



# USAID & Mercy Corps Southern Somalia Livelihoods Recovery Program (SSLRP)

## Final Program Report



<b>Agency:</b>	Mercy Corps
<b>Agreement Number:</b>	DFG-G-00-07-00075-00
<b>Program title:</b>	USAID & Mercy Corps Southern Somalia Livelihoods Project
<b>Country/Region:</b>	Lower and Middle Juba Region, Lower Shebelle, South Somalia
<b>Number of Beneficiaries:</b>	170,440 (42,000 of which are Internally Displaced People)
<b>Start-Up Date of Operation:</b>	1 April 2007
<b>Proposed Period of Activity</b>	30 September 2009
<b>Amount of Contract:</b>	\$3,125,893
<b>Period Covered by This Report:</b>	1 April 2007 to 30 September 2009
<b>Submission Date of Present Report:</b>	December 2009

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### ACRONYMS

**ICU:** Islamic Courts Union

**IDPs:** Internally Displaced Persons

**CfW:** Cash for Work

**CHAST:** Child Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation

**FGD:** Focus Group Discussion

**IDP:** Internally Displaced Person

**M&E:** Monitoring and Evaluation

**MC:** Mercy Corps

**NFI:** Non Food Items

**OFDA:** Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance

**PHAST:** Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation

**TFG:** Transitional Federal Government

**USAID:** United States Agency for International Development

**USD:** United States Dollar

**WASH:** Water, sanitation and Hygiene

## Introduction

The USAID & Mercy Corps Southern Somalia Livelihoods Recovery Program, which started in April 2007, has coincided with the worst humanitarian crisis in Somalia following nearly two decades of civil war and fighting between subsequent weak UN-backed Transitional National Governments and insurgents. The incursion of Ethiopia to oust the IUC in the early months of the program has led to the insurgency and uprising of more radical militia groups and the displacement of thousands of innocent civilians. This has further deteriorated the humanitarian situation due to the combination of sky rocketing food prices, the significant devaluing of the Somali Shilling, deepening and protracted droughts, persistent insecurity and massive displacement of civilian populations.

During the program period, IDPs continued to struggle to integrate into the host communities in the program target districts of Lower Shabelle, Middle and Lower Juba, with most households increasing by an average of 20%. This has impacted the riverine farming communities, further stretching their scarce resources, leaving many without an adequate livelihood source and with limited or insufficient basic infrastructure such as roads and sanitation facilities. The ever escalating insecurity in South Central Somalia forced many humanitarian agencies to withdraw, thereby making it more difficult for life saving humanitarian relief to reach the most vulnerable populations. The USAID/OFDA funded program primarily focused on rehabilitation of essential community infrastructure such as river embankments, market access roads and market centers through cash for work as well as providing key economic activities such as digging of shallow wells, temporary classrooms and hygiene and sanitation

**Program Goal:** To improve the ability of households and communities to cope with and recover from natural- and man-made shocks.

To achieve the above goal, the program had the following three main objectives.

1. Targeted households have an increased asset base through immediate short-term employment and improved community and economic infrastructure
2. Targeted households have clean water, appropriate sanitation and improved hygiene
3. Targeted households have relief items to meet short term needs

## Program Operation areas.

The South Somalia Livelihoods Program was implemented in Middle and Lower Juba regions of Somalia. The program specifically targeted Jamame, Jilib, Mararey, Kismayo and Barawa districts. Due to the security situation in the region, implementation of activities in Kismayu was suspended. In Barawa district, activities did not start until the last five months of the program. Due to the suspension of activities in Kismayo, Mercy Corps conducted an impromptu assessment in Afmadow district in the Lower Juba region to expand activities there. Following a prolonged drought in the district, Mercy Corps constructed surface dams through cash for work. The main office was located in Jamame town with a sub office in Kismayo (this office was latter closed due to security). There were three satellite offices in Jilib, Mararey and Barawa towns. The implementation of the program was directly spearheaded by a program manager (expatriate) with the assistance of several staff in both program and operation units.

## Selection of Beneficiaries

Over the program period, selection of beneficiaries for cash for work was carried out jointly by Mercy Corps program staff and community elders. The selection was based on a jointly developed selection criteria which considered the level of poverty at the family level and gender. 40% of the cash for work participants were women and/or youth. The program was also focusing on minority clans (Somali Bantu) who are mainly farmers or agro pastoralist in the area. During the second half of the last year of the program, the participation of women in the cash for work activities was at risk of being suspended following strict Islamic codes prescribed by the militia group controlling the areas. However, Mercy

Corps, in consultation with the local communities, developed different working schedules for women and men. For instance, during the clearing of access roads, men and women were working at different sections of the same roads. This allowed the continued involvement of women in program activities. Program sites were also jointly identified based on the needs at the time.

### Security in areas of Operation

The security situation in Somalia has been tenuous, at best, during the life of the program, with many regions in South Central Somalia falling into the hands of armed militia groups fighting the interim government. The epicenters of the crisis have been in Mogadishu and the Middle and Lower Juba regions which experienced continued violent conflict since the ousting of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) in 2006 and the subsequent establishment of two weak interim governments, both marred by internal dissonance. The conflict spread to other neighboring regions including Shabelle, Hiran, Bay, Bakol and Gedo limiting access to program areas in these regions. Sporadic fighting between and amongst the various armed opposition groups and the Transitional Federal Government persisted throughout the region for most of the 2007-2009 timeframe. This resulted in the displacement of many thousands of people from the area, most of who fled to northern Somalia to seek refuge in crowded IDP camps in Puntland and Somaliland.

For much of the period under review Mercy Corps was one of the only international humanitarian agencies that remained in the region despite the rising insecurity. Our ability to stay was due in large part to the strong support from the communities we worked in who deterred any aggression from the militia groups. However, as more regions fell into the hands of the militia groups, a majority of the international agencies and some national non-governmental organizations were expelled from the region. This culminated into the seizure of offices belonging to INGOs and LNGOs in Jamame, including Mercy Corps, by one of the strongest armed opposition groups, Al Shabab, on 3rd August 2009. Mercy Corps' office in Jamame was closed following this attack and the program ended one month early. Negotiations are still on going with elders on the resumption of activities in the area.

### 1. Program Overview:

The program worked in Kismayo, Jamame, Jilib, and Marerey district in Middle & Lower Juba and Barawa district in Lower Shabelle region. During the implementation period, the program has witnessed various challenges ranging from general insecurity and protracted drought in the operation area, to the killing of a senior Mercy Corps staff member in Jamame. However, despite these serious constraints, Mercy Corps established its presence in all target districts in the program area. The program offered temporary employment through cash for work that injected cash into the local economy and provided families with money to meet their basic needs while improving basic infrastructure. The program has carried out occasional informal assessments of the different implementation locations to inform the humanitarian intervention and establish security standards. Participatory, need-based project design was maintained and outreach to communities and local authorities was made routine to ensure sustainability and ownership. This has led to continuous community involvement in various stages of the program and created strong understanding between Mercy Corps, the beneficiaries, community elders and the local administration.

*In the Economy and Market Systems sector*, Mercy Corps completed the construction of 109 river embankments out of the overall target of 65 in villages along the Juba River. The embankment construction sites were identified as potential flooding points by community elders and beneficiaries. In total 3,815 cash for work beneficiaries, each representing a vulnerable household, earned \$4 per day. In addition, 400 kilometers of roads were cleared of traffic limiting bush out of the overall program target of 310. The selected roads were previously abandoned pathways used by farmers and residents to access markets in major urban centers. A total of 2,400 CfW beneficiaries representing 1,440 households were

involved in the road clearance, earning \$4 per day. The program has also constructed 67 semi permanent school classrooms in Jilib, Jamame, Marerey and Kismayo districts, against the target of 50. A total of 2,278 CfW beneficiaries representing 13,668 vulnerable households benefited. Overall, targets for the economy and market system which involved construction of river embankments, semi permanent classrooms and road clearance were surpassed reaching more villages and beneficiaries than originally envisaged.

*In the WASH sector*, Mercy Corps rehabilitated or constructed a total of 94 shallow wells in villages in Jilib, Jamame, Marerey and Kismayo districts. In addition, 2,090 single family latrines were constructed against the target of 1,900. In order to promote hygiene and sanitation in the community, Mercy Corps conducted PHAST trainings which focused on personal and environmental hygiene and included garbage collection and disposal, a hand washing campaign, water handling and storage, use and maintenance of latrines, and the prevention of waterborne diseases.

*In the Logistics/ Relief Commodities Sector*; Mercy Corps has distributed Non Food Items (NFIs) kits in Kismayo and Jamame targeting IDPs. The distribution benefited 7,000 households (42,000 individuals). The NFI kits contained stainless steel cooking pots of various sizes, cutlery, metal cups, mosquito nets, blankets and 10 and 20 liter, collapsible water containers.

## 2. Accomplishment by Objectives:

<b>Objective 1</b>	<b>Program Target</b>	<b>Program Reach</b>
Targeted households have an increased asset base through immediate short-term employment and improved community and economic infrastructure	42,400	66,500

<b>Expected Results</b>	
1	65 river embankment points rehabilitated
2	10% (310km) of market roads to/from Kenya and to/from Kismayo up to the Jilib District cleared of traffic-limiting bush
3	50 classrooms expanded by approximately 10x6 meters
4	134,700 days of paid labor
<b>Indicators</b>	
A	USD increase in purchasing power per beneficiary from CFW payments
B	Kilometers of roads rehabilitated
C	Total value of USD for direct assistance to beneficiaries

**Result 1: 65 River embankment rehabilitated**



Mercy Corps has constructed/rehabilitated 109 river embankment points in villages in Marerey, Jilib and Jamame districts surpassing the overall program target of 65. The design and shape of the river embankments varied from one area to another depending on the size and terrain of the area. In some villages, they were covered with sand while some communities preferred to leave them open so as to repair any damage after flooding. The materials used were generally gunny sacks filled with mud and gravel and

stacked together along the breached river banks. The sites have been selected with community elders and local leaders as areas prone to perennial flooding in the respective villages. Cash for work methodology was used in the construction of such embankments injecting cash in to the community and providing temporary employment.



**Result 2: 10 percent (310km) of market roads to/from Kismayo to Jilib cleared of traffic**

**limiting bush:**

To increase community asset base and economic infrastructure, Mercy Corps, using the CfW model cleared 400 kilometers road of traffic limiting bush out of the overall program target 310 over the last three years. The selected locations were essential avenues and short cuts for farmers and residents to access markets in major urban centers. However, because of the neglect over time, the routes have been rendered unusable because of the thick traffic limiting bushes forcing farmers to transport their produce in alternative long routes to the markets. The roads usually 10 kilometer long and 10 meters wide have reduced the time taken to reach markets and neighboring villages. Besides improving access to farmlands, the roads have also improved transport and communication amongst villages. This has in effect enhanced access to basic essential services such as health posts and schools.

*Photos: Above: A flooded section of river Juba before Mercy Corps interventions;*

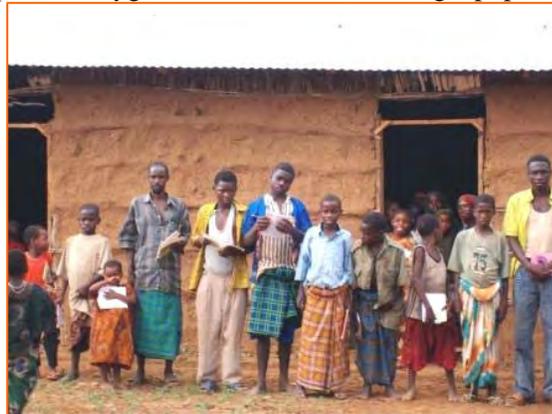
*Below: Same section after Mercy Corps constructed an embankment*



*On the left, community member's clear roads to ease access (right)*

**Result 3: 50 School classrooms expanded by approximately 10x6m**

Under this program Mercy Corps constructed 67 school classrooms out of the overall target 50. The construction of such semi permanent classrooms was aimed at improving school attendance as well as providing a place conducive for learning in remote villages in the program area. Mercy Corps has mobilized communities to identify and donate appropriate land for the construction of school classrooms. The classrooms were made of locally available materials such as twigs and mud. To improve sanitation in schools, Mercy Corps constructed separate latrines for boys and girls in each school depending on the number of classrooms constructed. Two latrines were constructed for a school with two classrooms and four latrines for schools with four classrooms. Mercy Corps also conducted Child Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation (CHAST) sessions in schools to promote hygiene and sanitation amongst pupils.



*Above: Students studying under a tree before Mercy Corps interventions; Below: Students getting out of class rooms after Mercy Corps constructed two class rooms for the local community*

**Result 4: 134,700 days of paid labor:**

Temporary employment through cash for work was aimed at increasing the purchasing power of vulnerable community members in the program area and was calculated as paid labor days. In this program, Mercy Corps has spent \$553,840 through CFW translating into 138,460 days of paid labor out of the projected 134,700. The additional hours were obtained following increased activities that surpassed the programs targets.

Breakdown of cash for work activities and days of paid labor

Activity	Number (Unit) constructed or rehabilitated	Amount spent per unit	Total \$ spent	Total # of man hours
River embankments	109	1,800	196,200	49,050
Construction of semi permanent Classrooms	67	920	61,640	15,410
Road clearance	400	600	240,000	60,000
Surface dams	1	16,000	16,000	4,000
Rehabilitation of Market center	5	8,000	40,000	10,000
		<b>Total:</b>	<b>553, 840</b>	<b>138,460</b>

Objective 2		Program Target	Program Reach
Targeted households have clean water, appropriate sanitation and improved hygiene		118,870 beneficiaries	(184,700, including 42,000 IDP)
Expected Results			
1	90 water sources constructed and maintained		
2	1,900 single family latrines constructed and maintained		
3	450 IDP communal latrines constructed		
4	13,000 household's awareness raised on hygiene and sanitation		
Indicators			
Water	# of protected water points established		
Sanitation	# of household latrines constructed		
	# of beneficiaries benefiting from household latrines		
Hygiene promotion	# of water and sanitation committees revitalized, trained and/or established		
	Average increase in correct water usage practices (reported as % of people)		
	Average increase in good hand washing practices (reported as % of people)		

**Result 1: 90 water sources constructed / rehabilitated and maintained**

During the program period, Mercy Corps constructed and/or rehabilitated 94 shallow wells in different villages in Jamame, Jilib and Marerey districts. The design of the new wells is such that they were internally lined with culverts made of concrete and reinforcement bars. For the existing wells, Mercy Corps has deepened them to improve yield and installed new aprons and lined the internal surfaces with culverts. The wells, with an average depth of 20 meters, are mainly used for human



consumption. However, in some villages, the shallow wells are also used by pastoralists especially during prolonged periods of drought. Local engineers are used for the construction and rehabilitation of the wells. The rehabilitated wells are mostly shallow hand dug infiltration sites. The wells are internally aligned with culverts which have been designed locally and well reinforced with bars (below). Mercy Corps intended to install hand pumps on all the shallow wells, but the procurement was shelved after the tender was awarded following the takeover of the Jamame office and suspension of the program activities.



### **Result 2: 1,900 single-family latrines constructed**

Traditionally the communities along the river Juba have used the thick riverine vegetation as their toilet facilities, with many villages having no proper latrines at all. Before latrine construction activities commenced, Mercy Corps mobilized and conducted massive awareness campaigns on hygiene and sanitation in these communities. The communities were taught how to maintain and clean the latrines; they were taught how to safely dispose of their children's feces, and to wash their hands after using the latrine, amongst other key hygiene issues. The latrines are used by approximately 6 individuals each. In some cases, Mercy Corps only provided the slabs (pictured) for the latrines while the communities provided the super structure and doors. This promoted a sense of ownership among community members. Overall, Mercy Corps constructed 2090 single-family latrines during the program period spread over various villages in Jilib, Jamame and Marerey districts.



### **Result 3: 450 IDP communal latrines constructed**

In total the program has constructed 220 communal latrines. Although nearly all the communal latrines were initially planned for IDPs camps in Kismayo, Mercy Corps has managed to construct only 220 such latrines in five IDP camps in Kismayo before activities were suspended in the town due to growing

insecurity. The activities plan was revised and the communal latrines were constructed in villages in Kismayo, Barawe, Marerey and Jamame districts as single family latrines and some communal latrines taken to institutions such as schools.

**Result 4: 13,000 Households participated in hygiene education activities**

Mercy Corps employed an integrated approach in an effort to improve hygiene and sanitation amongst the targets population. The different strategies used included training of community member’s, public awareness campaigns as well as house to house visits in the villages and IDP camps. For instance, Mercy Corps conducted 125 Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation (PHAST) trainings targeting 2500 individuals in Jilib, Jamame, Kismayo, Barawa and Marerey. The trainings focused on personal and environmental hygiene which included garbage collection and disposal, a hand washing campaign, water handling and storage, use and maintenance of latrines, and the prevention of waterborne diseases. Focus areas for discussion with communities included identification of sanitation and hygiene problems, mapping of community water and sanitation resources, proper and improper hygiene practices in the communities, transmission and prevention of common diseases and the role of women and men in promoting a healthy community and environment. In addition, participants of the PHAST trainings were used to further reach the community members and participate in conducting house to house awareness campaigns. In some cases some of the participants were trained as TOTs to further conduct PHAST trainings for community members in which case each TOT was given a target to reach 10 additional people in their village. Meanwhile program staff conducted public awareness campaigns in which over 40,000 households were reached in the three year period.

**Result 5: # of water and sanitation committees revitalized, trained and/or established**

In this program, Mercy Corps established 65 of water user associations targeting villages where water points such as berkets and shallow wells were constructed. Further 29 committees were revitalized in villages where abandoned water points were rehabilitated. Both categories of the committee members were trained on hygiene, sanitation and basic maintenance and management of water resources.

<b>Objective 3</b>		<b>Program Target</b>	<b>Program Reach</b>
Targeted households have relief items to meet short term needs		42,000 IDPs	42,000 (all IDPs)
<b>Expected Results</b>			
1	42,000 IDPs provided with basic start-up non-food Items		
<b>Indicators</b>			
A	# of beneficiaries receiving NFIs		
B	# or amount in Kg of commodities distributed		
C	# of NFIs per beneficiary		

**Result 1: 42,000 IDPs provided with basic start-up non-food Items**

Mercy Corps has carried out three NFI distribution sessions in Kismayo and Jamame districts amongst internally displaced persons. In Kismayo, the distribution targeted vulnerable households in the IDP camps whereas in Jamame, displaced families from Mogadishu and other parts of Southern Somalia who have settled in makeshift camps in the area were targeted. The distributions benefited 7000 households (42,000 individuals). The NFI kits contained stainless steel cooking pots of various sizes, cutlery, metal cups, mosquito nets, and blankets and 10 and 20 liter capacity water containers.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

The implementation of the program was preceded by the development of work plans and indicator plans by program staff. Data collection tools and indicator tracking sheets were also developed and data was collected on a weekly basis. Weekly and monthly progress reports were submitted along with quarterly reports. The monitoring of program activities was jointly done by program staff with the participation of the community and village elders. The elders were involved in monthly participatory progress monitoring processes where selected community elders and program staff visited program activity sites to check on status and quality of work. In July 2009, Mercy Corps contracted an external consultant to evaluate the program (see attached evaluation report)

## Coordination:

Mercy Corps coordinated with agencies in the region both in the field and in Nairobi. Mercy Corps was regularly represented in cluster meetings in Nairobi. At the field level, Mercy Corps worked closely with community leaders, the few international agencies and local organizations in the region to facilitate synergy of efforts and approaches. Mercy Corps was committed to supporting communities through integrated, short-term and long-term activities derived from communities' existing capacities and knowledge.

## Conclusion:

The fragile security in the region continued to pose challenges to implementation of Mercy Corps' programs and finally led to the temporary cessation of operations in the region. Despite these constraints, the program has largely achieved its key objectives. The sudden closure of the Jamame office and the subsequent temporary suspension of activities have only left a few activities unfinished, and the majority of those were at the late stage of completion. The end of program evaluation conducted by an external evaluator in the last month of operation has chiefly acknowledged achievements of key program activities.