



Building Opportunities For Resilience In The Horn Of Africa

BORESHA II End of Project Evaluation Report Summary



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Background of BORESHA II project

Building Opportunities for Resilience in the Horn of Africa II (BORESHA II) is a 3,157,896 million Euro project funded by the European Union Trust Fund for Africa. The project was implemented for 10 months by the Danish Refugee Council in partnership with World Vision International and CARE International between March to December 2021 in the Cross-Border area of Kenya, Somalia, and Ethiopia, known as the “Mandera triangle”. The project adopted a community-driven approach to address the shared nature of the risks and opportunities in the target area. The project targeted 350,000 individual beneficiaries across the three countries by making individuals and communities more resilient and better prepared for shocks, more self-reliant through increased skills and opportunities and ensuring equitable and sustainable management of shared natural resources.

Purpose/objectives of endline evaluation

The main objective of the end-line evaluation was to provide the end-line status of project outcomes compared to the targets and capture the impact guided by the OECD/DAC criteria.

Methodology

The endline evaluation used the collaborative outcomes reporting (COR) approach to develop a performance story. The end line evaluation involved quantitative and qualitative approaches largely in line with the OECD/DAC criteria that included Effectiveness and Efficiency, Coherence, Coordination, Impact and Sustainability, and Lessons learnt. The task was undertaken using mixed evaluation/research methodologies in a holistic and integrated manner that included: (i) Desktop research - literature search and file/document review; (ii) key informant interviews (98) and focus group discussions (48).

Key findings

Effectiveness and Efficiency

The project effectively strengthened community resilience and facilitated the management of climate change-related shocks. This was mainly achieved by enhancing the capacity of Community Disaster Risk Reduction and Management committees (CDRRM), operationalization of CDRR action plans and uptake of index-based livestock insurance schemes across the border points. BORESHA II focused on actualizing the Community Action Plans (CAP) through community contribution and advocacy during food security cluster meetings as a means to actualize the CAPs. Further, the DRR committee members were supported to develop the CAPs and trained in community-based early warning monitoring and response systems including the use of GPS among other technologies. The project emphasized creating community and individual skill banks through TVET and, vocational and business development training targets the creation of employment opportunities within the cross-border area thus enhancing self-reliance. The project has so far trained 652 beneficiaries in business development skills, of which 76.07% (496) were women, representing a 242.4% achievement rate. The Cash for Work (CfW) model of implementing infrastructural programs was effective from selection and through to implementation. It is anchored on a strong community participatory approach that involved infrastructural projects and thus directly benefiting 2,046 households and indirectly benefiting 12,276 individuals. The management and utilization of shared natural resources thematic area effectively rehabilitated 19 degraded rangelands across the three countries through the CfW scheme. Additionally, 20 community groups were supported to promote alternative utilization of prosopis to produce high quality charcoal briquettes and as fodder for livestock. The project has also been effective in facilitating the tri-border committee meetings for consultation to resolve resource-based conflicts through the dissemination of traditional and indigenous NRM knowledge for the management of cross-border range and natural resources. However, the effectiveness and efficiency of the project were negatively influenced by budgetary constraints, especially on monitoring evaluation

and learning activities and supporting continuous business skills development whose reach was limited. Other factors included drought, and border closures, the short-term nature of the project and the lack of contingency funds to respond to emergencies during the project implementation period.

Coherence and coordination

“Mandera Triangle” is majorly known for frequent conflicts linked to competition for control and utilization of scarce natural resources. BORESHA II has been effective in implementing diverse and resilient approaches such as rehabilitation of degraded land through the CfW program; strengthening the linkage between beneficiaries and community structures and respective government departments; enhanced community dialogue on resource utilization, capacity building and expanding economic opportunities for the locals. The conflict management approaches and the cross-border management structures align with existing public sector strategies and plans such as IGAD ‘Policy Framework on the nexus between Informal Cross-Border Trade and Cross-Border Security Governance’ (2018) and Drought Disaster Resilience Sustainability Initiative (The IDDRSI Strategy: 2019–2024). BORESHA II had a strong coordination framework that facilitated the achievement of the project objectives and effective feedback mechanism amongst partner-consortium, community, local and national level, other partners and donors.

Impact and sustainability

The CfW process enabled the majority of NRM committee members to reclaim more pasture land and farms for agricultural use. The strengthened capacities of NRM members enhanced community dialogue and cross border interactions, and ultimately supported conflict management. The reduction in long queues at water points was evidence of a reduction in the time women spent fetching water. Vocational education and training strengthened the trainees’ self-confidence during the transition to the labor market. However, the evaluation team noted that the short-term nature of the project activities was against such impacts that are realized in the long run. The capacity building initiative for other livestock enterprises provided an opportunity in the community and opened the scope for future diversification of livelihood activities. Additionally, strengthening existing VSLAs encouraged saving among members, positively impacting livelihoods. The CfW beneficiary households had higher purchasing power that triggered economic activity in the local area and contributed to economic growth. DRR /Tri-border Committee members facilitated the cross-border movement of pastoralists, guarded against deforestation in the project sites, and supported animal trade that provided several job opportunities to the fodder traders and market brokers. The transformative benefits and impacts generated by the BORESHA II project are sustainable beyond the project funding duration. Through the cash-for-work program, the project has rehabilitated several infrastructures, the impact of which will be supportive in the future. The infrastructure supported includes improved roads and rangelands rehabilitated through bush clearing and underground tanks. BORESHA II has strengthened the capacity of BORESHA I champions, making them those that are more committed to responding to the community’s needs with zeal and enthusiasm, thus contributing to sustainability. Other sustainability measures included strategic linkages with government departments and private sector involvement in the project. Awareness of livestock insurance created is likely to create demand for insurance over the long term, depending on market forces.

SUMMARY OF KEY ENDLINE PROJECT PERFORMANCE

OUTCOME LEVEL

Outcomes reported under outcome 1: Communities in the Mandera Triangle are more resilient and better prepared for shocks, and response is more effective

- a) LCIG members pointed out that 80% of farmers and pastoralists have better knowledge of mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery, and earlier warning signs.
- b) 2 community action plans are implemented and funded for each phase of the project.

c) 80% -90% of target communities indicated that improved their capacity, have good knowledge of the disaster, and were able to cope.

d) 614 livestock-dependent households are registered through insurance.

Outcomes reported under outcome 2: Selected individuals and communities are more self-reliant through increased skills and opportunities for cross-border employment, diversified enterprise and livelihoods.

a) 70%-90% of livestock vaccination and treatment beneficiaries indicated better health and lower rates of attrition among their herds.

b) 47% (of 22 VSLA graduates) initiated income-generating activities while CfW beneficiaries reported increased income through active economic engagements.

c) 70%-90% of the VSLA members access financial services (mainly credit).

d) Among 19 TVET training beneficiaries, all reported readiness for employment, 79% are employed, and 21% with reduced chances of enrolling in illegal gangs.

Outcomes reported under outcome 3: Cross-border rangeland and other shared natural resources are more equitably and sustainably managed.

a) 19 degraded sites rehabilitated and being used by the community members.

b) Incomes of 20 community groups improved through alternative products and income from proso-pis.

c) Construction/rehabilitation of 13 key water sources completed and being used by the community members for water for domestic use both for humans and animals.

OUTPUT LEVEL ACHIEVEMENTS SUMMARY

S/NO	Description of the indicator	Target	Male	Female	Achieved	% Achieved
Outcome 1: Communities in the "Mandera Triangle" are more resilient and better prepared for shocks, and response is more effective.						
1.1	cDRRM committees trained and supported	40	–	–	30	75
1.2	Wash and livelihoods structures supported from the cDRR action plans	18	–	–	25	139
1.3	Education structures supported from the cDRR action plans	12	–	–	10	83.3
1.4	Farmers sensitized on index-based livestock insurance model in 2021	183,198	–	–	350,000	191.05
1.5	Farmers buying IBLI insurance	420	–	–	614	146
Outcome 2: Selected individuals and communities are more self-reliant through increased skills and opportunities for cross-border employment, diversified enterprise and livelihoods.						
2.1	LCIG members trained on improved husbandry and marketing	401	382	253	635	158
2.2	HH supported to improve fodder availability during times of stress/drought	330	0	360	360	109
2.3	Restraints/treatment facilities installed	2	-	-	2	100.00
2.4	CDRs trained and supported/equipped with the necessary kits or equipment	40	30	4	34	85.00
2.5	Livestock treated and dewormed	170,000	-	-	591,500	348
2.6	CBTs provided with refresher training	7	7	0	7	100.00
2.7	VSLAs groups trained on and provided with seed capital/revolving funds	52	13	52	65	125
2.8	Exchange Learning events for District Bank Committee for VSLA revolving loans	2	0	0	3	150
2.9	Women and youth accessing technical and vocational educational opportunities (TVET)	100	104	86	190	190
2.10	Women and youth accessing technical & vocational educational opportunities (scholarships)	21	5	5	10	47.62

2.11	Infrastructure projects delivered through Cash for Work	36	-	-	45	125
2.12	Households /individuals engaged in Cash for Work	1,140	1306	740	2046	179.5
2.13	People trained on business skills	269	156	496	652	242.4
2.14	Tri-border committee meetings held	3	-	-	5	167
2.15	Traders Monthly reach through the Market information mobile platform.	800	-	-	436	54.5
2.16	Studies conducted and shared for learning	3	-	-	5	167
Outcome 3: Cross-border rangeland and other shared natural resources more equitably and sustainably managed.						
3.1	Degraded rangelands sites rehabilitated through CfW initiatives.	14	-	-	19	136
3.2	Groups supported through promotion of alternative utilization of invasive species (prosopis) for livestock feed and as charcoal.	13	-	-	20	154
3.3	Meetings/trainings held to assess & strengthen existing indigenous NRM knowledge	5(125 people)	-	-	5(128 people)	100
3.4	Key water sources such as borehole and dams constructed/rehabilitated	4	33,960	32,725	13 benefitting 72,685 ppl	100.00
3.5	Community water committees established/ trained	10	-	-	10	100
3.6	People reached through radio awareness raising campaign	464,448	-	-	350,000	75.36
3.7	Vulnerable HHs supported with COVID -19 WASH materials including those supported through distribution of hygiene kits.	3,714	-	-	5,301	142.73

Lessons learnt

1. Strategic collaboration with multiple partners is critical in cross-border resilience programming:

Leveraging on multi partners' experience and strength is essential in livelihood transformation across the cross-boundary communities, especially when the project programming has multiple resilience thematic areas. Bringing together different international organizations posed a challenge to the implementation, but the strong coordination framework engraved in the project enhanced its success of the project. At the beginning of project implementation, joint analysis, and planning (including a common work plan or at least synchronized timelines and common objectives) are important in establishing a common understanding and set of shared goals that enhance project effectiveness. The overall collaboration between local and national administrations across the "Mandera Triangle" created an excellent working relationship and goodwill from the administrations, opening movement between and amongst the communities.

2. Strategic selection of local partners:

Local partners who share the same vision and mandate sustain the pace of project implementation. Partnering with local government organizations and local institutions and having the mechanism of cross border dialogue played an integral role in the project's implementation and the realization of outcomes envisaged in the project. Key aspects of successful partnerships adopted by BORESHA II of collaboration and synergies, partner strength and flexibility, and diverse expert-wide inputs contributed to ownership and the project's success.

3. Participatory involvement of stakeholders:

Stakeholder involvement and community mobilization at every stage of program implementation have improved the quality of program implementation and monitored by local authorities, village representative committees (VRC), beneficiaries, and BORESHA II staff, led to ownership and sustainability of the program by the beneficiaries. The innovative COVACA process was instrumental in involving beneficiaries in the project activities.

4. Project implementation during COVID 19 pandemic:

Mainstreaming and integration of the COVID-19 related activities led to behavioral changes among beneficiaries, leading to the successful implementation of project activities during a pandemic. Activities related to COVID 19 supported the successful engagement of project beneficiaries in their activities during the pandemic.

5. Participatory planning and implementation of the project: Stakeholder involvement and community mobilization at every stage of program implementation have improved the quality of the program implementation and oversight by local authorities, village representative committees (VRC), beneficiaries, and project staff, leading to beneficiary ownership and program sustainability. Involving the beneficiaries in several aspects of the project enhanced the sense of ownership. For instance, it was very strategic to adopt a participatory community approach to selecting cash-for-work beneficiaries and overseeing the projects.

6. Strengthening community structures ensures the sustainability of a project: Building on the success of BORESHA I, BORESHA II has successfully strengthened the structures, thus ensuring their sustained effective functioning.

7. Strategic monitoring and Learning meetings: There is need for learning meetings to incorporate beneficiaries to bring in their perspective, thereby strengthening feedback and the learning process.

8. Cross border resource-based conflict management should be implemented for a longer term for sustained impact: Cross-border interventions, primarily where resource-based conflicts exist, need a long-term approach to have a meaningful, sustained impact. Newly established institutional structures embedded in the sustainability plan require strengthening and support to guarantee self-reliance effectively.

9. TVETs training coupled with business development skills improves self-reliance among scholarship beneficiaries: BORESHA II adopted regular coaching and business skill development, which were essential strategies to refresh the skills and knowledge of scholarship beneficiaries, especially those provided with start-up kits from DRC to establish their business. Business skill training was the most relevant in any project to sustain project outcomes.

10. The institutionalization of BORESHA II interventions is essential for sustainability: Anchoring the sustainability plan to existing developed structures and the recovery plan to strengthen their performance rather than considering a broader coverage of interventions in the second phase, ensures sustained community impact.

11. Effective project coordination and monitoring: Regular project meetings kept everyone updated and on their toes to ensure the project was delivering results. Ongoing collaboration with the partner reviews meetings and sharing of fieldwork results brought commitment and accountability among the multiple partners.

12. Strategic collaboration with multiple partners is critical in cross-border resilience programming: The index-based livestock insurance also requires a lot of donor support as the product is highly subsidized. Livestock owners pay very little and are partially subsidized by the donor and have a low likelihood of continued use. There is a need to engage insurance companies and reinvent insurance products that are profitable for them as a business, but at the same time, not too expensive for the livestock providers.

13. Cross border programming requires a comprehensive approach: Cross borderland interventions need to be designed following a comprehensive approach rather than a piecemeal approach because of the strongly intertwined challenges. *"I still see a piecemeal approach to border areas. There is the security lens, and the discussion with security actors, but there needs to be a discussion with local institutions that have been weakened in their governance role. All the social and economic linkages have been based on ease of movement."*

There is a clash between the cultural, economic, social, and political, and security lenses. If you build a road, do you want only the police to patrol, or do you want to build local connectivity? That perception of looking at everything at the same time is missing.” external stakeholders as cited in case study reports on the EUTF Cross-Border Programme.

Recommendations

1. Project learning frameworks to involve beneficiaries: Project learning and reflection meetings should involve the beneficiaries to bring their perspective to the learning and feedback process, which is critical for programming. Such meetings will enhance the collaborative design of interventions and involve beneficiaries in the process.

2. Need for contingency funds and budget flexibility in the resilience programming: Programmes of such nature BORESHA II should consider including contingency funds to address any risks that may arise due to the vulnerability in the cross-border context. Such risks can be predicted if detailed risk analysis is undertaken during project planning. Budget flexibility is also required for such programmes as it helps to meet the immediate needs of the community in the event of an emergency during project implementation.

3. Length of the project: Future programming, particularly across the border, will require a longer project timeline based on the complexities and vulnerabilities presented by the context making the realization of results take a little bit longer period. For example, offering scholarships for long-term TVET courses, e.g. diplomas and degrees, would be more effective in the long run. Further, peacebuilding addresses deep-rooted issues and requires a longer period to build trust between stakeholders.

4. Strategic up-scaling of BORESHA II: Scaling up could be in three directions. This could be done either by expanding geographical scope or deepening coverage in the same project areas or exploring other interventions in the project sites or other new sites. Broadly, expansion should be supported by evidence of community need and the ability to sustain benefits. Further, a community demand-driven approach, as opposed to a ‘one size fit to all’ or “homogeneous” one, could be applied in handling the cross-border challenges because of the diversity in needs. The challenges in borderlands are intertwined and thus the need to strengthen a comprehensive approach to programming.

5. Cash for work in livelihood projects: Livelihood programmes should consider cash transfer options/ components that give the beneficiary autonomy.

6. Deepen high-level policy engagement of cross border governments: There is a need for cross border interventions to engage local and high-level policymakers to implement activities and strategies that support the cohesion and integration of communities at border points.

7. Redesigning insurance schemes for ASALs: There is a need to develop index-based insurance schemes that are more affordable for the pastoralist community whilst providing a return on investment for the private sector. This will create sustained demand for the products in the ASAL areas.

8. Consider gender mainstreaming for the youth, male and female: In the implementation of the project, the roles of each gender and the youths have not been appropriately outlined. Therefore, it is recommended that the roles be outlined from the initial stages of the project to ensure total inclusion and fair distribution of gains across all genders and youths.

9. Studentship scholarship and support should consider a comprehensive package: There is a need to strengthen the scholarship programme as part of an overall package that includes training, business development training, and start-up kits to improve the transition to the labour market through usability of skills gained from vocational and tertiary institutions. Further, enhancing the students’ networking capability creates opportunities for graduate employability.



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BORESHA Consortium

Danish Refugee Council - East Africa and Great Lakes

Lower Kabete Road (Ngecha Junction)

P.O Box 14762 – 00800 Nairobi, Kenya | Office: +254 709867000

Email: KEN-Boresha@drc.ngo | Twitter: BORESCHA_HoA

Website: www.boreshahoa.org

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