



# Evaluation of Water and Sanitation Response for Vulnerable Populations in Lower Juba, Southern Somalia

Executive Summary

Oxfam GB Programme Evaluation

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## THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Background:** This report is an outcome of the end of project evaluation of the ECHO funded water and sanitation response for vulnerable populations in Lower Juba. The project was implemented by Oxfam GB through WASDA. After 2 months' preparation period, work started on the ground in January 2008 and was finalized after 6 months. The evaluation was conducted in August 2008 by independent consultants together with Oxfam GB and WASDA program team. The purpose of the evaluation was to obtain an overall view of the positive and negative impacts of the project and gauge the relevance, achievements, timeliness, efficiency and cost effectiveness of the interventions. In addition, the evaluation was to gauge the partnership approaches, community participation, inter-agency coordination and gender mainstreaming. To achieve these aims, the evaluation team sampled 5 out of the 6 settlements (leaving out Gelef, which has the least number of respondents) for data collection and analysis. Data was collected using a combination of focus group discussions, field visits, structured interviews and field audit of the implemented activities. Where possible, men and women were interviewed separately, in order to pick out gender de-segregated data. The interviews were guided by questionnaires derived from the log-frames and the Terms of Reference (ToRs).

**Findings:** Regarding outputs, the project managed to excavate a total of 34,000 cubic meters from 6 water pans against the originally projected 25,000 cubic meters in 5 water pans. All the water pans, except the one at Tabta, were filled with water and eased water problems for target communities. On sanitation, 170 latrines were constructed against the projected 190. Out of these, 160 latrines were satisfactory and in good condition but 10 latrines in Godaya were poorly finished. The target 1100 beneficiaries managed to benefit from the monthly allocations of US\$ 60 per household per month. The supervisors benefited from US\$70 per person per month. In Doblely, a 70,000 liter water tank was constructed against the projected 90,000 litre tank. Similarly, an engine room was constructed at Tabta. Tabta was considered needier compared to the original target, Doblely. All these constructions were in good condition. None of the projected 3 community water point was constructed in order to avoid overlap with Solidarite, a French NGO. Resources saved from these changes were used to construct the sixth water pan at Gelef. Finally, hygiene trainings and promotions were conducted at each settlement for 15 beneficiaries per settlement. Refresher trainings on targeting, security and activity management were conducted for VRCs, borehole committees and community animators.

In respect to relevance, two critical priorities were addressed; the livelihoods and access to water and sanitation. The relevance of the sanitation was apparent as the latrine coverage was less than 1% before the intervention. The project addressed the chronic livelihood, water and sanitation issues. On community mobilization and participation, both were properly undertaken. This led to high project ownership. The ownership is reflected by the protection accorded to water facilities and also the uptake of health and sanitation practices.

Women representation in VRCs was mixed. While some settlements had more than 40%, others had fewer and Gelef had none. Generally, where women were active, men tended to support them. However, to be more competitive, women need leadership and facilitation skills as well as experience of working with communities.

On cost effectiveness and efficiency, WASDA implemented the activities as planned, balanced the need for household livelihoods and the need for water and sanitation. The excavations were therefore implemented as budgeted. The US \$60 per household per month, initially adequate, was found to be too little as prices of foodstuffs had escalated. The high dependency ratio of 1:10 and the limited allocation per settlement worsened the situation. It was felt that simple, cost effective (preferably prefabricated) latrine designs whose superstructure could be shifted from site to site when the pit fills up could improve the efficiency of using the limited resources, in the long run. Most nomadic villages exist during the rainy season and move on thereafter. Families could re-assemble the superstructures in their new location where new latrines would be constructed. Designs that use iron sheets screwed on angle lines (superstructure without roof) could be tried on plot basis.

**Impacts:** The projected 1,100 households received US \$60 per month for six months. This increased access to credit from shop owners by about 30%. A few beneficiaries managed to buy one or two goats or purchase cloths. Others bought household milk, water and iron sheets for construction. In addition, the number of small business rose by 20% (mainly by women), stimulated by the cash inflow into the settlements. The increase was reflected by the number of trips made by the traders to purchase merchandize. It was also reflected by travels to get credit from money transfer companies linked to business transactions. At the beginning, about 1% of the earnings were shared with needy households but the percentage rose steadily to 6% in response to influx of needy people to the settlements. The estimated rise in population at the settlements was 20%, by the end of the project. While sharing with neighbors, household that had one meal per day managed to have 2 or 3.

Some beneficiaries managed to save money and buy donkey carts used for transport purposes. In respect to water access, Diff, Gelef and Godaya realized better water access, from 40Lts per household (HH) per day to 100Lts/ HH per day. This was an increase of about 150%. In Tabta, the water pan got water on the day the evaluation was done. In Doblely and Qoqani, the number of water users rose, as the population also increased. As a result, the impact was not as clear given that access to water also depended on household incomes allocated to water user charges. On sanitation, at least 40 % of the households in the settlements have taken up one or more sanitation practices. The most common practices are garbage pits for household waste, exclusion of animals in the houses, seeking advice on sanitation issues from WASDA and placement of Jerry cans at strategic points for hand washing, as opposed to communal water bowls. Overall, the project impact would have been better if the project duration was longer. This is supported by the fact that earnings in the first three months or so are used to repay debts. It is the earning received towards the end of 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> month that go towards livelihood recovery and diversification of livelihood options, including setting up of small businesses by the target beneficiaries.

**General recommendations:** The following general recommendations were made;

- It was recommended that Oxfam implements the current plans in reducing the turnover of program staff at Oxfam GB to avoid inconsistencies in supporting the partners and to avoid slowing down the strategic project decisions and advancement.
- It is recommended that adequate attention be given to quality data at the project planning stage. This would ensure that the best options and approaches are taken up and that fewer changes are made during the project implementation.

- It is recommended that thorough and comprehensive partner assessments be done on all Oxfam GB partners in Somalia to form the basis for capacity building by Oxfam GB. In addition, the resultant partner capacity statements would form the basis for linking such partners to donors.
- It is recommended that Oxfam continues with the regular project field missions, assessments and reviews be conducted between Oxfam GB and WASDA. This would improve strategic collaboration and support.
- Oxfam ought to institutionalize the partnership process to ensure that potential partners understand what partnership entails. Long term partnerships are more beneficial.
- In respect to partners' capacity building, it is recommended that Oxfam concentrates on systems development, linking partners to donors, ensuring quality fundraising and helping partners to understand strategic issues in organizational development and growth.

**Specific recommendations:** The following specific recommendations were made;

- To ensure that hygiene and sanitation practices are taken up early (and while appreciating sanitation programs for adults), health and sanitation projects ought to target children in Madrassa and Duqsi<sup>1</sup> through participatory child health, hygiene and sanitation programs.
- It is recommended that the immense human health needs at the target settlements be addressed as part of the health and sanitation programs. This could be done via mobile clinics, once or twice per month. Training of TBAs, First Aid, and Community Health Workers could also be considered.
- The evaluation team recommends expansion of the water and sanitation program to a wider area, in order to reduce the influx of people to the target settlements. However, migration patterns must be taken into account, numerous settlements affect migration patterns.
- It is recommended that VRCs (the face of the project at community level), be trained on public relations, decision making, facilitation and generally, how to work and relate with communities.
- It is recommended that the disabled, elderly and the sick be targeted by future programs through cash relief. Alternatively, they should be allocated cash for work activities to be executed by family members or close associates, rather than being left out.
- To increase toilet coverage at the grassroots, it was recommended that the cost of latrine construction be lowered, preferably, by supply the slab<sup>2</sup> and letting the community use local materials to construct the superstructure. Alternatively, develop fabricated superstructure that can be shifted from site to site when the pit fills up.
- In respect to tools for excavations, it is important to exclude wheelbarrows; they are unsuitable in loose soils. Instead, topless jerry cans or gunny bags ought to be purchased for excavation purposes.
- Community privatization of borehole management should be studied to understand its relevance, implications and the prospects for scale up. Under this approach, water management committees (comprising businessmen) are given temporary rights and allowed to manage the boreholes as private entities.
- Oxfam, WASDA and other partners should develop a program of nurturing sister NGOs in Somalia. It is recommended that small facilitation funds be given to build grassroots NGOs with good values, principles, and accountability functions. Members could be drawn from the current VRCs/ the Diaspora.

- Given the rising cost of foodstuffs, it is recommended that the household allocations in the Cash for Work activities be increased from US\$60 to \$90 per household per month. The volume of work per settlement should be similarly increased to ensure additional incomes for a longer period of time.

In conclusion, despite the security challenges, low budget allocations, and logistical constraints, the project outputs and outcomes were favorable. Tangible results and impacts were realized and the project improved the situation from becoming worse by enhancing livelihoods, access to water and sanitation in all the settlements. More assistance is needed in the project area given the influx of refugees and the general rise in prices of foodstuffs/other commodities. Such price increase result in more people being pushed below the poverty line. The above notwithstanding, the consultant believes that uptake of the recommendations above could improve interventions in future.

<sup>1</sup> Traditional 'under tree' Islamic schools for children

<sup>2</sup> Use pre-casting molds that satisfy the community needs in terms of size of latrines.

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