mercy Corps held sensitization workshops wherein victims of GBV and the community leadership were sensitized on matters relating to protection, gender and violence. The victims had opportunities to share their challenges, coping mechanisms and expectations. The GBV team offered them group and individual counseling, referrals and help lines.

The locations where training was conducted were Maumau, Hadado, Elnur of Wajir West and Lagboghol, Machesa and Eladow of Wajir south. The trainees included members of women's groups, youth groups, student groups, community leaders and religious leaders. These groups were trained on active listening skills, GBV response principles, psychosocial support mechanisms, the multi-sectorial approach and the GBV response referral network.



GBV and Child protection training sessions at Maumau village

Activity 2: **Health, Psychosocial and Legal Referral Mechanism for GBV survivors**

Taking into consideration the Islamic principles and cultural values of communities, the trained participants who supported GBV survivors were asked to refer the case to the appropriate locally available GBV response service based on the survivor's needs and requests. The police, the health institutions, the religious centers, Kenya National Commission of Human Rights Office in Wajir and Peace Committees were selected as the referral centers for GBV survivors.

Activity 3: **GBV Risks Awareness Campaigns**

Public sensitization campaigns on gender-based violence issues were also conducted. Community members pledged to end gender-based violence and promised to protect children from abuse.

Through the CFW activities, the beneficiaries were enlightened on varying gender roles and gender equity. The youth were especially encouraged to 'live the present' wherein everyone has a right to opportunities. They were asked to be the role models in society by ceasing GBV and child abuse. GBV committees were been established to help achieve commitments made by the communities.

Sub-Sector 3.2: Psychosocial Services

Activity 1: **Conducting Counseling sessions**

Mercy Corps in close collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development delivered 6 sessions of counseling during the GBV trainings to GBV victims especially to cases of wife battery and Female Genital Mutilation victims and referred them to the referral networks such as Kenya National Commission of Human Rights, health institutions, the police, religious and community elders.

Sub-Sector 3.3: Child protection

Activity 1: Build capacity of duty bearers on child protection risks and responses

Mercy Corps in close collaboration with Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development delivered GBV training for the area advisory council for child protections and GBV response teams in Wajir South and Wajir West. These trainings were through the Ministry of Gender training modules on GBV and covered child protection, risks, abuses and responses with special emphasis on child protection, psychosocial support provision, health and legal service provision and response to child abuses.

Activity 2: Child protection risks awareness campaigns

Training on Child Protection was conducted at the child- friendly centers and GBV training sites to sensitize on the importance of the child protection risks and responses. A total of 100 parents were trained on how the centers will operate and a hand-over strategy for the community to fully own and run the centers.

Activity 3: Child friendly spaces



Mercy Corps constructed two Child-friendly centers (CFCs) with close collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Services and community leaders in Busbus and Bililburbur. These CFCs were equipped with writing materials, seventeen (17) three-seat desks each and playing materials. As an exit strategy, the communities were involved in the site identification, provision of raw materials, unskilled labor, construction and provision of night guards for the construction materials throughout the construction phase. The two CFCs are currently providing a safe and comfortable space for children to interact and play. The communities have appointed permanent administrators of these two CFCs as volunteer teachers and children care takers.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The program team carried out a post-distribution participatory assessment in all of the 20 sites (10 in Wajir West and 10 Wajir South) on cash for work and unconditional cash transfers. Three sessions were held with randomly selected beneficiaries comprised of men, youth, traders and women for the assessment to gauge the impact the direct unconditional cash transfer and CfW had on the communities. The beneficiaries mainly reported the cash transfers being spent on food purchases, repayment of debt, and buying water during the dry spell. Successful and timely cash distribution was reported in all the areas where the cash transfers were done through the local Hawala. Indicator monitoring was carried out routinely and the team produced regular activity and weekly reports.

Reports and other regular updates were shared with program stakeholders including the line ministries, local authorities, village relief committees, and DSG committees.

During the first month of the program, a baseline survey was conducted in Wajir South and West. Focus group discussions, key informant interviews and beneficiary questionnaires were communicated to collect key project baseline data. The baseline survey report was finalized and submitted.

The Program Manager and M&E officer were responsible for tracking all activities and indicators of the program while the WASH engineer ensured the quality of the construction work. The program team produced regular activity and weekly reports for the country management and reports and updates were shared with program stakeholders during the County Forum and District Steering Group meetings. The household post-distribution monitoring was done to assess the situation after the cash distribution was done. The sample size selected was 10% of the targeted households in each site. A total 114 respondents were interviewed using focus group discussions, household and traders questionnaires. The unconditional cash transfer had 577 male and 1,228 female registered as household head. The number of household members in both Wajir West and South was 11,626. The majority of the targeted beneficiaries were females. During post-distribution monitoring household survey, 65.8% of the respondents were female while the remaining 34.2% were male. The beneficiaries targeted were through community based targeting.

COORDINATION

The program team liaised and coordinated with other humanitarian actors and line ministries working in the two districts. Mercy Corps was represented in the WASH cluster meetings in the field and at county level. Mercy Corps used the line ministries offices for field activities coordination. Meetings with local administrations, line ministries, community elders in both Wajir South and West were held to mobilize the communities for the implementation of the project activities. Mercy Corps continues to be involved in coordination of activities under the District Steering Group (DSG) and relevant clusters both in Wajir and in Nairobi including: district level unconditional cash program meetings for sharing information and best practices and the national Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP). In addition, Mercy Corps is engaged in water and sanitation coordination meetings at both local and national level.

CHANGES IN THE CONTEXT: PROGRAM AND SECURITY

The rains have provided some relief but not enough to obliterate the negative impact of prolonged drought. Rains are also causing additional problems as some roads have become impassible and the threat of disease outbreaks has increased. Following district-wide water, sanitation and hygiene assessment on the danger of disease outbreaks, Mercy Corps scaled up sanitation and hygiene interventions including building latrines, distribution of aqua tabs, rehabilitation of water points, and instructing villagers on how to purify water and keep water points clean during the No Cost Extension implementation period.

Security context: During the initial program set up, the security situation in Wajir County remained stable, but targeted security incidents increased, especially for military and government personnel. Mercy Corps participates in the head of agencies security coordination meeting at district level and maintains stringent security standard operating procedures and plans. In addition, Mercy Corps has

employed local staffs who understand the context. To respond to the changing environment the following rules are observed by MC:

- Movements close to the border by non-Somali team members was not permitted. This applies notably but not exclusively to Diff, Dagahaley and Wajir Bor communities.
- Somali staff travelling to communities close to the border used low profile rental vehicles hired from Wajir and without signage.
- Visibility for vehicles and the office were minimized.
- Movements outside Wajir town were restricted to essential movements only.

CONCLUSION

The main focus of the program implementation was saving lives during the harsh drought, building resilience, relief and creating short-term employment opportunities through cash for work, both for the pastoralist drop outs households and the wider host communities. Rehabilitation and construction of water points, shallow wells, and surface dams, improvement of sanitation, the construction of latrines, protection activity components, Unconditional Cash Transfers and CfW activities were all completed as of March 31st 2012.

Despite making progress towards meeting the program objectives during the funding period, insecurity related issues and the seasonal rains made the roads inaccessible to the targeted project sites. Staff movement has been restricted and limited as a result of inaccessible roads and insecurity. During the start of the program, the implementation was more focused on meeting emergency needs (WASH and food security) and activities under the protection component were delayed until the situation improved. A no cost extension request was submitted and approved and the activities were completed planned by the end of March 2012.